

Con't Tape #6

I make fried bread too.

And bannock?

Yeh. I make bannock too. I like kahkawik too.

How do you make that?

Well, they would dry meat and they'd make a smoke sometimes. When they'd dry meat.

How did they cook it?

They would just eat it like that.

With potatoes?

Yeh, with potatoes and onions.

Is that what they call the little broth?

Ha ha ha, gravy, soup. Rabbit gravy soup. Oh rabbits tasted good in them days. Today they don't taste at all.... Same thing with ducks. I think they've been poisoned, eh? I think so. Well there's sure a lot of different chemicals landing in lakes and places, eh?

Yeah.

Farmers are spraying too much chemicals. Yeah, they're the ones spoiling everything, even the little birds. You can see them on the lake. Same as the fish.

How do you cook the fish?

They make a stew and pie, fish pie. Oh and it was good with onions and pepper.

Was it like today's meat pies?

Yeah like that. I still make those too, today. Oh yeah.

You have recipes for that?

Yeah, in my head.

When or where did you first speak in Michif?

My Grandma.

That one showed you?

Yeah, and my Mom too. I didn't know any English. When I went to school is when I started speaking.

Before you went to school?

Yeah, just in Cree.

Who there spoke in Cree?

My Mom and Dad and people around there too. Yeah. They just spoke Michif.

Today what do they speak?

Today mainly English and Cree. You know the Métis speak. But most of the time do they speak English. If there are some Métis there then they speak in Michif, but other times we speak in English.

And did you ever hear of legends? Long ago, the werewolves?

Oh yeah. My grandmother. I don't know if this is true. Did they scare you? Yeah, kind of. The old lady here, I don't know if I should mention names.

It's up to you.

The old lady Rosalie they said she was going to town, walking to Fort Qu'Appelle. She was going to buy stew meat, they said, and she had twenty-five cents. She looked out the window. A horse was coming in a gallop. In walked Betsy Parisia. She said to my Grandma, "Put some water on the stove. Before the water boils, I'll bring your meat," she said. So Grandma gave her the twenty-five cents and the horse was running. Well, before the water started boiling this girl walked in with the meat. They always said she was a werewolf.

That girl?

Eh ha and when she would chop wood, just one hit and the wood would be chopped off.

Chopped off?

Yeah, right off. And I guess she had a baby and she put it on a pile of wood and set it on fire and burned it.

Her baby?

Yeah, her baby. I guess she didn't know the devil was helping her. I don't know if it's true, but everyone talked about this you know, and my Dad too. He's a cutter. He was going to a dance when he was coming home, the horse was running. Suddenly a black dog appeared walking beside the cutter. The black dog got on the cutter. The horse could not go on. He just stopped.

He stopped?

Yes. He just stopped there. Then the dog got off. Now the horse started off again. They say when a person goes like that, they expect you to stab, you have to see blood. Then the werewolf turns into a person. You have to draw blood, then you save them. They even tell you, "Thank you."

You save them, eh?

Yes you do.

That's the ones they call werewolves?

Yes. That's it.

That was Lent, eh?

The Catholics used to talk about the devil and about God. If you don't pray for seven years, the devil will come in to your house. So they used to say.

Well long ago, they used to tell good stories, eh? They use to tell hard stories, eh?

Oh yeah. When at the wakes, that's where you hear a lot.

When they tell stories?

Yeah. Yeah.

Long ago when they'd have a wake it used to be two or three days wasn't it?

Yeah. Two days for sure and nobody, you'd have to fend for yourself.

When the ones that would carry the coffin, didn't they have to wear ribbons?

Yes, around the arm, here.

Black ribbon?

Yeah for one year, they have to wear them.

Who's to wear them? The brothers? The sisters?

The family.

The family that's mourning eh?

Yeah, that's what they call in mourning. They call it die in French; us we call in mourning.

Cause they really gave great respect for the dead in those days, eh?

Yeah. Oh yeah.

Do they still do that today? The people?

No. By midnight they are already dancing.

They didn't do that long ago, eh?

No, for one year.

They don't do that today, eh?

No. They start dancing right away. They just don't care. I guess that's why we have lost our way of life, eh?

Yeah. That's it.

Yeah.

When you were little, that is still how people lived, eh?

Oh yeah. Yes.

They had a great respect, eh?

Oh yeah.

Well I am sure glad we had this talk today. I thank you all.

Okay.

What's your name?

Evelyn Major.

The end of Tape #6