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Howard Luke

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Fairbanks, Alaska

Bill Schneider, interviewer

Leslie McCartney, videographer and interviewer

Series: Howard Luke Remembers

Howard Luke said he was hungry when he was at the mission. He would sneak down to his mother's place and she would feed him. The mission had a big root cellar. They stored carrots and potatoes there. There were a lot of mouths to feed. They would go out and pick berries. He thinks about not getting his education. Bill asked him about skipping school to work for his uncle. Luke said the school teacher caught him one time. He talked about sharing his information with children.

Sarah asked Luke about his mother packing him on her back and taking him to meetings. Luke said in those days they strongly believed in their ways. They believed that the talking goes in their ears when they are little and when they are grown up it comes back to them. Luke talked about a time when their food was gone and the water was bad to drink. His mother and grandmother used willows for food. The people got all together. They asked their medicine men to make medicine. They put all the kids in one tent. There were no cabins at that time. They sang all night. They told the boys to get their canoes ready. By noon a herd of caribou came through and crossed the river. He said his people are not doing things traditionally any more. He said they are doing potlatch the wrong way.

Sarah asked Luke about running down an animal. Luke said his mother always told him to get up early. The price for black foxes was a lot of money in those days. He came out into the open and saw a fox. He ran after the fox. The fox tired quickly. The fox stuck his head in the snow and Luke pulled him out by his tail and clubbed him. He gave the fox to his uncle. He said you hardly see any black fox now. He said there are three kinds of caribou. He talked about seeing huge herds of caribou.