



I But there wasn't enough meat to stop you being hungry?

R No, there wasn't. We had to hunt away then.

I And how about, were there seeds and things? Were there plants that you'd eat?

R **Traditional Aboriginal: Bush Tucker**

10:14:01:20 No, they'd get that, oh I don't know what you call 'em, wild onions, Yasco (?) we calls it. We'd get it and cook it and peel it like that and it'd come out little wild onions. They're good there. You'd get ... we'd see, oh like, I don't know what you call 'em, [montara?] and the wild fruit on it - we'd get that too. And we eat and they'd get a lot of fruit of that and eatin' it. When we got travellin' back to Mount Gason then, we was pickin' all the fruits there, eatin' it.

I And do you remember arriving in Birdsville at all? Can you remember coming in for the first time?

R Yeah, from Pandie then. Because the white people was in Pandie then, when Mum was workin' there.

I So what do you remember when you first came to Birdsville?

R Frightened. Racin' around and frightened from the white fella. Terrible then.

I Were your parents afraid of white people too?

R No, no, only my brother and two sisters, three sisters – four of us, like.

I And what were you afraid of, do you think?

R Well, they might ... we'd think, you know, like that. We'd think 'They might kill us these white fellas'. Oh, frightened.

I So what did your parents tell you about white people, Linda?



**R      Traditional Aboriginal: Clothes**

10:18:00:00    Yeah, she was happy. She was like wild one, I suppose we were runnin' around the naked. But Dad had a rabbit skin, made a skirt out of it. You know, not sewn, that's what they call a stick poonkaru(?). Open it up and open it up and put the skin through then. Rabbit skin. The skin was that long and sewed that up with a poonkaru, a stick, poonkaru stick.

I      And who would wear that skirt?

R      Me and my sister, Clara and Dora and ... my two sisters.

I      So how many kids were there in your parents' family?

R      Well, there was three of us and one brother, Conbilly, Tom and Aylene.

I      And would your brother, did he work on the property?

R      Yeah, when he'd get big and he left Mum and Dad, all of us, and gone to the property then, down at the Chilton Hills, worked down there then.

I      And how about, Linda, where did you go to school?

**R      Education**

Never. Pandi - Padnus mean nothing. All my kids went to school.

I      So why didn't you go to school?

R      10:19:27:00    Didn't want to. I still take off when I see white fellas. Still in them, you know, in me. I don't go wika then all white kids went to school here.

I      And when you were a kid, Linda, were your parents teaching you traditional ways?

R      Yeah.

I      So tell us about some of those lessons that you had as a child.

R Well Mum and Dad tell us about all them [punta?] (language) that means, you what's that mean, fishin'.(language) Jean, Oh, not again, look over there, they're goin' to drop that kid directly.

I So what did your parents teach you about fishing?

R **Traditional Aboriginal: Bush Tucker**

10:20:35:10 Catch a fish. Go along the river and catch a yabbie, get the yabbie and put it in the hook, and my old grandfather, he had a long hair right down, and they'd get that hair and do that to them and get the ... government sent the hook out, you know, fishin' line and all. That put little hook in the long hair then and then we went down fishin'. He caught a lot of fish. We run (language) what you got? (language) that's mean grandfather. 'Here take this back to Mum and Dad, he'll cook it for you', so all right.

I So when you were a little child, was the word 'government', was that a word that you would hear? When you'd get the blankets or whatever, would you be hearing 'the government sent us this'?

R Mmmm. (Language – substantial)

I And what would you think of the government? What was your feeling about the government?

R **Race Relations**

10:21:50:10 Well, since we got them clothes we reckon 'Oh, gee, they're a nice lot of people, givin' us the clothes'.

Other Mother, you're doin' well there.

R See that flower you sent for me? Yeah, then, we reckon, 'Oh, gee them white fella must be good to us, sendin' it'. Oh, yeah, we're jumpin' around with the new dresses and all, and pants, and all that. Glad for it.

I For how long did you stay on Pandie Pandi, do you know?

R 10:22:42:10 We stayed there all the time then. Dad had to go to Durrie and work with my ... that's where I pick up my man there at Pandie Pandi. That old man there, me \_\_\_ him(?) so I pick him up there.

I So how did you meet him?

R Oh, I don't know, cant's say.

I Was he working on Pandie Pandie too?

R **Romance**

10:23:10:10 No. He was working on Nappanuma, come in every time, comin' to see his parents, Mum and Dad, and they was there. Anyway, he was comin' in all the time there, every day, you know. Not every day, like, every week. Stayin' there. I said to my sister, 'I'm goin' to get that man'. 'Dad'll rouse on you,' they said. 'No,' you know,

I Was he the first man you'd really wanted?

R Yeah, that's the first one. So when he died, I never worried about an old man then.

I And so how old were you, do you reckon, when you and your husband got together?

R 20.

I And had you started to work by then on the station?

R Oh, I had \_\_\_\_\_ then, I started cooking for the station.

I And where was that you started cooking?

R What's-a-name? [Hawthorn?] Down. All my family was there then.

I And so what was involved in cooking for the station? What would a day be like?

R What's that?

I What was involved in cooking for the station? You know, what was the work?

R **Aboriginal Workers**

Oh, cooking and sometime go out ridin', chasin' cattle. Do everything. But we used to chase cattle, you know, ridin' with my husband, and that.

I Were you paid cash wages or were you paid in food and clothes? When you started working ...

R 10:25:08:10 Yeah, you'd get ... they'd cut your wages then, they'd give you food and clothes. They'd pay you something like a hundred dollars, something like that, or it might be two hundred, like that.

I Two hundred dollars. How long would you have to work before you'd get two hundred dollars?

R About a fortnight I think. I'm not too sure. Took us ... boss was there but we don't ask him how long the wages. Oh my eye aches.

I That's no good. Do you need to stop Linda?

R Mmmm. We started workin' at the Hawthorne Downs then chasin' cattle and all that. I used to ride a horse.

I Who taught you to ride a horse?

R 10:26:01:08 My Dad and Mum. They both ride. Leave us, when we were small when they leave us with the grandmother, they go away chasin' cattle and all that. Go out cookin' and camp, settle down with a at last I went like that and went, 'Oh, well, I'm goin' back now, goin' back to Mum and Dad'. 'Yeah, I'll take you back and leave you in here,' he said. I'll go there then, every day, like every fortnight, yeah, took me back and left me at Pandie Pandi.

I So when your baby was born, where was your first baby born?

R In the hospital here. There's that man, there, sittin' up with the bung eye, he my first son.

I And do you know what year that was, that he was born?

R No, but a lot of paper been there in the hospital but it got burnt. They might get the paper in there, you might make enquiry.

I So what was it like coming in to Birdsville Hospital to have your baby? Could you tell me that story?

R **Childbirth**

10:27:18:10 All right. Ridin' a horse, come in. When we come in, there's a [mickeree?] in there, a well. Aboriginal well, they calls it [mickeree?]. That's the only word. No water was here, nothing. Dry. And that water was sort of feedin' the town too. Anyway, we ... get caught up in the back too, everywhere.

I Go on. So you came in. Tell me ...

R I stayed in there then, at the hospital then.

I Were you happy to come to hospital to have your baby?

R **Palmistry**

Yeah. And my husband's father was workin'. He said, 'Linda, show your hand'. I said, 'What for?' 'I can tell if you've got a boy or girl' and he said, 'You've got a boy'. I said, 'Go on'. I said, 'No, don't tell lies, Frank'. He said, 'No, fair dinkum'. He said, 'Put your money there, you and your husband's money, and I'll put mine there'. So his old rubbish won it.

I And were you happy to be having a boy?

R 10:28:37:10 Yeah. Then I went away workin' then. Went back to Mortons again then, workin'. We left that country out there, too far to come into the hospital, you see. And go to the Mortons and work.

I So what was the name of the Mortons property?



R Roseberth, You come past Roseberth when you go. You the past there and when you go out this way, this is the road goin' to the big hill. That's [Rose -----?].

I And so how old was your baby when you started working for the Mortons?

R 10:29:14:08 He done can sit up. He wouldn't let me to go before. He said, 'No, you stop and look after baby'. And them day, you don't feed the kid with the milk, you feed it at the breast. Oh, this here. That's them two girls.

No, no, you'll smash the glasses.

I So what was the work, Linda, that you took on then, when your baby was small?

R **Race Relations/Work: Domestic**

Oh, cleanin' the house out for old Mrs Morton.

I Who taught you how to clean the house?

R 10:30:21:20 She did. Old Mrs Morton herself. And we worked there and we'd get tucker there again.

I And where did you live on the Morton property?

R Down the river. There's not much house them days. We made our own little [poonga poonga?].

I So you knew how to do that from having grown up in the desert?

R Yeah. Yeah.

I And did your husband live traditional way as well?

R 10:30:37:00 Yeah. We both stayed there and then my sister was workin' there, we all, me and her work's done, well we took Mum back then. Mum lookin' after the babies then. She come up and we only workin' from the

mornin' to dinner, knock off then. But old Mrs Morton said, 'Oh, we won't keep you too long, them babies will cry'. 'Yeah? Oh that's good then.'

I So your babies would stay with your mother in the [poonga poonga?]

R Yeah.

I And so did you keep breast feeding after you started working?

R Mmmm. All my babies are fed in breastfeedin'.

I And so what did you think of working in that house on the station, Linda?

R All right. It's good. And workin' round, grandmother was and all there.

I How would you describe your relationship with the Morton family then?

R Oh, it was all right. Gettin' on good with 'em.

I Would there ever be trouble between white and black on the station?

R No. No.

I Reading history books, there's a lot of talk of Aboriginal women being treated badly on the stations. Like stud gins, women being kept for sex and that sort of thing. Did you ever experience that or hear about that happening to other women?

R No. No.

I Would you go into the house except when you were working there or would you mostly stay down with your camp?

R 10:32:58:10 No, we stayed down at the camp and they'd just give us a big tarpaulin for the night it was right. Stayed down there.

I Would there be time when you'd be leaving camp for ceremonies? For business?

R 10:33:17:08 No, nothing them days. Then, they all finished. They all went  
back to Alice Springs, the ceremony peoples. Nothing along here.  
10:33:38:10