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to make a frame, a roof, and inside--in? side just two-by-four, the plaster I'm paying extra. I said, "Okay, I'll pay you cash money when you finish." I told him how much I want, how many rooms, and this and that. The whole downstairs finished; the whole upstairs just two-by-four. After I move here, my man with the boys--they put gyprock upstairs and fixed those two rooms. Oh, yeah. 1942 or 1943--I got a job in the steel plant. I'm happy they're taking a woman for work in the plant. My man came with word, "You say you're looking for a job"--because I talked all the time, if I'd find a job I'd take it--because I wanted some nice furnishing for the house. He said the company was taking women for work in the plant. And he told me one day--I'm dressed and I'm gone. They marked my name, they sent me to a doctor who said I'm healthy-- and after, I went to work. (Did you want to work in the steel plant?) Yes. And I worked hard. I'm working in the bar mill. Other women worked in the open hearth. Lots of women worked. In the bar mill I tied the rods, with wire, on tight. Bundles, One woman one side, and other one the other side--on a big bench. (You have a scar on your arm,,,,) Yes, with wire. Right through. Sometimes they were short of men different places. Rod mill. I went behind the furnace, pushing billets into the furnace. (Is this heavy work?) Ho, ho--I'm sweating. And it's dangerous. When the billets come this side, you've got to hook something to stop them, not let too many go. When the fellow blows the whistle, some go in the furnace. Just sometimes they were short of men and they'd call me. The boss knew I was good, I'd watch. Same as a man. That's the way the boss got a surprise: in the arms, I'm strong. And short of men, they called me right away. They paid more money for those places, behind the furnace in the rod mill--little bit, a few cents more. Women used to say, "Why take Siepierski and not me?" Boss said, "Never mind, she's a good woman." Sometimes I'm working bundle shack. Wire bundles go with hooks, and the women tied it twice with the small wire, both sides--and men took it out with the hooks. (Did you ever have to lift anything?) No, no, no, no. The war time, lots of women worked. Women worked in the open hearth, for the brick laying, just piled the bricks. I didn't work those jobs, I just worked in the bar mill. (How long did you work?) Nearly three years. Men working in the plant were taken in war? time; this is the way they were short of men. After the war stopped, the men came back and they went to work in the place they worked before. (What did they tell you?) Well, the women were laid off. (Was there a chance you'd be called back?) No, no. Just leave some women that worked in the office. (Otherwise...,) Everybody home. (How did you feel about that?) Oh, I felt sorry. Because I wanted to work, I wanted to make money. I made money. I bought those chesterfields. I bought a furnace in the basement with money from work. But I think myself, it's better the women stay home and the men working--can't help it. (You don't think women who want to work in the steel plant should?) No. How? The women work and the men stay home--that's no good. Better men got jobs and women go home and stay. That's woman's job in the house. (If you had had a husband to work for you, you'd have stayed home?) Oh, nev? er would be going to work, no



sirree. Just a woman got job in a home, cook, clean house, wash clothes nice, watch children, (And you would have been satisfied with that.) Oh, yes. (How did you make a living after the war?) I didn't keep boarders. I kept that man. He was like a stepfather for those chil? dren. One time I'm mad, I throw everything of his outside--the kids cry, for him, and he came back. My family grew. My man bought a Blackett's Lake place and made a cottage, nice bungalow for summer, and I went every summer, sometimes sleeping in the house. After 22 years, he died. He got diabetes, high blood pressure. I raised three children. Two boys and one girl. And everybody's married. And they all feel good. Sometimes I sit down in the evening, I think of when I was working hard; why can't I work now?--nothing. I've lost eve? rything, strength. (Kazimir: She's forget? ting she's 77.) Sometimes I sit down and I'm thinking to myself how much has passed, that I'm crying. What do you do? Old peo? ple pass everything to young people: hard work, worrying, everything. That's all. Bird Island Tours CAMPING and CABINS A 2 1/2 hour cruise fro. MOUNTAIN VIEW BY THE SEA 4 miles off Trans-Canada Highway at Big Bras d'Or (902)674-2384 (39)