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Full transcript of an interview with

**DOREEN KARTINYERI**

on 06 April 2000

by Sue Anderson

for the

**NGADJURI ORAL HISTORIES PROJECT**

Recording available on CD

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**DR DOREEN KARTINYERI TALKING TO SUE ANDERSON, AT PORT  
GERMEIN, 6 APRIL 2000**

**SA:** This is Sue Anderson talking to Doreen Kartinyeri at Port Germein on – what day is it? – Thursday [laughs], 6<sup>th</sup> of April 2000, and we'll be talking about Doreen's Ngadjuri connections for the Ngadjuri project. So Doreen, can you just tell me your full name and when you were born and where?

**DK:** Doreen Maud Kartinyeri. I was born on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 1935 at Raukkan.

**And who are your parents?**

My Mother, Thelma nee Rigney and Oscar Kartinyeri.

**What about brothers and sisters?**

I have – there were seven in the family – Oscar the oldest, then myself, Nancy (who is now deceased), Ron (who's deceased), Doris, Alma (who is deceased), Connie Levin and Doris Eileen is still alive. There's only three of us left.

**And you grew up at Raukkan?**

I was at Raukkan from when I was born till I was 10 years old, just before my 11<sup>th</sup> birthday I was taken away and put into the Fullarton Girls' Home.

**And were you reunited with your family?**

Yes, during the holidays we were allowed to go back to Raukkan and have our holidays, and then I went out to work just before my 14<sup>th</sup> birthday, and then when I was 15 and a half, I went back and I looked after my Nanna and my brothers and sisters.

**When did you find that you had Ngadjuri connections?**

Well I was sitting down listening to my Grandfather [Archie George Kartinyeri] and my Father talking when I was at Raukkan, young teenager. My Grandfather used to always talk about Bundaleer, where he said he was born. And I didn't realise then that he had a white father; it wasn't until after that I learned his Father was named Archibald George Clark, who came from the Clare district. And that's about all I knew; actually whereabouts in Clare, I don't know.

But he always talked about Bundaleer and he said that his Mother, with him and his little sister [Amelia], who were both children of Archie Clark, were then taken to Raukkan and remembering what he told me then and hearing about what the government did, the Protector did, in those days, I would now say yes, they took her away because she would have been [seen as] a bad influence with other Aboriginal families there and having two children from a white man would have been a no-no in them days. It was bad enough people having one, but when they had two there used to be a big stink kicked up and of course the women were removed from those areas.

But they were taken in to Raukkan where Ellen Armstrong, his Mother, married Albert Kartinyeri.

**About when would this have been?**

He would have been born – according to his age when he died – he would have been born around about 1880. He could have been a little bit younger or a couple of years older, or a couple of years younger – I'm not quite sure – but that would be the year that we would put him down as being born, about 1880. And his sister Amelia died. So, Ellen didn't

have any children that lived from her husband Albert Kartinyeri, so my Grandfather grew up with the name, adopted the name Kartinyeri from his Step-Father. And hearing him talk about that – he died in 196-----, 1958; my Grandmother died in 1961, no she died in 1958 or 1961, but one of those dates they died – and he was quite old when he died and over the years and living with him at Raukkan, he told us all yarns about his people that he could remember from up in this district [Ngadjuri country]. He can't remember going to Raukkan; all he remembers [is] being there and being brought up there.

### **So he must have been quite young?**

Yeah, he doesn't actually remember the exact movement and listening to my Father talk about him after when Dad had come to live with me for 15 years – we used to often sit down in the evening – and my Father had suffered that badly with asthma and very seldom he could go anywhere, couldn't walk – so we'd often sit down and he'd start and play with the Grandchildren, my first couple of kids, and yeah, I used to be always asking him questions about his family. I found out my Nanna come from Poonindie when I was living at Raukkan with them, and I really didn't think I had any connection to Raukkan. And then of course Dad said oh yeah, your Mother is from here, and her Mother, and her ancestors, so all of this was interesting to me over the years. So Grandfather said to us – I must have been just about 18, 19 or going on 19 – and he said one of the things he'd like mos tlike to do is go back to Bundaleer and have a look, see where he come from. But unfortunately, he never ever made that trip. We didn't have a car; none of us had a car in them days and we used to just travel around the mission with a horse and cart. So we sort of never had that opportunity to take him back.

But hearing about him and the other family names that he remembered – Warriors, Cross – he kept talking about this old man, Jack Cross. And apparently I think he met up with Old Jack Cross at Raukkan, because Old Jack Cross must have visited Raukkan. Because I said to Dad, 'Dad, Grandfather said he never ever been back to Bundaleer; how could he remember all those people?' Oh he said we've been there and we've been to Point Pearce, so the connection had been made, and they remember. I said oh gee, you have a

good memory; I wish I had a memory like that. I never thought I'd be finishing up with a memory like this. But yeah, see he talked a lot about Bundaleer.

**What did he, do you remember what sort of things he said about Bundaleer?**

I don't remember him talking about his every-day living there, but he remembered – and I think it may have been because one of the older, his Mother or his Aunties that said – that they didn't want them up there. And they were trying to get rid of them all the time. He said something once and I couldn't understand because I didn't know whereabout the train lines were running in them days; we didn't have buses were running; we didn't know any of those things in them days. So I just wondered how they could get them from A from B, you know?

And he said oh they was taking a lot of people up to a place called Yorkies Crossing – well I didn't know where that was until about 20 years ago; it's just outside Port Augusta – and I remember him mentioning Yorkies Crossing and I think, oh it must be a little town somewhere. Then I remember my Father talking about Orroroo and I said, 'Where's that' and he said it's up the north there, not far from Port Augusta, up from Bundaleer. Well memory heard my Dad, Father mention Bundaleer, I sort of knew whereabouts it would have been. So he said that – he went up there, young fellow, working – and I said what kind of work you was there? And he said, oh we were only young – 14, 15 year olds – and they took us out stump picking and we went in a old truck. So about six of them went.

So my Father was able to get into the area where his Father was actually born but never ever actually went back to.

**Do you know who he was working for, doing the stump-----?**

No, I don't. He said they were just clearing the land there, and stump picking. And the next time I think my Father would have been back there would have been in the late

1950s I think, when he was working at the Water Works on Spalding. And that's when he had that bad asthma attack, apparently when they were doing the water works there and the bloke tipped up a truck of dirt and him and another bloke got caught in it. He didn't realise they were in the drain, you know? And my Father finished up with a very bad case of asthma. Didn't get compensation or anything, but he had to leave work then and he went on rations with us kids.

But I was a young married woman then, so he came and stayed with me at Point Pearce. And there were several men from Point Pearce working up there too. But my Grandfather always talked about Bundaleer and always wanted to go back and there was no way we were able to do that. Then when I got married in 1954, October 23<sup>rd</sup> 1954, we brought my Grandparents over to Point Pearce to stay with my cousin Aileen Wilson and her husband Mark before the marriage, and after my marriage they stayed for about a month. And while he was over there, he met Aunty Alma Power and Tom Goldsmith and he met Aunty Annie Sansbury (who was a Warrior) and how they knew so much about one another was amazing to me because I don't ever remember having contact with these people. But he did and they were talking. So whether he was related to any of them I still don't know – I couldn't find any records and I haven't heard any stories – but they owned one another. Now I found out after, a couple of days after we took him down to see Aunty Alma Power, that she is Amelia Armstrong's Grand-daughter. So her Mother Maud and my Grandfather are first cousins; their Mothers are two sisters.

**Oh.**

And he explained it to me. He said Aunty Alma was over there doing a lot of fishing over at Yorke Peninsula; she was always sending fish up for my Grandmother and Grandfather, and they loved it. And every afternoon he'd take a walk down there and sit down and talk to her. So that even though they hadn't seen one another in all them years, that connection was still there, and they were very, very close.

And then he was starting to tell me about Old Edgar Warrior. Well I don't even remember Old Edgar Warrior – this would be Freddy's [Warrior's] Great-grandfather – and yet I sort of knew about him. I felt as if I've known him, hearing my Grandfather talk about him. And I didn't realise that the people were going from Point McLeay to Point Pearce at different times, but apparently they were. They'd meet up at Port Adelaide at the wharf, because a lot of the people used to work down the wharves down at Port Adelaide. And then there was shearing, so there was Point Pearce men going down to the southeast and calling in to Raukkan and meeting up at Raukkan on their way back and forward to their shearing. So yes, there was a big strong contact between a lot of them. And he always used to say to me, we're Ngarrindjeri. I said yeah. He said but don't forget, you're Ngadjuri too. And I was thinking, isn't that the same? [laughter] Because I was young, and I wasn't familiar with all the different tribes. So he used to say to me, tell me how to pronounce the two different words, because sometimes if you say them quick, they sound alike.

**Mm, well people have said that to me. When I say I'm doing, researching Ngadjuri, they think I mean Ngarrindjeri.**

Yeah, well this is how my Grandfather took it and he'd say are you Ngarrindjeri? And I used to say yes. He said no, you're Ngadjuri too. And then he'd get me to pronounce it properly for him. And then after he got sick, he left Raukkan and he went to live at Gawler with my cousin, his other Granddaughter, and that's where he died, in Gawler.

But hearing the stories from him was really great. So when I started to get involved in all this work and I started coming across all these names I remembered – people were talking to me about – I got interested and I started to read about these families. You see Faye Gale showed me her collection of her genealogies. Then she made arrangements with Graeme Pretty, who was a curator at the South Australian Museum. Graeme Pretty wrote to Norman Tindale in America and then got permission for me to use his genealogies.



I thought I was in my seventh heaven when I saw everything there in front of me and it was there just as I remembered being told about the kinship. So I learnt it from my Grandfather and my Father and my Mother's sister when I went to Point Pearce, because then Aunty Rosie was living over Point Pearce. She went over there with her husband – and they're both Ngarrindjeris but they went over there – and they lived over there until she died in 1981. So there I saw Norman Tindale's material for the first time and it was magnificent. This is a treasure; I never knew it existed. I never knew it was done. I appear in the Point McLeay genealogies – says I'm a three-year-old child – so looking at the date of my birthday and the date on the pages, he did it in 1939. So I was just going on to four when he did it. Because he dated and signed every page he did.

So looking at that and learning a bit about, from the old people, and the kinship was really, I really got interested. There was no way I could have avoided knowing this. It was taught to me in the way the old people would have taught the older ones. So I picked it up, memorised it and today I could talk from memory. I could tell you about the Warriors – Old Edgar Warrior and his wife and how they-----

**Who was his wife? He had two wives I think didn't he?**

Yes, he had two wives.

**The second one was Olive Cross?**

Yes, Olive Cross. She was Olive Thomas and then she married Jack Cross. And then she had Jimmy, Olive and Mary. Then when Jack Cross died, she then married Edgar Warrior, then she had Mona, Doris and Doug and I think a boy Robert. But Robert must have died younger and then she had a couple of children from a bloke at Port Augusta, but they died young. So we've lost contact with Olive when she died, and I'm not quite sure when she died.

**Where were they living, at Port August was it, with Edgar?**

Skillogalee Hills when she first got married – that’s where Jimmy and Olive and Mary was born, there. Then when she married Edgar Warrior, apparently they were in the Orroroo area. Old Ned Edwards – they must have been in the area because he got killed when the horse and cart tipped over, and he got killed there. He was Old Ned Edwards, and somewhere along the line he was the first husband to her, but when Fred and Barney came along – Tindale got them down as Edgar and Alice’s children, but looking at the ages, I would say that they may have been Edwards’, Ned Edwards’ children, because they looked, according to Edgar’s date of death and the age of his death, he would have been pretty young if he were to father them. But then again I can’t be right or wrong because I haven’t actually checked that out in all the records. I’ve only worked with Norman Tindale’s records on that one.

**You know there were two Freds and two Barneys, don’t you?**

Yeah, well Barney’s eldest son was Fred and Fred’s eldest son was Barney.

**Yep.**

OK, you’ve got two brothers, Barney and Fred. I’ve got a photograph of them Auntie Annie’s lent me; I’ve got a copy of it and they’re taken with Old Fred McGrath.

**I know that one, yeah.**

Yeah. So you’ve got Fred and Barney. Now Barney married May Wilson and their oldest son is Fred. Fred married May Goldsmith and-----

**Their son’s Barney.**

Their son is Barney. But you see May had a child before she married Fred and his name was Bert Goldsmith – that’s Pearl Nam, Betty Mack, Hazel Graham – was their Father.

**Oh. Oh, that explains a lot [laughs].**

So yeah. And I think because Uncle Bert kept his Mum's maiden name – and he was born before she married the Warrior – Barney and Bert are brothers through the Mother. And I don't know whether you know Pearl Nam-----

**Well I've heard of Pearl, I haven't met her.**

Yeah, Betty Mack, Hazel Graham, Peter Goldsmith and Brian. Well their Father was May's eldest son. So that's the connection with them. Well you go down to Barney – Poppa Syke we used to call him – he's only got one son living now and that's Claude. Verna and Thelma and Leon died, over these last few years. But Claude is the only one living.

But if you're looking at Barney and May's children, they had Fred Warrior (and he married Katie Edwards), then you had Annie (she married Parry Sansbury), Florence married Bill Abdulla, Bessie married Les Buckskin and Nellie married Lionel Graham. But they never had any children, Lionel and Nellie, but all the others had large families. So you've got that line there.

So with Fred Warrior and Roslyn and Pat, you've got Fred marrying Katie Edwards and then you've got Winnie, their daughter and then you've got Fred, Pat, all them coming down. So with Doris Graham, who was a sister to Kate, you've got Fred Warrior, uh Fred Graham – she married a Cecil Graham. See, you've got the Grahams – you've got Cecil (Shells), Michael, Doug, Eugene, Ponga, May, Raylene, Raylene Smith and May Turner. So you've got all that family coming from Doris.

Then you've got Mary Williams' family. She was another sister; she was another daughter of Fred and Kate. She's the youngest and she married a Williams – Laurie

Williams. You've got Georgina and Joan, Hester (that just died), Clifford, Marie, Johnno, Billy Williams, Myra and all that family – from Mary.

And then you've got Aunty Viney, who was another sister to, another daughter of Kate and Fred and she married a Weetra. So you've got Spencer, Roma, Viney, Soody, all them, Rodney Weetra, Joe Weetra and all that family coming in. So they're Aunty Viney's children.

Now the other brother, Sydney George, married Winnie Kropinyeri, my Aunty Rosie's daughter, and then you've got Cathy, Coral and Lee. Well Coral is the only one left; she's now Coral Wilson. So you've got that family in that line.

**So that's Fred and Kate. What about on Barney and May's side, did we go through that?**

Well their daughter Mona; Mona married Bertie Clark. And you've got Christine, Johnny, Joan – they've got quite a big family too. Joan married Eric Milera, then you've got Raylene, Raylene Champion. I don't know who Christine married. Johnny, I saw him not long ago; I don't know whether he's ever married. But they had a few children too.

And Dossie, Doris, she had – I think she lost a couple when she was small. And Doug married Coral Edwards from Koonibba and they only had one daughter and she was killed in a car accident about five years ago, because I done a family tree for that. So there you've got Edgar and Olive's children.

Jimmy Cross married Aunty Rosie's other daughter Stella – you've got Cyril, Joy, Peggy, Rose and Laurel. Cyril died, Joy's twin brother died when he was a little boy, but you've got Peggy, Joy, Laurel and Rose still living. And that was Olive's children – she'd got Teddy, Kenny and Carol. Carol is in Victoria, Kenny died, Teddy's still living somewhere; I don't know where he is. And then the other children didn't get married. Robert and Peter was the other two boys – they didn't get married. And Mary married a

Joe Argent and none of their children are alive today, but they've got grandchildren that's living, some of the Argents. In fact two of my Grandchildren are descended from them.

So that would be Edgar and them, family, and they had close contacts with Ngadjuri over here.

**Mm, then there's Sansburys as well?**

Yeah, well Annie, you're coming down to Fred's sisters now. Annie Warrior married Parry Sansbury and you've got Irene, Elaine, Pam, Kelly, Lindsay, Lizzie. They're the only ones left in that family, but you would be familiar with them.

Flossie, who married Bill Abdulla – they've only got two daughters left, Marlene[Lindsay] and Cora [Sumner]; Johnny died not long ago. Bessie, who married Les Buckskin – you've got Ella, Lionel – Ella married a Harradine, so she's Ella Harradine now – you've got Lionel and you've got Avis, Nellie, Robert-----

**Robert, mm.**

Violet died; Gloria died; Barney died. Gadie, Graham died. Three died as babies; one was named Dolores, can't remember the other two names.

**Gee, why not? [laughter]**

I wonder. One was named Dolores. Yeah, so you've got that family and they're Barney's Grandchildren and they would all have Ngadjuri ancestors.

**Yep, yep.**

And with Archie Kartinyeri, him and Sally – he married Sally Varcoe – they had Arthur (and they called him Rangey Kartineryi, and he married Laura Sumner; they had quite a

few children), and then there was Martha, married Reg Rankine and they had Sarah, Allan, Nelson, Flossie, Clark, Stewie, Mary and William. Only one child is living – Snowy Rankine – that’s the only one living in that family.

Then there was my Dad – he had Oscar, me, Connie, Ronnie, Doris, Alma and Nancy. And there’s only me, Connie and Doris living in that family. My Uncle Theo; he married Phyllis Rigney, my Mother’s youngest sister and they had Albert, no Francis, Nancy, Albert, Theo, Beverly, Betty, Archie and Wendy. And my other Uncle didn’t have any children; he married Ruth Gollan.

So that’s like the family, and today I’m the oldest one living out of my Grandparents, Archie and Sally Kartinyeri’s Grandchildren. And at one time I had quite a lot of older cousins. And I’m the oldest one living now.

**MM. So Archie Kartinyeri’s Mother was Ellen Armstrong, is that right?**

Yes, Ellen Armstrong.

**And who were Ellen, Amelia and Joanne?**

They were the full-blood children of a woman from Corowie and a white man named John Armstrong.

**From Corowie?**

Yes.

**So she was-----?**

I believe from what I remember my Grandfather telling me, that he used to be driving a bullock team or something, driving a bullock team. I suppose that would be transporting stuff from different little towns, you know?

**And the Warriors, there were Warriors on the West Coast?**

Old Ernie Warrior, but he was no relation to these Warriors, according to Tindale.

**Oh right.**

And he married Eva Kite.

**And they were no relation according to Tindale?**

No, not according to Tindale; he made a special note of saying they were no relation to the Warriors of Point Pearce. And he married Eva Kite there and he had about four children and then he died. Eva Kite remarried over Point Pearce. She married an Abdulla.

**And their daughter is Eunice, is it, Wanganeen?**

No, that's her Granddaughter.

**Her Granddaughter, OK.**

Her Daughter Joan, Lena Joan, married Teddy Wanganeen, and then they had Teddy, Roy, Gilbert, Eunice – what's Tiggy's name? – Bronwyn. I've got it in the Wanganeen book; I should know.

**Oh that's all right.**

Rosemary, Rosemary's Tiggy, that's right.

**Right, so they wouldn't have Ngadjuri ancestry then?**

No, not through that Ernie Warrior.

**I was wondering actually whether; you know, I know that Ngadjuri people were moved off their land very early on-----**

They were!

**And I wondered if some of them had gone to the West Coast.**

And I would have thought that looking at the age, it could have possibly been a relative, but I know that Tindale did make a special note of saying that Ernie was no relation to the other Warriors. Now he would have interviewed Eva and we've got Eva on tape too and she says no; her husband wasn't related to the Warriors from Point Pearce. And she says from Point Pearce too, which, because that's the Oscar they would have known, known one another.

**Mm, and I know that people, Ngadjuri people, some moved north and joined the Adnyamathanha and other different groups in the north, and I know that the last Olary people moved to the Broken Hill area, but I haven't been able to trace anybody at all in those areas. You don't know about anything like that?**

No, I was talking to a woman that came down to the Museum once and she said that she come from Wilcannia. And she said one of her Grandmothers was supposed to have come from the Flinders Ranges, round near Clare, place called Clare. And that's about all she could tell me.

**Oh, that's interesting though isn't it, that she'd gone-----?**



Well that's a long way away.

**A long way, mm.**

And then I think some of them went down towards the River Murray way. They was at, went up towards – do you know where Barmera is situated, the Overland Corner there? Because they had like a settlement there. But I think it was my Father that was saying Grandfather's people went, some of them went to the River Murray. And they was on this side of the River and they wasn't mixing up with the other side. And I said what for? And he said oh I suppose they were jealous of their *miminis*, their women, you know? Because if there was a new lot coming in somewhere, the others used to be very wary of them with their women. So they'd just sort of stay at the back. Now I don't know if that's true or not. I've got no idea. I couldn't find very much except I do have an article out there written up about the Overland Corner, just out from Barmera. And there was a bit of conflict there in early days.

**Yes, there was, yeah. Oh well that's interesting. I haven't come across that anywhere at all, that people might have gone there, but I mean they were moved so early that they could have gone anywhere really.**

When I was asking my Father why are they moving them around all the time, he said well they used to have to take them as close as they can to the ration depots in the olden days, so that they can get supplies from the Protector. And I quite believe that could have been the case too.

**That was one reason.**

A lot of the places never had ration depots. I mean, you take Tumby Bay, Tumby Bay had one there and that used to cover Port Lincoln, other side of Port Lincoln and coming

up here to the next one, that was nearly in Port Augusta. So it would have been a long for people to go for rations.

**Well they did actually have rations up in the mid-north. Bungaree was a ration depot.**

Bundaleer?

**Bungaree, the station, and other places, but the fact is that the land in the mid-north is so good for growing crops that I think it was settled very early and people – there was the Mount Bryan massacre and people were hunted and shot and-----**

Yeah, my Father said the same thing too. He said you take Poonindie for instance. He said that was a booming place. His Mother used to tell him. And my Grandmother's family moved from there in the early 1890s, just before it closed down and they left my Grandmother Sally in Adelaide working for a doctor and that doctor got her pregnant and they took her home to; she sent a message for them to come and get her and they took her back to Raukkan when she gave birth to her first child. And he was from Doctor Wigby at Glenelg. And that name, them stories were passed right down to us, about the doctor. One of the first doctors in Adelaide and yet he took advantage of the young Aboriginal girl. It went very badly with his name, you know?

But when I was going through the Protector's letter book too, you'll find a lot of these letters have been written in from different areas, different locations, and you listen to the old people talking and you could almost visualise their movements and sometimes I feel as though I was living in them days, because I seem to have a strong feeling about being there, you know?

Same as I did with the Island [Hindmarsh: Kumarangk]; I had a very strong feeling about knowing all those things and even though they were told to me when I was a young teenager and then after I got married, I still felt as if I'd had strong contacts with that

place. And then I don't feel as if I have strong contacts with the Ngadjuri because after my Grandfather was taken away and his little sister died at Raukkan, he grew up like a Ngarrindjeri person and he became like a Ngarrindjeri person, even though he wasn't of Ngarrindjeri descent.

He worked from the Ngarrindjeri about 12, 13 years old until almost the time he died, and he was fairly old – well he was in his 80s – when he died. He didn't want to give up his job. Even when the bell was ringing [laughs] and they wanted to ration him off – because they couldn't get pensions in them days – he used to still go down and line up for his work. And I said Archie you have to go home, you're getting rations now; you can't work no more. 'No matter, I've got to go give the milk out'. Because first thing in the morning, he'd go out and get the milk. Then he was the butcher and he used to be the baker, you know, so he just didn't want to give up. So they got in touch with my Auntie Martha and my Auntie Martha couldn't look after him, so her daughter took him, out at Gawler. He kept arguing with the officer on the mission for going back out to work [laughs], but even Old Dan Wilson didn't want to give up his job when they said he had to give up. Because he'd been in that store for so many years and that was his life, and he couldn't understand why they were just giving him rations and not giving him that work any more.

And I think it wasn't that important to them because I know they used to have block [?], so it didn't hurt them when they didn't get much. The fact that they wanted to work; Grandfather told me about the times when they went out and they pulled all the fences down in the night. Next day they'd get up and they'd have to go put the fences up again, and they continuously did this until all the rations and the blankets was threatened to be stopped, because they just didn't want to be fenced in.

And Dad told me about the barrage; they tried to go down there and get the barrage down, when they was building the barrage there in the late 1920s. They couldn't do it because it was too hard for them to break down.

So I remember all the stories, you know, and I used to follow them up in the archives when I learned to work in the archives. But you sort of never remember what year this was and the only thing I used to talk about the times was when, ‘Oh we had a big flood’ or ‘The water come up over the jetty’, or something else. So then we’d have to remember then what – I was telling Faye Gale this and she said well we could always check a flood out because that would have been in the papers that the River Murray flooded and of course the water would have went over the jetty, so we would have some idea of when this happened. I said yeah, but it’s going to take me years to go over all that, because I’m only just feeling my way round.

So hearing them talk and not being able to put a date to anything is why some the things I couldn’t chase up. So I spent about three months in the archives myself when the kids were at school and I used to go and sit down and read and sort of pin-point a year that I think that my Grandfather might be talking about – if he was about that age, then this must have been this year. So I sort of started to, things’d keep clicking over in my mind [laughs].

### **Detective work?**

Yeah, and I was. And sometimes I’d find – like that letter in the Rigney book. I remember my Auntie Rosie telling me how her Grandmother got reported and was taken back to Raukkan with her two little boys – one was her Father, see, so she’d remembered the stories, because Isabella died in the 1920s and my Auntie Rosie was born in 1894. So she was old enough to learn stories from her Grandmother and she has on her tape too that she was after that [phone rings].

[Tape break]

----- was interviewing her at The Stolen Generation.

**Well we've just had a break while Doreen's spoken to – who was it? Port Augusta ABC?**

No, it's Amuwarra Radio Station, the Aboriginal radio up in Port Augusta.

**Because they want to talk to her about the Stolen Generation, but there wasn't a stolen generation [referring to remarks by the Prime Minister in recent days].**

Oh yes there was! [laughter]

**Now, where did we get to? I think we've pretty much covered it actually. Is there anything else that you can think of might relate to Ngadjuri in any way? I know that pretty much the cultural knowledge that we have comes from Barney Warrior, who was obviously very keen to pass that on.**

Mm. Irene Agius was telling me that. It was Auntie Annie's Father; her Grandfather.

**Mm, and he talked to Tindale and Mountford and Berndt in the 1940s, and it sounds like he actually went from Point Pearce to Adelaide to tell them stuff so that it would be recorded because he felt like he was the last person left with any sort of, you know, deep knowledge. He was an initiated man. But I haven't yet come across anyone else with direct cultural knowledge like that.**

Well my Grandfather didn't know anything about that. Like I said, he felt more like a Ngarrindjeri than he did a Ngadjuri, but he still had that talk about always wanting to go back to have a look to see where he'd come from and he never had the chance. But I doubt whether my Grandfather would have actually told me anything anyway, if he did know, or if any stories were ever passed on to him, because I would be the Granddaughter. If he told anybody, it would have been his Grandsons, because Dad – I always felt that Dad was holding some things back from me, because I used to----- He said to me one day, should have bloody called you Wendy. I said why Wendy, I don't

like that name? He said because you were like Wendy Why, asking questions all the time; go and play, play [?] out there, or do something. And he used to always cut me off with things like that. But I felt that he was holding things back. So he may have learnt in the later years too because he wouldn't have had anything to do with the Ngadjuri and the only time I think he would have was when he went over there stump picking. Because he talked about that and that's about all he could ever remember of that particular place.

### **Who did he go stump picking with?**

He didn't, I think one of his brothers was with him, Uncle Matt. And then Uncle Matt took off to the River and he went up there grape picking. Dad went back home. They just went stump picking, clearing property. Knowing what they did in the past, after reading a lot of records and things, I would say they were just out to clear as much land as they possibly can and use as much cheap labour as they possibly can. They wouldn't have paid big money for it. I mean it costs a bloody fortune now to ..... a tree if it's breaking up your cement or anything, or your pavements or your buildings. In them days they would have got trees and bushes and shrubs moved; there's no worries with Blackfellas, the labour they had.

### **Ngadjuri country is known for its peppermint gums, which don't really grow anywhere else very much at all-----**

Except there.

**Except there, and they were known; the Kaurna called them the peppermint gum people. And now – I mean there are patches of peppermint gums left – but the whole area would have been quite dense with peppermint gums I think then.**

Well when Uncle Jimmy Cross came back from down the southeast shearing, he called in to Raukkan and he picked up a bag of rushes from my Auntie Rosie, who was his mother-in-law. And I went back to Point Pearce with him – that was in 1951 – I was only a

young girl and our team got kicked out of the basketball, that team, so I didn't ever stay there; I went over to Point Pearce to play the grand final. And I stayed there with my cousin Aylene Wilson. And on the train coming over we were talking, because see, caught the train from, we caught the mail bus from Raukkan to Tailem Bend and then the train from Tailem Bend to Adelaide and then we caught the big bus service that used to go into Port Victoria. So we got picked up down at the corner by Uncle Bert and Auntie Gertie Goldsmith; they were expecting Uncle Jim to come home.

So we went over to Point Pearce in 1951 and all the way to Adelaide we were talking, yarning, me and him. And that's when I first found out that he's come from there, see? And even though my Grandfather mentioned a few of the old names, I didn't make the family connection then. So I was only about 17 – 16 or 17 – I didn't make any connections with the different families from different locations, not like today. So I just found everything he was saying interesting, because he was talking about Skillogalee Hills where he was born, and how he used to live there, work there and how he took up shearing; how he went down to Yorke Peninsula and he was shearing down there – that's when he met my cousin, Stella – so it was really great listening to him talk.

But he never went into anything like culture or tradition or clans or tribes. He never mentioned that he was of Ngadjuri tribe. I mean, I only heard about Ngadjuri from my Grandfather and my Father. And then when I started doing all this work and I realised, ah Uncle Jim here, and his sister, Auntie Mona, married Uncle Bertie Clark (and he was from the Flinders Ranges, you know), and I thought I'd never ever heard Jimmy say that. Because he was married to my cousin, but I still call him Uncle Jimmy out of respect.

I thought well that's not unusual for someone not to know anything, especially if they hadn't lived there all their life. And I never thought more anything about it. But then when I started doing the work and I realised that we was Ngadjuri, I thought gee, I wish I had known that when I met him in 1951, and I didn't mention anything about Ngadjuri. We just talked----- And when he said Skillogalee Hills, I just looked on that as another place; I didn't realise it was in the same area. So we had a good old yarn, all the way

from Tailem Bend to Adeldaide, but if I'd only known then what I know now I'd have been getting as much information as I can out of him. Even though I wrote nothing down, I still listened, I still listened to what they were saying and I wanted to learn. And it didn't matter who they were; I found everyone that I spoke to about these things really interesting because if they couldn't tell me anything they'd say straight out, but if they hinted that they wanted to yarn to me, then naturally I would talk to them.

So he told me about his sister Olive and Mary and Mona. Well I hadn't met Mary and Mona and Olive you see, but then when I went to Point Pearce and met Auntie Doris, his sister, well Mona wasn't living there, but then I got to her in the later years, because I'd married into Point Pearce; I married Terry Wanganeen, so I got to know a lot of families and it was interesting just talking to everyone. Auntie Myrtle and Auntie Annie – Auntie Myrtle was a Sansbury; married a Wanganeen and then a Kite – they gave me a lot of information, and I've got nearly all that knowledge and stories still in my head and I haven't been able to use any of it. She told me about her kinship, and they both did, because I married Auntie Myrtle's nephew.

So my knowledge and my talking to everybody has learnt me a lot. And I've remembered and I've listened, I've listened, I've really listened to how they've said things to me and how they've talked to me. It's not just that you want to cut in and ask them things. You have to sort of wait till they've finished telling you and then they'll sort of just say well, what you think, or something and give you a little bit of encouragement to either ask about this or not.

And then you have to say to yourself, these people can not be telling you the untruth because you're hearing it from so many different people from so many different parts of different places, there's got to be a lot of truth in it. And this is why I say it doesn't matter who they are; if it's an Aboriginal person, I take that as gospel truth really. Because I don't see why any of them should sit there and spend time with me telling me these things if there wasn't any truth in it. And after doing a lot of research, going



through Protector's Records, I find out that a lot of these things that these people were telling me over the years have actually happened. But before that I didn't know this, because there was no way I was able to check out their story.

So, I've still said today, I don't care what you all say about Norman Tindale's map; there has to be some truth in it, because these old people would not have put so much trust in Tindale to tell him so much. If they wanted to tell him so much about their personal lives, why didn't they want to be honest with him about the boundaries? Because I've had a lot of arguments about the boundaries, might I say Susan. They said Tindale's boundaries was way out. And I said well you tell me why the Old People would do this? None of them could give me one reason why the Old People would tell Tindale a lie. They would say, some has said to me that they wouldn't want Tindale to really know. And I said and yet they tell him about their personal life; I would have thought that would be more to be kept from Tindale than the boundary. Even myself, I have to say, I wonder if Tindale is correct, but when you go through his notes in the Museum – which we've done a bit of, although not all of them – and the people that he's spoken to, I would say I find it very hard for those people to really lie or just to cover up something. And I might be the only one in South Australia living today who would say this about Norman Tindale's work. Because I've sat down and I've listened to these Old People and I can't believe they would have just deliberately misled him in the boundaries only when they'd given so much of their personal life to him. I don't know how anybody else feels about it, but I've been told, 'His map is no good; it's not right'.

**Well it may be that there's the odd thing or two, but-----**

Well I thought that too; I thought; well I even said to Pat, I would have even, and I may have said it to Freddy Warrior too at one stage quite a while ago – he used to come into the Museum – I said Fred the old area is different; there is buildings now where they were never there when this work was done; there's bridges going over little creeks now, where they may not have been there when Tindale was working with these people. We have to look at all of these things – and I've said that to several people; I think Lewis is

one of them and I'm sure Freddy [Warrior] was another one – but I feel that the change of the different developments in the towns – even this little place has grown; I mean, Old Fred McGrath was born here; Aboriginal people were actually born in Port Germein; this was the little campsite here; I feel good living here, I feel at peace. And I think that even though Norman Tindale may be a little bit out, or a lot out, I can't see how he would have been if they could sit down with him, day after day, telling him stories, him recording it, they're going into their genealogies, they're giving him the illegitimacy of their life, and yet they're going to stuff him up with the boundaries. I find that very hard to believe Susan.

**Oh I think that what we've got through Tindale is absolutely extraordinary and we're so lucky to have all that information aren't we, that we should be very grateful for what we've got to work with.**

Exactly. I feel that. And I think to myself, and I've said to Georgina, Joan, a lot of them, you're going to have to give me better proof than what you think. Otherwise I just ignore them. Because now they've heard about the Narrunga book that's now finished-----  
Yeah, I don't mind.

**Shall we call the tape to an end, do you think now, that-----**

If you want to, yeah.

[END OF TAPE]