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Olga Naugle interview, 20 February 2003

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Interviewer: Shelly Brewer
Subject: Olga Naugle
Date: February 20, 2003 11a.m.

SB: Can you state your name and spell it.

ON: My name is Olga Naugle. NAUGLE is my last name.

SB: When did your parents move to Tremont?

ON: I remember them living there all my life. I was born on West 11th, and we moved from there into the Tremont area, more into the Tremont area. We lived on Jefferson, Starkweather, Professor. Professor was the hub of everything, it seemed like they had everything there, everywhere you'd want to go. We had a drugstore, we had a florist, we had a shoe store, a hardware store, we had a furniture store, we had a bank, we had everything there, we didn't have to go anywhere. It was like everything was on Professor Avenue or off of Professor.

SB: So your parents have lived there as long as you remember, but what about there parents, when and why did they move into the area.

ON: Well my parents came from Europe and were married and naturally settled there from New York.

SB: Can you tell me some of your early childhood memories.

ON: Mostly I remember a lot of little incidents. Such as the paper ex men, I don't know whether you are aware of that, but anyway, well things were so poor at that time. My father was out of work for five years, therefore, you know we were straddled for money. And so we used to go to various stores, pick up boxes, fold them, sell them to the paper ex men for five cents, and then we could pay for a movie. And at the movie theater we would see serials. We'd want to see them every week, because they wouldn't show you the whole thing and you'd have to go back the next week to see it.

SB: What were serials, what kind of shows were those?

ON: Like Gene Autry was in them and Buck Rogers, oh Buck Rogers was wonderful. We never imagined things would be like they are now.

SB: What year did you graduate from high school?

ON: 1940

SB: You were in high school during the depression?

ON: Well it was before, and things were really bad at that time. People started working, the WPA came around and my father got a job there and things were a little better.

SB: What is WPA?

ON: You've never heard of it? Well it was during the war, like your welfare would be, but people were working at the time, you know people started working, the government gave them jobs. Parma roads were built by WPA workers. The brick stones were put here by WPA workers.

SB: And where did you work?

ON: I was a bookkeeper at State Window Cleaning Company for six years and then I had my family. Then I went back to work when the children were a little older and going to college. I started working at Lincoln Junior High. It was Lincoln Junior and Senior at the time, then they changed it to Junior.

SB: What I want to focus a little bit on, Olga, is what you did in High school. What kind of classes did you take?

ON: I took, mostly I, well I knew I'd probably be working in an office, I knew I didn't have the money to go to college, so therefore I took office production typing, book keeping, all of the office work.

SB: Did you have favorite teachers?

ON: I used to like Ms. Potter because I was in the gym leaders. We had what we called the gym leaders at the time, instead of the teachers taking care of the classes we used to. Of course she supervised, and we used to ref the basketball games and we used to have white gym leaders sweaters, I mean uniforms, and we had red letter sweaters on. We were like big shots, we were voted in, it was an honor to get into that

SB: Did that lead to sports, or did you play sports. Did they have organized sports for women at that time?

ON: No, and there were so many good women athletes at the time, but we just didn't have anything like that. We had a Harvard Yale game at the end of the year. That was a basketball game that the girls played. I was a cheerleader for those games. It was a lot of fun. The Harvard had red uniforms and we had the blue. Yale had blue uniforms. It was a lot of fun, it was just once a year. We used to have dances at school on Fridays. We were more musical, my husband and I. We were both in the band together. We were both trumpet players. He used to play in a band every Friday. Almost every Friday in the gym at the school, and we'd have dances.

SB: This was during high school?

ON: Yes, After school on Fridays. Their jazz band would be playing, of course it was different, it was the Glen Miller type of music. In the Mood and all that stuff. It was a lot of fun.

SB: What were your favorite subjects?

ON: Well, I really liked school, I guess I liked biology. I liked the science courses.

SB: You mentioned that you took a lot of business classes. Did your school guide you towards that? Was it more of a personal choice to do that. Do you think that the school guided you in that path. Did they have a lot to offer?

ON: No, I'm really disappointed. I keep thinking back on that. I don't remember having any counselors. (Asking her husband: Do you remember having any counseling?). That was one of the bad things in school. Because I really loved school, and I wanted to go to college, but like I said I just didn't have the money to do it, and scholarships were rare at that time.

SB: What other things do you remember about school?

ON: We used to have what we call ribbon day. I think that they still select your colors in schools. Well I know that ours was a rose and a blue. Well anyway, we had ribbon bows. I guess it was every Friday, we used to have what we called ribbon day, or bow day. Where the seniors, just the seniors would wear bows in their hair. That was a really a nice thing to do.

SB: Did that symbolize your class as a school spirit thing?

ON: It was like, well we didn't show off or anything, more or less we were seniors and we wanted to show everyone that we were seniors, you know big shots. We used to call the freshman coming in Flats. Oh, you flat (laughing).

SB: Why flat?

ON: I don't know, but we used to. It was what we used to call them, right Paul (talking to husband).

SB: So as teenagers, where did you go on dates?

ON: Well we used to roller skate a lot. It was one of our dates. My husband more or less played in the band in a little orchestra, so we used to go and watch them play. There wasn't that much to do when you were a senior. You'd come home and do your homework, Just one day a week we'd go roller skating, we'd go to the movie theater. We'd go to Euclid Beach Park during the summer months. Of course when we were younger and we'd go to Euclid Beach, we'd go by streetcar, and that was a lot of fun. The boys used to go on the back of the streetcars and pull the trolley. Pull it off the wire.

SB: Can you describe what dating was like as a teenager. You two dated all through high school?

ON: We started dating at sixteen. We were young when we started. Like I say, most of our dates we liked to roller skate, we used to circle waltz. That was most of our dates. At the movie theaters, they used to give away things. They used to have bank night, I don't know if you heard about that.

SB: No.

ON: My mother went there one night during bank night and she won a chicken. She brought it home and we made a pet of the chicken. So one Sunday, my mother said supper is ready, let's eat. Well here we had chicken. We were looking around like where's our chicken. You know she made our chicken. None of us ate. No way were we eating that chicken. And they used to give away plates. They had pajama night. You'd go down there dressed in pajamas. Not the pajamas you'd wear to bed, but that was the style at that time. They were called pajamas. I know that my sister had won the contest once. They gave prizes.

SB: This was all at the movies?

ON: Yes. The show would be the intermission type thing, and they'd have a parade of girls wearing pajamas. Not always, but this is one of these things that they had. Another night they'd have bank night where you'd win money. I don't know if you've ever heard of this.

SB: No.

ON: There was a night when they'd give plates. We had a theater right in our neighborhood. Right on West 14th. We had Jennings Theater. That's where we used to go mostly. Right across the street from the Ukrainian National home. I don't know if you know the area.

SB: I don't know the neighborhood very well. It's kind of new to me. This is going to be helpful. (Showing a map)

ON: They have a map somewhere of stores. We did what we could remember so I could tell you where things were at that time. We had a dairy right next door, a couple of doors away from where we used to live, my father used to tell me, especially on a Friday, to take a pitcher and go to the Maple Leaf dairy. It was just a couple of doors away from us. They used to fill it up with buttermilk and I'd bring it back home in a pitcher.

SB: Did you buy on credit?

ON: Oh yeah. In fact I have it marked down here. Where we used to go. What was her name again, I know it just as well as my own name, and I can't think of it. Kwikowski(). They were Polish people. You know the girl that roller skates? I often wondered if that was her grand mother. Kwikowski () was her name, the skater.

SB: The ice skater?

ON: The ice skater, yeah. I think that might have been her great grandmother or grandmother, or if she was related to her in some way. I'll tell you, we'll never forget that grocery store, because they were so good to us. We were real poor, like I say, my father was out of work for five years, so you know how little we had to live on. We were all young. I was maybe eight years old. We had a book, and she would put everything we bought in that book. My mother would pay what she could, which was very little. She credited all this for us. After my dad got his job with WPA, my mother paid everything back to her. But if it wasn't for that grocery store we never would

have survived. Because she was just wonderful to us, to everyone, she was a wonderful woman. She had this grocery store, but I don't remember her husband though. But I remember her. We had a hardware store, we had a funeral home, my brother had a haberdashery store there.

SB: What is that?

ON: Where he sold neckties, and he had dry cleaning, shined shoes. He did everything in there. We used to make shoe polish for him. People had to make money somehow. We were poor. There was a Jefferson bakery there. A Wonderful bakery. Mostly Polish people. A lot of Polish people in the area there.

SB: Are you Polish?

ON: I'm Ukrainian. But not that much difference there.

SB: Did you attend church?

ON: St. Vladimir's. It was a Ukrainian church. We went to St. Peter and Paul's at one time. It was a Catholic church on West 7th. My mother switched because they built a new church on West 11th, and that's where we ended up going was to St. Vladimirs. Now they're out in Parma here.

SB: Did your parents speak the language. Did they pass that on to you?

ON: Oh yeah. I went to Ukrainian school. I learned how to read and write Ukrainian.

SB: Where was the Ukrainian school?

ON: From our church. We had a school there. St. Peter and Paul's. I went there to learn the language. I took dance lessons at the Ukrainian National home. You're not aware of that, but it's on West 14th street. You know Lampson Session(). Mr. Session() used to own that. Well it used to be his home. Next door he built that Ukrainian National home. Which it turned into Ukrainian National home afterwards. That was his art museum there that he built, because he had a lot of art. Paintings and stuff. So he built the addition to that home of his. Then after that, the Ukrainians bought that. In fact I found this. (Showing me a note). Isn't that something?

SB: Wow. Could you read that?

ON: Sure. It says please attend dancing practice to be held Friday January 26, 1934 at the Ukrainian National home. J. Cahoot () was the instructor. I don't know why I kept this.

SB: You kept it for this reason.

ON: Yeah. This is me when I was little. (Showing a picture)

SB: What a great picture.

ON: Didn't even know I had it.

SB: Where was this taken?

ON: It was on Jefferson. We lived on Jefferson and then we moved to Professor, then we moved to Starkweather. No, from Jefferson we moved to Tremont, then we moved to Professor, then we move to Starkweather, then we moved back to West 11th. That house is still standing. Well we rented from my uncle who owned a grocery store. National Meats and Groceries. It's still there, the store. We lived there until after we were married and had children. Then we moved on Bure (). We live in the area the whole time practically. Then the freeway came through. So we had to move out of there, and this is where we ended up. We lived there till our kids were out of school. My daughter was in her last year of high school at Lincoln.

SB: That's actually one of my questions, since you brought it up. What were some of your memories of the innerbelt project.

ON: Breaking up with your neighbors, who were good friends. It was really a sad affair. We just didn't want to move out of there. We had done our whole house inside. All of sudden we had to move out. It was frustrating. Not knowing where you're going to move out to. Looking for other places. Your children had their friends there. It was sad.

SB: How many children did you have.

ON: Two.

SB: And this is when your youngest daughter was in high school.

ON: It was my oldest daughter. My son then went to Parma. She was in her last year. She used to commute from here for her last year.

SB: Ok. I'm going to bring this back to Lincoln Park. Can you tell me about Lincoln Park?

ON: Sure. Lincoln Park was different at the time. In the middle of the park was a swimming pool. It was like a wading pool. We spent so much time there because we had nowhere to go at the time, other than Brookside Park. It seemed like everybody in the area would end up at the pool. Of course they covered that up now and it's all together different. It was almost like in the middle of the park they had this pool. We had some good times there. Some of things that I didn't tell you were during the summer we did go to Brookside Park. We'd walk all the way from where we lived. Which was quite a ways. Of course we had no busses, even to go to school we had no busses, we had to walk everywhere. Everyone walked, there were no buses. Mine was about two miles at least. There and back with the trumpets and the books. The winters, the snow, the wet. We used to walk all the way to Rhodes.

SB: That's pretty far.

ON: You bet. From West 11th and Fairfield I walked to Rhodes. Then walked all the way back after the game.

SB: Did the football team and the band all have to walk.

ON: I don't know if the football team had to walk. They must have got a ride. The band had to walk. You know when it was cold it was terrible. We had no topcoats over our uniforms, not like they do today, the raincoats. In fact I have pictures. When I was in the band. (Showing pictures)

SB: It hasn't changed too much, the uniforms really haven't. Great pictures. We need to have a picture of you with your trumpet.

ON: Wait, I do have some snapshots. I don't know how we got those. I'll tell you, at the time when we were younger, we had no camera. This is me my husband and my girlfriend. We were all friends. (Showing pictures)

SB: What is her name?

ON: Marion Gunderman(). This is National Meat and Grocery, the place I was telling you we lived next door to. This was the store here, it's still there. That was there for a long time. This was the church. Sorry some of these are in such bad shape.

SB: I think they're in great shape.

ON: This is St. Vladimirs, the church we went to on West 11th. It's owned by the Greeks, uh, Puerto Ricans now.

SB: Did they speak English at your church?

ON: We used to sing in Ukrainian. We got married there, the reason we changed, we go to Zion United Church of Christ now, because Paul couldn't understand Ukrainian. He's German. We'd go to church and he wouldn't know what they were saying. So I said well let's forget it. (Showing a picture) This is us, when we were younger, with my father and my sister. We were all light haired blondes, my sister is the only one with dark.

SB: The clothes were very fashionable for the day. It's so weird how the styles are similar to now.

ON: They are.

SB: Your haircut is similar to my haircut.

ON: Except you look nicer in it. These pictures here even.(Showing a picture). This is when my husband was in the service. The clothes aren't that old fashioned looking. Of course the one where I was little, that's different. In the band we had band sweaters too. I think they still do-- Sweaters with letters on them.

SB: I'm trying to tie this in to a historical perspective. What year did you get married.

ON: We got married in 1944. February 13th.

SB: You said he went into the service. What part of the service?

ON: The air force.

SB: What was it like during that time? I'm assuming you were in World War II.

ON: At that time I worked and we into different camps, naturally. We didn't get married until two years before he got out of the service. We didn't get married like you do now. He came home on furlough. I was working in the office at the time as a book keeper then. All day long he sat, it was a one woman office, so I did everything. He sat all day and asked what should we do. Should we get married, or shouldn't we get married. All day. So we came home that night, and after supper I said ma, what should we do, should we get married, or shouldn't we? My mother says Oh, you've been dating five years, go ahead and get married. So that was a Thursday. Can you believe we got married Sunday. And I had a wedding gown. I had a whole wedding.

SB: Where did you get the gown?

ON: I got it in Rose's bridal shop, downtown on Ontario. I think there is something still there-- Some kind of a store there. But that's where I went. I was tiny at the time--I was skinny. We didn't have sizes like you have now. Nine was the smallest size. So they had to take it in yet. I got married Sunday. Can you believe that? I had a whole wedding. We got married and had a reception and everything. We called everybody by phone. That's how we got the people to come.

SB: Did you have a lot of people at your wedding?

ON: We didn't have a real big wedding, but we had all our friends and family. Everybody you'd want.

SB: Was it at your church?

ON: We got married at my church, the Ukrainian church.

SB: Where was your reception dinner?

ON: At Freedles () restaurant, it was on Lorain and West 25th. Do you know what we had? I'll have to tell you the menu, because you could never have a menu like this. We had homemade chicken soup with homemade noodles. We had chicken paprikash with homemade dumplings. We had homemade strudel, apple strudel for desert. That was our menu.

SB: It was all ready on Sunday?

ON: Yes. It was all ready. That was 59 years ago. We got married the 13th. Sunday the 13th--I'll tell you what we used to do when we were little--for games. I thought of this. When we were little, we had no dolls. They made them then, but we couldn't afford them. So we used to get some candy boxes from the stores, we used to cut out door ways and windows. Then we'd cut out dolls and make dresses for them. That's how we used to play with them.

SB: Like a dollhouse?

ON: Yes, that was our dollhouse. You had to do with what you had. We used to go to candy stores, instead of delicatessens. We'd go to the candy store and get grab bags. We'd get them for a penny. We'd fill them with candy and gum. Then they had a gum ball machine. You'd get them in different colors, Maybe a red around a yellow gumball. Then they'd give you a candy bar or ice cream. You couldn't even afford an ice cream cone. We went to the drug store that had ice cream. Mr. Toplift() owned it. Him and his wife had the drugstore. They'd scrape off the extra ice cream. They'd give you the one scoop. Then they'd put sprinkles on it. It felt so good even getting the ice cream.

SB: How much did the ice cream cost?

ON: About five cents. For a tiny little scoop. We had another drugstore we would go to after school. The West 14th drug store. They had seats in there. Like a delicatessen. You could drink your sundae or soda, whatever you bought. That was on West 14th.

SB: Were there popular food places?

ON: No. I remember the first time we ever went out to eat was at McDonalds. They never had restaurants. That's one thing we didn't have.

SB: Were there any restaurants in Tremont?

ON: There were no restaurants. I can't think of that popular restaurant on Professor. That used to be a dry cleaning store, Kurtzes(). Things were different. It's where Lola's () is. I don't know if you've ever been there. That used to be Kurtzes() dry cleaning. Further down, there's professor and it goes into a peak. That used to be a furniture store-- Klovata's(). There was a bank there and a bank across the street. Can you imagine all this on Professor?

SB: That was the hub?

ON: That was the hub.

SB: I see that over here there were clothing stores, a five and dime place. Is that where you would have bought your clothes?

ON: Yes. We couldn't afford to go downtown to shop. There were department stores and the dime stores--and movie theaters.

SB: What about ball games? Did you go downtown to Indians games?

ON: No. (Talking to her husband) you went to some games. They had League Park. (Looking at the map again). So here's Professor. And all of these streets--like Literary--they had stores on that street. But Professor had everything. There was a hardware store-- a funeral home. Boy they had everything there. We even had a midwife that lived across the street.

SB: Was that what most people used was a midwife?

ON: Well a lot of people used it. They didn't go to hospitals when they were young. When my mother had children she had them at home. The midwife would come and help. Of course we went to the hospital, but my mother didn't.

SB: So how has the neighborhood changed?

ON: It's changed a lot. It's all together different. A lot of eateries--ice cream stores. It's changed completely. Where that peak is at Klovatis() was a Cleveland trust, but now it's a Ukrainian bank.

SB: When Paul got back from the military, what kind of places did you hang out at? I'm sure that things changed as you became adults. Were there bars in the area?

ON: After he came home, well he was gone for two years in the military. We had no honeymoon. He had to go right over seas.

SB: How long after the wedding?

ON: Only 2 days, then he was gone for 2 years. That was it. It was sad seeing them leave. To not know where they're going. He was then stationed in the Aleutian Islands.

SB: Did you write?

ON: Oh yeah. Everyday--I even wrote poems. I used to like to write poetry. In fact, this is what you may be interested in. Let's see if I can find it. (Showing a picture). This is where he was stationed. This is my graduation thing that we got--our diploma.

SB: How do you say your maiden name?

ON: Bigadza.

SB: Is it still Lincoln High School?

ON: Yes, uh, no. It's Lincoln Junior. They knocked that down. Here's a picture of it. As it was. (Showing a picture)

SB: Is this your yearbook then?

ON: Yes. I even kept my commencement thing.

SB: I'm going to bring it back around to what you did. What did you do while he was gone?

ON: Yeah. I got out of school--I was seventeen, so I had to wait.

SB: Until you were eighteen.

ON: So I got a job as a bookkeeper. I worked there six years. He was the year after me. We're the same age though. He was then drafted into the service. So he went to Greensborough, North Carolina. He was the bugle boy of company B. You ever hear that song--He was. So I used to go visit him once in a while. I just kept working. I used to chum with my girlfriends. I started taking different things. I started taking swimming lessons at one of the colleges. We just did things together as a group. I had like eight of us girlfriends that used to celebrate our birthdays together. That's how we entertained ourselves--because there were no men. They were in the service.

SB: So what kind of places did you and your friends go?

ON: There was a place we used to go to the movies. We used to dress up, we would wear hats downtown. I mean we used to really dress up. When we'd celebrate our birthdays we'd go to a place--131st and Miles, called the Golden Goose. We used to tease and call it the silver duck. We used to dance. We had a good time. We'd have a dinner there. We used to go to some places downtown. Like Perchners (). That's not there any more. There's a lot of places that aren't there. Downtown we'd go to a movie theater, but they'd have a vaudeville show there, as well as a movie. They had good vaudeville shows. I saw Glen Miller. You saw good things.

SB: How did you get downtown?

ON: We'd take the bus, but earlier it was streetcars.

SB: So what did you do when he came back? Did you start a family right away?

ON: Yes. We were getting a little older. My daughter was not born immediately, but she was born in '47. We got married in '44. But he was gone for two years. We wasted a lot of time there.

SB: What kind of things did you do with your children? Were things changing?

ON: We didn't have to go out like you do now. I used to take the children out in the stroller. We used to walk to the Jefferson bakery. We lived on West 11th. It was a little walk, but a nice walk. We'd pick up some bakery, or go to Lincoln Park. I'd take the children on the swings. I think they had a sliding board. They were entertained there. Took them to church on Sunday. We were active in church. It wasn't a life like you have now. We had a television screen, which was something not very many people had. But we bought one at the time.

SB: Did you work at that time?

ON: No, I was home with the children, then when we moved here, my daughter started college. I was getting low on funds, so I figured I'd get a job.

SB: I've been informed that at one point some of the bridges were out, the Abbey Road Bridge, The Clark Road Bridge. Did that effect your life at all? Did you have to go somewhere else. Did you have to cross those bridges?

ON: We'd have to walk across those bridges every once in a while. The West Side Market, that was an important bridge. I'll tell you what was a bad thing. When they tore down the Clark street bridge. That was a very important bridge. It was very devastating.

SB: Why did they tear that down?

ON: It was deteriorating.

SB: They chose not to put another one up?

ON: That's right. They didn't have the funds I guess. But that bridge was very valuable. It connects the east with the west.

SB: So you had to go clear around the Harvard Denison?

ON: Yeah. But we used to walk a lot across to downtown. My brother used to work downtown. What they called hustling papers, or selling newspapers. They used to call it hustling. After he was through, we were young at the time, my brother was older than us, he'd walk all the way down 25th street. There was an RB Biscuit company, he'd pick up a bag of broken up pretzels and cookies in a bag. He'd bring it home for us girls to eat. He was our only brother. We had three girls. That's what they used to do was hustle papers. Mostly walking, He'd walk all the way down to 25th street and walk all the way to where we used to live on Professor.

SB: What about when Paul came back, where did he work?

ON: Republic steel. He worked in the electrical department there. Until he retired, till they went bankrupt.

SB: In what year did you move out of Tremont?

ON: It was my daughter's senior year. I don't know what year. It was about forty years ago.

SB: What was the political scene like? Who were your representatives? Did anything political effect you?

END OF SIDE ONE

ON: (The tape did not pick up the name said). He was a big help in our area, he really was. Rollingson () was in charge of the bureau thing. They'd process dead animals. The smell was terrible, we used to fight that. I don't know what they did with that dead stuff.

SB: Dead animals?

ON: The slaughterhouse.

SB: There was a slaughterhouse down in the area?

ON: I don't know what they did with it, but the odor was just terrible. We used to fight that. It was the bureau civic association. It was in that area. We lived on West 11th.

SB: What was the smell like?

ON: Terrible, it was terrible. And we lived near the steel mills too. That was even worse.

SB: Was that the poem you were looking for?

ON: (Looking at a poem). I don't know, this isn't the one. (Reading the poem) You're up in the Aleutians, where fog is everywhere. Where rainy days are common, and sunny days are rare. Where mud is always ankle deep, and winds are swift and strong. Dampness always fills the air, and days and nights are long. You're lonesome as all get out, for there's no place there to go, besides going to the px or the movie show. But keep that chin up soldier, for there will come a day. When you'll leave that dreary place behind and come back home to stay.

SB: That's very good.

ON: Well I had nothing else to do. (Showing me a newspaper). I have a Lincoln Log, that may be of interest to you. See on Bure() avenue, we were closer to the Fairfield, Starkweather area, we didn't have as much in food areas, except for bakeries. There was an Ellen's tea room on Bure() at one time. That was a long time ago. This was the Lincoln Log, our newspaper from school. The journalism department would put out the Lincoln Log.

SB: May I look at this? This is from March 19, 1965. This one is from your daughter then? (Reading a headline from newspaper) English class gives competition, as girls prove double trouble. So this was probably her last year then? What was the neighborhood like when Carl Stokes was elected mayor in 1967? You had just moved from the area. Do you remember any of that?

ON: I don't think that he made too much of an impression on the people. He was, I don't know if I should say not honest, but he wasn't like his brother. Louis Stokes is all together different from his brother. I think so.

SB: What was Louis Stokes doing at the time?

ON: That was when he was just getting into office. I think. Carl, I don't remember what he did, but there was something. But they didn't vote him in again.

SB: What other things did you have written down that you would like to talk about.

ON: Let me see whether you hit everything. There were a lot of funeral homes in our area. On West 14th. Between Fairfield and Abbey, there was a Bania () funeral home. I don't know if they have that marked in somewhere. There was a funeral home across the street. Toomans () funeral home. It was gorgeous. The place was like a mansion. Have you ever been down West 14th street. Have you seen the real big house, when you get off on 71 and head toward West 14th. There's a real big house there. Tooman's () was an even bigger house than that, and that's a really big house.

SB: That was the funeral home.

ON: We had 2 funeral homes right across the street from the other.

SB: Why do you think there were so many funeral homes?

ON: There were a lot of funeral homes there. Kalochik ()--.

SB: Did you think there were an unusual amount?

ON: If somebody Polish died, they'd go to the Polish funeral home, if somebody Ukrainian died...I think that was mainly it. That happens a lot even now.

SB: Did that happen in different areas besides funeral homes. If you were Polish, you went to the Polish grocer?

ON: Yeah, well I don't know whether that's true. We had a lot of Polish friends we chummed with. My father was a violin player, he played at dances and different things, They used to have a hall on Fairfield and West 11th, this has been knocked down actually. They used to have the topless drugstore. Above it was a dancehall. I know that my father used to play there quite a bit. His sister got married there. There were a lot of places that got knocked down. It's a shame they were knocked down. On Fairfield there was a Polish newspaper that was printed?

SB: In Polish?

ON: Yes. I think it's still in operation. It was, I don't know if it still is. They used to have a department store there. Sam's. We used to do a lot of shopping there.

SB: What kind of department store?

ON: It had everything? It just had everything. You didn't have to go downtown at all.

SB: Was it like a Woolworth's?

ON: No, they had everything there. They had dresses. A little--Walmart. Next door he had a furniture store he owned. Everything was right there. Your grocery stores, a couple of furniture stores. Dry cleaning--ice cream. A Krogers, a hardware store. If it wasn't on Jefferson, it was on the off shoots. A lot of halls. Lempko hall, they had a Polish hall. Corneys () hall. Where the bath houses were. They built some condo's there now. Next to the bath house is what they called a royal theater. A long time ago that's what used to be there.

SB: What are bath houses?

ON: Things were bad and some people didn't have bathtubs in their house. So they used to go there to take a bath. That's right, you wouldn't know that. We didn't have automatic tanks at one time. We had to light our tanks. Then turn them off when we were done with them. In our bathrooms we had a tank.

SB: Was the plumbing inside the house or outside the house?

ON: Well I don't remember having a basement. We lived in a double--we lived upstairs. Four of us slept in one bedroom. We only had two bedrooms. We had a silver tank and it was in the bathroom. We had to light it if we were going to take a bath. I suppose the pipes went downstairs somewhere. Anybody could use the public bath houses. I remember years back when I was real little we had an outside toilet. We had to use the orange paper. My mom used to get it from the store. They used to cover oranges with orange paper. Oh, rough. Those were rough times.

SB: I have heard they used the JCPenney catalog.

ON: That's true! Boy it was cold in the winter I tell you.

SB: I'm going to stop us, unless you have anything else you want to share.

ON: They had beautiful homes on West 14th. At one time that was suppose to be a University. That's why all of them are, Professor, Literary. They were going to build a college.

SB: Do you know why it was never built?

ON: I don't know, it just fizzled out. On West 14th they had beautiful homes that they knocked down. I wish I had a camera at that time. A lot of professionals-- a lot of the people I graduated with turned professional. Joe Shultz () was a physician. George Mocrise was a physician. I used to go to school with John Mattis (), he's a judge. We used to walk to school together. So I was on jury one time, and I was on the elevator, and who should come in but John Mattis (). So I thought, he'll probably know me. He didn't even pay attention. We used to go to Tremont together. Arthur Lambrose () is the one who just passed away. There were a lot of people who graduated from the Lincoln area. At that time it wasn't like it was now.

SB: As far as?

ON: The class of people that live there. We might have been poor, but there were still a lot of people who were classy. I hope that we've helped you. Maybe if you want to take this. (Handing me the map). There was Alburn()Hall, Lempko () bakery. This was all in the Tremont area. Above the West 14th drugstore, there were Doctors offices. Dr. Malong (), Dr. Allen, Dr. Urich (). Polish National Home across from Lincoln. I don't know if you're going to be able to read this—because I wrote this so fast. You know years ago there used to be a truck that came by when I was maybe eight years old. We used to have a waffle truck come around. They used to make waffles in it. They used to sell waffles two for five cents. They used to make them with powdered sugar, right in their truck. Usually on a Sunday. Like your good humor guys. It was a treat. Also, the watermelon man, He would say watermelone, watermelone, (pronouncing with Italian accent)--In a cart with a horse. He would put a plug in it and let you try it before you bought it. We'd eat ice off of the trucks. We used to have ice delivered, because we didn't have a refrigerator. We had ice boxes. They'd chop the ice, and we'd follow and pick it up. Another thing we used to do to make money. Like I said, things were bad. Guys would throw out there cigarette packs, we would pick them up. We would strip the aluminum off the thing and make a ball and sell it to the paper ex men with the cardboard boxes. Depending on how big the ball was, was how much they'd give you. It wasn't that much, but it was enough to go to show. He had arrow box tops. They'd take everything. The streetcars used to stop right at our corner. Starkweather and Professor. They used to have the streetcar stop right there. That was the first stop--I even had an icebox when we got married. We couldn't get a refrigerator. During the war, you couldn't get sugar or anything, everything was rationed. You had to have a coupon. My mothers first refrigerator she had, you had to put a quarter in it to run.

SB: How long would it run:

ON: Till we put another quarter in. (laughing). I'll tell you we had a good life. We had a lot of love in the family. Everybody was close. You didn't go out that much. My father played the fiddle and he'd practice at the house. My girlfriends would come over, they loved to come over. We always had entertainment.

SB: You ate dinner together.

ON: Yes, all the time. But my mother had to go to work though, she got a job finally, my father was out of work for so long. We had to eat.

SB: Where did she work?

ON: She started working in a building. All of the foreign born ethnic women were working in a building. Cleaning. That's all she could do. She couldn't speak, she was from Europe. They called them Charwomen. Things weren't easy. Lets see--oh , we used to have a Spangs() bakery truck come around. A little truck that sold glazed doughnuts--in boxes. They were so good. You didn't have to go to the bakery.

We had milk and eggs delivered... This is our wedding picture. The one I sent to the paper. I had a gown and everything. I had everything, I had a real wedding. It was a nice wedding. What we got, we paid for, because my parents couldn't afford. His parents bought the liquor.

SB: Do you think that it would be possible to come back out and talk to you some more. You seem to have a lot more to share.

ON: Sure, sure.

TURNING THE TAPE RECORDER OFF.

TURNING THE RECORDER BACK ON:

ON: At Tremont school when I went there, my sister and I were very skinny. They called it open air. If you were underweight and needed more nourishment, you'd have a period that they called open air. You went into this place, I don't remember what kind of room it was, but it was a room where they had cots. You had a rest period during school time.

SB: Because you were too thin?

ON: Yes. And there were a lot of us. It wasn't just my sister and myself there were a lot of kids. They would take us out of our class, and walk us to this room where they had cots and gave us robes to put on. They were like black robes, hooded. We laid on those cots for a period I guess. They'd give us crackers and milk. Maybe peaches, I remember getting apricot--a lot of apricots. Because of the iron I suppose. My sister and I never ate. It was a lot of kids.

SB: Girls and boys?

ON: Yeah. Girls and boys. I didn't pay attention to the boys, but I know that we did have both. Whoever was underweight. We had a dentist in our school. He would come in and look at our teeth. Drill them, put fillings in them.

SB: For free.

ON: For free, it was part of the school.

END OF INTERVIEW