

Joel Kauppila
interviewing
Mary Saari

Me - My name is Joel Kauppila and I'm interviewing Mary at her home in Republic on January 1, 1988

Me - When and Where were you born?

Grandma - I was born in Marquette Michigan at St. Mary's Hospital
June 17, 1926

Me - How many brothers and sisters were in your family?

Grandma - I had two brothers and four sisters

Me - How did you get along with them?

Grandma - We got along fine.

Me - How did you get along with your friends?

Grandma - ^{ah} two friends would get along ~~real~~ good together, but three didn't seem to do so well. So it was always two at a time if you'd seem to get it.

Me - What was church like?

Grandma - There was a great big church room made in the early 1900's, it was real cold in the winter and in those days priests were old and fat.

Me - What was school like?

Grandma - I liked school and it was one of my ~~best~~ ^{favorite} memories. There was a porch in front of the school especially in the rainy ~~weather~~ weather too it wasn't too bad. But ah, it was nice, We used to have nice Christmas plays and all well ah a lot of school activities.

Me - What did the school look like?

Grandma - It was um, a three story brick building.

Me - How far was the walk to school?

Grandma - It was about a mile.

Me - Did you ever take a bus?

Grandma - What do you mean? a trip?

Me - nya!

Grandma - Oh yes, we went to California, Georgia, West Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, Wisconsin, the state of Washington, Oregon, I was quite a travelin' woman.

Me - What were the teachers like?

Grandma - The teachers in school, they were all, they were all nice they were ah most of them were older

Me - Have any favorite teachers?

Grandma - Yes, the first and second grade teachers.

Me - What were your favorite subjects?

Grandma - Spelling, and Reading, and Geography

Me - What were your worst subjects?

Grandma - History and arithmetic

Me - What did school lunch consist of?

Grandma - In those days we didn't have the school lunches. All children on the farms used to pack their lunches and the ones that were in walking distance went home for their lunch.

Me - What grades did you get?

Grandma - Average

Me - What sports were there?

Grandma - Oh well we had a basketball for instance

Me - Was there girls basketball?

Grandma - They had it for a little while but they didn't get into it real big

Me - How many years of school did you finish?

Grandma - Did I finish? 10 years

Me - What did you do in the summer?

Grandma - Oh we went swimming, hiking, camping, Champion beach & that we used to play hide and seek, marble games

Me - What long trips did you take in the summer?

Grandma - Well the longest trip I took in the summer when I was younger was to Chicago.

Me - How did you get there?

Grandma - By train

Me - What, what child diseases did you have?

Grandma - measles, chickenpox

Me - Did you ever have a doctor come over?

Grandma - yes, we had a doctor from Champion ~~use~~
to come over used to make house calls his
name was Dr. Van Riper.

Me - What were the hospitals like?

Grandma - well, cold looking, smelled really medicinal

Me - Kitchens?

Grandma - oh no they were clean but the plaster
was cracked and the halls were all dingy
looking. They were kind of like the hospitals
of today

Me - How did you celebrate the fourth of July?

Grandma - We used to have fourth of July celebrations
the firemen used to put on celebrations and
they used to have parades and ah they used
to have carnivals come through town and
we used to have a lot of fun and everybody
use parade trim their bicycles up and be in
the

Me - What Christmases do you remember?

Grandma - ah lets see ah the year I had the set of
dishes and my little brother put them on
his head and smashed them.

Me - (laugh)

Grandma - and I cried and cried.

Me - Do you, if you remember any other Christmas

Grandma - Oh, Oh yes I remember a lot of Christmases
Cold, they always seemed to turn cold. (cough)
- we'd go to midnight mass we'd come home and
- we'd have lunch and ah the tree lights would
stay lit if one bulb went out the rest went
out so you'd only have Christmas lights on
for about three hours

Me - What other holidays did you celebrate?

Grandma - Easter we celebrated Easter Egg hunts We
used to go church first of course then
we'd all dress up you know hats, and new shoes,
coats, and gloves, and purses, the works (laugh)
and we'd ah walk around the block we thought
we were really showing off our new clothes

Me - What chores did you have?

Grandma - Oh we'd have to ah m clean our bedrooms
and we'd have to sweep the kitchen, do the
dishes and um pick up in the yard, ^{pick} the toys, rake,
rake the grass, and I don't remember having
any lawn mowers in those days and I think I
think we used to have seiges and sickles

Me - What were the winters like?

Grandma - Cold and a lot of snow there was snow up
to the second stories we had big, big big
storms the storms we have today around this
area were nothing what we used to get back
then Back in '38 there was a storm there
was a party in town and the people who came
to that party didn't come home for two days
they had to get horses out

Me - Did you have any favorite pets?

Grandma - Well we had um, well we had white spitz dogs ^{well at}
little beagles once in a while but the spitz dogs
were my favorite.

Me - What was your fathers occupation?

Grandma - Well he had a um a restaurant, and um lets see
um I think in the later years he owned a tavern

Me - What were the weddings like back then?

Grandma - Well all of us younger children use to wait
till after the weddings were over we wouldn't
go to them we weren't allowed to in those days
we'd go to the houses and they'd call them
shiverers - and they'd throw nickels and dimes
and quarters out to all the kids who were around
there they were singing songs and ask the
married couple, they'd throw money to all
the kids and they'd all dive down ^{for the}
money

Me - How much money did you get?

Grandma - We were lucky if you got a quarter

Me - (laugh)

Grandma - or twenty - five cents worth

Me - What were the funerals like?

Grandma - Kind of long drawn out affairs I remember
one year the roads were so muddy they
had to use someones horse and the old horse
a wooden horse and it was drawn by
horses ^{and I can remember} we went out to the cemetery and the
the mud ^{and} ^{the} ^{funerals} were just terrible ~~that~~ ^{low}
remember funerals

Me - What grandparents did you know?

Grandma - Ahh, my fathers mother and father and my mothers mother and my mothers father had died when she was a little girl

Me - (stumbling) Did, Did you, Did you ever see em?

Grandma - I saw the three of them my grandpa and my Grandma Ringette and my Grandma Shink

Me - What jobs did you have?

Grandma - I worked in the de - two defense plants in Chicago, and ah in hole plant in Milwaukee and a super. charger plant that was a defense plant in Milwaukee and I was a waitress

Me - What year were you married?

Grandma - 1946, October 3rd

Me - What were the prices of things like then, way back then?

Grandma - Well, the prices were much lower than they were now but the wages were lower too so it averages out to about the same

Me - Do you think times are better today or do you like the way things used to be?

Grandma - I rather the way they used to be.

Me - Why?

Grandma - Nothing was as complicated