

BC & CANADA
THROUGH
ARRIVING
EYES



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Vancouver, BC

HANS & BARBARA MILEWSKI

interviewed by

MARC STOECKLE

*August 7 & 14, 2015
Maple Ridge, BC*

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Interviewee

Hans & Barbara Milewski immigrated from Germany to Canada in 1954. From Bremerhaven, Germany they boarded the ship "Canberra" to arrive several days later in Quebec, QC. After arriving in Canada they traveled by train to Toronto, ON to arrive a day later at their first destination Niagara Falls, ON. Although Hans quickly found seasonal work as a painter, Barbara's job prospects were not what they expected to be and after Hans was let go by his employer due to the upcoming winter they decided to move to Toronto, ON after approximately one year. In the meantime, Barbara was expecting their son and after a two-year stint in Toronto, ON and the birth of their son Martin, the Milewskis moved to Fort William, ON (now Thunder Bay, ON). After more than 8 years living in Fort William in hope of better job prospects they moved to Vancouver, BC in 1965. Currently they reside in Maple Ridge, BC.

Interviewer

Marc Stoeckle is the research assistant of the project "BC Through Arriving Eyes". He is currently a master's student of Library and Information Science at the iScool at the University of British Columbia.

Notes

Abstract

The interviews were held on 7th & 14th of August 2015 in Maple Ridge, BC. The interviewees tell their story of immigrating to Canada from Germany. The first interview session is focusing on their German background while the second interview session is exploring the journey and life of the interviewees in Canada.

Restrictions

The recording is muted twice for several minutes as the interviewee was providing information that the research team considered to be too sensitive for publication.

Format

The sound recordings are available in wav-format.

Transcript

The transcription is providing the words in verbatim sentences but does not include non-verbal communication or external sounds transcription.

Interview Transcript I

British Columbia and Canada Through Arriving Eyes

UBC Library

Humanities and Social Sciences Division
Walter C. Koerner Library
1958 Main Mall
Vancouver, BC Canada V6T 1Z2

Transcript of interview conducted August 7, 2015, with:

HANS & BARBARA MILEWSKI
Maple Ridge, BC, Canada

by:

MARC STOECKLE

STOECKLE: I'm Marc Stoeckle. I am a research assistant for the research project "BC and Canada Through Arriving Eyes". I am here in Maple Ridge and is the 7th of August 2015. I am interviewing Hans and Barbara Milewski and what I would like for both of you... maybe you could really quickly tell me your name? When and where you were born? Yes you can speak freely.
#0:0:00.0#

PATRICIA MILEWSKI: So your name Mutti.
#0:0:38.2#

BARBARA MILEWSKI: Well, is it on?
#0:0:43.3#

STOECKLE: Ja, ja. It's recording.
#0:0:46.5#

BARBARA MILEWSKI: Hello. I am Barbara Milewski and you want to here when I was born. I am according to my opinion 91 years old and was born 1922. When was it? 24. And what else?
#0:0:51.8#

STOECKLE: Can you tell me where you were born? Where?
#0:1:32.8#

HANS MILEWSKI: Tsassen.
#0:1:32.8#

BARBARA MILEWSKI: And I am had been a German citizen since I was born of course and... From what day shall I begin? When we married or before that?
#0:1:32.8#

STOECKLE: I would like to hear Hans? So that he tells me his name too?
#0:2:7.0#

HANS MILEWSKI: Unfortunately, I have an attack of migraine and I cannot see perfectly but I have made some notes which I had formally used. My background: When my father had come home from WWI he took a position as a treasurer in a state owned horse breeding farm and he looked around for a beautiful girl and soon married the youngest daughter of a local school teacher. So I was born in fall 1922 about a time when Mussolini took over, took over power in Italy. I was born in East Prussia... a peculiar border province at the Baltic Sea. As a result of the peace treaty at Versailles in 1919 East Prussia was cut off by the polish corridor. With the promotion as a civil servant my father was transferred from the main stall, Trakinen to the next horse breeding farm in Gudweil and then to Rastenburg. A town in the middle of the province. I remember that our house was about 8 years old. I

have to stop here now maybe you shut oft he... I can't, I have a migraine, it will go soon over but I have to rest.

STOECKLE:
#0:5:17.1#

Would it be OK if we talk to you a little bit more or should we stop?

BARBARA MILEWSKI:
#0:5:21.3#

Well... we both are old and have problems to collect our thoughts after all. 91 years and ... So I come from a wonderful family. My father was as old as... genauso alt wie mein Vater... and they both had the same war experience and in the First World War where my father was a lieutenant and somewhat higher I don't really remember. And my mother came from a very religious family. They... where my grandfather was a superintendent in the Evangelical Church, Lutheran, and so of course they married and since my father studied, what is called, mining engineering I would say... the business of managing mines and during the... see I am the same way as my husband... it is terrible. So... when my father was drafted into the German army he was stationed first in Königsberg, which is a city today called Kaliningrad. It became... it was... of the as a consequence of the war... Germany lost this part of the land. Can't you help me? It is terrible

PATRICIA MILEWSKI:
#0:8:57.8#

How did you and Hans meet?

BARBARA MILEWSKI:
#0:8:57.8#

Oh, yes well of course eventually. I can say I came from a very loving family and... I better skip some thoughts here. And we met of course, my husband Hans was in the army and I, after having attended a study of gymnastics and became a gymnastic teacher at a school which is today not in existence, neither is the form of gymnastics in existence and ... So my personal life is such that due to the strict government I had finished this part of the training and I did not receive my gymnastic diploma because after the war ended... no, no, no. I had to attend the labor service first before I received my diploma. And I could only obtain it after I had done this so I was ... I was... I became a maid in the labor force and we helped German farmers ... no, no, yeah that's true and after that during that time I was... we were drafted into the real army and there I worked at the which is called Maschinensatz, as a machinist so to speak, to learn how to turn motors on and off and learn all the knobs and so forth. And... that was a strict, I did not realize how strict it really was until I came to the thought that ... disagreed with some of the government's rules and then suddenly the war was over in which we experienced... I experienced to turn on the machinery and, and, and the electronic or whatever directing went through to

some transmission and we had the opportunity to turn on our Scheinwerfer... it was called. What is it today?

PATRICIA MILEWSKI: Flat lights. Spotlights.
#0:14:21.3#

BARBARA MILEWSKI: What would you think?
#0:14:21.3#

STOECKLE Yeah. I think I would translate it that way too. Die Scheinwerfer.
#0:14:26.6#
Ja.

BARBARA MILEWSKI: That was a light which when it was turned on by my machine and
#0:14:31.9# a girl who sat on the other machine... directed the light to search or to directly hit the plane. And so we had the opportunity to do that on many occasions. Not too many but enough. And ...

STOECKLE: So you were actually doing this while there were air raids?
#0:15:9.5#

BARBARA MILEWSKI: I was in... under the motor. Organizing the motor and turned it
#0:15:11.6# on in the end. That was my job and the next girl sat on another turnable machine. This machine searched for the airplane and when they had it in focus than they turned... then I got the signal turn on my motor and then that machine had the plane directly in focus. And that was our job. And that is what I did during... until the end of the war. And... and then suddenly the war was over and we were suddenly free. Free to go wherever we wanted to go from our place and that was in Czechoslovakia. And our whole flag unit... everyone was suddenly released... sent wherever we wanted from wherever we were. So we were in Czechoslovakia... near I forgot the name where we were stationed on the fields and we, well we made a decision where we would be going. Of course whom... and we were from very different places in the barracks where we lived. We where 12 girls and in the kitchen barracks were we lived... 2 German officers of the lower kind... Unteroffiziere. We had a lot of fun there weil we had not much to do but during that time the Russians came towards Germany and had occupied already quite a bit and we heard they were in Chemnitz and that city was taken already so we thought where we would go... and we had a truck on which the officers were drivers. They drove the German Flackzack and then our flight began. On the way you saw... you saw soldiers coming from all sides fleeing somewhere. They had their places chosen and we were on that truck with this officers. Two girls and I... we were together and one was my leader, my soldier leader. I don't know how she was called but we were

together we three... and so... where did these men go. They decided to go to Chemnitz which was not occupied yet. But we heard on the way we were on the truck that Chemnitz was taken. So they were there on the direction of the street to Chemnitz and on the way we hit another motorcar... another soldier on a motorcar. What is a motorcar called? That is a Motorrad?

PATRICIA MILEWSKI: Motorcycle.
#0:20:35.2#

STOECKLE: Motorcycle.
#0:20:35.2#

BARBARA MILEWSKI: Anyways, we hit that and that man was dead. We three girls were shocked about this and they decided well one checked and saw this motorcycle in the ditch and the man on top of it and he checked and verified, that this man was definitely dead. So this, our officer decided we take him along and we were shocked. Oh, no... oh no... because we were in the back of the truck and he was supposed to be on... with us. We would go on with him... with the dead soldier. We were so shocked and were so frightened that they decided they leave the whole thing and let him there lie in the ditch... the motor was running... the whole time... and well... and we thought we go now on the way to Chemnitz and... but there was... I don't really remember that... what really was... anyways the next thing I remember is... we where on the station, on the railway station in... directly in Pilsen which is Czechoslovakia nowadays. During that time it belonged to Bohemia... but under German... still under German government which was called Protektorat. And so... so we were all there waiting for a train to arrive and we waited for hours. And there were wounded soldiers with big bandages and bleeding and people with luggage and other... this is our meal. Meal on wheels is coming. Rolling in. Hans do you hear what I am saying?

HANS MILEWSKI: Ja.
#0:23:49.5#

BARBARA MILEWSKI: Ja. Can I talk on. And we waited for who knows how long but it was still in the middle of the day and finally a train arrived and packed full with soldiers, they were hanging on outside on the roof... everywhere. Most of them were wounded and some single refugees' families were there. Two... fleeing from Czechoslovakia already because the Czechs became suddenly very furious against the Germans and so we were lucky enough to remain together... we three we hung on. And how we got... I don't know... we stepped over so many who knows how many

wounded soldiers in the train and even the toilet... everything was taken. So where should they go if they couldn't go anywhere. You can't imagine what that means. It began to smell strange and with the blood of the soldiers seeping into the bandages, it was a miserable sight and of course our goal was... oh I forgot that part. Can I say this know and you put it together? I forgot... I don't really know how to put it together but the fact is we went first... quite a few girls together... to a family who had a house and there had been refugees before. Anyways they had a house and all took us in. We were quite a few and shared a very meager evening meal because they hardly had anything and then this part was not occupied because it was forgotten through the planning of the incoming American soldiers... military government in Germany. And so we sat... we sat in a very unusual place. Suddenly there was a long street and on that street were... were different denomination. The blue course and this and that. And unusual names of Christian believing people of a lot of different denominations. So... they hardly had anything and the family were we stayed said: You better go and see whether you can peel potatoes or do something in the still existing part of the German army which was already released. And they... they knew that the Russians were coming and so these dominations preached here something and all preached this is end... this is the end... come to us and believe and pray with us. So this was very, very unusual and we tried to peel potatoes for them but this was all not possible anymore. It was in complete disarray, the whole existence one day after another. And so we decided we cannot impose on our friendly guests and thought we just take on. And we turn to the American side and don't even go to Chemnitz but go to the west to the Americans to Bavaria that is where still a part of the German army was at the end of the war. And so that's what we did and... and we saw... we had not eaten anything and we had still our iron rations which consisted of some meat. Wie heist Dosen auf ...?

PATRICIA MILEWSKI:
#0:30:17.6#

Can.

BARBARA MILEWSKI:
#0:30:17.6#

Cans... and... three or four but we took very careful care because we didn't know what would happen next. So we sat down when we saw there was a little spot where it went down and to our great surprise there was a little fountain... a little Quelle. What is it?

PATRICIA MILEWSKI:
#0:30:49.7#

Spring

BARBARA MILEWSKI: A little spring, ja, with a clean looking water and so we thought this is the very spot we will have our meal here. And we sat down and ate something... opened ne Dose... a can and shared that and eat a little bit of Fliegerschokolade which was the ration for emergency needs and we had eaten and then we were really in a certain dell and it was lovely there. We felt at peace because we had no idea what happens next and next was we were taken prisoners. We were already while we were sitting there, singled by the Americans and so... and that was... we thought first... because we never saw the German army except in the blue greyish... soldiers of the Air Force and we thought this must be the Germans, what's the matter here. So we stood up and... no not all of us, one of us... I think it was me and suddenly they shoot. We were shot at and so we thought what's the matter here and because we really thought that were... that were German people and there we were completely surrounded by the Americans and we three having learned a little English because not everyone had, because we went to the lyceum, that's what it was called, high school training for girls only. And we three came from the same background and so we could all speak... we thought we could speak English and we didn't understand one word which they said... so they checked us of course... we stood like this for a long time but this was later on. And... well... anyways they spoke English and we learned the first word we learned in... to understand and even to comprehend was the word "path". P-A-T-H. "Path". "The Way". So we were on the way we were on the path somewhere. It is all very strange and so they began a certain conversation and we stammered things together in what we have learned in school and we did not learn conversational English. We learned not even the English, the basic English... an English course. We learned to read MacBeth almost at the beginning so we were not sure what we were really saying and what we were hearing neither. So... and at first they all had their guns... not guns, they had Gewehre. Was heist das?

STOECKLE: Rifle.
#0:36:4.3#

BARBARA MILEWSKI: Rifles pointed in our backs because they didn't really trust us and then they met others... that were higher officers and so they began to talk to us. And, and... we had hats usually to wear and we had easy... that was for the militaries when they came together... dressed up but we were of course very modestly dressed we had everything which was looked like our army life... we had that not on us and I wore of all things we called this... this hat which we had for normal days, Teufelskappe. Can you

imagine? Wie nannte sich das im Deutschen? Ja wir nannten es so... ja. And that made me look like much younger than I was and I heard the one officer to the other say: My goodness? How old is your sister? They talked in American... ja in English to each other and I understood that they talked about me. How old is your sister... he asked one soldier to the other, the Americans, and they pointed to me. And then he said... twelve. My goodness... such young girls... such young girls in the army and that's how young I looked. I looked like a little girl. And anyways... we were really surprised how friendly they became toward us and we did not peel potatoes. We received a normal American afternoon meal or whatever they had and that was so plentiful and so tempting as we never had seen in our whole life probably that's how well they fed the Americans their soldiers... from our opinion... from our low eating rations compared to this relationship this was like paradise. And so we had lovely meals and did not stay very long. I don't know it was probably only two days or so... very short. And they sent us our way... and so we were left alone again. But in the meantime we were in American territory. So this was taken and that's still belonged... ja, that was before we reached the train of which I talked before... told you before. And... so were on our way and there were already set certain rules that in the evening everyone has to be sheltered somewhere and not allowed to be seen on the street seen... nowhere. And so what we had to do is... we reached a certain place and we had... carried still some..., no... no, no... no, no we still had some of our luggage but they took everything which was eatable away. They took our Schok..., chocolate, they took our cans, so and I had a little thing which they couldn't understand and which looked pink and machte Spitze. This was something which I learned from my mother to do... to make lace and... I had... and they threw that away too and I began to cry... and then they took it out again and gave it back to me again... because they said this doesn't look so dangerous or maybe let's her have it. So I got that back. Pink. Und das nannte sich Schiffchen. A little ship. So we were on our way and had, had only... the main things... that means some food was not there. So it was the evening, the first night... yeah... we had to be away from the street and we just checked one house and said: That's it. That's where we are going. And of course that were normal Bavarian people and they had suddenly three burdensome girls in their house and they had to feed us somehow and so of course we were thankful wherever we went.

PATRICIA MILEWSKI:
#0:43:43.3#

We have a little break Mutti? Hans looks like he might be ready.

BARBARA MILEWSKI:
#0:43:54.4#

Der hört sicher nicht zu. Well anyways... so it was... we were on our own. And that is the way we worked. If we had to eat or to be at the spot... at a certain place which we liked, which looked likeable... but we did not do that very long. So... our goal was to go to Germany, go home and in the meantime of course the military government which were not only for Bavaria... set but for the whole occupation from Bavaria and England was the other country which had the same or similar regulations and France had similar... similar regulations. Were there three occupations or more? Anyways... so... we happened to walk all three of us were from the region of central Germany and my friend, die Scheinwerferführerin, was from Nornburg, and I was from a place which probably nobody hears, ever heard of, Bad Dürrenberg and the next girl was from the... from another district in Saxony, Sachsen-Anhalt. Do you remember what that was? I don't... anyways we all went into... in the same direction. My friend said goodbye in Nornburg and I in Bad Dürrenberg and I don't remember but I walked that way all alone and on the way someone told me this bridge in Germany is bombed out... is not existing anymore and the crazy leader from the soldier... Volkssturm was it called... which was all the old folks which were not capable of not ready to fight or do something were there... and of course... anyways. I walked that way and I heard when they said that crazy man was a crazy man, who was my father, because my father was drawn into the Volkssturm and to defend and was taken prisoner and I thought well my father doesn't live anymore. I heard that on the way while I walked near the river Saale and was prepared to meet my... some of my family at least... and the... and I found that one bomb has fallen very near to the place right beside it or right in front of it on the river... near the river Saale... that... occupied, that is where the turbines, were two big turbines who... which belonged to the district of my father personally and he was on the tower he was... that goes too far. He was in the Volkssturm and I thought... well my father is dead because I heard it and I stood on... I arrived in front of our house at the bottom near the river... near the bombed turbines and met an employee of my father and he said, he shook my hand and because he was not... not taken prisoner, only my father. And he met me and said: Nah, wie schrecklich. How terrible this is. And we shook hands and I went up the stairs through the building were my parents lived. And of course the house of my parents was full of refugees... a long time I knew that. And they were all there and bombed out inside, terribly looking everything... but still intact. And the shingles of the house had flown of which... which my sister helped to redo later on. And there... I talked to my mother and said to her: we will

manage. We will manage. And so I had no idea what it all meant. I have to get on that track here.

STOECKLE: So what happened to your dad?
#0:52:28.1#

BARBARA MILEWSKI: Pardon?
#0:52:28.1#

STOECKLE So what then happened to your dad. What exactly happened to him?
#0:52:31.5#

BARBARA MILEWSKI: Yeah, ja, that was, that is a good question. There... I spoke to my mother as if I knew that my father was dead. And he was not dead. And when I said we will manage I thought my father was... was dead. And then to my great surprise I heard my father is not there. He was taken by the Americans to... Siegen something... Ziegenheim. That is were the... that is were the army collected the criminals... the Nazi criminals. And my father was no Nazi criminal but he was in the German party but he did anything else but serving now three of... three Salinendirektor positions. So you make out what you can. I have no idea how to explain that because Bad Dürrenberg was a „Bad“... that was... Well, where sick children were brought through the German government to get well and take... take special salty inhalations mixed with other medication and that belonged to the bath part but it was connected with... with a recently re... redesigned park which was done under my father's direction. So I knew now my father lives and all the refugees are there and they were... they were living their very meager live under the newly established communistic regime. How is that called. Is that right to say that? The German occupation... was that communistic?

HANS MILEWSKI: But anyway... we see that every war brings drastic changes to the people. I thought... I should mention even after the first world war... the motorization of the armies and so on brought also reduction of... in spite of the loss of many... fatalities in the horse breedings... my father was now transferred to Rastenburg because of the reduction of the horse breeding.

BARBARA MILEWSKI: And Rastenburg is a special place because what happened there? Die Wolfsschanze.
#0:57:1.3#

HANS MILEWSKI: Ja, Hitler... Hitler's... in order to not to be bombed out in Berlin, he transferred his headquarters to Rastenburg... because Rastenburg was still not yet in too much of a danger in... to be taken by the Soviets. And there was still the hope that Hitler

could somehow persuade the western states like France and the US and England to change their mind and rather fight the communism instead of the Nazis. So... I remember only when... when... when my father was in Rastenburg... still the economics were not too bad in spite of the consequences of the depression. I remember the huge airship Zeppelin flew over our house when I was about eight years old. The teacher ordered us kids to right an essay about that special event and while the essays of my peers were interlarded with the citizens enthusiasm my essay consisted of four sentences describing the bare facts. The teacher graded it with the unjuvenile mark... tenuous. Since my family name did not sound German or considered to be Polish... the teacher seemed to take me for an aborigine... one of the old Prussian's stock... considered to be rather reserved and not talkative. The original Prussians were not of Germanic stock... they belonged to the Baltic people such as the Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians... They had a saying: There is no point in speaking unless you can improve on silence. If I consider my occupational activities you may call me an artisan, five years horseman, including 3 1/2 years as a soldier in World War Two, ten years painting and decorating, 20 years sign lettering, 10 years lab technician for Hydraulic Research Model Construction. After a five year stint as a care taker and manager of a 20 men condominium... I retired in 1988. My early years and adolescence fell... fall into... in time of political unrest. My... by 1933 Germany was deeply affected by the depression. There were 6 million unemployed. This gave the Nazi mob unreders, the chance to get to power. My father considered Hitler a person without remorse of consciousness... a person who was law onto himself and a genius for hammering his ideology upon the generality of men. One day the local Nazi leader required to have the riding chord of the stalian depot for their mass demonstrations. Since my father did not grant them the permit he got in trouble with the party and with the Nazi party and the so called... Gauleiter of the province didn't want any leading or... anyway... leading officials in who were not in the Nazi party and so... since my father was a consciences official... he was exchanged with an... with an official from the Stadt in Hannover, in the province in Hannover and he was transferred to a Stadt in Hohinsbrueck of the province in Hannover. It was actually a blessing in the skies because all my relatives could after the war became refugees and my parents took them temporarily on. But I will say this, concerning my father was drafted in 1938 as a reserve officer to the annexation of Austria. My only brother joined the army as a cadet. He was 1 1/2 years younger then I and he was killed in 1942 on the Eastern front. I was drafted in fall 1941 to a rider platoon in an infantry regiment used for

recognizance. At the end of my training I suffered a spell of bowls on my Botox so I was unable to ride a horse. This turned out to be also a blessing in the skies and they transferred me to a medical core with horse drawn ambiances. As soon as my Botox were healed the medical officer appointed me his batman and dispatch rider. The company was transferred to the Southern front in Russia. We marched through the Ukraine and the Kalmyck Steppe towards Kaliningrad... towards Stalingrad... which is nowadays Volgograd to meet the dweller and the horror. During that summer offensive of 1942 we advanced quickly but usually just when the Soviet defenses have been blasted by the German Stuka airstrikes. Finally, our field hospital took position in earth bunkers... 30km before the outskirts of Stalingrad. In the meantime I had become very sick from diary and jondos. I had lost half of my weight and was scheduled to return to Germany. In the second half of November 1942 the Soviet armee started counter attacking leading to the encirclement of 22 German divisions exhausted by the strain of combat and so 33.000 men of the Sixth Army were doomed to suffer unbearable horrors. Yet I was spared... a motorized ambulance took me out of the pocket just one day before it was closed. There upon the meager remainder of our army was desert in the North of France and reestablished with new recruits. The new Sixth Army was subsequently moved to Northern Italy... then to Croatia fighting the Tito partisans and in 1944 brought us again to the Russian front since I was one of the youngest in the medical core I was soon transferred to an artillery battery. They quickly trained me with the signals and attached me to the observation officer to communicate by wireless or telephone the impacts of the battery fire. There in the frontline in fall 1944 I was wounded by a shrapnel from a Soviet trench mortar. It penetrated the half of my right leg and so I was unable to go on and was taken back to... to be operated in the field hospital. There I was attended by my old friends of the medical core. They send me further back to Pschonschmenuessel in Poland were I was under the case of some Ukrainian nurses in a make shift hospital until I was able to walk again. There is a rhyme by a German writer and journalist Eugen Rott who was severely wounded in World War One. He said: A man reflects on times portion and sees his ill luck was his fortune. Meaning: Ein Mensch... sieht in der Zeit zurueck und sieht das sein Unglück war sein Glück. In 1961... I received the Canadian Citizenship but I wanted just to mention the battle of Stalingrad. August 23, 1942 till February 1943. From August 23 when German... when German Sixth Army forces... commanded by general Friederich Paulus reached the Volga at Stalingrad... Soviet and German infantry fought a long house to hose battle for the city. At the

same time Soviet armies ultimately numbering in estimated one million men built up on the German flanks. On November 19 proceeded by... and enormous barrage, Soviet armies attacked on both flanks. Within five days they had executing Pincer's movement that encircled 250 to 300 Germans and satellite troops, Italians and Hungarians, Romanians, and other units from the occupied countries. Hitler forbade Paulus from attempting to brake out to the rear which he might have done early in the encirclement. Then the German troops slowly froze starve and ran out of ammunition. The entire remaining German force surrendered on February 2, 1943. According to German records there were about 340.000 German soldiers in the battle of Stalingrad involved. Of these were 901.000 captured by the soviets and only about 6.000 returned home from captivity. Soviet prisoners of war, camps in Siberia had become a center of epidemic while the Western allies send their prisoners home very soon. The Soviets released their POW's in stages in the years 1941, 1949 and 1953. The last had suffered a decade in Russian captivity. In, as I said before... in 1961 I received the Canadian citizenship. I might read this here. Some notes... the fact that we reckon our calendar after the years of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth might have been evidence enough for me to believe that he is Jesus the Christ the only begotten son of god but only, but how would I know of his teaching whether it would be of god. I was born in 1922 in East Prussia, Germany that peculiar province bordered the Baltic Sea...

BARBARA MILEWSKI: Das hast du schon gesagt
#1:17:19.7#

HANS MILEWSKI: The territory and the three independent Baltic states: Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia were seated to the Soviet Union... at that time a hindrance to missionary work. As soon as World War Two ceased... my wife and I were living in Western Germany. The West had a blessing in the skies for inspite the enormous refugee problem there economy began to rise. This was due to the Marshall aid. So called after the general Marshall's... US general Marshall's plan and pressure in the labor market which made the trade unions docile and kept down the level of real wages. In the summer of 1954 we emigrated to Canada willing and anxious to work for whatever we received. No gains without pains. At times as an individual under pressure I bocked. Never the less by the grace of god I did my level to never go on strike. After all it is not what we gain but what we save... that makes us rich. So it makes sense to keep a storch plan for our temporary needs but moreover we have reason to recognize god's plan of salvation for our temporal and spiritual needs. Let us realize that

we most valuable creature to be saved is the human soul. At 38 living in Thunder Bay, ON I received a book from a Mormon from my next door neighbor, an Ukrainian by birth. He had not been curious enough to read it thoroughly. I was curious... however at that time I was too busy with sign painting and home improvements so I forgot to read it until a year later missionaries knocked at the door. They challenged me to read it. Of course this also improved my bible knowledge but it is the book of Mormon were I have found striking comparisons with my experiences in World War Two and the post World War. I recognized god as an active force in history. The book of Mormon is an eye opener to them who love god... once it takes a hold of them. In my case... missionaries work was accelerated by power of the book of Mormon and the elders who were up to the level they represented. They invited me to come to Christ and the church to ruleness not goodness and so I became an entire person... peaceful and angry and loving and hating, giving and taking, in joy and in sadness, in success and failure. Building my character and building a face in god and I am still coming this way and have a testimony that all things worked together for good in then... that love god. That is a quotation from Romans 8 verse 28 by the apostle Paul.

STOECKLE: #1:22:23.0# Could you tell when you lived in Western Canada... in Western Germany. Why did you decide to go to Canada.

BARBARA MILEWSKI: #1:22:31.7# Pardon?

STOECKLE: #1:22:32.3# Why did you, living in Western Germany and the economy started to grow, the Wirtschaftswunder...

BARBARA MILEWSKI: #1:22:40.9# Well, that is interesting?

STOECKLE: #1:22:40.9# Why then did you decide to go to Canada.

BARBARA MILEWSKI: #1:22:43.5# Ja, ja.

HANS MILEWSKI: #1:22:45.2# You see. That has actually to do with my occupation as a painter. And when the unions demanded more or higher wages I did not in my consciousness to... to join the strikes. I was always against strikes because you cannot serve two... two masters. Either you support your... your boss who has his painting business or you support your unions... union bosses who do not understand to

keep a business going. And so I was... punished more or less by the union people. They hindered me to go to my workplace and since then I decided not to remain in Germany and I had myself informed to what country in the West I could go. And there were some refugee and emigration stations who advised me to go to Canada. I originally wanted to go to Australia but I was advised to go to Canada because there were more opportunities. So in 19... 1952... no in 1953 I married Barbara and we applied for emigration to Canada. We would have to wait probably maybe two or three years to get admission but my father had...

BARBARA MILEWSKI: That's how strict Canada was.
#1:26:12.1#

HANS MILEWSKI: But my father had some connection with an officer of the Canadian forces and he speeded it up to... that we could apply in... earlier and we could... we could get permission to emigrate in 1954. And so we emigrated in 19... no... ja... we married in 1953... we emigrated in summer 1954. My son was born in Toronto in 1955 and since I... by then the similar union situations began in Canada and I looked for a place to... to have a steady work and we moved to Thunder Bay, which was at that time Fort William and Port Arthur. And immediately I got a job there as a sign painter. And... since my son grew up and had the desire to study medicine I looked for a place of a university. So we moved to Vancouver... for there was a job ready to take me... and since that was a severe winter I had only temporarily work but towards the better season in spring I got a steady job. And so...

BARBARA MILEWSKI: That was the reason Hans?
#1:29:34.2#

HANS MILEWSKI: Ja.
#1:29:34.2#

BARBARA MILEWSKI: Und mein... I have a different reason. A completely different reason. And I am saying this now for the first time. Hans know that but I have a husband who is not speaking much. Who was... who was a very strange person to me after I noticed that. Because he hardly spoke a word and that is true Patricia... my daughter in law. And it developed so that I thought... you see... he...

HANS MILEWSKI: I actually was brought up by the attitude of my father and we children could only speak when we were asked to speak.
#1:30:34.9#

- BARBARA MILEWSKI: Ja, ja. But that's not... that's not all. Anyways... he... he... I felt he was not really accepted by my family because... because... he was always friendly... so... but it was... if someone...
#1:30:54.4#
- HANS MILEWSKI: He was not outgoing.
#1:31:32.2#
- BARBARA MILEWSKI: He was not outgoing at all. Not outgoing at all. That's... that's the least I can say and that is why I thought it might be best we leave this... we leave Germany altogether and there was enough reasons for leaving because... my... I was willing to work wherever it was but my... my somewhat strange... rhythmical gymnastic was at that time almost impossible to work and make a foundation because that was the least people thought of. Everyone was thinking of reestablishing their own basic family foundations.
#1:31:34.3#
- HANS MILEWSKI: So you trained as a masseuse.
#1:32:58.9#
- BARBARA MILEWSKI: Was?
#1:33:1.1#
- HANS MILEWSKI: You trained as a masseuse.
#1:33:2.7#
- BARBARA MILEWSKI: I am taking... taken additional...
#1:33:3.7#
- HANS MILEWSKI: Massage course.
#1:33:10.2#
- BARBARA MILEWSKI: As a masseuse... but that was a registered masseuse and was not a masseuse which you might think of. It was more like... physical... P.E. education which... which was connected with my training too but there was no need for it so I took up this... this massage course and that was not that appealing to me. And...
#1:33:10.5#
- HANS MILEWSKI: And in Niagara Falls...
#1:33:55.7#
- BARBARA MILEWSKI: And this... I thought this was... would change the situation when we change places and...
#1:33:57.1#
- STOECKLE: Were you unhappy when you were in Germany?
#1:34:14.5#

- BARBARA MILEWSKI: Pardon?
#1:34:14.5#
- STOECKLE: Where you unhappy when you were in Germany?
#1:34:14.5#
- BARBARA MILEWSKI: Oh ja. It was very nice to experience the leaving of the country.
#1:34:17.5#
- HANS MILEWSKI: Well... coaccidentally a masseur from Niagara Falls... here in Canada... had advertised to...
#1:34:39.9#
- BARBARA MILEWSKI: Oh ja that was the reason really...
#1:34:55.8#
- HANS MILEWSKI: ... to have a helper in his massage business.
#1:34:55.8#
- BARBARA MILEWSKI: He had said. I would have a job to work for him. When it turns out to be... it did not... it was no job at all. Ja... he wanted more company and they thought maybe they could do something with me together... having five children to look after and they were all around... around from 10 to 2. And so ja... that was the reason and besides... Hans was very sick... he had pneumonia. And while we were... while we were... anyways he had pneumonia and this masseur had a sauna in his house and he... he gave him some sauna... sauna treatment with... with eucalyptus and other natural things... he was... he became well again.
#1:35:2.4#
- STOECKLE: But that happened in...
#1:36:24.9#
- BARBARA MILEWSKI: That was during the time where I excepted my son. And so we were stuck in a very very serious situation... very serious.
#1:36:24.9#
- STOECKLE: So that happened the first year you arrived here.
#1:36:36.1#
- BARBARA MILEWSKI: Ja... ja... I was already pregnant. That's how it was. So... concerning... we haven't really discussed anything what is of worth to you to use I'm sure.
#1:36:41.6#
- PATRICIA MILEWSKI: What about Toronto Mutti?
#1:37:1.0#

BARBARA MILEWSKI: This is our... What?
#1:37:3.8#

PATRICIA MILEWSKI: What about Toronto and where you lived in Toronto?
#1:37:6.8#

BARBARA MILEWSKI: Well... ja in Toronto. I still worked in Toronto.
#1:37:9.2#

STOECKLE: I would be... I think because we already... are 1 1/2 hours in and
#1:37:13.7# ja... I just saw it. Maybe... maybe... what I would quite... if you are
like feel well enough to... because I quite liked the exploration
of your background. I really like that. Just to understand where
you are coming from. And what now would be interesting is how
you actually got here. Got here from Germany to Canada
physically. Did you take a ship?

BARBARA MILEWSKI: A ship, ja.
#1:37:53.7#

STOECKLE: And then from where? How was the travel over the Atlantic?
#1:37:53.7# Where did you arrive? That would be very interesting.

PATRICIA MILEWSKI: We can take a break for lunch maybe you need a little rest.
#1:38:6.9#

END