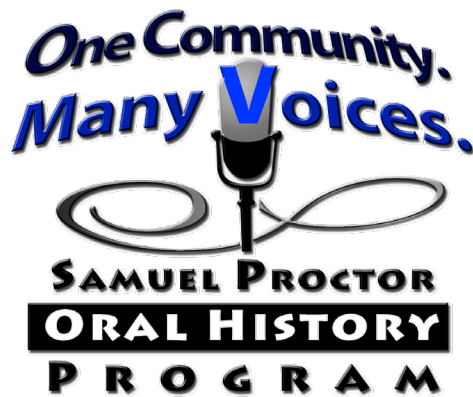


Susie Ross

Poarch Creek Project
CRK-014

Interview by:

Dr. J. Anthony Paredes
August 1972



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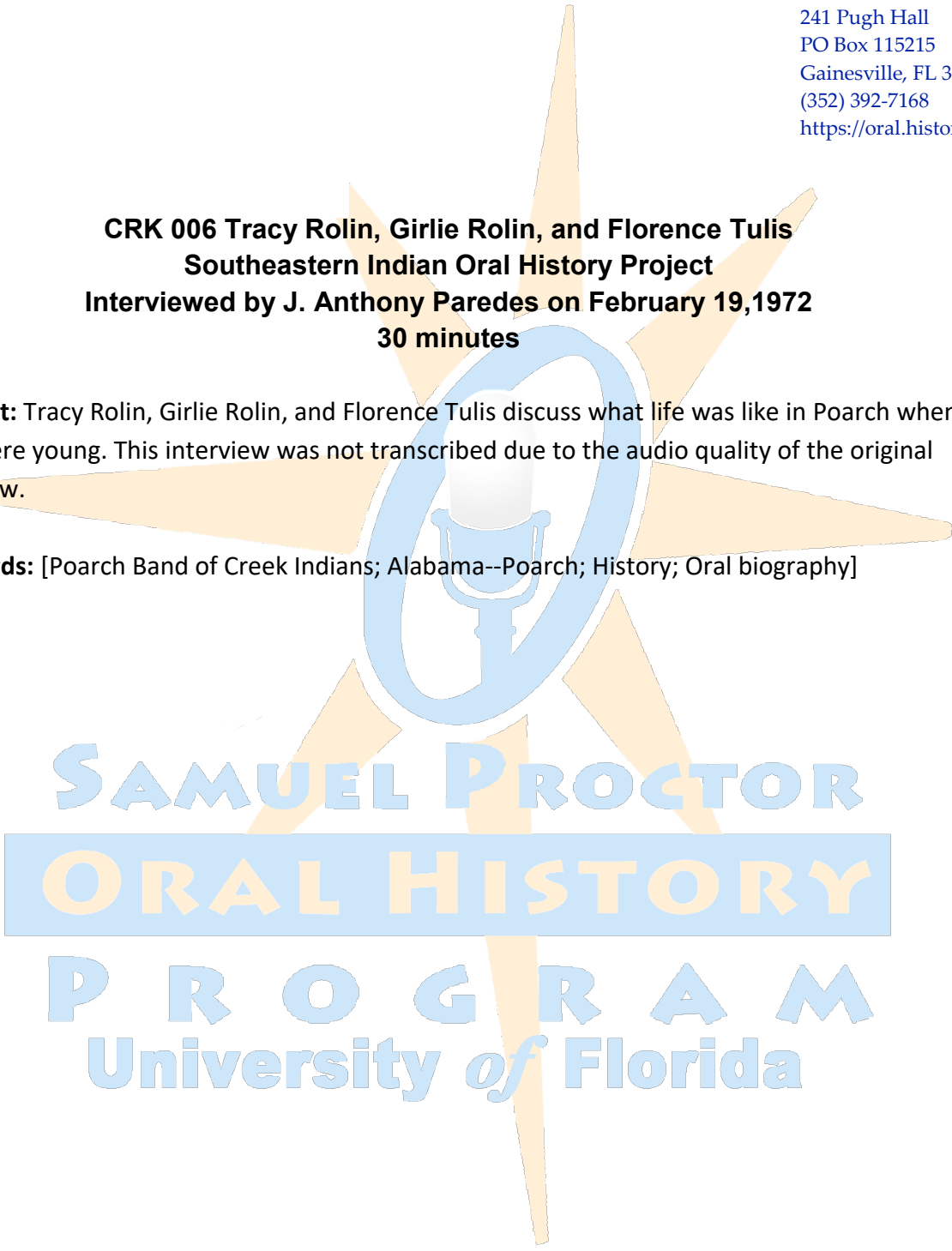
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CRK 014 Susie Ross
Southeastern Indian Oral History Project
Interviewed by J. Anthony Paredes in August 1972
9 minutes | 8 pages

Abstract: Susie goes over a few “Indian words” she remember and discusses how people lived when she was a girl. She goes into detail about cooking methods, making beads out of seeds, and the construction of houses.

Keywords: [Poarch Band of Creek Indians; History; Food]



SAMUEL PROCTOR
ORAL HISTORY
P R O G R A M
University of Florida

CRK-014

Interviewee: Susie Ross

Interviewer: Dr. J. Anthony Paredes

Date: August 1972

P: What would people say when you would say *mvto* to them?

R: What ails your toe? [Laughter]

R: What ails your toe? You also told me that there was an Indian word for a rockfish, would you say that word again?

R: ***Charliehata***.

P: ***Charliehata***. Can you think of any other Indian words for things that you remember when you were a girl?

R: No, I don't remember nothing like that.

P: But you say that you used to sometimes talk in Indian language, is that correct?

R: No I used to ask him, could he talk it?

P: What would he say?

R: Go on there with your foolishness.

P: When you were a girl—I'll ask you again—do you remember whether there were a lot of people around who knew how to say a few words in Indian language?

R: No, I don't know anybody.

P: We were talking just a few minute ago about *sofke*. Tell me again what *sofke* is and how you make it.

R: It's corn and beat up and made and cooked and you can eat it. Made out of corn.
You know what corn is.

P: How do you beat it up? What do you beat it up in?

R: With a pestle, and a mortar.

P: Which is made out of what?

R: The mortar's made out of wood just like a log and a hole burnt out in it and you
put that sack in there and then beat that *sofke* in there.

P: Do you have to get the corn at any particular time of the year to make that?

R: No. You can get it about now. It'll dry out so you can beat it.

P: Now, do you put anything besides corn in it when you cook it?

R: No. Nothing but salt and soda.

P: Do you remember when you were a girl whether people had their own medicines
that they would make?

R: I don't know about that part of it.

P: How did people live back in those days?

R: Oh, good Lord knows. [Laughter]

P: Mainly farming or what?

R: Sure, that's all they knowed was farm. Farming, hunting, fishing, that's what the Indians done.

P: How'd they cook their food back in the days before they had electricity and all those kind of things?

R: Cook it with wood. Build you a big fire there, burn it down to a coal and cook your stuff on that, that coal.

P: Do you remember ever seeing people cook out in the yard on a table or something built up?

R: Yes, yes, I've done that many a time myself.

P: Tell me how you make one of those to cook on.

R: Well, you just take your four stubs, make a box like and fill it up with dirt and then build your fire on top of that and then cook.

P: And that way you don't have to bend over to cook?

R: No, stand up and cook.

P: So you just take four stubs and put them in the ground . . .

R: Four stubs and put them in the ground and put some plank around there build a box like and fill it up with dirt and then . . . there's lots of ways if you want to do it.

P: How about cooking in the fireplace?

R: Well, I've done that, too. Coming down your alley, ain't it?

P: Have you ever dried beef?

R: Yes, sir, sure have.

P: Tell me how you dry beef.

R: Well, you kill your beef, salt it down, and then let it stand there drying a while, about two or three days. And then take it out and put that on a scaffold, build you a fire under it and then that fire burn down and it'd be a smoke and that's what smokes the meat.

P: After you had it all smoked, how do you keep it? Where do you put it?

R: Well, you just put it up in a dry box.

P: Have you ever heard of it being wrapped up in corn shucks?

R: Yes, sir, I've done that, too.

P: Did you ever fix deer meat that way?

R: No, I didn't fix no deer meat that way. I just fixed pork and beef that way.

P: Can you do that with fish, too?

R: I reckon you could.

P: But you've never done it with fish.

R: No, I ain't never fixed no fish.

P: Back years ago, were there any other foods and ways of fixing food that people did that they don't do now?

R: There's lots of it.

P: Tell me about some of it.

R: Well, they just got different ways to cook. You get out there and build you a fire, burn that wood down to a coal, and then put your pots on that and cook it and then just like I said, build them that scaffold there and I cook that way many, many a time myself.

P: I notice you got some pretty red strings of peppers hanging here on the porch. Have people around here always been big pepper eaters?

R: [Laughter] Yeah, yes, sir. I eat pepper. Right there's a pepper-eater right over there.

P: **Mrs. Lyman** over there is a pepper eater, too? Did you grow these peppers? Those are mighty pretty. Buford Rolin told me that he thought maybe you did some bead work in the past. Did you ever do that?

R: [Inaudible]

P: What kind of beads would you string?

R: All just different kinds of beads. Blue beads, red.

P: Do you ever remember people making beads out of chinaberry seeds years ago?

R: Yes, yeah.

P: Tell me about how that was done.

R: Well, that's easy done. Take berries and break them off of them stems and you get that needle through them and string them.

P: Is that something that children would do or grown-up ladies?

R: Young-uns can do that.

P: How would you say that today things are different than it were you when you were a girl?

R: Whole lots different. They living too fast now. Don't you say that?

P: I think too fast and dying young.

R: Yes, sir, that's right.

P: Back when you were a girl, I guess there weren't any cars and things, were there?

R: No, no.

P: How did people get around from one place to the other?

R: Walk, I guess. Walk.

P: How about wagons?

R: Wagons, new wagons and oxen and all like that.

P: When you were a girl, did people make their own ox yokes?

R: Yes, sir. Daddy could make them.

P: What kind of wood did he like best for those?

R: Gum.

P: Gum?

R: Yeah, gum and hickory. Use the hickory for the board and use the gum to make the yoke out of the gum.

P: Do you remember when you were a girl, whether there were many people, if any that had dirt floors in their houses?

R: **Lots of.**

P: If you didn't have a dirt floor, what other kind of floors were they? Were they just the plank floors? Did you ever see a house with a log floor?

R: Yes. Hewed logs.

P: Hewed logs.

R: Hewed logs for the floor.

P: People that lived in a dirt house with a dirt floor, did they do anything special to keep it clean and packed down?

R: No, they just pack it down and brush it. They put white sand over it.

P: Uh-huh. And that'd make a good, clean floor that way?

R: Yes, sir. That's right.

P: But back in those days, people didn't live as fast as they do now?

R: No.

[End of interview]

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