

Tammy Parkkonen's  
Interview with  
Arthur Parkkonen

Me: Hello my name is Tammy Parkkonen today is Sunday December 10th 1989. I am interviewing Mr. Art Parkkonen my grandpa. He lives on 125 South Daisy St. Ishpeming, Michigan.

Me: When and where were you born?

Grandpa: I was born in Negaunee July 1, 1925.

Me: Did you have any other brother's or sister's?

Grandpa: Yes four brother's and five sister's.

Me: And what are their names?

Grandpa: Lorraine the girl's lorraine and Ruth, Marylouise, and Marjorie, and Sharon. And the boys would be Bill, George and John which he got killed in a car accident in the 50's.

Grandma: 1954

Grandpa: In 1954

Me: What are your parent's names?

Grandpa: Armi V. Parkkonen and Mary Lempi Parkkonen.

Me: When and where were your parent's born/

Grandpa: I don't know when the dates when they were born.

Grandma: But where were they born?

Grandpa: They were born in Negaunee, but I don't remember or know exactly where they were born I think my dad was born in Parks Street Location. I'm not sure but my mother was in Buffalo location.



Me: What country did your family come from?  
Grandpa: United States  
Grandma: No would be Finland must be Finland  
Grandpa: O you mean my grandfather's  
Grandma: Uh yeah Findland  
Me: When did they come to America?  
Grandpa: I don't know  
Me: Are you married?  
Grandpa: Yes  
Me: What is your wife's name?  
Grandpa: Ellen Fredrickson Parkkonen  
Me: When and where was she born?  
Grandpa: She was born  
Grandpa: In Ishpeming  
Grandpa: In Ishpeming I thought it was newbert  
Grandma: No I was born in Ishpeming  
Grandpa: She was born in Ishpeming  
Grandma: 1920  
Grandpa: 1928  
Me: Do you have any children?  
Grandpa: yes  
Me: how many  
Grandpa: Three

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Me: What are their name's?

Grandpa: Shirley, Paul and Lois

Me: What were school's like when you were young?

Grandpa: Well they were a little different than they are today. When I took my sister to school I put her in the wrong side of the room and she started in the first grade instead of kindergarten.

Grandma: Tell Why because both classes were

Grandpa: Because both classes were in one room. the kindergarten was on one side and the first grade was on the other so I put her on the wrong side of the room so she started in the first grade.

Grandma: She never did change.

Me: What school's did you attend?

Grandpa: I started in Parks Street school in Negaunee then we moved away to Trout Creek in 1931. then I started school in Trout Creek and I went there until we moved back to Negaunee in 1936 and then I attended the Jackson school and then I went to Central grade and up to about the eighth grade and then I quit.

Me: What were teacher's like?

Grandpa: What were teacher's like?

Me: Ya

Grandpa: They were very strick and they were very good teacher's.

Me: Why did you quit?

Grandpa: Well I wasn't that smart in school so I decided to start work early.

Grandma: To help support the family to.

Me: What was your first job?

Grandpa: Ah my first job I think I worked in the bakery when I was about sixteen.



Grandma: Tell them about the

Grandpa: The what?

Grandma: The mice in the bakery

Grandpa: I worked at night shift in the bakery shop.

Me: Ok um you didn't go to college did you?

Grandpa: No

Me: Ok um how did you get to school?

Grandpa: Ah when we were in Trout Creek we lived a mile away from school and ah and they told us that we were to close to ride the bus so it was a Model a Model T bus I won't them to know that but they picked us up a few times and then they told us we were to close so had to start walking.

Me: Um were class sizes large?

Grandpa: Not to large no

Me: Um how were kids expected to act and behave?

Grandma: That's a good question.

Grandpa: Well they had to be a you have to pay attention and be quiet and they were very strick them days.

Grandma: can I say something now

Me: Ya

Grandma: they weren't afraid to use a ruler on your hand if you didn't listen

Me: How did you have to dress?

Grandpa: You had to have well the best you could do anyway I mean they couldn't tell you how to dress but them days they didn't wear jeans that much like they do now but they but the kids dressed as neat as they could.

Grandma: No holes in the jeans.

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Me: Um the punishment now was that like the hands being hit with the ruler or was lots of other different punishments.

Grandpa: O they weren't aloud to hit you , but they weren't scared to slap you them day's, They would give you a slap on the face even when you were naughty.

Grandma: Send you into the principal

Grandpa: Then theyed send you into the principal if you were a naughty boy.

Me: Um Do you remember any humerous or interesting stories in school?

Grandpa: No I don't I can't think of any.

Grandma: If he does we'll come back to that

Me: What other job's did you have when you were younger?

Grandpa: I don't know when I chauffeured yes I was a chauffeur for a rich man in Neguane by the name of Mr. Winter. And I had to chauffer him to all the different banks that he was a president of. He was a president of Ganen Grocery Company in Marquette. And then he had a camp on little lake I had to bring him there back and forth and he had a son that was a doctor. I had to drive him on the other side of the Straits to visit him. When I got through that job, I got a job at the Soo Locks, they were building the McArthur Locks.



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Grandpa: in Soo St. Marie in 1942 I drove a dump truck on night shift and it was very cold and that was war time where they had soldiers all over the Soo Locks had the aircraft gun's , balloon's in the air so airplane's couldn't come in and boom the locks and it was very bad there were soldier's around the Soo Locks them day's and sailor's or coast guard men it was a busy place so that's where I worked and then after we came back from there well I was in the conservation core in camp Evelan and Wetmore then I got transferred to Sidna and then after the conservation core CCI called and I got into the mines that was 1943 and I done that most of working day's under ground and in different mine's for the Cleveland Cliffs and I got my pension in 1987 so I worked in the mine's from 1943 to 1987 and here I am pensioned.

Me: What mine's did you work in ?

Grandpa: Well the Athens mine, the Mather A, Mather B and Bunker Hill and then the Republic Mine and um the Empire and Tilden I worked in all them mine's.

Me: Where did you stay when you were chauffering and how did you eat?

Grandpa: I was staying home but when I was chauffering when he went out his camp I'd stay out his camp with them and had a cottage in the yard there and we would eat with them.

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Me: Where did you stay at the Soo Locks?

Grandpa: I had a room at a motel, and they were boarding it was a boarding house and so they feed us and give us room and board.

Me: How and why did you have to do all these job's was there a reason that you had to do all these?

Grandma: Well it was your first job's.

Grandpa: Well oh that was my work

Me: Did you have to pay for some of the expenses for the family?

Grandpa: O yes when I was single I gave most of my money at home and helped to support the family.

Grandma: Because you were the second to the oldest.

Grandpa: Ya I was second to the oldest too I had to help support the family until I got married.

Me: When you were at home did you have special chores you'd have to do in the morning and at night?

Grandpa: Well when we lived in trout creek us young boy's had to hall our water from town that was over a mile and on wash day's we had to hall many many trip's. We halled it with cream tanks and then on wash day's one of us boy's had to take turn's to start the washing machine up and keep it running for my mother while she washed it was a gasoline washing machine so one week my brother would stay home and the next week it was my turn.

Grandma: Didn't you have to crank them?

Grandpa: No there was a step outfit on there my mother would be scared to start it because sometime it would give a little kick and it might throw you on your backside.

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Me: what has made this area special to you?

Grandpa: I always liked to live around here I don't know we had to move away to Konosha one time and we were glad to get back in this area again that was in 1962 when the mines where kinda bad shape around here but know we got back here and we are happy to be back.

Grandma: And are children make it special now are children are children make it special now don't they the kids.

Grandpa: Ya we don't like to go on vacation more than a few weeks because are children all live here and we rather stay around closer to them and are grandchildren.

Me: When you were working in the mine's did you have any incidents that happened?

Grandpa: Yes lot's of close call's and different thing's happened I don't know how I didn't get hurt I thank the lord nothing serious happened to me.

Grandma: Tell about the incident with your partner where you had to shovel him out.

Grandpa: One time we were repairing a tugaroo and the whole back came down on my partner he got burried up and I had to work so fast and I didn't even know where his head was so I had to get a shovel and start to dig in a hurry I just happened to hit the right side of him so he could get some air and he said he would not have lasted only a few seconds longer if we would not have gotten to him on time.



Grandma: Then another you could say about your brother inlaw being killed blasted.

Grandpa: And my wife's brother got blasted at the Mather A and I was working there at the time too. That was a terrible accident so I went through years I worked in the mine I seen lot of men get killed and a lot killed and a lot of bad accidents.

Me: Um

Grandpa: That's about all

Grandma: Um how about your accident that hurt your legs

Me: Ya

Me: The accident that hurt your legs

Grandma: The first time at the mine and then

Grandpa: I don't remember that one

Grandma: Well then how about the one out at the Tilden.

Grandpa: Ya at the Tilden mine I was climbing in the loader and ah my foot slipped O and then my hand slipped off the hand rail and my foot went in between thee ladder that you climb up on and I was hanging by one leg I swung backwards and was hanging by one leg I was just lucky it happened so quick that I don't know.

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Grandma: Well you had to have surgery because of it  
Grandpa: Ya well ok  
Me: What event had the greatest impact on your life?  
Grandpa: On my leg  
GRANDMA: No what event had the greatest impact on your  
life the greatest defect  
Grandpa: Press that down  
Grandpa: Is it on now I guess the greatest impact of my  
life was when I got married to Ellen she's been  
the best thing that ever happened to me.  
Me: Ok what do you consider to be the most important  
thing in life?  
Grandpa: I guess to serve the lord  
Me: Ok what has been the most rewarding part of your  
corer.  
Grandpa: I most rewarding part ask that question  
again.  
Me: What has been the most rewarding part of your corer.  
Grandpa: I guess the most important part would be that  
ah that I could support my family have a nice  
place to live plenty of food that was the most  
rewarding part I guess.

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Me: What do you like to do in your spare time?  
What are your favorite interest or hobbie's?

Grandpa: I like to work in my little shop monkey  
with wood.

Me: Going back now what were car's like? What did  
you ride in?

Grandpa: Back then we had 1925 model T and it had  
side certain's on it and that is what we  
had to ride in. Then to go from Trout  
Creek to Neguanee I think it use to take  
0 man I can't remember now about 3 in a  
half or 4 hour's but one time we were go-  
ing back to Trout Creek from Neguanee the  
light's burnt out some way I don't know  
how.

Grandma: It was night time.

Grandpa: My brother went under the running board  
the frount fender with a flashlight so my  
dad could see to drive and he hit a hole  
and my brother flew in the bush and we had  
to stop quick and go look for him.

Me: Oh

Me: What did you have any accident's when you were  
in Trout Creek?

4Grandpa: Yes my brother and I were playing around  
horsebacking each other. I was on my bro-  
ther's back and he let me go and I swung on  
the bed and hit my head on the windowseal  
and split my head wide open so then the  
blood was running so fast we had to go to  
the doctor's which was over a mile or so.  
I had to wait for my mother to get dressed  
and um while she was getting dressed I th-  
ink I had my head by a dish pan there was  
about 2 or 3 inches of blood in there uff  
when she got ready we had to run to town  
and I lossed quite a bit of blood and I'll  
never forget my dad was out hunting and a  
then when he came from hunting uh I was so  
worried about what he was going to say. He  
was pretty mad about it so that scared me  
more than the hole in my head did.



Me: What jobs did your dad do when?

Grandpa: My dad was a do you got that on was a butcher at rosebergs store in Trout Creek at the time and that's the reason we moved downthere

Me: How did they deliver there groceries?

Grandpa: They didn't deliver at Trout Creek they did in stores in Negaunee and Ishpeming they had delivery trucks they'd make two or three deliver's a week to the houses.

Me: What about your mother what jobs did she do?

Grandpa: O house work mostly

Me: Did your dad work in Negaunee?

Grandpa: Ya my dad was a butcher at Winter and Sease and different groceries stores in Negaunee. But he was a delivery man to at Winter and Sease I remember when he had horse and buggy and I went with him several times then he'd have to put the horses in the stable and scrap him down and everything comb their tail because I use to go with them lots. I remember ALS and I railroad were we lived they used to have steam ingeners um when that strill whistle used to blow the horse use to gallup down the street with the delivery wagon my dad had to go run after it and when I was about o 13 or 14 well there were several families around are house that had cows so after I changed my school clothes then I'd go out in the woods because I knew the cows should be by a sertant time so I take a walk way behind the moss mined and I'd listen for the cow bells then I'd know where the cows where then I'd bring them all home and they'd know exsactly what barns to go into and some ladies would give me a orange some would give me fifteen cents what ever what ever everyone would give you something different and I did that everyday in the summertime when I'd come from school I'd run out the woods and look for the cows.

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Me: Did you have lots of time for play?

Grandpa: No not really when we were younge boy we had to um go out the woods and cut wood and we had to make twelve to fourteen cords we cut them in four foot lengths then it was all done with across cut saw there were no power saws and then when we got it home we'd have to pill it up and then get somebody with a buzz saw to cut it up again and split it and pill it we couldn't even play baseball in the summer time because we were always busy with wood and we have to do that all my summers all my growing up days.

Me: Um when you did have free time though to play what kinda thing did you play?

Grandpa: I use to love to play softball and then we had a playground right down the street we were down there lots there were different activities going on

Ya on time I did get into a tournament and a I thought I could get away with it we had a big tournament game on Saturday I was up to bats I hit about a three base hit my dad was up on the railroad tracks whistles waving me to coming because I had to go cut wood and I said from then on in I could never get on a softball team again The fellows didn't even won't me on cause they knew I wouldn't be on the team long after to do them any good so.

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Grandpa: And them day's they use to have a high school or when you got in 9th or 10th grade you could play service team football so I was on the Navy team and them day's there were cow's all over even where we played football it's kinda hard to believe I tackled a guy and I rolled them in it them day's they use to call them cow pasties and um I got it all over in my ear's, nose and the couch just gave me a route in the rear and said get in there it is good for what ail's you and I never loved football no more. And that's the end of my story.

Me: Thank you very much.

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