

Kelly West
interviewing
Mrs. Johnson

me

Mrs J

I was born in Chey bogan, Michigan, and I was brought here when I was six months old, and I've been here ever since, so that's a few years. (laughs)

me laughs

Mrs J

I lived up at the end of the street till I was 13 then I moved in this house, and I was raised in this house. And I got married, and left, and come back here years after. I, I can't explain all the details for that because it would take a whole book you know. And been here ever since. And uh my twins were born in this house and my daughter was born across the street in that house (points) and one born next door, and one in Negaunee. SO. uh (pauses)

me where did you go to school?

Mrs J

Oh, I went to the Phelps now, it was the High street school ~~now~~ ^{then}, and the grammar school, it isn't anymore, and the High School before it was burned of course.

me What did you do after you graduated from High School?

mrs J I didnt graduate.

me you didnt?

mrs J Thought I was smart enough when I was a Junior, my Junior year in March I didnt need school anymore so I quit. Then I worked. I did housework and, oh, went on, when I was really young I went on home deliveries, because babies were born home those days, you know. And, uh, then I got married, oh, I worked at the Bozard, ~~and~~ I worked at Aunties Restaurant, I, um, where else, like I said housework and, oh, on going out on home deliveries you went for the delivery, you took the laundry home, you went back morning and night and took care of the mother and the baby, and each day you brought clean laundry back and brought it home the next day and washed it and brought it back clean.

mrs J

and, uh, well those days you didn't get paid for those things, I got a slip one place, a nightgown one place, you know to show thier appreciation for doing it. And uh, well it was many years after that I became a practical. I was married, and raised my family, and then I went to the hospital to work. Started in the kitchen, then on the floors as an aide, and then took a practical nurse course when that came out. So I was over 50 yrs old when I became a practical.

me

Did you have to pay to take this course?

mrs J

uh, no, we didnt pay anything for that, but I had to pay to take my state board, all ot ten dollars.

mrs J I was afr^oid to take
them because of not
graduating you know,
and I had a much
better mark on that
than I had in school,
because I hated school,
I guess it's like my
friend says when
I don't know how
I got a good mark
in this when in
school wasn't quite
so good you know, and
she said, well I like
this, and I did, I
always liked it, I
wanted to become a
nurse, but when I was
young I didn't have the
opportunity. So then
I worked in the
hospital for twenty
nine years.

Mrs J

and I worked all shifts
ended up just O.B. And
I worked, I didnt like
dayshift, I never liked to
get up in the morning, had
no trouble staying up, but
had trouble getting up.
And, well, then I had
5 children And the
oldest is 64 now, and
the youngest is 53,
and I got 13 grandchildren,
uh, had 12 great-grandchildren,
but lost one, and I enjoy
all them, and I still
enjoy life alot, and
I go out every chance
I get, dont go on my
own anymore, but
anybody calls and says
"Do you want to go?", I'm
gone, I tell ya!

112

Mrs J and I keep active in church work, and, I like to play bingo. I like to play cards, I like to dance, but I can't much anymore, but I do every chance I get. Oh, just a waltz now though, a slow one (laughs) and well, I've just had a good life.

Well, really when we were in grade school, about all we did was go sleigh riding, in the winter, and uh, skating. I never had skates that fit, they were the kind you screw on your shoes

Mrs J you know. when wide shoes were in style I wore narrow ones, and when narrow ones were in style I wore wide ones, cause' you could get 'em cheaper and we used to just go on the hills, and slide, not even on cardboard, just on our rears, down the hills (chuckles) and no snow pants in those days, it was fleece lined underwear you know. And home knit stockings, and ah, then when I got older we used to, like in high school and that, we had a dime on Saturday night.

mrs J that was all, er, all we could
have you know, it was a nickel
to go to the show, and then
we used to go ~~to~~ to Gills
Ice Cream Parlor, which was on
main street, and wed have a
nickel for ice cream, and
there were 3 of us, my 2
girlfriends and I, and in
those days it was just a
syrup you got on your ice
cream, flavoring you know,
and mine was banana,
Judith's was, ah, a, no,
Judith's was banana, mine
was um, lemon, and
James was pineapple.
And one Saturday night
we went over to the show,
er, over to the ice cream
parlor, after the show, and
there was a young lad
working there.