

108

INTRODUCTION

Windsor Nardi's interview
with John Nardi

★

me: Hi, this is Windsor Nardi, it's December 5th 1993.
I'm interviewing my father John Nardi for Red
Dust. He's a maintenance^{sp} worker for CCI. We are at
my house in Ishpeming.

Lindsey Nardi's
interview with John Nardi

①

me: When + where were you born?

John: I was born July 24, 1954 in Ishpeming, Michigan

me: What are the names of your ~~children~~? parents?

John: John Aloisius Nardi and Laverno Holmgren

me: What did your parents do for a living?

John: My father started work at the cliffs shaft in Ishpeming + then he transferred to Bell Memorial hospital which at that time was owned by CCI. He worked there for 38 years + my mother was a housewife.

me: What is your wife's name?

John: Lynn Nardi, Lynn Salminen before

me: What are the names of your children?

John: John, Kirsten, + Lindsey

me: How long have you been working in the Iron Industry?

John: Over 20 years

me: Why did you choose to work in the Iron Industry?

John: I first got a job at CCI cause I found college too expensive so I was gonna go work in the mine for 2 years + go back to school. But I never did end up going back. (Laughing) ^{include this was true of many workers.}

me: What are the names of your relatives who have worked in the Iron Industry

John: My father worked there, my grand-father worked underground + he fell when he was underground + ended

⑧

Wendy Nardi's interview
with John Nardi

②

(continued)

John: up ^{dying} from that injury. I have many uncles, cousins, brothers, brother in-laws, Aunt's alot of ^{include} people that worked in the mine

me: What are the names of the various mines that you've worked in?

John: I worked at the Mather B underground. I worked at the Tilden + I worked at the Empire.

me: Over the years, what kinds of duties have you performed for CCI?

John: I was a contract miner, I worked in the lab, I've been a welder + a plant ~~repair~~ repairman

me: In as much detail as you can tell me, describe the main duties of your current job.

John: The duties of my current job are to fix + repair all machinery, do maintenance work on all machinery, welding, we do ^{include + quite} fix anything + everything that's out there.

me: What's maintenance work?

John: maintenance work is replacing pieces of machinery, fixing it, just regular maintenance stuff like that ^{include}

me: Did this job require any special training or higher education?

John: I went on a training program for CCI for 3 1/2 years that they sponsored. That's pretty much it. ^{include}

me: Please describe any special machinery or equipment that you use when you're working

John: Special Machinery, I don't know we use everything I mean many welders, All types of welding machines, all fork lifts, all types of mobile equipment, All types of tools, overhead cranes, ^{use every}

me: what is the most challenging or most difficult part of your job?

John: Probably the most challenging part of my job right now, is when we do safety welding, when we do safety welding we weld alot of stuff that people's lives or ~~lives~~ ^{livelihood} ~~lives~~ ^{lives} would depend on if the welds were to break they could have things fall on them or fall off of them. ^{include + quote}

me: Thinking Back over the years, what is the most challenging or ~~most~~ most difficult duty you had to perform? + why.

John: when I worked underground, I filled in for a while as a raise miner, + I found that very difficult, it was demanding as you'd go up there into your raise + drill + blast + after the blast you'd have to crawl + under reath ~~under~~ what you had just blasted, And alot of times everything up there was loose + you couldn't it off until you got up to where you just blasted. Then a couple times on the way up stuff would be falling on you. Rocks + pieces of rocks + you never know how big they were One time they had one that came down + break you're helmet + you're sitting in that raise w/ no helmet w/ stuff still falling That was probably what I would consider the most ~~challenging~~ ^{include + quote} dangerous.

me: what have you enjoyed the most about your job?

John: I think I ^{include + quote} enjoyed the most about my job was that I had the ability to post to different jobs Go on training programs, Go to different properties I could always go to a different job when I got bored w/ the ~~the~~ one that I was doing. So ^{Broke up the} ^{Maroney alot.}

(1)

me: If it applies to you, Describe the most dangerous situations that you've been in.

John: The most dangerous situation ^{I think} I've ^{ever} been in ~~is~~ when I was working underground as a miner. We were putting up ~~at~~ what are called slot raises for in the drifts to knock the ore down. And when we were down ~~there~~, + blasted it, we blasted into an underground lake. And all the drifts filled up w/ water + we flooded the level w/ water. We had no idea ~~cause~~ that lake was there + just minutes before, we were probably 5 ft away from being just washed away by that lake.

include + quote

me: Have you been in or involved any accidents?

John: Lots, I had a knee surgery from work, I had ~~many~~ well, ^{more's} Lots of accidents ~~from work~~ [not as many now as there used to be. Underground there's a lot of accidents. But now there doesn't seem to be quite as many. In the open pits] ^{good quote}

me: Have any of your friends or family ever gotten hurt?

John: Well, I knew my grandpa got hurt bad when he fell underground. I think he eventually died from that injury.

me: Is that all?

John: Yeah

me: Describe either the most unique or perhaps humorous situation that you have seen over the years.

John: I can't answer that right now.

me: Describe your working conditions

John: Noisy, Lots of vibration, tends to be dark, sometimes wet. They change lots because we go to a lot of different jobs. We can be outside or ^{inside} ^{it changes} ^{from job to job} ^{quickly}

include

(5)

me: How have safety standards changed + what improvements do you see that are yet to be made

John: I think safety standards are lots better now than they ever been + they progressively get better cause there's alot more ^{interaction} ~~inner action~~ between the union + the company. ~~Both~~ sides are equally involved cause it costs the company lots less money when there's less accidents

me: Do you see any that should be made that aren't made yet?

John: Just in the long term for like occupational diseases but I don't know how you would, how you could actually help that. That's something that would have to be worked on ^{include}

me: How have you seen the duties of your job change, over the years?

John: Well, there's been lots of man power cuts + as a man power cuts come at work the jobs don't get to be less the what they do is [they put more responsibility on every worker, so every year you get more responsibility more jobs to do then more less combination of jobs] ^{good quote}

me: Please describe what your co-workers are like.

John: I have many co-workers (Laughing) [most of them are very family oriented it's a good work force] ^{include + quote}

me: Do you remember any special stories that stand out about them

John: No

me: During your career were you involved in any special projects or have you implemented any new programs

John: I served on a committee to make better working relations

me: Have you ever won any awards or been recognized in any way for your job performance?

(6)

John: I won a safety award _____ and a snowblower (laughing)

me: At any time have you felt like changing jobs or your career?

John: Many times

me: Why

John: There's too many lay-offs, too many strikes, ^{shift work} there's a lot of health hazards, lot of occupational diseases, It's a good paying job but it's a job you'd always think about changing.

me: What are Occupational diseases

John: ^{emphysema} Ephysema, Arthritis, things to that nature where as you get older all the abuse that your body suffered will come to show

me: What do you think the future holds for the Iron + Empire?

John: I think it's a good future. I think that they'll probably go for quite a while yet.

me: What does the future look like for the iron + steel industry in general?

John: In general I think it's probably gonna be down sized more probably be a few more plants that will end up going into bankruptcy & be out of business. That's what I can see

me: What do you feel must be done for CCI to remain competitive?

John: [They must have better relations between employees + employer & there must be more trust developed] quote

me: What do you think has been the key to success of CCI where other companies have failed?

John: I think a lot of it is, lot of it is location or the shipping, but a lot of it is also that a lot of the employees here were willing to take cuts when the iron industry was bad. ^{than company's been} include

Me: Looking far into the future, how do you think history will remember the Cleveland Cliffs Iron company + its workers?

John: Well, I would hope they remember the workers as alot of good honest people - I hope they remember the company as someone that truly cared about the area. + ^{include} doesn't just ~~go~~ leave, + leave a big environmental mess.

Me: ~~that~~ How has the role of women changed in the iron industry + what direction do you think it will take in the future?

John: I think there's alot more women working at the mine right now, I think there will be more as future goes on.

Me: What skills do the young people of today need to develop if they plan to work for CCI some day?

John: I think alot of people need to realize that mining isn't pick + shovel anymore there's alot of skills that they're learning in school that they don't think are useful that are going to be very useful in the future. They need to know how to use computers + all kinds of tools it's alot more advanced than they realize ^{include + quote}

Me: In a related question, what advice do you give in general to the students of today?

John: I think [they should pay more attention to their studies cause they're more important than they think they are right now] ^{quote}

Me: Are you, or have you ever been a member of the Steelworkers union?

John: Yes

Me: Have you ever experienced being on strike?

John: I think I was on strike 3 times,

Me: How does a strike begin?

John: A strike begins when a union + company meet + they ^{negotiate} negotiate + the union has demands, that they want met + the company has demands that they want + when they can't reach an agreement, they come in an impasse + the strike happens there.

Me: About how many employees does a strike usually involve?

John: On this range, immediately it involves 2,000 but it'll grow in number as the other businesses support it steel industry aren't needed + I'd say it goes pretty close to 4,000 people in this area.

Me: What is the purpose of a picket line? + ~~describe~~ describe what happens there.

John: A picket line is set up just to inform people that you are on strike, they want support, you can't do anything on a picket line that stops people from going in + out of a mile if they want to but if there's truckers or whatever, if they decide that they see you're on strike + they're members of a union, + they support your strike they don't have to go in but it's more or less just an informational picket.

include + quote

Me: Do you know of any interesting stories about an accident or incident on a picket line?

John: On a picket line, well there's been quite a few I don't think I'll relate those right now.

Me: What is the most interesting or unique story that you can remember that you can tell from ~~the~~ workers were on strike?

John: Well, what I remember about being on strike is that, in 1977 a large number of us hired on to work on construction. Because they needed people, & we were on ~~the~~ strike & we had the skills for maintenance + welding or whatever. So we hired on + I hired on out the Island + Marquette to coal docks + there were 6 crews of us, 6 crews of 4, & at the time there was 4 of us on that crew from CCI + all the rest were regular iron workers + they kept us all on + the last crew left was the 4 of us from CCI + I remember the night that they told us they were gonna leave us 4 on + leave the rest off we didn't dare go out to our cars. we stayed inside

include

Me: What takes place at a union meeting or a union rally?

John: A union meeting is usually all business they just relate bills payed, new business, there's alot of donations that go out from the union + other organizations + it's more or less just an update on where our union is. Pretty mild actually.

Me: Do alot of people go to the Steelworkers Union? Can just anyone show up from the Steelworkers?

John: Usually you have to be in from your own local, in the meetings but you can take a guest if you want.

Me: Please describe what you enjoy doing in your spare time.

John: I like hunting, fishing, exercising, I like everything, what I really like doing alot is taking night classes. but there's alot of times that you don't have the time or it's just costs too much at the time to make them

Me: If you had to do it all over again, would you make the same career choice?

John: I might have worked in the mine, but what I wish I would've done is stayed in school + then made my decision after I had a degree

Me: Looking back over the years, what impressions stand out most considering your association w/ CCI?

John: I don't have an answer for that

Me: Before we end the interview, is there anything else that comes to mind that you'd like to add?

John: The only thing I would add is like I know I have a son in college right now + no complaints about not having any money or anything + I can look back + remember feeling the same way when I was going to college that's why I quit going at the time + got a job + but I think what I would tell, like I tell him, I think I would tell everyone else, no matter how poor you are, no matter how bad it feels at the time stay in school until you get your degree + then make a career choice. Don't quit ~~when~~ w/ the idea, that, oh, I'm gonna go back someday. There are people that do But it is very hard to do again.

Good advice -
guntz

Me: well that's the end so thanks

Topics

~~difficult duties~~ **difficult duties** Blue

working conditions ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Pink

dangerous situation

change in job duties **Yellow**
Purple

advice for students ~~ready~~ **Orange**
something at end of

interview that comes to mind **green**