

## SAANICH ARCHIVES ORAL HISTORY PROJECT 2007

### Eric McMorran Interview Summary

#### **FAMILY HISTORY:**

A local man, Mr. Rithet, advertised in Paisley, Ontario for a person to establish a farm in the Victoria area, on a 1000 acre estate in Royal Oak at the top of Quadra Street. Eric McMorran's grandfather, George McMorran, had seen an advertisement in a Canadian Pacific Railway train station in Paisley headed "Go West, Young Man" and was inspired by it. At that time the "colonist rate" was ten dollars return to Port Moody, so George made the trip to Victoria, staying in the Occidental Hotel near the Johnson Street Bridge in 1886. He made arrangements to move, then returned in 1889 or 1890 with his wife Isabella "Bella" Stark and four children; two boys and two girls. The Rithet's provided everything the McMorran's needed and the family lived in the Occidental Hotel. George McMorran was manager of the Rithet farm for 11 years. Around 1902, Mr. McMorran bought a property with a four-bedroom house at Doncaster and Pear Street for \$5000, but didn't live there.

At that time, Cordova Bay was the family vacation place, with a good swimming beach and plenty of geoducks available at Kirkendale Point. George Stark McMorran, one of George and Isabella's sons, born in 1888, bought property in Cordova Bay. He had formed a real estate company with Fred Dougall before World War I, called Doumac Realty. Today's Doumac Avenue is named after it. Mr. Dougall bowed out, and the real estate company was dissolved. After George McMorran returned from the war, he bought most of Section 31 and rented a site for an ice cream parlour. The business grew from that small beginning into a resort with a tea room, store, and a modern auto court with stucco walls and indoor plumbing. George S. McMorran asked Miss Ida May Richards, a local schoolteacher, to take care of his tearoom while he was away on business. This contact led to their marriage in 1923. As well as managing the resort, George also worked as Postmaster until his retirement. When George retired, his sons Eric and Bruce became the managers of the resort.

#### **ERIC WALLACE MCMORRAN:**

Eric Wallace McMorran has lived his whole life in Cordova Bay. He was born to George Stark McMorran and Ida May Richards at a nursing home at the corner of Hillside Avenue and Rose Street on November 19, 1925. He attended Royal Oak Elementary and then Central High School. He married Helen Emily Burgess on September 10, 1951. The couple have two children, Wallace Daniel McMorran, born April 17, 1956, and Sharon Elizabeth McMorran, born January 13, 1959. Her married name is DeCastro. Today, Eric and Helen McMorran's son Wallace, who had previously worked for large hotels, is the manager of the popular McMorran's Beach House and banquet room at 5109 Cordova Bay Road. Eric McMorran, in his retirement, continues to work in the family business.

## **Eric McMorran Interview Transcript**

**Date of Interview:** Wednesday, August 8, 2007

**Interviewer:** Louise Ditmars for Saanich Archives

**Interviewee:** Eric McMorran

**Interview Location:** In the ballroom at McMorran's in Cordova Bay.

*Text in italics has been added, amended or had its order changed by transcriber for clarification, correction, and consistency.*

### **[1:24] Can you tell me your full name please?**

My name is Eric Wallace McMorran and I'm a member of McMorran's Cordova Bay Ltd. I thought I was running this place when I was 5 years old because I used to do chores for my Dad around his hot dog counter, and ice cream and candy cases. I guess that's why I'm still here because I'm steeped in the place.

### **Who were your parents? Tell me a little bit about them.**

My grandparents' second son (*my father*) was George Stark McMorran. He opened... he was attracted to Cordova Bay when he was about 3 or 4 years old when they came from the Dallas Farm at Royal Oak to Cordova Bay Beach where they would have picnics and dig clams just off Seal Rock there. They would dig clams there and cook them on the beach. They had a hidden pot down there where they'd put in the salt chuck water in and boil the water and have some farm bread from Rithet's farmhouse. George Stark McMorran, being my father, I imagine in his inner being, I would say taken with Cordova Bay into his young heart of only 5 years old but they all seemed to have a love for Cordova Bay.

He opened... first in Cordova Bay he joined up with a fellow by the name of Fred Dougall who also served at the latter end of WWII as did my father, George Stark McMorran. They decided to go into the real estate business. Anybody could hang up a sign and say you're a realtor and do business, you didn't need a licence or anything, you just opened up. He subdivided some property at the end of... well see, they built Memorial Avenue which is known as Shelbourne Street now and the memorial trees are still there, a number of them. But anyway they subdivided some property there because they were going to put a... the BC Electric Railway Company were going to run a streetcar line out towards Mt. Douglas and that was an attraction for that property so they thought they could make some money there; these two young fellows just out of WWI. They subdivided Majestic Avenue and Dougall Avenue and McMorran Avenue over there off of which we know as Shelbourne Street today in 2007. Anyway, things went fairly well but they didn't sell many lots there. But that now has been encompassed, in Saanich's wisdom, which was a smart thing to do because when George McMorran, my grandfather, the two realtors subdivided Doumac Avenue (Dougall and McMorran Avenue), and the Doumac Ravine, which I don't know what Saanich calls it now, was virtually given to Saanich. I think they paid the legal fees and everything for it but the bottom part there, that ravine is a real beautiful namesake in there. But anyway, the connection in there was that they'd bought that property and figured that different businessmen in Victoria, like people go today to Cowichan Lake and Shawnigan Lake, it was a place that they could come and put their little two rooms and a path type of accommodations, same on Agate Lane. But people weren't wanting to come out to Cordova Bay that much. It was a long journey out here and you'd, I mean, we're going

back to 1909 when he first opened his tent platform rentals down on Agate Lane because people weren't buying the properties. He sold two properties, one was to, I believe Plimley, who had the Rolls Royce and Packard dealership in Victoria. And they bought a lot along with another family called Weatherall. And they were on the curve of the road as you go along Doumac Avenue. The rest of it was not raising any money for taxes to pay and keep it there so that's why his friend, Dougall, he got fed up with the situation I understand so George McMorran took it on and he raised what he could renting these tent platforms which I can give you a picture, downstairs of. So to wind this up kind of quickly, people that were camping there would bring their roll of canvas with an A-frame pole across to hang it on, and they brought their own mattresses and maybe a flat-bottomed boat or whatever to set up there. They had water there because of a brook that runs through there. All the people in Cordova Bay got their water from the different creeks or a well in the community. Anyway, people were saying "McMorran you've got this campsite place, we need a tearoom close by."

[7:27] So that's what got him started to build this little bit of a tearoom, which was just a hole in the ground. He had, I believe, four tables, one of them is up at our cabin at Shawnigan Lake, it's a piece of furniture made out of old boards. But anyway, that took place ten years after he opened there. In 1919 he opened with his small little tearoom. He didn't own the property, he rented it from a fellow by the name of Archie Feltoe who had the property across the road, a part of the [Revins'?] estate which was Section 31 would be in Saanich's history. Saanich would know more about the dimensions of that section. But anyway Archie Feltoe rented this to George McMorran to have his little tearoom thing on the lot which holds our patio here right adjacent to the thing, it wasn't on the property we're sitting in now. Mrs. Dunn who owned that; the cottage next door here, she's sold that now, new owners there now. I'm talking a long time ago, these people don't exist now.

So what happened here was that rent was very high those days - \$50 for the season. That was a lot of money to pay out at that time when he was selling hot dogs and tea. He didn't have ice cream to start with because there was no refrigeration here but that's what he started out with, virtually nothing. Well the next year, he came along and he saw all these people coming, this Archie Feltoe fellow, he was a nice chap mind you but I was little scared of him, as a kid, I learned who he was in later years. He felt that he wasn't getting enough rent for that property and he moved it to \$100 and George McMorran couldn't raise that kind of money from May to *September*, the season was listed from Empire Day to Labour Day. And then it was all over because the camping people, their kids are going back to school and it was pretty dormant around Cordova Bay after that time. So, what happened with George McMorran, he was a wise man in his way, and had his father's support in things he was doing because when they developed and sold a little more, they built a story and a half summer cottage down on Agate Lane, just before the crash came in the 1930's that many people knew about. But anyway, they brought down a couple of Clyde horses or whatever from the farm, because when they left the Rithet Farm, they went to establish the acreage (this is grandfather McMorran) at the corner of Pear and Cedar Hill Wagon Road which is now known as Cedar Hill Road. The house is still there, it's a very very historic house and a beautiful house with all hardwood floors. I was told that house was built with hardwood floors with four bedrooms upstairs because it was a family with 6 offspring, and hardwood floors down, two granite fireplaces, built for \$5000 by Drysdales which were a lumber and contracting company in the early days. So we've covered that, I think we need to get more perhaps into this area which is going to be what you're here for really.

[11:30] So they moved, with the assistance of a logging jack, he had a McClusky jack, a great big thing like the railway people used, he jacked this up and put some cement pads underneath and there was this tearoom on this new piece of property. Archie Feltoe he used to go to I think Harrison or someplace and he came back and he saw this... because my Dad had told me I can't handle that you know, the rent. So he came back and he saw the *process* of moving this house over onto his lot when Archie returned. He and his sister lived next door, across the street there you see. He said we could come to some terms, George, come on now George, you're right by the public right-of-way there. You see there was a few feet taken off this part of Section 31 and a part of Section 30 which Norris owned, so Saanich could set up a walkway to the beach otherwise that walkway wouldn't have been there. Mr. Feltoe, he was somewhat upset not getting this rent, I guess and he said 'we could come to some terms, you need my property I've been renting there, the right-of-way is there and it's owned by Saanich and this property that I'm renting you fronts that public right-of-way.' My Dad said 'I'm not worrying what Saanich is doing, my father and I are going to get the slip scraper down' and he says 'we're going to have our own private access for the public to enjoy the beach' which he built, went down right here, you perhaps might remember. But anyway, that was sort of the end of that with Archie Felto.

He had hard times as everybody did and in the end, they're not what I would call cruel stories, they're stories that, what you have to do when people are stubborn in their attitude and I feel sorry for people that are that way. People come here and they come into our building here which I think is quite nice, it's antiquated I know, but it's got a lovely spring maple floor in it. They come in to find what they won't like about something and those people are missing what the creator put them here to love what you have and love one another.

But anyway Archie was... my Dad wanted to get out of his campsites down there, people were building rustic things there and he had his eye on the property across the road but Archie wasn't too fond of my Dad there at the end when this got moved over. So another fellow, he was a veteran of the war, gassed and spent many times in the Jubilee Hospital. He was a very sick man but a smart man, he was in surveying and all this kind of thing. He was pretty smart and he was very fond of my Dad. Dad had a cabin for him down on Agate Lane where he and his wife sort of camped in the summer. What happened there was that he says 'George, I'll get that piece of property over there' he says, 'he's not going to sell it to you' he says, 'I've got that figured out, I'll buy it'. So he went to Archie's, my Dad didn't know entirely about this but I had a conversation, he said 'McMorran's making a lot of money over there in that place' (he really wasn't but...) 'he's making a lot of money over there and I hear you have a lot available which is next to his place there' he says, 'I would like to have some acreage' and so a verbal agreement was made. He says 'I wouldn't want to take it on now but come next spring, if you're still interested, I would be interested.' So time passed and I don't know what month in the late spring it was, but he said he went back to Archie and he says 'I'll take the property' so he made the payment or whatever it was. I don't know what money changed hands but he said to him some months later 'I've been watching that George McMorran, he doesn't know how to stop work, he's working all around the clock, using lamps at night, doing work. I don't think I can take that on, Archie, to do that, so I made an arrangement I didn't want to see you stuck so I sold it to this George McMorran, he seems to like a lot of work so I sold the property to George McMorran'. And that was the end of how he acquired the property that was across the road and also the lot which is next here.

But this lot here on the other side of what we call the pavilion, where that post is roughly there, was owned by Mrs. Dunn and her son Patrick Dunn is a good friend of our family's and he lives in Oak Bay. He was quite a leading chartered Accountant, CA in Victoria and also I know him quite well because he is a very good Masonic brother in the same lodge, St. Andrews, that I'm in. I take him to different events once in a while because he doesn't go out much, he's quite much older than me. But anyway, that brings us to the point of this property being able to be used as it was and Mr. George Stark McMorran got his building permit from Saanich, which was the whole cost of \$1 for the building permit to build from the boundary of Cedar Hill Wagon Road was changed to Cordova Bay Road when it was continued up to join in with Sayward Road north of where St. David's church is, that was the Catterall Farm in early days. And from there on was the Carmichael Farm where the Cordova Bay School is there now. And then beyond that was the pioneer people, true pioneers; there was Joseph Sayward who owned the Sayward Building at the corner of View and Douglas Street in Victoria. He had the acreage and he rented that to Jim Turner who was another friend of my Dad's. But anyway, to bring that around; when that road was changed, when the road went through, I can't give you any dates, you can probably get it from the development of Saanich. From Cedar Hill Wagon Road to Cordova Bay Road and that started from Mt. Douglas Park. Cedar Hill Wagon Road ended where you go up Church Hill Drive right to the top where it's now known as Cedar Hill Road. But that was grass growing in the middle of the road where the dirt was where the wagon wheels ran so to speak. Very few motor vehicles ever went here. I guess Mr. Plimley was one of the first, the Rolls Royce dealer and Packard dealer. He was the one that bought, I think I told you before, the house, the property on the curve of the road going still down there, it was later sold to a man called Weatherall, later on. But it was built with Rolls Royce and Bentley wood cases they shipped the cars from England on sailing ships I guess. But anyway going back here to this property here at McMorran's known as McMorran's Canuck Tea Room for the first year and after that, McMorran's Tea Room at Cordova Bay because the other man, Mr. Dougall went elsewhere. So, I hope I'm not getting out of breath here with you.

[20:39] This establishment here started in a very minor way and I told you when I was five years old; why I'm still here people because I'm still managing it since I was five years old, because I used to sweep around the front, crawl around on the counter. Dad had no windows, he had just shutters, and I'd put the barrel bolts down or my brother, George Bruce McMorran, him and I were very close, there's only 20 months between our births, we were both were sort of managers we thought in our heads, and I used to ride my trike in the middle of the afternoon on Cordova Bay Road in a circle all day not worrying about any traffic coming because if there were 7 vehicles went by in a day in the winter time, that would be something.

Now, do you want to know more about this building?

**Yes, please.**

[21:34] Well the little building, the original, was put up on skids because we'd acquired this property across the road. In the early days, people didn't tear down old buildings. He put some windows in it and rented it out to somebody. I don't know whoever wanted to rent it. It had a dry toilet out the back and it was across the road. There was no sewerage in the community or even septic services here in those days but that was the beginning of building this building known later as McMorran's Tea Room then later when it was added on again, still McMorran's Tea Room and then after that it

got called McMorran's Pavilion. And if you want to stop the film for a minute, I'll just review that and come back and talk to you what I'm talking about.

**That's ok, just carry on.**

Alright, you'll find here in the ceiling, where this exit light is, there is a break in that ceiling all the way across to that big beam. And then, there was a wall there that went down to the street boundary. No offset off the street, that wasn't required, you could build up to the boundary. I know perhaps it might cause difficulty with the Planning Department or something, but we're grandfathered here but we love them all, we love all parts, we have no animosity to anybody. But anyway, there it was and this fireplace was in the middle of the room as it was because the ceiling was joined right where that light fixture is if you look closely you'll see that was where the wall ended. This here was all a drop away with sword ferns and brambleberries and stuff there and we lived in the cottage where the restrooms are there now, next to Mrs. Dunn. And she had a big cherry tree right on the bank oh they were big cherries and I used to... Dad had king tree out in front, and I could climb up that and Bruce and I used to climb on the roof of the building and go around to the side where Mrs. Dunn's cherry tree had some big limbs and these big cherries and we'd sit on the roof there eating cherries. She knew we were having them but we thought that was something special.

[24:08] But anyway what came into being in here, he'd .... See prior to running here when he was renting his tent platforms, he was running dances at the Temperance Hall, that hall just next to where St. Luke's church is, the Anglican church there. He had Dick Bray who ran a Tally-ho in Victoria, He had one of his Tally-ho, Bray's Transfer was an early company, just like Heaney's "big or teeny, just call Heaney." He was playing... he was the second band playing there, the first band he had playing there was mostly strings, a mandolin and a guitar or something. It was Katy Herbert's group, about 4 piece played there. Admission was 25 cents for Men, ladies were free if they brought cookies. That's how he first ran dances. And that would go back to 1909 or around there. Following that, Dick Bray set up a Tally-ho on the corner of the new Hudsons' Bay building on the corner of Fisgard and Yates and would take people out and would bring his drums and stuff out and play them. Following them, Dick Bray, was Tommy Ross' Roamers. That was his next orchestra he had. The Ross Family had the CIL Paint franchise on Pandora Street in Victoria. I don't know whether that's not what you want but I just try to relate people to what their profession was. That's what went on and later on he had a number, he found that he was running... he'd stopped running the dances at the thing, because he got too involved here. He built this Tea Room and he needed to be spending more time here on one thing or another. His parents lost the house on the corner of Pear Street, through the Depression and my grandfather passed away when I was about 4 or 5 years old. I can just remember him. Both of them were loving grandparents. Isabella, later Shirger, had a heart attack and was half paralyzed in her body. He and his older sister Marguerite who helped with the Tea Room here too, they had to get out of the house because it was no longer theirs and the acreage right down to, not Memorial Avenue, as we know Shelbourne Street, and they had that rented out in later years, when Grandfather got sick, they rented it out to Louie Chew and, Dirty Chin, was the other Chinese fellow. They had the property that McMorran's owned adjoining Mt. Douglas Park. They owned down to Blenkinsop Road on Cordova Bay Road. Here I'm taking a step back before this was a thing. I forgot to include that. They were running the farm that Grandfather couldn't operate and they paid rent for it but my Grandfather had the only phone and I can remember Louie talking, I would be just five years old I guess, talking in Chinese to somebody and I used to get a kick, I'd hide

around the corner, and listen to him talking Chinese to somebody because it was only, you rung a bell to get the phone, it wasn't a modern phone like today.

[28:24] But anyway, what happened here was that the dances he was running got to be very popular and he had Irvin's Orchestra playing Mabel Irvine and Cecil Gray who was a carpenter, he played the violin, two or three others, there's pictures of the Irvine Orchestra in this book I was telling you about called *Irvine's since 1851*. We were rather newcomers. That went on for a while but he found that the dance game was a good game to get into because he wasn't making money out of ice cream cones to much because it was all packed in ice and it was pretty slurpy when they served it because there was no electricity. So he enlarged this piece where that beam goes along the building there, that piece of timber there has bolts going up through it which are hidden by the vines into a big truss that Cecil Gray and Noel Thomas who were excellent contractors, and they designed a truss that goes right through to the roof and it was built over in the field across the road there on the former Archie Felto's property. It was levelled off there and they built it. There was an orchard there. I don't remember how they got that over here and got it into place. On top of this, see when he opened this part here, when he built this side, that part there was not there, that was our front lawn. He built this part out and this became McMorran's Tea Room. But then again things were running well on the dances so he got Noel Thomas and Cecil Gray got together and they built this piece onto this building, not building a truss at all. S second gable, the old pictures will show you, there were two gables facing the beach when this was finished and a big trough in the center which in the bad real winter storms, the water was back, it was rolled roofing in those days, Dad would have buckets in here catching the water so that it wouldn't get on his fir dance floor, it was a fir dance floor.

People didn't like dancing *around the posts*..... there were four posts, this one hidden in behind the curtain there. He wanted to get rid of those posts and so, again, Cecil Gray who played the violin, and Noel Thomas, they got together and, whether they designed it or had someone design it, it's got great big bolts, like this that hold it all together and it holds this building, so they came in, there was pretty near a celebration when they bolted up, they put the truss on this post that went right down to the beach. That post there, you take that post out, this building would fall down. Because the truss is on that end and the truss is on a big post on the other end. The bolts were tightened up and the posts *in the middle* were knocked out. There were some little patches in the floor there because there was a floor on that side where these posts were taken out and filled in. So this post couldn't be taken out because the window ended, the front of this building did not end there, it ended here on this corner post and an archway here and an archway there, which had windows that were arched, if you see the old pictures, all across the front. They were slide windows that swoll up in the winter time and if you closed them, you wouldn't be able to open them in the winter but he didn't run dances in the winter anyway. But then when he did this he changed the name of the place and he called it McMorran's Seaside Dancing Pavilion and Tea Room because he served teas here too of course.

[32:54] The Regattas came, we had the Regattas out here. The Cordova Bay Recreation Club, which was the original people out here and a lot of these people that are listed on this trophy here were people that were big pushes on establishing this with all these people's names on here which were pioneers of Victoria and loved Cordova Bay to establish this meets on the beach with sports. Dad, with his Pavilion here, he got a lot of summer... see the churches in Victoria depended on Christian fellowship more in the early days than they seem to now. They seem to not appreciate what the teachings are, some; there are some wonderful Christian living around the country, too, hope I'm not

rubbing anybody. But these people came out here and they would have races on the beach and they would rent, and what arrangements they would make with Mr. Norris, with his fields over here, they would have races there for the Baptists or someone like there, and they had little stoves where they had big copper boilers on them to boil the tea and all that kind of thing. They'd have races but they would have to do maybe their obstacle races and that up on the field, but they'd do *most of* them on the big sandbar here. I could show you some giant sandbars, bigger than the ones we're getting now. Depends what the winter storm is how much sandbars we have. And my Dad opened up... we had a picnic area underneath here; only half of the building because he hasn't developed the other side yet, that comes later. One of the denominations had the floor downstairs here and the Shantyman's Christian Association, there was no church in Cordova Bay, but they had church here on Sundays for the campers because there were a lot of people here in the summer. And they had it down by the creek here that runs out, that's a spring-fed creek there, and they had a little organ they pumped down there. Us kids would go down and they had little texts they handed out to people with pretty pictures and things on it and we'd be singing "Wide, Wide is the Ocean" and "Jesus Loves Me" and that kind of thing. When you're a little kid you're not understanding the Christian Bible like you should be knowing in later years, of course. There were times when we're signing "Wide, Wide is the Ocean," and we'd be, a bunch of us kids, there'd 20 or 30 of us on the beach all looking for the Lord to come around the point in a rowboat. That's to add a little bit of fun... not meaning anything disrespectful to Christian teaching because I live, or try to live a Christian life and it's important in my life. They'd have that and they would have the use of the Pavilion on Sunday night and show slides, the man didn't have talkie with it or anything, he'd talk, this is a picture of Jerusalem or this is a picture... All us kids and their parents, we used to have a packed room in here on a Sunday night. They pulled all the benches, the dance part had benches all around; we put the benches all in a row across.

[37:00] We had electricity. My Dad had the first electricity in Cordova Bay before the BC Electric Railway Company brought juice in here which they brought in over Haliburton Road. He had Arcoflame lights. There's two or three of them laying around here. We never got rid of them. Coleman bought them out after but these Arcoflame had two big something like Coleman had only a big glass with flowers printed on the chan... the thing... the smokestack, so that the glass wouldn't get broken because I don't think they had tempered glass those days. But anyway, he found out about the Delco Company *which* had a little two-cylinder engine you could buy that would make electricity.

[37:52] See, he was getting ice cream and only had it to sell on weekends usually. They didn't have dry ice those days, so the end of the Sunday sale and the Saturday sale maybe the ice cream was pretty slippy but people were glad to have it. He had Palm Dairies, he joined with VIMPA Company, Vancouver Island Milk Producers' Association, they were making, them and the Royal Dairy, The Royal Dairy was a very early farm before others. Royal Ice Cream was known in Victoria right across from the Scollard Building and they made nice big ice cream cones there because my Aunty Molly used to take me there sometimes. Anyway, the ice cream cabinet... and then Palm Dairy, it was all corked lined inside, it had eight. The first one he had had two lids on it with the round lids, you've perhaps seen pictures, and he was selling so much ice cream they got him an 8-lid thing and he paid a subsidy, he didn't buy the cabinet it was a subsidy that after so many years it belongs to you. In other words when he paid his ice cream bill the subsidy was included in the charge.



He got along fine with George Exley. George Exley was a fine, fine man. He was the manager of Palm Dairy on North Park Street behind now where Sands Funeral Parlour was on the corner. They used to be down on North Park Street. They had their Palm Dairy there and they had neon signs that said "Palm Ice Cream served here." George Exley became a friend of my Dad's because he wanted to bring his family to the beach for the summer and Dad built two, they weren't lined inside, the studs were up but the outside was all lined had windows and a porch. He built one right next to, this side of where Fable Cottage eventually became. There was no Fable Cottage there, they were growing loganberries there; somebody was. That was Bill Bayliss, the Bayliss Neon Sign Company on Rock Bay Avenue. He had a son and he came into Cordova Bay and he came right next to where the Fable Cottage property as you know now and then George Exley had the other one next to it, there were two and there was a bit of a right-of-way there. There were some 10 sort of cabins there; they had kitchen sinks in there where they would bury a barrel in the ground and the barrel would have cuts in it and stuff where the water would seep into the ground from the kitchen sink. For the human waste, they had a path. I'm getting too far carried away.

That electric thing there helped a lot and Dad went into costs building this other half. He was against the wall all the time. He was still paying off the acreage across the road and Bill Bayliss when he started the neon sign business he was having a financial time too but he wanted to bring his family out here. They were a wonderful family. They belonged to Centennial Church the same Church that I go to now but I didn't in those days. I was elsewhere. He built this modern auto camp over... main plumbing was indoors. Because George McMorran... The Norris's put in a water system for the cottages that lived along the waterfront down here. Before that there were cribs put in the creek, in other words the Norris Creek which trout went up. Bruce and I used to fish trout down there after school out of that creek. So there'd be a spillway where you could fill your bucket with water and take it to your cabin or your tent, whatever the case may be. They had sort of a water run going down to the bottom of Norris Hill which we called the Japs Hill because Norris rented out to the Mitzuno Kakuno brothers there back around 1909 I think, something like that. They had their water for their irrigation from the other little creek which was established and still runs water where Abbey Road is there now. That creek goes through the Saanich right-of-way that's there. But George McMorran had this modern auto camp so he had to have flush toilets, he didn't have, he had sinks and flush toilets and wanted to have lawns and sprinklers and this kind of thing which his Dad I think helped him with, or whatever, his mother, whatever, they had an antiquated sprinkler system there. We had, in the lawn, when he put that L-shaped auto court, auto camp as it was called, there was the biggest dogwood tree on that property that I think held, I don't know whether Canada knew about it, but it was photographed by many newspapers including the "Montreal Standard" I think it was. It was on the front page. I don't know where the picture is today but it was a gigantic really gigantic dogwood tree. The dogwood tree is not there since we sold for development, it was goodbye dogwood tree.

[44:20] We're getting to electricity now and water, so he put his own water in, it was made with wood staves like you build barrels with originally. It leaked quite a bit but he had wood stave pipe coming down to where our house which we lived in, which Archie Feltoe lived in. We had running water in our house and water into all our cabins. He had 16 modern stucco auto camps which had a partition in the centre to divide...  $\frac{3}{4}$ , partition went up about 8 feet up and then there was open ceiling, there was no ceiling, you could see the rafters of the building. That was considered a modern autocamp in those days. You see auto camps were mainly used up in the Fraser Canyon you went

and got water in the bucket and there was a privy out back for your relief. So he advertised that he had put the word 'modern' on it. You didn't use anything about what was in a restroom or anything. The restrooms we had here were called powder rooms for the ladies. The men's and ladies' powder rooms. They're old expressions that don't seem to leave your mind. The water system after a time was deteriorating. I'm taking quite a jump ahead now. In 1945 we didn't have enough water. There was all kinds of water there but we couldn't harness the water. And so Dad got forms made, similar to what they build concrete septic tanks with, but it wasn't a septic tank plan. It had a flume coming down from where this water, it bubbles like porridge out of the ground up that hill and they built that condominium up there, they had big troubles. They were going to build over top of it, but we were advising them to use the water. You see, when Dad got that, he protected his backside by licensing it with the Dept. of Mines and Waterways with the Province of British Columbia. That was a registered water service for domestic purposes. There's many water permits for water service from springs for agricultural purposes but he had it for domestic and we had to be very careful because the public were drinking this water through the pipes. When we put this new one in, the concrete was carried in buckets down from what we called the CNR Railway Tracks. You know it as Lochside. It was quite an undertaking, you couldn't wheel a... it's all marshy there, it's all springs. We made some concrete filter beds about the size of half that round table there, but they were square mind you and water went in there and if there was any silt in it it dropped. There were no dwellings or anything to interfere, to spoil that water.

The Royal Oak Cemetery was putting in new services. There was a big, you may notice. The ornate gates going into the Royal Oak Cemetery there; there was a building there in the lawn. That was a pump house in there that was hidden in there. They had Bell and Spiggot castiron English pipe stored right by there. My Dad got wind of it from the Cemetery Society and went over and had a talk with them. He said 'Are you planning to use that pipe?' And they said, 'no, we're tying into Saanich Waterworks now.' You see, that cemetery was quite a bit out of town, and foundry... So, they made a deal with my Dad which was very favourable to him and he put this line in and he got the big 4-inch valves, three of them, one on each tank, so that when you flushed the tank out you had the other tank to come on to without interrupting the water. That pipe came down to Cordova Bay Road right where you go into this development across the road, right next to a big maple tree there. People were coming to the Tea Room here saying 'What kind of tea do you use?' It wasn't the tea, it was the water because the water was unadulterated. It was not treated at all, it didn't have to be treated. I can't think of the name of the firm but it was sent to every six months to Vancouver to a testing company and we had a certificate saying that it doesn't need to be adulterated with whatever purification chemicals. When he put that line down there he put a tap in there with a 3/4 inch tap on it so people could come with jugs. You'd be surprised people lined up to get this water. Now they're paying, buying Sooke Lake water that's been boiled or treated, whatever it is with them, but... there's nothing wrong with the Sooke Lake Water, (laughs) it's palatable, I drink it now, we don't have the spring anymore. But anyway, that was a bit of history for us here. We had all this water running and the sprinklers ran 24 hours a day and God Bless our Police Department, they held out their Department there, they went into water rationing days. Dad would be watering the auto court lawn, he'd have 3 or 4 sprinklers running, the water is running over the spillway, and one day a constable came to... and said 'I'm not going to issue you a ticket right now,' but he says 'you're making a poor example to the community.' He says 'you're going to have to turn those sprinklers off.' He didn't realize, he (*my Dad*) said 'well you go back and talk to Joe Bull.' That was another friend of my Dad's too, they both went to school together, Joe Bull, the Police Chief. Anyway,

nothing more was heard about that. The water system was piped under the road. It was hydraulic, we didn't dig up the street, we dug up to the edge of the pavement because it was no longer Cedar Hill Wagon Road anymore. The water line to this building was washed underneath the street without digging the street up which was good. They dug a big hole there, I've forgotten who dug that up. It was so and so. We got that in. We never made a big noise publicly about the spring water. But the word got around, we sold a lot of teas, made good coffee.

[52:00] So anyways, I've been sort of too overbearing right now, telling you and not moving on faster, but I'm trying to pass on to you the childhood days to people that may be interested in this, that don't exist now, the people I'm referring to, very few of them do. Bernie Rogers is still with us, he's a dear. He and his wife established Fable Cottage. Ok, we got this building in here, he called it McMorran's Pavilion. I could name a bunch of orchestras that people are very interested and they started here and Dad often lost them because he was very seasonal. One orchestra he had here was Charlie Hunt's Orchestra. Charlie Hunt's Orchestra played here when he first went into music and he played for my Dad. He followed, Len Acre's Orchestra played here originally for the summer months, but then after about the middle of September, he got on playing with Crystal Gardens. "To dance and grunt, dance to Charlie Hunt at McMorran's" (laughs) and he played for my Dad for a few years. They opened the, what they called, the second dance hall in the Crystal Gardens, there was the North Ballroom and I've forgotten now the name of it, someone could tell me, and I know it, and they had two dances going on there. Following that, Dad had a real wizard of music and he played odd times over at the Hamsterley Tea Room which was at the northwest end of Elk Lake and they called it the Toby Jug Tea Room run by, I can't think of it, it was called the Hamsterley Tea Room Toby Jug. They had a little dance floor but it wasn't closed in like Dad's was and the orchestra that was playing here then was Cecil Heaton.

Cecil Heaton was a wizard on the piano and he could put more music over than you could believe. He worked for David Spencer's limited. He worked there 6 days a week there and when you went down to Spencer's, any new tune that came out - see not many people had gramophones - this was the latest one and someone would be looking over and they'd say 'oh play me this one' and he had it on clothespins on wires all these different kinds of music on there and he'd pull one down, and he'd sit down with the piano... he was a wizard on the piano, maybe you and I wouldn't be able to play it too well. He would be a wizard on the piano and... bringing out his music. He sold more music than anyone else in Victoria. Another one that was popular was Fletcher Brothers - they had a music store too. But Cecil, he had people go there even if they didn't play music, they would loiter around there listening to him play. Cecil came in here and worked for my Dad because it was a little longer season here than up at the other place. He worked here for a while, I don't know where he went, whether he just stayed on, I don't know his later on years but after that came in was, I told you Cecil Gray played and Irvin's Orchestra played. They played before the electrical period.

Dances were quite a bit in people's minds. I get people's children that come here *saying* 'My Dad used to dance back here when your Dad ran it. Are you a McMorran? I'm so glad to meet you.' I'm not saying this with a fat head. My Dad would know your Dad better than I did but I did know some of the names when he referred to different things. *And they'd say* 'This is my wife, we're celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we met at McMorran's Pavilion.' You know, so a lot of that swings back to people.

Another one was Fred Pitt. He was very good and played here for a long time. Fred Pitt was a very good musician too and he had a name for his band but I can't remember it. But he was very popular in Victoria. I think he played in the Shrine Ballroom at times. Following him came Bunk McEwan, you might have heard the name Bunk McEwan. Bunk McEwan was also was a wizard at the piano and he was a composer and he played in the Shrine Ballroom which later became the Club Sirocco. The Shriners sold their building there on View Street at Cook Street. Bunk played here and he brought in a big crowd for my Dad too. But my Dad had certain difficulties for some habits that he had and the orchestra would be ready to play but Bunk would be indisposed. That was too bad. I'm not relating any further about that but Bunk McEwan was replaced by Stan Cross. Stan Cross lived in Saanich for a long, long time over by Colquitz Creek and his brother, George Cross, played the drums and oh I can't think of the name of other persons in the program, but he played for a considerable time for my Dad. While he was playing here after Bunk McEwan, sometimes on Fridays, he'd run a dance with Irvin's Oldtimers, playing old time music with *[inaudible]* and reels and all this kind of stuff, and Cecil Gray and people.

[59:12] When the Galey family moved down here; they moved in next to my Dad's sister's and his property, what we called the 57 acres/acreage there that was left after the death of their parents because the other brothers went up into the Cariboo. And Galeys obtained the property next to what used to be Kellows. Kellows were the early people. The Galeys were here since 38, that's a long time, but prior to that the Kellows were there. Bruce took over Bernard Kellow's paper route and I took over Les Johnson's Colonist route. He became the Water Commissioner for Saanich but we never bought any water from Saanich in those days. I'm dating back a ways.

[60:11] Bringing us up a little more date in here. My two cousins went into the war just around the end of 1939. The war had broken out and they were desperate. They were attending University in Vancouver, doing their last year. Their names were Elmer and Melvin McMorran. They went in at a very early age but they got their training in flying airplanes of course. There were no planes for them to fly because Canada didn't have any at the time so they were loaned to the British RAF and they served quite a long time as RCAF members, they still were keeping their Canada identification. They were flying these Lancasters into Germany, into places where munitions were being stored, where there were railways bringing in armaments, and bridges there were... that's what they did. They flew for I guess some of the longest that served in WWII. Melvin was snubbed out two months before the end of the war. Melvin/*Elmer* was snubbed out about three weeks after. He was struck, Melvin/*Elmer*, in Holland and Melvin/*Elmer* over the North Sea. Germans are lovely people, it's the Nazis we'd been fighting. Nazis were the trouble, I know a lot of fine German people. Why they got knocked out, I spoke to a Squadron Leader here a while ago. He's on in age, but he's still with us. I don't know if he knew my cousins. But I was telling him about my cousins. He said 'the reason they snubbed out more before the end of the war, they'd invented these jet fighters, see the Spitfires weren't... and they'd just drop out of the clouds, flying very high above and they just....' That's how, I guess my cousins got wiped out. So we came back from the war. Bruce joined, he learned to fly a single engine and he was flying... two motored two propellored airplanes and about oh a year later, I joined the Canadian Navy. He joined up for the war in Europe although he never got over to Europe. The war was proving to come to an end, he was doing commander courses *that taught him how to survive*, if he had got shot down over Europe. He was taking them in Quebec, St. Ives, not St. Ives, some place on the St. Lawrence River. When I joined up, I spent 2 or 3 months in HMCS Discovery in Vancouver. A little time in Naden here, then they shipped me to the east coast. I never

was across the Atlantic, but I served on the east coast of Atlantic. Some of my friends here, we joined up at the same time. Cliff McKay, he was a buddy of mine. We did things together down there. It was nice to have someone from here because there wasn't a lot of guys that I knew that were in our Division.

[64:20] But anyway, that was that. When I came back here, my Dad was burned out, completely burned out. He ran the Post Office, he ran the Auto Court, he ran the Pavilion, he ran the Red & White grocery store we had. That man was ready to go, he was not out of his mind, but he was ready to go out of his mind because you couldn't hire anybody. War was on, things were serious. He had my mother and some of his family that came to help him and there were different people that were maybe 15 or 16 years old that came to help him but that along with war savings stamps, of butter, and sugar, and all that kind of stuff, it was driving him nuts, this thing. At the Post Office, people were, he signed documents; he was Postmaster, he got recognized by the Dominion Government as Postmaster for just under 50 years, he was Postmaster. Cordova Bay Post Office which was a Crown Post Office, not part of Victoria Post Office. All these Post Offices around now are District Post Offices or Sub Post Offices. But to go up and visit his brother after the war and that kind of thing up in the Interior. He would write, I remember seeing one of his letters, he says, 'I'm appointing my wife Ida McMorrان to be Assistant Postmaster in my absence for my vacation. Signed Your Most Obedient Servant, George S. McMorrان.'

[65:57] How he met Ida Richards. I've got to tell you a love story. Like a love story, I've been telling you some things that are heart-wrenching to tell. The Richards family camped in the Norris fields. Here is the Norris Cup. They came from Bristol, England and there's another association that I'll tell you about a little later. The Richards' camped over here in the Norris fields. They had tents there and they'd come down to the beach and one thing and another. And I guess they liked the - Saanich didn't have the stairs they have there today which is a little bit of a trail with wild rose bushes growing each side, if you understand what I mean, and Dad had his new stairway here. Mr. Feltoe didn't think he could do this, but he had wide steps like this with cedar planks and pegs in front down the beach - So Miss Richards, and her... she had two brothers and a younger sister... they'd come down and build sand castles. Aunty Molly, the youngest one would come down, and they'd be watching her while she made sand castles and one thing and another. My mother, Ida Richards, was the oldest person in the family. She looked after her mother, her mother was not well too and she sort of looked after things but they tended her... her Dad was deafened and shell shocked in care of Jubilee Pavilion for veterans. Anyway they camped there and she ran a good shop, my grandmother, she worked actually rolling cigars, it's something she could *do*, and be with her family, she was sort of rolling cigars... she got some money because she got very little pension from the government with her... Dad, they had hard times. Anyway, they came here and George McMorrان was at his counter, an old-fashioned counter with boards around the front. I wasn't born of course. Miss Richards is coming up the stairs here right in front of Mr. McMorrان's counter. And Mr. McMorrان said, 'Oh, hello Miss Richards, could I speak to you for a moment?' 'Yes, what is it Mr. McMorrان?' she said. She was very very polite. She was a very well-trained school teacher at Banks Street School in Oak Bay. She wasn't allowed to work in the summer time anyway because she was helping look after the family. He said 'I'd like to speak to you for a moment. I have some business to attend to in town and I'd like very much if you'd look after the counter. I would try not to be very long - maybe a couple of hours or whatever it took.' It kind of startled Miss Richards, Ida May Richards. She said, 'Mr. McMorrان, I appreciate the thought, but I'm not trained in commerce,' she

said 'I just couldn't take on that because I wouldn't want to take on that responsibility. My brothers and that are perhaps waiting for their lunch or something.' Because she was the oldest one in the family. And she went over there and I guess a conversation took place over their in Norris field. I guess they thought Mr. McMorrان was in great difficulty wanting someone there. She says, 'well go over and tell him that you'll look after the Tea Room' but, she says 'I'll do my best then'. So she went over to Mr. McMorrان – these are the words, she told me this not my Dad – She said. 'you know, Mr. McMorrان, I will look after your Tea Room the best that I can, but remember that I'm a school teacher and if I make mistakes, I don't want you to feel that I'm responsible. Otherwise, I'll do it for you if you understand that.' That was a relief off George McMorrان's mind. So she looked after the counter - how many customers she looked after I don't know, being a business day in the week, it probably wasn't too busy. Anyway, that happened.

[70:51] A short time after, there's a further story to it. He had a couple of rowboats downstairs he was renting from the Tea Room at this time. Things got bigger, you see, before he had this other addition on. He also had, when they camped with his parents down on Agate Lane, a special Peterboro canoe called a Swanson canoe, in other words you could stand up in it and it wouldn't tip. It had *[inaudible]* It was a very beautiful hardwood canoe, it was his pride and job. He didn't rent it. He had some other canoes he rented out in later years too. But he didn't rent it. That was his private canoe. He loaned it to special friends, like the man from Bapco Paint, he used Mr. McMorrان's canoe to go down and get sword ferns from Mt. Douglas Park because he was developing that second house over there. Oh, a couple of other persons would have distinguished use to use that canoe. But a few weeks later, George McMorrان was seen there paddling his canoe, singing in a tenor voice to Miss Richards who was sitting in the canoe with a cushion and a back rest and one thing another down the beach. So something happened some year or so later. The first son was born, George Bruce McMorrان was born in 1923 and another son was born, Eric Wallace McMorrان in 1925. And there was the beginning of a marriage, and a great marriage, and an understanding of each other, very much, because Miss Richards wasn't accustomed to pioneering in the way that the McMorrانs pioneered. When they were first married, they lived in the house that was a friend of my Uncle Wallace's, related to them, as I told you in this book, the Whittakers. They rented the Whittaker's house on Blenkinsop Road which is now a place for young people with difficulties there - Seven Oaks is it called? That used to be the Whittaker property, the home is a great home. I don't know if they rented the whole home, they just rented part of it probably. He'd come down here with his old Ford and open up from there and then had this little cottage to live in next door here. So that brings you up to now, not up to now, but a goodly part of it.

[73:47] Going back into the excitement in Cordova Bay, there was the Cordova Bay Shantyman's Christian Association which were a wonderful caring people. Their teachings are - should an organized church come into the community, they would move out and go to another place where there was no organized church. The Shantyman's Christian Association had a vessel called the Messenger III that went up and down this coast and serviced Native colonies and people that were sick and needed a nurse or something. The United Church of Canada did that too. They had two ships, I can't remember the names, doesn't matter. They had them there and then in Cordova Bay, there was some in the group that were sort of big headed. They started the Cordova Bay Recreation Association and they would have races on the sandbar, they played baseball, they would play, not tennis, with the bird – badminton... They put posts up on the beach and then put a net across. People built shelters out of potato sacks. They would find... you didn't buy lumber, you watch for lumber

logs that were towing logs to the mills. There were no logging trucks in those days. They'd fell the trees into the ocean and a tug would pull them off and boom them and take them into where Point Ellice Bridge is. Len Gonason's and Cameron's lumber, they were all built on the waterfront in Victoria, that's the only place they could handle these logs. They'd split logs, oh 8 feet long, with wedges to make cedar boards, and they'd make a frame, and then the ladies would have sack needles - for sewing sacks when they package potatoes up that way with a sack needle - and make these sack things and you'll see some of them in the archives downstairs. And these were built along the beach and they were just sort of nailed on a... log on it they'd nail the board and that would sort of hold the thing up and they'd have a carriage seat or something to sit on or an old canvas floating seat. People would have their banjo, their harmonicas, their guitar, or accordion and some of them would leave them in there all the time... Over by, next tent to Miss Richards' tent, I don't know. But they never bothered carrying their stuff off the beach. It was a trusting world those days. We never locked the door of our house across the road. We locked the door here because there were temptations right in the window.

[77:12] That was the next Association that came into Cordova Bay and then they had the VIOA, Vancouver Island Outboard Association which later became the VI Outboard and Inboard Association because they were putting Ford V-8 motors in these to go really fast. And that was a big hit here, a very big hit. And Mr. Ellis, I was telling you, his name, I don't think his name is on this, he was the surveyor that surveyed the one-mile oval for them to race. They got railway ties from the railway up here, where they made... and put a crosspiece on the end to make a bit of a float. Then they built a [*permaid?*] with a plaster lath on it and painted them red and white, red and white, for the markers to go round. Mr. Ellis had a second/minute special kind of pocket..., I can picture his watch now, a big kind of watch, gold watch for timing, maybe he got it from the army, when he served, or whatever, for timing these people, and who could do it the fastest or who came first in the end. Two leading fellows had what they called hydroplanes, they were [*C-3?*] hydroplanes and they could go, I guess 50 miles an hour. Us as young kids, they were really... my Dad, see, he had a swimming float and he donated to them for the races only and then it went back as a float. There's pictures around somewhere of it and they'd put a plank off the shore to... the drivers could be there and people hold their boat and put a rope around it and give it a pull. They had other ones called runabout boats they were bigger than the [*C-3?*] Hydro. There were two persons and they do like they do in hockey games today so and so is out to get so and so. Rolly Hibbert had one and Cammy Cameron, he worked for the BC Telephone Company, he had a [*C-3?*] too. And they had Evinrude 460 engines, with 4 cylinders and 6 horse power. They burned, I don't know where they got... I think they got the gas from Shell Oil and it was called Dianix, it wasn't the gas you buy for your car, it'd be too... it smelled like ether they put in it too, or something, it used to make quite a smoke out the back. Just to be funny sometimes, they were practicing on the oval getting ready for what they're gonna have this do. The CPR afternoon boat would go by and they'd go out and do a couple of circles around the afternoon boat I guess they didn't advertise because nobody had boats that fast those days, around the CPR boat that was going to Vancouver.

There were some other ones called runabouts. They were about 14 to 16 feet long at the most. There were some great guys there. A lot of these fellows built their own boats. They belonged to the Association. I can think of two people Turk Rice, he had a summer cabin down on Fenn Road and Parker Avenue that was only another just over the hill. The rest of Parker Avenue didn't exist, where all those homes are, that was Sayward's farm. Turk Rice had a boat called the Cat's Meow and

Cammy Cameron also had one of these runabouts. He called his Zimy's Special. The other boat was owned by Louis Smelts. The Smelts Machine Shop in Victoria; they were of German descent and very fine mechanics. He had a pretty fine boat with a souped up engine on that. Besides racing, I had a great admiration for Louie Smelts, his parents were - I didn't know them as well as Louie because they weren't of my era as much. He'd come after the race, bring his boat in, and any kids that came to the dock, he'd take them out for a spin maybe from here half way to D'Arcy Island, zoom around. He'd put on us kids the VIOA racing... because they had to wear safety belts if there was a thing with a collar that came up... but nobody's in the boat unless they have one of them on. I don't know whether I asked my mother if it was all right or night, because Mrs. McMorran, she was legally married before having any family. There were some great memories their.

[82:45] Bringing other things to recreation here, the war was on and Noel Andrew he went in the Army later on, about a year before I went in the Navy. He became coach for my Mom. She had the girls' - no daughters in our family - she loved girls around the house. Any Cordova Bay girls were invited to join the Cordova Bay Stitchers' Association which my mother ran and taught them how to knit, for the sailors or the soldiers, or how to sew. And they had recreation too, of running and also she made arrangements for St. Aidan's church down here, for them to play basketball. Noel Andrew, he used to be associated with the famous Dominoes basketball team, Canadian champions, he took on coaching these girls. This created a jealousy in the community. Here we have a girls' basketball club and we have a lot of boys that are idle. So my Mom asked him if they'd like to take on the boys too. He took on the boys' and the girls' basketball teams. They didn't have... they made their own kind of uniforms when they first started. But then, what happened there, was that I'd come back from the service by then, and I took on as manager when the boys team started up. The war was over and the girls' one was the pioneer one with the girls because the war was still on. There were two - I don't know why my mother shared it with me - there were a couple of girls that came and they met in the house across the road and Mother would have the fireplace on for them, and they'd have hot chocolate, and they had a nice time. It wasn't a big crowd to it, I don't know how many girls she had, enough to have a basketball team that's for sure. A couple of the girls that came. She says, I won't mention any names. But this one particular girl, she said, I think she saved up to come to our house because we had inside plumbing. She said when she came in to the stitches, she always spent a long time in my bathroom. I guess to wash up and do what she had to do. I won't mention any names. They were a very nice family, but they were suffering from problems of not having enough do-re-mi. But my Mom welcomed anybody in. So that came on. And so we had a boys' team and a girls' team. I should have brought a couple of uniforms up to show you, they're down in the storage downstairs. So we got into getting an Island championships and everything else. On the Island here, we did very well but it got too much for Noel Andrew to look after it all and a fellow who played in the Dominoes Team too also was Gordon Patterson, he was a Customs Officer. He took on the boys' team and Noel kept on the girls' because he'd been with them the longest. We did very well, we didn't win any BC laurels but it kept youth busy.

What I enjoyed a lot about it too, is that different ones like Mrs. Pedenault, she never missed a practice. She used to come to the practices and the games. Dorothy Pedenault, her daughter played. They had the Zeballos Mines, the Pedenaults, right across from Town and Country, where that lounge shop is now. They had a big house there. They moved it, they didn't tear it down, it was a great big house. They moved it and put it somewhere in Gordon Head I think. The Pedenault family were a very fine family. She would provide, when we were playing up island, she'd volunteer - I



think they had a big Chrysler or something - and they would take *some of the* team and I would take the rest of the team because I was out of the Navy then. We had a 48 Chev truck, panel truck, and I put a felt mattress in the bottom there, all sat down, because putting a bench, they'd be all hunched like this, and that's not good for a basketball player that was going out to win a game. But anyway, that went on and they grew up. There was the Lindstrom girl, the two... they were sweethearts... one of them lives in Gordon head now... it'll come to me later. Anyway, there were a bunch of nice boys and girls that we had. And Preston brothers was another one on the boys' team, George Preston. Mrs. Preston was a jewel. George Preston worked for David Spencers. Mrs. Preston was Bella Deselle - the first Box and Paper Company in Victoria on Bridge Street in Victoria; Deselle Box and Paper Company. They camped out here. Another one that sang in the dance orchestra was Barbara Henry. She sang with the orchestra. Her dad was the Fire chief of Victoria. She sang with the Len Akers Orchestra. She had a very melting voice. She was a real nice person too and she dress up real nice. Now they dress as little as they can.

**[89:40] Tell me about when you got married and about your own family.**

Oh ok, here we are. Bruce came back first, when I got into the plane business, airplanes. When he came home, see the war with Europe came to a close so they didn't need him taking it. He finished his commander course, I know and he came down and visited me in Nova Scotia. Then he went back to the big airfield near Toronto, I can't think of the name of it, and he was demobilized there, as they call it, because he'd signed up for the war in Europe. But I had not known any difference, I'm 20 months younger, I signed up and they wanted me to sign up for the Cessation of hostilities, so I signed up for the Cessation of Hostilities but they didn't let me off because there were still difficulties with Japan. I was demobilized as they called it in the beginning of summer of '46. The Navy never paid you any much. That's when you get boot training - you got \$30 a month, you got your uniform, you were fed, your dentistry was looked after; they had a slew of doctors that were testing you from time to time and warning you to keep away from trouble which I was brought up to keep away from trouble. Dentists that did that up and checked your teeth all that kind of thing. After the first year, I got a little raise in my rating and I got 40 dollars or 45 a month, I forgot. I was doing alright.

But I'm out now and I'm having trouble hearing you sometimes. I got in touch with the Navy base out here. And I says, 'is there anything along in the Veterans' Affairs to help guys who are going deaf? I'm driving my family nuts.' He says I'll put you on to... This fellow was connected to the Legion. He says 'I'll put you in touch with Terry out at HMCS Dockyard.' He says, 'I'll have a good talk with him and he'll do something for you probably.' He went to battle for me, and I'm getting, I just haven't had time, I've had approval since the beginning of June, but I just haven't been... I got lined up, not with a Technician, I'm not rubbing Technicians, they're wonderful. But he says you want to get the best signature to your examination, without saying you'll get it or not, you'll get the examination done on you free and the Government will take up the cost. He says, there's some right near Cordova Bay, you might like to choose; didn't name any. He says, I'm not allowed to name any Technician or Doctor. But he says you want to get the best. So I went over and I looked into the phone book and there's two of them there so I chose to go to the Doctor one. It's a lady doctor and boy did she give me a going over. It was quite a test and she answered all the forms that were sent to Terry, this fella and he looked it all over and he phoned me a few days after. He says, 'I think it would be only fair that I send this down and I'm going to emphasize to them there's persons that

need that seriously' and one thing and another. In about two weeks' time, I got the notice that they are going to pick up the tab whatever it was, and I got a veterans' card and a wee bit of a pension. I wasn't getting any pension, but they gave me a wee bit of a pension, because I was making big money when I was in the Navy - \$30 a month. But it's just a little basic pension, not an awful lot of money but it's quite a reward to me because I don't get any wages from here. I'm here as a volunteer, cuz I want to be. If I want to go home, and stay home, I can stay home, but I don't want to get old. My Dad's secret is, keep in the stream of life, keep your mind busy, keep busy even if you're tired, and you'll never get old. But if you do sit back, and you've lost your health and you can't look after yourself, that's another story. But eventually what happens, your mind destroys your body and you have to get help. That's why I'm here, because I love my family, I love this business and that's why I'm here today.

**[94:47]** My mother married George McMorran, she had four boys, I am the second son. You want to know about Eric Wallace McMorran's family?

I went to Royal Oak School, my Dad went to Royal Oak School in 1886. I went to Royal Oak School in 1931. The old School that's up there still. When I eventually moved from the little school to the bigger school in Grade 3. I didn't pay any attention to girls at that time. They were kind of a nuisance. We used to play marbles and that up behind the school. There's a bunch of chestnut trees at the front of where that school ground is, it's now a parking lot. They had a big septic system, there was a concrete level there. We used to play pussy in the corner there, run back and forth. How many minutes? Five. Ok, so anyway I grew up in that school. There were other families that did, but we went over from Cordova Bay to that school on the Coach Lines bus, it was; Saanich paid for it. I put to schooling there and then I went to Central, I didn't go to Mount View, a number went to Mount View, my brother Bruce went to Mt. Douglas. But I was kind of interested in electricity or something and my Aunt Molly which was a Miss Richards knew Grant Patterson, he was vice principal or something there. She says, 'they teach boys electrical and woodwork and that,' And I thought of course... so Aunt Molly got me lined up going in to the city school. But I didn't finish school there, I came back and helped Dad, I just walked away I guess from the school after a while, so I don't have a high school graduation but I did go to high school for a while. Anyway, I never had really many girlfriends, I had some.

**[97:31]** We were re-doing the Auto Court. We had military people in here all the time and it was pretty, they would... The Government were looking for people to put these army fellows in from Gordon Head or the guys from Pat Bay were all in this... And they were pretty darn rustic, not lined inside or anything, just plain boards and a wood stove to keep warm, a place for them to live. And they rented all these cottages from my Dad. So we knew they weren't acceptable to go into tourist business. So we lined them all with beaver board, it was kind of a composition board, we lined them all inside. At first, before it was a central shower, they had two shower rooms and a laundry room up the corner, one side was men's and one side was lady's so if people wanted to have a hot shower we had an old boiler in there to heat the water. Anyway we put in a central heating system with big pipes going all around, and radiators, and all that kinda thing; lined them all inside. And we had little radios we rented out, little tube radios, 50 cents or a dollar if you wanted a radio. Anyway, that's how it came, and we rented it as McMorran's Modern Auto Camp. And then after the war, it was called McMorran's Resort Court Motel. That's what the name became.

We wanted to put nice mirrors in the bathrooms. We bought a lot of equipment, like our new windows and that, we bought it from Hobbs Glass Company which later became Canadian Pittsburgh Industries. We got all the windows and glass and that from them and had the windows made. We had these nice little wash basins. There were plaster showers inside, they weren't tiled but the bottom half was tiled up about that far. And so, Dad says we're going to recess them in the wall and have a little medicine cabinet to put the little soaps on and all that kind of thing.

So I went down to Hobbs Glass and it was lunchtime and while I was there, the regular salesman Fred Bossom, the fellow who looked after me there. I says, 'is Fred around?' 'No' she says, 'you're Eric McMorran.' I said 'yes.' She says, 'I'm Helen Burgess' and I said, 'Helen, Royal Oak School!' (laughs) She was as cute as a... and she still is she's my cutest sweetheart. I just can't fathom what happened. Something clicked between us but I was scared to ask for a date. This would be back in about 1948, I guess and we'd just got this new panel truck and I was always coming and getting supplies for the thing so I always had an excuse to go and get some putty or some paint, or something just to go in there. So I got brave one day and said, 'I haven't had my lunch yet.' And Pop Cozier had a place called Wimpy's Place on Yates Street. So I said 'I'm going to get a hamburger, I'll get a couple of hamburgers and we could go watch the boats go by on down at the waterfront, Beacon Hill.' She says 'well I won't be off until Mr. Keats is going to be later, about 1:30.' So I said 'I don't want to eat too early anyway.' So down we went. And then we got seeing each other after that. We went for a daytime trip, we didn't go up to see the boat races, we went up to Nanaimo and back on a trip, a daytrip, that was our longest trip. We went up early in the morning and then came back. We got to know each other better. She had a wonderful mother. Her father died when she was 14 or 15. Sad. He was Navy all his life but a lot of things happened to him I guess. But he was very nice... I knew the Burgess girls, there was Mary, her older sister is Mary, and then there was Walter her brother, Helen, they all took up Scottish Highland dancing and Helen's got a whole bunch of little cups and stuff that she's won over the years. She was with the Scottish, St. Andrew's Caledonians. I didn't belong but I came as her escort to that and they'd have this big function for Burns' Day at the Empress Hotel. Who gets to sit at the head table with the secretary? (laughs) We had some wonderful times together and we still do. But we work too hard right now. She does all the flowers here, she does all the layout, she does all this kind of stuff. You have someone getting married, they want blue. The next person want pink or they want polka dot or whatever; she buys all this kind of material for the... she gets a bit of a wholesale price from the suppliers and she does all the flowers. She just does everything, she's just a wonderful and she tidies up after persons that work here that are not trained other than to serve people nicely. But she tidies up that servery room there and she puts stuff away and all kinds of things. I've got a wife that's just a jewel and I love her dearly and between us we've provided one girl and one boy. Our boy is Wallace who is manager here. And we have one daughter Sharon DiCastro; that's her married name. She looks after accounts receivable and payable and all the computer stuff and her husband is an artist and also a computer wizard because he looks after our machines. He can take a computer apart and put it back together again if he needed to. But he does art work too, you know. There's some of his artwork down in the Wisteria room down there. But I admire him too, he can fix anything, especially electrical, you know if something goes wrong, or if a light's not working somewhere, he can fix it. I can do anything too, having a motel, I can fix anything. I changed a toilet tank yesterday, took it out, put a new one in. It was cracked and leaking in the staff bathroom. I don't know what happened to it maybe the lid got banged against it or something happened to it. I put it in.

**[105: 32] I'd like to really thank you for giving all this excellent information today. The Archives really appreciates it. It's been a pleasure to talk to you.**

I didn't deal nearly long enough with my children. But my children... well Wallace went through High School and then he joined up with Delta Hotel for a short time up island, and then later had an opening with Four Seasons in Vancouver. They said he would have to join the union or something. He said I was brought up in a family operation and I respect all modes of work but, he says, I don't choose in my heart to belong to a union. He was already at Delta, and they said well we'd like you to come at the end of the month or something. He says well I can't come right now, I committed where I am, I could come in September or October, he says, I'm committed already with an employer now and that's where I'll be but if you can use me after that, I'll be glad to work for you. They got a message there in that. And this manager took him in and he says I'll put you in as Office Attendant which later he became a Food and Beverage Director of some kind and the Manager got moved out of Vancouver and shipped to Edmonton.

Wallace doesn't like the cold that much but he came to me and he said to me and opened his heart and I opened my heart. I says, 'Wallace, do you want to make that for your real career?' He says, 'I like the career very much and I like the positions I've been offered working there.' I said, 'My advice to you, as your Dad, go to this man, don't tell him you don't want to go to Alberta or why you don't want to go to Alberta. Go there and say that you really appreciate the confidence he has in you, otherwise he would not have asked you to go.' And they took him down there and he stayed in that hotel until he got free accommodation and that Four Seasons Hotel is a pretty tony hotel. And he became Food and Beverage Director there. And then when they sold that hotel 16 years ago, I guess it was, when they were selling it, he got nervous because he didn't know where his comrade manager had gone. He didn't get nervous, he knew he could get a job. Hoping he came with Canadian Pacific. He came to the Empress here, worked at the changeover at that, they shipped him out of Victoria for the changeover in the Palister, he made some changes in the Empress while closing up that place downstairs and he closed up the place in the Palister, they had a place for businessmen to come in, they had a bakery downstairs where they baked their own bread, he closed that up and made it into something else. And he made a... had a... There was money to be spent, it wasn't his money, it was their money, and put in a self-serve - you see it's all around these investment people and skyscrapers is where that hotel is - and he put in a luncheon buffet where businessmen can come along and take someone they want to impress in there and they can have some little mini afternoon steaks or they can have whatever they want, or if they were in a hurry, they could serve themselves or a waitress would wait on you if you want to order from the dining room. So he did very well with them and when he left to come here, I didn't know if he wanted to come or not but this place had to have a renovation. Thank you to the Corporation of Saanich, they gave us... "keep it within the shell, and we'll give you the go." We're grandfathered here, we're not legal, we're grandfathered and so I said well I'll take that under advisement, what they're telling me, because the people who had bought our property across the road wanted to develop this in some way here, maybe an apartment or something. So we went down and saw Wallace and we said don't come, because I've come to tell you about this, this place will be turned over to the people who bought the land across the road, and I had the funds to do it, because we'd put the money that was there to go in here if the family were interested. But I said, "We'll back you up all the way if you want to come but I don't want you to come if you've got other opportunities with the Canadian Pacific, there may be something else for you." But he let me know about two or three months after. He says we're coming

out to the coast. This picture how that was, mind you he was getting far and away piles more money than ever I could pay here. I can't pay big money here. I'm still going over these sprinkler systems and these seismographic people came in here. I was up to here, ready to... Why did I do this? That's what I said. But we got through it. Another way he perhaps looks at it, he never says anything but this is heritage for him and his sister. This property is worth some money.

**Thank you very, very much.**