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Sid Crawford

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INTERVIEWER: Ken Baldrige

SUBJECT(S): Maori Agricultural College

SIDE A

INT December 23, I'm in the post office at Bridge Pa talking to Brother Sid Crawford concerning his MAC experience. Now, you said you were at MAC what years?

PE I was at the MAC year 1926, 27, 28, 29 and I graduated in 1929.

INT Oh, so you spent all of your secondary experience there?

PE Right.

INT Now, were you living here in Bridge Pa at the time?

PE No. I came from Tokomaru Bay and that's about 60, 70 miles north of Gisborne.

INT How did you travel down here to the college?

PE At that time, I came by boat.

INT Steamer from Toko?

PE Steamer from Tokomaru Bay right into Napia. And that took about, traveled one night and one day.

INT You caught the train in Napia?

PE Caught the train from Napia and then into Hastings and from Hastings I got into, hired a cab, and came out of ??.

INT You were a member of the church at that time right?

PE No, I wasn't. I wasn't a member of the church. I attended the MAC as a non member and graduated as a non member with high honors. I was the valedictorian of the ?? graduating class year 1929.

INT Lovely. Now did the, did your experience at MAC have any significance in you later joining the church?

PE Very much so Ken. Very much so. In fact it was then that I learned much of the church in spite of what my grandparents told me, never to have anything to do with the church. But anyway I came and studied for myself, although I did not join the church then.

INT How many years later did you join?

PE I graduated in 1929 and 19--, July 1930, I was baptized.

INT A year later then. Now how old were you when you went to the college?

PE I was about fifteen and a half, fifteen.

INT Why did you come to MAC when you were not a member?

PE Well, when I was attending the primary school at Tokomaru Bay I heard much about the MAC and I just felt a desire to come to the MAC in spite of what was said against the MAC being a mormon school.

INT Your family was not happy about you coming then?

PE They were not. They were not. They were not. My father was very much against my coming to the MAC, knowing that it was a mormon school and he had a great desire, rather than coming to the MAC, that I should attend Te Aute College. But of course I cried and cried to come to the MAC.

INT I was talking to George Nepia a couple of days ago and he said that it was quite interesting to see his mate get off the train to go to ?? (mumbles) that he would plan to go too. Now I know they had a vocational program, how were you involved in the vocational training?

PE Well, is this in regard to what we learned there?

INT Mmm. Did they have any kind of a work program there, were you involved in the farm and dairy?

PE Yes. Yes. I wasn't actually one of those, shall I say, fortunate ones, you know. But they did have a program about ??. Is this what you mean?

INT Yes.

PE Yes, they did have a program to assist a student. The cost of tuition then was so reasonable and cheap, something like 25 pounds a year (laughs). 25 pounds a year tuition wasn't bad at all.

INT Now the students were able to work these things off to by the looks of things.

PE Oh yes, oh yes. In summer time when the school terminates, the students went back to their homes, a lot of the students applied for work on the farm. There was hay making and the general maintenance of a farm.

INT What about during the school year? Did you have any necessary assignments in connection with that?

PE What do you mean?

INT Kitchen or...

PE Oh yes. Oh yes Ken. Yes, we used to do all that ourselves. Such as waitressing and cooking, baking, we used to do our baking at the store, and umm, yeah, there were a lot of other things.

INT Oh yes. Now did you have these assignments for set periods at a time, for a month or a semester or an entire year or what?

PE Monthly assignments. Right.

INT So you might be working in the kitchen for one month and then mopping tiles in another month?

PE (mumbles) We had our own dairy farm, milked the cows ourselves.

INT So you had to do that for four years. You probably had a go at just about all the ...

PE Just about all the -

INT ?? You were a monitor too weren't you?

PE Yes, I was a monitor. I was the Head Prefect.

INT Now is a monitor the same thing as a prefect or was there two different assignments?

PE Two different assignments. There are monitors and there was the head monitor to oversee things.

INT Now what were the monitors?

PE The monitors are in charge of certain departments of the administration of the school. For example a monitor would be in charge of the kitchen, a monitor would be in charge of keeping the ??, a monitor would be in charge of the band room facilities and of the farm, the poultry farm, the milking, the dairy farm. So all in all, we probably had something like five or six monitors.

INT I see. What about the prefects? What did they do?

PE May I say that prefects are almost equivalent to monitors.

INT I see. I remember seeing this picture that said the monitors and I wondered if the power really was the same thing as prefects (mumbles).

PE No. About the same, equivalent.

INT Do you know if there's been any book written, some (mumbles) told me that he thought there had been a book about MAC?

PE Not that I know of, not that I know of.

INT I've never heard anybody else mention it and I don't what it would be (mumbles) to.

PE Not that I know of.

INT If you're not worried about it, I don't think I would've....(mumbles). OK, about how many students were there during that four year period?

PE(mumbles) my four year there would be an average of 60, 70 students here.

INT Now , is this the first time that President Ballard (?) was he the Head Master then?

PE Right.

INT Was he there about four years too?

PE Oh no. The principal, when I first came here was Mr. Sells, S E double L S.

INT Do you remember his first name?

PE No.

INT Do you remember when Elder Ballard came?

PE When Elder Ballard came in, yes.

INT Do you remember which one that was?

PE 1927. Actually the latter part of 1927 when he came, yes.

INT (mumbles) about two years. OK. Do you remember any of the other teachers?

PE Oh yes. And I say this in regard to the principal, Principal Bob, he was the one that was responsible for my conversion into the church and that was his last

assignment before he left back for America. He baptized me on the 6th of July, 1930 and I think the following day he left for America.

INT Is that right?

PE Right.

INT Well, where were you baptized?

PE Back in Bridge Pa.

INT Were you down in the stream?

PE Right. There was a stream just opposite the school.

INT What non Maori students who were getting baptized, and some from the islands at this point?

PE Yes, yes, there were quite a few Samoans, Tongans went to school then at that time. There was one Hawaiian boy, from Kona.

INT Kali was his name?

PE Judd Kali(?).

INT Now the dorms, I understand, probably getting a picture of it now, there were two stories, about two or three boys to each room, is that right?

PE Right. Yes. That whole thing, the room assignments.

INT Now the room arrangements, are they something like at CCNZ? Was it similar?

PE Yes. Very similar. Two or three to a dorm.

INT Can you give us an idea then of what that was like. '26, let's see, what was the football like in those years – '26 to '29?

PE Wonderful. We had a very good football team over the years. So the MAC we learned the, well, most we learned the rugby, the under 19's, '28, '29 here in Hawkes Bay.

INT Now did, I know George Nepia never came back to school, did, who was the other All Black? ??

PE Lee Pawai.

INT Pawai. Lee Pawai. Is that L U I? Is that the way you spell it?

PE L O U I E (spells out loud).

INT L O U I E. OK. Did he come back to college?

PE Coffee. He was much before my time.

INT Yes.

PE No I don't think so. None of them came back to school.

INT (mumbles) came back or not, but it was just high quality rugby during those years. What about grammatics? I understand Sister Ballard...

PE Very much. We had a good grammatic teacher there, that was Sister Ballard.

INT Now why the productions that were put on by the boys, did they use any female parts that are...

PE No, the production was absolutely by the boys and if there was any female part, she dressed us up as females.

INT Oh yes (laughs). Good to see. And were these productions given there at the college?

PE At the college, yes, given at the college in the assembly hall open to the public or shown to the public.

INT At this stage, I can see the missionary effect, do you feel that MAC had quite a missionary value?

PE Very much so Ken. Very much so. And I believe a survey was made during the mission days, before the stakes were organized, and a survey was made and was, they found that near all the believers throughout the missions were MAC old boys.

INT (mumbles) perspective. Glad to hear you say that. One of the questions that I've had was in effect, that MAC owns the ?? in New Zealand.

PE Stake leaders, branch presidents, district presidents, leaders throughout the whole mission.

INT Now the effect on your life has quite obviously been quite profound since you've been living the gospel. Now did you feel while you were there, it's interesting ?? you went there as a strong Methodist, did you say?

PE Church of England.

INT Church of England (mumbles) against these mormons that you'd heard so much about or how did you feel about going to the religion classes and things like that?

PE Ahh, perhaps I can best well answer you when I came, I came to the college with all those convictions because of the teachings of my parents saying that when you go to the MAC we do not want you to participate of and anything to do with the mormons. (mumbles) And I came, I came with that all built up in me, but when I came of course, I learned the gospel, I went to church, I taught some in of our classes regarding the Book of Mormon.

INTwas your testimony growing at that time...

PE Probably my testimony grew from then. I remember there was one time I was really sick and I was almost, you know, ...(mumbles) when President Ballard, Brother L. Buck, two or three of your teachers, came into my room and asked if I wanted to be blessed. And I agreed. And they did. They anointed, and they blessed me, and ever since then I really took more interest in the church. And this is quite an experience for me.

INT (mumbled speech)

PE Certainly did. I was very happy at the MAC. My academic part of my life.

INT What about vocationally. Did you learn information then that you were able to use later in your vocation?

PE I sure did. I learned much of accountancy work, book keeping and carpentry, wood work, and when I finished school, then I graduated, I followed these two goals. I took on carpentry. I became very efficient and I made Head of the Maori Affairs Department, here, locally, in building Maori homes. And book keeping worked, well actually, ?? (mumbles). So I give credit to my old school and college.

INT The rest of your adult life is in pursuit of what trade? Carpentry work and shop, how long have you had the shop?

PE Since, I've had my ?? business since 1948.

INT And before that you were ?? carpentry?

PE Prior to that I was in ??, yeah.

INT Well, good, that answered my questions there then. Are there any other incidents that you think might be interesting, that you recall kind of a moderate, going back to 40 years, it's been 41, 42 years, it's going back a long way.

PE laughs.

INT Any little thing that might kind of get some color to...

PE Oh yes. Well, I think of the medium of transportation then Ken. Our mode of transportation then of course is not so like what we have today. We used to travel in horse drawn ?? what they used to call it then. ??...mumbles....drawn by a few horses and ?? (mumbles) and then to town.

INT Now this is a real wagon?

PE Yes. A four wheel wagon. And that's our mode of transportation from the college town and back. There weren't many, there weren't too many tires around then.

INT It's very good you mentioned that(mumbles).....went out and bought a truck. (mumbles)....when you got there. Do you remember that?

PE (mumbles)

INT (mumbles)

PE We had a truck in our day, ?? (mumbles) to assist in the transportation of the students, either to football games or going to town once a month for pictures and that sort of thing. We were allowed that privilege of going into town once a month. And in order to get the money to go into town, our allowance was something like two and six, or 30 cents a month to go into town. (laughs)

INT Now did all the students have this, or just the ?? students have this privilege?

PE All students, all students who had the privilege of going into once a month (mumbles) an extra, say twice a month.

INT Oh yes. ...(mumbles) should have certain benefits. Well, this has been very good, now before I leave I'll have to get the names and addresses of any others that you may think of that were there, but I would leave it here with what I've got, names down...(mumbles)...but if anything comes up...(mumbles).

PE Thank you very much.

INT Pleased to visit with you.