

See Ahola's
interview with
Julo Ahola

It is February 6, I'm interviewing Julo W. Ahola, and I'm interviewing him about missions, and today we are at my grandpa's house in Amses, Michigan.

me: When and where were you born?

Julo: In Negaunee, Michigan in 1904

me: What were your parents names?

Julo: My father's name was Eli Ahola, and my mother's name was Mary Ahola

me: What was the names of your brothers and sisters?

Julo: My sister is Alysce Ahola, my brothers names are Ray Ahola, Tom Ahola, and ~~Raymond~~ ^{Heimo} Ahola

me: When and where were you married?

Julo: Crystal Falls in 1933

me: What was her name? grandma's name?
grandma's? your wife's? your wife's
name?

Lulo: ~~Ma~~ Ellen Ahola

me: what was her maiden name?

Lulo: her maiden name was ~~Ma~~ ~~Pakkula~~
Pakkula

me: What did your parents do for a living?

Lulo: First, my dad worked in the mines, and then we
moved to Rock, Michigan, and took a homestead,
~~what~~ ^{he did} farming and
logging for the rest of his life

me: Where did you go to school?

Lulo: I was at the homestead in Rock, Michigan, they didn't
have no school, but when I was about seven, eight
years old they built one school house, one room
school house and I went through grade school in
that school house

me: Where did you go to high school?

Lulo: In ~~Rock~~^{Negaunee}, Michigan,

me: Why did you go to ~~Rock~~^{Negaunee}, or was there one in Rock?

Lulo: There was no high school in Rock, for, I had to go to ~~Rock~~^{Negaunee}

me: um, where did you stay when you were in ~~Rock~~^{Negaunee}? when going to high school where did you stay? where did you stay, did you have friends

Lulo: oh-oh, my dad had some friends in ~~Rock~~^{Negaunee}, and I stayed at ~~Rock~~^{Negaunee} place, it's located between ~~Rock~~^{Negaunee} and Oshtemo

me: well, did you have any special memories growing up either in Rock or ~~Rock~~^{Negaunee}?

Lulo: well, I ~~remember~~ kind of remember just; ~~Rock~~^{Negaunee} had a good basketball team, they won the U.P. championship while I was there

me: Where you on the basketball team?

Lulo: no, ~~no~~ I wasn't, I was on the second team, but not the first team

me: Uh, what special features stand out in your mind about ~~the~~ ^{Negaunee} ~~place~~ when you were there?

Lulo: well, at that time Negaunee had a ski hill by Teal Lake, and they had ski tournaments just like they have now in Iron Mountain or Suicide Hill in Ishpeming

me: um, did you take part in them at all?

Lulo: no

me: Do you love any ^{humorous} ~~stories~~ stories to ~~share~~ share about the early days in ^{Negaunee} ~~Negaunee~~? Do you have any interesting or ^{humorous} ~~stories~~ stories that happened in ^{Negaunee} ~~Negaunee~~ while you were there?

Lulo: many, but I can't remember, they aren't that exciting stories

me: they don't have to be exciting; do you have any at all?

Dulo: I can't think of anything special

me: How old were you when you got your first job?
What was your first job and where was it?

Dulo: Oh, I was ¹³ had to leave high school on a count of a broken family, and I was the oldest boy so I had to go to work, my first job was at Palmer, Michigan and ^{at} Richmond Mine, it was an open pit they used

and I was around the steam shovel making tracks of the steam shovel cause then they didn't have the shovel, ~~the shovel~~ Caterpillars steam shovels

me: about how old were you?

Dulo: 13, 19, I can't remember exact

me: o.k; did anything interesting happen there when you were working there? the mine?

~~me: I can't think of anything special~~ Dulo: I can't think of anything special ~~at the mine~~ right now

me: about how long did you work at the mine in Palmer?

Lulo: Oh, it is a open pit, just operated in the summer, summertime, cause everything would freeze in the wintertime, they closed down in the fall, and I had to go work, went to work in the woods for the winter

me: how many summers did you spent working ^{here} just one?

Lulo: just one, then I went back to

me: Uh, How many total years did you work? at any job you had, out of all the jobs you had?

Lulo: Oh, I've worked all over, different jobs, the Depression they didn't, around the 30's, then large so you couldn't hardly find a job, there was lots of people just working for their board, if they were lucky enough

me: O.k., after the Depression what kind of jobs did you get after the Depression?

Lulo: well, then I went for ~~the~~ worked ⁱⁿ Powers ^{just} the Iron Mountain, but their tillet closed down.

me: Then where did you go after that?

Lulo: I worked for, around the area mines here, and then Bates mine closed down, I went to work for Longman and they had jobs all over the different places, putting up steam ~~boilers~~ ^{boilers}

me: Well, how was that like, putting up steam ~~boilers~~ ^{boilers}? Was it easy or hard? How did you do it?

Lulo: How?

me: How, ~~will~~ how did you put up steam ~~boilers~~ ^{boilers}?

Lulo: Steam ~~boilers~~ ^{boilers}?

me: ~~Yah~~ ^{Yah}

Lulo: Well, we have to put up the steel ~~work~~ work first, we put the ~~boilers~~ ^{boiler} down, and then we put the ~~boiler~~ ^{boiler} up there and put the tubes in, the roll of tubes

me: Um, so that all you had to do or did you do more?

Lulo: That thing also closed down on the count of the Depression, then I came to Amasa, to my grandmother's place, cause she was getting old and ~~somebody~~ ^{somebody} had to stay ~~and~~ and take care of her

me: Was that the last job you had or what else did you do? for jobs?

Lulo: Well, I worked different mines around this area, in Iron River, Alpha, and Latex in Amasa at the ^{Warner} ~~Warner~~ Mine, ~~the~~ ^{the} all underground mines closed down in this area

me: Well, when did you retire, how old were you, and when you quit working how old were you?

~~my~~

Lulo: as to the mines closed down?

me: ~~yes~~ ^{yah}

Lulo: Oh, I was about, in the 50's let's see I think it was close to 55 or 56

me: where were you employed the longest at which place?

Lulo: well, I worked the longest for Hanna ^{Hanna} Co. they had mines in Iron River, then I worked for North Range the last they had open pit in Alpha, then the ^{Warner} ~~Warner~~ Mine in Amasa

me: why did you choose mining?

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Lulo: Well, them days you had to choose what you could get, but it was lucky that you ~~got~~ ^{got} to work in the mines, after the Depression even, I had a family to support, so I had to make a living somehow

me: what kind of equipment did you have to wear going into the mines?

Lulo: Oh, there's drilling machines, jack hammer, and gravel shovels

me: did you have to wear any safety equipment?

~~me:~~

Lulo: well, we had ^{to} have first if you had ~~to~~ to have a rubber rain suit, when it's wet, you have to wear a battery on your back and a light on your head, on your helmet

me: Uh, which mine did you like working at the best?

Lulo: All the mines are just about the same thing, you have to work under certain conditions, it's compressed air, and some are wet and some are dry, ~~the~~ ^{Warner} Mine ~~where~~ ^{where} I worked the last was just about the best place, it was dry

me: o.k., when you were working at the mine did you have to follow any rules or regulations, or were there any regulations

hulo: oh yes, they have their rules, in the mines like every ~~mine~~ place else, one of the rules was no smoking, cause there was the danger of explosion of a gas, there was different rules about handling dynamite, you couldn't do this and you couldn't do that with dynamite

me: uh, what was the most rewarding part of working in the mine?

hulo: well, I don't know if there were any rewarding, it was all hard work because of the money that they pay you, ~~the~~ ^{paid} pretty good money in the mines

me: what was the most challenging or difficult part of mining?

hulo: the difficult?

me: ~~uh~~ ^{yah}

hulo: Well, I don't know, it's just ~~arduous~~ ^{arduous}, no difficulty as far as I know

me: How did the duties of working in the mines change over the years? did they get any easier working in the ~~mines~~ ^{mines} as time went on, did they get any easier?

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Dulo: the mines got more modern then at first, they took the more modern methods

me: what was one of the easier & methods they used?

Dulo: they used shovels, ~~mechanized~~ ^{mechanized} shovels instead of shoveling by hand, and they had motors, before they had mules to pull the tram cars, later they had electric motors

me: ~~yes~~ ^{yeah}, that could help a little bit, motors instead of mules, well, did any of your brothers work at the same job as you ever?

Dulo: no, no, they were ~~scattered~~ ^{scattered} all over

me: were you ever in a dangerous situation ~~when~~ ^{when} you were mining, did anything dangerous happen, did any kind of emergencies or that when you were mining that happened?

Dulo: what, an emergency?

me: or anything that happened that went wrong

Dulo: oh, well, one time the ~~Warner~~ ^{Warner} Mine got flooded, water broke into the mine and we had to climb up to safe, safety ladder, come out ~~the~~ old mining tunnels and get to surface

me: about how far deep were you in?

Subo: how far we were down?

me: ~~yes~~ ^{yeah}

Subo: Oh, that was about ~~twelfth~~ ^{twelfth}, thirteenth level, it was about ~~one~~ a thousand feet deep

me: about how long did it take you or can you remember how long it took you to get ^{up} the top, to the surface, climbing the ladder?

Subo: Well, I don't ~~remember~~ ^{remember} exactly, but it took quite long

me: did you ever feel like changing careers, instead of ~~mining~~ ^{mining} do something else, when you were mining did you ever ~~regret~~ ^{regrets} that you decided to mining?

Subo: Well, I guess there was no better job, ^{if} and I was qualified for it I would take it, but I had to take what I could get, when the underground mines closed around here, I went to work in the woods and then I wasn't getting any younger, I couldn't, ~~was~~ no one would hire an old man for any other kind of jobs, so I had to take what I could

me: what was the biggest responsibility of mining, of your job as a miner?

Subo: the mine?

me: ~~yes~~ ^{yeah}

Lulo: well, you had to work safely, that's what's different rules you had to ~~live~~ abide by

me: did you do anything special or that, did you ~~receive~~ receive any awards or anything for doing your job?

Lulo: no, not that I can think of

me: what kind of ^{leisure} ~~leisure~~ activities did you do when you weren't working, or did you have any hobbies when you were home?

Lulo: yes, my main hobby is hunting and fishing

me: how has hunting and fishing changed over the years, since you started to ~~now~~ now?

Lulo: how has it changed?

me: ^{yah} ~~yah~~

Lulo: it's not the same as ~~it~~ it used to be, but there is still good hunting and fishing

me: ~~what~~ What was your fondest memories of mining, or do you have any memories of mining, did anything special happen?

Lulo: mining?

me: ^{yah} ~~yah~~, when you were mining

Lulo:

mining days closed down

people talking in background

me: do you have any fondest memories of ~~the~~ mining?

Lulo: I can't think of anything

me: were you a member of an union, was there a union where you were mining?

Lulo: yes

me: what was the name of your union?

Lulo: United Mine Workers

me: if you had to do your life all over again would you choose mining again, or would you choose a different career?

Lulo: Well, if I, there is lots of things I would do different, but under the circumstances you have to take what you can get

me: do you have anything else you want to say about mining that I didn't ask you about?

Lulo: no

me: is there anything else you would like to tell me about your life that I haven't asked you, would you like to

tell me about your life that I haven't asked you yet?

Dad: Well, life, everything has changed in the 88 years I have lived, ~~when~~ when I went to school we didn't have no school buses and the schoolhouse was just a one room school, one teacher for all the classes, and a big box stove in the middle ~~of~~ of the floor for heat, ^{and} ~~them~~ ~~days~~ days we didn't watch televisions, we enjoyed ourselves with ~~was~~ something else, we had horses and pigs for pets

me: Well, thank you for the interview, thank you for ~~letting~~ ^{letting} me interview you