

Troy Holmgren

Fifty-seven

Confident Worker

"I enjoy working in the mines" stated Mr. David Holmgren. Mr. Holmgren graduated from Ishpeming High School and decided to work for Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company.

David R. Holmgren was born September 2, 1951, in Ishpeming Michigan. He is the son of Roy and Grace Holmgren and has a sister named Judy White which also lives in Ishpeming. He is married to Sue Felt. Mr. Holmgren first started working for CCI in 1969, and he started working as an underground miner. "I guess I got the push from my dad," stated Mr. Holmgren. As we chatted I began to learn more and more about what mining was like back then and today. He had many interesting stories to tell.

For many years family members have worked in mines including cousins, uncles, grandfathers, and his father. His father, Roy, worked in underground mines for thirty years.

Mr. Holmgren first started working in the Mather B Mine, he stayed for ten years until the mine closed in 1979. He was then transferred to the Tilden Mine. In 1982, he was sent to the Empire Mine, and has been there ever since. "Working in the Mines is very dusty, dirty, and is hard work," said Mr. Holmgren.

Mr. Holmgren has had many different tasks to do for CCI. He has been a hoisting engineer who brought the men up and down out of the mine. He has also driven the huge dump trucks out in

the pit. He was a transperscraperman and a motorman which hauled ore cars underground to the dump. Then he was a cage rider which brought the men their supplies that they needed. Next, he was a shovel operator, and presently he is a plant repairman. He and his partner usually go around fixing things in the mill. He mostly fixes feeders which brings the crude ore over to the grinding Mills.

As we began talking about the different job experiences he has had, I began to wonder what kind of training it would take to do these kinds of jobs. Mr. Holmgren said that workers are required to have many hours on a job to qualify for different pay levels at the mine. To become a plant repairman he had to take a test. When I asked him what the most challenging part of his job was, he said that he has to fix things that break down. "Once you have repaired something and see what you have accomplished you realize that you can tackle any job." stated Mr. Holmgren.

He says he enjoys working at the mine. The co-workers are all a good group of people. He looks forward to going to work everyday. "Going to work is very fun. It isn't just all work. We have humerous fun too." said Mr. Holmgren. Mr. Holmgren is on the Empire Mine's safety committee and was safety chairman. I asked him if he has seen or been in any accidents. He said he has only investigated some of the accidents at the mine.

I asked Mr. Holmgren what kind of advice he would give to young people who want to work in the mining industry when they get older. His advice to me was to stay in school. Students should also stay in school to learn to utilize more modern equipment like computers and electronics. If students learn

more and get the best education that is possible, the better the opportunities are.

Mr. Holmgren has also been a member of the United SteelWorker's Union for twenty-five years. He cares a lot about his job and a lot about other workers. He said that he would never change his career. He believes in the union a great deal. Mr. Holmgren says he has experienced being on strike and it is not a picnic. The last strike he was recording secretary for the negotiating committee. "Being on strike is not very pleasant," said Mr. Holmgren.

I'm very glad that I was able to interview Mr. Holmgren. He has taught me a great deal about the mining industry. He is a very knowledgeable man. Mr. Holmgren is my father and this is why I know such a great deal about him. I am very glad that he is my father. I would like to thank him for taking the time to let me interview him.