**Uncover Podcast Outline**

***Theme music***

***Introduction (Intro)***

Welcome to Uncover, the show that reveals stories of residential school survivors. I am Hannah Cheng, and I am Venus Cheng. Today, we are talking about Mary Battaja’s experience with the residential school, a residential school survivor who decided to become a priest even after what she went through.

***Segue***

Knowpe - Noir Et Blanc Vie 00:00 – 00:04

***Segment 1***

**Mary Battaja’s background**

* + Mary was raised by her traditional parent, she lived in a small community where people are closely connected with each other and the natural world.
  + Her village was located “3 miles down the Spirit River, 3 miles from Mayo Town”, where people could speak their Northern Tutchone language, hunt, fish and trap.
  + They had a traditional system they used for decades. Children were taught different surviving skills since they were young. Women would teach girls, and men would teach boys.
  + People had a joyful life before everything changed.

**When the peaceful day ended**

* + One day, an Indian agent sent by the government told people in her village that they must move out of the village immediately.
  + There were people cried, there were people who packed up their belonging.
  + People moved to a town that is 3 miles away from their village.
  + For approximately 4 or 5 years, her family had to live in tents during four seasons.
  + They didn’t know how to speak the English language.
  + To learn how to speak English, Mary used to go to shops or restaurants to watch how White people order food and speak. When she went home, she would practice speaking English that she heard.
  + Life was difficult for them, it was almost impossible for them to find a job. Mary’s father was only able to make enough money to afford their expenses.

***Segue***

BatchBug - Playing In The Wind 00:00 – 00:02

***Segment 2***

**Life in residential school**

* + In 1954, at the age of eight, Mary was taken away from her parent to go to residential school, so as her little brother and two of her older sisters.
  + They travelled to school by a big old horse truck with wooden railings around and a canvas on top.
  + She was taken to Choutla Residential School, also known as Carcross Residential School. It was the first Indian residential school opened by Anglican Church in Carcross, located in Yukon, Canada.
  + Children were assigned by numbers.
  + She was separated from her sibling.
  + Children were divided into Juniors, Intermediates and Seniors.
  + A nightgown and a uniform were given to them.
  + They were then taken to the shower, children needed to wash their hair with kerosene oil, in case they had lice.
  + They could not speak their languages.
  + Sometimes, Mary and her siblings would hide behind bushes and speak their language.
  + In class, children were only allowed to sit quietly in their seats and they must finish their assignments on time.
  + There would be punishments if anyone disobeyed the rules or instructions.
  + Whenever the children did anything inappropriate, the teacher would throw chalks at them or strap them.

**Attempt to escape from residential school**

* + There was once, Mary’s sisters ran away from school
  + Mary was very small and was too afraid to run away.
  + After Mary’s sisters were brought back, they received very cruel punishments.
  + They had to “dig a ditch from the school to the principal’s house with a shovel”.

**Mary brother’s death**

* Mary had a little brother, who is the son of her aunt.
* One day, Mary noticed that his brother was not in class. Even after few days, they still couldn’t see him.
* They were told by the supervisor that their brother was ill.
* They asked to see him so many times. Finally, the Infirmary nurse gave them permission to see their brother for a short period of time. It was the last they saw him.
* Later, their brother was sent to Edmonton. He passed away in Edmonton and Mary never sees him again.

**Mary’s last year in residential school**

* In 1959, Mary’s last year at the residential school, public schools were first opened to indigenous people.
* Mary and her sisters went to the public school.
* Yet there were many racism and pressure toward indigenous children that time, which caused Mary to give up her education.

***Segue***

BatchBug - Playing In The Wind 00:02 – 00:07

***Sponsor message (Vancity)***

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***Segue***

BatchBug - Playing In The Wind 00:07 – 00:11

***Segment 3***

**After residential school**

* Even after a long time, Mary was afraid to openly speak about her experience in the residential school.
* She never told anyone except her husband.
* Fortunately, Mary met her husband, he always caring and gentle to her and Mary now has a wonderful family.
* Mary was very strict with her child, there were many rules.
* Her children were also impacted by it.
* Mary talked with her children and they understood.
* She always tried her best to support her kids.
* Mary also became an ordained Priest in Anglican church, she is part of AISEP.
* She would go to conferences, deal with the Residential School Syndrome and heard stories of different people.
* She was always asked with the question, why would you decide to be a priest even after everything you experienced.
* Mary answered, “I love children and I love my work and I love helping people.”
* She became a social worker in school and worked in the Whitehorse General Hospital to help people.

**Mary’s thought on residential school**

* Mary learned many new knowledges from residential school, but she learned many abuses from the system as well. Since she was small, her parent always taught her that “learning is a good thing for a child, and they should be happy, and they should be able to make mistakes, not to be abused and to be punished”.
* Although Mary did not agree with the abusive school system of residential school, she is still grateful that she had the opportunity to learn.
* Mary “would like to encourage the children who went to Residential School and their families to continue to work on this because it’s not going to go away”.

***Call to action***

* We had a glimpse at how children were treated in residential school and how it impacted them and their family.
* We would like to announce some call to action from the “Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada” to help residential school survivors and their families.

#7 We call upon the federal government to develop with Aboriginal groups a joint strategy to eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

#13 We call upon the federal government to acknowledge that Aboriginal rights include Aboriginal language rights.

#21 We call upon the federal government to provide sustainable funding for existing and new Aboriginal healing centres to address the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual harms caused by residential schools, and to ensure that the funding of healing centres in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories is a priority.

***Outro***

With this information, I hope you would understand more about residential school.

Thank you for listening to uncover, remember to subscribe our podcast channel and we will see you next time.

***Theme song***

Knowpe - Noir Et Blanc Vie 00:06 – 00:011