

Miss Eylene Harris

Interviewed May 19, 1972.

Miss Donaldine Harris 819 Ackroyd Rd.

Miss Eylene Harris  
Born January 1903 - Vancouver.

Miss Donaldine Harris and twin sister Mrs. Josephine Reid, born September 1904, Vancouver

Twin sisters Leila and Lola, born in Steveston, now in Vancouver.

-father Austin Harris at 14 settled on farm 1890 No. 9 road near No. 3 Road with parents, brother Goldwin went to Lulu School.

-Austin to Vogel's business College, Vancouver, worked on B.C. Electric streetcars, Vancouver - Harris family first to Lulu Is. on Mellis' stage

-Austin married Charlotte Badwell - lived in Vancouver

1906 - Austin Harris brought his family winter with grand parents -

spring 1907 to Steveston - Eylene age 4 to Steveston - recalls lots water around dyke low, high tide with storms - water came in, stayed

-floodgates opened at low tides - no pumps - Xmas visit to grandparents

Sea Island around first or second year - returned to water over yard, ditches - had to be carried in from horse and buggy - roads terrible -

2 passenger cart, blocky - engine became saw - recalls earliest 24 May

horse races, foot races, games up and down - 2nd Ave. - home corner

Garry and 2nd Ave. - didn't go much to school, health poor, Mother

taught her - others to Steveston School - from Entrance Class on taught at Bridgeport School - Steveston School teachers: Miss Crawford &

Davison boarded with Harris family - 2 room school - Berries on home

5 lots - hedge of evergreen, blackberries, berries - picked blueberries pinhead size on bog - canned, jelly, jam, spiced as pickles from black

berries - picked huckleberries using blueberries for flavor - took

tram to Garden City to pick -series of bog fires every summer - now

fire dept. stops it.

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Miss Eylene and Miss Donaldine Harris

sisters picked strawberries, raspberries to earn money-also sisters 10 years old, got 10 cents per hour at Lighthouse Cannery, Imperial Cannery later - all worked year of fire - little houses, shacks close together, tin stove pipes, bucket brigade, but if not water in ditch and tide out fire went till burned out -

Steveston - Moncton to dyke packed with small buildings - early 5 hotels, canneries along dyke -

Lists Hotels: Steveston, Sockeye, Commercial, Star, and London.

Big Fire at cannery near Imperial - summer's pack of cans fell into River - Steveston children worked at salvage - checked ends for bulges - paid 25¢ an hour "thought they were in heaven"

Sisters summer jobs at canneries at Imperial - made own cans - filled wooden trays with tins - Chinamen put cans on line one at time - also on clinchers - salt goes into cans and lids go on.

Indians: Homes wooden shacks, earth floors - row along dyke next to Scottish Cannery - beside other canneries - went out in sailboats Sunday night when gun went off - stayed out till Friday night or Saturday morning - heard singing Indian songs ashore - Indian Cemeteries around - brought missionary - Rev. Tate came on Thomas Crosby, Methodist Mission boat - in Methodist Church summers - he spoke Chinook - later Goldie Eburne captain on Crosby - son of Harry Eburne first post office at Eburne.

Stores Steveston - early general store Hunt's - sold to Walkers - Walkers and Keiths homes showplaces end 2nd Ave. and Moncton - across was Rubinevitch Store (combination) - Williams butcher shop - when cars came Grauers had big delivery service from Sea Is. - farmers traded Saturdays at Steveston stores. Excursion special - stern wheeler from

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Westminster Sunday afternoon to watch fishing boats - started 6 p.m. - never missed - quite close - sailboats run by one Indian and wife - depended on sail - had drawn drum - just throw out net to get a fish. - friends often gave them fish free - Indians made beautiful hand woven baskets - came around trading baskets for clothes - post masters wife Mrs. Parker had wonderful basket collection - Hong Wo lived outside dyke - also many small Japanese stores living quarters behind - many boat houses on pilings - when first came recalls only 2 Japanese families - hundreds Chinese in bunkhouses near canneries - wild time Chinese playing fantan, gambling games - when father Chief of Police once rounded up 600 Chinese in station - 2 early school teachers sworn in deputies to help round up Chinese: Rufus L. Davison (retired dentist) and C.R. Messinger (dead) later principal 2 west Vancouver Schools - recalls going by police station angry looking Chinaman hanging out window - used to see Chinese smoking pipes (perhaps opium) - Chinese had lots pep work long hours - Mah Bing family prominent - huge farm - grandson artist Raymond Chow lives Manoa Village - Uncle Goldie used to walk bridge Lulu Is. to Marpole on hands. Open ditches - each sister accidentally had one ducking in ditch - two anecdotes re falling in ditches. First family car - 2 passenger Ford 1914 - only 3 cars around - Bob Bridge had one. Father (Austin) helped put in first Richmond waterworks ran Municipality's Studebaker - at first only rain barrels - sometimes drove into Vancouver for water - 1921 water off for weeks - brought from Marpole in milk cans - used by the drop - some used ditch water for cleaning houses - Swim - younger sister started at pool (river) by Gulf of Georgia Cannery - beach in town - Fog - some bad - once walking

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along Kingsway one hand on curb, one on car - real bad on Island - broken up with more buildings - Norwegian neighbor talked of fog hospitals in Norway - coal oil lamps at grandpa's - electricity early phone in around 1911 - 1912.

Recreation - Old Opera House, dances, concerts, churches had strawberry festival - oodles of strawberries and real cream concert after - Old Opera House concerts - Jack O'Neil connections helped get artists - Pauline Johnston recited - comic skits - Gold dust twins - Harry Lauder W.W. I Red Cross Concerts - Barney Salmon and daughters (one ended with Ziegfield Follies) - Farewell Dance around 1914 W.W. I - recalls watching dance for boys leaving - Sam and Les Gilmore - Herb House - Bay and Ralph Carter (stepsons of Police Chief Waddell) - earlier Steveston Doctor Hepworth wedding reception in Opera House - big affair - Tram - on Kerrisdale trestle incident steer - loose broke leg - 3 sisters handful for mother - recalls Eburne Bridge slowly would open, shu while Harris' on horse and cart waited in cold - Father recalled skating on frozen North Arm of Fraser - few houses Steveston - 5-6 houses within sight see out in Gulf, white caps - dark on whole Is. at night - Father Police Chief early years at Steveston, then on waterworks, then on halibut boats - Steveston reputation being tough place - People couldn't get off Island readily even when trams going - crime minimum - if Andy Waddell and Alfie Johnston saw anyone didn't like getting off tram at Steveston they put him back on tram - police used to meet the trams at midnight - made sure no drunks off - worked 24 hours a day - no one could pull a robbery - Myelene worked in Telephone Office - Donny in stores, cannery office, 3 sisters were teachers in Steveston. Chinese raised pigs - Japanese mostly fishermen, families worked canneries - Chinese dwindled - Japanese crowded them out of canneries and crowded

Indians out of fishing.

Walked on dyke often - something fascinating to see - solid with canneries, boathouses, Japanese dwellings.

Flowers wild roses along dyke - Crab rose - mayflower, dandelions.

Made beads from garden roses at Grandma's - ground like meat, shaped, used long hair pins to dry on blackened.

NOTE: extra

Recalls fire department from Marpole with Jack O'Neil voluntary fireman going into ditch - no fire protection until W.W.II when A.R.P. bought old car, rebuilt it - each contributed \$25. to become first fire engine in Canada - Recalls when Jap stores caught fire in her childhood Japanese became very excited.

TAPE 25 - JDD 4.