

①

Joanne Douglas
interview with
Jim Douglas

me: Hi! I'm Joanne Douglas
and I'm here at 1730 Rose-
wood Lane in Ishpeming
interviewing James Allan
Douglas.

me: O.k. To start things off
when and where were you
born?

Mr. Douglas: I was born in Marquette
in 1950.

me: Um, what were your parents
names?

Mr. Douglas: Darold and Mariann.

me: What were the names of your brothers and sisters?

Mr. Douglas: Janet and Lori

me: When and where were you married?

Mr. Douglas: I was married in Marguette at St. John's Church on April 17th 1971.

me: What is your spouses name?

Mr. Douglas: Susan

me: What did your parents do for a living?

Mr. Douglas: Ah! My mother was a waitress and my father was a Woolworth manager.

me: Where did you go to school?

Mr. Douglas: When I was growing up I went to a different school every 2 or 3 years because you got transferred, so I lived in Waterloo Iowa, Sturgen Bay Wisconsin, Milwaukee Shaw Wisconsin, and Marguette

me: What special memories do you have of growing up in this area?

Mr. Douglas: Well when I was younger a friend of mine and I used to go and explore rock caves and ledges and things like that then there were always some kind of recreational activity you could do any kind of the year.

me: Is there any special features that stand out in your mind of the cities of Ishpeming and Negaunee when you were younger?

Mr. Douglas: Other than its quiet and its not rushed like it is in the cities nothing else.

me: How have the cities changed?

Mr. Douglas: Well the cities of Ishpeming and Negaunee haven't changed too much. On the outskirts they're a little bit more modern, but the main course cities are pretty much the same thing.

(4)

me: What kinds of things did you and your friends do for entertainment when you were teenagers?

Mr. Douglas: Play baseball do all kinds of sports things, just ride our bikes or go out exploring in the woods or out on the countryside.

me: Is there anywhere specifically where you would like to hang-out in town when you were a teenager with your friends?

Mr. Douglas: We didn't hang around town or anything like that, we always had better things to do.

me: How old were you when you found your first job and where did you work?

Mr. Douglas: Well I started out with a paper route at 10 years old and later on that was the Milwaukee Journal and Sentinel route, and later on I got a mining journal route, and then I got my first real job working at the mining journal. They showed me how to do things in the press room, showed me how to take pictures and engrave pictures

(5)

Mr. Douglas: So they could be made ready to go into the paper.

me: Are those basically the duties you performed at your first job?

Mr. Douglas: Ya, I delivered papers and then they showed me how to take pictures and develop film the old fashioned way where you had to separate the film and the paper in complete darkness. You had to be able to feel your way around the thing until you could put it in a special fixing liquid to where it would develop. They gave me a camera to where I could go out and take pictures all the time. That I wanted to in case I could see something that somebody else didn't get. And at 13 I had a picture of a train wreck that the regular photographer didn't get so they put that in the paper.

me: Under your name?

Mr. Douglas: I had my name in the paper, right.

me: What stands out the most in your mind about your first job?

Mr. Douglas: Well, that I got to do a lot of different things. Those were some of the things that I did but I worked for every department at the newspaper, the editorial section, the advertising section, they all had little jobs that I would do for them. So I was kind of like the gofer, they always tried to teach me something new everyday.

me: Were you ever in the military?

Mr. Douglas: No I was never in the military but I did go down for a preinduction physical at the time that they held the first draft lottery. To where they would assign numbers to everyone that would be drafted for the Vietnam War. My number came out 318 and they were going to draft anyone for induction anybody who had a draft number of 250 or less. So they never looked for me after that.

me: Up until now how many years did you work in your lifetime?

Mr. Douglas: 25 years, no more then that let's see, 33 years.

me: Where were you employed the longest?

Mr. Douglas: I managed a Hardee's restaurant for 16 years.

me: When you started working at Hardees wasn't it Burger Chef?

Mr. Douglas: Ya, I started out Burger Chef and then they changed the name 8 or 9 years later, and they were bought out by the company that owned Hardees.

me: Can you tell me how or why you chose this career?

Mr. Douglas: Well I started working at the pizza place next to the Burger chef in addition to another job that I had and they put an add in the paper for an assistant manager, well assistant manager trainee, and I applied for the job and I got it.

me: IN as much details as possible please describe the main duties of this job.

Mr. Douglas: Well, I hired everybody, I trained everybody who worked there I had to order all the supplies, I had to make sure that all the equipment was either maintained by myself or somebody else who could fix or clean it, or have an outside contractor come in and fix it, I had to schedule all the help, make sure that all the help got trained properly, all the aspects that they need to do on their job, had to promote people from different constotations and jobs, evaluate those people and give them raises, and to discipline them if they were wrong, they had to develop marketing programs as to the way to promote the business and by advirtising it and getting involved in community activities

me: so you did alot of things there?

Mr. Douglas: Ya, store did.

me: Did this job require any special training?

Mr. Douglas: Well, it required ability to think and be good at figures and understand how to get people to do what you wanted them to do and want them to do it.

me: Did this job have any rules or regulations to follow?

Mr. Douglas: Well, we had to abide by all the wage and hour rules and regulations, we had to abide by all the Health Department's regulations and rules, we had to abide by the Franchise requirements from the Burger King and Hardees Companies also, plus all the other basic rules that most companies have.

me: What was the most rewarding part of your career?

Mr. Douglas: Getting to know a lot of people and being able to be active in a lot of other activities associated with the business because the more people you know the more opportunities you have to do other activities or be involved in things and help people but there are bribes and goals and what have you.

me: What was the most challenging or difficult part of your job?

Mr. Douglas: The most difficult part of the job was to have and generate as much profit as possible. Which

10
Mr. Douglas: means you had to be effective in every aspect of the job, you had to be able to watch your costs, you had to be careful of what you purchased, from different vendors so that you got the proper price, you had to be aware of portion control, you had to be able to anticipate in how many hours of help you are going to need at a specific time so that you can get proper service without having to much help on or something like that.

me: How did the duties of your job change over the years?

Mr. Douglas: Well, as there became more restaurants and more places for people to work you had to be able to, it was harder to find better more qualified people, plus inflation it was harder to get more deals on things so you had to watch your costs continually. You had to go out and try to find the people rather than have the people come to you looking.

me: Did any other family member work for the same company?

Mr. Douglas: Ya, my sister worked for me for about a 1 and a 1/2.

me: Which sister?

Mr. Douglas: That's Lori.

me: Did your job put you in any dangerous situations?

Mr. Douglas: No, other than you had to be careful when you were working on equipment, make sure it was disconnected or if you had to disconnect gas lines you had to be careful with that, we had slicers that had to be dismantled so you had to wear stainless steel gloves so that you didn't accidentally brush against the blade and with some hot equipment you sometimes had to wear special gloves or wait until it was cooled down and things like that.

me: Can you describe what your co-workers were like?

Mr. Douglas: Co-workers, most of the people who worked for me were like, liked to work hard, enjoyed relating with people, and liked to be able to look back at our accomplishments of doing a good job and working hard.

me: Could you describe something funny or humorous that happened at your job?

Mr. Douglas: Well I can think of one thing that was real funny, a whole bus full of people, well actually it was 3 buses and all the kids were coming in at once and this one girl went and poured a coke and went to put a lid on top of it of a 20 oz. glass and dumped the pop right into the cash register.

Mr. Douglas: into all the coin slots didn't ⁽¹²⁾
spil a drop on the floor or on the
counter but filled ever coin slot
right up to the top.

me: Who did that?

Mr. Douglas: Well, it was a girl named Nancy.
She said well what do I do now,
take the change out and try to
dry it as best as you can and hand
it to the customers.

me: At any time did you feel like
changing careers?

Mr. Douglas: Ya, sometimes if you do the same thing
everyday, you wonder if there's some-
thing better out there, for the most part
I enjoyed what I did.

me: What were the biggest responsibilities of
your job?

Mr. Douglas: The biggest responsibility was to try to
keep 65-70 people happy at the same time
so that they'd want to do their job well
and with a good attitude.

me: Did you receive any special awards from
your employer and were you recognized
in any major stuff?

Mr. Douglas: Well, I used to get awards from different
charitable organizations that we used to
help out and help with fundraising things
like that, the 2 gentlemen I worked for
owned 5 restaurants at 1 time and they
were recognized as the best operators
of the entire nation one year because
each one of our restaurants operated
at a very excellently high level both
profitability and service wise and
everything else that was valuable.

me: During your days of employment and
beyond what have been your favorite
hobbies and leisure activities?

Mr. Douglas: Oh, going to sports events is pretty
much what I've done.

me: Do you have any special stories about them?

Mr. Douglas: No, just always had fun at the bowling alley giving people a hard time, I like sporting events that's all.

me: Have you been involved in any clubs or organizations or sports leagues?

Mr. Douglas: Ya, I was officer in the church baseball league for 15 years, I was either president or vice president or umpire, and basketball league I was president for 4 years and bowling league I was vice president for a few years.

me: Can you describe them?

Mr. Douglas: Describe?

me: The league.

Mr. Douglas: Well baseball league had 24 teams and what you gotta do is make sure that all the equipment was ordered there was umpires for every team, that all the teams payed the bills to pay for the equipment things like that on time, you had to make out a schedule, you had to make out rules and regulations, and deal with anything that came up if there was a dispute.

me: What special moments stand out about this aspect of your life?

Mr. Douglas: Well, other than just having fun with people, giving people a hard time always just playing ball for fun.

me: What were the fondest memories of your working days of your career?

Mr. Douglas: The fondest memories was getting to know alot of people and knowing those people for a lot of years and getting a friendly word from those people because you were nice to them.

me: If you could do it all over again would you choose the same career?

Mr. Douglas: Ya, I think so, but it probably would of gotten a little more education because then I could branch out to even more areas and have other oppertunities that I didn't have before

me: In closing to you have anything else
you would like to add?

Mr. Douglas: No, I don't think so.

me: Well, thanks

Mr. Douglas: Your welcome