

6 June 2000

Topics in Bold

R = Respondent

So tell me about Edna Zigenbine again.

00:02:02:00 Edna? Yes, Lindsay, when they were little, I can't remember how many children Mrs Ziggenbine had there but I remember they had, they camped for dinner once just about a hundred yards from home and we ran over to see them. Mum sent us over to ask Mrs Ziggenbine to come over to the house, you know, but she was too busy to come over. Had to feed the children first and then after that she, I think she went to see Mum then, I think. She was a marvellous woman, Mrs Ziggenbine. Edna, too. And so was Kathleen. Kathleen married Dick and they used to go droving. Monty was with them, my brother. And he said that Dick and him had never been down the [Murrinjai?]. Dick was a wild man, real wild man. They'd never been down the [Murrinjai?] Track, you know up there, and Kathleen had been, and she piloted them all the way down the [Murrinjai?]. Both horsewomen, they were, oh Edna.

00:03:12:20

R 00:03:31:22 Oh, well, Edna's sister was my sister-in-law. Edna's not blood related but she's sort of, you know. I like to see her every time I go to Mt Isa but I've been up there a couple of times and got my teeth done, you know, and I just didn't go up but I'll go up next

time I go up there. I'll go over and see her. 'Cause Mt Isa is a bit strange to me but now I know exactly where she is. I know where she is, she lives up near the museum, up there, up on that hill. Grey Street, it is. So I intend to go and see her next time. I will go and see her next time I go up there. I haven't because I had a lot of trouble getting me teeth out. Oh, it was awful.

I And when you say that, as a child, well before your brother married Kathy, that you'd see the Ziggenbines going past and your mother would call out to her, was that kind of one woman looking out for another woman she didn't know? Was that how it went?

R 00:04:16:16 Oh, yes. Well, she knew Mrs Ziggenbine, see. Harry Ziggenbine, Dad and Mum knew him and there was, oh there was a few. The Sodens too, they were a married couple. Mr and Mrs Soden, they used to drove down there and they had two kids, you know. A girl and a boy. Don't know where they are now. They should be still around because the girl was older than the boy, but they were younger than me, the children, so they should be still ... I don't know where they are but I tell you where you find out a lot of people, is in that Hall of Fame paper. That's a very handy paper if you want to know, you know, where people are. And I've been going to write and ask, oh lots of times, and I haven't, you know.

I The Hall of Fame has never interviewed you, I don't think, have they?

R No.

I So were you and Edna mates as kids?

R **Race Relations: Edna Zigenbine**

00:05:28:12 No, no, we weren't, no. Edna, see I was too little. I didn't ... I was only little. Edna and I are the same age. I think I'm a year older than Edna but she was small then when they came down and she didn't drove down the Marree-Birdsville Track. She was boss drover after her ... see she was nursing. She was nursing Tennant Creek, I think it was, and her father took ill, so she went and took over the plant of horses and they reckon that she could really handle the Aborigines, you know, even those that never wore boots, you know, big toes in the stirrup iron. They reckon Edna ... they'd do anything for Edna.

I They respected her?

R Yeah. She was droving for years.

I Do you think she would have had difficulty as a woman doing a job that was usually a man's job?

R 00:06:18:00 No, I don't think so. She was brought up to it, see. She was looking after the common up there too for a long, long time. Years she was there looking after the cattle in the yard. Oh you see most of these papers, you see Edna's photo in them. But I haven't seen Edna for a few years. I'm going to see her next time, though, when I go up in November. No, September I go up again. In September I will go and see her then.

SIDE B

I So how did you and your husband come to run this pub? How did the shift come ...?

R 00:06:54:15 My husband never ran the pub. My son did, Jimmy. He never ran the pub.

I So your husband, you weren't with him for so long?

R Oh, yeah, a long time. I forget how long now. He's buried up there in the cemetery. I forget how long. Hang on, we were married in '48, '49 I think. '48 or '49 we were married.

I So your husband couldn't work because of the drink?

R 00:08:09:22 No, he had ulcers too. He used to work. But he was very sick with ulcers. He died of cancer.

I How much older than you was your husband?

R About 18 months.

I So, Jean, did you ever have a period when you weren't working and you were looking after your kids, or was it always ...?

R 00:08:13:00 Oh, yes. I lived over in that old house over there and in that big house on the corner for a while. That belonged to ... Jack Clancy built that house on the corner. He had an old man helping put down the floors, then he built the rest himself and just had jackaroos, young fellows who used to put on and then Peter's father bought it then. When

he died, we went to live in it too, and then when his brother Nick came along we shifted into that old cottage.

I So when you were living with your children in the house opposite, tell me the kind of the physical conditions of your life there. You know, like did you have an electric light? What did you cook on?

R **Washing**

00:09:06:22 Oh we had engines, yeah. A wooden stove. And then we had a gas stove but we had, always had the washing machine there. Old, you know, washing machine, but we had to start up the engine, our own engine to wash. It wasn't so bad then, not like in Mum's day. You had to wash by hand, the old copper out the front. And even when I went to Davenport, Ethel washed by hand and she had the copper. That was a big day, the wash day, in those days. Now you can just go out and put the washing machine on.

I And so you had one of those washing machines with the wringers? Would that be the sort you had?

R 00:09:47:14 Mmmm. Ethel did have one over there after. Yeah, no, no, we never. Or did we? Yes, I did. Yeah, and it was so long ago, it's over twenty years. Yeah, we had the wringer on it. Mmmm. Yes, it was only in the latter years that they had, you know, the spin dry. They had a spin dry here when I came over to the pub, though, but we never had a spin dry.

I So while your kids were young, then, your husband was earning enough money to keep you and the children?

R **Gender Relations**

00:10:19:04 Oh, yes, he kept us. He managed [Clifton Hills?]. We were there for about three years, I think it was. Took our horses, some of our horses there, and then we took some of them down, left them at the gate and the kids and I, or he trucked them to [Mungaranie?] and then the kids and I took 'em down to the [Clayton?]. We lived 30 miles this side of Marree and we left them there for a while, then we picked them up and the kids and I brought 'em up. I wouldn't drive in the motor car but people reckoned that he made me drive the horses. He never made me drive the horses at all. I wouldn't drive, ride in the motor car, I wanted to ride the horses and I did. That was before Maxie was

born. And then a lot of people, you know, 'Oh, yes, he made her drive'. He never at all. Nobody could make me do what I didn't want to do. I didn't want to drive the motor car and I wouldn't drive it.

I And that was not about being afraid of the car, it was about you wanted to ride?

R No, I wanted to ride.

I So have you ever owned a car, Jean?

R 00:11:15:00 Yes. Yeah, I owned a little Morris, second-hand Morris. And I've reared calves for year, you know. Years and years and years I've bred calves for 25-30 years or something. Here. I home too. But then I bought a Suzuki, there's the cattle money, and Danny used to help me a lot. If it was too dry here they'd take the cattle over there and then when they mustered, they'd muster mine with theirs and send them away for me, see, and Gordon Reid bought the lot that I sold to buy this Suzuki. Good little car, I had it for a few years, and then twenty years ago I sold some more and bought a Hi-Lux. I've got it here, still here, the old Hi-Lux. I wouldn't part with it for anything.

I So when did you buy the pub, then? And did you buy the pub and ...?

R 00:12:06:02 Oh, well Jimmy was the one. He was the youngest publican in Queensland at the time. He was just 21, I think it was, and he did all the business. I didn't. And even when he was trucking, he did all the ordering and paying for things. But if, he'd ring me up and tell me to pay an account. I wouldn't pay anything unless he rung me up and told me and then I'd pay it, see. But if he didn't come home, he used to come home every, oh, sometimes he'd be away a fortnight trucking, but not too long, be back for a couple of days and then he'd go again. But he did all the ordering and most of the paying for things but if he wanted anything paid before he got home, he'd just tell me to pay it, see, and I used to.

I So you and your son went into business to buy this pub here?

R 00:12:55:20 Yeah, mmmm. Yeah, there was ... oh, the other boys were in it, too, I think. Yeah, they were, but it's a good while ago and then they sort of ... Jimmy bought them out. Donny and David, I don't know about Roy. But I know Donny and David were in it too.

I So how long ago did your family take over the pub from the Gafneys?

- R 00:13:24:12 Oh, it was from the Shores. Len and Margaret Shore. Ahhh, it'll be 30 years next year, 29 years. Margaret and Len Shore, they live in Toowoomba now. Margaret Shaw's Sandy Kid's sister. Sandy Kid from Windorah, you know, he's well known, old Sandy. One day their father, Jim Kidd, he said, 'Where's Margaret, Sandy?' 'Oh,' he said, 'she fell out a long way back'. Always casual, old Sandy.
- I I've heard Margaret described as 'History Margaret' or something. She might know a lot of ...
- R I think she probably would, yes. Mmmm. Sandy's got an aeroplane and he's a good pilot too.
- I So the Post Office was always part of the pub?
- R 00:14:22:00 Mmmm, far as I know. And we've got a box up there that came from one of the Post Offices up further, I just forget the name of it, but there was a young fellow lives in town and he told me that that Post Office is burnt now, that this box has been here ... well, when I first come up here, it was here then, so I don't know how long it's been here. This box with the different names on it – Arcadia Valley and all those. I kept the names on it too.
- I So what was the box for?
- R To put the mail in. Letters and things.
- I And were you like the bank for this community as well?
- R 00:15:01:05 Jimmy was. Jimmy was but I wasn't, no. My intelligence doesn't work to that, I don't think.
- I So what would be involved in being the bank for this community? Was it like agent for the Commonwealth Bank?
- R Mmmm. Agent he was, yeah. Mmmm. But it's not worth it. He's got that, oh what do they call it now? EFTPOS or something. I don't understand it but
- I So if Jimmy was away and you were left running the pub, how would the banking side of things go?

R Work: Bank Agency/Post Office

00:15:39:18 Oh, well, he used to come back in time to bank, usually. Usually he'd come back ... oh, he never, once he started trucking he gave that up. It's not worth it. Not worth it. You start a new account off and you get \$2.00. And that's about all you would get. It's not worth it. The Post Office isn't worth much either but I still do it because you can see how many houses there are in town now. I've been going to write and tell them too. They wouldn't want to know, of course, but ...

I So how much money do you get for running the Post Office?

R Oh, you get \$1,037.00 every three months, that's all I get. That's a seven-day-a-week job. A big firm, see.

I So what's involved in running that Post Office? What do you do for your \$1,037.00?

R 00:16:29:19 Oh, well, Monday the mail goes out. Monday afternoon. I've got to miss my session. I usually miss that movie, you know, that's on, midday movie. I generally have to miss it Monday 'cause the mail goes out. But today, Tuesday, the mail comes in. All mail comes from Mt Isa. Today it comes in. I've sorted most of it. And then Wednesday, tomorrow, is the road mail. It comes and my daughter-in-law runs that from Boulia, Carol. Roy comes down sometimes on it. The little girl comes down too. Anyway, and then that's Wednesday. Thursday the mail goes out again. I can't watch my midday movie again on a ... I watch scraps of it, you know. Friday the mail comes back. Saturday we don't have any mail but then I've got to do up the mail for Sunday morning. Sunday morning at half-past-nine we get the mail to South Australia. We don't get any mail from there, it just all comes round through Brisbane or somewhere. I don't know why. And once when the school children left some parcels behind, I sent them a bag and sent it straight to Brisbane so they'd get it and oh, didn't I get into trouble over it, to send that bag to Brisbane. It's supposed to all go to Mt Isa, I don't know why, because the bag goes to Brisbane, you see, the same day, but then it may be just as quick to Mt Isa, I don't know. But I would have had to wait a day or two so I sent it down and got into trouble.
00:18:01:16

I And your goats, when did you start running goats?

- R 00:18:05:06 Oh, goodness me, a long time ago, when I was over in the old cottage, around calves then. I've been around calves for years. The station used to give them to me when ... see, on a station now, the muster, when they have a muster on the big station, they can lose up to oh 50 calves a year, something like that. It's no fault of theirs. They're born when they're mustering, see. They've got to muster and when the calves are born when they're mustering, the mother might ... if the mother feeds them once, they're right, but if she doesn't feed 'em them, then I've got no colostrum to give them. Should have now but they don't give calves away much now. I don't know why.
- I So you take on the poddies?
- R Yeah, goats too. Sometimes you feed the same goat with the same calf for about six weeks, they'll mother them then sing out to them, run out and feed them and everything.
- I So you have a herd of goats and the mother ...?
- R Mmmm. I did have a lot but now I've only got eleven nannies.
- I And the mother goats will feed ...?
- R 00:19:04:10 Feed the calves, yeah. Doesn't matter how big the calf is. They reckon it's cruel. It's not cruel at all. The goats will run out and feed them. And that's the trouble, see, then when the dingoes come around, that goat will go out to save that calf. The calf will stand and look at the dingo, of course the goat will run out, see, and the dingo gets the goat then. That's the trouble.
- I So you've got a lot of dingoes round here?
- R 00:19:25:18 Yeah, more than there should be. One day, a few years ago, I went up there. I heard the goats sing out and I ran up there. It was a hot day, too. Usually dingoes won't kill, only morning and evening, but I ran up there and here's this dingo, the calves are trying to ... three calves, and they're trying to, four I think there was, they were trying to get this dingo away from the goat. Of course as soon as the dingo saw me he went, see. About a couple of hundred yards down from me. He went and the calves brought that goat home. There was one calf on each side, one behind it, and one in the lead, and they brought that goat home. It's when they get a bit bigger, I suppose, it'd be better.
- I So, raising goats and poddies, is that partly to provide milk for the community or ...?

R 00:19:10:00 No, if there's any sick kids they can go up there any time they like. There's no milk there now. It's not right. I haven't had a Billy goat for about two or three years now. Three years, I think, and of course when I was away I don't think the goats maybe it's not, it may be that they're going to have kids again because I've got an Anglo-Nubian Billy goat now, a thoroughbred, he's pedigreed, and I'm not going to let him out. I put him in with the goats at night, then I bring him up here or leave him up there in the yard, you know, through the day. Some time, we had him up here for a good while in the fowl house. The trouble is, he gets out of there. Gracie, that's one of my friends, she mended the fowl yard and it got out again, and she mended it again. I don't know how many times she's mended it and he gets out in a different place.

I And, Jean, you're not running the pub any more, are you? You're just doing the Post Office?

R No. That's right.

I So is that the closest to retirement that you get?

R 00:21:08:20 Oh, I think it would be, yes. I don't think I'll get much help either, I'm too . I don't think I would. You know, when I do want to retire I don't think I'll get much help. When Peter was crippled up there and my sons had to look after him. They talk all this here carers and all that sort of thing, but I don't think there's very much done. My sons had to bath him. That's wrong, you know. A bushman that's worked all his life, and that's how he ends up, and they don't do much for him.

I So this was when your husband was dying of cancer?

R 00:21:27:04 Yes, he was in Mt Isa for a start and Maxie and Trace, that's my youngest son, he was allowed to come down to Boulia. He was a mechanic there in the council so Peter came down to, and there was a cottage, Roy and Karen's cottage next to the house. They built a landing where he could walk across to the house, he could walk first, when he first came down there. It didn't last long, they had to bath him and everything, and where's the carers? Where are their carers? Yeah, I know about that.

I So what do you see in the future for yourself?

R **Work/Retirement**

00:22:20:00 Well, I don't know. I'm just not thinking about the future. Thinking about

today is the best part. Today. Every day. I don't know what's going to happen. But I do know one thing, that my family is not going to keep me like that. I'll go into a home if I get too sick. I will not ... here the other day, they said, 'Oh, Jimmy's caring for you'. I said, 'Oh, is he?' I'm not interested in it but they'll be ... the damn government will be because we've paid tax for years and worked hard – pioneers. And that's the way you get treated when you've got teeth that give trouble my bottom teeth, I broke them off when I was 12, four of them on the bottom, and I had to put up with that all the years because of the, you know, we didn't get away to get them fixed up. Mum didn't even know they were giving me trouble. I had to put me tongue over 'em when I drank cold water and I thought, 'Well, that's all right because I was only 12 when I did it'. I thought well, you know, we've suffered enough too, but one of these days if ... I might even get onto the news in Longreach. I have before, you know. Let them know a few things that won't be appreciated.

I And what would you say? If you were on the news in Longreach now, what would you want to say?

R 00:23:39:20 I don't know, I'd have to put it very carefully, wouldn't I? You can't say too much, can you? When carers come to Bedourie and they don't even come down to see me, when they come here twice, and don't ... from Mt Isa, and don't even come down just for five minutes to say hello. So.

I Who are these carers? These are local government community nurses?

R Ah, I won't name the carer but I've finished with that carer now anyway, because she doesn't want to come down and spend five minutes talking to me, or just hello and go again. But to come to Bedourie twice and not even come near me. That's enough for me.

I And tell me about floods, Jean. Does this area ... it looks very lush between here and the creek. Does that flood?

R **Drought**

00:24:30:16 Yes. Oh, well, it all depends. This year it has. I think there's been water over that twice this year but, oh, you should have been here last year. Oh, my goodness, it was dry. The cattle, the poor things, you know. I used to fill mine whenever I could. I'd see the worst ones fed but the trouble was there was so much big stations' cattle were here too, see, and you can't feed the lot in there. It wouldn't feed 'em. And the poor things,

their eyes used to stick out and they'd stare at you, and well you know that's sad, it's terrible to see them. I can't understand why they don't look after them better, you know. Give them a bit of feed anyway.

I Drought has been more of a problem than flood?

R **Flood**

00:25:13:18 Yeah. Mmmm, droughts. We've had a couple of bad droughts in the last few years. We had a flood in '91, I think it was, but see the people that are here now, there's only one person that's seen a big flood here and that's Alby Smith. He comes from up, oh way up Kywong up there, you know that station up there, and he's been in this country for a long time, though, years. He was married here and had his family but the others, they don't know what a big flood is. They reckon the '91 flood, oh, it was a big flood, blah, blah, blah. It wasn't at all. It was a very small ... it wasn't a big flood. It was a good flood but it wasn't a big one.

I Was it '74 a big one here?

R **Women/Land**

00:25:59:00 Yes. There was '50. The 1950 flood was a big one too. It came up here. And the '74 flood, it was a real big one and Colin Tully was managing Clooney. He said it washed out the Aboriginal camps over there so it was a big one. But the old blackfellow, Old King Billy, he's buried just up the sand hill there, he's told George Gafney that there'd be three big floods. Now how did he know that? See, they know all right. He said there'll be three big floods but he didn't know when. He said there'll be one big one, he said, and another bigger, bigger still. Well that's '50 and '74. And then he said there's going to be a real big flood, so I'm not looking forward to a real big flood. Ooh, ooh. He was right about the other two. But still, you know, the way they fiddle with the atmosphere so much, we may not get it, see. But they always know. The old blackfellows know.

I How high did the water come in '74?

R 00:26:52:04 Well I used to wear my bathers going to the goat yard. It was right up to there, between here and the fence.

I In here?

R No, no, not in here. Down there, yeah. Oh, it did start to run in up there, just started up there where they dug drains, you know, to let the water out, but only just a little bit. A bit higher, it would have really come in. It would now, I think. It would come in now if we had a because they just won't take any notice, although there is a big bank up there now which is pretty good.

I So who lives in Bedourie now, Jean?

R 00:27:27:20 Oh, a lot of people here. A lot of people that have, you know, some of them have been reared here, some of the girls. A couple of them. One girl, she's ... two girls now, one from ... oh, they're both from round here, I suppose. They're the teacher's aides up at the school. They're doing pretty well, too, I think. They've got a teacher and two teacher's aides and an administrator, the school here now. Four. Four in the school. It might be five. Oh, and then they've got two sort of working part-time – David Parsons, he works part-time in the garden, you know. It's good too. It looks good now but before that when the summer came, when the summer came they had nobody to water the gardens and things, so David does that in the summer. Bill Knight did it too for a while. He's a carpenter, good one too. Lives in town.

I Are there many Aboriginal families in town these days?

R 00:28:32:22 Oh, yeah, I suppose, but I don't know whether you'd call 'em Aboriginals. You just don't know. They're white people and they work. Bedourie, Birdsville and Windorah, their people, they look after their houses and they're the same as clean white people, the same thing. They're not dirty, oh no. They're very, very clean.

I They've been vital to the pastoral industry, haven't they?

R 00:29:09:16 Yeah, oh, I suppose. Yeah. But there's been other people as well, you know. It's not only around here. They used to get jackaroos up from the city. Always same in Monkira and all those stations but there were a few really good stockmen. There was an old fellow there in Birdsville – Jimmy Lynch was a good stockman. I saw him in Monkira, oh a really good stockman. He was half black.

I Bill Gorrenge? Do you know Bill?

R **Braided Channels**

00:29:31:14 Yeah, Bill Gorrenge, Windorah. No, I don't really know them, see, they're in Windorah, but of course I hear a lot about them. Yeah. And Spinny Mulligan, Maudie. He married a girl from Birdsville and Linda's daughter. Very good stockman. Their son's a jockey in Adelaide, Maudie and Spinny.

I Oh and tell me the stories about the Duncans. You knew Laura Duncan and Laura's mum.

R Yeah, well, ah they were lovely people. Oh, Miss Duncan, she was nice, so was Mrs Duncan McKenzie. She was a tall, slim woman, you know. I remember I didn't see her a lot, see, because we never came up here a lot but when we went down, she came out to the car and met us and she took us in for a meal. Midday it was. They were really nice people, you know, really bush people. Miss Duncan, I went to see her. I'm please I did now, too. I got Peter to take me round there when I had ... I had all my children then, I think, and that's the last time I saw her. She was still working out in the yard, she had a thoroughbred bull in the yard, feeding it, and ... Miss Duncan, yeah.

I How old would she have been then?

R **Gender Relations: Laura Duncan**

00:30:44:16 Oh, I don't know but she was a real lady. She used to go out on the camp and she'd have her tent. There were tent pegs at each camp, and they just took the tent up for her. She used to go up to the camp and she was a real lady and Bob Gunther, he managed Monkira for years, he came up, Ted Pratt brought him up as a jackaroo and he was a little fellow, you know. He was cowboy, then he was stockman, then he was head stockman, then he was manager, Bob Gunther. And Mrs Gunther was there and he was the chairman here for years, see. And Miss Duncan got onto him on the wireless, see, and she said, 'Oh,' she said, 'Bob, would you mind sending me a photo of your grader, I haven't seen one here for years'. And that was Miss Duncan. She was like that. Never raised her voice, you know.

I Did you ever meet Alice Duncan? Alice Duncan Kemp?

R 00:31:47:00 I don't think I did, you know, but I remember an old lady, tall, slim woman she was. Yeah, she married a McKenzie after. I don't know how many years after but a long time after and there was old Donald McKenzie, that was his brother. He was on Monkira for many years, old Donald, and then he went to Adelaide. I remember once

Frank and Ethel went down and they took Donald McKenzie down, see, further down, oh and Sid Pratt too, Ted Pratt's son, but the further down we got, the drunker old, old fellow got, see. There were more, see, more pubs, and Frank never drank and he used to go past them if he could but ... there was Nathan beer then or something, and you'd hear him say, 'Ha, ha, Nathan my word'. Old Donald McKenzie. Funny old man, he was. 00:32:26:22

I And you've got Alice Duncan Kemp's books?

R Yeah.

I What do you make of Alice's work?

R 00:32:42:12 Oh, good, yeah. It's really, really good. Mmmm. Yes, there was a lot of places you wouldn't have known if I hadn't read the books. Rainmaker's buried on the Clooney-Monkira road, not far from Clooney, 30 miles or something, and it always rains there. Always. Always rains there and that's where Rainmaker's buried. Funny, isn't it?

I The picture you get out of Alice Duncan Kemp's books of Aboriginal people and white people living very closely ...

R Well, the one book I got from the archives, I got it, and the photos were taken out of it. And then they wrote to me and told me that they had a book there with all the photos in it. And instead of me sending for it straight away, oh I was too busy at the time and by the time I got round to sending for it, it was already sold, of course.

I But do you think that picture she paints of the Duncans on Mooraberree living very closely with Aboriginal people, do you think that was typical of ...?

R **Race Relations/History/Massacres**

00:33:44:14 Oh, yeah. Yes. Yes. They were always friends. They never, well my family never treated 'em badly. Never. See, I've never known it, so this is why I can't understand why they want John Howard to apologise. What for? See, we don't know. I've lived in this country all my life and I can't see why he should apologise to any of them. There's half black and half white, because they're white so far as I'm concerned. And another thing, like years ago, they were talking about how the white people used to kill the blacks. Well they never say how the blacks used to kill the whites, did they? And I know about that. Well, that's all in the past. I don't hold it against any dark people. Not a

bit. Anyway, there was in here near, oh up here too, I've got a book in there. Up here these Kalkadoons they were real bad. They used to tie the Chinamen up, tie 'em up and, oh break their legs so they couldn't get away. If they had plenty meat, eat the Chinamen. That's a fact. Too right. That's never mentioned, is it? No. Well, I don't see why anyone should apologise. It's nothing to apologise for because now, I think it was in near Charleville there, they used to feed them. They'd come up there and they'd feed them and this, what-his-name old fellow there, the boss of the tribe or something, they used to feed them and the men were away one day and they went in and killed all the women and the kids. There was only one, I can't understand them killing the children but one kid they were feeding to the yabbies and, of course, they went then, the men went chasing that lot but it wasn't that lot that killed them, it was the fellow sitting on the waterhole. He was the one that did it and I think they shot some of them. Well, it's retaliation, that's all it was, see, that's all it was. So I can't see that there's anything. 00:35:35:06

History

I mean, just let the past be the past and do the same for blacks as we do for whites now. That should have been all along. I think it was, too, with us it was anyway. We'd never let 'em, Mum and Dad never let 'em past and they still know it too, never let 'em go past without a feed. Why should we if we fed, like give the drovers tea and that, 'cause they had to camp with them but why not feed them too? We did. And I can't see that there's anything for John Howard to apologise for, and I can't see why they should be wasting money – wasting money – it's all right to help them, yes, but help them too much, as the old blacks will tell you, and they're ruining the young ones. That is what they're doing. I reckon John Howard's 100% there, there's nothing to apologise for. This lost generation, now that's a lot of damn rot. How about England? All those young boys and girls that were brought out from England, same thing. I can't see it. I think that the past is the past. This is future now. Yeah, and they're treated all right now. 00:36:39:20

I Is there anything I haven't asked you about, Jean, that you think's important for me to understand your life and, through you, something of the women of the Channel Country?

R Women/Work

00:36:51:04 Yeah, well see, the women up here, see we, down there I know about what a hard time we had but up here, when I came up here when I was 17, of course it wasn't so hard then because they had, like now some of the women like Shirley Schrader she works all the time. She's got a cowboy but she still works out at Sandringham. But usually now

they don't have to work, but Shirley does. She cooks and, oh gee, she works all the time. Always has done, you know. She's a bush woman.

I Who's that?

R **Education**

00:37:25:00 Shirley Schrader out on Sandringham, 40 miles out. And my daughter-in-law, she worked too. She worked hard. Gee whiz, she did, Paula, out at Etherbooka. Oh, she taught her children, taught her children, she taught two of them, no three now. They've had three but two are going away to school. As soon as the others went to school, she had to teach the little one, and now it's coming pretty close to the time the little one has to go away to school and she's very worried about it. I don't know how, they're going to miss her, you know. Don't know how they can live without her, you know.

I It's a lot women have taken on out here, isn't it?

R 00:38:01:10 Oh, a lot, yes. Oh, yes, and they don't get any credit for it, it's always the man. The man does it all. He's wonderful. Of course, my son is too. He ... see, they can't afford to employ anyone. Well, she goes out and helps him as well as teach the children. The children, they go out and help too. At 12, when the daughter was 12 years old, my brother, the one that's a bit older than me, he's been a stockman all his life, and he said that when they were mustering cattle, he said he'd take orders from her because she knew what she was doing and she was 11 years old. David would be in the aeroplane, see, he's got an aeroplane he's batted around oh, he's worked hard too. They all have, anyway, all the boys. Jimmy too. All of them. They were brought up to work.

I So you think women often do their work and ...?

R 00:38:44:00 Oh, they do. Yeah. A lot of them. Yeah, a lot of women do, yes, yes. Shirley Schrader out there does, and Paula did, my daughter-in-law. Oh, yes, there's odd women still do, still work, you know, but most of the others are just at the station, you know, I think anyway. I don't think they ... they don't go out much. They still work though, of course, I suppose, but the modern conveniences now are different than they used to be.

I So do you feel satisfied with your life?

R 00:39:16:16 Oh, yes. Mmmm. Yeah. Yeah, I'm quite satisfied with my life.

I Okay, let's stop.

END OF INTERVIEW