

Interview with Olive Liikene

INT: When were you born?

OL: July 26, 1914

INT: Where were you born?

OL: \_\_\_\_\_

INT: Can you tell me something about your parents?

OL: My parents, my mother was a, what would you call, a nurse mate, since she was nine years old. In Finland, the fathers and mothers, course they were poor, they were peasants. They let the children out to kind of let them go to work, and my mother was nine years old. Her father got ten marks for her services, and she got one pair of shoes per year. All her life she graduated from nurse mate to a regular maid, and so forth, and so on. She got older until she got married. My father was sent out when he was seven years old. He had to watch the cows, because there was no fences to keep the farmers' herd of cows. So, he had to go with the cows, and stay all day to chase the cows back. His father got ten dollars, and my father got a pair of shoes per year. At supper time they did not wear shoes, they didn't need shoes for dinner. In the winter, Finland is the same as the Upper Peninsula, its cold, lots of snow. They heard these stories about America, streets were paved with gold, and everything was just wonderful. So, somehow other, they saved enough money to come to America. The passage wasn't very much, because the ski trip companies they had ski trips to win their people from Europe to America. They encouraged people to come. So, it didn't cost too much to come over for us. We were probably in the ship for a whole month crossing the Atlantic. My parents went to South Prairie Ontario, Canada. There was mines there too, in Canada. For some reason, the Finlanders' wanted to work in the mines. My father heard that the situation was that they were hiring in Michigan, so he came to Ironwood. I was at the time four years old. I was the fifth one to be born, but the first one to live. I turned out to be number five, but I am still the oldest in the family. You think about the mines, in the wonderful wages. When my father first started working the mines, he only got a dollar a day. Then he had to use the pick and shovels, not the way they do things now a days with machines.

INT: What was their names?

OL: Isaac and Katri. You could call her Kat if you wanted to. She wanted to be Kat Vardi. Her maiden name was Koski.

INT: At what age did they marry?

OL: They were in there twenties. I'm sure they were in their twenties.

INT: Where were they raised? On a farm, or in a city?

OL: Oh, on a village. My mother's dad took care of the horses, and the farmers' land. He had they had a little cottage. They worked for the landowner, on the land. They had a little home on the land there. My grandfather, on my father's side, was of all things a ditch digger. He was considered the best ditch digger in the whole county. In those days, in Finland, when they packed a piece of land, they dug ditches on all sides for irrigation. It was my Grandpa's job to dig those ditches. My grandmother was the best reader, they didn't go to school. They were self-educated, because they had to go to confirmation whether they had school or not. My mother and father taught themselves to read. So, my grandmother was the best reader in the village, so the minister had her reading bibles passages in church. The parents thought you were lazy if you went to school, you didn't want you work. They were self-taught. They both could read and write. Isn't that strange?

INT: Can you remember how you parents met?

OL: I think they must have been at a dance. My father went courting at dances. I'm afraid it was at a dance. They were good dancers. In the old days, they used to have dances even in our location. I was a little girl looking at them. My father and mother were good dancers. My mother would not marry my father if he wouldn't give up the accordion. She wasn't going to have her husband playing it at dances. So, my father had to give up playing the accordion.

INT: What do you recollect about your grandparents?

OL: I never saw my grandparents. I never met them. They were in Finland. I remember going to school and saying around Thanksgiving that I would like to go visit them. They were still in Finland. I never saw them.

OL: My grandfather on my father's side. He was a half-breed. He was half Finnish, half-Swedish. He changed his name to Vardi. My grandmother came from the family named Evarvi, and they were rich land owners that lived up on a hill. My grandmother fell in love with this half-breed. The Finnish looked down on the Swedes. The Finnish were at war with the Swedish for five-hundred years. I heard bad stories from their ancestors. My great-grandparents disowned my grandmother, because she married the half-breed. So my grandpa, bought a little piece of land, they were up on a hill looking down at a valley. He changed his name to Ovardi. They others were Ervardi, that means hi vardi. So he changed his name to Ovardi. Which means low vardi. My grandpa had a sense of humor. She lost her inheritance. They never forgave her.

INT: Did they live anywhere else?

OL: No, my parents lived just in Canada. Then they came down. They lived there for about four years.

What language was spoken in your home?

OL: Finnish. When I went to school, I did not know one word of English. My parents were not allowed a foreign language to be spoken. It took years to learn. My sister Lila and I were the oldest. We got a hairful if we accidentally said a word of English. My mother didn't know English and I was registered by a fourth grade girl who translated my name from Ouli to Olive. I don't see how she did. I don't see any resemblance between Ouli and Olive.

INT: Do you know by chance what your original names would translate into?

OL: I don't know.

INT: What stories do you remember of the old days that perhaps your grandparents told?

OL: My mother used to tell the stories. The stories were about the ladies in the town would get all dressed up to go shopping, they would dress up with their hat and belts on. They had dark colored dresses. Usual that was their "Sunday go meeting dress". They put an apron on. A real fancy apron. My father told stories about Finland.

INT: What are your first memories as a little girl?

OL: My first memories of being a little girl was of being in first grade. My parents rented houses for a while. We had two or three different houses that we lived in, because we rented. We lived in this corner house, and Paul Docson stole my doll. I was playing in the yard with my doll. He stole my doll. I ran after him, and he ran home. His parents were Swedish. I was yelling at him in Finnish. I followed in right into the house. I grabbed my doll, and there was his mother and father. I wasn't even four years old at the time. I saw him in high school, and still remembered that he still stole my doll. In that same house, my father broke his leg. They did have the Oliver hospital, but it was really small. There was also a lot of accidents in the mine. He brought my father home and he was all covered with iron ore on his face. He looked like a monster with his face all covered in iron ore. You could see the whites of his eyes. There was my sister, my little brother and I. My little brother was maybe a year or two old. My mother had just run to the neighbors, to get some milk. Our neighbors had a cow. We started screaming, and this father's voice came out of this monster that was covered with iron ore, and said be quiet! We just shut-up right away. We were very quiet. We were scared. He looked terrible. All covered up with this ore. That I remember. We lived on Tappat St. on a really steep hill. He bought a sleigh that looked like a cutter. The front was wound like a old fashioned cutter's work. We sat down, and my father was going to take me down the hill the sleigh. We went to go down the hill but we didn't, because my father broke the sleigh. He was too heavy. It was my new sleigh, but he quickly replaced it with steel rudders. I have loved sleigh riding ever since. In those days, we didn't even have cars. I remember only one car that was in town. There might have been others. I don't know if it was Mr. Erickson, or Mr. Coleman that had a Stanley Steamer. It seems to me that, that car ran by steam. Am I wrong? I think it was Mr. Coleman. It was a Stanley Steamer. I remember that. The roads were not plowed, so

you didn't go out, even if you had a car. They couldn't drive in the winter.

INT: Do you remember by chance when they started plowing the roads?

OL: Let's see, it was in the early twenties. Wait, I remember in 1924, the roads were not yet plowed. We went to the cemetery in a horse and buggy. I remember, not a buggy, but a sleigh. Before they started plowing.

INT: Do you know when they started plowing?

OL: I don't know. They had it out on contract.

INT: Do you have any brothers or sisters, and if so, what were their names and ages?

OL: Lila is 82, she is in a nursing home in New Mexico. My brother Oiva died of a heart attack in San Jose, CA. He was about 70 years old. Walter is still in a nursing home, and he is 78. Then there is Harold, in CA, he lives in an apartment like I do. He lives alone. He is 76. He has had a hard time walking. He needs a walker. It is kind of sad. Ingrid is 74 and she lives in Iron River, MI. She is okay. Tom is in Wakegon. He travels a lot. He is about 72. Even now, he is in New Mexico. Norman died of diabetes. No doctor was going to tell him what to eat. Then he died of diabetes. He was 69 years old. Easy going, nothing ever phased him. There was eight of us. There was one set of twins, they were two years older than me.

INT: What were your mother's daily activities?

OL: Life at that time wasn't easy. You took out the scrub board, heated your water on a wood burning stove. Life was hard. She did all the sewing for all the kids. She knitted stockings and mittens in the winter time. She did that at night. When she was resting, she was sewing and knitting. When we went to the store, everything was made. She had three cows even. There was a big barn there. My father used to rent hay fields, to make hay from. So he could make hay. My father carried the hay on his back into the barn.

INT: Basically your family worked for the mine, but they were also farmers?

OL: Yes, they had that farmer's instinct. We always had cow milk. My mother made her own butter. I had chickens. My mother had a hard life. She was a seamstress too. She sewed for the little girls and babies in the neighborhood. She was a real good seamstress. I wish I was that good.

INT: How much did you help run the house?

OL: As much as I could. My mother lost one baby, when I was in the first grade, so actually she had fifteen babies. And when the fifteenth baby was born, Norman, she just fell apart physically. She didn't have any strength in her. I was fourteen years old, but I was strong. So I took over, and I started doing all the housework, and went to school. But, when Norman was a

baby and he got sick, I didn't go to school that day, but I could get away with it, because I wasn't too bad of a student. Teacher would ask me the next day why I didn't come to school, Olive? I said, "My baby was sick". Fourteen years old, and I told my teacher, my baby was sick. I didn't explain it was my brother. In my mind, that baby was mine. My mother's oldest daughter was kind of a work-a-holic at that age.

INT: Were you born at home or at the hospital?

OL: At home.

INT: Did a doctor or mid-wife attend to your mother?

OL: Mid-wife. But, later on with the younger children, there was a doctor too, with the mid-wife. There was both the doctor and the mid-wife. When I was born, there was just the mid-wife. There was no doctor.

INT: Do you remember some of the home medical remedies of the day?

OL: Tonic, white-coal green sand, on a burn you separate two eggs. I separated the whites and put the egg on her arm. My mother used to have a cough syrup, which she had a big bowl, and would cut up onions. She then put sugar in the bowl, and then they put it in a warming oven overnight. For some reason, maybe the sugar melted, or the onion juice, but there was a liquid in there. That was used for cough syrup. Also, honey and vinegar, put some water in it and that also works. That was a tonic. If you kept on drinking it all, you were supposed to not get all crippled up when you got old. I don't think any of us kept drinking it. If anybody would fall down, and their knees get all bloody, my mother would put peroxide on it. I remember a boy once threw a rock at my sister's head, and her head started bleeding. The rock made a real hole in her head. The blood started gushing out. My father just put peroxide on it. We never got infections. The peroxide must have helped. There was a product in K-mart from the Watkins Company. It was very strong. It was supposed to be for man and beast. It said it right on the bottle. If you had a real bad cold or cough, my mother would take and give you some of that. Another remedy for my mother, was she heated wine. I did not like that.

INT: What kinds of fruit and vegetables did your mother cook up, and who helped with this activity?

OL: For some reason, Lila never had to do any of that work. I don't know why. In those days, peaches were real cheap, they came in bushels baskets. Maybe they cost a dollar each. So the mothers, would can up a lot of peaches, and a lot of pears. Everybody picked berries, blueberries and raspberries especially. You went to Washburn, WI, you had a tent full of people. We would stay there for three days and three nights. We would pick blueberries. The raspberries were usually picked all day and then they came home. But, that was mostly around Lake Superior. Were they logged, is where the berries grew. Some people had even three-hundred quarts of raspberries in their basement. You didn't go to the store for desserts. That was your dessert was the berries in the wintertime. The Finish did not eat a lot of

vegetables. They had carrots and cabbage, and beets. My father did not see a tomato until he came to Canada or oranges. When my mother came over, they had to stay a week in Liverpool waiting for the ship to take them to Canada. There was a group of people in that room, and they didn't have nothing to eat. A young boy said, "I'm going to go out and see if I can't find something to eat." He came back and he said, "I don't know what these horns are, but I hope you can eat them." They were bananas. They took them a while to figure out that before you can eat them, you have to peel them. They tried to eat them with the peeling on. They had never seen a banana. My father saw tomatoes in a boarding house in a bowl. He took bowl with beautiful red tomatoes. He used to put sugar on them. I even eat tomatoes with sugar on them.

INT: What kind of transportation did your family use?

OL: The only transportation that my father used when I was little, was a horse and buggy. Then when the model T came out in the early 20's, we had transportation. Iron River was the longest trip we ever had to take. We had to fix the tire very many times. We were getting flat tires all the time. We had inner tubes. You always made sure before you went anywhere that you had a patch to fix the tires.

INT: How did you air the tires up?

OL: You had a pump.

INT: What were the roads like where you were at?

OL: Rough. A lot of road were made so that the different logs could go down the road. After that, all they did was put just a little gravel on because everything cost money. There was many bumps like a washboard.

INT: Where did your grandparents go to school?

OL: They never went to school.

INT: Did they ever tell you about the school enrollment?

OL: No.

INT: Where did you go to school?

OL: Norry School.

INT: What do you remember about your playmates in those girly days?

OL: Well, I was a Fin. In that neighborhood where the school was, were a lot of Swedish and Polish and different other foreigners. All that had to do, was say Finlanders fight with knives.

In Finland they do manufacture beautiful hunting knives. Kids would say Finlanders fight with knives and then we would beat them up to show that we don't need knives. You fought all the way to school, and then all the way back. It was all us kids fighting, not the parents.

INT: Who were your teachers, and what do you remember about them?

OL: We respected our teachers, and we were afraid of them. Ms. Nichols was the kindergarten teacher. She put me in the corner, and to this day I have no idea why she put me in the corner. She could not understand English, so she had her problems. I know there was a Ms. Larson in the first or second grade, and a Mrs. Olson in the third grade. I don't remember fifth or sixth. High school in English was Mr. Leeke. Mr. Coleman was my history teacher. He was also my biology teacher. I don't remember that much anymore. There was Ms. Knight, and she was my gym teacher. All of a sudden they started talking about these Knight girls. She was a lesbian, and she had a group of girls. She finally got fired. They called those girls, "Knight girls". A couple of those girls even got married soon after. Then those girls got divorced soon after. I supposed it had something to do with Ms. Knight.

INT: Do you recall any poems or citations?

OL: In are school we had to memorize a lot of poems. We had to memorize Hiawatha. Gosh, I don't even remember the names anymore. There is no reason that my memory is gone that much. We had to memorize anything by Robert Louis Stevenson or Nathaniel Hawthorne.

INT: What funny things happened to you or your friends when you were little?

OL: One of my Catholic friends had to go confession every Friday night. She couldn't think of any sins that she had committed during the week, so I thought up sins that she did so she could go. I had a good imagination. We were little. We were in the second or third grade.

INT: What kind of games did you play?

OL: Cops and robbers, marble. When there was still snow, you would take and cut out a piece of snow. Then you would take and put the marbles in the hole. We also played hopscotch. We used to love to go sleighing, toboggan, and ski. I loved ice skating. We had an outdoor rink. Almost every neighborhood had an outdoor rink. It was cold out there, but we didn't mind.

INT: Where did your parents go shopping for food, clothing and other items?

OL: Coffee was 19 cents a pound and milk was five cents a quart.

INT: What about your clothing?

OL: There was a penny store. My mother used to order from catalogs. They were cheaper in catalogs. Montgomery Ward and Sears Roebuck, were the biggest catalog merchants. But,

when the depression came, then all you had was leftovers. Those that were better off, and had jobs gave my mother dresses. Then my mother cut them up and make dresses for us girls. You know the depression lasted fifteen years. It happened in October 1929. I may have the wrong date. We thought all those poor rich people lost all their money in the stock markets. We didn't realize that when the rich man loses his money, the poor man loses his job. There was a lot of unemployment. Those were hard times. My mother had those three cows, and she sold milk for five cents a quart. That was all the cash we saw in the house. Things we really rough. My brother tried to do jobs in the neighborhood. What little we got, we would give it to my mother. Even when I would make ten dollars a month, I would bring the check to my mother. When I first started out as a maid, I made only ten dollars a month. My brother also gave our mother money. Because, my brother being a boy, he got jobs with construction. He even got a job helping put up a new theater. I asked him how he got a better job. He was too young. He said, he used a fake birth certificate. The name on the birth certificate was Olive. When it came time to get my social security, all those jobs that I had work at went to Olive Vardi. I needed to get my name changed. So I went to the clerk's office and told them my problem. I needed to change my legal name to Olive. He took out my birth certificate. On it read, Oli. That was a boy's name. That's how he got away with it. It took me over forty years to find out how he got away with it. I don't know how young people would do with a depression like that again. Even my children, my daughters what are they going to do. I don't know, I don't think they would have survived. Because, you didn't have nothing. My oldest brother and I in my county got \_\_\_\_\_, so people could see us. I don't think we were stealing, but there was scraps of lumber along the mine. They used to bring coal to the steam house with a railroad car. It would be piled up so hi, until the pieces of coal dripped along the railroad track. My brother and I would take a bucket, and pick up the pieces of coal along the railroad track. So, we could have heater in the living room. That is how we heated our house. The wood that we found, we burned it in a wood-burning stove.

INT: Did your family take vacations? If so, where did they go?

OL: I don't really remember. Only when my father wanted to see a brother or sister, then we would take a trip. We went to Iron River maybe and stayed there one night, and then came back the next day. Trips like that is what we took. Not really vacations.

INT: What was your nearest town, and what do you remember about it?

OL: We had street cars, and payday my father would go to Hurley's with his paycheck. My mother and I would go looking for him, before he drank up his entire paycheck. But, anyway we would take a street car and go from tavern to tavern until I found him. My mother would make an appearance because he would get mad if he saw my mother. My mother stayed outside. When I went in, he acted like a puppy. All I said was, "Father, let's finish up and go home." It was one bar after another. The whole street was full of them. The street car took us to the roller rink. Costs about ten cents to go there. So, we took the street car to the roller rink, and that costs us about ten cents.

INT: Do remember anything else about that?

OL: No. I heard a story that Ironwood would have been the seat, but the manufacturers stole the records. So, Iron River got it instead. That's what I heard. Somehow they stole the records, and got the seat of the county.

INT: What particular stores do you recall the best and why?

OL: JC Penny and Albert's. Albert's were so nice to the people. I remember my mother taking me there to buy shoes. She had the money. They were nice to everybody, and to the customers. For some reason, it was a very friendly store. At the Penny's store, they always had a Finnish speaking clerk. So my mother refused to learn English. My father did learn, because he became a citizen. He had to go to night school. My mother refused to learn. All of the stores, had Finnish clerks, so nobody had to learn English. A cab driver told us after we grew up, that my mother spoke good English. She led us on to believe that she couldn't.

Were the taxi cabs motorized or were they horse and buggy?

OL: They had both I imagine. I imagine the, with the city folk who lived in town rode in motorized taxi cabs. See we lived in a location where the Norry mine was. There was Big Norry, East Norry, Norry and Normine. So there was three Norry mines.

INT: Do you remember talking to very old people when you were small? If so did they tell stories that made an impression on you that you could still tell?

OL: Only thing I remember that the streets in the town were mud. The buildings were put up in a hurry. Grandma Liikene when she came to Ironwood, she started working in a boarding house on Varn St. There was a lot of boarding houses, because the miners needed lodging. They needed a place to sleep, and needed a place to eat too. We grandma said they built the buildings in a hurry, and by winter time the lumber started to dry. So she had an upstairs room, and there was cracks between the boards. The snow would come into her room. They were in such a hurry to build the city, they weren't built properly. The snow actually came through the cracks. They tried putting paper through the cracks to stop the snow from getting in.

INT: What are some of the differences from growing up now, then you were growing up as a child then?

OL: It was a lot tougher. The morals were a lot higher. You respected your teachers. You wouldn't dare talk back to an elder. You had deep respect for elders, and you were afraid that you might offend them in any way. You watched your words when you spoke to an older person. So that you would not offend them. It was wrong to talk back to them.

INT: How would you describe a successful person when you were growing up?

OL: I think back then, a successful person would be a teacher or something. They had a nice job. Another job, was a nurse. I really wanted to be a nurse.

INT: Describe a typical Fourth of July when you were a child.

OL: My father was very proud to be a citizen of the United States. In the morning, he would put a flag in the front yard. My father said, "Only once a year we have the Fourth of July." To him, that was the day. We celebrated with a picnic. We always went to some lake to have a picnic. That was the day to celebrate. We didn't have to work on that day. My father's holiday. Of course, my mother went along. He was really proud of being a citizen.

INT: What are your earliest memories of Christmas?

OL: My earliest of Christmas, was my parents did allow some things. We would have a Christmas tree. It was in the living room, and we didn't have too much money for decorations, so my siblings and I made decorations out of colored paper. The tree did not have electric lights it had real candles. So father would sit in the living room, and he would light the candles. You would sit there and watch the tree for a while, and then my father would blow the candles out. It was dangerous to have it on for too long. The candles got real hot, they dripped wax on the colored paper, and the candles could have caught the tree on fire. We obeyed him. My father and mother (even though there was eight of us and times were hard) always made sure to get us at least one gift. I thought that was really something. My first husband never got a Christmas gift in his whole life. His parents worked in the mine too. He said his parents always used religion as an excuse. They were very cheap. We got at least one gift. My sister and I used to get a mama doll with the word mama on the doll. I remember that tree with the real candles on it. Then getting up and going to early morning services at five in the morning. I was so proud, because father let me come with him. We walked through the caves up to the church.

INT: What was the effect of the 1929 great depression on your family?

OL: It really was bad times. My father lost his job, and we had nothing. Those were really bad days.

INT: What move to different houses did your family make as you were growing up?

OL: We stayed in the same house on Hub St. We never moved.

INT: How did you decide on a career?

OL: The big depression formed. You graduated from high school, and there was a junior college in Ironwood, so you would have to have two years of junior college to get a job at the dime store. I found out that if I went to Chicago, I would get room and board and still get a salary. I became a maid and a housekeeper also a cook. I would live with the family, so I never had to pay rent. I also never had to pay for my food. In the girls that worked in the stores, and in the factories got eighteen dollars a week. They had to pay rent, and they had to buy their own food. So they were any better off than I was.

INT: How did you meet your husband, and what were the courting patterns of your day?

OL: I met my first husband at the county fair. I was home on vacation, because I was a maid in Chicago. It was mostly correspondence until I got my next vacation. Then he said, "Let's get married." He didn't like my answer, I told him "Okay then." I don't why, I must have been in a bad mood. I knew it was coming, so we got married. I was mostly letter writing. Our courtship was mostly letter writing.

INT: Did you or your parents belong to any church, group, or club or other group?

OL: My parents always belonged to a church. St. Paul's Lutheran church in Ironwood. I have always belonged to a church. When I became an adult, I joined a church.

INT: Any clubs or anything like that?

OL: No, I have never been in a club. I was in a choir before. I sang in the church choir. Of course, that was church.

INT: Did your parents belong to any clubs?

OL: No.

INT: Did you have to travel far to catch a train from where you were?

OL: No, not really. It wasn't far.

INT: When did your family first have electricity, indoor plumbing and a telephone?

OL: I graduated in 1934, and there wasn't an indoor toilet yet. It must have been in 1935 or 1936 before my parents had an inside toilet. My oldest brother had a job at the saw mill, and he was the kind of person who fixed things. They always had electricity. They always had running water. I'm sure it was before 1914 that they had electricity.

INT: What about a telephone?

OL: The telephone didn't come until much later. My mother didn't get here telephone until the 50's. The older people weren't too quick to get a phone. They didn't think it was necessary.

INT: Do you remember anything about presidential or state elections?

OL: No.

INT: Well you remember Joe Maki, who lived by you for the longest time. He was the senator from Michigan.

OL: Yes, was the senator from Michigan. Fred Delano was in office for four terms. So that was really the first time I got interested in politics. I remember voting for John F. Kennedy, because he was so good looking. Then there was Hoover. Hoover came before, but times was so tough. He didn't do anything about the depression. Roosevelt did though, he got the WPA, so fathers could get jobs. My father got a job on the WPA, and so did my brothers. Then my parents started getting money. Even though it was only 40 dollars a month it wasn't nothing. Things got better. Then my brother went to CC camps, and he got 20 dollars. He sent money to my parents. Roosevelt made the poor person's life a lot better. Even high school kids got jobs for 19 dollars a month on NYA. They were going to school, and they did things around the school. Working in the cafeteria, and cleaning, doing little odd jobs. They got nineteen dollars a month. There was no welfare.

INT: Do you know what NYA stands for?

OL: National Youth Association. It was a wonderful program. At that time, thank god we had Roosevelt.

INT: So, Roosevelt did a lot for the poor person?

OL: He did a lot.

INT: Can you remember anything about your brother working in the CC camps?

OL: It was kind of like any army. They had to follow rules. They planted a lot of trees. They built pavilions and bridges. They replanted a lot of trees. They worked on repairing roads. They did a lot of work like that.

INT: Do you remember anything about the WPA?

OL: They got forty dollars a month. They had to work I think 20 days out of the month. A truck came to pick them up at their homes and brought them where they had to work. Quite a bit of road buildings were done in those days. There was a lot of repairing. They did a lot of that public work.

INT: Do you ever recall them ever recall them ever making a movie up here?

OL: Only one I ever remember, is a young man came to town, and they made that movie in Saxton. I don't ever remember them making a movie in Ironwood.

INT: Did they make any movies in the UP that you are aware of?

OL: They had one about a murder in Ishpeming. Anatomy of a Murder. It was filmed in Ishpeming. Earnest Hemingway wrote the story of a young man coming to town when he was very young. He stayed the summers in Land o'Lakes. I worked as a housekeeper over there. The lady I worked for, Ms. Goodrich, knew Earnest Hemingway when he was real young. He

spent a lot of summer in Land o' Lakes. Her money came from Goodrich tires. She inherited the money from the Goodrich family.

INT: Do you remember anything about historical landmarks around here?

OL: Hiawatha went up in 1972. They Hiawatha on a big long trailer, and they parked it in the fairground overnight, and they were going to put it up the next morning. When they went to the fairgrounds, it wasn't there. Somebody had taken the truck and driven it to Ashland, WI. It was really a joke to lose something that big.

INT: Do you remember any other landmarks?

OL: The theater went up in about 1928 or 1929. The memorial building and the Vi-dock went up about the same time too. They all cost a million dollars. The fellow that took the contract for the Vi-dock ended up costing him a lot more. He went bankrupt and committed suicide.

INT: Why was the Vi-dock built?

OL: To go over the railroad tracks. The troubles was, it was built for the Model-T. It had trouble because after that the cars got wider. So the bridges were almost useless. I had to drive as long as I could when my brother came to town. He wanted to ride over the Vi-docks. He wanted to drive up to Mt. Zine. He wanted to see Hiawatha.

INT: Do you remember by chance when the first railroad came in?

OL: That was before my time, but the whole town used to come and see the train that would come from Chicago. It was important to the town that they got a railroad. Also, for the mines it was very important. There was a railroad everywhere. In Thompson, people would stay in the hotels overnight, and then take the train the next day. That hotel was the railroad center. There was railroads all over. The one interesting story that I have to tell you about. Ms. Goodrich told me this story. Someone who was running for supervisor at Land o' Lakes. He knew who would vote for him, and he knew who wouldn't vote for him. So, he would invite the people who would not vote for him to the cabin for a party before the election. He got them so drunk and on a train and told them of a place where they all could really have a lot of fun. These guys were so drunk they didn't realize what was happening to them. He put them on a train to Maranasco. They had to wait until the next evening to come back. The train didn't come until evening. On the next day, they were not able to vote against him. That was a smart move.

INT: Do you remember anything about Lake Gogebic?

OL: Last staged highway robbery was on Lake Gogebic. Have you ever heard of that? The last highway robbery on a stagecoach. They claim it happened on Lake Gogebic. At Watersmeet they had a lodge and people would come to the lodge at Lake Gogebic. That was way back in the 1890's. That was the only story that I heard about Lake Gogebic. When a storm came up, they were really bad.

INT: You don't remember by chance when that lake was made do you?

OL: No.

INT: Do you remember anybody doing something great around here? Like maybe writing a book?

OL: Well, there was a lady named Sculdabanner that wrote Last Stream Out. Her home was on Long St. Her father was Swedish royalty. He married a commoner. She wrote a story about the early days when Mon St. was the main street in town. The businesses were on Mon St. She called her book, Last Stream Out. There must be a meaning to the title of that book. There was this boy name Norry Pearson. He had a list of names especially widows that he had met in a tavern and rejected him. He had a girlfriend, but found another boyfriend. Her boyfriend was from Lower Michigan. He was a married man. His girlfriend was named Sally Johnson. Her friend, Sally and her boyfriend were at her daughter's Ms. Gustason one day. She was a widow. Her husband had died. He went in there and shot Ms. Rigomi, and he shot Sally Johnson, her daughter. Ms. Gustason's daughter was twelve years old, and she ran into the closet. She was able to lock the door, but he shot through the door. She was in the hospital for a year. She was in such bad shape. Then he went to a couple of the widows houses, but they weren't home. So, he went to a house right next to the tavern. He shot Raymond and his wife. The reason he shot Raymond, was because Raymond had this gas station. He had charged up about 200 dollars' worth of gas. Raymond told him, "Why don't you pay on that bill a little?" Then he went into the tavern and shot a man and a woman, Mr. and Mrs. Koisto. She had never been in a tavern in her life. It was their anniversary and they were coming from some point, and he talked her into going in there. She walked into her death. John Niemi took a beer bottle and hit him on the back of the head with it and knocked him out. That stopped the rampage. He ended up shooting thirteen people. The little girl was the only one that survived.

INT: Do you remember anything about the airports?

OL: The first place they had planes landing down so you could even had rides, was in section 12. Right next to the big farm, was the first airport. Then they started that airport on airport road.

INT: Do you remember when that airport was started?

OL: I kind of remember them having a big celebration. There was a few accidents there too.

INT: Do you remember any stories or anything important about the ski hills?

OL: I remember Porcupine Mountain. It should be more famous than it is now but they don't have the money. For 75 years that has been a dream.

INT: Isn't that the second largest wooden ski hill?

OL: Yes

INT: Do you remember anything about ski hills? Like black jack or powder

OL: We had a lot of ski hills but they weren't Indian head or powder horn, they were all over section 12 and we had a lot of skiers that come from the \_\_\_\_\_ location and Aroura location. We had a lot of skiers in those days but now you don't hear about none of them.

INT: Do you remember when old man Geller bought the farm land before Powder Horn?

OL: Oh, I have to tell you about that. Mr. Martisca owned quite a bit of land on Black River Road. His property is now all full of trees. He had that farm land and a pasture land that went up the hill. For some reason he had bought it; it was worthless though. He called it his pasture land. Even where the lodge, is that was pasture land. And this crazy guy from Chicago came and bought all the pasture land from Mr. Martisca; he was in church that Sunday morning and he left. He thought that was funny crazy guy was going to buy all that worthless land. I don't think that the crazy guy had to pay too much either to get it. He sold it pretty cheap but Mr. Martisca never lived to see what that crazy man did with his land.

End of tape.