



BC Conference

The United Church of Canada L'Église Unie du Canada

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Making Room for Women Project

Interview with Doreen Angus

March 4, 2014

Oral History Recording Summary

Interviewee: Doreen Angus (DA)
Date of Interview: March 4, 2014
Transcribed by: Katherine Chambers

Interviewed by: Melanie Ihmels (MI)
Auditor of Transcription: Doreen Angus

Time Log	Description of Content
00:01	Beginning of interview: introduction, permission, information about early life
07:26	Involvement in the United Church and leadership roles
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- MI: Okay. So, officially I am Melanie Ihmels and the date is March the third, I think, 2014 ... 00:01
- DA: Fourth, fourth.
- MI: Today is the fourth. Okay. March the fourth and I'm interviewing Doreen Angus as part of the Making Room for Women program at the United Church of Canada Archives. Do I have your permission to continue with this interview?
- DA: Yes.
- MI: Okay. So I have a couple of questions. You are welcome to add, or stop me at any time to throw in other stories or details. We love to hear some of the story parts, but I do have a few questions to help guide us on the interview as we go. So one of the first ones is I'm going to ask you to tell me about your early life: your family, your community, and your participation in the church.
- DA: My early life didn't ... we didn't start out being involved in the United Church because I'm a Wet'suwet'en person and the church history and boundaries and places where churches went in the early days fell under Catholic.
- MI: Really?
- DA: Yes, in Bulkley Valley, so that would be Smithers and Houston and tiny little places on the railway. And my family originates in Moricetown, which is a Wet'suwet'en community.
- MI: And can I ask when you were born?
- DA: Yes. In 1946, in Smithers. Probably because I was first born, I was born in a hospital. Some of my siblings were born at home, not that big a deal in the '50s and in that era.
- MI: And how many siblings did you have?
- DA: Nine all together.
- MI: Wow, that's a lot.
- DA: (Chuckles) Yes!
- MI: And you were the eldest! Lucky you!

DA: Yes.

MI: So you grew up with all of them, then?

DA: For a time, and then after, say about the age of ten, then things changed because of the death of my father and then again at the age thirteen, death of my mother, so we all became separated and with different members of the family with the ministry, as we say these days. We used to call it welfare.

MI: Yes, welfare, yes. I grew up in welfare as well. That must have been quite hard on you then.

DA: Oh, I didn't know at the time, but yes, in retrospect it was hard.

MI: I bet. So you stayed in Smithers for a while?

DA: Yes, in the Bulkley Valley, so that would be Smithers and Houston. We used to live in a little place called Quick. My father and mother had died with working on the railroad, so they were ... we just moved where the work was. Yeah, and also in those days our family used to be involved with small mills, so we also stayed in a little place called Walcott.

MI: Oh! W-I-L-C-O-T-T?

DA: W-A-L.

MI: A-L. Oh, I have heard of it. Walcott. Okay. So how did your development with the church come about? Was that in your teens?

DA: In the United Church?

MI: Or any church.

DA: Any church ... well I was born into the Catholic church and baptized with ... the bishop and the time was at the hospital in Smithers, because it was run by the church and nuns, so a lot of people went through the same process. They were foreign and baptized probably even before they leave the hospital. And then going to Catholic school for some of my elementary education, and then moving and when I got married, then I became involved with the United Church.

MI: And when did you get married?

DA: 1967.

MI: Twenty-one?

DA: Mmm hmm. Yes. Almost twenty-two.

MI: Almost twenty-two. Wow. And so where did you get married?

DA: In Smithers.

MI: Oh, in Smithers too!

DA: Yeah, to please my aunt, who liked to have celebrations and we had a wedding in Smithers. We would have preferred just to get married and have a little ceremony and get on with our lives but we had a little ... medium-sized wedding, I guess ... couple hundred guests.

MI: Just a little wedding, you know.

(Chuckling)

DA: Yes.

MI: That's neat. And so did you have children?

DA: Oh, yes. Yes, we had three of our own and then we raised several others.

MI: Through the foster care system?

DA: No ... well, you can say that, I suppose. It's relatives—my sister-in-law had children that she couldn't ... she wasn't able to care for, and we looked after them. And then next thing you know, it was the generation after that. We had a great-niece and a great-nephew that were like ours.

MI: You had quite a few children, then, to be in and out of your life.

DA: Yes. Yes, and so in the United Church then it was in the '70s when we were living ... we moved home to Kispiox, where my husband comes from, he's Gitxsan.

MI: Kispiox ...

DA: K-I-S-P-I-O-X.

MI: Okay, and he's Gitxsan? That one I do know, haha! So you moved back there, and was there a United Church there? 07:26

DA: Yes. Yes, so that was in the early '70s. And we had ministers here who had three-point charges and one of them, Mel Adams, appeared at my door every now and then and just made home visits, invited us to participate in church, so that's how I got started and my husband was involved as a child so ... (long

before I was here).

MI: So during the early '70s, that's when you began your involvement.

DA: Yes.

MI: That's neat. And you've been involved ever since!

DA: Yes.

MI: So what was the first kind of involvement that you were involved as a member or an attendee ... ?

DA: Yeah, an attendee, and the next thing you know you're attending meetings and because I was an office worker I was chosen to do things like secretarial tasks and so I became the secretary somewhere in there and I still am today!

(Laughter)

MI: Yeah, once you start it's hard to get away, isn't it?!

DA: Yeah, it is!

MI: And what is the church called?

DA: It's called Pierce Memorial.

MI: Pierce?

DA: P-I-E-R-C-E. Named after a First Nations person, actually. Oh, he's probably half-breed, but William Pierce was his name and the church was established in the late 1800s.

MI: Wow, that's neat! So there's quite a legacy there then!

DA: Oh, yes.

MI: And so you're still a secretary. You know everybody!

DA: Oh! (Chuckles). Yes, and in 1998—or 1995, I believe it was, we had a 100th anniversary for the Kispiox church, for Pierce Memorial, and we did a photo ... kind of like a ... it was a magazine, kind of, with photos, and the minister—the current minister at that time—and myself and another woman headed up the project and then we had a big service and recognized people and sold copies of that for a little fundraiser.

MI: Wow! Do you still have copies of those?

DA: Mmm hmm.

MI: I would love to be able to add that into your file with the archives, that would be a really great piece of material to have.

DA: Sure. I'm pretty sure the Archives has one, but we can send you one.

MI: Okay. So your involvement with the United Church—how ... has there been a lot of volunteer ... sorry, I have a dog sitting here who's giving me looks ... so your involvement in the United Church I'm assuming there's volunteer as well as paid.

DA: Let me see ... hardly any paid. Hardly any paid at all. Just like for workshops, when I've facilitated workshops and stuff, I've got honorariums, but I never had a paid position.

MI: Okay. So did you do any ministry positions?

DA: No.

MI: You got to be the oil.

DA: Mm hmm. (Chuckles)

MI: I definitely like that position. And did you work outside the home for pay as well as working with the church?

DA: Mm hmm. Yes, I was an office worker for many years and then went back to school in 1982 and I got a teaching degree.

MI: Wow!

DA: Yeah. Yeah, when my kids were teen down to ... probably an intermediate student, I guess, so my family had to put up with a lot to allow me to do that, because we had an opportunity through the University of Victoria to do a local program. We brought in professors and taught them a lot, and there were about twenty-four people to start and then we had ... when we graduated, my little group, there were six of us.

MI: Wow!

DA: Yeah, and other people went on to different programs or ... all the twenty-four people didn't become teachers but some of them went and did different things.

MI: That's very neat. I understand the family participation, that's what I'm doing

right now, so...

DA: Ohhhh.

MI: I can totally understand that.

DA: Yes.

MI: So what led you to your decision to volunteer, particularly, I mean that's ... we're looking at what, forty years now?

DA: Mm hmm. Yes, I think ... the people. Definitely. Sheesh, going to make me cry!

MI: I have the last couple of people—sorry! I should warn people to have Kleenex by themselves.

DA: Yeah, I've got some. But so many friends ... And we've been close to all the ministers that have been here, and some of them are probably very elderly, and maybe in ill health now, I don't know. We're not in touch with all of them, but some of them are certainly dear people to us.

MI: Very much a community.

DA: Yeah. Definitely. Let me see ... one couple in particular that were here for five years came on a pilot project to help rebuild the church and they just came and were part of the community so much that it was really hard to let them go. But they went on, and they're still good friends, and they lived in Victoria.

MI: Oh, that's so neat.

DA: Yeah. And we've had others. There was an ... I think, Gwen Boyd came when she was in her—probably late fifties, I don't know, but anyway she left when she was sixty-five. Oh, no she must have been sixty when she came, and then she left when she was sixty-five. She gave us the last few of her working years, and that was an awesome relationship.

MI: That's so neat.

DA: As well. Yeah, working with people in the community. And it's hard, you know, being here, because you're ... although the church has only, let's say, thirty or forty families that are involved and attend, but the whole community is who you're serving when it comes to weddings and funerals and, you know, those kinds of things.

MI: Yes.

DA: So it's a lot of work and a big job.

MI: Oh, I bet. Now, if your family is still nearby, do your children still live close to you or have they spread their wings?

DA: Yeah, two ... I've got two daughters, one teaching in my home community of Moriceown, and one is living locally in our community—back in our community, and she's a social worker. And I have a son in Vancouver with three of his kids that are ... he's pursuing a career in Indian Art and struggling, you know, but he's studying jewelry at the moment. We're very proud of all our kids.

MI: It must be nice to have some of them close by.

DA: Yes, definitely. Especially the grandkids.

MI: Yes, I've heard that from a number of people. Having the grandkids close by makes a big difference.

DA: Oh, it does. I couldn't imagine them being elsewhere for their formative years. Anyway, we know they're gonna move away at some point, but while they're growing up it's cool to have them.

MI: Yeah, I could definitely see that. So we've talked a bit about the technical aspects of things. I think one of the more technical questions is about leadership responsibilities that you've carried within the church. I'm assuming because you've been there for so long that you've done some leadership, even if it's not ministry-related.

DA: Yeah. Oh definitely, yeah. Yes, and always working with people. It's not myself, but always with other people that things take shape and projects come about. So Presbytery was a big part of our involvement as well. We attended meetings and as delegates numerous times at BC Conference and then because ... I don't know if it was because ... I think it was in the '80s, I worked with the Children's Working Unit, in BC Conference, when Ann Searcy was one of the leaders in that. She was the—these days they'd call the person who was leading the "Minister" of that unit. 17:11

MI: Yes.

DA: Yeah, that's what Ann Searcy's job was. She's still in White Rock, I think.

MI: Her name has come up quite a lot, actually. I'm think I'm going to need to add her to my list because you're the ...

DA: Oh, definitely you need to.

MI: ... third or fourth person who's brought her up.

DA: Yes.

MI: I think that would be a good interview as well.

DA: She's an amazing person. She's just so dedicated; she just put everybody to shame with her dedication to do any work. She's such a faithful servant.

MI: So you did a lot of work with that unit as well then, during the '80s.

DA: Well, I did it ... I can't remember if I did a term or two, but anyways it's working with about a dozen people, attending meetings and a couple of times I got to help out with Children at Conference. Really neat, because it's always a process, working with the children who don't know each other, and they come together and we do activities to help them bond and then we do activities that form some kind of presentation, you know, as Children at Conference, and it's really exciting.

MI: That sounds fun.

DA: Yeah! At least a couple of times, I did that.

MI: Any other leadership roles that you took or are taking?

DA: Let me see ... In 1982, I believe it was, we had a National Native Consultation in our little community and it was hosted by everybody here, not just the United Church but the whole village, because, I think. I can't remember if there were about eighty or eighty-some delegates that came from all over Canada and they were all involved in Native Ministry.

MI: Okay.

DA: So it was very exciting to gather and to have—I think it was a three day ... that we met and shared stories and talked about our dreams and it was a very neat event. I don't think we've had such a big event here for a long time. Probably not since then. So at that time, that was our early involvement with the BC Native Ministries Council, I think is what we called it then, and Dolly Lansdowne ... you must have her on your list ...

MI: Yes.

DA: Yes. She was one of the leaders in that group and got us involved and we went to meetings and events. So as far as the development of Native Ministry grew, in BC, we went to the Native Ministries Consortium. The Vancouver School of Theology was the meeting place. We had summer schools. I went as a student some of the time and then I also taught there a couple of times.

MI: Oh, that's so neat! Are you involved with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission at all now?

DA: No. I wish I were, but I haven't been. I went to ... I've been to, just meetings

sort of on the fringe because I wasn't a residential school student myself and neither was my husband. So that's why we were not directly involved. But certainly we heard so many of the stories and we have friends, my own personal family—one of my aunts was a student, and then after I realized, you know, all of the stuff she went through then I could understand why she was kind of a mean person.

MI: Makes a little more sense.

DA: Yes.

MI: So I'm going to veer off a little of the technical stuff and do you have your Kleenex?

(Chuckling)

23:23

MI: Fair warning. One of the questions that you're asking is who your role models were. Or women in the church or outside of the church that made you stand up and do what you wanted to do, or have done.

DA: Well, let's see. I think one of the role models would certainly be Ann Searcy. She's just such a terrific person. Let me see ... my friend Gwen Boyd, she was just such a ... even though, you know, the involvement is not way back in our history, but still, she's a very strong person of faith and conviction. You know, she was widowed when she was probably, I don't know, she was in her forties or something, and then she went back to school and became a minister after her husband died.

MI: And she would be United Church?

DA: Yes. She lives in Nanaimo. She's retired.

MI: That is a very powerful message.

DA: It is, it is. And she's a wonderful person. And then other people who were here, Jim and Jeanine Elliott. They're on the Sunshine Coast, and Jeanine, who is not the minister in the family, but she was such a strong ... kind of like a women's lib person, and that wasn't my forte. I had to learn that kind of thinking, because it's not from my era. People born as a First Nations person in the Forties, we were Baby Boomers, but I don't think we were ... well, I should just speak for myself: I was not a progressive thinker in my early years. Probably not until after I became a teacher, then I learned a whole lot more about ways of being and all that. So my role models are people who are strong people and if they're women, then that's what I admired.

MI: That's neat. Do you have full Aboriginal status in Canada?

25:40

DA: Mm hmm.

MI: And are you also from the same tribe as your husband—is that ... I'm not even sure if that's the politically correct term now—the same group as your husband?

DA: Well, in my Native status, yes, because I married him.

MI: Okay. Yes.

DA: Yes, my band number is the same as his, and prior to that I didn't have one because—that's another story. My father was enfranchised, as they called it in the early '60s. He gave up his status so that he could have rights to go to the liquor store and not be punished and even jailed for such things.

MI: Wow!

DA: Yeah, yeah. So he gave up his Indian status—it hurts to think that, but that's how it was.

MI: And so that affected his family.

DA: Oh definitely. Yes, it certainly did. And when I married my husband, then I was able to have full status and not everybody—my sister, one of my sisters had to struggle to get her children recognized as status Native People so that they could have education benefits and things like that.

MI: Wow. That's quite a different life.

DA: Yes.

MI: Yeah, I can see how that would be hard. And then your children of course have full status.

DA: Yes. Yes, they do.

MI: So did you find that—for yourself, did that bring any stigma or problems as you were growing up?

DA: Let me see ... Well, I think poverty was certainly a part of our existence because our family was large and we didn't live on reserve; we lived in Smithers or, I don't know, for whatever reason we just didn't live on reserve. Probably because of my father's work and so ... we were just poor all the time.

MI: Which made life hard in a different way.

DA: Oh yes, yes. For school and everything like that.

MI: So you finished high school?

DA: Mm hmm ... Well, actually, in my day I was going to grade ten in Houston, living with a foster family, and I was able to go to a college program from there because you could do that in those days and not have to graduate from grade 12.

MI: Wow! They could do that here!

DA: Yeah, so that's what I did.

MI: And what was the college program in?

DA: Office work. It was secretarial.

MI: So then you could get a job pretty quickly there.

DA: Oh, yes. Yes. Almost right away.

MI: In some ways I think that system is better than what we have now.

DA: Oh, definitely. I think so, too.

MI: Okay, so that was your ... and then you met your husband after that.

DA: Mm hmm.

MI: I'm just looking down my list of questions ... Do you remember any moment, a defining moment that made you aware of either any racial or gender inequality?

DA: Let me see ... I always thought—when people talk about racism, that I didn't suffer a lot at the hands of, you know, people who are racist, but then when I was in grade seven I did have boys who were bullies and were not kind. And that's what sticks out most in my mind, about racism. And that was in grade seven. 30:30

MI: And were they white?

DA: Yeah.

MI: And I'm assuming they did not say very nice things.

DA: No, no.

MI: Children can be mean.

DA: Oh, definitely.

MI: And was there anything else as you got older? As you were going to school or as you started doing more with the church?

DA: Well, let's see ... as I was going to school I think I was pretty fortunate because when I went to the office training program I was a good student and so I didn't have such difficulty, and even getting work I didn't ... I think it's ... when you look back on it, it's because it was the time that it was. I think it's surprising that I was working in an office in Prince George. You know, in my eighteenth year. So thank goodness I went to that program; I certainly could have gone a different track.

MI: As you took on more and more leadership in the church itself, did you find you ran into any problems with gender or race?

DA: Oh, I think in the United Church as a whole we had challenges because we were in the minority. I felt that. Didn't have confidence to speak up at Presbytery meetings in the early days, and there weren't very many of us and sometimes when we went to those meetings, someone there talking about something like policy or things that are happening in the national church that we ... you know, it didn't feel like we were a part of ... it wasn't relevant for us. Because we come from a small First Nations community and it's ... you know, we don't speak the same language as the people who go to metropolitan downtown Toronto.

MI: Yeah, we still have that problem today.

(Chuckling)

DA: Yeah.

MI: Do you remember any particular or more specific incidents that stand out to you?

DA: Always ... what I recall when I was a delegate is talking about money. And that we always needed money and there was never enough. And it felt like sometimes that we were ... that it was a big problem. A Native problem. Too much need and not enough resources.

MI: That came up often? In the early years?

DA: I would think so, yeah. Yeah, and it's still like that. But the way ... people are more broad-minded now, and actually the whole shape of the church has changed, and we were part of all that, especially—my husband was part of the steering committee that did all the work with the Aboriginal ministry in becoming ... first of all, it was Native Ministries at BC Conference, became one of the pillars, and then later on it was at General Council. So we were there for all that transition. One of the things that stands out that was even more of an issue in my mind than the Native problem was the gay and lesbian thing that happened in 1986. That really stands out as a difficult time. And I remember—speaking of role models—Marion Best. She was wonderful.

MI: Yes, I've interviewed her. She's a pretty neat lady.

DA: Yes, she was such a strong leader through that time. She was on the right side of the fence!

MI: So how was it a concern in your church?

DA: You know, I always thought that it wouldn't be a concern in our church because we just didn't ... we never talked about stuff like that, and I thought if we didn't talk about it then it wouldn't be an issue. But that's not really true. That was just in my mind. It still is probably an issue for some people, but we're—at least we can talk about these things now and we're more comfortable with gender differences and sexual orientation and stuff like that. Probably with the elders we can't. They just don't speak that language. But in my position and people my age and stuff, we're up there with everybody else, with the awareness and equality in the workplace and all that stuff.

MI: So was there a large split within your church?

DA: Oh, no. No, we didn't have that problem here.

MI: That's good.

DA: But if we were going to hire a person who was gay or lesbian, then I think the issue would have showed its not-so-kind face. But we didn't.

MI: And did your church go through a vote?

DA: No. We didn't, no.

MI: Went with the flow.

DA: Yeah.

MI: So that's actually one of the questions, was about some of the turning points within the church. How not only the church, but how you, as a woman, fared within that time period.

DA: Yes, it was ... it definitely stands out, and we had some young people come to work in our community. You know how people will do exchange programs, or they do work programs or ... I don't remember what this group was called, but they were probably half a dozen young adults and they came to do ... I don't know if it was a restoration project or whatever in our community. They came to help. And one of them, it turns out—we didn't know at the time—but in the early '80s, like I said, we didn't talk about sexual orientation but we heard. That was when we started hearing about AIDS and everything, but one of those young people who was here actually had AIDS and we heard that he died, and that was our ... a really painful time of... you know that was our family connection to one of those situations. 38:32

MI: So would you say that the issues regarding the Aboriginal community were of more importance than the homosexual issues at the time?

DA: No.

MI: No?

DA: No, I wouldn't say that. It was right across the country, I'm pretty sure that we were on the back burner when all that talk was happening. (Chuckles). Well, that's my opinion, anyway.

MI: Yes. I do find it interesting to listen to different views because I've interviewed quite a few women and the perspectives are so unique to each one. So I love hearing about how different people viewed the different things that happened.

DA: Yeah, I would like to be in your shoes and hear some of those stories.

MI: It is kind of fun. I have to say I do like this part of it. The transcription is not my favourite.

DA: Yeah, I know.

MI: This part is definitely good.

DA: Yeah.

MI: Are there any other turning points over the last time in the United Church? I mean, 1986 was a big one. Are there any other ones that stand out?

DA: Well, personally, in our family, my husband was the president of BC Conference for a term. So, I think that was a turning point. It was a lot of work done by a lot of people and BC Conference was held in Terrace that year and Jim was nominated and I was working as one of the people for Children at Conference. So I was there working away with Ann and while the vote and everything was happening. 41:15

MI: Wow! So that was definitely a different ...

DA: Yes.

MI: And did you have—do you remember any specific stories about how your family and you dealt with that?

DA: Oh, it's pretty exciting. I mean we were—I think when those kinds of things happen, when the process starts you don't really think, "Oh, it's okay if he runs because he's probably not going to win," you know, and that kind of thing. So ...

MI: And then he won!

DA: Yes! Yes. And I remember Jim Elliot was still in our Presbytery at that point. He's a big, big man and picked my husband practically right off the floor he was so happy.

MI: That's neat. So are there ... ?

DA: Oh, it was right on our home turf too, in Terrace.

MI: Oh, yes, that's close by! That would be not a lot of travel, then, I like that.

DA: Yes. Yeah, that was exciting.

MI: So what about some important issues or joys or challenges you've had in your life?

DA: Let me see ... Well I've, like I've said, enjoyed working with the people all along the way, and Native Ministries has been a big part of our life for many years and being at Vancouver School of Theology every summer for quite a few years. And while we were going there, we were doing two things: I was going to university and getting a Master's degree while we were staying at VST

several summers doing that as well as attending the Native Ministries summer school.

MI: And is your Master's degree in teaching?

DA: Yes, in special ed.

MI: That's a lot of work.

DA: Yes, definitely.

MI: I just finished mine, so yup, that's a lot of work.

DA: Goodness me, yes. I was living in Vancouver and I never got to do any of the touristy things.

(Laughter)

DA: That stands out in my mind.

MI: Yup! Remember that! Definitely. And so are there any other challenges that you've had, that stand out?

DA: Let me see ... I think in recent times the ... let's see, what do you call it? Hardly anybody ... like a lot of people not attending church and all that kind of thing. And money cutbacks and then we didn't have a minister anymore here when Boyd left. Oh, actually, we did. We had our own homegrown minister and that was a challenging time.

MI: Oh, yes.

DA: Yes, because it's just such a big learning curve to have somebody practically—well, I shouldn't say—in my mind, anyway, somebody else who's trained to be a minister and ... so much work. And he was a—I'm a teacher, so I can say this: he was kind of still learning. And a lot of ups and downs in the church during his time. I can remember how many years he worked and then he never did finish the Native Ministries program to get a—he was licensed but he didn't get an ordination ... a degree, anyway. Didn't get to that point, so it was for us, as leaders and community members, to go through that whole process.

MI: And do you have a minister now?

DA: No.

MI: No?

DA: I shouldn't say no, we don't have a minister. We have another local person who's volunteering in the pulpit. She just gets some expense money and a gift of money; she's not on salary. So from having full time ministers, you know, two people and serving and doing all that kind of work, and going down to barely nothing and then now our ... I don't know, we've got a dozen people who are there all the time and do the work. So the church is still open but it's small scale.

MI: Scale has changed.

DA: Definitely. But the community wants a church there, they want it open. And it's challenging just to pay the gas bill or the oil bill and keep the lights on.

MI: Understand that. A few churches are going through that right now.

Is there anything, any project or work that you've done that you're especially proud of?

DA: Yes, I didn't mention the ... let me see, there was a resource for the United Church. Not only for Church School but for ministers: *The Dancing Sun* it was called. So I worked with a couple of people on two or three of those issues and then while I was there we developed the *Children of the Dancing Sun*.

MI: And what's *The Dancing Sun*?

DA: It was a resource with First Nations stories and liturgy and things that people who were serving in First Nations communities could use as a resource.

MI: That sounds fascinating!

DA: Yeah, yeah it's still available.

MI: Oh I'd love to look at that sometime. That would be very fascinating to look at and even use. I can see why you're proud of that. Is there anything else that stands out?

DA: Probably some things that I've missed, but it's just an ongoing part of my life.

MI: Would you know what effect your class or your race or your sexual orientation had on your life or your participation in the church? We've talked a little bit

about it. Were there any specific things that stand out more than anything else?

DA: No, I think I pretty much covered it when we talked about 1986 and all that, and how I was kind of naïve and didn't think that it would be an issue here just because we didn't talk about it, but then I realized, well if we had to choose a minister that was gay or lesbian then that would be a different story.

MI: Would be a very different story.

DA: Yes.

MI: So what leisure time activities do you participate in? Or do you have any?

DA: I'm trying to ... at the moment I'm on another one of my "get healthier" things. 50:32
I've done it all my life.

(Laughter)

DA: But then I keep sliding and going off to unhealthy and then going back again. I've always done exercise and stuff like that; aerobics I used to do just in my house or go to groups or that kind of thing, so I'm doing that again. It's a little bit different in my mid-sixties, but I need to do it and I love it. It gets me connected with people and in a lot of ways I want to be a role model for healthier aging. People don't have to become debilitated and shut in. If we look after our health we should be able to live and be reasonably active until God decides otherwise.

MI: Yup, I agree with that! So what is important to you about your life now? Within the church and outside of the church?

DA: Well, definitely people. People in my family, people in our community and the First Nations people and their—I don't like to call it their plight but that's what it's been. We just want to be—what I want for people is for them to have some prosperity and live a good life. It seems like there's too much struggle. What I do in the community, when I volunteer and such is just try to make a difference, helping people with their outlook and dream dreams and do things. I forgot to mention that we developed a summer camp and so our whole family's been involved in that for about twenty years. It's a summer camp for kids, a safe place to go for a week or so and do activities that have to do with culture and learning about the land and enjoying things like canoeing and swimming and singing and drumming.

MI: Oh, that sounds fun. Can I come?

DA: Yes, you can come visit!

(Chuckling)

DA: Yes, so Rediscovery International, it's called. We call it RIS. We have a friend who helped start the program in Haida Gwaii in 1978, I believe it was. And so we became part of that in 1993 or something. And so since then the camp idea grew and we actually have a facility now. We started out in Walton ...

MI: And now you have a facility.

DA: Mm hmm.

MI So going back to the church, what direction do you hope the church will take in the future?

DA: Well, I see in BC that we're trying different things. I just hope that we can work together and still maintain our little churches, because that's what the people want. But we definitely have to use different strategies and work together in different ways so that the money will go further and people can still get help when they need it to keep their churches running and having programs, training, and all those kinds of things. I don't want to see ... it looked like we were going to go right off the map here for a while and now we're still hanging in there.

54:30

(Noise)

MI: Sorry, now my cat is causing problems!

DA: (Laughs)

MI: (Speaks to cat)

MI: So this kind of connects to the last question: looking over the last eighty years, what are some of the lessons we can take into our future generations, particularly with some of the things you've mentioned, about maintaining some of the smaller congregations and things like that.

DA: That money is important but it's it shouldn't be the reason that we live or die. You know, the way we're operating right now we have a small group but it's not because of anybody's money; it's because we're connected and we have convictions and values and that's why we're doing what we're doing. So in the future we do need money, but sometimes if there isn't money then people have creativity and all that kind of stuff takes over if people hang together.

56:22

MI: Well that's my list of questions. Was there anything else you would like to add or that I've missed?

DA: I don't think so at the moment but when I read the transcript and stuff something else might come up and then I will let you know.

MI: I think that's going to happen for quite a few people so I'll be doing a lot of edits when I get the transcripts back, and I'm hoping that happens because then other stories can come out. And if you have anything that you want to add before you get the transcripts it will take a few weeks, so email me and I can add it in at the end.

DA: Sure

MI: I'm just going to formally stop the interview and then I'll talk to you just for a minute or two after that.

DA: Okay, and if you could give me your mailing address so that I can send you one of those church memory books. 58:32

MI: Oh, definitely! Okay so this is ending the interview at fifty-nine minutes. Thank you very much Doreen.