

JOHN PARDY

Interview by Lois Myers
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TOPICS:

Land Development
Senior Citizens Center

Transcription by John W. Weigel
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Q: This is June the 20th, 19...1995. We're at the Senior Citizens' Center, and I'm taping John Pardy for the celebration of our fortieth anniversary in our City Historical Commission. John, how long have you lived in Madison Heights?

A: Twenty-four years.

Q: And on when...when did you move here? Where did you come from when you moved here?

A: I moved here from Hazel Park. I moved here in 1971.

Q: 197...tell us about the changes you've seen here.

A: Well, I saw'da...saw a lot of changes. I saw some before I moved here through visiting the city. Campbell Road for one thing was...was just a one...one lane, and part of it was so muddy that you couldn't hardly go up and down [tape turned off and on].

Q: Go ahead.

A: I don't know a whole lot more that I can really say. The houses had...most of the dwellings...not...it wasn't densely populated in Madison Heights. The...the houses were...didn't have any...very few of them had inside plumbing. And they had water and electricity, but the toilet facilities were usually outhouses and we used to have fun on Hal...just for Halloween pushin' those over. And there used to be...used to be a...a little old...low, real old building Eleven Mile and John R, and it was called the Sunset Inn. That was what they called the beer garden. I didn't drink at the time, and...but I been in there a few times. I always wondered that this was before the war, and when I came home from the war, the building was...was gone and I never knew exactly...but I was sure it was Eleven Mile and John R but then somebody could have said it was a different place because everything changed so much at that time that you really...it's hard to think about the...the way it was because it changed so much.

Q: Well...did...

A: I was in the service for four and a half years, and I spent two years right over...overseas. I went...I landed in France on D-Day. It was very fortunate that I made it safe. And this year I was in the Madison Heights parade.

Q: [Inaudible]

A: I wore my uniform.

Q: You were wonderful.

A: Very proud of it. And I don't know a whole lot more that I can say, but you ask me some questions, maybe I'll have some more answers.

[Tape turned off and on]

A: Well one thing...one thing I can say, and be proud to say, and I'm proud of Madison Heights is the wonderful and beautiful Senior Center. Everybody that comes here brags...brags about our Senior Center. They...they think it's the nicest one that they've ever seen around and when I first retired...well, before I retired I used to come down John R and go over Thirteen Mile Road going home, 'cause I lived at Campbell Road and Thirteen. And I used to go by here, and I had...the Senior Center at that time was a little white house. And then when I retired, the Senior Center was the...the building it is...half as big as what it is today. And I came here and I was...I was received very well. And the people here are very nice, were very nice to me and are nice to everybody that comes to the center.

A: You have a few wackos, but they have those everywhere. And since then this center has...has been added on to, and we have all kinds of facilities here. We have people...a lot of people that come here for lunch and I help...I kinda help in a way at the Center, with serving the people who come in here with canes and wheelchairs. I deliver their dinner to 'em and I help out a little bit on the newsletter and if they've got furniture to move that I'm able to move, then I help, basically. In other words, I do little odd jobs around here and I try to...try to do what I can to volunteer, because a lot of the...the Center needs volunteers to do the work because they can't pay everybody to do everything and...and well, I'm...I'm here almost every day. I...I...I join...I...I take advantage of the...the pool room. I play pool. And we have a real good time playin' pool and then, of course after...after I help out then I usually go home and do what little bit I have to do around the house.

Q: Do you do any bowling with the...the leagues?

A: I...I did...I did at one time. I bowled when we had a...they still have the league here but...and I bowled in it for about I would say six, seven years or so. But then my back started botherin' me and I had to quit bowlin'. I wish I could continue to bowl with the seniors because they have a real good league and everybody enjoys the league and has a good time. It's a good...it's good recreation for the seniors. We have...course they have a lot of card playing here. I don't...I don't play cards very much, so I don't enjoy it, but the...the lot of seniors, they play cards here quite regularly, and they have good...they have good card [inaudible] parties here. I enjoy it.

Q: You know, it's...it's a great place to come to meet friends too, isn't it?

A: Oh yes. You meet a lot of good friends in here.

Q: And a lot of people get here and they play cards and things, something they never do at home. They just lay around the house and not have anything to do.

A: Well...

Q: They play bingo.

A: Oh yes, they [inaudible].

Q: They love that.

A: They do. They have bingo every Thursday.

Q: Uh huh.

A: And I'll tell ya.

Q: That's the biggest day, isn't it?

A: Yes it is. Thursday is the biggest day. That's when our biggest crowd is.

Q: How do you like the lunches?

A: The lunches here are...they're...they're very, very good here. Matter of fact, the meals are excellent.

Q: Wonderful.

A: And I don't eat lunch here a lot because I don't eat lunch very often. But when I do...when I do eat here I enjoy the meal and...and most of the people here are real good people, and the...and the staff is very efficient. And they...and they do anything that you ask 'em to do that's within right. And they...they keep pretty good track of the people, and if somebody gets sick, they...they...they can't get to 'em fast enough to help 'em. And the staff is very good and the building itself is very clean. It's...it's very neat, and it's well taken care of. And a lot of these seniors really are...I don't classify myself as...as...in this category because I...I'm married. I have wife and we had a house, and I enjoyed being at home a lot of times but some of these seniors that...I don't know what they would do if it wasn't for the Center. They would sit in apartments and look at four walls, and they would dissipate and they wouldn't be around for long.

Q: You know...

A: The Senior Citizens [Center] is great for these people.

Q: It certainly is. I was down in St. Petersburg a few years ago with my husband before he was [inaudible]. And people just sittin' around on the outside of the churches and things that look like they're just sitting there rea...ready to die. You don't see that here. People are active. People are involved. And people are...they dress up to come down and everything else. I think it's good for the whole situation myself. And John, I thank you. You've been very pleasant to do this with me, and I really and truly appreciate it. I know the city well.

A: Uh.

Q: And this will be part of the record that the city will have in the future...

A: Lois...

Q: ...and thank you and God bless you.

A: God bless you, Lois and I hope that I've done a lit...a little bit for ya...as...when you're not prepared for something and don't have it wrote down...none of this was wrote down as...just talkin' out of what comes through my head and...

Q: That's wh...

A: ...I thank you and I hope

Q: That's what we want...

A: ...you appreciate it.

Q: ...is mem'ries, not...

A: Right.

Q: ...not what...what's written down. We want mem'ries, and that's what you got lot of. And I sure appreciate.

A: You're welcome, and thank you and God bless you.

Q: You too.

END OF INTERVIEW