

Bowdoin College

Bowdoin Digital Commons

Maine Wabanaki-State Child Welfare Truth and
Reconciliation Commission: Statements

Maine Wabanaki-State Child Welfare Truth &
Reconciliation Commission Archive

10-16-2014

Statement by Anonymous collected by Marcie Lister on October 16, 2014

Anonymous

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.bowdoin.edu/maine-wabanaki-trc-statements>

Recommended Citation

Anonymous, "Statement by Anonymous collected by Marcie Lister on October 16, 2014" (2014). *Maine Wabanaki-State Child Welfare Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Statements*. 21.
<https://digitalcommons.bowdoin.edu/maine-wabanaki-trc-statements/21>

This Statement is brought to you for free and open access by the Maine Wabanaki-State Child Welfare Truth & Reconciliation Commission Archive at Bowdoin Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Maine Wabanaki-State Child Welfare Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Statements by an authorized administrator of Bowdoin Digital Commons. For more information, please contact mdoyle@bowdoin.edu.



General Information

Private or Public Statement? - Private

Statement Provider: Anonymous

Date: October 16, 2014

Location: Presque Isle, Maine

Previous Statement? N/A

Statement Gatherer: Marcie Lister

Support Person: Joanne Putnam

Additional Individuals Present: Commissioner gkisedtanamoogk, Krista Stevens and Tanya Paul

Recording Format: Audio

Length of Recording: 57:51:22

Transcriber's Note:

This is an anonymous statement. Any alternations to the recording and redactions in the transcript have been completed at the request of the statement provider in an effort to protect his or her identity.

Recording

ML: I'm Marcie Lister, and I'm here at the home of [REDACTED], but you like to use another name as well?

A: [REDACTED]

ML: Thank you [REDACTED].

ML: And, it is October 16, 2014. The file number is A-201410-00112-001. And, um, I'm Marcie Lister. I'm the Statement Gatherer. And with us are:

KS: Krista Stevens, [REACTED]

TP: Tanya Paul, [REDACTED]



JP: Joanne Putnam, longtime friend, 20 years neighbors.

GK: And Commissioner gkisedtanamoogk.

ML: Thank you. And [REDACTED], have you read over — or actually, I read them — Ah, we've read over the consents. Do you — Did you understand all of them?

A: Yeah.

ML: And, did you sign them?

A: Yes.

ML: Okay. And, I need to repeat that, should anything come up in your Statement today that indicates that, ah, a child is in any danger of, uh, being harmed in any way, that is — We are not able to keep that confidential. Um, so I thank you ahead of time, and you may begin whenever you're ready.

A: Um. I would have to say it was in 1960 — Between 1964 and '65, we became fosters child. My brother, David, and my sister, Donna. And we were put in foster homes in Canada. And they took David away from us, 'cause we were fighting to stay together. And they said they would try to do the best they can, because there's not much family would take three kids at once. And we kept fighting for it, 'cause I kept talking to the Indian Affairs of Canada. And I think 1964, I was just turning ten, or I was ten. I might have been ten. I'm trying to think. Yeah, I might have been near close to ten. I'm trying to see if there was snow on the ground, but I don't see no snow. It must have been in the fall. And, um, my mother separated from Dad. And I kept hanging onto the window trying to grab him. *(cries)* But he didn't come for a while. Mum says she's just taking a break, and when she said that I felt better. And I said, 'Well, I would always picture Daddy taking the bus.' Cause [UNCLEAR]. You guys look out for your dad.'

And we settled down in a lumberjack place, and it was run by a guy named Henry Renski. And we started to get used to the place. It was nice in the woods. And Mum did her work, and we were brought to school. We had this wait, walk a little ways out into the field. There was a cow pasture. Crossroad, place where we went used to be a cow pasture, but it was a field, like, of hay. And we used to get on the bus from there. I don't even remember some of the kids there. But I was made sure Donna, and Donna didn't — Yeah! Donna went with us, except David. He stayed home. And we just did that a couple times. So we must not have stayed there too long. And then we did the regular thing of go shopping.

(pause) I'm going to, my Mom must have met another guy. *(cries)* And Donna and me was thinking how we'd knock him out. *(laughs)* I mean, and I asked Mom, 'Is that our new Dad?' She said, 'No. Your Dad will always be your Dad.' Mama said he was a friend. It didn't look



like it. And we got used to him, because he bought us presents. I remember my Mom it seemed like she didn't pay attention to us when we wanted to see her because we was so used to having her to ourselves. And we hated that guy. Not the same guy that she took off with. It was a French guy, and I just completely block him out of my mind. 'Cause we went to Grand Falls before we went to there. I just forgot about it, and what happened there.

And I tried to fight him. I was tall for ten. I think I was tall as men, I guess. And I tried to throw things on him. Sometimes a bunch of chairs up there. And put 'em up far from him so I could throw 'em downstairs so he won't come up. And he kept saying he was going to come up and kill me. But I [UNCLEAR] I wasn't scared of him. 'Cause one time Mum and him got in a fight in the kitchen, and I threw a chair at him again.

I did hurt him. And I was so happy. And then, he would try to tell Mum he's gonna beat, spank me. And Mum said, 'You better not touch her.' So he never get to touch me. Because I would still do it again. And I told Mum, 'I'm gonna run down' — we would, lived right in town so I could go to the cops. I told Mum, 'I know where the cops is if you get in trouble. I'll help you.' And we had those incidents there. I met some friends in school. Then my Mom signed me up to piano lessons. And I'm sitting there, 'Piano Mom?' (*laughs*) She goes, 'Oh yeah, I'm walking you to piano.' I go, 'Whose idea was it to take me to piano?' And so, I'm sitting there waiting, like, and this woman comes in. And she showed me how to use the clock. And we did some things. And then she said, 'There'll be some days that you'll be around, you'll be here, you'll just practice.' There were days when I practiced and then there were days I just, what you call, skipped it. I had no idea why Mum put me in there. Maybe she wanted me to learn how to play piano. I do know how to play piano and a little bit of that from just reading the notes they gave us and everything.

But then I met a guy that was (*laughs*) 11 years old and his name was George. 'I had my own boyfriend now,' I told Mom. He used to walk me from school. And then, uh, he used to pick me up in the morning. So I'd wait for him. And then we'd — Nobody'd bother me or beat us or darn on me. He'd protect the both of us. And then that happened for a while. I don't even know how long we stayed there, 'cause I just remember a little bit of snow. Not much. Maybe it was coming off the ground, 'cause maybe we didn't even see it. I don't even remember. And one day, he came with a bloody nose and Donna came running. 'Someone beat your boyfriend up!' I go, 'Don't let him in!' (*laugh*) I would not let him in. He's out the door going, 'Let me in, [REDACTED].' I'm like, 'No, you look like a monster.' And I was scared of him, 'cause he got beat up. And he had to go home, 'cause I won't let him in. And Mum goes, 'Let him in,' and I go, 'I don't want to let him in; he looks like blood coming down his face is going to come and get us.' 'I will not hurt you!' But I never let him in.

KS: The 11-year-old?

A: He was 11. (*laughs*) And that's when we then went to [unclear] in that field. We stayed there for a while. I still don't remember snow. I usually would remember snow. And Mum —



We all went to do something in town. Mr. Renski. And like go to restaurants and then we went and ate, went to some kind of play place. And I still won't talk to him. And he was trying to talk to me. And I told him I didn't want him to talk to me. I told him I wanted him to give my mom back. And he got her drinking, and I just stayed by David and Donna more, 'cause Mum was like, they was just drinking all night. (*pause*)

And it seemed to happen a lot. And he would jump us all at home, and we'd all go. He did that a couple times. And then we came home one night. There was no TV. We had a TV. I don't even remember watching it. And Mum said, 'They stole our TV.' And there was nobody around. We don't understand. Somebody broke into the gate and took a lot of things. And Mum told me, 'Go call the cops.' So I ran to the woods to these people that live across the road, realizing it was a home, the last home we went to was that house I went in. There was a [UNCLEAR]. And there were a crowd of people, and came back and tried to get the police. And the police somehow noticed that Mum's friend came home. Peter was mad, because that's who she was going with at first. It was Henry Renski, she'd later start hanging around him and Peter didn't like that. So this was his payback. Stealing all Mum's stuff, 'cause he said he spent money on it.

And then Mom and, just we were going to go walk around, we walked around in the field, and she was going to — I don't know what, she's just walking. We were walking when it was not quite dark. And we see a bunch of guys coming up the road, on the main road. And one of them was Peter. And then they just took — And Mum start out fighting with him. And things got worse, and they all hold Mum and kept kicking her. (*cries*) And then I think it went: 'What's going on here?' You know, Mum and Peter always getting in a fight, but this time they all was fighting Mum. And this day, I used to dream of that. (*crying*)

(*pause*) Then they just kept kicking her face and I just kept seeing blood. And then I took David and Donna in the bushes and said, 'Stay right there till I call you.' 'Cause I'm going to beat them up. (*brief laugh*) I don't know what made me think I could beat them up. I think they beat *me* up. One of them picked me up by my hair and tossed me against the barbed wire fences. And I just got back down, and he goes, 'Don't try it, 'cause I am gonna kick your face in like your mother. And I got scared. Because I was bleeding from the barbed wire, and I was trying to get to my Mom. And then Mom whispered, 'Call the cops.'

So we took off, running down 'cross to the missions. and they called the cops. [00:15:19.04] They helped me. [UNCLEAR]. And those guys tried running off. The cops caught some. And they brought Mum to the hospital. They tell Mum they had to put us in a place for a while. Temporary foster home. And I refused to go. I kept hanging on the table. I told them, 'I want my Mom back.' And my sisters were hanging on to me. My sister and my brother. And then Donna go-, 'They made Mum into a mad woman.' She wondered why Mum was waving the knife around. Mom was in a hospital for about two weeks. We stayed with a ... (*sighs*) Donna knows her name. I know she was kind. She was the only one, she was the mother that I liked, but I didn't like her husband.



We had to stay there till they put Mum through some kind of rehab. And so, we start staying there, going to school there. I don't want to remember the guy, her husband. And they gave us a dog. He was so cute. He looked like those Labrador, golden Labradors. This wasn't a small one. Just like a legit dog or something. He looked like a Labrador to me. And her husband took him, and I guess he was not listening to him. So he went and made us stand on the hill and watch him shoot him. But he didn't die at first. He just kept running back up the hill. And he kept trying to shoot him. (*cries*) And he kept trying to get back up the hill to us. And then he finally went rolling down.

I hated him.

So I told Donna, we're going to escape this place. Because they took David that day, too. They were getting ready to separate us. But then they couldn't make it up, so we were guarding him too much. We didn't like that place. I liked Irene, 'cause she used to go some kind of club at night. I don't know if it was a women's club or not.

But they were almost like Pentecost people. They were like Baptists or Pentecost. And I told her I didn't know them religion. I go, 'My mother was Catholic.' I have to stay in that place. And she had to go. And then everything was quiet. And then I go up to my room, and got dressed. Got ready for bed. Donna fell asleep. Then I ran in, 'cause we always thought there was ghosts in the kitchen, 'cause everything had little lights. And now when I came out, a hand went over my mouth.

(*pause*) I don't know what's going on. (*cries*) It's a stinky hand. And then he kept beating me on the ground and jumping on me. I turned around to make sure I didn't want Donna to see it. And then he told me to go clean myself. And I had blood all over the place. And I tried to clean it. And I was scared. So I stuffed everything in the dirty clothes. Put my clean, put a blanket around me and didn't, clean clothes. And try not to cry. And I was so scared when she left. I'd be glad when I hear a car come in, 'cause I wouldn't go out again. And then I told Donna, and she – She didn't know what to do. What – She didn't understand what happened to me. 'Cause I still had some blood on the [UNCLEAR]. And she goes, 'You [UNCLEAR].' And I go. She go, 'You can't tell the mammy.' I don't know. And then I told her, 'We're going away.'

I want us to get out the door and everything, 'cause I was scared he'd get back in. 'Cause we didn't know where we were going. So I wouldn't come out again. I wouldn't come out unless I heard her coming home. I would hold everything until she gets home. And when she got home, she goes, '[REDACTED], I want you staying at home today. Don't go to school.' But, I knew it must have been something. And then she made me coffee and donut and sometimes cookies. Want to know what happened in the bathroom. She goes, 'You're turning eleven. So this is your first period.' And I go, 'Period?' She go, 'Yeah, you got blood all over the bathroom and your clothes are full of blood.' I go, 'Phew.' She didn't think, you know. I didn't want her to think I got her — I don't know why. I was just embarrassed.



I didn't like myself. I thought I was dirty. (*cries*) I would stay in the tub a lot. She would have to tell me — you know [UNCLEAR] help me. She bought me the pads and everything when that happens every month. But it didn't happen the month after. It didn't come back till couple weeks so she said I was having my period, but it would be odd. And then I told her I wanted to talk to Indian Affairs. And so she, this one thing that they did, they did get me Indian Affairs when I wanted them. And they came up and I said, 'I want to go into a [counter?] home.' And so, 'I know I don't know these guys' religion.' They say, 'Well, a [counter?] home won't be open for a while. We'll have you live in another home.'

And that name I can't forget. And it was the Mr. Max and Donna Cordon. They were nice to us. And then they said they're going to bring us to church. We go to the church. I go, 'This is a church?' I go, 'You guys got no statues or you don't got no nothing. Who do you pray to?' And they said, 'We pray to God.' And I go, 'Where is he?' (*laughs*) I don't know why I had these weird things about religion. So we stayed there about maybe six months 'cause they put me in Bible class. I was kicked out of it. I go, 'cause I would go, 'Where's mother Mary?' (*laughs*) And I'd go — And they'd say, 'Oh, that's the father,' I mean the, well, 'mother, and she got a baby.' And, (*exhales*) holy cow. I didn't understand. So I went to Mrs. Donna, Mrs. Cordon, and I go, 'Can you explain to me about how mother Mary got Jesus without someone touching her?' And she would tell me. She had a sick girl named Rita. She had this heart disease where she couldn't do too much 'cause she would have a heart attack. So I did the carrying upstairs for her. And I still didn't get the Mary thing. Or why they don't put Mary in things. And I would try to tell, I'd draw a picture of Mar-, Virgin Mary. (*laugh*)

And everybody looked at my drawing. Who's that? I go, 'I think that's Jesus' mother.' And then they told me they have to send me home and maybe take a break from class. And I asked her, I go, 'Did I do wrong?' She go, 'They don't believe in the Virgin Mary the way you do.' And I go, 'Then I don't want to be in this church.' She was nice to us at first. I think they all were. And that story that I gave you is part of that. But [UNCLEAR] lookin' in the mirror. But I wasn't really lookin in the mirror. I was looking past the mirror.

I was upstairs. We had a, they had a vent there. I could see the kitchen and then there's the dining room, and then the kitchen. I could see. And then when I was there — We used to get up like five, six in the morning go eat cereal. And then I heard them reciting. It must have been getting near Christmas because they were doing a Christmas play. And I see them standing up with stuff on, doing their reciting, and all that was going on and I was knocking them. There was Donna my sister, Brian and Galen. I know them all, and Rita, the one that had a bad heart. And I was doing bad. I didn't feel like getting up right away and dealing with the kids. And they were just playing and suddenly Donna and Brian was in the kitchen, and I don't know what happened. I heard the glass busting. Donna dropped a glass. She was trying to pass it to Blaine. And it dropped and sliver went all over the place and I could hear Mrs. Cordon go in there. And hollerin' at Donna. And when I heard her hollerin' at Donna, it's like something just broke inside me. And she said, 'I'm going to get the cat-and-eye-tail!' And I go, 'What the frig is the cat-and-eye-tail?' And I just like zoomed downstairs. And in, she was showing us the



cat-and-eye-tail, and it looking like a skipping rope with duct tape, all cut up. I think my, uh, English teacher told me what they called it. It's almost the same as like cat-and-eye-tail. I don't know. Was there a saying for that?

ML: I don't know. I haven't heard of that, cat-and-eye-tail. Is it like a —

A: But it was. It was hanging on the wall.

JP: I've heard of it. It's sort of like a whip but it has a number of tails to it, like rather than just one, it's got probably nine or, yeah.

ML: To punish, she would use it to —?

A: Spank us. But we never did *[UNCLEAR]*. When I went in there and I stand in front of Donna — In that story I called Donna Little Feathers. I changed everybody's name. And then she came towards me, and I always knew what the bitch was, you know? 'Cause we were outside playing ball, and the boys used to call us, 'You bitch, you missed the ball!' 'No, you're a bitch!' (*laughs*) And these are Pentecost kids. And I was standing there, and she came back and goes, *[REDACTED]* can you step aside, I have to discipline your sister. I go, 'No.' I go, 'She made a mistake.' I go, 'We never got a spanking for mistakes.' And then I got Donna hanging onto me. (*cries*) And I couldn't move. And so she said I'm going to tell you more again — 'Cause she used to like me a lot. And then she was always picking on Donna. And I wouldn't move. And I called her, 'You're a bitch!' And she goes, she just got mad and her face started changing.

But I wouldn't let her touch Donna. I told Donna to go run to the playhouse. Don't let her catch you. If anything happened to me, and then she goes — She was getting mad at me. Grabbed me by the hair. She didn't whip me in front of the kids. She put me in the bathroom, and then I kept calling her 'bitch,' 'cause I wanted to get her mind off Donna. And I just kept calling her that. I didn't even feel like I was getting hurt. And I kept looking right in her eyes. And her face and the veins up in her neck and her lipstick was on — Like, she kept wiping her mouth or something. The sweat. That's all I could see was her red lipstick. And then when I went to wipe my hands, they're like red. I go, 'Oh no, I got her lipstick on me.' And then, (*crying*) I just hearing my voice saying, 'You bitch.' I wanted her to get mad at me, 'cause I didn't want her going to Donna. And I don't remember too much after that. I just remember people hollerin' and the door bust open. It was her husband. And then he said, 'Oh my God, you must be sick to do that to her.' He couldn't call the doctor, 'cause daughter told her, 'Don't get her in trouble.' And then he kept cleaning on my hands. And that's when I saw the blood going in the sink. I wouldn't let him touch anything else on me. But yeah, he says, 'What happened?' And I told him. I want to know if Donna was safe. And I told him, I go, 'I want to tell your wife something.' He go, 'What?' I go, 'I'm not scared of her.' And he goes, 'That will make her angry.' I go, 'Tell her it didn't hurt. Tell her I feel much better and I get the freedom. I'm not scared no more.'



And then sh-, I guess she heard it. And then she kept saying she was sorry. And I told him, 'You better call an Indian agent fast. 'Cause I'm going to tell on you guys.' Well he, I guess he called them fast, 'cause the Indian agent was there the next day. Pick us up. Wanted to know what happened. And he kept looking at me. 'Please don't say nothing. Mrs. Cordon is sick and her kids need her.' And she used to run the Bible school.

I told that story so many times. It is getting easier. Because I wasn't going to let nobody hurt them. We didn't have David at the time because they separate us. He was up the road with the other Cordon. That was weird. They must have been related, is all I can think of. But he *[UNCLEAR]*. Was hard to see David, 'cause that dog surround us one day. And I kept having nightmares. He used to make it a special day to go visit David. We would always get pounded by a big Rottweiler or what he was. I wasn't scared of him, but I sure did after I shut the door. 'Cause he's pouncing on the door and we're looking at each other going. 'Ahhhh!' (*laughs*) I had no words to say, 'Run Donna, shut the door,' 'cause it was a shed with two doors on the end. And she did, and I go, 'Ahhh!' And then the owners came out and rescued us. We got to see David. That was our special days.

So that was the testimony I gave. What I written in class. And the whole class knows — My English class, because they wanted to hear more. And one girl said she was just — She go, '*[REDACTED]* you make me cry.' I go, 'I didn't mean to.' But they brought us to another home. We were always glad — It was a Catholic home. Not that I believe in going to church now. I kind of like swayed away from the church. Not because I do not — I don't know. It's like my mind, I believe there's something more. 'Cause you'd be praying and praying. And you wonder, where is He? Where is She? 'Cause you really want to believe it. *[UNCLEAR]* no religion. And I was really struck with religion. I prayed and wanted to do everything right. And really prayed every day. (*cries*) Pray for the people to stop hurting us. Didn't know what we did to them. Just wanted them to stop hurting. Don't hurt my brother or my sister. Even bringing us to the Catholic place didn't really make me feel safe. At least I knew, you know, how to pray. Mrs. Smith made me a cake on my Valentine with hearts all over it. It looked like a wedding cake. She made me feel special. People came over. And some people said to us, 'Blizzard's on the way.' My birthday was always full of blizzards. (*laughs*) February 9th. I'd be looking out the window. 'Nobody's coming to my party.' She'd go, somebody would go, 'Look, there's a blizzard out there.'

They, the Mishes treated us good. But she had this thing with Donna was always being bad. And I go, 'She's just a little girl.' And I go, 'Oh no, here we go again.' But there was another *[UNCLEAR]* family that we stayed with. Oh no, the *[Lawleys?]* They had to move us out of there. 'Cause of Donna. Not because of her, but Mrs. Mish believed that Donna was seducing her husband. Just jumping on him, you know, and she didn't like that. So she reported us, and I'm thinking, 'What did Donna do?' And Donna would go upstairs crying. I'd just stay with her. 'Cause she was, I don't know if she spanked her or not. 'Cause I was sent upstairs. It was almost like soundproof. We had a little room, we called, in the attic. Felt like the attic. We'd look out and see everything. We had a nice bedroom. We had a radio. But now, I'd have to say



that was the best place than all the other homes. Then they switch us to Baptists. Let's see, no, Methodist, and the other one was Baptist. And the Mishes were Catholic. We just came out of. They took us out of the Catholic home person and put us in the Methodist church, and I'm like, 'This is screwy.' And then they, well, back out of the Catholic church.

So we stayed with the [UNCLEAR NAME]. And I'd have to say that was our best(?) place. We stayed there maybe almost a whole year. She had gifts for us. She treated us nice. She called us her little Indian girls. We didn't mind that. It's just she made it sound like we were little teenyboppers. Teeny little Indians walking around. We would be upstairs looking at people walk by. She had her bed over the window. And when she'd go, 'That person is bad.' Donna went on one side, I went on the other. We just watched. Spied on people.

And then she was getting sick, and then Mum and Dad could come and visit. They were starting to bring the visits closer. And we went shopping for clothes. Had a boyfriend. I think I was like age twelve. I'm not good at boyfriends. He broke up with me 'cause I was speaking with the twin. I go which is — What we did was climb roof. Then, I was a tomboy. And he broke up with me. I still remember his name. David King. 'Yeah, I can't go with you anymore, [REDACTED]. 'Okay.' I didn't mind. I would just keep hanging around those twins. I thought they were fun.

I had fun, you know. We would just slide down roofs and collect a lot of bottles, bring 'em down to the center. Get a lot of candy. She was, I would say she would be the best foster home we stayed in. I didn't want him saying is that her gettin' sick. And her sister lived next door. She was nasty. She hated Indians. She called us squaws downstairs, and we ran to Mrs. Lawley. 'Your sister just called us a squaw!' And then she would come over and get mad at her sister, and they'd both get in a fight in their yard. They just had a yard away. And she told me, 'Never mind what she say. And in your mind, stick your tongue out. But if you do it in front of her, she'll just be nasty.' But Donna's best friend was her mother. It was weird. And then finally Mum and Dad came to get us. That was the happiest day. (*cries*) Mom and Dad being back together again.

And then Mama had a baby. I know, we knew she had a baby. She was pregnant. Last time she came up to buy us clothes. Dad goes, 'I was so happy [REDACTED]. I was trying to tell you. We had a letter from him. 'I hopped and I hopped to the sky, and you know what I did? It started raining.' And we could picture Daddy hopping up and down in the rain (*laughing*) being so happy. He said he had almost started a flood. And we were so happy. That's when we had Roldina.

We didn't have Roldina. (*laughs*) Cousins used to write letters to us telling what she's doing next. We couldn't wait to see her. Our youngest sister. Yeah, Mum broke up with her other boyfriends and she'd been going to rehab. She made it back to Canada — I mean, back to the United States to work. Came to work for two years. Getting us together. And she got, had a hard time first time came back here looking for your Dad. She would tell us the story. 'I want



to surprise your Dad. He's working in the woods with Uncle Wolf.' And she finally found him. And that was the best time when your Mum came to. That's when [UNCLEAR]. (*laughter*)

I was so happy. And, it's been in my — All these thoughts. I don't want my mother to know. I know Tanya knows and Krista. I tell them stories off and on. There might be some stories I forgot. Some I really want to forget. (*crying*) And I never wanted my kids to go through that. I never wanted them to see what I saw. But I couldn't teach them the language. I tried. Every time I'd see Gammy I would ask her something. A clue. But Tanya ended up doing the 12 stations of the cross. I think that's how many? In Passamaquoddy. I'm so proud of her. Passamaquoddy. (*laughs*) I do love my language, too. I was so proud of her. Then Krista, she used to count in Passamaquoddy. I don't know if she still does.

KS: A little bit.

A: She'll be teaching me. (*laughs*) 'Cause I stayed in Princeton for a while. Almost seven years. Met [REDACTED] We had a house, different houses. We keep getting married the old Indian way. Nobody was accepting it. (*laughs*) We carried our own cow head around. (*laughs*) And we went and wrapped ourselves in blankets, and — We were at a party once and they married us, too. I don't know how many times we gotta get married to have someone believe us. And he had his trouble. I had mine. And then, of course, it was with alcohol. Our best friend at the time. And I went to rehab in 1991. Met some people in Wickenburg, Arizona. 'Cause I had eating problems. Diabetic. Things was just gripping me in. Thinking about that with the past.

There was a time I wanted to commit suicide. But I just thought of my kids. (*cries*) I didn't want to leave them. I said, 'I have to do it a different way. I'm going to live. So they can see me every day. And the people that don't like me can see me every good damn day that they'll get tired of looking at me or something.' I was mad at some people. My sister and I had a plan to go to Pastua, do a job of killing them all. (*laughs*) We couldn't find the place. Thank God. We just talked about it all the way out and then we forget what we were gonna do. And I got this one guy I wanted to check out. He was in high school. Had a crush on him. His name was Darrell Witt. Darrell Witt. He'd be much older than me, 'cause I was young then.

I went to Wickenburg. Tanya didn't, drove Tanya there later. Very expensive rehab. I didn't know it was that much. Met a lot of crazy people. [UNCLEAR] climate there. I wish we lived there all the time. I used to smoke a lot. Smoke cigarettes. Smoked a lot of other stuff. And gradually getting out of that shell. And having fun with my grandchildren so much. It's like having my kids all over again. (*laughs*) Now they can ask for anything and I'll give it to them. Now we got [someone's name, Leah?]- her laptop broke on her. So Lee rebuilt that computer for her. [00:51:26.01] And we have a second one for Anthony. So we keep so busy, you know. Anthony likes climbing. But he will, 'kill 'em, kill 'em — that's why that chair's — trying to get him away from that. You right back up to killin' again. (*laughs*) And then he can be so gentle, and he can be so mean. But I want them to grow up to remember me.



I went to college off and on. When the kids needed my help, I got out of college. They come first. Now, I'm going to try to stay. And I end up getting sick. All kinds of stuff. I'm glad I did. You know, I had them take some things they thought was cancerous out of me. And a cyst that was in me. Now I gotta go one more trip to the hemoglobin doctor. On the 29th or 30th. I'll probably, we'll cross that path again.

I'm hoping to let everybody know. Don't give up. It's worth living — Staying alive for your kids. And having parents like Mum and Dad. They might not have been there for a couple of years, but I'm not going to condemn them. I'd give anything back to get my Dad. And then I want my Mom. Now I know what Mum know. She doesn't know about this. And I don't think you know her years. She's having fun with baskets. She's having fun going to shows. And I have fun with her. And once and a while we'll grab one of the kids. They bring their kids. We lost Derrick, was it Derrick we lost at a fair? He used to follow that clown.

We were at the college at Brunswick ten years ago. Talking to people. You see Tanya, she gets right in the crowd. She — That's my daughter in there. 'Oh yeah, she's in the middle making baskets or making other people baskets.' Trading. They did a lot of trading. And I see my grandchildren doing that. And I want it to stay this way. There is a lot of things that happened, and I like to tell people about it. That's why I decide to take my picture out. So, they would have the strength to say it. I never had the strength. And that's probably the 'nother thing why I went to rehab. Is to face my fears. And when Augie committed suicide. He hung himself. But we're not sure about it. We're — It's iffy. I want to leave at the door, iffy. We had a lot of good times. Brought the kids camping every summer. They couldn't wait to get out of school and go to Mount Katahdin. But he got into drugs. Tried hard to be near him and then this was my home. I couldn't put my there. I committed myself. Because I couldn't deal with the drugs. Didn't know what he was taking. Wanted to help him, but didn't know how. Once in a while you see us on Facebook. Krista put that one. Him and his old car. I'm grabbin' hold. And on my wrists I see leather — What would you call that? Spikes. *(laughs)* Is that what I think it is?

JP: I love that bracelet.

A: Yeah. He had a lot of spike stuff.

TP: I think Lisa took that from you. I got in trouble. She took it from me.

A: That's so that you have protection, you know. And Tanya, one year would, in reading she trekked the child cross the country. In a train. *(lots of chatter and laughter)*

TP: That was crazy.

A: And Krista graduate-, Tanya graduated, then Krista graduate. [UNCLEAR]. I was so proud. And now it's my turn. I'm running out of, but I'm happy. And then I go *(more talk about graduating that's hard to identify)* I think I'm done.

ML: Okay. Well, thank you so much for sharing that.

A: It's getting easier to share.

[END OF RECORDING]