

Athabasca Area Seniors' Memory Project

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Transcription of Bonnie Speers - 001.mp3

Narrator: Bonnie Speers
Interviewer: Heather Stocking
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[Start of Interview]

Heather May 10th, 2022. Heather Stocking, talking to Bonnie Speers.

Bonnie Okay. First of all, thank you for having me. I'm married and have been happily married for 50 years, just about 53 years, to Larry Speers and I'm part of the Speers family. But I thought that it might be nice for my family, and grandchildren, and friends to know the Bonnie Stewart before I married Larry Speers. And so I'm going to talk a little bit about my life.

Bonnie So, again, my name is Bonnie Jean. My maiden name was Stewart, so very Scottish. I was born March 21st, 1947. I was the oldest girl, oldest of four children. I was born in '47. My brother in '48, my sister in '51, and my youngest sister, a surprise package, was 1960. And two of them have carrot-red hair. Anyway, we were born to my mom and dad, Doug and Marg Stewart.

Heather Marg? Margaret?

Bonnie Margaret. Yes, Douglas and Margaret Stewart. Okay, so I was going to say a little bit about my dad. Douglas Stanley Stewart was born on May 21st, 1921. First, a little bit about his family.

Heather Do you know where he was born?

Bonnie He was born in Edmonton, Alberta. But his parents, his dad was born in 1876 and he was Donald Gavin Stewart and he was born in Tomintoul, Scotland. It was so nice because two years ago we went on a cruise through the British Isles and hired a taxi just to go up and walk around Tomintoul where he was born, his family was born. And so that was pretty meaningful, and actually I was with myself and Larry and my youngest sister Liz and her husband. So very meaningful and very, I don't know if you've been to Scotland, but beautiful. And the wild, the cows, the highland cows... Anyway, a little bit about him. He had fiery red hair and I think, I believe, a temper to go with it, I'm not sure. So he worked around and I think what happened in his life is his mother passed and his dad married again, and he didn't get along so well with his stepmother. So he left home early, like about 17, and went to South Africa and worked in the diamond mines for quite a few years.

Bonnie And that's where he met the lady of his life, Gwendolyn Maud Hopkins. And she was born in 1882 in Bristol, England. So they went and married and they eventually moved to Canada. And I think they had their first two boys in South Africa and then the rest, eventually they had seven boys and one girl, and my dad was the youngest of the boys. And when they moved to Canada, they moved around. Where did they have the fire? He became a North-West Mounted Police policeman and there was a fire in Wainwright, I think, that cleaned out a lot in the '30s. Anyway so he was a part of that.

Heather When they came to Canada they came straight to Alberta to settle?

Bonnie They did. They came right to Edmonton because the other, I think, five children were born in Edmonton, like my dad was born in Edmonton.

Bonnie And then a little bit about Maud, very English. I remember Dad always saying that they, she always had a day, like I think she warmed the water up on Sunday, washed her clothes on Monday, and hung them out to dry on Tuesday, like she had every day. And it was a real treat on Saturdays, they each had one egg, like that was a real treat, you know. They didn't have a lot of money, and the Stewart clan had a sweet tooth. So even when I was growing up, when dad was... on Friday nights we'd go to the Palace of Sweets, in Edmonton, and get our candy, our sugar fix, which is okay.

Bonnie My dad was again Douglas Stanley Stewart. He worked with Air Canada for 43 years. So, okay, a little bit about my dad. He was a part of the Royal Canadian Air Force during World War II. So he worked, I think, a couple of years with Air Canada and then he went overseas.

Heather Was he a mechanic?

Bonnie No, he actually was a bombardier. So his dream was to be a pilot. He didn't have the peripheral vision that you need to have. Anyway, he still wanted to fly airplanes and he still wanted to fly for, you know, for the Canadian Air Force. So he went over and, on one of his trips out over Germany, their plane was shot down. And I think three of the seven crew members were killed. But he was captured and he was a prisoner of war for 15 months, which was a long time. Yeah, a really long time. And so, you know, that was hard on him. You never, it's funny when growing up, he never ever talked about it. It was just something. And so I remember my mom was a nurse and she would always say, you know, there were times he would just shake in the bed. So that would have been in the '40s.

Heather Like PTSD kind of thing, before we knew what PTSD was?

Bonnie I think you're absolutely right, what they called shell-shocked.

Bonnie Yes. So my sister, the youngest, the spoiled one [laughs], she was a vice principal at Vegreville High School and, on a couple of Remembrance Days, she would get up and speak about it. Okay, so he was shot down. After the war was over, so that

would have been in '45, '46, they marched the prisoners from Germany to where they were, from the prisoner of war camp to, I guess, the English borders. And then they transported them somehow. But he was in a hospital anyway, but on his way marching he caught dysentery which was not so good.

Heather So he probably wasn't in the best of health anyway?

Bonnie No. You know, he could never eat turnip, because I think they lived on turnip peels, that was their soup. And so he went to a hospital with dysentery and they helped him. And in the hospital, his brother, an older brother, Uncle Hedley, went to visit him because they knew he was there. And, you know, he walked right by his bed and didn't see him because he probably had a beard, and he was 125 pounds, like skin and bones. Anyway, they got through that.

Bonnie So how he met my Mom was kind of romantic or interesting. My mom's brother was also in the same camp, prisoner of war camp. And somehow, and maybe in the hospital, they got to know each other and they flew home and my Mom and Uncle Bill, his friend in the prisoner of war camp, flew home to Prescott, Ontario, which is where Mom was. My Mom was raised on the St. Lawrence River. They flew home, flew to Prescott and that's where Mom and Dad met. And then I think two, well maybe even one year later, he came back and proposed. Like he went to Edmonton, to his home, and then came back and proposed to her in Prescott.

Heather So they were writing letters back and forth?

Bonnie They were, yeah. So then they married and they had we four children. Okay, so that's Dad's side.

Bonnie So I think my reason for talking about it is that because he was from Scotland and England, and that's kind of where our heritage was from his side. And then my Mom was English, her parents. She was born in Prescott and her parents ran the china shop and it's just a small town in Prescott. Also, the people from Prescott would come and pay their power bills there, called Bell phone bills. They would go there and pay those as well. So her dad was James Stuart Miller and he was born in 1891.

Heather And the spelling, the common S-t-e-w?

Bonnie Yes. Although it's confusing because his dad was James Stuart and that Stuart is S-t-u-a-r-t. Oh, I am sorry as the S-t-e-w-a-r-t is on my dad's side. Right. That Scottish. And that's Bonnie Jean Stewart. You couldn't get more Scottish, could you?

Heather Not really.

Bonnie Anyway, I feel blessed, and I'm happy to have it. Okay, so, Mom's dad was James Stuart Miller, and he and his wife ran this china shop. And her name was Miriam Jean Connerty. And they were both born in the same year, 1891. She was a

kindergarten teacher. This is where, I don't know, I'm a picture person. If you come to my house, it's... So this would be my Mom and this is her aunt, and James and Miriam had five children. So my Mom was the oldest and then Uncle Bill, and then they had a set of twins, too, there was Mary and Ann, and then the baby was Uncle Bill. So that's kind of a nice picture of them.

Heather That could be scanned.

Bonnie Okay. And this is kind of neat, too. This shows my mom, she was a nurse and this is my dad. And they were airforce. And so that's Uncle Bill. And so they came over and it was kind of a nice.

Heather Are they holding hands back there?

Bonnie You know what I noticed, because I'm an athlete, he's smoking.

Heather Oh, you're right. Different time.

Bonnie You know, he didn't when we were growing up, interesting. But anyway, they came back and she never did go abroad. She stayed back in Toronto and worked when the soldiers came back and she looked after the injured soldiers that came back from the unit.

Bonnie Then this is me. So I was going to talk about my life. Because Dad worked for Air Canada, we got free passes to go places. And so this is my grandma. So that's Miriam and James Stuart. Right. And there's my mom, Margaret. Between them and her, there's Uncle Bill and Joan and the two twins, Mary and Ann. And this is me, Scottish skirt on, and my brother Bill and my youngest sister, and my young sister, Barb. Actually Liz is right here. Carrot-red hair. She and Bill had carrot-red hair, and then Barb and I were brunettes.

Bonnie I like this picture because it shows, and this is in Prescott. This is in..., we called her Nanny and Grandpa Miller, her maiden name, her mom's maiden name was Miller.

Bonnie So then this is my life, you know. Are there any stories or anything about my mom's side of the family?

Heather Well, what did your mom do after the...?

Bonnie Oh, she was a nurse until she married and then she stayed, she was content to stay home with us. So she stayed home and raised us. And then when we got older and left, she went back and worked in intensive care. She loved knitting and quite often in intensive care you're just watching monitors, and so she would knit. She was a night person which I never was, but lots of her shifts would be night, the midnight shift. And

she'd be quite contented to work there and then sleep during the day. So that's English, and then there was Scottish and English on my Dad's side.

Bonnie Okay, so my life. So I was born March 21st, the first day of spring 1947, so after the war. They were married in '46 and, and they had me in '47, so they didn't waste much time. I was born and raised in Edmonton. And again, I was just going to say that Dad worked for Air Canada and growing up, it was so nice. When we were going to school, in the summer, we were able to get these free passes and all of us would get on the flight and just spend a month or two months in Prescott with Mom's family.

Heather So what did your Dad do for Air Canada?

Bonnie Mostly he worked at the ticket office. In fact, when I was going to university, he got me jobs and I was able to work at the ticket office with him. And because I was living at home and getting fed at home, the money that I made there was enough to pay... then the tuition, it wasn't like it now is, but I was able to pay for, you know, the tuition. So when I graduated, I didn't have any debt. I was able to get out there and teach. So we went to Prescott and enjoyed our other cousins, our Miller cousins.

Bonnie In Edmonton, I went to Strathearn Elementary and Junior High. And there, in grade nine, I had a phys ed teacher, Miss Hoffa. You know, you meet some people in your life and they become an influence on what you want to do. Well, she was a spectacular teacher, and she worked with us in actually, in basketball. Were you a basketball player?

Heather Yeah.

Bonnie So she worked with us from September until our tournament in November, or even maybe it was even in the new year. But we would go to school early, at 7:00, and we would practice and we'd practice with the boys. And that would make us better, right, because we'd be playing with the boys. And Strathearn was not, it's by Bonnie Doon, I don't know if you're familiar with Edmonton.

Heather Yeah.

Bonnie South side... Strathearn Junior High School. We won the city championship, which was quite a feather in our cap because it was a small school and we were going up against huge, like Hardisty Junior High, and a lot of the big schools. But anyway, we were able to win that. That was kind of a motivation for me to want to be a teacher. So that kind of was my goal after my experience with Miss Hoffa.

Bonnie Then when I went on to high school, which was at Bonnie Doon, and now it's called Vimy Ridge Academy. So they take students that are specialized in a sport like hockey, and they do the academics, but they also have coaches. So it's called Vimy Ridge Academy of Sports. Anyway, at Bonnie Doon, I played volleyball, basketball, track and field, and our team won the provincials in curling. We curled at the Shamrock

curling rink, quite close to Bonnie Doon. Anyway so we won the city championship there. So I was involved in sports, like, well I was a hard worker in school but I really enjoyed the sports. And even now, when I watch the Oilers tonight, or the Blue Jays, I get a high in athletic excellence.

Bonnie Like we had all of our kids, we had five of our own children, and so we coached. I was probably the loudest parent cheering, but they didn't mind, and I wasn't critical or negative. I was just encouraging, Just like I was as a coach, too. But anyway, in 1965, so from Bonnie Doon I went to the U of A, and I was in the Faculty of Physical Education, which was then, that particular year, '65 was the last of a three-year program. So I graduated in phys ed and then I went back and registered, because I wanted to be a teacher. And I graduated, I think in '74 with a Bachelor of Education. And so that was with distinction. I really, you know, it seems when you find your joy, you blossom. And so I really enjoyed the schooling and while I was at U of A, I did compete on the basketball team as a Panda. And I also was a Panda on the curling team. So that was a part of my life. And then in 1969, this made Larry laugh, we fell in love. I met Larry in one of my criminology classes.

Heather Criminology?

Bonnie Criminology class. Okay. One of our, I guess one of our options that we would have to take.

Heather So if teaching didn't work out, you wanted to be a police officer?

Bonnie Oh no. You know, when you go through the faculties, you have to take certain options. And that was just an option.

Heather So it interested you?

Bonnie It did for sure.

Heather And so he was in that class?

Bonnie Actually, he was in the Faculty of Education, specializing in phys ed, where I took my degree and then I took education. Anyway, Larry always says that we met in the revolving door and we've been going around ever since. Can you see him say that?

Heather Yes.

Bonnie And so 53 years later, so that's kind of where...

Heather So you were taking this criminology course and what was he doing?

Bonnie He was taking the same option. After that he said it took a long time for him to get the courage to call me, but he did. So we went out a bit in '69, or '68, I think. And we

married in '69, so he was just about 27 and I was 22. So we were ready. I didn't talk about our children. Do you want to talk about...?

Heather We can. Okay. I was going to ask you, though, do you think that it was a long time? Like, could you tell that he was interested in you?

Bonnie He was so shy? You have no idea how shy he was. You know what his mother would say, when he was growing up, the neighbor lady would say, "You know, I never hear a word out of Larry. Does he ever talk?" And in later years there, Larry's mom would say, "You know, he doesn't stop."

Heather He was saving it up.

Bonnie Yes, he was saving it up. Anyway, this is the Stewart. I didn't show you. Sorry. So this is my Mom. And they were raised in Prescott, Ontario. So this is the good-looking brother. This is Uncle Bill. And then they had two twins, Auntie Ann and Auntie Mary. And then the baby was Joan, Auntie Joan. So this was taken... I don't know if they have a date, but taken when they were growing up. And this auntie, I think, lived with them. Norton's sister. Yeah. Anyway, so I was explaining to Heather that my Mom's brother Bill and my Dad were prisoners of war during the Second World War and they, Uncle Bill brought Dad to Prescott where he met my mom. That's where they, and they corresponded for a year or so. And then Dad went back to Prescott. He lived in Edmonton. His family was in Edmonton, so, he came back and proposed to Mom. And she's the only one of all that family that went west.

Heather So when did they, what year did they come to Edmonton? When they got married?

Bonnie That would have been. I was born in '47. They must have come in '46.

Heather And then your Mom, just like you said, she was happy to stay home.

Bonnie She was a nurse. Okay, so this is later on, but this is a really good picture because it has my grandparents, Mom's mom and dad, Nanny and Grandpa Miller, and this is my Mom, Margaret. And there's her good-looking brother, Uncle Bill. And this, these are the twins Ann and Mary and Auntie Joan. So that's me. With the Scottish skirt.

Edie Yuill I had an outfit just like that.

Bonnie And then my brother was just a year younger, with carrot-red hair, and then this is my sister, she's four years and then my youngest, she was a surprise package. Lizzie. She was 13 years... I always told her she was the best surprise we ever had. Anyway, she was 13 years younger, and she also had carrot-red hair. But I was telling Heather that she became, well she was a teacher. She and her husband are teachers in Vegreville. And I was saying Dad was a prisoner of war. She was the vice principal at the end and she'd get up on Remembrance Day. And because kids don't understand

the sacrifices that that those men made, she would get up and speak, probably for half an hour. She said, you could hear a pin drop. They were listening and they did maybe try to understand.

Eddie Yuill It would be hard. You don't have pictures or you don't have whatever, you know.

Bonnie Yeah, for sure. Anyway, so that's me before Larry. But, you know, we've had quite a rich life. Well, you know, being able to raise five kids and they're all, you know, coming home and happy and have families.

Heather What was it like for a city girl to move to the country?

Bonnie Well that was quite an adjustment. I was 28 years in the city and then we moved. So when we moved, when we finally did buy, get our property, which was Larry's grandparents, our oldest boy Troy was five and our second Riley was three. And our baby, Reggie, was just born. He was born in October and we moved in May to a house that was built, I'm not sure if it was by the Speers, but it had running cold water. Just cold. We moved in May, so by the time winter came, we did get a septic tank and we did get stuff.

Heather So it was an outdoor toilet?

Bonnie Yeah, of course. Two-seater, actually. White. It was the White House actually. And you know what, I got it at a sale. I had a wringer washer but it leaked and so I had to plug it into the outside socket, and so I did all my laundry... You know I have an album of pictures and I couldn't find them, but I have pictures of that, and I was so afraid my fingers would get caught them in the rollers. But anyway, I used that for all the diapers and all the washing.

Heather Back then there were no disposable...

Bonnie Diapers. There weren't.

Eddie Yuill Do you know the year your parents were married?

Bonnie My parents, it was March 23rd and it would have been '46, because I was born in '47. So Douglas, and I don't know if it'd be Bessie Margaret or Margaret Bessie. She didn't like the name Bessie, so everybody called her Marg.

Bonnie Oh, were you talking grandparents? I do have that someplace else.

Eddie Yuill Okay, I won't put the year in now.

Bonnie But you know what, it would be in here. Just, I mean, where he found a beautiful home for her with servants to help to keep her fit for a queen.

Heather And Josephburg after they were married. So you think that she had left and gone back to Bristol?

Bonnie I'm not quite sure. I should be reading this more, I'm sorry.

Heather That's okay.

Bonnie And then in 1906, that's when the oldest, Keith, and he was born in England, and Walter was born in Forest Hills, a suburb of London. So they were both born in England.

Heather So you said they were married in '04 and he was born in '06. So they weren't in a hurry?

Bonnie No, they weren't. And then I think it looks like we have three abroad. And then Uncle Hedley was born in 1913 in Edmonton. So he was the first born in Canada. I was trying to see where he met Mom. And so he met Mom at Durban in Natal province, not too far from Josephburg [South Africa], where he worked in the diamond mines in 1899. And then he joined the cavalry, where he was known for two things: the best shot and the worst horseman. And then the Boer War was over in 1902. And then he went to where Mom was waiting for him. So they don't really see where she was waiting. But the Stewarts had a tremendous sense of humor. Oh my goodness. They showed each other no patience, or no mercy. When you know, as grandchildren, we just kind of sat and listened.

Heather We were talking about moving to the farm.

Bonnie Oh, yes.

Heather So you and Larry got married and then you were six years in Edmonton.

Bonnie He was at NAIT, and actually, I taught part time because I just had Troy then, so I taught part time with the Edmonton Public for two years. I taught at Brightview and Hardisty Junior High, where I coached basketball and taught phys ed and math. And then we went for six years, and you know, Larry got restless and I didn't understand what this restlessness was because I was quite content to be raising my kids and doing the things. He needed more than just that 9 to 5 job. And he missed the farming, the chores, and being outside, and doing things. And so this land came up for sale. And I knew nothing about anything so I was game. So for two years I taught and then I got pregnant with Riley. And so after that I decided to stay home.

Bonnie So we caretook apartment blocks to be able to save money, maybe to buy a house right in the city. So we did that, and then once we were able, it was interesting, we bought four quarters of land when we bought land, and it was we paid the same amount as the money we got when we sold our house. So isn't that unbelievable? Four

quarters of land and one house in the city was \$46,000. So we felt lucky too. Anyway, we were there.

Bonnie And Larry's mom, bless her soul, was just up the road three miles. Did you know Bessie at all? Or did you know Gladys Spence? No, you'll probably get to know her because she's anyway, she's a sister. And so they taught me everything I know, like I'd never put a garden in. I didn't know anything about flowers, but I think being in phys ed and learning how to work hard, you learn that and if you want it, you do it. And so I, you know, in one of the pictures that I have, I have a cat on my shoulder and I'm peeling parsnips that are that size because they're huge. And I'd never eaten a parsnip in my life, but I grew them because they said they were good and they are. So I did learn how to garden and do those kind of things.

Bonnie Then we decided to have some cattle. And we got Cherry, poor Cherry, our milk cow. I had never milked a cow, and so they said, "Have you milked a cow?" Okay. So I knew this but I didn't know this [demonstrates]. And so after 20 minutes she had blisters, like wasn't that awful? So I had to get cream for it, but I learned.

Bonnie So we had chubby, we had fat dogs and cats, because I would give them... and you know, it's funny, our two sons, they didn't care for the..., because I guess they were already used to the pasteurized milk from the city. But I used it for everything else and I had them shaking jars to make butter and all those kinds of things. Did you do that?

Eddie Yuill Yeah, lots of shaking.

Bonnie Yes, and so those are the kinds of things that... But now after, we moved in '75, so what are we, 48, 47 years, so now I'm past doing all of that and happy just to be a part of, like this morning, we had to ear tag a calf and go out. My job in the morning is so nice, I'm able to go out and check. We have 85 live healthy baby calves and I just go and check and make sure they're all happy and kicking up their heels. And so that's kind of my job.

Heather So you still have the four quarters of land?

Bonnie We do, and we'll give them. I think both Larry and I want to keep the farm in the family. So our oldest son is there now and helping us, but he lost his wife a couple of years ago, and that's a heartbreaker. Anyway, Troy is still working through that. But, you know, we'll just see how life... but we're hoping that maybe those quarters will stay in the Speers name.

Heather So what did you have when you moved out there? Like you say, there's what, 85 head of cattle? How many cattle do you have now? 90?

Bonnie You know, we've fluctuated. We had as many as 200 at one time when Larry retired from being a principal. And then we were down, and now Troy has half and he's bought some really good quality black Angus bulls. We have some, like Troy said this

morning, "Mom, I think this is the best calf crop we've ever had." Of course I say that every year, because I deliver and he and I tag, right? Like we have to tag and give them needles.

Heather You obviously have chickens.

Bonnie We do, yes. Yeah, we're down to 12. And, you know, I'm still getting 10 eggs, so they're still happy and that's good. So we're lucky.

Heather Did you ever have pigs over the years?

Bonnie We did have pigs. Not so much. So once our kids grew, our youngest, I stayed home for 14 years and raised them and coached them. Then when our youngest Brandi went into kindergarten, Larry hired me as a kindergarten teacher at Rochester. So I was there for a couple of years. And so, I can tell you a cute story. I don't know, I still get responses by it. Anyway, when I did start teaching again, after being at home for 14 years, we went to a function in I think it was Onoway. So he got up to introduce me and he said, "You know, Bonnie, she had an advantage. She was sleeping with the principal." And of course my face! Because I was trying to show, it's the first time I've met most of these teachers, right. Anyway, but I'm still getting that, and 'are you still sleeping with the principal?' Oh, yes.

Heather Yeah, he's got that sense of humor. It's hard to imagine knowing him now. It's hard to imagine him being silent.

Bonnie Yeah, it is, and I think that's because of his hearing, and you know, you just adjust to it. You just make the most of it. They were all shy, you know the whole family were shy. But when he got out and got some success, he didn't really have success until he got to high school, university and that's when, you know, his work ethic kind of kicked in and he was able to do things.

Heather Yeah. Listening to him talk, yeah, it didn't sound like it was the best time growing up and you know.

Bonnie I don't know if you've had liquor in your life? I was blessed, I didn't have liquor, but his dad was a drinker. And Bessie, you know, she's just an amazing person. I'm so glad, you know, that they have nice pictures of her, too. He used to always have them because she was only three miles away. So the family would usually come to our place, too, for Christmas or Easter. She'd always be happy to be there. She and I were close. She helped me a lot.

Heather It's a big difference going from the city to the farm.

Bonnie Well, you should have seen the first few, like Larry's oldest brother. I think the first time I had red high boots that you zip up, red plastic, and then a red leather coat. And he was taking me through the cattle. And he was pretty good, Donald was pretty

quick to say, you know, she's not going to last six months here. I always chuckled at him and said, "Well, I just had to learn how to dress."

Heather Yeah. So what else did you like when you were growing up? Did your mom do canning and stuff like that?

Bonnie You know, she did pickled beets and she did, oh yes, she did some stuff, for sure. But nothing like what we like. I think I'm famous for my raspberry jam, but last year it wasn't such a great crop. But this year I'm hoping. I'm out there now cleaning the canes because it should warm up.

Edie Yuill Do you know, sorry to bother you, but do you know what, like your grandfather?

Heather Okay, so, over the years, you had all sorts of animals. Did you guys take in foster kids too?

Bonnie No, we never did that. But we did adopt a girl that actually was, between our oldest sons, between Troy and Riley. She was a foster girl – a Baxandall, from kind of a dysfunctional family. But you know, she would come at Christmas and Easter with Troy or Riley and she'd just jump right in and help. And so after a few years, we just decided that maybe we didn't formally adopt her, but like, she was out for Mother's Day and, you know, she brought stuff. And she just is part of the family. And every night I always wish each of the kids sweet dreams. And she's one of them.

Heather You don't need that formal adoption, really, to call someone family.

Bonnie Oh, gosh, no. And she has a daughter that's married. And so it was her daughter and herself that came out just for a couple of hours, just to touch base. And she has a very, very good job. She travels all over. She's in HR, human resources. Actually when I was teaching, she had to do with the pensions for schools. She had a lot to do with, just paperwork. I would much rather be doing, with the kids and doing stuff.

Heather So you taught at Rochester School for a couple of years in kindergarten?

Bonnie I did. I was the aide and yes, probably, well maybe even three or four years. Then a job came up at Athabasca, which I was, you know, I was trained in high school, junior high school, and basketball. And my daughters became, Larry was so good. He taught skills well at Rochester, so when they moved up to me, they already had the skills, right?

Heather You could tell which kids came from Rochester.

Bonnie And they were on my team, right? But I didn't show favoritism. But anyway, we did well, we went to provincials lots, and we'd travel. And, you know, at times, the

parents didn't drive a lot, but we had buses and Larry would quite often drive the bus for me, which was so nice. So he's there driving the bus and cheering for his daughters.

Heather Was it Landing Trail or EPC?

Bonnie EPC. Yeah, Athabasca.

Heather So you were up at the old one?

Bonnie I was, and so many good memories. I think 12 years I was there. I always tell people I don't think I remember a negative day of teaching. You know, you can look at things negatively, but there's always something good about the day, and the kids. And I think teaching phys ed, sometimes you can push them past what they're used to. And I always had lots of satisfaction. But yeah, I just, and I told you before that I just want the kids to know that, you know, it's nice that they know where your grandma is coming from as well.

Bonnie Yeah, exactly.

[End of Interview]

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