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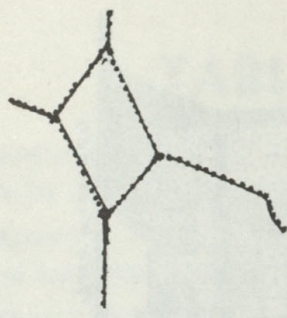
RED DUST®
1986

Maxine Honkala, Principal
Aspen Ridge Middle School
350 Aspen Ridge School Rd.
Ishpeming MI 49849

+ Sharon Richards

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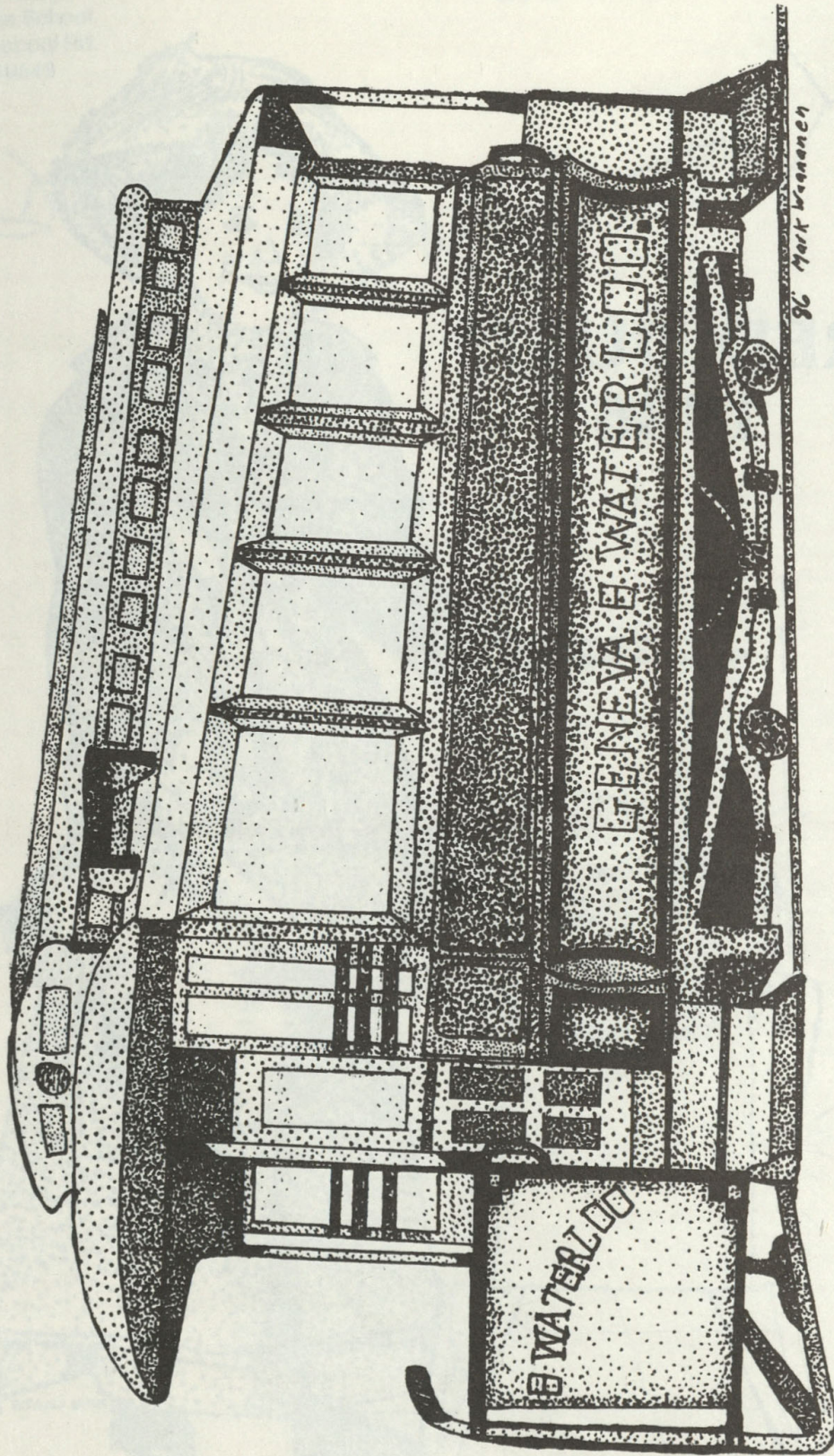
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In grateful
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Cover Photo: The old National Mine School, circa early 1900's.



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*Edited by Maxine Honkala, Sharon Richards and Brenda Striler
National Mine Middle School, National Mine, Michigan*

A special thanks to Superior View Studio and all who contributed their photographs.

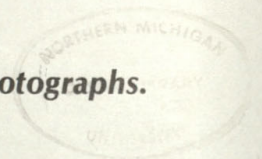


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PREFACE

During my 25 years as a member of the Board of Education of the National Mine School District and presently of the NICE Community School District, I have seen numerous changes in education, as well as new techniques in teaching and curriculum.

The *Red Dust* book of 1986 is in part about how men and women strived and sacrificed for better living and working conditions for underground miners.

I highly commend these students and teachers of the National Mine School for putting their time and effort in searching the archives of past history and contacting residents of the Upper Peninsula during this past century.

Elmer Aho - trustee
NICE Community School District



Red Dust '86, like the three previous editions, gives testimony to the professionalism and dedication of the educators directly involved in its preparation. The quality of the product demonstrates in a very unique manner the educational process at work; the fostering and cultivating of fertile young intellects.

This year's edition chronicles some poignant events in the history of the Marquette Range. Certainly, all the stories recorded by the students from interviews with local personalities enriches us all by making us better informed about the history and heritage of our area.

As a member of the NICE Board of Education, I find it extremely gratifying and rewarding to observe such an exemplary and successful educational venture. Congratulations to the students and their teachers. Keep up the fine work.

Robert S. Menard - trustee
NICE Community School District



Danielle
weyer
20

PATIENT'S COMFORT COMES FIRST



**Martha Koski Bennett,
student nurse at left.**

"It was stressed on us every day, ten times a day, patient's comfort comes first," were the words of Martha Bennett while reminiscing about her nursing career.

Mrs. Bennett was born in West Ishpeming. As a child she remembers, "We made our own play things. We'd take covers from pails and drive a nail and a stick through it, pretending it was a car and pushing it along. We'd take hoops from barrels and push them with a stick." As a child, Martha had six brothers and six sisters. Her father was a miner, but he owned a farm several miles from where they lived. "Every Saturday I had to clean the cupboards and take everything out, wash the shelves, and put everything back, and I hated that," Martha related laughingly.

Martha stated that doctors at that time weren't extremely well educated. If they had a problem case, they would look it up before making a diagnosis. She also remembered that dentists pulled out any tooth causing a problem.

As Martha reflected back on her childhood, she remembered Christmas as a special holiday. "That was the time of year my mother made a great, big layer cake and put white frosting and walnuts and coconuts on it. I used to see that I got the walnuts when she cut the cake," Martha relates, chuckling. Martha used to like to sew doll clothes, but claims she wasn't a very good seamstress. She also read a lot. "I used to go to the Carnegie Library and get a book and then I'd climb in the maple tree in our front yard, read and

sit up there, so no one could find me," Martha chuckled.

Martha attended Ishpeming High School and graduated in 1934. Almost a year later she decided to become a nurse. When I asked her why she went to nurse's training, her reply was, "My mother said I was too puny to do a good day's work so I might as well go to school." Martha's mother died when she was a freshmen in high school, so she never saw what Martha did with her life. "I was interested in secretarial work, but my family said, 'No way!' There wasn't money, they didn't trust me that far from home, so it was just impossible, and there were no secretarial jobs in the area." She continued her explanation, "You had to be eighteen before you could get into nurses training, and you had to be at least 5'3" tall. The reason for that was, the beds weren't those up and down beds like they have now, if you were less than 5'3", you couldn't reach the patient."

While Martha was in her probationary period of nursing, she had a rather unique experience. One night when she was going to supper, a truck screeched in the back of the hospital, two men jumped out and took an injured man out of the truck. His boot fell off and his leg was still in it! He had amputated his leg with a saw. This proved to be a startling introduction into the nursing profession.

During her training they had twelve hour working days. Classes ran concurrently with the floor duties. Six-thirty was chapel, then breakfast. They'd report to the floor at seven a.m. and have classes from nine to eleven a.m. and again from one to five p.m. Then, they'd go back to the floor and work until seven p.m. If they did something wrong, they had to do it over until they did it

right. One girl in the class ahead of Martha's was seen kissing her boyfriend in the lounge and was suspended. "Scholastic standing was important along with discipline, honesty, and good moral character," Martha stressed.

"I was put on probation in my junior year," Martha stated truthfully, "they had a memorial service for James Couzins who donated funds to the James Couzins Memorial Building, and I was working part of that afternoon and decided not to go. I had my cap and bib taken away and was put on probation."

Martha thought the nurses uniforms were "great"! She said it made them look like prisoners. They had blue and white uniforms with long sleeves and separate cuffs and collars which were starched so they were like cardboard. There was an apron over them which was voluminous, and the bib was so stiff, it was hard to sit down. The outfit was completed with black shoes and black stockings. Wearing hairnets was a must and having short fingernails was considered part of the uniform. "Wasn't that sexy?" Martha asked with a twinkle in her eye.

As a nurse they had to cook and deliver food to the patients. "But I didn't mind that too much because it gave me access to all the oranges I wanted, and I'd fill my pockets with oranges," Martha remembered smiling.

Martha loved pediatrics, but she picked up diseases from the children. One time she poked herself with a needle and got blood poisoning. Another time she got scarlet fever. In pediatrics, nurses took care of little babies just like mothers took care of them at home. They bathed them, held them, rocked, fed, and changed them.

Bathing procedures in the hospital have changed too. They take a wet towel and plop it on the patient's front, do the same to the back, and that's it," Martha related and added, "Baths don't sound like such a big thing, but that's when you learn any symptoms on a patient."



**Martha Bennett, R.N. with
Tommy Durfee, three-year
old pediatric patient.**

When Martha worked in the operating room, there was no such thing as disposable supplies like they have now. The nurses had to produce the applicators, cotton balls, gauze dressings, roller bandages, and intravenous solutions. Each floor had a dressing cart with large stainless steel bowls, which held cotton balls, applicators, and gauze sponges.

"One day I was helping a doctor with a dressing and he stuck his hand right into a container of sterile dressing and I said, "Aah, your hand isn't sterile!" He got furious with me and stomped off the floor. Years later when I was working at another hospital as supervisor, I questioned the same man about something he ordered for a patient because I thought it was hazardous to the patient's health. He refused to change the order, so I went to the Chief of Staff, and the Chief of Staff changed the order. That doctor didn't talk to me for five years after. I wasn't running for a popularity contest," Martha recalled with a determined look.

Martha feels that today's hospitals are better equipped and she feels more comfortable with the disposable supplies. The hospitals now have many more departments, a larger staff of doctors and nurses, and the nurses are relieved of many tasks such as squeezing oranges, and making toast. Things like this aren't really considered nursing, but there was nobody else to do them. In past years, bathrooms were not in every patient's room like they have now. In order to empty a bedpan, a nurse had to walk the distance of a hall.

Martha also remembers taking the Florence Nightingale vow in which they promised to live their lives in purity and practice their profession truthfully and restrain from whatever is deleterious and mischievous which meant no drugs, no booze, and no sexual misconduct. She continued nursing for forty years, retiring four years ago. Martha reported with a grin, "A lot of nurses aren't wearing their caps anymore, but I wore mine right to the last day." When I asked Martha if she'd like to become a nurse again, her gleeful reply was, "Nope, I'd like to become a carpenter." However, the tradition of nursing has been carried on in Martha's family as two of her daughters became nurses. "I tried to discourage them. I said there are easier ways to make a living, but they said I was their role model," Martha said laughingly. They both work in a hospital in California and Martha proudly stated, "They are both excellent nurses."

After visiting with Martha Bennett, I learned what nursing was really like. She was obviously a hard working, honest nurse. She believed in making her patient's comfort come first. I hope some day to become a nurse, and if I do, I'd like to be the kind of nurse she was.

Jill Wikman



COMING TO AMERICA

"But no school." Those were the words of my great-grandfather, Frank Valela, describing his early life before he came to the United States from Italy in 1913. Before he could enter first grade, he was already working in a lumber camp hauling logs for eighteen cents a day for a sixteen hour workday.

When he was two years old, his father, my great-great-grandfather, went to South America. The family received letters for seven or eight years, but then the letters stopped coming and his family never found out what happened to him.

These events in my great-grandfather's life formed the basis for the constant hard work and financial hardships that would last many years.

Frank Valela was born on September 13, 1895, in Simbario, Italy. He had one older and two younger sisters. Because of the situation with his father, he had to work at an early age to help support his family. During this time, his grandfather was sick, and his family had to support him and buy his medicine. This did not help their already strained financial status.

He came to the United States in 1913 after stopping at several European cities such as Rome, Milan, and Rotterdam. He then traveled across the Atlantic Ocean to Quebec. In Quebec, all the passengers on the boat were quarantined for several weeks. This was common practice if someone aboard the ship was found to have a communicable disease.

Next he went to Montreal with an Italian family of five. Two of them stayed at one boarding house and four at another.

He stayed there several weeks until his visa arrived. Great-grandfather then went to the counselor who informed him he needed twenty-five dollars and someone to support him before he could enter the United States. His older sister, who had emigrated to America before him, sent him the needed money. When it arrived, the Italian family he stayed with took him to the train station and he bought a ticket. His first scheduled stop was Chicago.

Arriving in Chicago, he discovered that he was too early for the train, so the conductor directed him to a nearby bench. Every time a train came into the station, great-grandfather would stand up and give his ticket to the conductor. The conductor would say, "Sit down, sit down," and bring him back to the bench. He spent the night there.

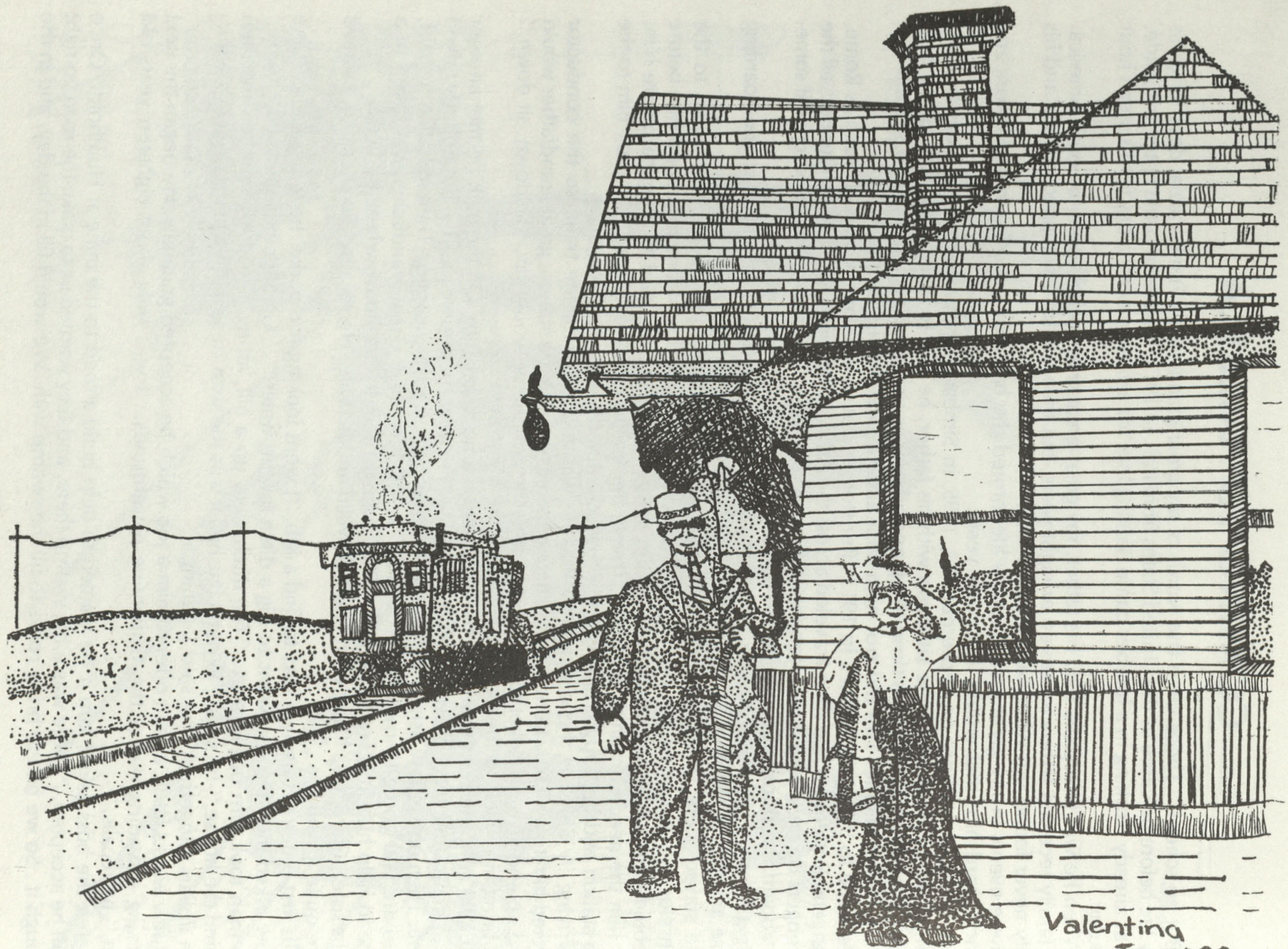
At 6:00 a.m. the next morning, the conductor came to get him. On the train he met another Italian man a few years older than him. He says, "I saw lots of people pass by, but nobody talked to me. Then one fellow asked me where I was going. I said, 'No capito,' Then in Italian he said, 'Who are you going to over here?' I said, 'Frank Sarvello.'" Great-grandfather was taken to a place to help him find Frank Sarvello. They brought him to the house where he lived.

His sister, Clara, was living with Frank Sarvello and his wife. He recalls, "So after that, I stayed there quite a while."

His first order of business was to find a job. "I went looking for work," he remembers. "One fellow asked me, 'Do you want to dig a ditch for the water?' " Great-grandfather said, "Sure." The man took him out to start. "The ditch went up a hill, along a road, up another hill, then behind the house," he says. "When I finished it was the sixth or seventh week. He gave me thirteen dollars altogether," he said laughing.

A few weeks later, a man offered him a job which he accepted gratefully. He began the next morning spreading dirt at the Ishpeming playgrounds. "I was only about eighteen years old then," he recalls.

Later, the boss asked him if he wanted to help build a road to the mine at Humboldt. Once again he accepted. "There was a big swamp there, and they wanted us to make the road go right through it. So we had to bring rocks to fill the swamp with. We would fill in the day, and in the



Valentina
Torreano

night, it would all sink down again. I worked another month there, then the job was finished," he remembered.

Much of the money he earned he sent home every two or three months to help support his mother.

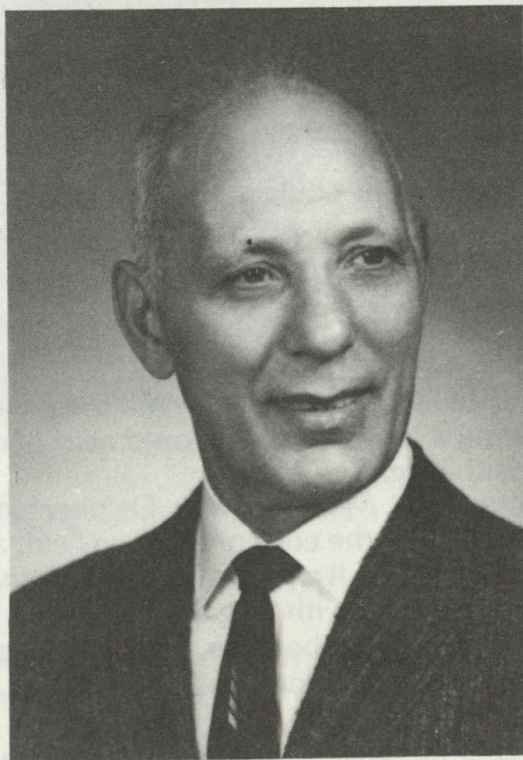
He then got a job in one of the mines in Ishpeming. He worked in the summer for four or five months. He quit working there and went to Diorite where he worked for a couple of months. His most permanent job was in another mine in Ishpeming where he worked until 1944. "I taught men how to mine," he continued. "Then I hurt my back, so I couldn't work, and I got to be shift boss."

"When I first came to this country, we wanted to make a band. There were about twenty-five or thirty of us who wanted it. I played the trombone and coronet," he said proudly. He was in the band from 1913 to 1926.

Great-grandfather belonged to several lodges such as the Moose Lodge and St. Anthony's among others. "I was president, secretary, and treasurer. I was everything in the lodge. We had a feast every year and everyone would come. We started it in 1918 and had it every year until 1966," he proclaimed. His band put on a concert every year. He added, "You don't remember, you're too young."

I probably would never have found out about it either if I had not done this interview. By interviewing my great-grandfather, I learned of the hardships an immigrant had to overcome. I was overwhelmed by the type of work he had to do for so little pay. I am proud of the diligence, courage, and effort of my great-grandfather.

Brian Joseph



Mr. Frank Valela

“ANYTHING THAT’S A LITTLE DIFFERENT OR INTERESTING”

Shirley Delongchamp, local free-lance writer, has lived all her life within a quarter of a mile of where she was born in 1929. She has written many stories about this area. She says, “I think one of the things I do is try to write inspiring stories.” She continued, “. . . Those are the stories I like to do.” I was interested in finding out about her writing as well as her life.

One of the stories she wrote was based on the Italian Hall disaster in Calumet, Michigan. I was particularly interested in this story because I and four of my classmates did a performance based on this historical event for History Day competitions. A man supposedly yelled “FIRE” at a striking miners Christmas Party. Consequently seventy-three or four people were trampled in the stairway. These lives were needlessly wasted because there was no fire. Mrs. Delongchamp and I discussed the discrepancy in the number of people that reportedly died in the tragedy.

People are the central focus of many of Mrs. Delongchamp’s stories. For example, she wrote about a blind lady, living in Marquette, who was running a little lunch store. When the woman’s son was twelve they rode by bicycle to Montreal and camped along the road all the way there. The blind woman then went on tour to Europe, by herself! It’s unbelievable that someone with such a visual impairment could do all that.

Mrs. Delongchamp interviewed a man who lived in Republic whose name was Ronald Reagan. In the course of the interview she asked him, “What is one of the funniest things you’ve encountered?” He replied that while on a trip he was going to call his wife, collect. The operator politely asked him, “Who’s calling?” His reply was, “Ronald Reagan.” He recalled that during a long pause he could hear her whispering, so he explained that he was a “different” Ronald Reagan.

This summer on a ride to Ontonagon, Michigan, Mrs. Delongchamp and her husband passed a little bee stand that sold honey. It was at the edge of an open field, and it had a sign, “YOU TAKE THE HONEY, YOU LEAVE THE MONEY.” It was a self-service arrangement with a change box on the stand. When she saw this she toyed with the idea of a story explaining, “For the big city newspapers this would make a great story, because he’s trusting people.” She took pictures of the stand and interviewed the owner. Her story was published in the *Bee Journal* and a Green Bay newspaper.

One story that really surprised me was the piece written about earthquakes in the Upper Peninsula. Mrs. Delongchamp said she found documented research that Upper Michigan has had fourteen or fifteen earthquakes. None of them killed anyone, but they did do damage. She



*Shirley Junak Delongchamp,
two months old.*

The Italian Hall at Calumet, Michigan.



Jennie '86'
Sundquist

discovered that we live on the Keweenaw Fault which was responsible for most of the earthquakes.

When Shirley Delongchamp begins her research, she goes to the Historical Society in Marquette or the basement of the Ishpeming Library, ". . . You kind of get to know the ladies down there and they know what kind of information they have. The help a lot," she declares. About fifty years ago there was a newspaper called the *Iron Ore* which she gets a lot of information from.

Although she has written hundreds of stories and has had her work published in over 70 magazines and newspapers, Shirley Delongchamp still has time for her family. In fact, what actually initiated her writing career was the birth of her youngest daughter who was born with a birth defect. Her daughter had to have many surgeries which made Mrs. Delonchamp very depressed. The doctor asked her, "Is there anything that you liked before, that you could go into

now to take your mind off your daughter's problems?" She replied, "Well, I always liked to write." The doctor encouraged her to write. She took a two year correspondence course in creative writing from the New York Institute of America. Before she finished the course, she had her work published in magazines! "I was sort of hooked," she laughed.

Her husband helps her out. She explained, "He's my best critic. I read everything I write at least three or four times, and when I think I have it down to where I've got all the wording right, I usually ask him to read it. He's good about it because he can tell me right away if I've got an interesting story that you want to read to the end. I value his opinion."

Mrs. Delongchamp has seven children, all but the oldest and youngest are married. "I get mad at my kids when they need quiet, because when I first started writing, when I was taking my course, I had seven kids screaming at me, and I'd be typing away. I was trying to take care of the house, them, and a hundred other things. I did my first writing amidst noise you wouldn't believe!" chuckled Mrs. Delongchamp.

Mrs. Johnson, also a writer, wrote a story about Mrs. Delongchamp which won a national contest. Mrs. Delongchamp was supposed to go to San Francisco to accept a plaque. She didn't go since the sponsor only paid her way, and she didn't want to go alone.

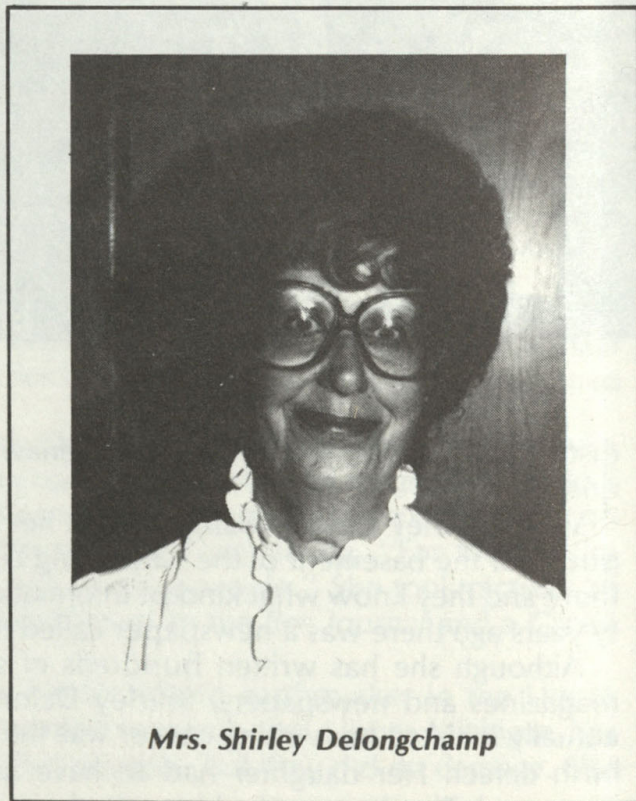
Mrs. Delongchamp was also Writer of the Year in the Upper Peninsula. The *Mining Journal* did a story on her after she received the award.

One of Shirley Delongchamp's loves is traveling. She has been to the Communist countries of Czechoslovakia, Poland, and East Germany. ". . .I've been to three of the Communist countries, which are very interesting because you find out how much you have going for you in America." she explained. The Scandinavian countries she has traveled to are, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. ". . .They are very similar to the Upper Peninsula," she relates.

Other countries she has visited include: West Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Greece, Mexico and Canada.

Shirley Delongchamp is always looking for a story, "You kind of keep your eye out for anything that's a little different or interesting. I find we're sort of unique up here in the Upper Peninsula. People kind of do their own thing compared to people in the city." She is certainly right about that because Shirley Delongchamp is one of those unique people who exhibits interest and caring for others, and she is willing to share her talents with us, her readers.

Jennie Sundquist



Mrs. Shirley Delongchamp

"I'M HAVING SO MUCH FUN"

"We were all good friends in North Lake, that's all we had. We never did much as far as getting out of North Lake; everybody stuck around together," commented my uncle, Norman Pennala, as he recalled the days of his youth.

Norman Pennala was born on July 19, 1922, in his parents' home. He said, "We didn't go to the hospital in those days; we were born right in the houses we lived in." He had three sisters, two older and one younger. His father, Victor Pennala, worked for Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company as did most families in North Lake. His mother's name was Hattie Pennala.

Uncle Norman lived in North Lake for thirty-eight years. He told me that he and his friends really stayed close to the North Lake area and had fun playing together. They used to ski, sleigh ride, and sometimes they would see a movie which cost ten cents. After the movies, they would then act the show out themselves pretending that they were the pirates or the captains of a ship.

The North Lake location is surrounded by a wooded area so I asked my uncle if he hunted when he was young. He remarked, "Oh! yes, we hunted rabbits and we hunted deer. One of our biggest things when we were younger was to go snaring rabbits. We never took a gun but we went around the town setting snares in all the swamps." His only gun was a twenty-two, a single shot twenty-two.

Health care was much different in my Uncle Norman's youth than it is now. When I asked him what it was like to be sick when he was young, he told me, "When we were sick, we just had to tough it out at home. There was a doctor. If he came, that was the only way. We couldn't get to the hospital. I don't think I was to the hospital when I was growing up at all. The doctors came to our house if you had the real emergency, but they came if they thought it warranted it."

When I asked him to describe his days in school, he replied, "Well, there wasn't much to do but go to school; I think the majority of us liked it. We looked forward to going to school; it was one of our big things in North Lake at that time. He said the principal was pretty strict, so everybody "towed the line." The principal kept them pretty well in rein. When they got punished, the principal would rap them on the knuckles with the straight edge of the ruler and it hurt. My uncle also mentioned that they had a lot of homework and that they walked to school. He did not have it so bad as he lived only down the road from the school. He proclaimed, "We had to learn at North Lake. It was a good school." Leaving many happy memories at the North Lake School, he continued his education at Ishpeming High School where he graduated in 1940.

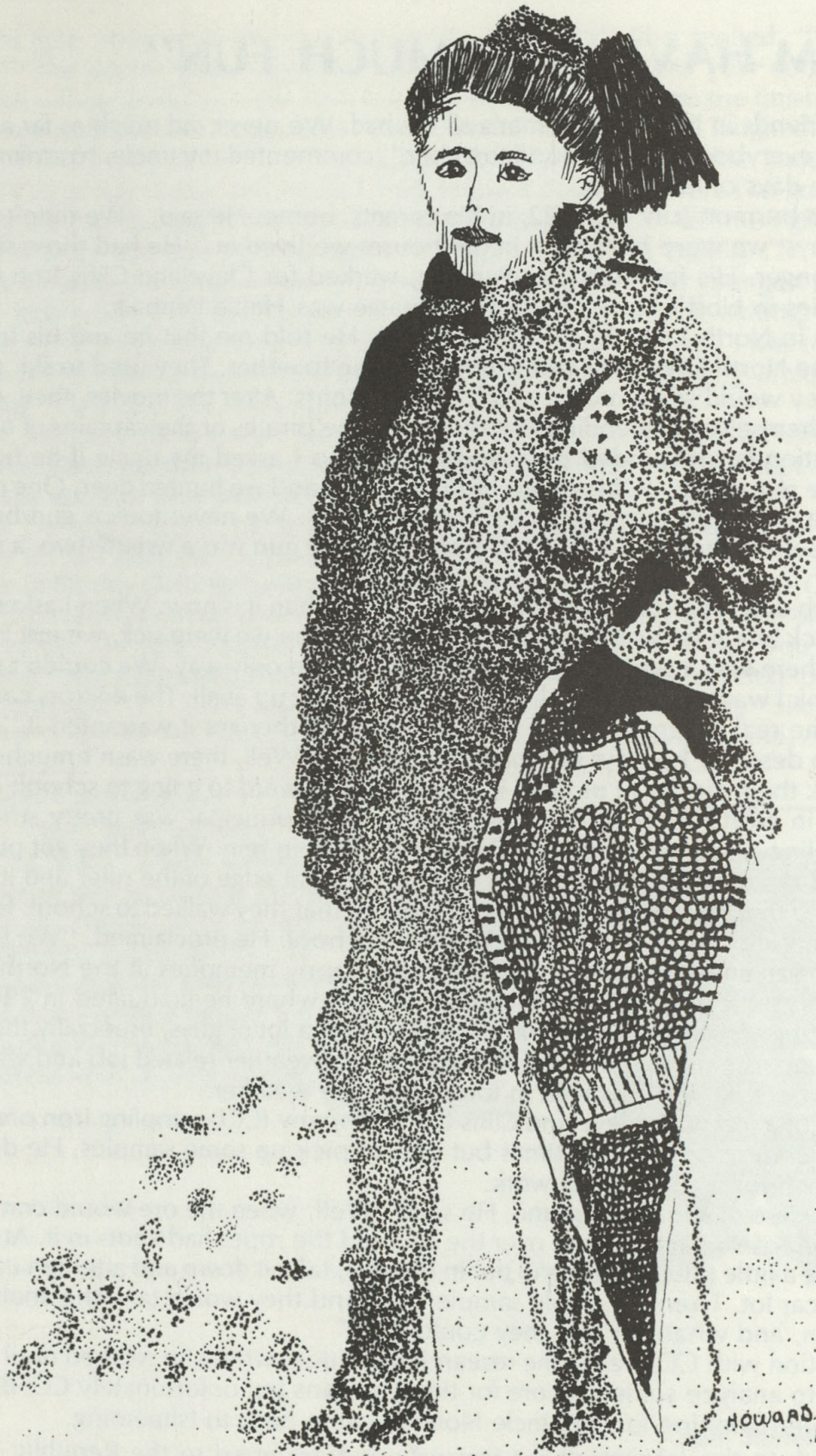
Following graduation he served in World War II. He said that a lot of guys, especially those in combat, had it a lot rougher than he did. He was assigned to a weather related job and was stationed in Greenland, where he was involved in forecasting the weather.

After the service he got a job with Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company (CCI) sampling iron ore from railroad cars. He went underground a few times but only to pick up some samples. He did not think he had the stomach for underground work.

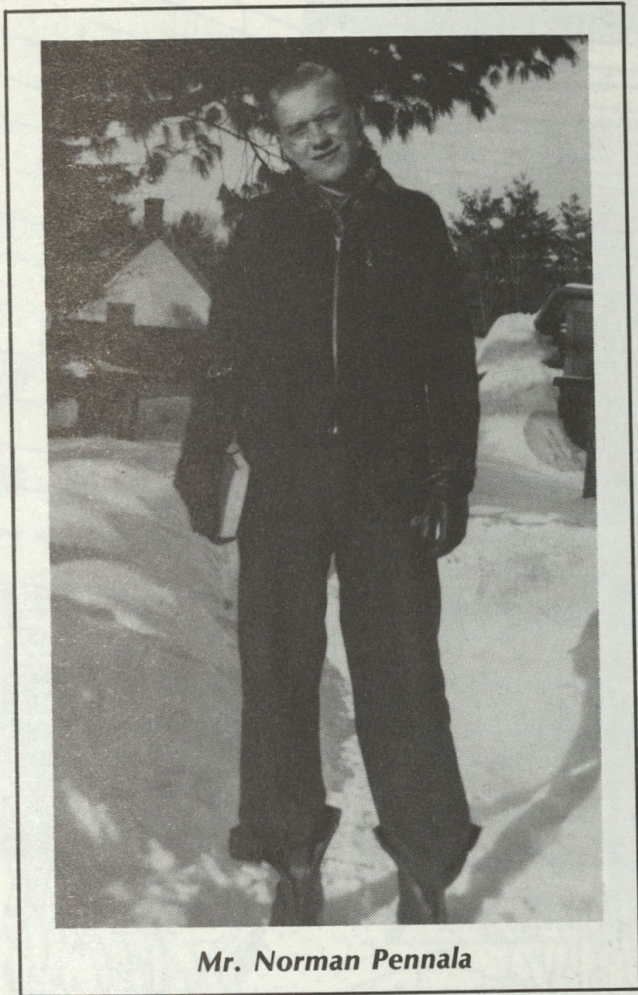
He described the process of sampling for me. He said, "Well, when the ore would come up, we would have a method of throwing a rope over the cars and the ropes had knots in it. At every knot end we would take a little piece of ore and put in in a pail, take it down and after ten cars we would call them a ten-car lot. Then we would sample them and they would take the analysis at the labs for iron, silicon, and whatever else they could find."

My uncle's next position with CCI was in the research laboratory where he worked until 1960. He also went to Brazil to analyze some iron ore for the Brazilians but unfortunately CCI did not get the property they were looking for, so Uncle Norman came back to Ishpeming.

He never did go back to the laboratory but instead was transferred to the Republic Plant. When I asked my uncle what he did in the mill, he gave me a detailed explanation, "Well we



HOWARD WOOD
1986



Mr. Norman Pennala

made these pellets which was just like a concentrate. We in the mill would concentrate the iron. It would come in about a thirty percent iron ore, maybe a little bit more, it would vary, and by the process of grinding and flotation, and so forth, we would get the concentrate to about sixty-sixty-two or sixty-three percent iron. Then they would send it to the pellet plant and mix the concentrate with a bentonite, so many pounds per ton, and then we would send it through a process of pelletizing. After they got it balled, they'd send it through the grate and start it off at low heats. As it traveled along the grate, it would eventually get up to 1800 degrees or 2,000 degrees and from there it would slide down into the rotary kiln. The rotary kiln would be moving around. These balls would be rolling around inside these pellets or the pellets would heat them to about 2,300 to 2,380 degrees or whatever the process demanded at that time. The ores would fluctuate and you had to play it by ear. After they heated it to that extent it would come out the other end of the kiln. We put them into a cooler which was shaped like a donut. There was air blowing up through the bed in the cooler. It cooled the pellets until it made one complete revolution and then they'd dump them down into a chute or either the stock pile. This process would take them about forty-five minutes."

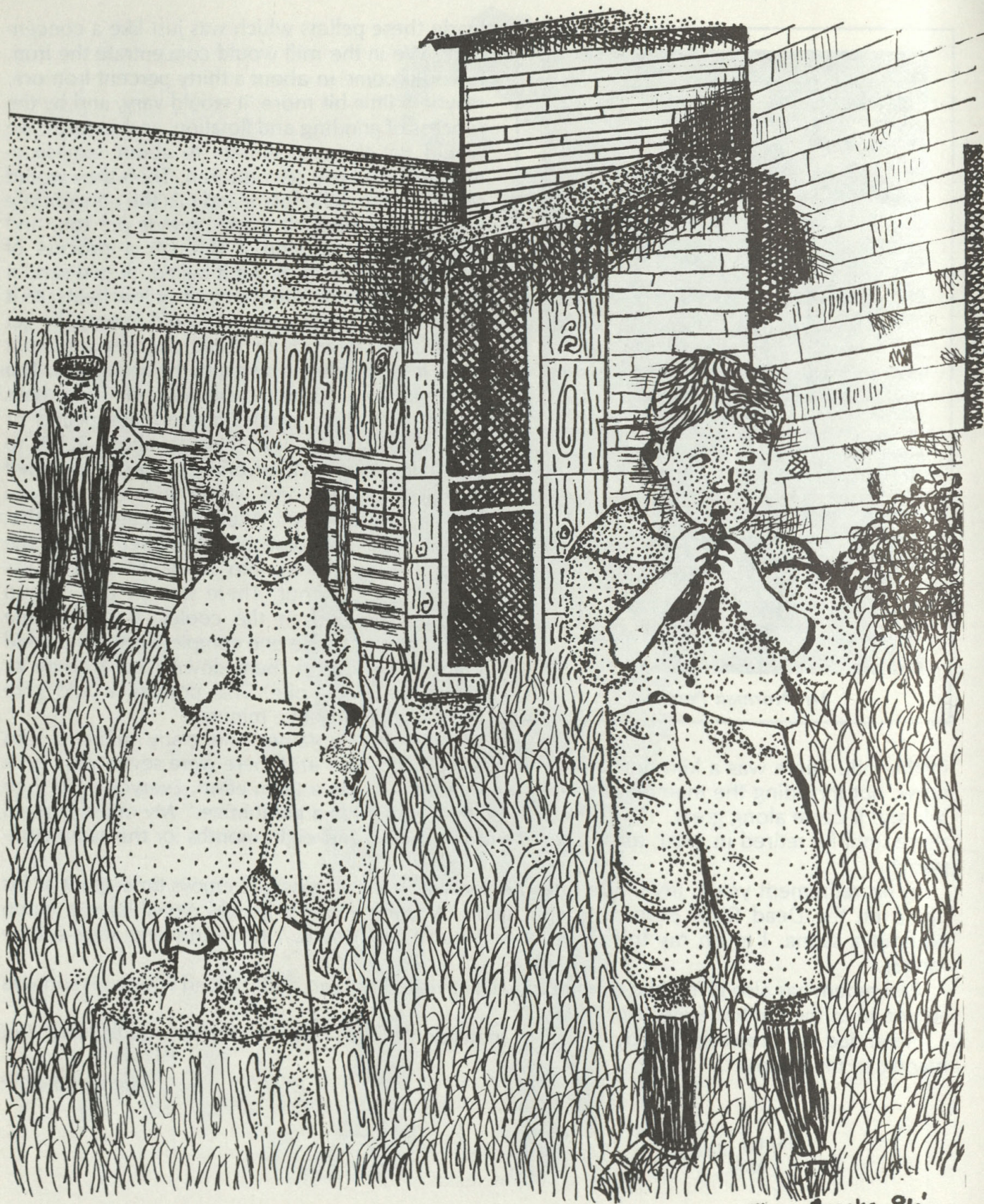
My uncle explained the many different jobs in the mill. There was a kiln operator who was the head man and there were seven guys on a crew, not including the maintenance men. He stated, "It was a team effort. Everyone did their job and it came along great. . . I think the Republic Mine was a great mine." My uncle worked there until he retired in 1981, after a service of forty years and eight months for the same company!

In his retirement years, my uncle rides his snowmobile and skis and enjoys time spent at his camp on the Dead River Basin. He chuckled, "A true Finlander would never have a camp without a sauna. I'm on my third one now, I burnt two down. I hope this one stays a little longer."

Retirement has also given him time to travel. He visited Finland and England where his son was stationed in the United States Air Force.

He ended our time together by saying, "I really don't know how I had time to go to work, I'm having so much fun!"

Michael Bjorne



Terrri Brooks 86'

HOMEMADE BREW



Mrs. Teresa Bertucci, 1942

My great-grandmother, a petite woman with a wonderful personality and a warm heart, invited me into her apartment and eagerly began to tell me about our family.

Great-grandmother's story began with her childhood. I listened as she told me that when she was young her sister married which meant that great-grandmother had to quit school to care for their ill mother.

When I asked about her marriage, she replied that she had married at seventeen and raised six children during the Great Depression. Rearing six children through the Depression was difficult. She recalls a time when she had to count the pieces of bread. Many times she and her husband would go without bread so that the children would have enough to eat. She also told me that her children went barefoot. When she tried to buy shoes for her son, Dominic, she could not get the necessary credit because she had a credit balance of \$100.00 at the store. Unfortunately, \$100.00 was the upper limit the store would permit. When she asked for more credit to buy the shoes, the storekeeper turned her down. Imagine having to count bread slices and going barefoot! I began to realize how tough her life must have been.

During Prohibition, the production, distribution, and possession of alcohol was forbidden. My great-grandmother shared with me and reminisced about her days of moonshining, a subject that interested me very much. She explained to me about the ingredients and process that go into the making of moonshine.

The ingredients were corn flour, sugar, and yeast which had to be purchased. Four or five pounds of yeast were purchased in one pound bricks from a restaurant or bakery for one dollar a

pound. She added that moonshine wasn't very expensive to make.

Great-grandma's job was to make a paste out of flour and corn starch. This would be put around the edges of the twenty-five gallon boiler so no air would get in. The boiler itself was not very large and it had copper pipes coming from it.

The moonshine was placed into the boiler and the process began which sometimes took a whole day. After boiling, the moonshine would fall a drop at a time into charcoal lined barrels, where the two-week aging process started. Then my great-grandmother would burn sugar to add a little coloring to the moonshine. She added that it looked like brandy after the sugar was added.

I realized that because of Prohibition everyone was afraid of the law. My great-grandma confirmed this and recalled that they kept the shades pulled down and everyone was kept quiet on the day when they made the moonshine. The fear of discovery made them very cautious and my great-grandmother was happy when her husband destroyed the machine that she feared would get in the wrong hands. Great-grandmother also told me that she didn't like her husband making moonshine. She said with a laugh, "Ya know he was afraid and I was afraid so I kept pounding on him."

Wine was another beverage my great-grandfather made. He raised grapes in his own garden. Great-grandmother's eyes lit up as she talked about how much great-grandpa loved his garden. She remembered him often sharing his vegetables with his neighbors.

I was grateful for the time spent with my great-grandmother as she made me realize the importance of the history of my family. I greatly appreciate her telling me about my ethnic roots. She concluded our interview by saying, "Now I have a good life I must have suffered enough then."

Kristie Bertucci



“LAND OF OPPORTUNITY”

Mr. Adrian Comment, who is a French chef, has cooked for many famous people such as John F. Kennedy, Louis Kung, and other millionaires. Being Mr. Comment's neighbor, I was anxious to know more about his background so recently I interviewed him.

Mr. Comment was born in Biel, Switzerland, which is located in Bern. He lived there through part of his childhood and then moved to the Jura country and lived there until he was sixteen. When I questioned Mr. Comment about his school days, he replied, “Not like they are today!”

His father was a stone cutter and made gigantic pieces of art while his mother stayed at home. Mr. Comment spoke French but at the dinner table he remembers his parents conversation was always in German.

When I questioned Mr. Comment about how he became a chef he told me he had to participate in the Hotel School which is similar to a four-year college. “Before you do that,” he explained, “You have to be one year butcher and one year pastry man or baker. You pass an exam and go to the Hotel School for four years where you learn not only chef, you learn serving at the table. It takes a total of six years and then you are recognized by the federal government as a chef,” explained Mr. Comment. Mr. Comment served as a chef in several places.

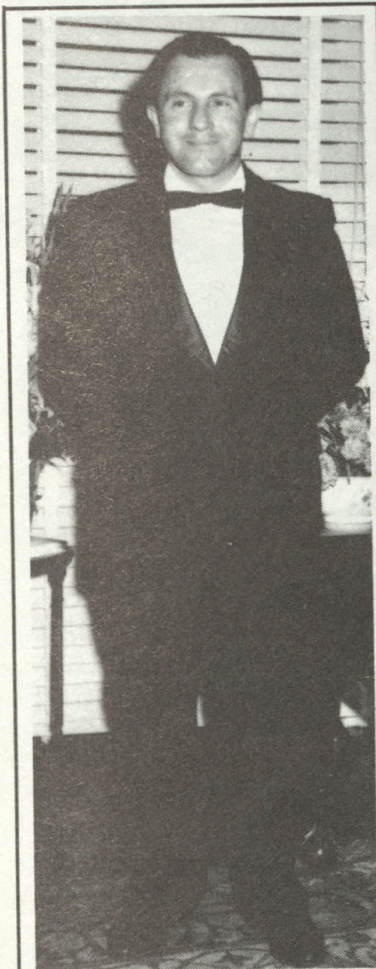
Mr. Comment worked throughout the winter season in the mountains where rich people came to ski. Another job Mr. Comment had was in North Africa for a very wealthy man, who had two mansions, one in Casablanca and one in the Sahara Desert. He worked there for four years and then quit because of the heat.

Mr. Comment came to America because he was asked by a woman if he would be willing to come to the United States to work for her and he replied, “Well, if the pay is good I'm coming.” In 1954 he did come to the United States but he didn't go to work for that person because at the time working for a private household didn't appeal to him. After a year he decided that he would work in Virginia for the wife of Mr. H.D. Auchincloss, the mother of Jacqueline Kennedy. Mr. Comment stayed with the Auchincloss family for five years. Every summer they went to Newport, Rhode Island, where they owned an enormous mansion. Sometimes when Mr. Comment was there he would work for Jack and Jacqueline Kennedy, especially in the summer when Mr. Auchincloss went to Europe or on a vacation. Mr. Comment enjoyed working for the Kennedys. He remembers their favorite foods were lamb, chicken with champagne, lobster, shrimp and fish. Many times when Senator Kennedy came home late from the Senate he would request an angel food cake with ice cream and Mr. Comment would bake one for him. Although he liked working for the Kennedys he left the family in 1954 to go to Texas.

While he was in Texas he worked for an oil man. His name was Louis Jung; who was the nephew of Chiang Kai-Shek. He worked there for four years and then came here to the Upper Peninsula which Mr. Comment referred to as ‘God's Country’.

Mr. Comment has led a very interesting life and I'm glad that he took the time to share it with me.

Sandy Bystrom

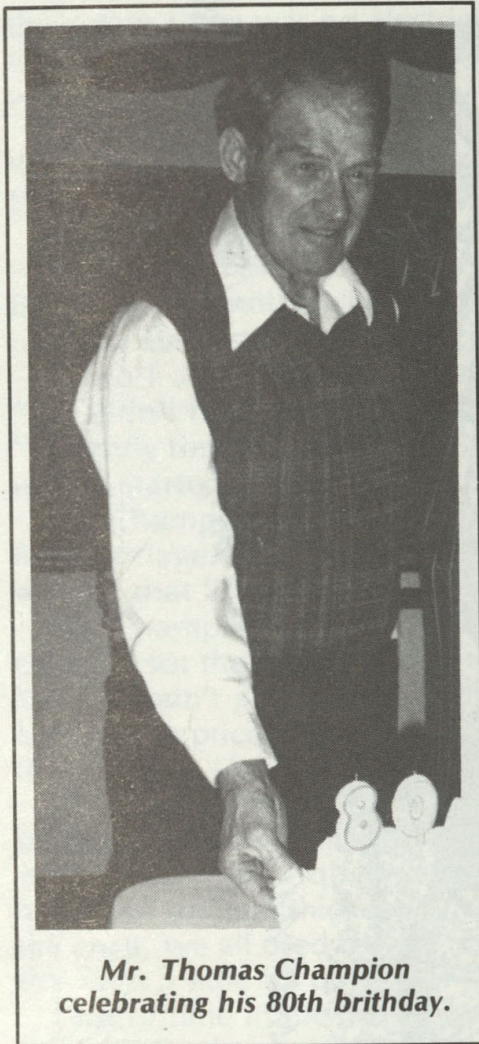


Mr. Adrian Comment



Kristin Nelson
810

"TOO MUCH OF A HURRY"



**Mr. Thomas Champion
celebrating his 80th birthday.**

Mr. Champion believed that in many ways the past was better than the present. In a recent interview, he shared with me the reasons for those feelings.

Thomas Champion was born on December 8, 1903, in National Mine. He was a very responsible young man, and he told me about some chores he had to do. "After school, I had to carry water for other people around the location. I got fifty cents a month and carried two pails of water every night after school. That was big pay in them days." He continued, "I had to bring the wood up to our house. You had to have the wood in the house and have the water in. The hay had to be cut, the gardens had to be trimmed. You had to have everything in the garden stored away for the winter. But there was plenty of fish, any little stream had beautiful trout, any little swamp had beautiful rabbits, any hill had partridge, and any little hill you stood on you could see a deer."

Mr. Champion used to live by the Hercules Powder Plant and he would walk home to eat lunch. Students had one hour to walk home, eat lunch, and walk back. Tom went to school until the 8th grade at the National Mine School.

Mr. Champion had two brothers and six sisters. I asked him if he ever had to take care of his brothers and sisters, his reply was "No, I had nothing to do with them. My mother and dad did, and they were good folks. They took care of us and worked too."

He explained how doctors visited homes when people got sick. For transportation in the summer doctors used horses and buggies, while in the winter they used cutters.

Doctors were paid one dollar a month from everybody in the location.

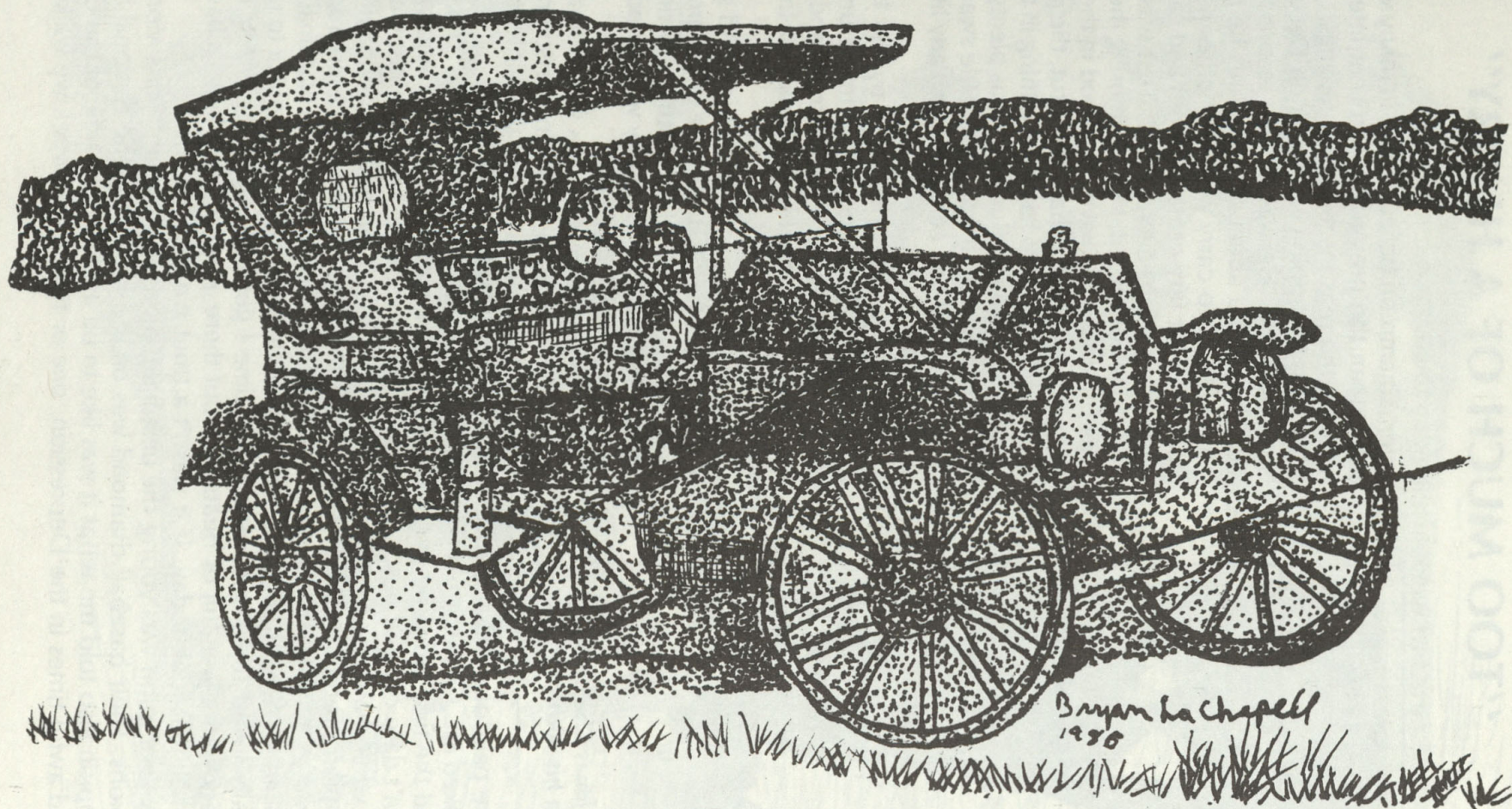
When I asked Mr. Champion if they had home remedies his reply was, "You never had a cold. You coughed the first time and your dad would give you a spoonful of sugar and kerosene oil, and you didn't dare cough the second time!" He never went to the dentist when he was a boy. He recalled when having a toothache, "We just suffer it out and be done with it."

Mr. Champion lived in National Mine until 1924, when he married a girl from Salisbury. After that he moved to Woods, Wisconsin. However, he later returned to National Mine.

When I asked Mr. Champion what he did in his leisure time he was quick to reply, "I loved the woods, I really loved the woods and every time I got off I was out hunting rabbits, deer and fishing." Every spring was full of beautiful trout there was no such thing as bass and junk that's what we call all that junk today. If it wasn't a trout we didn't want it."

When Mr. Champion was young the best hardball team was the "Brass Monkeys" who were state champions. Their baseball diamond was on the flat below the National Mine School.

Mr. Champion also told me what it was like to be a boy in the time of the Great Depression. "Oh, we had awful times in the Depression, one or two days a week we walked from National



Mine to Negaunee. We worked in a rock cut over there and we worked ten hour shifts, we got \$5.00 a week."

Mr. Champion started to work in the mine when he was fifteen. Mr. Champion told me, "In them days there was no electricity, but we had old carbide lamps to put on our heads. The old timers still had candles on their hats. I had ten hour shifts and got \$2.25 and got \$15.52 for a two week payday."

When he worked in the mine, his lunch mainly consisted of deer meat pasties, "My mother was a beautiful cook. We had a nice big hot pasty that would melt in your mouth. You don't get them today, there was no hamburger in them. There was always good meat and plenty of it."

Mr. Champion worked in the Blueberry Mine near the Barnes-Hecker and he was in that mine when the Barnes-Hecker lost 51 men. "There were a couple of men that got killed in the Blueberry, but nothing like the Barnes-Hecker," Mr. Champion replied. According to Mr. Champion the Barnes-Heckers surface all fell in.

When I asked Mr. Champion if he were ever scared working in the mine, I got his answer, "We didn't have time to be scared. We had to get our ten hour shifts in." I chuckled as he said, "The only time I'd be scared is if a bear got up behind me. I could beat him any time after once we got started."

Mr. Champion was married twice in his lifetime. "When I was married I was twenty-one the first marriage. Two beautiful women, I was the luckiest man on earth. I got two of the nicest women that lived in this country," Mr. Champion proudly responds.

Mr. Champion recently celebrated his 82nd birthday. I asked him if he thought times have changed for the better, and he was very quick to reply, "Good God, girl, you ain't got nothing. You kids ain't got nothing. Everybody is out of work, and nobody is able to pay for anything. Look at the price of the automobile today. We could buy a brand new car for \$400. But \$400 in them days is like \$4000 today.

He recalled the better times of the past saying, "You buy bread today and you could squish it before you eat it — making a little basketball or a little baseball out of your loaf of bread. The whole family got a square meal out of the homemade bread. Slices were one-half inch to three-fourths of an inch thick. Why you think you were in heaven to smell that nice hot bread. Then the crust, we all used to fight for the crust of the bread, to get a little bit of homemade butter on that with a little bit of homemade jam. Everything was homemade, everything," he explained.

Leisure time in the summer was spent with family. Mr. Champion recalled riding all day in a Model-T Ford to get to Presque Isle in Marquette. "We had a beautiful picnic while we were there and there was ice cream for the kids. The band played for us and you don't see hardly any of that today."

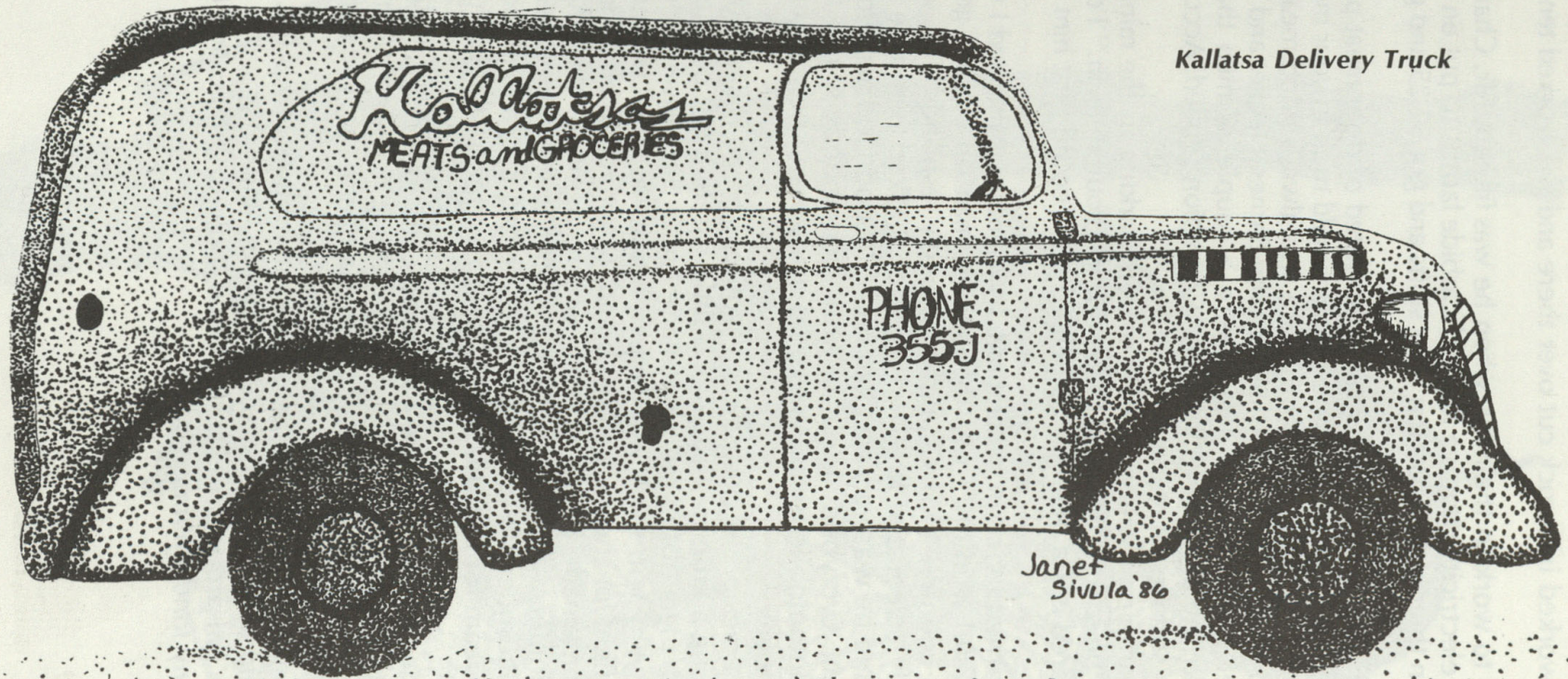
In a kidding manner he tells me, "These days people are in too much of a hurry. You kids, your life is going too fast. You're going 90 m.p.h. and doing nothing. What do you gotta be in Marquette for in five minutes? Tell me that! What's in Marquette that you need to be there in ten minutes?"

Mr. Champion was very open with me, sharing many things in his life. He was a very interesting man and I would like to give a special thanks to him.

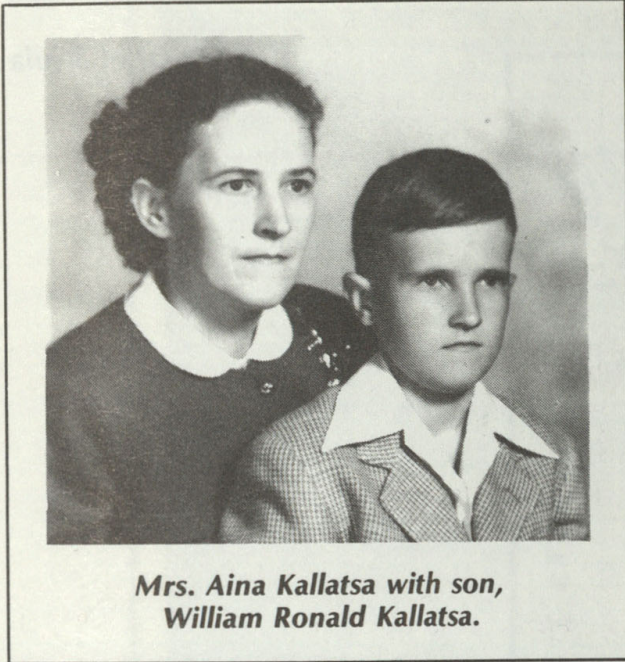
(Mr. Champion lived a full productive life. In March, prior to publication of Red Dust '86, he passed away, leaving many fond memories.)

Diana Thibeault

Kallatsa Delivery Truck



KALLATSA'S MARKET



**Mrs. Aina Kallatsa with son,
William Ronald Kallatsa.**

"Well, Bill enjoyed the business because he was raised there. He always wanted to be in the store business, but it was something I had to learn. I didn't care for it that much."

This was the reply of Mrs. Aina Kallatsa when I talked to her about owning a grocery store for 31 years. As I talked to Mrs. Kallatsa, I learned what it was like to own and manage a grocery business.

Mrs. Kallatsa was born on August 1, 1909. She was born on 280 Steel Street in West Ishpeming which is my grandparents' house. Her parents both came from Finland at an early age. Her father worked in the Barnum Mine for many years, but after he lost a foot in a mining accident, he began a small farm.

Mrs. Kallatsa attended grammar school through the eighth grade and graduated from Ishpeming High School.

In 1934, she married William E. Kallatsa. Bill Kallatsa and John Harsila took a two-year lease on

a store that was owned by Mr. Nick Lahti. They called the store Kallatsa and Harsila. After two years, they decided they needed a bigger building since the store was becoming very crowded. They put up a new building on 170 Silver Street, with living quarters upstairs. In 1936, the new building was ready for business. The next year Bill bought out John Harsila's share in the business. The store became known as Kallatsa's Market.

In the 1940's, Bill began having health problems. Bill had exploratory surgery and the doctor's diagnosis was cancer. He traveled to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, where the doctors gave him six months to live.

On June 13, 1945, Bill passed away, just ten days before their young son's ninth birthday. Mrs. Kallatsa knew she had to work because she was left with a business and a young son.

The grocery business was changing, "When we first started. . .cookies were in little box caddies, and brown sugar and powdered sugar in fifty pound bags. Nothing was packaged, we had to package them ourselves," said Mrs. Kallatsa, ". . .in the 1950's, when self service in stores became popular. . .we got shopping carts and we had a check out and packaged goods. The store sold mostly groceries, but dry goods, some clothes, and some medicine were added."

The work force included a full-time butcher, a delivery man, someone at the check out, and Mrs. Kallatsa. When they first opened, they needed a delivery man because not many people had cars. ". . .That's why we did so much delivery service, because people didn't always have cars. They didn't have telephones or refrigerators, so we had to be open a long time," laughs Mrs. Kallatsa. They delivered twice a week to North Lake and every Saturday around the location.

For many years, Kallatsa's Market was the only store around, until some businessmen put up a store on the highway. Most of her customers were from West Ishpeming, but they had some from Barnum Location, North Lake, and surrounding areas.

In 1965, Mrs. Kallatsa decided to change the store into apartments. For many weeks, they had "Going-Out-Of-Business" sales. "I hired carpenters and Kallatsa's Market was a thing of the past, after 31 years 1934-1965," says Mrs. Kallatsa.

Mrs. Aina Kallatsa still lives on 170 Silver Street in one of the downstairs apartments. She travels a little and spends some of her summers at a cottage near Gwinn.

She hasn't forgotten the customers though and added, "Their support and loyalty made it all seem worthwhile."

Janet Sivula



16th Anniversary
★ EVENT ★

Free Coffee, Crackers, Cheese and Cookies
WILL BE SERVED FROM 2-5 FRIDAY

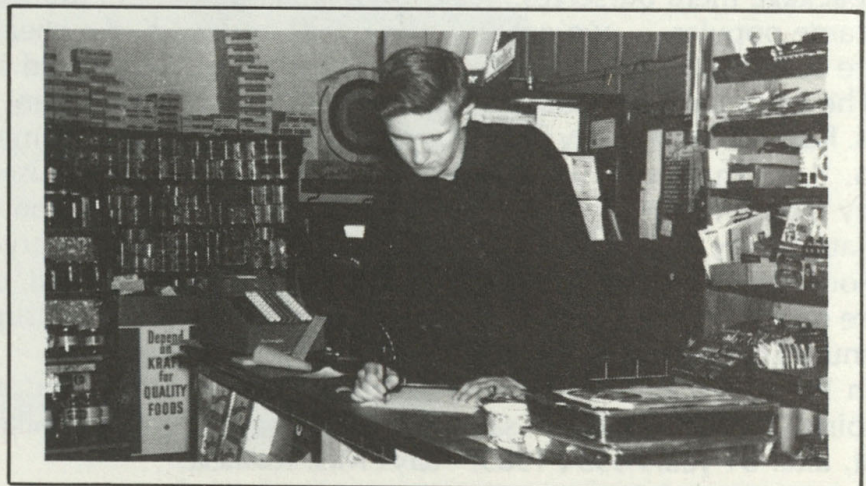
<p>Cudahy's Fancy Beef Rib Roast, lb. - 59c Fancy, Super-Cut T-Bone Steak, lb. - 83c Lean Pork Butts, lb. - 57c Sliced Bacon, lb. - 29c 92 Score Butter, lb. - 61c</p> <p>Arco Coffee, 2 lbs. - \$1.57 Duluth Universal Flour, 50-lb. print bag \$3.87 Fresh Coconut Cookies, 2 lbs. - 45c Northern Dairy Ice Cream, 2 pints - 47c Campbell's Tomato Soup, 2 cans - 23c Verifine Milk, 5 tall cans - 55c Bartlett Pears, No. 2½ can - 33c Cigarettes, carton - \$1.79 Star Dust Blouses, each - \$1.98 Star Dust Slips, each - \$1.98</p>	<p>Bake-Rite Shortening, 3-lb. can79c Sno-Sheen Cake Flour, 2-lb. pkg.....39c Real Lemon Juice, pint37c Real Gold Orange Base, 3 cans51c (Makes One Quart) Wigwam Orange and Grape Fruit Juice, 2 No. 2 cans33c Native Raspberry Pie Mix, No. 2 can39c Heinz Baby Food, 3 cans29c Red, Ripe Tomatoes, 2 cans27c Small June Peas, 2 cans27c Tide, Rinso or Super Suds, 2 lge. pkgs.55c Insect Bombs\$1.15 Aero No-Rubbing Wax, qt.49c Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Paris Nylons, 51 Gauge, pair\$1.49</p> <p>Ladies' House Dresses, size 12 to 20, each\$2.59</p> <p>Bath Towels, 18 x 40, 2 for99c Men's Skivvies T-Shirts89c Men's Sun Tan Suits, Shirt and Pants for\$7.23</p> <p>Genuine Aladdin Lunch Kits, complete with Aladdin Bottle\$1.98</p> <p>2-Way Electric Lanterns\$2.98 (Ideal for Outings or Camping)</p>
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KALLATSA'S

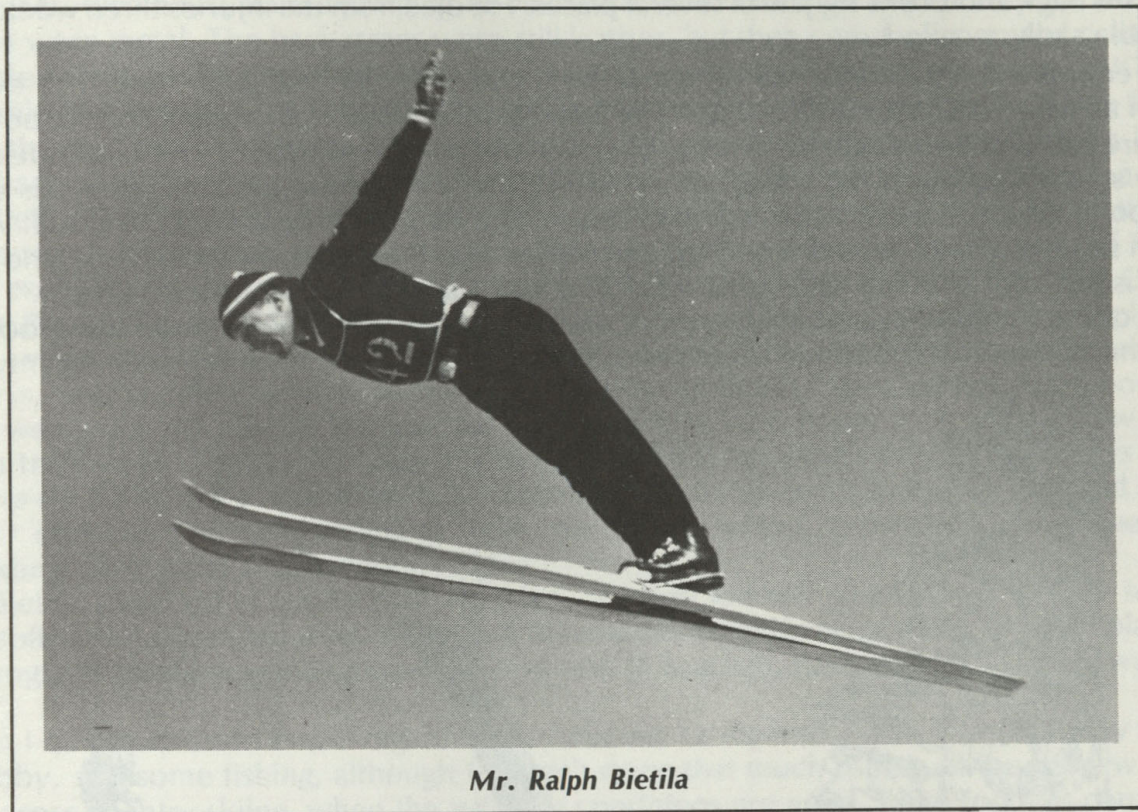
Phone 1152 West Ishpeming

Kallatsa's hand-delivered flyer.

*Mr. William Ronald Kallatsa
inside Kallatsa's Market, 1954.*



THE FLYING BIETILA'S



"I was the youngest in the family, so I think my older brothers had me skiing when I was three or four years old." That was the response Mr. Bietila gave me when I asked him at what age he began to ski.

Mr. Ralph Bietila is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Bietila. He was born in his home, on Jasper Street, on July 8, 1924. He had six brothers, and one sister. All of his brothers skied, but his sister did not.

Mr. Bietila told me that his older brothers got him started in skiing. "And so, they all skied, so naturally I had to too, I guess," he commented.

"My oldest brother Anselm, was the one who taught us all to ski. Yep! He made us all train," he said explaining his brother's philosophy, "If we have to ski, we have to pray also," Mr. Bietila told me.

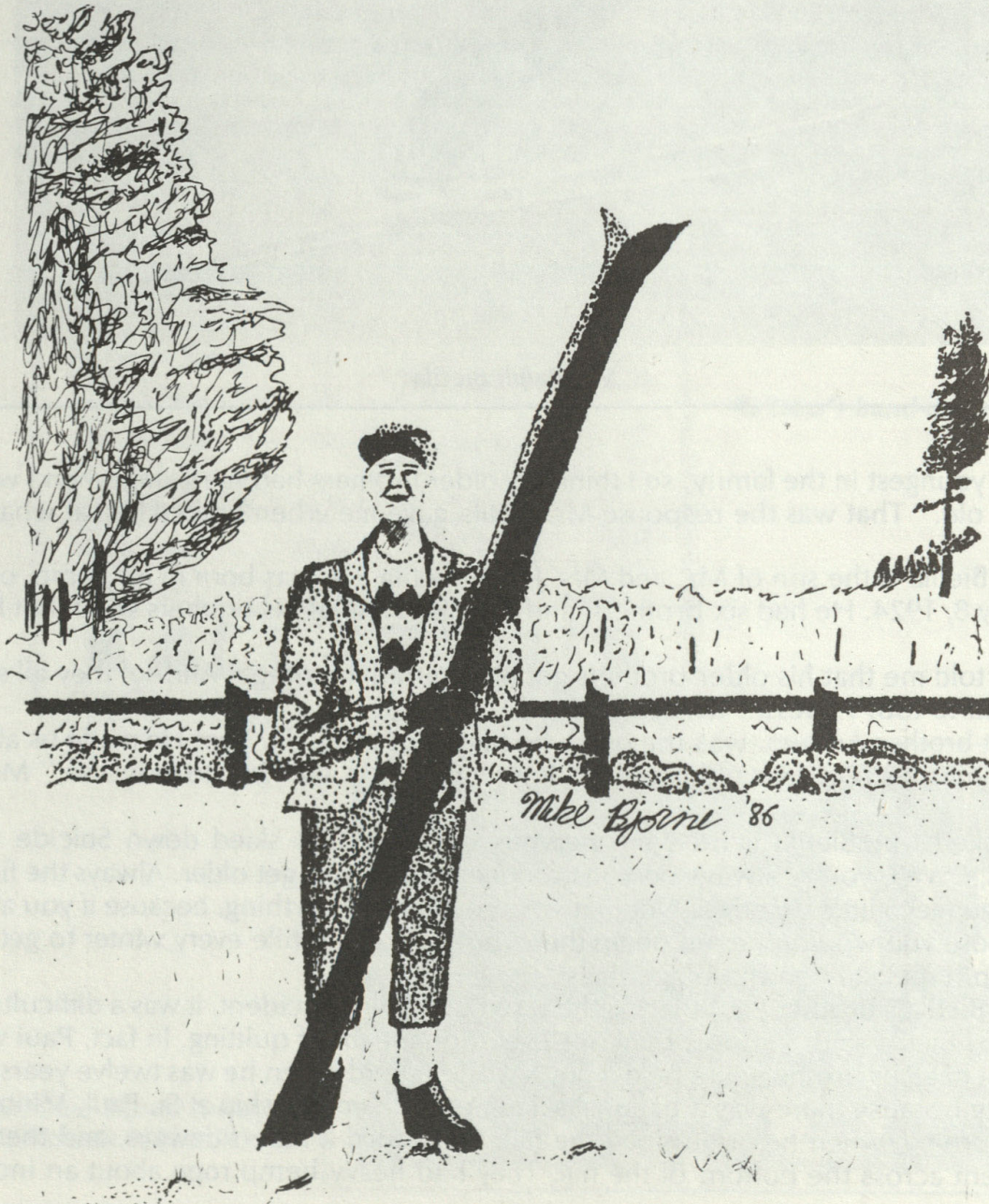
When I asked Mr. Bietila if he were nervous when he first skied down Suicide Hill, his response was, "Well, you're always nervous about it even as you get older. Always the first jump of the year you feel a little on edge. Not that you are afraid or anything, because if you are really afraid, I suppose you wouldn't even be up there, but it takes a while every winter to get used to jumping again, especially on the bigger hills."

When Mr. Bietila's brother Paul died as the result of a skiing accident, it was a difficult time for the family. Mr. Bietila said, "I don't think we ever thought about quitting. In fact, Paul was probably the best of all us brothers. He held a boy's world record when he was twelve years old. He was in training because there was a national ski jumping championship at St. Paul, Minnesota. It was in the morning, when he outjumped the hill. He landed a little sideways, and there was a creek that went across the bottom of the hill. They had heavy hemp rope about an inch thick,

which was wrapped around sandbarrels. He went off to the side, and hit into this rope which stretched. When they pulled him back, they pulled him up against the timbers on the bridge. He injured his back and broke his jaw in several places. He died from the injuries three weeks later," Mr. Bietila sadly recalled.

The equipment Mr. Bietila started skiing with was a lot different than now. The skis were made of all wood at that time. He says, "The kind I started off on was probably one-grooved and they were called strand skis at the time, probably made out of a softwood." He continues, "Later on they started making hickory skis out of hickory. Now they have the laminated skis with the plastic bottoms which are much easier to take care of as far as waxing and stuff like that. With the wooden skis we'd have to steel wool 'em and shellac them. There was a lot of work, and now all you do is just take some of the excess wax off once in a while, just put new wax on."

Most of the jumping skis now have six or seven grooves. The reason for all the grooves is it makes the ski more stable which allows them to run straight and they don't slide too much. He



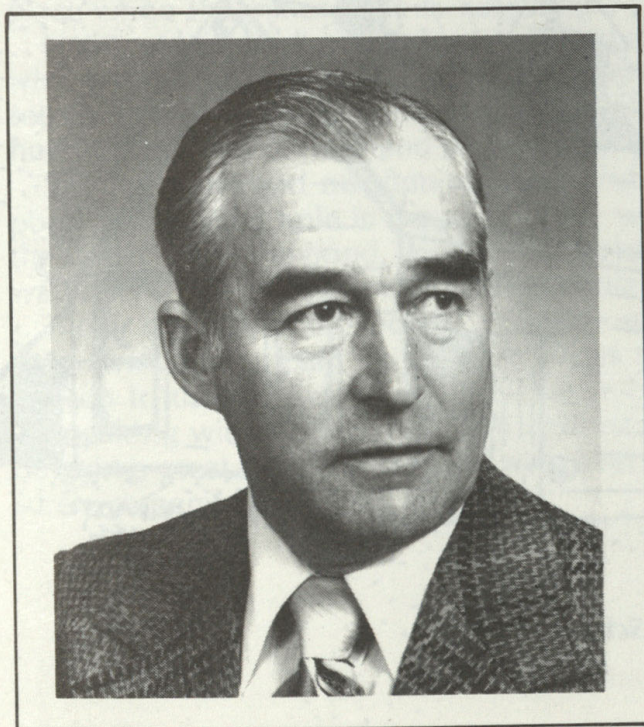
tells me, "Now the skis with the plastic bottoms are much faster. There's not so much in carrying them."

When Mr. Bietila first started jumping he had leather-like bindings. When they got older their toeplates were metal. The back straps were still leather, but then companies started coming out with cable bindings. He feels that the bindings used now are much better. He explains, "There is still a cable binding with the spring in the back so you have good control and still can let your heel off the ski. You can't tighten it as much as you want to. Usually jumpers like it a little bit looser than what a slalom skier would. Slalom skiers, they have their shoes right to the ski."

Mr. Bietila's ability to ski jump gave him the opportunity to become a member of the 1948 Olympic team. He traveled to Switzerland with his brother Walter, and Joe Perrault of Ishpeming. He was also on the 1950 World Championship Team. He told me, "In the 1952 Olympic team Joe Perrault, Wilbert Rasmussen, and I went to Norway that year." Mr. Bietila's reply about training was, "Well, actually to be a real good jumper or no matter what sport you're in nowadays, you should really be training almost all year round." Last winter three boys from Finland were here. Mr. Bietila learned that in Finland they have plastic hills which allow Finnish skiers to train every week of the year. He said, "They'll jump maybe two to three days a week and jump on a fifty to seventy meter hill." Looking back at his own career, he informed me that he didn't consider practice jumping as work. He quickly added, "when we trained we always loved skiing, so it wasn't really work."

Mr. Bietila loved other sports also. He says, "I loved football when I was in high school. I played softball and baseball when they used to have city teams in Ishpeming. In fact, I played for Ishpeming and Negaunee and I played second base in baseball. I played softball until I was in my forties."

When I questioned Mr. Bietila regarding his hobbies, he replied, "Well, hunting is my number one hobby, and some fishing, although I haven't done that much fishing in the last few years. I still do cross-country skiing, when the weather conditions are good. I like to cross-country ski, and of course I'm still interested in jumping, so whenever the younger boys are out there skiing we usually go out and watch them."



I wondered if he had ever been hurt jumping, and he replied, "Well, nothing really serious. I broke my arm in Switzerland three weeks before the Olympics and in 1953 I broke my leg in Minnesota skiing."

The hour I spent with Mr. Ralph Bietila was very exciting. I didn't realize how much fun ski jumping could be. It's not often that a young person gets a chance to talk to an Olympic participant. I admire Mr. Bietila's talent, perseverance and enthusiasm for skiing.

Jeanne Racine

Mr. Ralph Bietila

THE BEST OF TIMES

"I went to school in National Mine, kindergarten in National Mine, and I couldn't speak one word of English." These words were spoken by Sadie Brown as I interviewed her in her home in National Mine. Having lived in National Mine and the Green Creek location all of her life, she was very knowledgeable about the area. I found her very interesting because I, too, have lived in National Mine all of my life.

Being born in National Mine in 1908, and having parents of Finnish descent, the Finnish language was all she could speak when she entered kindergarten at the National Mine School.

"It was a nice school," she stated. She went on to say what a beautiful auditorium it had.

The following summer Sadie moved to a farm in the Green Creek location. She attended the first grade at the Green Creek schoolhouse. She remembers the school as being, "All in the woods. . ." The first few years Sadie went to the Green Creek School there was only one room; children from all grades were taught in that same room by the same teacher. Later another room was added which was connected to the first by sliding doors. Each room was heated by a big pot-bellied stove. Mr. Larson, the janitor, would light the stove every morning and add wood when needed to keep the place warm all day. Sadie felt that she and her fellow students showed great respect for their elders. Every morning the class would say, "Good morning Mr. Larson ."



The Green Creek School

"He was a nice old man," Sadie explained, "but he never had much to say." Every day Mr. Larson would dust the desks with an old feather duster.

In school Sadie enjoyed all subjects except arithmetic. "I liked history and geography best," she remarked. When Sadie first attended school she had to walk. The first "school bus," driven by Mr. Woods, was a covered sleigh weighted down with bricks and pulled by a horse. There were blankets and quilts to help keep the kids warm. She recalls, "When we got cold, we'd jump out of there and run behind the sleigh."

She told me of a time the National Mine kids had a half a day of school off. The students of the Green Creek School were so mad they decided to play hookey at noon hour. When the noon bell rang none of the kids went into the school. "But one by one someone got chicken and went." Soon all the kids had gone back into the school, "I really didn't want to do it," she explained, "but we all went along."

At noon hour students would go skiing on Raisanen's hill. When the bell on the top of the school rang, "Did we have to hurry on our skis to get back to school," she commented.

Sadie's father came to the United States when he was twelve. He was immediately put to work in one of the iron ore mines, which was very dangerous labor since many men had been killed in underground mines. "It was nothing for a man to die there every day. . .they didn't have safety first."

For entertainment Sadie went to circuses, carnivals, and medicine shows. The circuses and carnivals were big events. Parades would lead them behind the old Mather A mine, which was once called Union Park, where circuses and carnivals were held.

In the National Mine area there were several different nationality groups. Most were of Scandinavian descent, such as Finnish, Norwegian, and Swedish, but there were also Polish, Hungarian, English, and Irish.

The variety of nationalities, with many groups bringing their own religious beliefs, resulted in many churches in National Mine. The Swedish Church was located on Brooks' Hill. The English Methodist Church, the Norwegian Church, and the Finnish Church were scattered throughout National Mine. Each nationality attended their own church. The Swedish Church was a bustling place when the mines were in full swing.

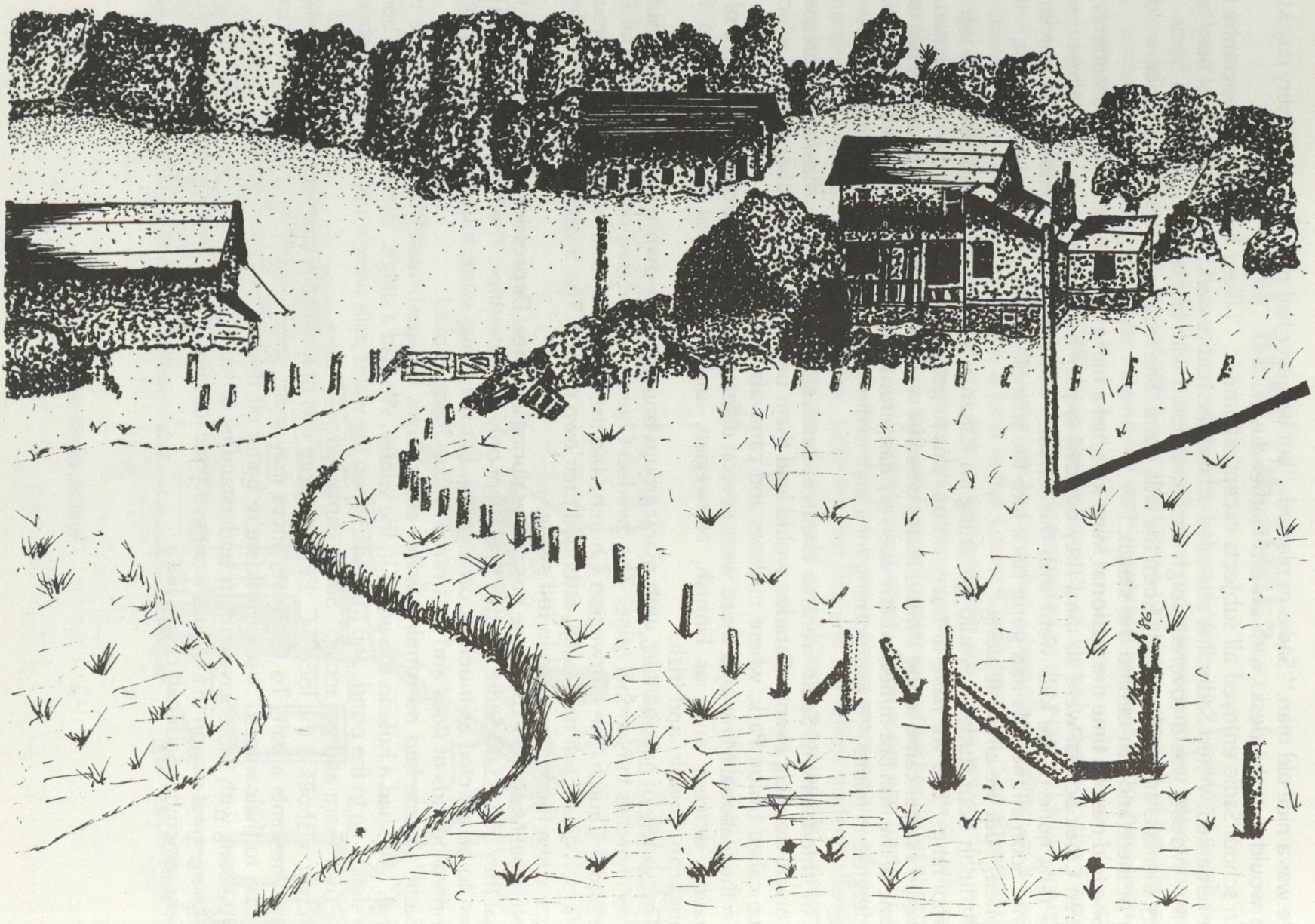
National Mine did experience hard times during the Great Depression. "They made the best of what they had," said Sadie. Money was spent only on necessities. The National Mine area didn't seem to be affected as much as other areas, but still things were tough. "We used to get one-hundred pounds of flour and that meat in cans," she replied.

Sadie's home had no running water and she got her wash water for clothes from a nearby pond. "We had a hole in the pond in the winter. We had a sleigh. We would put the boiler on the sleigh, go to the pond, and fill it up. When the water pails were empty you would have to go way over there and get more," Sadie explained.

A pair of shoes at the local J.C. Penney store was only ninety-eight cents, while overalls were forty-nine cents a pair. To us these prices may seem unbelievably low, but were not in comparison to their wages. "I still think we're better off these days," Sadie replies.

Speaking with Sadie gave me an understanding of life in her youth. She is a very interesting, outgoing, great person to talk to. I want everyone to know what a great experience this was. I will surely remember Sadie all of my life.

Billy Krook



VIVID MEMORIES OF WORLD WAR II

Mr. Hyett, born in England, recently shared his memories of World War II, his emigration to the United States as well as his experiences in the United States Air Force.

Even though Mr. Hyett was born in England, he does not remember all of his childhood there as he left when he was nine years old. But one vivid memory that remains with him was the affect World War II had on England.

Mr. Hyett began his story by saying, "Let's see, I was three or four years old during the war and even today I can remember the V2 German rockets going over our town." These rockets were launched from Germany and would land anywhere from fifteen to twenty miles away from Mr. Hyett's residence. He remembered the Germans blowing up portions of Sheffield with incendiary bombs and related, "They said, as long as you heard the rocket motors, you were safe, but if you saw one moving in and there was no sound, you better run for the hills, because that meant that the rocket was going to come down on you." People were urged out of their houses when the air raid sirens went off. This happened almost every night when the German bombers came over. "We used to have to go out to the air raid shelters out in the backyard which were dug into the earth," he explained. There were two sirens, one which meant the people had to go into the shelters and the other siren blew when all was clear telling Mr. Hyett and other people they could return to their beds. He was lucky as no bombs came close to his house, but I know I would have been pretty scared.

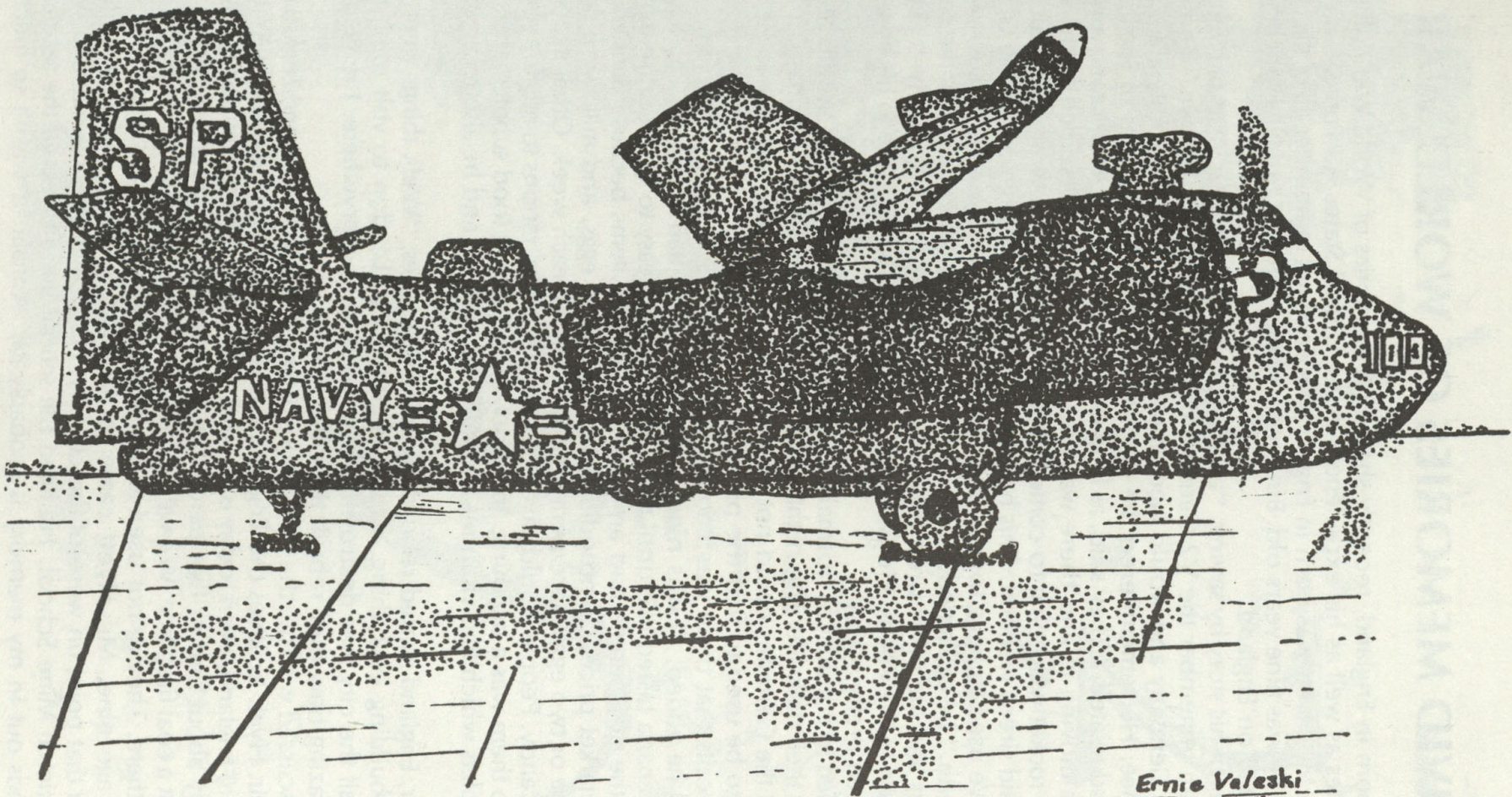
His family tried to conduct as normal a life as possible. Since most of the attacks were at night, it did not affect their daily life. The night attacks were effective for the Germans. It was hard to see the planes and the Germans could not be shot down very easily with the anti-aircraft guns. Big spotlights had to be used to find the planes.

Mr. Hyett recalls that there was enough food, but with no extras. People just had the basic necessities and he added, "I was nine years old before I had a banana." Imagine, he did not know what a banana tasted like until then! Food was not easy to get because many things were rationed. But, the rich people had an easier time getting items because people were willing to pay the blackmarket price. Commodities such as butter, eggs, and milk were rationed. For instance, only one or two eggs were permitted for a person each week. Other items rationed were things such as candy. People would save one or two months' rations to buy four or five ounces of candy which to them was a big thing. In school, Mr. Hyett got food supplements. He used to get malted milk tablets which had vitamins and minerals in them, and he also received extra milk rations.

After the war, England started rebuilding. Mr. Hyett states, "Well, things went on, you know; they started rebuilding everything. I remember going to London to visit some relatives and it seemed like half the city was destroyed; there were ruins everywhere. I remember that pretty vividly. It's amazing how they rebuilt the cities though."

Mr. Hyett discussed with me the differences between the American and English cultures. Comparing them, Mr. Hyett believes the English people did not have it as easy as Americans. "Well, you know, life in England, even today isn't what Americans are accustomed to. It's a lot harsher, even today only about four or five percent of the houses have central heating. I remember we heated with just a coal fireplace. We were cold most of the time, that's why people wore so many sweaters over there. They're not used to the central heating in the states."

In 1949, at age nine, Mr. Hyett came to the United States. He commented that all his memories from that point on were of this country. His new home was National Mine and he attended the National Mine School. He liked the school and respected the teachers. He added, "One that stands out in my memory is probably Mr. Annala. It wasn't so much as like, but I



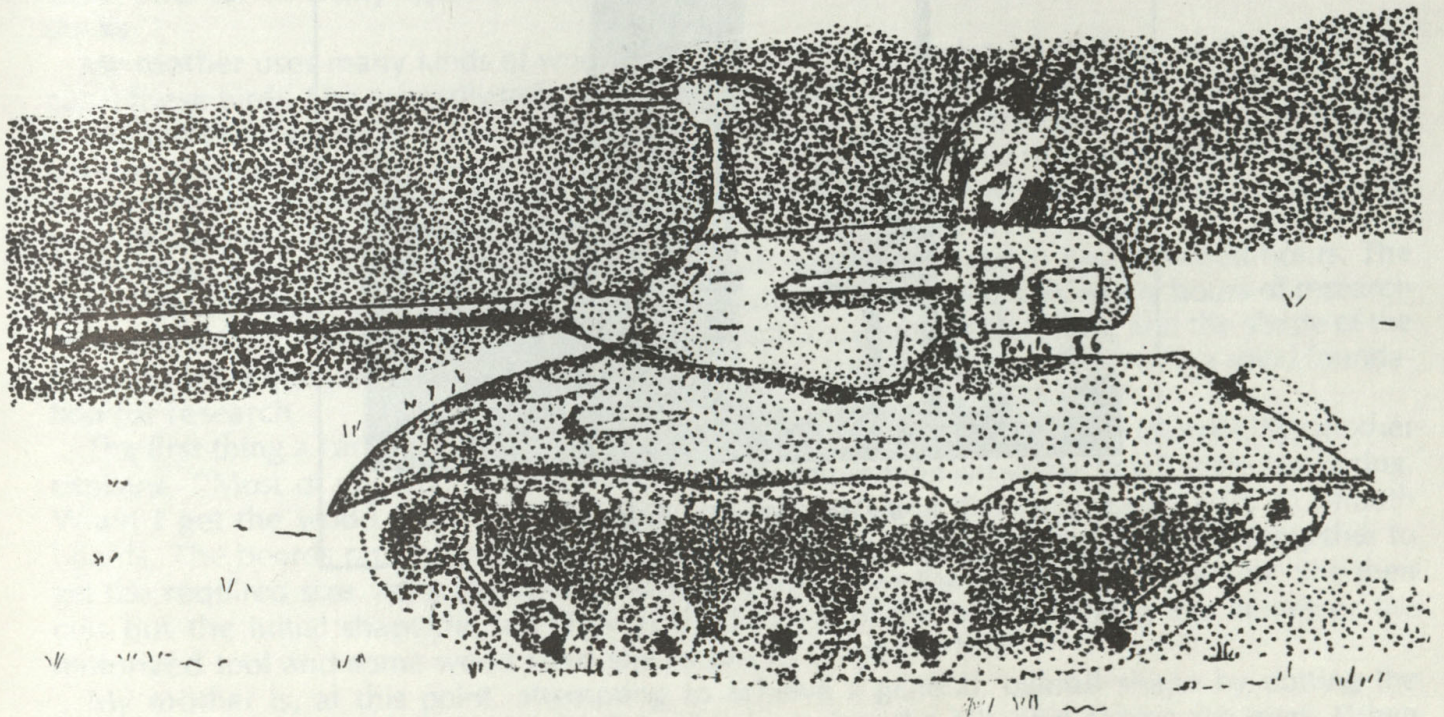
Ernie Valeski
86''

respected him a lot. Most of the kids didn't like him because he was so strict." The school was about a half-mile away from his house so it took him fifteen to twenty minutes to walk there and perhaps a little longer in the winter. Mr. Hyett also played basketball during his freshman and sophomore years in high school.

During his youth he had lots of pets and one of his favorites was a beautiful Irish Setter named Susan. He did not live far from town but if he wanted to get there he had to walk. He remembers holidays as special and fun times even though he did not have any relatives in America.

I was curious about the forms of recreation back then. When I questioned him, he replied, "Oh, just like they are today, except you had to make your fun more than now, I guess. Like I take my son skiing and we have all the professional equipment and everything. In those days you put on an old pair of skis, if you were lucky, and cut some rubber bands and put them on your feet and more or less made your own fun."

After graduation from high school, Mr. Hyett enlisted in the United States Air Force. There he became an electronics repairman for radar, navigational equipment, and a commercial navigator. He did not have a permanent schedule, and his hours of work varied. Often he completed a week with fifty to eighty hours and did this without extra pay. While in the Air Force, he went on tours to England where he visited relatives that he had not seen for years. These tours refreshed his memory of life in England and he discussed with me their monetary system. He said, "They've gone to the decimal system now. When I was stationed there they used old pounds, shillings, and pence so it was a little complicated. Since my last tour of duty in 1974-1977, they converted to the decimal coinage which is based on ten so it's the same as the dollar basically. So it's much easier now."



My. Hyett attended college while in the service. He had classes at the University of Maryland and also the Clinton Community College in Plattsburg, New York. Some classes were also taken while overseas. His college attendance was quite varied, but it helped him launch a successful career.

Today, Mr. Hyett lives in Ishpeming in a beautiful home with his wife and son. He is the district manager of the Franklin Life Insurance Company.

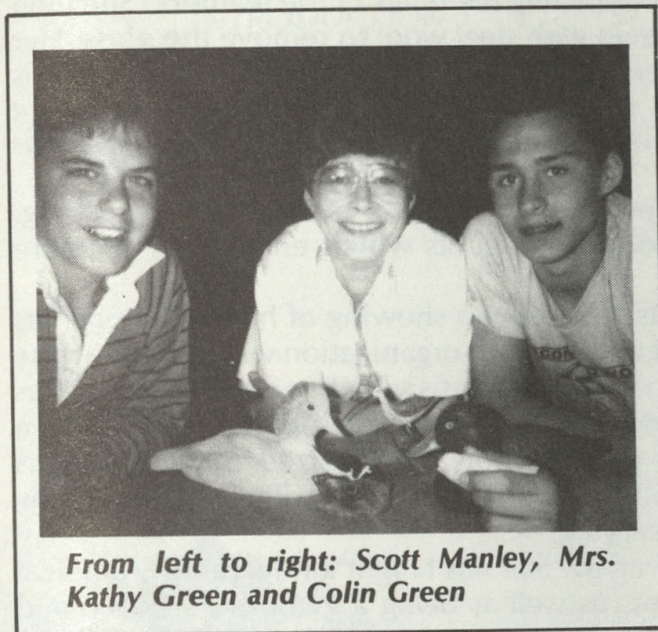
Mr. Hyett's memories of England and World War II were harsh, but they made me understand what it was like to live in a war torn country.

Daniel Moffatt



Big Ben, London, England

DUCK AND DECOY CARVING



From left to right: Scott Manley, Mrs. Kathy Green and Colin Green

Wildlife art is an artistic form a majority of people have always enjoyed viewing. This art form provides people with an opportunity to see wildlife up close with all of the simulated beauty of the object. It is sometimes difficult to view or appreciate the beauty of a duck from the shore of a pond. A well-carved form gives people an opportunity to see wildlife in a way that's realistic and long-lasting.

Duck and decoy carving originated with hunters. Before the invention of plastic, hunters had to carve their own decoys out of wood, cork, or reed. Decoys that have been carved by American Indians have been found. What started out as a necessity later became folk art. A large collector's market exists for antique decoys. There are a number of people who collect both decorative and realistic duck carving.

My mother has always been interested in artistic endeavors. She was a member of the art club in high school and was also a teaching assistant in junior high art classes. Even though her major in college was physical education, she also took many art classes such as sketching, design, weaving, drawing, painting, and sculpture.

In the last three years, my mother's interest in art took a different turn. She began carving birds. She carves many types of birds. . . song birds, shore birds, and realistic and decorative ducks.

My mother uses many kinds of wood such as white pine, cedar, basswood, and butternut to carve these birds. She primarily uses white pine or basswood, the most available woods. She uses many types of tools such as knives, gouges, and rasps to complete the birds. Power tools such as bandsaws are used to cut the initial shape. She also uses a hand-held motorized tool that can use different types of grinding bits. This tool will remove some of the wood fairly rapidly. However, most of the detailed carving is done by hand with small gouges and knives.

The time it takes for her to complete these birds varies from four to two hundred hours. The period of time depends upon the size of the bird and the depth of detail. Many hours of research are done prior to carving to check the bird's or duck's anatomy, coloration, and the shape of the feathers. Her college classes in biology, anatomy, and zoology provided her with a good foundation for research.

The first thing a carver has to do in creating the bird or duck is to gather materials. My mother explains, "Most of my wood I purchase from individuals who do some small scale lumbering. When I get the wood I have to dress it." This means taking it from a rough state to smooth boards. The boards range in width and in depth. At times she has to glue the blocks together to get the required size. After the board is dressed, she draws the pattern on the wood. She then cuts out the initial shape-the top view and side view of the bird. Utilizing her knives or the motorized tool and some wood rasps she begins to shape the bird.

My mother is, at this point, attempting to achieve a general, overall shape by cutting the various feather groupings, doing all of the head carving, the bill, and setting the eyes. When those tasks are completed, she begins the more detailed carving which means carving in the in-

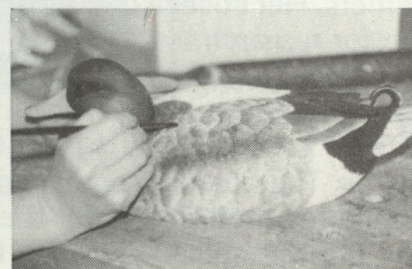
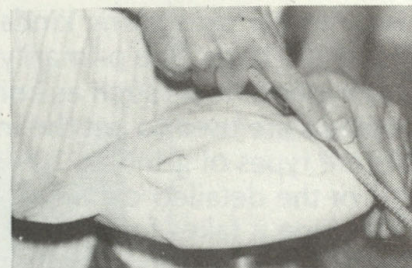
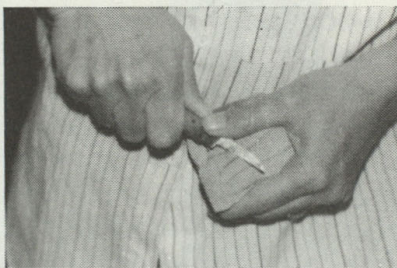
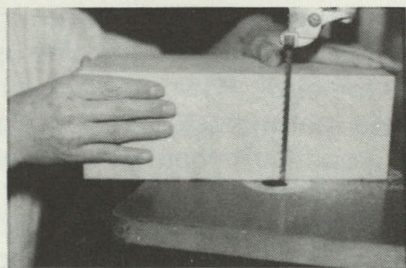
dividual sets of feathers. She then sands it down making sure that she has everything exactly the way she wants it. A wood burning tool is used and all of the various feather markings are laid in, sometimes making as many as sixty lines to an inch depicting the quills of the feathers. She then seals everything with a sanding sealer and rubs it down with steel wool to remove the gloss. Her next step may be to paint the bird if that is her intent. However, carvers sometimes stop at this point, and they will stain and varnish the bird. But if the duck is to be painted, many different paints are applied using small brush strokes. The choice of colors is dependent upon the birds species and sex.

Striving for realistic carvings, my mother must spend many hours at the library researching. Her pursuit of perfection is also enhanced by taxidermy mounts which enable her to more readily discern coloration and feather texture.

My mother is presently gathering enough exhibits to present a showing of her work. She has been asked to donate one of her carvings to Ducks Unlimited, an organization which helps in the preservation of wildlife. She prefers to carve on a commission basis which means someone has seen her work and asked her to do a specific species of bird for them. She sells her carvings for a price she thinks is fair taking into consideration many factors. A full-sized duck, which is realistically carved, commands at least a three hundred dollar fee, depending on how many hours of work are invested and the quality of the carving.

My mother's interests and talents are many and varied. She has taught kindergarten, physical education, swimming, adult and children art classes, as well as being a gymnastics coach and cheerleading advisor. She has always enjoyed art and working with her hands. I admire her artistic ability and her will to achieve perfection.

Colin Green



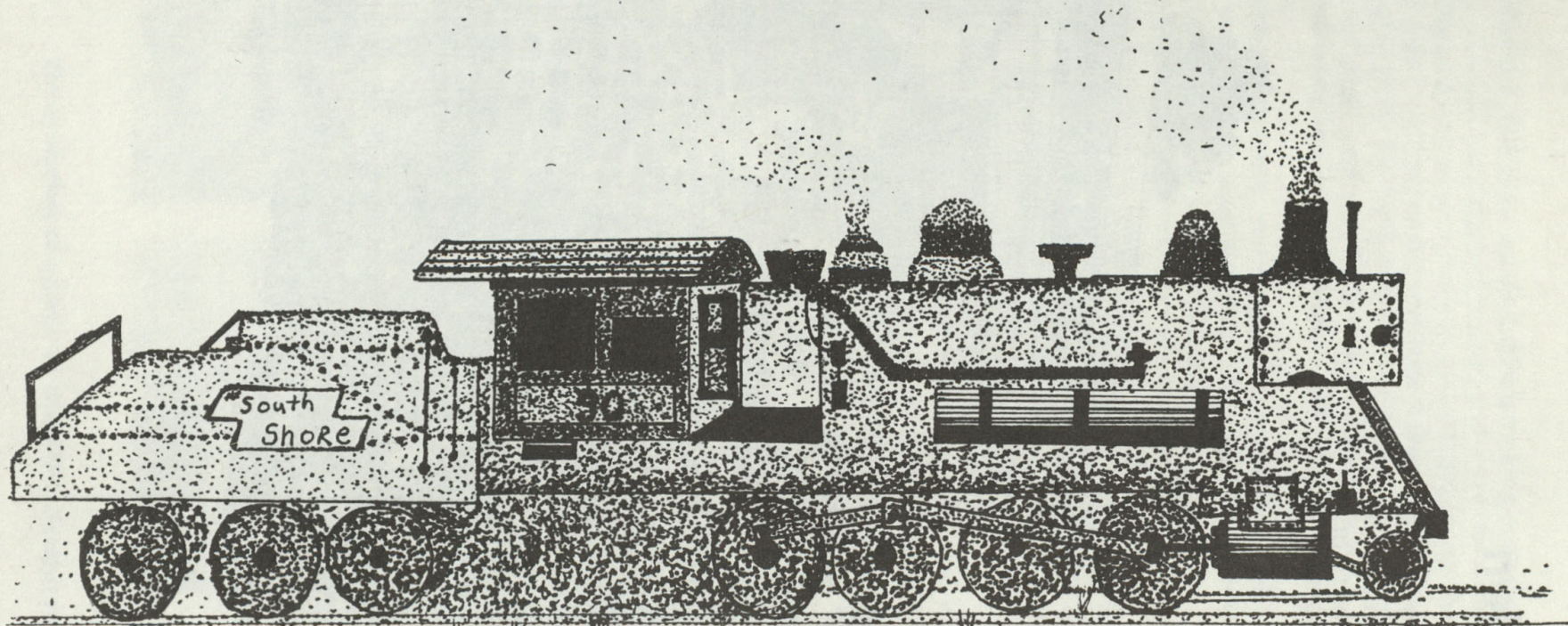
The evolution of a piece of wood to a handsome duck decoy.

Days of Decision

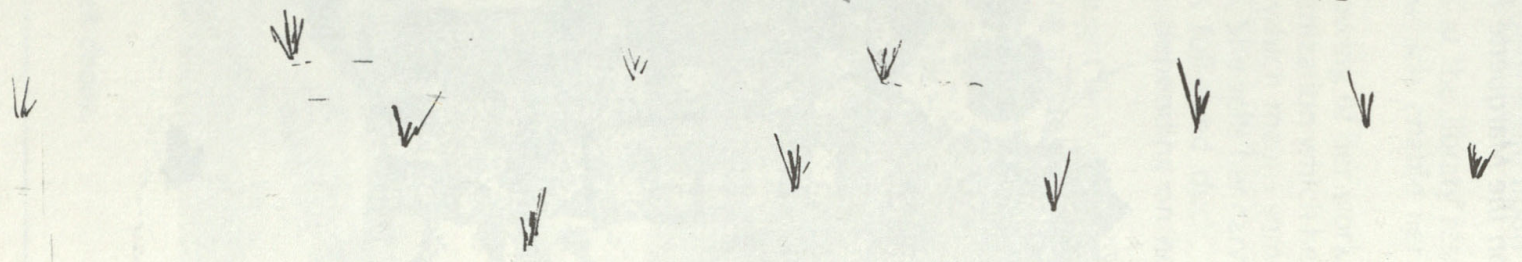
INTRODUCTION

1986 marks the 40th anniversary of the 1946 strike. The following stories are personal reminiscences of the birth of a union on the Marquette Range.

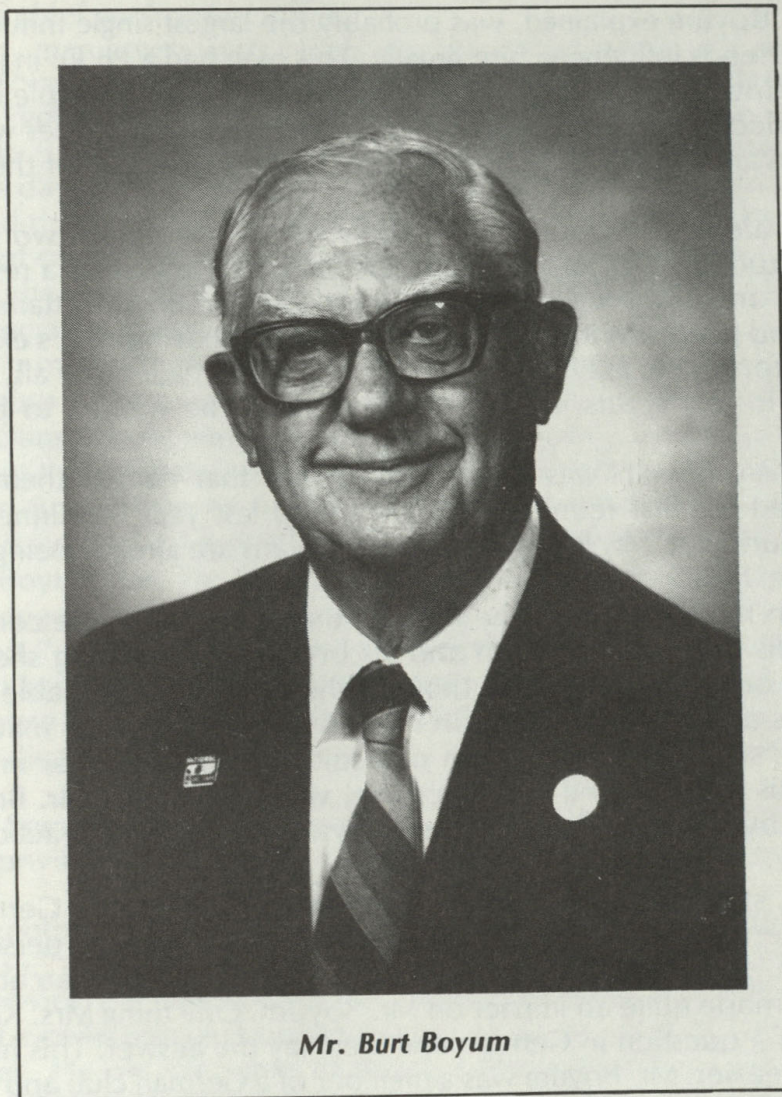




DAWN Healey



MR. BURT BOYUM—AN EXTRAORDINARY MAN



Mr. Burt Boyum recently shared with me the events and people that influenced his life. These influences along with hard work, intelligence, and constant love of learning were responsible for the man Mr. Boyum has become. I was privileged to have Mr. Boyum share his youth and exciting life with me.

Mr. Boyum was born February 4, 1919, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He, as he related, "had a childhood that relates to city activity." His parents were interested in the out-of-doors. He had an uncle that lived in northern Minnesota, who Mr. Boyum and his brother would go and visit every summer. These visits gave him a good opportunity to develop a strong interest in outdoor activities. Perhaps this is one of the reasons Mr. Boyum grew to love the Upper Peninsula.

Early in his youth, Mr. Boyum became interested in and joined the Boy Scouts of America. Mr. Boyum credits his scoutmaster, Dr. S. Miller, as being the greatest influence on his life. Mr. Boyum really respected and admired Dr. Miller who was a professor in medicine at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Miller would take the scout troops on overnight trips to their favorite spot called, Twin Springs. He spoke four languages and he was knowledgeable in things like

medicine, trees, birds, and animals. "He was a remarkable scoutmaster," Mr. Boyum states. Mr. Boyum became patrol leader, then senior patrol leader, and finally assistant to his scoutmaster after spending five years in Boy Scouting.

Dr. S. Miller, Mr. Boyum explained, was probably the largest single influence on his life. Also one of his parents' friends influenced him greatly. This man had a Ph.D. in geology and was also active in mining engineering. Mr. Boyum ranked them as the two principle influences on his life.

Mr. Boyum attended Sidney Pratt, a grade school named after a soldier who lost his life in the Spanish-American War. The high school was named John Marshall after the first Chief Justice of the United States.

Mr. Boyum was valedictorian of his senior class which had ninety-two students. He felt the smaller number of students was an advantage and said, "Of course as a result you got to know people much better, and it was really quite a tight group." Mr. Boyum attained top ranking in the class due to very good grades. With modesty he remembers having all A's except for one B+ and said, ". . .yes, I'm fortunate, maybe because I was a good reader and all, I did very well." He did not participate in any sports in high school because he wanted to put his emphasis on reading.

In high school, Mr. Boyum was a part of a group that named themselves, "The Three Musketeers." He had his first reunion with this group last year in Minneapolis. In 1985, the Musketeers had a reunion at Mr. Boyum's camp and plans are already being made for their 50th year class reunion in 1987.

Reflecting back on his school years, he recalled that a boy would be considered a sissy if he wore short pants. His mother talked him and his brother into wearing shorts. Once everyone stopped teasing the brothers, they really thought shorts were comfortable. Even at this young age, Mr. Boyum was an individual and didn't let his peers pressure or influence him. In grade school no one wore suits or the equivalent of a suit. "I can remember my mother taking me downtown to buy this first suit, and that, of course, was a big thrill," Mr. Boyum chuckled, and added, "I would say by and large the styles these days are much more practical and adapted than they were in my day."

In his high school, students were offered an option of taking either a German or French class. Mr. Boyum chose German. His German teacher, Bearnice Katz, was a person who left a lasting impression with him. She encouraged her students to speak in German at every possible moment. This directive made quite an impact on Mr. Boyum. One thing Mrs. Katz told her students to do was to think of a question in German and then say the answer. This helped Mr. Boyum to learn German much easier. Mr. Boyum was a member of a German club and related, "We would meet and have German plays and German songs and German food and that sort of thing." His accomplishment of learning to speak German so fluently helped him to learn three additional languages. Adding to his interest was the fact that his great-grandmother was born in Germany. He would go to her house on weekends and would speak German to her and he proudly stated, "This was great because I was the only one of the great-grandchildren that could speak German and talk to her, so that was really fun."

After completing high school, Mr. Boyum attended the University of Minnesota. Between his freshman and sophomore years in college, Mr. Boyum worked in Wyoming. He explained it was a "Construction outfit that was both on surface and underground. I found that I liked underground work very much. I found I was at home, I was not frightened by being underground and in the dark confined area." Mr. Boyum graduated as a geological and mining engineer.

Following his college graduation, Mr. Boyum went to work for Cleveland-Cliffs Iron Company. He described his job by saying, "I worked underground at all of the Cleveland-Cliff's properties, I mapped the underground and surveyed. . . I really loved the camaraderie, the good feeling, the good fellowship that you have underground." Mr. Boyum found ways to amuse himself even when alone. He says, "A number of times I would map alone because I was mapping new

development, and since I liked to sing, you could sing till your hearts content." Mr. Boyum was assistant geologist for Cleveland-Cliffs from 1941-1948. He then became assistant chief geologist, attaining the post of chief geologist in 1954.

During the 1940's, many men were called into the armed forces. Mr. Boyum went through preinduction for the Navy. However, Mr. Stakel, the general superintendent of mines, informed him, "You're not going into the Navy, you're staying here, we need you here in Cleveland-Cliffs." Mr. Boyum continues, "I can remember a number of days when I would work a full shift during the day and then go underground again in the evening to carry out mapping or direct some diamond-drilling and that sort of thing. So, hours meant nothing to us during the war because that was part of our war effort." He exclaimed, "We set records here in the Marquette Range, for example, the Negaunee Mine in Negaunee hit a million tons a year for the first time in 1944." Steel was crucial to the war effort in World War II.

Besides his work in mines on the Marquette Range, Mr. Boyum also became a world traveler. He spent time in South America working for Cleveland-Cliffs and enjoyed the experience. The new culture was exciting and he noted, "I was relaxed and really enjoying it, trying to learn what people thought about things, their food, their attitudes, and values. It was fascinating for me." It was evident that Mr. Boyum tries to absorb and learn from whatever circumstances he's in.

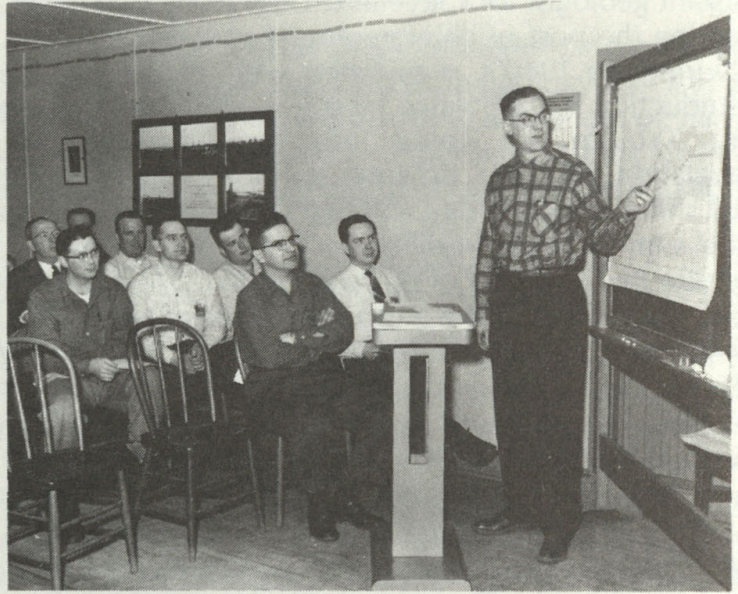
Although mining is such a vital part of his life, I was amazed at the number of interests outside of mining that Mr. Boyum has. He loves writing, hunting, fishing, collecting antique weapons, skiing, and also photography. However he is quick to point out, "I don't care what you do, you have to write a report," and that is how Mr. Boyum started explaining his interest in writing to me. Mr. Boyum says you have to think about who you are writing the report for, and how you are going to convey the picture. Mr. Boyum recently finished a book about the history of Cleveland-Cliffs. Mr. Boyum indicated that writing on mining is his number one interest and writing on skiing is his second.

The bulk of Mr. Boyum's antique weapon collection is at the Marquette County Historical Society. I was very privileged to see a few of his antiques. They were in beautiful shape and also are very interesting.

Mr. Boyum has another hobby with cameras and photography. "I've been taking 35mm pictures now since 1936," he said. His first camera was a 35mm. In 1946, Mr. Boyum became interested in taking movies. He took both family movies and company movies. When Mr. Boyum went to Peru he got a collection of Peruvian records which he used for background music to accompany his movies. He did the same in Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Canada, and also various places in the United States. He learned to edit, and he did his own soundtrack! He constantly upgraded his equipment to state of the art.

Mr. Boyum vividly recalls the 1946 miners' strike on the Marquette Range and the formation of the union. He told me that for many years there was no union in the Lake Superior Region. There was an attempt to organize in the Gwinn district in 1912 but it was a flop. After the Great Depression the feeling for unionism had grown. The law in 1936, the Wagner Act, aided in the formation of a union. William G. Mather formed a company union called the United States Steel Corporation and it was the largest iron mining company on the Lake Superior Region. Mr. Boyum pointed out, "So that into the 1940's then the forty-three, forty-four and forty-five, there were local unions and the industrial union was dead."

Mr. Boyum carefully explained, "the 1946 strike was not a strike that pertained only to the Marquette Range, it was a nationwide strike." They had a goal of eighteen and one-half cent raise an hour in wage and other things they wanted improved." Mr. Boyum related the management point of view. He explains, "There's all kinds of mining conditions, and mining economics, there were big mines and there were small mines and while a big mine would tolerate an increase of



Photos from the Boyum Family Album: top left: Burton Boyum, age four with his two-year old brother, William. Top right: Boyum lectures on ore reserves to Cleveland-Cliffs officials in 1956. Center: Mr. and Mrs. Irwin Drabek of Ontonagon display their Wood Badge Certificate presented by Mr. Boyum. Bottom left: A recent photograph of Mr. Boyum and his wife, Joanne.

eighteen and one-half cents an hour and some of these other benefits, small mines have great difficulty."

The union members held different views than the company. Referring to miners he says, "Some could see that the economics were such that some mines ought to be treated differently. That this uniform eighteen and one-half cents an hour for every mine in Lake Superior was unrealistic. Others said no, the union has got to take a stand, we can't have any of our people being second class citizens because they work at a small mine."

The strike started in February and progressed into March; "That's kind of a grim time of year anyway. People are on the edge, they've had their fill of winter, then you get a big snowstorm. That kind of thing brings your spirits up and down. That's when the violence occurred. Cleveland-Cliffs started bringing people in from the outside." Mr. Boyum related, and added, "I personally was familiar with families in which either a father and son took varying view points, or two brothers took varying view points, one was pro-company, one was pro-union and it made for real hard feelings, some of which lasted years after the strike was over."

Mr. Boyum felt that the strike and decisions that followed were not governed by majority rule. "It looked like the little guy, whether he was pro-company or pro-union, didn't really have a voice in the decision," Mr. Boyum explained. The entire community was affected with newspapers and business becoming involved. He continued, "There were a number of newspaper articles. Both the union and the company would print their particular viewpoints on the thing."

There were some merchants who did not take sides, they wanted to be friends with everyone. Mr. Boyum added, "A lot of the people said, you can't do it, you either stand up for us in the union, or you stand up for the company. One way or the other, you can't be both." I was beginning to realize that a traumatic event this really was. One hundred and four days passed before a compromise was reached.

"After the strike was over, supervisors and also union leaders said, the strike is over, let by-gones be by-gones."

The strike was not without consequences, for the Princeton Mine never reopened. Another casualty was the hard feelings, "That was really unfortunate because this was our first-hand experience with the big league, getting into hardball instead of just playing softball," said Mr. Boyum with a thoughtful gaze.

During April of the 1946 strike, Mr. Boyum decided to build a house. He and six other men lived in a cabin together for eight days to cut down trees for the home. "Roughly one half of that crew were on strike and so here, you have seven guys living for eight days together, who were involved on both sides of the strike. In eight days we were there, I don't think we talked about the strike once," he explained.

Mr. Boyum has been married 43 years. He and his wife, Joanne, have three children, two daughters and one son. Each of them are married. The oldest daughter, Judy, a teacher, has two children. The son, Bruce, who's the middle child, has two degrees in engineering. He also has two children. The youngest child, Janice, has three children. So Mr. Boyum proudly states that he has four American grandchildren and three Canadian.

I really admire and respect Mr. Boyum. He has done so many things and helped so many people. He never feels he has learned all he needs to know, or accomplished all that needs to be done. He is always involved in more and more activities. I think Mr. Boyum has greatly influenced my life by showing me that intelligence, ambition and being involved with others, take you a long way in life!

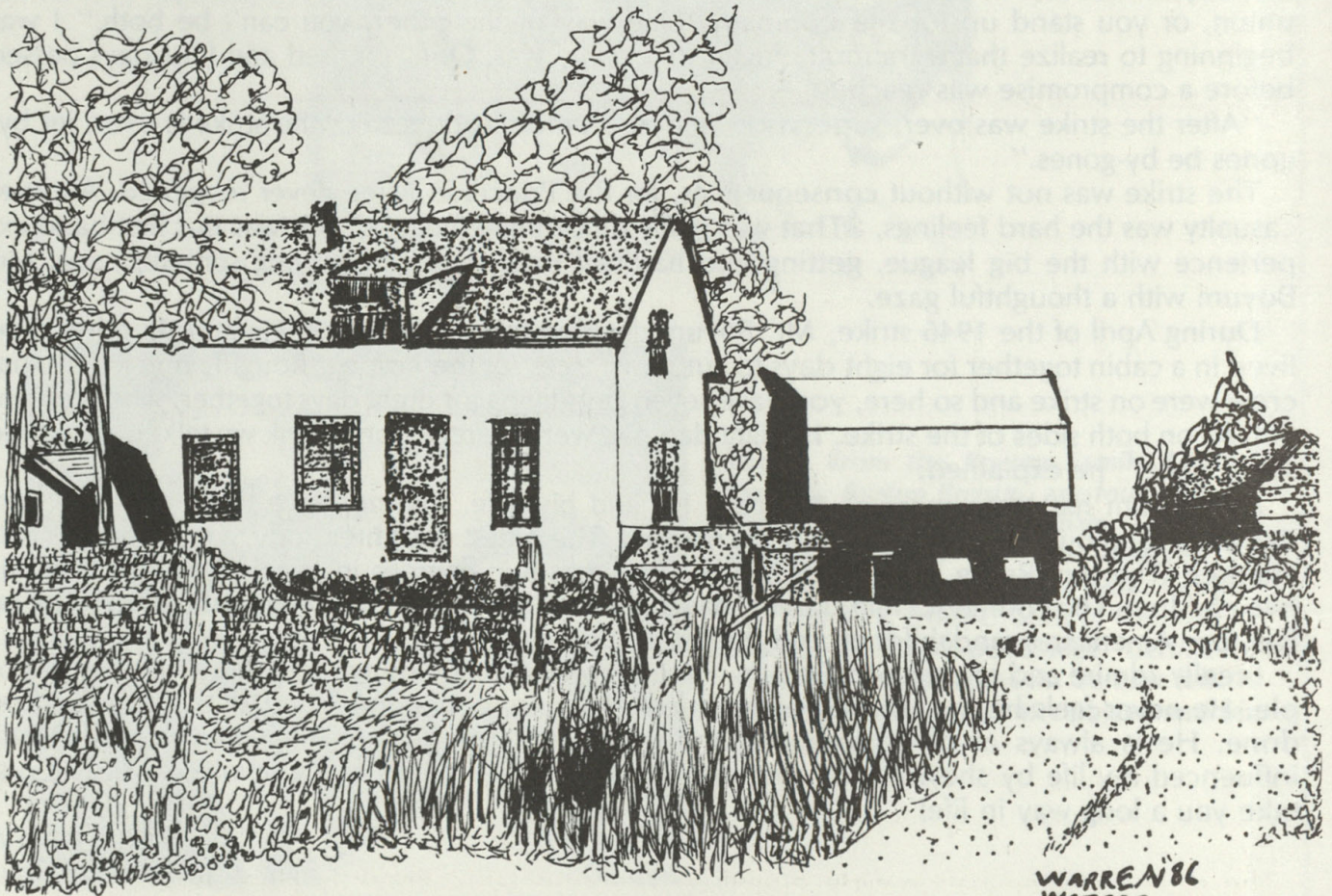
Kristyn Nelson

“A TOUGH WAY TO MAKE A LIVING”

Mr. John Lindroos, a remarkable man, has weathered many hardships throughout his life. Through his excellent memory I recently shared the details of the 1946 strike and the birth of a labor union.

Mr. Lindroos' first hardship was the Great Depression. When the Stock Market collapsed in 1929, financial affairs and the standard of living plummeted. It was hard for people to survive. "You kept your light bill down to a dollar a month. You went to bed when it got dark and got up when it was daylight," Mr. Lindroos recalls. An advantage to living in National Mine was that people could farm and hunt. His family grew potatoes, carrots, and rutabagas and he described them, "Mostly all these hard foods you could preserve." They could get all of the deer and rabbit meat they desired. Once in a while a poacher would get caught by the game warden for hunting without a license. "He (game warden) would say don't do it again or don't get caught at it," Mr. Lindroos laughingly remarked. There was very little work available. In Marquette County, men had relief work called the WPA. For very little pay, workers widened and fixed roads like County Road 581 with pick, shovel, and wheelbarrows.

Another difficult period Mr. Lindroos was deeply involved in was the 104 day 1946 strike. I wondered how the miners could survive without wages. Mr. Lindroos said, ". . . We survived then by tightening our belts. One thing about it, when the strike came on, the majority of the



people had saved up some bonds. When this war had come on everybody had to buy these war bonds and save them. Well a lot of them had those to live on. But those who didn't have anything they could go to the welfare department. But you had to be very, very poor. I know a lot of them went into the stores. They picked up all of the old bread and all of the old stuff that had mildewed. Just pinch from this and pinch from that."

Mr. Lindroos was employed at the Negaunee Mine as a timber hoister when the strike happened. The strike began on February 8, 1946, and lasted 104 days. "The miners first demanded twenty-five cents per hour but it was later reduced to eighteen and one-half cents per hour. I was receiving eighty-two cents an hour before the strike, and one dollar and one-half cent after the strike." He first went on picket duty at 6:00 a.m. in twenty degree below zero weather. A few men arrived carrying lunch buckets but turned and went home. A shack was constructed and picket duty was scheduled. Matters went along peacefully for a time until the Cleveland-Cliffs Iron Company started a back-to-work movement. The company got an injunction from the Circuit Court which ordered the pickets to stand one hundred feet apart. Also pickets were not permitted to prevent anybody from going back to work.

The namesake of the Ishpeming Hospital, Francis A. Bell, was the company's attorney. His father, Frank Bell, was the Circuit Court judge who issued the injunction against the pickets. E.R. Nelson was the welfare director and his brother-in-law, C.J. Stakel, was the general manager of the company. Welfare was denied to miners, and they were told to go back to work. It is easy to see how conflict of interest charges might be made in these proceedings.

Supervisors and shift bosses contacted the miners and told strikers to return to work or be fired or laid off. Workers were told Cleveland-Cliffs Iron Company would give them ten cents an hour increase and the union would be ended. The company promised that if the company was granted an increase in the price of iron ore they would negotiate the rest. Ore prices were still under some war restrictions through the OPA (Office of Price Administration), and prices couldn't be raised without government permission. Joe Haller, the Mather A superintendent, was given credit for directing these back-to-work movements. Some men did return to work. Following this company strategy, strikers held a mass meeting at the union hall in Ishpeming on Division Street and in the Negaunee Hall. They decided to use the strategy of mass picketing by having one hundred men at each mine. Big Mike Yanek, Smaile Chatek, John Riff, and Joe Pascoe, all experienced strike leaders from Pittsburg, were sent by the International Union to help. The mass picketing was quite successful except for the Mather A Mine which ran for a number of weeks with a handful of men and bosses.

There was some violence; cars turned over, one shooting incident with a man shot in the ankle during a demonstration. Some men were arrested. "It became a fight to preserve the union rather than the demand for the eighteen and one-half cent wage increase," Mr. Lindroos explained. The prosecuting attorney, John Voelker, urged the companies to stop the back-to-work movement since it promoted violence.

The union leaders filed charges of unfair labor practices to the National Labor Relations Board which sent three representatives who conducted three days of hearings at the Negaunee City Hall. The men signed affidavits containing names of bosses who contacted them to come back to work. Bosses and officials were called to testify. "The general theme was that the company officials had no right to bargain individually with the employees. The United Steelworkers of America had been voted in a few years before as the sole bargaining agent between the company and the employees." Mr. Lindroos commented. The National Labor Relations Board recognized the United Steelworkers as the bargaining agent for the miners. This was a setback to the company.

The strike attracted nation-wide attention. "Representative Frank E. Hook from Ironwood

made a speech in Congress criticizing the mining companies." After 3½ months the strike was settled for an eighteen and one-half cent per hour increase. The charges against the companies and unions were dismissed. The workers did not gain all their demands as Mr. Lindroos says, "We still didn't get the shift differential, paid holidays, and other fringes." These benefits were to be later gained through strikes, tough bargaining and sacrifices. Mr. Lindroos describes the 1946 strike this way, "This was the first test of the strength of the union. It left a bitter feeling for a long time. It was felt in the schools, churches, fraternal organizations, and civic affairs." Mr. Lindroos' stated his opinion, "All working conditions and standards of living were very much improved by action of the United Steelworkers of America."

Clarence Randall, President of the Inland Steel Company, had announced that if companies granted this eighteen and one-half cent wage increase mines would shut down, and Ishpeming and Negaunee would be ghost towns. It was a prediction made forty years ago and the towns are still here.

Mr. Lindroos continued his mining career. He spent most of his years mining at the Mather A Mine until it closed. He went to the Bunker Hill Mine for a few years, and he worked his last seven years at the Mather B Mine.

Mr. Lindroos concluded by saying, ". . .It (mining) was a tough way to make a living." He is convinced that through the union came the safety regulations, and wage and fringe benefits that these hard-working miners deserved.

Chris Mattson



Mr. John Lindroos at left.

“TOGETHER WE HAVE STRENGTH— DIVIDED WE FALL”



Mr. Ted Mattson

Ted Mattson's life has been busy, interesting, and fulfilling. He has served the public, politically as a former mayor, city council member, and supervisor, and he has shared his talents in many ways.

Mr. Mattson was born on July 18, 1916, in Ishpeming, Michigan, to a Finnish father and a Swedish mother. Mr. Mattson has lived most of his almost 70 years here in Ishpeming.

When I questioned Mr. Mattson about his childhood in the Cleveland Location, he informed me that although he was a winter sports enthusiast, he also liked football, basketball, and baseball. In fact, the Cleveland Location had their own independent baseball team.

He started kindergarten at four going on five years of age. He said, "I liked school until my first few years of high school when my grades slipped a little, but then I started studying more my last year of high school." Since he mentioned having cows, I thought he had a farm, but he said, "Many people had cows back in them days because the income from the mines was so small and there were periods of recession. People had cows to more-or-less offset the income from the mines."

Sports activities were important recreational diversions for Mr. Mattson. He told me, "We kids were pretty close knit together. We used to be from our area and we would play teams from another area. Competition was pretty strong in them days."

Mr. Mattson got along real well with his parents. He told me, "At one time we had thirteen children. I'm the only one living now." His share of the chores included washing and ironing clothes, helping with the cows, as well as planting potatoes. His family had no machinery, just



Jon Selden '86

horses.

When he finished high school during the 1930's it was hard to get a job, because the mines weren't operating steadily and some were shut down. In fact, in 1932, all of the mines were shut down. This, of course, was during the Great Depression, when milk sold for a nickel a quart and people made their own butter and cheese. Sometimes circumstances got so bad that some families even lost their homes due to large grocery bills. Fortunately, Mr. Mattson's family was able to keep their home.

The jobs he held during this period, varied from selling cars, working in a fish market, to playing in a band. "I played drums. The pay wasn't very good but it kept me in some spending money and helped me get clothes," he stated.

He began working in the mines on February 14, 1941. He has strong personal feelings about the union. He says, "My father worked in the mines forty-seven years and he never saw a paid holiday, paid vacation, or a pension." His father worked until he was sixty-seven but Social Security benefits were not available at that time. Mr. Mattson didn't want these same conditions for him and his family so he, and many others secretly paid a dollar a month dues to the union.

"The first strike was started on February 8, 1946," but since Mr. Mattson was still in the army he was not involved. "It lasted one hundred four days and the miners, upon settlement, received an eighteen and one-half cent raise. The mines tried a back-to-work movement, offering ten cents an hour raise and threatening to shut the mine down. The union filed unfair labor practices with the National Labor Relations Board. The N.L.R.B. demanded to know of the superintendent who gave him the right to negotiate individually with union leaders," stated Mr. Mattson.

"The next strike was held in 1949 for a pension for the miners. This strike lasted seven weeks, but there was no back-to-work movement tried for any strike held after 1946. Many young workers complained about having to strike for the old, but now they're old and getting a good pension," Mr. Mattson continued his explanation. There was another strike in 1952 for a pension and wage increase which lasted five weeks.

There was also a no smoking strike in 1953. "At the time if a worker was caught smoking he was fired immediately. After that time, a worker was given thirty days layoff the first time, ninety days the second. Then the third time he was fired. This strike lasted two weeks.

"In 1957 there was a honeydew week. The miners worked two weeks and got one week off." During the week off, they received money from a sub fund which was quickly depleted.

The wage increases were the main issue in the one hundred day 1959 strike. In Mr. Mattson's opinion, "The politicians forced the strike. They asked companies to demand foolish concessions. The economy was down and they wanted a good economy for the 1960 election."

"Layoffs began January 1, 1961. The layoffs went back to seventeen years and seven months." Mr. Mattson had seventeen years and ten months so he missed the layoff by three months!

There were no strikes between 1959 and 1977 because of an experimental negotiation agreement between the union and the company. A 1964 negotiated benefit granted miners with at least eighteen years seniority a thirteen-week vacation. This was done to create twenty per cent more jobs because the company always had one fifth of the labor force off each year during a five-year period.

At first when Mr. Mattson said he'd made sacrifices, I didn't understand what he meant. When I questioned him, he informed me he was willing to lose wages to strike for better conditions. The conditions in the mines were bad, for they were dirty and could be hot and humid. Mr. Mattson worked in a rock drift that went across into an ore body. He sometimes worked at a depth several thousand feet down, but he said, "One thing about working in an underground mine was the temperature was always the same."

When Mr. Mattson was with the union he held various jobs within the union, including being President of Local 4950 and serving on the Grievance Committee, as well as the Wage Policy

Committee. He also stated, "I represented the Upper Peninsula and Northern Wisconsin in Duluth, which was one of the greatest experiences of my life. An underground miner had a chance to sit down with the top officers of the United Steel Workers of America, but they worked themselves up through the ranks, too."

Ted Mattson's involvement in the union didn't end with his retirement. "I was spokesman for the retirees, reminding workers what we had sacrificed for them to get better living conditions and not to forget us in the negotiations," he related.

"The pension increase was a fair way of granting an increase. Those who retired before 1966 got a seventy percent increase amounting to \$182 a month increase. Those who retired from 1966-1968 received a sixty percent increase which amounted to \$146 a month increase. Those who retired from 1968-1970 received a fifty per cent increase and it amounted to \$140 a month increase. Those who retired from 1975 to 1980 got a ten per cent increase which amounted to fifty-two dollars a month increase," Mr. Mattson explained. The retirees also received a paid health insurance policy in 1975.

Ted Mattson has done many things for the kids in our area. He was responsible for starting a Little League in 1951, a Babe Ruth League in 1960 and an American Legion Baseball program, which honored outstanding players at the end of the year.

He used his organizational skills to form a retirees club for the over 1500 retired steelworkers on the Marquette Range. He says that when they get together, the politicians must listen to them. Their motto is, "Together we have strength. Divided we fall." He also says that "By letting the politicians know that we get out to vote, they listen to us. We've even had Congressman Davis speak at one of our dinners."

Mr. Mattson has been married since August 21, 1938. He has two children and five grandchildren. His daughter, Mrs. Hebert, is my typing teacher whom I've known for some time now.

Ted Mattson is one of the most interesting and colorful people I've ever met. I was impressed by his recall of facts and figures and by how much he has done for others. Ted Mattson, in my opinion, represents all that is good in our society.

Louis Myers



Mr. Ted Mattson, former President of Local 4950 with the Bolivan Mine Team.

MR. ERNIE RONN—A UNION FIGHTER

Mr. Ernie Ronn spent the years of his life since birth in the aura of mining. He followed his father and grandfather into the mines and mining unions. Mr. Ronn became quite involved in the unions as a young miner and progressed into a highly respected union leader.

Mr. Ronn was born in Negaunee, Michigan, in 1925. He graduated from Negaunee High School with the class of '43. "My dad was a miner," stated Mr. Ronn. "He started work in 1923 until he retired in 1970. He had worked with my grandfather before that." Mr. Ronn recalls his grade school years and teachers. "At the time I didn't like them (his teachers) but as I got older I learned to respect them and understood what they were trying to do and I am thankful that they were strict," he said with a laughing gleam in his eye. His teachers were at times very harsh. Mr. Ronn told me of times when he was rapped over the knuckles with a ruler.

Mr. Ronn was always kept busy during his teen years. He'd obtain groceries for his grandparents and neighbors. He also brought in wood and coal to heat his home and the home of his grandparents. He was paid whenever money was available which was not very often.

Mr. Ronn first received work in the Negaunee Mine in 1943. ". . . When I graduated I was two days short of my eighteenth birthday and on my birthday I registered for the draft. In the mines I started to work about one week after my birthday," affirmed Mr. Ronn.

Mr. Ronn spent many of his working years in the Negaunee underground mines as a contract miner. Within these years was a two year interruption when Mr. Ronn entered the infantry. He served as Staff Sergeant with the One Hundred First and Eighty-Second Airborne Divisions in the European Theatre during World War II. As soon as he was discharged in 1946, Mr. Ronn returned to Negaunee and the mines.

Following World War II approximately five hundred men were employed at the Negaunee Mine. Mr. Ronn spoke of the range of pay from about fifty cents to a dollar per hour. Mr. Ronn started out with a sixty-two and one-half cent per hour income. I asked Mr. Ronn how a miner advanced to a higher level of pay. His response was not what I had expected. He said there was no "post or order" at all. "It depended where the company thought you were needed and that is where they put you."

"When I started work in '43 I believe the Finnish group was the largest group in the Negaunee Mine followed closely by the Italians and then after that would be the Swedish and the English people," was Mr. Ronn's reply when I asked him what the most common nationality in the mine. Mr. Ronn, able to speak the Finnish language, learned much from the miners who only spoke Finn and had toiled in the mines since the turn of the century. He heard of the conditions and trials of that time and the people that faced them. Aside from the oldtimers, Mr. Ronn made many other good friends. ". . . A lot of memories came from the very days with those miners along with the people I met in the infantry."

Our conversation turned to tragedies and safety precautions in the mines during Mr. Ronn's laboring days. "The mine was a dangerous place," recalled Mr. Ronn sternly. He mentioned incidents that resulted in fatalities and near deaths in underground mines such as caving grounds, falls, and accidents occurring from dynamite. Luckily, Mr. Ronn was never seriously injured, "just cuts and bruises." When I questioned him about safety precautions, Mr. Ronn informed me that mining companies did have safety rules and there were mine inspection systems. The problem was that the inspection systems had no "enforcement capabilities" so not much was done to protect the miners. Today, under federal and state laws, there are precise safety rules and regulations that protect miners according to Mr. Ronn.

Mr. Ronn worked an average of eight hours a day with a twenty minute break for lunch. "It was very heavy work," declared Mr. Ronn with a brief sigh. Mr. Ronn normally worked a Monday through Friday schedule, but during the war years it was Monday through Saturday and often

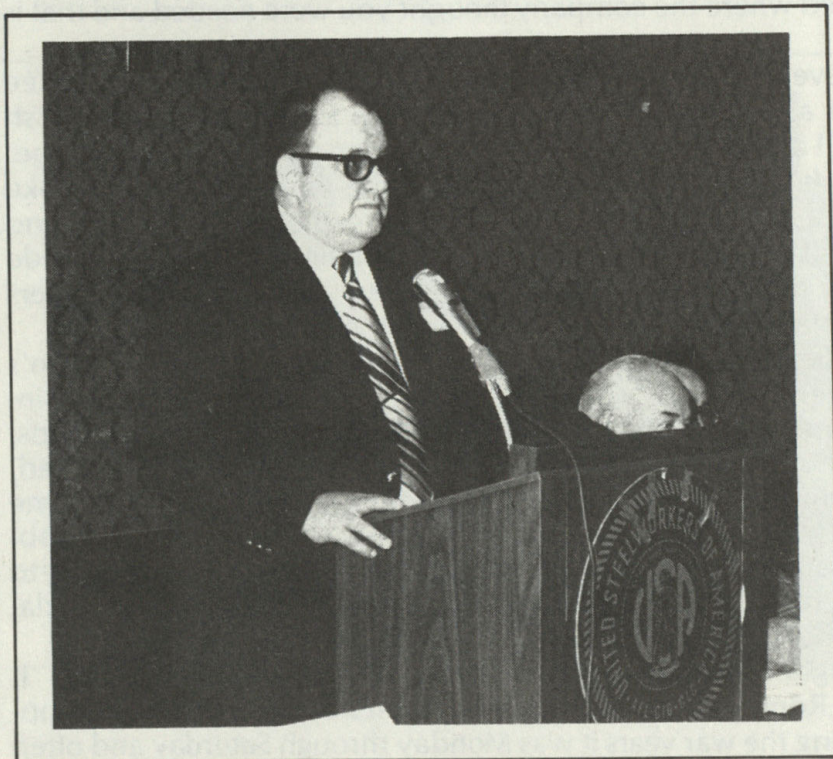
miners even labored on Sunday. During the war, iron ore from Michigan mines was a necessity for the national defense. At the closing of World War II, the working schedule for the miners "went as low as four days a week with only three weeks a month."

Like most people, Mr. Ronn fantasized about having a different occupation, but he grew to realize that mining was the only good paying work in the area available to him. Mr. Ronn's parents never had enough money to send him to a school of higher learning.

Mr. Ronn later became involved in mine strikes such as the 1946 strike which lasted 104 days. He joined the United Steelworkers of America, a local mining union, and spent many tedious days picketing for items such as higher wages, shorter working days, and better working conditions. Children and wives also picketed with the miners. The women and children suffered much mockery from those who didn't support the strike. ". . .Some of the scars from the '46 strike still exist today and they will still exist as long as those people who went through those picket lines live," Mr. Ronn grimly related. Violence often took place during the strike such as rock hurling and even a few shootings. Family ideas were often separated because of strikes. ". . .there were families that felt rather different between fathers and in-laws and you have to remember in 1946 there were a lot of men returning from the service and they felt they earned a right to work without a union. Others felt as I do, that we fought a war and we earned a right to join a union," remarked Mr. Ronn. Business owners were also somewhat involved in the strike of 1946. "We had a lot of friendly businessmen who assisted us and some who were not quite so friendly who cut out the credit and attempted to force and starve the miners back to work," mentioned Mr. Ronn. Luckily for the strikers, the majority of the businessmen stuck with them.

Mr. Ronn no longer works in the mines but is very much involved in the miners' interests. He is the chairman of Union Local 4950, United Steelworkers of America and has much influence on what the Union does. The most recent strike that Mr. Ronn was involved in was in 1976 where the strikers reached their goal of higher wages. Mr. Ronn has a position of great responsibility and I believe he is totally committed to his work.

Ernie Valeski



**Mr. Ernie Ronn, Chairman
of Union Local 4950.**



National Mine School — a 1913 classroom photograph.