

**Betty Jeffery in conversation with Dianne Hentschel and Doreen Thompson,
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I was brought in here as a baby. My family came from North Vancouver in 1925. I was a week old when my mother, Mary (Morris) Jeffery, came home from the hospital. My dad was away and the neighbour invited mother in for a cup of tea while he lit the fire in our place. Our roof was being reshingled. Sparks from the stove set fire to shingles around the house. All our possessions were destroyed in the fire. We had nowhere to live.

Dad read in the paper where there was a furnished house on Cortez Island. He thought it would be a good place to raise a family. We all got on the Union boat -my parents, Baron, Charles, Fred, Dolly, Lillian, and me and got off at Seaford which was supposed to be the closest place to this house in Butler Bay. As the Union Boat was pulling out my dad said, "Where's the closest hotel?" Mr. Daniel's said "Well, there's no hotel on this island." So dad says "We've come to look at the house in Butler's Bay. Mr. Daniels said "There's no road in there, just a trail." Mr. Daniels said he knew of a neighbour who had a boat so he woke them up. There were all these kids, see. They needed kids for the school. Captain Smith, Nellie's dad, was only too glad to take us around. It was in Tormay's Bay.

My mother wondered where there was a grocery store. A neighbour, a bachelor named Jim Smith told her that you sent an order to Woodward's in Vancouver through Mr. Daniels, the postman at Seaford. Then you picked it up a week later on mail day, bringing it home in a row boat if it was good weather, or on a pig in bad weather. My mother thought he meant a live pig but he meant a sleigh built to drag over the skid roads. Mother had to learn the logging terminology.

That house was a long way from any school or grocery store. A house later owned by Leightons became available closer to Squirrel Cove so we moved there. Then my dad got 49 acres at Chris's Lagoon. We moved there and he added on to that place.

When I was about 8 years old dad got Smelt Bay through the Soldier's Settlement Board. It was a preemption that had been abandoned. His lungs were damaged during the first World War. He was on a disability pension of \$98 per month. When he first got the Smelt Bay property he didn't have the money to build on it. There were two old buildings. My dad and one of my brothers camped in one of these buildings. According to his arrangement with the Soldier's Settlement Board my dad had to stay on that property. He lived there with one of my brothers, while the younger ones lived with mother at Chris's Lagoon. Mother and dad each managed with \$49 from the pension. We couldn't find a buyer for Chris's Lagoon during the war years. It was 49 acres and a house for \$500.

Work on the house was further held up when my brother Charles was killed in a logging accident. Before that he and my dad had started a foundation. It stood there 7 or 8 years. There was no money. My dad had money taken off his pension to pay for the property and my brother Fred had money taken off his wages. He didn't come back from World War II. We camped out in the house on the point after Harold and Dolly moved out. (They camped there while Harold was logging for George Freeman.) Finally the house got built, the property got

cleared. Mr. Taylor bought the piece at the point which cleared the title and my dad subdivided so each of the family could get a piece. My mother's brother Harry Morris came up and bought the place Dale Salentin has. Other than Taylors all the property went to family members.

Mother and dad managed on their income by growing and preserving their own food. They always had a pig and chickens and a big garden. 365 jars of preserves in a season was normal. They canned everything-peas and beans. That was what saved the oldtimers. Dad used to grow watermelon and cantalope in the compost.

They were great community people. They could get things going. My dad used to cook the Christmas dinner at the Community Hall. That was when the Columbia Coast Mission was going. He used to play Santa Claus. Mother started the Women's Auxiliary. There were always dances and parties at home. I remember that we had to clean and wax the floor before a dance party. My older brothers and sisters used to drag me around on a blanket to polish the floor. They would put records on.

My father Henry Charles Jeffery died in April 1955. My mother Mary Jeffery died in April 1971 at the age of 86.

I was of high school age during the war. We couldn't get a teacher for Cortes at that time. Eventually we had Nellie's sister-in-law, Gladys Brown, Harvey Smith's mother. For me it meant doing high school courses by correspondence. It was too difficult.

I went to work at Egmont for a couple of years. Queen Charlotte Fisheries took over the store at Egmont from the Japanese when they were sent to the interior. All their stuff was stored in the attic of that place, I often wonder if they ever got it back. Jack Parrish had the contract but he was working for Mr. Tindall at Refuge Cove. His sister was going to do it but she couldn't stand the isolation.

After Egmont I worked off and on at Painter's Lodge for 30 years from 1944 to 1974 and I worked for Mrs. Lowes at Manson's Lagoon. Mrs. Herrewig, one of the Manson's daughters started a little store up in the Lodge here. It was too bad that the Park's board didn't keep the Lodge.

Summers and Lowes bought that place from the Percy's. Percy's wife, she didn't like it here. "No way she was coming burying herself up in here."

Jack and Evelyn worked in the store. Evelyn did the store and Jack pumped gas. Mr. Lowe used to help Evelyn on boat day when the freight came in. Mrs. Lowe did the Lodge and cabins. When the place really expanded was when the project started at Kittimat and Kemano. They used to make one stop here to fuel up and one at Sullivan Bay. Sometimes they would try to make two trips a day. Lots of times they'd just make it into here and over night and on to Vancouver. To start with the pilots used to walk up to the Lodge They used to say to Jack, "You've got to do something about this. We're wasting too much time." So Jack and Mr. Lowe built the coffee shop. It had six tables and a long counter. Mrs. Lowe was known as far as Chilco Lake for her pies. At the time a piece of pie was 75 cents. She'd cook and I'd take the

stuff out to the customers. We served full meals. You had to give them full meals when they came off the planes. She had a big room in back for the laundry. One day she was in that back room there doing laundry and this fella came in and he started opened the bins and poking his head in there. He says, "I guess you're wondering who I am. Well, I'm the health authority."

On changeover day Mr. Lowe would change coal oil in all the lamps.

Some of the locals would just have coffee. They'd sit there and sit there. We'd hope the gas in the gas lamps would run out. They's sit there waiting for the mail to be sorted. Morg May and Ernie Guthrie always sat in the two seats by the kitchen door. I could bank on them a couple of times a day for coffee. We used to feed Morg fairly often. He did a lot of little jobs for us. For myself I got \$12.00 a week and room and board. I worked from daylight to dark if people needed anything. If it was really busy I'd get a couple of dollars extra.

There was a big propellor that the pilots all signed. Lowes and Summers sold to a Mr. Taylor. Little did they know he was going to trade the place for timber somewhere else. Different people managed the place. Mr. Gill from Whaletown came over to run the store. Woolseys had the big house for a while. Bartons were the last ones in there. The Bartons used that light plant as a garbage dump. It was such a busy place. Then all of a sudden it just went "poof". The whole thing is grown over there. You can't tell where the Lodge was or the cabins. The parks Board put the cabins up for auction. The boards in that wood shed of mine, a lot of them came from the lodge. Dennis Hansen got the bid for the Lodge. Ian Disney bid on one of the cabins. Victor had one at his place on Potlatch.

My house was originally 12' by 24'. I built that with my dad as a place to camp when I came home on my days off. I fell off the roof once. My dad said, "What are you doing down there." And I wondered myself what I was doing down there. But you were taught how to do everything and I'm grateful I was. I could chop wood just as good as the men. Later rooms were added. We were hooked up to Harold's light plant before the power came in.

After Dad died and after Harold and Dolly moved out of the brown House, mother sold it. Then she used to go to Victoria in the winter and come and stay at my house in the summer. She didn't think I needed a phone but I had one put in in case she needed help in the night.

The big bedroom was added when I brought mother here to care for her after she had the heart attack. The doctor thought she was a miracle woman. She wanted to move back to the island. She just lasted a year.

We used to have community work bees. After dances at the Hall us kids used to have to go clean it up. It was lots of fun. Then there were work bees to get wood in for the Hall. That was where kids learned respect. We weren't just handed things.

At one time there were 12 kids living on this road playing around here. Now only three houses have year round residents. There are no children.