

EVA VASELENEK

Mrs. Vaselenek was born in Hardwick, Vermont, <sup>where</sup> her father <sup>was</sup> a granite cutter. She moved to Richmond in 1943, and got a job in a cannery to support her ill daughter. She first washed fish and then packed it into cans. The conditions were very bad; the canneries were cold, with wind coming in the cracks in the floor, and the work was both hourly and piecework. Many different nationalities worked in the canneries; Natives, Japanese, Chinese, and Whites. The different races and nationalities worked on different aspects of the canning operation at B.C. Packers. She was asked by the workers to help them organize as she was vocal in protesting conditions. She contacted the Fishermen's Union; it took from 1944 - 1946 to completely sign the plant up. The forelady and management harrassed the union militants. She was elected as a steward, put onto the by-law committee and then elected as a paid organizer. She was an effective organizer and signed up both fishermen and cannery workers, ~~and~~ bringing the membership out to meetings, speaking to workers on their lunch-hours and signing up all different ethnic groups and religious groups. She worked in plants to start organizing campaigns, moving from the canneries into fresh fish. The union fought for equal pay for women and the different nationalities; <sup>for an end to</sup> ~~fought against~~ harrassment by the supervisors; ~~fought~~ for seniority by job category and for uniform wages and conditions across the province.

CHRIS WADDELL

Mrs. Waddell worked in the YWCA during the Depression as a dietician, later working in the British Embassy in Washington. She moved to Vancouver in 1947-48 and worked in the dining room of the Aristocratic Restaurant at Granville and Broadway. She was already sympathetic to trade unionism as her father had been the leader of the OBU Street railwaymen in Winnipeg. She was asked to join the union (HREU) and did so. A janitor, ~~was~~ the main organizer and he was ~~late~~ fired. Others were transferred out of the restaurant to other locations in the chain. Despite this, <sup>an</sup> the application went to the LRB which ruled that the certification was allright. As well, the union used the tactic of informational picketting. Mrs. Waddell took up the union campaign and soon signed up the new workers in the restaurant, and finally an agreement was signed. The Aristocratic workers were so enthused by their new contract that they became very active in the union and soon made up half of the executive. Flo Allen, a longtime member of the union then suggested that Mrs. Waddell run for Business Agent. She did so, and took the position, working for the union for 12 years.

RICHARD AND PHYLLIS WHISKER

Both Richard and Phyllis Whisker come from coal mining families.