

Interviewer: Emily Rosenthal

Narrator: Charles D. Brower

2nd Narrator: Janet Brower

10/3/2022 in the Fairbanks, Alaska home of the Rev. Charles and Janet Brower

While I was researching the life and times of Sadie Brower Neakok (the first female Iñupiat magistrate of Alaska), her nephew, the Rev. Charles D. Brower offered his memories of her, and in that context, I learned that Charles's journey from a BIA primary school to ecumenical Pastor is very interesting as well. During the interview, Charles's wife chimed in from time to time with additional information.

Intro: Start at ZOOM0001_LR 0:00:02.5
Stop at ZOOM0001_LR 0:00:35.8
Pause: for technical problem
Resume: Start again at ZOOM0007_LR 0:00:51.0
End: Stop at ZOOM0007_LR 2:44:30.0

E: So, today is October 3, 2022. And I am at the home Charles and Janet Brower. Very happy to be here. And we're going to talk about their life and what they know about Sadie Brower Neakok. I have a bunch of questions, but they're really just sort of touchstones, and you can just talk as long as you want about anything.

C: That'll be just fine.

(pause for fix of recording set-up)

E: All right, you talk.

C: I'll wait for your questions and I'll answer whatever, what I can.

E: Ok, good.

E: I have two separate lists of questions. One was if we're going to go through your life. But I'm going to start with Sadie, OK?

C: Alright, OK.

E: And hopefully then you'll get comfortable enough and say yes, I want to go all the way through. (laughter)
Okay, so you said that you were you were not in Barrow a lot of the time, right? So what is your first memory of Sadie?

C: Her smile, I think. She always had a smile for whoever came in the house, and several of her children, particularly Charlie, was about my age, and we used to play together fairly regular. But I played mostly with my cousin Stanley [Brower] and Billy [Brower] both of whom are gone now. But we lived on the Browerville side, and Sadie was the first house really on the Barrow side of town.

E: Can you explain that a little bit to me? The Browerville and the Barrow side.

C: Barrow, is Utqiagvik now [since 2016], Barrow back then, is on the west side of the lagoon. There's a lower lagoon and upper lagoon. They're kind of connected. But Browerville is east of Barrow by maybe half a mile. And that's where my grandfather, Charles Brower, Charles D. Brower, had an 11-acre plot that he had

homesteaded or put a claim on. And so those of us who were, some of us grew up on the Browerville side there with my family: Uncle Robert's family, Uncle Tom's family. I think that was it for, but Uncle Harry – oh and Auntie Mariah was on the Browerville side. And Sadie, Harry, were on the Barrow side of town. And the school where we went to was just up the hill and a little bit south of where Sadie's house was. Sadie's House was near - back then the beach was quite a bit wider than it is today, maybe by another, oh 8th of a mile, quarter of a mile. But Sadie's house was the nearest the ocean. And I can remember some of the activities we used to do. In summertime, there was always a soccer game. It was either a soccer game or some kind of a baseball game going on, on that little stretch, kind of a sand strip between Browerville and Barrow. And there was a little creek that emptied some of the overflow from the lower lagoon out into the ocean, that was easier to cross. But sometimes if there were a lot of water coming out, it could be hard to cross over it. Had to get big equipment or adults to carrier us over. The school was on the Brower, excuse me, Barrow side. My grandfather's trading post was on the Browerville side. And most of the commerce was really on the Barrow side, the post office was there. Eventually, Brower's Store began another outpost on the Barrow side. Ed Burnell had a coal [0:00:04:50] mine about 60 miles out of Barrow, and he used to have a big, big building and he used to store the coal in that he would sell to town, to folks in town. He would bag it up in 100-pound gunny sacks and that was for most of our heat. That and driftwood or cases that were demolished when packing material for whatever came in wooden crates. That was our kindling primarily, but most of our stoves ran on coal of some kind. And that was provided by the Burnell coal mine.

C: But I can always remember Sadie. She always had a big smile. No matter who you were, when you came to her house, she always had a big smile and particularly, particularly for us, her nieces and nephews were, she always had a wonderful time for us. She was quite a sewer. And the house she had had a stairway on the east side of the house. And she liked to sit on those stairs to do her sewing. And there was a particular step that she liked to sit at. She would cut a hole through the through the walls and put a window there so she could have light on her sewing. And there was two or three of those little windows. They weren't very big, maybe 8" by 8", maybe 10" by 10", I don't remember, but they were pretty small windows. And I think those went away when a number of years ago that house had a gas leak and they had an explosion. And when they renovated the house, those little windows went away.

E: So she was on the inside and then made the window so that she could see her out, and get the lighting?

C: Yeah and if there was something she wanted to do in her house, she did it. If there was a change she wanted to make, she did it. She was always resourceful.

E: Now would you say, when you were growing up, you were in Barrow for, you were born in Barrow?

C: Yeah, I was born in Barrow, but I lived there till I was about 10 years old.

E: OK, that's when you went off to school.

C: Yes.

E: And so I know that you were born in 1945, because that's when all the Charleses¹ got named.

C: Yes.

E: I guess my question on the Browerville and Barrow sides, did they fill up the Browerville side first or something, and then -

C: No, the Barrow side, the Barrow side came first. That's really where the old part of town is. That's where the sod - I can still remember some of the families used to live in sod houses.

E: When you were there too?

C: Yes, when I was there. There was one particular family, the Tadrooks, that lived in the sod house on the west end of town. But there was also a place next to the Presbyterian manse that was also sod, a little sod structure. That's where they kept their ice in the summertime for drinking water. Springtime they would go out to the freshwater lake about three miles out of town and cut up blocks of ice and put them in storage in that sod house. So I guess that's good insulation. And they put sawdust on the ground to keep the ice off the dirt. But there were, there was at least one other sod house in town, but I don't remember where it was or who lived in it but, there were still a few sod houses when I was there.

E: And so when you were young, that's when you lived right near Sadie?

C: We lived across on the Browerville side, and later, and at that house I grew up in, my father transformed it into a hotel, the Arctic Hotel, then sold it to his brother Tom. And he bought a house over on the Barrow side

¹ It is Iñupiaq custom to name a newborn after someone who has recently died. Sadie's father, Charles DeWitt Brower, died in early 1945.

that was one house away from Sadie's house. So whenever I came back, came home or have a chance to come home during the summers from boarding school, that's when I interacted more with Sadie and her family.

E: And all her kids? Which kids were you more friendly with, the ones your own age?

C: Yes, I was more friendly with the kids my more my age.

E: Which ones were those?

C: Charlie [Neakok, also born in 1945], Margaret and Billy, the older ones, and Danny. Those were the ones, and Ronald occasionally, but Ron was kind of a shy guy.

E: The rest weren't?

C: yeah.

E: So you talked about when you went off to school. Do you want to talk about that a little bit?

C: Yes, let's do that.

E: So I know some of that was not a happy time.

C: Yeah, well ..

E: But I want to, I'm interested in, you know, both sides of it. What you got out of it.

C: Yes. When I was going to school in Barrow, Barrow day school, I think we had a lot of kids coming in so that there was no more room for us above 6th grade. So I went through 6th grade in Barrow.

E: Oh, okay. So that's why you didn't stay through 8th grade?

C: Right. And then the government decided, BIA, Bureau of Indian Affairs, decided we needed to go elsewhere if we're going to continue our education. And so they gathered us kids from the North Slope: Point Hope, Point Lay, Wainwright, Kaktovik. Gathered us in Barrow and took us to Fairbanks, kept us overnight, and then bundled us up with other kids from the interior and other locations around Alaska, and chartered an airplane from Wien airlines and sent us off to Juneau. Landing at Juneau at the airport, we were transferred into little amphibious airplanes to deliver us to Wrangell or to Sitka, whichever school we were going to.

E: Now how did they decide which school you were going to?

C: Wrangell Institute was the primary school through 8th grade.

E: Ok, got it.

C: And Mt. Edgecumbe was on the Sitka side and it was located, it used to be a Navy base. And that's where the high school was.

E: Oh, then Edgcumbe.

C: Mt. Edgecumbe, yes.

E: Okay, Mount Edgecumbe. And all those kids that went on that trip, went to one of those two schools. So then by the time you were there, you knew some of those people.

C: It was also my first international experience, going to Wrangell that first year. That chartered airplane going to Juneau, Juneau was fogged in by the time we got there. The pilot circled for a little while and headed back north and dropped us off at White Horse, Yukon Territory. Some of us stayed in hotels. Some of us stayed with folks that had extra bedrooms in town. They opened up the movie theater. That was my first, really my first international experience. I remember going there and before the movie started, we had to stand and listen and help sing God save the queen. That was my first experience ever to have that kind of experience before a movie, because we never had any of that experience in Barrow.

E: And God Save the Queen of all things.

C: But I could remember that.

E: Now, why would it have been God save the queen?

C: Well, they had the words. And the music.

E: You weren't in Canada.

C: I was in Canada. Yes, yes, we were in Canada.

E: Oh White Horse is in Canada. That explains that part of it.

C: And we were there overnight. The next day they put us on different airplanes, took us down to Juneau. Some of the kids went off on smaller planes, 4-passengers. Some went on 8-passengers, whatever happened to be handy from the local airlines.

E: Now, had you ever been out of Barrow at that point?

C: Oh yes, I'd been to Fairbanks. I'd been going to Fairbanks, I think since I was about five or six years old. My mother and dad would come here for a big spring fur rendezvous. No, I don't think it was fur rendezvous in spring, some kind of a festival here in Fairbanks that happened in the spring. Dog races and, I've been to Fairbanks a few times I can remember staying at the - What was the name of that hotel? Leicester? No. Anyway, there was an old hotel in Fairbanks. It's burnt down now. But I can remember my first taste of a waffle was at the Model Cafe. It was on 2nd Street. They also had a kind of a fountain there. My first time I ever had a float was at that Model Cafe. I can remember being outside in Fairbanks in my caribou boots and rabbit fur jacket that my momma made, keeping warm, watching the dog races. I don't much remember much about the dog races, but I can remember being there. So it was, I've been out of Barrow before, so it really was no big deal for me.

E: Had you been to any of the other villages before?

C: Not by airplane. Most of our travel was done by boat. We had what we called an *iqniligauraq*, means an inboard motor boat. It was probably about a 30-foot boat made out of wood and had an inboard and it had a small deck in the back there to put the gasoline on top for when we ran out of fuel. My father bought about a 25- or 30-gallon tank. Had a little pilot house above the housing. But it had a canvas cover over the front, so we could push that canvas back and load it up with caribou or whatever we were going to catch.

E: And you use that boat on the ocean, or ..

C: Yeah, mostly on the ocean, but if we found a river deep enough we also went up the rivers on it.

E: I'm just going to follow where you go. So, you were talking about your father. Was -

C: My father was David.

E: Yes,

C: He was, he was the eldest of the second family from my grandfather.

E: Did you ever meet anybody from the first family?

C: I did, after a number of years. After Jan and I got married is when I met some of the family, who lived in Southern California. There was a couple there that lived in Glendale, that were from the first family. There was another uncle that lived in Portland, [Oregon] Uncle Bill, Aunt Vi. We met them. And we've interacted mostly with Aunt Jennie and Uncle Al Dimond. They were in San Francisco, so we were up there several times. We met their family.

E: And that was Jennie ...?

C: Was Jennie Dimond. [Sadie's older sister]

E: Yeah, okay.

C: She has some interesting stories because she was a nurse in the army and when World War II started, she was tasked to go off to the Aleutians because she was native, looked native, and kind of be the eyes and ears of, to tell what was happening with the Japanese out in the Aleutians. Said it was scary, but she did it. Quite some stories she used to tell.

E: And because she was native because of, she would blend in with the Aleutians or because she would blend in with the Japanese.

C: No, she blended in with the, with the Aleutians, she's very native-looking.

E: Alright. And so when you were in California, you went looking? You knew that these people were there and you went out?

C: Yes, yes.

E: Made contact with them?

C: I've heard stories of, I guess the family had a ranch near Santa Barbara once upon a time. We had a camp on the river just outside of Santa Rosa, California, just north of San Francisco. We were there several times with Aunt Jennie and Uncle Al. That's some wonderful times there, weekends.

E: And so you were camping out a lot too?

C: Yeah, yeah.

E: When you were still in Barrow, were you ... what were your days like when you were a child in Barrow?

C: Most of the time we went out hiking around. It was most of a day trip one way around the lagoon. We started on the Browerville side, walked the beach, filled up our pockets and bags or whatever we had with little rocks, or use our slingshots on whatever we were going to shoot at, birds or cans or whatever. And then we would go for a trek around the lagoon, maybe find a couple of swimming spots if it's a warm day. It's mostly just a trek around the lagoon.

E: And what about in the winter? Did you do that kind of thing too?

C: Not much. It was more sticking close to town, sticking with family, visiting other people. Building snow houses or forts, snow tunnels. I remember Uncle Raymond. Raymond Segevan, from my mother's side of the family. He was the keeper of the curfew. He rang the curfew bell at night and he would have a big long flashlight, it probably had 8 batteries here. That thing was big, long, probably a foot and a half long. With all those batteries he could look through town and going around looking, see kids who might be out after curfew.

E: And he made the curfew?

C: Yeah. And some of the, some of the older kids I can remember one time there were two good-sized tanks next to the school building. And some of the kids would make snowballs, carry them up to the top and wait for Uncle Raymond to come out after ringing that curfew bell, they would throw and see if it would distract him. I think he kind of knew where they came from and he played the game anyway.

E: Yeah, and let's see. And did you did you like school in general?

C: Yes.

E: You were a good student?

C: I was a pretty good student. I could remember my first grade year, I won a stuffed pelican. I can still remember it was white with a big yellow or orange, kind of orangish yellow beak for being a good student.

E: Were there Pelicans up there?

C: No. No. I had, but I had stuffed Pelican. I knew what it was. (laughter)

E: Let's see. I was on school. Oh, what language was spoken at home?

C: It was combination of both English and Iñupiaq. My mother spoke mostly Iñupiaq. My dad spoke mostly English, but would speak to us also in Iñupiaq. I kind of grew up with both, felt comfortable with both.

E: Do you know how your parents met?

C: No that I don't know. Yeah, my mother was from the Segevan family that was from Wainwright. I have a feeling my father might have been down there on a trip of some kind, or she might have come up because her brother Raymond was also there in Barrow, but the rest of the family was down in the Wainwright side.

E: Yeah, got it. And so she mostly spoke Iñupiaq and he mostly spoke English, and you all grew up sort of bilingual.

C: Yeah. She was a wonderful seamstress. My mother was a wonderful seamstress. You go to the church in Barrow and notice the collection buckets they use. They're made with baleen handles and lined with velvet, some kind. But the outside is made out of calfskin all sewed together with different designs on it. My mother made several of those she and Bertha Leavitt, her best friend Bertha. I can remember watching them sew, sitting in our living room, sewing those baskets.

E: And did you know the connections between like the Leavitts and your father and when you were kids?

C: I kind of knew the families were there, but I really didn't know who and where they came from. I really don't know the history, but other people have told me that we're kind of related this way, that way based on, like .. There were a couple of brothers, Charlie and Eddie, Edward Edwardson that were adopted by my grandfather, they kind of grew up. And then when I was growing up, we had another family that lived with us. Their parents had passed away. And there was Donald, Jonas, Joe, Mable, that family. And they lived with us most of the time. And then I had another sister who was two, about three weeks older than I was. She was adopted into our family. Her brother was adopted into one of the Leavitt families. So I kind of grew up with kind of mixed, mixed family connections, but I never really went into trying to find out who was what, how the connection is, like some people. I have an interest in it, but not enough really to go pursue it too far, I think.

E: One of the things that I saw, I believe at least from the two books of your grandfather's book² and the book about Sadie³ is that the Edwardsons were actually from your grandmother's side.

C: Yeah, right, and ...

E: Her daughter Dora was married to Antone Edwardsen, is that -

C: Yes. So I could remember Charlie, I can remember both those guys, they were much older than I was.

They had children my age. One of the people you hear about quite often, Etok Edwardsen. He was, he was Charlie Edwardsen's son and Eddie Edwardsen. I saw, I just saw his son George, called me "Uncle" the other day on the airplane, he was coming out of Barrow the same time we were. But I could remember some of those guys coming up saying Uncle; Uncle! How do I get to be an uncle? [laughter]

E: And Etok was a good friend of yours?

C: Yes.

E: Now when you went off to school, did that break up any of these friendships, I mean not break up, but ...?

C: Right. Yeah, it puts kind of a distance between some of us. [0:25:10.0] Others, like I have good friends here in Fairbanks that I learned, I met when we first went to Wrangell, Mickey Allen, those guys, some of the folks in Minto.

E: There's a place called Minto I think?

C: Yes, there's an old Minto, there's a place where cultural things happen, and then over towards Manley on the highway is the New Minto. Before they moved their community, I don't know what the reasoning went, probably floodplains or something. There is a new Minto where most of the old Minto folks moved to, so some connections there.

E: All right, so let's talk about Wrangell. What was Wrangell like? Was it a, It was a primary school, you said.

C: Yes, it was primary school. Probably somewhere between say 300 to 350 students total, both boys and girls. First grade through 8th grade. There were some, one end of our boys' dorm, second floor is where we all

² 50 Years Below Zero by Charles Dewitt Brower

³ Sadie Brower Neakok: An Iñupiaq Woman by Margaret Blackman

lived together. The ground floor, there was a big library, there was a big concrete floor, a place we would roller skate and do things. And between the two, of the boys' dorm on this one side and the girls' dorm on the other, there was the school building with a covered walkway between them. And across the street from those buildings was the cafeteria. And far on the other side of where the girls' dorm was the pharmacy and the clinic. But it was interesting. One of the teachers I had there in the eighth grade, Mr. Minner, Joe Lester Minner, had been a teacher at Wainwright. And the school nurse also had been a nurse at the school in Wainwright. So they kind of knew our, some of us from families from way back when. So they kind of gave us, I wouldn't say, special treatment, but they always had a smile and hello and "how's the family?"

E: So you didn't feel like it was totally foreign to you?

C: Yeah. And some of us had access to reel to reel tape recorders. And so families could send small tapes of messages that all of us would gather together and listen to once in a while. Not very many letters going back and forth, but once in a while we would get a tape from family members or from the community.

E: Yeah, that's what I was going to ask too, about letters. You didn't write letters and -

C: Didn't write many letters, no, no. In fact I can remember my first year in Wrangell, my mother passed away. I wasn't able to go home. I don't, I never knew what caused her, where she was, or or

E: And she was she was healthy when you left?

C: Yeah. I think she was healthy when I left, yeah. So it was kind of a shock to me that I hear about my mother passed away.

E: Yeah, how did you hear about it?

C: One with the counselors came and told me they had a message my, my mother had passed away.

E: And ...

C: And I asked him if I could go home and he said no, so I can remember that.

E: That must have been hard. And, in general, what is, I guess, what is the custom when somebody passes away, what kind of ceremony or funeral?

C: Well, there's normally the body's taken care of at home... by the family.

E: In the house?

C: Yeah, washed the body and washed, and they used to back then, they used to make the caskets out of wood, whatever wood we had, and covered with canvas. And the family would take care of the body, dress it and put it in the casket and dig the grave by axe and pick, you know.

E: Hmm.

C: Shovels. That's where the burials happen.

E: And when did you ... when did you finally see her grave?

C: It wasn't until way after, after high school, I guess. After my mother passed away, during the summers, I would not come home to Barrow. I went to where my sister Lorena and her family, she was married to a guy who was in the Army, Jim [Huteson], my brother-in-law. And where they were, wherever they were stationed at, is where I ended up for spending some of the summer. But really, rarely ever went back to Barrow during those boarding school days.

E: And why, why was that? Do you know? I mean, was that your choice, their choice?

C: It was family choice. I think my father, because he knew I would not fit in with the family. There was nobody really to take care of us except for whoever will happen to be helping there.

E: Right.

C: And my younger brother, my younger brother was also going [0:30:18.0] to, he went to boarding school at Chemawa [Chemawa Indian School in Salem, Oregon]. He went to the family here in, my sister Mable's family here in Fairbanks, that's where he would spend his summers. I spent a summer in Petersburg. I spent a summer in Delta. I spent a summer in other places.

E: But all around the state?

C: Yeah, because my brother-in-law was a technician with the Alaska Communications Systems (ACS) that had the tele, telegraph, and the telephone system throughout Alaska. That's where most of our communications happened.

E: Hmm. When? When was like speaking telephone? Was that while you were-

C: I can remember my father being, or being called to the telephone. And they would set up a certain time for the call to happen. And my wife was with the nurse up in Barrow when she wanted to call home and she had to do it through a connection with high frequency radios.

J: Ham radio.

C: Yeah, she would have to say over?

E: Right. Yeah, over and out. Yeah. (laughter)

J: Yeah, to end the call.

E: So, so when your mother died, you didn't even get to talk to anybody in your family?

C: No, no.

E: Did you have people from Barrow? Were there other kids from Barrow?

C: Yes. There, there were probably about seven or eight boys and six or seven girls, yeah. My cousin Edna [now MacLean] was there. Etok Edwardson was there. Ronald Tukle was there. Several others. On 2nd year there were even more. Yeah. So they were, they were the kind of connections there.

C: But I can remember we only had two bicycles, one for the girls, one for the boys. And the street between the back of the boys' dorm to the, where the clinic was, where the road, we could ride our bikes back and forth. And we had to take turns. We only had two bikes, yeah. One bike for the girls were bike for the boys. Yeah. There was always a line.

E: Was there a boy's bike and girl's bike like were they built,

C: yeah, like they were, yeah. Somehow the boys' bike I think was blue and the girls' bike was the red one.

E: Did you ever learn any of those string games that Sadie talks about, or something, the cat's cradle?

C: Cat's cradle, yeah I did some of those, but I've forgotten a lot of them. I can remember using one for making a net in the, doing a children's sermon at the church in Nome. I was a pastor there and I asked the kids, "What do you think this is?" I can remember one of the kids looked at me, smiled and said, "Spider web."
(Laughter)

E: That's good.

C: Yeah, I was, I think that the story I was telling was about the fisherman. One side of the boat or the other.

E: I thought maybe it was Jacob's Ladder or something.

C: No, no. I was telling the story about fishers of men, I think it was. Or how those folks, those disciples used to go and go out and get. One time they didn't catch any, came back, Jesus told them to go put the net on the other side, and then come back and they came back with more than enough.

E: Teach them adaptation.

C: I think that was the story I was telling while I was doing that cat's cradle. I can still remember that kid's answer - spider web. (laughter)

E: That's very kid-like. So you went, so you didn't go home in the summers. And now what about when you went to Mt. Edgecumbe? Did you go home in between and all?

C: I was home when I was, I think the first two years when I was in Wrangell, I did go home.

E: Okay.

C: But most of the summers out of Mt. Edgecumbe I did not go home.

E: And you went with your sister's family again?

C: Yeah.

E: And you have, said in some of the writings I've found that you felt like you sort of missed learning how to do the hunting and fishing and everything.

C: Yes oh yes. Because a lot of that was taught by hand. By being there, experiencing it. And being shown what to look for, how to look for, what you would experience, other things that happened with whatever you were experiencing at the time, which way the wind was blowing, how strong it was. You put your string in the water, which way the current and the water would go and those kind of things. You're going to be a successful and safe hunter, you had to know all that. And being out at the boarding schools, I've never had experienced

that. And being, that not coming to Barrow during my teenage years, there was also a big factor. I did not get a chance to learn how....

E: Yeah. And I think you said that, I guess it was maybe when you were home after Mt. Edgecumbe, that they came and said, "Here, we're going to teach you some crafts and skills."

C: I can remember I was out hunting actually, on our inboard boat, and with the crew. And my dad sent my brother-in-law out, Joe, [Felder], who had a float plane, to pick me up, bring me back to Barrow. And told me you're going to Los Angeles, you're going, you're going to school, some more school. I said okay . So I flew from Barrow to Fairbanks, got on a Western Airlines to Seattle to Los Angeles.

C: So other than obviously feeling bad that you couldn't come home when your mother died. You were okay with all this? It was interesting to you?

C: Yeah?

E: What school classes did you favor?

C: Math. I enjoyed math and science.

E: Uh-huh. And so the technical things they were teaching you were probably pretty good stuff too.

C: Yeah, yeah. But I can remember they put us in boarding homes where they got, landed in Los Angeles.

There was somebody there from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to meet us and assign us which boarding home we were going to go to. And gave us bus passes and gave us maps of how to ride the buses. The boarding home I was assigned was about 3 miles from downtown Los Angeles. Take the bus in downtown 6th and Main to the third, fourth, fifth floors of the Trailways, Continental Trailways bus station. That's where our classrooms were.

E: So. I'm just trying to think like when you went so you knew Fairbanks because you'd gone there a few times, so had experience outside of Barrow and then when you went down to Wrangell. Were, was the world very different there?

C: It was different in the sense that it was not family. Yeah, that's about the major difference. Because nobody treats you like family. Nobody said, "I love you." Or corrected you what you did wrong with something. Yeah.

E: You missed that?

C: Yeah. So it was not a, it's not a very loving feeling, yeah.

E: And you had said something about. Oh, your mother made the church boxes and was church a big thing in your family?

C: Oh, yes. For most families in Barrow about that time, Church was a big thing. We had Sunday morning worship, Sunday evening worship, Sunday afternoon for Sunday school. And Wednesday evening worship. And my father was a deacon in the church, I think it was a deacon or elder, or something in the Presbyterian Church. Some of the families would gather for Sunday morning. If they didn't have the money to give, they would bring whatever extra food they had and leave it outside the church in the wintertime, in a box. My dad and one of the other elders or deacons would trek through town with his little sled, delivering food to those folks who needed it.

E: I remember this from some of what I read about Sadie too, that how did they know who needed it? Where, was it the same families all the time?

C: It was primarily that the widows, yeah, that didn't have someone or family or families that didn't have young people who go out hunting. They kind of knew, kind of knew the community. And I can remember this, the times I did spend summers in Barrow. I can remember going from house to house, collecting whatever the families could give for us as what we would award to those winners of whatever race was happening in 4th of July. But I could remember making that making the rounds with a little wagon behind me, collecting boxes of soup or crackers and whatever the family could spare.

E: Could give, yeah.

C: So whatever anybody that you wanted, there was always something different.

E: That's very nice.

C: And I can remember the celebrations always happened at the Presbyterian Church. Big feast at Thanksgiving, big feast at Christmas and we always had a family, family Christmas at home. I don't know how my father did it, but probably through his store connection we always had an apple, an orange and an apple in our sock. And nuts. And many of the kids in Barrow didn't know what those were...

E: Right. Yeah, because those doesn't grow here.

C: Yeah, so I can remember those. But Christmas and Barrow at the one at the Presbyterian Church, people would bring gifts for other folks in the time of year it was. They put them up in the box and wrap them up in paper, whatever. But they always had to put the name on them, and they made a big pile in the whole corner of the church, probably 10-15 feet out, all the way around ...

E: The name of the person that donated it, or the name of the -

C: No. To the, to the person for.

E: Okay.

C: But invariably some of the, some of the labels came off so those were kind of put aside for those folks who didn't get as many presents as some other folks. It was always fun. And they were the ones, the ones that got those early presents, the unknown presents were normally kind of in a circle and they had enjoyed it too, but they had to open their presents in front of everybody.

E: And see what it was.

C: Yeah, I can remember one I, I really wanted. There was a Pan American Clipper airplane model made out of wood that I really wanted. And one of the ladies ended up with one of those. My Goodness, how come I didn't get that? (laughter)

E: What are you gonna do with it?

C: Yeah.

E: But there's no trading going on?

C: No, well, but somehow magically that airplane showed up at my house anyway. Somebody must have known -

E: Somebody heard you.

C: Somebody knew I wanted one.

E: And at school. Oh, so first of all, you talked about the Presbyterian Church. Were there any other churches here at the same time?

C: There was a Catholic Church, but... Father Tom Gordon was the priest there, but none of the natives went there. It was primarily for the folks out there working out at the Navy base.

E: Was that the Tom Gordon that, that your grandfather knew or was that -

C: No, no.

E: The child of?

C: He became a Bishop. That was a different Tom Gordon.

E: Yeah. OK.

C: Bishop Gordon.

E: Uh-huh.

C: But we never observed there. It was a, their church was a little Quonset hut, and it was, I think it's still open. I have, they have quite a few more followers, people going to church there now, mostly from Tonga, Samoa, and those folks and the Filipinos right there in Barrow now.

E: Yeah, that are used to Catholic church.

C: And there are quite a few more churches in Barrow now.

E: Yeah, but when you were, when you were young, were there a lot of people from outside that weren't Iñupiaq?

C: There really, there were a few. Jack Connery was the postmaster. He was married to Flossie Connery. She was my kindergarten and 1st grade teacher. She was Iñupiaq. He was one.

E: I remember Sadie talking about her.

C: Frey, well Lewis and Gladys Frey [0:43:00.0]. Well, they had a store. Shontz had a store. I don't know anybody else who was there besides the pastors and their families.

E: And when you when you went to school how did they deal with religion when you were in Wrangell, for example, oh, how did they deal with church? I mean, did you go to church?

C: Well, the different churches in whatever church, whatever town were, whatever school we were at, their pastors came out and introduced themselves and they would send a van out to the school, where the pastor would come with his family and have a little worship with us.

E: Oh ok, so you didn't go to church, they came to you.

C: Yeah.

E: That's a nice way of doing it.

C: Yeah. Yeah.

E: And were they Presbyterian or?

C: Yeah.

E: OK and also that, was it similar at Mt. Edgecumbe too?

C: Mt. Edgecumbe was a little different. We were expected to go across to the Sitka side to attend the church, whatever we wanted. We didn't have to go to any particular church there. We could choose any, anyone we wanted to go to. But the bridge that's there now between Mt. Edgecumbe and Sitka is, was not there when I was there. We had to take a what we called a shore boat. If you were not a student or a worker, government worker, you had to pay a nickel to go back and forth. But those of us who were students or worked at the hospital got on for free, so.

E: That's nice. Public transportation.

C: Yeah, yeah.

E: And okay, so like when you got out of school, did you, did you feel like you were planning for any particular type of career while you were in school?

C: No, no.

E: Did you have any thoughts about that?

C: No. I didn't have. I didn't have any, any counselors who said one way or the other.

E: No guidance counselors, right.

C: I had one math teacher with trigonometry teacher, calculus teacher. That was Mr. Kingwell. he was from Santa Rosa, CA. He encouraged those of us who were, there was five of us, I think, in that class, advanced math. He encouraged us to look at colleges. He even set us up, there was a Santa Rosa junior college, he said. Some of us could go there and he would line us up with families to live with. So if we want a job, he had connections there, we could find our jobs too, but none of us really went there, so...

E: So when you... right, when you were boarding with families, other families like during the summer or something like that or when you were working? How to word this? Well, what kind of families were they? Were they welcoming?

C: It was mostly I mean, when I was, when I would live for the summer, I was mostly with summer with my family I lived with. I decided to live with that. But there were others. Others. Yeah, yeah, yeah. But there was a, there was a couple of brothers that I would have known since I went to Wrangell. They're still, well one of the brothers died in Vietnam, but one of the brothers still alive down there, down in Anchorage. And he and I still get together occasionally. But their father left them. Their father was white, their mother was native, from the Kotzebue region, and their father left when they were quite young, and they ended up going to other families during the summer. And they never knew which family was going to be their family for the summer. I can remember them telling me they spend the summer at Creamers Field here because their family that they ended up with that summer, worked there.

E: Uh-huh.

C: There. The dad worked there. So they had to work there too.

E: And everybody was new each time. They didn't know.

C: Yeah.

E: I guess you learn to get along with a lot of different people that way.

C: And Wrangell it was, the school itself was probably about 5 miles out of town. And kind of on the road, the road down there, there was a big long period that their fuel, fuel barges came and tied up to deliver fuel to the school and some supplies.

E: Now did, by the time you were there and you grew up in a bilingual house, did you get, you know, the kind of restrictions where you weren't allowed to talk and speak Iñupiaq.

C: Yes. It really didn't bother me because I was used to speaking English anyway. But I I can remember some of the kids that uh got quite, quite some severe punishments for speaking. Yeah, I can remember one, one young man from Point Lay.

E: Yeah.

C: [0:48:20.0] We were in the library one Saturday morning after cleaning up our dormitory. And one of the attendants, male attendants, came in and asked him a question, and Al was still thinking, and trying to process, converting what he was asking to what he could say. And the guy said, picked him up and threw him against the wall, probably eight feet into the wall. And he bounced off the wall and kind of shook himself. I can remember that guy's comment to Al. He says, "You're slow."

E: Whoa.

C: So no, there was really no tolerance for -

E: Yeah.

C: if you had any kind of translation problem.

E: Was there anything else other than language like that? Umm. What about food? Would you eat food that you weren't used to?

C: There were some funny things I can remember. There was one family from, their family was from, where were they, somewhere along the Yukon River. McGrath, I think they were from, but their father had been in the Air Force, McGrath had an Air Force Base, and their mother was native. And there was three of them. At least three. The oldest boy was Bernard, sister Delores, and they had another little brother, I forgot what his name was, but they always sat together at meals. And Bernard, the oldest guy, we had these trays where we

ate, had the little compartments for different things. He would pick up his food, finish one compartment at a time, and I can remember his sister looking at him, and says, "Bernard it all goes in the same place Anyway - Mix it up." (laughter)

E: Cute.

C: So, some funny experiences, comments.

E: Did you miss the kind of food that you had?

C: Well some of some of us would get a care package once in a while

E: Ah.

C: . Yeah we would get it. And it was kept for us in in the dorm, kind of, you put your name on it or your number on it, whatever and put it in the freezer or refrigerator. Some ladies kept out, they had flower boxes outside the window of where the offices were. And they would put some of the food out there, the smoked fish and those kinds of things, they would keep those out there in plastic bags.

C: But we had what we called the chores to do. Different people had different things. I can remember my first chore was to go, since I was in 7th grade, that my job was to go for the first month I was there, to go and help the little kids in one of the small rooms. There were eight kids to a room, and the lower grades levels, like the kids like first, second and third graders, go help them get ready for school, make sure they got off to breakfast, the room was clean, those kinds of things. And there were others that had what we called a seagull. Their job was to go pick up trash all under school before breakfast.

E: Is that why they were named seagulls or?

C: Yeah. Yeah, that's why we called them seagulls. Yeah, it was.

E: And was your group, the group where you were with the little kids, did that have a name?

C: No, no.

E: Just the seagulls had the perfect name.

C: Yes. Yeah. One of our favorite things to do together was to sneak away. There was a waterfall up through a path in the woods probably about maybe half mile up from the school grounds. You could run up there, go sit by the waterfall and enjoy a quiet, peace and quiet once in a while. It was only, you had to know someone who knew the trail to get up there, so once, but once you got it... But it was still, you had, you had to get away unseen. (laughter)

E: Yeah. Did you, would you get in trouble if you were caught coming back?

C: I don't remember anybody ever get caught.

E: Now, what about things like, especially when you were in high school, like smoking cigarettes or drugs, or alcohol or anything.

C: Well, alcohol was more considered more of a problem than smoking. Wrangell I never saw anybody with alcohol or booze. But Mt. Edgecumbe it was quite, I wouldn't say prevalent, but it was very common. Because we had access to things in Sitka.

E: Yeah.

C: Some of us made money by, I can remember going over to, there was a bakery in Sitka, buying donuts by the dozen in a box and take them for seven cents apiece and then going back to the dormitory and selling them for 15 cents apiece, and walking in -

E: Entrepreneurial.

C: Yeah, and buying instant coffee by the jar. Making -

E: Making a cup of coffee

C: Yeah, making a cup of coffee to go with the donuts. Yeah, so coffee and donut was 25 cents for. Made pretty good money. Some of us were able to get jobs through there. I can remember one time I had a job with a school nurse, cleaning up her apartment. I would go a couple days a week and have to clean up her apartment before she, before she got off of work and be back at school before she got out.

E: So that would give you some money to, to do what with?

C: Go buy my coffee and donuts. Make more money. (laughter)

E: or another model?

C: Yeah, yeah.

E: And gambling? Was anybody doing any gambling like playing poker?

C: I don't remember any gambling.

E: So one thing just sort of jarringly going back, one of the things that Sadie talked about and I'm - and I'm just trying to understand whether this is hyperbole or really like it is. And part of this is from, you know, a time before you were born maybe, but I know you've read more than I've read and I've read a bunch of these books. One of the things that she says when she first became a magistrate was, "We never had," or even before she came, magistrate, I guess, she said, "We never had alcohol."

C: Yeah.

E: And I remember the story of your grandfather, you know, first unwittingly encouraging that and then, breaking all the stills. And so I'm wondering if it was true that as long as her grandfather was, your grandfather was around that there was no alcohol in Barrow?

C: Not until the Navy came.

E: Right.

C: When they are out, the Arctic Research Laboratory started there, and the Navy base for the DEW line site came. That's when it became more problematic, I think, more common.

E: Right. And the other thing she talked about was, I guess this was after she became a magistrate was the first murder or, well I think and suicide. And like maybe the first year or so, when she was there [as magistrate].

C: I don't, I don't, you know, growing up, I don't ever remember a killing or a suicide.

E: or hearing stories about?

C: I can remember people freezing to death or getting lost out on the trail or something, but never, never, never by anybody, by foul play.

E: and never stories of that having have happened?

C: Yeah. And back then I can still, I can still remember when the first snow machines came into Barrow. One of the guys had one there and he got off the trail, and was lost for a few hours, until he finds his way back. He says, "I better go back to dog teams because at least that dog teams left piles here and there. You can follow the trail. Snow machines don't do that." (laughter)

E: Yeah. Except for the trail, maybe. Yeah.

C: Yeah. But if the wind blows, moves it, they're gone.

E: Yeah. Well, that's something I never thought of before. But yeah, like all the things about the dogs sort of learning the way. And then you don't have the dogs anymore.

C: Yeah.

(pause)

E: So I have two ways in my mind. One is your working. Let's go there. So you went down to Los Angeles?

C: Yeah. And I could, I could remember I was sitting in the window seat on Western Airlines.

E: Yeah.

C: After the pilot made the announcement we were starting our descent. Looking out the window for 20, 20-25 minutes, maybe half an hour, nothing but lights. We landed at night at 9:00 o'clock at night I think, but I could remember there's a Boeing 707 Western Airlines and sitting by the window and just remember, wow, all those lights. And they never seem to stop!

E: And you didn't even in, even when you were in Wrangell and near Sitka or something, you didn't see that kind of lights?

C: No, not that, no. Sitka what, maybe 8,000 people?

E: yeah.

C: Wrangell 2,500?

E: But there were electric lights?

C: There were electric lights.

E: Yeah.

C: We had electric lights when I was in Barrow, early on. I can remember the first generator they had outside of the government system.

E: Uh-huh...

C: There was one on the Browerville side. They had a little abandoned house. They put a generator with a one lung diesel. You had to crank that thing going, get it going.

E: To keep it going, yeah.

C: And the folks that pooled their money together to buy that generator also pooled their money together to buy wire and as people wanted to add on you know to things to the system, to the electrical system where they were.

E: And what about things like radio, TV or phone.

C: My first, first TV I saw was probably when I was 12 years old.

E: Yeah...

C: The first one I ever saw was, I was babysitting some kids down in Wrangell for a family and they had a TV and I didn't know what it was. And they turned it on, but we didn't see anything. He said, well, this was from a previous life, they moved to Petersburg, so .. (laughter)

E: Yeah...

C: We had radios, I can remember I had a little transistor radio in my bunk in, at Mt. Edgecumbe, I didn't at Wrangell. Sitka I did. But I can remember that radio station there that, that people, kids or families or whoever could make a request for certain song or a certain person, that kind of thing. I can remember that, yeah.

E: Yeah, this is dedicated to the one... So that was when you were at Mt. Edgcumbe?

C: Yeah.

E: And what about in Barrow? Were there, was there any radio there, while you were there?

C: Not back when I was there. The church, of course, had a small radio station, just to broadcast their church services for those who couldn't make it. But it's one of those little. ..

E: Yeah.

C: Local things there.

E: And there was a, wasn't there, I guess maybe it was later and also with the, maybe with the Navy, but there was a person there that was the communications?

C: That, that communication is primarily done by the Alaska Communications Systems (ACS), they, the Army base.

E: Right? Okay so that was just for them, really.

C: They had a house at the corner, of the lagoon, behind the hospital. That's where all the telegraph, telegraph wires came. And if you had a telephone call, you had to go to that place, and use their system, and you had to have an appointment. Or they would make the appointment and then tell you that this person is going to call back at such and such a time. And you went there.

E: And was there ever any public anything, like when Sadie talks about translating the news, was there like a newscast or something that--?

C: There must have been, but I don't remember, I really don't remember. I was probably gone from there before when that started. Yeah. [called the ACS station by Sadie, it was more accessible to civilians in the mid-30's, between the wars]

E: And what about movies?

C: We had at least three different movie theaters, different times: Matumiak had one on the east, uh yeah west end of town. Steve Hopson had one kind of in the middle of Barrow, and Native Village of Barrow had one by the native stores. So they weren't operating all at the same time. But I think Steve Hopson might have been the first one and then Matumiak took over what we called the theater. They would have dances there after the movies. It was always fun for the high school kids. Mt. Edgecumbe kids come home and teach the local folks

how the hottest dances were (laughter). But that was always it now, eat, the movie night, and then after that was the dance, and it was a big social thing too.

E: Did you, did you know about the Eskimo dancing and singing at all when you were a kid?

C: I remember seeing it, mostly at the holiday times. Christmas, Thanksgiving, after the feast would have an Eskimo dance. I can remember that, but never for any really just spur of the moment thing. I knew there were some crews that, or some dance groups that have a practice, but I never knew where they were practicing at or when, but I knew they practiced.

(pause)

E: So let's, let's go back to when you were working in Los Angeles. So you were, you went to school there, you did some kind of training.

C: I went there in August of 1963. August of 63.

E: And what were you learning there?

C: Electronics. How to be an electronic technician. I was learning the basics of electronics.

E: And did you like that?

C: Oh, I'd enjoyed it, yeah. But it was bus ride.

E: Yeah, right. And then what? How long did that go on? And then what did you do?

C: Right after Kennedy got shot, I was there in Los Angeles when that happened. I could remember that. And at the end of the year they closed, the calendar year they closed that school down and say we're moving the school to New York. So that is all moved from Los Angeles to New York.

E: Do you know why they did that?

C: Oh I don't know, I never, I was never in the loop for making those decisions. (laughter) I was just a student.

E: Yeah? And then you went to New York, and New Jersey, New York and New Jersey.

C: I was, I lived in a tenement building in 22nd floor tenement building in Newark. Kind of, kind of a different situation. Shootings every night...

E: Yeah.

C: The elevator, if the elevator went out for any reason, there was 22 flights of stairs up and down. And had to take the bus or the subway over to New York to go to the RCA school.

E: And that's what you were doing, going to the RCA school?

C: And I, I just couldn't handle it. The violence that was happening all the time. So I tried to go to Haskell Institute where a lot of my friends from Mt. Edgecumbe were at, Indian school college. And they had, they had overflow, they didn't have any room.

E: What was the name of that school?

C: Haskell Institute.

E: That sounds familiar. Where was that?

C: It's in Lawrence, Kansas. So to be near them, I applied to University of Kansas and I was accepted there to start after the Christmas break. But by that time I got a draft notice, so I went and joined the Navy instead.

E: Oh, okay. So then what?

C: So then I went from there.

E: Were you in radio in the Navy?

C: I went to a boot camp at Great Lakes, just north of Chicago, between Chicago and Milwaukee. That was, tell you where, it was '64 which, after the big earthquake happened in Anchorage.

E: Yeah -

C: South Central Alaska, I can remember my commander, my company commander asking me, "You from Alaska?" I said, "yeah." He said, "How's your family?" I said, "I don't know." He said, "Where do they live?" So I told him on a map. He said, "Oh that's a different part of the state."

E: Yeah...

C: So I thought they're probably okay.

E: Wow.

C: Yeah. But even there our family rarely ever wrote. And I went from there, I had boot camp. Then transferred to Memphis. The Naval Air Station Memphis. And that's where I went through a lot more of my electronic training. And then got up from there, moved to San Diego. That's my first assignment, NAS North Island and then,

E: So that was your first time it wasn't just school.

C: Yeah.

E: That you were actually working.

C: Yeah. I was at the patrol squadron in San Diego.

E: What was your job? What do you?

C: I worked in a training section. My job really was to teach others how to take photographs of, from an airplane.

E: Uh-huh.

C: Practice out, go out in a patrol plane.

E: Yeah.

C: In a P2. They had a bubble nose in front, put you on a chair in the rail, with the big camera on the rail, in front of you. And he would - and what they call it, rigging a ship. They'd fly by the ship, kind of at an angle, so you have the camera pointed and start shooting movies of this, of this try to identify whose ship it was, where it came from, that kind of a thing.

E: Yeah...

C: So that was, that was what my job was. Also worked in navigation office, to keep track of where the planes were. And the planes were out there looking for submarines that... We knew where the submarines were, the airplanes didn't.

E: Okay.

C: So they were supposed to go out, and try to find out in the ocean somewhere between San Diego and Hawaii where they, where they thought, they thought they found submarines. So...

E: So is this sort of like Cold War stuff?

C: Yeah.

E: Yeah.

C: So, and then Vietnam got hot and heavy and -

E: Oh, yeah, right, Vietnam.

C: So I got transferred up to what we call the Tailhook office. Small, small attack outfit. Based out of Lemoore, California, just south of Fresno. And I went on two different cruises with that, with that outfit. One on the USS Ranger aircraft carrier and another one on the Constellation. So I was on two different tours over the South China Sea.

E: And so how long were you working as -

C: I was in the Navy for four years.

E: Okay. In different places?

C: Yeah.

E: And was that like a tour of duty or did you choose to?

C: Well, the last, the last two years really was with the same outfit light attack outfit 55V55 stationed mostly at Lemoore. But we went overseas over to South China Sea on our cruises, with, I say we stopped in Hawaii. Then next go on over off of Vietnam and South China Sea area. Go into port, the Philippines, Hong Kong, some of those places.

E: And did you go into those places too?

C: Yes, yes.

E: You got a lot of travel. Join the Navy and see the world.

C: Yes. It was good. Yeah.

E: Yeah, so then what?

C: Then I started getting letters from, from that lady over there. (nods toward Janet)

E: Yeah?

C: And nobody would write me letters, tell me news and all that. One day I start getting letters from somebody in Barrow, will tell me the local news, but never anything about themselves. So I wrote letters back trying to find out who she was. Telegraph back, who is this? Nobody would ever answer. Finally I found out.

E: (to Janet) So you were just doing this for a, you know, write to a man in the Navy who needs information, or you knew what you were doing?

J: No, the nurse I worked with up there was married to his cousin, that he was very close to, Billy [Brower].

E: Okay...

J: And she said that nobody was writing him the hometown news. And I said, "Well, I can write him the hometown news, basketball, what's happening on the tundra..."

E: Yeah. So you could have been Howard Rock. [founder of first newspaper for Native Alaskans]

C: Yeah.

J: No, I don't think so. I respect him. Goodness.

J: So I never expected to meet him [Charles].

E: And you didn't sign your name?

J: Oh, yeah, I did. But what did that mean to him? I was from New York State, you know.

E: Oh.

J: So his letters were very interesting. Kind of fun.

C: Then I got out of the Navy and spent a few months in San Francisco. And then decided to come home 'cause I was offered a job with the Arctic Research Laboratory, to maintain the electronics on the airplanes,

some of the scientific stuff. So I took that job. But in the meantime, both the military airport and the civil airport in Barrow, were both under construction or renovation or whatever, and the planes that - I could only go to Barrow on those nights that the road between NARL and Barrow was frozen enough for the plane to land. So I was stuck in Fairbanks for about a week. So I called her, she'd moved to a different hospital by that time. She was in Tanana.

J: Indian territory

E: Which is not far from here.

J: Here. Yeah.

C: So she invited me, so I went the next day.

J: The plane had come for the week, I didn't expect to see him.

C: One plane a week airline.

J: Might have been twice a week,

E: Yeah.

C: But I found a friend who had an airplane. So I have to go drop a note off in Manley anyway, so I'll go down that way. So I, I got a ride.

E: You knew what you were doing.

C: Yeah. But it was fun, yeah. I walked from the, from the airport to the hospital at the main entrance of the main hospital. And the lady there at the reception desk had been at Mt. Edgecumbe a year ahead of me. And so I knew her for three years. And she put me through the grill of, "What's your intent? What do you, how do you know her? What are you gonna do here?" So I after that, then I was saved by another person who was there, Ben See. His mother had been one of the matrons at the boys' dormitory, went to Mt. Edgecumbe as well, so he was from Sitka. He came by and heard all the questions I was being asked by this young lady. And he said I'll take care of him, I'll put them in the men's quarters. So he took care of me, found me a place to stay. So that's how I met my wife.

E: That's great. Good story.

J: I was making cookies for my Sunday school class, 3rd grade class, to take on a picnic. And he pops in. Whom I had not expected to see, no warning. So of course I said well come along.

E: Did you offer him a cookie?

J: Navy bars? [1:12:42.0] No way he's going on a Sunday school picnic. (laughs) Wrong.

C: Yeah.

J: Oh my goodness.

E: So what happened then?

C: We went on a Sunday school picnic, on our way back, there was a cabin on fire. We ran up. So I got to be part of a fire brigade, had buckets from the, from the river -

J: The Yukon river -

C: to try to put this cabin fire out, yeah.

E: Be the hero in the story.

J: And I kept the kids back,

C: Yeah.

J: Directing them down the gravel path.

C: Yeah. And while I was here, the Yukon River went out, the ice on the river went out, man it was, that was something to see, man. Big, huge blocks of ice, big as a house, would come up on the beach, just push forward.

J: Grinding. We don't have that so much anymore because the ice doesn't get as thick.

E: Yeah?

C: But that year was impressive.

E: And that's the river. And I heard, I read about sometimes when the ocean did that.

C: Yeah, yes. So it was quite, it was quite a good trip. Then she, her parents came up, or her mother and her aunt came up during the summer that same year. She was still in town now, and they were touring the state in different parts. When her mom and aunt ended up down in, or going south, she came to Barrow to come visit. I guess she couldn't stay away. (laughter)

E: So then you decided to get married?

J: Oh, not quite, not quite. (laughter)

C: No, it took a while.

J: He took me out on a date in his Jeep from the research laboratory.

C: Yeah, yeah.

J: All of a sudden, there's a heater in the back, has flames coming out. Of course I'm out the door. He says, "No problem, it always does that, you know." Not with me in it! He was always exciting. (laughter)

E: Yeah, right. Really.

C: Then she invited me, well she went home.

J: I had finished my two years. I thought I'd get some more public health experience and come back as a state public health nurse visiting different villages.

E: So that's how you got to Alaska in the first place?

J: With the U.S. Public Health service. Go up for two years, they pay your way. And they pay your way home in two years. And a friend also came up. She was a year ahead of me in school, but we were both interested in going someplace different, we thought. We didn't pick Barrow, but that's where they had the openings,

E: Right. And you knew a little bit about it.

J: Well, I read before I came, but still. It sounded different. It was.

C: And Aunt Sadie was the one that notarized, your nurse, your nursing license and she also made, we had Eddie Bauer parkas.

E: Yeah,

J: With down. But you really need a ruff. And so she covered them for us. I remember we picked up material and went over to her house. Oh, probably separate times cause there probably wasn't much staff at the hospital. We each worked a shift, 8 hours, either days, evenings, or nights.

E: What years were those?

J: '66 to '68.

E: Uh-huh.

J: 19 -

E: Yes. I figured.

J: Been getting older I guess.

E: But yeah,

J: Yeah. Not that I knew her well, but she told wonderful stories. She's always friendly,

E: Yeah.

J: Think about it. I don't know how she did all she did. But the sewing must have bring in some money.

E: Yeah.

J: And then she was a magistrate. So that's where you had to go for if you wanted something notarized.

E: Got it. Uh-huh. But so now you're talking about the 60s, so let's talk a little. You start, you first came to Alaska like '66.

J: 66, yeah.

C: I saw her come off the plane to Barrow. I was home on vacation from the Navy. I was with my cousin Stanley. He said let's go see a movie. A movie, the movie theater, it was free at the Navy base. So we're going to go there and on our way there, we saw the plane coming in. So we passed the movie theater and went over to watch the planes come in. I can remember coming off, her coming off the plane in a short skirt, high heels.

J: September, it's snowing here. (laughter)

E: Yeah. Really good.

C: Yeah.

E: Like she's gonna, she'll learn.

C: Yeah.

E: So you [Janet] weren't there when Alaska became a state, but were you?

C: Yeah, I was there when Alaska became a state.

E: Tell me about what that was like.

C: Well, well, the guys at the, now, ACS station, Alaska Communication station, they had a couple of guys who had some demolition experience. And they were going to set up this big blast thing 20, 49 of 49 different -

J: Where was this?

C: Out in the ocean. In Barrow.

J: Oh in Barrow.

E: On the ice.

C: Yeah. And they drill some holes in the ice and they put dynamite in there or caps or something. And the last one there's going to be number 49 and going to be a big thing in the middle. But somehow it didn't happen. Some of the little ones went off, but the big one didn't go off. But I can remember everybody waiting for it and everybody saying Boo, Boo. It didn't happen. (laughter) But I can remember that.

E: That was '59 or '60 or...

C: '59 I think it was. Yeah, yeah, whenever Alaska became a state. I forget '59.

E: Yeah.

C: It was in the springtime because the ocean ice was still there.

E: Yeah, it seems like there were like several different phases that it went through. Like somebody voted on it and so we're having a celebration and then the next people voted on it, and had a celebration. And then it became true. And did you - what did you think of Alaska becoming a state?

C: It was really was no big difference from me. Nothing different.

E: Yeah.

C: All of a sudden I knew we were not a territory anymore, but a state. But the thing, the big thing that changed for us, probably, not me so much, but some of the other community was under the territorial system, they used to have commissioners for the territory. They were assigned to be the keeper of whatever in each area of the state. And my grandfather had been a Commissioner once upon a time, way back when. But I don't know, I don't know what happened to that system after we became a state so - commissioner system went away

E: and was replaced by the court system.

C: Yeah

E: And did you know the Commissioner that was there before?

C: No. And if they if they lived in Barrow, I might have known about it. They didn't live in Barrow. I didn't know.

E: Yeah, and when, so what was the first time you [Janet] met Sadie? Would that have been when she signed your notary?

J: Pretty soon after. Probably we worked on the parkas pretty quick too.

E: Yeah, right. Soon as you got there. 'Cause that skirt wasn't doing the trick.

J: Goodness.

E: So how did that go? How did that happen that she was working on the parka?

J: I don't remember the, certainly asked who would, who could sew or who could do something.

E: You would have asked.

J: Yeah, I would have asked at the hospital. And she was certainly well known, I went over to see if she had time to do it.

J: And she did.

C: She always had a good sense of humor, though. I can remember. I left, I was at Barrow for only a few months with a job at the Arctic Research Laboratory. And then I went down to see [Janet], see her family for Christmas. She invited me down.

E: Never learned. (laughter) Where was your (Janet's) family then?

J: Walkill, New York, Hudson River valley, about 75 miles north of the city.

E: I live in New York now.

J: What part?

E: In the city, in Queens.

J: Okay, yeah.

E: But I grew up in Massachusetts.

J: So farmland, right. Apples went to the city.

E: Yeah right, right.

C: So I left Barrow. At the time, I had a friend who had an airplane, was going south, so I hitched a ride. Got as far as Chicago, took us four days from, from here to go to Chicago.

E: hitchhiking?

J: No, on a plane.

C: On a small plane,

E: Oh on a plane, okay, got it.

C: On a Piper Cub. Got on an airline, I forget which airline, from Chicago to New York City.

E: Uh huh.

C: Took a bus from, stayed there overnight in New York City, took a bus up to near where she was at. And called, tried to call, there were five or six Dolans in the phonebook. So I start calling and the first one I called was her Aunt Madeline.

E: Yeah,

C: And she said you may want to call this number, so I wish you luck.

E: What was your last name?

J: Dolan

E: Dolan, yeah.

C: Dolan, yeah. So I called the number she gave me. It was at the store.

E: Uh huh.

C: Her dad came up to, to the bus station where I was at, New Paltz.

E: Wanted to see who this guy was?

J: He heard about him. But I wasn't sure.

C: Yeah, he picked me up. And took me to the house. And introduced me.

J: He was grinning.

C: Yeah,

J: Really grinning. My dad.

C: He looked at me and said, "I think Jan is out in the back of the farm hiking somewhere, walking." So Jan just came in. Yeah.

(pause)

E: Let's see.

J: We're a little off Sadie's subject.

E: Yeah, I have some Sadie questions. When did you come back to Barrow after all that working?

C: '68. 1968.

E: Ok, so you weren't back before that because she was -

C: I was in the Navy. And I got out of the Navy and I came up. It must have been June because I landed in Barrow late in middle of the night, had a few hours sleep. The next day I was put on an airplane to go out to Ice Island T3 to go move antennas and rewire houses or little trailers that they had out there. It's a floating piece of ice [about 30 sq. miles on the ocean, that was being used for research] that was just floating around out there. And it was springtime and they had snow. So houses, or the little cabins were on pedestals and ice would melt away except for underneath them. So they would build a ramp to reach cabin, pour it off knock down the pedestal, reset the pedestal. Our job was to rewire electrical wire, radio antennas, whatever else was.

E: Did they bring them off?

C: No, they were still there. People are still out there floating around.

E: Yeah?

C: And I floated out there for a couple of weeks.

E: Uh huh.

C: So it was interesting,

E: Yeah.

C: And then finally, finally the airplane was able to make it back out again...

E: Uh huh.

C: It was a DC3 with skis.

E: So you couldn't get back until the plane could make it out again.

C: Yeah.

E: And I think my trip has some uncertainty. That's real uncertainty.

C: It was fun. So there are some guys there I knew from Barrow that I grew up with. Charlie Hopson was there, Percy Nusunginya was there. Some other folks that I knew were there.

E: Do you remember the ice being like way more than it is now.

C: It used to be much thicker, I remember. The *lvu*, what we call the *lvu*, the ice coming up on the land from the wind and the currents.

E: What's the word?

C: *lvu*.

E: *lvu*. [1:25:48.0]

C: It's when the ice comes up, piles up. We used to get quite some good size ice, icebergs come through, but we don't see those anymore. I think those came from the glaciers over, over in Greenland somewhere. But we don't see those anymore. And the ice we have today is much thick, thinner than it used to be back, back when.

J: And much later forming.

E: Yeah,

J: I remember ice in October up there on the ocean. Like it, the ocean was slush and then it froze.

E: And it was froze.

J: and now they're out boating.

C: Yeah

C: Open ocean.

E: Does it make longer whaling season maybe?

C: Well, whaling seasons have also changed. I don't remember, when we came back in 1992, I used to go whaling with a crew up there. And it was okay if I made it to Barrow by May 10th. to go to both high school

graduation and also spend a week whaling. But now if I, if I wait that long, it's just too late. I have to be up the middle of April, if I want to go whaling. because that's when the whales start migrating, a few weeks earlier.

E: So you didn't, you didn't lose so much more of your Inupiaq-ness, that you can't go whaling?

C: No. Oh no. Yeah, yeah.

E: So that's good, yeah.

C: I was a good connection to a, where I was at, my business connections in Anchorage, I could get ammunition for wholesale price for what we have to get, I could bring it up on the plane with me, whatever. So it was a good combination. We both needed each other.

E: Yeah, yeah, right, Exactly.

C: And they continued, I would also get the shotgun shells for their goose hunting after, right after whaling that kind of things.

E: Yeah. You were in the Navy, you could do that.

J: After he was out.

C: After I got out of the Navy.

J: In the nineties, we moved back to Alaska.

E: Oh, ok.

J: He was part of one crew. Could have been on a different crew, probably, but ...

E: OK, now wait a minute. So I, you just skipped a bunch of years.

C: Yeah.

E: So you -

C: I got out of the Navy in '68,

E: Okay.

C: We got married in -

J: '69.

C: '69

E: And where did you live then?

C: We got married in New York, drove across the country, and lived in Los Angeles.

E: Okay, alright, for a while.

J: 8 years

E: Yeah?

J: [He] went to college.

C: Yeah. I was going to college. And she was working at the hospital there.

J: Not while I was working with public health.

C: Public health.

E: Yeah?

C: She started out at Imperial Hospital

J: Well, for a few months. Till the other job offer.

C: Yeah.

E: You went to college where?

C: Northrup Institute of Technology. [BS Electrical Engineering]

E: Uh huh.

C: It was in Inglewood, right near airfield, the LAX airport.

E: So this was your first real college experience and you went all the way through with -

C: I went on quarter system so I could try to finish up in less than four years. I did it in a little over three. I took a quarter off when our son was born. And I really needed to take that time off. [1:29:12] But that kind of threw me off my schedule. But it was okay. I finished yeah.

E: And then where did you go?

C: Now, I went to work for Lockheed, a California company, as a test engineer up in their research facility. Up north, up there where Magic Mountain is now, just north of Los Angeles.

J: Simi Valley.

C: We bought a house in ...

J: Newhall

C: Newhall, yeah. [1:29:35.0]

E: And you were still working?

J: Mmm no, I was having my second kid. I worked weekends, I worked ..

E: How many kids do you have?

J: four

C: four sons.

J: I think I worked weekends. I kept my finger in it ...

C: So I worked for Lockheed for awhile, on Navy programs. Then I transitioned from there to Rockwell International, for the start of the first B-1 [bomber]. And then Jimmy Carter got elected, and he canceled that program. So I went what I would call job shopping. With consulting different places. So I worked in Saint Louis for McDonnell Douglas Company.

E: Now were you still living in California?

C: Yeah.

E: Okay.

C: I know that our third son was born, I got back in time to before his birth and her [Janet's] mom was there with her. Our first two sons were born in the hospitals. But Justin was born at home, number 3, and number 4 was also born at home.

E: Born at home on purpose or because it was a surprise?

J: This is on purpose.

E: Good.

C: I can remember -

E: In California?

C: Yes

J: One of them in California and the last one in Massachusetts.

C: Yeah.

E: So where were you in Massachusetts then?

C: We lived just outside of Boston, 35 miles. I worked in Lexington.

E: Okay.

C: The Air Force stationed there at Hanscom Air Force Base,

E: Right

C: And it's where the Air Force did a lot of their procurement of systems. That's why I was a consultant there.

E: Yeah. I grew up in Natick which is near Wellesley .

J: Oh, yeah. I know where Natick is.

C: Yeah.

J: We lived in Stow.

C: We lived in Stow. He went to, he went to Nashoba Regional High School out in that area,

E: Okay,

C: West of, western Stow.

J: He just visited it again, last week with them.

C: But he was, he was a cross country runner.

E: Yeah?

C: Cross country skier. He did very well.

E: Yeah?

C: I can remember going to New York City for one of his meets. After the state meets that happened, there was a big Nike one. I think Nike put one on for all the cross country runners and that whole region.

E: Wow.

C: So we went to New York City for that.

E: Uh huh.

C: I can remember that.

J: But he did better when he was running for his school.

E: Yeah?

J: It was interesting.

E: Yeah, interesting. What school was that?

C: Nashoba.

E: Nashoba, right.

J: And then University of Colorado.

E: Uh huh.

C: Yeah.

E: And are you, are your kids or your other kids are out here?

J: Two in Fairbanks, one in Barrow and one in Wasilla - Houston,

E: Wasilla - Houston?

J: North of Anchorage.

C: Just north of Wasilla is a town called Houston.

E: Oh, I see. I know where Wasilla is, Yeah. Wasilla is pretty much next to Anchorage?

J: Yeah.

C: Yeah. Probably about 60 miles north of Anchorage.

E: Oh, okay, so it's a little ways. So you get to see them a lot,

C: Yeah.

E: And you have grandkids, I'm sure.

C: Yeah. And we lived in Anchorage for about 20 years.

E: Yeah?

C: moved back

J: moved back in '91.

C: '92. '92.

E: Okay, so wait, so you were, you were in California. And the next place you lived was?

C: Massachusetts

J: Massachusetts.

E: Massachusetts for how long?

J: Was it 15 years?

C: About 15

J: '77 to '91.

C: Yeah.

E: And then what? And then you came to?

J: Anchorage.

E: Anchorage.

J: When we move, we really move. (laughter) We stay in one house, we live in one area.

E: I'm going somewhere with this. And then? And then you came to Fairbanks?

J: Well, no.

C: Lived in Anchorage.

J: After retirement, he decided to become a pastor. [\[1:33:56.0\]](#)

E: So that's what I want to know. How did you decide to become a pastor?

C: Well, we had this gathering of elders, sponsored by United Methodist Church. Begun by Pastor Jim Campbell, who was a pastor to Willow, Willow Alaska Church, United Methodist Church.

E: Okay, and did you already know him?

C: I knew him, yeah. And he, they started this program at the insistence I think of Della Waghiyi, who was from Savoonga on St. Lawrence Island.

E: That his name was Gambell is no ..

C: Campbell yeah, Jim

J: Campbell, not the town on -

E: Oh okay, right, not the town of Gambell, yeah.

C: Oh yeah. But they, Della, Della's family extends over into the Russian side.

E: Okay.

J: She's Siberian Yupik.

C: And there was a crisis there in that whole Siberian coast region, that there were families in really poor conditions. They didn't have much, the government's too far away, in Moscow.

J: After the fall of the Soviet Union, support didn't come to Siberia, to those folks.

E: Aha. So...

J: There's no government, like the fox farms, all their industry kind of collapsed. They were starving.

E: So the Soviet Union was contributing to them before?

J: Yeah.

C: Apparently, yes.

E: Or just people there were, the way they ..

J: Well it was a different system. And the system fell apart.

C: So Della had started this ministry with the Siberian Yupik and several different communities. And asking those of us who could afford to send things, to -. And the families would send us letters, and we had to get a translator, because they were written in Russian, of what they wanted, what they needed, and who to send it to. And you had to put two different names on each package. One was the person that it was going to. The second name was somebody that was connected kind of to the government somehow,

E: Right, okay.

C: Whether it be a school teacher, a pastor, whatever.

E: Right.

C: So that's, we sent boxes of fish lures, fish lines, shampoo, soap,

J: Clothes,

C: Thread, clothes

E: So this was all to St. Lawrence Island or?

J: No. This was to Russia.

E: Oh, to Russia, okay.

C: But to mail it ...

J: Yanakanerit (phonetic) village or something is where we sent it. I don't think it even exists anymore.

C: To mail it, the way we mailed it, it went to the postal system, end up in Moscow. And several months later it made it back to Siberia by train. [1:36:37.0] And it would take several months for some of them. So anytime, anytime we knew someone was going into that part of the region by whatever plane,

E: Right, you'd give it to them?

C: We'd yeah, We'd load them over as much as we could.

E: And no perishables, right?

C: Yeah no, no food.

J: Well, dried food.

E: Dried food, yeah.

C: Yeah, dried food, yeah. But some of the complaints we'd have, some of the families, we knew what we had put in the boxes. We'd get a letter back, saying this is what we got, so some of the things that we had sent was gone along the way somewhere.

E: Yeah.

C: Went somewhere else. So that then, with that the pastor -

E: That's almost like a third world country kind of thing.

C: But the pastor that was helping Della start that ministry was the pastor at Willow church.

E: Okay. Was this when you were in Anchorage?

C: Yeah. We were in Anchorage, yeah.

J: And he was working.

C: I was working, yeah.

J: Arctic Slope.

C: But I could remember the church

E: You were working, so you were working for the Arctic Slope?

C: No.

J: ASRC.

C: One of the subsidiaries. I was president of a company called Piquniq Management Corporation. We ran that business pretty well.

J: Yeah, he was CEO.

C: Yeah.

J: Till it got too big to be a ..

E: And what was the name of that company?

C: Piquniq Management Corporation.

E: Say it again?

C: Piq-uniq

E: Piq-uniq

C: It means a mound that comes out of the ground and people would stand on it and look around.

E: And what was that company doing?

C: It was in services. We had the base [in Barrow, NARL]. It initially started with North Slope Borough providing training for people who wanted to work in the oil fields, how to work in the oil fields, what jobs there were, and set them up. We also had a contract with North Slope Borough to run service area ten, which was a trash hauling operation. We also did a lot of the training in how to weld and maintain equipment. I was in that building. So it was kind of a natural for us that we expanded from there to government work.

E: Yeah?

C: We had the contracts in Wake Island, Midway Island, we had an office in Honolulu out, I administered those too. We had a contract in Amchitka Island out in the Aleutians. We had a contract in Chena, [Yukon, Canada] We had a contract at the coastguard station, Kodiak, maintenance. So we were kind of spread out, primarily on military base or ex-military base that still needed maintenance. And our work was primarily in those outlying areas were from the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. And actually we had to get coordinated with those countries, that we wouldn't abuse their workers, we would make sure they didn't run away when they got to the states, and those kind of things, so ..

E: So just a general question about these corporations, I think I understand them, but ... So the corporation is put together by a tribe or some group of people...

C: Yeah.

E: You might be working on behalf of them, profits might go to them ..

C: Yes.

E: But basically you could do the work for anybody

C: Yes.

E: And it's for profit work.

C: Yes.

E: Okay, got it.

C: When I first got there, the PMC, what was primarily a management corporation, was owned by, ASRC owned about 49% and UIC, Utqiagvik Iñupiat Corporation ...

J: The village corporation

E: mmhm

C: Kuukpik, which is a corporation for Nuiqsut over near the west slope, and one other, I forget who the third one. There were three village corporations who were also partners with ASRC, and they owned 51%, those

three others. But being small in those village corporations, they could not raise the capital when we needed to do some projects [1:40:48.0]

E: versus ..

C: So ASRC bought them, we made arrangements for ASRC to buy them out,

E: Uh huh

C: Eventually it was wholly owned by ASRC.

E: Uh huh

C: So we had a much bigger bank account, much bigger bonding,

E: You can take up

C: much bigger contracts

E: You can take up bigger contracts, right.

C: Yea, yeah. So

E: That's fascinating.

C: So we were the first tribally-owned small disadvantaged business in the United States.

E: And minority- owned.

C: And minority- owned. And we grew that business into a little over \$75 million a year in the first five years.

E: Wow.

C: So we were very successful.

E: Uh huh.

C: And that was the years that ASRC also boomed.

E: Right.

C: And that was the years that I was on the corporation, that we started doing discussions about, why are these guys making more money than we are,

E: Right.

C: And compensation so, and also went into looking into strategic planning.

E: mm hm

C: Once we got these things settled down, the corporation had some leeway into which way it wanted to go. And after that, PMC outgrew our size-standard in the business we were in.

E: Okay?

C: So we dissolved PMC, and started others that were in similar lines of work to take over the contracts that we had.

E: But specific lines, and not all of those.

C: Yes. But in 1996, we were at the contract of North Slope Borough took for training for oil fields. And at that same time frame Iḷisaḡvik College, which now is Iḷisaḡvik College, I forget what the name they had, but they had 75 students. Out of 75, I think 7 of them were native people.

E: hm

C: who lived in the North Slope, and the rest of them were spouses of people who came here -

E: Oh, ok.

C: And wanted a college education. But then the president of the college spent \$1,000 of the college money for a remote starter for his own pickup truck.

E: Uh oh.

J: You got it.

C: So this Higher Education Board didn't think that was too, too kosher, so they fired him.

E: Right.

C: In the meantime, they looked at me and said while you got this contract for training, you got, you want to, So we made the pitch. Al Adams was a, was a marketing guy.

J: He was a state senator.

E: Yeah?.

C: And he was couple of years ahead of me in Mt. Edgecumbe too.

E: And that's the Adams

C: Yes.

E: Group, okay.

C: Yeah, he went up to Barrow and talk with North Slope Mayor. And said we've got this contract. We could take over management of the college until the Higher Ed Board feels comfortable they can handle it themselves. So we did. They gave us a contract, said we give you three to five years to make this a real college. But, on the stipulation you go find this particular person to be the president of the college.

E: Meaning you?

C: No, no, I was the go between. [to Shirley Holloway]

E: Okay.

C: But they gave me the name of where she worked, so I went down to Spokane. She was the superintendent of the Three River School District in the Spokane area. So I went down and had dinner with her and her husband, and she had been the, her experience in Barrow, the reason they wanted her, she was an excellent superintendent of the school district for North Slope Borough School District. So they, she had experience there. They knew her. And so I went down and had dinner with her and Jesse. And do you want it and she said yes. Just let me finish up a few things here, I'll be ready to go. So I came back with the good news and they gave us the contract.

E: uh huh

C: And in the meantime UIC had heard we were going to have it. So they offered what they had inherited from the government of the Naval Arctic Research Laboratory of all the buildings there at NARL.

E: Uh-huh.

C: For classrooms,

E: Yeah,

C: And they fixed up a few of their old Quonsets for classroom use. Fixed up what used to be the laboratories, except for the wing that's where the Wildlife Management is. Rest, the rest of the laboratory, they turned over to us for administration and classrooms.

E: Thank you for all this because I've read little snippets of these things it's putting it together,

C: So it's, so we had the contract.

J: This is after Sadie? When did Sadie die?

E: 2004,

C: Yeah.

E: So this was in the 90s,

J: Yeah, she's still going strong.

C: Yeah, '96 we started.

E: I'll get back [to Sadie.]

C: Yeah. When the management expertise to really run it and the person they wanted to be the president of college.

E: Yeah.

C: So It all worked for us. In three years, they felt comfortable under the service leadership to run the college take it over themselves. So we gave the contract back to them. The college is on its own, got its, and had a good start on their accreditation, which they have now.

E: Right.

C: And then now, Shirley, Shirley Holloway was the President of the College then.

E: Okay,

C: That's who I had dinner with.

E: Uh-huh.

C: And she became the Commissioner of Education for the state of Washington.

E: Oh, wow.

C: After that, after that job, which we still remained on contract to us as to consult to whoever is going to be the next two or three presidents. She still consulted to us, so we had a good deal.

E: That's good.

J: And the president after her was your cousin.

C: Yeah.

J: Edna Ahgeak

E: Edna, yeah.

C: Edna was, yeah

J: Charley got his Master's [MBA] in Massachusetts.

E: Uh huh

J: By the time we moved, he had to finish a course or two here - in business.

E: Uh huh. In where?

C: Western New England University. They're headquartered in Springfield, but I took most of my work at Hanscom Air Force Base, extension classes, yeah.

E: Yeah. And didn't you say spent some time at MIT too? Working?

C: Well I, I spent some time at their laboratories when I was consulting with the Air Force. I did a lot of work in CSD Laboratories which was in uh, Lexington,

E: mm hm

C: And MIT Labs which was down in Cambridge, between those three, the Air Force base, CSDL and MIT Labs.

E: So we were, this all came about because, when we were talking about how you got to be a pastor.

C: Yeah.

E: So let's go back to that.

C: Okay, Anyway.

J: It fills in a few years.

E: Yeah, right.

C: Then I retired from that job, ASRC.

E: Okay, you did retire.

C: Yeah, well, not, that company was over. And we had looked for a church in Anchorage when we moved there. We tried the Friends church, we tried two or three different Presbyterian churches and other churches, but we got to Saint John United Methodist Church and their outreach program was so focused on reaching out.

E: Yeah,

C: So that's what drew us in.

E: Got it, okay.

C: And then the pastor there, there were several pastors, several good pastors there we had. And then this this worked with Russia started. And Della needed some help, native help that kind of understood how the church works, so my job learned a little bit more.

E: So, yeah, they must have been happy to have you here.

C: Yeah. And then Jim Campbell, who was the pastor at the Willow Church, went out and found money from, I think the annual conference in Colorado, support ..

E: Methodist?

C: Methodist. United Methodist Conference, yeah.

J: It's a connectional church. 1:48:56

C: And they gave us \$40,000 for a several year program to outreach to native people.

E: Wow.

C: So we started this program called Giving Voice. Well, for the first three years we invited native elders from different parts of the state. Didn't matter which denomination they were, come together for several days of meetings and have conversations. What's, what's challenging in your life? What do you what do you wish changed? And most of it was since the missionaries are gone, we don't have church anymore. And start doing a little more research there, even today, almost 200 communities that used to have churches that don't have churches today. Even today. So that got my interest.

E: And especially to me what was so interesting to even see one of them or something, is that people wanted it.

C: Yes.

E: And they didn't have a church.

C: Yes.

E: You know, it'd be one thing if you know you had a lot of non-believers around or something, who didn't care.

C: But once we started this, with about three years of conversation with the elders. And they said at the last, the last, the third year, they said to us that, "Well you've heard our concerns. Go fix 'em." So ...

E: What are you going to do?

C: Okay. So for the next 11-12 years or so, we had what we call continuation and giving voice, but really with native pastors from different denominations, who gather together, for several days of meetings. And at the end

of each set of meetings, we'd have conversations with the church leadership in Alaska for different denominations. We had the executive presbyter from the Presbyterian Church. We had the district superintendent for United Methodist Church. We had the bishop for the Interschool Church. The bishop for the Evangelical Lutheran Church. And they would meet with us for the last day, to hear what our conversations were about and what their support could mean to us. So that's, how I got started into. And the more we had these conversations with, the more I realized that we really needed to have some native pastors, more native pastors, younger native pastors.

E: mm hm.

C: So my job was really to go and find out what these pastors need, young native folks are experiencing and if they were to consider going to Lay Pastor school. So I went to Lay Pastor school in the Presbyterian system. And to Lay Pastor school in the Methodist system. So I had all this pastor training as lay pastor. And then Nome, the pastor in Nome wanted to move. And this was in April.

E: And this was the Methodist church?

C: The Methodist Church in Nome. Our cycle in the Methodist system is they changed pastors over the 1st of July. So for April, July, very short time frame. So our district superintendent called me over to his house and I knew what was going on. He, I knew he had some conversations and he said, "We've got a conference call with the folks in Nome." And he told me the situation, with the pastor there was leaving. And there was no, nobody else in the pipeline, so he asked me, "Well, would you mind?" I said, "Well, let's see what they want, what they want to say." So we got on the telephone and had the telephone conference with their staff Parish Relations committee. And it's funny, but the very first question they asked, that it's not about my faith, not about my experience. But the very first question they ask is, "How handy are you?" (laughter) They wanted to know if I could fix anything. Come to find out the church and the church and their apartments attached to it and the and the parsonage were all attached together. But they were built back in 1952. They're aging and made a lot of work, they said. I told him I'd do most anything, except I don't do plumbing. So they agreed with that, so they offered me a job. So that's how I became a pastor. So I spent the month of May and June finding out more about how I get certified to be a pastor.

E: To be a real pastor?

C: To be a "local pastor", I went to West Ohio Conference in Dayton. They had a training session happening in June, so I went to that, that week long training session and came out as a certified local pastor. They gave their certificate to be a local pastor.

E: So is that, you have a lay pastor, you have a certified local pastor and then is there something after that?

C: Well, a local pastor, you have to be under the tutelage or, or sponsorship of a what do you call, an Elder. An Elder is somebody who's gone through...

E: Seminary?

C: Ordination.

E: Ordination. Ordained pastor.

C: Ordained pastor, yeah. They call them elders in the Methodist Church. So I was under, under the sponsorship and kind of the mentor or mentorship of a couple of different superintendents.

E: Uh-huh.

C: Dave Beckett at the start. And Carlo Rapanut. So anytime I had to do something different outside of our church, I had to get the approval to do it. There were people who wanted me to do burials from a different denomination. Want me to do Easter service in a Covenant Church in another little town in Wisconsin like so.

E: And so, so you would do them for a different denomination in their -

C: in their church

E: in their -

C: in their town

E: and in their, uh, ways.

C: Yes. So I have several different books on how to do church service in Covenant Church, how to do church service in Lutheran Church, how to do church service .. So that that's how I got to be about a local pastor -

E: You could write an interesting just about that.

C: I got to be a local pastor in a Methodist church. And then in 2016, in 2016 I think it was, our annual conference or just before our annual conference down in Seward, our Bishop called me, said, "Charlie, I think it's time that you became a ordained pastor. We'll ordain you at our next annual conference." I went to our annual conference down in Seward, they ordained me as a pastor. So I can do Pastoring most everywhere, without having to ask for anybody's permission.

E: Right.

J: Without bothering somebody

C: Yeah, yeah.

E: Yeah.

C: Alaska and Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference and the Red Bird Missionary Conference, these were the other two missionary conferences in the states. Alaska, Red Bird...

E: Where's Red Bird?

C: Red Bird is in south east Kentucky,

E: Okay.

C: Appalachia

E: Okay, wow.

C: And Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference is most of Indian country Oklahoma.

E: In Oklahoma,

C: In those three church in those three mission areas, the bishop has the authority to ordain people locally. Not having to go through...

E: right?

C: All of that other stuff. So I got ordained that way. I was only the second person that's ever happened to.

E: Wow.

C: Della Waghiyi was the first.

E: Was the first.

C: But she's gone through seminary. Her husband John

E: Yeah.

C: had but gone through seminary in the Moravian system.

E: Wow, ok

C: And while John was taking his courses, Della was also taken those courses, but not an enrolled person,

E: Right

C: But a support one,

E: Right, right.

C: So she was, she knew all the all the church things that she needed to do so they ordained her a number of years ago, so. ...

E: My goodness.

C: So ..

E: And I've heard of Moravian many times, but I don't really know what, is that just another sect of

C: Yes,

E: Christianity?

C: There's the northern, there's Northern Moravian, and there's southern Moravian. I don't know what the difference is,

E: Okay

C: But they're very similar to mainline churches. They have a seminary in Bethel,

E: Okay

C: A small one, and the Russian Orthodox have a seminary in Kodiak for the Russian Orthodox Church. So after I got to be a pastor, one of my jobs is really to keep our conversations going amongst all the pastors. And looking for how can we train more people. And we've been in conversation with, with both the Moravian Church and the Russian Orthodox church about how can we train and entice more younger folks to come into ministry by using your facilities. But the politics of each different denomination will be done by their own denomination,

E: Now have you been able to do that?

C: Generate some interest? Most of it is that most people can't afford to take five years off of their life to go to seminary and those kinds of things. Or even, some of the, some of the denominations don't have the ability to have what we call a local pastor. They do now in some, some areas now, in some areas, this is the situation with the Alaska conferences? that uh ...

E: You mean to pay somebody to be there?

C: Yes. That's the biggest problem in mission churches today. Not many in small communities can afford to pay what an elder or an ordained pastor [would earn]. Even today, it's hard to find somebody who will go to their own village and be a pastor. It's very tough.

E: Can they do something like not on a temporary basis, but like instead of being there every Sunday, being there once a month or something?

C: That's what we're working on. Curt [Karns]⁴ and I are, and Dorothy [Bekoalok] are working on developing a schedule for, to go to those communities that don't have a pastor of some kind once, at least once a quarter, one of us will be there.

E: Because it seems even that regularity would be so much better than ...

C: Yeah, well, they've been able to transition some into kind of an offshoot of a local church, a family church.

E: Yeah...

C: Where they gather together on Sunday nights for an evening of hymns and songs.

⁴ Charles and Pastor Curt Karns are co-executives of the faith-based non-profit Intergenerational Arctic Ministries (IAM) and Dorothy Bekoalok is supervisor of IAM's Healing and Renewal program.

E: Yeah, doing it themselves, which is, I'm sure, very nice.

C: Which to me is. I, we were in Kaktovik for a week to do a funeral this summer. And it was just wonderful. Every night they had a, what they called, a singsperation. And just to hear the different songs and different people.

J: Guitar players, no [written] music, but they must, they played for hours, a different hymn or a different song every time.

E: Wow.

J: Just you know, just, you know, six guitars or something. It was amazing.

C: Yeah. They were, it was quite an experience.

J: And the counterpoint. Just beautiful singing. Real peppy.

C: Each village is different.

E: And what were you doing while all this was going on. Were you participating?

J: Oh of course! (laughter)

C: She'll travel with me to those places that she has an interest in.

E: Yeah.

J: But I'm not as much of a traveler as he is.

E: You don't like traveling as much as that.

J: No, not all the time. (laughter)

C: Oh I don't know. She's been to Midway Island with me. She's been to Wake Island with me. She's been to Korea with me.

E: Yeah.

C: She's been on some of the commuters around the state.

J: The steward was handing Charley his chocolate and goodies last night on the plane, million mile flyer. He said what would it take to get you to a million miles? (laughter) Water, please.

E: So, let me ask you some just random questions that I have here which are, let's see, one of them is do you know the story? There's one thing I read⁵. It was a tribute, I don't even know when it was done and I thought about printing it out but I didn't. But it told the whole story of how ANCSA happened. And it was a mayor, I think a mayor was, wrote the whole thing. And talking to younger people about, you know, you don't know what it was like to do this.

C: m hm.

E: And that's also one of the things that it does, the specific thing that I wanted to talk about is in the story, they told the story that I've seen in other places about Eben Hopson, young Eben Hopson wanting to go to high school and not, and being left behind. Do you know that story?

C: I've heard parts of it, yeah.

E: The way that I heard it, or read it, he had done something that ticked off the principle, or something, got the principle into trouble. And so, and he was the best in his school. And he was about 15 years old. And he wanted to go and everything. He assumed that he would be picked to go. And everybody else sort of knew that he had gotten on the principle's bad side. And when the boat came to pick them up, the North Star, I think it was the Northern star. He was left behind. And I think it was in 1935. So you might not have been around and -

C: No, I wasn't.

E: No you weren't even born yet. (laughter)

C: Before my time.

E: You might have been somewhere as they say, a twinkle in somebody's eye, right? It also seems to maybe be, so this is my question about it. That he was, he was left behind and he stayed on the beach all alone. And then Charlie Brower, your grandfather, came by, put his hand on his shoulder and said, "Alright, it's over now. You get on with your life." or something like that. And I had two questions about this. And I have no idea if you

⁵ http://www.alaskool.org/native_ed/curriculum/aamodt/TC.html Alaskool.org 1993 selected materials about Alaska Native history, intended for school curriculum.

have any thoughts about it, but one was, so Charles Brower was sort of like the *Umiak*⁶, was that what you call it?

C: *Umialik*.

E: *Umialik*, yeah. And I was sort of wondering why he didn't have the power to do so, to intervene there. Or he might have agreed that he, that Eben was a troublemaker, I don't know.

C: The education system back in the early days of Alaska were really controlled by the government through churches.

E: Uh-huh.

C: 1885 [1885] the Comity Agreement amongst the churches, the verbal comity agreement amongst the churches to divvy up Alaska -

J: 1885

C: by community

E: Right

C: As to who was gonna go where, which church was going to go where. And along with that came the influences of the churches on education.

E: Right.

C: So the education system was really ..

E: Was that Sheldon Jackson?

C: Sheldon Jackson was the first primary missionary up here by the Met, by the Presbyterian Church. And he quickly realized the size, the breadth of the state of Alaska or the Territory of Alaska back then. That it was too big for his denomination. So he went back outside and had conversations with the other denominations and they're the ones that really came up with how they're divvy up.

E: Okay,

⁶ *Umiak* is an open boat made of animal skins stretched over a wooden frame. *Umialik* is the head man of a village.

C: But Sheldon Jackson was, was really the, the, head guy starting up education in Alaska. And even he had some problems with uh, with identifying with natives.

E: Yeah? So he had some problems with, explain what you're saying.

C: Well, he said, in the sense that he didn't think we were real people. That we were beyond education, that we really need to learn the white man's way before we'd do anything. So, that's the problem he had.

E: Yeah. Right.

C: That's the problem that many of the early missionaries had too, I think,

C: There's a book out, Ataataziuraq [2:06:14.0] about an early missionary in Brevig Mission down near Nome. And I enjoy that book because it, I haven't read all of it, but it's a story about this missionary coming to Brevig, and thinking the people there were heathen. That's the thought they had - heathen? [2:06:38.0] That sense that they're less than us was there. And I preached about it too. How the other churches and other denominations, when they get a chance, taking the story of Paul and the Centurion in Acts, when the Centurion laid down, and Paul gets down next to him and says "I'm a man just like you." And using that as an example, I wish that's how early missionaries took their call. But it didn't happen. But "Ataataziuraq," in our denom-, in our language means "little father." And most, most people who are given Inupiaq names are very proud to have that. But in this case, it was one of those things where they're taking a stab at the guy for wanting to be so much like God, the little father, the little guy. He was very proud of that name.

E: Interesting.

C: That's the kind of attitude the early missionaries conveyed to our people. We were less than they were. And that in order for us to survive in this world, we would have to learn their way.

E: And submit to...

C: And that's kind of the attitude that many of the boarding schools had throughout the United States. Like that was with pastor, Methodist pastor down in Navajo country. He said he went through boarding school until tenth grade and then he left. He couldn't take it anymore. He was able to run away. And then he joined the Nav-, excuse me, joined the Army when Vietnam got hot and heavy, and wishing that, all the problems that he

had, he'd be shot and killed when he was in Vietnam. But it didn't happen. He said God had a better plan for him. So he's a pastor now. That's the experience he had at boarding schools. These were bad. [2:08:42.0]

E: mmm.

C: Worse, even worse than what we've, what many of us here in Alaska have experienced. So it's a, there's another pastor down there in Albuquerque who's originally from, upper Michigan I think it was. Married to a Navajo woman that also had a boarding school experience that was not very pleasant. He joined the Marines.

E: mmm

C: Vietnam for.. Came back alive, but he's ... He's a lay pastor, a local pastor through the Methodist system. But he's studying a different kind of ministry where he's allowed, or without allowing, doing things that are more native than the church would normally allow.

E: Right,

C: A very different form of worship.

E: That's interesting. And so, in this particular case, the principal of the school had more power.

C: Yeah.

E: And also because I guess your grandfather had his issues with the church,

C: Yeah

E: with the missionaries

C: Yeah

E: Sometimes, as I saw it anyway.

C: Well, he had a lot of work to do with a lot of the whaling ships that were there too. That was his primary interest.

E: Yeah.

C: And so these other things that happened kind of, he was probably aware of them, but that ..

E: Yeah, right. It wasn't really his concern.

E: I guess the other question about it, um, this is a ridiculous question, but it's the kind of question I would ask, is that because Sadie, one of the things that I think is very interesting about her story, and I think education is really huge in her story.

C: yeah

E: that, was that, without my having known her, all I know is these second-hand things, but that she originally didn't value, feels like she didn't value education, and then she came around to valuing education. But there, her coming around to it, was it almost maybe the same year that she was hired by the BIA to recruit people to go to Eklutna. And I'm just wondering if she had tried to recruit him, and if he was going to go, and there's a wonderful photograph that just popped out of nowhere, I don't know, I guess probably the Heritage Center, that has Charles sitting on a block of something, on a stone or something, and all the people that were going to go on the North Star to Eklutna...

C: mmhm

E: there. And I just, wow, I didn't think, you know, there'd ever be something that close to that story that you could actually look at.

C: mmhm.

E: But I was just wondering if, if those two stories did come together, or if they just might have been...

C: I really don't know. I really don't know, and...

E: I know that one of his daughters, granddaughters I think, I think it's granddaughter won a -because I just keep googling and googling, won a public speaking thing in school, reading -

C: mmhm

E: one of his speeches.

C: mmhm

E: And I was thinking, I was wondering if maybe she might be somebody to get in touch with.

C: Well he had, Eben had quite an influence on this family.

E: Yeah.

C: His daughter, Flossie, was the director for the Arctic Education Foundation. She was wonderful in that job.

E: Uh-huh.

C: She made, she made contact with all the kids that were going through college, wherever they were at, she made personal visits.

E: Wow.

C: She was, she felt the housing here for native students they, they paid for building buildings.

E: Oh great, like a separate, yeah

C: And they paid for fifty years of maintenance, put it in a trust fund.

E: With UAF [University of Alaska, Fairbanks]

C: With UAF.

E: Yeah.

C: And Flossie was the instrumental person in making that happen. She was, she was director of AEF then. She's up in Barrow now with her brother. They're having a funeral for one of her brothers, just passed away just this last week.

E: mmm

C: But uh Flossie is just

J: Our kids had scholarships.

C: Yeah

E: Yeah?

J: Arctic Education.

C: Yeah.

E: That's wonderful.

C: And, and several others, people have followed in her footsteps, but have not done as well at being as instrumental as Flossie was. 'Cause she was there.

E: Dedicated, yeah.

C: I think it came from her father.

E: Yeah.

C: I can remember when I was in high school, when our legislature was in session, Eben and John Nusunyinga who were both from Barrow, they would come to Mt. Edgecumbe and visit us from over there, and ask us questions about how things were going.

E: That's really nice.

C: Yeah.

E: Huh. And there was one, there was one little article about a little item that I think Sadie went too, at Mt. Edgecumbe for something. And did some little -

C: Yeah.

E: Demonstration, maybe of sewing maybe it was.

C: Yeah, Sadie was very connected to the community. She was in the Mother's Club. She was instrumental in getting it started.

E: Yeah.

C: Everything that had to do with empowering women.

E: mmhm

C: And Sadie was there.

E: And she uh, I mean one of the one of the ironic things is, what she says in the book anyway, in her interview was that she didn't think Magistrate was a, was a woman's job. She was resisting it because it was a man's job.

C: She did good at it.

E: Yeah.

C: But, but, but the thing I kind of think she's good at that job was that she kept the focus on the local people.

E: Yeah.

C: That somebody else out here saying we're gonna do this, do this, what's gonna happen here?

E: And she did it her way.

J: She followed the law, but ...

C: Yeah

J: She was smart enough to have it

C: More local.

J: Work well. Okay, then go arrest them, then arrest them all right?

E: Right. I love, I love

J: The Duck-In story. [famous display of civil disobedience by Iñupiat protesting unfair hunting enforcement]

E: Yeah, really.

C: And one of the questions that I was asked when I was down in Mt. Edgecumbe a couple of weeks ago, from one of the students. What are good examples of colonization that are still around today? And I used that Duck-In story.

E: Yeah.

C: The impact -

E: Yes -

C: Of laws that are generated elsewhere that have impact on us here.

E: Right, right. And that's a perfect story.

C: Yeah.

(pause)

E: mmm.

J: We probably have a few pictures. I could run down in the garage and look. We had Sadie on our wall in Anchorage. But you probably have all the pictures you wanted.

E: No. Never. Never ever. I'd love to see them.

C: Some, some of your pictures are slides,

J: Yeah. And I don't know. I was thinking of our framed ones.

C: OK, yeah. That might be good.

J: 'Cause Sadie was always welcoming. I mean, I was a stranger, you know. She always had a smile. Yeah. And you have a cup of tea there. And you were free to stop in at any time. Not that I did that much, but.

E: Yeah. I just um –

J: People were friendly.

E: I told you I wanted to do a tour of Utqiagvik again and I found this guide who was listed in TripAdvisor or something that people said was a wonderful guide. And he was a white guy, but he'd been there for a long, long time. And I started talking to him about it and he said, you know, well, I'm leaving for Mexico the day that you get here. So forget that -

C: Yeah...

E: But he said, and I said, well, you know, this is what I was looking for and that I was working on something about Sadie Brower Neakok. And he said, "She married me and my wife." (laughter) I thought I'd have to call him again and see and get more information. But one of the, so one of the things I wanted to ask about was she's, I think she got a mother of the year award or something,

C: Yeah...

E: Maybe a couple of times. And the mother of Barrow she was called. But also, they, like many other Iñupiaq families, fostered other kids

C: Yeah,

E: And yeah, and especially in her role as a social worker would be put in a position to do that. But she also had a large family herself,

C: Yes she did.

E: And she was a working woman.

C: Yes

E: And do you think that there were, did you see, in your knowledge of her during her later days, or anything that, that that had any consequences? Was there any backlash or something? You know, that she was a working mother and couldn't –

C: Not really, I think, well, I don't think so. Because she was kind of mother to everybody.

E: mmhm.

C: Anybody who came in her house. Well, it was kind of the, the system, so to speak, in our community,

E: yeah.

C: You can go into anybody's house without having called ahead of time,

E: Uh huh

C: Just walking in, and will stand by the door and they will welcome you, they'd offer you cookies or tea or crackers ...

E: Or whatever they were

C: And that was the way it was. And they, whoever was the middle or youngest girl in that family would start the tea

E: Uh huh

C: Just when somebody walked in. But that didn't happen in, not the younger, but anybody who was there -

E: Yeah...

C: In Sadie's family -

E: Right -

C: Would make sure that they were part of the welcome.

E: Yeah, yeah.

C: And that was kind of, you know, she encouraged that in all of us, you know, all the kids that were there.

E: And she also said that Nate was very good with the children.

C: Yes, yeah Nate, he was a very quiet guy, always had a big smile.

E: Yeah.

C: Yeah. I spent a couple of summers up there, there's still a place on the Sungovoak [on map] and that's Sadie's cabin.

E: Okay,

C: And you can get there by snow machine or four-wheeler.

E: Where is that?

C: Sungovoak, It's probably about 20 miles south of Barrow, south, southwest of Barrow.

E: Okay.

C: And I can remember spending a summer there with -

E: I think I saw it on a map somewhere.

C: with Billy and Charlie and, old man Otuana [David⁷ Otuana], the four of us, where we had nets out.

⁷ Sadie talks about inviting David Otuana to live in her home after she helped him when he had TB, and he did for over 20 years.

E: Yeah?.

C: We had owls and we had foxes, baby foxes for pets and we had owls and

E: Uh huh

C: And Otuana would tell us what to do. Old man Otuana. Otuana kinda was an old bachelor, old man bachelor,

E: Yeah?

C: He really didn't have a family. So he would spend summers with, either with Sadie or my dad's family, one of the two.

E: Uh huh.

C: I can remember him. That summer, the two summers I worked there, at the time that Otuana was with Sadie, they took up, and they sent him up to camp with boys. Our job was to fill up the larder with caribou and fish.

E: When you were growing up um, I guess maybe this was totally all gone, but she said when she was growing up, there was a custom of somewhat of, not really arranged marriages, but assumed coupling. Was that still going on when you were growing up?

C: That's still kind of happening in the background today. Like when my oldest, our eldest son, he married a girl from Selawik, he came down, met her there at her grandmother's funeral,

E: mmhm

C: And then came he back later and then had a conversation. I can still remember her mom and dad's, her mom was a Mescalero Apache and her dad, he was from Selawik.

E: Uh huh.

C: Iñupiaq. They were both teachers there, both of them from UAF. But I can remember their comment about it, "It just happened their own way. He came, and they decided they were gonna leave [2:22:59.0](#) and he took her with him, he took our daughter with him." So...

E. Ah

C: Yeah.

E: And that's another question I wanted to ask you. I read Debbie Dahl Edwardson's book⁸ -

C: She was on the airplane with us yesterday, yeah.

E: On the airplane?

C: When we were coming out of Barrow yesterday. She was the Elder at the church where we went to church yesterday.

E: Oh ok, yeah.

C: Yeah.

E: And then she talked about the three boys, this was based on a true story, but fictionalized it.

C: Yeah, yeah.

C: Debbie's husband George was on the plane. He's very much involved with, what is it, ICAS [Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope],

E: Uh huh.

C: He's on the board of directors for ICAS. He's very involved with all the things that happen. He's there and he's an eloquent speaker.

E: That's good.

C: Yeah, yeah, anything Inupiat in the Arctic Slope, he's there, you know.

E: And I guess she was a teacher too.

C: She still is. She's associated with Iñisaġvik College.

E: mmhm. Now when you came back, well I guess you knew – Oh wow. [J unwrapped a framed photo of a very young Sadie wearing a parka.] Wow. That's beautiful. I'm going to take a picture of your picture.

⁸ My Name is not Easy by Debby Dahl Edwardson

E: That's great.

C: Yeah.

E: Thank you.

J: I can take it out.

E: Oh you don't - No, don't even do that.

J: Well you don't need the glare

E: Yeah, well.

C: We'll find a non-glare spot

J: Oh you can find a non-glare spot.

E: Right there. I can do it over here.

J: Set it there.

E: Do you, did you ever have any involvement with her as a magistrate?

C: No. The closest I got was one of my classmates from Mt. Edgecumbe was probably one of the first native state troopers. And he was assigned to Barrow.

E: mmhm

C: And he came there a little bit after I left to marry this woman, or meet this woman's family. But he came to Barrow. And first day on the job, he goes over to my Aunt Sadie's house and, "I'm here to arrest Charley Brower." She looked up and smiled and says, "What'd he do now?"

C: "Well I hear he's been carousing, he's been drinking." So, he made up a big story. And Sadie knew what it was. So knew who he was, and what our relationship was in high school, four years together in the same room. So Sadie kind of knew what was going on.

E: She figured it out.

C: She said, "But I think you're a little late. You might have to get on a plane and go catch him now." But he was there just a few days after I left, yeah.

E: Yeah. That's funny.

C: Yeah.

E: And then the other thing was her notarizing your – So now when you wanted her to notarize that, you just went into the courthouse –

J: Oh no. Her house!

E: Her house! Oh okay.

C: Her house was her courthouse.

J: There was no courthouse.

C: There was no courthouse in Barrow then.

E: Okay, yeah, wow. This is the '60's right. Let's see if I have anything else.

J: Yeah, I knew I'd passed the test and all. This was just a matter of New York State.

E: Yes.

J: Getting the paperwork together.

E: One of the things I was going to ask you about was about Nate. So you gave me, that was a good story. He was quiet. He didn't speak English very well, right?

C: No, no. He could understand some.

E: Yeah.

C: And quite often Aunt Sadie would travel mostly by herself. 'Cause Nate stayed home to take care of the family.

E: Yeah, I love the way um gender roles are treated, you know, it's sort of like, and even that's sort of what intrigued me even in your grandfather's book. And that's what made me go looking for something about women in the community. Because his first wife, or whatever -

J: Toctoo

E: Because somebody said there were three [wives] altogether, but [Toctoo] went on the whaling ship. And I thought, well, that's different, you know. But now, now fathers do -

C: Yeah

E: Let their daughters go on these ships and stuff like that. And so -

J: There's a female whaling captain in Barrow.

E: Yeah? Wow.

C: There's a couple of them now.

J: Yeah.

E: Yeah?

J: And our son's wife is on that crew.

E: Yeah. Wow. And it's sort of like it's not. It's not taking away from anybody.

C: No.

E: You know, it's just that you know these are these are the roles. And if you want to take this from this one and that from this one, then it's okay.

C: Yeah

J: With most people, but there's a few. (laughter)

E: Okay, tell me.

J: Traditional ...

E: Tell me a story.

C: But there are other stories there,

E: Yeah?

C: That some of the women during the Korean conflict,

E: Uh huh?

C: When they joined the Alaska Territorial Guard.

J: Oh, that was, oh.

C: Afterwards back in the early 1950s.

E: Yeah?

C: They were, the women were out there with 45s up there outside their parka, standing watch. They were looking for planes or whatever.

E: Right? Huh.

C: Because there are several women who were part of that that Alaska Territorial Guard.

E: Until that war was over?

C: Well, I don't, I don't know how long it lasted.

E: Yeah.

C: But they were there. And made sure that, just like my uncle with being the curfew guy,

E: Right, right.

C: They were also, the ATG was also making sure they would walk around the village, make sure people have their windows covered so that -

E: Yeah right their lights off or something.

C: Yeah yeah,

J: Was that World War II maybe?

E: Yeah.

C: No

E: Uh, Korean War.

C: Korean War, yeah.

E: Early 50s.

J: Yeah I knew that was the Korean War. I didn't realize that happened that time too.

C: Oh yeah.

J: East coast it didn't.

C: I remember that, yeah.

E: Yeah I don't remember this much, but the, but the West Coast is near

J: Much closer right.

E: Yeah alright.

J: Yeah I just learned something.

C: There was it, there was, there was a, a tower [2:30:40.0] 25 miles out of Barrow that was built by the Air Force out of Rome Air Development Center. And I didn't know what it was for, but one of the guys I worked with when I was working for the Air Force, Hanscom, said that it was built with the microphones with a big receiver...

E: Yeah?

C: To try to listen for airplane noises away from Barrow,

E: right?

C: In case, an early trend developed

E: 'Cause Barrow's such a noisy town?

C: Yeah, an early detection system.

E: Yeah. Yeah. Right. And that's what the DEW Line was.

C: The DEW Line, well, that was, came much later

E: Yeah,

C: But they were testing out acoustic systems, trying to look for airplane noises.

E: Interesting. Oh, about the movie theater, right. You said, Steve Hopson, was he, how is he related to, he must have been somehow related to Eben Hopson.

C: Who is?

E: You said Steve Hopson had one of the movie -

C: They were brothers, they were brothers.

E: They were brothers, okay, yeah. And at one point there's a, the way Sadie tells it, the way the story is in the book, it was Eddie Hobson that was appointed magistrate first. And he couldn't get the job done I guess. And so he, I don't know if you read the book, but it was -

J: Not as carefully as you have (laughter)

E: I know, I feel like I've memorized it, but the way, the way he talks her into taking it is when she says it's a man's job, he said, "Well, I'm man and I couldn't do it." But then in another, in another telling of the story, somebody says it was Eben Hopson. But I don't think so, no, because Eben already had his senate job or assembly job or something.

C: Yeah. Eddie was one of the incorporators for ASRC.

E: mmhm.

J: Donna visited us, the daughter, Sadie's daughter.

E: Donna, yeah?

J: When we were in California when we lived there.

E: Yeah?

J: She came one summer with a niece of ours.

E: huh?

J: Just vacation, I guess.

E: Yeah.

J: She was up there in school still.

C: Yeah.

E: I spoke with Donna once.

J: I don't know her now.

E: Donna Miller.

C: Donna Miller, yeah,

J: You have kept in touch.

E: Oh, here's one. So I guess technically her job as magistrate was sort of the whole North Slope.

C: Yes.

E: Do you know how that was dealt with? I know that there were, I know it was hard to get policemen to live in Barrow, in the villages. But do you know, do you have any memory of any kind of case that involved her going out to another village or something like that.

C: No, I was never really involved with any of that. I really didn't hear about what's happening outside of Barrow.

E: And, and is that probably true most people in Barrow didn't really know what was going on in another village unless they knew somebody?

C: They might have heard from family.

E: Yeah.

J: If they had family there.

E: Yeah. Right. Yeah. If they had a reason to know.

C: Yeah.

E: But it's not like there was a radio story or something like that.

C: No, no. there was none of that.

E: Okay.

C: 'Cause the mail, even the mail was delivered by dog team from Barrow. They delivered the mail by dog team going through Wainwright, Point Lay, Point Hope, in that direction. And Ned Nusunyinga used to be one of the mail carriers.

E: Uh-huh. So he probably knew the scoop.

C: I would guess

J: One thing about the boarding schools, it just brought people, youngsters together from all over the state.

E: mmhm

J: So I know when we moved back here, and it didn't matter where you went, Charlie knew somebody from the family. Might not even be the person he met, but he knew the brother.

C: Right.

J: And he knew them well, you know, not like just going to school during the day,

E: Right?

J: 'Cause they knew some of the kids. That certainly helped.

E: Interesting.

C: When I was down at Mt. Edgecumbe just a couple of weeks ago, I brought my yearbooks from way back when.

E: Uh-huh.

C: And I passed them around the classroom and a couple of the young ladies there saw pictures of their grandparents.

E: Yeah?

C: So they came up and said, "did you know?"

E: Yeah?

C: So there was kinda' fun.

J: Connections among age-mates, and generations.

E: Which is, which is great, because that's how -

C: That's how ASCA happened, yes.

E: Yes, I mean, that's how kids learn that what their parents told them is real, you know,

C: yeah,

E: it's when somebody else knows it, you know?

C: Yeah,

E: And also there was another one of Sadie's stories. There were, there were kids that she was bringing to the school from different tribes. And I guess there was something, you know, for lack of a better expression, bad blood between Point Hope and Kotzebue or something. And there were a couple of girls who were, you know, all set to hate each other, and it was sort of like watching the Parent Trap, where they got to like each other.

C: Yeah, well we had an aunt, she's passed now, but she tells the story of coming through Fairbanks to go to school.

J: She's from the North Slope.

C: She was from Wainwright

J: 18 years old,

C: 18 years old hitching a ride on a plane to Fairbanks staying at the Nordale Hotel. And next day she is going to go on down to the hospital in Anchorage.

E: mmhm

C: But since they were native girls, she was put in a room with a native girl from the interior. And then being these Indian wars.

E: Yeah.

C: Eskimo Indian Wars among communities.

E: Yeah,

C: And both girls are suspicious

J: She was in her nineties at this point,

E: Yeah?

C: So yeah. Kind of aware she's Eskimo, she's Indian. And they thought they were going to kill each other, do something harmful to each other.

J: They didn't dare go to sleep,

C: They didn't dare go to sleep, turned their backs on each other. But they woke up in the morning. Nothing happened. (laughter) Then they kind of laughed about it. So those kinds of experiences were there.

E: Yeah. God, you've been so wonderful. I'm sure I'll probably think of a million other things, you know?

J: Ask.

E: Oh, I know. Did your siblings go to school too?

C: I had my sister Lorena went to Mt. Edgecumbe to be a Licensed Practical Nurse. My twin sisters Jenny and Jeanette were at Mt. Edgecumbe, Jeanette for five years without coming home, Jenny came home fairly regular.

E: mmhm

C: My sister Ruth, she was there three years ahead of me.

E: mmhm

C: My three-week older sister Ruth, the adopted sister,

E: Yes, right.

C: went there. My little brother David went to Chemawa [Indian School] in Oregon. So most of us younger folks.

J: We went up for his graduation when we lived in California when we first married. \$5.00 in our pocket.

E: Back when \$5.00 meant something.

C: And a new credit card.

J: And a credit card that had come the day before. Our first one.

E: Yeah?

J: He was going to school.

C: My dad came back down with us.

E: So was your father a hunter?

C: He was, the way it used to be. The family, since he was the oldest, he kind of minded the store. He ran the store, he ran the trading post. He ran the post office when my grandfather had it. And the other brothers, Arnold, Tommy,

E: Tom, yeah

C: and Harry and Robert were out taking care of the caribou herds, out at Half Moon Three. But he managed the system for the whole family,

E: Yeah,

C: Gave out dividends to the family, take care of each other. So my dad's job was really in town. I don't, I don't remember, ever remember him being out of town with the reindeer herds.

E: Uh-huh.

C: He was the manager of the of the system, for our family.

E: And he was doing sort of the trading business too,

C: Yes.

E: So he was like the proprietor of that business then when you were growing up,

C: Yeah kind of. Even after my grandfather died, he ran that family business for quite a number of years,

E: Yeah. I think, I think he was the one in the story that Sadie tells about when she was coming back from school and her father didn't know it. And he and Jim Allen

C: from Wainwright, yeah.

E: Had come down with photos, which made her even more homesick. And so it's sort of like they all sort of, you know, escape together to go out and there was a big strike at, which I checked out, and there was a huge strike of the steamships strike in Seattle. [\[2:41:43.0\]](#) And they, David and Jim snuck them all on to the boat to get to Alaska

C: mmhm.

E: Did you ever hear that story?

C: No. no.

E: That was the one personal thing I saw about Dave, let's see.

J: Was he a policeman in San Francisco for a while?

E: Oh!

C: My father was a part-time policeman in San Francisco. [\[2:42:16.0\]](#)

E: Oh wow

C: He was going to college there. Somewhere in my family up north wonder, wondering. I think probably the younger, the second family,

E: right?

C: He's still got his police badge his 38 Special.

E: Wow.

S: 38 Special. Ah, he was going to school. I think he went to San Francisco State, way back when.

E: And this was after your mother died.

C and J: No, no, this was before.

E: Oh before!

J: As a young man.

C: Way before.

E: Oh, ok. Alright.

J: Before he was married. When he was single

E: Huh.

C: He went down there, like my grandfather sent him down there to learn how the business end of ...

E: uh-huh

C: And he was a bookkeeper of several community, several organizations in our town as well. The Native Store, he kept the books for them.

E: mmhm. I was going to ask you about the quote, about "all this training I've gone through" and now I know what it meant. All this pastor training,

C: Yeah.

E: Have you ever gone back to Wrangell and Edgecumbe? You said you went back Mt. Edgecumbe.

C: I went to Wrangell, I've been to Mt. Edgecumbe a few times.

E: Yeah?

C: Just recently, was about two weeks ago I was there working with the students, in invitation of one of the teachers, yeah.

E: Yeah, now were they still mostly schooling indigenous people were or,

C: I would say probably 90% of the population, student population, there's indigenous and, but there's some smattering of non-native students there as well in both locations.

E: mmhm

C: Since it's a state school, it's not really for natives anymore, it's open

E: Right.

C: But the principal is native. A number of the of the teachers I met there are native women, native people.

E: Well, thank you.

C: You're very welcome.

E: This was wonderful, for me. I hope, did you enjoy it?

C: I enjoyed it, yeah.

E: Good, good. I'm going to turn this off now.