

KODIAK ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with Lena Metrokin

By Ron Granstra

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walked all the time.

RG: Did most of the people in town walk during this time?

LM: Yes, there weren't too many cars back in those days.

RG: I guess there weren't too many roads then.

LM: No, no. Mission Road was the very first road built in Kodiak. It was a very narrow road and it was dangerous to walk there in the evenings.

RG: What did you and your family do for entertainment during the war?

LM: We were home all the time. My husband was gone a lot. In the winter he trapped. He did that for quite a while. That was when the price of long furs was good, it's never been good since. Then he started bear guiding, he was a real good bear guide. I think he was one of the best in Chignik. He started when he was a young boy with his father.

RG: Where did he go for his trapping?

LM: Chiniak. He had two cabins built out there. I guess you could call them barabaras. I never did see them, but I've been out there once or twice. I really do like it, I think it's nice out there.

RG: Of course there were no roads to Chiniak in those days.

LM: No, they had to go by boat. I think they used to call them codfish boats, they were really good built boats.

RG: How long would he be gone?

LM: I think he would go in late October, trapping season would open in November. He would come home for Russian

back from the war?

LM: I don't think so, I think they all came back.

RG: Did your children go to school?

LM: Yes, they went all the time.

RG: Where did they go to school?

LM: It was downtown here, the old school.

RG: Were you here for the tidal wave?

LM: Yes we were here.

RG: Was there an earthquake before the tidal wave?

LM: Well it was just a few minutes before. That was in 1964, it was on Good Friday. I had been working down at the cannery, we had been working for three weeks, ten hours a day with no day off and this was going to be our first day off. Our boss said that we could go and stay home until saturday morning.

RG: Did you see the tidal wave when it hit?

LM: I didn't see too much of it. I saw my husband coming from his shop and I could see he was walking like he was on high seas and he disappeared so fast to check on his boats down there by the waterfront. So I turned on the radio and it said to take to high ground immediately because there was going to be a tidal wave in thirty minutes. I looked for my husband but couldn't find him, so I took my two kids with me. What I saw when I got up to the school there were so many people there I only got just a glimpse of the big one rolling in, it was white and foamy. I think what saved a lot of people were the

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