

Here we are at Mrs. Gladys Kings home on a glorious morning, sunshine for a bit of a change. It is approximately 10:30 in the morning, and Mrs. King is going to help us relive the history of the King family. She is fortunate she has a great deal of information for us and we will listen to her story now.

Gladys: Grandpa was born in <sup>Smerna</sup> Smerna which was a Greece<sup>k</sup> colony at that time, his father or family was an important exporting family. The uncle was the skipper on the flag ship which father looked after, and grandpa went to school with the priests. He was a very well behaved man he spoke Greek, Latin, Arabic, but not English.

Interviewer: His family was in the shipping business.

Guest: They were in the importing exporting shipping business all over the world. He always envied the boys who didn't have to go the school. They just helped unload ships, or other boys just fished off the warf, and he always thought that that was the ideal thing to do, he wanted to do this but his father said you will either become a lawyer or a doctor. So he came home from his holiday and studied really hard, and his uncle was just about ready to leave. So he thought that he would ~~steaway~~ <sup>stop</sup> and have a little trip. Well of course being sailing ships they let <sup>stop</sup> with the tide, and wouldn't come back for any reason. So when the ship got well out into the harbour he popped out and said "hello uncle look who is here" His uncle said if you think for one minute you can have a joy ride you've got another thing coming, you are going to work, so he did. He was a cabin boy and he was a seaman and he was whatever he had to do and he loved it. Now these trips took several years but they could do them in one year, but I believe it was on this trip but i'm not sure it may have been another one that they went to england and while they were in England he left the ship and he stayed in England for some time. What he did when he was there I dont know but he didn't speak english and he learned it, he tought himself how to read and write. Then he worked his way over on a nother sailing ship to the States. While he was there it was the american civil War broke out and he fought in the Civil War, now I don't know which side he fought on but he fought.

Interviewer: Was this about 1850?

Guest: Yes

Interviewer: About how old was he at that time?

Guest: Well I would say he must have been around 20 probably or some where around there Anyway then this was over they found gold in California, So he thought this would be a marvolus thing; he was going to make a fortune and go back and show all the people in Smerna how smart he was. He didn't have to be a lawyer or any thing else to make it. So he got on another sailing ship and worked his way on that and he went around the horn and up to California. In San Fransisco they did an awful lot of shanghaiing at that time and he and another fellow were accumulating just people that were walking along the street, they would get bopt on the head and halled off on to this ship. They were not allowed out on deck when the ship was in at any port because they had to come in up the coast you know to get wood for the ship, and also the had to stop for provisions such as water and differernt things on the way up. So they were going to go it was sealing or whaling i'm not sure which I think it was sealing ship. It happened that it was around the time that Victoria got gas lights so of course it showed up the town quite well these lights reflected, and he was on watch and he said to the officer that was there " What are those lights over there" And he said that's Victoria. So he said " Oh is that in washington territory, Organ territory, or ... "Oh no" he said that is Vancouver Island a British Colony. So he said "it is" and he said "yes" Well they were at least three mile off shore when the were going by and about midnight he was off his watch and went down and he said to this fellow " I'm leaving" If you want to come and if you can swim why you can go with me. So he took his clothes and stuffed them in his duffle bag and jumped over board and swam ashore

Interviewer: With his duffle bag?

Guest: Yes with his duffle bag. He wasn't a big tall man he was a short stocky man like leon very broad shoulders and so he the other man came with him and he helped him get a shore and they got to Victoria.

Guest: Well they spent sometime in Victoria, and then they were opening up Saltspring Island. So they thought they could go there to see if he liked it and he did. So he took land here and of course being a man from the warm Agean coastline he chose a waterfront when everyone else was picking in the island in the central part of island, he chose a southern slope on the water. He had a sloop and he used to pick up things and farm things and take them to the island. He would pick up things for the farmers in the island and he went to Namimio and get bags of coal for people if anybody could afford to have coal why he would bring it. One time when he was delivering some grain now at that time grain was in two hundred pound bags people would refer to them as peas, it didn't necessarily mean it was peas he had, but if it was sawder type crop you know it may have been peas but this two hundred bag of peas, and he was climbing up the rocky beach up to a farm and he slipped and fell and broke his back. From that time on he was bent at the waist. He managed to get back down to his boat and sailed home. How he did it I don't know It's a wonder he didn't die. All the rest of his life he had to have white linen clothes that that he used to have cleaned every several times a day to put in his back because his perspiring would make it quite sore.

Interviewer: Wasn't there any doctors on the island at that time?

Guest: No I don't suppose so no. So he married and he was married at that time, I don't know if he had any children at that time. Then he quit going and doing so much of this.

Interviewer: Did he marry Mrs. Murfey?

Guest: Yes. She was from the Saanich area. He had or he was a great man for peas and etc. and he had this was up here with his nursery where he did glass staining, and those trees over there the one ones you can see in the far orchard those trees are over one hundred years old

Interviewer: Did he have to clear all of this land?

Guest: Yes with oxen and what have you. Up here this particular piece up here which was a cedar bottom is loaded with rocks. When he was doing this he would tell the boys to take the rocks and the boys took them as far as here and dump them all.

Interviewer: When you say boys do you mean his children? Interviewer

Guest: Yes, this was Alexander and Cronston and the Leo and maybe we better say approximately what time these boys were born.

Guest: Well Leon's father would be about 104 and the other two were older than that

Interviewer: Constanteen was the first boy born.

Guest: I believe so. then Alexander then Leon.

Interviewer: Did he die in 1958?

Guest: Yes.

Interviewer: There was a real tragedy with Constanteen.

Guest: Now they must of died in 1904 or 1905.

Interviewer: Could you tell us a bit about that tragedy?

Guest: Yes well the Victoria sealing company had a number of ships that went to Japan and up in the Priviloff Islands and all up there sealing. A number of the boys from Saltspring Island were on the plan. Constanteen and Alexander were on and also Dick Purser who was an uncle. A storm came up, and they used to go to Russia they used to go into merman or some thing up there in the Pacific anyway they used to go to Russia. They would stop there to get provisions in Russia. Of course at that time Alaska belonged to Russia. They also stopped at Japan because they were gone a year or two. Anyway they had loaded up and gone out again and there was a hurricane and the craft went down with all hands and they were never heard of again. That was one of the tragedies of the time because there was so many young men, particularly from the island here who had gone down. This ship was one of the better paying ones because they did very well. Although their wages were very poor as you can see by these papers ten dollars and twelve dollars and what have you sent to the father at the time.

Interviewer: We have the pleasure of having the original receipts of the money paid to the men. Its true that it didn't seem like that much money but I suppose they managed.

Guest: Oh yes. Now lets ...

Interviewer: Now the third son was Leon, and we are skipping around a bit but he was married to Soapy Purser in approx. 1900 is that correct?

Guest: Yes. Now her father was a magistrate at one time at this end of the island and

Interviewer: Now was this Dick Purser.

Guest: No that was his brother, and I believe that his name was Dick also but I'm not sure. Mrs. King laughed and told me that Mr. King her husband had told her that when he was a little boy they referred to Mr. Purser as that long stocking englishman, because he wore these nipper type pants, so they referred to him as a long stocking englishman. Mr. Purser and Mr. King and another fellow built the Roman Catholic Church, both of their wives were Roman Catholic and although Mr. King was Greek Orthodox...

Interviewer: Now are we talking Joseph King?

Guest: Yes.

Interviewer: Was he the father of Sophia Purser?

Guest: Yes. You see Mr. King and Mr. Purser both worked on this church. Mr. King was Greek Orthodox but his wife was Roman Catholic, and the Pursers were Roman Catholic so they worked on it. Mrs. Purser was the daughter of a Cowhican chief and she was married to a man named Mr. Fisher and they...

Interviewer: What was her first name do you remember?

Guest: I don't think I remember. Mrs. King always used to refer to her as mother and never said what her name was.

Interviewer: Now we have done a little skipping around and I interrupted your story we were talking about moving stones and I wanted to know if you were referring to his boys I wanted people to know who his boys were. So can we go back to the moving of stones.

Guest: Oh yes, well he would tell the boys the stones and of course boys didn't take them to far and they just dumped them up here in this cedar bottom here you see. So of course they got all the stones from down there and all the stones from up here. They had a log house down there originally and now I have or I gave to my husband's cousin's daughter a wooden spoon that grandpa had carved and I still have one here, one of the wooden spoons that he carved and I gave her a metal fish or round slotted cedar with a handle that you take fish out of when you are poaching them. Now I don't know when granma King died because she was not here when Sophia and Leon were married.

Interviewer: Now was this the original Mrs. Murphey?

Guest: Yes. It was Emily, and she had died or died shortly after they were married because Leon and Sophia were married here.

Interviewer: Is she buried here in the church yard.

Guest: Yes.

Interviewer: Well now let's see, then Leon and Sophia Purser were married about 1900 and then they in turn had all those children. Can you tell us their names and the approx. dates of birth.

Guest: Yes. There was Hazel she was born in 1902, then Vera who was born in 1904, then Bernard who was born in 1906, then Dennis was in 1907 and Bernard was born in 1909. Next was Eviline in 1911, and Leon in 1914.

Interviewer: And Leon is your husband.

Guest: Yes. Seven days before Leon was born his grandfather died and the family had just had the new house built, a log house that their grandfather had built.

Interviewer: Was this the old original house that was down closer to the water?

Guest: Yes it was. They took the log house down but the other one is still there. It was built 66 years ago, and they were already to move in and grandpa died. At this time had been bothered very very much at this time with his back. He had also hurt his leg and it had turned to Ganggreen. So he felt he should teach this mother how to cook and how to fish and how to swim because she had almost fallen overboard when she was expecting one of her babies. So he said you must learn how to swim so he taught her how to swim. He taught her all the things that she didn't learn being brought up.

Interviewer: Now are you talking about Sophia?

Guest: Yes, and all of this is grandpa at the end of his life time, and she would go out and fish because she loved to and grandpa would look after the children. She was a great one for anyone who was sick she would go and look after them and help them and this sort of thing, sometimes he would go with the doctor and help him. Grandpa looked after the children and spoiled them terribly. He would give anything they wanted and it didn't make any difference what it was but they would get it, and those children loved him. He used to give them rides even with his bad back

Guest: built this school up here because his children had to go to school.

Interviewer: Is this the Beaver Point School?

Guest: Yes. Then he felt that when he was not well he should not be in the house with the children. So he had a little shed that they fixed up for him and he had his bed, and other furniture in there. Leon's mother looked after him.

Interviewer: Couldn't he have his leg removed?

Guest: Well i don't know wether he couldn't have or din't wish to or what I don't know. Everyone was quite disturbed because here was thier mother looking after him and she was expecting a baby. Anyway he died just before she had Leon.

Interviewer: What year approx. did he die?

Guest: In 1914 December of 1914.

Interviewer: Was he also a member of the Catholic church?