

Mrs. Carol Cox

ME: When and where were you born?

Mrs C.: August, do you want the year? Is that necessary?

Me: Ya, if that's OK.

Mrs C.: August 1953 Ishpeming

Me: How many brothers and sisters do you have?

Mrs C.: I have one brother

Me: Name?

Mrs C.: Jean

Me: How old is he?

Mrs C.: He's forty-one; he graduated from National Mine

Me: How many of them went to National Mine? Well that's...

Mrs C.: Well, just him

Me: OK.

~~Me~~: Me: Um, when and whom did you marry?

Mrs C.: I married my high school sweetheart Victor Cox, he graduated in '69'

Me: Do you have any children?

Mrs C.: Mhm, I have two, one Michael is in seventh grade at National Mine, and Christine is in sixth grade at Latta Mine.

Me: um, what years did you attend National Mine?

Mrs C.: I started in kindergarten way back in 1957, boy that sounds like a long time ago, I graduated in 1971 when I wrote that, when I thought about that wow! I think

Me: wow!
Me: Do you remember some of your teachers?

Mrs C.: um, from grade school a yeah well I remember just about all of my teachers um, ~~there~~ are some fond memories and not so fond memories um... one thing I remember ^{some} about the grade school teachers is that they seemed at the time... they seemed real strict, and they seemed old, but now I know some of

Mrs C: (continued) them, and maybe their in their seventys, but they don't seem so old anymore ha! ha! but, um I can't say anything that were um that were a bad about the teachers at that time, but I do remember that I remember that... I remember being scared of them in a way you know, being strict, but kind, but kind, and gentle

Me: Do you remember any interesting stories, maybe about them?

Mrs C: Oh I remember some I'm not sure I want to repeat them Ha! Ha! Ha! but there was one, there was one ^{some of} in particular that I remember, and um I think it was when I was in fourth grade, and we had a teacher that she seemed real tired she wasn't that in the system very long, she seemed real tired alot, when we'd go out for recess we'd come back in, and a shed never, she wouldn't show up many times this would happen, she would go to the teachers kunge, and take a nap, and we'd kind of ratchon to it after a while some wouldn't say anything to the principal cause we knew that if he didn't know anything we'd be alone in the room! so

ME: Do you remember any of your junior high or high school teachers?

Mrs C: Um, see our junior high was up with the high school, so I'm having a hard time remembering who was my junior high, and who was my high school teachers, cause we were all kind of mushed together there, you know, and I think, I think even some of the junior high teachers taught in high school, and stuff like that, but yeah I remember, um alot of my teachers from seventh grade up to um twelveth grade. See at that time junior high was seventh, and, eighth now I think junior high is sixth, seventh, and ~~seventh~~ eighth. um, but yeah I remember many of them.

Me: um, any interesting stories about them?

Mrs C: Um, I can't remember anything in particular about them, except I remember working alot, alot of paperwork in junior high it seems like the teachers were all out to get us! Ya know they were work! work! work! all the time, and that's something I remember most about the junior high.

Me: How long was the school day?

Mrs C: I think its the same schedule as what you have now. I think was um, and I might be wrong but I think I'm correct

Mrs C: (continued): because I remember being out at 3:15 pm. (3)
cause I sure that we started at quarter to nine, and I think that's what you have now.

Me: How'd you get to school?

Mrs C: I walked

Me: How many miles, or how far?

Mrs C: Oh probably, Oh I don't know I was just down below the school, so it wasn't very far it was just probably maybe took me two minutes, to get up the hill. Ya know where the front of the school is where you go in in by um Mrs. Honkala's office, by the art room there you go down that path by the flag pole. That's where I lived in that big house over there.

Me: what subjects did you have?

Mrs C: Oh we had all kinds of things um well the typical things; Math, English, science, History, History! And um business subjects which was something that I really enjoyed in high school. We had some business classes taking shorthand and business practices, and algebra I remember that one, band and chorus was a subject.

Me: Did you play anything in band? what did you play?

Mrs C: I played clarinet, and I played saxophone a little bit, and I even played tuba one time during a graduation ceremony. um see we had such a small band our tuba player, or was graduating in the ceremony so um I was one that could read music fairly decently so I tried the tuba, and played the tuba for a graduation ceremony. then chorus I joined chorus I was 3 kinds in the one that liked musical

Me: what was the toughest subject?

Mrs C: Um... I can't I don't know if I can say anything was really, really tough, but probably one of the toughest ones for me was History "case" I mean. I guess I didn't like it at that time. I didn't see why we had to learn all those dates, and things like that ya know names, and places, but now I know why! But I... guess it wasn't real tough but it was just something that I didn't... didn't enjoy the most, and maybe that's why it was toughest for me. Because I didn't know the answer, or put the effort in to it.

Me: how did the kids dress?

Mrs C: um, well we couldn't wear jeans to school. That would be a change hey? um we had a dress code, and the girls always

MrSC: (continued) had to um wear outfits like... I think ⁽⁴⁾
when I was getting into... it might have been in junior high
or else I was a freshman, and that's when they um allowed us to

wear pants, before then it was you had to wear skirts, and the
pants had to be pants suits you know you had to buy like a
um the pants, and then like vest, or a jacket or something that
matched it um so then the girls started wearing pants more
the dressy pants, but then mini skirts became the in thing
and um everybody wore mini skirts, well not everybody but
most people wore the shorter skirts, until Mr. Rusing got
his ruler out, and started measuring the skirts, from the
floor ya know, had to be a certain amount of inches above
the knee, that was probably one of the biggest dress crazes
that they "was the mini skirt."

Me: were there any special sayings or anything?

MrSC: um, one that sticks out in my mind, I remember saying
"Sure bob," ever heard that one before, "Sure bob" we used to
say that all the time, I don't know what it meant, or what
it was for, it he is somebody made a comment to us about
um oh, maybe even such things as... "I going to take a ride
to town tonight we'd say "Sure bob" that was one thing we
said a lot, and I guess cool was starting to be a word like that
we said a lot.

Me: How were kids expected to act, and behave?

MrSC: um, I don't think that's changed a whole lot over the years, cause
they certainly expected the kids to behave with respect towards
adults, and we still expect that these days, but I guess it is a little
bit different in the attitudes, but I think they tried to get us to
see the value of treating people nice, and respectful, can't say
that everybody abided by that, or did that, but um I think that's
what they tried to teach us.

Me: was there anybody, who was like really intractable lots of anything?

MrSC: Oh yes, Oh yes I'm not going to mention any names, of course but
oh we had our class clowns, and kids that seemed to get in their
share of trouble all the time, but I wouldn't say there was anything
major, I don't remember kids being arrested.

Me: what were the punishments?

MrSC: um for school um, it's pretty much the same, as it is now
where you would be suspended if you did something really wrong
um there were certain guidelines ya know, I guess some people
were held after school, parents were called I think parents
were called more so then then they are now, the detention

Misc: (continued): and the eligibilities, you're involved in sports, um you didn't keep your grades up or you got into trouble somehow, you were a member of a team that would be one way of punishing you.

Me: What were the particular activities?

Misc: Well, being such a small school we didn't have a lot available especially for girls, if you were a girl you would have been able to cheerlead, you were able to be on the year book staff. The echo staff. The echo staff was a news paper, that was put out, I think it was over a month, or something like that. A there was a French club, and that was limited to the people who took French, at school, um for girls that was about it. The boys, had baseball. They had basketball, they had track, and they could always participate in year book staff, and the newspaper. We also had a Forensics team, and that was in high school.

Me: Which ones did you take part in?

Misc: All of the above, you know in a small school you could do that, you could be involved in a lot of things, ya I was in I was a cheerleader, and I was in band, and chorus, although I don't think that was considered an extra curricular that was right in the schedule. I was in Forensics, and I was in yearbook staff, and the echo staff, all of those things, and we tried to get a girls track team going at that time we were kind of rebels, in ways the girls in my class, because we thought these boys have all these activities fun things, and we don't, so we tried to get a track team going. To know we'd be out that year, but the next year after they did get one. So maybe we contributed to that. I hope to think so anyway.

Me: Did any teams win a trophy, or a championship or anything?

Misc: I remember, I would have been a Freshman, we won the District Basketball Championship, that year 1968, I was a Freshman and that was pretty exciting, cause we played um, a champion team from Channing Michigan, and a kind of a varsity, and we ended up winning. I believe it was, in over time or at least second shot or something like that it was very exciting.

Me: Did any body act different, like what effect did it have on the school? 6

MrSC: Well I think it got the excitement up in the school a little bit everybody started to go to the games, um we had tremendous amount of support when we went to Northern because at the same time Ishreming High School was down there, and we had a lot of fans there that would backup National Mine, and here this small school. All of a sudden we had this huge fan club, I think it did a lot for the pride of the students. We were really proud of that team and that was really important to us that they did that. Brought us a big trophy home and stuff I think it was a great positive thing for the school.

Me: How did they like get to the games like that?

MrSC: A school bus, some of us would go by school bus and we used to take fan buses. Just about every game, actually a lot of the kids didn't have cars. Like they do now in high school, so that was there entertainment to go on the school bus to a basket ball game.

Me: Do you remember any special cheers?

MrSC: Oh I remember a lot of them. At that time we were National Mine Nets N-e-t-s. That's kind of different there were some kind of corny cheers, that had to do with the nets. I remember the old school song, let's sing for National "swing the banners high." Oh we did a lot of cheers there was one railroad choo-choo, cheer that we used to do that was kind of silly. Then we started doing cartwheels, and things I remember that we were a little more adventurous we built pyramids, we'd build pyramids, they pyramid just totally collapsed.

Me: How would you describe your academic performance?

MISC: Um that's kind of a funny question especially when I'm teaching now, and I look back at how kind of slack I was when I was in high school, or in junior high, I guess I was about average, I was always on the honor roll but I was not an all A student. By any means I could have been I think I didn't work up to my potential, and now I see that. Social life was very important to me.

Me: what was lunch like?

MISC: A well a lot of times I would go home to eat lunch because I was so close, but my grandmother used to be one of the cooks up there, and so a lot of times I would stay after and eat lunch. They had delicious lunches. This is the days where the cooks peeled potatoes, and a fresh vegetable and stuff, and actually cooked from scratch, and they used to make the best chicken, and they used to have a stew that was out of this world. The lunches were some thing that kids looked forward to. Not anymore that's what I understand. It was a real treat they used to make chocolate cake, you could smell it baking in the oven.

Me: where was the cafeteria?

MISC: I guess we used to have it setup in the gym part. We'd have the tables where we would sit and eat in the gym, but the kitchen was where Mr. Kelly's room is coming down the stairs there, it was just in a little corner there. It wasn't a very big kitchen just a little corner on the side there as you come down the stairs by Mr. Kelly's room.

Me: who was the principal?

MISC: Mr. Ruesing

Me: what was he like?

MISC: Oh I liked him a lot he was interesting, he always seemed like he was wanting to know about you, and he was interested in what you were doing, and how you were doing, he seemed to take time to become involved with things that were going on at the school, which most principals don't do.

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Mrs C: (continued) but um he had real nice personality he was one you could go, and you wouldn't feel um shy about talking to him, just having a casual conversation with him. I think he was very well liked.

Me: Did they have any special picnics or outings?

Mrs C: Now that's something I couldn't remember, I don't think so

Me: like on the last day of school

Mrs C: No, they pretty much kept us all in the school, ya know we might have had just parties in the classes and stuff but, we never went out of the school that I can think of. Um my memory may not serve me well on that but I don't remember, we ya know went on field trips, and a lot of times that was toward the end of the school year, especially in the grade school we would go on a big field trip, and that would kind of be the end of the year thing.

Me: Did any teachers have an impact on your life?

Mrs C: Um, I would say so yeah, especially now that I'm teaching, and I look back, and I do remember some of the things that some teachers did, and I would think yeah as I was going through my training for teaching. I covered the fact that I realized yeah, that's where this came from I remember this.

Me: What was your graduation ceremony like?

Mrs C: A, it was small, a twenty-two in my graduating class so all twenty-two of us could fit up on the little stage well National Mine had the stage then. It's different now. I'm sure you realized that but um, they had the stage, and the auditorium seats, so all twenty-two fit right across the stage nicely, neat in a row very serious, sad in a way I remember crying, rather than being happy, that ya know with such close friendships in our classes, we had such small classes, I remember taking part in it a lot because I was involved in the music part, a woodwinds ensemble kind of thing, and I was in chorus

Me: Did you have a diploma?

Mrs C: Yeah in fact, the year that I was a senior we had our first prom, they might have had one way back @ when I'm not sure they possibly could have, when I was a senior we tried to get a prom going, and we did. It wasn't as elegant as they are now-a-days I mean it was a thing for us to have a band, and everybody dressing up in formals. This was the first time we had our formals on, the decorations and stuff were special, and a regular band there, it was unusual in those days. Ever remember, a lot of the girls, I know I did of borrowing dresses, ya know because it was so expensive, a lot of us couldn't afford to buy another dress, and now I know it's nothing for those girls to spend "6-7" hundred dollars a dress, getting ready for a prom so, and I know they had a prom the year after, but I don't know if they continued on with it or not.

Me: Did any tragedies occur while you were in school?

Mrs C: yes, a one comes to mind in that there was a gal that um, one of the students in a grade ahead of me she collapsed in the hallway one day, and she died, I was in junior high I must have been in eighth grade, and we had been down practicing for cheer leading tryouts. I just remember coming upstairs, and seeing her lay by her locker, all the commotion, and stuff we hustled, and bustled back to our classes, and to find out that she had died that was pretty serious, as it is then.

Me: Were you able to maintain any contacts with your childhood friends?

Mrs C: um, some yeah in fact it's kind of ironic because one of my sons best friends is a son of one of my best friends when we were in high school, so I have some contacts that I keep with, some people who have stayed around here, some of my friends that have moved away I keep in touch with occasionally Christmas time, I'll send them a Christmas card. They come up in the summer time talk to me. Some of my friends in school were my relatives, being

MrSC: (continued) a small school, cousins I certainly keep in touch with them

Me: what do you think is the biggest change in school?, or has it changed

MrSC: um, well I think its changed, I think one of the biggest changes that I see is the opportunities that kids have now-a-days. verses what we had, and like I said we didnt have that many extra curriculums we could become involved in, we didnt have a big selection of classes. we really couldnt elect that many classes unless we went into the science-main area or to the business area. Now it seems like theres so many choices for kids to make, so many opportunities that they can get experience in before they graduate from high school. I think its a very positive change, I like that change, but I often think that what if I could have tried that ya know, now my kids will have that chance.

Me: what are your fondest memories of National Mine?

MrSC: I think probably the fondest memories are um because we were such small classes. and such a small school we were close, almost friendships were really important to us. we had friends that we knew we could depend on. for us to rely on. And I not only had friends in my class I had friends that were four years, ahead of me or four years behind me. I think thats probably one of the teachers. The teachers had a chance to be more involved with each individual student cause there werent very many students in the classes, you got to know your teachers alot better, so there fore you cared about them more, and you felt they cared about you. I think thats one of the biggest, other than going into all the social kinds of activities ya know the fun things, and certainly I enjoyed basketball, and cheer leading. I loved cheer leading

MISC: (continued): music was important to me, and those are all fun things. (11)

Me: If you could give a message to the students what would it be?

MISC: I talked about this um, a little bit already but I would tell these students now - a days to be aware of all those opportunities that are available to them now, and take advantage of it, as they go through school. Know that they should do their absolute best that they can, and do while they're in school right now, cause it's going to effect their future in some other days both as a person as an individual and um as far as employment later on.

Me: Do you have anything else you would like to add?

MISC: Um, I don't think so. I think I kind of said it all when I talked, going to a small school you think of it as being you're at a disadvantage, but I really don't believe you are because small school fosters a lot of things that help you especially as far as your relationships go. For the people, you learn to care, you learn to rely, and to trust other people, and I think that's a real important lesson. You know other kids when I went on to college they always felt that they had an advantage over me, or over some one else that went to a class D school. Because they had so much more, but they never did, they really never did. When it came down to our college courses, and giving out grades the kids that I graduated with, and myself we were right up there with them.

The end!