**Transcription sponsored by Cuyahoga Valley National Park**

**Maureen Carroll** [00:00:00] To hear the story.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:00:01] Okay. Okay, I'm Rosemary Snell. I was born [...], 1938. I have grandparents on both sides that are immigrants from Hungary. On my father's side, the name is Trubicza, T-R-U-B-I-C-Z-A. ost Most of the family have changed their name to Tracy. On my mother's side, the family is Lenart, L-E-N-A-R-T. On my father's side, Grandfather bought a farm in 1894 and Hylton Road. Seventy five acres. He farmed the land. He originally lived in Cleveland on Buckeye Road and they wanted to get out into the country. See, they my family, my dad's side of the family had nine children, he was the youngest of nine in his family. My father was helped, my dad, my grandfather on the farm, he became sick. They weren't sure what was wrong with him. Dad was going to dental school at the time and he asked my dad to take a leave of absence. And my dad did. And my father, my grandfather developed pneumonia and he died soon after that. And Dad never went back to dental school, stayed on the farm. There were seventy-five acres between Houghton and Sagamore Road. They farmed... He farmed the land and in the wintertime he drove the school bus. On my mother's side, she lived across from the Boston Store in the Colonial and she lived through the flood of 1913. My mother was 12 years... Born in 1912. My aunt was about ten years older and she had a brother in between. When the flood come, the parents went to higher ground and left my Aunt Mary with the children. And I think my uncle was about six years old and my mother was an infant. And she said the water kept... My aunt would tell the story about how she can recall the water raising higher and higher, and it had flooded the first floor. The parents had taken the animals up to higher ground on Twinsburg Road. They she said they were gone for two days. She said it was like forever. She could recall that so vividly. She told that story many, many times, and every time she told us a little bit, something a little bit different. Finally, the parents come to get them and they went up on Twinsburg Road and never come back. The house is still there. It's the older colonial opposite the Boston Store. My mother's side of the family... Then my mother... In those days, the farmers had a son, the farmer had a daughter, and they were Hungarian. They liked to marry within their own nationality. And my mother and dad married in 1913. My mother, I mean, 1935. Excuse me. That's incorrect. And my mother moved to the farm where my dad was living. My grandmother was very sick. She took care of her for two years. I don't know what she had, but she... My mother said she cared for her for a couple of years and she died. And then shortly after that, the grandfather died. So they stayed on the farm and farmed the farm. We lived on the east side of Houghton Road. We were... At that time, Mr. Eaton had a big farm of over seven hundred acres, and Dad would farm part of his land and share the crops.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:04:07] Cyrus Eaton?

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:04:07] Cyrus Eaton. And Mr Eaton was around a lot. He probably had about seven hundred acres and that would be down off a Walton Road. Walton Road was a through road from Houghton to Valley View Road. I was... There was a younger brother, I mean a brother, older brother I had, but he was in a tractor accident and died when he was about a year old. I was the oldest. I come from a family of four girls and one boy. And I learned to drive the tractor when I was probably eight years old to help my father. What else can I tell you? Yes, and mom, the Lenart family kept the farm out on Twinsburg Road up to about five years ago. My Uncle Steve would farm the farm and it was split between... It's right next to the railroad tracks. There's homes there now. And my grandfather would, I mean, my uncle would farm both sides of the road. What else would you... You have some questions?

**Maureen Carroll** [00:05:21] Yes, I certainly do. So this whole family history sort of attracted you to the idea of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park?

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:05:31] Yes, as a matter of fact, we bought a six and a half acres off of Chaffee Road, and that was in the early '70s. And that's when the park, the conversations and the newspapers had a lot of information about the Cuyahoga Valley Park being developed. And we were in a wooded area, a short street off of... Actually it was a Romane, and then the street is called Jill off of there. And we were told that it would be in the national park. So I attended the very first meeting that Bill Birdsell, who was the superintendent at that time, had in the Valley. We were very concerned whether we were going to be in the park or out of the park. There were four lots in that area at the time. Actually, there was five. We had one side of the street and then there were four lots across the street, and the lots across the street were approximately two to five acres. So we were of course curious what would happen and we attended that first meeting where there were hundreds of people from the Valley very concerned, very upset about their land being acquired. So they could not have the meeting because I can't remember exactly where it was, but it seems to me it was that the Valley View Community Center. So they ended up having a meeting the following week at one of the schools and it was very vague as to what land they were going to take. People were very upset. I tried to go with one of my neighbors. All of us were under construction. The homes across from where we live were further along than us. We decided to stop and wait to see if they were going to acquire the land. And if they were, we weren't going to continue. So finally, we after several attending several meetings, I was able to talk to Bill Birdsell and I invited him to our home and I asked him if he could come. And I guess the neighbors that were building in the area and we would look at the maps and see exactly where we were. He did take our invitation. He come to our home and he pulled out the maps. And we looked at the area and he said, well, it's pretty vague as to whether you're in the park or out of the park. Exactly where are you? And we showed him and the pencil line was just right around where we were. And he said, go ahead and continue building your home. He said the only thing that may happen is we may take scenic easements. Well, it never happened. And we all built our homes. There was one little one person that lived in Michigan that bought the fourth lot that was acquired by eminent domain. They decided since he wasn't under construction, they would just take that property and that's what they did. So there's actually four homes and we're in a wooded area, lovely area, probably the loveliest area in Sagamore Hills. And we went... We built in all the homes to have changed hands except us. We have been there for... We moved in in 1979-80, just before Christmas. So...

**Maureen Carroll** [00:08:58] You know, it's sounds as though they really tried to work it out with the people who were going to be affected.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:09:05] Yes. Particularly the people that were on the borderline of the area. But actually it was the best thing that ever happened because after the '70s this area just boomed and this Valley would have been full of homes. And it's such a lovely area in this... And it's something that should be kept and history should be made of the area.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:09:33] Preserved.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:09:34] Yes.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:09:34] Preserved.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:09:35] Okay, so what is your current role or relationship to the park?

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:09:41] I have been a member of the Cuyahoga Valley Community Council since the beginning. I've... At present time I've been secretary treasurer for many years, where...

**Maureen Carroll** [00:09:52] What was the role of it?

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:09:54] The role was... The role is... Our... Actually our mission was to work with the park and with the residents to help them through all of the transition that was taking place and the acquisition of the property. We also worked on a lot of different projects. We had a deer management force. We had a lot of problems with a lot of deer in the area. And we worked with the Department of Agriculture and made up a lot of information for people, how they could manage with the deer. We also worked on the gypsy moths. Back about 10 years ago, we had an invasion of gypsy moths. We had a gypsy moth taskforce. We worked with them. Also most recent is the ash borer.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:10:50] The emerald ash borer.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:10:50] And, yes, it's not prevalent in this area so much as it is west of here. We do have some information. About four years ago or five years ago, a lot of us come together and decided that our mission is complete. The park is... They've pretty much acquired most of the land that they were going to have for the park. And we decided that we would go to a council of governments. So most approximately two years ago, we changed our mission and we're working with Summit County, as well as Cuyahoga County and other projects. At the present time we're working on water management, flooding, which is a big problem in the Valley. We are still on high ground in Sagamore Hills. But for instance, Valley View, they're having a lot of problems. They have flooding with the canal and so on. So we're doing a lot of research and putting together some role as far as a water management is concerned and flooding. We're working with the county engineer, both in Summit County and Cuyahoga County. We're trying to encourage more and more communities to join the council so that we can work together because everything is becoming a regional thing rather than each community doing their own thing. So we're working with Cuyahoga County. We've toured Cuyahoga County, some of the things they've done, for instance, the Mill Creek area and so on. They have toured Summit County and we have gone through some of the areas that have changed in Summit County.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:12:34] So the role that you started with has evolved as the needs of the liaison... Actually you act as a liaison between the park and the issues there and the various governments or people groups.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:12:49] Right. We're working together kind of on a regional basis, but we're working more with communities because as far as the park is concerned, we still have them involved. We have the Metro Parks from Summit County as far as, as well as this Cuyahoga County Metroparks. And we also have the national parks. We all make contributions on a yearly basis because we do have an executive director and an assistant.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:13:22] Well, I like what you said about focusing more on the regional issues. Sometimes the issue goes beyond the confines of a township or city.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:13:32] Right. One of the other issues is the gorge in Cuyahoga Falls. The electric company is... Ohio Edison's trying to take over that area. And it's such a pristine area. A lot of people have canoed in that area and so on. And Cuyahoga Falls has been fighting that because they'll be a building in that area and changing the whole area. I haven't been in that area myself, but I understand it's very, very beautiful area.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:14:07] Well, you really have been so involved in all of the development of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park and working as a liaison, you know, between the residents and the people. Now, this might sound a little redundant, but it's just a slightly different view, from your perspective why is this project important?

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:14:34] Well, I think because of the deep roots I have. My family on both sides have lived in this area. We have actually played in the area. We enjoy the parks. All of my family... I'm the third generation. I have a son who is an attorney in Sagamore Hills who is the fourth generation. And I have a grandson who is eight years old that's living in the area and plans to stay in the area. We enjoy outdoor recreation. We like to bike. I don't bike quite as much as I used to, but my son spends a lot of time on the trail. I became a trustee fifteen years ago and one of my missions was to develop a park in Sagamore Hills. We never had one. We've had a lot of large developments in our area. We have Greenwood Village and the Eaton Estates and we were going through the by the mid, early '90s building boom, Mr. Eaton Jr. sold the property and it was developed by Forest City. It was to take ten years to build out and it was built out in less than seven years. We have the Department of Mental Health in our area that had originally the Hawthorne property, Hawthorne Mental Hospital. They had over a thousand acres in the area immediately across from our township hall we had five acres. To the south of there, a developer was putting in approximately 24 homes. He had contacted the Department of Mental Health to see if they would sell the 40 acres that abut up to our five acres. I contacted our trustees and I said, may I go down to the mental health and see if they want to sell that property to us? And sure enough, they did. But we had to go through the surveying process. We had to go through the Senate and through the Department of Mental Health in the State of Ohio. And we acquired the 40 acres. We now have a 45-acre park across the street from us. We also... I asked them if they had some additional land they were going to sell. At one time they had about twenty-five hundred residents in the area, in the mental hospital. They used to farm this land, a lot of the land around Sagamore Hills. They actually used the crops for their patients. They also had the patients working in the fields. We had a lot of walkaways, but we knew who they were. They were dressed funny. We would just call the police and they'd pick them up. So the mental health changed over the years and that campus become very small. There's approximately two hundred and fifty between two hundred and two hundred and fifty patients there at the present time. I asked them if they were going to sell some additional land. They said yes. They wanted to sell off about another 400 acres. We talked to the national park who abuts immediately opposite and also to the north and the Cuyahoga Valley on the Cuyahoga County line. There was a hundred acres. So we we did get together. John Debo from the Cuyahoga Valley and Mr. Vern Hartenburg from the Metroparks in Cleveland and myself traveled to Columbus. And we were ready to make a presentation to the Board of Mental Health. And Mr. Hague walked into the room and he said, this is a no brainer. He said for three government entities to come together and want to purchase this land, it's a given. So I raised my hand and I said, I have one little problem in Sagamore Hills. We have to pass the one-mill five-year levy, that we would do that this fall. That would be a contingency on this, but I'll work very, very hard on this, and I think I can get this passed. So we had a grassroots campaign, made homemade signs, contact the people, send out fliers, and sure enough, we passed it by 85 percent of the people. So we acquired 192 acres. The National Park acquired a little over a hundred acres and the Metroparks on the north side added approximately a hundred acres to their Metropark system. So it was a great... It was a great accomplishment as far as we're concerned. It stopped construction of homes coming up the hill from Canal Road. We own all the way to the hike and bike trail. And we also have an entrance from the Sagamore Hills area. There was a baseball field there that we use for traveling leagues. We keep the grass cut and we bought it in its wild and wooly state with the condition that it'll never be built on.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:20:12] Well, it sounds as though, yes, they had a building boom in that area, and that's good. But you wanted to curb it.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:20:21] Yes.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:20:22] So that it would not overtake the entire situation and you'd still have some green space. You would still have access and make additions to the park, which is good.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:20:33] Well, actually, I will identify the intersection. It's by Valley View Road and Chaffee Road, and it would be going east to the hike and bike trail on the north side of the road. We... And also, we have a landowner that had 18 acres that run adjacent to our own park, the Sagamore Park, and on the far end it ended right where our park ended. And I contacted... I knew the family for many years—it was the Hennes family—and asked them if they would be willing to sell a couple of acres, because if they did, we would have the ability to connect to the hike and bike trail. However, we would have to cross under some high lines. And that, of course, is a problem. So, yes, they did sell it to us. We acquired the property. It took two years to get a license to cross under the high lines, and it happened to be kind of in the middle of where the large towers were that hold the lines. So we finally worked with the attorneys and have a 99-year lease to cross under that. And I made an application with the Ohio and Erie Coalition over a two-year period to put a trail connecting our park, the Sagamore Park, to the hike and bike trail so people would now have the ability to come into our park, park their cars and their bikes, and get on the hike and bike trail and go north or south because Valley View Road is a very heavily traveled road with people going to and from Cleveland, particularly early in the morning and in the evening. And we certainly didn't want children traveling on that road. And it's being used a lot. We have a lot of people coming in, parking their cars with their bikes, and getting on the trail. And we now have the bridge across Valley View Road. I worked very closely with Keith Shy. I worked very closely with the with the Summit County park system. At one time from Sagamore Road to Highland Road that was under the jurisdiction of Cuyahoga County. And I said to Keith, why is it under Cuyahoga County? It's not being kept up. And finally, they were able to acquire that property into Summit County where it should be. And they at that time, they put up the bridge and repaired that area and paved it. And it's a wonderful asset for Sagamore Hills.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:23:22] Well, you really developed a huge ability to negotiate with these entities and developed a political savvy in the process.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:23:35] Well, I think part of it is because of my deep roots in the area and understanding what was there before and what is happening. They're not making any more land. And so we had to acquire as much as we possibly could. We also... I also helped our Nordonia school system. We had the Children's Psychiatric Hospital on Dunham Road, and that was closed in 1992, and the building stayed vacant all those years. It was a building that was very... Built very special for these children. The inside of the building had what they called pods, and they would have a main focus area and these small rooms for these children. So there was really... It was very hard to sell that property or anybody to become interested in the property. Finally, I worked with our school system and said there's 94 acres here. We need to look at this for our future. Maybe this could be a high school or campus of maybe a middle school and so on. So working with the Department of Mental Health and working with the schools and taking tours and so on, we were able to have that property purchased by our Nordonia city schools. And it's a little bit out of the center of our school system, but it's zoned residential and we were afraid we would get 94 homes there. So that property has they razed the building. They had some property that was given to them on Carter Road, approximately 40 acres. When the developer put in Greenwood Village, he gave the schools of this property for a possible middle school. They sold that property and used the money from that property to raze the building. And so they now have 94 acres of vacant land, which is a lot of land in this particular area. There's not too many large parcels of land. Most of it's been developed.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:25:54] You've answered quite a bit about this, but what can you think that would be a watershed moment in the history of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park? What would you think is that, like, everything came together?

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:26:15] Are you looking for a time that this come together or...

**Maureen Carroll** [00:26:19] An event, a time, an event, a coming together of maybe groups of people that solidified the situation?

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:26:32] Well, I attended most of the meetings, and I don't think there's any particular time, but I think it probably, it was probably eight to ten years before people realized that this will happen and this will become a park. And I think people begin to realize this. They were acquiring large parcels of land. I think the biggest problem was they felt that their property maybe was worth more than what they were being offered by the government. There were a lot of people that were very upset about losing their property. However, the park did give them life estates. Some people are still living in those homes. And I think that probably took ten or twelve years before it really kind of settled down and people realized that this was going to happen. Mr. Seiberling was instrumental in getting this... Began this process.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:27:41] John Seiberling.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:27:41] Yes.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:27:42] John Seiberling.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:27:42] Yes.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:27:42] So that would have been a hurdle for the people perhaps not getting as much money as they thought they should.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:27:49] Right.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:27:49] An eminent domain rights situation. So this would have been one of the challenges.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:27:56] Yes.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:27:56] It would have been a challenge that was met and overcome.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:28:00] Yes.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:28:00] In the project. What type of support... Now you've been a very supportive person of the park. What other types of support has the project encountered?

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:28:15] You mean the Cuyahoga Valley?

**Maureen Carroll** [00:28:16] Yeah.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:28:18] I think... I think it's been a real asset to all of us in this area. I think it's increased the value of our homes, both on the Brecksville side and Sagamore Hills. We have very little... At the present time, there's a lot of foreclosures and people struggling because of the economy. We have very few foreclosures. We have very few people that have moved out of the area. I think the same with Brecksville. There was an article recently in the paper about this. I think we have an asset with Brandywine Falls. They have enhanced that area. It's actually a scenic area that a lot of people come to. There's a lot of people that come to the Valley now just to go through the park. They enjoy the riding of the bicycles through the area, the restaurants along the way. I think all the additions to the north, through the steel mills, I think that's helped us. And we were very fortunate in this area because this is where it began. We've been able to use this for the last twenty-five years, going... Now they're trying to... We're working to find a way to go from Brandywine Road to connect to the other side of Brandywine Falls so that people are not traveling on Brandywine Road, which is over [I-]271. It's a very heavily, fast driven road. They have a plan in place. We've been working with the Metroparks on this. However, funding is the problem. They thought about putting a bridge. There used to be a train trestle to the east that went across 271 and that was removed way before the park come into the area. And they're... Now they're planning to go through Brandywine Inn and go... They're trying to develop a trail to get to the other, because there's just a missing link that they have to travel on Brandywine Road. And I know there's lots of areas through Akron and some of the other sections of Canton that are all coming together and connecting. So I think it'll end up being about 90-some miles of [crosstalk] parkway and hike and bike...

**Maureen Carroll** [00:31:07] You know, it's a very unique park because it joins two very large cities.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:31:14] Yes.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:31:15] At this point. Akron and Cleveland. And it's... Of course it began with the canal, which brought economic prosperity to that whole area.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:31:28] Yes.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:31:28] And then it went through an evolutionary period, and now it's resurrected as a recreational and relaxation... Area of relaxation. But the national park that connects two big cities...

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:31:46] Yes. It's amazing and I think it's so nice and it's so unique that we can connect with downtown Cleveland and go all the way to Zoar through Akron, and they've had some huge hurdles to accomplish, particularly going through the steel mills and in Akron going across large roads and businesses in that area. And I think that there'll be a lot of... Hopefully there'll be a lot of small restaurants and small businesses that'll pop up along the canal that will help people that are traveling through the area. Hopefully there'll be some inns maybe where they can stay because a lot of people like to stay overnight. Brandywine Inn is very popular and it has been for years. The Hoys have done a great job of restoring that area.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:32:49] That would be really wonderful. That... Do you see that as the next part of the vision, sort of fleshing it out not in a touristy kind of way, but in a way where comforts are taken care of...

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:33:03] Right.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:33:04] In a gracious manner.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:33:06] Well, for instance, by the Boston Store, there's a little... There's a little... Used to be Grandma's Store. And I think she passed away. And I think her nephew or somebody has taken it over. And we always enjoyed... From our home we'd catch the Route 82. We would travel down a hill called Scenic View and get onto the Towpath it ride to the Boston Store, stop and have something to drink, and then continue on down to either the Winking Lizard or Fisher's and have dinner, rest, and then ride back. And it was approximately 18 miles roundtrip for us to travel. My husband and I did that for a number of years. We don't do it now. We're a little bit older, but we still ride our bikes. And I think we would catch up with neighbors and people. A lot of people would travel down Highland Road and get on the hike and bike trail. And at one time we called that Red Lock Hill. And I think they still do identify it that way. And a funny thing happened to me one day. We have a... We had a gentleman that was working for the county engineer for many of years, and we were talking about the area, and he made reference to it. He was talking about Valley View Road. And I made reference... I called it 631. 631, he said. I haven't heard that years. I said, well that's the name of the road we called it before it was Valley View Road. He said, you're one of the few people that remembered that. He said... Because they had it by route numbers rather than names.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:34:49] Oh, so that was 631.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:34:49] It was Route 631.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:34:51] Oh...

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:34:52] Valley View Road.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:34:53] Valley View Road.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:34:53] But it has different names because down at the canal, it's called Canal Road. Up the hill we call it Valley View. And if you continue further out, it's called it's called... Oh, I can't even recall the name now, but it has different names as it goes through different towns.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:35:18] I'm so impressed with everything that you've told me. Let's see. What type of support has the development of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park encountered. And maybe from, maybe from corporate... We've talked about the government. We've talked about the support of people who have a vision or even perhaps it was gonna cost them a little bit but they could see the positive side. Was corporate entities involved at all? Did they see anything positive here?

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:35:53] Excuse me. We don't have a lot of large corporations in our area. Sagamore Hills is basically a bedroom community. We have a small corridor of commercial along Route 82, and it's mostly stores. Northfield Center is pretty much the same way. I can remember... One thing I can remember is when my mother would have to go... Of course, my mother made everything. She bought flour and sugar, made all of her own bakery. She had two kitchens. She had a kitchen that was a summer kitchen that had a gas stove. She had a winter kitchen where she had coal and wood stove, and she made the best food. And she would go every two weeks to a little store up in Northfield Center. There's an old block of stores there and there used to be an A&P there, and there was a lady by the name of Mabel—I can remember this very well—and they had wood shelves. And when she would want to buy coffee, you bought whatever brand they had, and she had this long stick with a hook on it and she would grab the top of the can and catch it. And that was what we would buy. She bought her flour and her sugar and her coffee and the needs that she could not make at home. She did a lot of canning. She canned... We raised our own poultry and we had our own pork and cattle and milk and cream and butter. And in the summer, she had a very large garden and she would sell excess fruits and vegetables that she had. We had a big fruit orchard. She'd make homemade apple pies and kuchens and so on. My Aunt Mary, her oldest sister, lived about maybe a quarter mile from where we lived. My aunt never drove, but she used to come down to the farm and help out. In the summertime, my father would hire a lot of the high school boys that were available to help with the farm, with the hay and the crops and so on. And there's one person in particular who was very special to me, and his name is Arch Milani. He's still living. He would come down to the farm. We've become friends over the years. He's been the mayor of Northfield Village for many years. His son Victor is now the mayor. And he's... There was one little funny story he always tells, and he called me by the name of Dushka, which was apparently a Russian name for a little girl. And my grandfather when he was sick, I guess I would be, I was a newborn and he had... My mother and dad had a wicker buggy, and my grandfather would sit under the tree and watch watch the baby. And Arch would come along and want to look at the baby. And he would take his cane and say, get away, get away, because he didn't want him to [crosstalk[ bother the baby, you know, but he had... He has some very good stories as well. He served in the service and he's had some disability. He may be somebody that you may want to interview.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:39:33] Yes.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:39:35] But he's... He's having some health problems right now. I don't know whether he would be available or not.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:39:42] Well, we'll get his name.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:39:43] Okay.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:39:43] We'll get his name. That's good. So how has the landscape changed since the project's creation? How has the landscape solidified, come together, changed, become one?

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:39:57] I think the fact that a lot of people want to live near the Towpath and the hike and bike trail, I think we in Sagamore Hills have the best of both worlds because we have both of them available. I think people want to live in the area. They want to live close to the park. I think the people that... I think the park have have some great features. They have this kind of countryside farming that they have available. The people are now farming some of the land. They have organic markets available. I think there's a lot of... People are very happy with the park. But there's also... I think the generation has changed. It's been approximately twenty-five or twenty-seven, maybe thirty years. A lot of people that lived in the park or near the park have moved away. And I think it's a younger generation and they're very happy with this. They're enjoying it

**Maureen Carroll** [00:41:02] Do you think that the park really brings families together?

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:41:04] I think it does.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:41:05] Mm hmm.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:41:06] I see it in our area.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:41:07] Mm hmm.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:41:07] I think a lot of people... We have... They use our community park a lot. I think they're using the hike and bike trail. A lot of times the Athletic Association has approximately ten weeks of baseball. We have five baseball fields. I think the young parents are bringing their children. They get on the little trail that we have connecting, and they take their children for a walk or take 'em bike riding while their other children are playing baseball just to keep them busy. And I think it's bringing families together. It's being used... We are every weekend our park is being used. We have two pavilions. There's a lot of family reunions. There's a lot of graduations. I think it is helping people, bringing families more together. I think at some point that families were sort of drifting apart. Both parents were both working and they didn't have time, family time. And I think there's more and more of that now with the trails and with the hike and bike. And they're enjoying getting out of their homes. They have smaller lots and just getting out and enjoying the park system, packing lunches and just getting out.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:42:23] And having a national park right there.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:42:25] Yes. Mm hmm. And it's used by so many people.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:42:30] Mm hmm.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:42:30] There's people that travel from... There's people that are from foreign countries that are here. Traveling. It's amazing.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:42:36] I was surprised to hear how many people come to the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. It's I understand the third most used in the country.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:42:45] Yes.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:42:48] Is there anything in the whole development of this that has surprised you?

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:42:53] I don't think so. I think I've lived through. You know, when I... My father graduated from Northfield in 1924, at that time there were two separate schools, Northfield and Macedonia. Macedonia School was located on Valley View Road at Route 82, which is Aurora Road. My mother graduated in 1932 from a little schoolhouse there. My mother had six students in her class. She used to ride the horse from Twinsburg Road to school. My father graduated in 1924 and some of his siblings as well. He was of course the youngest of nine children. Now it has become one school system. I graduated in 1956. There were 52 students in our class. This was all a farm area. It began to develop with the Ford plant come in, Cummings Engine, Chrysler. And we were all kind of poor little farm kids. And these executives were moving into the area with their children. They had cars. They had fancy clothes. And we were a little bit challenged by that. However, they were moving into the area when we were in high school. One place I would like to point out is where the shopping center is in Northfield Village, it's called Northfield Plaza. That used to be the city ice farm. And in front of the... In front of that area, there was a white fence, I can remember, and they had beautiful horses and they would provide the ice for the Greater Cleveland area. And it was absolutely beautiful farm. And where Cummings Engine [is] was also a farm. And most of these areas started to develop, for instance, the Chrysler plant. And there were more and more... That's when our population really increased. I think about the second or third class after us had become over 100 students in the graduating class. We were having growing pains at the time. But that was that's when I noticed a big change in our area when I was graduating from high school.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:45:25] Mmm.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:45:25] Mm hmm.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:45:27] How did you what did you think of that change? Did you...

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:45:30] We accepted it. We we grew with things. A lot of the older people could not accept it, I think, just because of my age. And we were, you know, we didn't like some of the things that were happening, but we accepted it. I've always accepted change. While I was a trustee, the Eaton development took place and if it fit in our zoning and we had to... We had to accept it. And I think that change is good.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:46:10] Yeah. And yet you could see that if you let things develop without some type of an affirmation of the park system that it would be much more commercial, much more residential, and very little or no park system.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:46:29] Oh, I agree. I think that that whole area would have been developed into housing. It's... It would have been a challenge to develop some of the area because of the terrain of the property. And it's such pristine property. It's wonderful that we have this for our generations to come.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:46:53] Well, where do you see the project going or what do you think is the next step?

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:46:57] Well, we're... In Sagamore Hills, we're pretty well developed. We have small parcels of land here and there that are still being developed. In our zoning we call for one house, one acre. We changed our zoning back a few years ago. Anyone with 15 acres or more could build one house, one acre. However, they could cluster the homes. I don't mean attached, but just cluster, making them smaller lots with green space around them. We have approximately maybe a half a dozen of those in the area. One of the areas that we have is the Ashford Glen coming up out of Canal Road by Valley View and Chaffee on the south side, there's a development there. And in our zoning we requested that the developer put a trail that would connect to the hike and bike trail for residential use. They actually... They actually put the land in the open space, and people can get from that development—there's 60 acre, 60 homes there—and they can get on the hike and bike trail. And we do this with all of the areas that abut the park. We don't abut the park directly on the Towpath Trail, but we do on the hike and bike trail. And I've worked very, very closely and I still am working very closely with the Metro Parks in Akron. Keith Shy has been a very good person for the Metro Parks. Whenever there's something in our area or an adjacent town, he'll ask me to go along to help. We've been trying to make a connecting trail for all the communities to the east of us along 271. However, now they're doing a lot of work for the bypass for 271 and Route 8. We've been trying to get the residents from Sagamore, from Northfield Center, to be able to connect to the hike and bike trail along 271. They own some property there. However, the Catholic cemetery owns the property there. They've been pretty receptive, but we haven't actually gained an easement yet. But we're working on it, and we're trying to get some people from Macedonia to connect. We're also trying to get... I've been working with Northfield Village, but there's not a real easy way to get there because there's a lot of hills and most of the roads are very hilly. And the concern is traveling by bicycle or walking is very dangerous.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:50:00] Safety.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:50:00] Mm hmm.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:50:01] Well, let's see, as far as the parties concerned, the national, Cuyahoga County National Park, what do you see as their next step?

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:50:08] The National Park? I think they're pretty well developed. I see them having some of the farm, some farming in the area as they're doing now. They've been... I think funding is a problem right now. I don't think they're acquiring any additional property. They're trying to, I think, repair some of the barns and homes that are still left in the area. And...

**Maureen Carroll** [00:50:40] Is there anything that you can think of that you'd like to add?

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:50:43] Not really. I kind of jumped around a little bit. But as my memory, you know, I would recall things and I try to...

**Maureen Carroll** [00:50:51] John, do you have any questions?

**John Bennett** [00:50:53] First, can you clarify for me, because as I'm writing a lot, I may have skipped over it. Hike and bike. Now, is that the Towpath Trail or is hike and bike something different?

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:51:04] That's the Metro Parks serving Summit County. The hike and bike. And the Towpath is to the west of that along the canal.

**John Bennett** [00:51:14] Okay.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:51:14] Mm hmm.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:51:14] I think one of the areas that I enjoy, and I know that my family, is the train that passes through the area. They have Thomas the Train for the children, and they have the Polar Express. And I think that's a wonderful, wonderful way of showing people the park. Most recently, our county engineer has an annual meeting every year and he tries to find... He's very park oriented. His name is Greg Bachman, and he tries to have his annual meeting for the townships—that's one of the requirements by the ORC—in the park, and the most recent, in early May, we traveled on the train from Akron—I can't think of the road there, I'm not as familiar with Akron—all the way to the north to Brecksville and then rode back. And he actually had his meeting on the train. We had boxed lunches.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:52:24] Oh, that's nice.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:52:26] And he actually had a microphone.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:52:28] Mm hmm.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:52:29] We were condensed to probably to two cars. And it was a very enjoyable trip. But we've been down to the Oaks Pavilion down in the Metro Park system, and all of his meetings are in the park system. And a very interesting thing that he plans to do, this summer he wants to travel all the township roads. He's our county engineer and he is our engineer for the townships. He's planning to ride his bicycle with his wife through all the communities. He's going to begin the first of July. He's invited residents and public officials to ride with them and the maximum would be 30 miles on a Saturday. I'm not sure that I can do this, but he plans to do Sagamore Hills and Northfield together, and it's approximately 30 miles. He's a very interesting person. He grew up in Akron. He moved to Columbus and he's now moved back to the area. And he's... Also, there has in mind when roads are being resurfaced, he's putting a bike trail in the berm and he's paving that area. However, with funding the way it is, he's cut back some of that. But he has added trails so that people can get to the park. He believes in the Towpath. He believes in the hike and bike trail. So.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:54:02] That's wonderful.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:54:03] Yeah, it is, it really is.

**John Bennett** [00:54:06] Okay, I have another one.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:54:07] Okay, go for it.

**John Bennett** [00:54:08] In... I don't how I want to ask it, but as I was listening to you describe your involvement, the word that came to my mind was land baron, now I don't know if anybody's ever, but just listening to you describe how you've been involved in helping acquire land. How does that title strike you as being a land baron in terms of this whole project?

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:54:36] Well, I think it's very... My background is real estate. I'm retired from... As a realtor... And I believe that if we don't acquire this property, it will be developed and they're just not making any more land. And when I started as a trustee 15 years ago, we had five acres of land. At the present time, we have approximately two hundred and fifty acres. And I'm not so sure that would have happened over the years. But I think this is really important. Two hundred of that acres is pristine property. It'll stay in its wild and wooly condition. It will never be developed. It's on... It's stated on the deed from the State of Ohio that it will not be developed. Who knows, down, years from now, what would've happened to that. But it abuts the national park. It abuts the hike and bike trail. And I think this is something that's really, really important to the people in our community.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:55:40] So you really used your skill set as a realtor to actually help facilitate the acquisition of land, knowing exactly, so your deep roots in the area but also your skill set definitely helped.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:55:55] I think, too, being, you know, working on the farm, also being a realtor, knowing that, you know, property is being developed and once it's gone, it's gone forever. And if you don't own it, you can't control it because whoever owns the property, if it fits in there in our zoning, they have the right to develop it. One... And maybe this should be off the record, but across... [laughs] across the street from Greenwood Village, we have a highway. It's Route 82. And anything that was next to Greenwood Village could be developed. However, the property on Route 82 does not connect because of the state highway. It's not contiguous. And they own 15 acres, and they wanted to put in at one time what was called an assisted living. Our zoning gave them a window of approximately five years to develop that property. Once the five years passed, it would revert back to residential. Back about five years ago, the developer—this was the last parcel of land in Greenwood Village—decided that he wanted to put in a development for elderly people and he wanted to put 164 units on this 15 acres. Well, the trustees said, no, it would have to be rezoned. We were sued, and we were... We had depositions, went to court and so on. We said, no, this will remain residential property, and we never made a big deal out of it, but we actually won that court case. They got tired of paying attorneys. And now there's a little cluster development of approximately 15 homes going in that area. We also asked him to have a trail connecting to the hike and bike trail. It's adjacent to the hike and bike trail on Route 82 on the north side between Carter Road and the hike and bike trail. And if you go by there now, there's approximately five or six homes built. He slowed down. He's only a building as he sells them. And that's understandable [crosstalk] with the economy the way it is. But I thought that was an accomplishment.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:58:33] Yes, that was an accomplishment.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:58:35] And we held our ground. I said we can't have this. We don't want this to happen. We don't need this. This would have been for the elderly.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:58:44] Right.

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:58:44] And then further down the road, we have an assisted living, we have a nursing home, and we have the Brentwood doctors' offices. So we have, you know, we do have that available to people. So... And I think the largest farmer we have left is Polson. Kirk Polson was a trustee at one time in the township along with Cyrus Eaton, and I think Mr. Marshall, where Greenwood Village is located that was owned by Marshall Drug. And there's approximately a thousand acres there, where Greenwood village is. A portion of it was purchased by the National Park. There's a trail through there called the Carriage Trail. And if you go to the end of Holzhauer Road, you can get on a trail, very rugged trail, and go down to the Towpath. It's very hilly and somewhat dangerous if you are riding a bike or... It's easy to walk, but it would be very tough to ride a bike. We have ridden down through that area.

**Maureen Carroll** [00:59:52] What do you think Cyrus Eaton's take on the development of the national park would have been?

**Rose Mary Snell** [00:59:58] He loved his land. I think he would have been happy with that. He used to walk the fields. I can recall when I was young and we were farming some of his land, he'd be walking around through the woods with an old coat, hat, and a cane or a stick. And people would come up and ask if Mr. Eaton was in town because he spent a lot of time in Nova Scotia. It would be him. And he said, well, he's out of town, he's in Nova Scotia.

**Maureen Carroll** [01:00:26] [Laughs]

**Rose Mary Snell** [01:00:26] And we would laugh about it. Also, one thing that I can also mention to you is I remember when Mr. Khrushchev gave Mr. Eaton the troika and the troika was three... They had one horse out front and two to the side and a carriage. And I can remember Mr. Khrushchev and Mr. Eaton riding up and down Helton Road. We would see that often. But at that time, we didn't have cameras and we didn't take pictures. However, I did acquire some pictures through the Cleveland Plain Dealer. They do have a file on Mr. Eaton. That was really enjoyable to see big, beautiful white horses. The sad part of, about Mr. Eaton is when he passed away, he was married for the second time to a lady by the name of Ann, and he lived on Old Route 8. The home is still there—a doctor's bought it—and there was a little home that Mr. Khrushchev stayed in, and they have had that open. The Garden Club has had tours of that area back a few years ago. The sad part of it is when Mr. Eaton died, Mrs. Eaton—her first name was Ann—burned a lot of the artifacts and burned a lot of the pictures. She seemed to be very bitter and I really don't know her reasoning, but she destroyed a lot of the history that Mr. Eaton had for some reason, and I never knew why.

**Maureen Carroll** [01:02:02] Lost.

**Rose Mary Snell** [01:02:03] Lost memories.

**Maureen Carroll** [01:02:04] Lost.

**John Bennett** [01:02:05] We're glad you came today to share some memories, so now they're not lost.

**Rose Mary Snell** [01:02:09] Well, it's kind of confusing. I mean, [crosstalk] here and there, you'll have to put it together.

**John Bennett** [01:02:15] It's wonderful.

**Rose Mary Snell** [01:02:15] As you think of... As I think of things. If I think of some other things, I certainly will call you.

**Maureen Carroll** [01:02:20] Sure, you should have my number.

**Rose Mary Snell** [01:02:23] Yes.

**Maureen Carroll** [01:02:23] Yes, so that'll be good.

**Rose Mary Snell** [01:02:23] Do you have a card or anything?

**Maureen Carroll** [01:02:25] No, I don't think I do.

**Rose Mary Snell** [01:02:25] I have one. I'll bring it. I brought it with me. I'll give you one of mine if you want to call or have any questions.

**John Bennett** [01:02:31] Is there anything else that you would like to share before I hit the stop button?

**Rose Mary Snell** [01:02:35] I can't think of anything right now, but I certainly will call you if I do.

**Maureen Carroll** [01:02:39] Okay.

**Rose Mary Snell** [01:02:39] I know it's... I probably should have had some sequence of order.

**Maureen Carroll** [01:02:45] No. You were just fine. Okay, I think you can hit stop.