

CONSUL MUSEUM INCORPORATED
Oral History Collection – Section 2
Collected by Oral History Researcher Meagan Gough
Sigurd Brekus Interview 2007 August 23

Catalog No. 2.2 (E,R)

1/15

Conducted at Cypress Lodge, Maple Creek, SK

SB = Sigurd Brekhus, age 95: Interviewee
MG = Meagan Gough: Interviewer
SH = Sigurd's daughter, Sharon Hester
NJ = Nancy-Jean Taylor: Videographer

MG: What is your full name and then what is the history of ranching or farming in your family and did your family members, such as your parents, use land in this area? I guess you can just start wherever you like.

SB: Well, my name is Sigurd Eugene Brekhus, and I was born in Tolley, North Dakota.

MG: Oh, wow!

SB: And, um, I moved up here with my folks – my mom and dad and one sister in 19 – the spring of 1913. They homesteaded – do you want the number of the homestead?

MG: Sure.

SB: They homesteaded on the south half of 12-6, 12-5-26. And, the -- (pauses) (See notes at end of transcript)

SH: The history of farming and ranching -- and your experiences --

SB: Now, do they want to know the history right back, or?

SH: Just briefly 'til you got to your own, I think, Papa --

SB: Well, my dad died when I was about a year old, and I was raised by my stepfather, but that doesn't make any difference. I, uh, will start where I went to school. I went to school in White Mountain, and I went to Grade 8, 'cause we didn't have enough money to stay away from home, board away from home.

MG: Oh, wow.

SB: So I quit school and I worked from home for a few years helping them do the farming, and then I did the farming for my stepfather and in 1935, I think it was, he got a tractor for the land, so instead of working at home and working out part time for wages, I decided to go out farming on my own. So, I made a deal with the Hudson Bay Company to buy a half section of land from them and I used my stepfather's tractor to farm it for two years and the first year we had a complete failure. It was the driest year we ever had in this country -1937 – most people didn't even get their seed back. I got my seed back. So, I farmed with my stepfather's tractor until 1938, and then I got married. My wife's father was...passed away and my wife's mother was living on the farm and she couldn't do it herself, so we moved to her farm and lived with my wife's mother until 1944. Then I bought a tractor of my own. When I quit farming with my

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stepfather I bought a tractor of my own. Then, in 1939, I think it was, I bought a different tractor, a rubber-tired tractor. And, um, I wanted to have a home of my own, so I made a deal for some logs -- you know I couldn't build with lumber 'cause you couldn't buy it in those days.

MG: Yeah.

SB: The way I got started farming I didn't even have any money enough-- I borrowed 100 dollars from my uncle to make a down payment on the farm and I got the seed and fuel the from the municipality on a relief to start out, and I used my stepfather's tractor- I just started with my bare hands!

MG: My goodness!

SB: So then, we got to building the house and I got logs up in the hills, and got them squared up at a sawmill, and I got a carpenter that lived in Robsart to build the house for me, and I dug the basement by hand. And the way it happened, there was a, there was no well on the place, but there was a place up in the coulee where the grass stayed green all summer, even in the driest years, and I thought maybe there might be water there, so I dug down and, sure enough, about two feet down I found water!

MG: Oh my!

SB: And this was high enough up in the coulee so I could pipe the water down to where my new house was going to be. So, I dug a ditch by hand, 6 feet deep, from the well to where the house was going to be, to the basement, put in a water pipe, and we went ahead and built, and I had a carpenter from Robsart doing the building. We also had a kind of a building bee to put the house up -- the logs -- but then he built the rest of the house. Nobody in the country had running water and electric lights at that time. And I did put running water to the house when we built. I got an old light plant from Jack Anderson in Robsart - he used to furnish the power for the village of Robsart - and I bought his old light plant and installed that. So, when I got the house done, I had a modern house - running water, electric lights and a sewer system. And then, to help with generating power, I bought a wind charger and thirty-two volt generators, so here we were, about the only farm in the country that had lights and water!

SH: Do you remember the year?

SB: It was 1944, the year we moved up there from Grandma's place to -- Joy was three years old.

MG: So, 1944, you had the power and everything?

SB: Yes!

SH: And you had hot water, explain how you had the hot water!

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SB: Yes, well I kinda invented that. I put in a water tank, a galvanized water tank, and put it in beside the stove, and then I piped the water through the firebox in the old coal-and-wood stove, and then when we cooked or had a fire in the stove, it heated the water for the pressure system!

MG: Well, I'll be darned! That's about 13 years before --we were talking to Cliff Smith up in Consul there, do you know Cliff Smith? He was talking about how he went around selling power, and that was '57, so that's 13 years before--!

SH: (inaudible)

SB: So from then on things went pretty good, I had a newer tractor after awhile and rubber tires.

SH: (inaudible)-discussing the written document about Sigurd's life co-written by Sigurd and family member.

SB: Yes, they built the dam at the east end of Cypress Lake. They used horsepower to move the dirt. They had dump wagons and horses. I had three horses of my own there and got a job with the dump wagon and you'd drive down to where they'd fill your wagon from, I don't know what they'd call it, an elevator. Then you'd haul it -- Oh, I got mixed up! (*Laughs*)

SH: You were talking about your horses. And how hard they had to work!

SB: Yeah -- Then you'd go around and around and around and went down in the pit and got a load on your dump wagon, then you'd drive up on the grade for the dam, and dump it then go back down again. I worked there about a week and one of my horses died, so then I drove Louis Backman's mules for a day, but I didn't like driving mules. So, I took the other two horses home and went back and worked just with my hands. I worked at kinda the same job, but instead of driving the horses on the scraper, I was holding the handle and filling the scraper and follow it around and get up on the grade, and then dump it back down in the pit.

MG: That's tough work, no?

SB: Well, I guess you could call it good exercise!

MG: That was the optimist's way to look at it! The glass is half full and it's good exercise!

SH: That was a few years before they had the irrigation project there, wasn't it? The building of the dam... You wanted to mention the flowing well at Vidora, didn't you?

SB: Oh yes, when that country was settled, it was pretty near impossible to get water out on the farms; they would have shallow wells and wells beside sloughs. There was a spring that was a mile west and six miles north of Robsart. There was a spring, right

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from the time the country was settled, and there was water coming right out the side of the hill, and everyone hauled water from there for years.

NJ: Whose land is that on?

SB: The spring? Oh, I think Barry Dahl has got it now.

NJ: That's who I was thinking by the description...

SB: In Vidora, there was a flowing well, and south of Robsart, there was one or two wells where the water came right up to the surface. But when you got north of Robsart and west, about four miles north and then from there west, they couldn't get water. They dug wells all over the place and couldn't get water. Some of them put a well in by the slough and when the slough would dry up in the summertime, there was no water. I can remember we used to haul water when we lived in Grandma and Grandpa's place. We'd haul it about two miles in a barrel on a stoneboat – do you know what a stoneboat is? It's just some planks nailed on some posts to hook horses on...

MG: I didn't know what one was. I heard someone say it, but no one ever explained it to me. What is it?

SB: Well, yeah -- just take two logs, small logs, and nail planks across it and then set your barrels on it, then haul water...we hauled it for two miles! Water was pretty scarce; you sure didn't waste any when you hauled it for two miles!

MG: Oh my gosh!

SB: When Saturday afternoon would come, Mom would bathe us – smallest kid first, then heat a little more water and add it. Then the next biggest kid, and the next biggest kid and finally we'd all have a bath. And we never threw water away. It was such precious stuff. She'd save it in a bucket and use it to mop the floor with afterwards!

MG: Oh, neat! What are your parent's names? Your mom and your dad and stepdad?

SB: My mom's name was Gudve. "G-u-d-v-e". My stepfather's name was John – John Bakken. And my real dad's name - he died when I was just a little over a year old - was Lars. My dad was born in Norway and my mom was born in Norway.

MG: Gudve, what a beautiful name. I've never heard that name.

SH: You were telling me sometimes in the winter, people had to go out and melt snow for water?

SB: Oh, a lotta people melted snow, and it worked pretty good. In the wintertime instead of hauling water – you know you'd freeze if the water splashed all over everything! So we'd just melt snow. We'd have a big old boiler sitting on the

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cookstove and you'd just carry in a big chunk of snow every time. When it was melted, carry in some more snow. It turned into water pretty fast, so...

MG: How did it taste?

SB: Well, it was soft water; there was no real taste to it.

SH: Later on you talked about dugouts being a project, the digging of dugouts for the PFRA....

SB: Oh, yes, well, there was an area up where I lived where you couldn't get water. Nobody had wells. But being short of water in that area like that, the PFRA had a program where you could get a dugout okayed, and get a government man out to okay it, and you'd get it dug, then the government would pay for part of it, so people could get enough water to stay in the area. There was an area north of Robsart where you couldn't get water in the well. My old neighbour, I guess three or four years ago when his dad died, he was gonna go back to the farm and so he hired a well machine to come in, and he dug three deep wells on that place, and he still couldn't get water. And a mile and half from there it's comin' right out of the ground. The dugouts were successful – if they would fill up in the spring they'd last all summer. In the winter, if there was any water left, sometimes there was, sometimes there wasn't. You'd be digging holes in the ice so that the cattle could drink. Sometimes they had to almost stand on their heads to drink!

MG: Oh my gosh! That would be a funny sight to see!

SH: I remember as kids we skated on the dugouts, and we'd still keep skating, but you had to watch for those holes.

MG: Oh my gosh!

SB: Twice a day, we'd open up holes for them to drink because if you only let them water once a day, on a cold day they would drink so much it would take them a couple hours to warm up and quit shivering afterwards...

SH: How about rainfall and raising crops?

SB: We sure had some dry years, boy. There was one year that the grass didn't even get green.

SH: What was an average crop and what was a good crop?

SB: Wheat, a good crop would be..... Oh, thirty bushels to the acre was a bumper crop. But the way we farmed with horses you couldn't expect a good crop. I can remember taking a horse off to go across the field, and you'd work up the sod that was fairly loose, and then when you come to a place where there had been water standing and it was big, your machinery would just make marks on it. It wouldn't dig it up. No,

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couldn't expect much. Sometimes in summerfallowing, the weeds would get big and you'd plow them down and figure you had summerfallowed. Well, you'd already grew a crop of weeds on there. No it was difficult, lotta hard work and a lotta hard times, lotta fun. We used to go to schoolhouse dances, dance all night. When you're a teenager, you can have fun no matter what you do!

MG: This is something I wanted to ask you about -- it seems like talking with people over and over again there were pretty tough times, but people seemed to have fun. How did you manage to have fun amidst these bad crops and stuff? (laughing)

SB: I think when you're a teenager you can have fun no matter where you are! Yes, there was a lot of good times; school dances, ball games, picnics.

SH: You and mom met at a school dance, didn't you?

SB: Well, I guess we didn't really meet at a school dance, 'cause there are pictures of us from when we were about two years old when we were both at the same picnic, but we never knew each other yet.

MG: You hadn't become acquainted at that time?

SH: Tell us a little about the school dance, about the dance where you did get together.

SB: I think the first dance I met her at was a country dance. I think it was at the Berndtsson's place, and I just met her there and thought she was kinda nice, and so I made a date with her!

MG: And look, here you are!

SH: Turned out good for me!

SB: That was in 1934 and we went together for four years and got married in '38. In the meantime, she worked for Henry when I was farming, and I used to go see her there. And then it got so that nobody could pay wages and she went to Vancouver to live with her sister.

SH: Henry was her uncle.

SB: So then I would write to her. You still couldn't make any money but the PFRA was building the Cypress Lake Dam at that time, to dam up the water to store it, and they were paying for stones to riprap it, to line the inside of the grade with. So, I went to work and started piling stones – there was a lotta stones on everybody's land. PFRA would only pay you for rocks piled up in one place. And I made square piles and I got enough money outta piling stones, that I went to Vancouver and we got married and come back again.

MG: Oh!

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SB: When I come back, that's when Ethel's mom, who had been living alone, because her dad had died.

MG: Ethel's your wife?

SB: Yes, so then we moved onto Gram's place.

SH: There was so little money the girls couldn't afford to come home when their dad died, could they?

SB: That's right. He died in the winter time and I telephoned out. The train service wasn't very good. There was a lot of snow. You couldn't drive a car in the winter, Even to drive to Maple Creek to meet the train, you had to use horses, and there was no way horses could make it or that they could make it to the funeral.

MG: So you hauled enough stones to go get married in Vancouver. That's a lot of love there!

SB: Yeah! Oh boy, that was a lot of stones, too! *(laughing)*

SH: All of these stories always amaze me. I remember you telling after you and Mom got married, she wanted a piano so bad --

SB: That's right. Well, the first good crop we had was in, I think, 1940, and it was a good crop but it was tough that year and we had to cut the grain damp, and you didn't dare put it in the granary because damp grain will heat the granary. So we piled it on the ground. And it was damp, so I knew I'd have to market it the next year before summer was over because it would heat in the pile and spoil. So a good way to get rid of it was to sell it to feedlots and different places, but I decided to go into pigs and feed it up. So I bought a whole bunch of sows, and a boar pig, and I went into the pig business and the next spring we had pigs. That's when I built my house, you know, about every week I would haul in a load of pigs, ship em, then I would get some lumber and haul it back for building the house. I told my wife Ethel that any pig, any sow that had more than twelve pigs, she could have what was over – no, ten pigs I think it was. Well, them sows would lay down and have twelve or thirteen pigs. Then, she had a bunch of pigs, and when she sold her pigs she took the money and bought a piano! So, that's how she got her piano!

SH: We all took piano lessons on that piano, and my sister still has it actually.

MG: So you got to listen to great music then! The pigs paid for the house's tunes! Did she like to play a lot of piano?

SB: Oh yes, she liked playing piano. She was very musical, a good singer too.

MG: Did you sing too?

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SB: No, I can't carry a tune in a bucket.

MG: That's a good one! I can't carry a tune in a bucket!

SH: When you talk about water, one thing that always amused me and interested me was witching for water -- do you remember people in the area that witched for water?

SB: There's a man in town who still does it -- some use a rod, an iron rod; some use a tree branch; and they walk around and when they get close to where there's water in the ground -- supposed to be, this thing will turn down and tell them. That guy, that Herb Duncan -- he's been witching for people all over the country and he's been very successful. He finds wells on farms where they've dug many wells before and couldn't get any water, and he gets water. I still don't know if I believe it or not.

MG: So it's called "witching for water"?

NJ: We've had all of our wells found that way, in Alberta and here.

MG: So how long were you and your family in that house that you built?

SB: Well, we lived in there until '69 and then it burned down.

MG: Oh my!

SB: Then I took my chainsaw and went up in the woods and cut poles for another house and did the same thing all over again -- squared them at the sawmill, but this time we built a bigger, better, more modern house. It was a good house to live in.

NJ: How long did it take to build a house like that?

SB: Well, I don't know -- getting the trees out and squared and hauled home was a big job. The building of the house itself wasn't that bad. We had a building bee and neighbours came to help get the logs up. After that my brother and I, we did our own, didn't hire a carpenter. We bought the rafters. Otherwise, we built everything in it. We got it stuccoed. We had a real good house.

SH: We did. It's still standing there.

MG: Where did you get the logs from?

SB: Up in Cypress Hills Park.

MG: I just notice there are not a lot of trees around --

SB: There are places where there are pretty big trees. I got a permit -- forest ranger went in and marked the trees I could take. I cut them down, packed them up with the

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horse, hauled them to the sawmill, got them squared, then hauled them home. The slabs we sawed off when we squared them, I took home and used for a cowshed.

SH: The house is about eight miles north of Robsart and it's Les Fairbrother that lives there; not Les, Rodney Fairbrother. I presume that Backman's own that land, do they?

SB: Yes, they do.

MG: You must have felt very proud of building both those homes.

SH: My dad built lots of furniture, too. We lived in a log house and he built all our furniture.

SB: I enjoyed it. Yes, I was proud of them because they were both good homes. I worked hard; I farmed, I raised cattle, and I worked for the municipality. But it was a good life.

MG: What did you do for the municipality?

SB: Pardon?

MG: Your work for the municipality then?

SB: Yes, I did -- I think I wrote in that write up -- I was councilman for ten years, and I was a reeve for two years.

MG: So, what would you say are some of your favourite work experiences? What are some of your favourite moments when you think back?

SB: I think working with horses and cattle are some of the best. I could work with a horse all day and just love it – you're out in the open. Farming wasn't as good in that you are stuck in a tractor all day.

MG: Yeah.

SB: I was lucky. I had a nice family and we had a wonderful home. We lived a good life on the farm, didn't we?

SH: We sure did.

NJ: How many children do you have?

SB: Pardon?

NJ: How many children do you have?

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SB: I had three, but my son died. So, I've got two girls, Sharon and Joy, but you haven't met Joy.

MG: I haven't met Joy, no.

SH: She just moved here from Ontario in June.

SB: She retired as a teacher. In North Gower, Ontario.

SH: She lived there for almost thirty years, I guess. They used to live in the Robsart area. Then her husband became the president of the Farm Credit Corporation, so they moved down there and stayed there. For quite some time she taught there.

SB: My son farmed with me for a while, but he didn't care much for farming. We also had the Consul Hotel for three years and he run that for me; he didn't like farming, but he liked that.

NJ: What years?

SB: (to Sharon) What years did we have the Consul Hotel?

SH: Oh, I'm trying to think. It would have been in the '70's sometime. Late '70's, early '80's. I don't remember how old Leon was. He was probably five or something.

SB: Yeah, he was just ready to start school. I know he was riding a bicycle.

SH: Sold it around the late '70's, early '80's. Right around those years.

MG: I'm curious too, if you have any memories or stories related to the flood of '52 because it seems near everyone we have spoken to remembers that flood.

SB: Well -- the flood didn't affect us hardly at all. I remember when we went down and looked at the flats and there was water running from the hills at Humphries right up to the north side of the flat -- there was water all the way across, but it didn't affect us much -- we didn't have land in there.

SH: I remember cut a deep gully through our yard. From the hills, remember that? It rushed down there for weeks, and through the yard. We had to kind of put a bridge across there. Dad's place was at the bottom of the foothills. Just where the hills started, that's where his buildings sat. I presume that was the year. I wasn't very old. I would have been in Grade 2 in '52.

MG: Have there been other floods? There's been quite a few in the region?

SB: Well, there has been, but we were on the south side of the hills dry farming, and the floods didn't affect us.

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MG: So that's a blessing. So some of your favourite times were spent on your horse out in the open?

SB: I would think so, I liked it out there. Yes, I did.

MG: I've got to say that being new to this part of the province, I just can't believe how beautiful and open the sky is and the land – you can see to the edge of the earth! It almost makes me feel like I want to drop to the ground and hold on or I might blow to the edge of the earth! So are there any other stories you would like to share with us while we are here today?

SB: I can remember one time we couldn't drive the car to meet the school bus. I had a team and sleigh to get the girls to the school bus. And this one day it was storming – well I used a tractor that day, I guess, to meet the school bus.

MG: Oh my gosh!

SB: On the way home, that tractor quit and I couldn't get that tractor to go. We couldn't walk – it was a blizzard and deep snow - and we just about froze that time. I kept on with bare hands in freezing weather trying to fix the gas line, and finally got the tractor going, and we made it home alright, but that was getting serious.

SH: My mom could see us from the house. She was having fits. I know that!

SB: I don't think we could have hardly walked. I know the snow was so deep, we could have hardly walked.

MG: Oh my gosh.

SH: But before that, you went to a country school, Whitemud. Do you have any remembrances of your school days?

SB: Yes, there's quite a few things to remember. I remember that accident – we were going to school and we had a team of horses on a buggy, and we were in there - my sister, two sisters, and I think Harry was in there drivin' along. And instead of following the road, there was a place where there was no crop now, so we cut across, and the buggy wheel hit a rock and the axle broke. So, the corner I was sitting on driving the team fell right to the ground and I fell out. And when I fell out, I took the lines with me and the horses were trotting – they weren't scared - they were old tame horses. They didn't have any lines though, and they kept right on trotting. I had the lines down there with me, and my foot was caught in the buggy, and the team was dragging me. And the kids – I remember Esther was thrown around and she jumped out. And the team was not being steered, but I was pulling on the lines, I guess, so they ran in a great big circle, and my sister met them when they come around and stopped them and unhooked them and got me loose from the buggy. I couldn't walk; my ankle was dislocated. Then I stayed by the democrat when Esther walked over to Gottfrid

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Andersson's place, and they went to Vidora to get a doctor 'cause we didn't have any telephones, so the doctor come and took me home, and straightened my leg out.

MG: How did he straighten your leg out!?

SB: (laughing) He just took it and went "click" and he put it back. Oh, that hurt. But I was on crutches for a long time – five, six weeks. It was bad.

MG: Oh, I can't even imagine! Did they have painkillers for you at the time?

SB: Not very much! Just castor oil!

MG: Castor oil!! That probably didn't do much good! *(laughing)*

SB: You got castor oil for everything! If you had stomachache, you got castor oil; if you were constipated, you got castor oil!

MG: If you had a dislocated ankle?!

SB: If you did swearing, you got castor oil! It was a cure-all. *(laughing)*

SH: Later on you used to break horses and drop us off at school – Whitemud School. Your children went to the same school you went to before the buses started taking us in. I can remember you used to break horses and on the way, you'd take us to school and pick us up after, in the cutter you had built yourself. Do you remember anything about that?

SB: These horses, sometimes I remember you'd have to get in while they were still on the move – I couldn't stop them. I used to love breaking horses.

SH: You'd run them by the school, and if they didn't get in the first time, you'd run them by the second time! We'd have to jump in and jump out.

MG: *(Laughing)* So, with breaking the horses, then --?

SB: *(laughing)* I was training them to drive. They were wild horses. They grew up wild and when they got full grown, you'd take them in and halter break them – teach them to be tied up, and teach them to be harnessed – pull a wagon or sleigh, put a saddle on and ride them.

MG: When horses are wild are they called mustangs?

SB: A mustang is a wild horse, yes, but there could be other breeds that were wild, too. What was the name for the early horse in this country?

SH: When you went to Whitemud School, did you walk to school?

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SB: When we lived over at the John Bakken place, we walked to school, a mile and a half. After that, when we moved over to Henry's place, then we had three miles to go to school.

SH: We walked, too, but once in awhile we got a ride.

MG: When you were breaking horses, what do you notice about a horse's personality that is wild? How do you do it? How do you break it in?

SB: Well, a horse is wild because it is scared of people. They're like kids - some are more unruly than others. You take them in, you feed them, you pet them, you gentle them and get them so they like you, if you can, or maybe tolerate you. Then you just work with them and use them until they get used to being ridden and they get used to being driven. You just make a tame horse out of a wild one. But they vary so much in disposition – some horses like people, and some horses stay wilder than others all their life, some never get real gentle.

MG: Do you have any that stand out in your mind in particular that were real special?

SB: Well, I can remember when I was about six or seven, my stepfather -- I wanted a horse awfully bad, gee, I wanted a horse. We had a colt that was about a year old, and my stepfather told me when I could ride that colt, I could have it.

MG: Wow.

SB: Well, I first got my uncle Olaf Teigen to come up and get on it in the barn, and it wasn't too bad, but I kept on and kept on with that horse. I led him first and then put him in the barn in the stall, and would sneak up on his back and then off again. And he would get used to me that way, and then finally I could get on and off him in the corral. And then finally I could steer him a little, so I could take him away from the barn and back again. And it wasn't long before he was my horse.

MG: Oh, my -- what did you name him?

SB: Prince.

MG: Oh, what did he look like?

SB: He was a Sorrel horse with a star on his forehead.

MG: That was your first horse?

SB: Yes, that was my first horse, but I had a lot after that because we raised horses.

SH: He used to raise Palominos and you used to ride in parades quite a bit them, didn't you?

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SB: Yes, we used to take them in parades and go on trail rides --

MG: Wow, so even when you were that young and first started riding horses and worked with Prince, did you know that you loved horses?

SB: I knew I liked horses, but I didn't know much about them. I pretty much learned the hard way and made a few mistakes! And once in awhile I would have to walk home! Yes -- I didn't have anybody to teach me to train them, so I learned by trial and error. I'd make some mistakes, but I wouldn't make 'em a second time!

MG: Wow! Sounds like you taught yourself a lot of things in your life -- how to build a house, how to train horses --

SB: It was a life where it was a "do-it-yourself" life. You didn't have a chance to learn very much about it. I would do it all over again, too. I wouldn't change anything. Even the kids, even my girls -- I like them just the way they are.

MG: What a blessing to have a life like this.

SB: Well, we had a good life, a good home and house, and we'd take trips just about every summer for a while, drive to Vancouver in the holiday season. We'd go to South Dakota for a family picnic. Yes, we had a good life.

MG: I think that's what everyone wants, as they go through their life -- to have that feeling.

SB: It's kinda nice to think if you had to do it over again, that you'd do the same thing. I would have wished, if I had a choice when I quit grade school, to go on a little further in school because I didn't know much about keeping books and stuff like that. I made it through them years. But even if I couldn't count money I sure could spend it! (Everyone laughing)

MG: Well, that's the important thing!

SB: Oh, well, I am kind of getting carried away here, I guess -- (*talking off topic as a group*) "It's been a good life."

MG: We are interested in all of it- it's just so interesting -- from Prince to moving rocks to save up for the wedding, meeting your wife at a dance to all of your work projects!

SB: It's been a good life --

MG: So far! So, when was your birthday?

SB: October the 20th, 1912.

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(Break, then eating, camera off).

(Notes by Nancy-Jean Taylor (current president of Consul Museum Board) made from talking to Sigurd on 16 Feb 2009 to clarify names and locations. See also pg 280 Our Side of the Hills.)

Pg 2. Sigurd's log home was built on SE ¼ Sec 8 R25 Twp 6.

Pg 7. Henry Thormoseth (Gudve's brother) – Henry spelled his last name this way, other relatives spelled it Thormoset (Spelling varied according to Shirley Wenaas: Shirley's mother-in-law was Esther Brekus) NE12-6-26 W3.

Pg 11 Humphries lived in the section north of Sigurd. Walter and Maggie Humphrey and three children: Daphne, Pansy and Hubert. Pansy was Sigurd's second wife.

Pg 11. Harry was an uncle and Henry Thormoseth's halfbrother. Harry Westvig. There is a butte named "Henry and Harry Butte" north of NE 12-6-26-W3. Martin Wenaas has copies of the Government of Saskatchewan Commemoration of the butte. Sigurd's two sisters in the accident were Esther (oldest) and Lucille. Their father, Lars died in February 1914 when Sigurd was one. Lucille was born in July 1914. They lived in a sod house.

Pg 12. Gottfrid Andersson was a bachelor who owned a car. (pg 218)

Pg 13. John Bakken was Sigurd's stepfather. See page 246 Volume 1 in Our Side of the Hills.