

The date is May 2, 2007 This is Joshua Kauppila interviewing Erich Beinlich.

*What is your date of birth?*

February 4, 1929

*Place of birth?*

Eastern Pennsylvania

*When did you work in the mining industry in the UP, what span?*

From 1952 to 1987

*For whom did you work?*

The company, Cleveland-Cliffs Iron

*How has your job changed over that span?*

Well it changed from starting out as a young junior mining engineer, and ending up as a executive management to general manager. So the change was from engineering to management.

*How has the mining itself changed over that period of time, any technological advances, any other changes to the industry?*

Well in this area of the UP the primary change was from underground mining to open pit mining. That was the big change, ultimately the underground phased out

*When did that change occur?*

The last of the underground? The last underground, I believe, was 1979 when Mather mine closed that was the end of underground iron ore mining.

*What exactly was your position with Cleveland-Cliffs when you were an executive, what were your duties?*

My final job you mean, as general manager. As general manager of North American mines, was actually the general manager of all the mines in Michigan and Canada. There were 2 pelletizing operations in Canada and of course the mines in Michigan. That was the North American mines and I was general manager of those, that group of mines. Under my management there would be all the different mines in that group

*What is the relationship between labor and management in this industry? Was there any disputes between workers and management, unions, conflicts?*

I think you could say the normal questions and problems and agreements that are made between union and management they persisted in the iron ore industry just like any other industry. there was, there were no great problems that hung over us all the time, there was a normal relationship between labor and management

*What do you think iron mining has contributed to the region and the UP as a whole?*

Actually its one of the lifebloods of the UP. Without iron mining, there probably wouldn't be nearly as much in the UP as there is today, because right from the mid-80's

on iron mining was a big thing in the UP growing and expanding economically. So it's a big part along with timber, mining probably are the two biggest things, in Superior... in the UP to become what it is.

*What do you think about the expansion of mining in this area, I believe they are talking about mining other things?*

I think it's very interesting, I think that there's a good possibility it's going to happen. There's quite a battle going on right now, as you know between the opposition and the people trying to start but there is value there is metals there, there going to have to be mined sometime. So if it isn't going to be done now, it's going to be sometime in the future, so I think it's a good thing, though really to start.

I could say only this, there is still a lot of reserves of iron ore in upper Michigan some people think that there's not any left. There is a lot of iron ore left in Michigan it depends on how long into the future before it becomes valued enough to become poor. Ore is only viable enough when you can make a profit but there is a lot of reserves yet, and some day there will be more mining of iron ore.

*Are they deeper reserves, is that why..?*

Both, both deep reserves and surface reserves. there deep reserves that Cleveland cliffs was interested in mining 20-30 years ago but as I said underground mining kind of went out of the picture but there is underground reserves in the future. Some day way off in the future, they'll be mined as necessitated.

*Why was the underground mining phased out?*

It's a matter of competition they just couldn't compete with the large, huge, open pit mines, these large tonnages and huge equipment. Underground was labor-intensive very labor-intensive, and open-pits were more equipment-intensive. And as labor costs got higher and higher, it hurt the undergrounds more and more.