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interview with Eugene Kieskala Paul Turino
Dec. 27, 1983

me- Bip. Where were you born? In National Mine,

me- When were you born? Feb. 12, 1915

me- Where did you live during the Depression? In
the house I live in now. In National Mine
I remember

me- Do you remember the Stock Market Crash? A Little
bit about it. Yeh.

me- What things do you remember about it? Well. Just
what I read in the papers about it. That's all, all.
lot's of people jump out of Hotel windows. And
stuff like that when they found out they lose all
that money. And uh.

me- How old were you when it crashed? I was, uh,
For- Fourteen years old.

me- what was it like during the depression? Things
were pretty tough. I'll tell you that, uh. Nobody was
working. The whole country, well huh. 20% of the
population or working force idled. And uh. It was
pretty tough. No kind of insurance. ^{mumbled} No medical
Insurance.

me- what was the worst thing about the Depression? The
worst thing, oh Boy! ^{Pause} I guess you couldn't hold a job. Although
food was cheap, it uh. You could buy hamburger 5, 10-5 to
10¢ a pound. Milk was a nickle a quart. But a lot
of times you didn't have the nickle to pay for it
you see.

me- What did you think of President Hoover?

him- Well uh I didn't fall for him too much. But what you read in the paper about him. He wasn't too popular. But Although a lot of stuff was blamed on him that shouldn't have been.

me- Do you think it was his fault for the Depression?

him- Well, I can't quite commit myself on that. Some people seemed to have think it was alright. He had something to do with it uh.

me- Do you think you learned anything about the Depression?

him- Yes. You learned how to hold on to a nickle when you got one. (laugh)

me- What was it like when president Roosevelt came into office?

him- Well it was the heart of the Depression. In ah 1933. I guess it was.

me- Did you listen to his Fire Side Chats?

him- Yah, I listened to them, Yah.

me- Was welfare available at this time?

him- The county had a program that was paying 25¢ an hour for a 10 hour day uh. That come to \$2.50 a day and you worked 2 days a week on that.

me- Were jobs hard to get?

him- Definatly there were none to be had.

me- Did your parents have a job at this time?

him- My dad had been working one day a week ah for the Oliver mining company. I think it was around 1932 or 1933. He ^{was} laid off then even. And after I graduated from High School I was able to get a job on a county that paid 25¢ an hour for 2 days a week + and a ten hour day.

me- Did anyone you know work for the WPA or CC Camps?

him- No I never worked on WPA. That come out of that there ah. After what they called ERA. Then I went in CC camps in 1935 I think it was

me- What projects were available in the WPA?

him- It was all roadwork ah. Building roads throughout the county.

me- What kind of house did you live in?

him- Same house I'm living in now.

me- What did you use for transportation?

him- Well my dad had a model T. A twenty.
A twenty-seven Model T. Sedan Yah.

me- How important was the car?

him- Well ah. It was the only vehicle we had to get anywhere.

me- Did any railroad lines come through there?

him- Yes. A Northwestern and the Southshore used to come through there. But the Southshore finally gave up in the early 30's

me- Were they used for public or business?

him- Well they delivered stuff down to the Hercule Boiler Company ah and pump-loading docks in National Mine.

me- Was the education important?

him- I guess you might say it was important Yah.

me- Did schools have enough money to get by?

him- I graduated from High school in 1933, that was really the heart of the Depression.

him(continued)- Schools had to close down 1 month early, and they only gave them a weeks notice to prepare for graduation, Imagine that. It was the 6th or 7th of May when I graduated.

me- Were there any strikes at this time?

him- No there was no strikes.

me- Do you know who was the principle of Nat'l Mine?

him- When I graduated the principle was an Oscar Swanson. He was originally from Minnesota or North Dakota.

me- were Salaries cut low?

him- Salaries were quite low. I understand when Walter Bath was superintendent his top pay was only \$,000 a year. He retired in the 40's or 50's. He came there in 32.

me- Did you have a cap + gown for your graduation

him- No.

me- Did you feel you were poor?

him- I guess you might say we did.

me- Did people lose faith in the American way of life?

him- No I dont think so. They um. They went right along with it.

me- How did people treat each other?

him- Wellah. They was pretty good to each other. They helped each other alot and um. There was no conflict any where.

me- What were some ways of entertainment?

him- Well. They used to have um. dances down at the town hall but that was the only entertainment in National mine.

me- What were weddings, funerals, or other social affairs like?

him Weddings would be held at the Town Hall usually. And Funerals usually the people showed the body at the home even. Rather than a funeral home ya see.

me Did they have any clubs, lodges, or any other societies here?

him They had one club in National Mine, That folded after a couple of years

me was there a rise in crime?

him No there was no crime in Nat'l mine at the time.

me Did you have any communication systems?

him No. We didn't have no telephone. Telephones were scarce in delegations. I think at one time, the only phone in Nat'l mine was at the store.

me was medical help very good?

him Ah. Yes ah. My dad worked in the mine. He ah they deducted \$2 a month that meant he could go for a doctors call at the office, on that you know on that 2 dollars.

me What did you think of the New Deal?

him Slowly turned the country around.

me were there alot of changes?

him Quite a few.

me Could you name some?

him Well work picked up for one thing. I suppose that covers it all.

me Is there anything else you'd like to tell me that I missed?

him Well. Most of the people ah. Got cows. and ah. ~~you~~ got there own milk and butter. and a big meat supply, and ah. cut own firewood. I don't think noone burnt oil. (big pause) things were really tough. No suicides. (pause). Ate lots of deer meat I guess