

The following transcript of
Albert Rawlyk's interview

on

Memories and Music

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00:00:00 **Track starts.**

DOUG McLAUGHLIN: And a good afternoon to you. Welcome to another edition of Memories and Music brought to you every Sunday at this time on CIGM-FM stereo by Inco Limited. I'm Doug McLaughlin and, uh, Bert, who is our guest today?

BERT MEREDITH: Today on Memories and Music we will be talking with, uh, Albert Rawlyk who will be remembered by the boys at the mill in Copper Cliff where he had worked for many years before retiring in 1976. But, before we begin our visit with Albert, let's hear what Doug McLaughlin has in store for us on the music portion of our show.

DOUG McLAUGHLIN: Thank you Bert. Here's Kenny Price and "Sea of Heartbreak."

(Music)

DOUG McLAUGHLIN: We thought it might be appropriate to have a couple of ah, Ukrainian songs on today's show. The reason being of course our Ukrainian listeners recently celebrated their new year and our guest on today's program is from a Ukrainian background. And speaking of our guest, we're about to have him introduced and, uh, we'll give those honors to Bert Meredith.

BERT MEREDITH: Today our guest is Albert Rawlyk who retired from the mill at Copper Cliff recently. And Albert it's rather nice to see you again. And we want to talk a little bit about your early days out west. I understand that you were born in the west. Where?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I was born in North Battleford, Saskatchewan in 1917 on the farm.

BERT MEREDITH: North Battleford, Saskatchewan eh? That's about the middle of the First World War. Were things pretty tough then?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes, it was.

BERT MEREDITH: Was it? And did you stay on the farm?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I stayed for a while, then I come, come to Sud... to get a job.

BERT MEREDITH: In Sudbury

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes.

BERT MEREDITH: But before that, uh, you worked on the farm for quite a while, did you? Were you raised in North Battleford?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes, I was.

BERT MEREDITH: And did you work through many of the harvests out there in the fall?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Uh, a couple falls, like, before I come here.

BERT MEREDITH: Were that the days before they had combines?

ALBERT RAWLYK: No, they had old binders.

BERT MEREDITH: They had old binders. Tell us something about that. They were, you were driving horses, were you?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I was driving, but I was on the back, I was behind, I was stooking...

BERT MEREDITH: You were what? You were...?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I was stooking at that time.

BERT MEREDITH: You were stooking. That... What, what is stooking? A lot of people don't know what stooking is.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, it is... You put the sheaves together and you want to... uh, in a pile, and you, uh, put piles, piles of those five, uh, bundles together...

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Shipment of...

BERT MEREDITH: Why do you do that? To dry out the grains?

ALBERT RAWLYK: To dry out the grains for, but...

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah. And then you come along with your horse and rack.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes.

BERT MEREDITH: And what do you do then?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Horse and rack, put, uh, pitch it on a hay rack, and...

BERT MEREDITH: Yes?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Bring it to thrashing machine.

BERT MEREDITH: And you take it to the thrashing machine, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Right.

BERT MEREDITH: And let's see now. When you were working on the harvest, every hour was precious, because there might be a storm.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Mm-hm.

BERT MEREDITH: So you worked long hours, right?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Long, long hours.

BERT MEREDITH: Alright, how long were the hours you worked?

ALBERT RAWLYK: From, uh, six in the morning up 'til about 8:30 at night.

BERT MEREDITH: Six in the morning 'til 8:30 at night.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yeah.

BERT MEREDITH: When you got up at six in the morning what was the first thing that you did?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Breakfast, the same...

BERT MEREDITH: Breakfast.

ALBERT RAWLYK: And then...

BERT MEREDITH: Did you? What sort of a breakfast did you eat?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, bacon, eggs and... sausage.

BERT MEREDITH: A good, big one.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Big one.

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah. What about the animals? When did you feed the horses?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Uh, it was my... not my department. I was up, out stoking.

BERT MEREDITH: You were stoking, so someone else did that, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Mm-hm, yeah. Somebody look after, somebody look after that.

BERT MEREDITH: Then you went out to the field.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yeah.

BERT MEREDITH: Did you come in for lunch then?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Uh... I think we have to have break. Coffee or tea, whatever they... or, or pop.

BERT MEREDITH: You had a coffee break back then?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, I forget what we had then, I think coffee...

BERT MEREDITH: [Laughter]... Did you?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Or maybe... uh...

BERT MEREDITH: Lemonade or something?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Lemonade.

BERT MEREDITH: Did they bring it back to the field for you?

ALBERT RAWLYK: They brought it out, yes.

BERT MEREDITH: They did, eh? Yeah...

ALBERT RAWLYK: If they have time.

BERT MEREDITH: Yes. Well, alright. Did you work then until nightfall, did you work daylight until dark?

ALBERT RAWLYK: No, dinner, dinner time.

BERT MEREDITH: Beg your pardon?

ALBERT RAWLYK: We had lunch break, then we had dinner.

BERT MEREDITH: Well, at lunch, did you have that in the field?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Lunch, we had in the field, yes.

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah. Did you, uh, both... Thrashing, just for... You were working on your father's farm, I presume, were you?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes.

BERT MEREDITH: You were, eh? And you worked on other farms as well?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I worked for different places.

BERT MEREDITH: You did, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes.

BERT MEREDITH: Now, you told me one thing that I found rather interesting. You said that now you're retired, I'm back washing dishes again, the job I did in the café back in, uh, was it in the 1940s?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Mm... 1939 and '40s.

BERT MEREDITH: Nineteen thi... were you washing dishes in the café then?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes, I was.

BERT MEREDITH: Where?

ALBERT RAWLYK: North Battleford, Saskatchewan, uh...

BERT MEREDITH: In North... North Battlenorth?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Battleford... Go... uh... the main café.

BERT MEREDITH: Why? Couldn't you get a job on the farm, or couldn't you make a living?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Uh... they were so hard-up, they couldn't afford to pay for nobody, so I had to go west, to get myself occupied with, uh...

BERT MEREDITH: How much were you getting paid, do you remember? For washing dishes?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, it'll be funny. Nine dollars a week. No, I'm sorry. Nine dollars a month.

BERT MEREDITH: Nine dollars a month? And your food?

ALBERT RAWLYK: And food.

BERT MEREDITH: And food. And you washed them all by hand, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: By hand.

BERT MEREDITH: And how many hours did you work a day for your nine dollars a month? Do you remember?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Uh... from eight 'til... I had my shift from eight in the morning, from eight, eight in the morning. Twelve hours a day.

BERT MEREDITH: So twelve hours a day, eh? And you were glad to get that, were you?

ALBERT RAWLYK: That was really...

BERT MEREDITH: That was pretty good.

ALBERT RAWLYK: That was pretty good at that time.

BERT MEREDITH: And now, of course, you're washing dishes at home and you're happy to do that, are you?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes, I am.

BERT MEREDITH: You don't have as many?

ALBERT RAWLYK: It isn't as many and, uh... you take it or leave it.

BERT MEREDITH: And you can do it whenever you feel like it, eh? [Laughter] Is your wife happy to have you home as the dishwasher?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes she is.

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah, I'm glad to hear that, Albert. Uh, had you worked, before you came down to this country, had you worked anywhere else out west besides on the farm and as a dishwasher?

ALBERT RAWLYK: No, I didn't work no place like this, just two places.

BERT MEREDITH: You did, eh? What, uh, what brought you down to Sudbury?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I had a nephew working here, uh, in a smelter.

BERT MEREDITH: Yes.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Someplace with misfits. And uh I wrote a letter to him, "are there any jobs available?" and he said "yes, come there anytime."

BERT MEREDITH: Is he here now?

ALBERT RAWLYK: No he's, he's not here, he's now in Alberta now.

BERT MEREDITH: He's in Alberta. He quit and went back west.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, uh, I guess so.

BERT MEREDITH: Did you... Let's go back to Alberta for a few moments, or Saskatchewan, where you came from. Did you go through that period in the thirties when they had the drought and the sandstorms and so forth?

ALBERT RAWLYK: No. I remember that day but, uh, just, uh... Too far back to remember.

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah, well let's see, you were born in 1917, about, you'd be about 18 or 19 then, wouldn't you. It was in the thirties, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Thirties. I was too young to remember.

BERT MEREDITH: Were, uh, did you parents have quarter section, did they have a large lot?

ALBERT RAWLYK: They did.

BERT MEREDITH: Quarter section, all, did you have it all in wheat?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Wheat, oats.

BERT MEREDITH: You did, eh? Well, were, did they get through the depression years alright, Albert?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I imagine they did got through OK.

BERT MEREDITH: They did. But you left home, did you?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I left.

BERT MEREDITH: Did you have a lot of brothers and sisters then?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Five brothers and three sisters.

BERT MEREDITH: Five... and they couldn't afford to feed them all at the farm, I suppose.

ALBERT RAWLYK: No, I guess it was a hectic day.

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah. You had to, uh, get out and work somewhere else.

ALBERT RAWLYK: You had to get out and work.

BERT MEREDITH: But wasn't that the object, in those days, in the farms, to have lots of sons and daughters so they could work on the farm?

ALBERT RAWLYK: That's right, it helps.

BERT MEREDITH: That was the idea.

ALBERT RAWLYK: The idea to...

BERT MEREDITH: Let's go back even further, Albert. Um, where did your father come from?

ALBERT RAWLYK: He came from old country

BERT MEREDITH: Old, now what's the old country, what could that be? Ukraine?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Ukraine.

BERT MEREDITH: He did, eh? And did he homestead out west there?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I think he did.

BERT MEREDITH: He did, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes.

BERT MEREDITH: What... Did you know what year he came out there?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I... no, it's too far back to remember.

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah. Do you remember about the early winters out there?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes, I did.

BERT MEREDITH: And were they as bad as the winter we're having this year?

ALBERT RAWLYK: There were bad... bad days.

BERT MEREDITH: Bad days.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Bad days.

BERT MEREDITH: They are, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I remember when I went to look for stock, and I could hardly find it; they had to hide in behind the snowbanks, behind the buildings.

BERT MEREDITH: Why?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Storming.

BERT MEREDITH: The wind's so high, eh? Yeah.

ALBERT RAWLYK: After one blizzard

BERT MEREDITH: Nothing to stop it out there, all just flat, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: No, all just flat country.

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah. That's the trouble with the prairie district, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: That's right.

BERT MEREDITH: So you don't mind the winters we're having down here, do you?

ALBERT RAWLYK: No, this is better than out there.

BERT MEREDITH: Better here than there, eh? Yeah.

ALBERT RAWLYK: And I remember one day when I was going to see my neighbor, the roads were so blocked up tight, you could only go two feet.

BERT MEREDITH: How did you go? You're going by horse, or on foot, or what?

ALBERT RAWLYK: No, we had to go across on foot.

BERT MEREDITH: On foot. Did you use snowshoes out there at all?

ALBERT RAWLYK: No, I don't remember use snowshoes.

BERT MEREDITH: No, they didn't, did they, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: No.

BERT MEREDITH: Well, what would you do with the horses in the winter? They couldn't get through that deep snow, could they?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, They couldn't... can't get to it... they don't... they just sit put. Stayed put.

BERT MEREDITH: If you couldn't get there, you stayed put, is that it?

ALBERT RAWLYK: That's right.

BERT MEREDITH: What did you do with the stock in the wintertime?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, some of them kept 'em in the barn...

BERT MEREDITH: Yes...

ALBERT RAWLYK: Stock... when it was too... so cold, they get out, so we had to bring them, feed them inside.

BERT MEREDITH: I, uh... I worked out on the harvest in '29, and I thought it was... I was a tender young boy then and I thought it was terrible, because the farmer I worked for, when he finished using the horses in the fall, he just turned them out for the winter. Was that the common practice?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Sometime the guy, the farmer does that too.

BERT MEREDITH: And the horse just fended for himself.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Oh, yeah. He has to do. He has nothing else to do unless has some... uh... thing behind him to protect, or building to keep him from...

BERT MEREDITH: I hate that. Boy, with that blizzard weather, it wouldn't be much fun, would it, eh? It'd be a...

ALBERT RAWLYK: No. Now you remember we had forty below zero...

BERT MEREDITH: Forty below zero Fahrenheit, you're talking about.

ALBERT RAWLYK: That's right.

BERT MEREDITH: With a wind, too, eh? And lots of snow.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Blizzard, heavy drifting.

BERT MEREDITH: Yes, I know. Albert, um, that's all very interesting, and I'm glad that we're not living out there now under those conditions, as I'm sure you are.

ALBERT RAWLYK: That's right.

BERT MEREDITH: Now I think this would be a good time maybe for us to take a little break, and, uh, we'll go back and see what Doug McLaughlin has in store for us in the way of music while, uh, shall we say a drink of water? Or coffee?

DOUG McLAUGHLIN: It better be coffee, Bert. [Laughter] Thank you, Bert. Coming up now, in the way of music, we have Eddy Arnold, and he'll be followed by Glen Gray and the Casa Loma Orchestra.

(Music)

BERT MEREDITH: Albert, you, uh, came down to Sudbury, I believe you told me, in 1941. Is that right, did you come right from North Battleford?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes, I did

BERT MEREDITH: How did you come down?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I come by rail from North Battleford, Saskatchewan to Sudbury.

BERT MEREDITH: I, uh, when you say by rail, you don't mean by riding the rods, you mean in a passenger train?

ALBERT RAWLYK: A passenger train.

BERT MEREDITH: Where did you get the money? Didn't have much money washing dishes in the café, did you?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, I had to save some up to come here, and then to get, to get a job.

BERT MEREDITH: Did you have any money left when you got here to Sudbury?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, I had few dollars left, leftover for cup of coffee.

BERT MEREDITH: [Laughter] Did you stay with this cousin of yours when you first came here?

ALBERT RAWLYK: No, he stay, he stay out in room downtown and I had to get room down on Frood Road at, uh, Mr. Baby's.

BERT MEREDITH: Oh yes, you did, eh? Did you get a job right away?

ALBERT RAWLYK: No, that, uh... at that time I had to wait, like it was a week coming up, delaying. Uh... Took about a week before I got a job.

BERT MEREDITH: What month was that you came down here?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I came in the October.

BERT MEREDITH: 1941, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I came October 1941

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Then I got hired on.

BERT MEREDITH: Was it, did you wait for the harvest to finish out west and then come down here? Or was it...

ALBERT RAWLYK: No, I didn't.

BERT MEREDITH: No, you didn't, eh? Where did you start? Where did they send you to start first?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I got hired on with misfits.

BERT MEREDITH: Misfits. Now, misfits is a great name, and I like it, it means the miscellaneous fitters, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Miscellaneous fitters.

BERT MEREDITH: And you usually called that the old Jock Renny's gang, right?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Jock Renny's gang. When you get that...

BERT MEREDITH: Now, lots of people started, Bill Bray was there, who else?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Bill Bray, Jack Gifford, Tom Strong.

BERT MEREDITH: Yes, they were all there at one time. So you joined the misfits.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Joined the misfits.

BERT MEREDITH: And, uh, that doesn't mean to say that you're a misfit or such things. [Laughter] OK, what did the misfits do, what do they do?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, they send me out different places on, uh, general repair, they called it, general repair.

BERT MEREDITH: General repair. You're a mechanic in other words, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yep. Mechanic.

BERT MEREDITH: Ok. How long were you working with the miscellaneous fitters as a general mechanic, roughly?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I was with them, uh, four months, because I got transferred to the crushing plant.

BERT MEREDITH: You got transferred to the crushing plant?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes.

BERT MEREDITH: In Copper Cliff.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Copper Cliff.

BERT MEREDITH: Uh, that was really some place when it was going, wasn't it?

ALBERT RAWLYK: It was, yes.

BERT MEREDITH: Because that was, that... with all the crushers, they had those rolls crushers?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Taylor rolls crushers, what they call, Taylor rolls crushers.

BERT MEREDITH: But there were more conveyors...

ALBERT RAWLYK: Conveyors...

BERT MEREDITH: And crushers, and screeds - the screeds in that place - than anywhere, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yeah, screeds, they had crushers, scalpers...

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah. Well now, what was your job up in the crushing plant?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I was with, uh, with a repair gang.

BERT MEREDITH: With a repair gang. And I suppose that you were pretty busy, because you...

ALBERT RAWLYK: Always busy. Doing something.

BERT MEREDITH: Because you couldn't let that equipment down, it had to be going all the time, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: No, always gotta do something, pick up this, uh, all different jobs to do, patch in here, patch in there, you know?

BERT MEREDITH: Who was the... what... Tom Strong, or, um, or Jack Gifford over there in charge of the, uh, mechanics at that time?

ALBERT RAWLYK: We, uh... Jack worked at that time in charge in there.

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Tom Strong, I remember he was there too.

BERT MEREDITH: He was, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Right.

BERT MEREDITH: Anybody else that you remember worked there? A lot of people worked in that area at that time.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Uh... At that time I remember Johnny Martin was my shift boss.

BERT MEREDITH: Who was?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Johnny Martin.

BERT MEREDITH: Johnny Martin was your shift boss, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes. At that time there were three shifts.

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah. You were working three shifts.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Right.

BERT MEREDITH: Did you like working three shifts?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, I had to get in mind to work someway.

BERT MEREDITH: Oh yeah, that's right. How long did you work at the crushing plant?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I worked in crushing for twenty-five years.

BERT MEREDITH: Twenty-five years!

ALBERT RAWLYK: Then, uh... I went on days the rest of the time.

BERT MEREDITH: Well, wait a minute now. If you started in 1941, '42 and you worked there twenty-five years that'd put it about 1967 or '68, right?

ALBERT RAWLYK: About that, yes.

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah. Well now, the crushing plant closed down in, what, 1970? When did the Clarabelle Mill open, wasn't that when it closed down?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well it was about that time, yes.

BERT MEREDITH: What did you do then?

ALBERT RAWLYK: At that time we... they got together and we... they take me down to mill concentrator.

BERT MEREDITH: To the concentrator at Copper Cliff, yeah.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes.

BERT MEREDITH: And what did you do over there? A mechanic, also?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I was, uh, doing safety inspection.

BERT MEREDITH: Safe- for the safety department or for the mechanical department?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Mechanical department.

BERT MEREDITH: Now, just what do you mean by safety inspection for the mechanical department, uh, Albert?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I was in charge of all the conveyors, all the roller, rollers, all the snub pullies, and all... many other different things.

BERT MEREDITH: You mean you went around and inspected them?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Inspected them, report them to the...

BERT MEREDITH: What, what did you inspect them for? To see that they were, uh, operating properly, or to see that they were in a state of good repair?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I inspect all to be in a state of good repair, like when they would go, whenever they go down, or wrong, I report to my foreman to send out to get that repaired.

BERT MEREDITH: To get it fixed. So you, you had the whole mill to look after, right?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yeah. Right. And then, uh, with the mill and crush mill with them.

BERT MEREDITH: And you, you were over both of them?

ALBERT RAWLYK: That's right.

BERT MEREDITH: You had a pretty big beat, then, didn't you?

ALBERT RAWLYK: It was big beat, but we had to do it.

BERT MEREDITH: You covered the whole thing and checked on everything. Did you check on the, on the screeds and the scalpers and the...

ALBERT RAWLYK: Every... Oh, that was not my department. My... uh... other things.

BERT MEREDITH: Oh, I see, they were not yours to look after.

ALBERT RAWLYK: No, bigger, bigger...

BERT MEREDITH: And then the big mills were not of course...

ALBERT RAWLYK: No, I just have too many.

BERT MEREDITH: And what about in the floatation cells...

ALBERT RAWLYK: No, they had somebody else to cover that.

BERT MEREDITH: Beg your pardon?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Somebody have to cover that.

BERT MEREDITH: Somebody else covered that, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Right.

BERT MEREDITH: Did you like that sort of a job?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Was nice, we met, meet with all different gangs.

BERT MEREDITH: Yes, and I suppose you found the work rather interesting, because...

ALBERT RAWLYK: Was interesting.

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah. You gotta look at everything then...

ALBERT RAWLYK: Gotta look at everything.

BERT MEREDITH: You must've known pretty well what was going on around the mill and the crushing plant, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I did.

BERT MEREDITH: You did, eh? Ok. You didn't, now, when the crushing plant closed, then you went over and you became the inspector for the mechanics.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Right.

BERT MEREDITH: Then you told me that you wound up in a different area in the mill. Is this right? Where did you go then?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes, I was, uh, after that I went down to warehouse in the mill.

BERT MEREDITH: The warehouse in the mill.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Right.

BERT MEREDITH: It was the warehouse in the mill, eh? What does the warehouse in the mill do?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, they give out many bolts and other things to do for...

BERT MEREDITH: The parts that are needed there, rather than go down to the main warehouse in the plant, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes, right.

BERT MEREDITH: Now, was Jack O'Hara in there? Because...

ALBERT RAWLYK: I never seen... Jack was, uh, retired at that time.

BERT MEREDITH: Oh, that's after Jack O'Hara retired.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Right.

BERT MEREDITH: He was a character himself, wasn't he?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Oh, yes, I remember him, he was a real character.

BERT MEREDITH: A real great guy, wasn't he? A lot of people...

ALBERT RAWLYK: A good man and they really liked him, and he, they all missed him.

BERT MEREDITH: Yes. And he used to coach hockey with... he was very enthusiastic, I'll say.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Oh, yes, he was into everything.

BERT MEREDITH: He ran pools there...

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes, he did.

BERT MEREDITH: I think you told me that the, um, that the warehouse at the mill was the center of where the action was.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes, it was.

BERT MEREDITH: It was, eh? Everything that was going on, was goin' in the warehouse? Was that...

ALBERT RAWLYK: Ah, yes, all of them get together, they meet up together, they run pools, old friend of mine Louis Giroux run the pool.

BERT MEREDITH: And you'd meet, uh, the fellas would meet before they went on shift and chew the rag?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes.

BERT MEREDITH: And they'd meet there after they came off shift and...

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah.

BERT MEREDITH: When the supervision were nearby...

ALBERT RAWLYK: Right, it was around there, they looked around, keep on going.

BERT MEREDITH: It was a pretty good gang up in the mill, wasn't it?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yeah, all nice.

BERT MEREDITH: They got along very well.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Everybody get along fine.

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah. So what all did you do in the warehouse, besides, uh, did you run a few pools for them and things of that nature, were there big parties for the retirees and...

ALBERT RAWLYK: I couldn't do what... a friend of mine, Louis Giroux look after that.

BERT MEREDITH: Who did?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Louis Giroux.

BERT MEREDITH: Louis Giroux.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Right.

BERT MEREDITH: That was his stuff, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: It was his department.

BERT MEREDITH: [Laughter] His department, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: He used to take us on sales, on parties and all that.

BERT MEREDITH: Yes, and there were a lot of those at the mill, weren't there?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Oh, yes, yes. Quite a bit.

BERT MEREDITH: Now I bet you that's what you miss, it's the contact with those fellas up at the mill.

ALBERT RAWLYK: That's right, uh, that I do.

BERT MEREDITH: Well I'll tell you, Albert, uh, we're gonna talk a little bit more about that, but I think again it may be time if we went back and listened to a little more music, so we'll turn the show back to Doug McLaughlin for moment, Ok?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Ok.

DOUG MCLAUGHLIN: Thank you, Bert. It's twenty-three minutes before one o'clock on CIGM-FM stereo. Coming up now, couple of selections, the first one is "The Apple Valley Chatise" and we'll follow that with Jim Reeves and "Four Walls."

(Music)

DOUG MCLAUGHLIN: It's fourteen minutes before one on CIGM-FM stereo. Bert Meredith is talking to our special guest today, Albert Rawlyk.

BERT MEREDITH: Now, Albert, we were talking about, uh, the warehouse and the gang up in the mill, and, uh, you speak very highly of them as many others do who have worked there. Uh, during your time, you must have worked for quite a number of superintendents up there in the mill; I'm talking about operating people too. Were you there back in the days when Jim Parlee was running the mill?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes.

BERT MEREDITH: You were, eh? That's quite a while ago. Who, who followed Jim? Did, uh... Earl Stoneman?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Earl Stoneman.

BERT MEREDITH: Who followed him?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Um... Hilton Fowler.

BERT MEREDITH: Hilton fowl... was, was... Where did Jim Lee come in there? Wasn't Jim Lee in there somewhere too?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, he was there, but just don't remember what he...

BERT MEREDITH: Well, he was with Hilton Fowler and Jim Lee, yeah. They were all good men, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: All good, good friends.

BERT MEREDITH: Yes. That's the thing that you miss now. Albert, talking about good friends, I think I'd like to talk about probably the best friend that you've ever had, and that's your wife.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Right.

BERT MEREDITH: Right? Is that correct?

ALBERT RAWLYK: That's correct.

BERT MEREDITH: Ok. I want you to tell me, if you will, when you were married.

ALBERT RAWLYK: I got married on July 25th, 1941.

BERT MEREDITH: 1941. That's before you left to come to Sudbury?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Before I come to Sudbury.

BERT MEREDITH: Did your wife, then, know that you were going to come down here looking for work?

ALBERT RAWLYK: We talked about it, but she said, like, well, uh, she said, "you go right now and I wait and you send for me later."

BERT MEREDITH: And send for you later, eh? What was your wife's name before she was married?

ALBERT RAWLYK: My wife's name was Alice Olson.

BERT MEREDITH: And was she from out North Battleford also?

ALBERT RAWLYK: She is.

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah. Ok, you came down here and left your bride in the west, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes.

BERT MEREDITH: That's not very good, was it, eh? [Laughter] But you had to do it in those days.

ALBERT RAWLYK: I had to do it.

BERT MEREDITH: I suppose you didn't have any money for a honeymoon in those days, did you?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Oh, those days, honeymoon was scarce.

BERT MEREDITH: [Laughter] Honeymoons were scarce, I guess they were.

ALBERT RAWLYK: I went to, uh, for honeymoon back to kitchen

BERT MEREDITH: You were... that's all? Just as far as the kitchen, that's as far as you could go, eh? Well, you're none the worse for it, I'm sure.

ALBERT RAWLYK: No.

BERT MEREDITH: Well tell me then, Albert, you came down here and got a job. How long before you brought your wife down here?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I work about two months. About two days before Christmas.

BERT MEREDITH: Ah, in 1941.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Right.

BERT MEREDITH: So, she was with you for that first Christmas in Sudbury.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes, she was here.

BERT MEREDITH: That was, that was rather nice, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes.

BERT MEREDITH: What did she think of Sudbury when she first came here?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, she didn't think much, because she didn't know the town very good.

BERT MEREDITH: Yes. Of course it wasn't quite as big then in 1941, was it? That's, uh, thirty-six years ago.

ALBERT RAWLYK: It wasn't very big, but she didn't know the town very good. I would have to direct her to go back and forth and come home. Every time she'd get lost because she didn't know the way.

BERT MEREDITH: She'd get lost downtown.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yep.

BERT MEREDITH: Fine. My wife still gets lost downtown sometimes, so it's alright, Albert.

ALBERT RAWLYK: [Laughter]

BERT MEREDITH: Now tell me, how many of a family do you have?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I got two children.

BERT MEREDITH: Two children. Tell me about them then, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well my oldest daughter Joyce, she's married to Don Jackson.

BERT MEREDITH: She's married to Don Jackson?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes.

BERT MEREDITH: And where are they?

ALBERT RAWLYK: They're in Toronto.

BERT MEREDITH: In Toronto.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Husband works Pilkington Glass.

BERT MEREDITH: Pilkington Glass, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: My son, he's, uh...

BERT MEREDITH: And do they have any children?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Oh, yes, they got two children.

BERT MEREDITH: Two children, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yeah. Laura and Kurt. One is thirteen, one is eight.

BERT MEREDITH: The grandchildren are quite an age, then, aren't they?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Oh yes, it's climbing up.

BERT MEREDITH: Do you know something, Albert? For a young looking fella you're going to be a great grandfather before you know it, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I guess so! [Laughter]

BERT MEREDITH: Ok, you have, that's your daughter in Toronto, now what about your son?

ALBERT RAWLYK: My son, Brian...

BERT MEREDITH: Yes.

ALBERT RAWLYK: He got a child, about a year and a half. He got married to Lolly...

BERT MEREDITH: You're in trouble if you can't remember your daughter-in-law's name, you know, Albert. {Laughter}

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, I've just got to think, have my head the right way. Nyland.

BERT MEREDITH: Nyland. I see. Are they in Sudbury?

ALBERT RAWLYK: In Sudbury.

BERT MEREDITH: And where does he work?

ALBERT RAWLYK: He works at Frood-Stobie.

BERT MEREDITH: Frood-Stobie. Good for him.

ALBERT RAWLYK: And, uh... They...

BERT MEREDITH: What does he do out there? Is he a miner?

ALBERT RAWLYK: He's a miner.

BERT MEREDITH: Good.

ALBERT RAWLYK: And then, when they got married they were going to school together.

BERT MEREDITH: Really? They were going to school together?

ALBERT RAWLYK: School pals.

BERT MEREDITH: And that's how they met.

ALBERT RAWLYK: How they met. School.

BERT MEREDITH: I see.

ALBERT RAWLYK: And then they carried on from there.

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah, so, uh, they decided to stay in Sudbury.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes.

BERT MEREDITH: Do they like it?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, I guess they do.

BERT MEREDITH: What about you, now you're a... you've been in Sudbury for thirty-six years now.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Thirty-six years.

BERT MEREDITH: Do you consider yourself a Sudburian or a westerner still?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, Sudburian now.

BERT MEREDITH: Sudburian now. But you still have attachments in the west.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Oh, yes, I always go visit our mother and father and uncles.

BERT MEREDITH: You have mother and father and uncles back west, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I'm sorry, my dad's gone, but my mother's still living.

BERT MEREDITH: I see. Um, going back to your wife, Albert, you told me earlier that she has a rather unique hobby, and she...

ALBERT RAWLYK: She got nice hobby.

BERT MEREDITH: And that is what?

ALBERT RAWLYK: She's painting, uh... table cloths, dresses, scarves.

BERT MEREDITH: She embroiders them, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Embroiders and paints, yes.

BERT MEREDITH: This is rather unique. Do you know anyone else that does that?

ALBERT RAWLYK: My sister in law does that too. My daughter in law does that too.

BERT MEREDITH: Well, now, your sister, is she here or out west? Where does...

ALBERT RAWLYK: No, my sister in law.

BERT MEREDITH: Now is this... I don't know of anyone else doing it. Is this something they learned at a night class, or what? Where did they pick this up?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, they were demonstrating, coming around the house selling paint, arctic paint, and there were other brands, and they took and shown them a piece of cloth, they took it, they show, say, "you paint a rose, you paint a duck or a wooden shoe."

BERT MEREDITH: On a piece of plain cloth, yeah.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Plain cloth, you do it while you... on there.

BERT MEREDITH: And then, when you paint it on you mean you can wash it or anything and it doesn't come out?

ALBERT RAWLYK: It don't wash off.

BERT MEREDITH: Doesn't come out, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Won't come out.

BERT MEREDITH: And then you can make your own designs.

ALBERT RAWLYK: You got to buy patterns.

BERT MEREDITH: Oh, you buy patterns

ALBERT RAWLYK: And you paint them on your cloth.

BERT MEREDITH: Is your wife rather artistic? Does she like to paint?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Oh, yes. She likes all kinds of painting,

BERT MEREDITH: Does she do other painting as well?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, just, she's got to this, now she stays with that.

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah. And the only painting you do is the ceiling in the living room, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Right [Laughter]

BERT MEREDITH: Are you any good at that?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well sometimes make a mess, but... [Laughter]

BERT MEREDITH: And now this is why, now your wife has this hobby, that you're the dishwasher in the house, is that right?

ALBERT RAWLYK: That's right.

BERT MEREDITH: But tell me, uh, you and your wife, do you do things, do you have any hobbies that you enjoy together?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, we do bowling, mixed leagues.

BERT MEREDITH: You mix, you have a mixed league bowling. Whereabouts?

ALBERT RAWLYK: In Val Caron, Mix n' Bowl.

BERT MEREDITH: Val Caron. Is that where you live?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes, right, it's where I live.

BERT MEREDITH: How long have you lived in Val Caron?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, we moved there... not in '55? About eighteen years.

BERT MEREDITH: Albert Gravel is your mayor, is your reeve out there, is he?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes.

BERT MEREDITH: And he's a good one. He's an old Frood miner.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yeah, he's the old miner.

BERT MEREDITH: Yes sir, he's a good man. He's done a lot for you people out there, hasn't he?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Oh yeah.

BERT MEREDITH: Uh, tell me then, you bowl once a week in this mixed league, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes.

BERT MEREDITH: And then do you have a bash, party at the end of the year?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, when we get around to it, we get, uh, what you call, bowl banquet around the end of the year.

BERT MEREDITH: You have a bowling banquet, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yeah.

BERT MEREDITH: What's your average? Are you... this is five pin bowling, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Five pin.

BERT MEREDITH: What's your average?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, I get around 201...

BERT MEREDITH: Oh, you're 201? You're pretty good, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: When I get lousy, get 151, maybe... [Laughter]

BERT MEREDITH: [Laughter] But anything over 200 average is pretty good, isn't it? Of course it's a lot of fun, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: It's a lot of fun with the gang.

BERT MEREDITH: Is this the gang of, of more senior people that you're talking about?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Mixed league.

BERT MEREDITH: A mixed league.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yeah.

BERT MEREDITH: Right. But I mean they're most... they're mature people.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Oh, yes.

BERT MEREDITH: I'm not using the word "older" people, you noticed that, I said "mature," eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: That's right.

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah. Uh, you told me that you have been back once or twice to visit the gang at the plant too, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes, I came around, came around there.

BERT MEREDITH: Do you, uh, like going back and seeing...

ALBERT RAWLYK: Oh, see, I always like come back and see their faces back again

BERT MEREDITH: See what?

ALBERT RAWLYK: The old faces.

BERT MEREDITH: You like to see the old faces. There's quite a few new faces too, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Oh yes, quite a few. Yeah.

BERT MEREDITH: Tell me something, are they, uh, are they running things the way, uh, that you approve of them doing it, or have you got some suggestions to make? You know, sometimes when you leave, you don't always like the way somebody else does the job. [Laughter]

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, I'm not, uh, I can call 'em up, ask 'em what's going on.

BERT MEREDITH: No, you just like to go back and talk with the fellas, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I do that, I go back and talk to them, uh, joke with them and I say, well, I'm about to come back and take over the job, joke with them.

BERT MEREDITH: Yeah. Albert, you have a camper, right?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yes, I got a camper.

BERT MEREDITH: And do you use it quite a bit to leave...

ALBERT RAWLYK: I used it three, four times, went down to Niagara Falls for a visit.

BERT MEREDITH: To Niagara Falls.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Niagara Falls, we just go, camp there for few days.

BERT MEREDITH: What sort of a camper, will it sleep both of you, and all the amenities inside?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, uh, sleeps six.

BERT MEREDITH: Sleeps six?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Right.

BERT MEREDITH: My gosh, that's a good size.

ALBERT RAWLYK: A good size, yes.

BERT MEREDITH: Has it got all the equipment inside that you need, that, uh...

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, it's nothing...

BERT MEREDITH: The comforts of home, or just a sleeping place.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Sleeping place.

BERT MEREDITH: I see. So you use it instead of going to a motel, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: That's right.

BERT MEREDITH: Oh, that's not a bad idea. Do you go anywhere else with it? Do you go and park in the provincial parks or anything of that sort?

ALBERT RAWLYK: If it's available we do it, but not while we can't go in there.

BERT MEREDITH: Mm-hm.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Go someplace else.

BERT MEREDITH: Have you been west with it?

ALBERT RAWLYK: We didn't get the chance to get there this year yet, that's right, this year

BERT MEREDITH: Not to go home... You mean in 1976 you didn't get a chance to go. Are you thinking of going in 1977?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I'm trying to make it maybe next year.

BERT MEREDITH: You are, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Yeah.

BERT MEREDITH: You mean 1977.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Right.

BERT MEREDITH: That, that's right. It'd be a nice trip out there, wouldn't it, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Oh yes, nice, nice trip to go.

BERT MEREDITH: And you'd take the, uh, would you take any of the kids?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Oh, I take 'em too.

BERT MEREDITH: What sort of a grandfather are you? Are you one that spoil the grandchildren?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Not very much.

BERT MEREDITH: You look like the type that maybe you would, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Maybe I would, I don't know! [Laughter]

BERT MEREDITH: I rather think you would. You know, just to wind up, Albert, uh, do you think that you would have preferred to stay in the west throughout the hard times and wait for the better times to come, or you feel that you're better off that you came down here?

ALBERT RAWLYK: I think it's better off here

BERT MEREDITH: Mm-hm. Because some people did say that, when things got going better they did pretty well, but still...

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, I remember a friend years back, they went to stay and never come back.

BERT MEREDITH: They never came back, eh? How are they doing out there now?

ALBERT RAWLYK: Well, I think they're doing good.

BERT MEREDITH: No better than you, eh?

ALBERT RAWLYK: No better than me, but just as me, that's all I know.

BERT MEREDITH: That's right. Well, Albert, it's certainly been very pleasant talking to you today, and talking about some of your experiences out west, and also down here, and we're glad that you consider yourself a Sudburian and not a westerner, although you still have a good deal of affection for the west.

ALBERT RAWLYK: I do.

BERT MEREDITH: And I want to thank you for being our guest on Memories and Music today.

ALBERT RAWLYK: Ok.

BERT MEREDITH: We've been talking with Albert Rawlyk, who retired from the mill at Copper Cliff, uh, in the last year, and, uh, Albert, as you probably heard, came mostly from the West, but now he considers himself a citizen of Sudbury mostly like the rest of us here.

DOUG MCLAUGHLIN: Memories and Music is presented every Sunday at noon on CIGM-FM stereo by Inco Ltd. Next week's guest will be Bill Gamble. I'm Doug McGlaughlin. Good afternoon.

(Music)

00:31:21

Track ends