National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-Gathering Process
Part 1 Public Hearings
Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel
Elmbridge Room
Metro Vancouver, British Columbia

PUBLIC

Wednesday April 4, 2018

Public Volume 83
Lori Davis,
In relation to Carol Ruby Davis

Heard by Commissioner Michèle Audette
Commission Counsel: Christa Big Canoe
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**Witness: Lori Davis**

**Exhibits (code: P01P15P0106)**
Upon commencing on Wednesday, April 4, 2018 at 11:35

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE**: Good morning. Good morning, Commissioner Audette. I would like to introduce you to our next participant, Lori Davis.

Lori will be sharing the story of her sister Carol Ruby Davis.

Before we begin, I would ask that the registrar promise Lori in.

**MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG**: Good morning, Lori. Lori, do you promise to tell your truth in a good way today?

**MS. LORI DAVIS**: I do.

**MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG**: Okay, thank you.

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE**: So, Lori, I know today that you’re going to be talking to us about Carol Ruby Davis, but before we start into her story, can I just ask you a couple of questions about your background and who you are?

**MS. LORI DAVIS**: Okay. (Speaking in Haida language).

My name is Lori Davis and I’m a citizen of the Haida Nation, and I’m here to speak my sister’s name, Carol Ruby Davis.

Most of my adult life I spent working for
First Nations’ organizations in B.C. for the First Nations Summit and Assembly of First Nations and the Treaty Commission, and I travelled all over B.C. doing work in that area.

Then I left that a few years back and I became an artist -- starving artist -- but started an artists’ program. And returned to school a few years back to become a programmer, web designer, technical support person.

And then recently to bring a lot of my visions of what I see, I went back to school again and returned to become a pattern maker. So I spend a lot of time trying to teach our youth and our -- their parents on how to make Haida designs. So I do a lot of arts stuff.

But I’ve been living in Vancouver for a number of years now. I left when -- I was born and raised in Haida Gwaii and raised by my grandparents, Carey and Joe Weir (Ph.), and my great grandparents.

I didn’t really spend a lot of -- I spent one year out of my life with my mother and all of my siblings. So I have three brothers and four more sisters.

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** So you had mentioned you were raised in Haida Gwaii -- born and raised in Haida Gwaii. Do you want to just tell us a little bit about Haida Gwaii? I know it sounds funny, but even the distance
it is from here to Haida Gwaii.

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** Well it used to be called Queen Charlotte Island. So it’s the island just below Alaska and my village is Old Massett Village. And I’m not sure why I was -- I’m not sure, but I was the middle child and my house -- at that house with my grandparents, and my mom had eight kids all together, and all of them -- I have another sister -- so family with my grandparents. So I always grew up with them.

My grandfather was blind. So we always grew up with our culture because they wanted to make sure that we knew it. So we always had a dance group. And growing up there -- was a small village, it’s really big now.

I left -- my mom had left with all my siblings and -- at one point she had left with a couple of siblings at the beginning because they were too young, then left the other -- my other sisters with my grandparents, along with me.

And then at one point my mom had met a man and they lived together and all my siblings, she wanted them down here. So I think I was 15 when I came with the bunch.

And then I returned home a number of times to look after my grandma. And then she’s been gone a while now, but -- sorry.
MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So you mentioned your three brothers and four sisters. In relation -- like, you’re the middle child, so Carol Ruby, was she the youngest, was she oldest? What’s the age difference between the two of you?

MS. LORI DAVIS: I was the middle child in my grandparents’ house. There were two older -- well, two older cousins, and one other sister below me, and another cousin below me.

In my mom’s house I’m the oldest and Carol was number four. Her -- so when I came to Vancouver, her and I shared a room, along with my youngest brother and my other siblings across. So her and I were sharing a room and she had been down here a couple years by the time I had come down.

So I’m the oldest, Carol’s number four.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So can you share with the Commissioner any fond memories or some of Carol’s strengths?

MS. LORI DAVIS: Carol -- I don’t have a lot of memories of her because we weren’t raised together when we were young. My memories have to do with when she became -- when she got pregnant when she was 15. She had already been living a pretty different lifestyle than I. And a lot of my memories of Carol are to do with her after she became
pregnant with her son and I got -- I raised her son and
looked after him because he had -- he has Cerebral Palsy
and he needed a lot of care and she could not do that, so I
took on that.

When he was born, she had him baptized and
she made me God Mother to him so I took that role pretty
seriously, as his God Mother. And he was my first nephew.
And he had a daughter.

So most of my memories of her are to do with
her as a mother and my raising her son. I don’t have a lot
of memories of her as a young girl or anything because we
were raised in different houses.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: You had mentioned
that at one point, when you were about 15, you went down
with a whole bunch of your siblings to Vancouver to live
with your mother and her husband at the time. Can you tell
me a little bit about her husband?

MS. LORI DAVIS: He was a non-native guy.
My mom had two children with him, my youngest brother and
my youngest sister. And so we -- she didn’t marry him
right away, she married him a number of years later and
lost her status through that process.

There was a lot of alcohol involved in that
house. And I had left when I was -- I lived with my mom
for a year until I was 16, then I was put in a foster home.
And then during that time period Carol also left and then she started living a different lifestyle and got addicted to drugs and stuff.

So after that period, I just -- my mother’s still alive. He was very abusive to my mother, and abusive to us as well. So I was only there for a year because my grandparents had come down to get me.

And Carol left but she didn’t stay in the foster home. She left and was in the downtown east side for the rest of her life.

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** So you had mentioned that your mom’s husband wasn’t very nice to her and was abusive. How was he -- how did you treat you and Lori based on your appearance or your skin colour?

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** In my family, my sister and I, Carol, both -- we were darker skinned than the rest of our siblings and he always made fun of us because he didn’t want anybody to know that we were native.

So he used to treat my sister, Carol, really terrible and say really mean things to us about the colour of our skin. And I just recall one of my biggest memories that I had of her was she felt so bad about the colour of her skin she started -- she would bath in bleach so her skin would get fair so we wouldn’t be made fun of by him.

And I don’t know, just one of the memories I
have of her. And she had a really hard time in her life, living.

(SHORT PAUSE)

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** So it was difficult for her to live in that house to the point where she lost some of her own self-confidence and the ability to feel beautiful. But you know she was beautiful; right?

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** Yeah.

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** So you had then been explaining to the commissioner that, you know, when you left that house and Carol Ruby left that house, you know, you went one place in kind of one direction, and your sister went another and she found herself in the downtown east side. Can you tell me a little bit about that?

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** She got pregnant really young in age, she was 15 years old and she had her son. And I always knew that he really needed a lot of attention and so I spent a lot of time with her. So anytime she made money --- I didn’t even know where she lived, that’s the kind of life she lived. Because she was just place to place.

So whenever she made money, she would just show up to bring BJ to Playland or whatever and buy him what he needed. So the more money she made, the more often we would see her.
And because she was a drug addict, a lot of the visits tended to be her sleeping. So she would stay by us. Then she would take B.J. out. So I would let that go because BJ didn’t know what was going on with all her sleeping and stuff like that. So I allowed that -- all her visits to happen because they needed to have that relation as a mother and son.

So a lot of my -- a lot of her -- even as out of it as she used to be, she would always try to make sure that he always had what he needed or what he wished for. She was a good mom. When she took BJ she was a good mom.

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Did Carol have any other children?

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** She had a daughter that was a couple years younger than BJ, and her name is Crystal. But the dad, he’s Nisga’a, took her and he raised her up north. And so her -- I really don’t know her, and I’ve not had much contact with her through the years. She’s -- they’re both older now. But she’s a mother -- I’m not sure if she’s a grandmother herself, but they’re all grown and everything.

But Crystal lived up north for -- up in Nu’y’ant (Ph.) for most of her -- and she was with her -- her dad died a few years ago and she moved down to
Vancouver so I don’t see her often. But she’s a mother herself.

She’s never asked me about her mom, other than one of the problems I ran into with her was back in those days what they used to have was a thing called victim services and there was money involved in that process. And when I buried my sister, I paid for everything. I -- nobody helped me out or -- none of my brothers, my sisters, my mom, nobody, or her -- well, their dad.

But -- so we he -- her, Crystal, she’s phoned me a couple times because somebody had told her I got a lot of money because she was murdered. So she thinks I inherited a lot of money for -- and I spent it from these -- and did not work. The only reason -- I got very little money, and the only reason that was is because I was raising her son who has special needs. He has Cerebral Palsy, he needs a lot of attention and care. And that was the only reason they even considered my application at the time. And no matter what I told her daughter, she believes that I took a lot of money from something that happened to her mother.

So I don’t see her often, but she sure is a splitting image of her mother.

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** The -- did you -- could you explain to us about when Crystal -- sorry, not
when Crystal -- when Carol first was missing or when it came to your attention that she hadn’t come to visit BJ for a while? Do you recall what happened in that time frame?

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** Yeah, my grandparents were still alive at the time and I used to spend a lot of time with my grandparents until she died a few years ago. I moved home a number of times.

So what happened was I was having -- I had - - BJ and I had been renting a house out in east end Vancouver and some of my friends were over so we decided to have a barbeque in the backyard. I remember it was June, in late June. And we heard a knock at the door and it was the police. And police had come to tell me that they found my sister and that she was murdered or she had died.

So I went through quite a process. They didn’t give me any information. And because of where she was found and dumped, was on Marine Drive between the Vancouver side and Burnaby side. Because she was found on the Burnaby side, it was the RCMP that I had to deal with. So through the years that’s who I’ve been dealing with, is the RCMP.

So when they found her, my -- I called my grandma and my grandma wanted me to bring her home to bury her on our homeland and amongst our ancestors, so that’s what I did.
I went shopping for her. And I didn’t know the details of what had happened until the police told me what happened. What I was doing, I went shopping so I could go dress her, because I thought we were going to have an open casket and I wanted to dress her. So I went and bought all her clothes and shoes and everything so she would look nice on her journey.

And it was at that point -- sorry, I’m about to cry.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: It’s okay.

MS. LORI DAVIS: So it was at that point the police had told me the only way they knew who she was by her teeth. I guess she’d been there for a while.

And we hadn’t heard from her. And because she lived a different lifestyle than I did, I didn’t even know where to go look for her other than downtown. And so I phoned my grandma and told her. And most of the decision to bury her -- because my mom is still alive today -- most of the decision fell on me to do it, because of my grandma and my grandpa. So when I told them, because we were going to do an open casket, I had no idea -- other than the bones and teeth was really what was left of her. So that’s what I did.

We had a ceremony for her before left, because where she lived downtown, a lot of people showed up
Lori Davis
(Carol Ruby Davis)

for it. And then we got ready and, you know, so we all got ready. And BJ would have been 12 years old at the time, and I think his sister was nine or so. So they all came down and flew over to Haida Gwaii to come for the funeral — her dad and her.

And anyway -- sorry.

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Can I ask you one question?

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** Yeah.

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** I know that the first time you found out that you wouldn’t be able to send her on her journey in new clothes was when the police explained that they could only identify her by her dental record, what did you do with the clothes anyways?

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** I went to the funeral home and I asked them to put it in her casket so -- no matter what she’s going to go on a journey and I know she wanted to look nice. So I put everything -- I asked them to put everything in the casket for her for her journey. As long as there was something in there with her.

And I remember I put some -- BJ wanted to put some stuff in there too. I know he didn’t know at the time what had happened, but I don’t recall this, but I remember he wanted me to put something in there special, but he didn’t even realize what had happened.
MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So it’s fair to say that BJ didn’t quite understand and ---

MS. LORI DAVIS: Yeah.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Because when he had seen his mom from time to time when she came to visit you guys, and she’d take him out and they’d have a fun day. But he didn’t see her regularly enough to understand why she wasn’t coming back? Is that fair to say? Or can you explain to us?

MS. LORI DAVIS: Yeah, she would just show up whenever she had money. And we didn’t know when or anything she would show up to. Because it all depended on how much money she made. So it was ---

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So when you were able to take Carol Ruby back to Haida Gwaii, so you’d done ceremony done here, and she had friends and people that showed up. And then what happened when you took her up to bury her in Haida Gwaii?

MS. LORI DAVIS: Before I left, but I won’t get into that until probably when I -- end of this. I spoke to a really nice lady and then we flew home and -- well, all of us flew home.

And I recall, I remember I didn’t call him dad, Donald was his name because I didn’t know him myself. But he didn’t stay for the funeral, he had to leave.
And my grandparents, we had -- my grandparents were -- I mean, she died a few years ago but she would have been about 80, then. So they were kind of old and stuff. So we had a really big ceremony and then I -- in the community there with her because everybody kind of remembered us growing up. But I was always at home with my grandparents. They didn’t -- they never really returned after they had left. And I always brought BJ home so he knew where he came from.

And my nonny, or my grandma, really loved to BJ a lot and so we spent a lot of time together. And so when we got home, my grandma and her older brother, his name was Ernest Hailtaxi (Ph.), made sure all the protocol was in place for us to bury her in a proper burial ground in the village.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So at the time, did anybody help you pay for any of the taking Carol Ruby home, or the burial, or the headstone or anything?

MS. LORI DAVIS: No. Nobody offered. None of my brothers or my siblings or my mom or anything. But it took me a few years to pay off her casket and stuff. But one of the -- throughout the following years, while my grandmother was alive, one of the problems, and I hope that -- I think I’ll do it as a recommendation at the end, but was in my culture, you do -- you say goodbye and you have a
headstone, and you have a headstone move-in and all that. That never happened with my sister. But my grandmother would phone me and say your sister needs a headstone. And I felt, on my part, I had done more than my share to show my respects to my sister. So I didn’t. And I said her mom is still alive and she has brothers and sisters.

So what ended up happening, I returned home a number of times, and I always go down and visit her grave and clean it and make sure she didn’t get lost. But I haven’t returned home since my grandmother died, and I have -- because she doesn’t have a headstone, my cousin goes home on a regular basis, and she -- I always ask her to go please say hi to my sister for me and check on her. And because she doesn’t have a headstone, they can’t find her anymore.

So I try to describe where she is, but I think what has happened is a lot of the weeds and stuff has grown over because there’s no sign of her being there.

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** I know that at the time of Carol Ruby’s murder, you described to the Commissioner that she was found just on the border side of Burnaby instead of Vancouver. Was there ever any theories, or did people have an idea of what might have happened to her? Did you see clips in the media, pictures in magazines, or articles ever?
MS. LORI DAVIS: After she died, there was a lot of articles of -- written about Carol. At the time they believed she was number four. They had connected her to the -- at the time, was the Green River Murders. And that guy killed a lot of people. So they had thought that she was connected to that. That’s down in Washington State, so they thought he had come up here and she might have been victim to him. But that turned out not to be the case.

And then throughout the years, I only had one picture of Carol, because we didn’t -- and that was that picture. So normally whenever they would do a story about her, they always used that picture of her. It was the one that’s before you. And then when the pig farm thing happened, they thought, well maybe they’d find her there. But they already found her, but maybe she was connected to that person somehow.

And, because at the time they thought she was attached to the Green River, and Maclean’s magazine and those types of articles at the time had written quite a few stories about her because the Green River murder was such a big story in the United States that they kept writing stories about Carol.

And I used to -- I had all of them, but I’ve moved a few times throughout my life and I kind of lost a
lot of them. So I’ve been trying to find them again just for keepsake and stuff.

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** So over the years, because it’s been a number of years now since you’ve lost Carol Ruby, what is some of the advocacy or the work you’ve done? At the beginning you explained to the Commissioner that you’ve worked with a number of First Nation organizations and other organizations. Have you tried to sort of raise issues of missing and murdered Indigenous women or your sister in any of your work capacity?

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** Yeah. I used to work at the First Nations Summit. My whole adult life was based on politics. When -- after my sister was found murdered, I went to -- because I was working at the First Nations Summit, I approached all our leaders and it took me two years to ask them to put a resolution on the floor to do an inquiry because these women are all part of your nation, they belong -- they come from your communities and you need -- something’s happening to our women and there needs to be an inquiry.

So the First Nations Summit did pass a resolution 25 years ago and know -- they know -- and the same people that were leaders then are still leaders today and had done nothing with that resolution. For sure didn’t ever call me and ask me or talk to me about it.
I was there for quite a few years after that resolution was passed and tried to bring it to the attention of other groups and stuff like that.

Then with the Assembly of First Nations, I worked for the B.C. region office with Satsan and we would talk about it, but I don’t know why it just never, nothing ever became of that resolution that we passed at the First Nations Summit all those years ago.

And at that time, she was number four. And -- according to them, we don’t know that for sure. So I’m not sure why or -- well I guess why nothing ever became of it, and I, you know, would bring it up. Once in a while I would phone the communications guy at the Summit and see if they’re going to do an update or whatever. But I don’t -- I’m not aware of anything ever happening with that resolution.

But we have an inquiry today, so maybe.

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** So I understand that you did make some notes because you wanted to make sure that you didn’t forget anything that you wanted to share with the Commissioner. Can I ask if you have anything you want to read to the Commissioner that you’ve prepared?

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** Yeah. I came here today as I have in all of your gatherings, to speak my sister’s name. Her name is Carol Ruby Davis. She was a -- she’s a
citizen of the Haida Nation from Haida Gwaii. We are
Yuklaanas.

I’ve travelled this road since -- all by
myself. I have had no support from family or friends so
it’s been really hard because I’m here, but I don’t know
why I’m here. I’m here because I don’t -- because I -- I’m
not even sure in my head. All I know is that I’m here
because we have young people coming up, and future
generations that need to feel safe in our communities, and
that nothing is going to happen to them.

I have a niece in our culture, she’s my
niece through the clan system. And she told me she knows
my sister was murdered, and she had told me she was scared
to go out at night because she was scared something was
going to happen, and you don’t want your next generation to
be afraid to go out.

So I’ve travelled this road, and it’s been a
very long and lonely road, so I can speak her name. And
one of the things, throughout all these years, because she
was found in Burnaby, nobody’s ever asked me about Carol.
Nobody’s for sure never asked me about BJ. But the only
people who have ever called me about her is the RCMP to
tell me they have not forgotten her. They want to bring me
up to date about -- I mean, nothing’s going to change, you
know, but that they’ve added her to the new data or
whatever.

So throughout the years they call me once in a while just to let me know they’ve not forgotten her.

And my niece wanted to be -- sit beside me today, I had asked her because it’s a really, really important issue to her. So she couldn’t get time off work, so I had asked her if she could write something for me to speak to you about and so she had told me -- this was a really -- she’s 20 years old. She told me that -- she said that this is a really, really important issue to her, so she sat up last night and wrote this and asked me to -- and I told her I’d read it to you. And this is what she says.

“My name is Vanessa Panel, I’m Haida, Tsimshian, and Nisga’a. I’ve lived and grown up in the heart of East Vancouver for 20 years of my life. The quality of life that I’ve witnessed over all my years in east Vancouver is of the lowest standard when it comes to Aboriginal women.

Due to lack of fundamental care for humanity and life by our Canadian governing system and mainstream press, the dehumanization of Indigenous women can be traced back to the beginning of colonization. We are currently in 2018, living in the worst epidemic for the livelihood of Indigenous women that our history has seen.

At a young age I felt that in order to
survive I was forced to understand this society normalizes its injustices against women like me.

With that being, I do believe that this is not just an Aboriginal problem, but global problem. In regards to recommendations, I believe that the missing and murdered Aboriginal women should be globally recognized as an epidemic and treated with the same severity. Also, for Canadian leaders to teach our history from our Aboriginal perspective.

Social justice plays a factor in moving forward and ensuring that history is not repeated.

Thank you.”

That is Vanessa. She’s a strong, young woman.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And sorry, you just explained earlier that Vanessa is, like within your culture, she’s your niece.

MS. LORI DAVIS: Yeah.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Can you just explain a little more about that? Because it was great to hear her strong words, but maybe the context would help a little.

MS. LORI DAVIS: She’s -- I’m part of a dance group called Rainbow Creek Dancers headed up by Robert Davidson and Vanessa is also a part of our dance group, along with her mom.
Her mom, Vanessa’s -- we’re all Yuklaanas. We are one of the four daughters of Charles Edinsaw (Ph.) descendant. Her great grandmother and my grand mother -- great grandmother were sisters and one of the two daughters of Charles Edinsaw.

She participates in our dance group and she’s been with our dance group since she was just a little kid. And now she, you know, she’s driving around and everything, but. And her mom and as well. So we’re cousins through our great grandparents and who are relatives are. And in our way, I am her auntie because she’s from my clan.

I see Rodney -- I am his auntie in our culture because his grandparents are in my clan. I come from the biggest clan in my nature. So I have many, many, many in that way.

She’s not a niece from any of my brothers or any of my sisters, or any of my mom’s brothers and sisters. It goes to my great great grandparents from the clan system.

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And the clan system, and that kinship gives you an obligation, though, to treat you like a niece ---

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** Yeah.

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** --- because she sees
you as an auntie?

MS. LORI DAVIS: We don’t have cousins in Haida culture, that doesn’t exist. We’re either an auntie, or a mother, or a grandmother, or a sister.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: You had mentioned to Commissioner Audette that one of your big concerns, or some of the things you want to speak about is, you know, with the next generation of strong women and your nieces, that you’re concerned about their safety and wellness. Is there anything you wanted to add to that?

MS. LORI DAVIS: Yeah. Can I just tell you about the experiences I’ve had with all of your commissions? I would rather talk about that. That’s mostly my problem.

I’ve travelled this road for so long all by myself and it’s just been really hard getting here, getting to this point today. I’m going to tell you, there’s just been so many -- I’ve been treated so terribly by all of these places.

But the one I’m going to tell you about, because you need to know and you need to fix this. I was asked to participate in Prince George meeting. Before -- I won’t talk about the getting to Prince George, what I’ll talk to you about is after I returned.

Before I left, I saw that they were having a
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quilt program for names of the murdered, missing women. So I contacted the project and I said, “Are you going to add my sister’s name to that?” And they said, “Well, we’ll have a room in Prince George for you, so make sure to do it in there.”

So that’s what I did. I participated, I did everything. I went into the room, I spent the day there. I made a patch with her name on there. And I put on there -- so nobody ever mistook her for anybody else because on the downtown east side banners, they had been spelling her name wrong all these years. It took me 25 years to get them to change her name properly.

So I put on her banner, her little patch for the quilt, “Carol Ruby Davis, citizen of the Haida Nation. December 23rd, ’58 to June 1987. Haida Gwaii.” And did some stuff on there. And I really wasn’t sure what was going -- I think this was last year now we’re into.

So after I returned, I wasn’t sure what was going to happen with this quilt, or the patches that -- when I left Prince George, I left the patch with a picture of my sister.

Then I got an email last year, I think it was last year, after they had gone to the school and the students had put this quilt together and they send all of us -- so they obviously have my email, which is what I did,
I connected all the dots, gave my name an phone number to everybody. They emailed me a picture of the finished quilt that they were going to present to the Legislature in Victoria with all of the patches that all the families had made for their loved ones.

I went through every single patch and they didn’t include my sister’s.

I think -- I was pretty upset, pretty, pretty upset at that because they asked me to participate in this process, to come speak my sister’s name. And to forget her again. So I contacted that person that sent me the email, and the picture of the quilt, and they told me they had a patch there, that all it said was Ruby, and they thought that was her. So they left her off because of that.

Then they phoned me back again, and I had contacted my really, really good friend and she’s lawyer, and she specialized in that -- no, she’s been my good friend for many years. So I contacted her, crying.

And then after I hung up with her, the phone rang and it was the province phoning me to apologize for doing that. And they said they remedied the problem because they had her patch in front of them and they made the assumption, without asking me, if that was okay, or even asking me if that was the same person. They just went
ahead and did it without ever asking me.

So they told me they kind of felt bad about what happened so they would like to send me a ticket to come to Victoria for the presentation. So that even made me more mad. Why did I have to go through all of that just to get an invitation? Like I’m not sure why all the same people are involved, or how you get on an invitation list or anything like that.

So I took them up on that offer and I went. And so what happened was because they used that original picture on all the news articles and stuff like that, it happens to be the one without her name on it.

And that’s kind of how I’ve been dealt with throughout all these many processes while I come speak her name.

And I speak her name because we have young people, as I said, and future generations coming up.

You want us to participate to make it better for future generations, at least hear us and stop making us feel like we’re invisible. And hear us speak their name and hear us -- stop treating -- well, that’s kind of how I feel. I feel like I’m invisible because I -- you ask me to participate and then I’m not sure what happens after that, really.

I’m -- I try not to dwell on it too hard,
but the only way to make it better is to say something and
make sure you tell your people that they’re not doing their
job and that they need to fix it. And it just -- you go
through so much emotional turmoil just dealing with that
aspect of being overlooked and being asked to participate
in a process and then still be overlooked. So people are
not doing their job along the way to make -- it just made
me feel really -- I was -- so I got to Victoria for that
part of the ceremony and I didn’t stay very long, but --
while they made the presentation and that was one -- that
was the Prince George experience I had and there’s a couple
few other ones, but that’s the one I think kind of sums up,
really, how I’ve been treated.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Can I ask just a
couple clarification questions around that? You’re not
just talking about just any one particular process, you’re
talking about different processes ---

MS. LORI DAVIS: Yeah.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: --- that are -- that
have been addressing, you know, missing and murdered
Indigenous women. But is it fair to say even with this
process you think there could be improvements?

MS. LORI DAVIS: Big time, I think. Yeah.

In my mind’s mind I can’t come up with a
recommendation until we get beyond that. If people aren’t
doing their job, what does it look like at the end?

   Like, I wasn’t even sure about the quilting program. I see a lot of projects going on, and because my sister’s name was spelled wrong on those banners for so many years, they used that spelling to -- that’s not her. That’s somebody else’s name that they used. And because all the art projects that have come along in all these many years, that’s what they based it on, was that spelling from that -- from those banners.

   And it was -- that process took me 25 years just to get them to correct her name. And I’ve had just a really hard time just trying to feel what these processes are supposed to be of -- like, I keep getting treated like the Prince George experience family -- or gathering or something.

   MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So that feeling of being invisible, like, with her name corrected, I know it’s really important because you’ve said it so many times today, that you came here today to speak her name and you wanted to be clear that was her name is, and we saw it up on the picture that, you know, it’s Carol Ruby Davis.

   And are you starting to feel a little more hurt, or do you still feel invisible?

   MS. LORI DAVIS: I think I feel a lot better because my niece, she wrote such a strong statement that
she wanted you to hear how she feels. And that’s why we’re here. And I think her statement makes me feel a lot better because she -- because of that.

And so I think that gives me a little bit of hope that a young person like that would be that wise to make such recommendations to you about who she is and what she’s -- her vision is as a young person.

Yeah, I feel better today. Sorry, I’m such a crybaby.

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** No, not at all. Not at all.

I know that you talked earlier about the fact that Carol Ruby showed up in a lot of media when they were trying to guess what was happening in her life, but is there a particular article or a piece of media that you want to talk about with us today?

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** Something pretty amazing happened last week. I’m a computer programmer and a web designer and technical support person, so I did a lot of searches on my sister to make sure that things aren’t missing and that I get stuff.

The day before I was returning home to bury my sister, this lady, this reporter from the Vancouver Sun had called me, I spoke of her earlier. Her name is Frances Bula. She was a young reporter at the time for the
Vancouver Sun. We were going to leave the next day and she had called me and asked me if she could go and do a story for my sister. It would be 31 years ago this June.

And after I spoke with Crystal last week, I hadn’t searched for my sister -- I hadn’t done a search for her for about a year. After I spoke to Crystal on the phone, she sent me an email, she said, “Have you seen this?”

And this -- Frances, she doesn’t work with the Vancouver Sun anymore, she has her own media group thing going now. She had written an article last year, on July -- because I would have met her in the beginning of July before I brought my sister home, so she had spent the whole day with us because we had -- we were -- I was doing the casket and everything like that. She had spent the whole day with us at my home. She wanted to do a story about Carol.

Last July she wrote a story and it’s titled, “Carol Ruby Davis: A Heartbreaking Death, 30 Years Ago Now”. And she included the original story she had written about me, and my family, and BJ on that day we returned. And when -- before I left -- sorry. So she had -- she wrote in her -- she included the original story, and she wrote:

“Thirty years ago, I was a rookie reporter
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at the Vancouver Sun. I got sent out to cover the funeral of a sex-trade worker — something we actually did back in those days when we covered so much more in the city. It was a searing experience for me. I’ve never forgotten it or the way Carol’s family allowed me to enter their lives briefly. In Carol’s honour, here it is again.”

And she included the whole story in that write up. And she talked -- she covered the story, where we’re from, and BJ and my grandparents and everything. It was just a lovely story.

So I tweeted her that night on Twitter. I found her story on her Twitter feed, and I tweeted her and I told her, her name is Frances, and I said, “Frances, I raise my hands to you, it’s been a very long and lonely road for me, but I recall you very vividly. Thank you so much for not forgetting my sister.”

And she got back to me within an hour and I didn’t take her Twitter feed, I put it on my schedule for the next morning.

For over five years now I’ve been sending this out to Justin Trudeau, Judy, and the Inquiry, and UBCIC, all those people, National Women’s Group, APTN, and all I say is I speak her name. And to all those people, Carol Ruby Davis, Haida and then my hashtag, MIW and MIWG. Not one person has ever -- except for UBC once, no one ever
responds.

So what I did was -- and I send that out everyday at 9:49 everyday.

And so the next morning I -- before that time, I tweeted out her handle with that original story and sent it to those people. And then she got back to me again right away and she said, “Thank you very much for that.”

She said, “I never, ever, ever forgot your sister. It was a story that stuck with me all these years.” And I said, “Really, truly, I want to thank you for not forgetting her. I’m going to speak my sister’s name next week.”

So this morning, when I was leaving, I said -- I told her -- I said, “I again want to thank you for not forgetting my sister. I’m on my way to go speak her name and you will be part of my little story.”

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** One of the things in the article, and if you’re okay with me ---

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** Yeah.

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** --- just reading this part in? That she said, and this was -- remember, she wrote this that many years ago:

“To Vancouver police, Carol Davis was a ‘known prostitute and drug user.’

To her large family and many friends, Carol was a mother
who loved to spoil her children, someone who could laugh so
hard she’d just about cry, and a daughter and sister who
defended and gave to her family generously.”

She then goes on to talk about some of her
artistic skills and the talent she had. And I know in the
conversations you’re having about feeling invisible, is it
fair to say that Frances Bula, her article made you and
Carol feel less invisible?

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** Oh, I’m a Cancer so I cried
for two days after I saw this. She really touched my heart
that my sister touched her and she remembered it all these
years later. She made me realize that maybe we’re not so
alone. That somebody is out there thinking about you too.

So yeah, she really touched me and I don’t
think I’ll ever forget her.

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** You talk about your
use of Twitter because you’re a techie. When we were first
talking and your explained that to me I was quite surprised
because you’re way more technologically advanced than me.

But you just also shared the fact that you
put out your sister’s name on Twitter. So -- but because
that’s one of the ways that you get to say her name
everyday.

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** Yeah.

**MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Would it be great if
more people were retweeting or tweeting that particular
tweet so that her name would -- putting her name out there,
saying her name I know is important to you, but is it
important that other people do it too?

MS. LORI DAVIS: That’s my way, yeah. I
think everybody has to find their way. But tomorrow on
Twitter I’m going to change that for the day, or two days
maybe. I spoke her name. I spoke her name at Murdered,
Missing Women Inquiry and keep it like that for a while and
see how I feel along the way.

But for me it’s been -- I’m not big on
Facebook. I never -- I’ve not used -- I don’t use it very
often, but that was -- that’s my thing because people are
kind of really nice on Twitter. Because a lot of people
around the whole world are kind of aware what has happened
here. So I’m always surprised when someone from England or
something sends me a tweet about it or mentions it or
something. So yeah.

I’ll continue to do that. But tomorrow I
will change that context to, “I spoke.” And so that’s my
one way to do it. So everybody has their own.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: I just want to make
sure that we haven’t missed anything before you actually --
if you have anymore recommendations or anything else that
you want to share with Commissioner Audette?
MS. LORI DAVIS: I mean, I’m pretty much done. I’m sitting here way too long. I really basically wanted to speak my sister’s name and let her know that, you know, I’ll continue to speak her name and tell -- well, I’ll speak her name because nobody else is going to. And that she’s not forgotten. Yeah, because she has a son and a daughter. And I have a niece that -- her voice was heard today. So I’m -- no, I’m good. I think everything -- I’m good with that.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you.

Commissioner Audette, do you have any questions or comments?

COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: Merci beaucoup, Maître Big Canoe.

Not really. Question you cover very well, the question I was probably will -- I was going to ask. But you did an amazing -- a bon travail. Merci beaucoup.

But I knew I saw you before. And I’m glad that we found out where it was. And it was my first, first, first day with families. Yeah, a year and a half ago. Yeah, yeah, yeah. September 8th.

MS. LORI DAVIS: Yeah.

COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: Yeah. So, and very humble also. We never know, eh? Who’s going to be sitting with who. And I always believe there’s a reason why, and
it was meant to be. And here I was, receiving your truth and also being able to finally put a face to, not a name, but to a -- in Quebec I educate a lot about missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and survivors. And I always said many years ago, women went to see the Chief for a resolution because one of your sisters from here told me some advocate pushed a lot but the leadership didn’t move that much, and it’s you.

And that for me is very, very, very important because you’re part of the history that I’m sharing in the east. And now I can see a face of the person I was talking about.

So I was impressed by that woman, without knowing that it was you. So I’m very, very humbled that you stood up and pushed for that resolution. Even though if it didn’t go somewhere, you put that seed. You put that seed like many other women across Canada, or men did. So I’m always thankful for people like you. And you’re a mentor.

What is beautiful, also, in this journey, we have a place to put the name of nieces, our cousins, or our sisters. So if we can, we can officially put the right name of your sister, if you want. One day we will give, present a report. Like I said this morning, we’re just a tool to make this happen. And if it’s okay for you, we
could continue the commemoration that you’re doing today for your sister, by putting Carol Ruby Davis -- Davis, in English, and her nation. And impress to here also that you took care of her son.

Our men and boys are so important. They need us, I know that. I know that for a fact. And we’re always nervous to see what happened to the children there. You’re there for him. You were there. That’s huge. Very important.

And not really a question, but do you feel that because the RCMP or the police is calling you to let you know where they’re at, it’s helping a family?

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** It helps me. I think I’m the only one in my family that they really call because I think on -- the only number that’s pretty consistent and hasn’t -- I don’t change my phone number because -- there used to be one RCMP guy that never forgot the case, so he used to phone me on the reg, but I think he’s retired long time ago now.

So there’s been a couple of new ones along the way now. So it’s not -- but they’ve not forgotten.

So at least at some point they do call and let me know that they’ve not forgotten.

And I know there’s nothing they can do about it, but it’s just the fact that they even phone to tell me
that they’ve added her to some data that’s new or whatever.

So yeah, no, it’s been an important contact

for me, yeah.

**COMMISSIONER AUDETTE:** I noticed that in
Yellowknife, or other places, when the police stay in touch
with the families, or the survivor, it’s -- for the healing
process it’s -- we see a difference, so I -- it’s important
what you’re sharing with us. And merci. Merci beaucoup.

I was trying to find you on Twitter. I
couldn’t find you, so I’ll need your help later.

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** HaidaPrincess.

**COMMISSIONER AUDETTE:** HaidaPrincess? Oh.
I was under Lori Davis. There’s so many Lori Davis.

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** I’m too old to be a
princess anymore, but I’m going to keep it.

**COMMISSIONER AUDETTE:** Okay, okay. Bien.

Merci. Merci beaucoup.

Merci Maître Big Canoe.

(Speaking in Innu language). Thank you, so
much.

**MS. LORI DAVIS:** Howa for letting me speak
my sister’s name and coming before you to do that. Howa.

I’m sorry I’m just a bad speaker. I’m such

a crybaby. I try to get over it.

Howa. Thank you.
MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: If it’s all right, the Commissioner would like to just give you a small gift of seeds. The seeds -- the idea is to give you something new. Something you can plant, something that can grow. It’s just a very small gesture, a gift to reciprocate for you sharing your story with us. And yeah, just, if -- yeah. And then when you get the seeds, you’ll know which kind they are. And if you want, you can plant them and see if something new does grow.

MS. LORI DAVIS: They’re seeds?

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: They’re seeds, yeah.

MS. LORI DAVIS: Oh.

COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: You can grow them, and then you send me a picture.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: You put the picture on Twitter.

(SHORT PAUSE)

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: If we can adjourn for lunch. I’d ask that we adjourn for lunch. I believe we’re scheduled to come back at 1:50.

COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: Okay.

MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you.

--- Exhibits (code: P01P15P0106)

Exhibit 1: Single digital image displayed during the public testimony of Lori Davis.
Exhibit 2: Francesbula.com article “Carol Ruby Davis: A heartbreaking death, 30 years ago now” by Frances Bula, published July 6, 2017.

--- Upon adjourning at 12:47
LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST’S CERTIFICATE

I, Marie Rainville, Court Transcriber, hereby certify that
I have transcribed the foregoing and it is a true and
accurate transcript of the digital audio provided in this
matter.

_______________________________
Marie Rainville

Marie Rainville
April 10, 2018