

Nordic American Voices
Nordic Heritage Museum
Seattle, Washington

Interview of Jorma Salmi
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Bellevue, Washington

Interviewers: Gary London; Pirkko Borland

Gary London: [0:12] This is an interview for the Nordic American Voices oral history project. Today is February 7th, 2014, and we'll be interviewing Jorma Salmi. We are at his home in Bellevue, Washington. My name is Gary London, and with me is Pirkko Borland. Jorma, thank you very much for agreeing to be interviewed.

Jorma Salmi: [0:38] Thank you very much for coming to our humble house.

Gary: [0:42] Well, I don't think it's so humble; it's a beautiful house.

Jorma: [0:44] By American standards, I think it is.

Gary: [0:47] It's a beautiful home.

Jorma: [0:48] Thank you.

Gary: [0:49] I know you have a very interesting story to tell us. Remember that we want you to talk as much as possible.

Jorma: [0:56] Okay.

Gary: [0:57] ...And us to talk as little as possible.

Jorma: [0:58] Okay.

Gary: [0:59] So, we'll ask, occasionally, a question, but we would really like to hear from you. Let's start, however, with telling us about what you remember about your grandparents.

Jorma: [1:14] My grandparents were... he was a... how can I say... he was a... the father was my... he was dead when I was born. He was already... But he had been making bells. Like dinner bells.

And one of his bells was in the Langinkoski where Charles had a summer home. And that was his name on the bell, and it was...

[1:48] And so it was... *Mummo* was just a home-*mummo*. She just stayed home. She didn't work. And I remember her very well. She lived with us for a while, and she cooked for us and everything, so... Because we... it comes later, why we moved together with my mother's sister and *mummo*.

Gary: [2:14] So these are your grandparents on your father's side?

Jorma: [2:17] My father's side, yeah.

Gary: [2:19] Yeah. And what were their names?

Jorma: [2:21] Wirtanen. That's a good Finnish name. But they wrote it with "W." So... yeah.

Gary: [2:29] How about your grandparents on your mother's side?

Jorma: [2:39] They were living near Gutset, which is a big factory in Kotka. They had nine children, and they lived in a one-room apartment; outhouse, no hot water. And I'll always remember... the building is still there, but the rest is gone. It's like a museum now. I remember the floor, the wooden floor, but it was so old and it had they *oksat*...

Pirkko Borland: [3:12] Branches.

Jorma: [3:13] Branches, yeah. Branches were high, and it was like holes in the floors. Not holes, but they were like... I call them like a sea.

Gary: [3:28] Yeah.

Jorma: [3:29] They were like waves going under. And they had the little partition where they slept, but they had put the curtains in. It was kind of a big room, but can you imagine nine kids? A couple of them died earlier, so... And he was working at the factory there.

Gary: [3:50] Yeah. And what was their name? What was your mother's maiden name?

Jorma: [3:55] I'm sorry, now I said the opposite. That was my father's.

Gary: [3:59] Oh, that was your father's.

Jorma: [4:00] Yeah. And my mother's was Wirtanen.

Gary: [4:03] Okay.

Jorma: [4:04] And my father's was Salmi, of course.

Gary: [4:06] Yeah, yeah.

Jorma: [4:07] I'm sorry. Maybe you can correct that.

Gary: [4:09] That's just fine. Not a problem.

Jorma: [4:12] Okay.

Gary: [4:12] Not a problem. So, do you have any memories of time spent with any of your grandparents?

Jorma: [4:23] Not really, not really. But we went to see *Mummo* quite often. But the war started in 1939, and I was six years old.

Gary: [4:35] Yeah.

Jorma: [4:36] And the memories have to be before that. So they are very vague memories.

Gary: [4:41] Yeah. Do you know anything about how your father and mother met? Any stories about that?

Jorma: [4:48] No... I saw hundreds of pictures, because my father had a motor boat, a little motor boat. And they used to go to Suursaari, Högholmen. The Russians have it now. And they used to go on picnics on the weekends. I have pictures with the funny-looking swimming suits and the hats. Unfortunately I don't have that much memory about... Of course, I was there, too, in the basket, but... [Laughter]

Gary: [5:25] Yes. Do you have brothers and sisters?

Jorma: [5:29] I had one brother. He was a coal smith. He was a head... [inaudible 5:37], famous man and a coal smith.

Gary: [5:41] Yes.

Jorma: [5:42] So, Ole, my brother was the head designer for Vikstrom, and he always said that those were all his ideas, but you know, of course Vikstrom got... And he died a couple, three years ago. He had a *syöpä*, you know, cancer, unfortunately.

Gary: [6:00] Mm hm.

Jorma: [6:02] And that time, I went to see him quite often, a few times. It happened in summertime. We were in Helsinki, and he was in Hoitokoti, which was a fantastic place. The care was so good there. Because, you know, that's like hospice here.

Gary: [6:21] Yeah. What kinds of growing up memories do you have? This was all in Kotka, right?

Jorma: [6:32] That was Kotka, yeah. My memory is not... we had housekeepers, also, [inaudible 6:38 – 6:39]. And there was this thing, you know, on the wall, like a [inaudible 6:48]. If you were bad, you know...

Gary: [6:50] Yes.

Jorma: [6:51] You got this thing... And it was a very, very disciplined family. Of course, my father was mostly in the war, so my memories from my father... after the war, of course, I remember him, but during that time, 1933 - 1939, you know, I don't really have any. Except, you know, that they call it [inaudible 7:14 – 7:15]. The [inaudible 7:16]. [Laughter]

Gary: [7:18] Yeah.

Jorma: [7:19] So, that was a physical punishment. I don't think you can do it anymore.

Gary: [7:24] How about school?

Jorma: [7:27] Yeah, we went to... of course, I started school over here, I mean in Kotka. I was in a Svedska [inaudible 7:40] school. My mother was Swedish-speaking. My father didn't like that at all, but she thought that we better learn Swedish also. And then I went to Kotka [inaudible 7:52] Lyceum. And I only had five years, and then I quit. I didn't have the white cap and all that. And no university, either, but the life [taught] me.

Gary: [8:16] Do you have any contact these days with any of your former schoolmates?

Jorma: [8:21] Yes, I have... Pika Gunter. He's a retired doctor in Kotka. I plan to go to visit him in Kotka, because he's not in very good health, either. And then I have a couple other people. One of my very good friends just died. He was playing hockey with me in Kotka. But the rest of them... most of them are dead already, so...

Gary: [8:45] Yeah. We're going to talk later about your hockey, but why don't we go now to the... you were born in 1933, correct?

Jorma: [8:55] Yes.

Gary: [8:57] May, the...

Jorma: [8:58] May 6th.

Gary: [8:59] May 6th, 1933. So you would have been six years old at the outbreak of the Winter War.

Jorma: [9:06] Yes.

Gary: [9:07] Yeah. What kinds of memories do you have of that war?

Jorma: [9:12] I remember we took a train. One of my father's sisters was living in Muurame, middle Finland. She had a little farm there. So in October, we took a train up there, but the war didn't start, so we came back to Kotka. And then I was in kindergarten. And then I remember... this still hurts me. I had a little lunch pail, bucket, how you call it. And I lost it in the melee, and I still remember it.

[9:54] Anyway, we were having a lunch in kindergarten. And suddenly, there was this airplane... very loud noises were coming. And we all ran out, and this kindergarten was just about a hundred yards from the sea. There was like a hill down. There was this little Finnish battleship, very small. It had one gun, going "tu-tu-tu-tu." They were shooting those planes. They were coming like a [inaudible 10:22] they came in.

[10:23] And then those cigars started to drop down, and teachers were pushing us down, "get down, get down, get down." But they didn't come very close, because they were bombing the harbor, which was on the other side of the city. And then they sent us home, and that was the first day that

was really... that is in my mind, you know, very strongly. And then I went to [inaudible 10:49], what's that, [inaudible 10:53] school?

Gary: [10:54] Yeah.

Jorma: [10:54] And if there was more than two hours of bombing at night, there was no school in the morning. And we mostly slept in shelters. But my mother had a millinery store, making ladies' hats. We were living very close to her sister's building. We were living in a wooden house that was like a three-family house. She took us to Helsinki to buy some material, and we stayed at our relatives' overnight. We came back the next day, and the chimney was left. It was still burning. The house was still smoking and burning.

[11:39] Luckily because we stayed home, we didn't go to the shelter, and weren't around the shelter when the sirens went on. Many, many times the bombs were already falling when the sirens went off so late. So we moved to her sister's five-story brick building. We were on the fourth floor. Then we slept, almost always, in the basement. They had a little... not beds, but people slept there.

[12:13] And one night, three bombs hit the top of the building. They were very heavy bombs. And they were supposed to go through the building, penetrate, and then explode at the bottom. But some lucky Russian had put them so that they hit the roof and they exploded right away. So only one floor was destroyed. But the dust, and the building shaking... everybody was crying and screaming. It was unbelievable.

[12:48] So then we went to the same place, father's sister's. Actually, that was before she married the farmer. She was a teacher... No, I'm sorry, she was a... she had a [inaudible 13:07]. She had a little store then. And then the school had four classes in one room. I remember that. I don't know how they can teach at four different levels, but we went to school there. And then she married this farmer and moved. And then after the war, we went there quite often. So I was a little bit wrong on that point, first.

[13:31] Then we lived there with *Mummo* and her sister, and her brother. But then we got our own little same kind of house close by. And I remember one time Father came, from the... to stay there. He had a few days off from the duties in Army or Navy. And of course the Russians bombed that night. I remember they were trying to hit the nearby hospital. And we ran to the shelter, you know.

[14:12] I remember there was all kinds of [inaudible 14:15] and [inaudible 14:16]. Like five hundred meters to run to the shelter, but we made it, of course. But it was a terrifying thing for a young boy, to go... We sat first in a wooden building. It had like a front that was tile. So we sat there and waited and waited... it goes by, but it got worse and worse. So now we go to shelter. So we ran in the middle of the night to the shelter.

Gary: [14:50] So there was considerable bombing around Kotka.

Jorma: [14:53] Kotka was. They said it was the most-bombed city after... before [inaudible 14:58]. But what happened is that there was a... We were of course allies with the Germans at that time. And they had the war ships there and the merchant ships, and then there was this Russian plane taking pictures, you know along the [inaudible 15:17]. The ships went out to the sea at night. Every night they went out, and the harbor was empty. And so they were bombing empty harbors. And then of course, we got to be friends with... we had the auntie up in the hill. There was this Finnish... have you been in Kotka?

Gary: [15:40] I have, but not for a long while.

Jorma: [15:42] You know this *vesitorni*? This water tower? People were living right down there. From that, on the [inaudible 15:48 – 15:52]. Two brick buildings. So, anyhow. We got to be friends with those young guys who were trying to shoot those planes down. There were like twelve, fifteen of them. And there were a couple of cannons there. And one morning, we went there; a bomb had hit them, and they... I guess.... I don't know. It looked like they all died or something. There was nothing left but just a hole on the *kallio*.

[16:24] And so... and then of course, then we had also a morgue next to our building there. And they brought the dead in the open like a *kuorma-auto*, trucks, in the morning. And then all the [inaudible 16:38], we went to see. Do we know any of those dead? They were just laying there. And they went there. And then one night, somebody woke up in the morgue, and they thought they were dead, and was [inaudible 16:50 – 16:51] that they heard this story, that this poor person had woken up and was screaming there with the other bodies, and they saved her.

[17:04] So, and then, there also was something... with... there were railroad tracks right behind our house. Freight trains came, and they had all kinds of war stuff in there, and there was a load of

dynamite. So, what we did of course, we took the dynamite out and made a big bomb, and a couple of guys lost their fingers, and one guy lost his eye, and those things. And then also, at that time, we could have gone to Sweden. Sweden took the children.

Gary: [17:41] I was going to ask you about that.

Jorma: [17:42] Yeah. We already had... we were at the station already, they had our names hanging down, big piece of cardboard. We were there to board the train. At the last minute, my mother said, "No, you're not going," and took us home. And we never went to Sweden.

Gary: [18:01] Your mother just couldn't part with you.

Jorma: [18:03] No. Just the last minute. We were at the station already, to leave.

Gary: [18:08] That's amazing. Do you remember whether or not you wanted to go to Sweden?

Jorma: [18:12] No, I don't think... I think we wanted to stay home. It was kind of frightening, I think, to go. It was like at least one hundred children there, and they had those people who took care of them and took them, I think to Turku, and from there shipped to Sweden. Actually, I still feel lucky that we didn't have to go. Of course, we spoke... when father was gone, we spoke... my mother spoke Swedish to us. And Father came home and said, "Here we speak Finnish, we don't speak Swedish."

Gary: [18:51] But Finnish was your normal language at home?

Jorma: [18:53] Yeah, it was our language, yeah.

Gary: [18:57] And your father was off in the war, you said?

Jorma: [19:00] Yeah, he was off in [inaudible 19:02]. The [inaudible 19:04] of Finland. He was a tailor. His war, he was making uniforms for the...

Gary: [19:16] Officers?

Jorma: [19:17] Officers, yeah. Yeah. And so, but he saw... when it was Ilmarinen that sank. He said they were going in like a [inaudible 19:29] out to the sea, someplace there near Turku. And what happened- the Russians bombed, like Bismarck was the same thing, it capsized. And my mother said

there were faces in those little holes, those round things. It took a couple hours before it sank, but there was no place to go.

[19:56] But then there was this German anti-aircraft ship, which was parked on the harbor. And one night, the Russians sank it. They attacked this way from the air, and then they were going around some other planes, and they had these torpedoes, and they torpedoed the ship.

Gary: [20:20] That would have been during the Continuation War?

Jorma: [20:23] Yeah, that was later. That was 1943, '44, something like that.

Gary: [20:25] Yeah.

Jorma: [20:26] Yeah.

Gary: [20:29] So, as you...

Jorma: [20:30] And the name was [inaudible 20:31]. The ship's name was [inaudible 20:32].

[Transcriber note: Sounds like "Neobay;" not "Ilmarinen"]

Gary: [20:33] Oh.

Jorma: [20:34] It was a real warship, too. And also there, you heard these knockings. A couple of weeks, later, still people were... some were in the ship, alive, so... We had the rowboat, going around, trying to get some stuff from the ship, but you couldn't get up there. They had people there—soldiers there: "Don't come closer, don't come closer."

Gary: [21:00] Yeah. Well, that's a remarkable story.

Jorma: [21:04] Yeah. Then after the war, Father bought a little rowboat with sails, and a keel you could pull up. And I was sailing. I loved to sail. Normally I sailed alone. One of my hobbies was to go out to Suursaari, Högholmen, and when you get close, then Russians came out, still rowing the boat back. And they caught a few kids doing similar things, and there were a couple weeks they didn't know if they were dead or alive before they released them, so...

Gary: [21:42] Any other wartime memories? Maybe later memories of the Continuation War?

Jorma: [21:49] Yeah, I remember the day when the Germans left. And of course, the Germans, they were young men, so they had a lot of girls, ladies there. And what happened was, the ships left, and they just pushed those ladies to the sea, and they had to swim ashore if they could. I remember the day when they left. I don't know what day it was, but that's in the history books, I'm sure.

Pirkko: [22:16] So, who pushed the ladies into the sea? The Germans or the Finns?

Jorma: [22:20] No, there were no Finns. They were German warships; they were Germans.

Pirkko: [22:23] Okay.

Jorma: [22:25] A few of them which were higher up, you know, officers who had them got to go to Germany, and got married with those people.

Gary: [22:35] Yeah.

Jorma: [22:36] But that's also in the history books.

Gary: [22:37] Yeah, yeah. Do you remember any contact with the Germans at all?

Jorma: [22:44] This is kind of a not very nice story, but of course they had this hill, where this water tower was. It was like a forest out there. And the Germans used to go there with the girls, and we used to throw stones to them. And of course, they were very nice people, they [inaudible 23:05] *schokolade*. I learned German right away. So, they gave us candies. And they were marching and they were singing. I just sang one of those march songs yesterday to Riley in Finnish.

Gary: [23:20] Would you care to sing it for us?

Jorma: [23:24] I could try. I'm not a very good singer. I would have to think about it for a second. This couple.... [Singing 23:38 – 23:47] That was one of the... one of the songs. I can't recall it now.

Gary: [23:55] Okay, that's fine.

Jorma: [23:57] If it comes to my mind, I'll do it.

Gary: [23:59] Please do.

Jorma: [24:00] Yeah.

Gary: [24:01] Yeah. So you don't remember any particular negative experiences with the Germans.

Jorma: [24:06] It was only positive, only positive. They were really nice people, and friendly. Of course, they went north, and they burned Riley's hometown, Rovaniemi, to the ground. For some lucky reason, Riley's home was saved. One of the few which they didn't burn. And then they had an agreement with the Russians, of course. Our war had ended already.

[24:24] And the Russians were looking... they had never occupied Finland, but they were looking because they agreed, this thing... okay, today we go twenty kilometers back, tomorrow we go five kilometers back, no fighting at all. But the Russians urged the Finns to fight them, and retreat to Norway, so it happened.

Gary: [24:54] Yeah.

Jorma: [24:56] But I didn't have really any personal experiences... But one thing, in the wintertime, of course they had the area of fights all the time, with the Finns. And there was this, we call it *chika*, it's a "du-du-du," winged plane, open cockpit, and there were two fliers. And they ran out of gas, so they landed in the [inaudible 25:27] next to our kindergarten school. And they were these old, old men who were just the reserves, you know, like defending the home front. And they ran with their guns, and the kids ran with them, and these two fliers with their hands up. Because they had been told if they get caught, the Finns kill them right away.

Gary: [25:53] Yeah.

Jorma: [25:55] And then also, *dessant*. Do you know what *dessant* is? It's a... they dropped some... like a... with a parachute.

Gary: [26:06] Oh.

Jorma: [26:07] And they were supposed to fight from inside.

Gary: [26:10] Yes.

Jorma: [26:11] And then, of course later, we had these war prisoners, Russians.

Gary: [26:17] Uh huh.

Jorma: [26:18] And Lisa had them, too. Lisa. And when we were there, after the war... during the war, they were working on the fields. And they were really happy and nice people. They were smoking, nonstop smoking [inaudible 26:34] or something. But then they took them back. They didn't want to leave after the war, but they were forced to go, and I guess Stalin killed most of them.

Gary: [26:49] But you had positive experiences with them as well?

Jorma: [26:53] Very nice, very nice. I have a... one of my cousins, they went to America. And then, before the war started, this is kind of... Stalin wanted them to come to Russia. A lot of people went there, too, but then some people escaped. They said, "Don't come, they put you in hard labor right away." They were just about to leave to Russia. They had a beautiful American-made car. And they were driving to Leningrad, or St. Petersburg. But then somebody turned, "Don't go, don't go." They never went. So they were lucky. That's something which has been written in books, also, about that.

Gary: [27:43] Yes. Well, before we leave the war, any other memories that you want to share with us?

Jorma: [27:56] Yeah, we went to Siltakyla, which is... Porvoo. Is it in Porvoo? No, no. Siltakyla. It's like twenty kilometers from Kotka. And we lived there, and those were Finland-Swedes. And they were not very friendly people. I remember they kind of looked down to us. Then later, when we were back in Kotka, we could not get enough food. So she had a [inaudible 28:30]. And she... and then they had those stops on the road. So she went over the other way and bought food, and then she carried the [inaudible 28:40] behind the food. So, around the woods, to us, so we could have some flour and meat and butter.

Gary: [28:51] So, you do remember the rationing?

Jorma: [28:54] Yes, I remember very well, that, yes. I had the wooden shoes, which had the laces, also. And my father was a tailor, so he turned around the pants and jackets, you know, with the backside up because it was so worn out.

Gary: [29:19] Anything else you want to tell us about the war?

Jorma: [29:22] I think that's quite enough already.

Gary: [29:25] This is all wonderful.

Jorma: [29:27] Thank you, thank you.

Gary: [29:29] Now, we know that eventually you had a career in ice hockey. Did you begin playing ice hockey early on? When did you start?

Jorma: [29:38] We started actually... I had my first skates kind of, you know, where you have a hole here, and you put your skate, and turn, and screw it, and put these couple of things in. We played ice hockey, there was this little harbor near the house. Had a [inaudible 30:00] up out there. Boats were there in the summertime. So, they made an ice hockey arena from there for the neighborhood kids. But we didn't have any [inaudible 30:14]. So there was this... I tell that in the book, also. There was this fence to the railroad, this big. We stole those and made it... around and we played hockey there.

[30:38] But Kotka had no hockey team, officially. I was in Kotka [inaudible 30:44] and I had to do a presentation on sports, so I went to Karjala and they had a hockey team there. And there was this [inaudible 30:54] who gave me a hockey stick and puck. And then I wrote a book, I mean, a presentation at the class. And then I was collecting... before I even played hockey, I was collecting newspaper clippings from ice hockey.

Gary: [31:14] So, how old would you have been when you first played ice hockey?

Jorma: [31:20] Let me see now. I played pandy first. Pandy is like, there's a big field, and a crooked stick and ball. I played that. And then we decided to have a hockey team in Kotka. It's amazing how there were four or five hockey teams before there was even a city-made hockey rink for us. And Kotka is a very territorial city. [Inaudible 31:51 – 31:52] happens to be conservative, and [inaudible 31:56] was elected. Was like a conservative. And there was a [speaking Finnish 32:01 – 32:06] All "t-u-l's" [speaking Finnish 32:08 – 32:09] and Kotka followed it.

[32:16] And they were pretty good teams, the other teams. And our house, or building was very close, just over the street to the big ice arena. And I was skating there at night, practicing skating. And I was practicing skating and my math teacher went by there. We called him "Tumpi." He was very short. Short guy. The next morning, he put me to the blackboard, and said, "Okay, you had this to do at home last night." I couldn't do nothing. I said, "[Speaking Finnish 32:58 – 33:02]."

[Laughter]

[33:04] Yeah, I had a fun time. I had all my books in a pulpit. You couldn't get it down. It was like this. The teacher noticed all my books were there. So they said, "Salmi, take your books home. Try to study something." But I had a good memory, like history, I memorized from the teachers, so I didn't have to read them, those years... by just listening. But I was kind of a bad student. We had this Saturday... If you had three remarks on the book, you had to sit on Saturday for one hour, quietly. So I was a visitor quite often on Saturdays. [Laughter]

Gary: [33:54] Saturday school, huh?

Jorma: [33:55] Yeah. Quiet hour.

Gary: [34:00] Yeah. Talk to us, then, about how you progressed along through the ice hockey to your professional career.

Jorma: [34:08] Okay. I was a bookkeeper at [inaudible 34:13], which is a warehouse for farmers to buy bolts and all kind of stuff. And I hated that, because at that time you had to do everything by hand. The sales clerk makes a receipt, and then it comes to me, and I put it down; we had a thousand here, deduct two hundred, and so on. But the spirits were so bad. Of course. So when they had the inventory, had to count and do everything, my books never were okay because people stole, stole, stole there. So I hated that job.

[34:50] After I came from the Army, I decided that I could... I'd go to sea. I had been to New York earlier. I was in [inaudible 35:02] and I took a test with a Swedish boat, [inaudible 35:06], six thousand... five thousand, five hundred tons. Very small boat. We went to New York, and the East Coast, and there was a two-week strike in New York harbor, so we stayed there two weeks.

[35:23] I went to see the games in Madison Square Garden, and I saw ice hockey. At that time they had the stands [inaudible 35:30 – 35:31] stand up and sit in the seats. I didn't have that much money, but I bought my first skates there, real skates, good ones. And then I was three days late to school, so that didn't help, either.

[35:49] So, then I decided after the Army, this is a good story, I bought this. My good friend played hockey in Kotka, [inaudible 35:58], who died a couple years ago. We played in Kotka [inaudible 36:04]. We were very good players, both of us, good skaters. And we never passed the puck to each other. Just solo, solo, solo. No, it's mine, it's my turn.

[36:15] And then we went to the Army at the same time, and I didn't want to go to officer school. So I tried to do all kinds of things that I [wouldn't] have to go there. But they said, "Salmi, you are officer material. Don't stand there and do those foolish things. You are going to go to [inaudible 36:35]." And my buddy, my friend [inaudible 36:39], he tried and tried and tried; he didn't qualify.

[36:44] And I think I graduated with the minimum points, because I Hamina and Kotka are so close. I had a girlfriend in Kotka, so I took a bus to Kotka to dance and come, and later bus back, and they were waiting, and they said, "Salmi..." [Laughter] And all kinds... I was caught so many times.

[37:07] And then I was in the... we had these people who were behind bars. Just like regular soldiers, but they had done something so that one week or two weeks... So, I was sitting there one night, and I was the head of the whole thing. And I was cleaning my handgun. I forgot that I took the clip off, but there was one over there, and it went off on the table. And so I was there on the other side of the bars, you know.

[37:49] And then we were supposed to actually get off the Army the sixth of January. And we had this new group had come in, you know, and we took care of them. We schooled them. And you know [inaudible 38:08 – 38:10] marched them, and did all kinds of things. So, we had a Christmas party for them. Just [inaudible 38:21]. And then we put them to sleep at nine o'clock. Then we had five, six guys who were [inaudible 38:28 – 38:30]. They were like officers.

[38:32] The guy said, "Now we go to Hamina Harbor and we buy some booze." At that time I didn't drink at all, at that time. And I said, "Okay, you go, and I'll see if everything is okay here." So, they took a taxi. They had the Santa Claus outfits on, and they went to the harbor by taxi. And they got caught. They got two weeks in there. So I went to say goodbye when I left on January sixth or seventh. I said, "Bye-bye, guys." [Laughter]

[39:04] Then I thought, okay, now I go to... I was thinking about hockey. I [went] to sea. I had my sailor's passport from Trans-Atlantic Company. So, I took a boat from Helsinki to Stockholm, and then was going to take a train to Gothenburg. But I saw this girl on the ship, and we danced and we had a good time. And I put my jacket to the... I was so hot. I had my passport in my pocket. Somebody stole the passport.

[39:42] And so I had to... the girl said, "Oh, don't worry. Come to live with me until you get a new passport." She was working at the L.M. Erickson, and there was a ladies' barrack. One of those long ones. It was mid-winter, and there were no visitors overnight. The visitors had to leave at eleven o'clock. But of course I stayed overnight. At midnight they came and checked, bed checks. So I was on the ground floor, so I opened the window and jumped to the snow there, and stayed until the check went by. And then back in there.

[40:20] And I never went to see her, then. Then I went to play on this third division team, IF Stocksund. And we... I even made it to a tour of Finland. We played Kotka and Helsinki, with those. And then my good friend [inaudible 40:39], he was [inaudible 40:41], but he didn't play hockey or anything. We decided we'd go to Europe, and we bought this old tandem, no gears, just the one gear.

[40:53] I was working three jobs at the one time. I was painting phones at L.M. Erickson. Spray-painting all those metal parts. And then I was working at night at [inaudible 41:08] Central. And then I was also... no, four jobs, sometimes. I was also doing dishes at restaurants. They hired people for every night, you go different. And then also I was lifting bowling balls. At that time, there was no machine, you had to lift them by hand, and put your feet up- sometimes the ball would hit your foot.

[41:35] And then we decided... we stole a lot of chocolate from the [inaudible 41:41] Central. And then we bought an old cheap-looking tent. There's a picture of the tent. And then we started to bike in April. There was still snow was on the... so cold. And then in Copenhagen, my knee started to squeak and hurt, and so we shipped the bike back in the [inaudible 42:11 – 42:13].

[42:14] We never shipped it back, we left it there. [Inaudible 42:17] station, between Germany, and hitchhiked. At that time, there was a [inaudible 42:24] hitchhikers on the roads all the time. But we had the Finnish flag, so they thought we were going to a pilgrimage to the holy land, because the cross, the little cross. So we got rides all the time.

[42:36] So... somehow I had found that there was a summer league in Durham, which is a little town between Scotland and England, in Northern England. We got there, and I put a tent in front of the ice rink there, on the riverbank, and went to ask if I could play there. And they took me, and I played. And then this scout there from Brighton. He said, "Why don't you come play for Brighton?" So, it's a long story. It's all in the book.

Gary: [43:13] Yeah, yeah. So, did you also play at Nottingham?

Jorma: [43:17] Yeah. Then I went to... I worked for the Finnish embassy in London. I was like summer help there. And I played in Southampton. They had a team. And then somebody saw me again, and they said, "Why don't you come and play for Nottingham Panthers?" So, I went up there, and [inaudible 43:39] had this... he had like a factory making bread and all that.

[43:45] He was in London. He won a world championship in cake-making, decoration. And he read in a local paper, some London paper, that Salmi plays... actually that was in Brighton. Salmi plays in Brighton. And he sent me... he came to see one of the games. He sent me a ticket to Tampere, an open airline ticket, which I kept in my pocket.

[44:15] So the next tournament, I played in Nottingham, they closed the rink over Christmastime, so we went to Europe to play games in Europe. Had to come back to London, and I didn't have a working permit. The team leaders, they had left already, so they said, no entry to England. So, I had my ticket in my pocket, and I called Tampere, and I said, I'm coming tomorrow on this flight, then. They were playing on [inaudible 44:48] against I.F.K. in Helsinki. So I went to the hotel and the next day I played in [inaudible 44:57]. And there it started.

Gary: [45:02] What kind of experience was it to play in England?

Jorma: [45:06] We had only twelve players on our team. Now they have over twenty players, and four lines. We had two lines, and one guy over. And so you really had to be in good shape. It was a good team. We played against Czechs and Russians and Swedes. We lost a couple games, but the Czechs we played 2-2.

[45:26] And so it wasn't... they were all Canadians. They were all former stars, which were... playing for all ages, playing in Europe. Really nice. It was so fun, because that time you had people who took care of everything. You just went there, and everything was there, put them on, like they do nowadays. But in Ilves Tampere, you had to dress up at home. There [were] no facilities [inaudible 46:01].

Gary: [46:05] Now, you are sometimes referred to as the first professional hockey player in Finland.

Jorma: [46:10] Yeah. Pentti Lund, who played on New York Rangers, was really the first one, but he was born in America and was an American citizen. So I was the first Finn to play professionally, yeah. In Nottingham, my salary was fifteen pounds a week. The bus driver got six, seven pounds a week, so...

Gary: [46:31] Yeah.

Jorma: [46:32] So, and I had half board, and then of course, we traveled a lot, so...

Gary: [46:42] Yeah. And you played on a number of Finnish teams.

Jorma: [46:49] I played actually for Ilves and IFK. And I won a scoring title three years in a row. They found out, the guys who wrote the book, that I played one hundred games in Finland total. That little. At that time, they played twelve games a season, or fourteen. We were amateurs.

Gary: [47:08] Short season.

Jorma: [47:10] Yeah. And I scored ninety-eight goals in one hundred games. So, because at that time they were not very good skaters- defensemen were not very good skaters. And the goalies were not that good, either. And I was [inaudible 47:31], you know. But I had a good line. I had that [inaudible 47:36 – 47:37]. So, and then we went to Moscow, world championship, and Prague, and Oslo, and then the 1960 Olympics.

Gary: [47:53] So, you are an Olympic medalist.

Jorma: [47:57] Actually, we won the second division. They gave us bronze medals. Because what happened, the Finnish Olympic Committee didn't want to send the hockey team there, to Squaw Valley. We played charity games before. And we made so much money, so they could not refuse us.

Gary: [48:23] Yeah.

Jorma: [48:24] Because they got so much money, that it was over our expenses. So we were sent at the last minute. And we were [sent] like two days before we had to play Germany. We had beaten Germany 4-0 just a few weeks before. But to fly there, those DC-7s... and we had a fire on the plane. We had to make an emergency landing.

[48:47] And then we landed in Los Angeles, took a plane to San Francisco and a bus to Squaw Valley. And of course, at that time they had this sandwich war on the plane. You got this big sandwich, but young guys, you know, over twenty hour flight, you know, you can't get by on one sandwich. And nobody had that much money, either, to buy your own meals when you landed.

[49:15] And so when we left, we went across the country to New York, and there was a snowstorm, and we were delayed a couple of days in New York. The team had no money, so everybody who had money could eat. Those people who didn't have money didn't eat. So, again, SAS DC-7; same sandwich before you get home. When we got over to Squaw Valley, we were all so hungry, so we ate too much food. So, we couldn't really skate, you know, because we were so full of food. So, it was a very bad mistake so send us so late.

Gary: [50:00] Yeah. Yes. So, tell us about competitive skating. Did you get some injuries as a result of your skating career?

Jorma: [50:13] Yeah. In Detroit, I played with old-timers. They were all old pros. And we played against college teams, and we always beat those, even though they were young guys and good skaters. And this defenseman said, "Jorma, I want to score, I want to score! Give me a pass!" So, I made a... threw everything. I was a couple meters from the goal post. And I turned around and I passed the puck to him, and he slap-shot right to my eye. I went down, and down and out, and my eyeball had come out. They pushed my eyeball back in, and put a towel on my head and took me to a hospital.

[51:02] I was there, I think over a week, and they operated on me. And then I had this out of body experience. My heart stopped. It was a big operation, because they had to have bone... bone had to be structured. And eye, and nerves, and everything. It was three doctors operating on me. And my heart stopped.

[51:24] And I saw myself going up, you know, a string to my body. And those doctors and nurses were banging my chest. I heard them say, "Start beating, start beating, start beating." And suddenly I had this pain and I guess I was back in my body. I woke up, and I didn't hear any music or anything, but the room got bigger and lighter at the time. I was going. So.

Gary: [51:53] Amazing. Yes.

Jorma: [51:56] Here's Riley. Good.

Gary: [52:01] So, do you think competitive skating has changed over the years?

Jorma: [52:06] Oh yeah, oh yeah.

Gary: [52:08] Since you've competed?

Jorma: [52:09] The guys are bigger, and they are faster and stronger nowadays.

Gary: [52:12] More dangerous?

Jorma: [52:14] Much more dangerous, yes.

Gary: [52:16] So, as a younger skater, you didn't ever really have any serious injuries?

Jorma: [52:21] No, no. And I had... My mother made us- me and my brother; he played hockey also- made protection, you know. He had this [inaudible 52:31] and this [inaudible 52:33], made like a... put the [inaudible 52:36] in, and just put them on the feet and shoulders. They were both... when you play, you sweat, and then they get so heavy, because...

Gary: [52:47] Yeah.

Jorma: [52:47] Before I got the real stuff. Riley, come downstairs.

Gary: [52:52] I suppose we should also ask you about your years of playing hockey in Sweden. A couple of years there, was it?

Jorma: [52:59] Actually, 1960 – 1964.

Gary: [53:02] Okay.

Jorma: [53:04] And I... we were on the Swedish.... Yeah, I played Finland. I got three of my ribs were... they didn't break, but they somehow were... I got this terrible pain for a couple of weeks. Couldn't sleep, couldn't turn. And there was no cure for that. They didn't even give me any painkillers, either. But I couldn't play.

[53:31] At IFK... I soon would marry... At that time, you had to be one year in Sweden before you could play at the top level. So I played second level [inaudible 53:41] one year, and then IEK. I got engaged with Riley playing IEK. She came to... she saw her first hockey game when we played there.

Gary: [53:52] Is that how you met?

Jorma: [53:54] Oh, that's another story.

Gary: [53:56] Yes. Well, when we're through with hockey, we can talk about your meeting. Anything else about hockey you want to tell us? About that career?

Jorma: [54:08] It was my life, actually. It was a good experience, all together.

Pirkko: [54:16] Do you still follow hockey?

Jorma: [54:18] Oh yeah, oh yeah. I see my one core team is not doing too well. I watch also... I can see Finnish TV, but it's like videos. I don't see live TV, but I can see the games. So I watch on my PC all the time.

[54:39] So anyhow, I was based in... actually, I had just moved to Gothenburg, Sweden. And I flew around the world alone. I'm a kind of a loner, I flew to Hong Kong, Hawaii, Hong Kong, and then Tokyo, and then southern route back. I had like a... I still had like a week left on my vacation. And I came home just before Midsummer. And my friends in Helsinki said, "We have a sailboat, and we asked girls." You know, "Come, come with us to spend the Midsummer in the archipelago."

[55:27] But my mother was going to see her sister in Rovaniemi. And I was... what to do. I hadn't seen my mother in about three weeks, so I said, okay, I'll go up there. And Riley was on the same flight as I was. And of course, I had been working for Finnair; they all knew me, and I talked to everybody there, the hostesses.

[55:50] Riley had her twin sister with her. They said, "Look at that guy." I had like a coal-colored suit from Hong Kong, short hair. Riley says it [inaudible 56:02] as a coal-color [inaudible 56:05] so it made it look like a coal suit. Thirty-five dollars in Hong Kong. So, and then we went to the... her sister's husband had a saw... At that time there were a lot of the saws. Is it saw?

Gary: [56:23] Like a sawmill?

Pirkko: [56:24] Sawmill?

Jorma: [56:25] Sawmill, yeah. And they didn't drink any alcohol at all, and then Midsummer Day, she said, "Let's go and have a beer at the [inaudible 56:41]. But I had been... there was this lumberjack, they were going... at that time, there was a [inaudible 56:49] still on Rovaniemi. And I was walking with my family then, and Riley saw me there. And [inaudible 56:56] that guy. And then we went to [inaudible 57:00]. The guy at the door said, "We are full, you can't get in."

[57:04] This guy, my host, got so nervous, he took money, and gave it the guy, so we got in. And the first thing that I see is this beautiful girl in a red silk dress, smiling at me. And I said, "Okay, it's my lucky day." And we went to the bar. They came to the bar. They had eaten there. So I went to ask her to dance, and that's how it started.

Gary: [57:36] Hm. And how long have you now been married?

Jorma: [57:41] Next year, fifty years.

Gary: [57:42] Fifty years. Yeah. You said you were already working for Finnair at that time?

Jorma: [57:49] Yeah, it happened... I was in Tampere. I got tired of being, doing nothing. So, I asked my team leaders, get me a job, any job. And there was an opening at Finnair, at the airport, in the office. There were like fifty people who were looking to get that job, but they were academically... people who had much better papers than I had. I had no papers. And... but somehow I got the job. That's how it started.

Gary: [58:29] Yeah. And then it was in 1968, was it, that you migrated to the United States?

Jorma: [58:36] Yes, yes. I had my boss, he just died, Carl Nyberg just died a couple of weeks ago. He was head of sales in Finland and I was in sales in Helsinki. What I did to get business, we had the Euro grand championship in basketball, just one example. So I went to the hotel, asked for the leaders' name, the leaders. And I had some goodie bags, you know, some airline stuff for them. Then I went to talk to them. "If you fly back on Finnair, I'll put you in first class. The leaders go first class." Of course, I got a lot of business that way. I did all kind of... There were a lot of sports teams. And Carl said, "When I go to U.S., you come with me." So that happened.

Gary: [59:31] Did you have any misgivings about leaving Finland? Was it difficult?

Jorma: [59:35] No, no, because we had Mika already at that time. We both left, happily.

Gary: [59:45] So your wife wasn't...

Jorma: [59:47] No, you can ask her. [Laughter] Actually, I never asked her. [Laughter] The first time we got to the question.

Gary: [59:57] And where did you first live when you came to the United States?

Jorma: [1:00:01] We lived in New York, in Long Island. Riley? It was a huge brick building. There were lots of nationalities there. It was Hempstead, one of the suburbs. And I took a train downtown every day and walked to the office. There was like... one big building could have maybe twenty travel agents. So I'd go there, and "I'm from Finnair." "We don't need any air conditioning." [Laughter] You just have to go and try and try.

[1:00:47] Then we opened an office in Detroit... I opened an office in Detroit. And then Washington, D.C., Chicago, Seattle, San Francisco. I retired in San Francisco. Mika was living here, so we moved up here and after I retired. And then Mika moved to San Francisco. We didn't go after him anymore, so...

Gary: [1:01:11] But you had been previously in Seattle...

Jorma: [1:01:14] Yeah.

Gary: [1:01:15] And then San Francisco, and you decided to...

Jorma: [1:01:16] To come back, yeah. Because we liked the area here. It's like a lot of Finnish characteristics, the mountains, and the sea and everything.

Gary: [1:01:25] Yeah, yeah. So, how long have you been in Seattle?

Jorma: [1:01:30] Second time... since 1991. I retired in 1991.

Gary: [1:01:41] And what have you done in your retirement?

Jorma: [1:01:46] Playing golf, reading, exercising. We go exercise regularly. We go downtown at the [inaudible 1:01:56] Athletic Club. We take classes there.

Gary: [1:02:04] But I understand you've done very well at golf?

Jorma: [1:02:07] Yeah, I won Senior Championship for Finland, one time. The lowest I had was a seven handicap. Don't ask my handicap now.

Gary: [1:02:18] So, when did you switch from ice hockey to golf?

Jorma: [1:02:23] It was kind of... we had a Finnish consul in Detroit. [Inaudible 1:02:30]. He was one of those officers who had to leave Finland after [inaudible 1:02:36]. He became an honorary consul. He taught me to play golf. That was 1969 or something. So I was pretty old already, to start playing golf, but...

Gary: [1:02:52] Well, yeah. There's some who wait until their retirement...

Jorma: [1:02:57] I know, I did that, yeah.

Gary: [1:02:59] Yes, yes.

Jorma: [1:03:01] Actually, I started to play when I was working in Detroit, so... and then of course, I never went back to Detroit after that.

Gary: [1:03:10] Yeah. Let's talk a little bit about your involvement in Finnish life. What have you done here in Seattle? What organizations have you been involved in?

Jorma: [1:03:22] We go to church quite often, Riley and I. And then we support some good causes here, too.

Gary: [1:03:29] Yeah. Are you from a religious home?

Jorma: [1:03:35] No.

Gary: [1:03:35] Were your parents religious?

Jorma: [1:03:36] No, no. Not at all.

Gary: [1:03:38] Yeah. How about your wife? Was she from a religious background?

Jorma: [1:03:43] I don't think so, either. That's a good question, by the way.

Gary: [1:03:49] But the church has become important to you over the years.

Jorma: [1:03:52] Oh, yeah. And it's... after I had my experience, it kind of gave me a kind of trust that there's something after this, you know. So I don't have to worry about that.

Gary: [1:04:09] Yeah. Yeah. Your health now is good?

Jorma: [1:04:14] Yeah, I have my atrial fibrillation and my eyesight is a little worse than before.

Gary: [1:04:21] But you said you've actually had this atrial fibrillation for forty years?

Jorma: [1:04:25] Yeah. I was working, I think it was Chicago, and we went to Russia, and I took my tests in Helsinki, and the company doctor... and then they found this... it was worse before. They tried to reach me in Russia to come home. Hey, this is this... And I never got any messages. And I started to take coumadin and take care of myself.

Gary: [1:05:02] Yeah, yeah. Pirkko, do you have any questions that you want to ask?

Pirkko: [1:05:10] Maybe we should ask about your family. Your son, and his involvement in Finland, if any, and grandchildren, and so on.

Jorma: [1:05:20] Yeah. My son, he's an entrepreneur. He has started quite a few companies, and a few of them are very successful. He sold one of them to Viacom and MTV, and worked there for a couple of years, commuting to San Francisco, New York. Which was very tough to do. And the grandkids are wonderful young people. I don't want to brag about that. Riley hates bragging, so...
[Laughter]

Gary: [1:05:54] She hates bragging.

Pirkko: [1:05:55] Your son Mika still speaks Finnish, doesn't he?

Jorma: [1:05:58] Yeah. We were in Detroit, he came one time and visited Papa. "We are in America now, let's speak English." I told him that... if no Finnish, no food. Hard love.

Pirkko: [1:06:14] Yeah.

Gary: [1:06:14] Good for you.

Jorma: [1:06:15] Yeah. Now he's so happy. Because a lot of my friends, they are second generation, and they don't speak the hometown because the parents thought, we are American, we speak English.

Gary: [1:06:30] How about Mika's children? Do they express any interest in...

Jorma: [1:06:33] Yeah, they would like to learn Finnish, but they just don't have time to do that, because they are so much involved in different things. And of course, they speak fluent Spanish, because they lived in Barcelona a couple of years. They came back a year ago.

Gary: [1:06:52] But they have spent time in Finland?

Jorma: [1:06:54] Oh, yeah. They love Finland. They love Rovaniemi. So... like Mika also. They really like to come to Finland. And they... [inaudible 1:07:04] is learning Mandarin. That's the language of the future, so... I guess Finnish doesn't match with Mandarin.

Gary: [1:07:14] Mandarin, yeah.

Pirkko: [1:07:15] Yeah.

Gary: [1:07:17] And you maintain a residence in Finland, is that right?

Jorma: [1:07:21] Yes, we have a little apartment opposite the Russian embassy in Helsinki. [1:07:27] to us.

Gary: [1:07:28] Yeah. As a matter of fact, I think I mentioned to you, didn't I, that we're on the same street?

Jorma: [1:07:33] Yes, you said that. Yeah.

Gary: [1:07:35] We have a condo at [inaudible 1:07:36 – 1:07:38].

Jorma: [1:07:39] We're number eight. So we're down on the other side.

Gary: [1:07:41] We're down across from the Ehren [inaudible 1:07:45].

Jorma: [1:07:45] Yeah. Okay.

Gary: [1:07:46] That's where we are.

Jorma: [1:07:47] That brings me a memory, that Ehren [inaudible 1:07:50]. I had played golf, like five, six days in a row, and my back was very tired. My friend said, there's a doctor from Ehren [inaudible 1:08:03]. He specializes in people's backs. I asked him to... from behind, he lifted me up, and [cracking noises]. We were supposed to fly back to Seattle in early August. We went down the elevator, and I was on my knees in terrible pain. So, we couldn't fly back. Then I called him and went to see him, and he gave me some kind of massage, and some pills, and charged me for the visit.

Gary: [1:08:39] He didn't do you any good.

Jorma: [1:08:42] Riley, come in, please. This is my wife, Riley.

Gary: [1:08:48] Hello.

Riley: [1:08:49] Hello.

Gary: [1:08:50] Very nice to see you.

Riley: [1:08:51] Nice to see you.

Jorma: [1:07:52] Again.

Pirkko: [1:08:53] Have you two met? Oh yeah, you did meet.

Gary: [1:08:56] I saw you at the independence...

Riley: [1:08:58] The independence...

Jorma: [1:08:59] Yeah

Pirkko: [1:08:59] Yeah.

Gary: [1:08:59] Dinner dance. Yes. Well, we're getting close to the end. I wanted to ask you about what kind of Finnish holidays...

Jorma: [1:09:10] Sit down, Riley, please. What kind of Finnish holidays?

Gary: [1:09:16] What kind of Finnish holidays... how do you observe Christmas, for example? Is it in the Finnish tradition?

Jorma: [1:09:21] Yeah, very Finnish tradition. The kids love it, because we get Santa on Christmas Eve.

Gary: [1:09:27] Uh huh.

Jorma: [1:09:28] And we give presents. We have little pictures on those... And we've been... just about every Christmas with them.

Riley: [1:09:39] Yeah. Every Christmas. Because it has to be that way.

Jorma: [1:09:42] Yeah. When they were in Spain, we went to Spain to spend Christmas there, on the border with France up in the Pyrenees Mountains. And then we were... one year, we went to Levi in Finland, and spent Christmas. Horribly cold. I think it was like thirty degrees...

Riley: [1:09:58] Up in the mountains...

Jorma: [1:10:00] Up in the mountains, up in the hills, it was much less cold.

Riley: [1:10:05] It was nice up there.

Jorma: [1:10:06] But the valley was... yeah.

Gary: [1:10:07] My goodness.

Jorma: [1:10:08] Yeah.

Gary: [1:10:09] So, Christmas?

Riley: [1:10:11] We have two different houses, and gingerbread cookies... we decorate them. We have all the casseroles. It's really big, Christmas-wise.

Jorma: [1:10:23] Yeah. And also, like eleven years we went to Whistler. Mika was renting a house, built a house there. So we had Christmas in Whistler, skiing and eating.

Riley: [1:10:35] And eating, yeah. [Inaudible 1:10:39 – 1:10:41].

Jorma: [1:10:41] Riley is the one who makes all of the food, you know.

Gary: [1:10:43] She makes all the food.

Jorma: [1:10:44] She slaves. She is just like a [inaudible 1:10:47 – 1:10:48] girls. She says, “It’s all right.” “Why are you always in the kitchen?” [Laughter]

Riley: [1:10:54] Yeah, that’s right.

Gary: [1:10:55] So, is Grandmother teaching the granddaughters how to cook?

Riley: [1:11:00] I should soon, yes.

Gary: [1:11:03] How to fix Finnish food?

Riley: [1:11:05] Unfortunately, gingerbread cookies are not easy to bake. They are really... you know that.

Pirkko: [1:11:13] Yeah.

Jorma: [1:11:14] Layers, layers, layers.

Riley: [1:11:16] Yeah. And then decorating them. We have also parties, and everybody decorates their own gingerbread cookies, and that goes to the...

Jorma: [1:11:26] To the Christmas tree.

Riley: [1:11:27] Yeah.

Pirkko: [1:11:28] Oh, okay.

Gary: [1:11:28] Yeah.

Riley: [1:11:29] And our daughter-in-law really loves that we have traditions, because she doesn’t. Yeah, so she’s very happy. And they [inaudible 1:11:42] in the school how they have Christmas spent, and everybody is like, “Oh, you have all that!” [Laughter]

Jorma: [1:11:51] The one thing, in Axel's class, they had a project that they had asked friends to send postcards to them. Riley's brother lives in Rovaniemi, so he sent one from the Santa Claus land.

Gary: [1:12:07] Oh, yes.

Riley: [1:12:09] He went over there and asked, "Can you do something?" And they sent one card...

Jorma: [1:12:15] Have they gotten... we haven't heard if they got the card.

Riley: [1:12:17] Well, we post last week, so it's sort of based on...

Jorma: [1:12:20] Yeah, so, it's...

Riley: [1:12:24] Yeah, that's how they learn different places on the globe.

Pirkko: [1:12:29] Right. Yeah, that's good.

Riley: [1:12:31] Yeah, so...

Gary: [1:12:34] I want you to show us your book, yes. Want to get that in the picture here.

Jorma: [1:12:42] Okay.

Gary: [1:12:43] And tell us how that came to be written.

Jorma: [1:12:47] Riley was against this, me to write this. Out of [inaudible 1:21:51]. They work for Finnish radio, these two guys. This Joko [inaudible 1:12:58], he came to Vancouver to interview this Finnish hockey player who played with [inaudible 1:13:09], and Joko [inaudible 1:13:12]. And Yoko said, "There's another Finnish hockey player, former. Why don't you interview him, too?" So, they called me and I went up there. I spent the whole afternoon with Jyrki and Joko, and he had a guy from Finnish radio, took pictures.

[1:13:32] And then he said afterwards, "Jorma, if half of those stories are true, you know, you're better than Munchausen." [Laughter] And then he said, "Let's write a book," he said. I said, "I don't know." This was 2010. And then we decided to do it anyhow.

Riley: [1:13:53] When did you decide?

Jorma: [1:13:55] Oh, okay. [Laughter] It was in 2012 or something.

Gary: [1:14:02] And so you were interviewed extensively for that?

Jorma: [1:14:06] Yeah.

Gary: [1:14:07] Yeah.

Jorma: [1:14:07] And I had a lot of material I gave. This guy Napi, who was with me, he's been dead for some time, and his daughters read the book, and said, "Wow." Then they sent me the picture, but it didn't fit into the book anymore, because the book was written already.

Riley: [1:14:29] There were about fifty people interviewed for the book.

Pirkko: [1:14:31] Wow.

Gary: [1:14:32] Oh.

Jorma: [1:14:33] Yeah.

Gary: [1:14:34] Major project. And I think you were at a book fair, weren't you, to talk about your book?

Jorma: [1:14:40] Yeah. I was. It was a fantastic thing. I went there, and it was like a three-day, maybe four days, even. Finnish radio had one place where they interviewed different people. I went there like three hours early, and I was looking there. There were like fifty seats there, chairs. And there was nobody... just a couple people walked by, and a couple people were sitting there.

[1:15:13] I said, "Wow, two hours I had, it's my time, nobody will come." Come my time, the place was full, and people standing up. I don't know how they found out, because these guys wrote other books, too. So, I got a good audience.

Gary: [1:15:35] Excellent. This was in Helsinki?

Jorma: [1:15:37] In Helsinki, yeah. In Pasila.

Pirkko: [1:15:40] And just last fall, wasn't it?

Jorma: [1:15:42] This last fall, yeah.

Pirkko: [1:15:43] Mm hm.

Gary: [1:15:46] Is there any talk of translating it to English?

Riley: [1:15:52] No. [Laughter] No. So many people have asked us about that.

Jorma: [1:15:56] [Laughter] Who would read that book? I don't think anybody would read it.

Gary: [1:16:01] Oh, I'm not so sure that's true.

Jorma: [1:16:03] I don't know.

Gary: [1:16:04] You have a pretty amazing story to tell.

Jorma: [1:16:06] Yeah.

Gary: [1:16:08] Well, I think we probably don't want to wear you out. Is there anything you feel that we left out of the interview?

Jorma: [1:16:16] No, I can't think of... I think we talked too much already, so...

Gary: [1:16:21] No, no, no. Well, thank you again, so kindly.

Jorma: [1:16:27] Thank you very much for coming all the way here, to lazy man's home.

Gary: [1:16:35] [Laughter] Our pleasure.

Jorma: [1:16:37] They didn't want to have a coffee or anything. So, I'm kind of disappointed.

Riley: [1:16:39] Oh.

END OF RECORDING.

Transcription by Alison Goetz.