

## **Richard and Russell Payeur**

Transcript of the oral interview with Richard and Russell Payeur conducted by Emily Salvette. The interview took place on September 8, 2002 at a meeting of the Pittsfield Township Historical Society held at the Pittsfield Recreation Center, 701 W. Ellsworth Rd., Ann Arbor. Russell Payeur reviewed the transcript in November 2002. The transcript reflects his corrections.

### **Interview Summary**

Richard and Russell Payeur are brothers who grew up in Pittsfield Township. Richard was born 7/25/28 and Russell was born 12/27/36. They are two of the four children of Arsene (Harry) Payeur and Marie Louise Bedard Payeur who immigrated to Michigan from Quebec on their honeymoon in 1926. The interview documents the brothers' memories about growing up in Pittsfield Township, participating in Pittsfield's Volunteer Fire department, and running their construction business. The interview includes many comments from Carl Thayer and Carl (Tim) Ticknor, friends of the Payeur brothers, who were both in the audience.

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### **Richard and Russell Payeur Interview**

**MT:**

Marcia Ticknor

**ES:**

Emily Salvette

**Rich:**

Richard Payeur

**Russ:**

Russell Payeur

**CT:**

Carl Thayer

**C Ticknor:**

Carl (Tim) Ticknor

**DL:**  
Don LeClair  
**BL:**  
Betty LeClair  
**HR:**  
Helen Richards  
**F:**  
unidentified female  
**M:**  
unidentified male

Side One:

**MT:**  
...two thousand two program. We're going to be doing an oral history interview of Russell Payer and Richard Payeur, and Emily Salvette is going to be doing the interviewing. So we'll have time for questions after we do the interview.

**ES:**  
Thank you, Marcia. This is the first time I've done a two-person interview on this. So we're kind of learning as we're doing here about how to set up the microphone and everything. However, I want to welcome both of you gentlemen here. I appreciate having you both. And just to clarify, Russell and Richard are brothers.

**Rich:**  
Right.

**ES:**  
Russell, say hello.

**Russ:**  
Hello.

**ES:**  
Okay. And you're the younger brother, right?

**Russ:**  
Yes, ma'am.

**Rich:**  
All the tough questions he gets [laughs].

**ES:**  
Okay. And Richard, why don't you say hello so we get a voice print here.

**Rich:**  
Oh, okay. I'm Richard Payeur. Formerly from Pittsfield Township.

**ES:**  
Okay. Very good. And can you tell me who ♦ whoever wants to answer this one ♦ who...tell me the names of your parents.

**Rich:**  
Go ahead, Russ.

**Russ:**  
Well, our mother and dad, our father and...I'll give it to you two ways. In French, because my folks were originally from Quebec. My father's name was Arsene, which...A-R-S-E-N-E, which in English translates to Harry. So officially, his name was Arsene, but in the United States he was known as Harry.

**ES:**  
Okay.

**Russ:**  
And our mother was Marie Louise.

**ES:**

And what was her maiden name?

**Russ:** Marie, ah, Bedard. B-E-D-A-R-D.

**ES:** Maria?

**Russ:** No. Marie-Louise.

**ES:** Marie-Louise Bedard.

**Russ:** Bedard.

**ES:** And when did...did they come from Quebec?

**Russ:** Yes.

**ES:** And do you know when?

**Russ:** 1920...

**Rich:** 1926.

**Russ:** ...26.

**Rich:** They moved to Michigan on their honeymoon.

**ES:** Oh!

**Russ:** No, dad came here first and then went back and got mom.

**Rich:** Dad came first, but then he went back and married mom. They moved to Michigan on their honeymoon.

**Russ:** Yeah.

**Rich:** Mom got to Michigan and couldn't speak a word of English.

**ES:** Oh, my.

**Rich:** It's like...I get...and like in the olden days, each city has a French section, an English section, a Spanish, German. And they moved to the French section of Detroit which was Ferndale.

**ES:** Oh, I didn't know that.

**Rich:** And right near the Royal Shrine...

**Russ:** Shrine of the Little Flower.

**Rich:** That's the Ferndale area. That's where they started. So...

**Russ:** Our dad started out...well, he went to Canadian Northwest, there was nothing there, so we...that's how we got here. There was no work...My father...well, I started...he was from a family of 16. His father had died when he was six.

**Rich:**

Six or little young.

**Russ:** Young. And his mother was 16 of 'em, and there was nothing for him to do, so dad heard they...they went on the thrashing crews in the Canadian Northwest. And he was over these twice, these two years.

**Rich:** Yeah. Second year...

**Russ:** Second year he figured out but he would...couldn't, they couldn't work steady. He heard there was work in Detroit at Fords. And that's how he came to Dearborn, actually. Correct me if I'm wrong.

**Rich:** Yeah, well...

**Russ:** He came to Dearborn, worked in the factory, what?, three days?

**Rich:** Something like that.

**Russ:** Wasn't very long, and it wasn't for him, he wanted to do carpenter work. He worked...he went well...well, anyhow long story short because I don't remember at all.

**Rich:** Well, started out...

**Russ:** See he was bankrupt three times, quit with three different guys and...

**Rich:** The first job he got he lost, because he didn't know what a 2 x 4 was. So the second job he kept as a carpenter, he knew what a 2 x 4 was so he kept on going along and he worked around for different guys that way.

**Russ:** He couldn't speak English either.

**Rich:** Not too well. No, I guess not.

**Russ:** Not. So that's how he started. But anyhow, he...well, this gets to, brings us right here to Pittsfield. Ah, he heard there was carpenter work in Detroit. He came to Detroit. Then he...some...they sent him out here to build some houses, one of them he did. Anyhow, he ran across Morton. Was the name Henry Morton? And Morton wanted some work done on his house in town. So my dad went there but Morton didn't have any money. Morton told him if he would build his house that he had...was it 20 acres or 40 acres of land...

**Rich:** Eighty, eighty.

**Russ:** ...out here that he would give them for building his house in town. That's where Morton Road started, was the name, Morton.

**Rich:** M-O-R-T-O-N.

**ES:** Oh, okay. M-O-R...

**Russ:** M-O-R-T-O-N.

**ES:** Uh-huh.

**Russ:** That's how my...that's...my father got that property. It was Pittsfield Junction.

**Rich:** It was back in 1932 I think.

**Russ:** Um-hum. '32.

**Rich:** During the Depression.

**Russ:** That's how my folks got here.

**ES:** During the Depression. And you both said that your earliest memory of Pittsfield Township was Pittsfield Junction.

**Russ:** Oh, yeah.

**Rich:** Oh, yeah.

**ES:** So talk...can you talk a little bit about that?

**Rich:** I'll beat you on that one.

**Russ:** Why? You were there first [laughter].

**Rich:** Well, the New York Central, which is...they called it the Hillsdale Line that runs from Ypsilanti to Hillsdale was the spur that goes through Saline now. And the Ann Arbor Railroad, north and south, of course, it run from Toledo to Frankfurt. And I don't remember any passenger trains in the...

**Russ:** On the New York Central.

**Rich:** ...on New York Central. But I remember the Old 52 that run north and south on Ann Arbor Railroad go up north in the morning and come back in the afternoon, and...

**Russ:** You could stop the train, ride for a dime.

**Rich:** No, a quarter.

**Russ:** It was a dime at first.

**Rich:** Was it? All right. Well...Anyway, you go down there at the railroad depot where the junction was and there was a yellow sign. You hooked a nail and put the flag out and a train would stop.

**ES:** No kidding.

**Russ:** Yeah, somebody stopped the train.

**Rich:** And the passenger train.

**Russ:** Yeah.

**Rich:** It come about nine o'clock in the morning, and you get on the train for a quarter, you go to Ann Arbor, and then to get back on, you have to do at three o'clock or something like that, and you come back.

**Russ:** That little thing used to fly.

**Rich:** And I remember...

**Russ:**

It ended up...ended up burned though.

**Rich:**  
Yeah. I remember the Harwood. What's Ralph's dad's name? William Harwood...

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**Rich:**  
...Senior, one...Us kids, whenever the train stopped we went out to see who got off the train and he...oh, Bill Harwood went north someplace to buy some steers and he came home by train. I'll never forget that. I don't know if you were there or not, but he came...he used to use the railroad, that old train.

**Russ:**  
And that guy used to get mad as hell. Can't stop this train for a dime.

**Rich:**  
And mostly kids [laughter].

**Russ:**  
Us kids. My dad would pick us up at school and he couldn't bring us home and he'd take us down for...give us each a dime to take the train.

**Rich:**  
Take them on the train, oh, the train.

**Russ:**  
They used to get mad. Sometimes the engineer'd forget and they'd take us half way to Milan and have to back up [laughter]. Oh, yeah, that little thing used to fly.

**Rich:**  
Oh, yeah, it'd go. It was just two cars and a passenger car. Two passenger cars and the baggage car.

**Russ:**  
Baggage car. Yeah. And then one afternoon, they lost their train. It hit a JJ Amer-Oil truck on the corner of State, on State Street down here.

**Rich:**  
Burned right up.

**Russ:**  
Burnt up, train right up. They disconnected the engine and the cars just sit there and it wasn't nothing but a skeleton all they had.

**ES:**  
When was that?

**Rich:**  
Yeah. Well, that'd be in the Ann Arbor News. I don't know what day it was.

**Russ:**  
Oh, God! What year was that, Gert?

**Rich:**  
Was the Fire Department active then?

**Russ:**  
No, no.

**CT:**  
No.

**Rich:**  
That was before the Fire Department.

**Russ:**  
That was before that.

**CT:**  
Yeah. I do remember that, but...

**Russ:**  
There used to be 30...sometimes six and seven trains a day on the Ann Arbor. Big trains.

**ES:**  
Um-hum.

**CT:** Well, what they did, see, they...Whitmore Lake had a huge hotel and people would come up from Toledo and then stay at the hotel in Whitmore Lake. And then of course the rest of them were going on up to Frankfurt.

**Rich:** Yeah.

**CT:** Which was a big \_\_\_\_\_, and then of course they later on became the railroad where they could...rode on cars, take them across Lake Michigan. But at that time, it was really for you might say vacationers and tourists.

**Rich:** Well, the old Ann Arbor railroad was well used in olden says, the long before us. they'd tell me that it used to be five passenger trains east and west and nine north and south.

**ES:** Um-hum.

**Rich:** And there used to be a great big railroad station at Pittsfield Junction, where the depot was finally built.

**ES:** Do we have have....?

**Rich:** Yeah. Pardon me?

**F:** Maybe you have pictures.

**ES:** Do you have pictures of that?

**Russ:** I got one. You give it back?

**Rich:** I think so.

**Russ:** I got one of him when he's about five years old sitting on the dock.

**F:** We've got that in the archives.

**Rich:** Yeah. Okay, that's the one you've got. Okay.

**Russ:** All right. So it came from my book, I think...

**Rich:** Okay.

**Russ:** Who'd I give it to? I gave it to somebody.

**Rich:** Yeah. Might have been Carl for...

**Russ:** Another thing I remember about the railroad, I can remember this like it was yesterday. We were small, and my mother couldn't speak English, and there used to be a lot of hobos on that railroad, and they always stayed in that depot.

**Rich:** Because the door was open.

**Russ:** The door was never locked on that depot, you could go in and out. And they always used to stay there. You see these guys coming. Well, my mother would see them coming. She'd either run and hide. Then wouldn't open the door. Or she'd always give them...always fed them a sandwich. But when my dad was

home, dad said, "There's a pile of wood out there, and if you want something to eat, you pile it." And he'd give them a sandwich. He never turned them away. He always fed them something.

**ES:**

But he made them do something.

**Rich:**

Work harder. They had to earn it.

**Russ:**

Do something.

**ES:**

Yeah.

**Rich:**

And as a kid, we always...never walked by that railroad depot at night, because there would be some bums there.

**Russ:**

Hah. Walk around...

**Rich:**

There were bums, there were...

**F:**

Where was the depot located?

**Rich:**

On the southwest-southeast corner of the intersection to the two railroads.

**F:**

In relation to...

**Rich:**

You know where Tim is...lives. Know where Tim lives...

**Russ:**

Well, his folks, well, built a farm there.

**Rich:**

Well, there's a road that goes from Martin Road over to Payeur Road...

**Russ:**

Cinder\_\_\_...

**Rich:**

And as a circle like. And the railroads were serviced like off of that little road. Because the rail's still there. It was right inside the area.

**Russ:**

See, that side track was there years and years. It's still there. That side track used to go clear past Textile Road. Used to be that's...the trains used to pass there.

**Rich:**

Used to...yeah, used to go...just about.

**ES:**

Can...can you give a modern closest major intersection for that?

**Russ:**

Oh, Payeur Road.

**ES:**

Payeur Road and...

**Russ:**

You can't miss it. It's right there.

**Rich:**

Well, Pittsfield Junction is the two...they were actually named after the two railroad crossing.

**ES:**

Yeah. Well, ah, if somebody...if I put this on the website...

**Rich:**

Oh, I see. Okay.



**ES:** ...and somebody doesn't think it's familiar and has to go to a Yahoo map...

**Russ:** That was a Yahoo, you'd make...

**M:** You'll never make it [laughter].

**Rich:** It's between Morgan Road and Textile, east of State Street.

**ES:** Thank you [laughs].

**F:** And where those tracks now are.

**Rich:** Correct. The tracks are still there.

**F:** Right at...okay. I know where...

**Rich:** They've been discontinued west of Ellsworth...ah, Morgan. That road used to go all the way to Ypsi.

**Russ:** We're talking the side track. The trains used to...man, Ann Arbor...Ann Arbor Railroad, the trains used to pass there. It was a siding there.

**Rich:** There was a long siding \_\_\_\_.

**Russ:** You used to be able to put a whole freight train over on the side and then another one passed. I've seen some old steam locomotives down there that took them a half hour to get them started after they started. They couldn't....they'd spin they were so heavy.

**Rich:** Well, the train was so heavy, yeah.

**Russ:** Yeah, the train was like...take a half hour. Because, you know, a steamer, they had to jerk them to start. They'd get one car and then a second car and then you'd...that's how they got them started. I've seen them down there for a half hour, trying to start one of those trains.

**Rich:** I think they got to move two or three cars at a time and they come back and...

**Russ:** Sand, putting the sand on the track.

**CT:** So they've \_\_\_\_ a lot, because they were tying the intersection, so the fire department, the police couldn't get through.

**Rich:** Well...

**CT:** I want to...I have a question, when it go from Morton to Martin?

**Russ:** Post Office changed that.

**Rich:** Yeah.

**M:** And why?

**Russ:** Why? Because there was a Martin...there was a Martin...there was a Morton Street in town.

**Rich:**

In Ann Arbor. Still there.

**Russ:** In the \_\_\_\_...still there off of Packard.

**F:** Granger there.

**Russ:** So the Post Office said this is going to be Martin Road, changed the spelling. That's how come Martin...it's Martin Road. It was Morton. Because where my...

**M:** We have a Martin in Ann Arbor, too. Martin Place.

**Russ:** And that's Martin Place. They have...

**Rich:** Yeah, that's a T-O-N. Marton Road is T-O-N.

**Russ:** That's how it is...something. I remember dad telling that's the Post Office change up.

**Rich:** Yeah. So...oh, actually...

**Russ:** But I remember...remember that hobo thing, so that was like yesterday.

**ES:** Where'd you guys go to school?

**Russ:** I started the old \_\_\_\_.

**Rich:** I went to Sutherland School.

**ES:** Sutherland School.

**Rich:** Which was at the Railroad track and Textile. Yeah, that's me.

**Russ:** There he is. That's the picture.

**ES:** [laughs] We have the pic picture of Pittsfield Junction.

**Rich:** And I'm here, if you...if you could read it, it tells you so many miles to Toledo, and so many miles to Frankenmuth.

**F:** Turn it over. Look at the back.

**Rich:** Oh, well, that's my writing [laughter]. That's right there. Toledo, 53 miles, Frankenmuth, 231. I remembered that. I was six years old.

**Russ:** Well, that's the picture. That was...that's going up also when I...

**Rich:** No. That wood ramp that I'm sitting on used to go all the way over the siding, over to the main tracks. So they could transfer freight from one boxcar to another boxcar.

**M:** Right.

**Russ:** Well, Walt Gutekunst because took that...Walt Gutekunst, Senior took this apart and he junked it for the lumber.

**Rich:**

And...

**Russ:** And the two side supports, these corner arch supports...

**Rich:** Right.

**Russ:** ...there're four of them in the front of our barn, the old barn over on Marton Road to this day.

**Rich:** At 50...

**Russ:** Those tangled braces.

**Rich:** ...5100

**Russ:** Those came off...came off of that depot.

**Rich:** Yeah.

**Russ:** Yeah, that's...

**Rich:** Two years at the Pittsfield Township, we were at the Payeur Foundation Company on Martin Road.

**Russ:** And while you're talk ♦ then in what year?

**Rich:** What's that?

**Russ:** What year was Mark born? '69? Sixty... '61, we had the big train wreck right there.

**F:** '62

**Rich:** There were two train wrecks.

**Russ:** '62.

**Rich:** One at the Junction and there was another one up by our house.

**Russ:** Yeah, the good one was at the Junction.

**Rich:** Boy, I know.

**Russ:** '62.

**CT:** That's when they found stuff in everybody's front yards...

**Russ:** Well, in backyard.

**Rich:** Oh, yeah.

**CT:** ♦ in there.

**Rich:** It just missed the house by about 50 feet.

**Russ:** It was what? Forty cars on that thing?

**CT:**  
I...something like that.

**Rich:**  
I don't know if it was...

**Russ:**  
And it was 20 below zero. Jeez, it was cold.

**Rich:**  
I don't know how many people know this, but because of the railroad crossing, there was a switch room in the depot. So when the train would go one way or other, the man would hit...the Ann Arbor had the right of way.

**F:**  
Yeah.

**Rich:**  
The Hillsdale line, they had to stop, unlock the house, they'd come in there and actually manually take the steel box off the track.

**Russ:**  
Yeah, take the D-rail blocks off.

**Rich:**  
And they would have to turn the signal off for Ann Arbor, because it was like turning the red light on. And every time that they would...train...would see the train come, we'd go down there and watch those guys pull those levers.

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**Russ:**  
Had to pull a series of levers.

**Rich:**  
A series of levers to...

**Russ:**  
If you didn't have the right combination, you couldn't take the damn d-rail block off the rail down there. Us kids knew it by heart [laughs].

**Rich:**  
And it was manual. There was a pipe that run over a guide, that went all the way up to the block...to the block from that...from those levers...

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**Rich:**  
...inside the switch house. That was the only room that was locked in the depot. But some of the old chairs from the waiting room were still in there. I remember those. That's where the bums would sleep.

**ES:**  
Oh, yeah [laughter].

**Rich:**  
Well, it was all enclosed, it was a nice warm room.

**ES:**  
Sure.

**Rich:**  
And this...this was a storage place here that they used to put stuff in from the...from the freight when they were...

**ES:**  
Yeah.

**Rich:**  
...the boxcar wasn't there to put stuff in, they'd put in there and lock it.

**ES:**  
Um-hum. And that's on the right side of that picture.

**Rich:** Right.

**Russ:** Yeah.

**Rich:** Okay. But anyway...

**ES:** We need a visual [laughter].

**Rich:** But that's the old Pittsfield Junction.

**ES:** Oh, very interesting.

**Russ:** Yeah.

**Rich:** And actually, the railroad divided this Morton farm that Russ was telling about in four 20-acre parcels. It was...My dad's section was the northeast section, and then my Uncle Alfred bought the southeast section, and Uncle Alfonse owned the northwest section first, and his family got too big for the house so they built another one on the southwest section, and they sold that one off.

**Russ:** He sold to Uncle Amy. At one time there four...four...

**Rich:** ...Payeur brothers

**Russ:** Four Payeur brothers, each had a quarter of that 80 acres. Divided by the railroad. [various voices in background].

**Rich:** Ah...

**Russ:** No, the railroad was really the divider.

**Rich:** Here the road's another reason...this might be interesting for Tim and Marcia. Because of the railroad depot, the people, the Lavenders on the east, which we used to farm south of the Ann Arbor airport, had celery and potatoes and onions

**Russ:** All the muck ground.

**Rich:** All the black ground that's over there where the Avis Farms is now. They had a lot of production.

**Russ:** Produce.

**Rich:** And their way to market was by railroad car. So they would take their produce to Pittsfield Junction, load it on a boxcar. So they come down along the railroad track south of State Street there, where Payeur Road is now, to the Depot, load their stuff and go back. Well, there was just some road to the woods. There was no name on that road. It was a two-track. Okay. Dad being a contractor, and whatever, they'd to university and bid on these houses that the university was going to tear down for parking lots and buildings and stuff, and they'd salvage the wood.

**ES:** Uh-huh.

**Rich:** They didn't have much to do so they built Dennis's home, Marcia's house. Dad built three on Morgan Road, out of the reclaimed lumber that he made uptown. During the War, a fellow by the name of Pollack lived in your dad's house.

**C. Ticknor:**

Yeah. I remember that...

**Rich:**

And he wouldn't pay his rent.

**C. Ticknor:**

Yep.

**Rich:**

And couldn't evict him, because he was a veteran.

**ES:**

Oh.

**Rich:**

The way he did it, he sold it to your dad, because he was a veteran, eliminated the veteran status.

**Russ:**

Yes, that's how Ticknor got over there.

**Rich:**

Okay, now...but...

**Russ:**

I remember the night he bought it too.

**Rich:**

Okay.

**ES:**

[laughs]

**Rich:**

Dad was going to go to record this deed. Payeur Road did not have a name. So they named it after the person requesting land sale, and that's how Payeur Road got named, just because of your dad's house.

**C. Ticknor:**

Yeah.

**Russ:**

And then...[laughter] and after that...and after that is when Alfonse built his.

**Rich:**

Yeah. Right. Uncle Al was here.

**Russ:**

That house was there first.

**Rich:**

That house was there first all by itself. Because Vern Rowe's house was up on Morgan Road.

**M:**

Martin Road.

**Rich:**

Huh?

**M:**

Martin Road.

**Rich:**

Martin Road. Right. That brings another point up. The property where Vern Rowe used to live...what, what's the guy's name there now?

**Russ:**

Oh, Ulrich's live there. Ulrichs.

**Rich:**

Yeah. But...

**Russ:**

Reed lives there now.

**Rich:**

Who?

**Russ:**

**F:** Reed.

**Rich:** Reed.

**Rich:** Reed. Okay. Reed's house, the fellow that lived there -- I though his name was Morton, but maybe not, was a trouble maker. In the sense that he had trouble with the school district.

**Russ:** Okay.

**Rich:** And believe it or not, that one little acre parcel was part of Ann Arbor School District because you couldn't get along with the Sutherland School District, which...Marton Road was the divider.

**M:** Yeah.

**Russ:** Yeah.

**Rich:** That one acre, on that side of the road was Ann Arbor School District.

**ES:** Uh-huh.

**Rich:** I don't know if it still is or not.

**Russ:** Oh, I don't know...

**Rich:** But...but it...

**Russ:** That's how come Margaret Rowe and Vivian Rowe had to go to Ann Arbor Schools. They couldn't go with us to Saline, couldn't go to the other one.

**Rich:** Because they were on...I mean, they were that one property.

**Russ:** They used to get a Town Hall school, but we went to Sutherland.

**Rich:** Because the school district, I mean, if you're talking about going to school, I went to Sutherland School which was on Textile right next to the railroad track.

**ES:** Right. Yeah.

**Rich:** The house is still there. They remodeled it. Across from the Geyer farm. And the Cody's given that property for the school because it...their property was wedged, and Textile was on the south side and the railroad track was right behind it. And we used to go to school, walk right down the railroad track, that was a straight shot.

**Russ:** We walked to school. We didn't have school buses. We used to get home from school so fast, you could run all the way.

**Rich:** Took about a half hour. Mile and a half. Mile and a half.

**Russ:** Well, doesn't take very long when you're a kid \_\_\_\_\_ [laughter]

**Rich:** I never...I remember one time, I forget who it was, but three of us were walking down the railroad track and the wind was blowing from the east, and we looked around and here was a train right behind us

about 50 feet. We jumped off in a ditch [laughs]. Then we heard the clickety-click. We didn't hear...we couldn't hear the train, but hear the clickety-click in the ties. We had to jump in the ditch.

**Russ:**

Yeah.

**Rich:**

I'll never forget that. But anyway that's part of Pittsfield Junction and the Depot pretty much.

**Russ:**

Seen a lot of things happen in this area.

**ES:**

Well, I know both of you are involved in the volunteer fire department too. Do you want to talk about that?

**Rich:**

Well, I joined it with the original group back in '47.

**ES:**

That's when it was started? In '47?

**Rich:**

Well, that's a '47 fire truck. And...

**Russ:**

We had the most modern thing in the whole area at that time, didn't we, Carl.

**Rich:**

What year did you join, Carl?

**CT:**

'52. I think. I think they started the \_\_\_\_\_. I think they \_\_\_\_\_ '47, but they started the department in '48.

**Rich:**

That when it was?

**CT:**

Yeah. You could \_\_\_\_\_

**Rich:**

I was one of the first group. Because, see what they did, and you can tell by the picture, they took pretty much all the farmers and the young kids that are in the area that could respond, because they wanted people there during the day. Of course they're all there at night. But people working out of the area were gone during the day. So they tried to get people that was in here during the day to be volunteers. We started out with a phone system. Do you remember when Harold Losey's wife used to call them volunteers?

**CT:**

See, I lived over on Carpenter at the end of Central.

**Rich:**

Yeah.

**CT:**

So I was too far away.

**Rich:**

Well, yeah, but...

**Russ:**

You've got to remember...you've got to remember...

**Rich:**

...they had it zoned. If the plan was over there, they had key people. You'd call this one and he in turn would head a network phone system, where he would call somebody else and try to get everybody out.

**Russ:**

But you've got to remember too, we worked with East Ann Arbor for many years.

**CT:**

Yeah, well, we handled their fire runs a lot of times.

**Russ:**

Yeah.



**CT:**  
I can remember that.

**Russ:**  
See, a lot of people don't even know about old east Ann Arbor. East Ann Arbor has their own fire department.

**Rich:**  
Oh.

**Russ:**  
Mrs. Losey used to do the dispatching for them. We had the buzzers and everything over there.

**CT:**  
Mrs. Losey, that's what it was, was my phoner, she called me.

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**Rich:**  
Okay. Okay.

**Russ:**  
There you go.

**Rich:**  
There...Russ's wife?

**Russ:**  
And then we got modern. Remember we got them old radios.

**Rich:**  
East Ann Arbor was considered, what?, the Platt Road and Carpenter...

**Russ:**  
Right.

**Rich:**  
...and your area.

**ES:**  
That was part of Pittsfield Township, right?

**Rich:**  
Oh, yes.

**ES:**  
Yeah.

**Rich:**  
It's part of Pittsfield Township.

**Russ:**  
No, no, no.

**CT:**  
Well, they incorporated.

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**CT:**  
They became...they became a city.

**Russ:**  
They became a city.

**CT:**  
Oh, they became a city.

**M:**  
Yeah, that's what they did. They...

**ES:**  
Ah. [voices]

**Rich:**  
Old East Ann Arbor.

**CT:** They had the old East Ann Arbor Police Department, the whole nine yards.

**Russ:** They were not the town...

**M:** \_\_\_\_\_ trader, because they were all \_\_\_\_\_ by dirt roads.

**Russ:** And Ann Arbor didn't want to do nothing for them.

**CT:** No.

**Russ:** So east Ann Arbor worked with Pittsfield on the fire deal.

**ES:** Um-hum.

**Russ:** Mrs. Losey was the dispatcher. All the calls came in here, and when he...when east Ann Arbor would go on a fire," she had a big button, she pushed a button over here that rang the siren over there.

**Rich:** The fire hall was right behind the hardware store there on Platt Road.

**Russ:** Yeah. Still there today. Building still there.

**Rich:** They're using it as storage.

**CT:** Storage. Yeah.

**Russ:** Still there.

**Rich:** Well, since they sold hardware, I don't know what happened to that building.

**Russ:** I think Maynard's got it now.

**ES:** That lawnmower place, right?

**Russ:** Yeah, B. J. Maynard, B. J. Maynard.

**Rich:** Well, it's in front of B. J. I don't think B. J. owns that, does he?

**Rich:** Yeah.

**CT:** Yeah.

**Rich:** He owns that garage?

**CT:** I think so. Yeah.

**Russ:** BJ owns more than you think he owns.

**CT:** He rented it for sure.

**Rich:** Oh, that could be.

**CT:** Yeah, I think he did.

**Rich:** Okay. But...

**Russ:** But I don't that.

**Rich:** That was the first fire truck and the second fire truck was a John Bean, and it was made in Lansing. Did you go to the...when we received it, Carl was there with us. We went up to pick it up.

**Russ:** Yeah.

**Rich:** We went up there one day to fire school with the new fire truck, and we drove it home.

**CT:** Learned how to operate it, yeah.

**Rich:** Yeah.

**Russ:** God, I remember, oh, we had...Sam Morgan was supervisor for...

**Rich:** Twenty years.

**Russ:** God, he was just like God around here, for...knows, we didn't know anybody else. Sam Morgan was supervisor.

**Rich:** He was also the appraiser too.

**Russ:** He was everything. He was in that...

**CT:** I don't see that picture that I'd taken at that one door where we're in front of a school.

**Rich:** At John Bean School?

**M:** Yeah.

**Russ:** I've seen that.

**M:** What, at Lavender \_\_\_\_\_?

**Russ:** Who? At Lavender, yeah. Ed Lavender, yeah.

**M:** Yeah, for a while.

**Russ:** Oh, yeah. Chuck Leverett. Maybe it was at the same time Chuck Leverett was.

**CT:** And it was Mrs. Brown that lived on Ellsworth and Stone School Road, there in that house back there.

**Russ:** Yeah.

**CT:** She was a clerk when McCalla was...

**Rich:** Wasn't her name Ellsworth?

**CT:** when Mrs. McCalla was the treasurer, but that's who we paid....

**Russ:**

**CT:** No, Hutzel.

**CT:** ...our taxes to. No, Hutzel lived in Packard Road.

**Rich:** Yeah, she was one, worked for the...

**Russ:** And she never was an officer. She was only one who would make them state their name at the township board meetings and she'd sit there and long-hand everything in, or shorthand everything in.

**Rich:** Well, she was a judge's attorney...

**CT:** Her husband was on the board. He was the board.

**Rich:** Oh, he was on the board. Yeah.

**Russ:** She worked for a judge as a...as a...

**CT:** Yeah, she was the last...

**Russ:** The stenographer for a judge.

**CT:** The only stenographer that they...I think in the state of Michigan if I'm not mistaken.

**ES:** Oh, my.

**Rich:** Yeah. Oh, in Ann Arbor, though. So it's County Court for Ann Arbor.

**ES:** Hm. Carl, you wouldn't consider moving over to this seat, would you?

**Rich:** She wants to get your voice on tape [laughs].

**Russ:** You're getting interviewed too whether you know it or not.

**Rich:** Yeah, you might as well...you might as well get involved \_\_\_\_.

**CT:** \_\_\_\_ you got to tell \_\_\_\_.

**Rich:** Why don't I hear about \_\_\_\_.

**Russ:** And they were going...they were going to vote. I remember going to vote with my dad over at the old Township Hall, with a potbelly stove going in there. Over there on Morgan Road.

**Rich:** Morgan and Thomas.

**ES:** The old one.

**Rich:** Morgan and Thomas.

**ES:** Um-hum.

**Russ:** Well...

**CT:**

So we had...the first I...first time I ever run for office was a caucus, it wasn't a primary. My first election was a caucus. Then we went to primaries three years later.

**ES:**  
When was that? When did they go to primary?

**CT:**  
'54. Oh, primary, '56.

**Rich:**  
Yeah. Did...you got...did you get the bell out of that all Town Hall School?

**Russ:**  
Yeah. I got the bell out. I got it out...I bought it from Chuck Geddes. Went over there one day to talk to Chuck, I said, "I want that bell." He says, "Okay, you gotta go get it."

**Rich:**  
That's the school...

**Russ:**  
Went up...

**Rich:**  
...right across from the town hall. The town hall.

**Russ:**  
Went over there to get...

**ES:**  
The Town Hall School.

**Russ:**  
Yeah. Town House School. So I went over there, reached in there to get the bell and I reached right in and there was a big mama raccoon right in there. I reached for...[laughter]. I had to get rid of mama raccoon. I was going to get it. I went at...to get the bell, and then I had to put the belfry back together. That was part of the deal. Had that bell for a long time. It's a five-mile bell. It was a good one. And all of sudden one day some professor from Eastern Michigan drives in the...No, I get a phone call first. Wanted to know if I still had it, and I said, yeah, I still had it. Next thing I know, there's a professor drives in my yard in one evening or weekend or something and he said, "I got to get that bell." And I said, "Well, I don't know. Start talking." [laughter] Well, that's when they moved the old Town Hall to Eastern Michigan.

**ES:**  
Yeah.

**Russ:**  
And they wanted the original bell back.

**Rich:**  
Make it a historical...

**ES:**  
Um-hum.

**Russ:**  
So I gave it to him. I got a....

**Rich:**  
That's \_\_\_ Pittsfield Township for a while.

**Russ:**  
...I got my fifty dollars back when I got it in a sheet of a paper saying "donation." [laughter].

**Russ:**  
But...so it went back. It's back in the old...where it belongs, town of Ypsi.

**Rich:**  
The historical one.

**ES:**  
Right.

**Russ:**  
Unless somebody stole it [laughs].

**Rich:**

Anybody ever get a picture of that school and put it in the Pittsfield archives? The Old Town Hall School?

**F:**  
Yeah. \_\_\_\_\_

**Rich:**  
Well, it's there. All you got to do is go take a picture. That's where it used to be.

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**Rich:**  
Because that was dead center of the township. No...

**DL:**  
We went down there one time \_\_\_\_\_.

**Rich:**  
Oh, did you?

**Russ:**  
Was he there? I can't remember his name. You don't want to talk about it.

**DL:**  
It was funny because I was sitting at a desk, I looked in there. Somebody had carved my wife's maiden name in there

**Russ:**  
Oh. [laughter]

**Russ:**  
What? You went to school there?

**BL:**  
No, I didn't go to Stone School.

**M:**  
Oh, Stone School What...

**Russ:**  
How'd your name get in that desk?

**BL:**  
That's a good question.

**Rich:**  
Well... [laughter].

**DL:**  
Well, \_\_\_\_\_ we're going to find out because my wife wasn't just sitting...

**Rich:**  
Must have been your brother.

**DL:**  
...at the original desk. It was just \_\_\_\_\_.

**Rich:**  
Because the dead center of the township is Stone School and Morgan. I think you looked it up on your map at one time.

**M:**  
Yeah.

**Rich:**  
The dead center of the township is Stone School and Morgan.

**Russ:**  
It's been nibbled away since.

**Rich:**  
And they jogged it over because the railroad...

**Russ:**  
She's got it right there. I could...I recognize it.

**Rich:**  
There it is. That's it.

**MT:**  
We got it.

**Rich:**  
Yeah.

**Russ:**  
I recognize it.

**Rich:**  
Yeah, that's...that's the bell he's talking about.

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**Rich:**  
It came out of that little belfry there, 1986. School was built in '23. It's already boarded up there. So you got a good...good record. Okay, what else you got here.

**ES:**  
Oh [laughter]. I don't know, you do it so well, I hate to interrupt.

**Rich:**  
Well, you...we're getting talked out here.

**Russ:**  
We've seen that. I always seen the same township change.

**ES:**  
Have you done any of the buildings or constructions? What...I don't...sorry, I don't know about the construction aspects of what your family business is out there.

**Russ:**  
Well, we didn't...we didn't...we were brought up in construction. That's what our dad was, you know. That's, I mean...formal education, don't have any college. Both of us had correspondence, high school & correspondence course and that was about it.

**ES:**  
Um-hum. And did...

**Russ:**  
The rest of it was Dad's boot and hard work.

**Rich:**  
Both graduated from St. Thomas.

**ES:**  
Uh-huh. Uh-huh. And did you work...were you involved in building some of the sights and fixtures of Pittsfield Township during the 50s, 60s, 70s?

**Russ:**  
Well, you got to remember, we were...we were not general contractors. We were labeled as such but we were always like subcontractors. We all...we specialize in concrete.

**ES:**  
Okay.

**Russ:**  
So a lot of buildings we went in and did the concrete work and then we'd get out. Somebody else got the credit for building the building, you know what I'm saying?

**ES:**  
Um-hum. Um-hum.

**Russ:**  
We were mostly the subcontractors.

**ES:**  
Um-hum.

**Russ:**  
And then we built our own buildings up here on State Circle.

**ES:**  
Oh, uh-huh.

**Russ:**  
So...

**ES:**  
Did you work...I'm sorry. We're getting some water delivered here.

**Rich:**  
Thank. Great. Actually, from the Shank Farm. Kiddy-corner across the street here. There used to be the Shank farm. It run from State Street west and Ellsworth north. How big a farm was that? A hundred and fifty acres or whatever?

**Russ:**  
A hundred and sixty probably. Probably that corner. A hundred-sixty acres I'd say.

**Rich:**  
Does that go as far as the expressway now?

**Russ:**  
Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

**Rich:**  
They must have bought some property, the expressway cut off.

**Russ:**  
Expressway...the expressway cut it off.

**Rich:**  
I mean, and my dad went to town one say and Clarence April, the realtor used to live on the east side of State Street. Above the April farm.

**Russ:**  
Right above the top of hill up there.

**Rich:**  
Top of the hill. He was a realtor and he put a sign on the south side of State Street, on the west side of...just south of 94: Land for Sale. So my dad was in his office within an hour and bought five acres in there.

**Russ:**  
Oh, yeah.

**Rich:**  
Bought five acres. Which is on the south side of State Circle and the west of State Street right now. And...but he knew it was prime property. The expressway was already there.

**ES:**  
Um-hum.

**Rich:**  
And he didn't buy it on the north side because the road, the blocks we're not square because the expressway pulloff. So he bought five acres on the south side, and he started developing that.

**Russ:**  
Didn't want to buy too much. He figured it was too expensive. It was a thousand dollars an acre [laughter].

**F:**  
Can you believe that?

**Rich:**  
That was back in the 60s, wasn't it?

**Russ:**  
No, it was fifty...

**Rich:**  
Yeah, it was about '60, about '60.

**Russ:**  
No, it was before that.

**Rich:**  
Before that? Maybe we had it for a while first.

**DL:**  
Well, five thousand was a lot of money then.



**Rich:** Well, it was, about five acres. Five square acres right in there on the south side.

**M:** Yeah.

**Rich:** And Russ, my brother and I went in there later and bought twelve acres additional. That was all that was left pretty much.

**Russ:** Paid more than a thousand an acre for it.

**Rich:** Yeah. We had an opportunity to buy the whole Sherk farm. It...that was...

**Russ:** Yeah.

**Rich:** ...250,000 or whatever it was.

**Russ:** Yeah.

**Rich:** That's where Don Butcher build all his buildings over in there.

**Russ:** That's when...that's when K-Mart came over there.

**Rich:** That was before K-Mart.

**Russ:** Yeah. We could have bought it all.

**Rich:** That what I say, we could have bought it all. Before Butcher we had the chance at it.

**Russ:** Oh, yeah. He offered it to us. See, everybody thinks that my father's the one that gave us a lot of money in business. But it really wasn't. Lot of people don't know that. When we bought that land from Shank, we bought 12 acres for 55 thousand.

**Rich:** Something like that.

**Russ:** But, and a deal, was...no, no, wait a minute.

**Rich:** All right.

**Russ:** The deal was we had to accept that damn road.

**Russ:** At that time it was Shank Lane. Remember that?

**Rich:** Yeah.

**Russ:** Okay. We paid...we were paying like four percent interest. \$400 a month. You paid half and I paid half, because we couldn't afford it by ourselves. So one day we're up there working for American Home Food...No, American Home Food got out and then Pepsi moved in there. Remember that? When Pepsi moved into that building?

**Rich:** Was that before Franklin did it?

**Russ:** After. After he sold...

**Rich:**

Right.

**Russ:** ...American Home Food sold to...

**Rich:** Coca-Cola.

**Russ:** Pepsi.

**Rich:** Oh, Pepsi was in there.

**Russ:** We put those lamps on that building. His big Lincoln pulls up. Gray-haired gentleman gets out. He's got a chauffeur. He says, "Who owns that land right there?" And I says, "I know him quite well. What can I do for you?" He says, "Well, that's mine." We were making payments on it. We bought the 12 acres for \$55,000 and the old man comes out and he says, "I'll tell you what," he said, "I'll give you \$55,000 for that two acres." Oh, man, I almost wanted to kiss him, you know. Here I am [laughter], I'm in debt raising three babies, and here's this guy that's going to take me and my brother right out of debt, and we're still going to have eight...ten acres left.

**Rich:** Right.

**Russ:** Free and clear. So I went to Shank and said, "Harold, we got good news for you." He said, "What's that?" I said, "I'm going to pay you off." "What do you mean? You can't pay me off. I had the best year in business. You pay me off," he said, "The government's going to get it all." He said, "I'll tell you want I'll do." He said, "I'll release all the land to you, guys. Just keep paying \$400 a month."

**Rich:** He wanted the interest.

**Russ:** That's how we got started.

**CT:** Well, he had a good business going, you know, he...

**Russ:** Oh, sure \_\_\_\_\_

**CT:** There's here are fire built houses, you know and...

**Russ:** He was a quality builder.

**CT:** There was big...big bucks in that.

**Russ:** And that's how we got started. That's was our start.

**CT:** He was a custom builder. He did very well for himself.

**Rich:** Oh, yeah, skilled craftsman.

**Russ:** Um-hum. So, the Sank family helped us really get started too. That's how we got into the development business. One thing led to another. You know, that...

**Rich:** And the bank come through for us.

**Russ:** That's when you could go to the bank and walk in and see old Kebler that day, the gray-haired gentleman.

**Rich:** Citizen's bank in Saline.

**Russ:** Yeah. He says, I said, "I want to..." Said, I want to borrow a hundred thousand dollars." And he said, "Well, here in Saline," he says, "We start by getting your name and address and your phone number." I didn't know the guy. An hour later...[laughs]... "Oh, you know Web Harwood?" "Yeah. He sent me here." "Oh, you know Carl Schrandt?" "Yeah." "You know all these guys?" "Yeah. We were in." That was it. That's the way it went.

**Rich:** We knew the directors mostly.

**Russ:** We knew them all. That's the way it went.

**Rich:** The other...they're young, they can stick around for a while.

**Russ:** That ain't got much to do with Pittsfield. But that's how it all was about.

**Rich:** That was up on State Circle.

**ES:** Um-hum.

**Rich:** And now that...it used to be Shank Lane for a long time. And then when Don Canham built his sports enterprise down there, being national, lot of people couldn't spell Shank. So his secretary Gail Green...

**Russ:** yeah.

**Rich:** ...had it legally changed to State Circle.

**Russ:** We said, "Yeah, we don't care if you change your name, you do all the paper work." She did it all.

**Rich:** She did it all.

**Rich:** Well, the bigger problem, like when Russ started to say, the Shanks didn't want any responsibility with that Lane. You got to maintain the thing, you got to get the snow off it if and anything else. And part of our development thing, we had to dedicate that to the county. And the county wouldn't accept a cul-de-sac over so many feet long, wasn't it?

**Russ:** Unless it was class A. Putting in class A road was expensive.

**Rich:** So they had to update it to a truck, winter condition type road...

**Russ:** An all weather road...

**M:** ...class A, and then the county took care of it, and they'll maintain it.

**Russ:** And now they got a change, just like this week. They've got a change of administration out there. Now they find out, they're trying to tell me that I got a class B road.

**Rich:** Who's this, the county?

**Russ:** Yeah. We're into it right now.

**Rich:** Well contact \_\_\_\_\_, he's the one who built.

**Russ:** He's dead. Erin?

**M:** \_\_\_\_\_ Is dead? When did he die?

**M:** Wait a minute.

**CT:** Last I knew He was still at Stonebridge.

**Russ:** Yeah. He just...he just sold that land. It's not him. I'm mixing him up with somebody else. He sold just...

**CT:** He invited me out there fishing.

**Russ:** Yeah.

**Russ:** He just sold a Wexford, right?

**CT:** I'm not sure about that.

**Russ:** He owned all that land? The build...he was a road builder.

**CT:** Yeah.

**Rich:** Don Cunningham, yeah.

**Russ:** I got him mixed up. Well, a lot of the old-timers are gone.

**CT:** Yeah, I went to school with him.

**Russ:** Then you're better up on that one that I am.

**Rich:** Well, going back to the old time, I can remember State Street being a dirt road. Like you said, you were playing ball in the middle of the road and Harold Losey would say, "Look out for cars," once a while a car'd go by.

**ES:** [laughs]

**Russ:** Yeah, then we watched the expressways go in. Uh-huh.

**Rich:** Yeah.

**ES:** When did that happen?

**Russ:** First part down east was...in the 40's. Well, it came out with the bomber plant.

**Rich:** Well, it was during the War.

**Russ:** That's how it started. That's how it got there.

**CT:** It was still Wayne County, though. It stopped \_\_\_\_\_

**M:** Yeah.

**Rich:** Well, I thought it stopped at Michigan Ave. Went to Michigan Ave. to past the bomber plant.

**M:**

Yeah.

**Russ:** And they came down to Carpenter Road and it stopped there.

**Rich:** By I-94.

**Russ:** That's when that northbound 23 went through Ann Arbor. They come down to Carpenter Road and went north. Right through, town?

**M:** Had to go through Washtenaw. Yeah.

**Russ:** Remember that?

**Rich:** Um-hum.

**Russ:** Because we had a crane. My dad bought that first crane in 1950.

**Rich:** 1950, right.

**Russ:** And then the semi came around on a Sunday afternoon, had a tank, a whole of a tank, and it went around the corner too fast and the chains broke and the whole...the tank all came off his truck, set it right in the middle of the intersection. Saturday afternoon...or Sunday afternoon. State Police called and wanted that crane over there. They wanted it now. But that's...I remember that. That's in the early ♦50s, because that crane was brand new.

**Rich:** Yeah, 1950. That was 19...

**Russ:** So what's I remember...

**Rich:** ...so \_\_\_\_\_

**Russ:** ...that's what I remember in that.

**ES:** Yeah.

**Rich:** You rent it that day or did Uncle Fred?

**Russ:** No. They wouldn't let me at it. I was too young.

**Rich:** Yeah, but you could run it better than he could.

**Russ:** Yeah [laughter]. Yeah, that's another subject...

**Rich:** That...that makes...a section that we're familiar with over here on this...

**Russ:** And then I rode on the Ukes. On the scrapers when they built 94 down here. Carl and I would go to school. At night we'd go up there and ride on them earth haulers♦movers all night.

**ES:** Oh, my.

**Russ:** Then at midnight, we used to go down to the White Spot on Main Street and eat ♦go with those guys. Boy that was a big deal going with those guys. They come back and ride that damn movers all night long.

**CT:**  
Some big turnout

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**CT:**  
lot of dirt

**Russ:**  
Boy, and there was a bunch of them.

**Rich:**  
Well, they were putting in the interstate, they didn't fool around.

**Russ:**  
That...that...

**CT:**  
Twenty-four hours a day. And we lived on Dwight Street at the time as well.

**Russ:**  
Oh, yeah.

**CT:**  
And we left in '67 and that has been built by... built that in '63, '64...

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**CT:**  
...'65, right in there.

**Russ:**  
Somewhere.

**CT:**  
But...because they had to rework Stone School Road out...out to the Big Bridge there. Like 24 hours a day you'd hear "beep-beep," and that meant they were loaded and then you'd hear bump-bump-bump. And they'd load the double..

**M:**  
They'd go...

**Russ:**  
Yeah?

**CT:**  
Lot of dirt going out of there.

**ES:**  
Um-hum.

**CT:**  
And that went on seven days a week.

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**CT:**  
Then they hauled all the stumps over to Platt and Ellsworth, and then they caught on fire, so we spent a weekend over there in the dump.

**Rich:**  
Fire Department.

**CT:**  
They covered it with dirt and somehow they got undermined.

**ES:**  
Um-hum.

**CT:**  
And then it blew across the street, to Campell's property.

**Rich:**  
That must a...

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**CT:**  
And set all that on fire.

**Russ:**  
Do you remember when they used to feed the hogs up there at the dump?

**Rich:**  
Um-hum.

**Russ:**  
Oh!

**Rich:**  
Oh, that's...

**ES:**  
Ah, you better explain that [laughs].

**Russ:**  
Well, it was the...

**Rich:**  
On the corner of Ellsworth and Platt.

**Russ:**  
...it was a private dump at that time.

**Rich:**  
Well, it started out as a gravel pit.

**Russ:**  
Well, we know that. But it started then, it turned out as...it was private, you know, run.

**ES:**  
Uh-huh.

**Russ:**  
So somebody got the idea that...well, they got all the Campbell place. In conjunction with the dump, all the garbage coming into the dump, they took it over, fed it to the hogs. They had the fattest porks...

**Rich:**  
At the northeast corner of Platt and Ellsworth.

**Russ:**  
Yeah. And the dump was right across Ellsworth. So it was very convenient.

**ES:**  
Sure.

**Russ:**  
The stink.

**CT:**  
Back then each township has their own dump.

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**Rich:**  
Yeah, right.

**CT:**  
Ypsi Township had a dump that was off of Washtenaw, right there were the railroad tracks come through, like behind Morton...

**Rich:**  
The old, what?, drive-in theater.

**CT:**  
No, further down...

**Rich:**  
No.

**CT:**

...further down than that.

**Russ:**  
Farther than that.

**CT:**  
It's about where that little shopping center is.

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**CT:**  
It was back in there.

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**CT:**  
And then of course Pittsfield had this one here, and...

**Russ:**  
And it...

**CT:**  
...until the city decided they wanted, then Pittsfield could dump free.

**ES:**  
Um-hum.

**CT:**  
But they wanted...

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**CT:**  
...control of it. Soon as they got control, then that...that wiped us right out and we'd fade like the rest of them, and pretty soon we couldn't dump at all. They...

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**CT:**  
...for a while there everybody got shut off like that.

**Russ:**  
how big...

**CT:**  
all these little dumps all over.

**Russ:**  
Putting them \_\_\_\_\_

**CT:**  
You still see them in northern Michigan but...

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**ES:**  
And they were all privately owned and operated.

**Russ:**  
At that...oh, at that time. But that time Pittsfield residents got to dump there free. But anyhow the pig thing came in. They start feeding pigs, and then the Health Department got on them.

**ES:**  
Right.

**Russ:**  
They said, man...oh, it...the stench, you could smell it two miles away if the wind was right.

**Rich:**  
Oh...

**Russ:**  
Well, just a minute now.



**Rich:** All kinds of rotten stuff the pigs would eat...

**Russ:** We...we know that.

**Rich:** ...garbage.

**Russ:** So then Health Department got their foot in the door and they said, "You can't serve raw garbage to pigs, you gotta cook, it." [laughter] So they...

**Rich:** to try to get the bug...rid of the bugs, you know.

**Russ:** So they heated...they heated...they had a steam off it. They actually warmed up cooked garbage for the pigs. And did that stink, didn't it? Gee!

**Rich:** Oh, yeah.

**ES:** [laughs]

**M:** Then it really got ripe.

**Russ:** Well, yeah, well Campbell...

**Rich:** At the time right.

**Russ:** Campbell sold it. Campbell was out of there at that time.

**Rich:** Campbell was out of there.

**Russ:** No, Campbell wanted, bailed out of there years ago.

**Rich:** Well, they called that the Campbell Pit for a long time, that

**CT:** Yeah, it was still that, yeah.

**Russ:** Anyhow...it was...we went through cooked garbage and rats. Why those rats, all that cooked garbage...

**Rich:** Well, they lived in the...they ate on the...pigs and they lived in the dump.

**ES:** Um-hum.

**Russ:** Anyhow, I've seen rats over there the size of cats. Damn good size cats. Come on...some of them were so fat they couldn't walk.

**Rich:** What was the name of that black guy that used to live in the dump? He built himself a lean-to over there.

**Russ:** Jessie...

**Rich:** Louie?

**Russ:** No, no, Jessie...

**Rich:** Jessie, maybe. Remember the black fellow that lived in a made...

**Russ:** He rented a...take your quarters, you give him a quarter and if there's something you had you wanted...

**M:** And you tell him where you wanted to...

**Rich:** No, you give up...

**M:** ...and if you wanted to haul back out [laughs].

**Russ:** Then there was a...there was a time when they...Do you remember the old windmill that Rudy Schmerberg had over there on Packard and Carpenter?

**CT:** Yeah. He had Windmill Subdivision.

**Russ:** All right. Well, we took that old windmill down with a crane one day. And the dump at that time was in transition. But Jessie was still there. Well, everything had to be broken down or knocked down. Well, I come in there with this windmill on a truck. He said, "What are you going to do with that thing?" I said, "Well, bring it in here." "I can't take that," you know, blah-be-de-blah.

**Russ:** And I said, "Wait a minute, now, just cool it." Opened the truck door, there'd be...there's a bottle of booze sitting there. "There, Jess, what about that?" "Oh, just back her right over there." [laughter]

**Rich:** A little payola [laughs].

**Russ:** "Back her right over there." God, I can still see that guy.

**Rich:** No, his house wasn't much of a house. It was made out of scrap that had been brought to the dump.

**Russ:** Well, you all \_\_\_\_...

**Rich:** One of these recluse type, temporary things.

**CT:** What about what KDK had over there, that guy lived in those cardboard boxes in front that caught on fire that night.

**Rich:** Yeah, right.

**CT:** He lived in there for years. Had a wood stove in there, and the whole nine yards.

**Russ:** You don't even remember that one, do you?

**Rich:** No, I don't remember that.

**Russ:** They were the KD...yeah, I didn't think you...

**Rich:** I don't remember. I remember the truck fire they had on Ellsworth. Was it Dunbar? Or Dundee truck line? When they had all their semis parked inside and the thing burned down and burned up 25, 30 trucks.

**Russ:** I don't know what you're talking about.

**Rich:** There was a fire...that was a fire run...ah...

**CT:** You, what, you know what...?

**Rich:**  
North of...north of Morgan and East Carpenter.

**CT:**  
Oh.

**Rich:**  
There used to be a truck terminal in there.

**CT:**  
Yeah, that's right.

**Russ:**  
That's right.

**M:**  
Yeah.

**Russ:**  
Okay.

**Rich:**  
What was Dundee truck line?

**CT:**  
Bob...married Zahn's daughter.

**Russ:**  
Lyons?

**CT:**  
Lyons was a...had a lot of that property in there.

**Rich:**  
Well, he's kitty-corner.

**Rich:**  
That's before Lyons. That was the before Lyons.

**CT:**  
That's where that...and then like you said they had all that back in. Is that when they moved down there on Carpenter on Mor...on, the other end there then?

**Rich:**  
Could have been. I know they used to park the semis inside but after that fire, they put the semis outside.

**CT:**  
Yeah.

**Rich:**  
They were trying to keep it so they could start them the next day for the winter and one of them shorted out or something built...burnt the whole thing up. That's before they had the propane fire that time over there at the flame gas place. Did you get involved in that one?

**CT:**  
Sure did.

**Russ:**  
Yeah, but it's...that's, that's... the history of the fire department. [lot of voices together]

**CT:**  
I'm the one who went up there to shut the valves off.

**Rich:**  
Oh, no! [laughs]

**CT:**  
Remember they squirted me down about four lines keep me wet, and that...and I went up there and climbed up there started shutting valves off.

**Rich:**  
Yeah. What...?

**Russ:**  
I was at St. Joe having back surgery and I watched it, watched it in the sky.

**M:**

I just climbed in bed and heard boom, I got back up, said there we go. I was out there to four [laughs]. It did.

**Russ:** But anyhow...

**M:** Yeah.

**Russ:** ...Pittsfield, we watched the expressways go through, the city take us over, slowly.

**Rich:** Well, Lillies's...charter township thing went through with a...

**Russ:** Yeah. What year was that?

**Rich:** ...that's years ago.

**Russ:** You were on the board then.

**Rich:** No

**Russ:** What year was that, Don?

**Russ:** What hear he come chair? I remember Bob Lillie coming over and setting in our yard talking about that.

**Rich:** Talking about Charter Township.

**Russ:** Charter Town trying to get us to...

**Rich:** Yeah, trying...

**CT:** That was all because Ford Motor Company.

**Russ:** What do you mean, all because of the Ford Motor...?

**CT:** Well, Saline took Pittsfield. They got...went into...into Saline.

**Russ:** Yeah.

**CT:** Where if that had stayed in Pittsfield, Pittsfield would have got a tax, got the land tax and Saline would have got the school tax out of it.

**Russ:** That's right. It's the same time.

**CT:** And they would have split it. But now, that...and that's about the time they said, "That's it. We're through donating the land to Ann Arbor and Saline."

**Rich:** That's when they built the Ford Plant then.

**CT:** Yeah, that's...really, yeah.

**Rich:** The Ford Plant's in Saline now, isn't it?

**Russ:** Oh, yeah.

**Rich:**

CT: It was Pittsfield Township, because Maple Road was the divider.

Russ: Till they built it and then...

Rich: No. Soon as they built it.

M: Oh, the annex.

Russ: Well, Maple Road I think. Maple Road was Maple, you...

Rich: Yeah. Used to be.

M: Right.

Russ: Right down there in the Four Corners.

M: But Saline got that corner.

Rich: But now it's \_\_\_\_.

CT: Well, that's what...Saline...that was before Charter Township where they could annex. So...

Rich: But it's just like Briarwood. See, Briarwood is supposed to be in Pittsfield.

CT: Yeah. It's South of Water Road.

Russ: And their excuse was they couldn't get a liquor license, so they wanted to go to Water...

M: Yeah. But you gotta remember, Carl at that time...

Rich: And that was their excuse. But then what it was, was they wanted sewer...

M: We didn't have no...

Rich: ...but Pittsfield said sewer and water, they got the water out here from the steer farms, but the sewer, they said, "Well, we pump like Everett Brothers did out there. They...that and Hoover, they...they had water running in and they'd pump it out, haul it away. That was their excuse they needed a liquor license.

Russ: See, the old township line used to be Waters Road, which is Eisenhower now.

CT: Yeah, but back then, Pittsfield didn't have any sewer, did we?

Rich: No.

Russ: No.

M: Yeah, you did it. You had Oak Park Subdivision.

Rich: That didn't \_\_\_\_.

CT: Yeah, but that was a private deal.

M: Oh, that's right.

**Russ:**  
That was not.

**ES:**  
Jim Reader was talking about that...

**Russ:**  
It was not.

**Rich:**  
That's not township run?

**CT:**  
Because we...no, because we would take...

**Russ:**  
Always was.

**CT:**  
...gunny bags, we took gunny bags back in the four... '53, '54. And we'd take gunny sacks and push them down the hole, then the fire truck would dump 800 gallons of water down in the next block and then we'd pull that and act like a plunge and it...to wash them out, because there was only six, eight houses back in there, and it wasn't enough flow to keep that stuff cleared out.

**Rich:**  
Oh, out there.

**CT:**  
So do you remember doing any of that?

**Rich:**  
No, I never did that. And that...

**CT:**  
That was...

**Rich:**  
Well, that...the people in that subdivision got called on that.

**CT:**  
I know. So then they started building up, but...

**Rich:**  
That's right. That was township water, wasn't it, the Brookside. Still is. Is there...they're fighting it now, aren't they?

**M:**  
\_\_\_\_\_.

**Russ:**  
Oak Park. I remember when Oak Park...

**CT:**  
That was Shady Lane. You know, there's same thing there. Split up half and half. City and Township.

**Russ:**  
Shady Lane?

**Rich:**  
What township was that?

**Russ:**  
I thought that was all city now.

**Rich:**  
On the north side of Carp ◆ Platt Road, \_\_\_\_\_.

**CT:**  
They're still township houses is in there.

**Rich:**  
Is it?

**M:**  
\_\_\_\_\_ pull the \_\_\_\_\_.

**Rich:**

Well, where Joe Enriques lives, up in there.

**Russ:** No. I don't think we had \_\_\_\_\_. Yeah, that's history.

**Rich:** Yeah. \_\_\_\_\_

**Russ:** Years ago. But they're down now by Shady Lane, the other side of Packard. Where the trailer park is.

**Rich:** Yeah, I know where...oh, okay, okay.

**Russ:** I can't imagine that they...they got to be islands if they're in there.

**CT:** Well, just like Brookside, some of those went in the city. They didn't get any benefits. But they signed up for the city and now they pay city taxes and they still got their own community well and septic tanks. And that's in a big stink right now.

**Rich:** Yeah, I know, they're trying to annex it.

Side 2:

**ES:** No, we don't [laughs].

**Rich:** We're just a little section of it, because there's a lot...Well, used to be farm land, but now it's getting developed all the time.

**F:** Right.

**Russ:** Well, we lost our...the only dairy farmer we had for years. The one that hung out the longest was Chuck Geddes. Look at it now.

**Rich:** He close it up?

**Russ:** Well, the township...the township owns it now. But Chuck's been dead.

**Rich:** Well, that's part of that renewal thing over there in...

**Russ:** No, it's township land now. They bought it.

**Rich:** Yeah, I know they bought it.

**Russ:** Township bought it all.

**F:** They end of \_\_\_\_\_?

**M:** They bought the whole farm?

**Rich:** The Geddes \_\_\_\_ on Morgan Road.

**Russ:** Bought that whole 600 and some acres, did he?

**M:** Five...five hundred.

**F:**  
No, \_\_\_\_\_.

**Russ:**  
And that was...

**Rich:**  
And that was...

**Russ:**  
...wait a...wait a minute. That Geddes Farm was all part of New Market. Now didn't the township buy all of New Market?

**M:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Russ:**  
All right. Then they own the Geddes Farm too.

**Rich:**  
\_\_\_\_\_ they own the Geddes Farm.

**MT:**  
But there he is. Okay. I guess beyond Ellsworth there to Textile, then Platt, the subdivision is going to be going in there.

**Russ:**  
Well, that's south of Geddes' Farm. There was some land south of Geddes before Textile.

**MT:**  
Do you remember growing up a house on Platt, so, you know, on Platt, being where Geddes where lived on Textile Road?

**Rich:**  
Yeah, the Napindal Farm

**Russ:**  
No.

**Rich:**  
Napindal lived in there. The trash guy. The paper collect.

**MT:**  
Nalepka?

**Russ:**  
Nalepka? He's on the south side. She's talking, what, east?

**MT:**  
No, I'm talking on...on the...

**Rich:**  
South of...south of Morgan, north of Textile?

**MT:**  
On the west.

**MT:**  
...on the west side out Platt between Geddes and Textile.

**Rich:**  
Now Geddes, Geddes Farm.

**M:**  
There was a...yeah.

**Rich:**  
Yeah

**MT:**  
It was Nalepka area. Was there a house there?

**CT:**  
Yeah, there was a house, but it was abandoned, and they were living in a trailer or something, as I recall.

**Russ:**



There was an old house, but it was right close to Textile...It was off Textile Road. The driveway was off Textile.

**CT:**  
It was on the left side of the road.

**Rich:**  
What were the trash guy, with the paper newspaper?

**Russ:**  
That's Nalepka, that's...

**CT:**  
All he did was pick up cardboard. He handled cardboard.

**Rich:**  
Yeah, but he built a building in there too...

**CT:**  
The Ann Arbor...

**Rich:**  
...he built a building in there too.

**CT:**  
Oh, yeah, I had a nice \_\_\_\_\_.

**Russ:**  
No, that's \_\_\_\_\_.

**Rich:**  
He had a house in there before that, I think, Martin.

**Russ:**  
We put the basement in there too.

**M:**  
It was south...\_\_\_\_\_ basement.

**Russ:**  
We put the basement in \_\_\_\_\_

**M:**  
\_\_\_\_\_ left this out.

**Russ:**  
It's still there. The brick house?

**CT:**  
Yeah, that Quonset hut.

**MT:**  
No. I'm talking about the older...the older house.

**M:**  
It was an old frame house.

**M:**  
Yeah, and it was there before.

**MT:**  
Because we'd gotten information from Ruth McFarland who lived on Thomas Road and it was \_\_\_\_ Road. She lived on Platt in a little red house. And I was trying to place it on Platt.

**Russ:**  
The only house that I can place on the west side of Platt Road between there and...there two houses down on...right on Textile. I think one of them's driveway was off of Platt. They were old. I can still see the chimney going up the side of one of them.

**Rich:**  
I thought there was one further north. I checked with Joe Rodriguez's wife, and she's in a \_\_\_\_\_. I think she might have lived here.

**Russ:**  
Oh, Rodriguez's wife came from the other side of Ypsi, and her name was not Nalepka.

**Rich:**

Oh, okay. I got the wrong name.

**Russ:** Her name of Winnie...yeah, you got something wrong.

**Rich:** Okay. I got the wrong, I got the wrong...

**Russ:** I think \_\_\_\_\_

**Rich:** I thought you did that.

**Russ:** You got something mixed up. Because that ain't right.

**Rich:** I had my mind that's where she lived.

**Russ:** I know that ain't right.

**Rich:** That ain't right. All right. Scratch that.

**Russ:** I'll think of her last name. I got CRS, that's pretty bad. Yeah. [laughter]

**Rich:** Yeah. But the...

**ES:** We won't ask you to repeat what CRS stands for.

**Rich:** The Benky...The Benky's. Know anything about that over there, Marcia? Used to live on Thomas Road.

**C. Ticknor:** I would think so.

**Russ:** But Don's dead?

**M:** Don's family would know. They...

**Russ:** Are they still there?

**M:** I figure probably one of the kids may be there yet, but maybe not.

**Russ:** I don't know. The one kid took off and went to...took off and left Don holding the bag. Don died four or five years ago.

**M:** Yeah.

**Russ:** And I don't even know if his wife's still back there or not...Who moved Harwood's house? That was a Geddes. They're back there. That same...talk to him. That was a Geddes boy. What was his name? Chuck?

**F:** Brandon.

**Russ:** Brandon. All right. There you go. They didn't...they...they can help him.

**CT:** Well, that couple that lives across the street from Geddes in that newer home there on the East side, just past the church.

**Rich:** Oh, ah...Eberle.

**CT:**

At \_\_\_ and Geddes. Eberle.

**F:**  
Right.

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**CT:**  
They...they would know, I think because they were all tight with.

**Rich:**  
The kind of neighbors there, yeah.

**CT:**  
It was a tight group.

**Russ:**  
Yeah. Gabe Eberle. Worked for U of M, electrician wasn't he?

**CT:**  
Electrician.

**CT:**  
I think so, yeah.

**Russ:**  
Um-hum.

**F:**  
Who owned that property that backed up to the runway, the airport, and here's Ellsworth Road. If Ann Arbor city of Ann Arbor...

**Rich:**  
Where the barn is?

**F:**  
Yeah. Where the barn is.

**Rich:**  
Lipto, Lipto.

**Russ:**  
Oh, George Lipto.

**Rich:**  
George Lipto.

**F:**  
That must have been a beautiful farm.

**Rich:**  
Oh, it was beautiful.

**Russ:**  
You know how, you...

**Rich:**  
There's a gravel pit behind in that property.

**F:**  
Oh, is there.

**Rich:**  
It's on the west side of the Ann Arbor Airport. There's a great big gravel pit there. I don't know if they're still using it or not.

**Russ:**  
George Lipto was a...was a...an old bachelor. He lived there with his sister. She was a...

**Rich:**  
They call them? Spinster.

**Russ:**  
...spinster. And old George Lip...I remember that guy. They used to go to the Grange with my folks. Well, he ain't...

**Rich:**

Right.

**Russ:** Just a minute. Anyhow I can remember this. It was just like...somehow or other he got screwed up with the IRS. He didn't pay taxes. He didn't believe in that. But they got him. And they got him good. And old George, I can remember telling him. "Harry," he says, "He'll never get another dime out of me." They didn't. Because he gave that property to St. Francis Church.

**Rich:** Yep.

**Voices:** Oh.

**Russ:** And he lived there till he died, him and his sister both. The government never got another dime.

**Rich:** I knew he dedicated it to the church or something.

**Russ:** He gave it to the church with a life-time lease.

**Russ:** And then when...then, you know, the church, then after, when the agreement's up, they can't keep property, they got to...

**M:** Yeah.

**Russ:** ...dispose of it. And that's how come the city got that property.

**F:** Right in the middle of \_\_\_\_.

**Russ:** Oh, that was beautiful. Boy, that thing was worth a...

**F:** Nice farm.

**Russ:** That barn's still beautiful. But that's how...that's how the church came on it, and that's how the city got it.

**F:** Well, that would make a beautiful park. Between that and the farmland that goes from Ellsworth and Lohr Road.

**Russ:** Yeah. All that.

**M:** That was all rattlesnake gulch...

**Rich:** We ought to talk to the city.

**M:** ...in there, though. That's...were part of that.

**Russ:** Oh, they'll be all right. He...they gotta live too.

**M:** Lot of rattlesnakes back in there.

**Russ:** Well, look where Avis was. That was all snakes. There was some of the best pheasant hunting around here.

**CT:** Well, we used to go from Lavender out...Well, that one year, when he couldn't harvest anything, Bayliss and a bunch of us went over there, dug all his potatoes and crated, and washed them and bagged them,

sent them off. But they used to see rattlesnakes over to Thompson's house. You could go out there and pick strawberries.

**Russ:**

What year did you pick...?

**CT:**

Want some strawberries? go pick em.

**Russ:**

What year did you pick potatoes over to Lavender's? I don't remember seeing you there.

**CT:**

Ah...

**Russ:**

I was raised over there.

**Rich:**

I worked, when I...I worked 11, I was 12 years old.

**Russ:**

I started there at 12.

**Rich:**

That's \_\_\_\_.

**F:**

He couldn't work. He had blood clots.

**M:**

He had blood clots. So he couldn't go to anything.

**F:**

People from the church. Went to church.

**Russ:**

I remember picking old man Lavender up. Well, after...remember when George, Ed's father?

**M:**

Yeah. Yep.

**Russ:**

He was in his 80s. He had to have his leg cut off. He had sugar. Cut his leg off. I was...God, I was in high school. After you quit, I got the job of going over there at four in the morning, get on that potato digger. Used to pick up the old man out of his wheel chair, put him on a tractor, and then I'd ride potato digger. He'd pull me around all day with one leg. Go down and get the potatoes down to market. Yeah.

**Rich:**

There's an interesting story about the Lavenders. Ah, I went to Sutherland School for eight years, from Kindergarten through eighth.

**ES:**

Um-hum.

**Rich:**

And most of those years I had a teacher by the name of Aretha Hedgelif. She's from Hancock, Michigan. And the Lavenders made her a living quarters upstairs.

**ES:**

Um-hum.

**Rich:**

And needless to say, Ed Lavender married Aretha Hedgemond[?]....

**Russ:**

And Ed ended up upstairs [laughter].

**Rich:**

I think he was up there before they got married.

**Russ:**

She was all of a cook, wasn't...? She could cook.

**Rich:**

Oh, yeah. And I'll never forget the...

**Russ:**

And eat.

**Rich:**

In olden days you used have a horning, where'd you just horn in on a new married couple, and we went up to the Ed Lavender and Aretha Hedgeland[?] horning...

**M:**

Yeah.

**Rich:**

...and they were upstairs...Oh, Ralph Harwood had a great big bell, a dinner...a church...school bell or some darn thing, and somebody else had...saw it on a bar making noise and everything. And old Ed Lavender come out of that porch upstairs and threw a water all over. He said, "Dog gone, you guys, take ◆shut up, you're making too much noise." [laughter]

**Russ:**

Yeah, I remember that.

**Rich:**

You were there?

**Russ:**

I remember the day my brother...Ed Lavender was kind of a...you know, you knew Ed. You used to go up there and at noon, and all the guys were picking potatoes, whatever, they always had big dinner. Cripe, they'd have 25 guys eating. And my brother had a habit of reaching, getting bread or something, he'd reach and get it.

**Rich:**

Yeah, that's boarding house reach.

**Russ:**

He reached in front of Ed Lavender one day and Ed Lavender slapped it, just like [slapping noise and laughter] with his knife. I don't think he reached in front of anybody since, have you?

**M:**

No. [laughter]

**Russ:**

He got him good.

**Rich:**

Said, you ask for something, you...learned right quick.

**Russ:**

Boy, I never forget that.

**Rich:**

Wasn't that far, from here to there, it was on front of him. Yeah, it's...

**Russ:**

Yeah.

**Rich:**

Tales out of school, but...

**Russ:**

Yeah. I remember, the Sowachuck...the Sowachuck family, the So....where Lake Forest Golf Course is now, they used to have that farm. Ed Sowachuck used to bring his kids over to Lavenders and pick potatoes all day long so he could take a bagful. That's how he got his potatoes for the winter. Come over there with his kids, they'd eat the bag lunch on the lawn there and earn enough...enough...

**Rich:**

They earned they're keep there. Earned a bag of potatoes.

**Russ:**

...earn enough to keep, take home a bag at night.

**F:**

Well, what year would this be approximately?

**Rich:**

1940 for me.

**Russ:** Well, I graduate...when I was in tenth grade...

**Rich:** You were 12.

**Russ:** ...in high school, I used to...I came home and gave Ed his shots when he had his hernia and stay over \_\_\_\_

**Rich:** '37, '49. That'd be '50 for you.

**Russ:** Oh, early...real early ◆50s.

**Rich:** Well, I was 12 and...

**Russ:** Oh, I started there like you, 12, 13 years old.

**Rich:** Well, add it on top of your age, the year you were born.

**CT:** Well, in his declining years, it had to be mid-◆50s, I would say.

**Russ:** Yeah. Well, \_\_\_\_ worked over there.

**CT:** When we were over there, when we were over there working on...

**Rich:** Ah, I don't know how many people knew this, but the Lavenders had a farm, and right behind it was the East farm. Which the house is still up here, where Don Butcher's office is. And Ed East, his dad's name was Bill, and Tom was his bastard brother, right?

**Russ:** Yeah.

**Rich:** And at the state hospital, which is on the corner of Bemis and Platt? Yeah. There was a mental hospital. Somebody got out one time...

**Russ:** Um-hum.

**Rich:** ...and went over to the East shed and killed Bill East.

**Russ:** No, he didn't kill him. Hit him over the head with a hammer. He lived. He was a vegetable after. He didn't die.

**Rich:** Oh, he didn't die?

**Russ:** No.

**CT:** No, but he was committed

**Rich:** But he was the person who got away from the state hospital. [together]

**Russ:** He messed him up so bad he should have died. Yeah, remember that.

**Rich:** Yeah.

**Russ:** He didn't die, but he should have...would have been a blessing if he would have.

**Rich:**

Right.

**F:**  
Oh, dear.

**Rich:**  
But that was an accident happened...Of course, that was big news then in the township of Ann Arbor.

**Russ:**  
How many of you remember when there was a pond on the...on Stone School Road when there was a drowning murder thing going on. Remember that?

**CT:**  
That picture of me in the fire truck,

**Russ:**  
Yeah, you had to pump the pond.

**CT:**  
That's...I went to...the Fire Chief said, "Go home, eat...come get the fire truck, eat supper and then go down and pump the pond." I'm laughing, you know.

**Rich:**  
Yeah, they were looking for a body, weren't they?

**CT:**  
He didn't do it very often...

**Russ:**  
Um-hum.

**CT:**  
...but I says, you know, what's the Joke. "No," he says, "You got to pump that pond." I said, "Where am I going to pump it?" He said, "Across the road." I said, "There's no place to put it." He said, "It'll flow." [laughter] I said, "What am I doing?" He said, "You're looking for a bicycle and a pair of shoes."

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**Rich:**  
Oh, that's what it was?

**CT:**  
Yep. It's one lad had killed the other lad.

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**CT:**  
And there was a court order out to have that pumped, and he wanted that bicycle and a pair of shoes.

**Russ:**  
As kids, we used to go there and shoot carp with bow and arrow.

**CT:**  
So...

**Russ:**  
Walk around on water...

**CT:**  
...went over there and pumped. And of course we'd have hoses laid out so the county came over to block both ends of it, so no through traffic. And that brings curiosity on.

**Russ:**  
Oh, yeah.

**CT:**  
And about a hour and a half into it, here comes another court order that I have to stop because I'm flooding basements on...

**F:**  
Oh, you...[laughter].

**CT:**



...on the east side of Stone School Road. Okay, now what do I do? And of course we had no radio communications back then, so I'd go...

**Russ:**

No.

**CT:**

...I'd go to the squad car, talk to the sheriff's department, then they could call the township. But I kept pumping....

**Russ:**

What year was that?

**CT:**

That's what I want to know, because I had the date...

**Russ:**

Well, it's got to be after '47.

**Rich:**

That was on...that's on Stone School, wasn't it?

**CT:**

It was '50...it was ◆50s.

**Russ:**

Early ◆50s.

**CT:**

Probably '56 or somewhere in there.

**Russ:**

Oh, I don't think it was that far.

**F:**

Yeah.

**Russ:**

I graduated in '55 and that was before then.

**CT:**

Was it?

**Russ:**

Yeah, it's got to be before then.

**CT:**

And I'm...I moved out there...or we moved out there in '52, so...

**Russ:**

It's got to be right there.

**CT:**

It could have been '52 or '53 then.

**C Ticknor:**

I don't think it was that...

**ES:**

They never solved that murder? I mean...

**CT:**

Oh, yeah, they knew who did it.

**Rich:**

They knew who it was but they needed evidence.

**CT:**

they'd had a fight, they'd had a raft...

**ES:**

Yeah. Yep.

**M:**

...and he got mad and hit him over the head...

**M:**

Yeah.

**M:**  
...pushed him underneath the raft and held him there till he drowned.

**ES:**  
Oh, God.

**Russ:**  
A lot of people don't even know there was a pond there. It's right where Applied Dynamics is now.

**Rich:**  
Yeah. Right.

**CT:**  
Well, I say, I used to tell people, Pheasant Run. That's the easiest way to...

**Russ:**  
It's right there.

**Rich:**  
Well, it's on the northwest corner of Stone School and Ellsworth.

**Russ:**  
Down in there.

**M:**  
Yeah.

**Russ:**  
That was a...

**Rich:**  
Big pond in there.

**CT:**  
There was a lot of water in there. God, you'd pump for a while, then it'd plug up, and you'd dig out fish.

**Russ:**  
There was some bad carp in there. [together]

**Rich:**  
Mostly mud.

**Russ:**  
We used to shoot some carp. They were like this.

**CT:**  
Oh, yeah, we used to make...make arrowheads and shoot carp in there. Yeah.

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**CT:**  
So when I was a kid back in the 30s, we blocked that up. It was still Bayliss's property at that time, Don Bayliss and I, we plugged that up. And we swam in that creek. It was just clean, clear water. And they held...they'd had automobile races, out at the county race track on Maple and Jackson out there, and somebody got killed sitting on a fence. So they wouldn't let them race cars. They'd race horses, but not cars. So they moved it out on Stone School Road.

**Russ:**  
Um-hum.

**CT:**  
And lo and behold, it had no fenders. This guy climbed up on that wheel and brought that car up and killed another person. And then that ended that. But in the meantime, we had plugged that. We used to ride horses back in there.

**Rich:**  
That was where Brookside is now, isn't it, where that race track used to be?

**Russ:**  
No. A little further east.

**Rich:**  
South?

**M:**

**M:** It was south. South.

**M:** Yeah.

**CT:** But Larry...

**Russ:** God, I remember the dust.

**Rich:** \_\_\_\_ that were...

**CT:** Across the street up there owned a big farm, Larry. And then he owned a rest...owned restaurant in Saline.

**F:** Yeah. Skinner.

**CT:** Skinner.

**Russ:** Oh, yeah, Skinner.

**CT:** \_\_\_\_ Skinner would come down on his horse and then meet us at Bayliss's there, on the...you know, where Eisenhower Factory is. And we'd get two more horses mounted up. We'd go back in there. We'd watch them race the cars.

**Russ:** Jalopies.

**CT:** Yeah. Hot rods, or whatever...

**Russ:** Dick Losey...the Losey's had them.

**M:** Well, Dick Losey would be racing them by himself.

**Russ:** Yeah. Losey had...was sponsoring cars.

**M:** Yeah.

**Rich:** Yeah, what...I remember '99 was Harold Losey's entry.

**Russ:** Boy that's...that's going...I...I'm stretching my brain to remember that one. That...that's getting right back here. I remember being there and eating dust.

**M:** Oh, yeah, dust \_\_\_\_

**Russ:** Oh! There was no such thing...

**CT:** And I, well, I learned to drive on '37...'37 Chevy. We'd drive through those fields, and hit those little dead furrows boom, boom, oh, boy [laughing]. That's...Then finally Bayliss caught us out there at his...it was good car too [laughter]. So that ended my driving lesson.

**ES:** Yeah. What was your first car Russ?

**CT:** It's all houses now.

**Russ:** Me?

**ES:**  
Yeah.

**Russ:**  
Dad's truck.

**Rich:**  
You too?

**Russ:**  
Well, he...

**Rich:**  
I bought a 1937 Dodge was my first car, when he bought a new one. I had that for a long time.

**Russ:**  
I drove his. I didn't have...I didn't own a car until I went in the Service.

**Rich:**  
Oh, was that it? Well, I had...Dad got a new car and I got the old one.

**Russ:**  
Dad took care of that. "Drive a truck, it's good enough."

**ES:**  
Yeah [laughter].

**Russ:**  
Hey.

**ES:**  
Did you have other brothers and sisters?

**Rich:**  
Yeah, we got two sisters.

**Russ:**  
Two sisters.

**Rich:**  
One's in St. Augustine, Florida and Mary Lou is Merritt, Wisconsin.

**Russ:**  
Oh.

**Rich:**  
There was a girl in between Russ and I, and then a younger sister.

**Russ:**  
Uh-huh.

**ES:**  
Um-hum.

**Rich:**  
Four kids.

**ES:**  
Okay.

**Rich:**  
Yeah. My oldest sister, born in '33, was born in the house. And...

**ES:**  
Really?

**M:**  
...on 5150 Martin Road. I was just a little guy.

**Russ:**  
I wasn't here yet. So I don't know.

**Rich:**  
She was...Yeah, I know she was four years younger than me, and you \_\_\_\_\_, so then four years in '36.

**M:**  
Oh, '36.

**Rich:**

Yeah. From me. From me.

**ES:**  
Were you born in....?

**Rich:**  
I was born on Seventh Street in Ann Arbor when it was a dirt street.

**ES:**  
Oh, my.

**Rich:**  
Seven blocks from the stadium.

**ES:**  
Oh, wow.

**Rich:**  
Yeah.

**M:**  
What year?

**Rich:**  
1928.

**ES:**  
And were you born at the hospital?

**Russ:**  
I guess.

**Rich:**  
Yeah.

**ES:**  
I always ask this question. I always get the same response, don't I? "Well, I don't remember where I was born, I...

**Russ:**  
That's true.

**Rich:**  
Well...

**CT:**  
Well, ...I was born in '28, and we lived on Second Street, which is a block and a half from the Ann Arbor Railroad. And they would come up, and my mother fed them, and I remember from the time I was probably four or five years old...Well, actually, five years old, you come from school, and there's always somebody sitting on the back porch with a plate on their lap. They...she never let them in the house.

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**CT:**  
And we had more chalk marks in front of our house on the curb than anybody else in the street.

**Rich:**  
Oh, the hoboes.

**CT:**  
\_\_\_ red marks and yellow marks and white marks, they all had their own little coding.

**Rich:**  
No hoboes.

**Russ:**  
Where to go eat.

**Rich:**  
Where to go eat.

**Russ:**  
Sure.

**Rich:**  
Oh, they had really good organizations of...

**CT:**  
Yeah.

**Rich:**  
They called them bums, but officially get to call hoboes. Ma called them bums.

**F:**  
I know that was a tough time. It was.

**Rich:**  
Oh, that was that. Right? So...no, but Russ was born in the hospital in Ann Arbor where the old University Hospital used to be down...up Anne Street, right by the...right by the power plant.

**Russ:**  
I wasn't there.

**Rich:**  
I know. The pow♦I know. The pow♦the old maternity hospital at the University used to be...

**ES:**  
Yeah.

**Rich:**  
I think Anne and...north of Huron there. I vaguely remember that.

**CT:**  
My sister was born where West Quad is.

**Rich:**  
Oh, is that right [laughing]. Had a hospital there?

**CT:**  
It was a ho♦no, it was a house.

**Rich:**  
Oh, a house. Yeah.

**ES:**  
Huh. And...

**CT:**  
Tore the house down to build the university buildings.

**Rich:**  
Yeah.

**ES:**  
Yeah, right in there.

**Rich:**  
Yeah.

**ES:**  
Um, you were in the service, and...?

**Rich:**  
Russ was. I wasn't.

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**ES:**  
You were not. Okay.

**Rich:**  
I missed it by 25 days. They cancelled the draft the 30th of June, and I turned 18 the 25th of July [laughs].

**ES:**  
Oh, yeah.

**Rich:**  
I missed it by that much. It was compulsory one year service then.

**ES:**  
No kidding.

**Russ:**  
I didn't go in till '55.

**Rich:**  
Yeah, but you go for three years?

**Russ:**  
No two.

**ES:**  
Were you drafted?

**Russ:**  
I...huh? I volunteered for the draft.

**ES:**  
Oh.

**Russ:**  
And back then we had a six-year commitment -- two years active duty, two years active reserve, two years inactive reserve.

**ES:**  
Um-hum.

**Russ:**  
But if you went RA, which was Regular Army, you had to go for three years. And I...I didn't want that.

**Russ:**  
Two's enough, so I went...I volunteered for the...

**Rich:**  
I didn't know that.

**Russ:**  
I volunteered the day I'd get it, the day draft...the week before graduation or something, I went down there. My dad said, "What are you going to do? Are you going to the service, or you going to go to work?" "Well, let's get this out of the way." So I went and volunteered for the draft. But they didn't take me till November. They were...everybody was volunteering to get it over with.

**ES:**  
Um-hum.

**Russ:**  
So I got...had a ball.

**ES:**  
Oh, where did you serve?

**Russ:**  
Mostly Fort Knox. [laughter]

**Rich:**  
What year was that, Russ?

**Russ:**  
'55.

**Rich:**  
'55?

**Russ:**  
Spent two years to the day and damn near to the hour. God, we were AWOL before we even got in [laughter]. Yeah, our bus got in a wreck. We got rear-ended on Packard and Independence.

**ES:**  
Oh [laughter].

**Russ:**  
They put us on a bus at six in the morning, you couldn't even get out of town. The Gideons give us our Bible down there at quarter to six in the morning, and, you know, you good guy, you gone \_\_\_\_\_. And it's where the...

**M:**  
We went by train.

**Russ:**  
And then we...we got on the bus.

**M:**

Why...

**Russ:**

We really got screwed up. We got on the bus, then we got rear-ended at Independence. Well, you know, my gosh, everybody had to get out, and they had to fill out papers for every...we were there like three hours. Well, you want to know, you missed your connection in Detroit, when you...when you got to Detroit, hell, everything was done, gone. Bunch of kids standing on a corner, where the hell do we go from here? So by the time we got to Fort Wayne, which Fort Wayne was still there...

**ES:**

Um-hum.

**Russ:**

"Where have you been? You are AWOL. You are..." We didn't know what AWOL meant. We hadn't...in the army. Well, anyhow, that's the way it went.

**Rich:**

I didn't know that [laughter].

**Russ:**

So we were absent before we even got there.

**Rich:**

Yeah.

**ES:**

Well...as many stories as we have here, we might have to have them come back, huh?

**F:**

Yeah.

**M:**

Yeah.

**Rich:**

Well, it's just good old gossip though about. Because everybody here's got a lot of history...

**ES:**

Yeah.

**Russ:**

You got...you got a lot of history in his family. You've got as much in the Ticknor family as you have in the Payeur family.

**Rich:**

You've had your turn yet, Tim?

**C Ticknor:**

What's that?

**Rich:**

Have you had your turn yet? Your turn, up here?

**ES:**

Yeah. When's that going to happen? We need to get that guy.

**C Ticknor:**

No, I'm too young for that.

**F:**

Ah [laughs].

**Rich:**

Oh...Well, the Ticknor farm was over there on Stone School for years.

**Russ:**

What year'd your grandfather come there? That...that was always there when we were there.

**Rich:**

You're related to Hutzels?

**C Ticknor:**

Yeah. Yeah.

**Rich:**



Your grandpa married a Hutzel or what?

**C Ticknor:**  
No. No. My Aunt Janna, her husband was Steve Hutzel. That's...

**CT:**  
Well, then who was he?

**Rich:**  
How...?

**CT:**  
Harold's brother, or...? Who was Dean? Where did Dean fit in? Was he Harold's brother or...?

**C Ticknor:**  
No. He was, now you're making me think

**Rich:**  
[laughs]

**C Ticknor:**  
I have a mental block. You're probably correct in what you're saying...

**Rich:**  
How big was that Hutzel farm, or the Ticknor farm?

**C Ticknor:**  
originally?

**Rich:**  
Yeah.

**C Ticknor:**  
It was 180 acres.

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**C Ticknor:**  
That was split by the expressway in fifty two...

**Russ:**  
Expressway, way clear down there?

**Rich:**  
Oh, I didn't know that.

**Russ:**  
I didn't know it went that far south?

**CT:**  
Well, see, Hutzel come down...

**Rich:**  
Would they cover Brookside?

**CT:**  
...Hutzel come down, you know, past the school and all that. See, now their farm actually was on the...on the edge of it, then everything that Ticknor had was South.

**C Ticknor:**  
The Ticknor farm is the Stone School was right next to where grandpa's place was.

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**C Ticknor:**  
In that acreage. It continued all the way out to past through the swamp.

**Rich:**  
Um-hum. Right.

**C Ticknor:**  
David and I were over there that afternoon...

**CT:**  
You mean, when I was pumping...

**C. Ticknor:**

...but he was starting to pump that way.

**Rich:**  
Well, that was...that was the Ticknor farm, swamp?

**C Ticknor:**  
When the firemen were down there that afternoon.

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**C Ticknor:**  
When they started to pump that.

**Russ:**  
Yeah.

**C Ticknor:**  
Because you were trying to think what year it is. I got to say it's ♦54.

**CT:**  
Okay.

**Russ:**  
It's right in there somewhere.

**C Ticknor:**  
Don't, you know, don't hold me to it, but...because David was still here. Then shortly after...

**Rich:**  
Yeah.

**C Ticknor:**  
...he left. But grandpa's farm went all the way right to, at least to the swamp. I know ...

**Rich:**  
It didn't come all the way down far.

**C Ticknor:**  
...that part in...the part into the, where they're at \_\_\_\_\_. And then it went to the...that would have been to the west, and that's where the...

**CT:**  
To the west. And the \_\_\_\_ lake was there, didn't it?

**C Ticknor:**  
A little bit. But not...not a lot. It didn't look...

**Rich:**  
Probably followed that creek, didn't it?

**DL:**  
Did it get into the gravel pit?

**C Ticknor:**  
Hm...

**M:**  
Probably \_\_\_\_\_.

**DL:**  
Did it...where the dump is now.

**C Ticknor:**  
Oh, no, no.

**Russ:**  
No, no, no, no, no.

**Rich:**  
No, no, no. They're part of the north. Don.

**C Ticknor:**  
We're right over here, off on the corner of Stone School Road.

**M:**  
Stone...

**C Ticknor:**

And up to Ellsworth Road and then you would be heading west coming this way. It would be that block that would follow along Stone School Road all the way to Packard.

**DL:**

Would \_\_\_\_\_ in that...in that area.

**Russ:**

You didn't go east to Stone School.

**C Ticknor:**

Well, I'd probably say a mile by a quarter mile. That's where her grandma's place is at.

**Rich:**

Who had that platt book of Pittsfield Township that showed all the ownership. The Historical Society probably got that. You got that. Okay. That would probably explain a lot of things that you're talking about here. Who and what, when.

**ES:**

Well, we'll have to tidy that all up and add it to the margins of this interview. But we're going to wrap up right now.

**Rich:**

Good.

**ES:**

And I'm going to thank you very much. Both of you, it's been wonderful. And don't say anything after I turn off this tape, okay [laughter]. Because I don't want to miss all the good stories. Okay, thank you very much. [laughter].

**HR:**

You know, when they talked about were the fires, that June of '79 was a terrible month for the Fire Department. And Walt Gutekunst gave us this wonderful binder...

**Rich:**

Walt did?

**HR:**

...of fires and the explosions of fuel tanks. I don't know the men in the picture, but you can see what happened in Pittsfield Township, on Carpenter Road and...

**Russ:**

Yeah. Flame gas.

**HR:**

...on State Street.

**M:**

Morgan...Morgan was...yeah.

**Russ:**

I ought to go get a paper.

**HR:**

It's here, this...it's just a wonderful binder, if you want to take a look at it. I'll leave it here. And then we've got all your fire trucks that you talked about. Again, there's lots of wonderful wonderful pictures of all your trucks and when they opened, when they had...when they purchased their trucks in '74, and all '57.

**Russ:**

Where is that?

**HR:**

And here is the...here's the picture that you've brought.

**Rich:**

Yeah.

**Russ:**

Yeah.

**HR:**

But we've got all these things, right over...oh, here, in front. Is this the other one you were talking about?

**Russ:**

There's the Morgan. That's the one you're talking about.

**HR:**  
There it is, right here.

**Rich:**  
Yeah, that's a John Bean.

**Russ:**  
Or John Bean.

**Rich:**  
John Bean, yeah.

**M:**  
See what it says on the building? That's you...

**Rich:**  
Foote Machinery and Chemical Company, yeah. It was put up as a fruit sprayer.

**M:**  
Yeah.

**Rich:**  
They started out as fruit sprayer trucks, and they made a fire truck out of it.

**Russ:**  
Sam's not there. Roy Alexander's.

**CT:**  
He was our assistant fire chief at that time.

**Russ:**  
Yeah, I know he was. I thought, Car♦I thought Sam's...Well, I drove out of...

**Rich:**  
That's...that's Sam Morgan.

**CT:**  
They had a '56 Chevy Ford at that time.

**Rich:**  
Sure looks like it.

**CT:**  
Yeah, that's Sam.

**Russ:**  
My, God!

**M:**  
Sam, Morgan...

**Rich:**  
That's me on the end.

**Russ:**  
Well, I know that but I just...

**M:**  
Yeah, well, that's Sam...

**Russ:**  
That looks like Sam Morgan.

**M:**  
Oh, yeah.

**Rich:**  
That's the number one.

**HR:**  
We've got wonderful pictures of Pittsfield Junction too, and the railroad.

**Rich:**  
Oh, that's the train wreck. That's the train wreck.

**Russ:**  
Oh, that's the wreck, yeah, the wreck.

**CT:**

You \_\_\_\_ remember that.

**HR:**  
Here is the other one.

**M:**  
Which one's that?

**HR:**  
Which one? You could...boxcars outside and...

**Russ:**  
Oh, that's not the same wreck.

**Rich:**  
That the same wreck or not?

**HR:**  
No, that's the same wreck \_\_\_\_.

**Russ:**  
No, this is a freight...this is a passenger car.

**M:**  
...'61.

**M:**  
Yeah, they were all freighters.

**Rich:**  
Yeah, those are freight trains.

**Russ:**  
This is a where I don't know where this came from.

**Rich:**  
That's where we got all the toilet paper from.

**BL:**  
Yeah [laughs].

**Russ:**  
Boy.

**BL:**  
Well, anyway, I'd like to thank you two gentlemen, and I'd like to thank all of you for coming, because, you know, we...we have a fundraiser, because the historical society and of course those are note cards of the Sutherland Wilson farm which wasn't mentioned this afternoon.

**Russ:**  
Yeah? We know it well.

**BL:**  
They make great stocking stuffers and hostess gifts. Christmas is coming soon. And we'd like to invite you to some refreshments, and Marcia has an announcement about our up and coming October program.

The End