

NEVADA INDIAN COMMISSION

STEWART INDIAN SCHOOL ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

HAPPY STUDENT, FREE-SPIRITED WOMAN: AN INTERVIEW WITH EVELYN COOK

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Happy Student, Free-Spirited Woman: An Interview with Evelyn Cook

Evelyn (Sharp) Cook is a Northern Paiute woman who attended Stewart Indian School 1943-1947. She enjoyed her classes, teachers and friends at the school. After graduating, she moved to southern California with a sister and friends to work, using her vocational training in domestic skills in jobs there. She eventually moved back to Nevada, beginning a career in nursing at the Walker River hospital in Schurz. She retired after 23 years at the hospital, and still resides in Schurz. Evelyn is the great-great granddaughter of Jack "Wovoka" Wilson, renowned religious leader of the Ghost Dance.

My name is Terri McBride. It is Monday, April 17, 2017. We are at the Technology Center at the Walker River Paiute Tribe's Center in Schurz. The interview is with Evelyn Cook, a former student at Stewart Indian School. We will be discussing her experiences as a student. This interview is being conducted for the Stewart Indian School Oral History Project for the Nevada Indian Commission and will be archived in the Stewart Indian School Cultural Center, the Nevada State Library and Archives, and the Special Collections Library at the University of Nevada, Reno.

Okay, Evelyn, where were you born and when were you born?

I was born in Yerington, Nevada, on August 3, 1928.

And how many people were in your family?

Uh, there was—I had two sisters and mother and dad, and that was it.

And what language was spoken at home?

Paiute language and English.

Okay. Were there communication problems between, you know, the older relatives and the kids?

No, because that's all we, I mean, that's all they spoke and then, and then, of course, after school—after starting school—we had to talk English. So, it wasn't a problem.

When you were growing up in your house, in your home with your family, did your family celebrate American Indian traditional ceremonies or did you do traditional activities together, like dancing or pine-nutting, or you know?

I don't remember, 'cuz, uh, after we started school, it seemed like we got away from it all; and usually, we'd just join the community in whatever goes on, you know. And . . .

So, community events. Go ahead!

And . . . and my dad, he worked, he worked on the ranch on weekends and then during the weekdays, he worked for the State of Nevada for the Highway Department.

Oh, okay!

And my mother, she always stayed . . . she was a housewife so she never went and got a job after she got married, after she got with my dad, but before that, she worked in San Francisco, you know, after school, 'cuz she went to Stewart too!

Okay! I was gonna ask, did any of your other family members go to Stewart?

Yeah, both of my sisters went to Stewart.

So, you mother, and what about your father?

No, my dad didn't go to school. I think he had a third-grade education.

And so, your mom moved out to San Francisco for a job?

Yeah, she—after she left school, well, she went and got—she went to San Leandro, I think it was, where she got a job and she worked there I don't know how long, but anyway . . .

What did she do?

Domestic work, as far as I know.

And how old were you when you first went away to Stewart?

I was thirteen, I guess, fourteen.

Thirteen or fourteen, and how many years were you there?

Four. Just my high school years.

Four, okay.

I probably would have gone, stayed home and gone to Fallon or Yerington, you know, but because my sisters had gone to Stewart, well, I wanted to be there too, being the youngest.

Oh, okay!

(Laughs) You know how they always wanted to follow along with their older sisters and brothers.

That's right. So, that's why you went to Stewart is 'cuz you wanted to go to school with your sisters? And what did your mom . . . ?

You know, I didn't get to go to school with them 'cuz they got out. They were out by the time I got into Stewart.

Oh! They were done.

Uh-huh.

Okay. So, but you still wanted to go? You asked to go?

Yeah, I wanted to go.

And your mom was okay with that?

Mm-hmm.

Okay. So, how did you get there the first time, the first time you went off to school? How did you get over there?

I think—I can't remember, but I think we went on a bus. I mean, you know, they loaded up the children here and took them all.

Uh-huh. In the fall? To go off to school?

Uh-huh, in the fall.

And had you visited Stewart before you went? Did you know where you were going, really?

Well, yeah, because my sisters were up there and then my mom and dad, we'd go and visit.

Okay. So, what was your first impression when you got there as a student? When you got off that bus, what'd you think?

Umm, I don't know. . . . It didn't really make any difference to me because I had been away from home before that and you know, I wasn't at home all the time and, in fact, I was in a sanitorium when—before I went into high school.

Was that for TB?

Yeah, they said I had TB but afterwards, um, they didn't think I had TB. It was, I don't know, but anyway.

Yeah. So, you weren't scared.

Huh-uh. I wasn't afraid. I mean, because I had been away from my family, you know, I was away from them for about two and a half years, or going on three years; so, I wasn't really afraid.

Did you enjoy being a student at Stewart?

Mm-hmm. I did. I wasn't—I didn't have anything against it, you know. I mean, I've heard some stories where . . . well, some people thought that they were in prison or, you know, things like that, but I never thought that. I just went to school and I was happy.

So, when you went there, what kinds of things did you take with you from home? You took your clothes . . .

Oh, I just took my clothes.

Just clothes, huh?

Uh-huh. Just my personal things, you know. My clothes and that's about it.

And what was the most difficult thing to leave behind at home—or people?

I don't know because, you know, like I say, I was in a sanitorium and I didn't have anything there and then when I got home, well, I still didn't have anything so I really didn't, didn't think of anything that I had at home.

That you were missing.

Yeah. Just maybe my mother and dad! (laughs) But, that's natural!

Sure, sure. Well, how did they feel about you going away? So, you were the youngest, right? How did they feel about you going away?

Well, I guess they didn't . . . didn't really miss me, really, because I had been in the sanitorium just before that, before I went to Stewart.

So, they were used to you being gone!

So, I don't know, they never seemed to . . . they probably missed me but I never . . . they never showed it or, you know.

And as far as campus life goes, what was living in the dorms like?

I don't know; it was all right. For me, anyway, it was. I had my roommates.

Uh-huh, how many?

I had three roommates.

Okay, so you shared with three girls.

. . . 'Cuz there was four girls to a room.

Were you in the little girls' dorm at first or you were always in the big girls'?

I was always in the, yeah, in the large girls'.

Okay. You guys had to do chores, though, right?

Yeah, we had on weekends we had to clean our rooms and clean the . . . we all had details to do in the building, you know, and so we all did our weekend duties or even every day, you know, somethin' that has to be done every day; we had to do that if we were assigned to it.

Okay, and eating in the dining hall, what was the food like?

What?

What was the food like?

To me, I never did—I was never too finicky about food so it was all right with me. (laughs) I mean the food was all right, because we got our bread, butter, and cereals in the morning, and our meat and vegetables during lunch, and our dinner we got, you know, the same. So, it wasn't too bad; for me it wasn't, anyway.

And was that a social time, like, eating together with your friends?

Uh-huh.

Were there, was there a group of girls that you always sat with? Well, let me ask: first of all, did the boys and the girls have to sit separate in the dining hall?

Yeah.

Okay, and so, you just always had a group of friends that you liked to eat with?

Uh-huh.

So were you going [to Stewart] when they marched everybody in, and everybody had to go in single file?

Yeah . . .



Evelyn Cook, Schurz Nevada, April 17, 2017.

And so, did the girls go first, or did the boys go first? Do you remember?

I don't know, they seemed to have the boys on one side and the girls on the other side.

Oh, okay, they came in different doors.

Yeah, uh-huh.

Okay, good.

Yeah, they all came in . . .

. . . and sat in their separate . . .

Uh- huh.

And did they have a little student store there? Did you ever buy things there?

Mm-hmm.

What kinds of things?

They used to have—oh you know, soft drinks and candy, and that's about all. I don't remember, I never did! (laughs) I don't

remember. My mom, she used to, used to send me five dollars a month and so I'd have to make that last and then, if I didn't get a job—I mean a paying job—because they had, up at the main office, well, they used to have . . . a position up there where, uh . . . I had anyway, once, and I got a little, a little paycheck for, you know.

So, you worked in the office or . . . ?

Yeah, in the main office! And then, after that, and then, we had you know, our other details, too, so . . . but I used to get a little check, and I liked it. And then I . . .

Did they set up a bank account for you? Did they have a bank, like a savings account for you?

Huh-uh. They didn't because, I don't know, I just didn't even think about puttin' anything in the bank.

Okay, so, you just worked for a little spending money.

Yeah!

And did you have a favorite class, Evelyn?

A what?

A favorite class?

A favorite class? Uh . . . (pauses) I don't know. Dancing class, I guess! (laughs)

Dancing!

We used to have—they used to have different clubs, you know, like, I guess it was called a club, and they had a square dance club and, you know, and other . . . and they had all, other classes, too, but, I don't know, I used to like, I used to like that dancing.

Uh-huh; well, you said that you had a small job right there at Stewart in an office, but did you also do other—the vocational training?

Mm-hmm! Yeah!

Okay, so what kinds of things did you learn how to do there?

We learned how to cook and we learned how to keep our house, and, you know, domestic stuff.

Uh-huh, okay, and what about the teachers? Did you have a favorite teacher?

I, I really didn't have any favorites 'cuz they were all pretty good to me.

So, since you were a girl, you weren't involved in the school agriculture, then.

Huh-uh.

That was just for the boys to do?

Well, you know, during the war, too, the girls—I remember my sister, one of my sisters, she used to work in the dairy, or down on the farm and she said she used to milk cows and feed the cows and stuff like that, but that was during the war. After the boys all, they all decided to go in the service, you know, or they were drafted and so, the girls had to go and take care of the farm.

Sure, just like all over America.

Yeah!

So, did the girls take care of the chickens, too, or . . . ?

Uh-huh; they did everything down there, I guess—but I never did—and they had rabbits and pigs, and . . . but that was before I went there so I didn't, I didn't have to work at the farm.

So, you went there . . .

In '40; let's see, I graduated in '47.

So, from '43 to '47.

It was about '44, '43 or '44.

So, you got there right at the end of the war.

Uh-huh.

Okay, and so, you graduated from Stewart?

Mm-hmm.

Okay, class of '47?

Forty-seven. And then there was another job I liked over there, too. We'd work at the Employees' Club and that paid us.

Oh! Uh-huh, okay! So, it was kind of like the employees' lounge?

Yeah.

So, that's where they ate and what else did the employees do over there? Did they have meetings? What did they do there?

Meetings?

At the Employees' Club. What did they do over there?

Oh! The employees—that's where they ate, and the cook, she was really neat. Her name was Tropha.

Tropha?

Uh-huh, and she was from, I think she said she was from Arkansas or someplace she came from, and she was a real good cook too, and she used to tease us, you know, different things like one day she said, "Okay, you two get over there at the end of the counter," she says, "and we're gonna make a cake." And so, she was doing something over here but she was telling us what to do (laughs) and we made our cake! But she real, real good, you know. I really liked her because she was—she was interesting, you know, to work with. That's where I learned to, to wait on tables and then after I got out of school, I did some of that, you know. I worked in Yerington at the Eagle Club before it closed. I worked with a Chinese man and I really enjoyed that and so that was one of the jobs that I picked up at Stewart! (laughs)

Right! And the sports: How important was the sports there, on campus while you were there?

They had, you know, the regular sports. They had basketball, baseball, and, uh, I don't know what else, but . . .

Did they have wrestling—or did they have boxing when you were there?

Oh, yeah, the boxing.

Did you go watch?

Uh-huh.

Yeah? What was that like? Was that fun?

Yeah, yeah, I . . . I didn't, I wasn't too interested in sports because, because of my health, you know. I was not used to running and jumping and all that because of my health, but I liked to watch it, you know, and I'd try it once in a while but it just, I don't know, it was too much for me or something.

So, some girls played sports? What kinds of sports were the girls playing then?

Yeah! They played basketball.

Okay, so girls' basketball. Did they have softball or anything like that, or track?

Track, I think they did, but I don't know if the girls were—any participated in that.

Okay, so basketball for sure.

Yeah. And probably baseball.

Oh, baseball, okay. Did they have cheerleaders back then?

Uh-huh.

So the girls also were cheerleaders. What kinds of things did you do in the auditorium? You know, the building with the stage and all the seats?

Mmm . . .

What kinds of things did the students do in there?

They had their movies there all the time, you know, and . . .

Did they have any kind of performances like music, the band or anything or . . . ?

Well, I think so, um, mostly the band, you know, the high school, the school band. They had a real good school band and then their . . .

Okay, so the school band. So, they'd have their rehearsals in there or . . .

And the teacher was Mr. Laird and he was a good teacher. He was there for years and years. I mean, all the years that I was there and after.

Mr. Laird, yeah.

And I think they—they put on some acts, you know, uh, the school, maybe certain classes or something, would put on somethin'.

Okay, and did the boys and girls have to sit on different sides when you were there? Do you remember?

I don't think so. I think they sat wherever they wanted to in the auditorium.

You said earlier you were in a dance club.

Uh-huh.

Were there other clubs on campus that you were part of?

Mmm, no, I don't think so.

Were you in the band?

Huh-uh.

Okay.

I never did take up music. I like to listen!
(laughs)

Uh-huh. Especially when they're good!

Yeah!

Yeah! Okay, so you were in the square- dancing club, or was it just all dancing in the club you were in?

It was, you know, they had square dancing, and . . . ballroom dancing.

Right, okay.

And, of course, at the time, there was jitterbug!

(Laughs) Nice!

But I used to have fun. I mean, I liked it, you know and the square dance was good, we used to have fun doing that.

Right.

And by records, you know.

So, did you guys have sock hops?

A what?

Sock hop? You know what that is, a sock hop, where everyone kicks off their shoes and dances like the jitterbug or the swing kind of dancing?

No, I never did do that, but they probably did, you know, did if they wanted to.

And then regarding other buildings on campus, is there any memory that sticks out in your mind that happened at a particular building?

That what?

That happened at a particular building. Any memories of specific buildings on campus for you?

Uh-huh. No, I don't remember any.

So, did you get sick while you were at Stewart? Did you have to go to the infirmary while you were there?

Hmm-mm.

No?

Uh-uh. I was pretty healthy. (laughs)

Okay!

I don't think I, umm . . .

Did some of the girls work in that infirmary?

Uh-huh, yeah. There was always girls that were detailed there, and in the dental office also. I was detailed in the dental office there for six weeks, or nine weeks, or whatever they, whatever the time was and I enjoyed it. And then I ended up going, after high school, well, I retired from the hospital and I never did work in the hospital. I mean, you know, I never did take any training at the school.

Right! But that's where you ended up working most of your life?

Yeah!

Uh-huh! Which hospital?

The Schurz, Schurz Indian Hospital, I guess, or the Walker River Indian Hospital, I think it was called.

Right, okay!

And then they closed it, you know, not too long ago. Not too long ago—about twenty years ago!
(laughs)

Right!

But, anyway, I ended up working there and I retired from there. It's really funny how, you know, you do things, like I, I worked as a waitress and a laundress, and this is all training from Stewart, and what else did I do? Yeah, waitress and laundry and . . .

Did you ever work in a dentist office?

Huh?

Did you work in a dentist office?

Huh-uh. No, but then I kinda liked it when I was taking it at Stewart and all the instruments, you know. I, that was what I had to do was clean the instruments and autoclave them and everything, you know, sterilize them, and so, it was kinda fun to me. (laughs)

Yeah, sure! So, when you were at the Stewart Indian School, did you go to church?

Uh-huh.

And, which one?

Well at the time the Baptist church was the only one that was there, and then they finally brought in the Catholic church and I guess there might have been other churches too, but I never did—I just went to the church, the Baptist church 'cuz it was there! You know?

Okay, right.

And when I was at home, I went to the Methodist church. That's the one that's down there [in Schurz] but at the time when I went to it, well, it was a stucco building and then it burnt. And I don't know how it happened, but anyway it burnt and then they built this one that's there now.

Okay, okay.

But I did—I went to church as often, I mean, you know, almost every Sunday over at the Baptist church.

Right, the one that's still there.

Uh-huh.

Yeah! So, on the weekends, did you leave campus?

We used to go to town on weekends you know, if we had, if we had enough money to go to the movie and, you know. . . . So, we'd go downtown and get our few little articles if we needed, you know, and then go to the movie and go down to the Dutch Mill and have our hamburger and back to Stewart again! (laughs)

Did you say the Dutch Mill?

Uh-huh.

Uh-huh, that's what the place was called?

Yeah, the Dutch Mill and it's still there in Carson and that was our weekends and that was my weekend, anyway. But we used to have a lot of fun. I did, anyway.

[Recording machine battery needed replacing here. Recording stopped and restarted]

This is the continuation of Evie Cook's interview. Okay, so you used to walk to town?

Yeah, we used to walk to time or somebody might give us a ride, you know, but usually we walked to town. It's about three miles.

Did you follow the railroad tracks?

Yeah, well, there's a—from Stewart there's a road that goes right through to Carson.

Right, okay, okay!

A dirt road, but now it's all built in you know, with homes and stuff there right out of Stewart.

So, did you work a job in the summers away from home?

Uh-huh. I worked as a domestic babysitter. (laughs) First, my first job was . . . a domestic for a doctor.

[recording paused]

Let's try this again, sorry. You were talking about the jobs you did during the summer.

Uh-huh.

So, you worked up in Reno?

Uh- huh.

And what did you do up there?

I was a domestic in that home.

Okay. And you said that that family owned . . .

Yeah, they owned the Reno Grocery Company.

What was their name? Do you remember?

Their last name was Eckles.

Yeah, okay, Eckles.

I think . . . !

So you didn't come back to Yerington in the summers; you stayed over there and worked?

Yeah, I, and then . . . yeah, 'cuz there was no jobs around here and that one summer, I don't remember whether it was, when exactly it was, but I worked at the . . . what's that dime store?

Woolworth's?

Woolworth! (laughs) In the summertime. I worked there as the—in the—at the lunch counter. I was staying with my cousin and anyway, she was working there so she said, "Why don't you get a job there?" "Okay!" So, I did and that was kinda fun!

Sounds like an easy job to get if you had an inside person. So, do you have memories of classmates that you went to school with?

Yeah, I went to school with the veterans.

What do you mean you went to school with the veterans, uh, people returning . . . ?

The veterans, the veterans returning from World War II, and anyway, there was some—there was Vernon Newman and um, I can't think of—Jack . . . Jack DeLorme and . . .

So, they were a little bit older because they'd gone over to fight and then they came back.

Uh-huh. And they wanted to finish their high school, you know.

Sure.

So, they finished with me. There was a couple others but I can't think of their names. And I wished I had my yearbook but I loaned my yearbook away, out to somebody, my sister probably, and she never returned it to me and she passed away in August so . . . and I haven't, I didn't go through her books or anything, you know, so . . .

Right, right, so you don't know where that is.

Yeah, I was wishing I had that 'cuz then I could have . . .

. . . remembered more names.

Yeah.

Yeah, once you saw them again. And did you keep in touch with classmates after you left school?

Not really.

Not really? What about teachers? Did you keep in touch with any teachers?

Huh-uh. Once I left Stewart, I guess I just left Stewart! (laughs)

Onto the new horizon! So, did you know any friends from back home that went to Stewart with you?

That?

Like kids that you knew from Yerington, were they at Stewart with you?

No, I was from Schurz, really.

Oh, okay. So, were there kids from Schurz?

I was born—I was born in Yerington but we lived in Schurz. See my dad, Dad was from Schurz.

Oh, okay, got it.

And my mother was from Yerington.

Okay, right.

And I knew some kids from Yerington that went to Stewart too. There was, uh, I don't think they were in my class but I knew the . . . Pauline Stevens was one, and . . . Verna Andrews; these are from Yerington.

Okay, right. Well, what kind of student were you? Were you shy? Were you a troublemaker? Were you happy? Were you quiet?

I don't know. I wasn't a troublemaker! (laughs)

Okay!

I was just a happy-go-lucky student, I guess.

So, you were happy?

I mean, I tried to be friendly with everyone.

So, what were your goals? What were your plans for the future when you got out of school?

I don't think I had any! I just wanted to be out of school and go to work, I guess.

Right! Just graduate and go to work!

Yes!

And do you think there's a sense of connection between Stewart students—either while you were there, like, "Yeah, we're part of, part of a unique high school community," or outside, when you meet people and find out they went to Stewart. Is there a connection there?

I guess there would be, you know. I know, you get to talkin' about different things and, and laughing, and, you know, kinda reminding you all the goofy things that happened or something. (laughs)

What was it like to go to a school where there were so many different—there was so many people from different places all in one school. What was that like?

Uh-huh. I just tried to get along, I guess. I never, I never think about where they're from or anything, you know.

So, you talked a little bit about this earlier: Where did you go after leaving, after graduating Stewart?

I just got a job, I guess, 'cuz I went over to—I went home with my friend and we went to Lovelock. That was where she was from and her name was Adele Wasson and we graduated together.

So, you went to Lovelock after school. Did you get a job there?

Yeah! That's where I got, and I got a job at the laundry and I can't remember the proprietor's name, but anyway . . . And then after that, I came back to Schurz, and just hung out there for a while.

Did you raise a family?

Huh?

Did you raise a family?

No, and then my sister came back from, she came back from the Army. She was in the WACs, my oldest sister and—you know, during the war she wanted to be in there so bad but she was too young! (laughs) So, then, soon as she got to be eighteen, I think, there, she was gone. Anyway, she was home from the WACs and she was one of the first, the first WACs that went overseas with the—and they ended up in Tokyo, in Japan. So, that's where she was for, oh, I don't know how long she was there but, anyway, she really liked it, you know. She liked that Army life. It was something like Stewart, I think. You know, 'cuz in Stewart, you're, you have to obey orders. (laughs)

Right, yeah! Regimented.

Yeah.

Yeah.

And, so, she really enjoyed it.

So, she came back to Schurz and then. . . go ahead.

And then she asked me if I wanted to go down to, San Diego with her. I said, "Boy, lemme go!" (laughs) I wanted to go and so we went down there and, and, I knew her friend, or no, I didn't yet. But, anyway, we went down to visit her friend, Ruth, and she had married a Navy guy and he was stationed in San Diego and so, we—I, I got to meet him and they had a little girl and a boy, I think. The little girl was just a baby when we saw her and we were down there and she . . . she liked it and I did too, and since we weren't married, you know, or anything, so she got a job at the hospital in San Diego and I got a job in a laundry, and it was a Chinese laundry.

Oh! Uh-huh.

So, we worked down there for a while. I don't know how long I was down there. Two or three years, I guess. And then from there, she wanted to go to Santa Barbara so we went up to Santa Barbara and she got a job up there too. I don't think I got a job. No, I didn't work in San Diego—Santa Barbara. And then my other sister came down there and she—she was a nurse, was she a nurse already? But anyway, one of her friends that she went to nursing with, 'cuz she went, she went to nursing and became an R.N. and, anyway, one of her friends lived down in Santa Ynez, California and so we visited with her. (laughs) We were always, I mean, you know, and it was fun while we were there, and then, after that, well, my sister came back to Nevada, my older sister, and then Inez, she came back, and she went to work, she went to work at the hospital here, I guess, and then she took some more training and she went to Los Angeles and took some more training and . . .

So, you came back with them, back to Nevada?

Yeah.

And did you get nursing training before you ended up at the hospital?

Hmm-mm.

So, what did you do at the hospital then?

Um, I was a nursing assistant.

Okay.

And while I was there, well, I didn't know anything about hospital work. I'd been in a hospital but I never did, you know, know the jobs and so I asked my supervisor in Schurz when I started working, I said, "Would there be—could I get some, some lessons on, you know, on my job?" And she said, "Would you like to do that?" She said, "I was wondering if you girls would like to do that." I said, "I would, because," I said, "I don't know what I'm doing!" And then she said, "Well, I'll ask the other girls and see if they want to try it too." So, they said, "Yeah, we will!" So, you know, we . . . every, maybe every Wednesday or somethin' like that, we'd have classes and so, that's how I got my nursing, nursing, just by taking classes from, you know, for nursing assistant and did, and it was good because, I'm so, I was afraid, you know, I might do somethin' wrong and then and that person would die or somethin'!

Yeah!

You know, you know how it is—and so then that's why when we went through our classes and everything, well, they showed us how to make a bed and, and everything, you know, from the bottom up and to take care of a patient, how to give them a bath and to roll them over and everything, you know, and so I really, I really liked that, you know, 'cuz then I kinda had more of an idea of what I'm supposed to be doin'.

Right. Gives you confidence.

Yeah.

Yeah, uh-huh. So, how long did you end up working at the hospital, do you think? How many years?

Twenty-three years.

Wow! Good for you!

(Laughs) Yeah, and I retired from their clinic. They closed the hospital. They wanted to send us to Phoenix, you know, 'cuz we were under the Phoenix, and, I don't know, I just didn't feel like I wanted to uproot, you know. And I was gettin' . . . I think I was hittin' sixty then, and so I decided, oh, phooey, I'm not gonna go anyplace. I'll just stay right here because I'd just gotten my home, too, you know, and, uh, and I was married, but I didn't want to move any place else so I just wanted to stay in Schurz.

So, you did end up getting married later in life?

Uh-huh.

What was your maiden name, Evelyn?

Sharp.

So, do you think, you think going to Stewart affected your life afterwards? Sounds like maybe with the job choices.

Uh-huh. I think so because, I think, being in Stewart and going to school and I think that it helped me to learn how to do things, learn how to do like working in a laundry and like, what else? Oh, being a waitress and I think it, it helped, it helped me, anyway! I don't know about anybody else.

Just asking about you! (laughter) You have some bad memories of school?

Mmm, no.

Anything that stands out?

I don't, I don't, I don't have any bad memories of Stewart.

What about real good ones? Happy, I mean.

Yeah.

What are some of your best memories of the school?

Uh, I don't know. I always forget everything, you know. I—I enjoyed school.

And do you talk about your memories of Stewart with your family or other friends?

No, because, I don't know, sometimes they don't even want to talk about, you know, about school or anything like that, and I don't have a family but I have some grandnieces, a grandniece and nephew.

And you don't tell them about going to the boarding school?

Hmm-mm. Oh, and they're all out of school now, anyway. They graduated from Yerington, Yerington High School, 'cuz, I don't know, when we were in—going into high school, they didn't seem to want us to go there, to Yerington or, you know, to different places and they just seemed like, "You're going to Stewart, okay?"

Right, right.

And I was glad I had some place to go.

Yes. Some school districts, I'm finding out in this project, that some school districts just didn't want, um, American Indian kids in the high schools.

Mm-hmm.

So, they would keep them in the public school system up to junior high and high school and then send them off to Stewart, or Sherman or wherever.

Mm-hmm.

So, have you visited the campus?

Hmm?

Have you visited campus, have you visited Stewart since you graduated?

(shakes head in the negative)

You've not been back?

Huh-uh.

Ever?

No, well, like I say, the last time I was there was during that one reunion.

Right! Okay, so that one, that was around 1980, do you think?

Yeah, I think it was '80.

Okay, and just to wrap this interview up, what, more than anything, needs to be told to visitors who aren't familiar with Stewart or the boarding school system? What, more than anything, do we need to get across to them?

Well . . .

About the student experience?

Yeah, I don't know. It just seemed like now, they don't even want to go to school, you know, and then when they do, well, they just goof off anyway. That's all I can see and I can't stand it!

(laughter)

Right! School is a good thing!

Yeah!

School is a good thing to finish! And, any other thoughts? Any other things you want to say?

No, I don't think so.

Okay. Well, thank you very much for sharing your memories with me, Evelyn, I really appreciate it.