

144-82-127-18  
Interviewer: Mariah Maloney  
Person Interviewed: Buddug Waddell  
2nd Interview

Date: July 30, 1981  
Place: Homer, Ak.

M- This is Mariah Maloney interviewing Buddug Waddell on July 30, 1981. Just for a recap of your life in Homer. You came to Seldovia in 1928 is that right?

B- Yea, I came from Wales. I was a greenhorn, I didn't speak much English. I came here then in 1928.

M- OK, and then you married after you had moved to Homer right?

B- Well, no. I. ~~no~~ Well, yes I came here after I got married, stayed here. But I used to come over and visit Mrs. Svedlund, you know, every summer and I got acquainted with lots of people here in Homer. But to live, I came here after I got married.

M- Oh, I see. So you got married in Seldovia.

B- Yea, I got married in Seldovia but with a man from Homer.

M- Oh, ok.

B- Guy Waddell was a Homer man. And I met him here in Homer when I was visiting with friends here.

M- What year was that that you moved to Homer?

B- I moved to Homer to live you mean?

M- Yes.

B- That was in 1939. I got married that year, 1939 and I moved here.

M- And your husband was a big game hunter and guide right?

B- Yes, a big game guide. He used to get people from all over, from Germany and from New York and from South America and from all over. They were after the big game.

M- OK, then you guys homesteaded on West Hill after you moved here is that right?

B- Yes, that's where he started to build a little cabin, when we got married here. It's the little cabin on West Hill Road, on the first curve there as you go up the hill.

M- And then you moved to Oregon for one year?

B- Yes, we left and then lived in Oregon for, well almost a year. He wasn't there for a year but I was. He came back and went back to his guiding you know. I stayed there just, you know, just having fun I guess you could call it.

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M- Having a little vacation. Ok then you bought...

B-Svedlund's.

M-Svedlund's house?

B- Yea, Pa Svedlund's. We bought it and that right there...oh East End here. I think the Kilcher girl bought it. That's where we used to live in that green one. But they've built to it since we lived there.

M- And then ..that was on East Hill Road right?

B- Yes, East Road.

M-Ok that recap was just so I can get the dates and stuff right.

B- Yes, that's ok.

M- How did you feel about electricity when it came in?

B- Well, it was a good thing, you know, a very good thing. Because we had our own electricity, just a small generator that Guy had and we had you know. But when electricity came in we were very glad of it because we didn't have to fool around with the generator all the time. I couldn't even start it when he wasn't there, I had to use a lamp or candles or what ever.

M- So you did sort of have electricity.

B- Oh yes, well since we had our own generator. and he used to start it and then he'd go and turn it off when we went to bed. Then we would have candles or a lamp.

M- Well in what ways did electricity make your life easier or different?

B- Oh in lots of ways because you can use so many things in the kitchen. Well you know your beaters and your electric toasters and all that stuff that weren't really in use with our own electricity. So you could get all of the very convenient things, so you could get a vacuum to clean your carpet and so many things.

M- Ok it really differed your life when you got electricity.

B- Well it helped you know, you didn't have to scrub and do such hard work, you know.

M- Gave you a little break...

B- That's right because it ~~was~~ a real big help I think.

M- And did electricity make a big effect on you?

B- Well I don't know. I think I wouldn't go back to candles again. I think that I lived with candles and oil lamps for many years you know, when you get older you enjoy the electricity. But that is very expensive too, but just the same, it's very convenient. I think it's very convenient.

M- So your husband started the generator.

B- Yea, he had quite a big sized generator. Got enough light for all the rooms.

M- Yea so you had light before electricity but just not all the conveniences.

B- Yea, well we couldn't use all the power tools and stuff like that. We could use some but he had all kinds of power tools after the electricity came in, you know. He was a carpenter too and he could use all the power tools for carpenter work you know.

M- It really sounds like electricity made it much easier for you.

B- Yes, a big help it made it much....much easier.

M- What can you remember towards having phones?

B- Oh, we had a phone, it was a community affair, everybody had a phone but when everything was really important going on in the little village, they used to ring one long long ring. And then everybody would come listen in, and we knew what was going on in town and if there was a big dance or something, coming up everybody knew about it, because everybody would go to the phone because it was kind of a general alarm you know. But we had our phones, it was quite unique I think because you could talk to each other and, like I say, everyone knew what was going on because everybody listened in.

M- Yea, one big party line.

B- Yes, a big one, actually it was fun really, then there weren't very many people, it was kind of like one big family. Everybody would go to the schoolhouse once a week and take the kids and put them to sleep on the floor and everybody would dance till early hours in the morning. We'd bring something to eat and it was lots of fun.

M- What were some of the main differences of having a phone?

B- Well it made it better because we had private phones and it was a big help.

M- Were there any things you didn't like about the phones?

B- No, no it was pretty handy you know if you wanted to call out to the spit and find out when the boats were coming in or call down to find out when my husband was coming in, on the phone and stuff like that. And, like I said before, it's handy especially if you live away from town. Because we lived a mile and a half away from town. But then if you wanted to call the store, and find out if they had whatever you wanted, you know, you didn't have to go down unless you knew you had it on hand.

M- So you could get ahold of goods easier then.

B- Yea, that's right, it was a big help.

M- What about when you got sick,would you call doctors?

B- Well, we didn't have doctors over here,we would have to go to Seldovia. My first baby was born in Anchorage. We had to get a little plane to come down and <sup>get</sup> Guy and I to take us to Anchorage when Billy was born. Because we didn't have any doctors here. But then when Enid was born, they had just built the new hospital in Seldovia. And they got a doctor there so she was the first baby born in Seldovia Hospital. After that,Later on in the years,we had a hospital here. But most people used to go to Seldovia after they got the hospital there.

M- Yes,the phones really made it alot easier on you.

B- Oh yes,yes,and then when they got the phones from here to Seldovia and up to the cove and you could talk to everybody. You could call Seldovia and find out if the doctor was there.

M- You could call Seldovia from Homer then?

B- Yea,it was real handy. No I don't think I would want to be without a phone.

M- You said your husband got the first car in Homer,is that correct?

B- Well there was an old truck,I think a flatbed truck. Jack Deitz had it but we had the first little car. Yea it was kind of a Coupe,you know,it was a Chevy Coupe. Just a little one with just a front seat,just one seat.

M- How did you like the idea of you guys having the first real car?

B- Well,my husband always said to me before we got married that I fell in love with that car,it was a cute little thing and I used to drive it. He used to teach me how to drive it and that's the only car I ever drove. I never drove another one.

M- Really?

B- After he got rid of that little car,he got a great big one and I was afraid of that one. So I never drove it but I sure liked that little car.

M- Do you remember your first trip to Anchorage?

B- Well,yes I do. My husband was working on a right of way,he and Tom Shelford and Harris Gordon,I don't remember who else. Anyway they had the first cutting on making the road from here to Anchor Point and from Anchor Point and up that way. And they were the ones that were clearing part of the right of way for the road. But that was in '47 or '48,something like that. But before that I don't quite remember. Anyway,we came down to...I don't remember if we went up the road,we did I think. I think it was in '48 that we went to Mosse Pass to Anchorage.

M- Oh,there wasn't any road from Moose Pass to Anchorage?

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B: No we had to go to Moose Pass and then go on to Anchorage. And then when we came back, we came back in 1950; and that's what we did there, we came back down to Moose Pass because the road wasn't finished all the way to Anchorage. This was a very rough road. It was a dirt road, you know, all the way. But in '50's, it got better. They started to get it all the way to Anchorage,

M: It took quite a while to go to Anchorage?

B: Yes, it took quite a while because the roads were kind of rough. But after they got it paved, it was no trick at all to go to Anchorage. Now it's real fine, you know. When they first started it was pretty rough, but it was really something because we could go someplace, you know. Go from here to Kenai and those places. It was real nice to have the road. So handy. Otherwise the only way you could go was by boat or by plane. I remember going to Anchorage on the boat several times, from Seldovia to Anchorage. Hiny Burger's boat was the "Discoverer" - the name of the boat was the "Discoverer". And we used to go on that, and we used to go on Jack Anderson's boat. He used to carry the mail too. We used to have lots of fun on those boats. But I would get sick and I didn't like that!

M: How did the road to Anchorage change Homer?

B: Oh, my goodness, it changed Homer very much because before we didn't have hardly any tourists. It brought all the tourists down here. And it made a big difference to Homer because Homer grew alot after that. After the road went in, people came here and built homes here, so it has made a big difference since we got the road. The tourists keep coming in. They've been coming in for years now. Yes, that has made a big difference here.

M: So, tourists are on the main differences roads brought?

B: Yes, and people coming down here to live, people wanting to buy from Anchorage. Lots of people, retired people in Anchorage. Oh, they bought an awful lot of land back here in Homer. They would come here in the summertime or whenever, and - of course, the tourists are the main thing.

M: Were there more goods, like more food coming in?

B: Oh, yes. They come in with trucks. They bring in an awful lot of food, in by truck. Now the boats come here only once in a while. It all comes in by trucks. Some comes down by airplanes but I think the most of it comes in by trucks anymore. Sealand and different trucks that come in.

M: Well, what we've covered now is mainly, mostly the conveniences like phones, electricity, roads and cars.

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B: Oh, yes. I've seen al thi growing since I've been here. You know, when I first came here, there was hardly nothing here.

M: How do you feel about all this?

B: Oh, I feel great about it. Lot's of people don't like to see growth the way if is, but I think it's wonderful to have. . . you know, it makes a better place for people to find a job and everything. Some people don't like progress but I'm in favor of progress.

M: M: Oh, you told me some things about your husband hunting, and you brought me to be curious about the business. And so I was wondering, like who came to be guided and stuff?

B: Oh, hunters, you see, from . . . he would get a letter from some one outside wanting to know if he would take them on a hunt. And they'd want a big brown bear, or they'd want a sheep, or they'd want a moose - or something like that. So he'd write back to them and tell them that he'd take them for so much and he would furnish the food and furnish the tent and the horses and all that. Then maybe he'd two or three other fellas that he would write to. He used to have some brochures, and Jim Waddell used to go with him on these hunts quite a bit, and they had a partnership. They were brothers, and they went together. And they took out quite a few hunters. They'd have two or three camps. Jim would have a camp, and Guy would have a camp, and Billy would have a camp. They would take out several hunters on a hunting party like that. They'd try to get them trophies for what ever kind of animals they wanted. Like sheep, moose, bear, some of them wanted brown bear and black bear. Some wanted caribou. They liked caribou very much. They are very pretty, you know, the caribou are.

M: Where did they come from, what places?

B: You nean the hunters?

M: Yes.

B: Well, so many of them came from New York, Like the Webbs now, for example. Mrs. Webb and her whole family would be coming up. She had several sons, and they would come up every year. And then he had several from Germany. Lots of German people came, after bear. Jim would have a party, too, from Germany, and so did Guy. They'd take them all out. Maybe there'd be three or four in the party, and they'd all be hunters. So three or four men would come from Germany. And we had some from South America one year there, a man and wife. And then the Lerner from New York, they came too. They have the Lerner shops all over Outside. We used to get them from all over.

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M: How would they come up? Would they fly?

B: They would fly to Homer from wherever they were, and then Guy would take them then to wherever they wanted to go. He'd fly them or they'd come to Anchorage and he'd meet them there in Anchorage. And he'd take the horses up the beach all the way up to Anchorage. And then they'd go whenever - say Tustamena Lake, or if they'd want to go to different places up above Anchorage. But they had to take the planes to some of the places. They couldn't take horses there.

M: How would you advertise all the way over in Germany?

B: Well, he had some brochures made, and he would send them to them. And he used to put a little advertisement in the "Alaska Sportsman" and other magazines. And then the people would find out about it somehow. Someone would tell them maybe. Different guides would go advertise in different books, different magazines.

M: So were you like the secretary of the business?

B: Yeah, I was. I used to do a little typing that I could do with my fingers, one or two fingers, I would help him out.

M: What did the people bring when they went on these trips?

B: Well, all they brought were their <sup>own</sup> guns, and their sleeping bags and their, you know, clothes that they could wear out there.

M: But they didn't bring tents?

B: No, no Guy and Jim, they used to furnish all the tents and everything like that. They would furnish the food, but of course, they would charge them for everything.

M: So you were basically the Secretary for the business, right?

B: Yeah, I would just help out write the letters and stuff like that.

M: It was your business, right?

B: Yeah, it was his business and I would help him.

M: How many people would come on the trail at a time?

B: Oh, there would be quite a few. It just depends how many, the party may be, three or four may come in from the first party then we'd have three or four more in the second party, they'd be in for maybe two weeks at a time. They might have three or four parties during the season. The seasons are, well you have the spring season, then the fall season starts the first of May till June, sometime, then starts again in August 'till end of September. They come for Bear, you know, in the spring.

M: What did he do the rest of the time?

B: Well, he had a saw mill he'd cut lumber and he was a carpenter and he helped build homes. In the '50's we got in Partnership with the Seafair Motel, so he built most of it.

M: I have a question on the Seafair, did you two run the apartments?

B: Yeah, we ran the apartments until 1970.

M: And you two built the apartments?

B: Yeah, we built all the apartments;

M: Wow, that's interesting.

B: He did, I didn't, I had to work inside, but he built them all.

M: Yeah, and they're still there?

B: Yeah, they're still there. We were building them right before the earthquake. As we just started building down below. They all tumbled down but I got those back up again but I got some help to do it.

M: What were some of the major problems that the earthquake created?

B: Well, we didn't have too much, just broken pipes and some other... the apartments that Guy started kind of went back down. There wasn't too many damages. We were able to take care of it. I had some men come and help me. That was a year after Guy had passed away.

M: The Earthquake was after he passed away?

B: Yeah, a year after. He was killed in an automobile accident in '63 and the earthquake was in '64.

M: So you were alone during the earthquake.

B: Yes, I was.

M: That must have been real scary.

B: Well, I had Enid with me, and a baby. It was pretty scary. We were eating dinner at the table and the earthquake just moved everything around, and all we could do was run for the bedroom and lay on the bed. Yeah, it was scary.

M: Things fall out of the cupboards?

B: Yes, things fell on the floor. But really it wasn't too much damage here in Homer. The only big damage was at the spit, you know. The spit went down. All the water flooded in on the spit.

M: Were there any people living on the spit then?

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B: Oh, yeah, the canneries and everything growing on the spit. Then Browning, I think, had a carrery there, and it got about half full of water. And the spit went down about six feet. It covered all the grass. My husband used to have twenty-five or twenty-six head of horses grazing on the spit all winter. They were nice and fat, you know. But now there's hardly any grass at all. The Green Timbers, , , we used to call them Green Timbers - there are just all these sticks standing up now. Yeah, they were nice and they had a saw-mill out there, too.

M: That was one of the places?

B: Yes, because he used to bring logs from across the bay to the sawmill there. After the earthquake, the spit changed all together. The road went down. Everything went down. They have to rebuild the roads and everything. Yeah, there's lots more out there now than there was before.

M: During the earthquake where did you live?

B: Down at the Seafair, Seafair Motel. The only thing that happened there was the hot water, they were all busted. I though we had fire for a long time because I saw the steam, you know, coming out. The house down below where I lived, steam was coming out and I thought fire. But it wasn't. It was just the hot water.

M: M: The spit must have been pretty bad.

B: Yeah, it was the worst. Although it wasn't too bad in Homer, Only the spit was bad. And it's a good thing we didn't have a little wave. The wave by the time it got here was way down. It was bad enough to go all over the spit. And the spit went down, but we didn't have a bit tidal wave, or I don't know what would have happened to us.

M: Did you like the idea of roads?

B: Yes I thought roads were good because people could get around. . . Well, it was nice when people had horses, and they used to go horse-back riding. People would come from one end of town to the other. Well, we didn't have a town really, just a community affair. They would come over with a cart or somelike that. But it's so much more conveninet to have a car to go back and forth in. But right now there is too many cars I think. But it is nice to have a car. I can't drive anymore, I haven't driven for years and years. Quite a few had jeeps here in the very beginning. They would go down and get coal. It was nice you know, you could go on the beach.

M: Did they go by Bishop's beach?

B: Yeah, there by Bishop's Beach, and up towards the Seafair and that way, and pick up coal. We had all kind of coal. I don't think there's too much coming in anymore. I don't hear much about it. Once in a while I hear someone got some on the beach. Everybody used to. Everybody used to burn wood and coal years ago.

M: Was down by Bishop's the main part of town then?

B: Well, we had a post office down right close to the beach there. And they used to bring the mail over here from Seldovia. Shelford used to have a boat and he brought the mail over every week, or once a month. Really, it just depends when the boats come in. Sometimes we had a boat come in twice a month from Seldovia and bring the mail. But then Tom Shelford would go over and get the mail and bring it over here. And the Post Office was quite close to the Bishop's. . . well, they call it Bishop's Beach now, but it wasn't then. Because the store that Bishop had was Bennell. . . They built a store here in 1936. Also so did Mrs. Walli and Bennell's had a store here. I think the Walli's store was first and then the Bennell's built theirs. \*\*

*Bennell*

M: Was that the first store, in 1936?

B: Yeah, the first store we had here. But I think perhaps another little place upstairs where. . . when he'd go to Seldovia, he'd brought quite a few groceries, oh something to have in case someone wanted some salt or some sugar, or a few groceries just to have on hand. And people when they needed something real bad (Bert) Hanson had anything they could buy. It was that handy.

M: So he was kind of the in-between store.

B: Yeah.

M: Well, it's been nice interviewing you. I've found out a lot.

B: That's good. Well, thank you.

M: Yeah, Bye.

\*\*The store built on what is now called Bishops Beach was originally owned by the Barry's; then the Bennell's; then the Watson's; and finally George Bishop.

*+ Chamberlain*