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CLAUDINE ATKINSON
Narrator

CONNIE RICHARD
Interviewer

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5	429	Siblings. Three brothers: Virgil, Maurice and Glen. Two sisters: Geraldine and Wilma.
6	441	Husband: Glen Atkinson. Occupation: logger. Born 1922 in Potlatch. Narrator married husband in 1941 at her brother's home in Potlatch.
7	454	Three children: Kathy Jo, Pamela and Tim. All children are in their twenties now.

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		Kathy is working for Avon. Pamela is a homemaker and also works for Avon. Tim works in Potlatch as a logger.
9	475	Education. Narrator attended and graduated from high school in Potlatch. Occupations and skills: Narrator runs her own chain saw shop and is a machine repairist. At one time, narrator worked as a waitress.
10	506	Hobbies and interests: bowling, gardening and camping. Clubs: narrator belongs to the VFW Auxiliary.
12	526	Discussion of narrator's childhood. Narrator feels she was treated basically the same as her brothers, although most of her chores revolved around the house while her brothers did outside work. Although her brothers went on to more schooling after high school, narrator notes that they had to work their own way through school. Narrator got married soon after graduating from high school.
13	550	Contemporary family life compared to when narrator was a child. Narrator feels families are different now because of the changing times. Families nowadays, although they do more things, do less things together as a family. When narrator's children were growing up, the family did a lot of activities together: camping, boating, high school sports in Moscow.
14	571	Marriage. Two years after marrying, husband was sent overseas for the military. By that time, they had two children. While husband was gone, narrator lived with her parents and took care of her children. Narrator dated husband four years before they got married. Courtship: narrator feels that courtship is quite different nowadays; feels that children

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		today know much more.
15	600	Courtship activities and entertainment in Potlatch. When narrator was a young woman there was a dance hall in Potlatch. Also in Potlatch were a skating rink and a theater that many people went to. Most of these things are now gone from Potlatch. Narrator notes that when she was a teenager, it was rare for people to have cars, but nowadays most teenagers and young adults have cars.
16	618	Feelings about marriage. The first year was a little difficult, but after that, marriage has been pretty much what narrator expected. Has been very happy with her marriage, feels she probably had always wanted to get married.
17	643	Family planning. Both narrator and husband discussed and decided they wanted to have no more than three children. Childbirth: two children born in hospital, one born in nursing home. Narrator notes that although all of her children were born naturally, the practice at that time was to require mothers to stay in bed for about 10 days after childbirth. Narrator's feelings about this: not a good idea; would have felt better if she had been allowed to stand up, particularly with the birth of her last child. Another practice at that time was not allowing husbands to be present during childbirth.
21	704	Plans for children's futures: narrator just wants them to be happy in whatever they do. Does not believe in pressuring children. Only wants her daughters to marry if they want to.

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22	746	Chain saw business. Husband managed the business at first; later on narrator took over the business. They have had this chain saw shop for 22 years. Decision making in the family: both narrator and husband talk things over but husband usually makes the final decisions. Brief description of husband's work as a logger.
26	853	Rural life compared to urban life. Narrator prefers to live in a rural area. She lived in Spokane for a year and was very glad to get back to a small town.
26	875	End of Interview.

CR: We have a data sheet that we'd like to fill out first, and I'd like you to feel free to tell me anything, elaborate on anything. I want to get your name first. Claudine Atkison?

CA: Atkison.

CR: How do you spell that?

CA: A-t-k-i-s-o-n.

CR: Do you have any nicknames?

CA: No.

CR: What is your address here?

CA: Box 2, Potlatch.

CR: What was your maiden name?

CA: Davis.

CR: And your date of birth?

CA: June 7, 1923.

CR: And where were you born?

CA: Well, I was born in Moscow, but they had it on my birth certificate, Potlatch, so I guess it would be Potlatch.

CR: So you've lived here all your life?

CA: Uh huh.

CR: Do you have a phone?

CA: Yes.

CR: Would you give it to me again?

CA: 875-4271.

CR: And you've been here in Potlatch your whole life?

CA: Yes.

CR: Okay. You didn't immigrate from anywhere?

CA: No.

CR: Well, can we get something about your mother's family? What was her maiden name, do you know?

CA: Ethredge.

CR: How do you spell that?

CA: E-t-h-r-e-d-g-e.

CR: And did she have, how did she spend her time? Did she have an occupation or a job or anything?

CA: No.

CR: Homemaker?

CA: Just a homemaker; with six children, that's what it would be.

CR: Right. Do you remember her date of birth?

CA: No, I don't.

CR: Is she deceased now?

CA: Yes.

CR: Well, how old would she be?

CA: Well, let's see, she'd be about 86.

CR: Do you know where she was born?

CA: In Oregon somewhere.

CR: And when did she die?

CA: In '68.

CR: Do you know what year she was married?

CA: I can't say, I should remember, but I can't say now.

CR: Okay. And your father's name?

CA: Claude.

CR: What kind of work does he do?

CA: Most of his life he worked on the railroad.

CR: Was he with a railroad, you didn't have to move around much, your family stayed here?

CA: No, he worked for the last, well, since I was born anyway, he worked for the railroad up here in Potlatch.

CR: Do you remember his date of birth, or can you tell me how old he would be now? He's not alive now?

CA: No, he isn't. He would be just a year older than mother.

CR: Do you know where he was born, what state?

CA: In Oregon.

CR: And when did he die?

CA: I think it was 1965.

CR: Do you have sisters or brothers?

CA: Yes, I have five.

CR: Five of each?

CA: No. I have two sisters and three brothers.

CR: Could you give me their names?

CA: Well, there's Virgil.

CR: You'll give me brothers first, Virgil.

CA: And Maurice and Glen; and Geraldine and Wilma.

CR: Are they around this area?

CA: Uh, most of them are, yes. Virgil is in California; the rest of them are here in Spokane.

CR: And you are married?

CA: Yes.

CR: What is your spouse's name?

CA: Glen.

CR: And what occupation does he have?

CA: He's a logger.

CR: You mean you run this whole business yourself? This is really just your thing? He logs?

CA: Yes.

CR: And when was he born?

CA: June 19, 1922.

CR: And where was he born?

CA: In Potlatch.

CR: And where and when did you get married?

CA: Let's see, it was 1941, and in Potlatch.

CR: In a church?

CA: No, in a house.

CR: Your family's home?

CA: My brother's.

CR: And do you have children?

CA: Yes, three.

CR: And their names?

CA: Kathy Jo, Pamela, and Tim.

CR: Can you tell me how old they are?

CA: Kathy is 22.

CR: And Pamela?

CA: Is 23.

CR: And Tim?

CA: 25.

CR: All pretty much grown up. Have they got occupations?

CA: Well, Kathy works for Avon.

CR: And Pamela?

CA: She sells Avon also.

CR: Is she a housewife too?

CA: Yes, she's a housewife.

CR: And Tim?

CA: He logs.

CR: Does he work here in Potlatch?

CA: Yes.

CR: Does he live at home still?

CA: No, he's married.

CR: Now, we have down a few other things. Did you go to high school in Potlatch?

CA: Yes.

CR: Did you finish high school?

CA: Yes.

CR: Gee, we've got skills down here. I don't know where you would begin. Can you name all your skills?

CA: Well, I don't think I have very many.

CR: You're a machine repairist? Or, what do you call yourself?

CA: Well, I suppose it would be...

CR: Repairwoman?

CA: Yes, that might be all right.

CR: Do you have other things that you would consider skills that you do in the shop?

CA: Oh, I don't believe so, nothing I can think of anyway.

CR: Okay. Is this the job that you have had most of your life?

CA: Well, yes.

CR: Have you had any other occupations or jobs?

CA: No, not for years.

CR: Well, even way back, if you can think of anything else.

CA: Oh, way back I did a little as a waitress.

CR: Okay. I think we are gonna find in this area, the other women that I've interviewed, a lot of them have been waitresses. There weren't that many jobs for women in this area.

CR: Not several years ago, that's about all you could find if you weren't out of high school.

CA: Even if you were to be a schoolteacher, you had to have more education for that. So not too much more from what I understand. Have you got some other interests or hobbies?

CA: Bowling and gardening, I suppose.

CR: Do you belong to a bowling league?

CA: Yes.

CR: Do you have a big garden around here?

CA: Yes, we usually have a pretty good size garden.

CA: Out around back?

CA: Right in back most of the time.

CR: You don't go snowmobiling?

CA: No.

CR: You're pretty much into machines here?

CA: Well, my husband logs and he says he doesn't like to play in the snow on his only day off, which is understandable.

CR: Do you do things for entertainment together?

CA: We bowl and we garden together; that's both of our hobbies. We do a lot of camping.

CR: Do you belong to any clubs or groups?

CA: I just belong to the VFW Auxiliary.

CR: Was your husband in the service?

CA: Yes.

CR: When you think back to your childhood, do you feel your brothers were treated any differently than you were?

CA: No, I don't think so.

CR: Did your parents expect you to do the same kind of tasks as your brothers, or were the girls treated differently?

CA: Well, that way, yes, I think we were treated differently, yes. Well, most of the time there were certain chores we had to do, mostly in the house.

CR: Did you mind that, would've you liked to have gotten outside more? Did the boys get to do gardening and things?

CA: Oh, I guess they did. I could do that too, as far as that goes; but then, I didn't have the patience for it.

CR: Do you think your brothers had more opportunities than you did? Like, do you think your parents might have paid for more education for them but not for you girls, or anything like that?

CA: No, I don't believe so. My brothers, when they went on to school, had to work their way through.

CR: Were you encouraged to go on to school?

CA: No, not really.

CR: Your parents were satisfied with what you were doing?

CA: I got married soon after I got out of high school.

CR: Do you see families now as different or similar to your family?

CA: Oh, they're different because of the times, I believe. I think they do more; but not as much together.

CR: Which would you prefer?

CA: Oh, I like doing things together really, myself.

CR: Do you do that with your own family now?

CA: Well, they're pretty grown up; but we do do a lot of things together, especially in the summers.

CR: When they were home, before they got married, did you do a lot together?

CA: Oh yes.

CR: What kinds of things did you do?

CA: Oh, we went camping and boating, and then we took them to Moscow school sports and stuff out of town.

CR: Did you ever go to county fairs or anything like that?

CA: Oh, not too much. I guess we weren't really that interested in that.

CR: How long did you know your husband before you married him?

CA: About six years.

CR: Was there any particular reason why you decided to get married? I suppose you felt you were [unintelligible]. That's what most of the people said.

CA: Yes, I think so, I think that was it.

CR: What year did you get married now?

CA: '41.

CR: And then did he go away in the army?

CA: Not for two years.

CR: Was he sent over seas?

CA: Yes.

CR: I'll bet that was a hard time for you. What did you do while he was gone?

CA: Not very much. I stayed with my parents.

CR: You didn't have children yet?

CA: I had two.

CR: I guess they kept you busy. Was your husband accepted by your parents? Did they like him or want you to marry him?

CA: Yes.

CR: Can you describe your courtship for us?

CA: Well, I don't know. I went with him four years before we were married.

CR: Is it any different from the ways kids court today?

CA: Oh, in a lot of ways, yes, I think it was. Our children today have knowledge, how to do more things than we did.

CR: What did you do when you were courting?

CA: Oh, mostly then, we just...uh...that's too long ago.

CR: People have told me there was a dance hall in Potlatch. Did you go dancing?

CA: Oh yes, we went dancing and we went to a lot of shows.

CR: There was a theater in Potlatch, too?

CA: Yes.

CR: There was a roller skating rink too? How come all the entertainment things have been removed from Potlatch?

CA: A lot of it is that now all of these children have cars and they can go further. Before, maybe one out of a half a dozen couples had a car, so you wouldn't go very often. My husband always had a car.

CR: That was nice. Looking back on your marriage, like a year and five years after you got married, was it what you expected it to be?

CA: Oh, probably the first year it wasn't, but after that I think it was.

CR: Was the first year hard for you?

CA: It was harder to get adjusted to each other, yes, even though we'd known each other that long.

CR: But you've been happy with your marriage and glad that you got married?

CA: Oh yes, definitely.

CR: Did you ever think about not getting married? Or, have you always wanted to?

CA: Yeah, I probably always wanted to.

CR: It's pretty much accepted that if it's what the girls want to do, then it's accepted.

CA: Yes, I think it probably was more so 30 years ago than it probably is now.

CR: Okay. Was there any discussion about whether to have children or did you just know that you would have children?

CA: Oh, we discussed it. We wanted, definitely wanted children.

CR: Did you talk about how many or did you want to have as many as you could?

CA: No, we didn't want over three.

CR: How many did you have?

CA: Three.

CR: Okay. Can you describe, did you have your children in the hospital?

CA: Yes, in the hospital and one was in the nursing home.

CR: Where was there a nursing home?

CA: There was one right here.

CR: Was it good medical care?

CA: Oh yes. It was a private nursing home. At that time, I was the only patient in it, so you got a lot of attention.

CR: Did they have the spinal pain killers then for childbirth, or did you have natural childbirth?

CA: Natural.

CR: Did you mind it?

CA: No.

CR: Did you like it?

CA: Oh, if I had to do it over, I think that's what I'd do.

CR: That's interesting. In those days did they do, you know, they call it apeisiotomy, where they slit the vagina a little bit so it doesn't tear when the baby is coming out, did they do that then?

CA: No.

CR: Just pure natural, huh?

CA: Yes.

CR: I bet you could get up and walk around the next day too.

CA: Well, for the first two, no. Then they had this idea that you had to stay in bed for 10 days, and that was silly, of course.

CR: Did you have to stay at the hospital 10 days too, or did they let you come home?

CA: You stayed there most of the time unless you had someplace to go, and you had to stay down.

CR: How did you feel about that, staying down for 10 days?

CA: Well, after the last one, I felt it was silly because I felt so much better standing right up, you just weaken when you stay in bed.

CR: At least they've changed that pretty much now. How did your husband react to the childbirth? Did he come with you, could he watch or anything like that?

CA: No, they wouldn't let them watch then.

CR: Did he stay at the nursing home or the hospital until you had the baby? Or, what was he doing when you were having the baby?

CA: Well, with the first one, I sent him home. The second one, he was in the service. The third one, he was there but he couldn't see him born.

CR: Uh huh.

CA: Funny how they changed the way they used to do things.

CR: What, for your children, what did you want for them? Do they have what you would've desired for them? What were your wishes for them as they were growing up?

CA: I just wanted them to be fine, just to be happy whatever they wanted to do with their lives. I just wanted them to be happy with it.

CR: You're the second woman today who said that to me and it seems so hard for parents to just do that, I mean to not pressure them. Seems like most of my friends, their parents were always pressuring them to go to college or go and be something important. Were you really able not to do that, to just let them do whatever they wanted to do?

CA: Oh, I think so, because I've always believed if you pressured somebody into something, they're not gonna like it anyway. If they make up their mind they want that certain thing, they're gonna be a lot happier. You could have a job that pays you a lot more money, but if you're not happy, there's no sense in having it.

CR: Did you expect your daughters to get married?

CA: If they wanted to.

CR: Do you think any of them ever have any other ideas of something else they want to do, or did they always want to get married?

CA: Oh, I think that when they got married they probably wanted to marry, yes.

CR: Do you ever do things like recreation kind of things by yourself, or do you usually always do it with your husband?

CA: Oh, I bowl by myself on my league; but the other recreation we do together.

CR: This is really a funny question for you. What was the most significant thing you've done in your life to support your family? I guess your business must have been very supportive to your family.

CA: It helped. It in itself would not support a family, maybe, it's never been that large.

CR: How long have you had it now?

CA: Well, my husband had the business first, before he went into logging, and we've been in the chain saw business for 22 years.

CR: What were some of the things that your family would have had to have done if you weren't there to do it for them? Can you think of anything in particular?

CA: No.

CR: Would they get meals for themselves?

CA: Oh, not very often. Well, they helped getting meals after I started working, of course, then they were both in high school.

CR: How about decision making in your family? Does your husband make most of the decisions, or do you do it together, or does he refer to you, or can you persuade him?

CA: Oh, I think he makes a good share of the decisions after we discuss it.

CR: Do you think he considers what you have to say to be pretty important?

CA: Well, I hope so. On certain matters, yes, but a lot of them, he makes them on his own.

CR: What kinds of things does he ask you about?

CA: I don't know. He always discusses them with me; but he ends up, especially in his business, he makes all those decisions.

CR: With just your family then, when the children were younger, you didn't make any major moves or anything, you've always stayed here? Can you think of a major decision that was made? What about when he left the chain saw business and went into logging? Is that how it happened, were you running this together?

CA: No.

CR: He was running it and then he decided to go into logging?

CA: Yes.

CR: Did he talk to you about that?

CA: Oh yes. He'd been in the business for a long time and he just wanted to get out, outside. And he found out he really liked it out there.

CR: What kind of hours do loggers work?

CA: Well, like now, he leaves at five in the morning and gets home about five at night. But he's driving about 16 miles to work.

CR: His business is an independent one?

CA: He's a contractor for Bennetts.

CR: Who in your family is aware of current issues, like politics and stuff like that?

CA: Oh, we both are a little bit. I mean, we're not very interested in it. We buy the paper but we don't study it.

CR: If you could go back and live your life over again, would you want to change anything?

CA: Oh I don't think so, we had a good life.

CR: You were pretty happy then?

XX: How did you learn the skills to do this job?

CA: I'm nosy!

CR: Did you used to watch your husband when he had it?

CA: Oh yes.

CR: So you learned from him?

CA: Yes.

CR: Did he have other people helping him?

CA: Not in this business, it was never large enough to have other people working. He has several employees now in his logging.

CR: There's another thing I wanted to ask you about -- if you like living in a rural area and if you ever wanted to live in the city.

CA: I'd rather live in a rural area.

CR: Is there anything you think you're missing by not being in the city?

CA: Nothing that would interest me, I don't think.

CR: I guess you've just always lived here and I imagine the climate conditions don't bother you.

CA: Oh, we lived in Spokane for about a year and that was more than I wanted to. I'd rather come back to a small area.

CR: Did you live right downtown?

CA: No, we lived in the valley.