

1.
My name is Cassidy Carr, Today is Feb. 21, 1997. I'm interviewing Harry Wing about Ely Elementary School as School board member and bus driver for the 1997 Red Dust book.

Me: Please state your full name

Mr. W: Harry Charles Wing

me: What is your birthdate and where were you born?

Mr. W: I was born in Hindriver, Michigan.

me: Birthdate?

Mr. W: Birthdate is September Ninth.

me: Who are your parents and do you have siblings?

Mr. W: I have parents but they are passed away.

me: What are your parents first names?

Mr. W: I have four boys. ^{John &} Rodney, Steve and Kevin?

me: What were your parents names? Your parents names?

Mr. W: John, Rodney, Steve & Kevin.

me: Where did you go to school as an elementary student?

Mr. W: I started in Iron River and I went to school for a while in Imperial Mine, which is now called Imperial Heights.

Mr. W.: Then I went to school in Big Bay.

me: Is that where you went to high school to?

Mr. W.: No, I went one year of high school at Graverette.

me: What did you do after high school? Did you expand your schooling?

Mr. W.: No, I went to work in the woods!

me: Okay, what was your first real job, then?

Mr. W.: I was a cook in a lumber camp.

me: When did you start working at Ely Elementary school? When did you start working at Ely?

Mr. W.: In the NICE Community schools? In 1972.

me: Did you work at other than Ely? Okay so, when you were employed at Ely how many students attended?

Mr. W.: You mean when I was on the school board?

me: Yeah.

Mr. W.: When I was on the school board that was back in the mid-sixties and I went on to 1972 - think it was - and until consolidation was through.

me: Okay, what were some of the differences when you first began working there and when you left?

Mr. W.: Wages. They were quite little back then.

me: I'm going to start talking about when you were a bus driver then.

me: What were your bus driving routes like? You were a bus driver there what were your routes like?

Mr. W: Most of them kind of ^{working for the school.} mine were out in Champion and I drove a bus up to Michigamme, Michigamme and Three Lakes and this area, Petticoat Lake, I think ~~it~~ 15 years I have done.

me: What time did you wake up and go to work there?

Mr. W: About 6:00 clock

me: Did you wear any specific things, like heavy clothes?

Mr. W: Yes, I wore winter clothes.

me: What time did your bus leave the garage?

Mr. W: About 7:00 clock.

me: Where was your bus kept? Which garage?

Mr. W: The Champion one.

me: Okay the Champion one. How many students were on your bus in the morning?

Mr. W: Students? Around sixty.

me: At night? The same thing?

Mr. W: About the same because I had this route to had to pick them up in the morning & pick them up in the night.

me: Did you ever have any troublemakers on the bus?

Mr. W: A few. I had to put one student off the bus, the first year I worked there. I put him off the bus and he was off for a few days and his dad had to come to school and get him back on.

me: Was that how you disciplined students when they were bad?

Mr. W: I had to that time because that was the only way I could.

me: What was the environment of your bus like? Was it dirty, was the kids nice?

Mr. W: The majority of them yes.

me: How much noise did you allow?

Mr. W: Not too much. I hated noise. ~~I had a hall monitor on my bus all~~
I once had a chaperon on ~~the~~ bus all the time.

me: Really what is that like.

Mr. W: It was one of the students that kept control on the bus.

me: Oh, kind of like a bus monitor.

Mr. W: Yeah, and it

?

me: That's interesting did you ever get into an accident in your bus-driving career.

Mr. W: No.

me: What was your bus like in appearance? Was it tidy, was it a green bus or

me: yellow? Was it about the same?

Mr. W: They were about the same as they are now, yes?

me: Have safety regulations changed?

Mr. W: Oh, yes they have first aid & Aleres and every thing they have on there now.

me: Did you enjoy your job there?

Mr. W: Yes.

me: About how fast did you go.

Mr. W: The speed limit on the school bus is about 50 miles per hour.

me: So you went about that?

Mr. W: About that.

me: Did you ever have a crisis on the bus like anybody throwing stuff or anything like that?

Mr. W: Throw stuff? I've had some throwing, yes.

me: Has anyone ever gotten sick?

Mr. W: No, on the bus you mean? Oh I'm sorry, yes. I've had students get sick.

me: How, do you wait till they get to school?

Mr. W: I was fortunate that I had some students on the bus ~~to~~ who, we had some material ~~the~~ that we put on any vomit, that will take the smell out. I had students that weren't in.

6.
me: Okay, what kind of pictures or memorabilia did you hang up in your bus? Sometimes people put pictures...

Mr. W: No, I didn't put anything up in the bus. It was more of a distraction I thought. The only thing I put up in my bus, I used to have a tape player in my bus with a speaker in the front & a speaker in the back. I had that in the bus for a couple of years until one of the students got careless and wrecked it for me.

me: What were the weather conditions like? Did you ever get stuck in snow?

Mr. W: Yes, I got stuck.

me: Did you have any certain memories of your career at Ely when you were bus driving?

Mr. W: What?

me: Do you have any memories that stand out with you when you were bus driving?

Mr. W: I'm sorry I can't...

me: Okay when you were a bus driver do you have any memories or experiences?

Mr. W: Memories?

me: Yeah, any memories?

Mr. W: Yeah, I had quite a few memories. In fact the ones I remember most were when I came close to coming in an accident.

me: Can you give me...

Mr. W. I've had a car push me off the road when I had quite a few students on the bus. It crowded me off.

me: Our bus ^{driver} got into an accident ^{a couple of days} ~~the~~ ago when we rammed into ^{another} bus at Westward.

Mr. W. Ron?

me: Yeah. All the kids tease him about that.
When did you start on the Ely Township School board?

Mr. W. School board was about '63, 1963 or 1964.

me: We were searching through old records and we were taking notes and saw your name in there.

Mr. W. My name?

me: Yeah. Were you paid during your service at the school board?

Mr. W. We were paid a certain amount per meeting. Once a month. When we had special meetings we didn't get paid extra.

me: Okay. How were finances a part of the decisions on the school board?

Mr. W. Our finances for Ely were ~~they~~ getting bad, we board members were praying for consolidation. We were in the dire straits financially.

me: Okay what's why... Explain the job of a school board member. What did you discuss?

Mr. W. Oh all the problems and difficulties that happened at the school. We discussed bills and we'd go through them and see which ones to pay and not to pay.

me: How did you help the school? Particularly... by figuring out the bills & stuff?

Mr. W: It's the school?

me: Yeah. Was it... mostly the bills right?

Mr. W: No, that was just part of it. But there was always difficulties from that means there was ~~things~~ teachers who'd always bring problems to the board and there was family members who'd bring problems to the board.

me: Yeah, I think I remember like sometimes there would be problems with routes, turning around in a driveway...

Mr. W: Yeah.

me: Okay, how did the public play a part in the decisions?

Mr. W: I don't know that they played a part in decisions. I ~~remember~~ ^{ever} when they brought something up we discussed it and we studied it. And if we were favorable we'd go with them. It depends on whether we were favorable or not.

me: During your career how did the student population change? Was it bigger or smaller?

Mr. W: Now then when Ely was around here?

me: Yeah. When you were on the school board did it change?

Mr. W: Yeah it was pretty...

me: Even?

Mr. W: Even, yes. Although since consolidation there was more students in school here, I know, than when it was a school by itself.

me: Tell me what you remember when Ely became part of the NICE school District. What were the discussions like on the school board. When there was talk of consolidation, what was it like on the school board? what were discussions like?

Mr. W.: Well there was discussions, I used to meet with other school board members, other principals and Superintendents and we discussed things and a lot of them had particular jobs. One of my jobs was checking the history of Ely. And at one time I had to be interviewed on T.U.

me: That must have been cool. Okay, what were some of the changes made when consolidation came through?

Mr. W.: I think the changes here were probably the increase in students. The building didn't change any.

me: Okay, did your job change at all because of consolidation?

Mr. W.: My bus driving work in the school district I didn't start until after consolidation. I was on the board at the time of consolidation

me: so I couldn't work for the school then.

What are 2 were your most vivid memories of working at Ely?

Mr. W.: I never worked at Ely, only as a board member.

me: Was bus driving?

Mr. W.: No, I worked at Champion.

me: Oh, yeah.

Mr. W.: In the NICE community schools.

me: Did you have any other jobs besides that at Champion, you were a janitor right?

Mr. W: I was a bus driver, custodian. I was a twelve month employee I worked year-round.

me: So were you... describe your maintenance duties at Champion?

Mr. W: Cleaning classrooms, halls, and the gym. Cleaning rooms and bathrooms.

me: Do you remember any kids or experiences in particular?
At your career at both Ely & Champion?

Mr. W: No, I don't think so.

me: After working at Ely, you're still working at Champion right?

Mr. W: No, I retired in 1990.

me: That's what I thought...

Mr. W: I retired in 1990, I was off for a couple months, and then I come back to bus driving and I ~~then~~ work at North Lake then.

me: Okay, so you bus driver at North Lake then.

Mr. W: I work at North Lake as a bus driver.

me: Did you marry or have children? You said you had children.

Mr. W: Yes, I have four boys.

me: What are other things you are involved in, the NICE school district?

Mr. W: You mean in the school district? No, just the bus driving.

11.
me: Do you have anything else you'd like to say about Ely or Champion?

Mr. W: I can't think of anything.

me: How do you feel about Ely closing?

Mr. W: I feel split on that. I'd love to see it open but I can ~~see~~ understand why it has to close.

me: Was working on the school board at Ely a special thing? Was it...

Did you enjoy working on the school board? Was it interesting?

Mr. W: Oh, yes. I enjoyed it. It was very interesting.

me: Okay I think that's it then. Thanks.