

Interview with Lauri Maki Sr.  
November 28, 1998

Interviewed by Lauri Maki III

Me: This is Lauri Maki Interviewing Lauri Maki Sr. Today is November 28, 1998. When and where were you born?

Grandpa: I was born in Ironwood, Michigan on Tamarack street October 13, 1930.

Me: What is your nickname?

Gramps: Lully.

Me: Why are you called that?

Gramps: I don't know.

Me: Do you have any children?

Gramps: Yes, I had six.

Me: How old are they, and what are their names?

Gramps: Lauri Jr.(43), Laura Jean(42), Lee David(41), Leslie Steven(37), Lynn Diane(33), Larry Allen(31), that's enough.

Me: Do you have any brothers or sisters?

Gramps: I had five brothers. My oldest brother was Arvo his nickname is Morph Maki he has now been dead for several years. He was a miner.

Toivo Andrew died this past year January 1998 at the age of 80 he was a postal employee for 30 some odd years. Then my third brother Eugene Maki he had a nickname of Fuzzy or Eggy, and he died at the young age of forty-three. Then I have a brother William that's living he's about 70 years old. Then there's myself 68, and my brother Aeino or Ibo Maki at the age of 62.

Me: What's your happiest memory of your childhood?

Gramps: The day I married my wife, July 31, 1954.

Me: What's your saddest memory of your childhood?

Gramps: When my dad died when I was in the service.

Me: How did you get to school?

Gramps: In gradeschool we rode the bus. From Nory Location down to Nory School. And as we got older, say about 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> grade we rode the bus in the morning, we used to walk home up the hill for lunch and then walk back to school. And walked home at night. When I got in about eighth grade I walk to school, I'd have to take a rope along and right when the bell would ring I never had to stay after school due to the fact that I had to go and take my cow from the pasture, Munsica. And walk her home. She was a good pet.

Me: Did you get good grades at school?

Gramps: I suppose they were good , but we used to get checks and stuff, but I did good. Nothing unsatisfactory.

Me: Did you have a favorite teacher?

Gramps: I had several I'd say in grade school, Mrs. Talasca. In highschool I liked Mr. Fine a Math teacher. Ms. Polkinghorn, she was a Math teacher.

Ms. Purge she was a history teacher. They're all dead now.

Me: What kind of things did you get on holidays presents?

Gramps: Presents, well myself my brother Eggy and my brother Weeps, we all were born during the depression, I can't ever remember getting anything. I know my brother Aeino we bought him stuff but I never had a bike, I didn't mind it. I had used ice-skates. Size 12 or 13 for my little feet, but I could where my shoes in them. I would go to skate. I started working when I was about in the fifth grade. Well I started before that delivering newspapers I remember when WWI started on that Sunday that I delivered the Milwaukee Journal. Then I worked in the grocery store when I was a sixth grader or seventh grader. Then I started working in the steam baths when I was about in eighth grade or ninth grade when I was having confirmation. I would work Wednesdays and Saturdays we had about a six room plus men's side in the sauna and in those days we used to make a big day if we made 25\$ during the depression. After that during my high school years I also worked at Johnson's truck farm. We did a lot of weeding, moss picking, transplanting and so on. I also worked in the Michigan Pack Grocery Store when I was a senior in high school I went to school in the morning from about 8:00 to 12:00 then I went to work from 1:00 to 6:00. I worked on Friday nights and Saturdays. Got paid a whole dollar an hour. Then, I graduated and I quit working in the grocery store because I said I was not going to clean heads of lettuce anymore or any produce or work in the back rooms. I quit and I stayed home but that morning Jack Blunquist came to the door and said his boss wanted to see me and I went and I was hired so I started working in the drugstore. I worked in the drug store until I was about 20 and then I was drafted into the service. I went into the U.S. army in January of 1951. I wouldn't of had to go because I was told afterwards that I had so many dependants. Before that I joined the air force, I was sworn in and even already had a serial number. When I called home my dad was sick so I didn't go in the air force. My dad was taken into the hospital. I came home but I was drafted. I was told by the selected service ward that I really wouldn't have to go because at that age I had my dad and mother and my little brother's dependents. I had three dependents at the age of 21. I went in the service, I was drafted. I went into the service at Fort Sheridan, Illinois. I was sent down to Fort Knox, Kentucky in the third

armored division. I was in the third armored division through my basic training, which I took there. I was supposed to go over but I went home because my dad was sick so I got an emergency leave but then I was put into another battalion and then I went over. I ended up going to Germany due to the fact that I could speak Finn and I knew some of the foreign traditions and so on. It seemed like that's how they would send you. I was sent over seas by ship, although I forgot the name of the ship. It was a three stacker and we got to Berma. I was processed through Munich and so on. As we were going through the eighth infantry division area do to the fact that when I worked in the drugstore I was the pharmacists apprentice they called me in to the fortieth tank battalion medical detachment and the captain asked if I wanted to be a medic. I said sure so I was no longer in the armored infantry, I ended up being a medic in the infantry. I was at the fortieth tank battalion in Freidburg and I got there in September and in January I had to come home, that's when my dad died. So I came home by air force planes I flew from Germany to France, and from France to Azors, then I got into Washington, D.C. With no money in my pockets I hitchhiked from there and greyhound buses gave me rides and I got home and my dad had been dead but they hadn't had the burial so I did make it in time for the funeral. Then, after staying home for thirty days I was sent back over seas by ship again so it was my second crossing. I spent from March to December and in 1953 I was sent to the U.S. medical school and then I stayed there in Freidburg then I had the duties of almost of like being a doctor. I gave shots, which I had never given before but I was shown how too. The first time I gave em my Sergeant told me if I hit the wrong spot I'd know because I better start running. So that started my career in the medics, had many interesting cases, especially a young lad that was only 16 when he joined the army but was going home because he had a spleen operation, he survived. The saddest one is when a young man came in with a lump on a chest, which Captain Carvelis told me, because he was a head pathologist from Chicago University and New York University and so on. He was in charge and we both counted the days to get home. This young man came in with a lump on his chest and Captain C. told me to feel it. You could just take your finger tips and you could feel the round lump that would move. It wasn't sore or anything. When the fellow went off of sick leave he told me he's got cancer. We tried to send him home because once it starts it goes fast. Then we had some other experiences in Germany you might like to know about. I went to the various castles, the most fun we had is when we went to Frankenstein's castle around Halloween and we were told the story about Frankenstein's Street and so on. Up on top of the mountain we took a bus on the narrow

and curvy and twisty and steep roads they always had a little guest house. They always served beer and usually you could get a weinerschnitzel sandwich which was ham on rye. They would also give pork on a sandwich, nice cuts. Then they always had the German beer, which was very strong. The first time I got over to Germany and I have never drank German beer. I was in Munich going into Freidburg when I got there the beer was so strong then I barfed it up and the barracks had a concrete floor and the beer ate a hole in that concrete floor and that spot was there forever, maybe it's still there. After that I came home in December and we got to New Jersey and Ronny Supernaut and I traveled, since they let you go if you wanted to get home for Christmas, then come back and be released from the service. So we came home for Christmas, we took a train from New Jersey to Milwaukee, from Milwaukee we had took some kind of a bus to Mellon, Wisconsin. Are last way to get home was a fellow we found in a bar who offered to take us to Ironwood. He drove us, and we sat there wondering if we were ever going to make it. We did make it because we had enough money to get him a few more beers. Ronny and I got home for Christmas Eve, that was a happy occasion. I got home and I was able to call Jean my girlfriend and I went to see here and spend Christmas. Then I think we were still home at New Years. Then we had to go back to Illinois to get discharged. We were discharged in January 1953.

Me: What were some new inventions made by the time you got back?

Gramps: A lot of things, when we were in the service it was all military stuff, weapons the M1's were all changed. We didn't have the heavy horse blanket coats that was a wonderful thing. We got trench-coats that made you feel like a human being instead of a horse. Before I went into the service in 49' we first got TV in Ironwood. We were the first ones to have TV. I bought my mom a TV, it was black and white. I bought the antenna for the roof and it was very nice. Before that we had the radio, we would listen to it every nigh while laying on the floor, it was a floor model radio and we would listen to Jack Benney and Red Skelton. When television turned to color that was quite a change, but that came after I got out of the service and went to school. I got an instructor in advanced trigonometry or geometry. He told us that they would be shooting probes into space and we would be receiving messages from all over the world. We told the instructor that he was nuts, well it so happened that it wasn't long after that, this was in 54' that we started to get the new TV's. You could see colored shows and listen to music like Eddie Arnold would sing "I'm Sending You a Big Bouquet of Roses" or Mona Lisa and Patty Page would sing "How Much is That Dog in The Window?" Then "I Love Lucy" was a quite a good thing

because you could stay at home and watch TV. What other stuff we would do was, we'd have like twelve cents to go to the Rex Theatre during the depression. We could see cowboy shows on Saturday's. That's when there were lots of people all around and when Lone Ranger or Tonto would be riding by all the kids would start hollering and routing for naturally the good guy to beat the Indians. After that, TV expanded fast and now you can get anything you want on it including the internet and so on. It's hard to believe that so much information can be put into one micro-cell that when we were told about it we thought it was something ridiculous and impossible. In medicine it's unbelievable that they started bypass surgeries and they had invented the dephibulator, which was invented by a Polish inventor. They're a lot of Polish inventors in science and this fellow sure was smart. I am now going to receive my fourth dephibulator in February 99'. My first dephibulator I was zapped 13 times which means I could of died 13 times. I did live through my first cardiac arrest which was January 88'. I had a second one in April 88' and most people don't make it through the second one, I was fortunate enough to make it through both. I was sent to Marshfield Clinic where they asked me that my atro phibulation was all wacky and that my pulse rate would go up to 169 or so and that's why I would have cardiac arrests. They asked me if I wanted to go on, and they did some electrical experiments and they said that I needed a dephibulator. I was the seventh one. Now there are 100's. The first one lasted one year, the second one lasted 2&1/2 years, and the third one has gone for over 4&1/2 years. I don't know how long this one now will last, but I know I only have to get it charged once every two months. It's amazing, small gadgets no smaller than a package of cigarettes inserted in my abdomen but now they put them in the chest area. Then, I remember cars. My brother had a big Marquette made by General Motors before the Buick. I remember that we parked it in the yard and I was to young to reach the pedals but I did get the clutch, and naturally the car moved into the lilac bushes. After that my dad had a 36' Pontiac. With that car we went to the various lakes and run over pine snakes that used to be six feet long at least crossing the highways because the highways weren't that wide. The roads have improved quite a bit. They didn't have the number of potholes where you can bury yourself plus the car and everything else. Then, we went to the Kaiser the new cars which my dad gave me and my wife for our first car. Then when we were in school we at Ferris State. That was different. My brother and I went there. There were two people from our town that went to Ferris State.

I remember washing machines. I used to go to my neighbors because she had me help her do her wash and I remember the hand ringer. When you put the rug between the ringers and you had to push the handle and if you didn't get it all the way it would come back and hit you right in the chops. I did laundry in the steambaths and the clothing for the owners wife. Washers went from the Maytag to when we got married we got an automatic washer. Christmas lights were like if one went out they all went. Lots of places didn't have many lights because the trees were so dry because the house so hot because of being heated by wood. We cut our own wood. Then they switched now to oil and other kinds of heating like coal. Toasters were handled by hands by opening up the sides. Refrigeration was different because we had an ice chest and we had to get a chunk of ice from the ice man once a week. We had cows and rabbits. We had to give away our rabbits because we would not eat them. We would slaughter a calf or a cow for our winters meat. We collected the blood because we could sell it to people to make blood bread, pancakes, and sausage because people wanted anything that had iron in it. A pint of ice cream and a bottle of pop was 10 cents so we could make root beer floats. My mom would make home made root beer. We used to have an old wood stove.

You had to be quiet because if you made racket you would flop the cake. The work day was really amazing because you worked everyday of the week and two Sundays a month. You got a big check at the end of the month of 100 dollars. We went from incandescent to fluorescent lighting. We had the sewing machines which you had to pedal. Then we got an automatic one. My mom made her own rugs. We got two each Christmas. The old pianos used to be big and bulky. We had vacuums but not all those attachments. We never had a piece of steak because it was always a big feast. We didn't have packaged cereal. For sicknesses we had vix and a bottle of brandy. In the field of education the teachers were mean and strong. They could take an eighth grade boy and toss him down the stairs. We had confirmation on Saturday and Sunday school on Sunday. Confirmation was a big thing because we had a big meal and the bishop came and confirmed us. Kids used to sit and you never went to the table until the elders had eaten and had their refreshments then you were invited. On a train or bus if an elder came on you would get up and let them sit there. People don't care about the nation or their elders. My dad never had to discipline me except when I bought a pack of cigarettes and a bunch of us were trying them out, when my oldest brother was coming home

from work and he went home and told my dad that I was on top of the hill smoking. My dad came up the street and when I saw him I took off for home and I was lucky I was faster than him because he was fast. I got home and hid under the stairs he couldn't reach me not even with a broomstick so I just waited the rest of the day there. In the winter my mother thought that I wasn't wearing my snowpants so for the rest of the winter she made me wear those with no pants on and just underwear so naturally I didn't take them off. When a truck or a car slowed down by the hill we would hitch a ride on the back and get a free sled ride down the hill. People used to pull a big prank by taking the outhouse and pushing it over while they were inside. During a funeral the body stayed inside the house. Food prices have changed extremely.