

Brad Waters'
Interview with
William Brad Waters

ME: I'm Brad Waters, I'm interviewing William Brad Waters. He was a student at National Mine School. The date is Decombor tenth nineteen-nigety. The Interview is taking place in Ishpeming, Michigan at Brad Waters' house.

ME: when and where were you born?

MR. Waters: I was born in Negaunee in 1951.

ME: where were your parents born?

MR. Waters: My mother was born in 1915, in April, + my dad was born in 1913, in November.

ME: Were they from around here?

MR. Waters: My mother was from Ishpeming + my father was from Negaunee.

ME: How many brothers + sisters do you have

MR. Waters: I have one brother and two sisters.

ME: What are their names?

MR. Waters: (aaa) My oldest sister is Barbara + my brother is Robert + my youngest sister is Julie.

ME: When and who did you marry?

MR. Waters: I married Kathrine Marie Korpi in June 23, 1972

ME: How many children do you have?

MR. Waters: Two boys,

ME: What are their names?

MR. Waters: Warren and Bradley.

ME: What do you do for a living right now?

MR. Waters: I work at the Empire Mine.

ME: * What years did you attend National Mine?

MR. Waters: Oh that's a tough one (haha) aah lets see I started in fifty, I imagine it was fifty six and I graduated in nineteen sixty nine.

ME: Do you remember the names of some of your grade-school teachers?

MR. Waters: Yaa - all of em' there was (aaa) Mrs. Gleason was our Kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Magnusen was our first grade teacher, Mrs. Waara was the second grade teacher, Mrs. Hopus was our third grade teacher, then we went up stairs and we had aah, Jack Johnson "Jocko" they called him. he was our - lets see what was he (haa) I don't remember if he was our fourth or fifth grade teacher, I don't remember which one he was.

ME: What were they like?

MR. Waters: All of em' were fabulous people, every one of em' I aah, They helped me alot all-through school.

I made a mistake my - my fourth grade teacher was Mrs. Wasberg & my fifth grade-teacher was Jack Johnson. Sixth grade teacher was Fran Reusing

ME.: What were your Junior High school teachers like?

MR. Waters: What were they like?

ME: Yaa,

MR. Waters: I had alot of fun. I enjoyed school.

MR. Waters: They aah, just had a good time!

Me: Do you have any interesting or funny stories about any of the teachers?

MR. Waters: Yeah, I got a few -- how many do you want? (haaha) (go ahead)

Ohh, lets see, I think one of the, one of the best of the teacher we had the most fun with, was MR. Peity? he was our band director at National Mine, I was in the band, from when I was in fourth grade until I graduated. +

MR. Peity aah didnt have much discipline with us + we aah aah one of the things we used to do was, he would put out a, tell us a music he wanted us to play, a certain song. and we had a song that we had practiced quite a bit,

we knew by heart was Marching Down Main and MR. Peity would say put out such + such a piece of music we'd pretend we grabbed it + he'd raise his batton + started start us to play and we'd play Marching Down Main, and then he'd say no. no. no he said, wrong song play this other one, so we'd pretend + fumble through + grab another sheet of paper + he'd get ready + we'd start playing Marching Down Main again "oh no, no" he said and we'd do that about four or five times + then he'd come and take the music away from us + then we had to play what he wanted us to play then we used to, used to have parades all around the gym when we decided we wanted one.

Then in the spring time when we used to have parades in Ishpeming we used to (aah) march around National Mine, in formation and aah we would be going in one direction + MR. Peity would want us to turn around + go in the opposite direction + he was leading, so he would turn around + walk back + expect us to do the same thing we'd just keep

- on marching straight + when he'd find out where we were he'd come hollering + telling us we got to turn around. Half of the kids in band used to smoke cigarettes + (had) there would be (an) smoke coming out of the half of the instruments from the kids smoking. He was, he was lots of fun he could have got us all in a lot of trouble, but he didn't so...

ME: Have you seen him since you were in school?

MR Waters: No - I haven't + I hope he comes to this all school reunion that we have here coming up this summer.

ME: Do you remember what the first day of school was like?

MR Waters: NO! I can't remember back that far.

ME: When did you have to get up each day to get to school?

MR Waters: (Oh Jeez) I think it was around seven o'clock when Ma would roast us out of bed.

ME: When did you get out of school?

MR Waters: I was over at atlaah three o'clock I think.

ME: How did you get to school every day?

MR Waters: By bus - we had the bus you know

ME: Was it a long ride from your house to school?

MR Waters: Well - the actual distance wasn't that far probably eight-ten miles but the route, we were on the bus for probably forty-five minutes to an hour every day (ME) (on)

ME: Did the buses ever get stuck in the winter?

MR. Waters: I got a little story to tell you about that,

When we were in Kindergarten, we lived out where the Tilden mine is, & aah we had August Helsten - his nickname was "Aukie" He was our bus driver. We had a bad snow storm one day & when you turn off the main road going to powder mill, to go up towards the farm were we lived on, there was a big steep hill which you had to go up first, & we got half way up that hill & the bus got stuck - we couldn't get out & he didn't know what to do so he put the brake on & he told all the kids to stay in the bus & he walked me about a mile to aah MR. & MRS. Olmstead's House. I stayed there for the rest of the day until my father come through & then he walked back to the bus & then he had to walk back to school to get another bus to pull him out of the ditch & then we had to bring the kids home. But that was the only time I remember getting stuck.

ME: What subjects were taught at school?
Same ones as now?

MR. Waters: Ya, same ones as now. Ya they were all the same we didn't have any advanced math or anything like you guys have now. Just the basics.

ME: What was your favorite subject?

MR. Waters: Recess! (hoo hoo) Lunch - I did real good on lunch!
I never was real good in school I liked the science courses

MR Waters: - but I ahn.

ME: - Did you get to do alot of experiments in science?

MR Waters: haa haa Yaa I did lots of (haa) experiments in

Chemistry. We had a Stan Roberts in chemistry. I used to go in early on my free period + set up experiments that way it gave me access to all of the chemicals (haa) and aa we used to have teams. There was four at a table + each table would be two teams, the guy on sitting next to you was your team + two guys across the way was a team + we used to play tricks on each other.

One of the things we did - one of the things I did when we first got into chemistry we had these workbooks. + MR. Roberts told us that we'd have to turn the workbooks in at the end of the year. For some reason I can't remember the opposite team which was Bill Ustala + Victor Cox were messin around I think they were squirtin water at Dave and I + I told them that I'd get even so the next time I was setting up the experiment I went and got a little small bottle of sulfuric acid + an eye dropper and I hid it in my desk. We had big drawers right next to us + one of the, we were workin on our experiment they werent paying any attention -

①

- so I took the eye dropper + filled about half full of (haa) sulfuric acid + I opened up their workbook + I squirted the acid inside of the workbook + laid it back down so they never knew, well that was in the middle of the workbook + it was a long time before we ever got no where near the workbook + when (haa haa) they opened it up (haa) the acid had (haa) destroyed all of the, or most of the pages in the middle of the book it looked like little moths floating out of there when they opened the book up but I didn't put enough in there to hurt anything, just there workbook (haa haa). But, we had a lot of fun in that class, playing tricks on each other.

ME: How were kids expected to behave then?

MR. Waters: Well you were expected to behave like you do know (ha) but we got away with a lot more the discipline was more lax. We never did anything to actually hurt any body, it was a lot of pranks + fun times. We, we got away with a lot more stuff than you guys do

ME: Was the school strict if they caught you doing something?

MR. Waters: Well it all depends on what it was. I never did get expelled I got threatened to be expelled a few times but -

3

MR Waters: if you got caught throwin snowballs or anything a most of the time you had to ^{write} ~~wright~~ spelling words. I wrote spelling words for the last four years of my education I think at noontime.

ME: What did the teachers do for discipline, were they allowed to like hit your knuckles like they used to do?

MR Waters: NO! They never did - well they weren't suppose to, once in a while couple of teachers would get a little mad at the student & I've seen a little bit of discipline but nothing major - just picked the kid up by the shirt & holler at him a little bit. But nothin' serious.

ME: Were there any special dress codes?

MR Waters: Yes, that's one thing that I liked we had to wear dress pants & a dress shirt when we got into junior high & high school, and I don't think that hurt anybody, when I see some of these kids going to school with ripped clothes & teeshirts on like you wear, & well beards, we had to be clean shaven. I don't think that was bad I think that was a good idea having dress clothes I liked that.

ME: Were there any special fads or sayings used when you were a kid?

MR Waters: Ohh... let's see there was but hard to hard to remember the fads that - no I just can't remember any fads right now.

ME: What type of music did you listen to? (9)

MR. Waters: Well when we were junior high through probably tenth - eleventh grade, it was country + western, but then after that it went into rock + mostly rock.

ME: Did most kids listen to that type of stuff?

MR. Waters: Well - you had your rock + you had your country + western groups of each.

ME: What extra-curricular activities were offered?

MR. Waters: Well do you mean aah

ME: Like sports after school, basketball + stuff.

MR. Waters: Well there was basketball, I was student manager of the team when we won the districts. Ya I was student manager + aah me + Ken Roberts we took care of the, the getting the jerseys ready for em the basketball + just whenever they needed someone to do something Kenny + I did it.

ME: But you weren't on any of the teams?

MR. Waters: No, No I never did play - I played basketball for one year in junior high + didn't care for it. I went out for track. I was suppose to be out running + ME + Bill Kussonen hopped on Max Palmer's motorcycle + rode around National Mine + when we come up Mr. Reusing caught us on the bike + that was the end of my track career (hoo hoo) right there (hoo hoo). He headed me off so.

ME: Did any of the teams win trophies or tournaments while you were there?

MR. Waters: Yaa, we won the district, the class D district aah but I can't remember what year that was. I think it was Sixty-eight. I think that's the year we won the districts. Yaa

ME: were you in anything after school? any activities?

MR. Waters: Aah I was in the drum + bugle corp in Ishfeming, the Blue Notes. That took up most of my summers aah, well in fact all of my summers + twice a week all during the winter. That was - I kept pretty busy there. Then when I was younger I was in the boy-scouts. But that was about all. we had - MR. Peity would aah would arrange little parties for us for band. We used to go to the winter sports club in the winter oh maybe one or two times a year + have parties there + the school didn't put it on he would just have us meet there and we'd have hot chocolate + stuff like that. It was - that was lots of fun!

ME: Who was the principal when you were at National Mine?

MR. Waters: Well we had three of em' when I was - when I was real young aah MR. Lindberg - Kenny Lindberg was our principal. And then he went to the Superintendent + MR. Millman become our principal. I don't know where he was from, where he taught before.

- but he was from Ishpeming. He was a real good guy real - he was kind of strict but he was fair with everybody + aah he was dying of cancer when we were going to school + aah he come right out + told us he, he was he was in the open + the doctors had told him that he was going to die and he lived three to four years longer than they expected him to, + aah we'd have him in class + he would go into coughing fits + at the end there he was turning yellow + but he really, he kept a kept his courage up + he was - it was hard when he was dying cause he - everybody liked him it was really a it was really sad when he died. He was a good man. and then we had MR. Reusing, I liked him the best of all + aah he was strict in his own ways but, and yet he there was le way you know he didn't jump on ya for everything, I had a lot of respect for that.

ME: Do you think the text-books are harder now, or harder now than they were then?

MR. Waters: Well looking at your's + Warren's books + remembering what mine were for the difference in times, no, I don't think so, you guys are learning so much more at a early age than we were, that aah

ME: How much Homework did you get?

MR. Waters: How much homework did we get or how much homework did I do?

ME: Well how much homework were you supposed to do (aah!)

MR. Waters: I would say, we had actually more homework than you did, homework wasn't my favorite class either, I I did only what I had to do.

ME: What were your school lunches like?

MR. Waters: Excellent! We had the two best cooks in the whole world as far as I'm concerned. We had aah, Andrea Anderson + Vi Colbert + they were just fabulous are meals were like what your mother cooks. I really liked what we had.

ME: What were some of the meals that you get.

MR. Waters: Well we had a, they had the world's best ~~chicken~~^{chili} + the world's best sloppy joes aah we used to have turkey + chicken + and aah oh once and a while we'd have aah chicken noodle soup, not very often but we always had extra stuff aah like cheese + that patted meat. We had fresh vegetables + aah peanut butter sandwiches + butter sandwiches.

ME: How much did the lunches cost?

MR. Waters: I think it was - seems to me it was like \$4.00 a for ten days or something like that. I'm not too sure on that.

ME: Where was the cafeteria located? Was it in the same place that it is now?

MR. Waters: Well I don't know where it is now. Where is it?

ME: It's between well the gym and the hallway by the boys bathroom downstairs.

MR Waters: Well you know where you go in the entrance by the flag pole there? (Ya) OK, as soon as you go in that first room off to your right as you go in, that little small room with the two doors, or there used to be two doors. That was our first lunch room there.

ME: That's the art room now.

MR Waters: Ya when I first started they were all rows of like picnic tables, in there. Then aah they converted that into a class room & then they had these folding tables then we ate lunch in the gymnasium.

ME: Could you describe your recess?

MR. Waters: (hoo hoo) Well, from what I hear of your recesses & what ours were, like night & day. We were allowed to go anywhere we wanted during recess. Like our noon break there we used to eat as fast as we could & run out & go up to # three pit & go swimming in the # three pit. Either that or we'd go down to lily pond down there swimmin' behind Billy Tong's & aah when the apples were & plums were ripe we'd run over to aah Woods' on the other side of the main road there, going towards Ishpenning, way in the back there, there was good plum trees, we used to go back there & get plums & the girls would walk around the on the road all the way around, go up by Dalley's & over by Carlsons' over there & aah or not Carlsons' Anala's over there & aah Oh some would go over by Moody's down in that area. But aah we used to have lot of fun. Used to be able to go up on the Bluff. —

MR. Waters:

When I was probably about in 5th or 6th grade, had a kid we called "Dooner", Paul Nault was his real name, each we were up in the winter time jumping off the bluff on the high part, there was quite a bit of snow, so I bailed off the top part + landed + "Dooner" jumped off the top part he come down + started to scream - oh 'my leg my leg' so we were afraid we'd get in trouble so we made him walk on it to walk on the bluff to school. He was limpin + screamin + hollerin + aah (haa) I was holding him up + I don't remember who the teacher was, it might have been MR. Reusing because he was the the head of the safety patrol + come walkin over there + I was holdin him up (haa haa) I let him go + he stood on his leg for a few seconds + then he fell I told him, see your leg aint broke you stood (haa) on it for a while. It was broke in two places, so he was in a cast for quite a while. He was a terror with that crutch. He got his revenge.

ME: Did you ever have any special plays or programs?

MR. Waters: When I was in kindergarten through 6th, up to sixth grade, aah I was in all of MRS. Gleason's plays + I had a, me + Bud Moody had most of the speaking parts for the guys in aah the plays but once I got into Junior High in the senior in high school then I wouldn't be in the plays no more I didn't care for that. I was stage hand or manager or whatever you want to call it.

ME: Was there Christmas plays?

MR. Waters: In our grade school years ya, Mrs. Gleason would put them on every year. They were real cute, she did 'em' all by herself.

ME: Could you describe your graduation ceremony?

MR. Waters: Well there's another story. Aah it was no different than what they normally have. We had twenty kids in our graduating class & before we went on stage aah the teacher told us I don't remember who it was, not to look at our aah, our aah our little graduation certificates to see if we have the proper amount of signatures. & aah well I was kind a worried (had) if I was going to graduate or not so as I was walking across the stage I looked & seen that I had the proper amount & I give the thumbs up sign. But that's about the only thing we did. We had a graduation party out one of the camps of the kids that I graduated with. Had a lot of fun there.

ME: Were you able to maintain contact with your childhood friends?

MR. Waters: Aah: yea I maintained contact with a few of 'em! There was aah Rita Cobert, her & I are real good friends, I see her quite often. Ken Roberts I see him & Doug Kroon once & a while & aah. Well them three mostly I bump into Pat Cooper & Rita Aho but not too many other ones.

ME: Have you had any reunions since you were out?

MR. Waters: Yea, we had a a ten year reunion in 1979 we went to the Northwoods for supper & then we went to oah my father-in-law's camp after words & spent the night there. We had a bunch of old movies that Peggy Gravedonia's father took when we were in kindergarten & first & second grade. She brought the movies out there & we showed them. That was real interesting there was kids out there in the movies that we had all forgotten about. In fact there was one we don't even remember his name he was with us in kindergarten & then he moved away.

ME: Have any of the teachers had a great impact on your life?

MR. Waters: Aah, well I would say there's MR. Reusing & MR. Millman & MR. Chinn - they're the three that probably had the greatest impact on my life. Aah the fairness & discipline & aah oh what else, don't know what to say about MR. Millman & MR. Reusing. They were just great teachers, but MR. Chinn he was the one that I think did the most teaching & impressed me the most about teaching because he took time too, to to aah, to do his homework, to make our classroom easier & aah I learned lots on world history & because of that from him, but aah I think them three were probably the most, had the most impact on me.

ME: What do you think is the biggest change in school now?

MR. Waters: Well, jeez, I don't know how to answer that question. The discipline for you kids is a lot more strict than it was for us. Aah

ME: What are your fondest memories of National Mine?

MR. Waters: Well I could sit here for the next two hours & tell you stories about, about National Mine & what we did & how much fun we had. I think it was a great place to grow up. There was very little trouble in National Mine. There was very little stealing, there was no drug problem. There was a little bit of alcohol problem. But aah it was just a, to me it was just the greatest place there was to grow up, you know, you knew everybody you knew not only did you know the kids in the school but you knew the parents & the grandparents & some of the aunts & uncles. You got to know all of your teachers husbands & kids & wives & aah it was just a close community & I think growing up in a community like that where you do know everybody it's beneficial to your well being when you grow up, you know it's a, you get a different out look on life I think (aah).

ME: Were you like particular friends with any teachers other than in school, like after school?

MR. Waters: Aah, aah no I can't really say we were really good friends aah other than MR. Chinn. He was aah, in the Blue Notes with me. & aah I got to know him real well before he even got to be my teacher, in fact when he first come to National Mine

MR. Waters

I was calling him "Gordy" all the time & finally he took me aside & told me 'Brad you can't call me Gordy, you gotta call me MR Chinn'. That was kind of hard. But, that was probably the only real personal friend I had outside of school, just because, because of the Drum & Bugle Corps. We did go and visit the teachers.

ME: Do you have a special message to give to the students now?

MR. Waters: I think if I had one thing to say, would be to tell the kids to enjoy their time in school aah it's, it's so important to have memories like this aah & the more memories you have aah, well I don't know how else to explain it just aah, enjoy your time in school & learn & have fun. It's a great time of life when you don't have any cares or aah any worries so why not have as much fun as you can possibly have? That's about all I could.

ME: Is there anything else you'd like to add? Any stories or anything like that?

MR. Waters: Oh I got a lot of stories, We used to have a teacher in school, his name was Pat Gleason & aah it was Mrs. Gleason's husband I had him for wood shop & Drivers training. & He was pretty old when we got into school there we had a, one of the students in our grade, his name was Roger Televa aah, Roger was a smart kid but he had a real bad speech impediment. He a well he didn't have much of an education & a not because they didn't try, but well Roger just I don't think Roger tried. We were in aah, I think it was World History, Roger liked to aah throw spit balls aah Roger couldn't talk very good he had a funny way of saying things.

MR. Waters

+ aah MR. Gleason would walk around & we'd be doing our work, Roger, all he ever brought to school was a coloring-book (haa) now this was eighth-grade, seventh or eighth-grade. Roger took a big sheet of that yellow paper & stuffed it in his mouth & MR. Gleason walked behind him & he tapped him on the back he like that, he said ooh Roger did you ever do a nice coloring, + aah Roger swallowed (haa), when he hit em' aah MR. Gleason walked on & Roger leaned over to me & he said "I swallowed my pit ball." He swallowed that whole big juicy job of yellow paper (haa, haa). That was one of the little stories I remember.

We used to have alot of fun in study-hall! you have that bust, I think it was Beethoven, well we used to deface that. We used to tape cigarets to it (ha) earrings on it & put hats on it. We had a teacher MRS. Mayhew & she was a pretty good old teacher (haa) we used to give her quite a hard time & that was her pride & joy, that bust up there. Everytime she'd see it defaced, she would get upset with us. The more she would get upset the more we would deface it (haa) aah when, another little story aah, The big study hall, they had some round tables, & aah MR. Millman was the principal, he had the study-hall he used to aah come in at the begining of the study hall & sit there for a tittle while & watch everybody get goin & alot of times he'd leave for the whole study hall & go do other things he had to do well one day he left & soon as he left four of the guys in the round table brought out a deck of cards they were playin' poker & aah they didn't expect MR. Millman to walk back in one of em' was Kern Goulette, Kern he was pretty funny & aah they had went through the whole game - they were showing each other the hands aah Kern through down his cards, he said 'three bulls' & MR. Millman walked in that same time & said "Goulette," three days (haa) Goulette got three days for playin -

-poker. There was lots of little fun things like that in school. We use to ask go up to the roof of the school & we used to go into the boys locker room & there was a key to the door. Nobody had the key so we just used to take the door off & walk up there & ask there's tunnels underneath the school. ask there where they run the wires & the pipes & conduit & stuff like that. We used to know where the secret hole was when some of the guys would want a cigarette (had) they would go down there & burn one down there. When we were when we were at Christmas time every year we would have a the last day of school we'd have a bag of candy waitin' for us, a big apple, orange, a popcorn ball, hard candy, & a Hershey bar every single year for everyone of the kids at the school. I had lots of fond memories I like I said in the begining I really enjoyed school. I didn't learn as much as I possibly could of but ask I made up for it in just having lots of fun. I don't know, I think you learn a little of the "School of Hard Knocks"

ME: One more question, when you where in school what was your dream to grow up as

MR Waters: (Had) well I had alot of dreams, one of the things I wanted to do was if I was good enough in school I wanted to go to college & become a biologist, have something to do with animals cause of the way I feel about animals, but then after I got into high school & didn't keep my grades up, I realized my dreams of becoming a biologist were pretty far fetched. I'd like to have a farm. I grew up on a farm all the while I was going to school. I always wanted a farm but with this day-in-age the economy & the way things are that that's another lost dream, so I guess I'll just stay a minor Active farm. Cleveland Cliffs & just make the best of it I guess that's about all I can say.

ME: OK, Well thanks for letting me interview you
MR waters: OK.

(21)

Meod ERASABLE