

Athabasca Area Seniors' Memory Project

Edwin Brown – Interview Transcript

Narrator: Edwin Brown
Interviewer: Irene Fitzsimmons
Date: September 16, 2019

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Select "Eric & Ethel Brown Family" > Select "Edwin Arthur Brown" > Scroll down to "Audio interview" > Play ►

[START OF INTERVIEW]

Irene: *This is Irene Fitzsimmons, interviewer, on Monday, September 16th. I'm with Edwin just talking about, probably, from around the time you finished high school and just where you went, what you did, and just kind of in your own words from there till today.*

Edwin: Hi, my name is Edwin Brown. I was born August 30th, 1944. I graduated from Edwin Parr Composite High School in Athabasca in 1963. I left Athabasca and got a job in Edmonton. I worked for Northwestern Utilities, which is a gas company in Edmonton, reading gas meters.

I married Teresa King in 1963. We had two children, Tracy and Brenda. In 1970, Teresa and I got a divorce.

Later on, after I had quit the gas company, I worked for a company in Edmonton hauling some mobile homes, and I met Patricia. We've been together since that time. She had two children, Sandi and Carroll, and between Patricia (Pat) and myself, we had a son named Shawn.

We moved to Yellowknife. I managed and built a mobile home park in Yellowknife. We lived there until 1975, and then we moved to Grande Prairie, where I managed and built a mobile home park. After that, we moved back to Athabasca and went farming. It took five years for me to spend all the money and lose all the money that we ever made, so we went back to Yellowknife. Yellowknife was good for us the previous time that we were there, so we went back.

When we were in Yellowknife, and before that, I guess I should mention that we became foster parents, and we have been foster parents for 45 years. We have had a lot of kids over the years in fostering, and it's been very enjoyable for us. It's certainly been challenging, and probably more so for my wife than myself, because she enjoys babies and younger children.

We adopted an Inuit girl in Yellowknife. She is now an LPN and she has three children of her own.

The child that Pat and I had is Shawn, and he has four children, and he's an airplane mechanic living in British Columbia.

After Yellowknife, we'd spent about 10 years there, we moved back to Athabasca and live down in Meanook, and we're at the same location that I was raised on. But, in the

meantime, we'd built a house on a quarter of land. We thought that we were getting older and we didn't need the big house, so we sold it and moved to my parents' place. But I guess it's a house that, you know, would certainly be good enough for the two of us, but now that we've got grandchildren and the kids come home, it always seem to be a little short of space.

Over the years, I was quite involved with Air Cadets in Yellowknife and in Athabasca. I taught range to the cadets and took the Yellowknife shooting team, which represented the territories, to Ottawa a number of different times. After being there for a couple of years, I realized, you know, the kind of competition that was Canada-wide, and we did a lot of practicing, and we came in second in Canada, our team did, which was kind of unheard of for a small group of people from away up north. And, when we arrived back in Yellowknife, the commanding officer for the Northern Region met us at the airport, and everybody thought it was just kind of a fluke. Guess what? When we went back there the next year, we came in second again.

When I moved back to Athabasca, I was able to help out the 230 Squadron get their rifle team up and going, and getting them some rifles. Over the years, they've done very well. Our one son that we had adopted, Dean, he came in as the second top shot in Canada when he was in cadets here. So, that part of it's been very rewarding for me and also for the Air Cadets that participated in these projects.

At the present time, I'm still fairly active and Pat is very active with fostering. We have some cattle, and I look after a camp and a hotel in northern Alberta for a friend of mine that has some medical issues.

We've done some traveling to Europe and South America and that. We've been on a few cruises. We really enjoy cruising.

And, we have a great family. We're in touch with all the kids all the time. So, I think that's pretty well everything that I have to say. My throat seems to be getting a bit sore.

Irene: *Just one question for you, Edwin. What's this experience been like for you to participate with your siblings in talking about your parents' story and your own? How has that been for you?*

Edwin: It's been very good. I think it certainly instills that what our parents did for us was very fulfilling in our lives. Each and every one of us has done well by our own standards, and if you do well for yourself, you feel good about yourself, and you've probably helped the community in different aspects and helped your children and that. It's good to talk about the past, because usually there are very fond memories of the past.

Irene: *Well, thank you very much for coming to participate with your siblings and it's a really rich story for sure, and thank you for taking time to share your own individual piece of that.*

Edwin: You're welcome.

Irene: *Much appreciated. Thank you.*

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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