

**Joy Muehlenbeck and Jerry Elsinga- Interview by Jean Osmond
October 4, 2018**

0:02 JO: I am Jean Osmond, and I am here today to interview Joy and Jerry Muehlenbeck. And we are at the Old School House. It is Thursday October the 4th, and 19, sorry. 2018. I'd better get my dates correct here. And this oral history is selected as part of the Stories of Summer Project, which is supported in part by a grant from the National Endowment for Humanities Common Heritage Program. And I thank both of you for coming here to talk to me today.

0:37 JM: Welcome.

0:37 JE: Did you want my last name?

0:38 JO: I should have all, I should apologize here. I've known both Joy and Jerry as Muehlenbecks, but it's still Joy Muehlenbeck, but it is Jury Muehlenbeck and she's going to say it for us right now and spell it

0:53 JE: Elsinga.

0:54 JO: Ok. And spell Elsinga for me please.

0:56 JE: E-L-I-S-I-N-G-A

1:00 JO: mm hm. And Joy would you spell Muehlenbeck too, because that's, uh, kind of a toughie name

1:04 JM: [laugh] True. M-U-E-H-L-E-N-B-E-C-K

1:13 JO: Ok. And here we've got the two of them and they are going to share their information as to what they remember when they came here and when you both came up from the Chicago area, correct?

1:25 JM: yes

1:25 JE: yes

1:25 JM: Our parents bought, um, home in, uh, in this area. Actually it was on, at that time it was called Hooter Road, but, um, it's now 66th street.

1:39 JO: Hooter was a better name [laugh]

1:39 JM: [laugh]

1:40 JM: And they bought it in 1945. But we didn't move until 1955. Um, Dad was working, we were all living in Chicago. My dad was working in Chicago. He was working for Oscar Meyer as a driver, and they knew he had property in Michigan, and so they offered him the opportunity to move and continue working for Oscar Meyer. So he would meet, um a loaded truck, a full truck of meats in the morning, south of here, and he'd take the full truck and deliver to south western Michigan, and then he would return the empty truck the next morning for the full truck. And that's the way it worked for several years. Later on he decided he wanted to again unite with some union job and so, he um, found another job in Chicago and um, came out on the weekends. At that time, uh, a train ran out of Chicago to Fennville. Stopped in Fennville. So we'd pick him up from the depot and return him on Sunday night, and he would go back to work, and we could continue living here.

2:53 JO: Oh

2:54 JM: So we lived in the area, had home in the area since 45, came up weekends, shoo the mice out of the house

3:00 JE: [laugh]

3:01 JM: And, and then we moved in 55. And and at time I had already graduated, I had just graduated from Chicago High School in 55, but Jerry was to have gone in the second half in the seventh grade in Chicago. They did A and B, and she would have gone into the second half, uh, but not having that arrangement here in Douglas, um, maybe, I don't know if they gave her a test or not but, I think they took a chance on her being able to handle eighth grade and so.

3:37 JO: All they had to do Joy was just look at her and say she's an eighth grader, and for this, this was just Joy speaking, but now we're going to have Jerry, and you'll be able to tell the differences in their voices as to who's who. That was Joy, and now Jerry, what is your reaction to this?

3:52 JE: [pause]. Well. We lived on Hooter road like she said. 66th Street, and I remember coming out here, and the first thing, especially if it was in the winter my dad always had Glog on hand.

4:13 JO: What is Gluck?

4:15 JE: Glog is a wine—

4:18 JO: G-L-O-G! Oh!

4:23 JE: Glog. Yes

4:23 JO: Ok

4:23 **JE:** So we could warm u

4:25 **JO:** uh huh

4:26 **JE:** Because we did not have heat on. It was a summer home, so if we came out in the winter that was the way we warmed up quick

4:35 **JO:** [laugh]

4:37 **JE:** And I'm surprised Joy remembered that. Or if she did she wouldn't say

4:40 **JM:** Oh I didn't I didn't know if we wanted to talk about our drinking on this

4:44 **JE:** [laugh]

4:44 **JO:** [laugh]

4:45 **JM:** On the, on this program. That was the thing, so.

4:51 **JE:** Oh, but it was fun. It was, uh, an old fashioned house that, um, we had to go outside for our water, a pump

5:00 **JO:** Oo.

5:00 **JE:** And we had an outhouse. And for a while we had an outhouse.

5:05 **JO:** One seater or two seater?

5:07 **JM:** I think it was a one seater [laugh]

5:07 **JE:** One seater. Yes. But, the first tornado, which we did not know was a real tornado, that hit, and my aunt was out here for that specific weekend. I remember I was, oh gosh. If I was 8, 9, 10. I'm not sure. But it was horrendous wind outside. And my aunt and I had used the, john

5:43 **JO:** [laugh]

5:44 **JE:** And we went out there with our head down because the wind was so horrendous. And when we lifted our head up, we did not have a potty.

5:56 **JO:** [gasp] it blew away

5:57 **JE:** and we couldn't find it

6:00 JO: [laugh]

6:00 JE: So that's a story that I'll never forget. [laugh] So. It was a very scary evening. But it was worse when you couldn't even go potty.

6:16 JM: Yeah, but you remember when you came back into the house just in tears "Oh the toilet blew away," and our dad said "Well the hole was there, wasn't it?"

6:28 JO: [laugh]

6:30 JE: That's right. That's right. Yeah.

6:32 JM: He said

6:32 JO: Your dad is practical [laugh]

6:34 JM: The other thing about that old outhouse, uh, since you're talking about it was, um, my mom would send us out sometimes to throw some leftover food, and she'd normally throw in the garbage, and she'd say "Throw it down the hole, and don't lose the spoon!" She

6:52 JO: [laugh]

6:53 JM: was always the last thing she'd say to me. And I remember one time going out there, and dog gone it I was holding the spoon tightly and slightly, and what happened was I lost the bowl.

7:05 JO: But she didn't tell you not to lose the bowl.

7:07 JM: No.

7:08 JO: [laugh]

7:10 JE: And a follow up on the houses. My father lived, uh, where would you call that area?

7:17 JM: That was the Hamilton or the new, east Saugatuck area before you go into Hamilton, yeah.

7:23 JE: And he had three pole barns

7:26 JM: uh, 138

7:26 JE: Yeah.

7:26 JO: Oo

7:26 JE: And he obv, he always slept in his, um, what was it, a trailer. And um

7:36 JM: Camper

7:37 JE: Camper and trailer, yeah. And one day he had that fixed up. I mean this was an outhouse. Three holes

7:48 JO: Oo

7:48 JE: And he had uh, a sink. But of course no running water. So it was just a sink, and he decorated it and it was all. So, I remember using it one time. And I opened the door. I sat down and, closing the door I sat down, and all of a sudden this statue--- w--- what'd you call it?

8:15 JM: He called it the kilroy

8:18 JE: Kilroy.

8:19 JM: It was a dummy.

8:19 JO: [laugh]

8:19 JE: In the corner of that outhouse. Inside

8:24 JO: Oh my.

8:25 JE: Oh. I'll tell you, I, I did not like Kilroy. No. Uh uh. Kilroy was not my favorite. So anyway. That's the story of that. But then all of a sudden, one time he did not have his truck, the brake on correctly or something like that. And before he knew it, it backed up and it took out his outhouse.

8:52 JO: Three seater, huh? And Kilroy?

8:54 JE: And Kilroy [laugh]

8:55 JO: [laugh]

8:57 JM: But, knowing my dad his simple re, response to that was just to hang a sign on it said "Out of order"

9:05 JO: [laugh] I know where you two grew a sense of humor.

9:10 JM: He was funny

9:12 JO: That's

9:13 JE: He was funny

9:13 JO: So happened all the time before you lived up here permanently then.

9:17 JM: No, that, uh, when we, uh, in 55 when we moved uh, uh, actually we, then the house was sold in uh, 69. Then he had his own place. He left the place on Hooter Road when our mother had died. And, uh, so then they had lived in the camper which he had moved onto property, his own property three buildings. And that was on, uh, 38th, where she's talking the, the outhouse. We had two outhouses. The outhouse where we lived when we first moved, and then later on when dad lived alone, he moved to property where, um, had had an outhouse there too.

10:00 JE: Now. I might have to correct you on one thing.

10:04 JM: One thing only.

10:05 JE: One thing. All right. Kilroy belonged in Chicago.

10:12 JM: Yeah, but I didn't

10:12 JE: Where he had his bar in Chicago

10:15 JM: I think he moved it

10:17 JE: Yeah. It was a woman, in the, in the one on the other one.

10:20 JM: Oh. It wasn't Kilroy.

10:23 JE: No, it was, had a, woman

10:24 JM: It, it was a dummy of a sort

10:25 JO: [laugh]

10:26 JE: In the corner. There. And we finally said "You have to dress her, you know?" But in Chicago he had a bar.

10:38 JM: And that's where he had Kilroy

10:40 JE: And Kilroy was this mannequin dressed in a tux.

10:45 JO: Oh my word

10:48 JE: I was only what, 5, 3, 4, 5 years old. And I was terrified of Kilroy. He would take Kilroy and tie it to the front of his car and go through Chicago wherever he had to go.

11:06 JO: [laugh]

11:07 JE: And Kilroy was lying on top his

11:08 JO: On the trunk? I mean

11:09 JE: On the hood

11:09 JO: On the hood.

11:10 JE: On the side

11:11 JO: Oh my

11:13 JE: And the, then, you know, my mom said to my dad "Never, ever have Kilroy around when Jerry comes cause she's terrified of Kilroy." He forgot or, my, my mom came in surprisingly, I don't know what it was, but I opened the bathroom door and there sat Kilroy on my toilet

11:36 JO: [laugh]

11:38 JE: And I'll never forget that. Never

11:43 JM: The, the reason that um that our parents came up into this area was the fact that, um our mom had been born in a southern Illinois town. And after, um, her parents were no longer living. Um, at age 16, she went to Chicago to get employment. And uh, found that a bakery, a local bakery was advertising for a worker. So she applied there and she was going to work the counter within this bakery, um, and when they got to know her and like her and so on, they said "Rather than being a clerk for us, would you consider being a nanny?" They had some young children.

12:22 JO: Oh.

12:24 JM: So. She accepted that, that responsibility and that became like a family to her, being as young as she was. And then after this particular bakery family, um, retired, they bought property out here first. And it's now the art barn on Wiley

12:43 JO: Oh

12:44 JM: But it had been the Wanzung home and that's

12:48 JO: Spell Wanzung for us

12:48 JM: Uh, W-A-N-Z-U-N-G. Wanzung. And then, um, so then my parents would come to that, that introduced them to this community. And my dad was a city man who loved the country. My mom was a country girl who really preferred the city

13:08 JO: [laugh]

13:09 JM: But we got here.

13:09 JO: You got here. Well I'm glad you did.

13:11 JM: Yeah

13:13 JO: But now, Joy, when you said you came here, you had already graduated from high school

13:15 JM: From high school but

13:17 JO: But your sister was half way through her seventh grade year. But they put her into eighth grade here. This was a shock for you, wasn't it Jerry? Coming from a city like Chicago High School to this school house?

13:30 JE: You have no idea

13:31 JO: K. Tell us what you thought when you first walked into this building, or didn't want to walk into it.

13:38 JE: Well, we had seventh and eighth grade in the upper right hand corner

13:44 JO: So that'd be the room where we are right now.

13:46 JE: Exactly

13:47 JO: Ok. Where the Michigan Dunes Collection is.

13:48 JE: mm hm. And, um, there were 2 girls and 4 boys in eighth grade. K. Plus we had sixth and seventh grade also in the same. Mm hm. Ok. And, it was very difficult. Very difficult to come out of a school of, of two thousand, right Joy?

14:13 JM: A large public school you know

14:16 JE: Large. And I was so involved in tumbling, and I loved the gymnastics. And all of a sudden I'm plunked into this

14:27 JO: [laugh]

14:28 JE: and I say plunked. I didn't know how to react. I was just very quiet I think. And then Ty Hackme

14:43 JO: I remember that name. Ty Hackme. Mm hm.

14:46 JE: And I wore double, what do you call, gian-um, my hair was up in double

14:53 JO: Braids

14:54 JE: Braids

14:54 JO: Oh

14:55 JE: Or, yeah. And he sat behind me and he clung them

14:59 JO: [laugh]

14:59 JE: So

15:01 JO: So what kind of seats did you have that he could be so close to you? Didn't he have a desk in between or he couldn't have leaned over couldn't he?

15:06 JE: I'm trying to think. I'm trying to remember

15:09 JM: Were they etched, I don't I don't quite know

15:12 JE: I, yeah

15:14 JM: I have some real old school sets at home, and the, was like attached

15:18 JO: yeah.

15:20 JM: The front was attached to the back

15:20 JE: was attached to the back, uh huh

15:21 JM: And it looked like a train type thing, but I'm not sure what you

15:22 JE: Yes

15:23 JO: Yeah

15:24 JM: had if you had tables and chairs or

15:27 JE: No, I think it was that, that style, I think, but he just, he was was trying to always get my attention

15:37 JO: [laugh]

15:37 JE: And later, as I grew a little older, I dated the guy because he took me roller skating at the old Pavilion.

15:46 JO: Oh, so you remember that then too?

15:48 JE: Yeah. Yes

15:49 JO: Ok then, well tell me about that, and then we'll come back to the school here and how you grew up and what else was here.

15:55 JE: Yes

15:55 JO: Ok, then tell about the Pavilion, what it was like going there.

15:58 JE: Oh it was awesome to, to, to not only see that building, but to, uh, there was a movie theater to the left of it.

16:12 JO: Mm kay. How did you get in the building? Tell us that.

16:14 JE: Well

16:15 JO: How did you get into the Pavillion? Do you remember that Joy?

16:17 JM: Well the movie theater was on ground level. As I remember, I never, I never was in the, the dance area or roller skating area. And, and I think that was like at a second level

16:30 JO: yeah

16:31 JM: I think it was from the movie, or else the movie, or the theater was to the side of it. I'm not sure just how that worked

16:38 JE: I think there were two steps up into it

16:41 JM: Could have been

16:42 JE: Two steps. No more than three. But when you went in, it had been of course a big dance hall

16:52 JO: Mmhm. That's what I head

16:53 JE: And, um, of course at that time, young children weren't allowed in there, but when it became a roller rink, then that's when he taught me how to roller rink

17:09 JM: skate

17:09 JE: skate.

17:10 JM: [laugh]

17:10 JE: in the rink. But because, of course, oh he was great at it. Oh my gosh. He could just swing around that place like no tomorrow, and I'm on there just fumbling

17:20 JO: [laugh]

17:22 JE: Because I didn't know how. And, but he taught me how to roller skate, and uh

17:29 JO: Did you forgive him then for pulling your braids?

17:32 JE: At that point yes

17:33 JO: Ok. [laugh]

17:35 JM: He was a very interesting young man. He called the house one time when I answered the phone. And he identified himself as Ty, and he was "I, I wonder if I could come over and see Jerry." So I said, "Sure, you know. Come on" and he said "I'll run right over." When most people say "I'll run right over," they mean, you know, get in the car and drive, but he didn't come, and he didn't come, and he didn't come. He actually had run over. And we were probably three miles, four miles.

18:03 JE: Oh yeah.

18:04 JM: From the, from Douglas, but he, he, um

18:07 JE: yes

18:08 JM: Ran over. There was one other thing when we were picking up on that theater. They changed their film every night.

18:12 JO: Oh really?

18:13 JM: Yes. So you could have a different movie. And my mother loved to do movies. So she and I would do the movies. Oh, um

18:21 JO: How much was it to go to the movie?

18:23 JM: Um, I can't remember, but it was very, I mean, uh

18:25 JE: fifty cents?

18:28 JM: I remember, uh, Jane Vends (?) telling me what it cost to dance, but I don't remember what I got, ten cents,

18:32 JO: laugh

18:32 JE: [laugh]

18:34 JM: I don't remember

18:35 JE: It could have been ten cents.

18:38 JM: to get in there, but it was very inexpensive, but, um, I could drive. My dad left the car for us so we could have it during the summer. I could drive. I was fearful of crossing on the bridge. Crossing the bridge. So, what we, my mother and I, would do is park in Douglas, and we'd walk across and walk down to the film. Well that worked fine until one night when we were ready to return, it was pouring. It was a terrible, terrible storm. And we had to walk through that storm and across the bridge

19:11 JO: Cross the bridge. Oh.

19:12 JM: And, and she, I remember her saying, "I really believe, I really believe you could cross this bridge with the car. I think you could." I kind of did it from then on

19:24 JO: You drove over

19:24 JM: Drove to Saugatuck [laugh]

19:27 JE: Boy. I must have been, I don't remember that

19:28 JM: No, you weren't with us

19:30 JE: I must

19:32 JM: I don't know why, but [laugh], maybe it was an x rated film and you were too young.

19:36 JE: That could be

19:37 JO: Maybe, they didn't show X rated films

19:40 JM: [laugh] Well, I can't remember, but could be.

19:44 JE: But it was a beautiful area, and then, when I was old enough, and I, uh, all those boats that were out, out there and you know

19:54 JO: Oh in the

19:56 JE: And they were two and three and they were huge boats. I shouldn't even say boats. They were huge. They came from Chicago. Yachts!

20:01 JO: Yachts! The, the wealthy and

20:02 JE: the wealthy yachts. And oh, it was fun to walk on that board walk.

20:08 JO: Right outside of the Inn?

20:10 JE: Yes

20:11 JO: Ok. I've seen picture of it.

20:12 JE: Yes. The Pavilion was my stomping ground when I was old enough. I loved that place.

20:19 JO: Ok. So you would go roller skating there. You could go to a movie there. What else what other activities did they have there, do you remember?

20:25 JM: They had a bar too, I remember that was

20:27 JE: Oh yeah. Downstairs.

20:29 JM: uh, being in the, being in the

20:30 JE: right that was Red Skeller

20:32 JO: Red Skeller, ok. I remember that, yeah.

20:33 JE: That's where the dancing was, and the bar. And um

20:40 JM: I don't know if the Red Skeller was in the, um, big Pavilion. Or if that was in Coral Gables. I think

20:47 JE: Oh

20:49 JM: Coral Gables.

20:51 JO: Didn't you get to the Red Skellar by going outside and then going kind of down.

20:54 JE: Down. Mm hm

20:56 JO: That's what I always heard, but I could be wrong. I don't know.

20:58 JE: Boy I'm not sure now. Joy

20:59 JM: I thought it was at, I thought it was at Coral Gables but

21:01 JE: I think when the yachts were here

21:04 JM: I remember being um, I had gone to um, uh, Western Michigan University and, um, during May, uh, 1960, was the blaze which took down the Pavilion.

21:17 JE: Yes

21:18 JM: So I was

21:19 JE: It was early in May wasn't it?

21:20 JM: Yes, in May.

21:21 JE: Mm, yeah. May 6

21:22 JM: I was home

21:24 JE: I remember that cause I cried. I was out of school, and I, I saw it go down. And oh, yeah

21:32 JM: Yeah. When Jerry was, um, uh, here, at, um, the Union School I was, um, pursuing teacher training. I had been enrolled in the Chicago Teacher's College in Illinois, and of course when we moved I wanted to move with the family. And I was told of a program, it was called Allegan County

21:54 JE: Yes. I remember

21:55 JM: And, it had been in Allegan, the city of Allegan, for forty-nine years, and for its fiftieth year it was moving to Saugatuck

22:03 JO: Oh really?

22:04 JM: And it was located in one of the rooms off the, um, high school, which at the time was where those condos are now.

22:13 JO: Up on the hill

22:13 JM: On the hill. On Allegan Street and Elizabeth. Right was there. And we had a room in that, in that school. And that was convenient because we could do our student teaching right in the building

22:26 JO: Oh, in Saugatuck

22:27 JM: Right there, and um, um, and we only had a one-year program, and we were expected then to teach in, to teach in a one room school or two room school within the county. And, uh, Ottawa county did not have a normal school, so there were Holland people that came to Saugatuck to be part of that normal school. And you talked before, was there a difference between the Chicago schools, remember I had graduated from a Chicago High school and

23:01 JO: How many were in your graduating class?

23:01 JM: it was

23:02 JO: A thousand

23:04 JM: It was you know like, I never knew how to spell principal, and now I was one. You know?

23:08 JO: [laugh]

23:08 JM: yeah. Well. It was like, what is a one room school? What is a two room school? Kind of thing. And, um, at the time I had um, a job waitressing at a place called Simmons' of Saugatuck. It was on Butler Street in Saugatuck, and it's where Glick is now. And I worked for Dorothy Simmons. And, uh, the operation was breakfast til two o'clock. Eight to two. Then we closed. And then we reopened at five, and were open from five to eight. Don't like that split shift because you could hardly get to the beach and do anything, and then you had to be back to work, and um, I know that, um, a number of our customers, um, were from Castle Park and so on,

23:57 JO Oh yes

23:57 JM: Which was kind of an elite area

23:58 JO: Yes, it was

23:58 JM: Um, on the southwest side of the city. And they would come down for dinner. I remember that. Um, I remember working with, um, um, oh, twin women who one of whom dated um, Green, um, what did we say his first name was? Not Robert, but his brother.

24:19 JE: Um, Marshall

24:20 JM: Marshall. Marshall Green dated one of these women. So wanting the women to finish up quickly at night so he'd come and he'd help us.

24:28 [phone ringing]

24:30 JM: He'd come and help us clean up you know. And so, he would move the chairs all around, you know, the whole bit. That, but, I was with Simmons' of Saugatuck. I worked with, uh, Gala Davis

24:45 JO: Gala Davis

24:46 JM: Davis, and she was from the Davis family. Some of whom own Chicken as you like it of Saugatuck. That was her uncle I think.

24:55 JO: W—and where was that located?

24:56 JM: At, um, it was also right down town. And I, um, think it was, I don't know if it was on Butler for sure. I think it was, but I'm not sure which of the buildings because it was kind of closed at the time that I got involved in the area, but, um, I was telling Gala, one of the Davis' three children, I was going to start teaching the next day

25:20 JO: [laugh]

25:20 JM: And, um, and I said "I'm kind of nervous about it, you know" and Gala said "Hey. Mother's been teaching for years. I live right in Saugatuck." She said. "Come on up, and uh, meet my mom." So um, that's when I met Edna Davis. Edna Navit (?) Davis. And they had the big house across from All Saints Episcopal Church. Across Grand

25:42 JO: Ok.

25:42 JM: So their, their house was on the corner of Grand and Hoffman. It's a beautiful place now, owned by somebody who has gorgeous landscaping and they, anyway, after their death then their son Dave lived there before he sold it. But, and I bought my house, where I've lived since 1970, from the Davis'

26:06 JO: From the Davis'?

26:06 JM: Yes

26:07 JO: Oh, my word, what a big circle

26:08 JM: Yeah, they, from the Davis'. So it was really quite nice. And I remember that little tea room which the Simmons' of Saugatuck was

26:18 JO: Work until two, and then had a break from five to eight, right?

26:20 JM: Yes, yes, at the restaurant, and I remember we were told never tell a customer we don't have a cold cereal they might ask for. Whatever they ask for, we have it. Then I had to go out the back way, go around to a grocery store in town, and understand that's where Pumpernickels now stands.

26:40 JO: Oh.

26:41 JM: And buy that. And buy cereal

26:42 JO: And buy that cereal?

26:43 JM: And come back and go through the restaurant and serve it like

26:48 JO: [laugh] Of course we have it.

26:50 JM: Well then after a while we had a shelf full of cold cereal, and Mrs. Simmons' would say "Now we have enough choice here, you know." She'd get after the young man that did dishes because he was always soaked, you know. His shirt, his clothing, and she didn't like him looking that, even if he was in the kitchen, and she got on his back about it. So then he got a plastic apron, and he got around with his shoes going [squishing noises]

27:16 JO: [laugh]

27:16 JM: [laugh] all the water was in his shoes.

27:18 JO: What a memory, oh my word. How many, how many people did you serve, or how big a restaurant was it? Were there five tables? Eight tables?

27:28 JM: I don't know. It could have served fifty people or not, I bet it wasn't, I bet it could have served somewhere between, um, thirty and fifty. It was a quaint little restaurant. It was a popular restaurant, and it couldn't, just a lot of fun working for, uh, for Mrs. Simmons. And, uh, um, while we're on Butler Street, unless you'd like to move us off that street.

27:56 JO: Oh, no. Let's stay on Butler Street

27:57 JM: Walking around Butler Street, um, I liked to say a word for the Oosting (?) family. Now Oosting's was a furniture and appliance store. They, um, in the beginning when we first moved they were only on the east side of Butler. And then they bought what again is the Glick building. They were in there sort of on both sides of that. And just yesterday I had Bob Oosting visit my home about a chair that I'd bought from him. And I pulled out a file, a paper manila file, with Oosting's on it. And he said "You have a file?" and I said "Bob, we bought our first appliances from you, my family, in the fifties. Colored TV had just come out"

28:44 JO: Oh my word

28:44 JM: And you know people didn't buy a television the basis of the technology of it. They bought it as a piece of furniture. So, because it was. It was always in casing

28:56 JO: Casing yeah.

28:56 JM: A beautiful

28:58 JO: That's right

28:58 JM: And you could choose oak or maple or whatever. And I remember, buying for my parents this very lovely, um, TV. Uh, it was a color television from Bob Oosting. And I said to him yesterday "Bob, I thought that when you'd sold the store this past year, that you had taken off to parts unknown." But the truth of it is, behind those uh three or four stores that are being, that have been remodeled on his, on the east side of Butler there is um, a store in the back that's not accessed from Butler.

29:38 JO: From the front

29:38 JM: Go, just a little alleyway back, then you go in, and he's sharing, he will be sharing with a woman that's going to, uh do what they call staging

29:50 JO: Oh yes

29:51 JM: By, uh home, you know make it look nice, and Bob's going to do appliances there. So, uh, so he's still operating from from Saugatuck and, um, but he was impressed, and I said "well, you are a fixture in this town. You're family." They must have started that business in the forties maybe

30:10 JO: Because they were here before you came.

30:11 JM: Yes. And, and after his parents died, then he and his sister, uh, operated it, and then after she, after her death, and now Bob has kind off being going, you know, solo on it but I thought for sure he had um, he had uh

30:29 JO: Said enough

30:29 JM: Left the area. You know. Yeah

30:32 JO: Well that's neat. Spell Oostings for us

30:35 JM: O-o-s-t-i-n-g. You know. That. We were the first family of our immediate grandparent and so to, to move this way out of Chicago. But then our grandparents moved in the Fennville area, and Grandpa Fred Muehlenbeck was a custodian at Fennville Schools

30:55 JO: That's right!

30:56 JM: Yes

30:56 JO: I remember him

30:58 JM: Yes. And he, and he was just the kind of guy that if he saw a child without mittens or a hat or whatever

31:05 JO: Yup, he

31:05 JM: He'd go home with the story, and then he got grandmother involved, and you know the whole bit and

31:10 JO: That's right

31:11 JM: And then my aunt and uncle moved, um. My aunt's name was Lorraine Milnky (?). And she, um, had a sewing room. She altered the clothing from the different stores, wherever they sold men's usually men's trousers, men's pants. They would call her and let her know they were sending up a customer, would she measure and sew. So she did all the alterations. And she lived just a little bit east of me, so she was on the corner of Elizabeth, where the high school is. Elizabeth and, uh, Hoffman. Right on that corner that now is an entrance to the high school parking lot. Yeah.

31:54 JO: And then you would go to the left or go north to the high school now

31:56 JM: Yeah, yeah. She was south, south of the actual building. And she was there, and um, on neither my mother nor she drove, ever drove. Because in Chicago you didn't have to.

32:08 JO: You didn't need to.

32:09 JM: You had public transportation, the subway, you had the bus you know but. So, my aunt became a part of a small group of seniors who thought wouldn't it be cool if we could have some sort of transportation in this community. So they, um, they went to Allegan, and they did

all the petitioning and everything they had to do on behalf of the people here, and in 1980, the inner urban started running. And, uh, I know that you probably interview Phyllis Ike (?) who's the director there. Um, but I think she can tell that, in the beginning it was just a godsend to the people who couldn't drive, maybe because they were elderly, maybe because they were disabled in some way, but today just so many people. I mean it's only fifty cents for a senior to ride it, you know?

33:03 JO: [laugh] you can't beat that can you? And I've seen it out here on Blue Star and so on

33:07 JM: And, and they have a lift. So you tell them when you call the bus, "I would like the lift" and I mean, you have to be in a chair or on a walker, but they have a platform that just comes right down. And you just walk right onto it and get into the bus. And um, I'm working with Phyllis right now to get an arrangement for chamber music because the problem with our patrons is parking.

33:35 JO: That's right

33:36 JM: They get into Saugatuck

33:37 JO: there's no place

33:37 JM: And they can't find parking. So I'm trying to work out a plan whereby they would go to the high school at 7pm, there would be a bus that would take them down to the women's club.

33:45 JO: That sounds good

33:46 JM: And then at 10 pick them up. Take them back to their cars. And um, so Phillis says she doesn't know why that won't work on a Friday. Cause they provide the services anyway on Friday. If we were to do it on Thursday, which is another night of the concerts, um, we'd have to pay for the driver's time, you know, but even so.

34:06 JO: Well good luck with that.

34:06 JM: Yeah

34:07 JO: And speaking of transportation, Jerry, when you first came here to this building, how did you get here? Did your dad drive you? Joy could probably drive then? How did you get to

34:19 JM: I didn't go across the bridge, remember?

34:21 JO: Oh, right. That's right. You didn't have to because you lived there.

34:24 JE: How did I

34:24 JM: [laugh]

34:25 JO: How did you get here? Cause you lived that way. South of town

34:28 JE: On Hooter Road

34:29 JO: On Hooter Road. But how did you get here? I'm sure you didn't walk.

34:33 JM: You went on the bus.

34:34 JO: Oh did the school have the bus?

34:34 JE: There was a bus

34:34 JM: Yeah

34:35 JO: Saugatuck/ Douglas School bus?

34:36 JM: Yeah

34:37 JE: Probably. Ok.

34:39 JM: Yeah

34:40 JO: So it would pick you up.

34:41 JE: yeah

34:42 JO: Now did the front of the building look like it does now?

34:46 JE: Oh no.

34:46 JO: Tell us. What was different?

34:47 JE: It just looked old

34:49 JO: [laugh] you mean now it does, now it looks young?

34:52 JE: Well it's had a renewal

34:56 JO: Well now, when you walked in the front doors and you said that you were in the building which we are right now. Just upstairs on the right hand side as you face the building. How did you get up here? Were there stairs in the center like there are now? Were there

divided stairs? Where were the bathrooms? We talked about bathrooms before. Did you have a fire escape? I can remember I had a fire escape that looked like a big smoke stack. You'd slide down and use wax paper to make it more slippery. How did you do that? Do you remember Jerry?

35:24 JE: Well you took the photos, right?

35:25 JM: Yeah. But you had, wasn't there a long stairway when

35:29 JE: Yeah

35:29 JM: When you first walked in?

35:30 JE: Yes

35:30 JM: I, there was a stair way. Yeah

35:42 JE: Yeah.

35:34 JO: In the middle then? Right out the doors? When you walked in the doors you walked right up?

35:37 JM: I think it was

35:38 JE: Yeah. That's going back

35:39 JM: I wasn't here very many times, um, and I think there was there too

35:42 JE: Yeah. There were stairs. And, uh, I must have gotten here by bus because my mom didn't drive. My dad was in Chicago, so I didn't walk it

35:52 JM: Yeah. I'm trying to think, probably my recall on the bus deals more with when you were picked up to go to Fennville High School, but you still had to have a, must have had a bus to get here because I know that I didn't provide that particular, uh

36:07 JE: And I don't think Ty ran

36:08 JO: No I don't think he would carry you on his back like [laugh]

36:12 JE: [laugh]

36:12 JM: [laugh] I don't think so

36:16 JO: What about the bathrooms here? Were there bathrooms? Indoor bathrooms or did you have outdoor privies?

36:20 JE: No, we had indoor

36:22 JO: And so it was much more

36:23 JE: Yeah

36:23 JO: Up to date. OK

36:24 JE: yeah. Yeah. Um, but there was just, it, it was such a change from coming from 2,000-1500, probably school in Chicago, and then out here to a school with 6,7,8th grade in it. It, it was, it was quite a shock.

36:49 JM: Didn't you have trouble with your lunch disappearing for a while?

36:52 JE: Yeah. I think it was Ty Hackney again

36:54 JO: [laugh]

36:55 JM: I think it was a dog.

36:56 JE: That could be too. But I re- I remember that I would, um, well I would get to school somehow. So it had to have been a bus because nobody else could bring me. But, um, I'm trying to think. I lost track of what I was going to say

37:15 JO: Well you had the lunch, you had to bring your lunch. They didn't have hot lunches here.

37:18 JE: No. No. Absolutely not. We had to bring our lunch and

37:22 JO: And if your lunch were still there at noon did you eat it in the room, at your desk or go outside depending on weather or what?

37:28 JE: Right. Outside if it was, you know

37:31 JO: Nice

37:32 JE: Nice. Otherwise yeah. We had no other choice except to eat it, you know, in the classroom.

37:42 JO: Where did you store your lunch when you came in? Was there a shelf or something where you'd put it? And that's where yours disappeared?

37:46 JE: That's all I remember.

37:48 JO: What did you do when you didn't have a lunch?

37:48 JM: I remember your crying about your lunch, but I thought a dog had come into the building and taken it. [laugh] Maybe I'm wrong

37:56 JE: Well, I also cried I know when, first day I came home and said "He pulled my pig tails. I don't want to go back there. I, nuh uh. This was not for me." Not when someone could just, you know, like they're milking a cow. I remember that. I got used to it, obviously, and um graduated.

38:23 JO: Ok. What age was graduation. Well wait no. Before we get to graduation. When you were in Chicago you had probably several eighth grade classes. Where you were in a classroom where you had science or math or whatever. But here you just had these few kids, and the teacher couldn't meet with you all the time, could she?

38:42 JE: No.

38:44 JO: Ms. Hevit (?) teach you there?

38:44 JE: Mrs. Ramp (?)

38:45 JO: [gasp] Did she live in Fennville?

38:48 JE: I believe so. She was our teacher.

38:51 JO: What was her first name?

38:52 JE: Uh,

38:54 JO: Wilma?

38:55 JE: Wilma Ramp. Yes. And I, in my photos that I pulled the three teachers. Hathaway, Ramp, uh, there was one other. [pause]. It's in one of those, you know photos that I have here

39:10 JO: In one of those photos. Mrs. Ramp was your teacher?

39:14 JE: mmhm.

39:15 JO: What'd she'd look like?

39:16 JM: [laugh]

39:18 JE: Oh

39:19 JO: Oh dear. Maybe this is dangerous, huh? Was she?

39:22 JE: Tall

39:23 JO: Tall, ok.

39:25 JE: and, and, not thin, but I mean she was,

39:29 JO: She was solid

39:31 JM: Oh solid

39:31 JO: Was she cruel?

39:32 JE: Oh no

39:33 JO: She was a nice lady? Oh good.

39:37 JE: I loved her [laugh]

39:37 JO: Oh that's good. Because if she was mean

39:39 JE: She helped, she helped ease me into such a change.

39:48 JO: So she was very, very compassionate as far as you were concerned?

39:52 JE: And, um, she was a great lady.

39:55 JO: And you didn't feel as if you were missing out on your education? Or did you?

39:57 JE: No. Um. It was a major adjustment. I didn't have a choice, so at twelve years old I just did the best I could as far as adjusting, and, uh, I think I adjusted quite well. Quickly.

40:20 JM: Yeah you did pretty well. You're a pretty well-adjusted person I think. Pretty well. You know

40:20 JE: The first day crying.

40:24 JO: [laugh]

40:26 JE: When I came home that first day I cried. I'm not going back. I remember telling Mom that. I'm not going back

40:34 JO: And what did Mom say?

40:35 JE: Well. Of course Mom says "Oh yes you are." So.

40:41 JO: And don't drop the spoon, right?

40:42 JM: And don't drop the spoon. But you know, then after this, after the school closed, um, you know then apartments were made here, and, um, I have a friend my age [clears throat] excuse me, who lives in Tucson, Arizona. Kay Schreckengust.

41:00 JO: Kay. She worked with us at the Red Wood. Ok.

41:02 JM: Yes. Kay Schreckengust. Now Kay Spencer. And her dad, Nolan, was the person who worked on, on, uh changing this building into apartments.

41:13 JO: That's right

41:13 JM: Yeah

41:14 JO: He. Spell Schreckengust for us.

41:16 JM: S-C-H-R-E-C-K-E-N-G-U-S-T.

41:25 JO: Joy, you are, you are an instructor there.

41:25 JM: And you know she's exactly six months older than I. To the day.

41:30 JO: Really?

41:31 JM: So we mock her about being the older woman. And then I mock her, say, so how's it working. How's it working? Can I make it? Yeah. It's a good six month, you'll make it through. When she celebrated her 80th birthday, six months before I did, uh, she came to Douglas, and she had out at the family home of Karen Schreckengust who, um, has since died, but she and her nieces were there in Douglas, well, it's really the Fennville address area. But anyway, um, the whole theme was *The Wizard of Oz*. And the food, everything was thematically arranged. Remember that, Jerry?

42:13 JE: yeah

42:14 JM: It was a beautiful, a beautiful you know. Everything was perfect. And then what happened, but we got tornado warnings. I mean, could that have been anymore perfect?

42:26 JO: Oh no, that's right.

42:28 JM: Oh my gosh, you know. But, um, the nieces

42:30 JO: Did you have Toto with you?

42:31 JM: [laugh] yeah. We had red shoes and the whole thing. Til one of her nieces, Dawn, who was an EMT, and had gotten notice that you know, that this was in the area. It did strike in the area. Um, it wasn't a full-fledged tornado, but it was a heavy, you know, a real heavy, heavy wind. And I don't know if it was to the degree that it was labelled that, but we were down in the basement and we couldn't believe,

42:59 JO: here we are for this party and

43:00 JM: And someone said that I believe that, uh, I'd like to know who her party planner was, you know.

43:10 JO: [laugh]

43:10 JE: Well that could have been your birthday party too

43:11 JO: Yes, exactly

43:15 JE: And, I want to bring up my dad. Because when he moved out here, I'm trying to think. When was he a policeman? He worked

43:22 JM: Uh, he worked as a security guard

43:25 JE: as a security guard, right. And he worked out on a boat. Now I'll never forget, when the boat moved away, he went to put his foot on to get on to the dock. And the boat moved and he's straddling the dock and the boat moved. It did, and plunk, he went down

43:45 JM: Yes. He worked for the Allegan County, uh Sheriff's Department Marine Division, and that's when that particular happened. Yeah. Could have been

43:58 JO: That could have been real hairy

43:59 JM: Real dangerous right.

44:01 JO: Where were, where were the boats moored then? That he was going to get out with

44:06 JM: Uh, well now they're at the museum across the, the one that's across the, I don't know if that's where it was. I mean it was on the other, this side of the river and time

44:16 JO: On this side

44:16 JM: But, yeah, I think right next to the, I think, isn't that true when you take the pontoon, don't you see the Sheriff's boat, um, docked by the south side of the museum there

44:26 JE: Oh yeah. By the museum. Right.

44:32 JM: But I, I think it might have been on the other side at that particular time, but, um

44:33 JO: Yeah. Yeah. I think so

44:40 JM: That was, that was a time when um, he, he liked his job very much, and he was always on the water. Sometime he was back in the jail area. And he bragged about being able to get, remember, a haircut and um, oh what else did he get. A haircut and a carwash. For five bucks. And I said, Dad, what did they use to cut your hair? What do you think? They used a knife or a scissors or whatever. They trust these, they're prisoners. He said "Oh, but they've done nothing serious. They got a year behind on alimony or something. You know."

45:20 JE: Oh yeah. My dad was a very very trusting and loving person.

45:28 JO: This was in Allegan County then, where he, where the jail was. Oh my word

45:29 JM: Yeah, but, but, but he, when he went to Allegan County to

45:43 JO: For his hair cut and his car wash. Oh my goodness

45:36 JM: Haircut. Yeah. He was. But I, I remember talking about lunch too when we bought lunch in the school, um, my first school was the Colf school

45:45 JO: Tell us where that is, yes

45:26 JM: And, and that is that was on 58th, which runs between Fennville and Holland. And if you took Old Allegan Road to where it T's at 58, and you look a little to your left, there'd be a little knoll, and that's where the one room school was

46:02 JO: And if you went down from there you could go down into New Richmond, correct?

46:05 JM: Yes. That was a look right, that was a little bit beyond it, but this was

46:05 JO: Ok, little funny road on there, ok, but about the Colf, spell Colf

46:10 JM: C-O-L-F. I think it was after somebody. I was going to look that up someday, but I didn't so, but I think it was named after someone in the, in the community. But, um, I

remember the kids, um, had to carry their own lunch. And, um, they would often share something with me. You know, maybe an apple, maybe a piece of cake of some sort. Uh, and I was impressed that they would care enough about me that they would want to share their food until one day I took, I heard a couple kids talking, and one person said, "Hey if you don't like that give it to Miss Muelenbeck. She eats anything."

46:50 JO: [laugh]

46:53 JE: And she did. (pause) Still does

46:56 JM: But I had, I had one black family in my, in my school. All eight grades and one black family. And I remember when it was so stormy, such a tremendous snow storm that, um, Mr. Hornsby came to school, and he said "Blue Star's been closed." And so you won't be able to get back, um home

47:19 JO: the, the road. Blue Star Highway. Ok.

47:21 JM: The road. Blue star, uh road.

47:23 JO: Now, who is this man? Mr.

47:24 JM: Hornsby. H-O-R-N-S Horns B-Y.

47:29 JO: b-y

47:29 JM: y

47:30 JO: and he was a what

47:31 JM: He was a dad of, uh, of two of the kids

47:34 JO: Of the kids

47:34 JM: Yeah. And he just came to the school because we didn't have a phone. You know. So he came to tell me that, and he also came to invite me to stay at his home. He and his wife had talked about it, and they wanted to house me that evening. And I'll tell you, talk about a gracious family. Uh, the towels had the Cheseapeake, or the Chessy cat on it because he worked for the train company

47:59 JO: Oh! For the train company. Ok.

48:04 JM: [laugh] But it was a delightful, delightful experience, but, they, it was a very strong community at that time, and, uh, a very conservative community. Cause I still remember my very first interview, uh for teaching, and they didn't ask if I knew anything about teaching

reading or about math. They asked two questions. Number one: would I open with devotions every morning? And did I dance?

48:32 JO: Oo

48:33 JM: And I knew what they were asking with the dancing. And I said "Yes, I will open with devotions." So far as dancing I said "No, I don't." But I said "I don't by choice. Um, I know people enjoy it, and that's fine. I simply don't choose to do it. It's an interest that I don't have." But I knew what they were after

48:55 JO: After, that's right

48:55 JE: Yeah.

48:59 JM: But, uh, you know, it's interesting. It's a wonderful community. I was there three years. And every month they had a community dinner, potluck. And my mom would go with me, and the kids would pump her for information. "Does Miss Muehlenbeck do dishes?" Does she do this? I remember my mom saying to them one time, "Oh, I use Joy for my dishes for a long time.

49:24 JO: Oh! [laugh] good pun, good pun. How many kids did you have in your classroom?

49:28 JM: I had about twenty, twenty-three to twenty-five, but that, that was

49:37 JO: In each grade?

49:37 JM: In individual kids. But some of them were families, you know. Two or three might be from one family. I, I don't know if you know Joanne Deyoung. She works at Christian neighbor. She's um, one of the head persons over there, um, and she had been my fifth grader. Uh, so, and then she had a couple of brothers in the program too. For my seventieth birthday, uh, my family gave me a gift of a reunion. So I had the kids come back

50:04 JO: Oh how neat!

50:04 JM: And we stood in the same arrangement as we had for, uh

50:08 JO: For a class picture?

50:08 JM: For it in 56-57, you know. Uh, and some of the guys were sixty-five, and I was seventy. You can tell the age at that point, you know?

50:20 JO: [laugh] now that is neat.

50:22 JM: Yeah. Got that picture hanging. They were a little bit big, but I could bring them. I suppose they could be digitized.

50:28 JO: Oh, I bet. That would be wonderful. Yes. [pause].

50:32 JE: I have to correct myself on the Pavilion vs when the Pavilion, I saw the Pavilion burn down. I was there.

50:42 JO: You were there that day and

50:43 JE: Yes, and but before that, the Pavilion, I wasn't old enough to be, even around, the Pavilion, other than the theater. Mmkay. Other than roller skating or something. But I would walk along and see the yachts and everything. But it was the Rats Kellar that was in the Coral Gables. That. Yes.

51:14 JM: Yes. There was a bar, there was a bar of some sort at the, at the big Pavilion too. I don't even, I don't know what it was called

51:28 JE: Yeah but, yeah, but I wasn't even old enough to be uh, be around.

51:28 JO: It was illegal for. You were, you were not of age.

51:30 JE: Correct, but I did, uh, love to dance, uh. And so I would go to the Rats Kellar when I was old enough, and that was my haunting grounds and, so. But I did, yeah, see the Pavilion burn down and all. Just about broke my heart. I can still you know.

51:52 JM: Yeah, well, Jean Underwood was of course on the other side, and if the wind hadn't changed course it could have burned down everything over there.

51:58 JE: That's right

51:58 JO: Yeah

51:59 JM: yeah. Was living right there

51:59 JE: That was a sad day. And then both Joy and I worked, we worked for, um, for a time at the museum. We had hostess

52:08 JM: Yeah we were, you know, were hostesses at Docen's over there.

52:12 JE: Which was enjoyable

52:14 JM: Yeah.

52:15 JO: That's good, well can we go back to one thing that we didn't, I didn't clarify myself. When you were here you graduated because you were in eighth grade. That was the top one. That was your only year here. And Joy talked about this picture being taken. Did you have a picture taken for graduation here? Or

52:34 JE: No

52:34 JO: No?

52:35 JE: Not that I recall

52:38 JO: How did you, how did you have your graduation? Did you

52:40 JE: We didn't. It was

52:42 JO: It was just, you didn't. At the end of the year, that was it?

52:44 JE: That was it. There was one more year of kids being here.

52:48 JO: being here.

52:49 JE: So I was next to last

52:52 JO: last, but

52:53 JE: But then I went on to Fennville. You know, high school

52:47 JO: But then when you left here as an eighth grader, did they have a picnic at the end of the year? Did, what did they do at the end of the year. I can always remember, they would always have a picnic, and we went out to Allegan County Park and

53:10 JE: No. We didn't do

53:11 JO: Eelle Lake or something like that. You didn't, it just, that was it?

53:13 JE: I don't recall celebrating. When the school year ended everybody went their own way. Do you remember, Joy?

53:21 JM: No. We were just glad you graduated.

53:25 JO: [laugh] Oh come on now, Joy.

53:29 JE: Scratch that from the, yeah. Audio

53:32 JM: No. I don't remember

53:36 JE: I went to Hope College. Now you don't get into Hope College easily if you, you know. So I just want to point that out.

53:42 JO: [laugh] and then you went to Fennville. Now was there a big difference between here and when you went to Fennville?

53:45 JE: Oh yeah.

53:48 JO: Fennville was nothing like Chicago.

53:49 JE: I went to Fennville when it was on the hill

53:52 JO: The old school

53:53 JE: The old school. Ok

53:55 JO: Where the library is now

53:56 JE: Yes

53:58 JO: On Kindle street, or (?) it's called.

53:59 JE: Mm hmm. And that's where I graduated from. Uh. Yeah

54:06 JO: Because Mrs. Ward who used to teach kindergarten here. Didn't she teach kindergarten? I believe, taught sixth grade in Fennville. Mary Ward

54:14 JE: Oh, I remember, yeah.

54:15 JO: But you see, you would not have had her because you were going to be a ninth grader then.

54:18 JE: Right

54:19 JO: And she, I believe, taught sixth grade.

54:22 JE: Exactly. Yeah.

54:23 JO: Mm.

54:24 JM: You know the, um, the, the academic program post, post high school differed from the teachers to, because, um, in the beginning, uh, I'm talking about the end of the fifties when

teachers needed who had gone through, um, the county normal program needed to pursue additional credits, and of course got a degree, um. We didn't go to Western, or to another college necessarily, but a professor would come to us. So we took, uh, area teachers would get together once a week.

55:05 JO: Oh really?

55:06 JM: And the professor would come to us

55:08 JO: All year long, or just for in the summer?

55:10 JM: Yeah, for a semester and I think it continued to a second semester but for a particular period of time, like it would be going on campus. But they came, which made sense because we were all teaching. We were all working, and one person could better travel than all of us go the other way.

55:27 JO: That's right.

55:28 JM: And they would come. And the other value to that was that a concept would be taught, and then we were, um, encouraged to go try it. And so we would do it in our perspective classrooms. We would reassemble the following week and talk about, did it, did that idea work? Why did it work for you and not for me? What were the variables? You know, and that kind of thing. And it was a wonderful, wonderful learning situation. I mean, it was a practice as you could get

56:01 JO: Oh. You couldn't get any more than that.

56:02 JM: No. No. No. Then, of course, a number of us would go during the summer, go to summer school too, but

56:09 JE: one my—

56:09 JO: Because you had, go ahead, Jerry

56:11 JE: Um, I was saying that, when I went to Hope College, I went in to be a teacher, like Joy. My dad said "Be like Joy. Get a teaching. You'll never be out a job." I remember him always saying that to me. Jerry, you got be like. I think I had one semester, and I hated every minute of it.

56:32 JO: [laugh]

56:38 JE: Hated it. And I said I am not fit for this. Truly am not.

56:45 JO: Joy is Joy, and I'm Jerry. Right?

56:46 JE: Yes! And I wanted to go into social work. So badly. So when I continued at Hope College, and I took time off because I had two children, while going to college

57:01 JO: Wow. That's

57:02 JE: And I just, I did. That's what I want to do. And I finished out Hope College. And I started work at, uh, Ottawa County. And I stayed with them for well, 28 years. And the I was able to go out after 30 years in because they were able to pull my two years that I took education. Remember that, Joy? It was in the, and they were lucky they found it, because it was during, they had the fire. They had a fire in the basement of Douglas School.

57:50 JO: Oh

57:51 JE: Years ago. And my papers fortunately were saved. And so they had, they took the two years I was in the teaching arena. I never taught. But I took the—c--- t

58:10 JM: The class, the classes for it. Yeah.

58:11 JE: The classes for it. And they added my 28 years as a social worker and supervisor. I was social worker for two years and then I was a, um, I continued as a, um. Two years as a worker, then the rest I was a supervisor. And I was able to retire with 30 years in with state

58:39 JO: Hallelujah

58:40 JE: employment. So it just worked in my favor, even though I no longer wanted to be in that type of education, as far as teaching. So

58:53 JM: Yeah she's right about our dad because um of course I was, um, six years older, and I got the same lecture, about um, you've got to think about something that's going to always ensure employment. And, in those days, uh, we're talking about teaching, clerical work or secretarial work, or what was the third thing?

59:19 JE: to—er

59:20 JM: Nursing!

59:21 JE: Nursing. Yeah. Nursing.

59:23 JM: There's, well, blood makes me queasy.

59:27 JE: Still does

59:27 JO: [laugh]

59:28 JM: [laugh]

59:29 JE: She couldn't even hold my child when I was hemorrhaging one year.

59:32 JM: yeah she was just giving birth while I , but anyway

59:36 JO: And if one of the students cut his finger, go! Get him out of here! Don't show it to me! Right?

59:45 JM: So, anything, anyway, and then as far as secretarial work goes, you know, we took short hand at that time and typing and I was not very fast at that and stuff, so, I got into teaching. And, uh, I started off with the, um, you know, the one room school, and then I went overseas for a year and then

1:00:06 JO: Oh, I didn't know that. Where'd you go?

1:00:08 JM: Yeah, uh, in France

1:00:10 JO: oh really?

1:00:11 JM: And taught the dependents of Air Force personnel. There were American Air force, and when I came back I was at Holland Public for years

1:00:16 JO: Oh really?

1:00:18 JM: and I

1:00:19 JO: Which building

1:00:20 JM: Um Lincoln. And then Washington. While I, while I was there at Washington, I, there was a teacher that was ready to retire. And she came back from a phone interview one time, and she said, "You know what? That's not for me. They want a younger person that's willing to take these courses, because they're looking for a reading consultant in West Ottawa schools. And I bet that would be a good job for you." She said "I'll go get you an interview." I didn't even have a chance to say maybe I don't want it. And it was joke for two years because I said, "I don't know," her name was Willie. I said "I don't know whether to thank you yet," but I was in West Ottawa as a reading consultant for 24 years, but anyway, what I was going to say was this, the state came around with that same 80 idea. That if you could add your age plus your experience, and if it equaled 80 at least

1:01:15 JO: Oh really?

1:01:17 **JM:** You could get full retirement. So in, in uh 87, I had, um, 30 years in. I was 50 years old.

1:01:26 **JO:** Oh my word

1:01:27 **JM:** and that was it. And I had been attending the United Douglas Church of Christ since the end of the fifties. And they were, at that point without a, without a pastor. Um, full time pastor, but um, they needed someone to kind of work as administrator. So I, I thought, after I retired, then I had an opportunity to be an administrator at church. Administrator for ten years. And I also had the chance to work for the metal sculptor, Ed Gray.

1:01:59 **JO:** Oh. Ok.

1:01:59 **JM:** In Fennville. And then I had the chance to do, whole sale selling for a friend that made hand turned wooden items. And I rep'ed him along the 31 quarter to 32

1:02:16 **JO:** So repping him, you sold, you drove. All right

1:02:18 **JM:** Yeah, went to retail stores. Representing him wholesale so they could buy it. You know, so I did that. I never said "Ha Ha Ha," when I left, but I thought it. I had my cake and ate it too.

1:02:31 **JE:** Yeah. And I loved social work. It just was my bag. And, um, I was fortunate I stayed with Ottawa County for 28 years. And I was able to retire at 55 and get full benefits. So we both choose the path we wanted to be at regardless of our father.

1:02:59 **JO:** [laugh] Yeah. Without your father, the two of you would not be here, right? Oh that's great. Is there anything else that you two can add that you'd like to think of. Um, Andy advice, or anything like this that you'd like to give? You would never say, oh don't come to this area. Saugatuck Douglas area's awful. You'd never say that, right?

1:03:18 **JE:** No, never, never, never, never.

1:03:19 **JM:** No, and I heard, uh, people last night talk about the beauty of it and that whole bit. And I think, oh, that story is so true. People come here to visit, or people just come for a weekend. And I live on a street now where I'm the only 24/7 person living on the block

1:03:38 **JE:** You are

1:03:39 **JM:** I am, because the houses are owned by people who live elsewhere. In fact, one house at the end of my block is owned by a woman who lives in, lives in Texas. You know, um, Dale Pond Realty owns one house and it's used for coming and going. But I'll say this about the block, um, everyone keeps his, her property beautiful. And you know, if they're not living there, they've hired a service

1:04:08 **JO:** service. Ok. Take care of it.

1:04:09 **JM:** And, you know the people next to me on one side, they live in Chicago. They come out as they're able, but they have someone take care of it. A couple of gentlemen bought a house on the west side, uh they live in Palm Springs.

1:04:21 **JO:** Oh my word

1:04:23 **JM:** And, you know, they did as much work to make it look sharp. Uh. You know, when they were here this summer. And they have, uh, you know, they keep an eye on it. They have somebody watching the place. Telling them if there's a problem. So, I mean, I think, I don't know if Saugatuck city council is going to have to address all these transient people or you know, on, on my block there's absolutely no problem.

1:04:50 **JO:** Great

1:04:51 **JE:** And I love Douglas. Douglas is my town. Always will be. Even though now I live in Glen.

1:04:58 **JM:** I didn't realize you were that far south then, oh

1:04:59 **JE:** Yeah. I live in Glen, and I'm fortunate enough to live on Lake Michigan. And so that is a plus, but as far as, and the only reason I moved there is because I've been with John for fifteen years

1:05:14 **JO:** Fifteen years' now

1:05:16 **JE:** And yeah, and, but I, Douglas will always have my heart. When I stopped working for social services, I wasn't ready to give up working yet. So I jumped. I worked for all the people who owned a business here.

1:05:38 **JO:** Oh right, up and down the main street then

1:05:41 **JE:** And I worked for all of them. When, when, up, oh what was her name? On the corner, she, uh she had all the jewelry. The jewelry that I worked for on the corner. And she's now, is in South Haven. Uh, but the two Ed's, I worked for. And right on down and old, good old uh

1:06:07 **JM:** Walter

1:06:08 **JE:** Walter, the wonderful

1:06:09 **JO:** Walter the wonderful, wonderful, yeah.

1:06:10 **JE:** And nobody, nobody but nobody can be a Walter the wonderful. Ever. And I worked for him and his partner Barry at the time where they had the

1:06:20 **JO:** when they were still together.

1:06:22 **JE:** Uh huh, and um, I worked for them, and I worked for down the line. And then when I moved to Glen, uh, John had this inner urban old, old inner urban bus. And that's how I moved my clothes and my shoes

1:06:43 **JO:** Oh my word

1:06:44 **JE:** And everybody I worked for came out to watch this truck come through Douglas with all my clothes because of course

1:06:53 **JO:** They could, they could hung

1:06:54 **JE:** They could be hung. And everybody would like crazy because it was so funny to see. There goes Jerry. She's moving to Glen. And all my shoes, because I have a ton of shoes also

1:06:54 **JO:** [laugh]

1:07:07 **JO:** Oh, is your name Emelda?

1:07:08 **JE:** Just about. But that's how I ended up going to John's house permanently was in

1:07:15 **JO:** Oh my word.

1:07:15 **JE:** Inner Urban

1:07:15 **JO:** Inner Urban.

1:07:17 **JM:** I told Jerry I moved her so many times, and I told her "You know what? I am not moving your clothes anymore. My clothes are mostly denim, and they stick together and they don't slide off. But you've got all these slippy slidey clothes

1:07:35 **JO:** This right here.

1:07:36 **JM:** I am, I'm not carrying those things. So John came with this bus and all she had was hanging up on the bus

1:07:42 **JO:** Hanging. Oh. That's neat. That's neat

1:07:44 **JE:** And that was, that was so much fun for everybody in town. You know? But I just, belong. Other than Glen, I mean, I love Douglas

1:07:57 **JO:** We got Douglas, we got Saugatuck

1:07:57 **JE:** It will always be my town

1:07:58 **JO:** You've been in Saugatuck since 1970, you said, right?

1:08:03 **JM:** My, yes. The house I'm in, yes. Yeah. And I had gone right from our parents' home. I bought this house from the Davis' and yes. Bought it in 69, and um, I had a wonderful, um, carpenter working for me who would do time and materials. And I loved to work with wood in my hands. And so he'd come, he'd get me started. And then I'd get as far on the project as I could. And then I'd call him. "Simon, I'm ready for another lesson."

1:08:35 **JO:** Lesson.

1:08:36 **JM:** Um, or I need, I need some angles cut or whatever. And then he'd come back over and he'd move me on again. At that time, um Forrester. I don't know if you remember Wallace Forrester.

1:08:47 **JO:** Forrester's lived in Douglas, didn't they?

1:08:49 **JM:** Yes, they do, and I don't know if a family member----

1:08:51 **JO:** Seventh Day Adventists

1:08:53 **JM:** Exactly. Exactly. We couldn't go there on a Friday, Saturday

1:08:56 **JO:** Friday nights, mmhm

1:08:58 **JM:** Um, but on Sundays we could, and, uh, the scouts would go there and I would go there, and if I had just one dollar in my pocket, I came home with a whole car load of wood. He worked for, he worked for Romer and maybe Chris Craft.

1:09:08 **JO:** Oh, they were so generous, yes. Oh. OK.

1:09:13 **JM:** And so he had some beautiful, um, mahogany pieces. And you know they were just sold for ten cents. Maybe a quarter. And I built an eight frame play house, which I had moved into my house in Saugatuck. I had to predrill the mahogany 2X4's because you couldn't put a nail in it without pre drilling and then putting the nail in, but uh, I just love it. For me it was like going to a candy store, you know, and just hauling all that wood back, but, um,

1:09:47 **JO:** Forrester. F-O-R-R-E-S-T-E-R. Right?

1:09:48 **JM:** Yes.

1:09:50 **JO:** Did they have a daughter, Shirley?

1:09:51 **JM:** Um

1:09:52 **JO:** Oh no. What was it?

1:09:53 **JM:** They might have. I believe she married their son.

1:09:53 **JO:** I believe so. I can't remember

1:09:56 **JM:** Remember, they, they, could have. This was the other Forrester but, they lived out, where they lived at that time, out by Schmeecken

1:10:05 **JO:** Yes. Right into that, yes. By where Schmeecken is

1:10:05 **JM:** They were right in there, and um, I think that, um, they did so.

1:10:10 **JE:** And when I, when I worked in Douglas I also lived in Douglas at Mary Ellen G(?)'s home.

1:10:18 **JO:** Oh. Where is this?

1:10:20 **JE:** Um, oh, what is that?

1:10:22 **JM:** Is it Washington?

1:10:23 **JE:** Washington. Yes

1:10:24 **JM:** Ok.

1:10:25 **JE:** And, uh, she rented to me for three, four years, before she had to move in because her husband died and she wanted the home, but it was right near, but in Max. Cross, Across the road. I was always the lady under the bridge so to speak because the bridge was right where her home was. And I was fortunate enough to have that place. It was, you know, I just loved it there.

1:10:53 **JO:** Well this has been great. I am really pleased. Thank you both. Joy.

1:10:59 **JM:** You're very welcome

1:11:00 **JO:** And Jerry. You have shared a lot with us, and I think this great. So you should be very pleased, right? Oh. I'd better do this correctly. This concludes the interview

1:11:07 **JM:** [laugh]