

**Athabasca Area Seniors' Memory Project**  
**Transcription of William Waschuk-002.mp3**

[http://digiport.athabasca.ca/aasmp/people/w\\_waschuk.php](http://digiport.athabasca.ca/aasmp/people/w_waschuk.php)

Narrator: William Waschuk

Interviewer: Lorrill Waschuk

January 6, 2018

[Start of Interview]

**Lorrill** My name is Lorrill Waschuk and I am interviewing William Waschuk in his winter vacation home in Palm Springs, California. The date is January 6th, 2018. What's your full name?

**William** My name is William W. Waschuk. The "W" is silent; there is no name to it.

**Lorrill/William** What's your father's name? My father's name was Jacob.

**Lorrill/William** What was your mother's name? My mother's name was Violet.

**Lorrill/William** What was her maiden name? Her maiden name was Sawchuk.

**Lorrill/William** What was your father's date of birth? He was born in 1887.

**Lorrill/William** And what was your mother's date of birth? She was born in 1889.

**Lorrill/William** Do you know their place of birth? The place of birth was a place called Datyn, and it was a Russian empire at that time.

**Lorrill/William** Do you know what country it's in now? It's Poland.

**Lorrill** Can you tell us a little bit about your parents?

**William** My parents came to Canada in 1929 and settled on a farm about 22 miles north of Athabasca, a district called Larvert. And that's where I grew up, on a farm.

**Lorrill** Can you tell us what type of work your father did?

**William** My father was a farmer, and to make ends meet, especially in the fall during harvest time, he would get a job stooking. In those days there was no combines. Everything was cut with a binder and he would have to stook the bundles so they would dry during harvest time. Then, of course, they used threshing machines instead of combines in those days. And that was his job: to work at harvest time to make ends meet.

**Lorrill/William** So he worked for other farmers? He worked for other farmers, mostly in the St. Albert and the Clyde area.

**Lorrill** Do you have some early memories of your childhood?

**William** Yes, I do. I started school when I was six years old. Myself and neighbor's boy, also six years old, we had to stay after school just after a few days in school. And the reason was the teacher called us in after school and said, "You showed your tackies [?] to the girls, didn't you?" We said, "Yes we did." So he strapped the boy. But he started to cry and so loud, so he did not strap me.

**Lorrill** So can you describe your school and your teacher?

**William** Yes, our school consisted probably approximately between 30 and 40 students. The teacher had a little house by the school; a teachery, it was called a teachery house and that's where she lived. She was from somewhere around Athabasca but she lived in this teachery. The teacher at that time was a very nice teacher. As we got older, we started to get a little bit naughty. There were Saturday [night] dances in school and a lot of neighbors would bring cases of beer to have like a party in school. Monday morning, I found a bottle of beer and, of course, I brought it into school. The teacher said, "Give me that" and I wouldn't give it to her. She kept saying, "You give me that." I said, "No" and I jumped out the window. She chased me around the school several times. I jumped back into school and she came back in school, inside, and she was laughing. She did not punish me. Of course, after school, I shared this bottle of beer with my friends.

**Lorrill** How did you get to school?

**William** We walked three miles each way, every day, five days a week, of course. Three miles to school and three miles back. For eight years, I've walked to school.

**Lorrill** How long did you go to school for?

**William** I only finished Grade 8. When I was six, seven years old, I used to solder pots and pans for my mother and I was pretty good at it. As I got older, I quit school, took a welding course in Edmonton.

**Lorrill** How did you find out about the welding course?

**William** I was 16 years old and I took a welding course in Edmonton. It was called Chicago Vocational Training and I was trained there for six weeks.

**Lorrill** Do you remember how much the course was? And do you remember anything about your instructor? How did you pay for that course?

**William** The course was \$225.00. On the farm, I applied. There was an ad in the newspaper and I applied for this course. The man from Edmonton came down to

interview me. But we had to put \$50.00 down. Of course, my father didn't have the \$50 so he borrowed it from my neighbor. The man from Edmonton said, "When you finish your course, we'll get you a job." The balance would be paid when I arrived in Edmonton to take the course. So when I arrived in Edmonton, he said, "You got to pay the money in advance before you can continue." "Well," I said, "I have no way of getting in touch with my father because we have no phone and a letter would take some time." So he said, "Okay, you can continue." I finally got in touch with my father with a letter, which would be a week, 10 days later. He sent the money and I continued to finish the course.

**William** But when I finished the course, I had no money. First of all, I worked in a bowling alley in the evenings for four cents a game and I would make up to \$2.00 a night. So, I made a few dollars there. When the course was finished, I was short \$15.00 to pay for my room and board. The owner of the apartment said, "Well, you cannot take your suitcase until you pay us." So I went to my inspector [instructor]. He was a good old fellow and he borrowed me the \$15.00 to pay for my room. When I arrived back at home, we sent \$15.00 to him. He was a gentleman.

**Lorrill** What did you do in the bowling alley?

**William** I set up pins for four cents a game. In those days you had to set pins by hand. I worked on two alleys; I jumped over into the other alley, for two or three hours in the evening for probably a couple of weeks.

**Lorrill/William** Where did you room and board, can you describe that? In a rooming house just off Jasper Avenue. I walked to school, I think it was about 20 blocks, every day.

**Lorrill** Do you have a story about the first time you saw, I believe it was, the trolley? The trolley in Edmonton, the first time you saw the trolley?

**William** Oh, yes. Well, you know, this wasn't my first time in Edmonton, but it's the first time I was alone. So, I'm walking the first day to school, which would be about 20 blocks, on the sidewalks on 124 Street, Jasper Avenue. And of course, I see this train overhead and cars are going on the underpass. Walking, I hit this steel post and almost knock myself out because I was walking backwards watching this train go. But I was okay. I got up, continued walking, I got into school on time and everything was fine.

**Lorrill** What did you do in the evening when you were in Edmonton?

**William** I would go to a show practically every evening. This theater was called Gem. Most of the shows were Tarzan. Every evening, probably not every evening but three or four times a week, that's what I watched, mostly Tarzan.

**Lorrill/William** Do you remember how much the shows were to get in? What was the admission fee? I think it was 15 cents.

**Lorrill** Did you have the possibility to buy food in the cinemas?

**William** There probably was but I didn't because I didn't have much money with me, ever, when I was in Edmonton. I just had enough money to live on and that's why I had to work in the bowling alley to make my expenses. So, this one time, I had a buddy staying with me in this rooming house. He was also taking a welding course and he was from the north, Spirit River, I believe. So, we decided to go bowling but he bought a case of beer. I'm 16 years old and he was 18. Of course, we drank quite a bit and decided to go bowling. But it was very muddy, it was very warm that day. We walked into the bowling alley, never took our shoes off. Well, I'll tell you, they threw us out.

**Lorrill** Do you have any other stories you'd like to share of your experiences when you were taking the welding course?

**William** We bunked together and we used the one bed but he scratched all night. For some reason he scratched and I never thought nothing of it. When I finished the course and I got back home, I started to scratch and I scratched and scratched. I think I picked up eczema from him. But after about a month or so, I cured myself. So I was fine.

**Lorrill** When you had your little welding business on the farm, did you have a shop?

**William** Yes, I built a shop and my father bought me the equipment. First of all, it was oxyacetylene welding and later on he got me an electric welder. Working for the farmers, I guess they couldn't pay me, some of them would be on credit. I finally went bankrupt. I couldn't even pay for my oxygen bottle; the oxygen bottle was \$4.00 then, today it's about \$80.00. So, I had to quit, start looking for a job.

**Lorrill** What kinds of work did you do for the farmers?

**William** It would be when they broke a spoke and a wheel. It would be on equipment, major equipment. When I first got my ticket, it was called a Special and all I could do is weld for the farmers. I could not weld anything of importance, for an example, an axle on a truck or anything like that; my Special was not meant for that. So as time went on, it took me four years to get my First-Class Journeyman and that First-Class Journeyman is for life. But as time went on when I got my First-Class Journeyman, a year later, I applied for a B Pressure Certificate; that Pressure Certificate is only good for 18 months. So, every 18 months you have to get a new one and that [B Pressure Welding Certificate] is for welding uphand on boilers, mainly on boilers.

**Lorrill** When you welded for the farmers, did you weld chains?

**William** I welded chains and this one farmer paid me 10 cents a link. So, I think I welded 10 links for him because he had a bunch of chains that were broken. I pieced them together and I made \$1.00.

**Lorrill** You were how old when you built the shop? And what was the shop like?

**William** I was 17 when I built the shop. The shop was not very big, but I had my welding equipment in there. It was okay for the business that I had.

**Lorrill/William** And this shop is where? The shop was on my father's farm just where I was born and raised.

**Lorrill** Do you have a story about when you were a young boy and you built a little motorcycle?

**William** Yes, this was after I came back from my welding course and I got a job in Baptiste Lake. There was a shop; a family came in from Edmonton and opened a shop. I pedaled a bike [to the shop] every day, well, five, six days a week, 11 miles each way. I got tired of pedaling a bike and I decided to do something about it. So, I bought a washing machine motor for \$15.00 and fastened it to the bike and it worked excellent. I took it for a trial run to Athabasca, which is 22 miles, and pulled into a service station. It seemed like all of the town surrounded me when they saw this contraption. I bought some gas; it took eight cents worth of gas to get to Athabasca; the gas at that time was 34 cents a gallon. So, I bought an ice cream cone and headed back home.

**Lorrill** Did you use this homemade motorcycle every day to go to work for a long time?

**William** Yes, I used it for three months until I finally had an accident. The column in the steering wheel broke. I was slightly injured, had a wreck and that was the end of it. I did not repair it; I just retired the bicycle and that was it.

**Lorrill** After you got your welding course, how long did it take you to get your welding ticket?

**William** It took four years. The first year I got a ticket called Special and I could only weld on farm equipment and on nothing too serious. I could not weld on axles because this Special ticket did not cover it. Then three more years, I got my Journeyman [First-Class Journeyman ticket]. I worked in shops for three years. When I was 20 years old, my father retired and I went to Stettler and I got a job. I had a welding rig at the time, I got a job in Stettler and I went into the oilfields and started welding pipelines. I worked for this welding contractor for three years. Then I went on my own and still continued on the pipelines until 1960. Then I went welding big inch [pipelines], up to 48 inch, and I was pretty good at it.

In 1965, I hurt my knee and I had to have an operation. I had a torn cartilage so I was on crutches for a month. Then I thought, well, after welding 15 years on the pipelines, I decided to branch out on my own. So, I bought a ditching machine for \$1,500.00, a backhoe for \$3,000.00 and a few other things that was necessary to get going. I borrowed \$10,000.00 from the Royal Bank of Canada (I couldn't get more) and we had saved about \$4,000.00. Then I started pipelining. I got my first job of 4,000 feet of four-inch and I didn't do too well but I did okay. I continued and every time I got a job, it was a little bigger, a little bigger, and we kept going. I was doing quite well. As time went on, we became a major pipeline construction company, one of the largest privately owned

construction companies in Canada. We were very successful in this situation. Today the company is 50 years old and it's still going. I am semi-retired for the time being.

**Lorrill** When you were young and started to become interested in women or meeting a young girl, where would you meet a young girl? Where did couples meet? How did you meet young girls?

**William** I met a lot of girls when I left Athabasca. I was 20 years old [when I left]. I met my wife (she is my wife today), Agnes, in Trochu; I was 23 and she was 16. About three, four, five months later, she came to Stettler and got a job with a telephone company. That's when we started dating and eventually we got married.

**Lorrill/William** What was Agnes's maiden name? Her maiden name was Agnes Poztowski.

**Lorrill/William** What year did you get married? We got married in 1956.

**Lorrill/William** What anniversary did you celebrate? What anniversary would you celebrate this year? We will be celebrating 62 years.

**Lorrill/William** That's wonderful, congratulations. Thank you.

**Lorrill/William** Would you like to talk a little bit about the early days when you were married to Agnes? Where did you live? We lived in Stettler, Alberta which is about 150 miles southeast of Athabasca.

**Lorrill** You were working as a welder at this time?

**William** Yes, I was just a welder. I had my own rig, welding small pipelines, in the oilfields, on the rigs. Within six months, I bought myself a brand-new car, a 1953 Bel Air Chev. I paid \$3,030.00; it was top of the line and I earned it within six months. I was getting \$3.00/hour with my rig which was very good wages at that time.

**Lorrill** How many children did you have with Agnes?

**William** I've had three: Wesley, was born in 1957, Kevin was born in 1959, and Lorrill, my daughter, was born in 1963.

**Lorrill** Were you able to make a good living with your welding in those early days?

**William** Yes, I did. It was pretty good and was very busy those days. In Stettler, there was a brand-new oilfield which started in about 1948 or 1949. There was about 26 drilling rigs and they all came from the United States. There was all kinds of work for the workers in the oilfields.

**Lorrill** Do you have any other stories you'd like to share on your childhood in Athabasca? Did you have a fishing experience?

**William** Yes, before I went to Stettler, I was looking for a welding job. So, my neighbor and I decided to go to Fort Saskatchewan as there was a boom with the oilfields, plants were being built, etc. We couldn't get a job so we decided to go back, catch a bus from Edmonton to Athabasca. On the bus we met this guy. He says, "If you guys are looking for a job, I'll give you a job fishing on Great Slave Lake." "Well," I said, "I'm looking for a welding job." And he said, "Well, you might get a welding job, but if you don't get a welding job, I'll give you a job, for both of you, fishing. I'll pay you \$150.00 a month, and pay your fare there and back." So we said, "Okay." We went to Hay River, that's where the plants were for fishing. I couldn't get a welding job so we went fishing on Great Slave Lake. We took a plane from Hay River and landed up at a place called Gros Cap, that's where all the bunkhouses were. They pull them in for the summer as they don't use them in the summertime; they only use them in the wintertime. These bunkhouses are pulled with a Bombardier on the ice; they're about 12 by 14 feet. And that's where we were fishing for three months.

**Lorrill/William** So you lived in these bunkhouses? Yes, for three months.

**Lorrill** How did you live? Where did you get your food? What did you eat?

**William** The food: every week they would send a Bombardier and bring us food. This one time they couldn't bring us food because there was a huge storm and it lasted for about a week. We ran out of fuel as we had three dogs to get firewood for us with a toboggan, but we couldn't [get firewood] because it was a total whiteout. It got so bad that we had to burn some of our furniture in order to stay warm. We ate strictly fish. We had enough firewood to fry our fish. This lasted for almost a week. Then the Bombardier came when everything was cleared up and brought us food which made us quite happy.

**Lorrill** Can you describe how you would catch fish? What was the process?

**William** Yes, we would make a hole in the ice with a pickaroon, they called it, and put a jigger in the ice. It's a board about six feet long, 18 inches wide, and about two inches thick, and we would tie a rope to the end of it. As you pulled it and let go of the rope, it would move two or three feet at a time until we got 100 yards into the water. Then we would find the jigger as you can hear the knock of the jigger and it's also painted yellow. You could see it and [you would] dig a hole, pull this jigger out and pull the net in as there was a rope tied behind the jigger to pull the net in. This went on up to 30 nets, a continuation every 100 yards.

**Lorrill** How much fish would you catch in a net or in a day?

**William** We pulled 10 nets a day. Some of the nets had up to 100 whitefish, but the average would be about 40, 50 fish to a net.

**Lorrill** Was it generally whitefish you caught or were there other fish?

**William** Mostly whitefish. We'd get the odd trout and the odd jackfish but jackfish was of no value. We would throw it back in the water.

**Lorrill** When you would pull the fish out, what was the process to store the fish?

**William** Our boss got six cents a pound for frozen fish and ten cents a pound for fresh fish. In order to have fresh fish, as soon as you pull the fish out of the net, you had to cover it up with snow and it would not freeze. It's not frozen if you can still bend it—that was fresh fish. It was shipped to the packing plant in Hay River, and after, it was packed with ice in the box and shipped to various cities in the United States, mostly New York.

**Lorrill** Did they pick up the fish once a month, once a week?

**William** They'd pick up the fish every time they brought us groceries and food. That would be once a week.

**Lorrill/William** Do you remember the type of food that they supplied you? Do you remember what you ate? We had eggs, we had bacon. No question, it was good.

**Lorrill** You mentioned you had dogs?

**William** Yes, we had three dogs and they were huskies. [The temperature would be] 30, 40, 50, 60 below sometimes and the dogs would be outside. They survived by not eating fresh fish because if they ate fresh fish, they would gobble the food and they would eventually freeze to death. We had to give them frozen fish and they chew it and keep chewing until it's so fine. That's how they survive in the wintertime.

**Lorrill** Were there other cabins on Great Slave Lake besides yours?

**William** Yes, there was about 150 cabins all around the lake. It's a huge lake. A lot of these fishermen were from Saskatchewan and other provinces. The cabins were about three or four miles apart.

**Lorrill** What types of things did you do in the evening to pass the time when you were fishing?

**William** We would play cards and the days were very short. This one Sunday, it was a beautiful day, about 20 below but the skies were clear. We decided to visit one of the fishermen; we could see his cabin was about three miles away. So we walked with our dogs and introduced ourselves. We had a beer there and decided to play cards. We played cards till it got pitch dark, which was about 8:00, 9:00 in the evening, and decided to head back. But as we were going back, we knew that we were lost because we can't find our cabin. We made a mistake; we should have left a light on in our cabin, but we did not do that.

We walked all night till 3:00 in the morning. I saw a flickering light and I said to my boss, "I think I see something. We better head up towards that light." And he said, "I think your

eyes are playing tricks on you." Well, I said, "I'm not going to sleep on the ice here the rest of the night. Let's head out there." So we took about an hour to get there; it was about 5:00 in the morning. Sure enough, it was a cabin. We knocked on the door and they let us in. They knew that we were hungry and tired. They made us bacon and eggs. We had a very good meal and decided to go back to our cabin. We weren't that far away; it was only about two miles away. When you get lost in a whiteout . . . there wasn't really a whiteout. But when you're lost, you walk in circles and that's exactly what we did.

Our boss was a bit of a drunk. He used to go to Yellowknife and we wouldn't see him for a whole week and he would sell the fish to other companies, get cash, blow it in Yellowknife and come back with no money. So after three months, we had no money. We decided to quit, my neighbor and I. The fishing company confiscated the nets and everything else and we went back to Hay River. I had to work six weeks in a fish factory in order to get my fare back and pay my other expenses such as the clothes that I had to get to go on the ice.

**Lorrill** Do you have a story about trying to get your pilot's license that you'd like to share?

**William** In 1959, in January, a flying instructor came from Saskatchewan and signed up 29 students, including myself, to take a flying course. The first eight, ten hours, he was training us and he's the pilot and we're the students beside him. The plane that I was learning to fly was a Cessna 140, a two-passenger plane. After about 12, 15 hours, we are on our own. February the 17th, how can I forget what I went through? My flying time was 10:30 in the morning but there was a storm coming. The pilot [instructor] said, "When it gets worse, come right back." The plane was on skis and the airport, the landing, was in a field east of Stettler. When I took off, the storm got worse. It was a total whiteout. I tried to climb above the storm but climbing too fast, the plane stalled. I tried several times and this one time the plane dropped about 1,500 feet. I pulled on the steering stick. The sudden lift . . . I never let go of the stick, I actually passed out. The plane was upside down. I didn't know at the time, when I came to, the plane was heading in the trees. I woke up and made a landing in a farmer's yard. I asked him [the farmer] to drive me to Stettler. It was a miracle that I survived.

A lot of people think that when you stall a plane, it's the motor that stalls. A stall is when it's a steep climb and the plane can no longer pull the plane. So it starts to fall because it's heavy in the front and you can't do anything about it until it drops about 1,500 feet. When I did that several times, I panicked, pulled on the stick, almost hit the ground and never let go of the stick and it went upside down. I have no idea how long I was flying upside down but leaving at 11:30 am and coming back to the yard at 2:30 pm, I think I was upside down maybe 45 minutes. A Cessna 140 will roll back on its own. I'm not really a religious man, but I believe in the Almighty. I don't think I was flying that plane, somebody else was flying it.

**Lorrill** How many brothers and sisters did you have in your family?

**William** I had three brothers and three sisters. Right to this day, I only have one brother that's still alive. His name is Harry and he lives in Athabasca.

**Lorrill** Do you remember some early childhood stories with your brothers or your sisters?

**William** When we'd finish school, when I was about eight, nine years old, ten years old, after school we'd help with the farm. We'd go chop the trees to make more land for farming, we'd go and pick rocks. We had to work after school for a couple or three hours practically every day. We got along very well; we had no problems. I was the youngest brother or the youngest boy. I had a younger sister, Mary. We all got along. We had our usual fights at times but everything was fine.

**Lorrill** Did you all go to school together in the morning? Would you all walk to and from school?

**William** Yes, we all did. We'd walk to school every morning until we were 15 years old. The only one that went to high school was Mary. She moved to Athabasca and she finished Grade 12.

**Lorrill** Do you have a story with John about going to school or missing school?

**William** When John was about seven, eight, maybe ten years old, we went to visit our neighbor and they weren't home. John saw a watch hanging in the living room. The door was open, he grabbed that watch and he took it. But he didn't take it home, he hid it fairly close to that house. Of course, the neighbor came in [William and John's house] a few hours later and he said, "I got a watch that's missing." So, he measured our feet to see as he had some evidence about the few steps [footsteps] that he'd measured. He measured my feet; I wasn't the culprit. He measured John's feet and he says, "It's John!" So he took John to his place and, sure enough, John gave the watch back.

**Lorrill** Did your family go attend church on Sundays?

**William** Yes, we had what they call Sunday School days. Every Sunday, there would be preachers coming in from different towns and so on. They would even stay with the neighbors and have evening prayers, etc. My mother was very religious. My father was religious but not quite as religious as my mother was.

**Lorrill** Do you remember growing up in Athabasca or Larvert, some of the community events that you would participate in, like dances or baseball tournaments? Or did you go to the neighbor's house for special events?

**William** We used to visit our neighbors and play baseball whenever we could. We had our own team; we'd play against other teams. And fishing on Sundays. In the wintertime, we'd go hunting. During the war, we'd go hunting squirrels, rabbits, and skin them and sell the fur to a fur buyer. That was little extra dollars that we made, especially during the winter months.

**Lorrill** So when you were hunting the squirrels and the rabbits, do you remember how much you got paid for the furs?

**William** Yes, I remember my brother Tom. He shot 104 rabbits one day. If the rabbits were skinned, we got seven cents a pelt, but if they weren't skinned, we got one and a half cents. The meat and the rabbits would be sent for the soldiers during wartime. And the squirrels, we got 25 cents. But in January, when it was scarce, we would get up to \$1.00 a pelt.

**Lorrill** Did you play any musical instruments growing up?

**William** Yes, when I was 12 years old, my brother bought a guitar and I picked up the guitar quite well. When I turned 14, our neighbors had a band. I used to play for dances with them, playing the guitar, and I made \$2.00 a night.

**Lorrill** Did anyone else in your family play musical instruments?

**William** Yes, my brother John picked up the guitar quite well but he just entertained himself and us, of course. I got pretty good at it and I still play the guitar at my age.

**Lorrill/William** Did Tom play the guitar, your brother? Tom played a fiddle, but he was okay. He wasn't a master at it but he played a few tunes.

**Lorrill** Do you have any stories about your father growing up or do you remember some of the stories he told you about his life?

**William** He was a soldier in the Russian army for about eight years and he told us a lot of stories. He was an escape artist. He would always escape from a jail because he didn't like the war. They would catch up with him and put him back in jail but he seemed to always escape. His favorite country was Belgium.

**Lorrill** When you talk about jail, you mean prison camps in the war?

**William** Prison camps, yes, for the soldiers. This one time he told us a story: it was pouring rain and one of the soldiers hid at a cemetery in what was like a little house over this burial [mausoleum]; he moved in there to get from the rain. Another soldier came, he sat right in the doorway and he lit a cigarette. And this guy [first soldier sheltered in tomb], he said, "Uncle," because he wanted a smoke, too. And guess what? He [second soldier smoking in doorway] pooped his pants from it because he got so scared. He thought it was a ghost in that little hut.

**Lorrill** What was your first language growing up?

**William** It was Ukrainian but I learned to write Russian, printing. My father taught me [Russian] and I can still remember to this day some of the words. It's okay to know languages.

**William** When my father turned 65, he decided to retire. He bought a home in Athabasca and he gave me the farm, by me being the youngest son out of the four [sons]. He says, "You can have the farm, the family farm." About five years later, I sold it to my brother Harry. The reason I sold it to him is the oldest brother, Tom, had already two quarters of land. Harry had a quarter but he only had 80 acres he could farm; the rest of his land was in the river bank. John had a quarter section, he farmed 160 acres. I thought Harry had the least land so I sold him the farm, very reasonable. I said, "You can have it and I'm going to stay with my contracting business. God bless you."

**Lorrill** Why did you get the farm when you were the youngest boy?

**William** The reason I got the farm was because I was the youngest and I had no land. My other three brothers already had land, so my father thought I should have this land. But I didn't stay on it. I headed to Stettler, Alberta, with my welding outfit. My mother kept saying, "There is nothing for you on this farm. You have a career as a welder. Maybe you should do something else." I took her advice. My father loaned me \$1,200.00 to put a down payment on a pickup truck and I loaded my welding equipment on the truck and I headed to Stettler, Alberta. Then I welded there for about 15 years before I started my own company and that was 1965. But I had only \$4,000.00. I made a loan from the Royal Bank for \$10,000.00, I couldn't get any more. But this was not enough to really be a contractor and lay bigger jobs.

**William** So about three or four years later, the CIBC opened in Stettler. The manager came over on Saturday morning with a bottle of whiskey and he says, "I want your business." I said, "Well, that's just wonderful. I can use more money." After we finished the bottle of whiskey, he said, "You're good for \$40,000.00." That's when we really started to grow, bigger jobs, and bigger jobs every year. Finally, we ended up with about 250 pieces of equipment which includes the trucks. And the company is still going.

[End of Interview]

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