Nordic American Voices
Nordic Heritage Museum

Interview of Allan Wirkkala
July 26, 2014
Finnish American Folk Festival
Naselle, Washington

Interviewers: Janice Bogren; Marjorie Graf; Brandon Benson

Janice Bogren: [0:00] This is an interview for the Nordic American Voices oral history project. Today is July 26, 2014, and I will be interviewing Allan Wirkkala. We are at the Finnish Folk Festival in Naselle, Washington. My name is Janice Bogren, and with me are Marjorie Graf and Brandon Benson. So Allan, will you tell us your full name, and where you were born, and tell us about your family history. Thank you.

Allan Wirkkala: [0:33] [Allan C. Wirkkala Sr.] Thank you. I was born actually in Seattle, Washington on Queen Anne Hill-in a hospital that no longer exists, I'm told- in July of 1942. After only a couple years, my parents moved to the Naselle, Washington - Rosburg area to seek employment, which he found almost immediately.

[1:04] Our family- the Wirkkala family- as well as many other families from the Naselle area- the southwest Washington area- have a long forest products and logging history. I traced our activity in the forest back almost three hundred years into Finland.

[1:31] Speaking of Finland, in the late 1800s- 1890 to early 1900s, many, many Finnish people and other countries around Finland emigrated to the U.S. due to the difficult times and changing of the industry in Europe. So that's how they happened to all emigrate.

[2:06] Some went to Michigan; some went to southwest Washington, and some even went to Canada. As a result, after coming from roughly the Kaustinen, Finland area, I've been told that the Finns wanted to go to a place that was similar to what it was like in their home country. They found that southwest Washington and some parts of this western United States were very similar.

[2:37] So that's just a brief overview of how they happened to come here. We won't go into some of the harrowing tales they've told of how it came about. But there are a couple of good publications that detail this very well. One is actually connected to our family history. The Brix family came from Germany into this area in the early 1900s.

[3:08] They landed in Astoria off of a ship, went through customs, and then came up the Grays River, to a place that is now known as Rosburg, and eventually homesteaded a large acreage, which a few years later turned out to be where my mother's parents settled and had a large farm.

Janice: [3:32] Can you spell that name, that family name- the German name?

Allan: [3:36] Brix. The Brix family name is simply spelled B-R-I-X. The book I mentioned is named *The Brix Logging Story*. It is a very detailed pictorial and autobiographical account of how it all came about. And the Brix family… I will add a little more about the Brix family here.

[4:04] In that book, you will read how this family that came from Germany settled here in the area, and provided employment from 1905 to almost 1950 for the people that lived here- predominantly Finns. But it also shows the up and down cycle of industry- any industry.

[4:36] Sadly, at the end of the long career in this family, even though taking in millions of dollars in their time, the Great Depression of 1929 into the late thirties, the family had not much more than the average working man had, other than the original housing that they had.

[5:05] So to me it was an eye-opener in the sense that people plan things; they have great, idealistic adventures they go on, but in the end, life is valleys and hilltops, and nothing much changes in that scheme.

[5:23] But back to our family history- the Wirkkala family name comes from one basic area of Finland, as I mentioned- the Kaustinen area. And to confuse it even further, back in that day it was the custom that if my name was Johnson, and I married a girl from the Wirkkala farm in Kaustinen, Finland, our family name became Johnson. So it's really difficult to track family names in that sense.

[6:07] To compound it even further, there are Johnsons here in Naselle that were originally a Wirkkala. These are detailed somewhat in another book- *When Logging Was Logging*, also available from Appelo Archives. This Wirkkala came and saw how many Wirkkalas were here, and he said, "I don't care to have that many names with mine, so I want to choose Johnson for my name." So we lost a Wirkkala and gained a Johnson. And this valley has many Johnsons, Wirkkalas, Olsons, and others similar.

[6:45] But the Brix family, when they settled in that homestead on the riverbank of the Grays River, they began clearing it, and that's when they started their logging venture. I'm only including the Brix family in this interview due to the fact that much of my family was associated later, as time goes on with the Brix company. But they began with a small ox-logging setup there on the banks of the Grays River.

[7:15] And to get started, they logged these tideland spruce, rolled them into the river, put them on rafts, towed them to Astoria, sawed them into lumber, gave the mill a certain percentage of the lumber that was sawed as their share for doing the sawing, and then brought the rest back, and began to build their homes and their barns, and whatever outbuildings they needed.

[7:40] They exhausted the timber supply on this farm, so they went to move their operations, still oxen-logging. Most people know that those are one of the largest, most powerful animals ever in the world for pulling heavy weights. They began at a place called Sisson Creek, down the Columbia River- the mouth of the Grays was just a few short miles.

[8:07] And that was very hard work. They had a camp there. The women were mostly relegated to cook for the loggers, get the groceries and supplies in, look after all the other menial tasks, and probably took care of the bunkhouses- kept them clean, took care of the bedding.

[8:28] This went on for a little. Then the mechanized age began to come in. Animals were very expensive to maintain. They had to have a shed to be protected from the weather. They were temperamental. They had to be fed twenty-four hours a day, but only worked eight or nine hours a day. So as one can tell, that could be quite an expense.

[8:56] So when machinery began to be introduced, with the very first spool donkey, winding a line around a spool- much like you ladies use with sewing machines- you understand what we're talking about. Winding a thread around a small spool can generate quite a bit of power. The same principle was used in bringing logs to where they lay, four- to five hundred feet out, brought out to a skid row and then hooked together and rowed down to the river- or skidded down to the river, would be a better word.

[9:37] And here comes… Now we'll introduce the Wirkkala name into this. The Wirkkalas and the Brixes were somewhat working together in the industry, and worked with each other in developments. In our family, we had a man named Oscar A. Wirkkala [my great uncle], who was registered in Washington State Archives as one of the one hundred most… I don't know what the correct word is, but as the top one hundred people having the most influence in getting Washington State going as a state- all aspects of it. That would be dairying, farming, harvesting, logging, mining; all these things.

[10:28] And how these hundred people made that job much more cost-effective and possible to even do it, in some cases, where before it was impossible for financial reasons. But Oscar was a very bright young man. In one of our history letters I have at home, he was very quick with his hands. He was just a super alert, quick person.

[11:01] And this isn't related to logging, but he was so talented that when a lady was giving birth, and it was a breech position, Oscar was sometimes called. At five years old he was called to turn the baby around in a lady's womb. I don't know if this is something you want in your interview, but that's just part of our history. I'm told he did that more than once. So people noticed that he was especially talented.

[11:34] He went into school. I don't know much about his early school years or anything like that- that time period, but he only went through the seventh grade. I wish I could remember his birth date, but I know he passed away in [1959].

[11:52] And I actually was personally able to be at a table where he was, telling my father and showing him on many papers, "Hey, I came up with this idea. I wonder if this would work." Wherever he visited, he would have a briefcase and he would bring that in. He'd come to visit about normal things, but invariably he would open his briefcase and start showing whoever was here some of these things that he was working on.

[12:23] Well, in his association with the Brix [brothers], my grandfather Alex Wirkkala- Oscar's brother [worked at Brix Company]. There was another brother named Sam Wirkkala, who at thirty-eight years old went on a logging venture to the Philippines, contracted malaria and passed away at a very early age.

[12:49] Oscar, he looked at the people first of all, dragging logs along the ground. Every little object was impeded and would slow things down. He looked at the cost of maintaining animals, and he began to see these people using donkey engines, we'll call them. And I'll just briefly show this here now. That's the classic [photo] of the 1915 Washington two-speed. [Pause]

Janice: [13:27] We're going to try to frame the picture.

Allan: [13:29] Okay. [Pause]

Janice: [13:34] There. That's good.

Allan: [13:36] Okay. This donkey engine here was known as a two-speed slackliner, built by Washington Iron Works under contract for Oscar. And it came here, when it was completed, to Naselle, Washington, about five miles from where we are sitting right now today. It went to Brix camp, which had the name of Macedonia. If you know your Roman history, it is known as a place of death because it's such a dangerous operation.

[14:13] And this information I'm relaying here, I've heard with my own hearing, being around older Finns, conversing, shop-talk, or whatever you want to call it- logging talk, logging tales. But when our parents would visit, they would…

Janice: [14:36] Go ahead. Sorry about that. [Laughter]

Allan: [14:39] We had a small interruption. Anyway, they would visit and tell of these things. Keep in mind Oscar with his talent- designed this; no doubt collaborated with other engineers that had the information on how to do this. So they were able to work together and design this.

[15:06] And this machine here was so fast and so dangerous that the State of Washington outlawed its use in the woods, because it would move logs in the air at sixty miles an hour. And logs that were not sound quality, when this machine would be flying these logs at sixty miles an hour on a carriage, on a slackline, if they hit a stump or hit the ground, it would just snap them in half.

[15:39] Cedar logs weren't even put on the rigging unless they were five feet or more in diameter. Any smaller cedar would hit something like that and it would just explode into slivers. The Finnish name for this donkey is *metsä kone*, or woods engine, according to the way I understand it. So what happened to this machine? Nobody knows how this machine came to be in San Francisco at a pile-driving company.

[16:23] Oscar's son Joe was one of the foreman on building Astoria-Megler bridge that we have on the Columbia River. He worked for a company in San Francisco that specialized in bridge building. Joe told us that he had worked at that company for many years, and he saw this old machine in the corner of the yard that wasn't being used. He kept having this inkling… or I don't know what you would exactly call it. Déjà vu feeling, you maybe we could call that. Finally his curiosity got the best of him.

[17:10] He got some tools and went over to that engine, and he scraped the grease away from where he had seen the nameplate in pictures on this machine. And much to his surprise, he read the letters

"Oscar A. Wirkkala Logging Engine," and the invention dates. But the mystery is, no one knows how it got there. When Brix completed their job, they may have- you know, just conjecture- they may have hauled it out of the woods before they took the railroad out, and just put it somewhere, and then who knows what. We just don't know.

[17:48] But here, I'll hold its picture up again. [Pause] There's some people I know in this picture. [Pause] Standing where my finger is is Oscar Wirkkala himself. Then here is a man named Adolph Larsen. Ironically, I grew up in a house on Knappton Road that Brixes had logged… They logged that area in 1923, '24, '25. They later sold that property to the first landowner of that property. And lo and behold, here comes Adolph Larsen in about 1947 in a little school bus to pick me up to enter the first grade in the Naselle Grade School. So things have continuity in the woods industry, in the timber industry.

[18:52] There's also another person here. I believe that's John Huntis. He's also a Naselle resident. Huntis Farms is about two miles that way. So we had this notable character in our family tree. We're talking about Oscar. Oscar had a brother named Alex, Sam, Matt, and let's see, there's one other one? [Andrew] The name escapes me now. But they were all kind of farmer-loggers. Whatever it took to make a living.

[19:35] Alex and another brother- I think it was Sam- earlier, were in partnership with another one of the Brix brothers in a logging operation up east of Tacoma. Due to market conditions, that venture failed through no fault of their own- just the way the cycles go. Prices go up, prices go down. We all know that when you spend too much money… Spend a large amount of money- let me correct that- for a new venture, if we lose our income, we're in trouble.

Janice: [20:11] Would you remind us of Oscar's relationship to you and your family, and the family tree. Where did he fit? He was related to you how?

Allan: [20:23] Okay. Oscar and his four brothers originated from the Kaustinen area of Finland. Their father's name was Abraham Wirkkala. My father's name… My father's father was Alex, and my dad's middle name was Abraham. Charles Abraham. So they all came… Those five brothers came to America within a few years of each other.

Janice: [21:01] So Oscar was your father's brother?

Allan: [21:05] My grandfather's brother.

Janice: [21:07] Okay. And did Oscar live in the area with the family?

Allan: [21:15] Oscar lived… He worked in the Knappton area, northern Washington, Sedro-Woolley, Green River, behind Tacoma, some in northwest Oregon. And ironically, as I'm sitting here… I don't know what you call this, but the last remaining Wirkkala brother just walked in right over there- Edwin Wirkkala, my dad's brother. He's the last one remaining of those. To me that's a real coincidence. His father was Alex Wirkkala. And Oscar Wirkkala was Ed's uncle.

Janice: [22:03] Could you tell us about your time in your family? Where you grew up, and was this a Finnish home? Did you have customs that you celebrated? Did you speak the language?

Allan: [22:21] Okay. Be happy to. I already mentioned that my mother was raised in the home that was originally a Brix home, on the Grays River in Rosburg. And when my parents were married in 1941, when I was born in July of '42, I was the first nephew of the Kandolls and the Wirkkalas, both logging families at that time. So being that I was the first one, I was like exhibit A.

[22:57] The Kandoll family more than the Wirkkala family would have me come and stay at the very Finnish Kandoll farm. My grandmother instructed me that she would like me to converse with her in the Finnish language, and no English, so I did that. So the first six years of my life I spoke pretty much one hundred percent Finnish, except for when I went home to my regular home, then I would have to speak English, of course, when my brothers and sisters were there.

[23:37] When I entered the first grade at Naselle Grade School- over where Peaceful Hill Cemetery is- in December they had a visiting day, and from the first day of school in the first grade to that visiting day, I had not spoken one word to anybody but my teacher in all that time in that school, because I was reluctant to use the English language because I wasn't really sharpened up on it. I didn't know… I didn't sound like the rest of them. I knew Finnish- just a natural, fluent conversation. [Speaking Finnish 24:17] I just said, "And I still speak some of it."

[24:25] That day, on that visiting day, I brought my younger brother Lloyd to school with me. And a young man from the fourth grade saw this, and he came over and he looked at me, and he says, "I'm gonna beat your little brother up today." He wanted to get a rise out of me. So without thinking, I just yelled at him and said, "No, you're not!" And that kid dropped his arms and had a look of disbelief on his face. And he called everybody on the playground: "Quick, come here- he talks, he talks, he talks!" I still remember that plainly. And [after this] they left my little brother alone.

[25:17] So that part of the Finnish heritage… And on that Kandoll farm, they had many of the Finnish customs that were done in the old country. In the morning, it was very early to get up, because they had fifty-some cows they milked, morning and night. There were three brothers that did that. They did their chores, and then they would come in for breakfast- get cleaned up and have breakfast, and a breakfast unlike anything you'll ever see today. A big round table loaded with a room just for the eating dishes, just piled with food in the middle. All the bacon you want. You know, all that good farm food.

[26:04] Then after that it was time for farm chores. At ten-thirty there was a coffee time- mandatory coffee time. Then later you came to dinner, and at two-thirty or three, it seems like there was another coffee time. Then it was time for evening chores. I don't remember if supper was before or after the evening chores, but I think it was after. But learning some of those Finnish customs early on was very interesting to me.

[26:41] Now back to my own home where I grew up- my mother's maiden name was Kandoll, and she had grown up in that home, so she maintained many of the customs that she had learned as a girl. And she taught us about hard work, honesty, and your word- what we say is very important in this life. She was also a good Christian woman, as far as my dad was also, so we were raised in the church- a little church in Rosburg where we learned these values.

[27:21] It seems like the first ten or eleven years of my life, all the sermons were in the Finnish

language. So again, we had to call upon what we knew of the Finnish language to get anything out of it. That changed sometime in the late fifties, I think, to no more Finnish messages. So many of the older Finnish people had passed on.

[27:52] As I mentioned earlier about Oscar- I wanted to close Oscar out here. I had a couple more things about him. I believe he had twenty-seven different inventions that have a patent in the U.S. patent office, and they ranged from different logging hooks to the main, most common one was a choker hook or choker bell.

[28:23] I have a site on Facebook called "98 man's choker bells and logging history." And we talk about everything related to that. We touch on other areas, but mostly devoted to the logging industry and the safety aspects of it, new ideas in it, experiences, past experiences, harrowing escapes, disasters, all these things, in the hopes… I actually began the site to preserve the logging history, preserve the way a way of life, which is swiftly changing, so that others could see it later on. Really easy to do with Facebook- not like publishing a book, which seems so difficult.

[29:05] But we've had many rewarding experiences worldwide. We find that there are people just like us in New Zealand, and Australia; Germany; Finland; Sweden. Sweden and Finland we find are far advanced in their timber industry. I researched in Sweden- just a little side note here, or sidebar- that trees are so well connected to the community there in Sweden that when a timber sale is drawn up for the sale for building materials or whatever, they number every tree with a number. And that number of that tree is followed from the time it's cut, transported, manufactured into whatever it is used for. There's a record of each tree by its own number. It's quite a remarkable feat.

[30:18] In Finland they maintain their forests very well. They even take the stumps out of the ground, grind them up and use them for some usable thing. Many uses for wood. There are hundreds of uses for wood. That's a story for another day. But I'm reminded of a man that came to the U.S. visiting from Finland, and he went through a forest where our foresters had thought they had done a reasonably good job, and he just said, "That would not be acceptable in Finland." Which shows you a window into how much time they put into that.

[31:04] This logging choker hook that Oscar invented… I might seem like I'm rambling here, but I'm remembering things as I go along. When Oscar invented the choker bell, before that they used just a flat hook with links and cable at the end- very heavy, like twenty-five pounds. That had to be wrestled underneath the log, and then brought over the top and hooked up. And if it slacked off, the cable could come out of the hook and become loose, and you'd have to do the same thing all over again.

[31:43] Oscar's idea was once you put this knob into this bell, and put it into its slot, the harder you pull, the tighter it will grip, and there's no way for it to come loose. It has come loose sometimes- I've seen donkeys pull rigging back and forth enough times where they've managed to somehow take that loose, but very rarely.

[32:09] There are a couple schools of thought on where did Oscar get this idea. One is that he was observing- if one would look at a good photo of a wooden clipper sailing ship with a tall mast and all the lines and rigging around, they had blocks of woods with slots and holes where you could put a knotted rope through a hole, and the rope would come back through this slot, and it wouldn't pull

through there. It would be too big to go through that hole. So some say that's how he got it.

[32:46] Others say that he looked at a simple keyhole of a door- a regular lock. And he surmised that if you stick that knob in there and bring it down, it can't pull out. So we don't really know, because his last daughter Elizabeth passed away only two years ago at the age of ninety-six in Seattle. Her estate still has most of his diagrams and drawings and his material that he had from a lifetime of designing.

Janice: [33:22] Did Oscar get a financial reward from this invention? Eventually?

Allan: [33:29] There was never any great financial reward for him or any of his family due to perhaps not realizing how important it was to look after those things for himself personally. That's kind of a hazy area. There was… His last notable invention was called a Wirkkala propeller. And it was a propeller… If I had one here to show… I found one on eBay three years ago from a gentleman in California that lived near where the factory used to be located.

[34:14] He had gone to a garage sale; saw this white propeller on the wall, and he thought, "Well, they've only got five dollars on it, so I could do something with that." So he bought it and he took it home, and he got all the paint off of it, and now he sees the Wirkkala name in the hub of this propeller. So he researched it and found out that it had actually been built in a factory near where he was.

[34:42] Anyway, he put it on eBay and my brother Lloyd purchased that and has it in his home in Portland. But this propeller was used in some military applications. It was used in… purchased for use… but it was used… I know they tried it one time on the ferry that used to go between Astoria and Megler on the Columbia River. The main attribute that was advertised about this was that it reduced vibrations from a normal propeller to almost nonexistent.

[35:27] But again, he didn't have a good assistant to do the marketing and promoting and all this, so eventually that just kind of faded away. The other thing that hurt him in this respect was that this foreman in the factory in California took that design, built his own factory miles away, and built that and sold it in the open market and undercut Oscar's propeller. There was some talk of lawsuits, but I don't remember exactly where that went. And then that would have been about in the fifties, late fifties. His career pretty well wound down, and he passed away in 1963.

[36:19] Now I mentioned that our family, like my uncle Ed that's sitting over there- his dad, and Oscar's brothers- much as my brothers and I also worked together. Not necessarily a concrete business arrangement with each other, but whenever someone needed help, we'd just go help. And loggers still do that today with other outfits.

[36:48] I remember a time ten years ago when I was a foreman for a company- my third brother's company- my later part of my career. We needed a big dozer across the canyon. We didn't have one over there. We had it on this side of the canyon. It was hard to get one over there, like half a mile away. So I went to the neighboring company that was working near there. I told him [inaudible 37:17]. He says, "Take my D-8. Use it for whatever you need. Just bring it back when you're through." And that's how they operated. And that's generally how we operate out there in the woods.

Janice: [37:34] What personally did you… What was your life work?

Allan: [37:42] Okay. I'm glad you asked that. As I mentioned, we grew up on Knappton Road, just west of Naselle. When I was growing up, the Deep River Timber Company still had a steam locomotive hauling from the backcountry, and I could hear the steam whistle when I was in my pre-teens. That's in my mind yet as a memory growing up. My father worked for the Wirkkala Brothers Logging Company in Grays River, which was Ben, Albert, and Paul Wirkkala. They started in about 1945, and completed in '55- sold out to Weyerhauser Company.

[38:29] So many of our uncles… Like he worked for Wirkkala Brothers Logging Company- Uncle Ed, over there. Again, they all worked together. I don't know if we could call it a clan, but where one man found success, he would relay it. "Hey, come over here. This is really a good job. This is really good." There were many, many Wirkkalas in that company. I don't know how many we could say, but like Eddie and Elwin that you're going to have here- their father and his brother all worked together. They actually owned Wirkkala Brothers Logging Company- that company.

[39:09] So I grew up with a father that left before I got up when I was a boy. And when he came back in the evening it was supper. He cleaned up for supper, maybe read the paper; a little bit of discussion. At seven-thirty, eight o'clock, time to go to sleep for the next day, five days a week. I would think that I kind of might have some sawdust in my blood from all the way back to Finland. I don't know. But it was a given for me that I was going to be in the forest- in the woods.

[39:52] So after graduating from this school- Naselle High School, in 1960, in the fall of 1960, there was a knock on our door on Knappton Road, and a man was standing there, and he asked my father, "Did any of your boys graduate this year?" And he said, "Yeah, there's one right there." "Well, how would he like to come drive a log truck?" So I piped up; I said, "I'd like that." Of course. So, much to the envy of my classmates for the rest of the year I drove a bright red Kenworth through Naselle, hauling logs from there to the dump. The envy of them. Some of them. Maybe not all, but some of them.

[40:42] And in this little town here, it seemed like there was a logger in every valley- a company working. There was Grays River Logging Company, Valley Eight Logging Company, Gunnysack Logging, England Brothers Logging, Deep River Timber Company. Just all kind of companies, some large, some small.

[41:04] Going through my high school years, I began preparing for my career in the woods, but I also had a side note that came when a new highway was constructed right through in front of our place. Here's equipment, so what does a young man do? He climbs all over the equipment. So I actually had two careers. I worked in both.

[41:33] But in my experience in the forest, in the woods, I have noticed that the Scandinavian people seem to have the most stick-to-it-iveness, I guess we'd call that. Some call it *sisu*. When the going gets tough, the tough get going. You've heard all these things. My wife put a thing on my refrigerator years ago that said, "You can always tell a Finn, but you can't tell them anything." And no doubt you and some others have seen that as well.

Marjorie Graf: [42:17] I'd be interested to know more about your family. You just mentioned a wife.

Allan: [42:22] My wife?

Marjorie: [42:24] How did that happen?

Allan: [42:26] How did that happen? That's interesting. My dad, on May 18, 1962, was suddenly killed by a snag, cutting [inaudible 42:46] for Crown Zellarbach Company. I was suddenly the oldest of the living children, and mother at home. Let me tell you, that was a shock to the family. My mother recently passed away after living without her husband for… She passed away last year. So she lived without him nearly fifty years and raised the children. I for a few years stayed around the home area to help with whatever help she needed.

[43:33] Then as I mentioned before, this company that built road in front of our house, they gave me an opportunity to follow them, so I went to Vancouver, Washington. I seemingly broke out of my roots. But there I met a young lady named Laurel, one evening, just driving around. We've been married fifty-two years, and then some today.

Janice: [44:05] Is she Finnish?

Allan: [44:06] She is of English and Irish extraction, which made for a very interesting household. It made a good balance to me, where I would maybe let things slide a little bit, or "Don't rock the boat," she would just say, "I'm going to rock the boat, and maybe sink it if I need to." So I look at that as a good thing for me. I'll throw this in here.

[44:33] I saw a video of a man in Finland on the street that they were interviewing for a TV… I don't know if it was a special production or something, but here was a man with a video camera, and he stopped this Finnish man on the street, and he was just so Finnish that you couldn't get any more. And he asked him, "How often do you tell your wife that you love her?" And I'll never get his answer, "Maybe on her deathbed." And I thought, "I don't want to be like that." [Laughter] So that's the extreme of that reserved-ness, of how we can be.

[45:27] But as a result of marrying Laurel, I worked another year up in that area, and then found myself back in the woods here in Naselle, and worked for different companies. I wasn't content to just have a job in a company – "Okay, you do this." I wanted to have my own company, and I wanted to have one better than anybody else. That's a typical young man, I guess. But I would watch people, how they worked, and I would adopt their methods.

[46:00] Like for instance, I saw a man one day in the middle of the summertime, unloading some logs by the road. They were big [inaudible 46:08] logs, or rotten logs. It didn't make any sense, so I asked, "What is this all about? Why are you doing this?" He said, "I'm doing this because six months from now, the snow is going to fly, and I'm going to bring a donkey from the mountain, and I'm going to have a truck here, and I'm going to slide on these logs. It's going to be all ready for them."

[46:27] So I thought to myself, "That's the plan we need to follow." We need to plan ahead as best as we can. And that's a good plan for anything in our lives, but especially in logging. So I actually

was in logging personally with small gaps… I parked my last log loader in 2011, working for a man up out of Battle Ground. I put the boom down. I have a Facebook picture of me with my thumbs up like this. "That's it!" So how many years is that? That's very close to fifty years.

Janice: [47:11] And do you have children?

Allan: [47:13] I have… We have. She'd correct me on that, for sure. We have three children. A son, Allan Jr., and did have two daughters. We lost one daughter at the age of forty-four. We have another one at the age of forty-two who works in a critical care unit in Renton. Our son, Junior- he injured both his shoulders in the woods, so he's not able to work anymore. He's on disability. He's fifty-one. Very hard on him not to be able to go out there and do his work.

Janice: [47:55] Are your children interested in Finnish traditions?

Allan: [47:59] They have loosely sometimes. They don't really want to follow it. But here's an interesting thing. Our daughter Carmen was working in a hospital in Renton. There was a very belligerent Scandinavian man who would not obey the nurses about anything, and gave them a very hard time.

[48:24] So Carmen in exasperation yelled at him, "*Ole hiljaa*!" In other words, "Shut up!" And he changed his demeanor instantly, and he was like a lamb the rest of the time. Something connected with him. So in answer to your question, she follows tradition in that sense, and connected with that man. So, do you have any other questions?

Janice: [48:59] Well, we just want to thank you for such an interesting interview- your family, and the story of your family. Do you have questions? We want to just say thank you so much for this interview. It was wonderful. Thank you so much.

Brandon Benson: [49:21] Thank you.

Allan: [49:22] Thank you very much.

END OF RECORDING.

Transcription by Alison Goetz.