

me: Today's date is November 7th (1996) we will talk about Walter Palomaki's life in school, Please give me your full name. *no name - Chris Lemien*

Mr. P.: Walter Palomaki — Walter Mathew Palomaki

me: What year were you born?

Mr. P.: in 1915

me: What years did you attend the West Ishpeming School?

Mr. P.: Well come 1922-29

me: How were elementary school and high school separate At the West Ishpeming School?

Mr. P.: Well — what do you mean by different?

me: Were they separated in any way?

Mr. P.: Well — they were a little different. In West Ishpeming we walked to school but we had to go to high school in Ishpeming — in town

Me: Oh did you

Mr. P: Yea, we graduated Ishpeming High School

Me: Describe a typical day for you during elementary school.

Mr. P: What did you

Me: Describe a typical day for you during elementary school.

Mr. P: Typical day

Me: Yup

Mr. P: Well, I tell ya —

Me: What time did you wake up to go to school?

Mr. P: We always got up about seven O'clock but we only had about oh four blocks to get to school

Me: Yah

Mr. P: Oh, we used to get there a little early at times ^(laughing) we used to have fun playing outside and well school started at 9 o'clock always the bell rang - a teacher came out and rang the bell for us to come in

Me: What did you do for lunch?

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quote

Mr. P: We went home and eat

Me: About how many people were in each classroom?

Mr. P: Well it tell ya - I can't remember how many there was but I say each room there were two two grades *include* in each room.

Me: Were there more boys than girls?

Mr. P: No they were about even

Me: What did you do after school?

Mr. P: Go home and work. Ha ha (laughing)

Me: Did you have any homework?

Mr. P: Oh yes

Me: About how much?

Mr. P: Well, about an hour after school each *include* day.

Me: Did you attend church?

Mr. P: Yes

Me: How did that effect your school life? - Did it?

Mr. P: ~~No~~ No, it just kept us on the right path. *include*

Me: You said you walked to school.

Mr. P: Yea, of course then in high school we had to take the bus.

Me: What kind of clothes did you wear? - What kind of clothes did you wear?

Mr. P: Which school, gradeschool or

Me: Gradeschool at West Ishpeming

Mr. P: Well we had - well in kindergarden it was only just learning your A, B, C's and your numbers and -

Me: Was there a dress code?

Mr. P: It was just regular what would you call that

course, you had your geography and spelling and writing and arithmetic and penmanship which they don't have *include* now a days do they

Me: They sort of do - not as much probably

Mr.P: (ha ha) you had to really write

Me: How did students get in trouble

Mr.P: I don't know - not like they do now (ha ha ha) we had a few fights and *include* that's about all there were no drugs or anything

Me: What kind of punishments did they get?

Mr.P: I tell ya - we had a - the principle he had an oak

include + quote

slab about that big and that wide and for punishment the sent you down to him and you put your hand out and you give you a few wacks with that I tell you - not allowed to do that now

Me: What grades were together in the classroom? - You said there were two grades in each classroom.

Mr.P: Well there was kindergarden and 1st grade and there was 2nd and 3rd 4th and 5th then there were three in 6th 7th and 8th junior high

include all game into

Me: What kind of games did you play?

Mr.P: All kinds of games

Me: like

Mr.P: We played ball baseball and we didn't have no gym for basketball or anything ever - well I say when we come home we used to play chase - run - run

Me: Was football popular?

Mr.P: Well we used to play on our own, but the school didn't have any football or anything but we used to play at night with our regular clothes on no - no protection

Me: Where did you play baseball?

Mr. P: We had a diamond right here, right across
from the school we used to have it there is ^{include + quote}
a house there now

Me: What else did you do in your free time?

Mr. Well, in the winter time we ski jumped - and skate
a lot, too

Me: Was the ice rink there?

Mr. P: No, we skate on the river and we used to walk
to town go to a rink over there ice rink

Me: About how many snow days do you get in a year?

Mr. P: We didn't get no snow days.

Me: none

Mr. P: no, we went to school every day I don't know how
the teachers made it but they made it ^{include + quote}

Me: How were holidays celebrated at school?

Mr. P: What do you mean by that?

Me: Did you do anything special.

Mr. P: Christmas time we had two weeks - and one
thing you don't celebrate now is Washington's
- birthday we had a big day for Washington -
and Easter time we had one week.

Me: Did you exchange gifts?

Mr. P: Thanksgiving we had two days, yea or Thanksgiving
weekend

Me: At what age were you allowed to date?

Mr. P: Pardon

Me: At what age were you allowed to date? or did you
date?

Mr. P: At what age -

Me: I'll just skip that one.

me: Did you ever get sick as a child? - Did you ever get

sick?

Mr. P: Well yea the sicknesses that went around were ^{include} chicken pox and I didn't get it but they all had dyptheria.

me: Do you remember your doctor's name?

Mr. P: Doctor Schmitt

me: What kind of remedies did they have?

Mr. P: You had your cough syrups and they had vaccination for dyptheria that's all I got so I didn't get it.

Me: Did you have any married women teachers?

Mr. P: Not at that time

Me: Were there any minorities at school?

Mr. P: any what?

Me: any black people or

Mr. P: No, No mostly Finns — I think one was English

Me: Were there any who didn't speak English?

Mr. P: Well I tell ya I spoke English when I went to school, but my older brother didn't, he spoke Finn, when he went to school he had to learn the English language ^{include + quote}

Me: Describe the building

Mr. P: the school building

Me: Is it the same as it is now?

Mr. P: Well, I tell ya, it was in a lot better than
it is now (ha, ha) — only about 4 or 5
years old when we ~~started~~ there it was finished
in 1916 and it started in 1930

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+ quote

Me: What courses did you take? I know you said
geography and penmanship and

Mr. P: and arithmetic, reading

Me: were there any special courses?

Mr. P: When we got in 6th grade we got manual training

Me: What kind of chores did you have at home?

Mr. P: Hauling wood into the house, emptying ashes, hauling coal
into the —

Me: Did you have a favorite toy?

Mr. P: My main chore is keeping the woodbox full

Me: Which grade was your favorite?

Mr. P: Which grade? I don't know they were all good

Me: Did you ever switch classes?

Mr. P: No

Me: Tell me about some of your most favorite

classes

Mr. P: Well, arithmetic, mathematics

Me: What kind, what kind of activities did you do
during ~~class~~ school time

Mr. P: In the war time?

Me: School time, like, during class

Mr. P: What do you mean by activities

Me: Did your teachers have you do anything during
school, & how did they teach you?

page 7

Mr. P: The only thing I remember is Christmas time we had a lot of plays and it was just your regular classes you had you went and you did 'em you didn't do anything like the do now-a-days with — all of the activities that you're doin'

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Me: How long was your recess?

Mr. P: 15 min we had one in the morning and one after dinner noon was an hour

Me: What sports were you in?

Mr. P: We didn't have no sports in school then

Me: None?

Mr. P: Well, we played baseball and that's about all

Me: Did you have a school team for baseball?

Mr. P: No, we didn't have — we really didn't have any of those sports we were doin' those after school and we had a baseball team for 6th 7th and 8th graders. In the spring they were round up to Marquette and West Ishpeming and North Lake played against each other. That was the Main, main game of the year.

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Me: When did you get your first radio?

Mr. P: 19 ah I was at C. C. camp when I bought the first radio for the house for our home

include

Me: What did you listen to?

Mr. P: Marquette, It's about all you could get mostly well once in a while you could get outside Stations

Me: Did you have any favorite shows? - What did you listen to?

Mr. P: — it was a western theme — It was on Saturday nights —

Me: Did you have a locker?

Mr. P: We didn't have no lockers.

Me: Where was your stuff kept? Did you take any extra stuff to school like where did you keep your jackets?

Mr. P: I tell ya all your books and that were kept in school in the desk and your jackets and that they had a (door room)? where you keep your jackets and that.

Me: Did you get an allowance?

Mr. P: No allowances then.

Me: When did you learn to drive?

Mr. P: Well, I tell ya I didn't do much driving until I was 18 years old but I used to drive the old "model T" once in a while but at that time you could get your drivers license at 14 years old. You didn't need no drivers training. You ~~trained~~ with your dad at home (laughing)

Me: Who was your best friend?

Mr. P: Well they were all good.

Me: Can you name some of them?

Mr. P: Well there's I tell you I hung around with Jacob Korpi and the Harvala brothers Hugo and Richard

Me: What did you write on?

Mr. P: What did I write on!

Me: Did you have regular paper like this?

Mr. P: Oh ya

Me: ya

Mr. P: and pencil and pens we had — ink pens we had they were on the desk there was a bottle for that and ya had to page (laughing)

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Me: Can you describe a classroom.

Mr. P: There were two classes; one where you'd have a teacher ask you questions and then you have your written tests and (long pause)

Me: About how big was each classroom?

Mr. P: How big?

Me: Yeah

Mr. P: must have been 20 or just better

Me: Did you have any stores near you?

Mr. P: Stores?

Me: Yeah, where you could buy stuff. Were there any stores in West Ishpeming or

Mr. P: Oh yeah, we had a store in West Ishpeming and Hemala? store and Nick Walkey's but then the bigger store — but that wasn't there when we were in grade school that was built when we were grown up

Me: How did World War II affect school children?

Mr. P: I don't know I was working in the mine when World War II came. (laughing)

Me: What do you remember about the snowstorm of 1938?

Mr. P: Well I tell ya I was in afternoon shift that day

We came up at 11 o'clock it was coming up to our chests to get to the dry we stayed in the dry for 'til morning 5 o'clock when the track was plowed come out and made a road for us to follow that led up to the parking meter bridge up there and when all the cars were getting stuck behind the plows and when

dry = place where miners changed

Mr. P (con'd) we got to town we ~~went to the~~ ^{went to the}
Costmercentile? and me and my brother Arnold
and they gave us a sandwich we hadn't
since the night before so they gave us a
sandwich and I had my boots broken
so they gave me a pair of rawhide
laces and we walked home from town
to West Ishpeming in that storm we
took turns breaking trail

include
+ quote

Me: What do you remember about the Barnes Hecker
Mine tragedy?

Mr. P: We were in school when we heard about it and
we came home and for dinner my dad was
home he worked at the the Mores (Morris)
in North Lake and the had shipped them
all home so he told us about it so him
and my older brother went over there to the
shaft over there to see what was happening
and after when I looked there was like a big
lake where the swamp had been before it
had all caved in.

include + quote

Morris

Me: What do you remember about the mine strike
of 1948 or 46?

Mr. P: I know I was in that strike _____ ±
don't know how many days it was _____
maybe 6 or 7 and we go back to work 'till
May

Me: What percentage of the students graduated?

Mr. P: Oh well I tell you out of our class we had 119 that graduated there were about 200 that started. We had a lot of drop outs

Me: How many graduated from the West Ishpeming?
Did most of them?

Mr. P: Let's see how many there was in our class. I'd say we had about, I don't remember, it was either 8 or 10 in our class at that time

Me: How many started?

Mr. P: How many what?

Me: How many were starting? How many started?

Mr. P: Well there was about same amount as in Kindergarten that time.

Me: Did more men than women graduate?

Mr. P: More women

Me: more women did?

Mr. P: Yea, well our class had more women there were only 4 boys and 6 girls

Me: Did you attend college?

Mr. P: pardon

Me: Did you attend college?

Mr. P: Me, No

Me: Where did you work? What mine?

Mr. P: I worked at the Lord Mine and I went to Cliff Shaft and when the closed that I went to the Empire.

include

Me: Did you get married?

Mr. P: Yea, 1938 my wife died in '70 or '91 5 years ago

Me: Whom did you marry?

Mr. P: Margret (Pelezio) from Republic

Me: Did you have any children?

Mr. P: 2

Me: What were their names?

Mr. P: (^{Dwayne}?) and Tony she's my daughter
she's the oldest

Me: Do you have any grandchildren?

Mr. P: Lets see 4, 5, 6

Me: What were their names?

Mr. P: Well Joy and Matt and Richard and Harry,
Amy and Mark

Me: Give me some of your hobbies.

Mr. P: (^{I have to} laughing) Going out for breakfast right

now in the morning going out for breakfast

Me: Did you have a yearbook at the West Ishpening
school?

Mr. P: have a what?

Me: a yearbook (pause) a book with all the
pictures of the kids

Mr. P: Ya, but not in the West Ishpening School
they didn't no but in high school the
Hematites

Me: Do you have any photos I can borrow?

Mr. P: No, I ain't got any.

Me: Is there anyone else you thing I should interview?

Mr. P: What anyone else what?

Me: Is there anyone else you think I should interview?
Mr P: Well I tell ya, there's a few that came through there
I've got three brothers that went through ~~there~~
West Ishpeming School, Isaac he went to
college and was a teacher at the Fire Center
School ~~there~~, and Arnold who lives ~~in town~~ up here
and Hugo lives in town than ~~there~~. I don't know
if you can get ahold of Hugo Harvala he lives down
the street than ~~who~~ who else is around here that
there ^{give} ^{all} the ones that are living they aren't
around West Ishpeming yet

Me: Thank you