

Angus Beaulieu

Pre-interview general discussion:

Angus: Hello, I didn't make any, but some of these songs, like, I got some on here, but some of these songs I used to hear from, like, which one, well, does, does there, okay, the way I play it is the way I heard it from the old man and ? and it's different from the way?...son, he said, I want you to play my favourite. That's why I called it Uncle Jim. I think because I haven't got a name for it.

Herb: Would Uncle, would Jim Lafferty, would his dad be Napoleon?

Angus: Yah, that's what I mean. But, his second wife was Dorothy's mother and also Dorothy's dad died and so Jim, actually Dorothy's step...how do you call it, his mother was married to Jim. I'm just a son-in-law to Dorothy's mother, but he always called me son. Son, he said, I want you to play. He had this deep, deep voice and boy when he called square dances, just like singing. He just goes along right from the start of the song, right through the end. So that's why this, I called this one Uncle Jim. So I got three songs. One, two, three, four, I guess, is it? No, no, three songs and then that one I just play. I didn't try and sit down and ? That Red River Jig, I was trying the Red River Jig and I seemed like I didn't know which to copy, Reg Bouvette or any other fiddlers. So I was getting mixed up, from Calvin's and I was getting mixed up so I just picked up the fiddle and played and just made it up and that's what came up.

Herb: So just name it and play it?

Angus: Well I just play it and then when it came to... I wasn't going to put that in a recording. I was going to put that on and then Calvin said, "You can't have a tape without a jig." He said you got to have a jig in there. I said, "I don't know the Red River Jig myself. I don't know the notes." Probably if I really tried it, but I didn't. I was getting them all mixed up so I just made one up. I call it Slave River Jig. So, he said, "Play it," and that's the one you heard and played it and that's how it come out. There's a mistake in there. A couple of mistakes.

Herb: That's all right, like Richard Lafferty told me, he had a song, I think we were trying to get him to play the Devil's Reel, but he said he didn't play the Devil's Reel complete. He had versions of two tunes and he combined them and called it the Ril de Job. Kind of like in French the Devil's Reel, Ril de Job. So that's how that tune came up, similar to your Slave River Jig, which is good, because all of a sudden it becomes an original tune. So it would be okay to talk about those four so maybe when we get to that question. Like do you play any original tunes, we can just go from one and I have the titles and you can tell how they came to you. How these songs came about. Like I ask this question, "What inspired you to create these melodies?" but I think you'll answer that question in talking about them anyway.

Later we'll ask what plans do you have for your fiddle music and can we look forward to future recordings.

Angus: Yah, well, I was, because I think I mentioned to you before, well when I first went out, first I went to Hay River to try and record in Hay River they charge too much. I got a grant from two places, sixteen between the two, sixteen thousand dollars. In Hay River for ten thousand. They wanted sixteen thousand for ten songs.

Herb: You couldn't do it. A tape with five songs on each side, eh?

Angus: For ten, that's what he wanted so the price was too high so I phoned up... when I was talking to Morris in Edmonton, he said, "Why don't you go to Calvin?" and I know Calvin from before, so I phoned him up. "Sure," he said, "Come on down."

Herb: Oh, by the way, I met Calvin Volrath at Batoche and he told me to say hello to you.

Angus: Really!

Herb: Yah, yah. I told him we were going to see you.

Angus: What was going on at Batoche then?

Herb: Calvin Volrath, John Arcand, Gary Lepine and Hap Boyer were guests with us.

Angus: Somebody give me something on that. I can't remember. I don't remember, yah, somebody gave me something on that I can't remember. So that's on now?

Leah: It's every end of the last weekend in July. Every summer, it's always that last weekend in July.

Angus: I been there one year.

Leah: Oh love to have you down there again. You know, you would enjoy the fiddle fest. John Arcand's fiddle fest, because it's becoming a real Métis gathering, that one, holy!

Angus: I think I was there... I think after the hundred years.

Leah: Oh, the one in Batoche, yah, the 1985. The hundred year celebration.

Angus: I think it was the year after that. Uncle had a house and he used to let people use the house for dance. Just one room house. It was after, I think the first year, I started playing in one year's time. Exactly one year and I was tempted to try some of my fiddling and went down to where the dance was and I was standing there and they took a break. The fiddler that time I think was Sam Noran for the dance. So the fiddle was sitting on a bench there, so I picked it up. Everybody went outside to cool off ??? or something. So I was holding the fiddle there and everybody got back ?? come on and hurry up. So I was happy and I started playing. Everybody started square dancing. I didn't get very far and my arm was tired, so I was trying to stop. "Some more, some more, some more," and I tried again and kind of slowed down a bit and I was slowing down, slowing down and finally I couldn't play anymore. I stopped. Not over yet, some more, some more. I tried again and I couldn't, I couldn't play anymore. I just put my fiddle down and I just ran out. When I got home, I just about cried. I was embarrassed and I thought, "What am I gonna do?" you know, I just felt so awkward, so I just went to sleep. The next day, I put a ?? beside me and I grabbed my fiddle and I played and I timed myself. In a while I played again. Every time I played it was getting a little longer, little longer, little longer. Maybe in a month or more I can play without stop over half an hour. At first it was only, maybe, three or four minutes ?? ordinary song that's when I couldn't do it anymore so I played for a dance a few months later. There was a dance and I played and I been playing ever since. I was eleven, no, I was fourteen years when the first dance I played for. So I was born 1934.

Herb: Another thing we'll get you to talk about is the Native presence in ? but, not just yet. I'm just running these ideas by you, because she'll bleep me out, because we haven't officially started, but we're recording your ideas even though...cause I'm just bouncing these ideas off you that we came up with on the plane that were in addition to some of the questions that we ask all the fiddlers so we may get a little more personal to Fort Res area, eh and the rest of the questions, I think, pretty well will catch all of your playing, I think, well, that's what we're hoping and then the only other thing we have is, "Have you made any other studio or live recordings?" I guess that could be...

Angus: One with CBC.

Herb: That could be home recordings too.

Leah, at this point prompted Herb to get started with the interview, because she thought that her batteries were running low.

Angus Beaulieu - Interview
Fort Resolution, NT
August 13, 2001
Traditional Métis Fiddle Project

Herb: With us today, we have Angus Beaulieu, Métis fiddler from Fort Resolution, Northwest Territories. It's August 13, 2001 on a Monday evening. We're sitting in Angus Beaulieu's dining room. First of all we'll get you to tell, to maybe tell us about your family, the Beaulieu family.

Angus: I guess the Beaulieus goes a long ways. Francoise Beaulieu was the second Beaulieu. He was born in 1772 and he's been all over the North, trader and everything and he settled in South River which is right near Fort Smith. He lived to be one hundred and he also came down with the Catholic Mission to Fort Resolution in 1852. He established the Catholic Mission on Mission Island here and Fort Resolution with his son Pierre. He was in his eighties when he used to...I guess close to eighty whatever, comes through there...around eighty years old when came to Res here...well, he's been to Res before, but when he brought the Catholic Mission, first Catholic Mission into Fort Res and then his son Pierre was with him and after that I guess he must have moved back to... I'm just telling you what my grandfather told me and this is where he passed away. Pierre Beaulieu, his son, spent the rest of his life between Mission Island here and Fort Resolution. He is buried here at 86. He lived to eighty-six years old and then my grandfather from there. My grandfather raised me. I lost my mother when I was very young and my grandmother and grandfather raised me until...I also lost my grandmother, I think twelve years old and so from there my grandfather raised me. I first picked up the fiddle, I think, when I was about thirteen, I guess. I used to go to dances with my grandfather and fiddle dances and listen to George ? was one of the top fiddlers in Res. And Johnny Beaulieu was another fiddler and also Sam Norton was another fiddler. A number of years, I used to go with my grandfather before I picked up the fiddle and when I picked up the fiddle, the songs I used to hear from the old timers, that time we only had radios. We had gramophones, but we had one of those wind, we had to wind every record. But, we didn't have any fiddle songs. There was only one. We had one fiddle tune on one of those records, but it was cracked so when I tried to follow it with the fiddle, it would get to the crack and jump and I couldn't hold the head down so sometimes I'd try to get somebody to hold the head down so I could get this whole song and try and follow it with the fiddle, but it was hard. So ?? tape recorders and everything. We had radios of course, but even radios, at times we didn't have money for batteries. Those radios we had, we had to use seven batteries for that radio. It was huge. It might be about 18 inches by two feet high and it had a big battery like you call a wet battery. Almost like a car

battery. One, its called A battery and the other three were B batteries so that was four there and also two C batteries. So actually, six, six batteries to run that and then you have to have a long aerial outside to pick up the stations and actually the two C batteries I think was more for the light in the dial where your radio dial is and then I forget what the other two C batteries are for and that's the way I... and then later on it came out with one combination was a ...A and B in a dry fashion, but first, the first radio my grandfather had was, used one wet battery and the rest dry.

Herb: So there's no doubt you came from a musical family. So it was your grandfather that played the fiddle?

Angus: Not my grandfather, but that George Norton was my grandmother's brother and my grandmother also played one of these push pull accordions. She was a very good player and I've heard that she used to play with her brother at dances with that little push button, but that was before my time. My grandfather didn't play the fiddle, but my granny played accordion and on my dad's side I looked to see if there are any musicians. There is some, but my dad's brother, from there down, I run across some. My dad didn't play or my mother or my grandfather, just my grandmother.

Herb: So at thirteen years old, do you remember the first tune you learned?

Angus: Yah, I remember I learned the song called, Rubber Dolly and remember when I was learning it I was using only one finger.

Herb: So how long did it take you to learn Rubber Dolly with one finger?

Angus: I would say maybe over a month. Over a month and then there was another, I didn't give you all the fiddlers, but there was a cousin of mine. His name was Joe King and he passed away a couple years ago and I had a guitar that only had four strings, an old guitar. I don't remember even where it came from. I think my uncle. It had only four strings and the fiddle I picked up has been around the house for a while, but only when we got fiddlers come to our house. At first, my grandfather wouldn't let me touch it, you know, maybe I would have started at a younger age, but it was hanging up and I wasn't allowed to touch it till the time I started. I think grandpa was out for cards or he was out visiting when I first started trying it and I was doing this when grandpa wasn't around and I'd pick it up and put it away when I'd see grandpa was coming and finally one time, he caught me with the fiddle and I thought he was really going to get mad at me. He didn't say nothing so from then on, I didn't hide. Going back to this Joe King. I gave him this guitar and I said, "You try." It wasn't even tuned, it was only four strings on it. Him, he strum this guitar and me I'm trying to play the Rubber Dolly, one finger so he want to learn too, so I showed him with this one finger. I was playing Rubber Dolly. We were both playing Rubber Dolly and I think the second tune was Snow Deer. Rubber Dolly, I think came to two fingers and then from there it went on.

Joe King disappeared. I don't know where he went. He was about four years older than me and he disappeared. He went somewhere, fishing or whatever and when he came back, he was playing fiddle. I guess he picked up his fiddle and learned and he can play way better tunes than I can play when he came back. So he showed me a little bit that he was playing and then he disappear someplace for work and then I carried on. Within a year, I ???

Herb: Did you have any other musical influences? Aside from Joe King and George Norton, were there any other fiddlers that you can remember that you might have sat down with and learned tunes from?

Angus: Well, I never really sat down with George, but the thing is, what I heard at dances and also from Sam Norton and if you want me to mention, actually, they were both Métis before the treaty party first came up to Fort Res in 1899 around that area. Treaty party, and at that time everybody, except the ones who didn't want to accept treaty, and I was told the Nortons, they are all fair, blonde. I couldn't see much Indian in them and I guess down the road, somebody said in the thirties, that's when the old man Norton accepted, took treaty. So from there were the whole family. I'm only going by what somebody told me about this in the thirties, but it could be earlier. So that's how George Norton was a treaty fiddler, but he was, when he begin, George Norton was born in 1876 so when he started playing, he was a Métis, but later on the government put a label on him and he become a treaty. So other than that, before the treaty, everybody was one people.

Herb: So when you were learning songs, you pretty much learned them from say, Joe King, George Norton? Were there other fiddlers that played at the local dances that you can remember?

Angus: I didn't learn anything really from Joe, but it's just that maybe the songs I was playing, he was playing a little better than me so I improved it. I improved it through him a little bit. He was just playing and I watched him. I improved my playing a little bit from Joe, but he never taught any extra songs or anything like that. Nobody really taught me. I just went to dances, maybe dances that Johnny...till about twenty years ago, not even that, he died about fifteen years and he played for dances and I used to, I used to go to a lot of the dances, listen to him and this is where I picked up, just listening.

Herb: How often did they have these dances? Did they ever have dances during the middle of the week, or was it always Friday or Saturday night? Community hall dances I'm saying.

Angus: Well we didn't have no community hall those days. It was just one of the houses. They would take the stove out and it was the middle of winter. Sometimes it gets pretty chilly. Most of the houses they had, they have the stove right in the middle of the floor. They would take the stove out for the dances. The body heat I

guess. I remember some of the dances I went to. You could see your breath in there, dancing. But anyway, we didn't have a community hall. We didn't have really a big hall. Well we had one place, Loutitt's place, that's where they used to have most of the dances. Loutitt had a kind of a rooming house. They had a fairly big room in there and that's where the dances were at first and after Loutitts left Fort Res, that's way back, they used to have their dances just at home. Houses around Res. My uncle Jesse James, his house is one of the places where they used to have a lot of dances and even my grandfather's house that I lived in, in the summer was used for dances a lot. Weddings. My grandfather lent out the house and after the dance, pretty dusty, sometimes. You know, kick up all the dust. Sometimes it would be raining, you know and that. I remember, my uncle Jesse's house, where the fiddler sits, the floor had knots, the wood and the knots in the boards were sticking right out. I guess where they were kicking them. I remember that one spot. I guess the fiddler only sat one spot. We never had a community hall till here till the late sixties, seventies. Seventies.

Herb: Do you remember at what age you got your own first fiddle and how did you get it? Did you have to work at a summer job or, like, to get that first fiddle or did somebody give you a fiddle as a gift or Christmas present? How did you get your first fiddle?

Angus: The first one I was using was a medium sized fiddle that I was using and then the Hudson's Bay store had a fiddle and it was around the Hudson's Bay store for many years. So they put a sale price on it. It went down to \$15.00 and I bought it at \$15.00. I trapped with my grandfather. Spring, hunt rats. Made money that way and I bought this fiddle and I've used that old fiddle for many years after I start getting into competition.

Herb: About what age?

Angus: I think that fiddle, I would have been about seventeen. I had that fiddle, I think about five years or more and then I got another fiddle up at the Hudson's Bay store again for the same kind of deal. Nobody was buying it and it was sitting in the store so...I think that was my second fiddle.

Herb: Was there any place else, say a young fiddler just learning to play the fiddle, were there any other places you could get a fiddle or buy a fiddle other than the Hudson's Bay Company?

Angus: Well those days, the only way you can get out of Fort Res is by boat or dog team. I been to ? on a dog team. I been to Hay River, dog team, but I had a fiddle. In those days, the dogs made noise. In those days a fiddle was a fiddle and I wasn't looking for a better fiddle or anything. I can tell you a little story if you want me to. One time, when I usually go to Hay River by boat. We have a small motor in those days. Takes about a day and a half to get there and I always carried my

fiddle with me and when we get to Hay River. A dance at the old village at Hay River. That time Hay River just starting the other side which they call town now. There's no new town in Hay River, nothing, no highway. I remember, in the spring my grandfather we used to go to Hay River after we can get along the shore the ice. Sometimes we have to push through the ice to get to Hay River. ?Hay River since I played fiddle, people used to put on dances. I used to play for dances. Just the fiddle and guitar, that's it and guys used to play guitar for me. His name is Albert Norton and he's gone now. I played for many dances in Hay River like that and one time I forgot my fiddle. After I got halfway. To turn back was going to be almost a day and I get back here and I told grandpa I forgot my fiddle. It wasn't important for grandpa so he made signs for me to keep on going. He just waved his hand for me to keep on going to Hay River. I got to Hay River. By this time, I played a number of times in Hay River and people saw me in Hay River there at the old village. I guess they arranged a dance. They used to have a dance where they called, Johnny ??? it was a one room house, in the kitchen, in the back and I guess they arranged for a dance and I didn't know and I guess they thought I had my fiddle. Somebody came and said, "They're waiting for you." I said, "For what?" "Waiting for you, for a dance." I told him I didn't have my fiddle, so I went over to there and people were sitting all around. I told them I forgot my fiddle and they started looking around for a fiddle. The guy, that time, his name Frank ? had a fiddle. He was still out on the land, yet, so a few people were looking around for a fiddle and they found a fiddle and the bow only had just a few hair on it. They couldn't find any other bow. There was not enough hair on there to play. There was only, maybe about three or four, something like that. This a real true story. I have a witness that's still alive in Hay River. Pat Buggins, he's still alive in Hay River. He was there. His brother and him were there, but his brother is gone too. Somebody said that ?? who were going to have that dance had a horse that had a sore leg or sore foot or something like that. They shot that horse that morning. So they went and got that horse tail. So when they brought that horse tail, brown horse and they chopped the tail off and they brought me the whole tail. So I took the longest part of the hair and I, an old lady gave me a scissors and I cut it off and I never, ever done this before so I didn't know if it was going to work or what, but we couldn't find a bow so I just... The old lady put me some water in a wash basin and I put the hair in there and I kind of combed it. Rinsed it a little bit. She helped to wash it and I kind ??? She got me some sinew and I tied one end and then I combed it, combed it and then with my hand, rubbing my hand on it I kind of evened it out as much as I can and tied another sinew on it. Then had to dry that before I can do anything with it so they hung it up above the cook stove and not even thinking, we didn't have any rosin. Till I got the bow ready and I was ready to start and of course it can't make any noise, because it's just ordinary hair and nothing on it. Now we couldn't find any rosin. It's just like a B.S. story, but this is really true. So one of the guys, I said, spruce gum would work. So they went in the bush and they got me some spruce gum. So by this time, it was fairly late, but everybody was patient. Those days they didn't have T.V. or anything. So this was something special ?? in Hay River. End up, I started playing. Put quite a bit of that

rosin on it and it sounded like a fiddle. Way it started and boy people were just sweating away, square dancing and everything there, two stepping, you name it. I remember the sun set and the sun was up high. I remember the sun was up fairly high the next day and the dance was still going on and people were still dancing. I never experienced that before, but it worked and I have one person to witness that, that's alive yet. There was a number of them alive, but I remember I was playing in Hay River once with my full band. Pat walked up to me and said, "You remember that dead horse?" and I forgot what he was talking about. I said, "What dead horse?" "You remember that dead horsetail they brought you and it came back?" He said, "It's a bit different from that time to now." He said, "We have all this modern equipment, ? the whole speakers and all the amplifiers and all that." He said, "You were playing that time, you're still playing." So that's something I experienced.

Herb: What kind of tree did that spruce gum come from?

Angus: Well, there's two kinds of spruce gum, one is liquid and the other one is hard. That's the kind. It looks like rosin almost.

Leah: There's two types of spruce gum?

Angus: Yah, well one is, you know, you split a block or something and sometimes you find liquid in there. It's almost like syrup and that's one type. It's between when you split a log, but the other one, it's on the outside. I don't think it's the same gum. I don't know anything about gums. I remember somebody using it. That's how it come to my mind that it could be used and it worked. Maybe it's a bit squeaky, but...

Herb: They had to improvise. Richard Lafferty in Providence said, over the years, he's seen some spruce gum in some fiddle boxes too, so I guess it was a common thing when you couldn't get store bought rosin. I guess it was the Hudson's Bay, I imagine, that sold rosin.

Angus: The way I used to get them is from Eaton's catalogue. That's where I used to order strings. I used to use mostly mandolin strings for fiddle. ? so even if I got one set, I always had spare, eh. So I don't know why, I saw people using it and I've used that for years. Mandolin strings.

Herb: Do you know what brand it was?

Angus: Well, I don't know what brand it was, but we used to just order mandolin strings, here in the Eaton's catalogue and I guess just playing straight fiddle. I think it had just two wounded. The two top were wounded and the other two were not wounded. Well other fiddlers were using it. Johnny was using it. I remember Johnny, but I don't what George used or how much. I never knew that. But

Johnny used to tell me he used mandolin strings. That's how I started ordering mandolin strings.

Herb: Say if your mandolin strings, say your spare was broke, say it was a wild night and you broke two E strings, what would they do then?

Angus: Well we'd try and add rabbit snare at the end or another string at the end and try, you know, sometimes, eventually, it wouldn't sound right, you know, if you get it between the two front bridge and the back bridge, you know, if your joint comes between, you can't seem to tune it right. You know what I'm saying. If it breaks right the front little bridge. If it breaks inside of it. You know towards where you finger that and then so you have to put a short piece on the tail end of it to move it up ahead so the full string would be over the both bridges, but sometimes it happens it don't work good that way, but then the string would be dead. Dead because it was part of the rabbit snare or the joint there and wouldn't sound right. I remember that.

Herb: Do you think the audience knew the difference?

Angus: At times, probably not, you know, in those days the dances we played for, it wasn't a wet dance, we call it nowadays. In those days, I remember, people had dances and never, I don't remember seeing drunkards. Never a time they had to force somebody to get out, because they were drunk or anything or else they behaved when they were drinking. I think they had a good time without and maybe something, I don't know if you want to hear, but I would say now, without liquor, dry dance, nobody gets on the floor in our community, Fort Resolution here. Maybe I have one or two, something like that. Very seldom I can much dancers on the floor. When there's a wet dance, there's no room on the floor. So things have changed in Fort Res.

Herb: If we back up to the time when you first started playing for fiddle dances, were you playing any other instruments at the time you were learning fiddle?

Angus: Guitar. I also played banjo, mandolin. Also owned them. Sometimes for some of the dances I played for in Providence was the mandolin, but then it got into electric. In Providence, I played banjo and mandolin for dances there, but here, mostly fiddle. Also played accordion a bit, but not for dances, though. Mouth organ, but not for dances. So I tried just about everything, you know, we didn't have much to do in those days. We used to sometimes all get together and play guitar, fiddle, you know. All the young boys that used to gather at the house. There was many guitar players in Fort Res. Just about every second person. Just about everybody plays guitar and I can name names and names and names where people used to play guitar for me for dances. Just the guitar and fiddle, eh. I guess there was a lot of musicians.

Herb: Yah, the south McKenzie seems to have produced a lot of good musicians. I'm thinking of your fiddle. When you were a younger player, did you think much about or did other fiddlers, I'm more interested in you and your fiddle, did you do anything to personalize your fiddle so that if somebody saw your fiddle lying open in the case, how did they know it was your fiddle, for instance?

Angus: Well I don't think there was anything special about it. It was just ordinary. I never add nothing to it. For quite a while I used keys that don't slip and slip keys, because sometimes we'd have a hard time keeping, the keys will slip, will slip and slip keys that's the only thing that I used for many years. After I got into electric, I got away from the slip and slip keys. I went back to wooden pegs.

Herb: Say if a fiddler had wooden pegs and they were slipping, what can a beginner if his pegs were slipping, what can he do to stop them from slipping?

Angus: Sometimes what I usually do is pull it out a little bit and just loosen and put the rosin where it goes in the...tightens in the hole. Try and rub it on there so that when you put a little pressure on it, it'll catch. That's what I've used.

Herb: It works pretty good?

Angus: Yah, it works pretty good, but I saw some people would just grab the fiddle and spit on it, but I never tried that. I used rosin.

Herb: That's good. A lot of fiddlers, younger fiddlers especially, will appreciate those kinds of tips. When you were buying a fiddle, as you got older, you probably wanted a better fiddle. What did you look for in a fiddle, if you wanted to upgrade your fiddle?

Angus: Well, after we have connections with the highways and that, I travelled south. I been to cities and I never really, really looked around too much. I was pleased with what I had and that went on until, I would say into, maybe, the eighties or something like that. In the eighties, I looked around in Edmonton, in Winnipeg, in Vancouver. Every time I'm in the city, I look at fiddles and that. I've tried fiddles everywhere. After I could afford a more expensive fiddle. I tried fiddles that are worth three or four thousand dollars and I still prefer my old fiddle. I still like my old fiddle so I never really got expensive fiddle at all. I bought fiddles. I bought number of fiddles that maybe worth a hundred fifty, two hundred dollars. They were used fiddles and I thought I liked it and after I got it, I didn't like it. Maybe used it for a little while and I didn't like it so I went back to my old fiddle. Until recently, I bought a fiddle from Richard Lafferty. He bought a fiddle from Alfred Myers and after he bought a, I think thousand or two thousand dollar fiddle. He sold me this. He said he paid seven hundred for it, but he sold it to me for five hundred and I've used that for about, maybe, five years and then the fiddle I got now, I had this fiddle, I think, how many years would that be, about eight years,

that I'm using now. Somebody brought this fiddle to me and asked me if I wanted it. Fiddle with no strings, no nothing on it. I looked at it and I wasn't interested, because by this time, I had nine or ten fiddles around. I didn't want another old fiddle around. I said I didn't want it and I didn't realize this guy left it just outside. Left it outside and the wife put it away, I guess and I didn't know she put it away. About twenty years ago, more that twenty years ago, I didn't know what I was looking for in my old house next door. I was looking for something. There's an old fiddle laying there. I picked it up and brought it in the house. No pegs, no nothing, just an empty fiddle. I asked, "Where does this fiddle come from?" She said, "Remember this guy brought it over?" I said, "I thought he took it home?" She said, "No, he left it here." So at first, I wasn't interested, then I said, I'll just try it. I scraped all the varnish off it. There was two cracks on the front and one at the back so I put ordinary glue in there. I put it on the shelf and I guess kids knocked it off the shelf and it broke into nine pieces and so I just put it in a box and put it on one of the shelves here. It sat there maybe another two years. When I was burning garbage, I spilt the garbage in the garbage pile and here the pieces went into the flame. Good thing I had gloves on. I dug in there and I thought I took everything, but there was one piece I didn't take out and put it back into the box. I run across, somebody said that Alphonse Myers rebuilds fiddles so I put it all in a box and I sent it to Alphonse Myers in Edmonton. I got a letter from him that said it was going to cost me seven hundred and sixty-nine dollars to fix it, to rebuild and finish it. I told my wife, "I'm not going to pay seven and some dollars for that fiddle. I don't even know what it's going to sound like." In the meantime, I found out this fiddle goes way back. In the meantime, I found out it goes back in the Beaulieu family. Way back. Where I got it from and the person that owned it. Well that person, grandfather, owned it and it went back, way back to the Beaulieu, King, Beaulieu family. King Beaulieu is only a nick name. So it went way back. Well actually it goes back, as far as Francois Beaulieu's son. So when Alphonse finished it, he was finished it by center of Christmas, when I went on holidays, it was ready. The wife paid for it for me and I tried it. I thought he gave me another fiddle or something, because it looked like brand spanking new and I looked at it very closely. I could see where the cracks were. If I didn't know they were there, you wouldn't notice it. He said he had to put an extra piece in there. That one piece was missing. I tried it. It seemed to be good. I got a note in there. He's saying it's way over a hundred years old. I asked him how old the fiddle is. I asked him if it was to sell on the shelf, what it would sell for. This was about ?? years ago. He said I wouldn't have any problem selling it from ten thousand up.

Herb: That's a pretty good appraisal! So when you first started playing for fiddle dances, even at a young age, did you do anything special to prepare when you went out to play for a fiddle dance? Did you do anything out of the ordinary or just packed up your fiddle?

Angus: Well those days just straight fiddle, guitar, eh. So there wasn't really much to pack. Just grab my fiddle. There was quite a bit of practice around the

house. Just about anybody play the guitar. So it was just fiddle, guitar. I don't remember anything special or we had to do or anything like that. I never got into electric instruments until, I would say in the seventies or late sixties.

Herb: As a young fiddler growing up, just learning to play, some fiddlers are discouraged, like the parents or the grandparents or someone doesn't like the sound of the screechiness. Did you feel discouraged from playing the fiddle at all from what you recall?

Angus: Well, not really. My grandfather never really, well, he never played the instrument himself, maybe that's why, but he never really complained, except one time, I remember we were out in the bush, our cabin and he stays downstairs. I stay upstairs and I was squeaking my fiddle there after he was sleeping. I think I told this story before, but I guess he woke up and I was upstairs squeaking my fiddle there and he yell at me, "Why don't you put your fiddle away and do that privately in the morning!" I didn't say nothing. I just hung my fiddle up and went to bed. Darn it if I didn't wake up at five o'clock in the morning. Now I woke up and I grabbed my fiddle and upstairs the cabin we had there, the floor is kind of squeaky. If you tap your feet, it kind of rattles and everything like that. I just grabbed my fiddle and I started playing a tune. Grandpa hollered and said, "What are you doing anyway?" So after he yelled at me there, what you doing, I said, "Well you told me to do it five o'clock in the morning." I could hear him getting up, coming towards the stairway so I kind of looked, he was coming up the stairway with a chunk of wood, so right now, I opened up my blanket and I jumped in there and I put my fiddle in my arm and I cover myself with a blanket and I had my hand over like this. I thought if he hits me, I don't want my fiddle to break and so I had my hand like this. He never hit me at all. I didn't feel nothing at all and I guess I fell asleep like that. Later on when I woke up, the fiddle was in my arm and I kind of forgot what happened. I thought, "What am I doing here sleeping with a fiddle in my arm?" and I started thinking and then I remember what happened, but that was the only time my grandfather. He wasn't please with me playing at first in the evening and then just because he said do it at five o'clock in the morning and of course I just happened to wake up then and I don't know why I done this, but it just happened and I done it.

Herb: We just want to go back in time for a little bit here. We read and we heard some stories. One story came from Maria Campbell, the celebrated Métis author, that the Roman Catholic church, I guess it would be in the late 1800s, what they used to do is discourage Métis fiddle dances by rounding up the Métis fiddles and they would burn them, because the parishioners wouldn't show up in church on Sunday morning and we were wondering if you remember any stories like this? Did the Roman Catholic church, in any way, discourage the Métis fiddle dances or just fiddle dances in general, because for whatever reason that the people wouldn't show up for church Sunday morning?

Angus: Well, I never heard nothing in Fort Res. I never heard about that, but they used to have also when the people...this community kind of a center years ago. People from around this lake gathered in Fort Res even before the treaty? Because the stores?? This is where the people used to come to. For Christmas and birthdays people used to come round this way through Fort Res in the spring, would come here and also people would spend part of the summer here and go back, but I remember grandpa was telling me about ??drum dance and the priest. One time the priest went to him and try to stop them. The following week again, they were doing the same thing there, they were still drumming fairly late. I can't remember the Father's name. He took the drum away from one of the guys that was drumming and tried to bust it on his knee and I guess that drum was made out of beaver. The drum was hard as beaver hide. I guess they are very, very strong. It wasn't caribou. Caribou would have busted. He tried to bust it on his knee. He couldn't, so he just threw it on the ground and he jumped up and he just bounced off it and he walked away and they just continued with the drum dance. That's the only thing I heard, but I heard that they tried to tell the people not to have dances. I never heard about burning fiddles.

Herb: It could have happened in other places, maybe Saskatchewan or Manitoba. Do you recall any other unusual stories about Métis fiddle dances? Any funny or unusual stories about anything happening at a dance?

Angus: I just can't remember right off hand.

Herb: Earlier, I was mentioning about the tunes, the Devil's Reel and the Devil's Waltz, some old time fiddlers believe that when you play the Devil's Reel or the Devil's Waltz that the devil will visit. Maybe not so much now, but in the old days people were a little more suspicious. Do you remember any stories that might be connected to the Devil's Reel?

Angus: Well, I've heard people talk about that, but myself I never experienced anything like that, but I remember people talk about it. I remember one time, we were out in the bush, back in the cabin and my uncle was out in the trap line and my grandfather was sleeping and my aunt, my uncle's wife, she was awake yet and the kids were in bed. I always play my fiddle. I tune it for that Devil's, the way I tuned it just now. I tune it for the Devil's Reel there and I hung the fiddle up and put a black hankie on it and I told her the devil's going to visit us. I went upstairs to go to bed and she was just quiet there. I fell asleep for a couple hours. I come down. She was sitting up just falling asleep. She said, "I'm going to wake up grandpa to untune your fiddle." I said, "You wake up grandpa, grandpa's going to get mad at you so it's up to you. Wake grandpa if you want to." She didn't want to wake up grandpa so I went back upstairs again. I fell asleep again. I think it was four o'clock in the morning when I woke up. I looked. She was still sitting there falling asleep. Her head was going down. By that time, I pitied her so I took the fiddle and untuned it, but the devil never did visit us. But that's one time, I was

asking for him I guess, but he didn't come. That was in the early days when I was playing my fiddle. People were saying, "Oh that Angus learned the fiddle in such a rush, I think he must give himself to the devil. That's why he's playing." So I told somebody, "Yah I did," you know and I remember somebody mentioned to me, "When is your seven years up?" I said, "I just got two years extended," I told him. I guess maybe the devil didn't hear me, so I'm still here.

Herb: When you played at these fiddle dances, I guess I'm thinking more Fort Resolution, what types of fiddle tunes were and are still popular at fiddle dances, say if you were to play in Fort Res? Are there any tunes that they request consistently?

Angus: Well, maybe not today, but if you go back a little bit, a lot of people like Doe se Doe and Ragtime Annie. I remember those two were quite the favourite tunes.

Herb: While we're on the subject of dances, do you remember the old fiddle players? Like you mentioned George Noran and Sam Noran, Johnny ? Do you remember these fiddlers? Did they clog with their feet?

Angus: A lot. Very loud.

Herb: Like would they clog all the way through? Like say on a song, like the Red River Jig, I was listening to some fiddlers, just actually, in the last four months, like on the Red River Jig, they wouldn't clog on the high part, but when they went to the low D they would clog on the D. Would there be some songs that they would clog to only parts or would they clog all the way through?

Angus: I can't remember too much about on that on George Noran, but I remember on Johnny, I think when it comes down, I think he quiets down on the verses. Some parts he'll cut it loud and if it's loud, I remember him getting louder and little bit less, you know. So I think it ?? changes more than anything else. I'm just guessing. I think that might be, but I remember that. I have a tape here. Just a home tape of Johnny Beaulieu. Just bits and pieces. I put it together. He plays the Devil's Dream and he plays the Red River Jig, which is Fort Resolution style. Fort Resolution had their own style of Red River Jig. Johnny played it and all those old timers I mentioned, played it, but I never learned it, but I got it on tape and it's not very clear, cause of his feet there and he played the Devil's Dream, Devil's Reel and the Jig. That's three songs. Not all. It was broken up and put together. Just about all of it's in there.

Herb: Earlier, we were talking about doubling, we weren't quite sure what it was, but when you mentioned that, like before guitars and pianos came along, fiddlers would double, maybe, if you can, just for the record, maybe, explain what that doubling meant.

Angus: Well going back to George Noran again when his brothers, they call him Sammy, there's one fiddle player, Sam and the other one, brother of George was Sammy, and he used to kind of hit the chords with a kind of bouncy way of hitting the chords following his brother there. Didn't play the tunes, just the chords. Just the chord alone with his brother. I remember, of course, we didn't have all kinds of instruments there, but it seems to sound better than just fiddle playing itself. I remember them playing for many dances like that. Then also, they done something a little different. They had, this Sammy had two sticks and during his brother playing, during the song playing, he would hit the strings that he was bowing, he would hit those strings and go along up to right from A to G chord, go along as the fiddler would go along with the bow and follow and that sound makes the fiddle sound completely different, but that's the only two that I ever saw do it that way.

Herb: If we go from the times when two fiddlers would be playing at a dance, they probably did this before guitars, do you remember when guitars came into the picture chording for a fiddle?

Angus: Well as I was growing up, I think before I even started playing, there was guitars, but when this George Noran, I remember without guitar and then after that there was guitar in there and Johnny Beaulieu he had his brothers, he had two brothers playing guitar for him. He had three brothers that played guitar and at times he had two players.

Herb: Do you ever remember anybody chording for the fiddle on piano here in Fort Res?

Angus: They never had any piano in Fort Res. We heard it on Don Messer on the radio.

Herb: From what you remember, before pick ups and microphones and amps came along, do you remember if fiddlers did anything different to be heard above the sound of a lively crowd? Did they do anything to their fiddles? Did they do anything to sound louder to be heard?

Angus: I know some of them used clothes pins on the bridge. Some of them would put a comb. Some of the fiddles are too sharp so when you put a comb on there, it'll sound like a base. I remember I used to use a clothes pin, quite a bit on my fiddle. It didn't make it any louder. It actually just cut down the high pitch on the E strings. I remember, if I'd lose my clothes pin, I'd always go to somebody else's clothes line to get one.

Herb: At some of these fiddle dances you played at, going way back, are there any special memories you have of any of these fiddle dances? You already mentioned travelling to Hay River by ?? Any other unusual fiddle stories?

Angus: Well not really, but we had an uncle here, his name was Isadore Beaulieu and there was an old lady named Grace Warren, actually that was kind of, right off the start, ? Grace Warren to dance with Grace was very old age at the time, but was very light on her feet and they would do a jig or kind of tap dance. I remember my uncle would kind of dance around her and kind of act funny. He was very comical and remember people used to laugh. The old lady would also act a little funny and make people laugh. Those kinds of things I remember, but nothing really...

Herb: We were talking about reading music. You didn't ever try to learn to read music, eh?

Angus: No.

Herb: Do you think reading or playing fiddle by the book or note for note, do you think that would help or hinder, like, say a Métis fiddler's playing style?

Angus: Well, as I said, when I first learned, maybe I'm repeating myself, but when I first started learning, fiddle tunes are fiddle tunes, Métis or I didn't know which was which, you know, it's only recently that that's a Métis and that, but those days I mean just the tunes that I kind of liked and I liked the sound of it, that's the ones I learned. I didn't know if they were Métis tunes or whoever's tunes they were and that's the way I learned to play.

Herb: A lot of fiddlers nowadays, they talk about the fiddle styles, like you hear about the down east style, where they play one string at a time and the way I'm hearing the Métis style of fiddling is where a fiddler plays, like more than one string at a time. I'm just wondering, did you at one time play this down east style or has it always been double stops or two strings at a time?

Angus: Well, I know I can't play any songs from the east. I know that. I know that for sure.

Herb: So I imagine the style up north here has always been double strings or having a string drone.

Angus: So I don't know how you tell them apart.

Herb: When we talk about Métis fiddling, does any song come to mind, like, that to you, would define or all Métis fiddling, like namely one tune that would describe all Métis fiddling?

Angus: I guess, maybe Red River Jig, but as I said, I don't play the tune, but a lot of square dance music that of the Métis down here anyway, not only Métis as I told

you again the government put a label on us.

Herb: Do you play any original tunes of your own? I think you had mentioned a few and maybe you can tell us how those tunes came about?

Angus: One of them I'm recording here. I think I mentioned that there's one song we couldn't find a name for it, so I called, probably there are names, but Calvin is a fiddler himself and also the many different areas, all over the place fiddling and that and I asked him for the names of the tunes that I put on his...after we done the music, have names. There's one there I called it ? Special and the reason for that, I play quite a few times and? There seemed to be a kind of a favourite over there and I heard this by George Noran and Johnny Beaulieu and this is where I picked up this tune from, but I never did know the name of it. The other one is Great Slave Breakdown, I think they called it. That one also has a name too. Some of the fiddlers up here will identify the names, but I learned it from also again back to the old people that named are before. Many of the songs I play I don't know the names of them. Only recently I learned some of the names. So there two there and the third one that I named there, it was played by the old timers again here and I remember every time I played it for a square dance there was old Jim Lafferty here that's one of our best square dance caller and whenever I played for a square dance, first change, he always hollered at me, old son, he said, you played my favourite and that's how I played that tune. I asked Calvin and I asked some of the old timers here, nobody seemed to know the name for it and I've never heard any other fiddler play it. I've never heard it on the radio. I listened to the radio a lot. I've never, ever heard it on the radio or anyplace at all. I've called that one ? First Change. With Calvin there, Calvin said you can't have a tape without a jig. So I said, I have a jig that I made up, but it's not the Red River Jig. So I called it Slave River Jig. That's the only four that I have on my recording. I play some other ones too. I don't know the name of some of them. There's quite a few of them I don't know the names, but I couldn't describe it to you for you right now.

Herb: I remember my uncle, Morris Lafferty telling me of how during World War II they had to dim the house lights, because I guess the Canadian army was afraid that the Japanese were going to invade from Alaska and come down the B.C. coast and I'm just wondering if you were playing fiddle in the forties? Were you playing fiddle by the forties?

Angus: I was born in 1936. It was pretty hard to dim a candle light. That was all we had. We didn't have any way of dimming. It was either on or off.

Herb: Lee Anne Beaulieu just slipped me a note and I remember hitchhiking a ride from Fort Smith to Fort Smith junction there. We were on our way to play in Providence. Well you guys especially, never let me forget it. Maybe you could tell me about that story?

Angus: I formed a band that called ? cousins. That ? been playing over thirty-five years or so and sometimes some of the boys are...I forget where my bass player, Allan ? was, so in the meantime, Herby filled in. I used to phone him up in Fort Smith and say to him, "Would you like to play along with us in Fort Providence or Hay Rive?" This time it happened to be in Providence. So I phoned him and sure enough, he said, "I'll be there." It was a certain time, I think it was noon or whatever. So I left here and at the time, it wasn't raining the day before when I phoned the day before when I phoned. When we got to the junction, Fort Smith junction, it was pouring and the road was fairly wide there so I pulled on to the left hand side of the road instead of the right hand side of the road. I pulled on to the left hand side of the road and I stopped and the wife said, "I don't think Herby is going to be standing in the rain here. He must have caught a ride to Hay River with whoever he caught a ride with up to here." I remember we were a little bit late getting there so I waited about ten minutes. I said, "Whaa we'll just go and the wife said, "No, let's just wait a little bit longer." While I'm waiting, I was kind of looking up ? highway. There's a culvert there across the road, there across the road there, just at the junction. There was something coming out of the culvert and I couldn't figure out what it was, because it wasn't an animal, because it was square. Something square coming out of there. A guitar case came out first and then there's Herby right behind that. Here he got out of the culvert. I don't know how he fit in the culvert, because he's so tall and the culvert is very small, but anyway we picked him up. We laughed and laughed and laughed for a long ways. Now and then wherever I play, it comes to my mind that this happened and we have a good laugh about it. It happened a few times we talked about you after.

Herb: Those were the good old days. I know I sure enjoyed receiving that phone call, because I thought nothing of hitching a ride to play with you guys that's for sure. Angus, your band, can tell me what your band is called, cause you've been together a long time and I know you played the Yellowknife ?? bar or I don't know how many years, but maybe tell us how the band ?? came about. I know you have the original members and I thought to myself, gee you guys are like the Rolling Stones of fiddle music in the north. Maybe tell me about me about your band and the ? bar?

Angus: The band, our group, people call us Angus and His Boys or something like that and I thought we got to come up with a name and that's when we played at the start, we starting at ? The sign always said Angus Beaulieu and His Players and I thought we have to come up with a name and I thought of the boys that are playing with me. I come up with, how about Native Cousins and for the reason I called it us Native Cousins, was four of our players, myself, ? and Lloyd and Allan, our grandfathers are brothers. So I thought four of us out of, well at that time, Tony also played with us. Cecil Lafferty, but the majority, actually four out of six, my grandfather's brothers. This is why they agreed for this name, so that's where that name ?? came about. We played the Longest Bar which is was the banquet room in the Yellowknife Inn. Some called it the Caribou Room and we played in the

same room year after year for twenty-two years in a row. Twenty-two years and one in the same room for carnivals and people used to line up right from the corner where they called from the entrance past the corner towards the ? range. People used to line up sometimes three, four hours before our playing, because where we play only allows so many seats and not everybody could get in. Some people get mad at me and say, "How come I can't, don't let me in," and all we done is play. We have no control of who comes in. Just first come first serve. I try to change it to tickets and the owner said we can't do that. This way people wait till they get drunk and because they have a ticket, they wouldn't show up right away so they send some letter ?? first come, first serve. This is why they line up four hours sometimes. We used to live right upstairs. Sometimes I come downstairs way before playing and there's a big line up there and they're waving at me, "Let me in, let me in," and I say I got no control over who comes in. After they renovate the Yellowknife and where the Longest Bar was, I think there was some small stores so that was our end of playing in the Yellowknife Inn, but every year I still go to the carnival in Yellowknife. Before that I never entered in town shows, because I was playing and I didn't feel right about going over and entering in the town show and come back and play. It was interfering with my contract at playing there and after that I start entering at the ? hotel. They would usually have this talent show Friday night. Saturday night they'd have an old time dance and all the fiddlers that entered the talent show played for the dance so it's not the same, but it's still kind of, I'm still involved in playing. So that's going into many years now.

Herb: Many of these fiddle events were probably recorded. Tell us of your involvement with, say True North concerts, like when did you first start going to those?

Angus: Where is this?

Herb: I think they held them in different locations. Yellowknife for sure, true concerts or CBC.

Angus: CBC had some kind of a show, different communities. I think I been to all of them. I only been to one of those events they have in the ? They have what you call it again. They have some kind of a... and they have this every year down in the ? ic. Sometimes they have it Fort McPherson. ? you know the name it? That gather, they have this big concert down in Kavic. I forget what it's called.

Herb: Tell us a little more of your volume one, volume two fiddle CD.

Angus: Well I heard of this money they get, trying to get some money through this arts and crafts in Yellowknife there, so I applied for it and I was turned down the first three years and I thought I'll try again and this time I had so many that know how to... first maybe I wasn't filling it right or that and the fourth time I think I tried that, I got a grant arts and crafts in Yellowknife. I ?? Fort Smith and

matched that grant.

Herb: How many tunes are on volume one and volume two?

Angus: Well I recorded twenty-eight songs. I thought it was too many to have on one so I thought maybe I'd divide it so I just got in half so that fourteen on each.

Herb: Who accompanied you on this volume one and volume two project?

Angus: I couldn't go with my full band. At the time, I think Lloyd was away in the Arctic for some kind of workshop or something and then the time I can do recording, I found a place Calvin Volrath in St. Paul, Alberta and the opening that he had I can go to. Allan couldn't make it also. He had some other things so just ?? can make it. I took Herby, which Herby used to be part of the band years and years ago before the name cousins, but he hasn't played with me for way over twenty years, but I took Herby Beaulieu along. When it come to recording, I put Leander? on base, which is the lead player, but he plays just about anything too, except the fiddle. Maybe he does play the fiddle, but he doesn't play in front of me.

One of these days he might surprise me, but anyway he played the bass and Leander played rhythm and then after we done the recording, Calvin put some rhythm and the spoons in it and the steel. They also had a steel guitar. I asked for steel guitar in it, but it was too expensive so I couldn't afford more than ten songs, I think, out of the twenty-eight. That's how the recording came about. I didn't get all of the songs I wanted to get on there. We done twenty-eight songs in ten hours. We could have done more, but the boys had some other things to do so I didn't spend any more time. In the same time, Calvin had some other people to record too, so that's all I got, the twenty-eight songs. At first I thought it would be mostly practicing and I'd get the other songs in later and then we ended up with twenty-eight songs and we used the twenty-eight songs.

Herb: Do you have any future plans for more?

Angus: I sure wouldn't mind to get at least one more recording, because some of the songs that I had in mind to put on there that...also some of the songs I don't know the names of them and going back to the same players that I picked it up from. I'd like to see it played just like these old timers we lost. I mean they're gone with the music and I don't like to ? this music. Of course I've got to do it on home recording, but right now I haven't got a half decent recorder. None of my recorders here have anything on it. In the future, I'd like to get something. At least put it on a home recording so it will around beyond me.

Herb: In all the years you have been playing the fiddle, can you recall the one moment when you were most proud to be a Métis fiddler?

Angus: Not really, no. Maybe there's one thing I will mention. I remember my

grandfather, not too long before he passed away, he said to me, "I want to tell you something. Not everybody is given a gift like you were given a gift to play music to make you feel happy. I want you to carry that on as long as you can." That wasn't the last words, but close to the last words he said to me. Then he said if something happens to me, if I go. Some people, in those days, if you lose your relative, a close one, you don't play music for, maybe, quite a long time, a year, something like that. I remember he said to me, "Music is wonderful," and he said, "If something happens to me, don't leave the fiddle. Even a short time after, if you're asked to play someplace, play. Music is wonderful." He repeated himself. I remember, at first I didn't play for three months. I left it. Some people said, "His grandfather passed away and he's already playing the fiddle." The only reason I did that is because he told me to do that. This is something I'd just like to mention.

Herb: What has fiddling into your life, like, now what does fiddle mean to you?

Angus: Since I've been playing, ever since a young kid...now we don't play that often anymore. We play for the odd wedding dance. Sometimes we play...sometimes two weeks in a row. Sometimes in a month and then sometimes, a couple months nothing and then another time again. We're still playing. Like I said, I learned at an early age and I just love the fiddle music and I'd like to carry on as long as I can and I guess I'll keep on as long as my fingers don't give up on me.

Herb: What would be your advice to a beginner or a novice fiddler?

Angus: There's two young people, at different times, asked me if I could help them along so I said, sure, buy yourself a fiddle. They done that. One, I tuned up the fiddle for him and showed him a few chords. I'm not a music teacher, but I just try to show the first songs that I learned with only one finger and explain how I tried to learn it. I think his third visit, he said, "I haven't got patience for it." He said, "I give up. I'm going to sell my fiddle." "Now I can't tell you what to do, but," I said, "We need young fiddlers." Cause, I'm not going to last forever and right now in Fort Res there's Louie McKay, there's only the two of us left now. He's a few years older than me and one time Fort Res had many fiddlers. There's only two left and we're not young anymore. Actually, Lee Vanville in Yellowknife, his dad is from Fort Res, I'm happy he learned how to play the fiddle and he's very, very good. I'm very proud of him, because his dad is from my community. Also George Vanville used to play in my band. He played guitar for me. To have a young player, even if he doesn't live here, but I still feel really proud of him. It would be nice to have young fiddlers learn before we lose the fiddling in the north. I don't thing anyone is trying anything in Fort Res, but there must be some money somewhere to bring in some kind of workshop. We had this in Hay River. At one time, this was supposed to continue, this art and craft, to sponsor this. They held it here in Hay River for four days. At the end of each day, they had a straight fiddle dance. Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, we had four fiddle dances. Then one fiddler would

play four or five tunes, then the other fiddler and so on. There was no singers, just straight fiddle music. They also brought some young fiddlers to the workshop and each fiddler took the young fiddler and worked with the young fiddler and showed them. Not every fiddler learned the same way. A number of young fiddlers came to the workshop. I think about nine fiddlers came. The Arctic brought some. From all over the place. There was even a fiddler from the Yukon and then they would accompany the young fiddler. I had one from Fort Simpson. I can't remember his name now. He was a very beginner. It was kind of hard to learn in such a short time, but this is something they should try to go back to. It has to start some place, but I don't know how it should be started. There always seems to be a money problem. They have this in Hay River and Hay River is not a bad place. They can accommodate more people there. There's more motels and stuff like that there or it could be Fort Smith or whatever. It could be anywhere, but for a smaller gathering, it could be happening in smaller communities. It would be better if they had a teacher. I never taught anything like that. That time they brought this lady fiddler. She was all over the place. She was a music teacher. I can't remember her name. I got it on video tape. All that playing in Hay River.

Herb: When I was talking to you on the phone, you mentioned a Soosy or Soozay Beaulieu. If you can refresh my memory as to who he was?

Angus: There was so many Suzy Beaulieu's in the Beaulieu family. There must be about close to a dozen of them. That was one of Francois Beaulieu's sons.

Herb: Was he a fiddler?

Angus: Yes, apparently he was a fiddler.

Herb: Well, we are at the very end of our interview, Angus. Maybe you can tell us, as a traditional old time Métis fiddler, how would you like people to remember you?

Angus: There again, I don't know how to answer, but I know, like, I even played a square dance and a jig over a phone for a wedding. Remember you asked me something unusual, I forgot about that.

Herb: Who's wedding was that?

Angus: The phone rang, here it was Frederick Clemen from Fort Norman. He said, "We had a wedding here and they want you to play a jig for us." It just happened Gene Noran plays guitar and it just happened to be at the house. I said, "Are you crazy. How can I play on the phone?" He said, "We all sat up for you here. We have a phone here beside a mike. It's all into amplifier and everything." I was all ready to go. I felt stupid. I said, "I don't think it's going to work." He said, "Come on, come on, come on." So I grabbed my fiddle and just the flat top and Gene

grabbed the guitar and I started playing and the wife was holding the phone. The phone right there and we were both beside the phone and we were playing, eh. Soon after I played the tune, he said, "How about a square dance?" I said, "Well did you hear?" "Of course," he said, "They were dancing to your jig." So I played two tunes. Two square dance music, you know I played one and I stopped and I checked. I said, "Is it okay?" Yah, it's real good. They wanted one more. So I played three tunes and I got a witness that Frederick Clemen. We often talk about it you know. I got a witness, the wife and also Gene Noran. That was the anything unusual happened. That's something I forgot about.