

Kirsten Pardi
interview with
Gust Salminen

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I am Kirsten Pardi and it's February 21st,
and I am interviewing Gust Salminen
at his house.

Me: When and where you born?

Guest: July 13, 1920 in Humbolt Michigan.

me: What are your parents names?

Guest: My Parent's names are Gust and Maria
Salminen.

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

Guest: My brothers names are George, Charles,
_____, Lawrence and my one sister's
name was _____.

me: When were you married?

Guest: I was married in the Bethany
Lutheran Church by _____.

me: What did your parents do for a
living?

Guest: Well my father, when he first came to this country he worked as a carpenter in Chicigo and then when he came up in this area he worked in the mines and he worked mostly in the mines but in his later years he was a late minister for the Apostolic Lutheran Church.

Me: where did you go to school?

Guest: I went to school in Champion Michigan Champion grade school and Champion Highschool, I started school actually in Humbolt from Kindergarten to the second grade. Then when they closed the Humbolt school and he were bussed to Champion and they made us go a second year of second grade (laughingly). That Humbolt school was where _____

_____ lives now. Do you know where profits bodyshop is? you come South on over the hill and the place on the right side is the old Humbolt school. Your moms dad went to school there. So did Charlie. That only went to eighth grade, by the way then if you didn't want to continue school you didn't because there was no bussing to school in Champion. Now like the _____ girls _____ and _____ they went to the Champion school to get there highschool diploma. You had to provide your own transportation

Me: What special memories do you have about growing up in these areas?

Guest: What memories I have, I lived in a beautiful area where you can hunt and

Guest: fishing and that was my love. The hunting part especially.

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me: what special features stand out in your mind about Regaunee, Ashpening, or Huneboht?

Guest: Very seldom we ever went to Ashpening or Regaunee because transportation was poor, first we had the — — — then the — — — . Very seldomly we went to Ashpening or Regaunee. Mostly we'd like the kids hung around home and that's all we did when we were youngsters, but we'd go to Koski area where Lynn's uncle lived and we use to go play ball with the — family and the — family we use to have a great time. How we had fun.

me: How have the cities changed?

Guest: It's still the same place as it was when I was young, Ashpening and Regaunee, well Ashpening and Regaunee hasn't really changed that much, it's the same old buildings that you see in the 1940's and 20's

me: What kinds of things did you and your friends do for entertainment when you were teenagers?

Guest: We played ball mostly, we were always playing ball, we played baseball, we

Guest: played basketball, we played alot of touch football, that's about the main athletic sports that we played except the hunting and fishing bit, well we did that individually mostly.

Me: where did the kids like to go out when you were a teenager?

Guest: (Laughingly), we use to go to a little pond down there by 41 and build a bonfire and roast potatoes and marshmallows and talk about what kids talk about.

Me: Do you have any interesting or humorous stories to share about these early days in Ashpening, Pegaunee, or Humbolt?

Guest: well, I'll tell you there was a humorous thing about it. Everybody had a nickname when you were young, — — was known as slugger and black — and Earnest — what did they call Earnest? like — Roski was called Chuggo. And then I had a couple of nicknames King, and — — was known as snubby, and I think your mother

Guest: I think, didn't they call her _____?
who was called _____ or Marian.

me: How old were you when you found your first job? And where did you work?

Guest: Well, I was 19 and I worked on a railroad on the section _____, we were working with rails and ties and everything with constructing a railroad and it was really hard work I'll tell you! We didn't have no breaks in those days the only break we had was for lunch at noon. There wasn't a break during the day at all.

me: What types of duties did you perform on your first job?

Guest: Well I was placing rail on railroads and ties and setting the ties in the road bed and driving spikes and I don't know what else but, Oh well, we use to haul a quite a bit of rail we use to handle the rail, 33 ft. rail with 2 men, now those are heavy.

Me: What stands out ^{most} in your ^{mind about your} job?

Guest: On my first job on that railroad my first pair of shoes lasted for one week, because of the _____ ties, you know that's when you have a shovel and you try to get dirt underneath the tie as your putting in new ties and the boss use to come up to me and say put some dirt underneath that tie he'd say. And you know you're a young kid and you want to do the best you can and, wow! And you know the first pair of shoes that I went on them on the first week of work and it was pounding so hard on that shovel to get that in under the tie.

Me: were you ever in the military?

Guest: yes, from the years 1943 to 1946 I was in World War II.

Me: What were your experiences there?

Guest: Well, the one I remember quers was when we left ^{most} San Francisco ~~and~~ we went to New _____ and that's close to Australia and we were there and I remember when we

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Gust: landed there he looked at all these fellow Americans that were down there. he said "Yes, How come they look all so yellow?" he knew they were brown from the sun, but they also had a yellow cast and he'll tell ya' he found out when they made us eat adibran tablets and that's to prevent malaria from showing up and when you eat those malaria tablets you just got a yellow color to you and it was a yellowish brown that everybody was. And you had to take those adibran tablets because they didn't want that malaria to show up. And if you got it they would ship you back to the states, everybody was so glad to help in the war effort they were you know didn't take the adibran tablets because everybody during world war II and everybody was really concerned about the good war effort that everyone wanted to perform at this time and then from there we went to an

Guest: Australian troopship and we landed in Jady Island 14 days after the reinvation of the Phillipians by the American forces and that was General McArthur, remember when he made that statement "I shall return"? And he did return, so 14 days later he landed on Jady Island — a Japanese air rade between the ships as we were unloading and you knew it was a funny feeling and I was on the fifth wave and you know there was ~~different~~ different waves on the ship to leave to go on small ship to get to shore and you could hear the machines ^{guns} chattering on deck and the anti-aircraft guns and mobody said a word just looked at each other and when they said fifth wave they would go over to the rope latching to the small boats and when we landed, by the time we got to the rope ladders and the

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Guest: Japanese had left so the air route had ended, and then the Japanese were still a _____ force there and Jacy Island and we were told to be ready to evacuate because the Japanese are all over in the small groups in the jungles. (Laughingly) The first night I was put on guard duty and you can imagine how dark it is in the jungle and I had a car beam with me and they put me out until I think it was 10:00 to 2:00 in the morning and you could put your hand in front of your face and you could not see your hand. It was that pitch dark and you know the first time you're in the jungle you never heard so many different sounds. You know there was crashing, they had big canoes and you don't know what it was going through the wood

Cust: and I know the other gourd post
 I could hear rifle fire at times
 wondering what they were shooting
 at you couldn't see anything (laughing).
 I just remember I was up against
 a palm tree and I was standing
 there. What can you do? I really
 wasn't afraid, but jeez, when
 you can't see nothing it's
 funny (laughing). What are
 you gonna do when even
 there was something there
 you didn't know what
 to shoot at.

Me: How many total years did you
 work in your lifetime?

Cust: Oh let's see I worked so
 many times you know that I
 didn't work very long and I
 was just a _____ that way
 I'd go to school and then I
 would work and then, finally
 when I did start working for

Guest: _____

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I worked there for about 34 years except 27 years on a permanent capacity. Seven years in a consulting capacity. It was something like that anyway.

Me: When did you retire?

Guest: I retired when I was $64\frac{1}{2}$ years old and I am now 72 so that's what is that? Subtract 72 from $64\frac{1}{2}$ years I've been retired. Well, not really retired. I still do mortgage surveys for the bank and I did some engineering work for that new nursing home that's going to go up in Pegauner, so I'm on the Board of Escanaba Iron Company Board of Directors. There's a lot of things that I do yet that wise there isn't much involved but there is responsibility anyway.

me: in your lifetime where were you employed the longest?

Quest: I was employed the longest at _____ they had the Tracy Mine in Pigeon Michigan that is where I was employed.

me: why did you choose this career?

Quest: I was looking for a job when I was going to Mich. Tech.

me: how or why did you choose this career?

Quest: Well, (laughing) I was looking for a job while going to Michigan Tech and one Fall and I said I'd be back in the winter time and I never did go back and I went to go look for work and I got a job for _____

Guest: _____ as a
 drafterman and a roddeman
 beginning and from that point on I
 worked up and I was an underground
 surveyer and did engineering work and
 alot of layout engineering work and
 field surveying underground and above
 surface both. And I started at the
 Tracy Mine when there was no mine
 yet there at the time and a hole in
 the ground began where the shaft was
 gonna go down and so I got quite
 an education on the make up of a
 mine when it first started so it's
 really something.

Me: Did this job require any special
 training?

Guest: Well, ya it required special training
 to the point that you had to be
 able to survey land and do a
 good job at drawing well, that's
 what schooling is for so you're
 educated in that field. But,
 it worked out pretty well for
 me.

Me: what special equipment or clothing did
 this job require?

Guest: It didn't. The only time it required (14) it required special clothing is when we went underground and took our street clothes ~~off~~ on which is mostly a Hematite type ore, you could take it and roll it up and throw it just like a snowball and it would still hold together. The minute you go underground you touch anything you're full of that iron ore, it looks like baby's dung. ~~Laughing~~ (Laughing) it does really!

Me: (Laughing) Did this job have any rules or regulations to follow?

Guest: (Still laughing) There was no rules or regulations to follow. You did your job for a private industry and if you didn't do your job you'd get fired. You know. It's not like you're working for ~~industry~~ ^{government} or something which you don't have to answer to a profit and loss basis, but a private industry you have to.

Me: What was the most rewarding part of this career?

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Good well, I always felt the most rewarding part is I thought I did a fair job and there was an incident I like to think back there was an air shaft about a quarter mile from our main shaft, I had the responsibility of running a drift and holding up underneath that air shaft exactly underneath it and I was happy that everything worked out. The mine survey part was done real well by us me and my partner Doug ———— And it worked out real well because we did come out right underneath that shaft a $\frac{1}{4}$ mile away and it didn't come out and you were 10 ft off one side or the other you know it cost them a lot of money and they don't stand for that and they ~~say~~ would get someone else to do it. We were regrading a creek that went around the mine property and it was our responsibility on the field part of it and it went well and the day we went to flow into the other part of the creek, Do you think ~~the~~ it'll flow? I said "yes". He said "it better because if it doesn't you better have your bags packed because today would be your last day of work, But he was tough, the manager, he was there and if you did your job you didn't have to worry."

me: How did the duties + your job change over the years?

Guest: Well, it changed first I started off (16)
as a draftsman and a rodsman I worked to
the level of a mine surveyor underground
and surface, finally I was responsible for
the we had some cutting and timber
operations I was running — on that.
And finally when the mine closed the
manager asked me to stay on as a
representative for the company here in
this area and I worked in that capacity
for a few years and I was running on
workman's Comp. cases. And anything else
that came up so, it was interesting, you
would go to a lot of meeting and go to
meet and go to _____ so,
it was interesting.

Me: Did any of your family members
work in the same company?

Guest: Yes, at one time my brother Charlie ^{worked}
at the Tracy mine and I'd say he worked
there for 3 or 4 years and he got
laid off after that he went to

Me: Did your job put you in any dangerous
situations?

(Gust. Well, underground you know underground
 you've got to be careful when you're
 underground because a lot of places
 there's dead end drifts and there
 are tunnels in solid rock and
 if there is no air in there
 you've got to be careful you carried
 a lamp with you in case that flame
 went out there wasn't enough air
 so you better stay away from there,
 but we went in a couple of places
 we ended up checking a location of
 a tunnel of solid rock we wanted
 to check the top to see how
 high it was and when we came
 down I started to get a little
 whoozy and so did my partner
 because we didn't have enough
 air and we weren't suppose to do
 that. It was NO! NO! ^{didn't} because it
 had to be done and we took many
 chances underground. In any place
 underground if you went in a place
 where there was fractured ground you had
 to be careful that if there was no timber
 to support the fractured ground

Qust. you could be obliterated by rock that's sometimes these chunks are maybe 50 to 100 pounds and you could get killed. There's been a lot of mine accidents through the years and you know there's many mines up here and many, many guys have got killed.

Mc. Please describe what your coworkers were like.

Qust: They were a good bunch of guys!
(laughing) Bill Kanyos was a geologist for J+L Bill was interesting too when he was in Canada he was prospecting prospecting in the summer time, he was they use to fly him out to Canada and he'd be in the middle of nowhere in Canada and he'd be there all summer prospecting for minerals. And he finally got transferred down here and he got transferred to the Tracy Mine and he was a geologist there for J+L until it closed and then there was _____ . We had a good

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Guest: bunch of guys. Terri and I use to go out surveying on weekends at times and Doug _____ ya. And then all the other guys that use to work at _____ and _____ Steel Corporation and they were really, really a good group.

Me: Could you describe some interesting or humorous events that happened during this career?

Guest: well, the only interesting things I can think of about is we use to go in the coffee room and you know guys like to tell jokes you know and everybody would sit there then _____ he'd go, licking his fingers. (laughingly) he'd lick his fingers and he'd go, he said, "say fellows did you hear this one then he'd take his little notepad out from

Guest: his pocket and he'd say and then he'd leaf the pages and they'd say com'on — come on.
 (laughingly) so he use to tell the joke and it took him a month of Sundays. But, we had great times.

Me: At any time did you feel like changing careers?

Guest: Well, there's always those things that you say like I'd like to do this or I'd like to do that. It's funny you know when I was growing up I never really knew what I wanted to do. I wanted to be a forester so I could be out in the woods and then finally ~~found out~~ + know. I went down to the _____ Institute for to take architectural drawing and I didn't learn nothing down there because I knew everything that they gave, you know most of the kids were behind well I had a quite a bit of drawing earlier and then I finally transfere and I went up to Michigan Tech and

Gust: hardly even finished my education, that was sad, but that's the way life goes sometimes, but I'm as I think back now, I've enjoyed my working years, really, I mean the things that I did for J&L and now I've been doing work, now that I like. I enjoy surveying what I do occasionally now, I don't do much, but I use to do a lot of surveying for people you know, they'd by maybe, they'd have a piece of land ~~then~~ ^{interest} and they wanted surveys so I use to survey it for em. Hope that it comes out well. You gotta be careful when you doing that to, you know ^{because} you could survey a piece of land and describe it in property and then you get problems. (laughing)

Me: Did you receive any special awards from your employers & were you recognized in any way for job performance?

Gust: Well, my wife gives me a kiss once in a ~~while~~ while, that's the rewards I get ya know, she's the boss. (laughing)
I donno' do

(post: Well I've got, Well, Photography (22)

I got that plague upstairs that they gave me for ~~well~~ Well, ya'll did alot of photography work, you know, and I will first of all I use to I worked alot and so did Debbie, you know, my wife worked 27 years ~~at~~ at the _____ and beside that, ho, no, but then beside that you know I worked for J+L 8 hours a day, I'd come home and then I was _____ at the evergreen drive-in theatre. And then Ernie was working in the snack bar. and then in the weekends during the days in the weekends I'd go out and survey all Saturday, then have to go out and have to go out and work, that projections job in the evenings Saturday night. Never had a day out in the summertime and then beside that then I use to take wedding pictures and I took just about every weekend I took wedding pictures for quite a period of time yeah I took couple of them sometimes I took 2 wedding pictures in one day, you know and that was a event of when the color photographers began.

Guest: I first started in black and white and I did all the work myself. All the developing and the made all the negatives and then developed all the pictures and made the enlargements in my own dark room at home. Well I got started in photography mostly because

_____ passed away quite some years ago. But _____

I use to, we use to out on, you know, _____ and his wife ^{and} _____

Erly and I we use to go on alot of trips together and ~~for~~ one day

_____ come to me and he says,

"Hey Cous" he said "You got a wedding next Saturday" I said "What do you mean" he said "I got 2 and I

can't take both of them, you gotta take the other one." I said

"me take the other one" I said "What are you talkin about,"

I said, "Yup I told them, I told ~~the~~ the wedding party that you'd take the ~~the~~ wedding pictures. So what could I do?"

I had to take them and that was the days of flashbulbs. Then you had to take every girl going down the aisle.

QW

Guest: They were coming down pretty fast you had to put the flashbulb in, and pop it out, put another bulb in there, and make sure you focus. Ahhh what ~~is~~ that these bulbs and use to with a big 4 by 5 speed graphic, you know. Black and white. Then after you know I got that 1-20 camera that flicks and that's what I use, I still use it. ^{it} Took away last summer. Ya flicks.

Me: During your days of employment and beyond what have been your favorite hobbies or leisure activities?

Guest: Well, my ^{favorite} hobbies hunting and I use to fish alot, fish alot of Brook Trout when I was a kid. As the years went by I it kind of fell off. I'll go out still in the summer time make several trips on, just to fish for Northern, , and Bass in my canoe. Well (laughing)

(Post: I played a lot of ball. I played basketball, well I played 4 years for Champion, and 4 years as regular and then I went in the service. I went to school in Oklahoma, Northwestern State Teacher's College. We had a team there and we were undefeated and when we were leaving the school the coach even came up, "Just come on for a walk." And he said "Say Gus come back after the war we'll give you a scholarship to go to school here, and I said "Who's going to go to school in Oklahoma from Michigan"? But it was a teacher's college it was a small college something under the order of Northern. But I played with some good people

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CUST. there. One kid that played
for the ^{Kansas} University another one
played for Pasadena Junior
College, one kid played for the
University of Arizona, and one
kid played for a small College
in New York and I was the
only player that had no
College experience, but I played
center just think me! A
center at 6'^{feet}00, but those are
the days. You know the height
wasn't there like it is today
I remember we were playing
one team there that their
center was local at N.M.U. and
~~he~~ was 6'4 and was jumping
center for them, but we beat
them easily, and then
finally there was one team
that their gonna beat us you
know, they had one kid that
played for University of
Illinois, you know

Qust: Why kids you know all. (27)
was undefeated and they
challenged us and we beat 'em
down there, you know down
there it was hard you know.
But we beat 'em, I think
it is the closest we ever came
to getting beat. We beat them
by eight points and then
that. It was 16 and 0, but
you know that being, I was
the highest scorer for that
team a whole year and the
top rebounder and I was a
skinny kid you know. I
use to fight for the rebounds.

Me: Have you been involved in any
special clubs or organizations?

Qust: No, not really I'm not one that
likes joining clubs I belonged
to an Engineering Club. I belong
to Marquette ~~Club~~ ^{Engineering} Club. I'm a ~~registered~~ ^{registered} land

Qust: surveyor and I don't belong (28)
to any clubs they've asked me
to join state organizations, I
have one time I did get a letter
from the state and they asked
if I would be available to correct
student not student, but people
applying for land surveying
license if I would be available
to correct the exams for them
one year and I turned em
down I told them no, I
said I was working already,
and I could've got away and
the company would've let me go,
but I just didn't want to
go. You want a Uno and Toyro
job or what (laughing)

me: what special moment stand
out about this aspect of your
life?

Qust: Well everything that I did sports
wise or otherwise I got such a thrill
out of it. I you know I use to
think back whenever they looked
for me I was playing ball, I
use to enjoy playing ball so

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Post: much that wow! Because you know talk about playing ball we are to have a heck of a time you knew. there was Bill Koshi which was your mother's uncle and then there was _____ Koshi Chuga he was another good ball player for the same team there was Art _____ and _____ and Roy Millinake and Roy once had a tryout in the major leagues he played in the minor leagues as a pitcher and he played when he didn't pitch he played in the outfield he was such a good hitter and we really, we had a Wisconsin league and we won the Championship when we challenged a team of Wisconsin Michigan baseball league and the team that won that came and played in Humbolt we'd beat them. So, we had a good team in that little team of Humbolt

me: Overall what are your fondest memories in your working days and in your career?

Guest: Well the fondest memories that I have is ~~the~~ work pad 30 of it working. And my career I did what I like to do and I mean it was nothing negative about my working years. I enjoyed them.

Me: Were you a member of a union?

Guest: No

Me: Please, describe any interesting or humorous moments in your life.

Guest: Interesting moments. Well it was interesting was I remember when we got married you know I was poor really! I didn't you know when I had that I had to have a tax and I didn't have no black shoes. So I asked Bill Koshi he said ya' he got black shoes, but they got a hole in the center. (laughing) So I said well that's alright so we got to be married at the altar and then pastor said "knell down" at the

Cost: after and right there I (31)
thought holy smokes! all the
people are gonna see the hole
in the bottom of my shoe!
and they'd say is he ever
poor. Those were embarrassing
moments. (laughing hysterically)
^{what can} you do when your
show? your souls are gonna

Me: (laughing) if you had to do it
all over again would you
choose the same career?

Cost: ya I'd still many
and it's been a rewarding
career sure you can always
try to improve your career and
you know hope that you
could do something better.
It's been rewarding.

me: why or why not?

Cost: well, maybe I was smarter
I'd be farther ahead in life

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Host: then I am now Today. (laughing)

me: In closing do you have anything else you'd like to add?

Host: Well, it's been nice that you interviewed me. You know actually you're a relative of mine. See your mother is my niece. and I hope that I did a satisfactory job for you maybe you'll trash this after you'll get it (laughing)

me: Thanks

Host: you did a nice job
Did you hear that Ans and Tony
~~me~~ joke? (laughing)

me: I better stop it now (laughing)

Host: It's going! Well let's sing a song! What can I sing?
(Singing the sauna song in fin.)

(33)
GUST: And then in finn sais
("I'm a poor Finlander I
can't remember anymore.")

We sang at that wedding
(singing (let me call you
sweetheart.) See I was singing
that to my wife
you know in closing I have
to close this way. I'm
proud to be a Finlander!
Laughing) and I married a Finnish
person you know. Well, I can't
add anything more except for
that pride of being Finnish.

me: Thanks. (laughing)

Gust: You're welcome.