

Doug and Millie Hay Interview

by Vi Kowalchuk

Hay: It's unwinding now.

Kowalchuk: Well, no, but at the very beginning we never catch the first few words.

All right, Mr. Hay is going to tell us this story about this gathering.

Kowalchuk: After the cigars.

Hay: After the meal was over, they passed the cigars around and the man that was going to run for the Social Credit Party, Mr. Taid, he said, "No, thank you . . ." Everybody said, "Gee, he doesn't smoke, eh?" "Oh," he says, "he doesn't drink either. Didn't you notice he turned a drink down?" And so anyway they talked about it for a while and they said, "Mr. Taid, how come you don't drink and you don't smoke?" "Well," he says, "I tried them both once, and I didn't like it, so I don't do it anymore." So the guy says after he didn't talk to Taid anymore, toward the party, and he says, "You know that he had one child, too." (All laugh.)

Kowalchuk: That's cute, that's all right.

Hay: That actually happened.

Kowalchuk: That actually happened, that's right. That was quite something for them to come to Colinton like that.

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: Did somebody special here in this area, some politician, call them here, or . . .

Hay: No, I think they were going around to get nominees, you see. Clarence Taid was in Colinton here.

Kowalchuk: Yeah, oh sure, he was.

Gene Kowalchuk: That was before Aberhart was elected was it, or after?

Hay: This was getting . . . elected. He run for Aberhart, you know.

Gene Kowalchuk: They had been elected.

Hay: No, no.

Pearson: That's the first year they went in.

Kowalchuk: Can you give us a year for that little get together? What year?

Gene Kowalchuk: 33, was it?

Pearson: I can't just remember.

Gene Kowalchuk: When did you think, Jim?

Pearson: In the thirties, there, 32, 33.

Hay: Because we had a big hail storm.

Hay: Social Credit . . . we had the biggest hail storm we ever had in our lives.

Kowalchuk: Is that right.

Hay: I went up to that place before that election come up, and Quinn was up about like that, very good. Went up the next day after that election, and you'd have thought I had been on there with the disk. It really cleaned it off.

Kowalchuk: You didn't have . . .

Hay: It pounded it right into the ground.

Kowalchuk: And you didn't have insurance in those days.

Hay: Lucky if you had even enough money to buy seed.

Kowalchuk: Never mind insurance, eh.

Gene Kowalchuk: That was in June, you say. A hailstorm that early?

Hay: July, yeah.

Hay: No, it was earlier than that.

Pearson: No, because we just finished coiling up a bunch of hay out there. The next morning you could walk anyplace and it was scattered all over the place.

Gene Kowalchuk: Sure did.

Kowalchuk: All right, so now we're just going to go back a little bit again because we talked about the time when Barb was born, and then you had another child, David, and when was David born?

Hay: Gee, you ask the most embarrassing questions. But we can find out for you.

Kowalchuk: Certainly, you can. And I guess you were glad to get a son, too, no doubt, weren't you? You were glad to have your son arrive.

Hay: Oh yes.

Kowalchuk: I'm sure Mrs. Hay is going to look it up.

Hay: Well, Barbara come along first.

Kowalchuk: Yes, in . . .

Hay: And we were glad to get her, but everybody thought that, you know, that we should have a boy first.

Kowalchuk: Oh.

Hay: And so Dad said, “Well, don’t worry about it.” He says, “We’ve had a lot of boys in the Hay families. It’s time we had a girl now.”

Kowalchuk: Okay, well, while, well, how old is David now? You must know how old he is.

Hay: How old is he? Oh, around forty something.

Hay: He was born on November 15, 1945.

Kowalchuk: November 15, 1945. Okay, and . . .

Hay: Now, we’ll see how good her arithmetic is.

Kowalchuk: No, I’m not thinking about the age, but I’m just thinking because you said Debbie was born in 44.

Hay: No, Debbie was born in 53.

Kowalchuk: Not Debbie, sorry. Barbara, I’m sorry, Barb.

Hay: Barbara, yeah. There was three years between them.

Hay: 1940.

Kowalchuk: Oh, Barb was born in 40. That’s what I thought. I knew that wasn’t right. Okay, of course, David attended Colinton school, grades what, one to . . .

Hay: Nine.

Kowalchuk: Grade nine they had here.

Hay: No, grade ten. David finished grade ten. Mr. Conway.

Kowalchuk: Oh, Conway, from the United States.

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: Oh sure, then he took grade eleven and twelve in Athabasca.

Hay: No.

Kowalchuk: No?

Hay: He wouldn't go to school in Athabasca.

Hay: So he went but he didn't like it.

Hay: No, he didn't go at all. David never did go. He come home from here just before school was out, he came home from Colinton jumping about so high off the ground. He says, "I've got my future all settled. I joined the army today."

Kowalchuk: Oh, for heaven's sakes.

Hay: And he was sent from here to Calgary in the first week in July, and he was accepted there, and then he was on a month's leave, and he came back home, and he went, they sent him to Kingston, Ontario. And David never would stay away from home at night. He'd go to stay with Dale, and in the middle of the night, come David home. So when he got in the army and got to Kingston, he phoned home collect, "Mom, I'm so lonesome. If there was any way I could get out of her, I'd be home."

Kowalchuk: And go to Athabasca school and all, eh. But he didn't leave. He was in the army for how many years?

Hay: Seven years.

Kowalchuk: Seven years, all right.

Hay: And he got his grade ten, eleven, twelve, and thirteen.

Kowalchuk: Oh, he could take his education.

Hay: Yeah, he's got the scholastic standing of his company there.

Kowalchuk: Well.

Hay: And he got . . .

Kowalchuk: Great. What is he doing now?

Hay: He's working for Slumberjae. Has been for what, sixteen years?

Hay: He's a computer expert.

Hay: He works with computerized tools. He travels Canada and the United States.

Kowalchuk: Does he?

Hay: Yeah, and he won quite an award with Slumberjae.

Kowalchuk: All right, we're going to hear about his award right away. Then you had your Heather.

Hay: Yes, that's right.

Kowalchuk: I'll bet you remember when she was born.

Hay: You remember when she was born?

Kowalchuk: Do you?

Hay: Oh sure.

Hay: What?

Kowalchuk: Your Heather, when she came along. All right, just before we talk about Heather, let's have a look at this.

Hay: He won a thousand dollars.

Kowalchuk: There's David Hay. Now is this . . .

Hay: That's *Soundoff*. That's Slumberjae's magazine.

Kowalchuk: I see. Annual suggestion systems award and we don't have a date. Tell us what year he won this award and what it was all about.

Hay: Well he works on this machinery and he figured out some way that he could do something a lot easier if he had a little tool, and he made . . .

Hay: He modified the recently calliberated toolism game.

Kowalchuk: CNT-A.

Hay: So he sent his suggestion in to the company and they accepted it and he got this award for doing that.

Kowalchuk: Well, this picture of Beatrice and David. Isn't that interesting. And you say he got a thousand dollars along with it.

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: Oh, that's great.

Hay: Oh.

Kowalchuk: It says David Hay was amazed at how simple it was to make such a critical modification to the compensated neutron tool. Hmm. Isn't that something. Very good. Yes, Gene, you taught David, didn't you?

Hay: He taught David and Barb, too.

Gene Kowalchuk: I don't remember David, I remember Barb.

Kowalchuk: No, maybe you were gone to Ellscott. So, he's doing very well then.
They have what, three children?

Hay: Two, two girls.

Kowalchuk: Two girls. And they're living now . . .

Hay: At Crossfield.

Kowalchuk: Crossfield in Alberta. All right, and then Heather, your third child
was born?

Hay: In Edmonton.

Hay: No, she was born in Athabasca.

Kowalchuk: I bet she was born in 57. The reason I think that is because our Cheryl
was born in 57 and I think they were in the same class, but you'll have to check on
that. But Colinton was still operating when Heather was born. Yes, it was.

Hay: Yeah, she was in grade three or four.

Kowalchuk: When the school closed here, she attended Athabasca then.

Hay: Yeah, she attended Athabasca. She was the orneriest one in the bunch.

Kowalchuk: Was she? How do you figure that?

Hay: When Heather wanted to do something, that's what it was.

Kowalchuk: Is that right.

Hay: Whether you wanted her to do it or not.

Mrs. Pearson: She had lots of older people around to spoil her a little bit at that time.

Kowalchuk: That's true.

Mrs. Pearson: I know all about this.

Kowalchuk: Yes, I guess so, Mrs. Pearson. She came a little later and probably everyone doted on her, and just tell us a little bit about her.

Hay: She was born in 56.

Kowalchuk: Oh, 56, all right.

Hay: Well, she was always a good student and she enjoyed school, and she enjoyed 4-H. 4-H did an awful lot for her as far as public speaking, and she took she won an award with the 4-H, and for that she got a week in Toronto. And they took in a hockey game, courtesy of Esso, and . . .

Kowalchuk: She went Toronto Maple Leaf Gardens?

Hay: Yeah, so she beat me.

Kowalchuk: She beat you.

Hay: Because I never saw one.

Kowalchuk: And I just saw the outside of it.

Hay: And they took them to the Science Centre, and they stayed at the Royal York Hotel, and she really enjoyed that. And then she got a job in Edmonton at, well, she was there for quite a while and couldn't get a, she got a job at the Treasury Branch in Edmonton, the main branch, and she worked there for a year and a half. She come home one day and said, "I got my passport. I'm going to Europe."

Kowalchuk: What did you think of that?

Hay: I was floored. And she said, "Debbie Wytenko and I are going." So the next thing I get a phone call from Mary and she says, "Put your foot down and don't let Heather go, and then my girl won't want to go." I said, "Well, you put your foot down." Doug says, "You're not putting your foot down. They're going."

Kowalchuk: They were only what, eighteen, nineteen, twenty, nineteen?

Hay: No, about eighteen. And so I said, "Well, you better get yourself a suitcase." "Don't want a suitcase, got a pack sack." And they both had back packs, put their Canadian flag on the back, and away they went. Their first stop was Oslo, Norway. They stayed there for a month, and they worked on a market garden farm.

Hay: This was all arranged before they left Canada.

Kowalchuk: Oh, they did arrange that.

Hay: Yeah, they arranged it. And they got twenty dollars a week and their room and board. The people were very good to them. They took them to see all the important places. From there they went to Finland, and they were three miles apart there. They were with wealthy people, and they taught English to the children.

Kowalchuk: To the children.

Hay: To the children. And Debbie's family told her, if she'd stay an extra month, they would take her for a trip to Lapland. So the girls stayed an extra month and our Debbie got to go to Lapland.

Kowalchuk: Interesting.

Hay: And from there they went to, they decided they were going to Greece. And they had arranged to stay in hostels. And if you're going to stay in a hostel, you have to be there for 9:00 in the evening. So anyway they got to this hostel, it was

before they left for Greece, it must have been in Finland somewhere, and they did their laundry and hung it out, and went sight-seeing. When they come back, they didn't have any laundry.

Kowalchuk: Oh, dear. Oh, good gracious. What did they do?

Hay: Well, they had to go and do a little shopping. So anyway they got up in the morning and they see a notice on the bulletin board telling them that or saying that this fellow wanted someone to drive a car to Greece, and they'd give them forty dollars and pay all their expenses. So the silly kids decided to drive this car to Greece.

Kowalchuk: These brave girls.

Hay: So they run out of gas, and he says, "I haven't any money."

Hay: First of all they went to the . . .

Hay: Well, they went to the embassy and found out if they could drive, and they said they could. So the first time they run out of gas, he said, "I haven't any money here, but just hold on." So he went to the trunk of the car, and he got out some radios and he sold these radios. And he says, "Now, we can fill the car, and we can have a steak dinner." So the next time they ran out of gas, he had some watches he sold. So I said to them, "Wouldn't you have been smart if he had been selling drugs?"

Kowalchuk: Yes, I was going to say.

Hay: So when they got to Greece, it was too late. They couldn't go to the hostel, so they had to get a room in a hotel. And they had money, but he didn't. So the hotel, the hotel guy if you give me your passport, I'll give you a room for the night, and when you pay me in the morning, because he had this car sold apparently, I'll pay

you, I'll give you back your passport." So, the girls, after he went away, the girls come down and told this fellow that he owed them forty dollars. So he collected their forty dollars in the morning as well as for their rooms. So then they never saw the fellow again.

Kowalchuk: Oh goodness sakes. Chalk it up to experience, though.

Hay: And then when they were going to leave Greece to go somewhere's else, there was a riot. And their boats that they had passage on couldn't come in to port because somebody had been killed on the street and then all the people were rioting. So they didn't know what to do. So they saw a policeman. He said, "Stay put. Don't go where there's a crowd, and we'll see that you get to your boat." So after dark, they took them by a smaller boat to the ship, and that's how they got out of there.

Kowalchuk: Those girls, those girls!

Hay: And then they went to Mary Islands somewhere along the line. They stayed there for two weeks because they got room and board for \$2.50 a day with maid service.

Kowalchuk: Oh my. Very good.

Hay: And then they finally got to France, and they went to grapes and that nearly killed them because they hadn't done anything like that before.

Kowalchuk: Really, that was strenuous.

Hay: That was strenuous. Then they finally got to England, then Scotland, and then they came back just before Christmas.

Kowalchuk: How long in all?

Hay: They were six months.

Kowalchuk: Six months. What an experience, eh? Gracious sakes, yes. And now Debbie has continued her education, hasn't she? Or Heather I should say.

Hay: Yes, she will have her Ph.D. in May in _____ College.

Kowalchuk: That's what it is.

Hay: She's got her B.A., her Master's, and now she'll have her Ph.D.

Kowalchuk: In child psychology. Very good.

Hay: And Wednesday, she's flying to South Carolina to present a paper for Boston University.

Kowalchuk: Oh my goodness.

Hay: So she's been to Washington, Baltimore, Denver, and now to North Carolina. And this is all expense paid by the University.

Kowalchuk: Of course, of course, sure. Gosh.

Hay: So she's very happy. But she hasn't found a job yet.

Kowalchuk: Oh, she hasn't. Yes, well.

Hay: But she can teach part time at the Boston University and work part time at the Boston Children's University, so she's not too concerned. But she would like to get somewhere where she could be she could pursue her topic, research is what she'd like.

Kowalchuk: Oh yes. So if anybody wants to know how to bring up some children, I guess all they have to do is talk to Heather. She knows all about it.

Hay: Well, don't you ever tell Heather there's such a thing as a slow learner, or she'll jump right down your throat.

Kowalchuk: Oh?

Hay: She says there's no such thing.

Kowalchuk: I guess that's what they say. It's just that everybody learns at their own time in their own way.

Hay: She said that her teacher system puts them in a mold and that mold follows them all through school and they don't have a chance. The child realizes that they are classed as a slow learner, so why should they do anything else. And she says she has proved it.

Kowalchuk: Tell some of the teachers today.

Hay: She has proved it.

Kowalchuk: She has, eh?

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: The only trouble is you get into a whole mess of things that you can't deal with, because if Jane can write an exam in forty minutes, but Charley takes seventy-five minutes, you're sunk right there. Anyway, that's a whole different topic. You mentioned 4-H, and I was wondering if you people were very involved in organizations during your life here in Colinton.

Hay: Well all the time that Barb and Debbie were in 4-H, I was a 4-H leader. Doug had seventeen scouts and they met in our house every Wednesday and we supplied them with lunch.

Hay: We went on camps.

Kowalchuk: Did you?

Hay: Then we belonged to the young people's club that was connected with the Church. And I was president of the WA for a good number of years. I belonged to the choir. Doug belonged to the Canadian Club that used to meet in Athabasca.

Kowalchuk: Canadian Club?

Hay: Young Canadians who called it the young Canadian Club.

Kowalchuk: I don't think I've heard of it. What was the aim of the club?

Hay: Just to keep us happy.

Pearson: Frank ^{Falconer} Falkoner was a member.

Hay: And we met in Legion Hall in Athabasca.

Kowalchuk: Oh, did you?

Hay: Frank Falconer was one of them.

Gene Kowalchuk: Wasn't the Elks?

Hay: No, it was the Young Canadians.

Kowalchuk: I can't recall hearing about them. You talked about being in the choir. That was the Anglican Church?

Hay: It was before there was, what do they call them now, wears the uniforms.

Pearson: Legion.

Hay: The Cadets.

Kowalchuk: Oh, I see. That type of thing.

Hay: It was before there was any Cadets.

Kowalchuk: When did the Colinton Church close down?

Hay: It isn't closed down.

Kowalchuk: Is it still on?

Hay: The Roman Catholic Church closed down.

Kowalchuk: Oh, it's the Roman Catholic Church.

Hay: The Anglican Church they have a service every Sunday.

Kowalchuk: Every week here?

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: Oh, sure.

Gene Kowalchuk: 9:00.

Hay: We don't have a resident minister.

Mrs. Hay: One Sunday a week it's 7:30 at night.

Kowalchuk: Is it?

Hay: One Sunday a night it's 7:30 at night and Mr. Speers, Revered Speers comes down.

Kowalchuk: Oh sure, what am I thinking about? Of course, he comes out here.

Gene Kowalchuk: Well, that church on the corner there, is that a United Church?

Hay: It was the United Church.

Gene Kowalchuk: That's closed.

Hay: That's closed and it's sold and someone from the University has converted it into a house.

Kowalchuk: Have they? From Athabasca University?

Hay: Yeah.

Kowalchuk: Oh, for goodness sakes.

Pearson: And there was never a Roman Catholic Church here, was there?

Kowalchuk and Hay: Yes, there is.

Pearson: Where?

Gene Kowalchuk: Just behind the Anglican.

Hay: Just behind the Anglican church.

Pearson: Still operating?

Kowalchuk: No, they say it isn't.

Hay: No, it hasn't operated for a long time. The Anglican church is the only one that's operating.

Kowalchuk: All right, well, I think we've covered a lot of topics here. I like your stories, Mr. Hay.

Hay: You wanted to know about that story, the school teachers. I thought you would be interested in that. I thought about this. It was in the oh, late June, you know, everybody was getting ready to go for their holidays, you know, and there wasn't very much going at school. It was a lovely hot day and the windows were all open and the kids were crawling in and out of the windows. You know what happened? All of a sudden a man showed up. And he happened to be the school

inspector. And he looks around, this was in quite a commotion, you know. The teacher hadn't got back from her lunch or anything. So he looks around and he sees the biggest girl there, and that happened to be Kathleen Bannerman. He grabs the bell and he says, "Call school." So she took the bell and she looked very startled too. But she rung the bell and all the kids come in. Half of them tried to come through the windows. Then they saw him. Backed up and come through the door. Finally, some kind of law and order. Then low and behold, the teacher arrived. And she was just as surprised, or maybe more surprised than the rest. So him, the inspector, talked for a while. We don't know what they talked about. Anyway, finally he said, "Call such and such a class, and take such and such a subject." She did that. Nobody would change to this class. You take math on it. Now this teacher was awful bad at math. She was just out of normal. And I knew about just as much math half as she did and I was in grade six at that time. So I guess the inspector knew this, too. And so she says, "Well, what part of math do you like?" And he kind of hesitated. She says, "How about ^{rapid} rabbit calculation?" Because she knew she had a kid there that was really good at ^{rapid} rabbit calculating. So he says, "That's okay, go ahead with that." So this guy, he was really smart on his ^{rapid} rabbit calculating. She could count out numbers and he'd have the answer with him how they added up, you know, just right now. So this inspector listened to this for a little while, and then he says to this kid, "You think you're pretty smart." And he says, "Yes, I do." So then, after, you know, he held up his hands like that and everybody stopped laughing right away. And he says, "You stand up. I'll give you some math." So this kid stood up shaking, you know, and that guy, he asked a lot of questions, times-tables and everything, and he got along pretty fair. The inspector says, "You still think you're smart?" He says, "Yeah."

Gene Kowalchuk: Who needs to be bothered?

Kowalchuk: I thought you were going to . . .

Hay: So that was all about that one.

Kowalchuk: I thought you were going to tell us about the time the kids locked the teacher in the toilet.

Hay: Yes, there was the other guy, and there was a different teacher there, you know. He was a young man pretty much out of normal, and a very good hockey player . . . and the kids got the idea that he wasn't giving them quite a long enough recess. He was cheating on the recess time. So they complained about that, and he says, "No, I'm giving you exactly fifteen minutes, and that's what it's going to continue at. Fifteen-minute recesses." So the boys all had a huddle and took room when they got out for recess and I didn't know what was going on. But the older boys seemed to have it all figured out. And so we went out to play ball and I kept watching and watching. Finally, teacher some . . . had an idea that he had to go to the bathroom. So he went down to the toilet. And somebody run there and turned the catch on the door. And there was no opening on the inside. Just on the outside. So recess got to be half an hour. Some of the girls began to wonder why in the heck he isn't calling school. So they went in to school to find out, and there was no teacher there. So then they says, "What happened to the teacher? They come to where we were playing ball. What happened to teacher?" "Oh," they started to laugh. "We know where the teacher is. He's in that little building over there." So whoever that doggone girl was, she got smart, and she went over there and turned the latch, and then run away. Pretty soon we see the teacher walking across, never looked one way or another, straight into school, and the bell rang.

Kowalchuk: So he didn't find out who did it?

Hay: No, never said a word about it at all.

Kowalchuk: I'm surprised when you talk about . . .

Hay: That was never mentioned in school at all.

Kowalchuk: Why were kids coming through the windows?

Hay: Why were the kids climbing in and out the windows?

Pearson: Kids are kids.

Hay: It's just something to do, you know, that you can't do in the winter time.

Kowalchuk: I see. Okay, Mrs. Hay, we're going to tie this up. If you'll just sit down for a minute, we're going to just wrap this up, because I just want you to tell me how you're spending your retirement years, and what you enjoy most.

Hay: Well, I used to like sleeping in, but I can't sleep in anymore. I have to be up at 8:00 to take my needle.

Kowalchuk: Oh sure.

Hay: I do, I collect dolls, and I like dressing them. And I do a lot of _____ embroidery, and I read, and I watch T.V. We go to Seniors . . .

(Tape 4, Side B ends here)