

Ruth Benson

During birth, the father, the husband gathers up some rocks, then makes a big fire and makes a place where they're going to have the baby, a few yards from the house or home, then that's where they would have the baby. The men they would heat up the rocks. They made a big fire and heat the rocks up. Then they get some people to come, the people that know how to deliver the babies. It would be some men, some strong men, two or three of them. The ladies come too. They like to watch I guess, I don't know, but they would sit and just talk. Every time when the lady would have pains, the men they would shake her. She would be standing up and they would shake her every time she would have pains. When the baby is born, the ladies, they catch it. They wouldn't drop it on the ground. They catch the baby and there is one lady there who cuts the cord and washed the baby and rolls him up. Then they tie the lady's stomach and her, they tie them up.

Then they put them on that hot rocks. They put dirt on the rocks and then cover it with some material, then that lady sits on there. When the rocks getting cold they, the husband, he has another place doing the same thing, put them heated rocks and then put, set her on there, and the ones that she was on before, put it back in the fire again to heat it up. That's what they do all night and the next day do the same thing. There would be one

man there watching him that makes sure that he is doing it. He has to do that because that is the Indian way, that the man had to do something like that. Then in the morning, after the baby was born in the morning or when in the night after the baby be born, the husband be laying down but he has his head on a rock, a pointed rock, that makes sure that when he goes to sleep, you know when he drops his head, he wakes up. That keeps him awake and then he can't sleep.

This one guy he is there all night watching them and another lady too, an old lady be sitting there all night watching them. And then that man, he would be a young man, and they don't want him to go to sleep. And then they have a stick that he scratch himself. He had that stick to scratch with. Then early in the morning the same man, two or three of them would take that man to the river or creek someplace and even if it was cold and snowy they would make him take a bath in there. He takes a bath in there without saying anything. They say when he says something he's gonna say that all the time. When he is saying that it is cold he's gonna say that all the time. When he is saying that it is cold he's gonna be scared of cold all the time. Then everytime it gets cold he will be cold. But when he didn't say that he's not going to say that. He'll never be scared of the cold, the cold weather. That was their rule.

They couldn't stick their fingers in their hair because when they do that, when they stick their fingers in their hair, they get old faster than when they don't do that, they stay young, their hair don't get gray. That's the rules they had for the

man. And they didn't eat, both him and his wife, they both don't eat no meat or anything that's cooked in grease. They are on diets. They just eat potatoes, roasted potatoes and the bread that's made outside. Somebody bring that to them, the lady don't cook bread, somebody cooks that and brings that to them, and then watches them to make sure that they don't eat anything that has grease in it and no meat. They be like that for, until the baby belly button, belly string, falls out. I guess that happens when they are a week old or two weeks. Then they can, they move to another place then.

But they are like that for thirty days until the baby is a month old and before they go into the house, into their home, they take a bath. Then they go into their homes then they can eat. That was the Indian ways. But now they don't do that cause they have babies in the hospital now and in the hospital they give them any kind of food and the man is not with the lady in the hospital so that man can eat anything now. That's the Indian way. That's what they did at that time, the old ways. But they don't do that anymore. When the lady is in the hospital they eat meat. They didn't drink cold water, they would drink hot water all the time when they have their babies. Some of them still do that now days, they still drink hot water when they have babies.

Could you tell us a little bit about yourself and your family and maybe if you have an Indian name?

Yeah my name is (?). My daddy give me that name and I was a baby. I didn't have no name when I was a baby. My mother said

they didn't name me because my older brother and sister they died. I had three. I has two brother and one sister. They died right after another because they catch some kind of disease. Then when I was born my mother, they didn't want to name me, because they thought I was going to die too. That's when mom died too, when I was a baby. My dad used to just call me that name and my sister, my younger sister she didn't have no name too until she gets six or seven years old and I didn't too because they thought I was going to die, but we didn't die.

My mother didn't have no Indian name but they used to call her (?) because her name was Catherine. My grandmother, was Indian. She said when she was a baby her mother don't like her or didn't want to take care of her or something, they were traveling, she threw her in a cave and then she had a sister that sister was crying because she wanted that little baby back so they went after it and then, they left her with some white people down in St. George, because they didn't want to take her. She was small baby and she didn't have no name, so when she got about a year old they went after her and she didn't have no name. Because she was nursing from this white lady that took care of her because her mother wouldn't nurse because she didn't like her or something, she didn't want to take care of her. That's what they used to call my grandmother because she was nursing from that white lady. That was the Indian name she went by, but her name was Mary.

Her dad on her husband's side, my grandfather, my mothers father, he was from down between Needles and Parker somewhere down there. I don't know the name of it but they used to call it (?).

That was the place where he was from. And his brother, when he was a baby, his mother died because his father was going around with these other ladies near here. Witch doctor, Indian doctor, that lady and then that mother died. So the brother said to move up to Richfield. Said let's go up north. So they came up and then they had my mother's father, his baby when they was coming up, they can't nurse that baby, so his older brother chewed the rabbit. The rabbits have milk that's what he feed that little baby make his suck the milk, the rabbit milk. They did the same thing to him to the white man and they left him there and those white people took care of him at that home. Then they went after him when he was a big boy. That's how he came up this way to Shivwits. They have another brother, their other brother, he went over to Peach Springs. Then the two of them stayed down to Moapa and one sister. And when that one sister came with us my mother's father sister came with him. The two brothers stayed with my mother. My mother father and the older brother and sister, one sister. That one sister is Eunice's grandmother. That was Eunice's grandmother, that Besty's mother. That his sister. Eunice is from down there.

I think it was over here to Modena when they went over to get some pinenuts over there. The wagon went down the hill and roll off from it, then the wagon roll over him. And they buried him here in St. George. And my dad's father, his father was down from Parachute Mountain. And he came up this way and he married a girl from Kaibab. That time they had Indian over there in Kaibab mountain. And that is where that women was from, that

lady that young girl, I guess it was young girl.

My dad's grandfather they had some relatives up to Beaver. They named that Beaver after him. And that is where my dad's father, he was jealous. He got mad at my dad's mother, that lady from Kaibab, and he shot her and she died. When my dad was a baby and then my dad's father moved here to Cedar then and he got married again. That's all I know about what my dad did.

On the first question what was the role of Paiute women in the families?

When there's a young boy in the family, when they are a young boy, like when they grew up hunting deer and they kill deer, the family is not suppose to eat it. They are suppose to give it up, give it to older people. That's the way they were suppose to do it. But if they don't do that with the first deer they killed, he is not going to be lucky. He will be hunting all the time, but he is not going to get a deer, because he didn't give the first meat away.

And if he has a sister he is not suppose to touch his sister, tease her or any thing like that. When they do that, touch their sister, they are lazy when they bother their sister and tease them and stuff like that, they are lazy. That's what they used to say, don't bother them or tease them the reason why is the girls they have a blood they carry a blood (menstruation) that's why the boy's don't bother those girls. If they do then they are lazy and that's why they say don't let the brothers touch the girls. And the girls are not suppose to bother the boy because they are different than the boy, that's what they used to

say. And when the girls first have their periods they did the same thing they had to stay outside, they didn't eat anything. They didn't be with other people. Until they get all right, then they could be among other people. Every month they used to have little houses in the back and every month those girls go in there.

What did the girls do down there, the women do in those little houses?

They stayed in those little houses. I didn't do it. I didn't know about it but I seen people doing that. Stay back of the house all day long not doing anything they would just stay out there.

What were the daily activities, clean their house and stuff like that?

They do things like that. They used to have something to do, scrap deer hides, making moccasins and making stuff like that. They used to have something to do. They used to say you were real lazy when you didn't want to do anything. That's what those Indians used to say if you don't follow the rules you get old fast before your time. You're an old man and you're scared to do anything when you don't follow the rules. Used to say that he really followed them rules and when he got old he said that don't work, when he got old he lose his teeth before his time. My dad died when I was 6 years old but he wasn't lazy, he used to work all the time my dad. He retired from the railroad and then he died as soon as he retired.

Who taught you the traditional ways that you know of?

Oh my mother used to tell me what to do and I used to hear my grandmother talk about it all the time. Telling me what the old Indians used to do and how they lived. I don't remember alot of things they used to say, I don't listen to her. She used to tell me all kind of things.

My grandmother died when she was real old. She used to tell me alot of things about Shivwits, what they used to do down there. I think that is where she used to live. They used to live good down there, the Shivwits Indians. They did everything for themselves. They plant garden and stuff like that. They don't do that any more. I used to tell them girls that they should get up early in the morning and don't just lay in the bed. Same with the boys, I used to tell them too. I told Scott when he killed first deer meat that's what I told him to do. This Bryant he gave us a whole deer and then we had that deer hangover in the shed. And Scott got his first deer. He killed a real big one, his first deer and I told him to do that. Cut the meat up and give it away and he said, yeah, we did. We cut it all up. Then I asked him, did you give it away all ready? He said, I cut it up and took some down to Vala and down to that Carrie's and at that time I said, you didn't give it away it is still hanging out there. They said we didn't give the one that Scott killed, we gave the one that Bryant brought over. I said you're cheating you're suppose to do that, your suppose to give the one that Scott killed. Then they went back and did it again.

Do you think that all the tribal members <sup>know</sup> about the tribal



traditional ways?

Yes our tribe do the same thing but they don't anymore. Most of them live in cities, big cities now and they don't follow the Indian ways.

If you had a chance would you like to learn more?

I am too old to learn now. We used to live by them old ways. When we was young, long time ago but we don't anymore. I mean these older people don't anymore. They don't eat the way they used to eat long time age.

Now we were talking about traditional ways, lets continue on that.

The boys go hunting kind of young. That's all they use to do was go hunting and the girls do the cooking. The boys always do something, they don't just lay around the house. They never used to let them lay around. When they do that they tell them they are going to do that all the time, then they won't know how to protect and support their families. So the fathers they take them out hunting or in the mountains. They don't stay home with them, that's what the old Indians used to do. Now days they don't do that, they just kind of stay at the home because they can't go out. Those days they didn't have anything to do so they went out some place. That time the Indians could hunt, but now they can't.

They used to go down the valley and kill them ground dogs, that's what we used to eat. They would be down there during the day and get alot of them and bring it home to their mothers or sisters cook them in their furs and they boil it. That's what we

used to eat, It used to taste good. I used to like it. That's what they used to do but now they don't do that, instead of hunting they watch TV. We used to eat alot of them prairie dogs. They used to put water in the holes, then they would come out. That's the way we kill some prairie dogs. We used to do the same thing with those rabbits. We get alot of it and then dry it and eat it during the winter. The Indian boys used to like that snow. They would go out and kill the rabbits in the snow.

Most of your children, where were they born?

Most of them were born here in hospital, in Cedar. And then when they are born, all my seven of them, my mother used to tell me. When their belly button falls off don't throw it away put it away somewhere in the mountains under a tree go bury it. So all my children, I done that to them. When you just throw that belly button away the child will be looking for it even when they grow up. They go through things or anything like that because they are looking for their belly string. . They feel lost, then they steal and then they tell lie, because their belly string is lost. That's what my mother used to tell me. So that's what I keep telling my children but Wil, his dropped off when I was still in the hospital, born in Nevada. But these others I put them away. I told that to Jolene, so Jolene put that little boy's. I don't know where she hides his. I told her when that drops off do that to his, because if you don't he will be telling lies and stealing and go to steal when he goes into somebody's house and bother other people things. I said that's what they do when their belly string is lost, I used to say that to them. I did that with all

seven of my children. I believe it because my kids they don't do that they don't tell lie and they don't do everything.

Where any of the women, like maybe your grandmother, told you about leader in the earlier days?

Yes they used to have a leader, strong one, powerful one. My mother used to say like here in Cedar there is a bunch living here in Cedar and they had their own leader. And they had some people living down Iron Springs too and they had their own leader. And there was people living over here in Parowan and they had their own leader and they had to go certain miles down here to hunt Iron Springs and they had to talk to that lady down there Iron Springs to go down the mountain to hunt. Same with band, they had to ask Cedar leaders to go hunt up here that's the way they had the rules long time ago. The people who used to run this place and Parowan she said when she was first married when she came up here that's the way they had it.

Did you know of any women that were the leaders?

No the ladies, the Indian ladies, aren't leaders they never used to have ladies for leaders. They never had the ladies doing things like that, just the man.

Could you tell us what you know about how Restoration got started?

It started when they first signed up under the government. Before that we used to have the same thing go on here in Cedar. My dad used to put one on all the time but not the way they put them on now. My dad would have bear dance and cards and

handgames. They used to have Bear Dance all the time. The people that come from Koosharem, they used to have, they were bear dancers and would sing all of the time. That time they used to have it for five days. There would be alot of people here and when they started this, when they were putting back under, the government, they had this thing Travis and those other put that on Elvis. That was good and that was how it started. When they celebrate something that is good.

Could you tell us about reinstatement being back under the federal government the tribe?

That's good, we was all lost before. Our children didn't go to school. It cost too much to go to school and some of the people didn't have money and they couldn't put them in school. They were all dropouts it was real hard. They had to pay the fees and alot of things kids do in school and they can't pay for it and then they don't go to school on the count of they are having something in school, they didn't pay for it so they don't go to school. Some don't have clothes, so when they went back under the government again the government paid for the school expenses. And the doctor expense they pay for that.

Was there any one in your family that was involved in getting back under the government?

What do you mean involved?

Like helping to get the congressman together to make the law congress or being a leader during the Restoration.

My nephew, Travis, he was the one that really fight for it.

My children they are not involved here, they are not Paiutes, they're Goshute. The only one is York, he's in Cedar. He went along with Travis when he was doing his work. Everybody did.

What were you doing before reinstatement?

I used to go here and there and every where. I never worked all my life, see I didn't go school and nobody to hire me. I never worked all my life, except I took care of my children. That was my job. I had nine children. It was hard. We had all the children in the high school the same time and that time they were in a 4-H project and they really helped. They sell the life stock down here to the auction. The 4-H auction they get the money and then that paid for their school expense. That helped a little bit.

Has any of your family members take advantage of the educational benefits like going to school or getting training?

Yes all of them did. They are all working. That is Jolene she is the only one that didn't. That is her choice, she just doesn't want to do anything I guess.

Do you think that Restoration, being back under government, has improved your life?

Yes I like the way it is going. I think the other people feel the same way. I think the way they are doing for these many people and helping them make something of themselves. Helping them work and support their families and making their own living. Now days it seem like most of them are all educated and now we don't have to worry about them. They are all on their own. They

have their own homes. They have everything of their own. On the land what I would like to do myself, I did it, it is all mine, I did it for myself. My husband was retired from the railroad and that's where I get my money from. It's from the Union Pacific Railroad Retirement. That's where I get my money. My oldest son, he is about 45 now, he has worked for the government for over 20 years now. He is about to retire. But when he retires he is going to stay home with his cattle. He bought lot of cattle that's all he is going to do. My other son, Spencer, he went to the University in North Carolina. That's where he got his education, his college education.

Well we keep going like we been before. I guess that is the way we had to live. There is the way we lived, It is the way we have been all the time. There is a little change, like education and living like these white people. The Indians they don't live up to their old ways. They're doing the same thing the white people are doing. The people now don't cook at home like they used to do, they go up town and eat at Mcdonald. I am old and I used to eat like my grandmother's cooking and my mothers. I don't eat that way anymore. I go up buy what is already cooked that food and heat up in microwave. (TV dinners) I don't cook them like my grandmother and my mom used to do. It is all poisoned, you get sick now eating them things. The medicine that they used to use from them hills and things like that you get sick from it now because it is all poisoned. These white people they spray it now, it is no good.