

Monica Meachum's interview  
with  
Genny Parkonnen

Monica - "When and where were you born?"

Mrs. P. - "In Ishpeming, April 10th, 1956."

Monica - "How many brothers and sisters do you have", and  
"what are their names?"

Mrs. P. - "I have 2 brothers, Gary and David," and I  
have 1 sister, Lori."

Monica - "When and whom did you marry?"

Mrs. P. - "O-kay, I got married on Sept. 7, 1974." "AND  
I married Paul Parkonnen."

Monica - "How many children do you have", and what are  
their names?"

Mrs. P. - "I have 3 children, named Tammi, Paula, and Brian."

Monica - "When and where were your parents born?"

Mrs. P. - "My mother was born in Aurora Ill., and my  
father was born in Ishpeming."

Monica - "What year did you attend National Mine school?"

Mrs. P. - "1961 to 1974."

Monica - "Do you remember some of your gradeschool / elemen-  
tary teachers, and what were they like?"

Mrs. P. - "Mrs. Gleason was my kindergarten teacher,  
she was really special, I don't think there's too many  
teachers like her. Then my second grade teacher was  
Mrs. Magnusson, my third grade teacher was Mrs. Miller.

I liked all of them, I don't anything bad to say about any of  
them.

MONICA - Do you have any humorous or interesting stories about your grade school teachers?

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MRS. P. - No, I don't.

MONICA - Do you remember some of your junior high and high school teachers? Could you describe them?

MRS. P. - There was a lot of them. MR. KETO, MRS. RICHARDS, and MRS. HEBERT, MR. ROBERTS and MR. BETTS. There's a lot of them.

MONICA - Do you have any favorites of them?

MRS. P. - I'd have to say all my teachers were really special. I really liked all of them. I don't have any bad memories of any of them.

MONICA - Do you have any interesting or humorous stories about them?

MRS. P. - No.

MONICA - Okay, what was the first day of school like, at National Mine.

MRS. P. - It was really nice, because MRS. GLASON was the kindergarden teacher. And, she just made you feel so much at home. She was just kinda like your mother, she cared about each kid, in a real special way. So, you really weren't afraid.

MONICA - How long was the school day?

MRS. P. - I think our school days were the same as they are now. AND, the same length of days.

MONICA - How did you get to school, and how far was it?

MRS. P. - I took the bus, it was about 3 miles.

MONICA - What kinds of subjects were taught when you went to school?

MRS. P. - It wasn't like it is now. We had just basic subjects.

3 like, English and reading, math and geography, nothing extra.

Monica- what was your favorite subject, and why was it your favorite subject?

Mrs. P.- I liked government. I found it very interesting AND I liked my teacher.

Monica- what was your most difficult subject? And why was it difficult for you?

Mrs. P.- Math. I've never liked math, and I never will.

Monica- How were kids expected to act and behave?

Mrs. P.- you knew, you had rules, you had to obey. But you always have your kids that choose not to do it. You know you had to do what they told you to do all the time.

Monica- Do you remember any punishments that were given?

Mrs. P.- I think they used to give warnings, then expell kids for a certain amount of time.

Monica- How did the kids dress?

Mrs. P.- No, holy jeans! (ha! ha!) we dressed in dresses sometimes, and pants. But, I think basically it was just dressy clothes. You didn't have the kinda clothes kids have now.

Monica- were there any special fads or sayings you used to have? And, what kind of music did you listen to?

Mrs. P.- okay, I know mini skirts were in, and bell bottom pants, you never catch kids today wearing them! (ha! ha!) I can't remember the groups that say them, but it was different kinds of music than today.

Monica- what kinds of extra curricular activities were offered?

Mrs. P.- They had cheerleading and basketball, and wrestling, basically all the stuff they have now.

Monica- Which activities did you participate in?

Mrs. P.- I was in plays that we put on when we got up

IN the higher grades, I remember one, it was called the "Uninvited Ghost."

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MONICA- Do you have any, special memories of that OR anything?

MRS. P- It was a blast! we had a lotta fun doing it.

MONICA- Did any of the teams win a trophy or tournament and what affect did this have on the school?

MRS. P- I really don't remember.

MONICA- That's okay, how did the teams travel, and how far was it?

MRS. P- When they went to basketball games, they traveled by bus. AND if you wanted to go down to watch them you could ride on the bus.

MONICA- Who was the principle, and ~~x~~ could you describe him?

MRS. P- Mr. Ruesing. He was a really nice guy. As long as you, did what you were supposed to, he was really nice. But if you got in trouble, you knew it. (Ha! Ha!)

MONICA- Can you describe your text books?

MRS. P- They were basically the same as they are today, I don't see much difference in them.

MONICA- How much homework did you get?

MRS. P- Lots.

MONICA- Was it more than we have today?

MRS. P- It's probably about the same. If you have study hall unless you goofed off. Then you took it home.

But it was basically the same.

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MONICA- What was lunch time like? Can you describe hot lunch?

MRS. P- We ate in the cafeteria, well it used to be the gymnasium & is what it was, cuz the school wasn't set up as it is now. We had a hot lunch, I don't think it was as good as you's get now. It cost about 25¢ - 50¢.

MONICA- Can you describe the lunch break or recess?

MRS. P- It was kinda like you's get now. You know, we'd eat our lunch, and we'd go outside and you'd have your own groups that formed circles, and we just stood around and talked until the bell rang.

~~MONICA- Did you have any special fads or sayings? What kind of music did you listen to?~~

~~MRS. P-~~

MONICA- Did you have special plays or programs, and if so can you describe them?

MRS. P- Well, we had the program <sup>I</sup> said previous, and then when we were in kindergarten and that, Mrs. Gleason used to put on really nice programs for the little kids. And, she really put a lotta work into them.

MONICA- Did you participate in them?

MRS. P- Yes.

MONICA- Do you remember any interesting or humorous stories about them?

MRS. P- No.

MONICA - Can you describe the graduation ceremony at National Mine?

MRS. P. - Our class consisted of 25 kids, and that was our graduating class. We had the same kind of ceremony when they walk in, like they do and that.

MONICA - What special memories do you have of graduation?

MRS. P. - It was allotta fun. I wish I could go back, to it. I enjoyed it. I mean, we a very close class we all enjoyed ~~at~~ each other, and doing things together.

MONICA - Were you able to maintain contact with your childhood friends.

MRS. P. - Quite a few of them.

MONICA - Did you have any teachers that had a great impact on your life?

MRS. P. - I'd have to say they all did. I got along real well, with all my teachers. They all played a big part in it.

MONICA - Do you have any special yearly picnics or outings?

MRS. P. - No, just class reunions that we have.

MONICA - Did any tragedies occur while you were in school?

MRS. P. - ~~NO~~ NO.

MONICA - What do you think was the biggest change in the school since you were a student?

MRS. P. -

Monica - What are your fondest memories of National Mine?

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Mrs. P. - I don't really know. I think the encouragement that I received while I was there. It was a small school, but all the teachers were real concerned with what you were gonna do, and I think that would have to be my fondest memories, the concern that everybody had and that you finish school & you do graduate.

Monica - If you had a message for students today, what would that be?

Mrs. P. - No matter how hard it gets, no matter how much you hate it, always remember to finish school, because it's really, really, important. Now days you need it even worse than you did when I was graduating, ~~because~~ <sup>the</sup> things aren't as easy and jobs are harder to get. So you need a good education.

Monica - Is there anything else you would like to add?

Mrs. P. - No.

Monica - Thank you for your time.