

me: The date is December 29, 1983. I'm in the house of my grandpa and grandpa Goldsworthy in West Isperming. I am interviewing my grandpa on the Depression and what it was like in National Mine.

Grandpa, when and where were you born?

Grandpa: April 9, 1925.

me: and where?

Grandpa: In National Mine

me: ok. and where did you live?

Grandpa: Close to the school. across from the old town hall.

me: or where did your father work?

Grandpa: at the time he was working at Hercules

me: um. Did you have any brothers or sisters?

Grandpa: one brother and one sister

me: what are their names?

Grandpa: Jack and Shirley

me: Did your mother work?

Grandpa: she worked in the bazaar

me: How important was the automobile to your family?

Grandpa: Very important. we had to get to town to buy groceries every once in a while.

me: and did you ^{ever} have to walk?

Grandpa: yes we walked lots of times when we got a big snow storm.

me: How important was education then?

Grandpa: well It's always been important if you want to get anywhere

me: mmm and who were the principal and superintendent of National Mine?

Grandpa: mmm. Walter Bath was superintendent and George An Nalla was principal.

me: umm. Did your family grow a garden?

Grandpa: mhm.

me: and what kinds of things did you grow.

Grandpa: mostly potatoes and carrot and stuff like that, tomatoes.

me: umm, what were your feelings on Hoover?

Grandpa: I didn't think much of him.

me: No?

we both laugh.

me: umm, many people said Hoover was the cause of the Depression, what are your opinions on it?

Grandpa: I think he was.

me: Think so?

Grandpa: mmmhmm.

me: Umm. Could you tell me about the stock market crash?

Grandpa: Well, I wasn't very old when it crashed, I was only 4 years old.

Door opens and closes

we both chuckle.

me: umm. How did you feel about Roosevelt at first?

Door opens and closes.

Grandpa: I thought he was pretty good.

me: and then how did you feel afterwards?

Grandpa: Kept feelin' better and better towards him, 'cause he did a lot of things to put people back to work.

me: Um. What did you think of the New Deal?

Grandpa: It helped a lot of people. Gave them jobs like WPA and CCC's. Put lots of young people to work.

me: was it really helpful in National Mine?

Grandpa: Yes it was. They worked on the water lines ^{putting in} water. They also used to shovel the snow ^{in the winter time} when the plows couldn't get through. There would be that much snow. Especially in '38.

we both laugh.

me: what organizations did you think were worthy when Roosevelt was in office?

Grandpa: well, as I said the WPA, CCC's.

me: OK, umm, what was the job rate like in National Mine?

Grandpa: well, it was bad, then a lot of people got to work on the WPA, and younger people went in the CCC's. They had to send so much money home out of their check every month to the family to support the family

③ me: Didn't they have to go away to work?

Grandpa: Oh ya. They were in CCC camps

me: oh.

Grandpa: It was just like a, well you might say it was run in a military fashion.

me: mmm. umm where were some of the CCC camps?

Grandpa: Mmm. Some down around Gwinn, some down around _____ and I forget where the rest of them were. There were ~~me~~ some up in a up towards Baraga and _____, they did forestry projects planting trees

me: umm. How did people react towards the Depression here in National Mine?

Grandpa: Well, there wasn't much they could do about it, they just had to do the best they could to live. Almost everybody had gardens and tried to pick up odd jobs.

me: Did they umm, like feel depressed lots?

Grandpa: Oh, ya. wouldn't you if you didn't have any money?

me: Ya, I suppose. umm. How did you yourself feel about the Depression?

Grandpa: Well, I was pretty young. Lots of times we were hungry. we were wishing we had more ~~to eat~~, money so we could do more things.

me: umm. were there any building built in National Mine by the WPA?

Grandpa: Not that I can remember.

me: oh. umm what kind of problems did your family face during the Depression.

Grandpa: (Pause) Well, we had trouble paying the rent which was only around \$5 a month. we used to have to go and pick berries and sell them, which wasn't any fun in the summer months, and cut wood so you would have wood in the winter time. All the kids had jobs, they didn't play around like you kids do now a days.

We both laugh

④ me: Did the CCC's help your family?

Grandpa: No. Not really. (Pause) They did it by helping the country. You know. With trees and ~~some~~ stuff like that.

me: umm. Did the WPA help your family then?

Grandpa: As I said, they helped plow the roads, and put in waterlines. So indirectly it did.

me: In ~~any~~ what ~~ways~~ ways did the New Deal become helpful in your area?

Door opens and closes.

(Pause)

Door opens and closes.

Grandpa: Ah. Its hard to say, I imagine they helped everybody. Like providing jobs for lots of people.

me: was there prosperity in National Mine?

Grandpa: Prosperity? No. They used to have relief trucks that would come around and pass out apples and stuff like that. And for people who didn't have much gave them blankets and clothing.

me: Oh.

Grandpa: Something like your ah, St. Vincent's and that are doing now.

me: In the National Mine area, was there lots of hunger?

Well, I don't think anybody really starved to death. You know. You could always go out and shoot a deer.

we both laugh

me: Ya; I suppose.

Grandpa: There was a lot of that

me: about how many families did you know that lost their homes?

⑤ Grandpa: I didn't know any that really lost their homes because they were mostly renting from companies. They were almost all company homes. The company was pretty good about ^{letting them} staying there.

me: Where did most of the people work before the Depression started?

Grandpa: Well, the Tilden mine people were working, Hercules power company, and there was your related industries like a couple of stores in National Mine, and gas stations, and related jobs like that.

me: Ok. umm. what other mines were in progress?

Grandpa: That was the only one in National Mine. There were some in Ishpeming, quite a few going ^{to or from} Ishpeming, Negawane and National Mine, no even then, ya well the Tilden was the only, that was open pit and ran in the summer months closed in winter. That was the only one in National Mine.

me: Ok. what railroads were in progress?

Grandpa: _____ can through Ishpeming and some dynamite from the Hercules Power Company.

me: Mmm. umm. what ways were the holidays affected by the Depression?

Grandpa: Well, kids didn't get very many toys, if you got one you were lucky, but everybody tried to be happy. You usually tried to get a turkey or chicken or something for Christmas.

me: Oh. then that's pretty good.

Grandpa: Mmm.

me: About when did your father get laid off?

@ Grandpa: hmmm. It would be several times when he was laid off.

me: Oh. So he went back to work and got laid off again?

Grandpa: mm hmmm.

me: umm. Did the unemployment insurance help your family?

Grandpa: no.

me: umm. Did like your sister or brother or you have to work then to earn money?

Grandpa: No. I didn't start working til 1940. My brother had worked before that, he had worked at Hercules. My sister I don't don't think, no she left. I think she was married in 1938. So she didn't work except like in the summertime when we picked perris to sell.

me: umm. Did your family lose money when the banks started failing?

Grandpa: no. We never had enough to be in banks

me: Oh. umm. What did the economic hardships do to family life?

Grandpa: well, you didn't go anywhere. you know

me: Did you feel like your family was more close together during the Depression?

Grandpa: ya, you had to be just about. Everybody seemed to get along even with your neighbors you would help each other out.

me: Did you have a radio?

Grandpa: ya

me: so did you

Grandpa: that's what most everybody did was sit around even their neighbors that didn't have radios would come to your house at night and listen to it.

me: Like what was your favorite show on the radio?

Grandpa: ames and aney. And there was alot of music alot of big bands playing.

⑦ me: umm. Did you know any people who turned to Communism?

Grandpa: No, I don't.

me: No? Do you remember the Temperance Society?

Grandpa: I remember what it was for ya.

me: umm. what was it for?

Grandpa: Well, they didn't want anybody to drink called prohibition
Temperance was, actually what it meant was not to drink that

me: were there people that did anyway?

Grandpa: Oh, ya. There still is
we both laugh.

me: Oh. what about "blind pigs"?

Grandpa: well, I was really too young to know but there was lots of
rumor going around and where you bought bootleg whiskey

me: were a lot of people making moonshine?

Grandpa: Ya. And almost everybody made homemade beer
we laugh.
lots of wine

me: what were weddings like? were they large or small?

Grandpa: umhmm. Just about the whole community would go, and
they would have a dance at the town hall

me: Oh umm. what was a grange hall?

Grandpa: a what?

me: Grange hall?

Grandpa: Grange

me: Grange?

} figuring out
how to pronounce
it.

Grandpa: That was an organization of farmers. They would
get together and eat

me: Did Ethnic groups stick together?

Grandpa: Ya. mostly. Like in National mine used to be a
place called Finn Farm, one was Swede home and
nationalities stuck together, like New England
that's were most of your English ~~there~~ were. So they mostly stuck
in there own group mostly mixed but I mean there was
a when they settled they settled together.

me: were there any major epidemic cases going around?

Grandpa: I think there was a lot of flu going around cause
mostly your houses were cold

me: umm. Did people die from the flu?

grandpa: Some did. ya

me: umm. what did you do in your leisure time?

grandpa: We didn't have much. We would go ski riding alot and swimming, in the summer if only we could sneak away.
we laugh.

me: what there much hope for the Depression to dis appear in National Mine?

grandpa: well, everybody hoped it would, but nobody knew when, but it wasn't actually til after WWII started, then it started picking up

me: mmm. were there many people in National Mine that had to go to war?

grandpa: oh ya. almost everybody, all the young lads went. If you were 18, you were either enlisted or drafted.

me: How did you feel about the second New Deal? if you remember it.

grandpa: No. I was in the service from 43 on so until after Roosevelt died. so you really didn't pay much attention in the service.

me: why did you think Roosevelt's New Deal ended?

grandpa: well, I think it ended after he died. and Harry Truman was in there he had his own ideas

me: umm. For a while there it was picking up then like companies were getting together, so other companies would lose out. Did you like that the Depression was coming back or?

grandpa: No. things were going pretty good for everybody. During the war there were alot of defense plants and shipyards for people to go and get work. And the mines were really moving you know they had lots of steel

me ya. what did you feel was your main meal?

grandpa: Potatoes

me: was the garden helpful though?

grandpa: mmmmm. Oh ya. Everybody had a garden. So

me: So what would you do during the winter?

grandpa: winter?

me: mmmmm.

grandpa: well, shoveled snow, hauled in wood, empty ashes carry water we used to have to carry water for oh, about a quarter of a mile. with a neck and two pails on it

9) Washday you had many many trips to the pump.
me: Were there only certain days then that you could wash?
Grandpa: No. It was all in my grandmothers yard there was a pump we used to. we could go there and pump and lots of neighbors got it there too. There was no shortage in the pumps

me: Umm. Did your father always work at the same place?

Grandpa: No He got a job on the _____ and that's where he retired.

me: Umm. How long did your mom work at the Gazard?

Grandpa: Oh boy. I don't ^{really} know. She had quite a few years in there. She worked there before I went into the service and she worked in there while I was still in the service. I don't know when she quit. She had quit a few years.

me: Did you have one vehicle?

Grandpa: mmhmm.

me: So you all had to share it?

Grandpa: Oh yes, we did mostly walking.

me: Oh

Grandpa: Couldn't afford gas

me: About how much money did your father make a year?

Grandpa: Oh boy. I wouldn't know. They really didn't talk too much about wages and money. It was always that they didn't have enough. When I first started I worked for the Muther Inn and I made \$21 a month. Course I made the same amount when I was in the service too.

me: Umm. About what year did you go into the service then?

Grandpa: Early part of '43. (Pause) And after the war I put another hitch in, I reenlisted for a more years. I got out in the '47 I think I come out I got a job with CCI as a diesel mechanic. And that's what I did until I retired.

20 me: Like about how many students were in National Mine School?

Grandpa: (He laughs)

me: Not very many?

Grandpa: Not very many.

me: Was it like only one classroom?

Grandpa: Oh no. We had the regular National Mine School. Ya, my uncle was janitor there, Tom Heaton

me: Ok. What stores were open?

Grandpa: Well the post office was run by _____ Solka and they had groceries in there too, and then Anala's had a grocery store. I think that's called the Country Market now I think was and the old post office is closed down and that was just down the road from there, towards town

me: What kinds of things would you get for Christmas?

Grandpa: You usually got one big item, well not a big one but maybe a crawler tractor and the girls would get a doll, it wasn't much and then they tried to have fruit in your stocking and nuts and stuff like that to fill it up
we laugh.

me: Umm, where were your parents from?

Grandpa: They were both from National Mine

me: Oh. They always lived there then?

Grandpa: Mmmmm

me: Oh ok. Where did you go swimming, when you said that you went swimming?

Grandpa: ~~That~~ Well, there were mostly 3 places and they were all mine pits. One was the number 8 pit, and then there was Lily pond, (that was just a shallow one), and duck pond ~~later~~ that's where got the name from all the boys used to go swimming in the nude and fine a car (it was right by the road) any time a car went by or people walked by everybody would have to duck so it was called duck pond. (we laugh) It was cold and dirty

me: I do. What was your home like? Small, big?

Grandpa: It was a big house, it was 2 1/2 story and in the winter the snow would blow through the siding and be on the stair going upstairs. It was real cold

me: umm. Did you go anywhere on certain days?

Grandpa: Well on Saturdays we used to if we had, I think the movies were a nickel or a dime at the time. We would walk into Ishpeming that was about 3 miles to go to the movies and then you would walk home again. we laughed. They always had serials you know, continuing ones before the show. Something like a TV series now only they were called serials then

me: Serials! we laugh. Did you like the "fire side chats" by Roosevelt?

Grandpa: well, we used to listen to them but we were really too young to pay much attention. I always liked to hear him speak, he was a good speaker

me: were you made to listen to the radio every night?

Grandpa: No. That was all there was to do. My sister used to make a lot of candy. You would have taffy pulls and stuff like that. Neighbor kids would come in. Everything was done with friends and you know. You were really close in them days 'cause there really was nothing to do.

me: When you got really sick, where did you go $\frac{3}{4}$ or were you just taken care of at home?

Grandpa: Mostly the doctor would come to the house in them days

me: who was the doctor?

Grandpa: Dr. Hart, Dr. _____ and there were several doctors around. We usually had Dr. Hart or Dr. _____ as our doctors.

me: were the fees expensive?

Grandpa: No. (He laughs.) They didn't get paid too often. Nobody had any money. They gave them what they could and that was it.

me: Like was it real cold in the winters?

Grandpa: Mmmmm. About the same as now. It would get real cold. About the same as this year. We laughed.

I remember the storm of 1938. We went out the second story ~~water~~ window of our house there was that much snow. WPA guys would go around with poles looking for cars buried ~~under the snow~~ on the road before they could come through with the plow. There was that much snow that they had a big tractor with a V plow on it, a crawler tractor. But they had to shovel a path in front of it so the plow could get through. That's how much snow there was and it was picked that hard from the wind. We had a, the stores ran out of food so we had to walk in on snowshoes to Ishpeming pulling tobaggons to get more groceries. My dad, my brother, and I. Lots of fun. We laughed.

me: Did you have to run to the store often?

Grandpa: Usually there was an old Meyers merchantile store we used to have a sleigh from Ishpeming. They come out and you would put your order in for the next week ~~and~~ and when they came out they'd bring your order out. Get your kerosene for lamps.

me: Did you feel your parents were more strict then than today's?

Grandpa: Oh ya. Kids get away with murder now-a-days. I know, I raised 7 of them. We laughed.

me: How did you celebrate birthday parties?

Grandpa: It was usually a family affair and mother would bake a cake or something like that that was it.

me: Umm. Long pause

me: Were there many other holidays celebrated other than Christmas?

Grandpa: Well, Fourth of July was celebrated. Kids always had firecrackers from somewhere I don't know where we got them, but we had them.
we laughed

me: What was the store called that you went to?

Grandpa: Well, the ones in National Mine was _____ Solka and Anatas, they were brothers to the George Anata the principal. It was all the same family. Then we used to go to Meyers in Ishpeming, I guess right where OK Auto is now. And there was another one called Kockses ^{supply} in Ishpeming. There was an A E P store. Used to be a Piggly Wiggly at one time (we laughed). A lot of stores.

me: About what was the price of gasoline then?

Grandpa: Oh, I think around 16-17¢ a gallon. That's when we hadn't any money it was still lots.

me: Umm, where did you go skiing in the winter?

Grandpa: Mostly was ski jumping in them days. Nobody thought of cross country or downhill skiing. So we had a hill there in National Mine called "Little Bluff". We used to jump on that one then we would go ride to suicide in Ishpeming. You always had to walk and once in a while there was a warmer ski club and we used to go to Wisconsin and that. ^{later on} jumping ^{that} over Rylander and wed go to Bruce's Crossing and ^{all other} ski jumping. That must have been a state funded 'Cause Speldalre was the leader of ours.

me: Did you have to make your own skis?

Grandpa: No, we bought regular jumping skis.

me: Did you buy your snowshoes too?

Grandpa: No, lots of times you could borrow. You always borrowed back and forth between families and we always had a, well I guess is, can't arrest as now ~~but my brother had a share~~ But we always had a share mine, my brother and I for sharing rabbits. We'd have to go and check it every morning before school and bring rabbits home. Well, you had to eat.

(14) me: what would you usually do before school?
Grandpa: Well, we had to make sure the wood box was full and the ^{water} pits were full before we went to school, and the ashes were ~~empty~~ emptied.

me: So there was always

Grandpa: always something mmmmm, everybody was used to ~~the~~ it, you didn't think anything of it. You still had your time to play

me: Did you usually play around the house or go somewhere?

Grandpa: Usually played with certain groups, kids in one neighborhood would play together, and kids in another one. And we would go ice skating on the rivers and have a big fire, every once in a while you would go on thin ice and fall in, and went home froze stiff.

we laughed.

me: Did you graduate from high school?

Grandpa: ya. In 1978. See I quit to go in the service. But I quit before that. I was 19 actually, I went to work at the Matter Inn.

me: When people did graduate did they have gowns and class rings?

Grandpa: mmmmm.

me: Did about everybody be able to afford them?

Grandpa: Well one way or another they got them.

me: Did the families always have lots of children?

Grandpa: Well, ya, they were generally bigger families, because there was a lot of ~~family~~ farming going on, they needed, when you had lots of boys you had a good family. (we laughed)

me: Was there always lots of mending for the girls?

Grandpa: Women always used to sew, and most clothes were homemade. Very seldom you had anything bought

me: Did you make lots of your things that you played with?

Grandpa: ya. We used to take an old wooden barrel and make skimmers out of them.

(15) Just used one of the (motioning with hands the curved sides) and put a block of wood on it and a seat on it and ride them.

me: Sounds fun. We laugh.

Grandpa: It used to be. Took lots of spills but it was fun.

me: How many hours a day did your mother work at the Gizzard?

Grandpa: 8 hours.

me: What about your father?

Grandpa: They all worked 8 hours.

me: So then yours were left alone?

Grandpa: Ya, mostly. Well my dad was different shifts you know, he would be afternoon and midnight. He was watchman for Hercules you weren't home alone too much.

me: Did you have certain get-togethers with your neighbors?

Grandpa: On holidays usually. Then liked in the summer they would have work bees. Everybody would have a saw rig. All the guys would get together and go to different houses and cut their wood for winter. Kids would have to pile it and split it. (He laughs) Guys would cut it on a machine.

me: Were there any other types of bees that they had?

Grandpa: Oh ya. Somebody ^{needed} ~~would~~ help to build a barn you would get a bunch together women would do the cooking.

me: Were there any real rich people near you or was everybody the same?

Grandpa: Oh, there ~~was~~ ^{was} some had quite a bit of money. Might have been the ones that owned the stores and mine captains. They were quite a bit better off than anybody else.

me! But during the Depression they did lose
lots of money right?

Grandpa: ya. They had to give lots out on credit.
Lots of people couldn't repay.
Well thank you very much.