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- LT: 00:03 This is Reminiscing in West Central Minnesota, a Saturday KMRS news feature. Today, we're talking with Anna Rasmussen of Morris. And Anna, you came from a country that we haven't talked a lot about on Reminiscing, what country were you born in?
- AR: 00:17 Denmark.
- LT: 00:18 Okay. And how long did you live in Denmark before coming to this country?
- AR: 00:22 Thirty-six.
- LT: 00:24 You were 36 years old. And why is it that at age 36 you decided to come over to America?
- AR: 00:31 Because I had my man over here.
- LT: 00:35 Okay. So he had come over before you?
- AR: 00:37 Sixteen years before.
- LT: 00:39 And he waited 16 years, and then you decided that you better come over there?
- AR: 00:43 Yeah.
- LT: 00:44 Okay. Tell us a little bit about Denmark. When you were growing up there, for example, the schools, were they a lot different than the country schools we have around here?

AR: 00:54 Yeah. Little difference. Not big though, but little difference they were all stonewall.

LT: 01:08 Okay. So the construction was a little bit different, but you didn't have the little one-room schools like they used to have?

AR: 01:15 No.

LT: 01:17 The little red school houses there.

AR: 01:19 Little big on them.

LT: 01:20 A little bit bigger than those. What about Danish food? When you talk about Danishes, you think of pastry right away. Is that pretty big as a food that is used quite a bit?

AR: 01:33 Yeah. They have plenty pastry, all kinds of cakes and especially coffee cakes.

LT: 01:45 Okay. What about the one they have in Norway, lutefisk, did you ever have that over there?

AR: 01:50 No, we haven't got that. We—yeah, we have lutefisk, but not lefse.

LT: 01:54 Not lefse. Well, now, what did you do that—you went through school until about what age?

AR: 02:01 Fourteen years.

LT: 02:02 Okay. And then you started working a bit?

AR: 02:05 Yeah, I came out and worked for kind of little farm, something like that.

LT: 02:13 You got some fieldwork and all that kind of work in, too?

AR: 02:16 Yeah. Little, not too much. It was just a small farm.

LT: 02:20 All right. As you got a little bit older, you got some jobs in restaurants. What kind of work did you do there?

AR: 02:27 Served by tables.

LT: 02:30 Were the restaurants in Denmark different from the restaurants over here?

AR: 02:35 Oh, not too much difference.

LT: 02:39 Not too much. Well, then in, let's see, 1922, you came over here to the United States for the first time. Did it frighten you to come over to another country, were you scared at all?

AR: 02:51 Not that time, but I think I would today if I had to because—

LT: 02:56 All right. It was quite an experience though, I bet.

AR: 02:59 Yeah.

LT: 03:01 All right. Where did your—where was your man then, was he in Minnesota then waiting for you?

AR: 03:07 Yeah, he was in Ortonville when I came there.

LT: 03:11 Okay. And then you stayed there for a while, you came to Alberta, got in there somewhere.

AR: 03:17 Yeah. I came to some friends of my man, and stayed there until we got married.

LT: 03:24 Okay. What kind of business was your husband in?

AR: 03:28 He was a road builder, county road builder.

LT: 03:31 And when we look at these big super highways today, we think how easy it is to travel. Back—some of those early days though, the roads weren't quite as comfortable. What kind of surfaces did they have on the roads then?

AR: 03:44 Oh, they were dirt roads and gravel roads.

LT: 03:48 And what happened in the spring when they had a lot of rain?

AR: 03:51 Well, it got soft, muddy.

LT: 03:55 It used to be, make traveling difficult, didn't it?

AR: 03:58 Yeah.

LT: 04:00 Well then, you lived in Chokio I think, too, for a while, didn't you?

AR: 04:05 Yeah. A year and a half.

LT: 04:09 Okay. And then on a farm, too, I believe for a few years.

AR: 04:14 Yeah. I just can't remember how many years.

LT: 04:20 Okay. But you—that was—most of the time then you lived in the Chokio and Alberta area?

AR: 04:27 Yeah, we stayed there until—we went on a trip in '50 and—

LT: 04:36 Okay. Now, in '50 then you went back to Denmark to visit?

AR: 04:39 Yeah. Then we sold our farm in '54, went to Denmark to stay.

LT: 04:45 Okay. Let's talk about that visit first then. From 1922 to 1950, you'd been over here all the time. What was it like to go back to Denmark after all those years?

AR: 04:57 For me, it wasn't so much difference, but my man, he thought it was too much difference so he like to go back again.

LT: 05:05 Okay. So in—okay, before you went over the second time though, you had sold the farm and you were playing to go back there and stay, right?

AR: 05:13 Yeah.

LT: 05:15 What are the changes that were so much different than—

AR: 05:21 Oh, there were too much cars, so many cars now, a little hard to get through, and people wasn't too careful with the cars and especially not the bicycles.

LT: 05:34 Okay. Now, before the cars came, bikes used to be the, I suppose, what, for everybody's transportation?

AR: 05:40 Yeah. The bicycles have the right more than the cars because they were there first.

LT: 05:45 Okay. So the bikes had the right of way, but when the cars came, it got to be some problems. Did people of all ages used to ride bikes?

AR: 05:54 Yeah. That didn't make any difference, everybody could ride.

LT: 05:58 If you wanted to get somewhere, you was on a bike or is walking, I suppose.

AR: 06:01 Yeah. No, mostly bike.

LT: 06:04 Okay. So you you'd sold the farm back here in Minnesota, you'd moved back to Denmark but it didn't work out, what happened?

AR: 06:14 Well, we came back to Morris and found a house over here between the gas station and Jane Jones' place.

LT: 06:26 Right. Down Atlantic Avenue?

AR: 06:28 Yeah.

LT: 06:29 I suppose that since you moved back, moved to Morris here, things have changed quite a bit.

AR: 06:36 Yes. It did change a lot.

LT: 06:39 Just going up and down the main street there, a lot of things that have changed over the years.

AR: 06:44 Yeah.

LT: 06:46 Well, you've been here at the Grandview Apartments, Anna, since what year?

AR: 06:50 '69.

LT: 06:52 Now, it doesn't hardly seem possible that this building has been here since '69, but if you say so, I believe you. You were, what, one of the first people to move in here?

AR: 07:01 Yeah, I was.

LT: 07:04 Okay. And now, as I recall, this was one of the first buildings up here up in this part of town. When you first moved out here, were there any other buildings or houses?

AR: 07:15 No, we were—we moved here for—to have nice and quiet. It isn't so quiet here anymore.

LT: 07:24 You got the high school across the street, right?

AR: 07:27 Yeah.

LT: 07:28 And you've got—

AR: 07:28 High school and the church.

LT: 07:32 So there's lots of traffic and lots of people.

AR: 07:34 Yeah.

LT: 07:35 But it's still a pretty nice place to live, isn't it?

AR: 07:37 Oh, yes. I wouldn't move again, I hope.

LT: 07:41 One thing that, yeah, we didn't mention too much about and we should get in, that you did take two trips back and forth. How did you get back and forth when you went to Denmark?

AR: 07:51 We went by boat, steam boat.

LT: 07:54 How long does it take about to go across?

AR: 07:57 Oh, a week or so.

LT: 08:00 Did you like traveling that way, taking your time, or did you wish you could fly?

AR: 08:07 Oh, no, I don't think I would fly. Maybe if I had to go again, I would try to fly, too, but we liked the boat.

LT: 08:15 Ocean liner was quite a bit of fun.

AR: 08:17 Yeah. We had lots of fun on it.

LT: 08:19 Well, Anna, it sounds like between here and Denmark, you've seen quite a few things and it's been very interesting talking, but there's one question that I always end up and that's when I ask your age, and so far I've been pretty lucky, and I hope today I'm lucky, too. How old are you, Anna?

AR: 08:36 Ninety.

LT: 08:37 Thank you very much. And like I told you before we talked, you don't look a day over 55.

AR: 08:43 Oh, thank you. I know better because I feel it.

LT: 08:47 You feel it. Now, you don't feel 90 though?

AR: 08:50 Yes, I do. I'm tired.

LT: 08:53 But you still enjoy some things and you enjoy living here at Morris?

AR: 08:57 Yeah, I like Morris.

LT: 08:58 Thank you very much. We've been talking with Anna Rasmussen of Morris on Reminiscing in West Central Minnesota, a Saturday KMRS news feature.