

Amy Heikkila
? interviewing
Ina Heikkila

me - when and where were you born?

Ina - I was born in Black River Humbolt Township on June 13, 1916 on a homestead

me - who were your parents?

Ina - my parents were Edbert & Williamina Perry

me - where did your parents come from

Ina - They came from Finland on a boat

me - why did they come here

Ina - They came to America to find jobs & better opportunities

me - what is a homestead

Ina - a homestead is a land that has never been worked on it has no roads they built a one room log cabin, 2 room one upstairs & 1 downstairs they didn't have any roads. They had to go to town, to Ishpeming with a team of horses. They had to till the soil themselves, then!

me - did you have any brothers or sisters

Ina - yes, I had 5 sisters and 1 brother

me - where did you go to school

Ina - where? I first went to school in Iron River then we'd go back to Iron River after 5 years then we came back to Black River to Republic school

me - Did you have a favorite teacher

Ina - my favorite teacher was Mrs. Colund

me- what subject did she teach

Ina- She taught English and history

me- After school did you do any chores

Ina- ya, we did a few things, such as washing dishes & sweeping up, cleaning up a little & doing homework

me- what did you do for fun

Ina- what we did for fun? We ski riding, slay riding and in the winter. In the summer we would roam around and in the woods and pick berries and different kinds of leaves

me- who would you go with

Ina- with my sister Wilma, she's about 3 years younger than I am

me- Do you remember the snowstorm in 1938

Ina- I do, we got about, I think we got about, how many feet? I think about 7 feet of snow. There was lots of people at work that couldn't come home, till the roads were plowed and they had to spend the night at work. And my mother & brother went to Ishpeming that day & they got stranded. They had to get a team of horses to pull them out the rest of the way, to home

me- where were you at the time

Ina- ~~At~~ the time I was in Black River

me- how many children did you have

Ina- well, I had 7 children

me- did you work while they were growing up

Ina- Only when my younger one was twelve I went to work I worked at Johnny's Restaurant

me - How many years did you work at Johnny's

Ina - Well, I worked 19 years over there

me - what was your job there

Ina - well, I did baking, white bread, Rye bread, sweet rolls, & Coudaghi buns, & I'd do dishes whenever I had time

me - how many loaves of bread would you bake in a day

Ina - I made ~~10~~ white and 15 rye bread, so that makes 27 and I would make a can of sweet rolls, which was 45 sweet rolls. Coudaghi buns were about 38

me - Do you still work there

Ina - No. I'm retired now

me - when did you retire

Ina - I retired in. I retired in 1984 I think it was, ya

me - Do you still bake bread at home

Ina - Once in a while I bake bread. (laughing) They all like homemade bread, especially Amy

me - what kind of bread do you bake

Ina - Mostly I make white bread & Carninnom bread

me - what's your favorite

Ina - my favorite is just plain old homemade bread

me - how many grand children do you have

Ina - Grandchildren? (Thinking) I have. I have about 15 grand-children

me - Do they all live around here

Ina - Yes. They all live around here. Around this vicinity

me - Seeing as though you didn't have television, what about a radio. Did you have a radio

Ina - yes, we had a battery operated radio we use to listen to my mother was very fond of that program, that Bob and Betty. It was kind of a story about them. When it got to 1:00 she said, "lets put on that story." And I would translate that in Finnish to her. She was very interested in that story

me - what was it like

Ina - It was a love story about Bob and Betty, and their difficulties in life and...

me - what about politics

Ina - well politics, about every spring april month we had fellas ~~at~~ running around ~~for~~ supervisors. They would come from house to house talking politics and telling people the good things they would do if they got to. They would give parents candy to give to their children.

me - What was Christmas like back then

Ina - Christmas was very simple. Didn't have electricity really so some people put candles on the christmas tree, which were very dangerous, hazardous to fires and we hung a stocking out a lot of times and we got a calendar and a orange. Nothing like children get now a days

me - weren't you worried about illnesses

Ina - well, not really. I don't think there was too many illnesses, that I recall, but Dr. Vanwiper if anyone was ill they would call & he would come

And he ~~seen~~ seen the patients at home. He used a horse and buggy and later on he got a model T Ford, what he would go around with. And he would deliver the babies

me- What was Republic like

Ina- Republic was kind of a big town then. There was Republic mine that was operating. And the school was built then, the Republic school there which is now torn down and then I recall also Republic Bank being robbed that was in 1938. Now they have a nice bank there, postoffice and.

me- Did you plant any crops in Republic

Ina- Ya, we planted mostly potatoes and vegetables. My brother would drive the horse. And plow open the benches then eat the cob and rolls. He would plow them open and we would pick the potatoes, and separate the small ones from the big ones

me- Did you sell them

Ina- Ya, uh hu. Sold a lot of potatoes. The crop was very good. And we instead of fertilizer we had the real meneaur. I think that made the potatoe taste very good.

me- Back to Iron River, what was it like there

Ina- I'll always remember this place we moved to called Mineral Fields. And you could see 2 mines. There was the ~~Davidson~~ Davidson and the Homer mine. Right across the field my mother had a boarding house there, where we had the boarders that were working in the mine

And the times were so good that lots of times they came from the mines to look for men to work

me - in conclusion to this interview, what are the biggest changes you have experienced since you were a little girl

Ina - The biggest changes are the prices. The prices of food, for instance you could buy a pound of butter for a nickel. Bread you could buy for a nickel a loaf and now we pay way over a dollar. Work, the labor was cheaper but the money went further than it does now. you could take a lot of money now and it wouldn't go no further than that \$2.00 a day like earlier