

[pause 00:00:00]

Interviewer: We have Joy Sundberg here from Trinidad Rancheria in Northern California. And you've driven in today. You've been on the trip with your daughter Nisa. We're really glad to have you here in the Eastern Washington University Riverpoint campus building. Joy, it says here that you are a former chairwoman for your tribe?

Joy Sundberg: Yeah, probably, about 25 years. I was in the position that I really looked for or wanted but nobody else wanted it. And so they kept me until I put a bingo parlor and gaming, and then they started getting money and then they very ceremoniously got rid of me [chuckles] which happened all over California, you know, because ours was one of the first ones that- I went to the phrase of-- The bureau was organizing us at the time. And we didn't know anything about the Bureau of Indian Affairs or anything.

And so they decided that I should be the chairman and the bureau came out and helped us with our articles of association at that time. I think we've had it for years but we didn't have any place to go or we knew nothing about how a chairman's supposed to be or what they did or anything and so we went to meetings and we listened. I think it took me about 10 years before everything started clicking in here and knowing some of the phrases that we heard.

We had a good superintendent at the time, Mr. Tippeconnic and he brought us **[unintelligible 00:02:32]** and she was from Southern California. And she was so gracious and so nice and helped us out very, very much. Then Willie Colegrove from the Hupa Tribe decided that all Indians were getting organized and the Hupas were the only ones that really were organized. He started to help us in monitoring some of our grants.

It took a long time and we had a very small rancheria, 60 acres. There at the time, we didn't know what to do with it but the State of California went through our reservation rancheria and didn't pay for it, you know. Of course, we thought they were like gods. They were teaching all of us the right things. And later on, I learned that- my dad told me, he says, "Don't listen to the white man, him lie." And I certainly found that was true because all of the little rancherias, there's three of them, they never got organized.

Some of them they were organized. Termination started in California. I don't know if that's where the whole game started, but I know there's 20 rancherias were terminated at the time. I had the opportunity to be trained. Willie made sure that I met the right people in Washington. As a matter of fact, a lot of the Indians in Washington, they gave me a party and so I should know the right people.

At that time, the Hupa Tribe was the biggest tribe in California and they are the ones that were organized for quite some time. And so like I said I didn't meet Lucy until probably the end of the '60s when I'd heard about her, and that she was fighting to stop the termination of the tribes. Many times it was the Indians ourselves, we're our own worst enemies. We had to fight them and the government and everybody around because we weren't popular.

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You know I was raised in an era- I'm 87 now and I've had to go through every era like being ashamed of being an Indian and getting mad about it, and getting hurt about it, and fighting mad about it. And you know I had to sit in the halls sometimes and because I told them, "History wasn't right." Anyway, I was so pleased to meet Lucy. I was invited to sit on the board for American Indian Graduate program. And that was another learning experience for me because most of the little tribes in California were run by women because men all had to work. And so we got the job of taking care of the tribal business.

And it, well, it was fun and it was miserable and it was a learning experience. The bureau was not telling us the right things sometimes. One of the bills they had for the land that was taken, they gave the land to Indians, and then they didn't know what to do with it and so the bureau got a bunch of money, I forgot, for \$250,000. That sounds like a lot at that time, but it wasn't very much. They probably could have used \$250 million because a lot of the Indians were cheated out of their timber claims because that was a popular thing at that time.

They'd sell the land. Jessie Short said they only cruised the timber up to the first limb and then they'd only pay you for that much. Then the bastards would take your land too and so that's a lot of land. Anyway, that money was supposed to be for if you felt you were being cheated. And Mr. Finelli, when we were down there he said, "Oh, the Indians didn't know what to do with it." He said, "I sent it back because they didn't know how to take care of it." Of course, they didn't think about teaching us anything at that time.

He got a \$10,000 reward as I remember somebody told me. I don't know if that's the amount or what but there was all kinds of things going on and we knew nothing about them and didn't learn. And like I said, I sat there for 10 years and if only things were clicking and--

Anyway, back to where I met Lucy, and that was she was on the board for American Indian Scholarship. She was one of the founding people with other gentlemen. And that was-- Our Indian men were still being part of the good old boys, and so we had to fight them too. A lot of times a couple were together or maybe they were divorced and they were both trying to get to school and they would say, "Well, the man should get the biggest amount of money." You know, we'd have to say, "Well, the women have the children." We had a big fight, you know, about that but she was really good and she was very graceful, very, very graceful lady.

I think that people would have learned a great deal if they'd ever met her because she knew everybody in Washington because we always got these nice grants for American Indian Scholarship and it was her doing. When she went to Washington she's the one that knew everybody and how to get the money back and so there's a lot of people who went to school because of her efforts. We learned a lot how to go and be gracious to people. I, hopefully, I don't know if I'm as gracious as I'm supposed to be but you know, that's probably being an Indian woman. You should kinda be smarty too. [chuckles]

Anyway, she knew all the congressmen and who to go to. And I remember, Ryan, one of the senators, I believe, he asked me if we ever got paid for rancherias for the

roadway, and I said no and he was so upset. He's got so mad because that's what they did to us. They did all kinds of stuff. You turn out going through all these eras and time, it was different for the Indians then because we had to fight for everything, one bunch of things forever.

I remember when they put 638. Is that one, right? When they took law enforcement had rights on the reservation but Indians themselves voted that in in California because so many people were getting killed on the reservations and they never did do anything about it. They thought we had to get some more protection but they still did all kinds of things to us. And I think if you wanted to know about the reservation system, the rancheria system when they--

Forty-Niners took California and they didn't leave any land for Indians at all and if you wanted a piece of land and there was Indians on them they killed you, and whole villages went. And like there was 101 tribes at one time and some of them, they are some of the biggest massacres to happen in California so there was a lot of bad things. And of course, they wrote the history so that we were not only the victims but the perpetrator of everything. And so, oh, I've got so many things I could have talked about.

Lucy was such a marvelous person. She was a mentor to us young women like Veronica, Murdock, and Rachel. We'd sit there and she'd talk to us and tell us what to do and how to act and how to party. She had such a great sense of humor. You could just see the twinkle in her eye. And I took her to, in her last days, she wanted to go to Hawaii and so we took her to Hawaii. Ron Smith and I-- He was so good to her. And we have a picture of her in the outrigger but she was game for anything no matter and you never heard her complain about anything either.

She was just a fun person to know and I think she's one that really made warriors out of us women, that we stick up for our rights and that we don't have to be told what to do and not to do and we just want to make sure. And integrity was a big thing in her life, and was also a great thing for all of us. And I think more people need to have that. They forgot where their integrity went to. I don't know. In these days I think it's floating out there someplace, so you know. [chuckles]

I just-- It was a pleasure to know her because we, on the board, John was really good about taking, for the American Indian scholarship, and Joe Santos, they made sure that-- we had a meeting at one of the Pueblos, and the first thing I learned was, the first you go to you shouldn't pig out because you have to visit every one of them. And I think I gained some weight there too but we went to their dances and their culture, and I made many friends there on the Pueblos. They were really great.

I know, I remember, one time Rachel was running for office for NCAI and those guys they were so, so into their culture, you knew you were in the presence of real Indians when you were there and we were shaking in our boots when we asked for their help which they did, they supported her, and she won that year. Those were the kinds of things that we learned and how to do those things and it was her help.

And she was great at shopping so she made sure that we knew how to shop too. [chuckles] She always was a fashion plate and always looked very, very good. She

like everything else though when you get old you have to wear ugly shoes. That's a big part of my life I don't like to do is I have to wear ugly shoes. So, but I should tell some of the stories but I shouldn't I guess.

Interviewer: Let's just take a break for just a second.

?Speaker: I don't know if she needs to go back in. I know you can clip things together. We have you chairman at 28, not 25 so I don't know if that's been documented.

Joy: What did she say?

?Speaker: Your story about the rancherío formation and the termination you wanted to talk about is that something that's important or--

Interviewer: Yes, I'll ask her some questions about Lucy but we want to get a few more questions about when you were chair at Trinidad and just your familiarity with termination happening. You said earlier that the BIA was considering the termination of your tribe.

Joy: Oh, yes.

Interviewer: During the BIA takeover, they found your records, and they--

Joy: Yes, they were preparing us to terminate us at that time.

Interviewer: Get ready for that.

Crew: We're rolling.

Interviewer: Okay, All right. Sure. We're rolling so--

Joy: The bureau was starting to terminate the tribes and so there were so many things they needed. They promised education, you had to have a house and water, and roads, everything in there and so we thought, "Well, I guess, we should maybe make them do that, which there was several houses that started because the first people that lived there they built their garage and lived in it for a long time and we did too because there was no money coming out for housing. And if you lived on the reservation you couldn't borrow money to build your house and the bank wouldn't loan you any. And I know our congressmen wanted to go look into it.

Was he in Hong Kong? I was trying to think if he was a congressman or- Mr.

[unintelligible 00:20:13] We lived in our garage with bedrooms upstairs for many years because we got some money, and then we'd put it into our houses. If anybody wanted to know how come Indians lived in these awful places, we did pretty good at the Rancheria because all of our people have always had to work, and they still do, the older ones always worked.

And so we applied for our termination. I guess, they wanted just to terminate and we were going to do it. And then one day I was in town and somebody said, "Are you going to apply for that land up at Trinidad? That's some beautiful land up there right

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on the ocean." The guy said, "No." He said, "I'm going to wait till they are finished. Everybody's signing up, and they will go get it for real cheap like we do." You know we can talk them into selling their land real cheap, which happened to a lot of tribes in California. Like there was about 28 of them, and they had prime land down on Grape County, and the guys who were waiting right there at the bank to give them \$10,000 for prime land that you'd probably get a couple of hundred thousand dollars or something. And so I went back and told our counsel what I heard and so he said, "Well, we'll stop it then, we'll reverse it."

There was a guy, I think, whose name is John Crow. He was an Indian man, and he was going to make us go through on it. By that time, I think it was him that went into Washington, and took over the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and they destroyed a lot of paperwork, and one was our paperwork. And so for a long time, everybody thought we were terminated but didn't go through because all the paperwork was gone. And so that's why now we're busy buying land up and things like all the other tribes here are doing. That's why they didn't finish—they didn't sell all the lots. We took him off the market, is what we did. [chuckles]

That was funny, but that was the start of-- I think I've heard about Lucy at that time because I understood that she took on the fight when they were trying to terminate all the tribes up in Oregon and Washington, well, all over the United States that I remember. I had bought a bar in Arcadia, and the people that lived upstairs who were the Timberworks people, and they took on the Bureau. And I think it was Bureau but they-- What they did to them, they had this massive land up here in Oregon, and then right in the middle of it, they cut off the reservation, you know like that. The Indians were happy with their money.

After everybody because they were packing their money bag around in their paper bags. And that's what I was told. Anyway, they went back and sued him, and got their land back. Because-- Well, they're still taking our land, and we still have to fight, you know, but anyway, that's how we got saved from termination. As I understand it, Lucy used to sell a couple of cows and get some money to go back and lobby Congress. And she was good at it. And she let us know how to do it.

And before that, of course, I worked with her on American Indian Graduate Program. With all these guys and that was something else. She had her fingers every place it seems because she made warriors out of us women, and now we can go toe to toe with some of the guys. And we're not as scared of them anymore. You just have to make sure you don't say something that's not true and you'll be okay.

But anyway-- I'm so happy that in the '70s they started making lawyers out of Indians so we can make our own businesses. Indian law is different. I know when we were doing the Rancherias that they said you have to know all the laws of the United States and 700 or more Indian laws and that was way back 50 years ago. So I don't know how many laws there are today just to take care of Indian business. You know the guys are pretty smart now and become experts at it. Now some of those guys that were so knowledgeable, like the guy for the water, you know, the ones in California have- everybody's after our water and if we have that-- I don't remember the man's name, but he was the expert for Indian water. And so we've come a long

ways but everything that happens to us, we've got to fight for it and nobody else does.

I think that's one of the things that she taught us, and my friend Jessie Short too, **[unintelligible 00:27:52]** a congressman, she says, "I like your kisses but you're still wrong," and she'd be dancing around. And she was in her 80s at that time. So there was a lot of women that took on the job of teaching us, young girls. It's been a long time. It was about 60 years before I was a young girl, but I still remember. And I still—you know if Rachel was around us yet, we'd still be out. Now my daughter has to take care of all of that and ladies like you you have to do that also.

Interviewer: What did Lucy do to inspire you?

Joy: Pardon?

Interviewer: What did Lucy do that inspired you?

Joy: Well, I thought of that for a long time. I think it's because my mother worked for the Indian Rights Association back in the '30s and she used to give dinner parties. Then they had a white men's dance and us kids all got to go to that and sleep on the benches around the room. And they raised money for Mr. Gillette, I think it's his name. I remember that was for fighting for the rights of California at the time. But I just thought about that the other day, and I thought, I guess, my mother was involved in all that stuff too. And so we just took it up. If something happens to somebody, you help them, and we still do that. Lisa's still doing this stuff.

Interviewer: What do you think the tribal leaders should do about exercise in self-determination?

Joy: Now, what was that?

Interviewer: What do you think the role of tribal leaders are in asserting and promoting self-determination?

Joy: Well, the first thing, the role of a tribal leader is thinking about his people first. I didn't hear the rest of this.

Interviewer: It's moving from termination to self-determination.

Joy: Stopping termination?

Interviewer: Well, you went from being at risk of termination to trying to build up your tribe and promoting self-determination. I wondered what you did in that period of time after you got to know Lucy.

Joy: We never thought about that for a long time until all the crooks and the people that were building the casinos and stuff were giving up their termination because we never paid much attention to it. I remember making a motion that we don't give up our sovereignty at all as it was very important to us in every phase of our life.

Interviewer: All right, then I'll ask some questions about Lucy and native education. Eastern Washington University is actually planning to make people aware about what happened in the past so that new and emerging leaders, young people, and students can apply this knowledge to present-day situations. If you want to talk a little bit about that, that would be good. We knew that you were familiar with Lucy because you both served on that scholarship board but if you want to talk about what you would do at that time.

Joy: We just had a great time afterwards. She was a gracious lady and she was smart and she was full of fun, you know. And I think that's important. You can't be fighting all the time. You have to learn about your other people and take care of them. And she promoted education because we had to do our fighting on the board and then after it was over with, then we got along. You don't have grudges against anybody because you're disagreeing with them. And I think that's what's happening today. A lot of people can't disagree with somebody, they forget about it, you know. They don't forget about it and then they're mad at you forever and ever. That's one of the things that sometimes, like I said, it's your own people that give you a bad time.

Interviewer: What do you think about her in terms of her cultural identity?

Joy: Oh I had some earrings I was going to wear because she's the only one that ever did it. When I met her, we went some place and I wear my dentalium earrings. They were down like here. I brought them but she recognized a lot of the stuff that I wore, my jewelry and stuff, and their hats were different than ours. And so I do the dance, our ceremonial dances, as one of the leaders down there, like I said, when we first got started it again in 1950s or '60s, I guess. This last year we had 42 girls dancing all in regalia and that started out.

And I think they're up here in the Northwest. They were able to heap a lot of their cultures for ours was wiped out for a while and we had to rebuild and go back. And now we'd have all regalia dances, and my granddaughter was the first ones dancing the flower dance on the coast for the first time in 140 years because the churches took our dances away because they weren't proper for a young lady. We all involved in that because I know my cousins made me our hats from this area and I had put the sea and the sky and something else on, a rabbit on it, and just showing all that stuff on my hat, which is different but all the tribes are--

We live in two worlds sometimes three worlds and so we have to observe all of those, you know. We need to go back to the creator, the one above in our prayers, and be-- One of the things is **[speaking Native language]** Thank you. Thank you. Have to be thankful to the creator for all the things he brings us. We did talk about those things.

Interviewer: Does tribal sovereignty play a role in Indian education?

Joy: In meditation?

Interviewer: No, in education?

Joy: Oh, not so much. Maybe in the college. You know they talk about it now but they didn't before. A lot of those, the people were not educated into-- It's taken a long time when you- now with most of our tribal members do have a college education, and that before there was just grade school. And you did a lot but it was important because of our prayers, that they kept that with them and went underground for a long time. It wasn't because they weren't educated in the white man's world but they were educated in the Indian world. That's very important that you do follow that.

Interviewer: Well, we talked a little bit about Chuck Trimble, and John Rainer, and Joe Sando, and Ada Deer. You told us earlier too that tribal leaders didn't have anybody to teach them to be tribal leaders. There's not a class out there that tells you how to do that.

Joy: No, because you had to run a tribe like a city. You had ordinances and you had laws and [unintelligible 00:38:16] ordinances and all these sorts of things you had to learn about, and you didn't go to college for that. Then, maybe social science or studies are one of those, you had to take some classes, now there's a lot. I think that the Indian classes are doing more on history of their own people. A lot of them don't know anything about their history at all. They don't even know who they are, you know. Your genealogies are very important too, especially, you can't marry your cousin. You're supposed to not anyway.

Anyway, it's best- I know our boys and girls are much better when they do the dances. They learn a lot of things there culturally when they dance.

Interviewer: Did you and Lucy have conversations about that?

Joy: Oh we do because Lisa did food. We feed all the people. That's one of the things I had to do. I had to forgive everybody and feed them. What was the other one? There was something else that I had to do. It took me two years after fighting some of these laws, like Hupa, Yurok, you know that was a very important fight that we had because it affected all the United States area, all the laws, all the tribes in the United States because it was one of the post cases that some of, I think, for women or something, got the money from this poor lady, and they won in a court. And so we had--when they won it made us individual Indians, we were just advisors to the Bureau of Indian Affairs and so we had to fight that. Reagan signed that ten o'clock that one night at the end. Otherwise, we've all been terminated, except in-- What is it the treaty tribes or some of them? I don't remember exactly how that went, but I remember Senator Inouye when we were fighting that, and everybody else in our--

There's only 20 of us Yuroks fought the tribes and a lot of people wouldn't listen to us, but Senator Inouye, we were in Washington, and he said, "What would have happened to you if all of these chiefs around the rooms, the pictures all around the room if those guys didn't stick with it and keep the fight up?" And so we did, and we won, you know. We spent a lot of time there. And it would've affected a lot of tribes. Lisa will tell you about it.

Interviewer: When did you quit being a council member to the Trinidad Rancheria?

Joy: '89 I think or somewhere. I don't remember. Everything that's spent in Rancheria, we bought land, and we got housing, and put a new water system and had the bingo parlor first time, and a medical center. We built there a small one. And then it-- the worst thing I think we did is you start getting per capita, but that's a lot of the people wanted. They don't care about being an Indian. They don't care about anything. They want money, period. We built all that stuff. We get housing and land and everything, you know. I don't know what else I can do for them other than push me down the stairs or something. [chuckles]

Interviewer: You were the longest seated female chairperson of the State of California?

Joy: No, there was another lady, that was Mary Norton. We've traveled together, and she--

Interviewer: You were seated longer than her.

Joy: Mary was a chairman.

Interviewer: How many years was she?

Joy: Huh?

Interviewer: How many years was she?

Joy: I have no idea. We didn't think it was important. We had work to do.

Interviewer: I know, but it would got you that 20 years, that's what-- I don't know how long Mary was, but that's what the reason [unintelligible 00:44:03].

Joy: She was moved before I was. We were together until she passed.

Interviewer: I don't know, but I'm not going to argue with you about Mary Norton because I don't know how long she was. Daniel's the one who did the research on that.

Joy: I know how she was there before I was.

Interviewer: You were the former chairwoman of the Tribal Chairmen's Association for California?

Joy: Yes, for 64 tribes. That's when I went to [unintelligible 00:44:33] member-- What was that guy, the Secretary of Interior? [chuckles] That was funny, too.

Interviewer: Was that before [unintelligible 00:44:44]?

Joy: He's someone that-- I forgot what he did, but I remember [unintelligible 00:44:54] when he testified in all the-- I was representing The 54 tribes in California. They're all small, and the Navajos hated us. What's that guy from Mississippi? [laughs]

Interviewer: Philip Martin.

Joy: Philip Martin, yes. He even say, "This is the honorable so-and-so from this tribe and this one, this honorable," then he looked at me, and he said, "Ah, ah, ah, ah." I said, "Just call me honey. That's it you always call me anyway." And he got embarrassed. Everybody laughed at him. [chuckles]

Interviewer: Can you tell us about the first time you met Lucy? What is that like that day?

Joy: Well, she was the first-- When I first came on, John brought me on, and I met her. And she was really pleasant to me, and that's when, like I said, the good old' boys was so alive and kicking. At that time, the women had-- We're trying to get to school too, but they only wanted, they give most the money to the men because they said, "Well, they have children too," but not realizing that the women always had the children," and sometimes they don't even pay them, or share, or anything. So we'd have to fight those guys and argue with them.

So naturally, we become as friends. When you fight together, that's good. And she was just a beautiful person inside and out. You can see that picture of her with those twinkly eyes that is outback when she's even on the boat out there, the outrigger you can see there twinkling eyes. She was a good pal to be with, and we had a great time. That's how I--

Interviewer: We interviewed Rachel Joseph. Rachel talked about the time at Reno, and say hi when Lucy had to take back the microphone from the American Indian Movement Leaders.

Joy: From the who?

Interviewer: From the AIM leaders. Were you there at that meeting?

Joy: No, I didn't, but I did know that Rachel had the church opened their pantry doors in a mall food she marched back to Washington. I could tell you another one that Rachel, when I met Rachel the first time is when she was working for Intertribal California. It's probably one of her first big jobs. She took the money away from Intertribal because the guys weren't spending it right. We had another organization which she started and that I think it's still going.

But anyway, the guys in those days, they would have fights, you know fistfights. You don't hear about them, but they did, you know and the next day, they'd be all palsy-walsy. One time, they were all fighting, and I think it was Ramada Inn, or they've changed it over. I'm not sure. But she come in when the guys were all fighting, and somebody come in at the same time, and he's looking around to fight somebody, and he said, "Who shall I hit? Who shall I hit?" Somebody said, "Hit Rachel." And I just remember I was talking to her, and she burst out laughing. She said, "I remember that." She wasn't quite sure who told her, but they would have dared hit her, but you know she could hold her own too.

One time Walter Lehrer said, "If you were my wife, I'd divorce you." And she said— she wanted to say, "I'd let you," but she didn't dare say that to him. That's how we took care of things in those days.

Interviewer: Was Lucy involved when Veronica Murdoch was elected to the NCI?

Joy: I don't remember. I remember that I went with Rachel when she went to the Pueblos. I don't remember if they were both there at the time. But I don't know if Lucy was there at that time, but she was at most of the places. We'd see her in the evening because she'd sit with us and we'd visit and talk about everything. I mean, I remember LMA, of course, used to be part of that roundtable. We just-- She talked with us an awful lot of times. You know she sat with us. She was kind of a, what do you call them? Matchmaker, too.

Interviewer: Lucy was a matchmaker?

Joy: Yes. I don't remember, she told us not to, or yes and no, or no. But God it's been 50 years. I don't remember who was involved at the time, but we had a lot of fun. I can remember the fun times. And you know I'm happy for those and I'm happy for the times I was able to meet with her and sit with her and have lunch with her and all those things. And she was always great and grateful for anything you did for her, and vice versa.

Interviewer: When you went to Hawaii, you were there with her and you said Ron Smith?

Joy: Yes.

Interviewer: Do you remember the year or do you remember anything?

Joy: We were in Alaska and the Indians up there hosted us. Some of the most marvelous fresh fish they ever had. And then I remember they had fish eggs with pine needles in it. And I tried to but it kind of exploded. You had to just swallow it real whole. The other girls from up there, they were running around gathering them all up because that was a delicacy for them. We went to the Sheridan and we decided, "Well, we're going to meet the natives up there." And we went in and sat down with a bunch of them. They were there for the free food and drink. And so they were very gracious to us and nice to us.

And most of the time, me being from California, they'd always say, "Tell us how many different jails we were," in every place from there. And so anyway, we decided, "Well, we'd better go and visit some other natives." And they were all gracious to us. We had a great time up there. But we decided, she wanted to go to Hawaii because that's when she had her illness, and she had to wear a wig. And I don't know why the guys didn't have enough sense not to say, "You know that that's a wig." They didn't have to say that but they didn't know any better. But so a whole bunch of people signed up to go with her, but it ended up Ron and myself that went with her. And Ron was so gracious and to her.

And we went on an outrigger and we rented a car and went all over the islands and ate, went and listened to music. And we went to the Hawaiian place where they have

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all the young people hosting it. And we went into the beach. Would just went shopping, naturally. She was a great shopper. We just had a great time. And like I said, Ron was so nice to her. The only thing that happened to him, and me, he had tried to buy a T-shirt and he went to all stations there in the store to try to pay for it and nobody had waited him so he went and stuck it in my bag, and I thought, "He made a shoplifter out of me."

So anyway, I don't know what the T-shirt looked like anyway but I was so flabbergasted. But you know, I never did that before, but there's always something new to do. So anyway that was our trip. We got off the plane with our big, heavy coats and stuff in the hot, then we were roasting and had to pack all those coats and stuff. But she was really grateful that we were able to go with her. She didn't get sick. She just had one wonderful time.

Interviewer: That sounds really nice. I remember, Joy, that you came to Lucy's funeral and there were hundreds of people that were there.

Joy: Yes, I don't know if I was the chairman of the board at the time, but all of our board members went to Lucy's funeral. I wouldn't have missed it for anything, you know. That's how Indians are, you make sure that ones that you're really supposed to go to, you go and honor them. So I think that day, that was the time when it was misting like it is today. That's a sign that even the heavens are crying for them.

Interviewer: The Colville tribe has actually built a Government Center named it after her. Eastern Washington University is intending to create a Lucy Covington Center. There's land that's been set aside for that purpose and Eastern Washington University is actually one of the first campuses in the country to have an actual building, for Indian Study Center is a former church but it's very old, and very small. They're planning to build something in partnership with the Plateau Restoration Project, but we think the Governor's going to be helpful in establishing that center.

What do you think should be a part of that, knowing Lucy and what she's about and the things that she supported? What would make that building a perfect building?

Joy: I think it's such an honor, for one thing, you know that she deserved it. Maybe she didn't even say that, but you don't see many women being honored like that. We have one in California, Elsie Allen, she was a great basketmaker in the high school in Ukiah is named after her. And I was so happy that they are finally recognizing the honor and honor people like Lucy, because she's known for a lot of things, but I know that she's probably done 10 other things or 15 other things that nobody even knows about. And that's why I think that I get irritated. Sometimes people get honored for a lot of stuff and they haven't done anything, but we know that she did that. You know she wanted everybody to be educated.

And I think that there should be a scholarship in her name. Someplace for whatever, maybe it's in tribal government or something of that sort. Or something that, how to get around in Washington. You could go and take somebody on a tour and tell them what they're supposed to do and how they act. You know even if you took one or two at a time, you could do that. Maybe even four of them, show them how to go. How many copies of the bills you know that you have to do when you're speaking. Visit all

the offices and have their material all put together for them and know what they're supposed to do, because we didn't have that. We only found out later on and that helped me. But there's nobody there out to tell you, I don't know how some of these congressmen get around.

But I don't know how they ever spend time to get raising money because it's taken up-- their time is taken up just raising money. And I don't know how much work they can do unless they have a good staff. And that's one of the things that they should know about having to surround yourself with smart people and show them what a bill looks like and go on down, you know, where the money comes out and how it spread around and all these things that could be classes or something over there, if they have.

Interviewer: I worked in Washington DC myself, and I know that's when I had a chance to catch up with you again and with your daughter. I know that one of the first times that I was there with Melton Asket. He took me to dinner at the Phillips Flagship on the shore, on the pier, because he wanted me to experience the same dinner that he had had with Lucy. He said, "This was one of the first places that she brought me." He wanted me to see what it was like and what they talked about. That was a nice way to honor her memory. I wonder, I know when I was at NCI a month ago, I was sharing with others what I was doing on this project, that we were creating an archive.

That we're trying to build a repository and to gather stories like this one today, oral histories about Lucy. She had said it would be so good because there aren't enough books written about Lucy, about Indian women and their place in history. I wonder what your thoughts are about that?

Joy: Well, you know it's Indian women that kept families together. If it hadn't been for them, I remember one of the tribes said that they were the last front to watch out for their women and children when they were in battle. Because they would put their spears in their skirts and stand there to fight. But I know all the Indian women, there's a lot of great women that did some marvelous stuff that nobody ever-- Well, there's a lot of great people that do a lot of great things and nobody ever recognizes it, you know. I think that's one of the things that I always think they always say, "The meek shall inherit the earth." I think it's the women that are going to do it because we have to stand guard on our children.

You know very few men take care of their children like they should, and they leave. The women, most of them, not all of them. Most of them maybe have a lot of children and they make sure that those kids go to college and learn, and education is probably the best things. I always felt bad because our people, we didn't have the mentors like Blacks have with their college and a lot of people give to that. What is it about their mind being wasted? We should have some phrase or something that we should educate our people. Like I say, with the Indian tribes, with us, with the flower dance, that's one of the stuff, the things that the girls are supposed to learn how to be.

Skin a buck and do the salmon and sew and cook, and make baskets and do all this sorts of stuff. When they go into marriage, they know how to do all that stuff. I think

File name: Joy 1st Run.mp4

that's what the English were trying to do when they have their dowries and stuff but somebody screwed it up. I just heard that the women in the Navajo nation, they put their shoes out when they want to get rid of their husbands. I thought, well, I don't know if that's true or not, but makes it simple. Not that I advocate that, but things shouldn't be all screwed and end up like it is today. They fight over every little thing and it's not good for you or the father of the children, and it's getting worse.

I would say love your husband, and I know you're going to love your wife and be good to her. If I ever got another one, I'd be nice to him this time.

Interviewer: If you get another spouse?

Joy: No, the one was enough. [laughs]

Interviewer: Well, it sounds great that you've had 42 young girls dancing in your community. I know you probably did a lot to contribute to that. I'm just going to ask you one more question and it's just what is your fondest memory of Lucy?

Joy: Well, I think the time that we had such a good time in Hawaii because we were free, we weren't political, we weren't anything. We were just having enjoy ourselves. We didn't have to argue, we didn't have to be something that you weren't. I think it's very important to be who you are, period. We just had a marvelous time. That's all I can say about Lucy. Everything we did, she didn't put herself out first. She was not always first, she was just who she was.

Interviewer: She was like an incredible friend?

Joy: Yes. I've been very blessed with some marvelous friends over the lifetime. I have friends that I've had for 70 and 80 years. We're still friends. **[unintelligible 01:08:54]** some friends than I have fleeces. The night was another friend that have been there for 50 years or more, 60 years. You can have friends all over the world, but you have to be a friend first. I would say that she probably felt the way same way.

Interviewer: Great. Well, is there anything else that you'd like to share?

Joy: Well sitting here, and I'm one of those people, I wake up early in the morning. All of these thoughts and all the stuff's coming out, and I had to do one for another group in California. I was surprised all the stuff that came out and I remembered names from 50 years ago. We do still have the capability to bring stuff out. I could tell a lot of stories. Rachel would probably be mad at me for telling about her story, but she laughed about it too. We just had a lot of stories. I could tell a dozen of them and had fun about it. You have to laugh. [chuckling] Thank you for having me.

Interviewer: I'm sure if Lisa can ask a question?

Joy: Okay.

Lisa: It's important that you're sharing, in your experience as a tribal leader, use of sovereignty. The work that Lucy did was, the restoration-

Interviewer: Is overturning the movement parts, termination.

Lisa: I just wanted to see if there's anything else that you want to share about the termination period, and the work that Lucy was doing. How that met you when you were going through that problem with the DIA, and all that. I know you said you met her about that time, during the time that they were-

Joy: In the early '70s. '69 or something, there is that time when we learned a lot about what went on and how California was lost. I didn't finish telling you about when they took all the [unintelligible 01:11:43] land from the Indians in California and they had no place to go. There was a few white ranchers who usually let them stay on their property. Same way as when they ran the Chinese out, the same people kept them hidden so they didn't have to leave. There are a lot of good people, we wouldn't be here today if it hadn't been people like that.

Interviewer: Is there anything that you want to hear about sovereignty and how important sovereignty is to tribes? The federal government was trying to terminate the tribes. Why it was important for the tribes to reclaim their sovereignty?

Joy: It's very important because they could terminate us any time, actually. I don't think they would or they might. I think it's something that is very important that we should keep our sovereignty, and have nobody walk over us, period.

Interviewer: We've been talking about the current administration. The BIA is trying to change the framework for negotiating Water Rights, and I think you know how precious the water is to all of our people in California. We have saying up here in the North, and when I worked on the hill they would say,, "We can't give all of our water to California." They always thought that California as a state was trying to take the water from the Northwest. There's a feeling that the Bureau of Indian Affairs, it's like a privatization move. That they're trying to turn everything for the corporations to privatize.

Joy: Water rights?

Interviewer: The water rights of the tribes. There's a movement underfoot to have the state governments quantify the water rights for the tribes. That's the current movement in the framework for water rights negotiations. The tribes in our states have been fighting each other over water rights from the beginning. To have to be forced to move into that direction doesn't sit well with a lot of people from the past. It's terminating the water rights of the tribes, that's the fear that's out there. This work that we're trying to do help describe the terrible situation that occurs when you're terminated, or facing the prospect of termination, what that means is really important at this time for the people ahead of us, the young people to understand.

The Millennial tribal leaders don't seem to get it. They think, "Since the BIA is telling us to do this we better do this." We're saying, "No, that's not a good idea". People like Melton Askett and Jean Joseph and others who are tribal leaders from the '50s and '60s are saying, "This doesn't make sense. This is not appropriate". Anyways, that's why your review of what happened during termination is really important to us.

Joy: Well, we fought because the [unintelligible 01:15:33] tribe was not organized, our little rancheria sent people to those meetings and we had paid for them. I testified many times on the water rights. We have six rivers in our areas, so they were trying to get our water now and we're trying to put a hotel up. The city is trying to take our water and they're all people from Los Angeles. Moved into our city and they have bought houses for millions of dollars. They're trying to fight us. We fought over water years ago, but it's an ongoing fight and that's why I get irritated that people that should know better, that get involved in tribal things instead of petty things.

We have another big fight coming on, like California 20 years ago. They told us they're going to have 20 million people moving into California. They're there, and there are more coming. I feel bad about the people in South America and stuff, that are coming. All of them are coming up North to California. I feel sorry for them because I've traveled all over the country and saw things how poor they are. The Bill Gates, there should be more people like him putting facilities down to those countries, clean water and sewage and all that stuff because they are polluting our whole country, and they don't care. Everybody is happy to come to California.

People from overseas, they don't check those people out. I feel bad about them, but they're going to be after our lands again. Only your lands and your water. You'd be lucky they don't take our air away from us. We've got big fights ahead of us and we need to educate our people. I don't know how you're going to make them understand that we can't allow them to invade our sovereignty and just give up. I'm glad Lucy fought for the sovereignty. We, and all the young people need to fight for that too. I'm getting tired, I don't know how many battles we've been in, and so far we've won most every one of them.

You have to give your congressman good information, and reliable information. You need to put people on your boards that have common sense and intelligence and have an education. That they can at least read what they're supposed to do. I know they get mad at me every once in a while, but you can't be trying to get on a board because you get a per diem and free lunch. There's more to being a board member than that, so we have to educate our people and work with the young people. I don't know why you can't start it when they're very young. I remember, I didn't think that the people that work were stopping the people smoking in every place.

Now, the little kids started that. They wouldn't let anybody smoke in front of them and they stopped it. You can start it there. Some places educate them when they're very young and that's the same way with trash in our country. There's trash all along the roads. My friend from England came over, "How come our roads are so clean?" I said, "Because in California, people take a section of road and the whole family will work on two miles of road to keep it clean." That has helped, but you still have to see people throwing trash on the road. We need to have more education.

I think when the new people come in to the United States, they need to have some manners because they push in front of you, and they don't hold your door open for you. They don't even care about anybody else. They just are happy to be in America. I can't say that all the people are like that because there's a lot of nice people coming in too. Anyway.

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Interviewer: Jeff, was there anything that you want to ask?

Jeff: No, I think she covered quite a bit.

Interviewer: We are just checking with him to see if there was anything else. I think you pretty much covered everything, Joy.

Joy: I get on my high horse and then you can't shut my mouth up. [laughs] Those are the things that bother because I was raised not to do that sort of stuff. I wish that the old Indian girl they use when they're caught stealing, they cut your finger off at the knuckle, here. If you get a bunch of fingers with just the knuckles, cut them off, then you know who you're dealing with. That's how they punished them there. I don't know how other places they did. I wish that would come back again. [chuckles] Anyway.

Jeff: I got a question for you. If that's the case, what do they cut off for stealing your land?

Joy: I always say, "Off with your head." [chuckles] I got this imaginary sword, "Off with your head." Anyway, like I said, I'd gone through all the phases. Now I'm just a nice old lady.

Interviewer: Thank you very much. We appreciate it.

Joy: I hope I gave you what you wanted to do because my head's so full stuff. Rachel and I stopped in California. At one time, there was only 5000 Indians counted on the reservations in California, for health. When she worked for Governor Brown, and I was her able chairman and I had the authority and she had the authority, we went to Mr. Babbie, who was our area director. I don't know what he did, but now we have more Indians in California than any place else. We take care of all the Indians in California that come down. The other thing we did is we stopped the Sacramento office, they were going to close that office down and our Indians from Northern California would have had to come to Portland to see the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

The ones in Southern California would have gone to Phoenix, I believe. Five of us people stopped that. Rachel and I, and Mary Norton and Joe Solcom. There's a couple of bureau guys that stopped it. You can do those things. I didn't want our people to have to drive all the way up to Portland and so we stopped that. We've gotten Indian health for the urban Indians, because a lot of our land base is so small that we had to take care of the urban Indians too. They were from tribes from all over the country. Anyway, we were busy girls. Thank you, Lucy. She was our mentor.

Lisa: I knew when I worked in Capitol Hill, one of the questions we was asked was, "Why did they have a field office in Palm Springs?"

Joy: They are cheating. We met Mary Norton. We went down there, and they had Palm Springs, their office in the Bureau of Indian Affairs. They were watching over everything they did. They were cheating those Indians down there. We'd go down there and tell one of their mayors. What was his name?

Lisa: Richard Milanovich.

File name: Joy 1st Run.mp4

Joy: Yes, Richard. "You don't have to take that. You don't have to listen to the Bureau of Indian Affairs." He finally moved out. They grew because they had a checkerboard, a ranch or a reservation down there. Anyway, he had two casinos and they bought land, but they were cheating them bad.

Lisa: He used to open their mail, he used to tell me. Open all their mail.

Interviewer: Yes, he would look through the tribe space. It's crazy.

Joy: Anyway, we were mischievous. I had a good life. As long as they don't cut my head off. [laughs] Anyway, thank you very much for having me. I know I talk about a lot of stuff. The other thing, when I was down there some guy wanted to know, "How come you guys are so patriotic, the flag and everything?" I said, "Because this is our country. This is our land. We'll always keep it because it's ours." He looked at me so funny, "That's true." The other thing too, I think it was us and **[unintelligible 01:28:09]**. Did you ever meet him? He was the grandson of one of the Northern Cheyenne people that fought Cusser

He came by and he said, "You have to honor the American flag because it was taken in the last battle with the United States so it's our flag. We need to honor our American flag. I think that's right.

Interviewer: That's a good perspective.

Joy: Anyway, you'd better move me so you don't feel you have to stay here all night, listening to me.

[laughter]

[01:29:00] [END OF AUDIO]