

Researcher: David Stevenson

Tape 55, Side 2 and
Tape 54, Side 2

Interviewed: January 28, 1976

Ed Sparrow Sr.

Musqueam Indian Reserve,
6518 Salish Street,
Vancouver, B. C.

263-8434

- Born on the Musqueam Reserve, started as boat puller in 1911-12, on a Columbia River sailboat, 28-29 foot, about 7 or 8 foot wide.
- Fished mostly in the river, out to the drop-off at night.
- Fished with Tommy Musqueam, a good fisherman.
- Got his own boat in 1916, a sailboat.
- Very few gas boats then.
- Palmer and Easthope engines were used first.
- Hard work without the gas engine.
- Lots of fish in those days, today you have to work your head off.
- There was 5 days fishing a week up until the early 40's.
- Got his first gas boat 1914, went up to the Skeena, then went logging after the Hell's Gate slide.
- Started fishing in the Skeena on a rented boat.
- Prices were much the same in the North as they were in the Fraser, 15¢ differences in fish.
- His first boat, a gillnetter had a 7 HP Palmer then a Easthope.
- Gas engines made fishing easier, boat was more comfortable, sailboat had only a little tent and everything was always wet.
- Sailboats were not more dangerous, had a deep center board.
- Gear improved over the years, linen nets were white then they started using oil nets, after net was oiled and used for 3 or 4 or 5 days, it turned green to match the colour of the water.
- Using 5½" mesh, which varied with the year, depending on the run for the season, fall fishing 6½", and a bigger mesh for springs.
- Nets were pulled by hand until early 40's when drums came.
- Up-right winch used to help pull the net in, served as a nigger-head, used on a rough days and not a calm day.
- Canoe Pass has changed, good fishing in old days, too shallow now, ever since the big flood of early 40's.
- North Arm fishing died off early 50's due to pollution by log booms, dead heads and sewer outlets.

- Sockeyes came up only during freshet time now number of spawnes have gone down considerably.
- You have to go further out to fish, nets now are almost transparent and can be used in the deep water.
- You fish harder these days because it's a shorter week only 1 or 2 days to make your money.
- There used to be many boats from the Village, but the number of Indian fishermen has gradually decreased, only his family and 2 or 3 other boats.
- It's hard to get into fishing these days, takes a lot of money.
- Many of the Indian fishermen went long-shoring and logging and left the fishing industry.
- Only 7 - 10 gillnetters from Musqueam and 2 or 3 seine boats.
- His people used to have different fish camps on the Fraser, and they used to move with the season, many of them worked in the canneries, up at Deas Island, all over the river.
- In early days, it was mostly Indian and Japanese fishermen, very few Whites.
- It was rough on the Japanese who returned after the war; now they are the predominate ethnic group in the industry---gillnetters.
- His wife worked at Imperial Cannery until 7 years ago.
- He worked at Vancouver Cannery in 1919, then went to logging camp.
- Indians and Whites weren't organized in a union until 1915, Japanese were already ~~well~~ well-organized.
- 1942, U.F.A.W.U. started to form.
- He was Vice-President of the Native Brotherhood for some time.
- It started in the 20's up North and had very little to do with the South coast, began in response to land claims and to benefit the people with welfare programs, etc.
- Native Brotherhood and U.F.A.W.U. worked closely in negotiations.
- He was involved in quite a few strikes in his time.
- Fishermen gained quite a lot from being organized, better prices, and more security.
- The Native Brotherhood was first formed around Hartley Bay and Prince Rupert.
- Eulachons were fished by Musqueam as well. They were fished commercially for a ^{white} ~~White~~.

- beginning side 2 is damage.

- Herring used to be a big fishery in the 20's, they were salted and sold to Japan, then they fished for the reduction plants at Steveston.
- There is still a good eulachon run in the river.
- The Southern Indians never used the eulachon grease but they used to smoke it.
- They don't smoke much salmon anymore.
- There were only a few log houses left when he was a boy and a few totem poles, they went to U. B. C. and some went to Ottawa.
- The main village used to be down below on the flats, but was moved up on the banks about 6 or 7 years ago, it was drier and healthier.
- He was Chief of the Council for several years.
- He is President of Musqueam Enterprises.
- He gives his views on the future of the fishery.
- Not much fish, and now the boats are much more mobile and there is the need for regulations and control.
- Last year they predicted a big run, but it never happened, people blamed the Indian Food Fishery further up the valley but he maintains that their catch was minimal.
- Musqueam Land Claim is discussed: started in 1905-1906, the chief ~~66~~ gathered on Cambie fair grounds, site of present bus terminal, and decided to send a delegation to Ottawa, not much resulted then Native Brotherhood took up the cause.
- Allied Tribes also worked for Land Claim settlement.
- All the Salish Tribes have formed together to fight for their Land Claim, from Fraser River up to Powell River and including the people on Vancouver Island.
- Musqueam people have been involved in the fishing industry since it began, they used to knit nets for the different companies all winter long.
- Names the first cannery as Celtic Cannery, Celtic closed down in 1913.
- In the Middle Arm, there was the Vancouver Cannery, and the Acme, north side of Middle Arm, B. C. Packers, Terra Nova, ⁱⁿ Steveston, ^{there was} Scottish Canadian, Canadian ^{Fish} Star, ^{one in between} ~~Star~~, Imperial, Phoenix, Pacific Coast, then Great West, ~~then~~ Todds, ~~then~~ a B.C. Packers Cannery