

Interview with Dr. Russell Magnaghi
April 1, 1987
Location: Northern Michigan University

START OF INTERVIEW

Gail Juntinen (GJ): Today is the first of April, 1987. This is Gail Juntinen talking to Dr. Russell Magnaghi from Northern Michigan University. I'd like to start first by asking you a little bit about your professional history; where you had your schooling and then your progression to Northern?

Russell Magnaghi (RM): Okay. I was born in San Francisco, California and grew up out there and did my undergraduate work at the University of San Francisco and got a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1965 and then went to St. Louis University and two years later got a Master's degree, then worked on my PhD and then finally got the degree in 1970. Originally, or at that time, I studied or was interested in the French-Spanish colonial history and when I came to Northern they hired me to teach Latin American History. I always had an interest though in local history wherever I might be; be it California, Missouri, or Michigan. So that was kind of the background that I came from was this interest in local history and then to kind of bolster that in the summer of 1969, before I started teaching here, I was a ranger historian at Castillo de San Marco's national monument in St. Augustine and there I got kind of a strong dose of how to interpret history and how to take the material from the textbooks and develop that for the tourist that comes in and basically what we were doing – we had tourists come in to the Castillo and although we had a wealth of information about the construction of 17th century fortifications and the strategy of seizing them and so on, all we presented was kind of the tip of the iceberg. You would present what the tourists wanted to know about this fort. So that was kind of my exposure to history for the public. Then I started teaching at Northern in 1969 and at that time we had large enrollments, we had this liberal studies or I guess they called it common learnings at that time, and they basically hired me to teach medieval renaissance worlds and one of the little surprises when I arrived was that I would be teaching in Iron Mountain, or they said Iron Mountain – Kingsford, and I had just driven up from Iron Mountain – Kingsford and when I arrived I found I was teaching Latin American history there and I thought it was maybe someplace in between – only forty miles away – and instead I find out no it's the ninety miles away. But for the first few years then I was teaching medieval renaissance and then we got some on campus courses dealing with Latin American history but what we found there was that Latin American history was not a big seller; we just didn't have the students.

(GJ): Is that because of the area and the interests that would be here?

(RM): Well, not even so much the area, there's just not a great deal of interest in Latin American history and culture in the United States though we're all in the same hemisphere; it's just not there. So kind of with that in the back of my mind we have to do something about this. I was talking to a former student, a fellow by the name of Bob Archibald and he was down at the University of New Mexico and he was kind of getting their local history which was the Spanish story and he was saying that one of the things to do is to get into local history as a full-time thing. That was in the early '70s. So in the years that followed I just continued this interest in local history and by 1974 I had enough background at that time to feel comfortable starting to write some articles for the local Marquette County Historical Society and their journal Harlow's Wooden Man. I did a little article on the Scottish people in Marquette County.

(GJ): In fact, you did a lot of writing from then on didn't you?

(RM): Well then I started to get into local history and then I did quite a bit of writing in Harlow's Wooden Man and then did some larger journals but sticking with the local story. Then in 1977, well prior to that time I was working on it, but in the summer of 1977, the late summer, I taught for the first time a course on the history of the Upper Peninsula and that has been taught around the U.P. – Ironwood, Gladstone, Escanaba, Iron Mountain, Marquette – and it's been quite popular especially in the University resident centers around. Getting into local history that way then, one of the pillars of local history is the oral history. So I sort of then went from one to the other and got into oral history and at first it was a lot of talking about it; we didn't really get into it. I did run some workshops and we had there, this would be in '79 and '80, maybe even back to '78, but during that time I started to run one-day workshops; kind of intensive workshops on oral history. However, at that time it was all mostly theory; I hadn't done any interviews. Then gradually students got into doing interviews and I got into doing interviews and that became an extremely important experience and for anyone going into oral history you have to stop talking about it and do it; get somebody else to start talking and you sit there with your tape recorder and the questions. So this was by the early 1980s that we had this going. At least on paper we had a program and we were teaching workshops.

(GJ): When you say "we" are you meaning the University?

(RM): Well the University was backing this; the Continuing Education office would back these classes. Many times the classes were touch-and-go. You didn't know if the class was going to make it or you were going to get paid for the class.

(GJ): It hadn't quite caught on yet?

(RM): Well, I guess it really hadn't, but it depended on a number of factors; it depended on the weather, were you're going to have a snowstorm in the Copper Country the day you were going to be teaching the course. The other thing was how well advertised was the thing, and also how intense were people into oral history – did they want to develop a program, did they need all this information. Here in town for instance we had a workshop one time, kind of promoted by the Marquette County Historical Society and the National Ski Hall of Fame up in Ishpeming, and we had several dozen people and they were basically sending their people down to be trained to go and do the interviews themselves. So it was kind of hit and miss. I remember one time I went to Sault Ste. Marie in the Summer of 1982; I went over there and ran a workshop for a day and I think we got three people to come to the workshop. I don't know what the financial arrangement was now, I've forgotten. But things like that – that really wasn't really a successful day but ultimately it did provide these people – three, four, whatever it was – did provide them with some background on oral history. One of the big problems with oral history is that there's too much talk about it. People talk about how we're going to develop a program and it'd be a great idea, we want to do it, and then they never do it. The other problem is that everybody feels that you can do an interview without any background; you just sit down and do the interview. In reality the interview is, well number one you have to be professional about it. The interviewer has to be professional so the interviewee feels that this is an important interaction. The other thing is that the person doing the interview has to have some background about the historical time, the place, and be able to ask the proper questions. As a result, a lot of people overlook this and they don't really take oral interviewing as seriously as they should. So a lot of times they just wouldn't come. They'd say, "Well, I've done this before, I don't need the workshop." And then when some of these people attend the workshop then they find out that, oh, you have a lot to offer, this is a little bigger than I anticipated, this

isn't just getting a cheap Shopko/Kmart two for a dollar cassettes and turn on a bad tape recorder and get a lot of static and noise and this is your interview; that there's a lot involved. And so, what happens now is, as you get into it, you find this very professional thing and there's a lot involved, and you have to be prepared for this. But I think that was the reason why, and even today, we don't get a lot of people coming and taking the course and taking the workshop on oral history because they don't think it's that important. So I've been promoting this in the Upper Peninsula and we have the Michigan Oral History Council which kind of got started about the same time I was doing my work and they are in the process of developing oral history on a statewide basis with workshops and presentations and conferences.

(GJ): Can I ask you if there are other oral history courses offered up in the U.P.?

(RM): To my knowledge there aren't any.

(GJ): Are there any other programs?

(RM): I've heard of a program – somebody's doing a program at Bay de Noc Community College. Some of the historical societies are doing projects but it's kind of a hit and miss thing. I think at Tech they have oral interviews that have been done by students, you know just kind of a shotgun thing some students did; an oral interview here and there, and they've come together and they're at Tech. But in terms of having a project and methodically going out and soliciting interviews around a particular theme, that type of thing hasn't been done. The closest that we got to that was back in about 19-; it was the late 70s but it actually bore fruit about 1980. There was a group at Northland College over in Ashland, WI to the west of us, and they got a large council for the humanities grant and they did a thing on ethnic folk music for The Iron Range in Minnesota, Northern Wisconsin, and through about the central Upper Peninsula. That was kind of the only big project; and that was a project that had a specific focus on ethnic folk music. Unfortunately, that program then ended, the people dispersed, and I either called or was over there, and it's almost impossible now to find where these tapes are. I think they're in the library but you have to do a lot of asking as to where they're at. So to answer the question, there aren't that many programs in the U.P. that are doing this. Marquette County Historical Society would like to do something but they haven't really pulled together a program. They have some tapes; a lot of these places have tapes but there isn't an ongoing, real methodical program underway.

(GJ): Concerning this program, now is this called the Upper Peninsula Oral History Program? Or is there actually a real title...?

(RM): Well, I don't know. We go by a number of names. I think right now it's just kind of The Northern Michigan University Oral History Program; not that it's dealing with Northern, just that it's on Northern's campus. How that came about, or maybe I should go back and talk a little about how some of this came together and how we now have a title for some of this. From doing some oral histories then I had gotten some background but up through about 1982 it was just offering workshops. In June of 1981 Greta Swenson, who was involved with this program over at Northland College, came to Marquette looking for ethnic music. They had called me about a month prior and I tried to round up some different ethnic groups but in the city of Marquette there aren't that many. So I wrote to the ethnic churches, especially the Lutheran churches, I wrote to the pastors and then I knew which church was a German-Lutheran church, Swedish-Lutheran, Swedish-Methodist, and so on. I wrote to the churches and told them what I was doing and said send interested parties to this session we're having. So we had the session and there weren't too many people. I think there was more faculty from the history department there than there were participants. But anyway, there were some participants and we met and then as we got started in

walks Monsignor Spelgatti and Leonard Altibello from Ishpeming; I think they were the only church-kind-of-related group that sent somebody. None of the other ethnic groups sent anyone. So anyway, we were talking about doing oral interviews and the whole project about the ethnic groups and whatnot, and in the course of this conversation and discussion the Monsignor and Leonard Altibello said that they had funds that they had been gathering over the years; their Paesano Club of the Upper Peninsula had been gather funds for someone to do oral histories and gather the history of the Italians in at least Marquette County; I think that's as far as they were going to go.

(GJ): Okay, what was that?

(RM): The Paesano Club. It was...

(GJ): Was it church-related?

(RM): No, it was started in about 1963 by Monsignor Spelgatti to take the place of all of the defunct Italian clubs; there had been quite a few clubs in Marquette County and most of them died out by the 60s. So what he did was he organized this club with the idea of spreading branches all through the U.P. and its focus would be social and heritage preserving, and that this club would fund projects to preserve the heritage. So anyway, they had tried to get this project going in the early 60s and there was a fellow by the name of Vito Perrone, he was Italian background, but I think he no sooner got involved with the project that he obtained an administrative position on Northern's campus and then got into that, didn't have time for all of this research, and then eventually Vito went to, I think, North Dakota State College. Coincidentally, I was hired to replace him because he was their "Latin American" man; so I came on the scene then for Vito. So nothing was done with this project; when Perrone left that was the end of it. So for fourteen or fifteen years or so the project just stayed, accruing money, and so they presented me with this verbal proposition to get involved in such a project. I knew that the Italian communities in the Upper Peninsula were all scattered around and that the only record really there... Well I checked some of the things out and I found that there was very little printed material, a few odds and ends, and the stereotype stories that you hear of, that I heard of in the area you know, that said two different groups of Italians lived in Negaunee and Ishpeming and that everybody would forget that the South Italians were in Ishpeming and the North Italians were in Negaunee but you got stories like that; that was about the level of the knowledge. And that there was a Villa Capri and they served Italian food. So I knew that there were Italians in all the mining communities and so I was thinking about it and I'm thinking, well this is going to be a lot of traveling. There would have to be travel involved because you had to do oral interviews because no one had saved any record, and even some of these books that we were looking at here, club records and so on, these I saved. So when I started, these books weren't around; we had nothing. So anyway, after about six months I told them I would start the project. So from 1982 we started the project and I combed the Upper Peninsula and I gathered these oral interviews dealing specifically with the Italians. So today, at least the Italians in the Upper Peninsula, are well documented because of the process; I gathered over about 150 interviews and there were also photographs and artifacts and printed material, unpublished material. All of this then became part of the record that was all kind of gathered because of this interviewing.

(GJ): So from this then you were able to publish something on the Italians, was that just a census or was that what you had found from this program?

(RM) Well over the years now I've published a number of things; I did a number of things for the Chronicle, the Michigan Historical Society, on the literary and cultural tradition of the Italians in the U.P.,

for Harlow's Wooden Man, I think some of the early Italian immigrants, the female immigrants in the county. Then we've also, students have worked on some census data; now that isn't just Italians but it's other ethnic groups. So there have been many, many spin-offs from the original interviews into other projects. For instance, the one article; one was published and then another part was not published, and now it's going to be in a book that I'm coming out with entitled *Miners, Merchants, and Midwives: Italians in Michigan's Upper Peninsula*. But for instance, the work I did on the women immigrants, if there wasn't very much available on the Italians in general there was nothing available on the women and that article on the women in Marquette County and the manuscript I have for the women in the Upper Peninsula, everything there was gathered primarily, 99% of it, through oral interviews. Without the oral interviews there'd be no story; you'd have little bits and pieces. But here you had the oral interviews that gave you the human end of the story; what happened, the problems, and so on.

(GJ): What types of people would you interview, mostly the elderly?

(RM): Well in Upper Michigan now what has happened is that you're dealing with the second generation of Italians and Italian-Americans. The first generation pretty much died off by the 1960s, the bulk of them died off. Today, and I did interview some of these people, you would find people in their late 80s and in their 90s who were immigrants, many of those people I did interview, and most of them had passed away, some of them within a few days of interviewing them. Then, luckily, I've been able to get the sons and daughters of the immigrants and I say lucky because they remember; they grew up in the immigrant community, they grew up in the family setting, and the people I interviewed were really a wealth of information about the immigrants. The third generation, the fourth generation, had bypassed all of that, so you would find very little information, you'd find very vague stories if you start talking about the grandchildren and the great grandchildren of the original immigrants; there'd really be very little. What'll happen today is, they'll have to come back and listen to the tapes to find out what was going on in the Italian community of their great grandparents because a lot of that is gone; the process of assimilation takes over and a lot of the details, I'm talking about details. For instance, some of the things we're talking about and some of the things I'm going to have to do for research purposes is, for instance, to find out, and Italians are big on where they come from in Italy. I mean, articles are written on which group came from where and so it's not just Italians but it's the province they came from, the town they came from. For instance, Upper Michigan has a very interesting group of people because, as opposed to the rest of the country, especially the urban cities of the east and the Midwest – Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit – most of the Italians in Upper Michigan are from northern Italy, which is very, very rare in the United States. Usually they're from southern Italy; Sicily in particular. And so here we have a story that can be developed as to why did these people from northern Italy come to the Upper Peninsula? Obviously it was for mining, but by doing interviews now, and I have to go back and do some additional interviews with a new focus, is to go through the various names of people that you might find in a city directory and go to some old-timers, have them go through those names to find out where these people were from in Italy and possibly what towns were they from, and to see what the process of chain migration, the role of kinship. For instance, as you put some of these names together, people from clubs, you can see that there are numerous names that are similar. Now obviously they should be from the same family. By interviewing some people, you might be able to find more information about them. For instance, when I was up in the Copper Country interviewing the Vitone brothers – I think they sold out now but they had a big potato farm up there on Quincy Hill – and in the course of the interview they pointed out that this fellow Bart Quello, who was one of the original settlers up there, was a good friend of the Vitone family, and we're talking now the children of the children who are in their late 70s or early 80s, that they're telling me this. And so all of a sudden you have this immediate link that Quello obviously sent letters back to the old country telling friends and relatives over there to come on over;

there are jobs and there is opportunity. So the oral history, the oral interview, becomes extremely important because these people that I would be doing the interview with will know the names, and we're talking about that second generation. Now if you go and ask somebody say in the fourth generation who's lived in Detroit, and that's the other thing that's happened, today you're dealing with an older population because most of the third and fourth generation has had to leave and go down to the larger cities where there are jobs.

(GJ): ____ more advantage too you hope?

(RM): Well, for my work it's not a handicap, it does help out. And the people you're dealing with you know are probably second generation in most cases or they've lived in a small community and they've interacted; they haven't been kind of dispersed and heavily assimilated across larger urban areas. So this has been beneficial. Eventually though when all these people pass on, the only remains of those immigrants will be the tapes and that you can say for Italians, you can say for any ethnic group. Well, the Finns you'd probably have to discount because there are so many of them up here, but many of the other groups are basically dying out. The children, the grandchildren, come up in the summertime but really can't tell you about their heritage; what it was like growing up in the Copper Country, the mining country, or wherever they're at. So here we have kind of a unique situation, different than say if you were doing interviews in Detroit. The other thing that happens in this area is that you don't have an immigration, so you don't have new immigrants coming in to the area. I think I interviewed maybe three or four people who are immigrants, who are not very old, but who were immigrants who came say after World War II. You go down to Detroit and you'd be talking to people who are in their 40s who are immigrants ____ country. So there are some differences, but then you're looking at the history of this area and it's a different history.

(GJ): You touched on the problems. What do you feel will be the function of the whole history program as it develops and grows?

(RM): Well to date, the program still operates kind of in a haphazard fashion. We have now some hundred and fifty tapes on Italians in upper Michigan. Then I did some work and I have some tapes on Italians in lower Michigan. But in the process of these various workshops we've gotten additional tapes so now we probably have a collection of close to over two hundred tapes covering... it's kind of eclectic, we have different ethnic groups, we have different occupations. What I'm hoping for as the time permits is to, and as we get more students involved in the program and all, is that we eventually have a much stronger ongoing program. What the program would need is an infusion of grant money and that demands a certain amount of time and a certain amount of preparation, but Northern's history department is in the process of moving towards more of a public history type role where we do get into oral history. What's more important is that this is advertised and brought to the public and the student's attention so that people then know that these programs exist – this is the first time I've offered the oral history program as a course and not as a day workshop on campus, it's now being offered as a course. Now to get student support for something like that you have to offer it often, and then people know it's being offered and that way then you have a body of people trained and then you can go out and get your grant funding and then bring it in and then have these students, and you'd pay them and they'd become part of the program and they can go and do the interviews. So that's kind of in the long run as we have time and as we go along that's what I would like to do.

(GJ): What kind of focus do you plan to have with this program? It's going to have to be very broad isn't it?

(RM): Well, I think for convenience we would focus, in terms of area, on the central U.P. Marquette County... I guess you should think in terms of kind of rings which start with Marquette County and then work out. However, the other thing is that you will run into, well, your case is an example, you'll have somebody who's from another part of the Upper Peninsula that's say taking the course or attending Northern and maybe goes home every weekend. And then those people, if you're familiar with the community, say if you go up to Calumet, somebody is down here from Calumet, you can have them spend the weekends then since they know the community, getting interviews with people up there. In terms of the focus, my personal preference is ethnic history and I would eventually like to see all of the ethnic groups at least have representative oral histories. Now the Finns you can kind of check off because the Finnish people have done a great job to preserve their history with oral interviews, with movies, and all of this is done up at Suomi College so their heritage is safe and it's expanding in terms of the research being turned into books and articles and so on. As I pointed out, the Italians have had their material gathered but then there are many other ethnic groups – your various Yugoslov group, Slovenians, Croatians, the Poles, the large Polish population around the Upper Peninsula, the French-Canadians, the Germans, the Irish, the Cornish – all of these people. No one has gone out and done a study of all of these groups and all your Scandinavians. So what I would like to see is eventually maybe a focus would be the ethnic groups of Marquette County and we've done some work on that; we've done some preliminary work, but to do Marquette County and then possibly to do the Upper Peninsula so the pie in the future may be a monograph could be written on the ethnic groups of the Upper Peninsula. And I'd like to get away from the stereotypes and little stories that are told because like with the Italians you're just hitting the tip of the iceberg; you're getting cute stories but then as you clear through that you find that they had many, many lodges, they had a very complex society, there was a lot involved there. More than people would imagine. People are also quite surprised from lower Michigan, from the Detroit area, to hear that there were Italians, that there were large numbers of Poles, and Slovenians, and so on in upper Michigan. So it's kind of a whole history that's been forgotten about that has to be, and has to be done relatively quickly because there too we're dealing with people that are now in their 70s and 80s and if you look at the newspaper they're slowly going. Each day you look at the paper you see another name and that heritage is gone. So this is kind of a goal for the future is to develop a larger program, expand it, and then expand the whole thing to incorporate the whole U.P. And we've done a little bit of that. Through our workshops I have some interviews, non-Italian interviews of some people over at Finns and Swedes, those are kind of the two major groups in Newberry. We have some interviews of different ethnic groups from the Copper Country. Nothing done in a very thorough fashion, it's just kind of shotgun; some students were from the Copper Country, wanted to do a project, and we gave them the project. Then this last class we got some interviews with I think Croatians down in Escanaba. A few things like that. So that's kind of the focus; what I would like to get into in the future.

(GJ): Don't you think the Historical Societies could play a big role in promoting this type of program?

(RM): Well if there's the interest, and when I say interest I'm talking about the personnel, the volunteers, to do this. You have to remember that oral history is a very, very broad activity; you're dealing with many, many people. And so every little bit would help – Historical Societies, teachers – for instance, up in National Mine the teachers at the middle school there developed a program and have done the interviews, have gathered the interviews, and have turned them into slideshows and have done an excellent job in terms of gathering the local history in National Mine on tape. My concern for any of this is where are those tapes today? How accessible are those tapes to the researcher? Unfortunately, in National Mine, and people might get upset, but National Mine – right now, I cannot tell you where the tapes are, how accessible they are; I probably have some names of people that I

could call to find out, but I can't just right at my fingertips say yes, they're available through Northern's campus, they're available most working days of the year. I would say they're probably up at the National Mine school if they haven't been catalogued, they haven't been brought to the attention of the researching public, and if somebody were coming up to do a study of National Mine they would probably wonder into the community and wonder into the tapes, but there could be nothing planned ahead of time. A researcher someplace couldn't plan his work and say well I want to study National Mine and that type of thing, that has to be coordinated because in a sense you're kind of wasting valuable time if those oral interviews aren't available to researchers because what you want to do, you want to tape the... I mean you have various levels of research and the end product. You do interviews on the local level. You do interviews in Marquette County. You have that story. Sometimes those interviews will be developed into nice newspaper stories that get to the local public and the local public enjoys reading the article.

(GJ): I think that's where we see most of the oral history right now, is in those little short pieces that they put into those papers.

(RM): Yeah a glimpse of the past or something.

(GJ): Mhm.

(RM): Now that is one role, but then, and here I'm talking now kind of not as a local historian but a historian of American history, a lot of that like I was talking about the Italians in Calumet which can be a very nice, cute story that I can tell about what went on there through some of these tapes, but then when you start expanding that you begin to find that the history of the Upper Peninsula is not just a very local history but many of the things that happen have national ramifications. Now what happens if we check out these Italians and this can also be said of Finns, was upper Michigan's Copper Country the stepping stone? Was it say a second Ellis Island for immigrant miners? Did they come from their foreign country, Ellis Island, Calumet, and then out west? Now we know the Finns and the Italians did go to Buche, Montana and then from there you get little glimpses; they went to California to mine there, they went to Colorado, they went to Arizona, Oklahoma, they went to many, many places. We can talk about those things but by having these interviews and by having them available to researchers, you can then start developing larger histories and you can see how the Upper Peninsula, how the local history then, you know just kind of funnels into the national story and into things that people have never studied. Nobody has really ever studied the role of the immigrant miner. That has never been touched, and here we have kind of little model communities; Marquette, especially up in, well, Calumet and Marquette are going to be the two earliest mining areas in upper Michigan. So anything that you can look at in terms of the ethnic history and the ethnic background, for those two areas you can probably project on to the national scene in immigrant mining in the United States. This area would be a very important part of that and that history is going to be obtained right now, this period in time, is going to be obtained through oral interviews. So that's why what I would like to see is... I'm not talking about territoriality; I have my little territory and I'm going to dominate a particular area. What I would like to see is all of these people getting the sense of the professional nature of ____ oral history. Then beyond just using it in the local community, what role does our community play in the history of the nation? That then becomes important and that you'd like to get out. For instance, right now, I can see it. I've collected these tapes – we've been talking about these tapes I did on the Italians. Okay, the tapes are sitting here in this office. I'm working on a catalogue, when that catalogue comes out okay, people will know that these tapes are available. However, we are four to five hundred miles from a large metropolitan area. The University of Michigan is about four hundred and fifty miles from us; Michigan State a similar

distance; University of Wisconsin about six hours. When we talk about who is going to use this [as only] graduate students working on a dissertation we're off the main stream. The students are going to find it very difficult to come up here, the costs and so on. Even in the summertime there's going to be a certain cost so they're not going to use these materials. So there it becomes imperative and we've gotten some funding to have duplicate copies made of these tapes I've done and they're going to be sent to the Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota which is developing as kind of a regional center for various ethnic groups, not all ethnic groups, some ethnic groups; Italians are one of them, and they will have the tapes and those tapes will be used, where if they stay here they're not going to be used. So this is my concern is that we all collect the history so that there should be some... Northern should be kind of the agency that sets the standards and runs workshops, gets these people out doing the tapes, and then maybe gets a duplicate copy that is kept here and people come to the Northern campus and then you get a certain reputation that this is the center for oral history of the Upper Peninsula you come to Northern, then you will get people coming here and using these tapes. You have to establish that reputation. Or the other thing is to send ethnic tapes out to one of these universities that will attract researchers and that might be a little more convenient to get to. I'm a strong believer in getting those tapes out; I don't want them sitting up in an attic falling apart because then you might as well bury them with the interviewee that you interviewed because as they pass on and these tapes aren't available, it's done. The other thing is that we need many, many people doing interviews. I can't say hey, I'm capturing the market here I'm going to do all the interviews in Upper Michigan. That, it's impossible, the whole thing is a very foolish idea because you're talking about dozens of dozens of topics and people, of locations – you physically can't go to all these places. If you're working up in L'Anse – Baraga, I can't go up to L'Anse – Baraga, I have no intention of going to L'Anse – Baraga. It's impossible. So I would like to send these little cells out. You go out and you've taken this course now you work the L'Anse – Baraga area...

SIDE A ENDS

SIDE B BEGINS

(RM): ...and so then you go out, you do the interviews, you come back, we have them available, we have the facilities for instance to have catalogues made, to get these catalogues out to the state library, to the different libraries, and all working together and pooling resources and personnel and bringing all this together. This is what I envision eventually, is that we do something like this, that we get people like yourself Gail that will go out and become involved with the local historical society, set something up, take the training you've gotten from the class at Northern, bring it to that community, get around all the problems that you have, and come up with something and pass it on. Then you train other people and you have then a whole little program going in that town. Then if other people would do this and we were to tie this together then we'd be accomplishing what the Michigan Oral History Council would like to do; bringing all these people together and pulling together a network of oral historians.

(GJ): And as you said before too that time element is important in creating these programs when the second generation is still around, right?

(RM): At this point even in terms of topical history... Fishermen. How many old, commercial fishermen are still around? There's some around, but they're dying. So for instance, that would be a group to hit. Underground miners. There's no underground mining going on. There's mining going on at the Marquette Range but no underground mining; that's a different type of mining. There are people still around that have done it, but the old timers are going. So you have certain topics that you want to get to. And that goes back to the original idea of oral history that Alan Nevins at Columbia University in the

late 40s went out and saw that if you look at these obituaries, you're losing that history; that's another bit of history gone. That's why he got Columbia started back in 1946, '47, something like that. So it's imperative, the one big thing that I will say is that you go out, and you don't talk about it, you go out and you start doing the interviews and you get this information gathered and then the other thing is once it's gathered, make it available to the public. Even if you can't transcribe it, try to come up with an index, try to come up with something to make it easy for people to get to but the big thing is to make it available to the public so that researchers can use it and further develop the history of, in this case, the Upper Peninsula.

(GJ): Well thank you Dr. Magnaghi!

(RM): Okay, thank you!

END OF INTERVIEW