

Ralph Magar - Artist

Interviewed May 1, 1972

Born Vancouver 1913

Father James Magar came from Eastern Townships, Quebec to Nicomen Island, Fraser, 1891 - to Richmond with wife and family Nov. 1919 - farmed at 3 areas - bought 20 acres corner Granville and No. 2 Road - then Granville called Railway Ave. - their house (still there) was opposite Lulu Station (interurban tram no longer) - mixed farming - berry farming - mostly loganberries - some strawberries - few milk cows - sold berries to fruit canneries: Empress Jam and Canadian Cannery. - family of 4: Gladys, Lloyd, Melva, Ralph - family picked also got Japanese help Steveston then full of Japanese - recalls enjoyable times growing up - active in Brighthouse Young Peoples - father paid Ralph some money picking times difficult - early days father worked some for municipality - hauled gravel - incident foreman sick and Magar (senior) mapped curve Granville into Railway - Ralph arrived age of 7 - roadways - No. 2 Road was just gravel - Magars only family down to Blundell with electricity because lived on Railroad corner so wires came into house - had a telephone and water - lots of water early on land - especially at Xmas, high tides and torrential rains - no pumps then - whole area No. 2 Road to Brighthouse under water at times - no drainage - farm appeared to have had peat earlier - when subdividing bonfire burned, smoldered - old cedar logs buried - property from Granville south to Udy Rd. from Udy Rd. and No. 2 West to Lynas Lane ($\frac{1}{4}$ mi.) Ralph first school half mile north corner Westminster Hwy. and No. 2 Road Lulu School - school was next to house on actual corner - 1 room school - teacher Mr. Bailey - then to Bridgeport School - took interurban tram from Lulu Station to Bridgeport Station - tram always on time, comfortable, warm, relaxing - friendly - used to stop on old Granville Bridge - then Davie St. and Seymour the terminus.

Growing up active in United Church Brighthouse Young Peoples group - played badminton - had own tennis court behind house with friends - Herb Dick played badminton South Arm United Church - another tennis Court at Steveston, near parsonage.

-first ball park No. 3 Road and Granville Started when Ralph was 28, quit playing tennis - route to Brighthouse when he was young: present Granville Ave. stopped at No. 2 Road so had to go south to Blundell, east to No. 3 Road, north to Brighthouse - doubled the distance - put in Granville Ave. beside existing Railroad track - farm owned by Mr. Oeser (across st.) was subdivided - Gilbert later - at Lulu School sat 2 in a seat - person beside you in another grade so couldn't cheat - sat beside Albert Abercrombie - Wilfred and father Van Dusen hauled their berries (Wilf so small had to sit on cushion) - later picked up milk from Magar's cows for Vancouver - fog was thick - especially around Christmas - walked, took tram - got bike late teens - rode bike to Chilliwack, Victoria - to Westminster movie - rode on top of dykes everywhere - when young went swimming at Kitsilano some - older swam in lakes, and Fraser River almost to Airport at high tide - not polluted - sandy beach then - around 1938 commercial gill net fishing 2 seasons - with friend bought 15 ft. fishing skiff - sold to Phoenix Cannery - paid 50 cents a sockeye - fishing pool went out 1 week at a time - father rode bike out to meet them Saturday morning - fished off Westham Is. - 3 or 4 boats of same size in Gulf - mostly gas boats - start of drums pulling nets.

-Grandstand at Brighthouse racetrack burned down twice - no fire dept. so big cleanup - Stables started along present Granville Ave. where swimming pool is now, extended west to Gilbert Rd. north $\frac{1}{2}$ way to Westminster Hw east to No. 3 Road (minoru), some sheds along No. 3, and old clubhouse many fires in sheds.

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-recalls all buildings along dyke from No. 2 Road to Steveston swept by fire - age of 8 (had scarlet fever) - bog caught on fire every year - every east wind -Pauline Johnson's "Fires of Lulu Island - peat burned smell - Simpson Winery along No. 2 Road and between Steveston Highway and Moncton St. - Interior decorating own business 5 years in Richmond and Marpole - father brought Studebaker 1919 to farm, light head lights with match (carbide drip), squeeze horn with honk honk - never got out of barn - liked art early school drawing - went to Vancouver Art School - 2 years evenings - self-taught - 1936 Vancouver Jubilee asked to paint 2 pictures for float showing what Richmond expected future airport - asked by Reeve Grauer - describes picture ideas - 5 years ago Peter Ohler's Bookshop and Art Gallery (now Warwick Gallery, Vancouver) in October held Ralph Magar's one man Art Show - 20 paintings 24 x 30 - swamp along ^{Vedder} ~~Veda~~ River - wildflowers on rocks along Alta Lake Road - Richmond Review covered it - hunted pheasant in old Brighthouse Estate 600 acres tramped all over - also in what is Gilmore Park area with brother - also on own property - other hunters in - didn't post notices but finally municipality ruled out hunting on farms - shot ducks on other side of dyke, on Sturgeon Banks (used to be called Blundell flats) - Opening day guns went off by dozens - hear from guns Westham Is. Ladner - Old Marpole Bridge open and closed half the time - autos backed up to old Marpole Bridge open and closed half the time - autos backed up to old firehall, Hudson St. - recalls airport Lulu Island, just north of Lansdowne, from No. 3 Road east to Garden City Rd. - tri-motored Ford landed, Mayor of Vancouver, Lewis D. Taylor stepped out to greet crowd and propeller knocked him down, nearly killed him - same aircraft flying to Seattle lost - boats went up and down Gulf in prohibition days. -in Richmond old airport, training pilots, watched them close to inter-urban wires. side slipped. after W.W. II

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-ploughed fields Sea Island end of runway, with his own tractor.
-only way to Ladner by ferry - went south on No. 3 Road to Steveston Hwy.
east to No. 5 Rd., south on No. 5 to Ladner ferry wharf.
No. 5 Rd. then stopped at Cambie Rd.

Also recalled: when he came in 1919 Brighthouse had only 1 store, a grocery store owned by Mr. Stirton, followed by Mr. Dear - and 1 gas station owned by Mr. Hussell who had sons Bruce and Roy and a daughter, also recalled Mrs. Travers and Joe Thompson. Got their meat from Grauer's Store, delivered.

TAPE 21 - SIDE 2.