

Interview with Len Hebert  
November 29, 1998  
Interviewed by Mandy Tarvainen

Me: This is Mandy Tarvainen and I am interviewing my grandfather Leonard Hebert the date today is November 29, 1998.

Me: What is your full name

Gramps: Leanord Joseph Hebert

Me: Did you have a nickname as you were growing up

Gramps: Yes

Me: What was it

Gramps: ---

Me: why did they call you that

Gramps: I don't know

Me: Have you had other nicknames as an adult

Gramps: no

Me: Was there a chore you really hated as a child

Gramps: No

Me: No?

Me: What would you consider to be the most important inventions made in your lifetime

Gramps: The car, airplane, TV (laughing), radio

Me: How is the world now different from what it was like when you were a kid

Gramps: Life was a lot slower and there wasn't as many cars, life was a lot simpler

Me: What kind of books did you like to read, if any

Gramps: Funny books (laughs)

Me: Do you remember having a favorite nursery rhyme or bed time story

Gramps: No

Me: What were your favorite toys

Gramps: Trucks

Me: What are your favorite childhood games

Gramps: Hide and go seek and playing cowboy

Me: What were the schools like

Gramps: They were a lot simpler and the teachers were a lot meaner (laughing)

Me: How were the teachers meaner

Gramps: If you did something wrong you got a strap with the ruler on the hand or you got hauled up to the principals office

Me: How did you get to school

Gramps: Well, when I was littler I walked across the street and when I was older I rode the bus 5 miles to school

Me: What was your favorite subject in school

Gramps: I didn't have no favorite subjects (Laughing)

Me: Did you have a subject in school that was easy for you

Gramps: Well, Arithmetic was pretty easy

Me: What was your least favorite subject in school and why

Gramps: Oh, I think it was Math

Me: Who was your favorite teacher and why were they special  
Gramps: I didn't have no favorite teacher I liked my cook  
Me: Your cook?  
Gramps: She would give us cookies while we were outside playing  
Me: What was her name  
Gramps: Her name was Mrs. Anderson  
Me: How to kids from school remember you best  
Gramps: Mean, Ya I was always teasing somebody  
Me: What activities and sports did you participate in  
Gramps: We didn't have many sports but we would play football  
Me: did you and your friends have a special hangout where you liked to spend time  
Gramps: Well, we hang out in the corner of the gym  
Me: What did you do there  
Gramps: We just talked and argued and smoked cigarettes  
Me: Did you get good grades in school  
Gramps: They were all red ones  
Me: Is that bad  
Gramps: It's not to good  
Me: Did you like school  
Gramps: We didn't have much choice we had to go. I liked playing football. The least, doing my homework  
Me: What did you usually wear to school  
Gramps:  
Me:  
Gramps: Sam Richards, we've been friends all our lives  
Me: How many children did you have all together  
Gramps: I don't remember, but her name is Sandra  
Gramps: Sandy  
Mom: What  
Gramps: When were you born  
Mom: December 17, 1962  
Me: Were you a strict or lenient parent  
Gramps: I was very lenient  
Me: How were you  
Gramps: Because I'm kind  
Me: How did you hear you were a grandparent and how did you feel about it  
Gramps: I heard it from my daughter. Mom interrupts: In the middle of the night He thought your name was Samantha May so he went around telling everybody your name was Samantha May  
Me: Was there a president you admired the most and why  
Gramps: Well I don't know, Carter was all right  
Me: Why did you like him  
Gramps: Well I don't know he seemed to be pretty good, he seemed to be a hard worker and he came up from the bottom  
Me: Where have you lived as an adult and a child

Gramps: I live in Green Crick and in Frenchtown and we moved up here to green crick in 1938.

Me: Why are you living where you are today

Gramps: cause I love it

Me: How would you describe your sense of humor

Gramps: Pretty good

Me: What activities have you especially enjoyed as an adult

Gramps: I liked horse shoeing and horse riding for about 25 years and I bowled to.

Me: What are your hobbies

Gramps: bowling and playing cribbage and go out to eat on Fridays with Loren and Pearl

Gramps: we when I was young and I took care of the animals except when it came time to kill them

Me: Why did you kill them

Gramps: Because we had to eat

Me: Do you have a favorite story about a pet

Gramps: Well, I liked my old dog pal because he was very, very much of a pal he used to come with me a lot

Me: As a child what did you want to be when you grew up

Gramps: I think I always wanted to work on cars

Me: What kind of jobs did you have in the past

Gramps: I worked 19 years at the ford garage and I drove trucks

When I was a teenager I had to work in the barn milk the cows feed the chickens chop wood never ran out of things to do I never told my dad I didn't have nothing to do because he would find a bunch of jobs for you.

Me: What was the first job you ever had

Gramps: The first job I ever had I worked at the master motors

Me: Was it hard deciding on a career

Gramps: It was very hard because I didn't know exactly what I wanted to do at that time

Me: How did you finally decide

Gramps: The only thing I could find to do was a mechanic

Me: How old were you when you got your first car and how much did it cost

Gramps: I was 16 years old and my first car cost \$40.

Me: That's all

What was your first mechanical job and how much did you get paid and hour

Gramps: My first job was at \_\_\_\_\_ and it paid \$15 a week

Me: I get paid that much for babysitting a few hours

Me: What is the price of cars today compared to the price of cars when you were young

Gramps: Horrible Well, when I was young you could pick up a pretty good car for five or six hundred dollars now to pick up a pretty good car you have to pay 5 or 6 thousand \$!

Me: What is the first car you remember

Gramps: The first car I remember was my Model A that I paid \$40 for or my dad made \$40 for.

Me: What is the difference between a model a and a model t

Gramps: Well a model t has spoke wheels and doesn't have very much of a body and a model a has steel wheels and a little better body and if you really wanted to spend money you could even get a heater in it.

Me: All cars have heaters now

Me: What kind of car did you want when you were a kid

Gramps: Well, when I was a kid there wasn't very many cars except Ford and Chevrolet and Hudson, Nash, and stuff like that. I just picked up anything I could afford

Me: How old were you when you retired

Gramps: When I retired I was 60 years old

Me: Where were you born

Gramps: In a little log house at 1172 south pine street

Me: How long did you live there

Gramps: I lived there till 1938

Me: How many brothers and sisters do you have

Gramps: I had one brother and one sister Margaret

Me: What were your parent's names

Gramps: My parents names were Annie and Philip Hebert

Gramps: During my lifetime I had horses. Me and Bud Penthill and Billy woods we started a club and had all the people that horses go trail riding with and we used to go out and take all the kids on trail rides. After a while we started to have races \_\_\_ and barrel racing we would have a lot of fun we stuck it out for 25 years me and Bud Penthill and Billy Woods.

Me: You and your friends started this whole thing

Gramps: Ya, that's right

Me: You had games

Gramps: We would have games with the horses barrel racing

Me: What are those

Gramps: In barrel racing you would set up barrels and see how fast you could go around them

Me: It sounded like lots of fun

Gramps: It was a lot of fun

Me: Were you an adult when you started this or were you young

Gramps: I was an adult I was about 35 years old when I started

Me: What are some changes that have taken place during your lifetime

Gramps: Well, there were computers and the cars were all different and the food is different there are more pills on the market now and the children don't behave themselves like when I was a kid. There seems to be a lot more crime

Me: What did you like the most and least about school

Gramps: The most things I liked about school was going there to play with the kids and I liked to do arithmetic and stuff like that, but the least I like about school was math and all that other stuff. I couldn't see what I could use it for in my later years, but I'm sorry now.

Me: What's the difference between arithmetic and math

Gramps: Well, math is a little more, I don't know, it's a little bit more harder than arithmetic that's all. That's what I always thought it was

I liked history I enjoyed history

Me: Why did you study in history

Gramps: We studied about the elections the world situation and stuff like that and how the united states become the united states and all that and George Washington and all and how it started and how the 13 states got together. I liked that, that was interesting

Me: What are some of the funniest jokes you ever played on anyone

Gramps: Well, one of the funniest jokes is when we were working at ford garage and this guy \_\_\_\_\_ he had a 54 that was awful fast and he would race everybody. So one time we made a bet, I bet him I could beat him with my old 41 ford, and he said no sir after work were going to race. and I says o.k. well in the mean time he was busy so I went out to his car and I lifted up his carburetor at that time we only had two-barrel carburetors and I put a governor plate under the carburetor and we went out to the highway to race and that's all he could get was 45 miles an hour on the car and he couldn't understand it (Laughing as he is talking) and he took that car all apart and he could never find that governor plate until I told him 3 weeks later and I darn near got killed (laughing).

Me: What is the governor plate

Gramps: the governor plate is a plate you make out of tin and you put the certain size holes in it for the car will only go a certain speed so it will start and it will run and it will run up to 45 mph and it will quit. It will just go 45 mph that's all it will go. so that's one of the funniest jokes.

Me: What's another one

Gramps: Well, when I was working there I always use to like to eat kipper snacks, and people know what kipper snacks smell like. I use to take and I use to hide them in Loren Greys he use to be the secretary there and I use to hide them in his waste paper basket after I got done eating them. He looked all over the office to see where that smell was coming from (laughing as he says that) and it took him about two months to find out who was doing that and I pinior got killed for that one to.

Me: Do you have any more

Gramps: No, that's enough (laughing)

Me: What are some of the car companies around your area

Gramps: Well, when I was working at the ford garage there was Ford, Nash, Packard, Pontiac, Buick, Chevrolets, and we also had Nash Lofiet. Those were some of the cars I worked on when I was at the ford garage and some of the car companies that use to sell um at that time, but they had all different garages there were about nine garages around Ishpeming at one time.

Me: What kind of car was the highest in demand

Gramps: I think the ford was the most highest in demand at that time Ford and Chevrolet

Me: Why

Gramps: Because they were about the cheapest ones I think

Me: Were they good running cars

Gramps: Oh yes I fixed them for about nineteen years