

**KM-0046**

**SYLVI ANNIKKI**

**BIRTHDATE: MAY 7, 1918**

**INTERVIEW DATE: JUNE 25, 1994**

**AGE AT TIME OF INTERVIEW: 76**

**RUNNING TIME: 1:36:39**

**INTERVIEWER: KATE MOORE**

**RECORDING ENGINEER: VARANTOLA**

**TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY: MELISSA PERLZWEIG**

**TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY:**

**FINLAND, 1924**

**AGE: 6**

**SHIP:**

**PORT: HANKO**

**RESIDENCES:**

**FINLAND: PORI; HELSINKI**

**UNITED STATES: ABERDEEN, WASHINGTON**

**HISTORIAN'S NOTE: A male, presumably Mrs. Annikki's husband, is present for the interview and speaks but is not identified. He is referred to in the transcript as "MALE".**

MOORE: Good afternoon. This is Kate Moore for the National Park Service. Today is the 25<sup>th</sup> of June, 1994 and I'm in Aberdeen, Washington at the home of Sylvia Katainen, who came from Finland in 1924 when she was six years old. Why don't you begin by giving me your full [recording skips].

ANNIKKI: Well my full name is Sylvi Annikki born May the seventh, 1918.

MOORE: And could you spell your name please, for us, for records later?

ANNIKKI: My first name?

MOORE: All your names.

ANNIKKI: Sylvi, S-Y-L-V-I, Annikki, A-N-N-I-K-K-I.

MOORE: And your maiden name?

ANNIKKI: Lagerbom, L-A-G-E-R-B-O-M.

MOORE: And where were you born?

ANNIKKI: Pori, Finland.

MOORE: Could you spell Pori please?

ANNIKKI: P-O-R-I.

MOORE: And what size town was Pori at that time, do you remember?

ANNIKKI: Ah, I think it was about sixth in size [recording skips] the larger cities there so it had to have to over hundred thousand population.

MOORE: And what were the – what did the town look like? What type of town was it? What was the major industry?

ANNIKKI: Major industry was cotton meal and uh – [not understood] and paper and [not understood] work. (cuckoo clock goes off)

MOORE: [not understood] work. And what type of town was it? Could you describe it at all?

ANNIKKI: Lively town with two parks making a cross in the main city, dividing it in four quarters.

MOORE: And what was your father's name?

ANNIKKI: My father's name was Kaarle Johannes Lagerbom.

MOORE: Could you spell the first names please?

ANNIKKI: K-A-A-R-L-E, Johannes J-O-H-A-N-N-E-S.

MOORE: And what was his occupation?

ANNIKKI: He was a laborer.

MOORE: And what type of laborer work did he do?

ANNIKKI: Any kind. He was good in everything.

MOORE: And what did he look like?

ANNIKKI: Handsome young man. Very handsome. Tall, 'proximately six feet [recording skips]. Loved music, good dancer, good singer.

MOORE: What about his personality and temperament?

ANNIKKI: Jealous.

MOORE: Of whom or what?

ANNIKKI: Jealous of anyone who said a bad word about his family.

MOORE: Is there a story about your father that you remember from your childhood that typifies him?

ANNIKKI: Yes. If he couldn't get us up from the bed we were sleeping in, he would come and rattle the end of the bed and he would put the phonograph playing and he would take his accordion and his harmonica and if there wasn't noise then, we all got up.

MOORE: (laughs) What was your mother's name?

ANNIKKI: Selma, S-E-L-M-A, Elizabet, E-L-I-Z-A-B-E-T.

MOORE: Alright and –

ANNIKKI: And her maiden name Heinonen.

MOORE: How do you spell that?

ANNIKKI: H-E-I-N-O-N-E-N.

MOORE: And what was her occupation?

ANNIKKI: Home wife.

MOORE: Alright, and what did she look like?

ANNIKKI: Petite, dark haired, very quiet, good voice – in singing. Held more to herself.

MOORE: And what were her chores around the house?

ANNIKKI: She just kept the h—taking care of us wild ones.

MOORE: (laughs) And is there a story about your mother that t—that you think tells about her that you remember from your childhood?

ANNIKKI: Yes. And it is that I had her too short of a time. She was only thirty-seven when she sold out. She was only thirty-seven when she had a nervous breakdown in America.

MOORE: When she came here.

ANNIKKI: She lived here for about three, four years and then she had it.

MOORE: We'll get to that in a moment, alright. We'll talk about that later. What about your brothers and sisters? How many did you have?

ANNIKKI: I had a brother and a sister that followed us when we came to America.

MOORE: And what were their names?

ANNIKKI: Pentti Johannes.

MOORE: And Pentti you spell--?

ANNIKKI: P-E-N-T-T-I.

MOORE: Yeah and Joha—Johannes?

ANNIKKI: Johannes, J-O-H-A-N-N-E-S. Oh, he did have a third name too – Armus, of course.

MOORE: Armus, yeah. And how old were they in relation to you?

ANNIKKI: Two years apart, we were.

MOORE: And who – you were the oldest – the eldest?

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: Yes.

ANNIKKI: So we were six, four, and two.

MOORE: So Pentti came after you—

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: And then your younger sister?

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: I see. What about your house in Finland. What did it look like?

ANNIKKI: I don't know how you can describe it.

MOORE: What was it made of?

ANNIKKI: Wood.

MOORE: It was a wooden house –

ANNIKKI: My dad built it himself.

MOORE: I see. And what color was it?

ANNIKKI: Um, if I remember right, it was white with green trimming.

MOORE: And how many rooms were in that house?

ANNIKKI: Two and a half.

MOORE: And what were those two rooms?

ANNIKKI: Kitchen and kind of a family room and then a little nook for a bedroom.

MOORE: And how was it heated?

ANNIKKI: Wood.

MOORE: Wood stove?

ANNIKKI: Wood stove.

MOORE: Was there a garden?

ANNIKKI: Yes. [not understood] the potatoes are.

MOORE: And what – what did you grow besides potatoes, anything else?

ANNIKKI: No, because he was – my dad was from a farm so we had a chance to get all the other vegetables and grain stuff and all that from—

MOORE: From your grandparents' farm?

ANNIKKI: Yes. His mother and dad.

MOORE: And where do they live?

ANNIKKI: In Makkila.

MOORE: And where is that?

ANNIKKI: Makkila near [not understood]. [not understood] Makkila.

MOORE: Could you spell Makkila and [not understood]?

ANNIKKI: They're right near Pori.

MOORE: Yeah?

ANNIKKI: [not understood] is only about – I think twenty minutes by train from Pori.

MOORE: Uh huh. And how do you spell—

ANNIKKI: Makkila is – we have a saying [spoken in Finnish]. And it's a nice, small farming area. And it's spelled M-A-K-K-I-L-A, Makkila.

MOORE: And did you keep animals at all?

ANNIKKI: No.

MOORE: Did your – any of your grandparents or other family members live in the house with you?

ANNIKKI: No.

MOORE: Who did the cooking in the family?

ANNIKKI: Mother.

MOORE: Alright. What was your favorite food?

ANNIKKI: [spoken in Finnish]

MOORE: And what are they in English?

ANNIKKI: Rice pudding and berry soup.

MOORE: And did you help cook at all?

ANNIKKI: No.

MOORE: Describe the kitchen.

ANNIKKI: [recording skips] and my dad built all the furniture -- every piece of furniture in the home. And so, they were pretty sturdy -- all of them -- and had to be, with us wild ones running around all the time.

MOORE: And what was -- what wood did he make it out of -- all the furniture?

ANNIKKI: I think (long pause) could've it been birch I think. And -- and then, well what was commonly used them days.

MOORE: What about meal time? What was mealtime like?

ANNIKKI: Be quiet and eat.

MOORE: And you all ate together?

ANNIKKI: Yes, we did.

MOORE: How many meals a day did you eat?

ANNIKKI: Um, one – um – heavier meal when dad came home from work and then mom just fixed something for us children w--whenever she had a chance to get us together.

MOORE: Did you eat breakfast?

ANNIKKI: No.

MOORE: Right. Were there other – the family members nearby were your grandparents. Where were – as you said in Makkila.

ANNIKKI: Yes, and mother's mother lived not too far away either – in Pori.

MOORE: In Pori. And was your house in town or out of town?

ANNIKKI: Just the outskirts of Pori, just the outskirts there.

MOORE: In what section of Pori was it?

ANNIKKI: It's called [not understood].

MOORE: And were you partic—especially close to someone in the family?

ANNIKKI: My dad.

MOORE: Your dad. And the place where your grandmother – your mother's mother lived – where was that?

ANNIKKI: She lived about fifteen minutes from us so she was in the same area and it's called [not understood]. Sixth park of the town.

MOORE: Alright. Do you have any anecdotes about any of your family members? Funny things have happened that you remember?

ANNIKKI: (laughs) Well now to tell you the truth it's been more sad than funny so I – I just don't at the moment now remember any.

MOORE: Alright. Anything sad too, you can say if you feel like it, ok?

ANNIKKI: Yeah that we drifted all apart.

MOORE: Later in life?

ANNIKKI: Yes. Early – early in life.

MOORE: Early? Do you want to talk about that now or wait until after we talk about some of the other facts?

ANNIKKI: Um, my dad got – it would go back to where my dad wanted to come to America.

MOORE: Mhmm.

ANNIKKI: And he just got the fever soon after the house was finished and we had moved in. And he wanted to go and he couldn't get his relatives to sponsor him here in America. My mother had a friend who she had worked for as a young girl and they were in America and they were the ones that sponsored my dad.

MOORE: And where were they living this--?

ANNIKKI: In Aberdeen.

MOORE: In Aberdeen.

ANNIKKI: In Aberdeen.

MOORE: Alright.

ANNIKKI: So this is the way my dad got here first.

MOORE: Ok well – we'll get to that in a second and we'll talk about what happened to the family because of that – that move. But before you left in Finland, what was religious life like then?

ANNIKKI: Very good. I went to Sunday school and in no way did I want to miss any.

MOORE: And it was fun?

ANNIKKI: And my dad didn't care more so but my mom was very much for it. And she was happy that I wanted to go.

MOORE: And did your parents go to church?

ANNIKKI: No.

MOORE: What denomination were you? What religion?

ANNIKKI: Lutheran.

MOORE: Lutheran.

ANNIKKI: Eventually I become a Lutheran.

MOORE: Did you practice at home any prayers before bed or --?

ANNIKKI: Before going to sleep maybe as little children we did, yes.

MOORE: And do you remember any of those?

ANNIKKI: [says prayers in Finnish

MOORE: We'll have – we'll – we'll write that down.

ANNIKKI: Very common Finnish prayer.

MOORE: What about before meals? Did you pray before meals?

ANNIKKI: No, we didn't.

MOORE: What about holiday celebrations? What were your favorite holiday celebrations?

ANNIKKI: Christmas, of course.

MOORE: Why?

ANNIKKI: Because Santa Claus would come, even if you didn't have much. But it was just that suspension that you were in to have Santa come. But you never saw him, because then days they threw the bag from the door and disappeared.

MOORE: And what did you eat during Christmas? Was there any special foods or --?

ANNIKKI: Um, yes. We had that rice pudding and that berry soup. We had potato casserole, rutabaga casserole, beet salad.

MOORE: And what about meat? Did you eat a meat dish?

ANNIKKI: Ham.

MOORE: Ham.

ANNIKKI: Ham.

MOORE: Christmas ham.

ANNIKKI: Christmas ham.

MOORE: And did you go to church on Christmas?

ANNIKKI: Yes, we did.

MOORE: As a family?

ANNIKKI: I can't remember if we all went but I know mom went with us.

MOORE: Did you go to school in Finland?

ANNIKKI: Yes, I did.

MOORE: And c—what was school life like there?

ANNIKKI: Returning from America I went into the fifth grade.

MOORE: Alright so first you came –

ANNIKKI: [interposed] I mean the sixth grade.

MOORE: Oh.

ANNIKKI: In – in public school -- in Helsinki.

MOORE: And so we'll go – we'll go back to that then afterwards – what school was like. But um – you said your father – before that, what did you do for entertainment as a child? What type of games did you play? Do you remember any?

ANNIKKI: [recording skips] and – and singing. And dancing [not understood]. That's what we loved to do.

MOORE: And when you [recording skips] in childhood, what would you say were your best moments? [recording skips]

ANNIKKI: Well, I guess they were those early years that I remember when Grandma came over and we would dress the Christmas tree -- Christmas Eve. And she would watch me because I was the one that wanted to do it. And I was a

short, stubby little girl so she was scared that I'm gonna turn that tree upside down as – the way I was going. And I did burn my good, nice Christmas dress because I lit a candle down below where I should've lit the upper ones first. So I was one that they had to watch all the time. I got into mischief.

MOORE: (laughs) But you liked when Grandmother was there with [not understood]?

ANNIKKI: [superposed] Oh Grandma was good. And she always said to my mother – you don't know how to bring up children. Mother was so good – tenderhearted. She couldn't scold us, so we had a chance to do whatever we wanted.

MOORE: And this is y—which grandmother was this now?

ANNIKKI: This was my mother's mother. Dad's mother was a stern one. You wouldn't do that with her. Thank heavens she lived further.

MOORE: (laughs)

ANNIKKI: Those kids had a [not understood].

MOORE: Well you said your father decided to come and you said that your mother had a friend.

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: Do you remember getting – him getting ready to leave?

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: What happened?

ANNIKKI: My little sister Helme – the sister that was with us when we came – her. She was my father's -- father's favorite child and she was only so little as one year old. And dad took her in his lap and we had a picture taken of all of us. And it was hard for him to depart because the children were so young. But he just had that what we call [not understood] and he carried it with him and left. And we were put on the kitchen table – um – sitting on a kitchen table because the w—our window looked out towards the road that he walked. He had to walk to get stop – bus or whatever he took – I can't remember. So we watched him until he disappeared. And my little sister Helme said Papa ei tule, Papa ei tule. Daddy's not coming, Daddy's not coming. Papa [spoken in Finnish]. That's how much she could speak already so she was a little above a year old.

MOORE: And—

ANNIKKI: It was sad.

MOORE: And it was sad. Did your mother react – was your mother—

ANNIKKI: She more or less left us sitting on the table and disappeared. So I think she had so hard that she just went and bawled somewhere else. She wouldn't show it to the children.

MOORE: Mm. When you say [Finnish word] what – how would you translate [Finnish word]?

ANNIKKI: Guts.

MOORE: Guts.

ANNIKKI: Determination.

MOORE: And that's a typical Finnish thing?

ANNIKKI: Yes. We are known here – all over America – for that.

MOORE: And so what – what happened? How long was your father in the states and how did you join him?

ANNIKKI: Father was a year and then he sent us – his family – a ticket. Mother sold the house and off we went.

MOORE: And what did he do in Aberdeen when he came here?

ANNIKKI: He came straight to Aberdeen because of the family that sponsored him lived here. So he came here – he didn't stop at Butte, Montana where so many did. And he was not a man to go underground anyway. Farmer's son – he wouldn't have liked that job anyway.

MOORE: You mean in the mines.

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: Yeah.

ANNIKKI: So many um – stopped first in east America and went into the mining and then they came to Butte, Montana and stayed there. But then later on they got to know that this is the country to come to if you like to be outdoors. And so they transferred their work then – this area. My dad went right away to a saw mill.

MOORE: To a saw mill to work.

ANNIKKI: That's what he did.

MOORE: And when your mom s—do you remember selling a house and – and your mother's attitude toward it? Did she want to come?

ANNIKKI: No.

MOORE: And did she say so as much?

ANNIKKI: She feared the trip and – and her mother was saying that she's crazy with three children to start to even think about traveling to an unknown world part. But dad sent the tickets so we came.

MOORE: And did she say – express – you heard her grandmother say that to her/

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: And did she ever say anything to the children about it?

ANNIKKI: No, no, no. I had my ears always open. I was what they call [Finnish word].

MOORE: And how would you translate that in English?

ANNIKKI: Old in young age.

MOORE: Yeah.

ANNIKKI: (laughs)

MOORE: Precocious.

ANNIKKI: Yes, and curious.

MOORE: Yeah. So you heard a—heard all.

ANNIKKI: I did. I heard a little too much sometimes.

MOORE: (laughs)

ANNIKKI: Which wasn't very good for me.

MOORE: To whom did she sell it?

ANNIKKI: I don't remember [recording skips]. If I remember that name it was something like Jacobson or something like that. But I didn't pay too much attention to it because all I was thinking about -- we're gonna go to America, we're gonna go to America.

MOORE: And what did your mother tell you about America before you left?

ANNIKKI: Nothing, nothing.

MOORE: Did you know any English at all before you left?

ANNIKKI: No.

MOORE: Did she know any?

ANNIKKI: No.

[recording skips]

MOORE: Now the night before you left, did you remember packing?

ANNIKKI: Yes. I do remember because we had so many children's clothes and the little one was in diapers yet. And so there were s—it was difficult. My brother and I had to lug a sack of clothes and mom took the suitcase and the little one on her arm. And we stopped many times when we went to the bus.

MOORE: How did you get to the bus?

ANNIKKI: We walked.

MOORE: You walked.

ANNIKKI: We walked.

MOORE: And did you take anything special? Did your mother take anything special from the family with her – when she packed?

ANNIKKI: No. Only the clothing – only the clothing.

MOORE: [interposed] No toys?

ANNIKKI: [interposed] And pictures.

MOORE: Of whom?

ANNIKKI: Of the family.

MOORE: Mhmm.

ANNIKKI: Which I still have some saved from that period. I tried to save them even during the war from the bombing and all. Those were the first ones I always saved – those few pictures I had.

MOORE: So now you had to walk – now before you left did they have a going away party for you or anything?

ANNIKKI: Nothing doing. We just got together – my grandma, my aunt, and – um – my grandma, my aunt, and my cousins. And we took another picture of us all. And my brother was so mad because they had to pick him up from sleeping. He was always mad if he was picked up in the middle of his sleep. He was so mad, you couldn't get him to smile – no way. And mother had a chore keeping him in her lap – that I remember -- with his long hair. No, we were fancied in our new clothing. I think I even had my first pair of button shoes – those kinda like separate type. Can't remember where I put that picture.

MOORE: And you walked all the way to the bus the next day?

ANNIKKI: Yeah because there was a highway that went not too far from [not understood]. That highway that runs there.

MOORE: How far was that?

ANNIKKI: Well it's – it's nice walk. It's about – would it be mile and a half?

MALE: [not understood]

ANNIKKI: About – approximately mile and a half. Mother rested always and put the child down on the ground and – and – and then we got where the bus took us

to [not understood]. Let's see – did we take a bus or did we go to the railroad station and went with our train to Hanko? That I can't remember.

MOORE: What about your grandmother? Do you remember what she said before you left? Did she –

ANNIKKI: [interposed] Oh she was mad. Her head shook in her little [not understood] that she had on her head – it was going back and forth she was so mad. (laughs) Crazy people! Crazy people.

MOORE: And that's what she said – the last thing she said before you left?

ANNIKKI: Yes. [spoken in Finnish] – you will be sorry. Well, as it turned out, that's the way it did happen then. Grandma knew.

MOORE: Hm. So do you – you then left and you left her standing in the doorway or--?

ANNIKKI: No she walked with us until she got [not understood] and then she – she went home and we went our way.

MOORE: The last time you saw her there she was angry.

ANNIKKI: [superposed] Mad – she was mad.

MOORE: (laughs)

ANNIKKI: That's the last time I saw Grandma.

MOORE: And – and then you got on the train – the bus.

ANNIKKI: I'm sure we went with a train to – t—to – to Hanko. I'm pretty sure – I'm pretty sure we went to train.

MOORE: And when you got to Hanko what'd you do then?

ANNIKKI: We went to that station there where they looked you over – medical examination before you leave on this beautiful ship that we have pictured here.

MOORE: Yeah. Now you – what do they do as a medical examination?

ANNIKKI: They listen – your lungs – and they ask you if you've had TB and all that. And they looked your eyes, nose, ears, mouth – everything. If you have had any contagious illness – well we – we had our regular children's illnesses. H—small – um – chicken pox and – and measles and – and hooping cough. Them days you got them all and we had had them. But nothing else.

MOORE: [superposed] And then did they check anything else?

ANNIKKI: No.

MOORE: So you go on the S.S. Astrea[ph]?

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: Astrea, whatever it is – in Hanko, Finland. And where were you bound for at that point?

ANNIKKI: To England.

MOORE: Where in England?

ANNIKKI: [interposed] Hull.

MOORE: Hull?

ANNIKKI: Hull.

MOORE: So you went to Hull, and how long did that take?

ANNIKKI: I – I'm not sure how long that took – that thing. (laughs) That thing – that ship. It could've been a couple of days – two, three days – because that distance isn't so – where that Nordic Sea is – where that Nordic Sea is.

MOORE: Now what was – kind of accommodations did you have on that boat?

ANNIKKI: Poor.

MOORE: What did poor mean – what does that mean?

ANNIKKI: When the waves hit the deck they came down the – the storm vent. And water a—all over the floor and everything. And the bunk beds – pretty primitive. If you wanted to vomit, as well all did, you had to try and turn on your stomach so you'd hit the pot. (laughs) And mom – poor mom. I feel so sorry for her – even thinking of her. Three of them.

MOORE: And you were all sick?

ANNIKKI: All sick.

MOORE: Was she sick too?

ANNIKKI: Yes, we were all sick.

MOORE: And why were you sick?

ANNIKKI: It was so stormy.

MOORE: On the North Sea?

ANNIKKI: Yes, very stormy.

MOORE: Were other people sick too?

ANNIKKI: And this – this boat is so narrow that it rocks so easy.

MOORE: And so – and so were other people sick besides you?

ANNIKKI: Oh, nearly everyone was sick.

MOORE: And did they have food on that boat?

ANNIKKI: Yes. When we at last could get up that we could eat we went into a dining area where all the passengers and all the – it was a great big room and even the passengers and the –

MOORE: [interposed] Crew.

ANNIKKI: Crew. We all s—sat down in the same place or the same room. And when those – the crew – they were real lively. Of course they weren't sick like we were. They were already used to that and so they said [spoken in Finnish]. Cockroach soup-wurst is served.

MOORE: (laughs)

ANNIKKI: Well you know what that did to my poor mom! When she heard that, she couldn't eat anything. But those guys never figured out that that was the wrong word to say.

MOORE: (laughs) Alright.

ANNIKKI: And we couldn't go on the deck. No – we could've been swept overboard.

MOORE: So what did the wild ones do?

ANNIKKI: The wild ones stayed put because they were so sick.

MOORE: (laughs)

ANNIKKI: Yes. Of course that little one -- she – she just hang -- hung onto my mom as fast as she could. Just tugged on her the whole time. It isn't easy for a mom not knowing the language at all and not knowing anything – what to expect. And to have three little ones – a year, going on two, and the next one two years, going on three, and the next one, between five and six. I was six already, yeah. Yeah I was six. (sighs) I wouldn't do it.

MOORE: Well you – you got to Hull – what happened?

ANNIKKI: We were in a hotel there waiting for the ship to meet them in that place. That was a nice ship then. It was much larger.

MOORE: You were seeing England for the first time?

ANNIKKI: Yes. England – that channel part there – oh, was beautiful. Oh it was so beautiful. See it was – it was in August. I think it was August. It was very pretty. And what hit our eyes – there was so many lamb and – and what's the next – goats.

MOORE: And goats?

ANNIKKI: Yeah lambs and goats. Yeah, they were feeding out there on the banks.

MOORE: Mm. And the next boat – do you remember the name of the next boat that you sailed to the United States on?

ANNIKKI: What was it? Well I should know. No, I don't.

MOORE: That's alright. Maybe it'll come to you in a bit.

ANNIKKI: Yeah. Because I remember distinctly these – this other one that I traveled on.

MOORE: And you traveled – that boat left home when? Do you remember? What date? Or what month?

ANNIKKI: It was in September.

MOORE: Of?

ANNIKKI: '24.

MOORE: 1924 – September 1924. Alright now you stayed in a hotel at Hull.

ANNIKKI: Mhmm.

MOORE: And what do you remember about that?

ANNIKKI: The good food, because we were all hungry. And we were settled – our stomachs were settled so much already that we could feel that we were hungry. And anything tasted good to us. And my little brother – when he saw the – the white bread – sliced white bread – he couldn't fill his stomach enough. So he put a slice of bread under his little jacket so that h—he wouldn't run out of food.

MOORE: (laughs)

ANNIKKI: And the desserts were good. And it was a neat, neat ship. Very clean.

MOORE: The one you went to the states on?

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: What kind of accommodations did you have there?

ANNIKKI: Uh, we had um – they were pretty nice. But it was like uh – I think it was below tourist class, even. It was like a fourth grade. You know, the – it was in the cheaper part of the ship. So that we were at least in a decent area for ourselves to enjoy.

MOORE: And – what -- could you have bedding and--?

ANNIKKI: Oh yes, there [recording skips].

MOORE: So, was there bedding –

ANNIKKI: [interposed] Oh yes, oh yes. Decent bedding, just like in any other ship.

MOORE: And did you –

ANNIKKI: [interposed] Big one [not understood]. It was a large one so—

MOORE: What was the dining room like on that boat?

ANNIKKI: It was beautiful to our eyes. Of course there was the tablecloths and – and it was just gorgeous to children's eyes to see that when you had never even pictured anything like that.

MOORE: What was the food like?

ANNIKKI: An—good food, good food.

MOORE: Were you sick on this voyage?

ANNIKKI: I was the only one that was sick. And I had to be in the bunk. And when they had their practice for S.O.S. and they put those life vests on, they had everybody go on the deck to practice. And my mother was up there with the two children because she couldn't take me, and she couldn't tell anyone because she didn't know the language. So she couldn't say that one of her children is down in the bunk because mom thought that we were in danger. She didn't understand that that was a practice.

MOORE: Ohhhh.

ANNIKKI: And – and she tried to get them to understand that she had one in the bunk. So I guess then later on somebody had told her no, that this is practice. We take these off, no danger. See, when you do – see she was so quiet. She wasn't a blabber like I am and have been all my life. She didn't dare go ask

anybody anything but after they saw that she was horrified they tried to tell her that this is only a practice that we all have to go through. Oh it was fun, oh that was fun on that ship. We were taken so good care of. So many other people helped my mom and – and really offered all they could.

MOORE: How did they help her?

ANNIKKI: Well, they'd hold my sister and she would get used to somebody like a woman. She—not a man but a woman. And they would – she would allow them to hold her. Because she was petrified that they were gonna take her somewhere so she – she had – my mom had awful hard time and her eyes were getting just tired of carrying her all the time. So – and the worst was of course when they d—when she dirtied her diapers and – and you'd have to try and wash them out because you would run short. And then try and dry them too. It was a chore and a half.

MOORE: (laughs) What about um – you said – what were your – do you remember how long that trip was?

ANNIKKI: Oh that was uh – oh I bet that was close to three weeks – coming over from England to New York.

MOORE: And did – were you allowed to –

ANNIKKI: [interposed] Two – two weeks, at least.

MOORE: Alright. And were you allowed to play on deck?

ANNIKKI: Oh yes, oh yes. Oh yes. Mom just told us to stay away from the railing. And always there was a watchful eye – when they got to know that mom had

three children – well there was always somebody who helped watch. Yes, they took us to a barber shop and everything.

MOORE: And what did they do at the barber shop?

ANNIKKI: We had our hair cut because we all had long, long hair! (laughs)

MOORE: And – and –

ANNIKKI: [interposed] Them days even boys had long hair like now.

MOORE: Well what about um – did you find – was that fun for you – that trip?

ANNIKKI: Yes. Yes, it was. It – it was exciting. I didn't seem to miss anyone from Finland then.

MOORE: During the trip?

ANNIKKI: Yeah.

MOORE: What – do you remember seeing land for the first time?

ANNIKKI: Oh yes. When we got near New York, wow! We thought those buildings were like ghosts. They were so huge compared to Finland, which is so low. That's when the trouble started because then mom knew that she'd have to try and hold us together and carry that suitcase. Oh and when we left Helsinki – my aunt lived there – she gave us a blanket that reminds me of the Indian blanket. Because she had a store – clothing store – and all this excess baggage that we had, we put into that blanket and knotted it and my brother and I were supposed to carry it together. My angry brother wouldn't do his share. I'd have to drag that thing after me and mom had to be

scolding him the whole time. So also when we came to New York mother said to him you have to help if you're gonna come with us. So he was a grouchy little boy when he was helping. And we stayed – now this I don't remember what happened – but I don't think at that time we stopped at Ellis Island at all. Because we were supposed to have the money in a – in the ship office – and that ship office was in New York – shipping office. And when we got there my mother asked for the money that you have to have when you enter in. It was not there.

MOORE: Let's go back a little bit, hold on. So you came into the harbor. Do you remember the Statue of Liberty?

ANNIKKI: Not then.

MOORE: So – so the first time you came across you didn't – you don't remember going through – the Statue of Liberty – you don't remember Ellis Island.

ANNIKKI: No.

MOORE: Um, it's – the time that you remember Ellis Island is when you came back through again.

ANNIKKI: When I went from here in '29.

MOORE: [superposed] Oh so when you were deported.

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: Ok we'll get to that later. So ok --so this time you remember going to an office?

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: Where they had money.

ANNIKKI: Shipping. Yeah well we were supposed to have our letter that contained the money when we enter into the harbor.

MOORE: Mhmm.

ANNIKKI: In American currency.

MOORE: Now that office was not Ellis Island, you don't think?

ANNIKKI: No, I don't think so. No, I think we came to the harbor. Because I don't remember landing in Ellis Island then. Only once and that was when we went back.

MOORE: Ok well we'll get to that in a moment. Some of these memories of course go together--

ANNIKKI: [interposed] Yeah.

MOORE: [interposed] Because you were so young, you don't know which direction you're going. Maybe you remember being at Ellis Island and we talked about that before but w—we'll get that on tape. But ok, so what happened when there was no money?

ANNIKKI: We got room there at the hotel and we had money enough – or did they give us – we went to Canada. We had to come from Canada to Victoria – all across the continent.

MOORE: How did you get across the continent?

ANNIKKI: Train.

MOORE: On train.

ANNIKKI: And they gave us a box of food. That I remember because it was delicious fruit and all kinds of food there in that box for us to eat. And that took three, four days.

MOORE: The train trip?

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: And how was that?

ANNIKKI: Uh, well we fought a lot – us kids. Because it's – you know you're confined in such a sh—tight squeeze, there. And so mom had a hard getting us to simmer down. And then the train stopped. I remember that when the train stopped at a – at a nice place there when we were coming. And there were – it was just red with little wild strawberries. And of course I had to get out of the train like so many of the grownups to pick a few strawberries because we were standing still there. And I got to – not following – I should have jumped on so they had to just grab a hold of me and pull me in. The train was already going (laughs). I wanted to eat some more strawberries!

MOORE: (laughs) And what – what was your mother doing at that moment?

ANNIKKI: Tending to that little s—brother of mine and sister.

MOORE: Did she have any--

ANNIKKI: [interposed] She knew that I – I was quick enough to take care of myself (laughs). But I wasn't because those strawberries tasted so good – those wild strawberries. And yeah – and then this – I remember it distinctly. That one guy – he took a hold of me from the back here and he lifted me like that – like a potato sack. (laughs) Oh poor mom, she could've half of her brood (laughs).

MOORE: Ok so you remember getting into port – I mean getting into the station in – in – in Vancouver.

ANNIKKI: No we came to Victoria.

MOORE: Oh to Victoria, sorry.

ANNIKKI: Victoria.

MOORE: Yeah.

ANNIKKI: And that's where we s—were stuck. That's where we were stuck then. My dad had to get a sponsor to get us over on this side then.

MOORE: How long were you there?

ANNIKKI: Oh gosh I – I think we were there about a week or two. We lived there – it was a nice family where we lived. They – they were very good people. Very kind and accommodating and I remember going a circus, seeing an elephant, and (gasps) and I had a beautiful white dress on with a – a wide collar and oh was I smart. And – and (laughs) I enjoyed it enormously. I didn't think that it was such a hardship for us but it was a terrible hardship to get the money to sponsor us to come on this side because Dad was on this side. And you know the distance from Victoria here is not too big – too large or

long – whatever. And the law had changed just then – was it '22 or '23 that a wife does not become an American citizen if a husband is. It had just changed right there and then when we were entering in. So we got sponsors for five years and came straight to Aberdeen.

MOORE: Mhmm. Now um – did you remember your mother or your – your – your brothers, sisters, and you having problems with the language then?

ANNIKKI: No because we were so eager to get out and mix amongst the children, we learned it very quickly.

MOORE: How 'bout your mom?

ANNIKKI: No, mother never learned it. Mother never learned it and she didn't care. She wasn't a – she was a homebody and she didn't care to mix so that's one backfiring thing on her – learning the language. No, we -- my brother and I – we learned the language and went grade after grade after grade in school so we did pretty good.

MOORE: Did anybody every make fun of you for being a Fin?

ANNIKKI: They wouldn't dare! (laughs) We were quite a [not understood]. We lived right in that other section where you're gonna go to [not understood]. We lived in that area them days and th—that was full of Finnish people. And the Croatians were on this side and we mixed just swell together. There were Italians and there were Croatians and – and there were Greeks and Fins. And s—some Swedes. They called themselves Swedes. Many were Finnish-Swedish speaking people. So later on in life we got to know well – they are really Finnish speaking Swedish, I guess. Because Swede is the second language in Finland.

MOORE: Mm. So you lived in a Finnish neighborhood.

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: And how – and did you speak Finnish at home?

ANNIKKI: Yes, our home language was Fin.

MOORE: And was your neighbor language Fin?

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: Did you speak Finnish—

ANNIKKI: [interposed] Oh we spoke with both then eventually – English and Finnish.

MOORE: And um – ok so you came down to Aberdeen and what was your dad doing then?

ANNIKKI: Saw mill.

MOORE: At the saw mill. And where'd you live? What address did you go to?

ANNIKKI: First we lived downtown in a – in a – a little house but we only lived there about two months and then we moved to south side. And um – because dad could commute to his work. It was just so close by. And we lived on um – Southwest Front Street at Mrs. Humberg's house. And then we moved to Cushing Street.

MOORE: Now who is Mrs. Humberg?

ANNIKKI: Very good friend – became a very good friend and I knew her when I was a child so I knew her the whole time then.

MOORE: And she rented rooms?

ANNIKKI: She rented cottages.

MOORE: And so you lived in a cottage.

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: How big was it?

ANNIKKI: [superposed] In the little house that had one, two, three rooms.

MOORE: Uh huh. And how long did you live at Mrs. Humberg's?

ANNIKKI: Oh, about two years.

MOORE: And then –

ANNIKKI: [interposed] Then when my little brother was born in there so we lived until – oh, about that. Three years – because I think he was quote three years old when we moved away from there and moved to Cushing street.

MOORE: Which little brother?

ANNIKKI: The one that was born in America.

MOORE: Oh and who's he? What's his name?

ANNIKKI: His name was then Toivo – (pause) I can't remember if he had a second name. Toivo – Johannes I think he was also.

MOORE: T-O-I-V-O?

ANNIKKI: Yes, Toivo. He is now George Markoven[ph]. He was adopted when we were deported. My dad could not take care of the little one.

MOORE: So a little boy was born here.

ANNIKKI: '27.

MOORE: In 1927 right?

ANNIKKI: Mhmm.

MOORE: Ok and – and then you moved from Mrs. Humberg's to where?

ANNIKKI: To Mr. Sm—Mr. And Mrs. Smith's house on Cushing Street.

MOORE: Mhmm and w—what was that accommodations? What was that like?

ANNIKKI: Um, well that was also one, two, three, four rooms all together. That's four rooms all together and then we moved to the next house next door and that was the first that we had a bathtub.

MOORE: And how were these heated – all these places – these cottages?

ANNIKKI: Wood.

MOORE: And what about indoor facilities – any?

ANNIKKI: Ah, yes.

MOORE: Were there toilets?

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: In all of them.

ANNIKKI: All of them.

MOORE: Flush toilets?

ANNIKKI: yes.

MOORE: And running water?

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: How were they lighted -- lit?

ANNIKKI: Electricity.

MOORE: Electricity.

ANNIKKI: Mhmm.

MOORE: Alright now you mentioned that you had a little brother that was born and then something happened. You were deported – what happened?

ANNIKKI: My mother had a nervous breakdown.

MOORE: And why was that?

ANNIKKI: And we were sponsored five years. If you can't renew your sponsorship or if you are unable to seek your citizenship, you are deported.

MOORE: And what led to her having a nervous breakdown? What do you think happened?

ANNIKKI: My sister got sick, my dad got hurt, and she was always pondering on the idea that we have to leave when five years is up.

MOORE: Your sister got sick with what?

ANNIKKI: Um, what they call it – bone – um –

MOORE: Leukemia?

ANNIKKI: No it's bone um – when the bone deteriorates. Um, what they call that now? They had to operate even and – and scrape the bone.

MOORE: Osteo—no.

ANNIKKI: Ah, I can't remember what that was. She was in an orthopedic hospital for quite a while.

MOORE: And your dad got hurt how?

ANNIKKI: At the mill.

MOORE: What happened?

ANNIKKI: [superposed] The lumber fell on his back.

MOORE: And what happened then?

ANNIKKI: Well he recovered from that. He recovered from that but then also another scare came that depression was setting in. See 1929 was coming and the world was turning tipsy turvy a little and so my mom and dad were kinda – um – kinda worried about the situation and of course my sister being – she was in orthopedic hospital. She – we didn't have to pay anything for her. And then if my mom and us children would have been a ward of the county, a—a—them days, no – no. So my dad said then in '29 summer, I'm gonna take out citizenship papers. Maybe that'll help. And I said dad I'll help you with your English. And so we read together. And he got his citizenship papers but it didn't help – didn't help. And dad was still working. He was [not understood]. But my mother's condition was against.

MOORE: Now what happened when she had a nervous breakdown? What happened with the kids and everything? How did it manifest—

ANNIKKI: [interposed] My – my dad had a babysitter for the – my brother, who was three and um – about three years old. And next door neighbor lady took care of him and us three – we took care of ourself. And dad of course was a very good cook so when he came home he made the meals and gathered the group together.

MOORE: And where was your mother?

ANNIKKI: She was – for a while we had her -- downtown was a private – like a – a home that took care of mentally unbalanced that weren't bad. You know that they didn't destroy anything—

MOORE: Right.

ANNIKKI: And – but my mom didn't like it because she was behind closed doors –

MOORE: [interposed] I see, yeah.

ANNIKKI: And it aggravated her mind more. And so my dad told the doctor that I cannot keep her there – that what should I do? And then we had some people in Winlock that owned a farm there and they agreed let's have her come here. And so my dad said you don't have to worry, she won't do anything to anybody else but herself. She'll try and destroy herself. And so they did have to watch her a little but she got good food, she had freedom, she could go where she wanted to around the farm and they would keep a eye on her. And she became feeling much better – much, much better. And the only thing was, the first time my dad went to see her there she says I thought you were dead. I didn't remember you, I thought you were dead. So that made my dad really upset then. But mom came home and we had a nice Christmas after that when she came home and – but little by little she went back. It just came back again.

MOORE: So how did—

ANNIKKI: [interposed] And she was schizophrenic.

MOORE: Schizophrenic.

ANNIKKI: Mhmm.

MOORE: Ah. And did – when you were deported was – did she go with you?

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: And how did you get back? Who sent you back? What happened?

ANNIKKI: Back to Finland?

MOORE: Yeah.

ANNIKKI: My dad saw us off to the train and the luggage was sent ahead of time and I was the one that had the money in the – in my clothing. And dad said don't take it out of there until you reach Helsinki when you see Aunt Milia[ph] – Aunt Milia. And give it to her. And watch mom and your sister and brother.

MOORE: And what happened with the little one then?

ANNIKKI: And the neighbor lady took the little one and then he always came home when dad came home from work, stayed overnight with dad. But then dad thought this isn't gonna work. And my mother couldn't write anything from Finland so I kept the correspondence going and he – my dad would always ask how mom was. Is she getting along? Is she getting to be any better? Do I think mother will come out of it? So we asked the doctor and the doctor said no. We have now tried everything that is available at this time and age that she will not. So I relayed the message to my dad in letters so then my dad lost hope and then he contacted his cousin in Portland and they wrote to each other and he said the sad story. That she was not gonna be any better. And so my aunt – my dad's cousin there said there's a family there that would love to adopt a little Fin boy. And we had applications sent to Helsinki – we were living at the time in Helsinki – for my mom to sign over if she is capable of doing it – and – or then power attorney for the aunt to sign it – her sister – my – my mom's sister. And then my dad explained that this is a good family and they would love to adopt him so he was adopted.

MOORE: And did you keep in contact with him?

ANNIKKI: Well listen, we did keep in contact. I have always been one who wants to write him – keep in contact. And then during the wartime of course the correspondence was cut off. And then right after the war again, after Pearl Harbor I – we got a message. My mother was even living yet – that my brother had died in the Pacific. And so this is the news that we – it didn't come through the official office – military office. It did not come but the relatives here in Aberdeen wrote and so then I lost hope that I'd ever see him anymore. But I always was hoping that I would see my dad yet because my dad was still here living then. And so we – we started procedures then. Um, I started three different times – procedures to come back. Always something came.

MOORE: Let's talk about what happened though when you went to – you talk about – you were deported. And so you went on the train from Aberdeen and went across country. Now what happened when you got to New York?

ANNIKKI: Yeah, we went uh – from the train here. See we were on this side -- we didn't have to go to Canada then. We went through here. Well then, we had to wait for the ship so all of us that went on that train – there was a lot of deported people on that train. Mentally unbalanced people, some that illegally had entered in, and some that were maybe in the same position our family was so there was all kinds of us. And we had to wait for the main ship Gastonia that would take us over Atlantic to Helsinki. So we were the quarantined in Ellis Island. And I s—I remember as plain as day it – when I – when we left the Harbor in New York on that – it was like a tug boat type of a small little ship. And there was all kinds of us and I was just looking around and thinking oh my heavens, oh my god. Even if I was only a girl of eleven years old, I thought this is something awful. And we were led – what was

missing from my family were the chains on our hands. We didn't have those. There were some that had.

MOORE: Some people had chains?

ANNIKKI: Yes because you couldn't rely on them. They – they went berserk.

MOORE: So on this tugboat that you went on, some of the people who were going to be deported were in chains?

ANNIKKI: Yes, because they couldn't rely on them staying put.

MOORE: I see.

ANNIKKI: So they had them handcuffed – handcuffed. And there was one fellow in front of us – he had a habit of spittin'. Every time he turned his head he'd spit. And so I took my little sister and I said stay away, don't go too close. And of course, wouldn't you know it – he spit and it went on my sister's coat. And – so I start crying and I – I took a hold of that guy's jacket and I went and rubbed that stuff off of my sister's coat with his jacket. And I was crying myself because I felt that that was just horrible. And – and the people that were close by – they were watching (pause) and shaking their heads.

MOORE: Now, do – what do you remember about getting onto the island? What was your first impression of Ellis Island as you got there?

ANNIKKI: Huge room – that huge room. It was so big and it had walkway like on the second floor that went around like that. And some of the passengers were up there and some were in isolated cells without any clothing on even. Us kids – we went all around there. And we'd go and peek and we weren't supposed to be but you know nobody can watch kids – that they aren't doing

all kinds of things. They had a school there which we liked. We sat at the school –

MOORE: Now they sent you to school then? Now where did you live?

ANNIKKI: [superposed] Yes.

MOORE: Where did you live? What accommodations did –

ANNIKKI: [interposed] In that island – that Ellis Island.

MOORE: I know. What – what – where – what kind –

ANNIKKI: [superposed] It was a room – it was a room that we lived in.

MOORE: With other people?

ANNIKKI: Yes, uh huh.

MOORE: And what type of beds did they have?

ANNIKKI: Bunk beds.

MOORE: Uh huh. And did you have – was it clean?

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: Was it crowded?

ANNIKKI: Quite a bit, quite a bit. And we were told hold on to what you have. Don't – don't leave anything valuable out of your sight – keep it on you personally.

MOORE: And what did you have with you?

ANNIKKI: We had our suitcase for change of clothes and our trunk had gone ahead of time so we didn't have to worry about the trunk. So we had just that suitcase and then we had that bundle of clothing in that blanket. We had that. And we got a no—lots of nice little things from people sending – you know like there at Ellis Island they had – they had for you like clothing and stuff like that. And at school we got postcards that people had sent that you can cut out and just to get your time going. And then books to read and—

MOORE: How big was the school?

ANNIKKI: Well um – we were quite a few children there at the time. So I would say there was at least fifteen of us there at that time.

MOORE: And how – how long were you on Ellis Island?

ANNIKKI: I think we had to be there three or five days – three or five days. But we were busy the whole time. And then they'd serve in the afternoon when the grownups had their coffee hour – the kids were all waiting – milk and saltine crackers. And oh were they ever delicious.

MOORE: (laughs) Do you remember your mother – how she took this?

ANNIKKI: Mother just wandered around. Mother just wandered around and I had to always keep tab of her – where she was -- so that she wouldn't wander where she shouldn't be. And on the ship too, coming over Atlantic I had to always watch her because I was scared she was gonna jump over. She didn't wanna hurt anybody else but herself.

MOORE: Mhmm. So do you remember what happened – what – did they give you medical examination or anything?

ANNIKKI: Yes, oh yes at the Ellis Island we were still checked so that we didn't have any contagious illness because if they did they were isolated like my sister now being she had been operated on and it's like TB – that type of bone TB. That's the type she had. And my sister had been operated on, I think about five times – five different places. And it just would go from one side to the other side and – and – but she didn't die of that. Isn't it amazing?

MOORE: I think they call it [not understood]

ANNIKKI: Yes, yes, uh huh. And so she was in a hospital ward there so they had all these accommodations for you. They had the prison for the ones that were awful you know, criminals. And they had the less sick people and then the regular hospital they had there – hospital ward. And then this ward where us kids went to school.

MOORE: Did you remember um – the food?

ANNIKKI: Uh huh. We weren't starving, I know for sure – I know for sure. As far as I know that food was mostly soup – soup and milk. We always had milk. And fruit – we had a lot of fruit.

MOORE: Were there other Finnish children there?

ANNIKKI: Yes, there was one girl and her mother and father from back east. But I lost contact with them then.

MOORE: Back east meaning –

ANNIKKI: Yeah, yeah. They were like from uh – from Minnesota area out there. And I never contacted her after we arrived to Helsinki then, I never did.

MOORE: What about the voyage over then to Helsinki? How was that?

ANNIKKI: Very good -- very nice and easy.

MOORE: Um – I just want to go back for a moment. The medical examinations – did everyone get the same examination?

ANNIKKI: I am not sure. But I guess that we had a card that we gave officials there. See when we left from Finland we had that [not understood] examination there. And then we had a card that said if there was anything that they kinda were suspicious of, then you would have a marking on that card that would say please – you know that, examine.

MOORE: So you just mentioned a moment ago that the trip to Helsinki was great.

ANNIKKI: It was great. Yes, lots of fun – lots of fun and entertainment and – and –

MOORE: What kind of entertainment?

ANNIKKI: Oh there – there were stage shows and there was bands playing and – and like I said there was these little bars – coffee bars and that they call in Finland bar. And – oh there was a lot. All kinds of games that we played.

MOORE: Who paid for that ticket to go back? When you're deported, what happens?

ANNIKKI: Government.

MOORE: The governments—

ANNIKKI: [interposed] Government.

MOORE: Paid – sent you back on the Estonia.

ANNIKKI: Yes. And that was I think a Polish line ship – Estonia. I think that was a Polish line.

MOORE: What about the accommodations?

ANNIKKI: Good, good. We had a roomy cabin – very roomy cabin.

MOORE: To yourself?

ANNIKKI: Yes, to ourself.

MOORE: So actually your deported voyage was better in accommodations than your one coming over you paid yourself.

ANNIKKI: [superposed] Oh many times, many times, many times. They had advanced so much more in this travel then because so many people were coming over at them – those years.

MOORE: What was it – what was your family's attitude about this trip back home? How'd they feel about it? How did you feel about it? Home meaning Finland.

ANNIKKI: [superposed] Sad – sad. It was very sad. The whole south side cried here when we left. That's how we felt over there in that side [not understood].

MOORE: All the other Fins cried?

ANNIKKI: Yes. And they didn't think it was right. And they [not understood] as hard as my dad worked for that citizenship – me helping him with the language – fifth grader.

MOORE: And so they thought it was a tragedy?

ANNIKKI: Yes, yes they did. They couldn't believe it. Being that he was still working, but see I know that eventually my mom would've been a ward of the county because of her illness. We could've never managed to pay those bills.

MOORE: Mhmm. So what happened on the boat trip over – how was your mom then? Back to Helsinki?

ANNIKKI: Oh she just combed herself and – and – and dressed herself nice and feminine and went around with a hand on her hip and just nonchalantly walked around. So I had to sometimes take a hold of her and – and then we'd walk together so that she wouldn't be so—

MOORE: Preyed upon.

ANNIKKI: Yes, yes. And then there were these guys that would come around and this one guy especially – he came into cabin even and – and he said that for – to fight seasickness you better take some wine. And he brought us a wine bottle and I was already leery then about that fellow and so I told my mom keep the cabin door locked. But then us children – when we were going in and out, in and out – it was hard. So that she didn't always have it locked. And my sister was also on the hospital side on that ship. She was watched and taken care of.

MOORE: What happened – now how long was that trip then?

ANNIKKI: Oh that was about – we left November 22<sup>nd</sup> or 24<sup>th</sup> –

MOORE: 19—

ANNIKKI: '29.

MOORE: Right.

ANNIKKI: And then – well that ocean traveling was about fourteen days.

MOORE: And then where did you go back to?

ANNIKKI: To Helsinki.

MOORE: To Helsinki.

ANNIKKI: Yeah.

MOORE: Not to Pori?

ANNIKKI: Well we were in Helsinki a few days and then my aunt said that – being she wasn't sure if we have anything to live on and in Finland at least them days you had to go to the county where you are born if you want social welfare. So my aunt said I don't wanna send your sister who is not very well but you and your brother and your mother – you go to Pori and establish yourself there because that's where your mom will get help. This was all explained to me. So my sister was left in Helsinki and we went to Pori. Later on my mom got worse and she was well enough – she went to the school officials and asked them to loc—to relocate my s—our – my brother somewhere where he could go to school and get up – build up because he'll be on the streets. My mother still had that much mind left and so they did and he went to boys'

school in Kokemäki. That's near Pori. And he went confirmation and he went through school the rest the two years and then he had carpentry training there and he got a very, very good job. Houses – he worked there for years. I think he even went back there to work after war. So he had luck being trained. My sister was taken to a farm because she needed good nourishment so my aunt saw the children's welfare office in – and they recommended this place that they had sometimes given their name that they would gladly accept someone in my sister's age. So she went the farming area, which was near [not understood]. And I was on my own – I was working the family. So I was in domestic work.

MOORE: And you were how old then?

ANNIKKI: Twelve years old – thirteen? Twelve, thirteen years old.

MOORE: And how long did you –

ANNIKKI: [interposed] Seemed I was because I went that last year when I went from here then to Helsinki in '29 I was in fifth grade here – just started fifth grade here and they put me into sixth grade in [spoken in Finnish]. And I thought how am I gonna ever do this? I had learned in Sunday school my Fin, and then what we spoke at home. But my pronunciation and my spelling and everything wasn't so correct in that Finnish language and I thought this is the last grade and – and I'm not gonna – and they're gonna leave me in this class for another year. The principle said because of my age – being thirteen – that I should be in that class. Well, that's where I needed my guts again. I was third from the [not understood].

MOORE: At the end?

ANNIKKI: Uh huh. Yeah, third from the top! I was third from the top! But my aunt – my -- my aunt said – I was in Helsinki then with my aunt – my aunt said you're gonna be crazy with that kind of reading. I said but I'm gonna make it.

MOORE: (laughs)

ANNIKKI: And I did (laughs). Oh dear.

MOORE: So you stayed in Finland then?

ANNIKKI: Yes. And then I went back to Pori -- after I had completed school there in Helsinki I went back to Pori. But I didn't care to stay there. My mom was in the [not understood] and I always had such a sad feeling there. Otherwise it's a lively town and I have a lot of relatives and all that. I still wanted to go back to Helsinki. I wanted to do something better – something (pause) more advanced. Well I didn't get too far but I got a better job anyway.

MOORE: As what? What'd you get a job as?

ANNIKKI: I was a housekeeper for a – for a bachelor in – and he is a aristocrat – or was – [not understood] Oogla[ph] – Oogla was his name. He's long since been gone. And he was a bachelor and I – my aunt was the one that said oh you can take care – you can take care. I said I cannot be responsible for a man and – and his household and his buying the food and cooking the food and having the parties and good gosh, time shows you you can. You can do anything! (laughs) I worked for him five years – five years. Because that's where I got married from. And he was kinda mad because I got married and didn't stay in Helsinki. Then he would've gotten a job for Sulo[ph] then too. But Sulo wanted to go back to [not understood] because that's where his job was when he entered the military field and then he got a chance to go back to his old job. So he went. And of course that was my place to be then.

MOORE: Well how did you ever get back here in Washington? You lived here all those years.

ANNIKKI: Yes well I always remembered my dad. See, my dad was here. And I always corresponded with him and I always though one of these days I'm gonna – if I'm gonna go alone or how – I'm gonna make that trip so that I'll see my dad yet before he pass away. And it was a good thing that we didn't pass away – Sulo and I – in the turmoil that we were in. But it so happened then that we had a chance. We got those sponsors and I came home first again like my dad came first. And my dad saw my husband who came a year after I did and he saw our son who was nine years old, right on the day he arrived her in Aberdeen.

MOORE: Now wait a minute, what turmoil were you in in Finland? You mean—

ANNIKKI: [interposed] The war.

MOORE: The war.

ANNIKKI: Yeah.

MOORE: And w—and was your—

ANNIKKI: [interposed] And living in Helsinki at that time.

MOORE: What happened during that time in the war?

ANNIKKI: Well see we had the bombs all around us there in [not understood] where we lived. And I just saw now that that [not understood] that they're building a great big new high-rise there. They already had a high-rise in that old – that

old building was torn apart. [not understood] lives right near [not understood] – that area there. Well we were surrounded with bombs. Halberg's [ph] house got a bomb. And the Jews li—the Jews.

MOORE: Yeah, go ahead.

ANNIKKI: The Jewish people lived across the street. In the nighttime they all went and left for Sweden (pause) and we could see all this because we were sitting higher up so we could see all this which was happening. And a—one of our walls [recording skips] and we were in – in a part of the wall – and we were in a cellar. So you thank your lucky stars if you saw daylight when you got out of that cellar. But I guess there is somebody who watches over you and sure watched over my husband and me. And my brother, although he was wounded three times. Sulo was transferred to home front. They had to recruit younger kids and they need—needed trainers. So he was recruit – I couldn't believe it. He was out there in the east front—e—eastern frontier there and -- and I just – I don't know. Sometimes there is – like I say, miracles happen. Miracles happen and we were both spared and – and then we start thinking of coming to America. Maybe, maybe it'll be peaceful here.

MOORE: How old was he when he was recruiter for the eastern front?

ANNIKKI: He was in his military age – he was five years in. He was nineteen twenty –

MALE: [not understood]

ANNIKKI: No. Started nineteen, and he was five years in. So ah – both of us had – you know, really pure luck. We had bombs fall next to us when we were walking. It went in the – in the water. There was a high fence right there and the water just splashed over. It was one of these planes that came in without making a sound. And like I said, I left that halfway – my brother was not

killed in the Pacific – the one that was here. He was never killed in the Pacific.

MOORE: So that was a rumor?

ANNIKKI: [superposed] But that's – that's an – that's an—that's a rumor. That's a rumor. Yes.

MOORE: So wait, wait – wait (laughs). You got back here – so you came first.

ANNIKKI: [interposed] Yes.

MOORE: And Sulo –

ANNIKKI: Sulo came a year after with my – our son.

MOORE: How did you get here?

ANNIKKI: I had sponsors.

MOORE: So y—and who paid your trip?

ANNIKKI: I did.

MOORE: So you came and you had sponsors. You came like your father before you.

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: Did you come through Ellis Island then?

ANNIKKI: No I didn't. I came (laughs) – no I didn't then, no.

MOORE: So you came – now you call the way here.

ANNIKKI: Uh huh.

MOORE: And your dad was alive.

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: And did your dad tell you that your brother was alive?

ANNIKKI: Uh – no, he didn't know. He didn't know. See because the mili—

MOORE: Which year was that? What year was that?

ANNIKKI: Uh, '55 – 1955.

MOORE: Oh so it was after the war in 1955.

ANNIKKI: Yeah. Wasn't it '45 that bombing was in Pearl Harbor?

MOORE: Yes.

ANNIKKI: Yes – '45. Yeah. Well, '55 I came here – that's ten years later. But my dad had also that opinion that the boy is lost. He didn't realize [recording skips] – and contacted those people in Portland, they would've told him. But see, when you are adopted, that boy never knew he was adopted. This is where they did wrong. They should've told him from the beginning that he was adopted because he didn't know it until he went and got his papers to enter military service from Olympia -- his birth certificate. And that's when he [recording skips] – that age he was adopted. Well you know, a man of that

age getting the first time to know that he was adopted – it hurt. It hurt him. And he didn't even know why he was adopted or anything because his adoptive mother had passed away and the dad had remarried so he had a third mother.

MOORE: No wait a minute – how did he finally find out?

ANNIKKI: He found out when he got his birth certificate.

MOORE: How did you get a hold of him?

ANNIKKI: How did I get a hold of him? Well that goes then into the [not understood] – this brotherhood lodge that I worked for over forty years. Um--

MOORE: Wait a minute – before you do that – you came here for a year and what'd you work as when you came into –

ANNIKKI: [superposed] Domestic.

MOORE: A domestic. And then your husband and your son came a year later—

ANNIKKI: [interposed] Yes.

MOORE: And you all lived here in Aberdeen.

ANNIKKI: Yes.

MOORE: And what did your husband do when he came here?

ANNIKKI: Saw mill. And I – I had sworn that he's not gonna go in a saw mill because he was a tool grinder by – by trade – but he didn't know the language! And

the measurements are different here than they are in Finland. So what happened? Into the saw mill.

MOORE: And wait, wait – so how was it – how was it for him learning English?

ANNIKKI: Oh he learned – he learned that mill man's English.

MOORE: And your son – was it difficult for him?

ANNIKKI: No, not at all. In three months he was talking there with the kids out on the street.

MOORE: And so – ok so what – the [not understood]. What happened?

ANNIKKI: This brotherhood lodge that I belonged – uh – we had sister lodges. In Portland we have, and all over west coast here. Secretary that we knew very well from Portland lodge says – I told him, Frank – would you look into this problem? I've had a brother that was adopted into a family in Portland and I have heard what their name was, so would you look up [not understood] people if they are still living? I would so love to thank those people that they have helped a child get a good upbringing when we couldn't – my mom, dad, and us couldn't. I'd love to see them and meet them. Look if they are living. So Frank says, ok I'll do that. So he calls me one day says Sylva sit down. Your brother's living. I said oh no, oh no. Where? Not too far – in Scappoose, Oregon. And my god. And he said I told them – those parents – his dad was still living – his step-dad was living. Not the step-mother but the step dad. I – Frank said – I told him you are here, you would like to contact him. He is -- this old man is so leery -- at the time he says have her call me and I will ask her questions. So I did – I called the step-dad and he thought we were wanting something from them. And I said oh no, now you have all the wrong reason to start thinking that way. I said all I wanted to do is thank

you. You're welcome to come, but your brother is living in Scappoose and I will have to speak to him first if he wants to meet you. And so we went – headed for Portland. It was Easter time and (pause) obstacle came on the highway. We lost all the oil in the car. There we were standing and this is a first meeting with my brother. We went and had us towed to a service station and wen—rented a car from Centralia. I said we're gonna go – we're gonna go! And [not understood] – our son was so petrified. He said Dad can't drive this car, dad can't drive! I said dad can drive it. It's got a automatic shift in it but dad can drive it. Well you know with an automatic shift then it's kinda – it goes before you know it. (both laugh) And we left our car there at that service station and – and off we went to Portland because I had spoken on the phone that we would be coming and they knew it. And so we got there. I talked for six hours straight. There weren't too many words said from anyone else. I was so tired af—after I had visited my brother's house that I thought I made up for the whole time I was away. (laughs) And – so then – the wife was listening and she shook her head and said I can't understand how parents could give up a child. (pause) I thought to myself -- when I listened to her I thought haven't you listened to what I've been talking about at all? You would have had that reason right there. And I think to this day she thinks that we were horrible that we gave up the child.

MOORE: Now which woman was – was the step-mother?

ANNIKKI: No, this is my brother's wife.

MOORE: Yeah.

ANNIKKI: My brother's wife.

MOORE: But was he happy to see you?

ANNIKKI: Oh yes. And I have a lovely letter that he wrote to me. I'll never depart from that letter and we always exchange birthday greetings, but I don't exchange them with his wife. Because I was so hurt and I thought certainly woman, you should go into child psychology or something and study. And she – she's a read-up woman though that she – she should've known. So, that's how my brother was found.

MOORE: And did you – and – and so he understood though, when you – when you told him what happened.

ANNIKKI: Yes, he did, he did. But you know you carry on that kind of uh – uh – how shall I say – it hurt him awful lot to find out in Olympia w—by his birth certificate. It hurt him so deeply, when he didn't even know why – why he was given up.

MOORE: Yeah.

ANNIKKI: And I told him – I said listen here George. You know if ever there was a wanted child, you were a wanted Yankee. I said you were one of those that was wanted. And no way would've they given it – you up.

MOORE: So you stayed in this country then, after that. You stayed your whole life then after since.

ANNIKKI: Yeah. Since '55.

MOORE: Since '55 and what happened to Pentti[ph]?

ANNIKKI: He was also serving the army and he got wounded and he's on military pay of course, but he's able to do little chores and they live in Pori in a beautiful, beautiful condominium on [spoken in Finnish]. [recording skips] very nice

house. '92 we visited there and I said now this is something! I'm really proud of him what he – he has done.

MOORE: How 'bout your sister? What happened your sister?

ANNIKKI: She died. She died – I think it was 1972 or 3 that she passed away. And she never got married. She worked all her life but she was always sickly. She was always sickly. She had this f – this thing or that thing. But she was a like—

MOORE: [interposed] How 'bout your mom? What happened to your mom?

ANNIKKI: My mom stayed in that [not understood] the institution until she passed away. She passed away then and she's buried in Pori [spoken in Finnish]. Has a nice burial place there. My brother and I – we had the stone for her and she's resting in peace.

MOORE: And your son? Your son is -- is grown now?

ANNIKKI: Yeah, our – our boy's family is right there in that picture and – and he lives in Central Park not too far from here. Has a nine year old – no, eleven year old boy. He's got – and this is his family. That picture isn't the best of them but then – yeah she had been married before and had the girl. And then he got married and they had the boy.

MOORE: And so he – and so – when you look back on your life now, as everything has happened – you've had many things happen to you – what do you think about your father's first fever that he had?

ANNIKKI: Well I think there were just hundreds of them that had that same illness. Some were cured early, some later on in life. Some got good start, had a

chance to earn a good living, were fortunate to stay healthy, and that's the main thing. When you're out in the world, that's what you need. You need your health and your guts – to fight through. And another thing I have to be proud of the Finnish people, although they – at that time even, they suffered quite a bit – Finnish nationality is a proud nation – they're proud. Even if they don't own much but they are proud of what they own, and they wanna keep it. And they wanna do the right thing – mostly, they do. There's here and there might somebody be slipping a little and alcohol is one bad thing there.

MOORE: But what about – do you have any regrets? Does your father have any regrets about coming to this country?

ANNIKKI: [not understood] but I know, deep down he cried many a times. You say a man is a wimp if they cry – uh uh. It eases them. And if, like the Finnish nature – if they didn't have music and singing and dancing to ease their life and their health, many a times you know you feel very low. You put some of that Finnish music on and boy, your work goes just lickety split! You don't even notice it. Yeah.

MOORE: And do you have any regrets?

ANNIKKI: No, no, not at all. We get social security and we get a little pension from Finland even. Sulo gets his and I get mine and so life is ok. There's nothing to splurge on but we don't – we don't need nothing. What the heck if we haven't gotten it to this day we – we don't need it anymore (laughs).

MOORE: If you look at your whole family though –

ANNIKKI: [interposed] Yeah. (cuckoo clock goes off)

MOORE: In terms of your father's American fever, how do you think – as a family – it affected you as a unit?

ANNIKKI: It broke – it broke the unit. Ours – ours did – ours broke. And I know like in Finland my father and mother would've done ok. They would've done just swell because my dad was a great worker and he could do so many things. And – maybe my mother would've stayed healthy, us kids would've grown up, and left them – and so I think we could've done well there too. Sulo and I could've done well in Finland because he was working for [spoken in Finnish] and he had a good job. We were starting to build – we had the lot and then we decided no, let's try it here.

MOORE: But basically you also had the American fever?

ANNIKKI: Because I was more or less my dad's girl, and my dad was here.

MOORE: So you say you're your father's girl.

ANNIKKI: Yes, and my – my father was a nature lover also. He – he loved nature and he'd go in the woods and he'd whistle. And he loved to dance – where my mother didn't. And I give that credit also that I -- I love both music and – although I never had a chance to learn any, except to play a tape and [not understood] phonograph (laughs) gramophone. (laughs) Yeah.

MOORE: Well you said earlier that – that you contributed – when we were talking privately -- that you contributed to the Statue of Liberty and the Ellis Island Project. Why?

ANNIKKI: Because when I came back and I saw that Statue of Liberty, we were up that whole night on the ship. We were partying that last night and see – when I

came back I was seven days in the hospital because I had the mumps.  
There was another thing you missed out on (laughs).

MOORE: You mean when you finally came here you had the mumps?

ANNIKKI: I—in '55 I had the mumps in – on both sides. Horrible, horrible. I couldn't even get a lump sugar between my lips when I drank my coffee, which I always necessarily need. And all the fresh food that were brought into my cabin were dumped into the ocean because I couldn't eat – have them after you know [recording skips]. So we had a real ball there the last evening on that ship and we said we're gonna watch when the – what's that long point called the – when you enter into New York? It's that long point there. Ah, I can't remember the name of that point but soon after that point and then you can start waiting for that Statue of Liberty come. Whoopee! we all said. Here we are, entering into New York Harbor. And when I left that time in '29 this coincides with that. I was standing on the ship then, as a young girl. That's true, I saw um, Statue of Liberty then, too, but I didn't pay that much attention to it. But, I said, am I ever gonna see these – this shore any more in my life, I wonder. And that hit me when we got to New York and that Statue of Liberty came out. That got me because that came out just so clearly that I've stood on a ship before, thinking if I'm ever gonna see this shore in my life. And here I am, I'm passing Statue of Liberty again. But, going the opposite way – coming back to America. Then I was leaving to Finland, back. And there is a drastic difference when you get closer to the shores of Finland. They look very small, low, primitive when you look from a distance, compared to those huge that are on that Manhattan island.

MOORE: Well when you look back now do you – are you happy that you came back the second time?

ANNIKKI: Yes, and we've been back to Finland three times after that. '92 was the last time that we were. And they're expecting us to be (laughs) coming soon again, I think. It doesn't look like [recording skips]. I'm a great one to play bingo and lottery so maybe I'll have money (laughs). I always was hoping that I would win, and then I would send my brother money so he could come back and see these – these houses and this area where he was running as a young kid and – I never have had a chance, never.

MOORE: And what about your father? Wh—when did—

ANNIKKI: He died two years after – after I arrive here. Two years after that he died. He saw my husband and saw our son and – and my dad was the first one to buy our son a birthday cake on his ninth birthday and give him a two dollar bill and that was many, many [recording skips] and he still got the two dollar bill.

MOORE: I'd like to thank you on behalf of Ellis Island for taking your time with us and giving us your life story. And we will send you a copy of it. This is Kate Moore signing off from Aberdeen, Washington on J—June 25<sup>th</sup>, 1994 for the Ellis Island Oral History Project.

END OF INTERVIEW