

MRS. LOWEDA, GERALDINE AND TERRI DEAL

Interview by Bill Miles  
July 17, 1991

TOPICS:

Schools  
Land Development  
Home Construction  
Hospitals  
Great Depression  
Waste Disposal  
Animal Husbandry

Transcription by John W. Weigel  
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[Transcriber's Note: "Q" is the interviewer Bill Miles, "A" is Loweda Deal and "G" is Geraldine Deal. All third-party comments have been ascribed to Geraldine rather than Terri Ann, who does not appear to have commented during this interview.]

Q: This afternoon is July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1991. I will be interviewing Loweda Deal. Mrs. Deal...um...can you tell me your address and the year you were born?

A: I was born in March the 19<sup>th</sup>, 1915.

Q: Okay.

A: And...

Q: Your present address.

A: My present address is 84 East Hudson, Madison Heights.

Q: Okay, now if you do me a favor, if you could name your family that the children. You were married?

A: I was married in 1931.

Q: Mm-kay.

A: Shirley was...Shirley Deal was born in 1932.

Q: Okay.

A: And Joyce Elaine Deal was born in 1934.

Q: Okay, now you've been a longtime resident of Madison Heights. Were you born in Madison Heights?

A: No, I was not. I was born in Bad Axe, Michigan.

Q: Okay.

A: And my father was a farmer. There was nine of us children. Nine. And my father moved to Detroit in 1928. And worked in Detroit.

Q: What did he do in Detroit?

A: He drove a truck. He was a c'ment mixer. C'ment and repairman for sidewalks and that he did in Detroit.

Q: Now did he have familiarity with that when he was in Bad Axe or did he...um... just pick this up when he came to this area?

A: He picked this up when he came to Detroit. He moved to Detroit. And he picked this up just to do, so I have something to do.

Q: Okay.

A: Okay?

Q: And then you came to Bad Axe in...to Madison Heights in what year?

A: I was married in 1931.

Q: Mm-kay. And you came to Madison Heights?

A: I moved to Madison Heights, yes. In 1932.

Q: What was your address in Madison Heights, when you first moved to Madison Heights?

A: 84 East Hudson.

Q: 84 East...that's your present address, right?

A: Yes it is.

Q: Yeah. Okay. Now that's on the south end of the city. Um...your children went to the Madison schools?

A: Ma...Madison School. I sent three. I have a son, Gary Deal, who was also born in 1942. And I sent those children all to school and three...four grandchildren.

Q: What schools did they attend when they went to the Madison School District?

A: Joyce and Shirley came to Madison...first...when they first started school, we didn't have a school. They went over to the kindeergarten [sic].

Q: Ah, good. That's what I want to know.

A: They went to the kindeergarten over on Hudson, right through and beyond Stevison [sic] Highway. That was Oakland School over there.

Q: Okay.

A: And that's where the girls both went to school, earlier.

Q: It was part of the Royal Oak School District.

A: Yes it was the Royal Oak.

Q: Okay, that's back when where you lived was really Royal Oak Township.

A: Yes, it was Royal Oak Township.

Q: Okay. Now when did you have schools in Madison Heights that they could go to?

A: Shirley was six...in the sixth grade when she was transferred over to Madison High School, and that was on John R. The old Madison High School on John R. When she was in the sixth grade.

Q: Could you give me the year for that? Roundabout. Doesn't have to be exact.

A: Mmm.. Let me see, Gerry [inaudible] sixth grade. She started at five and what year would have she come over to the Madison High School. Well she's '32.

G: ...born...

Q: Close enough.

A: ...'32...

Q: No, it doesn't have to be exact.

A: At '32. So she was '35 or '36.

[Tape turned off and on].

A: '44, yeah. That [inaudible].

Q: About 1944.

A: Four, she came over to the high school on John R in Madison Heights. Yes.

Q: Okay, and then the rest of the children...

G: Was down at Hals...Halgreen's.

A: Shirley...Joyce also came over when she come to the sixth grade.. J...Joyce came over to the Madison High School on John R.

Q: Okay.

A: And that is where the girls both graduated from. The school in...on John R.

Q: Okay.

A: In Madison Heights.

Q: Okay.

A: Larry Deal started school over at the Roosevelt School.

Q: Mm-kay.

G: Gary.

A: Gary did. Yes. And he started school and went through school over there, at the grade school. And then he too came...no, the new Madison High School was built then. Where G...Gary came and went...finished school there.

Q: Mm-kay.

A: But what I want to say is...really, I want to tell you about a school over where the big high school...no, it was on Lincoln, where the Roosevelt school was. There was a school there that my...my daughter and...and sister-in-law came to live with us when she was twelve years old, and she had to go to school...over to the old school. And it was one-room school.

Q: Do you remember the name of the school? Was it the Kendall School?

A: Yes, it was.

Q: The Kendall School.

A: [Inaudible]. Over on Lincoln.

Q: Right.

A: Right.

Q: That school was originally on the property where the Madison High School was.

A: Yes.

Q: Right on John R. But your kids didn't get to it until it moved over to Lincoln.

A: It moved over to...that was my daughter-in-law.

Q: Okay. In fact, they were probably very near the last kids that were in that school.

A: Yes she was. She was.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yes she was. The very last. That went to school in that school before it...and I thought they moved that school over on John R. I thought they moved that school somewhere else.

Q: They did.

A: All right.

Q: They moved it on Eleven Mile and Groveland, where the United Methodist Church is now.

A: Yes. I knew that.

Q: And it's used as an activity center.

A: Mmhmm. Good.

Q: Okay, now you raised a family in Madison Heights. What did your husband do for a living?

A: He worked for General Motors and Pontiac Motor Car.

Q: How did you decide to come to Madison Heights?

A: I had...my sister-in-law...my...my sister had a home and built a garage home up on Tawas.

Q: Okay.

A: Yes. And...and that is what brought me over here, so I'd be near my sister.

Q: It wasn't the fact that your husband worked in Pontiac or anything like that?

A: No, no, no. Really, at first I wanted him to go to Waterford. Some real estate lady wanted us to buy a home in Waterford.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: But...no, he deci...

Q: That would have been closer for you, wouldn't it?

A: Yes it would have.

Q: For his work.

A: For his work.

Q: Yeah.

A: And he wanted to come over to Madison Heights. He...he too liked the area in Madison Heights.

Q: What did you like about it? What attracted you?

A: Well because it was...um...I don't know.

Q: Besides the fact that your sister was here.

A: I only had...I only had three neighbors on my street. There was only three houses on my street...

Q: Okay.

A: ...on Hudson. On East Hudson.

Q: When you first moved.

A: When we first moved there. Absolutely. Just three houses. And I liked it because it was alone.

Q: Kinda like "country".

A: "Country".

Q: Country, but being close enough to the city.

A: Very...it was very...right. Country and still being close enough to the city.

Q: Because you were a farm girl.

A: Yes, I was a farm...we had a beautiful garden. Gee.

Q: Did you really?

A: Yes, we sure did.

Q: Jav [Did you have] a large lot?

A: We bought a nice lot and...and we...we bought the one...no, we lived in a small home. We paid five dollars a month rent in this small home.

Q: Oh you're kidding. Five dollars a month?

A: Yes, absolutely.

Q: My goodness.

A: Five dollars a month rent. To a real estate company that was on John R. But anyway, when we lived there so long and...one year. We lived there one year when the real estate company told us that we could go to Pontiac and buy that house for back taxes. So you know where we went. We went right to Pontiac and bought that house for like three hundred and fifty or sixty dollars for back taxes. So it was ours.

Q: Holy cow.

G: That was real close. It was next to 84 East Hudson.

A: Yes, that was a little house next to 84 East Hudson.

G: And that would have been...what? 82?

A: Likely 82.

G: Mmhmm.

A: But then what we did...we lived in the small house and with two children, no water, no bathroom, no nothing...

Q: Mm-kay.

A: We...we...

Q: Yep. Because there wouldn't have been city water then.

A: No, no, no. There was...

Q: You had a well.

A: We had a well...

Q: Okay.

A: ...on Brockton where we carried all our water.

Q: You carried water from Brockton?

A: Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

Q: Oh, okay. Did that service all the neighbors or...?

A: Yes.



Q: Okay.

A: All the neighbors in that area didn't have no water, so we carried water. And we naturally outside...little house. But anyway, what I want to say, we lived there two or three years when my husband started savin' money to buy the lot next door. We didn't buy one lot...

Q: He's a smart guy.

A: Yes. He bought three lots. We paid fifty dollars apiece for these lots. Three lots next door. And then we had the fourth one, because we lived in the fourth one. But anyway, we didn't get...save enough money. Them days money was very hard to come by. So we had to save the money...

Q: This Depression times.

A: Yes it was. Yes it was. So my husband only worked about...let me see...about three days a week. Some weeks two days a week, and three days a week. So here was a guy that was ambitious and a working man. So what he did, in 1933 he opened a gas station.

Q: Give me your husband's name, just for the record.

A: Anthony Deal.

Q: Anthony Deal, okay.

A: Mmhmm.

Q: And he opened a gas station.

A: On the end of Hudson a building is still there today. He opened a gas station and...and my brother and...and his wife just had gotten married. Matter of fact we took 'em down to Ohio to be married. They were just young kids, 1933. So he didn't have a job. He did not have a job. So we found a house on Brockton for...for five dollars a month. Remember, five dollars...

Q: Boy, you were good shoppers.

A: Yes. So they moved into the house behind us...down one blo...one house. And then my husband put him to work at the gas station when he was workin' for General Motors.

Q: They switch off?

A: Ye...yes. And not only that. He helped and he was good with mechanics. A...and all kinds of little service for anybody in trouble for help, see?

Q: Okay.

A: Which my husband stayed at the gas station, but he worked around the gas station. And days when Tony...Anthony had to work, then he was there all day.

Q: Where was the gas station again? What was the location?

A: Hudson. Right on...right across the street from 84 East Hudson.

Q: Okay.

A: R...right across John R.

Q: Okay.

A: Right across the street. The building is there today, and it's a car lot.

Q: Oh, Verkler's...

G: Verk...yes.

Q: Verkler's Used Car lot?

A: Yes.

G: Yes.

Q: That's where the gas station was.

A: Yes, that [inaudible] gas station.

G: [Inaudible] Bunkers there for a while.

A: Yeah. Yeah. It's been different car lots. But anyway, he kept that gas station for about five years. It kept my brother and his wife in a job.

Q: And food.

A: And food.

Q: Yeah.

A: And rent. For the five years, and then he got another job.

Q: Your husband or your brother?

A: No, my brother...

Q: Brother.

A: ...got another job.

Q: Okay.

A: No, no, no. Anthony Deal stayed at General Motors. And work was getting a little bit better then. So you see... '33, '34, '35...

Q: Yeah, we're pullin' out it.

A: ...'36...

Q: We're startin' to pull out of it.

A: We're getting out of that slump, so he was workin' maybe four days or maybe five. But still he always had...um...a layoff through the summer months where they...the changeover in cars. They had the changeover.

Q: Right.

A: So anyway, then...then one time he thought there was a dance hall over on John...Lincoln, just...just about three doors down. That would be west on Lincoln.

Q: South of John R?

A: Off'n John R.

Q: Okay.

A: Just about three buildings. And I believe that Royal Oak Township bought that building after he...he had it a couple years. And he didn't make no money so he quit that.

Q: When you say a dance hall, it was what?

A: It was just a big dance hall.

Q: Just a big hall.

A: A big hall, and no drinks, no nothing. You...no pop or light drinks. And then they had a band.

Q: Okay.

A: They had a band come in. And there was...

Q: Different band all the time or the same band?

A: The same band. Just a...a...what do I want to say? A home-style band.

Q: Somebody from Madison Heights.

A: Somebody from Madison Heights.

Q: You don't happen to remember who they were, do you?

A: No, I really don't remember the...the names.

Q: Country music?

A: Country music...

Q: Really?

A: ...and popular mu...music. Mostly country music, really.

Q: Okay.

A: So anyway...

Q: Didn't make any money at it, though.

A: No, he...he was losin' money, so that only lasted two years. And he quit that. So that was up. But he still workin' at General Motors. Matter of fact, Anthony Deal put in thirty-one years for General Motors. So you know, he came through the bad times and up in the good. He worked his way up to journeyman millwright man.

Q: Excellent.

A: And he had an...eighteen or nineteen men working for him when he was...left General Motors.

Q: How did he start in General Motors? Did he have a mechanical background or did he just happen to start there or...?

A: No, he just happened to start there, and I think he started there...I'm gonna say in '28 or '29. That was before my time. But he was there years before I met him and before we were married.

Q: Mm-kay.

A: So he just went there and applied for a job and got it. So that's how he got his job at General Motors.

- Q: Can you tell me somethin' about the south end of the city? Do you remember any of the businesses that might have been down there or interesting people that might have been down there?
- A: Yes, the Murry's drug store right there on the Ten Mile Road I thought was very interesting. Mr. and Mrs. Murry. Drug store was right there on the corner of the Ten Mile Road and John R.
- Q: That would be...uh...the...uh...
- A: D.E., that was over on the Wayside...
- Q: ...the northeast corner?
- G: It was right next to the Wayside.
- A: The...right, right next to the Wayside. It...
- Q: Oh, okay.
- A: And...and, you know, Johnnie Johnson. We knew him well, because he started that bar there, in Madison Heights.
- Q: Okay, Johnnie Johnson started the Wayside?
- A: Yes. The Wayside, absolutely.
- Q: Mm-kay.
- A: Mmhmm. Mmhmm.
- G: Now it's [inaudible].
- A: I don't know what it is.
- Q: It's a bowl...bowling alley now, right?
- G: [Inaudible].
- A: Whatever it is. But Johnnie Johnson s...in the Pearlmans' store, it was over into Hazel Park. Now we used to buy a lotta groceries from them.
- Q: That was like a grocery store.
- A: Yes it was.
- Q: Okay.

A: And he was very nice. And they were really great.

Q: He lived in Madison Heights?

A: Yes he did. He...they lived behind the building. They...believe it or not, this is the truth...he lived...there was just a little store, not much of anything. And they just a room or two in the back where they lived.

Q: Mm-kay.

A: Perlman's.

Q: Okay.

A: But one day in about '36 they had a fire. A big fire. So then they build 'em a nice big building with a living quarters upstairs and a nice store downstairs.

Q: Now they built where? In Hazel Park or Madison Heights?

A: Hazel Park.

Q: Where was the first building? Hazel Park?

A: Yes it all is in Hazel Park. Matter of fact, the store I'm sure is still there today.

Q: Okay, so the Perlman's, they were Mad...Hazel Park residents.

A: Yes, they were Hazel Park residents, but that is a little area that I know well. But anyway we used to...and another thing is, we used to have...um...a bar we used to go to Saturday night. My sister and her husband and my brother-in-law and his wife, we'd all go down to the 'lev...the Eleven Mile Road and John R. There was an open bar there and a dance floor in the summertime when...

Q: There was...did they have barbecue there?

A: Yes, they did.

Q: Okay, I know where it is.

A: Sure.

Q: We talked to the mailman...

A: Okay.

Q: Mr. Rider?

A: Rider.

Q: Rider. He told us about the...

A: Yes.

Q: ...the barbecue.

A: Yes.

Q: Did you have a good time there?

A: We...that was every weekend.

Q: Lot of people?

A: On Saturday night. Oh, absolutely. You can get down on the floor to square-dance...they used to square-dance.

Q: Really?

A: And...we had...that was our weekend.

Q: Good people?

A: Good peo...yes.

Q: No problems?

A: No. No. No, I...

Q: Because you didn't even have police protection or anything.

A: No fights. No, we didn't have nothing. But we just went there, had a few beers and danced and had fun and barbecued, eat something. And you know, another place that was a good place to eat is the...um...Twelve Mile Road and John R.

Q: So there was something up here at Twelve Mile?

A: Yes. Yes, absolutely.

Q: You're kidding me.

A: A big old farmhouse.

Q: Okay.

A: It was a farmhouse. And when we wanted to go out to eat, that is where we went to eat.

Q: Do you remember which corner?

A: Yes, I do. Right where the Green Lantern is, absolutely.

Q: Okay.

A: Right where the Green Lantern...was a big old farmhouse at one time.

Q: Do you remember the name of the place? "Big old farmhouse" prob'ly.

A: Likely we called it "the farmhouse". But anyway if we'd have company, that's where we'd take 'em.

Q: Really?

A: See? Because I didn't have no water in the house, no nu...you know, we just had a little kerosene, three-burner kerosene, if you know what I'm talkin' about.

Q: Sure. Sure.

A: We had our house with coal and wood.

Q: Coal. Coal-heated.

A: Coal...

Q: And wood.

A: ...and wood. Mmhmm.

Q: This...did you do it in the stove in the kitchen?

A: No. No. We had in the...in the living area, in the largest room was an old icing glass. It used to have a beautiful ice. I'd give anything to have one of them today, believe me.

Q: Yeah, my grandmother had...great-grandmother had one of those in my [inaudible].

A: Yes.

Q: Yeah. With the chrome around it.

A: Oh, yes. With the chrome around it here.



Q: And the glass in the door.

A: And the chrome...

Q: Yeah.

A: ...around here. All the chrome around here and stood up on legs. Absolutely. Today it would be...

Q: Be worth a fortune [inaudible].

A: Yes. It would have been, and I don't know who I...we gave it to, but when we was well enough and had the money, we bought fuel oil stove.

Q: Okay. Your house must have gone through a lot of changes...

A: Yes it did.

Q: ...since you've been there.

A: It...it did. Well this is still in the little house.

Q: Oh, this was in the little house you're talkin' about?

A: Yes...

Q: Oh, okay.

A: ...the little house. All the floors were so cold. I had two little children, and the floors were so cold that they played in their bed. I...I had a wooden platform in their bed, take the mattress off. And they played in the bed. That's how cold the floors were.

G: [Inaudible] they built the house [inaudible].

A: Yeah, we built the house.

Q: Ok...oh, okay.

G: [Inaudible].

Q: Did you build it yourselves?

A: Yes.

Q: Oh you did, really?

A: My...

G: [Inaudible].

A: My husband...my brother from over in Hazel Park had an old madeover Ford tractor, like. All it had on it, no top at all. Just an old Ford car is what it really was at one time.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: And there was just a seat, and over here there was nothing. And we major...we got the...we got the permit and...and the blueprints to build this house next door.

Q: Who'd you get the permit from? You had to go to where to get a permit? Do you remember?

A: I don't know, but we got...

Q: It must have been somewhere in Royal Oak.

A: And it could be or it could have been over on Woodward Avenue.

Q: Okay.

A: Over on Woodward, I think it was, where he went to get the permit.

Q: And then you bought plans.

A: Yes, we bought the plans. Mmhmm. Mmhmm. And then...

Q: Weren't you scared? You ever build a house before?

A: No. No, but we were young. We knew we could do it.

Q: You weren't smart enough to be scared.

A: No, we...you're right! Absolutely. So anyway...

G: [Inaudible].

A: ...they took the...the plow and plowed that up. Where the house was gonna be, they ploughed it up.

Q: Okay.

A: And then they had a scraper and they scraped that dirt out, and we would come in one area and we'd go out that area, see?

Q: Did you dig a basement? Were you diggin' a basement down there?

A: We dug a basement with the plow and the trac...old tractor. And, you know, one of those scoopers that scooped the dirt out.

Q: Holy cow.

A: Yes. And when they got down in the clay, guess who rode on the truck...rode on the plow?

Q: You did.

A: I did.

Q: To make sure it didn't bounce all over the place.

A: Yes. Right. When the dirt got heavy.

G: [Inaudible].

Q: Sure.

A: And, too, when my brother wasn't there to drive the tractor, guess who drive...drove the tractor? I did.

Q: Well, you're a talented woman.

A: Well no, dumb [laughs]. I just...because we wanted that house built...

Q: The way you wanted it.

A: The way we wanted it. And we dug the basement, just like I'm tellin' ye, and it was hard times, and you really...

G: [Inaudible].

A: ...yes, and we started...

Q: It was hard even getting parts.

A: ...the house in '39.

Q: It was hard getting lumber and stuff during that time, wasn't it?

A: No, it wasn't...we didn't have no problem gettin' ...

Q: Really?

A: ...the lumber. It...we started that basement in 1939.

Q: Okay.

A: I can tell you that. Because they said, "Oh you'll never, never finish that house. Youse guys are just diggin' that hole out there for nothin'." "Well," I said, "I'm not worried about it. We'll...we'll see what we can do." So, anyway, we got the basement dug and we hired someone to come in and do the cem...this is sumpin' we did not know nothin' about was cement work. We had somebody come in and do the c'ment work.

Q: And the...what, block? Did you pour the basement? Block basement?

A: No, they blocks.

Q: Yeah.

A: It was made out of cinderblocks.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: And brought the cinderblocks. We got the cinderblocks. And then they come in and done the building of the cinderblocks. And then we had somebody come in to put a steel beam across the cinderblocks. Then I went over to...on Van Dyke and put the order in. I took my plans over...over to them and showed 'em what I wanted. I want enough lumber.

Q: Lumber.

A: [Inaudible].

Q: Which lumberyard, do you remember? Mile Road?

A: Yes, on Van Dyke and near the Ten Mile Road. N...n...

Q: Prob'ly Ulrich's Lumber.

A: Yeah. Ulrich's...

Q: Ulrich's Lumber is on Nine Mile Road.

A: All right.

Q: Still there.

A: Still there.

Q: Yup.

- A: Okay. All I did was take 'em the plans and they sent that lumber out, just like that. W...and...no, the lumber wasn't that much money. We was able to pay cash for the lumber.
- Q: But you'd been savin' too.
- A: Yes we had been savin'. Absolutely. Savin'. Absolutely. And we bought the lumber, paid cash for the lumber. And honest to goodness, my brothers...I had three brothers...and friends and my brother-in-law, Stretch, and they come over and...and what we did...what we did, we got a reg'lar builder, contractor from over in Center Line.
- Q: You don't remember his name, do you?
- A: Started with a B. Anyway, he come over. All he did to this house is tell them men what to do.
- Q: Did he stay there the whole time?
- A: No, he worked weekends. All of the carpenters worked weekends. But in two weekends we had closed that house up.
- Q: You're kidding me.
- A: No.
- Q: That was with you and your brother-in-law and...
- A: Yes, I...I...
- Q: ...your husband and...
- A: ...everybody worked.
- Q: ...three brothers.
- A: Everyone includin' myself handed lumber and pu...pushed lumber up to the roof of that house. We worked continuously.
- Q: Tell me about the house. How many rooms?
- A: It is five rooms and bath and...
- Q: Okay.
- A: ...a basement, and then...before I wanted to retire I put a dormer up on the top. Because I knew my retirement money wouldn't be enough, that I would want extra money. So there's a dormer up on the top of the house.

Q: So you worked too, in addition to your husband working. When...

G: Absolutely.

T: That was later on, though.

A: Later on in life, I put twenty-four years in workin', at Roy...Royal Oak Beaumont Hospital.

Q: Oh, did you really?

A: Yes, I did.

Q: Okay. What did you do at Royal Oak Beaumont?

A: I was...I ended in as...started in at Royal Oak Beaumont as a helper in the kitchen.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: But I ended up as a supervisor in the dietary department.

Q: Okay. When did you start at Beaumont? What year?

A: I started at Beaumont in 1957. Right close...1957, I think it will show.

Q: How much different is Beaumont Hospital today than it was when you started?

A: Oh, I...no...no...no comparison. When I first went to Royal Oak Beaumont, we had two hundred and...like...fifty beds and twenty-seven beds in emergency.

Q: What do you got now?

A: Oh, thousands.

Q: Thousands.

A: Yes.

Q: Because they've got two places. They got...

A: Yes.

Q: ...Royal Oak and they got Troy on top of it.

A: Troy. Yes, absolutely. Absolutely. Beautiful doctors over there, absolutely.

Q: Nice place.

A: Oh yes. Yes. When you're sick, that's the place to go.

G: She worked beside the kids in the kitchen.

A: Oh, I know.

G: They're now doctors.

A: They're doctors. I had two young men come in and work for me that are doctors today. And one is Doctor Sperl. I saw him about ten years ago at Beaumont before I retired. Doctor Sperl. He works out of...over on Outer Drive, the Jewish hospital...

Q: Sinai.

A: Sinai.

Q: Sinai.

A: Yes. Mount Sin...beautiful doctor. Beautiful young man. And the other man went out of state, so I don't know where he is. Beautiful. These young kids, I loved workin' with young kids, really and truly.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: Our night gang in the dietary department was all high-school guys comin' in from high school or college.

Q: Nice kids, though.

A: Oh yes. Yes, absolutely. NOT like we have today. And I would like to ask you a question...why?

Q: I have no idea, because they don't keep 'em busy enough. They're not buildin' houses.

G: Yeah.

Q: That's the reason. They don't have anything to do. Or else they have too much to do.

A: It's sad. It's sad. It is sad. I worked with a beautiful group of young men, like I said. Goin' to high...finishin' high school and goin' to college. Really some of 'em are electricians. One of the...Bill is an electrician at Beaumont, and Mike is a supervisor in the yard work at Royal Oak. And another one that worked with me is head of...I don't know what he is...but he's out at Troy Beaumont. But

he's up there. He's a supervisor. These guys all turned out to be supervisors in Beaumont. And they started right down on the level, you know. They worked their way in the dish room and...and sweepin' and moppin' the floors, whatever I...cleanin' Frigidaires, anything we had to do. And then they worked over...now, Bill started out in electric. But now, you believe it, he's got his license. He's electrical engineer. See, these young kids knew. The young kids of yesterday knew they had to have an education to get somewhere.

Q: Mm-kay.

A: I told 'em they just can't make a livin'. You've got to have the education behind you.

Q: I want to get us back into Madison Heights now.

A: Okay.

Q: When you were here, there wasn't anything. You didn't have any plumbing.

A: No. No plumbing, no water.

Q: Electricity you had.

A: Yes, we did have electrical.

Q: Okay, what were the roads like?

A: The dir...the roads in the spring and the fall, we were...we had two ruts, it was that deep. That your bottom of your car...

Q: You're...you're making a sign about eighteen inches, I'd say?

A: Yes. Mhmm.

Q: Okay.

A: Our ca...our driveway...our Hudson Street was...you stayed right in those tracks, goin' in and out.

Q: What happens if you have somebody comin' the opposite way? You backed up, probably.

A: No, they...they stayed. They knew better. No, they knew better. No, no, no, no. The roads were bad. Roads were bad. Really.

Q: You...grocery shopping. As far as grocery shopping, you went to Perlman's. I mean...



A: Yes, we did.

Q: ...that was the only place to go grocery shopping.

A: That was...it was only a half a mile. You could walk down there to the store. You know, there was no problem.

Q: Medical care, everybody went to where, Beaumont?

A: No, we did not. We did not have Beaumont when we got sick. We went to Ohmacher...Ohmacher's Hospital in...in Royal Oak on...in top of the...what is that building there on the corner? It's on the west side of Main Street in Royal Oak. No, it's not Main, it was Washington. Washington and...

Q: Okay.

A: ...Fourth Street.

Q: Okay.

A: There was a hospital. Well, really, truly, he's the one that started in...in...out Beaumont, really and truly.

Q: Oh did he really?

A: Yes, he really did.

Q: Okay.

A: See? We...

Q: His name was Ohmacher.

A: Yes. Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: Hospital. In Royal Oak.

Q: How did you get there? You had a car, right?

A: Yes, we had a car. We...

Q: Was there any transportation?

A: ...always had a car.

Q: Was there transportation they could use if they didn't have a car, because not everyone had a car.

A: Well, you know what? There...can I tell you? There was a little streetcar that run down the middle of Stevison [sic] Highway. A little streetcar. You could walk over to there and take a streetcar and go into Royal Oak.

Q: Yeah, that's what I was wondering. I heard tell there was a streetcar somewhere.

A: Oh yes.

Q: Okay.

A: And it would go into Detroit too. Well, I used to be able to take the streetcar and go into Detroit.

Q: Now it went down what, Stephenson?

A: Down...

G: [Inaudible].

A: It...it followed Stevison [sic] Highway.

Q: See, Stephenson went all the way down into Detroit and...and he...he built houses in Detroit and then built 'em right along Stephenson all the way out.

A: Right.

Q: Because Mr. Rider the mailman, who lived down on Harlo...

A: Yes.

Q: ...said that he worked for him building houses out this way, until he got into Madison Heights.

A: Right. Right. And then that streetcar went right into Royal Oak. I imagine it backed up and went back the other way.

Q: You don't remember a streetcar around Eleven Mile and John R, do you? Because we found tracks there.

A: Yes, there was, absolutely.

Q: There was.

A: Oh...no...I don't know if 'leven Mile Road, no, no. The only streetcar I can remember is the one that went down...

Q: Stephenson.

A: ...Stevison [sic] Highway.

Q: See, nobody else remembers it either and I [inaudible].

A: No, that's before my time.

Q: Okay. Now somebody sug...one of the people we interviewed suggested that maybe the tracks were from reinforcing, that they were using to reinforce the road when they were put in there.

A: Yeah. Well now, I came here--like I said--in Madison Heights early in 1932, and I been here ever since.

Q: Did you get involved with the school at all? You said you liked kids. Did you...did you get involved with the PTA or parents' group or anything like that?

A: Oh...no, not really. Not really. I don't know why, but I never...I just never got interested in...

Q: How about church?

A: No, we really...my husband really was born and raised a strict Catholic. And...and then I was raised a Methodist.

Q: Mm-kay.

A: And we just...neither one of us. My girls both went to St. Margaret's Episcopal Church over on Stevison [sic] Highway. They went...that's where they went to church, yes.

Q: Okay, does that...

A: They did go to church there.

Q: Church still there or not?

A: Yes, it is.

Q: It is.

A: It's still there. 'Cause my daughter was married in there too, yes. Mmhmm. And...and when I would...there was times I would go with 'em, you know. Take 'em and go with 'em over there. But to say I went every Sunday, no I didn't go.

- Q: What about this area here, around John R and Thirteen Mile, what do you remember about that?
- A: Well, really and truly, to tell you the truth, John R and the Thirteen Mile Road and the Fourteen Mile Road, where [J.O.?] Hudson's and Sears is, that was a...a farm...
- Q: Okay.
- A: ...to tell you the truth. That was a farm.
- Q: There really wasn't a whole lot around here then?
- A: No, no there was not. There was a house there, a farmer there. But no there wasn't. And on the other side was the same thing. I seen this all build up, because this was farmland.
- Q: Mm-kay.
- A: And...and my husband took me out on the Fifteen Mile Road, to teach me to drive.
- Q: Fifteen where? Fifteen and John R?
- A: John R.
- Q: Okay.
- A: And we went to the east. I went out there twice with him. He says, "You're just too dumb. You can't learn to drive." Well, we had the stick shift, you know. And the little gas thing, when it went up and down...
- Q: Oh yeah, that was tough.
- A: ...[the steering wheel?].
- Q: Yeah, that was tough.
- A: And the shifting of the car, and the little gas that made it go. And you had your clutch and you had your gas [and all that]. Well, two trips out there, and he said, "You're too dumb. You're not gonna even be able to drive." Next morning...see, my brother worked at General Motors with him. So the car sitting in the driveway. I said, "This girl's not too dumb to drive."
- Q: Not if you could build a house, you weren't too dumb to drive.

A: No, that was even before the house, believe me. I had two little babies. One with a...and sittin' here with a pillow on her lap, about four or six months old. And the other one on the other side.

Q: In the car.

A: In the car.

Q: In the car.

A: I backed that car up and I backed it right out of the driveway and right into the ditch.

Q: [Laughs]. And stayed there until your husband came home.

A: No, it did not. The mailman came along. Right then and there, the mailman. The milkman. We had a milkman.

Q: Okay, you remember his name?

A: In time. No, and I don't remember his name either.

Q: Okay.

A: But anyway, we had the milkman. He come along, he says, "Looks like you're in trouble." "Yes," I said, "I'm in trouble." He says, "Well let me see what I can do." So he got in the car and just drove right on out. See, I was afraid what to do with it, so he drove it right on out of the ditch. I got in that car and I went down to the Ten Mile Road, and I turned left. And I went on...it seems like it was Russell, that went right through to Detroit. And I went right through to Detroit with that car that day. Went to my mother's.

Q: Holy cow.

A: Went to my mother's over acrost [sic] Eight Mile Road

Q: I didn't ask you where your mother lived. Where'd your...where'd your mom and dad live in Detroit?

A: Eighty...no, I'm not gonna be able tell you the n...number. They lived on Han[na] in the first block. The house is still there.

Q: Around Eight Mile.

A: The Eight Mile Road.

Q: Okay.

A: Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

Q: That's close enough.

A: And I went right over there on Hanna and put that car in the driveway, stayed there for the day, turned around and come right, straight back home. He says, "What did you...how come the car is moved?" I said, "I went to my mother's today." [Laughter]. I'm not gonna say the words he said. "You didn't!" I said "Yes, I did." And I said, "And you tell me I'm too dumb to drive a car. I'm not. This girl's gonna drive." And I drove for...I would imagine...in and out of Detroit, not much in Madison Heights or into Royal Oak. No, I didn't go into Royal Oak. But I used to be able to go to Detroit.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: With the car. And I drove it like that, I think, for maybe three, four years like that. Just...just a little bit at a time. To get nerve enough to go...down to get my driver's license.

Q: When you say you didn't drive much in Madison Heights or Royal Oak, why not? Because there just wasn't much here?

A: There wasn't...no, there wasn't nothing here in Madison Heights to go to.

Q: Okay.

A: No, really, nothing. No, nothing. Absolutely nothing. No. We had a lumber yard right there this side of Lincoln or there by Lincoln.

Q: What was the name of the lumberyard, do you remember?

A: Jim's Lumber, yeah.

Q: Jim's Lumber, okay.

A: Yes, absolutely. Jim's Lumber was there. If we wanted any wood for anything or if I wanted any...even paint. I bought paint to paint the house. When we lived in just the little three-roomed house, I painted it myself. I did...I did...I didn't need nobody to help me. I just got lookin' down there and got the paint. And really, you didn't really only go to Royal Oak for big shopping for clothes or something, you know what I mean?

Q: Sounds like goin' downtown.

A: Yes. Yes, going down...

Q: Did you go downtown in Detroit?

- A: Yes we did.
- Q: Okay. Did you go shopping at Hudson's, things like...
- A: Yes we did. Yes we did. When my girls were growin' up, our day after Thanksgivin' was downtown Detroit.
- Q: That's what we used to do too.
- A: Yes. And took my children down there, to Hudson's. And we spent the whole day down there, had dinner, had ice cream and everything before we come back home. So any...and then too when I got my license, I used to drive down to Sears and park behind Sears in Highland Park.
- Q: Okay, I know where that is.
- A: And...and take the kids to Boblo. I would take my kids and come with some other kids, you know, maybe three or four kids. And we'd go to Boblo for the day, you know what I mean? Re...really, we didn't until Shirley and Joy started into high school where we went to the city often. Because I done all their sewin'. I made all their clothes. And most all of their clothes.
- Q: And where'd you get your cloth? Perlman's?
- A: No, they didn't have it. Back then I would have to go into Montgomery Ward's and take the streetcar and go into Royal Oak. To Montgomery Ward's.
- Q: Where was the Montgomery Ward's in Royal Oak?
- A: Right on the corner of W...Washington and Fourth Street. Right there on the corner.
- Q: Big store.
- A: Beautiful big sto...yes it was, absolutely. For years and years. Matter of fact...no, I'm not gonna say we did, and we bought furniture just for the little house. We...when we built the big house and finished that up, then I bought my furniture. I went to Triangle's and bought carpet and furniture in Royal Oak, see? So that is where I bought my furniture. Some of it I still have.
- Q: How 'bout your food? You said you had a big garden. Did you grow a lot of food?
- A: Oh yes, yes, yes. My girls...I had pictures of 'em when they were at least six, seven years old. They...they went to the few neighbors that we had there in Madison Heights and sold garden stuff.

Q: Did they really?

A: Absolutely.

Q: Could you give me the names of some of your neighbors? Some of the ones you had?

A: Mrs. Beech was...Mrs. Beech. And Mr. Beech had the little gas station right down on John R. Right just...right...

[Tape turned off and on].

Q: Okay.

A: The gas station...and Mr. Beech had the gas station right down on John R, where we bought all our gas. Just a little gas station.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: Nothing to...

Q: Which corner on John R? What Mile Road?

A: John R and...between Hudson and Conent.

Q: Okay.

A: Hudson and Kalama. Mr. Beet...and Mr. Beech, they lived in the back area until Mr. Beech had enough money and bought the house on Kalama. A big two-family house on Kalama and they lived there for...oh, until he died. He died when he was still at the gas station, Mr. Beech. And then she lived there for...and she would raise three children. They were Donny and Betty and...the...the oldest one was a nurse. She worked at the Beaumont Hospital, when I worked at Beaumont Hospital...I'm trying to think of what that girl's name was.

Q: Good friends of your kids?

A: No.

Q: Not really?

A: No, not really. No, they were older children...

Q: Oh, okay.

A: ...than my children. Yes.

Q: How about some of the other neighbors?



A: The other neighbor...the other neigh...

[End of Side One, Beginning of Side Two]

Q: Okay.

A: The only neighbors that my children had to play with, believe it or not, is the Remington children, and they lived on Brockton.

Q: Mm-kay.

A: And there was...oh, maybe four or five of the...of the Remington children that my children played with. And then the Giffords lived over on the next street over.

Q: Well, you were really far apart.

A: Yes.

Q: When you said you said you had three neighbors, you had three far-apart neighbors.

A: Yes. Yes, absolutely. And the Giffords lived over one block across from Brockton, and I'm trying to think of what the name of that street was over there. But anyway their names was the Giffords, and they had two boys and a girl. One girl was the same age as my oldest girl. And then we had the Witsets that lived away down, closer on Brockton to John R, and they were good neighbors. And they had the telephone, honey. They...they...we did not...

Q: The only telephone.

A: The only telephone in the whole neighborhood, see? We didn't have...and they of course naturally had a big brick house, and they had water and bathrooms. We...none of us did. So anyway...let me see. I'm trying to think of an...

Q: What...what did they do? Did he have a...a good job or...?

A: Yes, he had a job. He had a job at Chrysler's.

Q: Okay.

A: He worked for Chrysler's.

Q: Okay.

A: And they had this big house down there. And she worked at Royal Oak Hospital. She worked at the Royal Oak Hospital. She was a cook in the kitchen at the Ohmacher's Hospital in Royal Oak.

Q: Mm-kay.

A: So...um...

Q: Tell me about some of the other businesses. You remember any of the other businesses around?

A: The red and white store has always been there from when I went to the...when moved over there, when I was only seventeen, eighteen years old. That's when I moved over there.

Q: Where is the red and white store?

A: The red and white is still there and that's on Glenn...

Q: Okay.

A: ...and John R. It's still there. And that's always there. But we never went there to do our shoppin'. We went down to Perlman's. Perlman's gave us a better deal, so we went down to Perlman's every day.

Q: See, I told you you were good at shoppin'.

A: Yeah, right. Right.

Q: The red and white store was what? That was a grocery store?

A: Yes, it was a grocery store, but everything was just ten cents more, and when you're makin', you know, thirty-five or forty dollars a week, honey, you don't go up to the red and white store.

Q: Okay. You don't 'member...you don't remember who owned the red and white store, do you?

A: No, I sure can't tell you...

Q: No, because you didn't go there enough.

A: No, I didn't go there enough, and I didn't...we done all our grocery shopping from Perlman's, believe it or not.

Q: Anybody else?

A: I'm tryin' to think who else I could think of there in that neighborhood. I know...I...I know there was ano...w...we had...were friends always with the...what was the Berger's [inaudible]? Bergers!

G: Bergers.

A: Bergers. [Inaudible]. We were always friends with the Bergers. Now they lived down the street closer to my sister, on my way to my sister's. We knew the Bergers. But our children never played together. Their children was older, so we never played with them. And the Sorens. We always was friends with the Sorens. The Sorens. And believe it or not, with only that few neighborhoods of people there, would you believe it, that we had a card party and played cards once a week in the afternoon? Mrs. Soren and...and Mrs. Gifford and myself...and there was another lady there and I can't tell you what her name was. The four of us, we would get together and play cards and talk.

Q: Did you get together even in the wintertime or was it too tough in the wintertime?

A: It was too hard. In the wintertime and too cold.

Q: It must have been pretty lonely in the winter.

A: Yes it was. But we had our good old radio, you remember. That's all we had, was radio in them days. And they...

Q: What were your favorite programs? Remember any of them?

A: Amos 'n Andy.

Q: Okay.

A: And the Lone...no, I don't think the Lone Ranger was on at that time. No, Amos 'n Andy. Hmm.

Q: That's okay. I just wondered.

A: I just can't remember any of the other shows. There was all kinds of shows on, really.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: Yes. Or on...on...shows on...on radio. We had good radio.

Q: Little by little...you had no neighbors to start...when did people start moving, would you say?

A: [Inaudible]. Well, when...no, I'm not going to...what year, Gerry? What year did they start buildin' those little houses?

G: [Inaudible].

A: I know my son Gary went to school over at the Roosevelt School. That's where he started to school, over at the Roosevelt. And...but the neighbors went no...when they came in and built those little homes there in Madison Heights...

Q: When you're talkin' "little homes", you're talkin' about where?

G: Like across the street from us.

A: Right all the way around us...

Q: Okay.

A: ...are small homes.

Q: Okay.

A: Yes. And then there was a builder that came in and built some larger homes there down closer to John R and they started buildin' in, you know, a little bit bigger house there.

G: Yeah, no base...

A: No basements.

G: ...three or four...

A: Yes. They...

Q: This was, like what, the late forties, prob'ly, early fifties?

G: Late forties, early fifties I would think.

A: Yes.

G: And then Gary was a little bit older.

A: Yes.

G: Gary was born in '42.

A: In '42. So they...it...it had to be in '4...in '42, '43. Oh yes...

G: [Inaudible].

A: ...it would [inaudible] right about '45.

G: [Inaudible].

A: In 1945. And they built those small houses back on Brockton, that give us neighbors. And behind us by Irene's, and where Margaret still lives...

G: Right.

A: ...and Pearl across the street. In about '45, yes. That's when they started buildin'. So th...one contractor come in, now they were nice homes. There was not basements under 'em, but they were really, really with water and 'lectric and everything...

G: And then like...like the lot...that the third lot was sold. But they built that house there.

A: Yes, and...and...and...

G: That was after I met Gary.

A: Yes, that was...

Q: Did you get rid of all three lots?

A: No, just one. I...

Q: Just the one?

A: No, I'm sorry. We sold two. We sold the little house on the other side. We rented it for years after we moved over into the big house.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: And we rented it for years.

Q: That helped a little bit, right?

A: Oh, yeah. Fifteen dollars a month...

Q: Mmhmm.

A: ...all we ever got for it. And then we had a friend that wanted to buy it that took the gas station over. When Tony closed the gas station...I should say Anthony closed the gas station, there was Mr. Davies took it over after Tony left. The gas station. And he wanted to buy the house so he would be close to the gas station.

Q: The little house.

A: The little house. Mmhmm.

Q: And he did buy it.

A: So we sold it to him.

Q: Mm-kay.

A: Mmhmm.

Q: Little house still isn't there, though?

A: No, that's long gone.

Q: What year did your husband...what year did Anthony get rid of the gas station?

A: In...

Q: Do you remember?

A: '33...

G: [Inaudible] '38, '39.

A: ...'38, '39. Yes, when we s...in '39, when we started buildin' the big house, yes. Yes, and I'll say he got rid of it in '38 because then we had saved enough money, believe it or not.

Q: To build a house. So you used the money from the gas station to build a house.

A: And...and from his work.

Q: So you were pretty much all alone...

A: And then it...

Q: ...from 1928 to about 1945. That was pretty empty.

A: It...no, no. That was just country land.

Q: What did you do with your...um...say, your waste, your refuse, your trash, your...whatever? Where did that go? Did you bury it?

A: What...we really didn't have the waste that we have today.

Q: Today.

A: No, we don't. We d...we had our garden. But we buried, you know, the leftovers from the garden.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: We put that down back into the ground.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: So really...really we didn't have no garbage pickup. No, no...no junk pickup. No.

Q: Do you remember when the incinerator came in?

A: Yes I do. And I'm not gonna tell you what year that was in. I do...

Q: Well that, I've...I think it was about 1955.

A: Yes...

Q: I was wondering how they sold it to people, because I've heard one story of how the incinerator was sold to people.

A: Well, we didn't vote for it. Now really we did not vote for the incinerator here in Madison Heights.

Q: Okay.

A: No we did not. No, we were against it.

Q: Okay.

A: Because...now...now I'll tell you...you know, when we had trash...I'm tryin' to think of what we did with the trash if we had it. Our old cars, we turned 'em in and sold, you know, to the...wherever we bought our car...

Q: Mmhmm.

A: ...so we didn't have that. And like any leftovers that we had that was good, we gave it to people that didn't have that much that could use it. But that old stove in the...that we had, a beautiful old stove, we gave it to somebody that needed a stove. And even to a kerosene...when I got a different gas stove in the kitchen, we gave that kerosene stove to somebody that didn't have that much.

Q: See, back in those days,...

G: [Inaudible].

Q: ...people were more recyclers.

G: ...yeah. [Inaudible].

- A: Right.
- Q: They were into recycling back then.
- A: Right. Right. Well, when we bought the...I bought the gas stove that had the pump on 'em, where you pump...
- Q: Yeah. Kinda like a blowtorch.
- A: Yes.
- Q: Yeah.
- A: Right. We...we got rid of the kerosene and that was in the little house, and then we gave that stove to somebody that needed it because it was clean and good...worked good. So we gave it to somebody that had less than we had. Mmhmm. So we didn't have...we didn't have what you...you wouldn't take it out and throw it out.
- Q: No, because you made more use of everything.
- A: Right. Of every...
- Q: You had to save too long to get it anyway.
- A: Right. Right. Right. So we didn't have trash, no we didn't. And all of the waste from the table we buried out by the garden. We had a shovel and dug a hole and just buried anything that we had. Waste from the table, like chicken bones or bones of any kind. We just buried all that stuff ourselves. We never had no trash. No. But you don't have...today you don't have the trash...we didn't have the trash. When you went and bought a bottle of medicine, it wasn't come in a fancy container, a box where you had to throw it away. No, we didn't have that kind of paper, no. Mm-mm.
- Q: Mmmhmm.
- A: No. No. And...the soap, we got in a soapbox. But it wasn't that much, and I can't remember where we ever got rid of any of it, unless we buried it all.
- Q: Do you remember any of the political people from back then? Any of the people that were...?
- A: I remember...what was the woman mayor...?
- Q: Virginia Solberg.
- A: She was a...she was...bless her heart. She was a doll.



Q: Was she?

A: Yes, absolutely she was. We'd go down there and ask for anything, and that's where we got it, right there.

Q: Where did you...where did you go talk to her?

A: Right on John R. Absolutely.

Q: Was this when she was the mayor?

A: Yes, absolutely. When she w...before she even got to be mayor, she was in the city hall there on John R.

Q: What did she do, do you remember?

A: Just bookwork is all I could ever see her, with the taxes and that.

Q: Mm-kay.

A: And we pay our taxes fair. Sure.

Q: This is in the old city hall you're talkin' about.

A: Yes, that's in the old city hall, right there on John R.

Q: What kind of things would you ask her? What kind of things did you need back then?

A: Well, like when we wanted anything, to know anything. We could go and ask her.

Q: Just find out what was goin' on.

A: Yes, like in...in...I think that we went to her...no we did not. We went...my husband went to a lo...land contractor over on Woodward Avenue to find out, you know, before we dug the basement or got a permit or whatever he had to do to get that, and...and then I wrote to the Detroit News and got what I thought would make a good house, you know.

Q: Plans.

A: Plans.

Q: Because they had plans...

A: Plans.

Q: ...in the newspaper.

A: Right. They did. And I wrote to the Detroit News and got the plans for the house. Absolutely. And he went over on Woodward Avenue, and I'm not gonna be able to tell you...it was right over there on Lincoln and Woodward Avenue in that neighborhood, and I'm not gonna be able to you what...where he went to get it.

Q: To get the pla...to get the permit.

A: Permit or s...something that where we could build.

Q: Mm-kay.

A: And I think that we went down to Madison Heights too, the city hall there, to find out a little bit more, because that was in 1939.

Q: Do you remember when the big push came to make ci...Madison Heights a city?

A: Yes, I remember that.

Q: Did people come to your house and talk to you...

A: Yes, absolutely.

Q: ...or how'd they convince you that it should become a city?

A: Come to the...come to the house.

Q: Mmhmm.

A: And the same way with buildin' Beaumont Hospital. They...we had men come to our house about buildin' a hospital, and we donated for the hospital, to go, believe it or not, in Beaumont.

Q: Mm-kay.

A: And...and the same way with makin' this a city of Madison Heights, absolutely. They came to the house and talked to us, you know. And they would come in the evening, where they'd talk to both of us, even though we're just there in a three-room house, they didn't care. They just wanted our opinion and what we thought about it, and we thought it was great.

Q: You thought it was a good idea.

A: Oh, absolutely.

Q: Weren't you worried you weren't gonna be country anymore?

A: No, I was not worried. I was ready for it to be built up. I was ready for...to have more homes in here and to be built up, you know? Where we'd have stores to go to shop.

Q: Yeah.

A: Other than Royal Oak. Because that's the only store we ever went to, is Royal Oak. Yes. Even then when my husband and we bought Larry's Bicycle. We had to go down...we didn't go to Royal Oak. We went down on John R. And then there they have a little shopping center, like Ned's Auto Supply down there on John R.

Q: Yeah, it used to be part of Fire....Ned's, and then it was Firestone.

A: Firestone.

Q: Yes.

A: But when we went down it was Ned's, to buy Gary a little tricycle or bicycle, you know, we went down there.

Q: Was this in Madison Heights?

A: No, it was not. That was down on...that was down on John R, down towards Highland Park...on your way to Highland Park.

Q: So you had to go all that way just to buy a bicycle.

A: Yeah. Right. We did. Mmhmm. We didn't see anything we liked in Montgomery Ward's.

Q: Kind of an incentive to make it a city when they finally came along...

A: Right.

Q: ...and said, "Let's make it a city."

A: Right. Right. I was all for it. I was all for it. Yes, absolutely. So anyway, our big store was in Royal Oak. We used to go...well, naturally, everything was in Royal Oak...

Q: Did you go to farmer's market in Royal Oak?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you ever sell anything in farmer's market?

- A: No, we never did. No, we never did. But we used to go there and buy vegetables...no, not vegetables, just to go to see what they had. Or we used to buy fruit and strawberries in there, see? In the springtime, when your strawberries and your peaches...
- Q: Things that you couldn't grow in your own garden.
- A: Right. Right. We'd go to the market to buy it. Absolutely. And you know, another market we always used to go to too--and I bought many of things that we didn't have enough to can—is into Hazel Park at the Nine Mile Road and John R.
- Q: What was the name of that one?
- A: It was a big market down there in...
- Q: Hazel Park was a city, wasn't it?
- A: Yes it was.
- Q: It already was a city.
- A: Absolutely. Absolutely. Absolutely. And not only that. Down in Hazel Park there on the corner was a big open air market in the summertime. I imagine farmers brought their vegetables in there. Course, we weren't buying vegetables unless we bought a bushel o' tomatoes to can, and I didn't have that many.
- Q: Did you do a lot of canning?
- A: Yes I did. Hundreds of quarts.
- Q: Really?
- A: Hundreds.
- Q: Mostly vegetables, or meat too?
- A: I canned chickens because...when we built the big house...after we built the big house, we raised chickens. We had a chicken yard.
- Q: Oh did you really?
- A: And we raised turkeys, like a hundred...I'd buy a hundred baby turkeys. And put them upstairs. And believe it or not, in the...when we grew our turkeys, we lost one baby turkey. We had 'em that well-kept there.
- Q: Did you eat 'em yourselves or did you sell 'em?
- A: We sold 'em.

Q: Mm-kay.

A: Mmhmm.

Q: A lot of 'em or...

A: A hundred.

Q: Okay. So you sold most of them, then?

A: [Inaudible]. Yes, we sold 'em.

Q: Okay.

A: Mmhmm. And Anthony was always to make some money, believe me. We raised our own chickens and had our own chickens and our own eggs. And then we raised turkeys and everything for about five years. You know, that was what he called...what should I say...retirement or home...

Q: Nest egg or...

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: Just...just retirement when he would want to be home at night and go out and feed and water and change them. Them turkeys never hit the ground, never was on the ground. He had wire, like chicken wire underneath 'em. Them turkeys never went onto the ground. Never. He'd clean out every night when he'd come home under the turkey pen.

Q: And you had a hundred of 'em.

A: Yeah, we raised 'em but...we buy a hundred every year. And generally maybe I'd lose one or two.

G: [Inaudible].

A: Yes. But they're...they're nice. They...they were nice. They were beautiful.

Q: Okay, now you had turkeys and vegetables. Were other people growing things too? Around you?

A: No.

Q: No?

- A: No. No. No. But he was just ambitious. He had...we grew most our own potatoes, you know. Because we had the lots and pro...and not only that. We cultivated the lot next door to there, and next door to the other way. And we cultivated them and put them into potatoes and...
- Q: Was that...did that belong to someone? Did you have to ask 'em or rent it from 'em or you just...?
- A: No, we didn't rent there or nothing. We just plowed it up, and they said if anybody come along and was gonna build there, well then we'd just lose.
- Q: Fine and dandy.
- A: W...w...they didn't. They didn't. We used it for year, year in and year out. Th...that property there, for garden.
- Q: Mmhmm.
- A: And we grew most all our own. Well, naturally, all of us...I done a lot of, lot of, lot of canning.
- Q: Can you remember up and down Eleven Mile, around John R? Is there anything else that was up and down there? Any other stores, businesses, places you mighta gone? 'Cause that was pretty much it. I mean, that was the center.
- A: That...that was really not...there was not much there. Over on Stevison [sic] there was a bar over there, but we never went to it because we had our own, w...Johnny Johnson down on John R in Madison Heights, down...
- Q: Down on the corner.
- A: ...Ten. Right.
- Q: The sou...
- A: We'd invite Johnny to come over and have a beer out of his glass.
- Q: Okay.
- A: We...we always had...my sister and her husband and my brother and his wife, we always went out weekends together. We'd get a babysitter and we'd go out weekends together. And...and down when Johnny Johnson had that bar down there, and the one on Eleven Mile Road was gone, well we went to Johnny's down on the...
- Q: Was he a Madison Heights resident? Johnny Johnson, do you know?

A: I think he was. I don't know. I'm not gonna say because I...I really don't know. I couldn't tell you...

Q: Mm-kay.

A: ...to tell you the truth. No. No. But he was in there for a long, long time. He made a lotta money, I imagine. He was...went to Florida. I don't know where he went.

Q: Well, I'll tell you what, Loweda, it's been an interesting conversation. I want to mention before we turn off the tape that we had two guests with us. The first was guest was...

A: Gerry Deal. And...

Q: Geraldine Deal.

A: Terri Ann.

Q: Terri Ann is your granddaughter?

A: Daughter, mmhmm.

Q: And Geraldine is your daughter-in-law.

A: Daughter-in-law.

Q: Okay. I have one final question I want to ask you before...before we turn off the tape. I want to know why you stayed in Madison Heights all these year.

A: I was always satisfied with what Madison Heights had to give me, and the education from our schools were good. I'll tell you my daughter and my...my grand...my two daughters graduated from Madison High School, and they were both...they loved it, believe me. They were...

Q: Good school system.

A: G...good school system.

Q: Yeah, I didn't ask you anything about the school system.

A: Was very, very good.

Q: Do you remember any of the teachers? By any chance?

A: Really, Mrs. Hackman, I'll never forget her. She was a doll. She went to be a principal over in the Halfaman [sic]...

Q: School, okay.

A: ...and yes I let her...knew her very well. And I was trying to think of one of the other...

Q: You didn't know a teacher named Hennesy, did you? Helen Hennesy?

A: I likely did. I likely did.

Q: 'Cause she taught in the Kendall School.

A: And you know...and you know who...and you know who else I want to...Shirley S...teacher from the...Mr. Roe.

Q: Mr...?

A: Mr. Roe from the Madison High School.

Q: Mm-kay.

A: I liked him too. He was beautiful too.

Q: They seemed like they care.

A: Yes. They cared. And...and really and truly the Madison District high schools had been very good to my children and my grandchildren. And that is why I still stay in Madison Heights. Yes. Gerry has three children that graduated. Terri Ann here with honors...

G: She was [inaudible]...

A: ...and Larry...Larry Deal.

G: [Inaudible].

A: Yes, both of 'em. So...and...Carrie Dean.

Q: By any chance, do you remember the little building that's on a corner over by Wilkinson? That little brick building right on the corner where we're building the library? Did one of your kids ever go to that?

A: No.

G: [Inaudible].

Q: It was a four-room, seventh grade.

G: [Inaudible] Didn't they have a band in there for a while?



Q: Yes.

G: Yeah. [Inaudible].

Q: It was a band building.

A: Yes. We had bear...the band...the band. Yes, the band building. Absolutely.

Q: Did any of your children or grandchildren use that building at all?

G: Oldest granddaughter, Kim. I think she used it as a band...

Q: As the band building.

G: ...[inaudible].

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. I was just curious. Be...being that you were down there all that time, I figured you might have...

G: Mmhmm. Mmhmm.

Q: ...might been there when it was...

A: But the old hi...

G: Gary might have been there.

A: Who?

G: Gary.

A: Gary might have been in there.

G: What did they use that for?

Q: It was a four-room, seventh grade originally.

G: What years?

Q: 1938, 1939. Later on it became a band building.

G: Mmhmm.

A: I don't believe Gary went there...

G: No.

A: ...no he didn't Gerry.

G: [Inaudible].

A: No he did not. No he did not.

G: The little girls would have been too young for that.

A: No, they didn't. No. No.

Q: I'm just curious.

A: No.

G: But I think [inaudible].

A: But I'll tell you what. Our school systems is...is good, really, in Madison Heights. I have no complaints about them at all. No.

Q: You like the rest of the city. You don't plan to move?

A: No, I don't plan to move out of Madison Heights. No. I don't plan to move. No.

Q: Do you feel like it's too built up and too crowded now, or not?

A: No, I don't really see that it is. No I don't. No I don't. I like everything that's around here, really.

Q: Good enough.

A: I don't know...I...is...are they ever going to get the incinerator back to...?

Q: We don't really know.

A: You don't really...

Q: Don't know. There...that's still pending.

A: Okay.

Q: Would you like it or not?

A: Well, I feel for the people that live around there. Now I don't live right around there, to get this waste, but I know...I'll tell you what. As far as I'm concerned, I don't care what you're buyin', if you're buyin' hair spray or whatever you

bu...you buy the packaging of this here material that you buy. And we have too much waste in th...this junk mail that comes to your door every day.

Q: You're the perfect person to interview because you even got a plug in for recycling, and Madison Heights is the top recycler in Oakland County.

A: Yes. Yes, abso...

Q: I couldn't think of anybody better to talk to.

A: No. And I believe in all of that. I re...we all recycle everything. Gerry goes right down there and I recycle everything that comes into my house, believe it or not.

Q: Deals, I want to thank you for being with us this afternoon.

A: Okay.

Q: And this tape will be put in Historical Collection, and it's been a real pleasure. Thank you very much.

A: Okay...

END OF INTERVIEW