

Surinder Singh Transcription
Interview Date: December 4th, 2014

MB: What is your name?

SS: Surinder Singh.

MB: Surinder Singh. And when were you born?

SS: I was born on the 3rd of May in 1963.

MB: 1963. And where were you born?

SS: Village Sanghwaal. District: Jalandhar.

MB: Sadhowa?

SS: Sanghwal. S-A-N-G-H-W-A-A-L.

MB: Sanghwaal. And is this the village you stayed at before coming to Canada?

SS: Yes.

MB: What did you do before coming? Any studies?

SS: Yes I graduated.

MB: University or high school?

SS: University.

MB: What did you study?

SS: Economics geography.

MB: Economics geography?

SS: Yeah.

MB: Okay. And did you do any work before coming here?

SS: No, before coming here I had just written my exams for finals and then I left.

MB: Oh, okay. So you completed your degree then.

SS: Yes.

MB: So no agricultural work in the farms or anything then, right.

SS: No, nothing of that sort.

MB: And on what basis did you come here? By family class or point system..?

SS: No, I had come here by ship. First I had gone to Europe and I stayed in German and Holland. Then in 1987 there was a ship to Halifax and that's what I came in. There were 174 people and in that ship we came overseas.

MB: Okay. So, tell me a little bit about why you left India and went to Europe. What is the story behind that?

SS: Since I had studied geography, I had extensive knowledge about the mapping of the world. Since I had studied geography, I knew where the places were. And at that time, Germany was the #1 country of the world at the time – in 1985. So I was in excitement that I wanted to see Germany. I told my dad that after I finish my exams for the finals, I want to go out and see Germany so within a week or so he had sent me off. Then I stayed in German and I stayed in Holland. From Holland, the July of 1987 by a ship..

MB: Weren't there more people with you?

SS: No, there were 174 people in total.

MB: Were there any people you were familiar with because there wasn't any family with you.

SS: No, there wasn't any family of mine.

MB: There wasn't any family.

SS: No. I was by myself.

MB: So you stayed in Germany for about two years then.

SS: I stayed in Germany for about a year and then I went to Holland.

MB: Just by travelling around?

SS: Yes.

MB: Oh, wow! **Laughs** And how did you come to know about the ship?

SS: For the ship they were saying if anyone was interested in coming to Canada...and so we took the ship and came by here.

MB: Mhmmm.....Was the ticket quite expensive?

SS: The ticket was sold for around two thousand dollars.

MB: Two thousand. And were you working as well when you were staying in Europe? Sorry, in Germany.

SS: No, I didn't do too much work there only a little bit. The... you know the buttons that go on tops? I was putting those on **laughs**. They were run by machines and you manually put the button down and the machine would adjust it on it.

MB: Oh, okay. And what did you do in Holland?

SS: I did that in Holland. In Germany I didn't do much work.

MB: Okay. Was there any reason behind ...going to Holland?

SS: The temple in Holland that is in Amsterdam, I made that with my hands.

MB: Oh, okay! Was that the first temple in Amsterdam?

SS: In Amsterdam they had made one by renting a house. Then they bought a Church and modified it into a temple. And so I was one of the men in the front building the Nishan Sahib and everything. And so

MB: Alone?

SS: No, there were others as well.

MB: Other apney too?

SS: Around 7 of us guys would stay together and live there. We would do 'seva' (volunteer work) and also live there in the temple.

MB: Okay. And so, your first country was Germany then. What was it like for you to see a different country for the first time?

SS: Different country... well when I first left India it was completely different weather, it was very cold. In India we wear different shoes that are normal, but there it was too cold. Wearing tricot pants and heavy clothes – it wasn't like that in India where it wasn't that cold to have to wear such heavy clothes. So when I was in Germany it was just very cold. It was the month of December and the time of Christmas. And it was just very different in comparison to India – it was very cold.

MB: So how long was your journey by ship?

SS: Our journey was 23 days by ship.

MB: 23 days? And you must've stopped at some place too, right?

SS: No, we didn't stop anywhere. It was continuous.

MB: Oh, continuous, okay. And you said at Halifax that the destination was Halifax, right?

SS: Yes, at Halifax, Yarmouth they docked the ship and sent us off.

MB: Okay. Then what did you do?

SS: Then we came to Canada and well, because we were illegal

MB: Oh, really! Illegal!? Right because you weren't even a visitor.

SS: We weren't visitors.

MB: You were visitors before, in Germany.

SS: So when we arrived at the waters, we walked out and the army of Canada had come and arrested us.

MB: Really?!

SS: Yeah.

MB: Then what happened?

SS: So then we stayed in the jail at Halifax for 15 days. And with regards to help – because we were so hungry; we would only eat roti at one time during the whole day.

MB: In one day, yeah.

SS: We would eat only one roti in the entire day and that too barely. Because there were 174 passengers and it was a small ship – it was a cargo ship, that too a small one. So in beginning, we would get a good ration and eat. But in the last 7-8 days it was a very difficult time.

MB: And were there only men on the ship or?

SS: There were all men and only one lady.

MB: One lady? Oh, okay.

SS: And for the rest there was one captain and the chief. There were about 4 men who were the organizers of the ship.

MB: Crew members?

SS: Yes, the crew members. And the rest of us were 174 passengers.

MB: Um, okay. So they arrested all of you because you all immigrated illegally. And then you stayed in jail for 15 days. Why only 15 days? What happened and how did they resolve it?

SS: They had taken our – well because in Punjab, it was very hard at that time. So they took our interviews to assess whether or not we were dangerous people. And after taking our interviews and doing a full investigation, they had released us. And then we ... well they had filled our bounds to see are these men okay? After filling the bounds they told the Canadian government to release these men and that they'll keep us here. And all the Gurdwara (temples) society there had come together and pressured the government and said that if you aren't going to keep these men, we will keep them in our homes. So then they had released us. A few of our men went off to Vancouver and a few to Toronto.

MB: So the community had protested?

SS: Yes, the community had really sided with us. Because before that a ship had come from Sri Lanka and they had kept those passengers in 5 star hotels. And when we came, the Canadians had protested quite a lot to send those people back. But the Sikh community here said that no, we aren't going to let them go. If you can't even keep them in 5 star hotels then we'll let them stay in our homes. We will be responsible for

them, so release them and we'll keep them in our homes. So our bound had been filled and so they gave the money for the bound and released us.

MB: What does bound mean?

SS: Bound means like if you give us \$500,000 so that this man doesn't run away.

MB: Oh, okay, okay okay, I got it. So like, down payment almost **laughs**

SS: Yeah, yeah.

MB: Okay.

SS: So he doesn't get lost and that if we send him to immigration that he'll come. What he is doing and everything.

MB: So he doesn't flee.

SS: Yes, so he doesn't flee and run away.

MB: Okay. So then who had taken you from jail? How did

SS: From jail, all the communities that were there had come together then. All that were Sikh.

MB: In BC?

SS: In BC. But mostly Canada as a whole. In Toronto there was a Sikh Student Federation and World Sikh Organization. They all came together and worked out our bound and filled them for us without even having seen us. The families had filled the bounds no matter how much it was. If it was \$3,000 they gave \$3,000 for the man. So we stayed in the Gurdwara at Vancouver. And then slowly, slowly we told the government that we are able to work and requested work permits. So then they issued us work permits and we slowly began working.

MB: What year was this?

SS: When we got our work permit?

MB: When you came to Canada.

SS: '87.

MB: '87. Okay. So after how long did you get your work permit? In '88?

SS: We got it in, yeah, '88.

MB: Okay. So what work did you find after that?

SS: Of all jobs, I first started off with tree planting.

MB: Tree planting?

SS: Yeah.

MB: Okay, where was that?

SS: On the mountains wherever the jungle/forests are cut down. The Canadian government says to whatever has been cut needs to replant for future growth. So wherever it was, we did it at Clear Water, whatever places there were that needed it, we did tree planting there.

MB: So who found this job for you or how did you find it yourself?

SS: There was a "thekedar" from Port Alberni whose name was Bhangu. We had a contract with him so we had found work with him.

MB: So it was a job from Port Alberni?

SS: The contractor was just from Port Alberni.

MB: Oh, okay. So the job was in the Lower Mainland then?

SS: The job was for BC. Say we are going to Clear Water or Kamloops or anywhere else. It was just wherever the job took us. The contractor got the information from the government and wherever it was needed, we went there.

MB: Oh, okay. So for how long did you do this?

SS: I did this for one year.

MB: One year. And how did you find this job to be?

SS: It was quite hard. Now the tree planting is done by the motor but back then in '88, we had taken it by ourselves in what you see as trailers or campers. In the campers they kept all of

MB: The men?

SS: The men. So that was quite difficult. Sleeping was difficult. And even getting water. In all, the conditions/environment wasn't that good. And it was quite hard.

MB: Okay. So what made you leave that job?

SS: So then slowly I – because that was my part-time job to alternate with since I didn't have any other. So I tried to look for work in the mills and so I worked in there.

MB: Did you find the job yourself?

SS: In '89 there was a newly started mill in BC.

MB: What was the name?

SS: Then it was Fort Langley Cedar.

MB: Okay. And was this an apna owned mill or goras?

SS: This was apna's.

MB: So there were more apney working and less gorey?

SS: Yes, there were more apney and less gorey. I also worked with the gorey too while I worked in the mill.

MB: Okay. So first we will talk about this mill. For how long did you work at Fort Langley Cedar?

SS: There I worked around 10 years.

MB: So '89 to '99?

SS: Yeah.

MB: What was your job there?

SS: There I packed shakes and also cubes. I also drove the forklift.

MB: And so your first job was packing shakes?

SS: My first job was shake packer and then for a little while I drove the forklift to do loading and then I also learned cubing.

MB: And how did you find working at the mill? What was it like?

SS: It was very hard work in the mill. Picking up the blocks were very hard because they were really dirty and came from the river – and so I didn't like that. So the cubes that come to down and are the pieces that go on roofs are what I started packing. I was quite fast at that work and so I had started that.

MB: Of shake packing?

SS: Yes.

MB: How was the treatment towards you in this mill?

SS: In this mill it was okay as in ... it wasn't like the gora's. Because gorey paid more money.

MB: Apney or gorey?

SS: Gorey.

MB: So what was your rate here?

SS: There they paid a total of \$1-\$1.50 per square. If you tie 5 bundles then you earn about \$1.50 for that.

MB: Oh, okay. So how much would you earn in a day?

SS: It would be about... it depended on how much piecework there was.

MB: Like how much you packed.

SS: Like how much we packed. So sometimes we'd make \$100 or sometimes only be left with \$80 and sometimes if the mill broke down then just \$20. And sometimes even more than a hundred dollars would be made.

MB: And so you said you left this mill in '99. For Langley Cedar.

SS: No, that's when I started.

MB: '89-'99. Was '99 your last year there?

SS: Uh yeah, '99. Well actually, that mill had run into some trouble.

MB: What happened?

SS: The two partners

MB: Who?

SS: Uh, one's name was...Sidhu, Ranjit Sidhu. And the other was his partner from Mission – but I forgot his name. These two were partners and they had run into some of their own problems and because of that they separated. And so on the side I was also doing construction work – I'd do night shifts at work and in the daytime I'd do drywall, plumbing, roofing – I knew all the things. When the people would go to work during the day, I'd go with them.

MB: Oh, okay. When did you begin doing this? The side construction job.

SS: The side job I did beginning from around '92... Actually, yeah, in '90 I began.

MB: '92?

SS: Yes, in '92 I had begun doing my own then. In '90 I had begun going to see construction and learning how they did it.

MB: So in '90.

SS: In '90.

MB: So basically for two years you kept going and learning the ropes?

SS: Yes I went as a helper and learned on the side while helping. And then slowly I began doing part time while doing full-time at night at the mill. Then in 2000 I opened my own company.

MB: What is the name of that company?

SS: Ravi and Simi Home Renovation.

MB: Um, so this is your independent company. Right? So you haven't gone to the mill since then?

SS: Yes, I haven't gone back since then.

MB: So those ten years you spent in that one mill?

SS: In that time I did a little bit – my main work was at that mill but I also did part-time at other mills. There was also a gora's mill and there I did part-time.

MB: What was that gora mill?

SS: The name was ... I forgot the name.

MB: Was it here in Abbotsford?

SS: No, it was in Mission.

MB: In Mission. So this was gora owned and...how did you find time to work in other mills when you were busy doing full-time at that mill?

SS: It was very close to the mill that I was already working at, Fort Langley Cedar. It was close to the mill and people were already quite acquainted with one another because they always had a need for shake packers. Because it was quite fast work and very few men were doing it. Only those who are extra fast can do it. So you put one piece of wood in the machine and it splits it into two. So that is a machine but the man has to manually pack it by hand, right. So that was really hard because no matter how fast you are, the machine keeps going. So when it filled up, some didn't like it and many would leave it. Only those who were good packers were at a high demand. They could go anywhere once they knew there was a job opening. So at the gora mill for a little while, around 4-5 months, I did part-time.

MB: Okay, and how did you like this mill in comparison to the apna owned mill that you were at?

SS: It was a lot better than the apnas. For one thing, the payment was always given on time. Secondly, the money was much more than the apnas. And thirdly, the treatment towards the workers was a lot better.

MB: What is the difference in the treatment between apnas and goras in the mill since you're saying...

SS: Gora's know that you are a worker and if a man works well then he should be given money on time, be treated well and talked to or behaved with well too – apney don't do that much. Their way of talking or

MB: "tameez?" Respect?

SS: Yea, "tameez" isn't that good.

MB: Okay. So you did just 4-5 months then? Not more?

SS: Here I did just part-time. The rest was just there.

MB: And did you work in any other mills too?

SS: I only worked at Fort Langley continuously.

MB: Anywhere else part-time?

SS: Part-time I did ... at Walden.

MB: Walden?

SS: Yeah, Walden?

MB: Where is Walden?

SS: That's in Mission.

MB: What kind of mill was this? Sawmill or planer?

SS: This was the same kind of mill. For shakes.

MB: Shake and shingle?

SS: Yeah.

MB: And Mission was shake and shingle then.

SS: Yeah. All three of the mills that I worked at were shake and shingle mills.

MB: And did you find work at Walden the same way as side, part-time?

SS: It was on the side. Like I said before where there was a need for packers...

MB: And so how long did you work at Walden part-time?

SS: There I worked around six months.

MB: Six months. And was this gora owned or apna?

SS: This was gora owned.

MB: This too was gora owned. Um, was there any reason that you went back to work with another gora company?

SS: Gora mills actually were mill that were in unions. And to get in the mill, men weren't kept very often. For example they wouldn't let it get to 30 days. Like the law for mills then was if you work for 30 days then you're part of the union. They would lay-off workers before then or get rid of them first.

MB: Ohh, in the probation period?

SS: Yes, yes. So because of that whatever gora mills I worked at, I never stayed as steady or sure.

MB: Ohh, okay. So what were the advantages of working in a union?

SS: By working in a union on one side you knew that if you worked 8 hours then you'd definitely get paid for that time.

MB: For hourly?

SS: No, not for hourly because that too was piecework. But they were clear about getting paid for the amount of work. And so their production was on a base of union because all the men are hired and paid and so they want a full production right. And so for production, they take the full work too. For apney, because they aren't in a union then for one, the pay is less and secondly since there wasn't a union, if a mill broke down then it was like "Alright. Everyone go home."

MB: Ohh, okay. So there was no security.

SS: For a union, it's if you go today and the mill has broken down then you get paid for four hours. If it's with apney, then if you go and it's broken down then you just sit around and wait. If you go then you get paid, if not you don't, right.

MB: Okay. And so at Walden you did the same line of work, which is shake packing?

SS: Yeah.

MB: And how many apney and gorey would you say there were here.

SS: Here there were more gorey and less apney.

MB: Even the one at mission?

SS: The other one that I was there that was also gorey? There were less gorey and more apney there – it was gora owned but there were more apney. Because mostly the gorey do less shake packing and they were more on the sawyer – there is one shake and one shingle. Shingles are the ones that get cut by saws, which gorey did more off. There were less apney in that then but there are probably more apney in that now. And packing too was mostly gorey because that's a little easy. But shake was a lot harder because one had to work at a fast pace and gorey did less of that.

MB: Oh, okay. And was there any difference amongst the gorey and apney? First we can talk about the Mission mill. Was there any difference about how the apney were treated or anything?

SS: The gorey didn't do that. The apney were... if they knew that this man needs work then they would use him a little. But if they knew that he is settled and doing well then they would treat him differently. That was the difference.

MB: So the gorey and apney were okay amongst each other than in the mill?

SS: Yes, apney and gorey were okay with each other.

MB: And so how about at Walden? Because here there were more gorey.

SS: There too... at first the gora's would be a little discriminatory. They wouldn't show it but just like that, you'd feel it that they were doing it.

MB: Okay. How did you feel it? What would they say or do that would?

SS: They ... wouldn't show it but they would give other gora's some good work but to the East-Indians, they'd give a little harder work. And cheap or dirty work was given to the East-Indians but the gora's would get cleaner work to do.

MB: And this was happening in the union?

SS: Yes.

MB: Okay. And did you try to find work anywhere else or was it the mill you're your construction for you?

SS: Yeah, my construction was done for a little while at Canada Scaffold for around 5-6 months.

MB: Where?

SS: Canada Scaffold.

MB: And what is that?

SS: The scaffold that is made and put all around the house during construction, there they supply it. That is in Michel Island.

MB: Michel Island?

SS: Yes, the company was in Michel Island and they would supply scaffold wherever big construction work like for large buildings was happening.

MB: And so how did you find this job?

SS: This job I ... in between, when I – I had grown a problem from cedar.

MB: Of cedar?

SS: Yes, the work was of cedar and I had grown a problem of breathing from it. And so then I had taken a test to check it and that was at a point when I had been at the job for a little while- around 7 months.

MB: Ohh, um, the cedar problems from working at the mill?

SS: Cedar bothers some people. Problems can happen from dust or from cedar but once you do the test you find out whether the problem is from dust or cedar. Then I had taken all the tests in the meantime because there we wore masks, and when you wear masks there is already some difficulty with breathing. And because the work is so fast, one cannot do the job very well. And so because of that, I quit my job at Canada Scaffold.

MB: Ohh, okay. And do you remember what year you did that part-time job in the mill at Mission?

SS: The Mission one was in ... I think ... 90... around '96.

MB: Okay, and Walden?

SS: There I worked in the starting for a little bit around '89. Oh, so this was the first one! Okay. And whatever jobs you found, you found yourself – as in nobody helped you.

SS: As by help, no, nobody did. Because with the mill jobs that were on contract, there were people working with everyone and everywhere. By that, one would get a job. And when I was at Canada Scaffold a friend of mine was there. And so I had my problem and I told my friend that I was now free and he recommended for me to go apply there and so they hired me.

MB: So in what year did you start at Canada Scaffold?

SS: There I... '92.... It isn't coming to my mind right now.

MB: That's okay. So you were free because you were doing your own company's construction then.

SS: Yes, whatever work I did mostly related to the mill and I did part-time construction and so in 2000 I left the mill completely and have done construction since.

MB: Okay. And the reason for leaving the mill was your breathing problem then

SS: No, it wasn't that. Not the breathing. It was a little bit from the dust that I was feeling.

MB: Mhmmm..... So then what was the reason for leaving the mill?

SS: So then I had started getting better money here and it was my own work and so I thought why I would work for anyone else – so I just began doing my own work.

MB: Okay. And was there any family here at the time when you first came here?

SS: No, when I first came here there wasn't any family here at the time.

MB: So did you send for anyone here after from India?

SS: Yes, I sent for my mom and dad from India.

MB: By sponsoring?

SS: Yes.

MB: When?

SS: in '94.

MB: Oh, okay.

SS: In '94 my mom, dad, sister, and brother came.

MB: And if you can tell me a little bit once again with what the advantages were of working in the mill and if you can compare them a bit with what the challenges were as well.

SS: In the mill?

MB: Mhm.

SS: When I was working in the mill, I didn't have any other job at the time. And I didn't even have my immigration at the time. For me it was a work permit instead of immigration. For me, the work that I found was easy but it was hard work. It was hard work but the money at that time paid better at the mill. Instead of working in the farm or going as a helper at construction, it was more money. Because that too was piecework, it was my own work. I would tie however much wood there was and if I ever wanted, I could work at any mill I chose. In that time, the mill paid the best. That was one of the advantages. And I was alone and I had to pay my lawyer the fees and survive and the money I was getting through there was a lot more – that was one of the

advantages. Working in the farm, the money was less and the work was more. One had to do more work.

MB: In the farms and canaries?

SS: Yeah.

MB: Okay. So what were the difficulties and challenges presented working in the mill?

SS: Working in the mill it was just that it was heavy work and there were less facilities, like having to work outside and it used to be very cold. We'd have to work through it even when it was freezing. The machines that cut through the pieces were outside so it was all done out there.

MB: Oh all the machine and work was outdoors?

SS: Yes, outside. It was along the river and along the river the wind has a colder breeze in the winter. The cutting, pulling, and packing were all done outside. The facilities outside weren't that good outside but even in the rain one would have to go out there. These were the kinds of problems.

MB: And what was the nature of living in Canada at that time? Um, was it cheap..?

SS: Yes, back then Canada was quite cheap at the time, like all things were cheap. Then one could fill their grocery cart with \$100 and now it fills up with \$300. It is a lot more expensive now than back then. And rent was less then too. Money was less then too but the mill had a lot more than other places in comparison. Like the farm areas, people put in more hours but didn't make a lot of money. I even picked berries by doing work for 15-16 hours and one would barely make \$40-\$50. But in the mill, it was that if lumber was there, I'd make that same \$40-\$50 in 4 hours whereas there I'd have to put in 15-16 hours of work. But with the 15-16 hours, if there is more berry than more could be made, it depends on the season right. The berry is good for two weeks and in that two weeks, a hundred dollars could be made but in the meantime it is either \$20 or \$30 or \$40. But the mill had this advantage over working in the farm.

MB: Um, and when did you become a citizen because you initially had just your work permit right?

SS: I was first working with my work permit but in '92-'91 I got my immigration.

MB: Canadian status?

SS: Like, I got my immigration. In '95 I became a Canadian citizen.

MB: By immigration, like just... it wasn't on any basis right? Like how people come with the point system and

SS: Yeah, yeah. It's like how people come and immigrate. It was like that. I could stay at Canada and be an immigrant.

MB: Ohh, okay okay! PR! Permanent Resident! **Both laugh...** That's why I couldn't understand.

SS: In '91, the PR that we call now, is what used to be called immigration. Then they would just use a stamp and say that you are officially allowed to stay in Canada. First I was on work permit and could stay but only work and it wasn't for sure. In '91 the Canadian government gave me my immigration and said I could stay for sure and I was already working.

MB: Mhm. And you had to write a test to become a citizen right?

SS: Yes, to become a citizen I had written my test.

MB: Okay. And so tell me about your family life around that time. Your family, marriage.

SS: So in '92 I had gotten married. I got married in Toronto. And then my wife came here in '92 and since then we've been living in Abbotsford.

MB: Okay. And why was the wedding in Toronto? Did you have family there?

SS: I was just gone to visit, I had some family living there, my Bua and Phufar (father's sister and her husband). I went to go visit and travel and I was unmarried and then I got an arranged marriage.

MB: Okay. And you wife came here in '92?

SS: Yes, in '92. In '92. Yes, in March we had our wedding.

MB: And your parents and sister were sponsored when? In '94?

SS: They came here in '94.

MB: Okay, so they weren't around for your wedding.

SS: No for my wedding there wasn't anyone. There was just my aunty and uncle and my Bua and Phufar.

MB: Okay. And where have you lived? Because your jobs were in Fort Langley and in Mission.

SS: You mean, like living? I have lived in Vancouver in 1987 when I came – I lived in Vancouver then. Then I came to Abbotsford in '88 and then I went to Surrey

MB: In '88?

SS: No I went to Surrey in '89 and I stayed in Surrey for about a year. And then I came back to Abbotsford.

MB: In 90?

SS: Uh, yeah, around '90 I came to Abbotsford again.

MB: And since then you've been living here?

SS: Yes, in Abbotsford.

MB: Okay. Um, and you, I don't know if you answered this or not, but why did you leave the mill?

SS: I left the mill because the construction work that I was doing had taken off and was doing well.

MB: Oh yeah, okay. And why did you choose to open your own construction company?

SS: Back then there was quite some work and I knew how to do construction work quite well. I knew how to do it myself and since the money was good I decided to start my own company.

MB: And do you have any photos of that time? Any passports or documents?

SS: Yes, I'll have to find them. I don't have any passports but I think I might have those other things

MB: Those small pictures?

SS: Uh, I might have the pictures or copies of them.

MB: Okay. And if you have any pictures of the wedding or

SS: Yes, I have pictures of the wedding.

MB: But you may not have pictures of the time of when you first came and had just gotten released from jail in '87?

SS: Yes, I have those because there is a museum made of ours in Halifax. There is a spot there where we had gotten off. Where we had first stepped on the road after getting off

sea; we were very hungry and the police had arrested us. Since there were so many of us they had kept us on the side of the road because it was not easy detaining that many men. There was a house of some gora's and since it was a farm area, we were sitting at his front yard on 174. And since we were so hungry we had told him that we need something to eat. Firstly, whatever food he had he had with him, he given us. But for these many men it was not enough so he called around and collected as much food as he could. And then the government of Halifax had provided some food for us; a school there had arranged for us to eat. The school bus had come and taken us from there. And we invited that man over here when we did our Akhand Paath. We arranged their ticket and sent him and his wife over here.

MB: Akhand Paath here?

SS: No, in Vancouver's Ross temple. And so they came by air. They had some land there; they said take it and make whatever you want from it, like a park or anything. I think I might have some pictures of that history.

MB: Oh, okay, okay! And you said there is a museum there now?

SS: Yes, there is a museum. I'm not sure but in the Halifax museum they have it up there.

MB: Okay. In that same area that the man's house was?

SS: No, not there. It is just in the museum already in Halifax.

MB: Okay. And your story and all those men's are in there then?

SS: Yes, all the men that came and their history. They have quite a few things that have been kept there.

MB: Yeah. And when did you first go back to India after that?

SS: I first went back to India in '96.

MB: '96. Oh wow... after almost twenty years then.

SS: From '85 I left the house and came back in '96.

MB: Okay. Um... yeah, these were all the questions in the interview. **Both laugh.** You have answered all the questions. And I'll collect any photos you may have. Um, and I'll do some research into the Halifax museum as well to see what they have.

SS: Yes, over there I think – I have a friend, either he will have some or I will have some. And the old photos from that time, I can also give to you.

MB: Okay.