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**Nina Gibans** [00:00:00] All right. So, basically we're going to talk about your career, your background, Euclid Avenue.

**William Morris** [00:00:09] I thought we were talking about Euclid Avenue.

**Nina Gibans** [00:00:11] We... we will be. But it's important. You did get my material, right?

**William Morris** [00:00:15] Yes.

**Nina Gibans** [00:00:15] Okay. Very important to talk about your background because I want to ask you some things that I know along the way. So the first thing we need to do is to say that I'm Nina Gibans and this is Bill Morris.

**William Morris** [00:00:30] Right.

**Nina Gibans** [00:00:35] So you grew up in Shaker Heights, right?

**William Morris** [00:00:38] Yes.

**Nina Gibans** [00:00:40] So talk about how that might have influenced anything you are going to talk about.

**William Morris** [00:00:48] Well, it seems like Shaker Heights was the center of the earth as far as I could see.

**Nina Gibans** [00:00:59] So when did you expand beyond that center? [laughs]

**William Morris** [00:01:02] Finally, I went away to college. [laughs] And that had a big effect.

**Nina Gibans** [00:01:13] All right. And where did you go and who made any impact on you?

**William Morris** [00:01:20] I went to Cornell, but I started the architecture career at Auburn University in Alabama because when I graduated from high school, the next day, I was in the Navy.

**Nina Gibans** [00:01:40] I'd forgotten that.

**William Morris** [00:01:41] Yeah, I mean, the Navy had a program where, at that time in 1945, this was towards the end of the war, you were being... [beeping sound in background] If you turned 18 and you were in high school, they drafted you right out of high school and you didn't finish high school. But the Navy had a program where if you took a test and could pass it, they tracked you into a program for... as a radar technician, and sent you off to school and let you finish high school because they were looking for highly technical, you know, people they could train technically and the best way to do it was leaving high school, so that they could kind of deal with the school that they were going to send you to as to become this radar technician.

**Nina Gibans** [00:02:45] All right.

**William Morris** [00:02:46] And while in the boot camp or basic training, essentially, they gave everybody another test. And if you wanted to become an officer, that test program grew into a full track for becoming an officer because the Navy during the war, the Second World War, was not able to promote people from the ranks into... So they could move up as officers. It was... When the Navy was formed, Congress said naval officers had to have a college degree, period. And this was John Adams for the Navy, really. And so towards the end of the war, there was so much dissent from people who wanted to move up that they gave everybody in the Navy essentially an S.A.T. test. Really, this is about what it amounted to. And anybody who could pass it, they sent 'em to college because they only had one place where you could get a college degree to go into the Navy, which was Annapolis, period. And they opened up all the land grant colleges in the country to train naval officers.

**Nina Gibans** [00:04:29] Okay. So we're identifying that year as?

**William Morris** [00:04:31] 1945.

**Nina Gibans** [00:04:31] Yes.

**Emma Yanoshik-Wing** [00:04:33] I'm going to pause for just one second.

**William Morris** [00:04:36] But this is a long, shaggy dog story. [laughs]

**Nina Gibans** [00:04:40] Yeah, well, it's interesting, though.

**Emma Yanoshik-Wing** [00:04:42] I've restarted. Thank you.

**Nina Gibans** [00:04:44] All right, so now we're at...

**William Morris** [00:04:46] So, I took this test, and when I came back from leave, instead of sending me down to become a radar technician, they decided I was going to become an officer. So they put me on a train and sent me to Alabama and... To the Alabama Polytechnic Institute, which has now become Auburn University because it's in Auburn, Alabama, which was a town of maybe 5,000 people. And maybe 5,000 people in the university. And they said the first day, take any course you want. So I signed up for an architectural degree and put in a year of architecture there, and then they discharged me from the Navy because the war was over. And before that, or before... While I was still in 11th grade, I applied for Cornell. And it was interesting. I went up there for an interview and there were no men in the college at that time. It was all women, 100%, and it's probably 50% now. And when I got there in 1946, there were like two women in my class. They went right back to their, kind of, this is a program for men only. Of course, the two women were better than any of them who were in the class. [laughs]

**Nina Gibans** [00:06:37] That's fascinating. Okay. So, Cornell, you went through Cornell then?

**William Morris** [00:06:42] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:06:43] And the Cornell architecture?

**William Morris** [00:06:44] Yeah, the architectural school at Cornell.

**Nina Gibans** [00:06:47] And you're talking about undergrad though....

**William Morris** [00:06:51] Undergrad.

**Nina Gibans** [00:06:51] First and then...

**William Morris** [00:06:52] It was a five-year program.

**Nina Gibans** [00:06:54] Mm hmm.

**William Morris** [00:06:55] And I was anxious to get out of school. [laughs] I was sick of school by that time.

**Nina Gibans** [00:07:03] But were there are some people that influenced you at that time, in the architecture area?

**William Morris** [00:07:08] Not at the school. It was interesting because Auburn—which was a state school and the only state, and the only architectural school in the state of Alabama—was generously supported by the state of Alabama because they were training the only architects that would be available for Alabama for the next fifty years. And they just poured money into the school and they had the best people. The dean of the school, after I left, became head of University of Illinois, which was the largest architectural school in the country.

**Nina Gibans** [00:07:47] Right.

**William Morris** [00:07:48] The one in Champaign-Urbana.

**Nina Gibans** [00:07:50] Right.

**William Morris** [00:07:51] And the teacher, the best teachers that I had, one became head of the University of Oregon architectural school.

**Nina Gibans** [00:08:01] Are these names we'd all recognize?

**William Morris** [00:08:03] I can't even remember their names.

**Nina Gibans** [00:08:05] I see. Okay. All right.

**William Morris** [00:08:05] It's been 55 years now. [laughs]

**Nina Gibans** [00:08:08] Yes, yes. But they... Okay. So, we'll accept that.

**William Morris** [00:08:12] They were... It was interesting because the teachers were wonderful. And the student body, because it was a state school in Alabama, they had to take everybody who came out of an Alabama high school and nobody was prepared for college. I mean it. I just sailed through it with all eyes.

**Nina Gibans** [00:08:35] Shaker Heights. [laughs] That is funny.

**William Morris** [00:08:36] Shaker Heights was a prep school, essentially, Shaker Heights High School. And I said to myself, there's something wrong here because I'd never gotten an A in my life in high school, but I just sailed through it. Then I got to Cornell and the teachers were terrible, but the student body was incredible. You know, they attracted the best people from all over the country, and in an architectural studio that's what you want. You want the best students because you never know how good you are until you're up against that kind of competition. So there it was, an Ivy League school, and the one good thing about it is that unlike Yale, Harvard, and places like that, they employed no one who had a name. What they had was your fourth year, you had visiting critics.

**Nina Gibans** [00:09:47] Mm hmm.

**William Morris** [00:09:47] And they brought in people from, well, I had Philip Johnson for a whole semester then as a critic.

**Nina Gibans** [00:09:54] And who else?

**William Morris** [00:09:58] There was a guy from Florida who was doing all these kind of big buildings that they're tearing down now. You know, the Fontainebleau...

**Nina Gibans** [00:10:12] Yes.

**William Morris** [00:10:13] And places like that.

**Nina Gibans** [00:10:14] The one they just died.

**William Morris** [00:10:15] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:10:16] The man that... Okay.

**William Morris** [00:10:18] And he was very good. But they brought in people from all over the country who were practicing architects, who did have names and... Philip.... Well, I had Philip Johnson, the next semester class had Buckminster Fuller, and these people were available because Ithaca is such an isolated place. There's, there's nothing to do but sit around and talk, you know? [laughs]

**Nina Gibans** [00:10:55] Right.

**William Morris** [00:10:56] You know, it's not like going to school in New York City or someplace like that.

**Nina Gibans** [00:10:58] Right. All right. So you got back to Cleveland and it's about 1949?

**William Morris** [00:11:06] No. Well, it would have been, but. I figured since I was in such a... They had electives that you could take at school, but essentially all your courses were either in the Architecture school or in the Fine Arts department. So I kind of dropped the architectural program for a year. And because they had a very good, you know, liberal arts college, and took a bunch of English courses and philosophy courses and things like that that I wouldn't have gotten as electives. And that was the only way to really take advantage of the university.

**Nina Gibans** [00:11:54] So we're up to 1950.

**William Morris** [00:11:56] So we're up to 1950, about.

**Nina Gibans** [00:12:03] Okay. So you come back to Cleveland.

**William Morris** [00:12:05] No.

**Nina Gibans** [00:12:06] You don't?

**William Morris** [00:12:07] Meanwhile, back at the ranch, [laughs] my father got a job as the Deputy Chief of Industry for the Marshall Plan in Italy.

**Nina Gibans** [00:12:19] Right.

**William Morris** [00:12:20] And they moved to Italy for three years. And I went over to visit them in 1951 for the summer and just stayed for a year and a half.

**Nina Gibans** [00:12:32] The Academy of Rome or...

**William Morris** [00:12:34] Well, yeah, I had the it was Morris Bright, I called it rather than a Fulbright. I was there in, living in Rome for a year and a half and traveling all over Europe. It was, you know, very nice. And I enrolled at the University of Rome for a semester course with a man named [Pier Luigi] Nervi, who really was internationally famous.

**Nina Gibans** [00:13:12] As a designer and architect, right?

**William Morris** [00:13:15] He was actually an engineer.

**Nina Gibans** [00:13:17] Ah.

**William Morris** [00:13:19] But he was the most brilliant engineer I'd ever come across.

**Nina Gibans** [00:13:26] So then your family came back?

**William Morris** [00:13:28] My family came back.

**Nina Gibans** [00:13:29] And you came back...

**William Morris** [00:13:30] Finally, I completed the year... I had one semester to do at Cornell yet for my thesis. And I completed that. I did the design of a kibbutz in Israel and won a big medal for it that gets hung around my neck if I go back to....

**Nina Gibans** [00:13:55] Right.

**William Morris** [00:13:56] Reunions and things. [laughs]

**Nina Gibans** [00:13:57] [Laughs] All right.

**William Morris** [00:14:00] And... I started, I was interested in housing. And no architects were doing any houses, in 1953, this was, by that time. And so I got a job with a contractor doing carpentry, painting, electrical work and, you know, heating, plumbing, the whole thing. This was a kind of 19th century contractor. Here's more of the shaggy dog story. He was from Pittsburgh. James C. [00:14:54]Fanistock [0.0s] was his name.

**Nina Gibans** [00:14:54] Mm hmm.

**William Morris** [00:14:57] And he came to Cleveland because his sister, who was married to somebody who worked for the post office, the guy working for the post office transferred to Cleveland and he came to build her a house, and he bought her some property out in Pepper Pike. And Pepper Pike gave him such a hard time on the design of the house. He said, Screw this, and bought her some property in what is now Warrensville Heights, which was then in the country, and designed her something there. And they gave him a hard time too, you know, you don't have enough muntins in the windows. The same thing that Shaker's been doing for the last fifty years. So he bought our property, sold that and bought our property in Parma. Gorgeous piece of property on Ridgewood Drive, which was at that time the end of the streetcar line that went out Pearl Road. And his sister... He built his sister a house there. He built himself a house there. And he built a house for sale. And I got to him when he was building the house for sale and worked for him for two or three years on that and other projects. And he was a brilliant guy. First week I worked for him, we just talked about architecture for, like, four days straight. [laughs] And then he kept telling me, well, you don't really aspire to be a contractor, and... But he was willing to teach me all the trades, which he knew perfectly.

**Nina Gibans** [00:17:04] Oh, wow. Mm hmm.

**William Morris** [00:17:05] And so that by the time I started working in an architectural office, I couldn't draw anything, but I knew how everything went together because I had done it. So the drawing I picked up like that, you know? And I was the only person in the office who could actually go out and get bids from contractors and negotiate the costs and things like that.

**Nina Gibans** [00:17:40] Which office was this?

**William Morris** [00:17:42] Bruce Huston in Willoughby. Actually, it was Huston [00:17:49]Deacon [0.0s] at that time, and I worked in a Painesville office. That was quite a commute from South Euclid because there were no freeways.

**Nina Gibans** [00:18:04] And so how did you get there?

**William Morris** [00:18:08] More of the shaggy dog story.

**Nina Gibans** [00:18:10] Oh. Can we condense the shag? [laughs]

**William Morris** [00:18:14] Yeah, we can condense the shag. I married a girl from Germany. We went to visit her family and I bought a car there, a French Delahaye, which is the French Rolls-Royce, the one that Charles de Gaulle rode around in, you know, convertible. I paid $300 for it. [laughs]

**Nina Gibans** [00:18:45] That's how you got there?

**William Morris** [00:18:47] And that's how. I drove that car from South Euclid to Painesville and back every day. It was not a car I should have been driving that way. I mean, it was... It was a, you know, a gorgeous convertible, you know, really beautiful.

**Nina Gibans** [00:19:11] Why don't I remember this car? Is this 1953?

**William Morris** [00:19:15] Oh, this is probably '56 by now.

**Nina Gibans** [00:19:19] '56!

**William Morris** [00:19:19] Well, I had been working for this contractor for...

**Nina Gibans** [00:19:21] Right, right, okay.

**William Morris** [00:19:21] A couple, good many years.

**Nina Gibans** [00:19:24] So....

**William Morris** [00:19:24] And one year of that three years we built my parents' house.

**Nina Gibans** [00:19:31] Your parents' house on North Park.

**William Morris** [00:19:32] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:19:34] So that's your first house?

**William Morris** [00:19:36] The first house in Cleveland.

**Nina Gibans** [00:19:39] Okay. So housing has been your main, your main...

**William Morris** [00:19:43] It's all I've been interested.

**Nina Gibans** [00:19:44] Focus, since day one, really.

**William Morris** [00:19:47] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:19:48] I want to explore some things with you, though, that have to do with things that you've mentioned along the way in other conversations. One is that you brought some architects to Cleveland to work with you who flourished.

**William Morris** [00:20:09] A lot of 'em.

**Nina Gibans** [00:20:10] Lot of 'em. So I need to know who they were.

**William Morris** [00:20:16] Paul Westlake.

**Nina Gibans** [00:20:17] Yes, Paul... There's no doubt about Paul's talent nationally, and...

**William Morris** [00:20:23] He was a marvelous kid. I mean, I interviewed him. He interviewed Jack Kelly, with Jack Kelly first. Kelly didn't have a place for him at the time. But Kelly said him to me. I had worked for Kelly for a year.

**Nina Gibans** [00:20:40] You worked for Jack Kelly for a year?

**William Morris** [00:20:43] Mm hmm. After I worked for Huston & [00:20:44]Deacon. [0.0s] And in the interview, you know, he had... He had a bachelor's degree, the dual degree from the University of Pennsylvania, Wharton and Architecture. He started work at the University of Pennsylvania as an accounting major. And... but he could draw. And he had an uncle in Boston named Westlake, who essentially was the designer of this, the building with sloped roof at the corner of Saint Clair and Ninth Street. It's a nice building. It's one of the few good buildings downtown that were done in the '80s or '90s, '70s.

**Nina Gibans** [00:21:38] Yeah, you mean Fleischman?

**William Morris** [00:21:39] No.

**Nina Gibans** [00:21:39] No?

**William Morris** [00:21:39] Not Fleischman.

**Nina Gibans** [00:21:42] Not Fleishman?

**William Morris** [00:21:42] This was the guy from... It was the Blue Cross building, originally, started as that, but Blue Cross stayed where they were, I think.

**Nina Gibans** [00:21:50] Right. Okay.

**William Morris** [00:21:52] And. It's the one with the...

**Nina Gibans** [00:21:57] I know which one.

**William Morris** [00:21:57] Housing roof. [laughs]

**Nina Gibans** [00:22:00] And that was Paul's first building?

**William Morris** [00:22:02] No, that was Paul Westlake's uncle. His uncle was an architect.

**Nina Gibans** [00:22:06] I see.

**William Morris** [00:22:07] And he designed that building.

**Nina Gibans** [00:22:08] I see.

**William Morris** [00:22:10] And Paul then went to Harvard for graduate school. And I said to him, Well, you'll get over that. [laughs] [phone rings]

**Emma Yanoshik-Wing** [00:22:24] Years ago. Okay.

**Nina Gibans** [00:22:29] So, Westlake came to Cleveland because of you but because of his uncle?

**William Morris** [00:22:36] No, he came to Cleveland because he was from Warren.

**Nina Gibans** [00:22:41] Uh huh.

**William Morris** [00:22:43] And it was kind of coming home. I mean, there wasn't much for him to do in Warren with all these degrees, you know?

**Nina Gibans** [00:22:52] Right. Right.

**William Morris** [00:22:54] And so he came to Cleveland because Kelly was a graduate of Harvard also.

**Nina Gibans** [00:23:04] This is Jack Kelly.

**William Morris** [00:23:05] Jack Kelly. And Mr.—what's his face?—Gropius suggested to Paul that he interview with... Paul was went back to Philadelphia and was working for... God, I can't remember the names of these architects, but somebody who was famous there.

**Nina Gibans** [00:23:29] Venturi?

**William Morris** [00:23:30] No. Somebody who was doing housing in their kind of enormous program of renewing.

**Nina Gibans** [00:23:41] Renewal. Bacon?

**William Morris** [00:23:43] Yeah, well, not Bacon's office now...

**Nina Gibans** [00:23:45] But... Oh.

**William Morris** [00:23:46] But whoever Bacon hired to do, actually, the architect to do the housing now. So he was doing all these kind of rowhouses, new rowhouses and things like that. So he came back to interview with Kelly. Kelly didn't have the work for him at the time, so he interviewed with me and I had loads of work back in those good old days when you didn't need to do anything.... People just came over the transom.

**Nina Gibans** [00:24:21] Isn't that nice? [laughs]

**William Morris** [00:24:24] That's right. I had no marketing program whatsoever.

**Nina Gibans** [00:24:28] It's amazing.

**William Morris** [00:24:29] Yeah. It was just a different city then.

**Nina Gibans** [00:24:33] So Paul was with you how long?

**William Morris** [00:24:37] Two or three years.

**Nina Gibans** [00:24:37] And then went to West... To van Dijk?

**William Morris** [00:24:41] Yeah. I suggested he go down to interview with van Dijk because I had run out of work, so I had to let him go, which I hated to do.

**Nina Gibans** [00:24:53] So then there's Bill Koster.

**William Morris** [00:24:55] Bill Koster. Yeah. I met him when I was working out in Painesville because he had gone to school with all the people in that office. Painesville seemed to be... Painesville and Mentor seemed to be a straight ride from there to the University of Cincinnati, which is where Bill Koster went and where all those people who were working in that office were from. And when I started my own office, which was right after I left Jack Kelly's, it was really a one-man office just like it is now. [laughs] And I needed help to do working drawings because there was just, it was too hard to kind of design everything, get the jobs, meet with the clients, and do all the supervision that's necessary on these complicated buildings that the contractors have never seen anything like that before. And... So, I didn't want to rob the office from Painesville of people, so I asked them if they knew anybody. And they suggested Koster. Poor Koster. He was living in Rocky River. And he did like five houses in a row where the clients didn't pay him. So he was desperate for work that would pay him something. He was married by this time.

**Nina Gibans** [00:26:55] Wow. The Bodner house, by the way, is beautiful.

**William Morris** [00:27:02] Oh, Koster did fantastic work. He did [00:27:05]Maisel's [0.0s] working drawings, I think. Part of them anyhow. And when you see those drawings, you'll see.

**Nina Gibans** [00:27:14] Are there any other architects?

**William Morris** [00:27:16] Yeah. Bruce Lynch. He grew up in Orange or Moreland Hills out there in that area and went to the University of Illinois, had wanted to work for me since he was in high school, and which I didn't find out until he came in for an interview after he finished college and I hired him right away.

**Nina Gibans** [00:27:52] Where was the location of your first office?

**William Morris** [00:27:56] In an old house across the street from the Tower East on Chagrin Boulevard. That part of Shaker Heights was originally called Eastview. There are a group of, you know, old... There's some of those houses are still there on Chagrin Boulevard.

**Nina Gibans** [00:28:16] Near the Gropius building?

**William Morris** [00:28:18] Yeah. Well, there and there are two little streets across the street from that, Helen and...

**Nina Gibans** [00:28:27] Where... Near the golf course?

**William Morris** [00:28:28] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:28:30] Bill. Downtown Cleveland, though.

**William Morris** [00:28:32] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:28:33] We've gotta get there with this interview.

**William Morris** [00:28:34] [Laughs]

**Nina Gibans** [00:28:38] Certainly you have of memories of Euclid Avenue.

**William Morris** [00:28:40] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:28:41] So let's go to the buildings that meant the most to you or have meant the most to you, or what are the ones you would point out?

**William Morris** [00:28:53] Most of them are gone. [laughs]

**Nina Gibans** [00:28:55] Okay, well, let's talk about that.

**William Morris** [00:28:59] Cleveland has a kind of mentality that the faster they can rip down the good buildings, the better for the city it will be.

**Nina Gibans** [00:29:06] All right. So what are those good buildings that they tore down?

**William Morris** [00:29:10] Well, the first one I can think of was off Euclid Avenue. It was a Baptist church on 18th Street. Gorgeous kind of Arts and Crafts church, really phenomenal building.

**Nina Gibans** [00:29:31] So it's right around the corner from the Hermit Club?

**William Morris** [00:29:35] Yeah, it's between Chester and Euclld just buried in there when Euclid was kind of all residential, you know, it was...

**Nina Gibans** [00:29:45] Right.

**William Morris** [00:29:45] The neighborhood church. And I suspect that was probably funded by the Rockefellers, who were Baptist. And that's why all that Rockefeller money went to the University of Chicago, which was a Baptist institution, and did not go to Western Reserve, which was not a Baptist institution.

**Nina Gibans** [00:30:07] Okay. But what are some other buildings?

**William Morris** [00:30:11] Okay. Well, starting from 21st Street, it was all houses. When I was in the 11th grade, I took a course at John Huntington Polytechnic Institute, which was in a gigantic old Euclid Avenue mansion. And it was taught by Ceruti.

**Nina Gibans** [00:30:44] Joe Ceruti?

**William Morris** [00:30:45] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:30:47] Who built this apartment.

**William Morris** [00:30:48] Yeah. Right. It was a course in architectural lettering, you know? Well, I figured it was something I should learn before I went to college. [laughs] And it was at night. And I had to hop on the rapid and go downtown and walk up to... It was about at maybe 25th. It was in the area where CSU is now, and CSU kept one of the buildings, the Hanna Mansion. I don't know what they use it for now. For a while it was a...

[00:31:28] The convocation and the center for conferences and...

**William Morris** [00:31:32] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:31:33] The Mather Mansion?

**Emma Yanoshik-Wing** [00:31:34] Alumni and stuff like that, I think.

**William Morris** [00:31:36] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:31:37] Alumni use it.

**William Morris** [00:31:38] Yeah, it was the Mather Mansion.

**Nina Gibans** [00:31:39] And then about 1990, is it, the Junior League... No, earlier than that. The Junior League was behind the renovation, which I think meant I get... It's beautifully restored.

**William Morris** [00:31:54] Yeah. Very, very nicely restored.

**Nina Gibans** [00:31:57] Yeah.

**William Morris** [00:31:57] But they tore down everything else.

**Nina Gibans** [00:32:00] I know.

**William Morris** [00:32:01] And it's interesting because not all cities have behaved like Cleveland. Rochester, which is a very similar city, has a main drag of phenomenal houses, and they've kept every one. And of course, it's in the east. And faces, really faces more east than Cleveland does. And with all the rehabbing that was going on in large eastern cities, Rochester became part of that.

**Nina Gibans** [00:32:38] Why do you think Cleveland tore them all down?

**William Morris** [00:32:42] Because everybody had moved out of them here. When I... When I was a child and we'd go down Euclid Avenue, they were all used car lots. All those big front lawns. Well, the Mather Mansion still has, you know, space to Euclid Avenue, which was essentially... Those are all used car lots, and the houses were where the used car lots had their so-called offices and you could see it. It was criminal. Everybody moved out and that's when they built Fairmount Boulevard and places like that and Shaker Heights and South Park, North Park, those streets. They had to get out of the city because the air pollution was so bad.

**Nina Gibans** [00:33:42] That's right.

**William Morris** [00:33:43] And...

**Nina Gibans** [00:33:44] So but this is earlier.

**William Morris** [00:33:46] This is earlier. But that's... That left a vacuum.

**Nina Gibans** [00:33:50] Mm hmm.

**William Morris** [00:33:50] Nobody wanted to move into these buildings, and that's when they just went in the used car lots. And that's what's eventually going to happen to places like Solon and Gates Mills, where they're building these McMansions. You know? Who's going to live in those houses 40 years from now, 50 years from now, when it's gonna cost $5,000 a month to heat them? You know?

**Nina Gibans** [00:34:20] Good question.

**William Morris** [00:34:21] They will become rooming houses just like... This is what happened on Euclid Avenue. They became rooming houses and they put the front yards into used car lots. And these were properties that went all the way from Euclid to Chester with just a big mansion kind of in the middle on the... And it was... It was criminal. But that didn't happen in Rochester, to Rochester. Those wealthy industrialists in Rochester stayed on that main street, and the houses just passed down through the generations. And instead of tearing them down after they had been... After the... There was no zoning, of course, at that time, so you... But there were deed restrictions, which was a type of zoning, which is the zoning that the Van Sweringens used.

**Nina Gibans** [00:35:25] Yes.

**William Morris** [00:35:27] But they disregarded them. You know. Once these families had moved out and they couldn't sell the houses for a long time and they, you know, then became slum landlords essentially of those properties. Then that was kind of it for Euclid Avenue. And nobody paid any attention to the...

**Nina Gibans** [00:35:56] Right.

**William Morris** [00:35:56] The deed restrictions.

**Nina Gibans** [00:35:58] So that's a big chunk of Euclid Avenue.

**William Morris** [00:36:01] That goes all the way up through the Clinic because the... Actually the houses went from Cleveland to Buffalo because they included all of Mentor Avenue, which is the, you know, there are some wonderful old houses on that street still. But most of those have been torn down. And Painesville, their main street was Euclid Avenue, essentially. It and Willoughby had some very nice houses in it still.

**Nina Gibans** [00:36:34] So it really extended?

**William Morris** [00:36:35] Yeah, it was Main Street USA.

**Nina Gibans** [00:36:40] And yet the public buildings, some of them, and the anchors like University Circle...

**William Morris** [00:36:49] But University Circle was residential, too.

**Nina Gibans** [00:36:52] Yes.

**William Morris** [00:36:55] And they tore all that down. I mean, the university, Western Reserve University now is looking frantically for a college town. They had it and they tore it all down. That's the kind of Cleveland attitude. You know. When I was a kid and we used to go to University Hospitals to visit people or things like that, relatives and stuff like that, though all those streets were lined with wonderful old houses, now they're all gone and it's all institutional. And it's very interesting and very nice. Much nicer than Euclid Avenue, by the way, which is really kind of... Well, they say that what killed Euclid Avenue was the Pennsylvania Railroad put that railroad... They... the Pennsylvania Railroad went from a downtown station which is on the lake to the East 55th Street Station, which was at 55th and Euclid. Once they came through there and they were... Before they built all the bridges and things over those streets, Euclid and Chester and all that, that was grade-level crossings, all of those. Once they did that, and before that they had gone along the lake—I don't know to where, I suppose Erie or someplace like that—and then cut down to Pittsburgh. And then they put this Pittsburgh line through to, that cut right across Euclid Avenue, and all the people who lived in big houses there at 55th Street got out as fast as they could, you know, and it just had a kind of domino effect all the way down to Public Square, essentially. And suddenly it was no longer residential.

**Nina Gibans** [00:39:04] This is interesting because it's a perspective we haven't had. So as you came downtown, though, did you enjoy anything about downtown?

**William Morris** [00:39:20] Yeah, it was the only place to go. It was wonderful as far as I was concerned. It was heaven.

**Nina Gibans** [00:39:28] So you would go to the movies?

**William Morris** [00:39:31] Yeah. That's another thing. In 1955, I believe, there was a court suit brought by the owners of suburban movie houses like the Shaker Theater, Cedar-Lee—some of those are still around—and at that time, from the time the movies began, in the turn of the century until 1955, new movies were programed into downtown locations only. And after they ran for three weeks there or a month, maybe, they moved to 105th Street.

**Nina Gibans** [00:40:23] Mm hmm.

**William Morris** [00:40:24] And on the West Side, to 116th Street. And then after that, which was another month of showing, they moved to the suburban locations because there weren't a lot of people out in the suburbs then. And the suburban theater owners sued the Warner Brothers and RKO and all those people, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), that they wanted to get these movies because people were moving out here now.

**Nina Gibans** [00:41:01] Mm hmm.

**William Morris** [00:41:02] And to go to the movies, you had to go downtown. If you wanted to see a good movie and see it...

**Nina Gibans** [00:41:09] Right away.

**William Morris** [00:41:10] The right way. And you got dressed up. I mean, you didn't just go to the movies in your blue jeans, you know. You really went downtown. It was an occasion. And there were other things downtown. The Mayfair Casino. Had you ever been there? Oh, that was an incredible...

**Nina Gibans** [00:41:30] Well, talk about it! [laughs]

**William Morris** [00:41:32] My father used to take us there.

**Nina Gibans** [00:41:33] I see.

**William Morris** [00:41:34] We were kids. I mean, six or seven years old. And it was... It was like Las Vegas. [laughs] You know?

**Nina Gibans** [00:41:43] And where was this, now?

**William Morris** [00:41:45] The Mayfair Casino was in that area that got rehabbed into Playhouse Square. But it was one of those buildings, but not one of the theater buildings.

**Nina Gibans** [00:41:57] The Keith Building? Or where?

**William Morris** [00:42:00] No, not quite. It was between the Allen and the Keith somewhere.

**Nina Gibans** [00:42:04] Uh huh.

**William Morris** [00:42:05] Bulkley Building or one of those buildings.

**Nina Gibans** [00:42:07] Oh, Bulkley?

**William Morris** [00:42:08] One of those buildings in there. But it was a marvelous place. I mean, they... It was essentially a casino, a gambling place, and... But they had shows that came in from New York and Chicago and San Francisco and places like that.

**Nina Gibans** [00:42:29] So you were in elementary school...

**William Morris** [00:42:32] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:42:33] At that time?

**William Morris** [00:42:34] Well, my father was... [laughs] He was something else. He thought, you know, he grew up in a little town in Akron and came to the big city, and he figured his kids should have the advantage of living in a big city, which he never had.

**Nina Gibans** [00:42:52] Uh huh.

**William Morris** [00:42:53] And...

**Nina Gibans** [00:42:56] Ellen would go to?

**William Morris** [00:42:57] Oh, sure, we would go... All of us would go. The family, you know. Anyhow, when the suburban theater owners were successful in their suit against all the big movie companies, suddenly... 60,000 people a day used to go downtown to the movies a day. Can you imagine what that meant for Cleveland? It meant that there had to be restaurants for them and all kinds of, you know, auxiliary stuff that just bellied up after, in a matter of weeks, because nobody needed to come downtown anymore.

**Nina Gibans** [00:43:46] Mm hmm. Is this are we talking of mid-'40s, mid '50s? When?

**William Morris** [00:43:51] Mid '50s.

**Nina Gibans** [00:43:51] Mm hmm.

**William Morris** [00:43:53] After... Well, this was part of my architectural training, too. One of the architects that I worked for was Richard Hawley Cutting, along the way on this path to becoming an architect. And Richard Hawley Cutting landed a contract for the... The county was going to build a subway system. We are the only large city in the world that has a downtown hub, the Terminal, and no way to come through that Terminal and go to other places downtown. It's really because we were a one-street town. Euclid Avenue, that was it. There wasn't anything else downtown. [laughs] You know, now there are other centers like Ninth and Superior.

**Nina Gibans** [00:44:55] Well, it's still... Right.

**William Morris** [00:44:57] It's still a one-street town. It's a typical Great Lakes city. You go to Erie, Buffalo, Milwaukee, Ishpeming, Marquette. They're all the same. Some are bigger than others, but the layout is identical. There's a main street and that's it. And the closer you live to Main Street, the richer you are. But when those 60,000 people a day didn't come downtown, downtown bellied up. You couldn't go downtown to eat anymore because the restaurants were closing, you know, and the ones that weren't closing were being torn down by urban renewal. So that whole restaurant district around lower Short Vincent, where the Theatrical still is, I believe.

**Nina Gibans** [00:46:09] Yes.

**William Morris** [00:46:09] Yeah. That whole area got torn down by urban renewal. Across the street, across Chester from the Union Commerce building, there were five restaurants in a row, marvelous restaurants, as good as you'd find anywhere in the country.

**Nina Gibans** [00:46:32] Do you remember the names?

**William Morris** [00:46:38] No. [laughs] I'm too old to remember the names.

**Nina Gibans** [00:46:41] There was Monaco's, but that isn't where it was.

**William Morris** [00:46:44] No, that... Monaco's was further up.

**Nina Gibans** [00:46:46] Yeah. Playhouse Square.

**William Morris** [00:46:48] Yeah, but on Chester. Not on Euclid.

**Nina Gibans** [00:46:52] Okay.

**William Morris** [00:46:57] Name some others. [laughs] I can't remember 'em either.

**Nina Gibans** [00:46:58] I'm too young.

**William Morris** [00:47:01] Yeah? [laughs]

**Nina Gibans** [00:47:03] I don't remember them.

**William Morris** [00:47:05] Yeah! But there was no reason to have those restaurants anymore because people weren't coming down to see the movies. Therefore, they weren't eating downtown. You know, because as long as you were getting dressed up and I mean dressed up, I mean, people went downtown in tuxedos and long dresses.

**Nina Gibans** [00:47:23] Now, for lunch you went to the department stores though?

**William Morris** [00:47:27] Yes. But once people didn't come down for the movies, the department store was another thing that people came downtown for because they weren't out here. There weren't shopping centers.

**Nina Gibans** [00:47:40] What about buildings, though, like the May Company building, like the Halle Brothers building.

**William Morris** [00:47:46] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:47:47] Like... Talk a little, like CAC building, because that also was a lunch place for business.

**William Morris** [00:47:54] Yeah. It's interesting. You picked all of terra-cotta buildings. Every one of them is a terra-cotta building.

**Nina Gibans** [00:48:00] Okay.

**William Morris** [00:48:02] And they're the best ones we have. No, there's some small ones that you find in isolated locations on the West Side, places like that, and across the street from the West Side Market, but there's a lot of terra-cotta stuff.

**Nina Gibans** [00:48:21] And it's being restored.

**William Morris** [00:48:23] Yes. And you can restore them today because they make the terra cotta in fiberglass and it looks just like terra cotta [laughs] and lasts forever. You know, it isn't like terra cotta.

**Nina Gibans** [00:48:37] What do you think of that? Are you a purist with the materials?

**William Morris** [00:48:41] No, I never have been.

**Nina Gibans** [00:48:42] You never have been?

**William Morris** [00:48:43] Yes, I've been a purist on some things. I will not use asphalt shingles. I hate them. So all the roofs I do are either wood shakes or slate or something like that. I put a lot of money in the roofs that I do.

**Nina Gibans** [00:48:59] It's worth it.

**William Morris** [00:49:00] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:49:01] They stick around for a while.

**William Morris** [00:49:01] They last forever.

**Nina Gibans** [00:49:03] Right. Well, okay. On the other side of things, we know what disappeared and we know what maybe mistakes we made, a few. What about buildings you really like? Aren't there someon Euclid Avenue.

**William Morris** [00:49:24] I never liked the May Company.

**Nina Gibans** [00:49:27] Well, you don't have to like the May Company. Just tell me any building...

**William Morris** [00:49:31] [Laughs] I mean, it's a building.

**Nina Gibans** [00:49:32] I see.

**William Morris** [00:49:33] I didn't like it as a store. I didn't like...

**Nina Gibans** [00:49:35] No, no. On what as a building?

**William Morris** [00:49:37] No, I didn't.

**Nina Gibans** [00:49:38] Any buildings?

**William Morris** [00:49:39] I liked the buildings across the street, which they tore down to build the BP Tower.

**Nina Gibans** [00:49:44] I see. What about Old Stone Church, though? And buildings like that?

**William Morris** [00:49:48] I liked it when it was, looked old before they...

**Nina Gibans** [00:49:52] Cleaned it?

**William Morris** [00:49:53] Cleaned it. It looked wonderful.

**Nina Gibans** [00:49:56] What about the banking halls?

**William Morris** [00:49:59] Yeah, well, when I was younger, I didn't have much to do with banks. That was my father's realm, you know. He knew all the bankers. He knew everybody. He taught at Marshall Law School for twenty years. And he was a professor who had probably taught every politician in town. You know, [Frank] Lausche was one of his students and all the mayors of Cleveland, you know, because they got their degrees at a night law school and worked their way up politically. And when I would go downtown with them, we'd walk from Euclid Avenue, on Eucli Avenue, from the Terminal up to Ninth Street where his office was. And in that short walk, fifty people would come up there and say, Oh, Professor Morris, it's so good to see you. I bet you don't remember who I am. And my father would say B-6, which was the row that he had sat in and maybe he couldn't remember his name, but that's how... Those were the clues that he used to remember his face. You know, he sat in B-6, and [laughs] the guy would be flabbergasted.

**Nina Gibans** [00:51:34] That's at the symphony?

**William Morris** [00:51:35] No.

**Nina Gibans** [00:51:35] Or where?

**William Morris** [00:51:36] Walking up Euclid Avenue.

**Nina Gibans** [00:51:37] No, no, B-6, though, is where?

**William Morris** [00:51:39] B-6 would be the seat that he had in my father's class...

**Nina Gibans** [00:51:43] Oh, oh, oh....

**William Morris** [00:51:45] In law school.

**Nina Gibans** [00:51:45] I have that. Oh my goodness. Isn't that fun.

**William Morris** [00:51:48] Yeah. [laughs] But he just knew everybody, you know.

**Nina Gibans** [00:51:54] B-6.

**William Morris** [00:51:56] Yeah. Or C-16, you know. Because everybody sat in... You were assigned seats.

**Nina Gibans** [00:52:05] You were assigned seats. Did the letter mean that their name started with A, B or C?

**William Morris** [00:52:09] No.

**Nina Gibans** [00:52:09] Or it was just the way...

**William Morris** [00:52:10] A, B, C, D.

**Nina Gibans** [00:52:13] Yeah, right. Oh, I like that

**William Morris** [00:52:14] Yeah, but that's what Euclid Avenue meant for me. It was where you promenaded [laughs] with your dad.

**Nina Gibans** [00:52:26] Right.

**William Morris** [00:52:27] And of course, they tore down the building that was across the street from his office where... It's Benesch, Friedlander's office. He was an original partner there. And across the street was...

**Nina Gibans** [00:52:43] Williamson?

**William Morris** [00:52:43] No, that was down on... That's... They tore that down for the BP building. They tore the building down to build Bond's store. You remember the Bond's store?

**Nina Gibans** [00:52:55] Oh, I do. What did you think of that?

**William Morris** [00:53:00] I thought it was kind of out of place.

**Nina Gibans** [00:53:05] So you aren't missing that one?

**William Morris** [00:53:06] I was missing the building before it.

**Nina Gibans** [00:53:09] I see.

**William Morris** [00:53:10] Which had a clock tower, and it was one of these 1890s, you know. Something happened in the 1890s that made people really happy. I don't know what it was, but they built wonderful buildings.

**Nina Gibans** [00:53:27] Well, that was the year of the old Arcade.

**William Morris** [00:53:29] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:53:30] And things like that. So.

**William Morris** [00:53:31] I mean, that's a nice building.

**Nina Gibans** [00:53:33] The old Arcade?

**William Morris** [00:53:35] Inside.

**Nina Gibans** [00:53:36] Yes.

**William Morris** [00:53:36] It ain't much outside.

**Nina Gibans** [00:53:39] Well, it has two different outsides.

**William Morris** [00:53:42] Yeah. But neither one is magnificent or anything like that. And I was never intrigued with the Group Plan. I never liked those buildings. They all seemed kind of dowdy and nobody used them.

**Nina Gibans** [00:54:03] So, Bill, Beaux-Arts architecture was not your thing at all?

**William Morris** [00:54:08] No, not at all. I went to non Beaux-Arts schools. They had been Beaux-Arts schools ten years before I was there. But now both Auburn and Cornell were, you know, Bauhaus schools. That was it. I mean, they had Bauhaus people down at Auburn. Hundreds of them must have come to the country at the same time and they spread out everywhere.

**Nina Gibans** [00:54:39] Gropius himself. Breuer himself.

**William Morris** [00:54:41] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:54:42] All of those people came down there to be... To be guest...

**William Morris** [00:54:46] No. No.

**Nina Gibans** [00:54:48] No. They just were here in this country.

**William Morris** [00:54:51] They were here in this country. And schools like Auburn picked them up.

**Nina Gibans** [00:54:55] Right. But not those two.

**William Morris** [00:54:58] No.

**Nina Gibans** [00:55:00] Interesting. Well, Bauhaus closed.

**William Morris** [00:55:03] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:55:03] And so that where they gravitated.

**William Morris** [00:55:07] Yeah. It was the first thing that Hitler did is close the Bauhaus.

**Nina Gibans** [00:55:10] Right.

**William Morris** [00:55:12] That was his architectural training. [laughs]

**Nina Gibans** [00:55:15] All right. Well, it's interesting, Bill, because the architects that are the generation before you really, really talk about the Beaux Arts.

**William Morris** [00:55:27] Oh, yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:55:28] With great reverence and...

**William Morris** [00:55:35] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:55:35] All right. Anything that has happened in recent years on Euclid Avenue that is a plus? After all, this is part of a renovation, I mean, this whole project is part of a...

**William Morris** [00:55:54] Yeah. Cleveland Clinic. They have some good buildings.

**Nina Gibans** [00:56:02] Mm hmm. Talk about that.

**William Morris** [00:56:02] The one that... The one, what they call it, the Crile Building.

**Nina Gibans** [00:56:08] The old Crile Building or the...

**William Morris** [00:56:09] No.

**Nina Gibans** [00:56:09] New one?

**William Morris** [00:56:11] Both the old one and the new one. The old one, which is the kind of Renaissance building.

**Nina Gibans** [00:56:16] Right.

**William Morris** [00:56:16] The small one on Euclid Avenue, which they didn't rip down, even though they're building kind of around it now with that new...

**Nina Gibans** [00:56:23] Right.

**William Morris** [00:56:24] Kind of curved building.

**Nina Gibans** [00:56:26] And the Belluschi?

**William Morris** [00:56:33] Is it Belluschi? [They mean César Pelli]

**Nina Gibans** [00:56:33] The first building they did before they did the Eye Clinic and the... The Eye Clinic is...

**William Morris** [00:56:39] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:56:40] Collins Rimer.

**William Morris** [00:56:41] And Crile is, oh, what's his name? The guy that van Dijk worked for. In fact, van Dijk got the building for him and did the supervision on it.

**Nina Gibans** [00:57:04] I know who you're thinking. And it's the same person I'm thinking, too.

**William Morris** [00:57:07] Yeah. That's a beautiful building.

**Nina Gibans** [00:57:09] Yes.

**William Morris** [00:57:10] Absolutely beautiful.

**Nina Gibans** [00:57:11] The first one they did with....

**William Morris** [00:57:12] Yes. The stepped up.

**Nina Gibans** [00:57:13] Yes. And I'm not right. It's a... It's an Italian name.

**William Morris** [00:57:21] Yeah. But... And not Venturi.

**Nina Gibans** [00:57:27] Do you know, Emma?

**Emma Yanoshik-Wing** [00:57:28] No.

**Nina Gibans** [00:57:30] That's why I said Belluschi. But that's not it.

**William Morris** [00:57:33] No. Belluschi did a lot of buildings out in Portland.

**Nina Gibans** [00:57:41] Yeah, but I thought he had done that one.

**William Morris** [00:57:43] No.

**Nina Gibans** [00:57:44] Okay. All right. Anything else? That's good. Yeah.

**William Morris** [00:57:55] I liked the Rockefeller Building down at at West Sixth and Superior.

**Nina Gibans** [00:58:06] Talk about it a little bit.

**William Morris** [00:58:08] Well, after going through five or six years of Bauhaus schools, it was a perfect example of the Chicago Style, you know, which was something that was revered at Cornell and at Auburn too. Trying to think of other buildings that I liked.

**Nina Gibans** [00:58:44] What about the bank?

**William Morris** [00:58:46] I liked Union Commerce Bank inside.

**Nina Gibans** [00:58:48] Union Commerce but also Cleveland Trust.

**William Morris** [00:58:52] I didn't, never liked that as much.

**Nina Gibans** [00:58:55] And what about the Breuer part of it?

**William Morris** [00:58:59] I hated the Breuer building.

**Nina Gibans** [00:59:01] Okay. So...

**William Morris** [00:59:02] They're gonna tear that down anyhow. The county's gonna tear it down.

**Nina Gibans** [00:59:07] Okay.

**William Morris** [00:59:08] I like the Rose Building. That was off Euclid Avenue. It was on the corner of... It's still there.

**Nina Gibans** [00:59:14] Yes, it's still an office building.

**William Morris** [00:59:17] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [00:59:20] Forum Cafeteria was there. Yes?

**William Morris** [00:59:22] Yeah, I think it was in the first floor.

**Nina Gibans** [00:59:25] Right.

**William Morris** [00:59:25] Or it was in that block there between Euclid...

**Nina Gibans** [00:59:28] That's where we went to the dentist. Did you go downtown for doctors? Dentists?

**William Morris** [00:59:35] We went downtown for dentists, yeah. Dr. [B. Holly] Broadbent.

**Nina Gibans** [00:59:38] I see, Broadbent.

**William Morris** [00:59:41] Oh, what a thrill that was. He was up on like the 20th floor of the Keith building facing the lake, and you sat down in the dentist chair. Bang! There was the lake. Well, living in Shaker Heights, I didn't even know there was a lake. [laughs] Well, I knew there was a lake because Danny Silver lived on the lake, and I used to go there all the time and play. His mother would call up and say, Eleanor, Danny's been home for the, you know, Christmas holidays and there are no Jewish boys to play with over here. Why don't you bring Billie over? [laughs] And she'd shlep me in the car, and that was marvelous. She lived right on the lake. The house is gone now. That's ano[ther]... Everything goes, doesn't it? But the lake took that house. It fell into the lake.

**Nina Gibans** [01:00:40] Oh, really?

**William Morris** [01:00:41] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [01:00:42] This was in Bratenahl?

**William Morris** [01:00:43] In Bratenahl at the end of Eddy Road. Eddy Road ended right at the lake, not in a cul de sac or anything. Bang! It was..

**Nina Gibans** [01:00:53] This is where the townhouses are and all that now?

**William Morris** [01:00:55] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [01:00:58] Mm hmm. Wow. So...

**William Morris** [01:01:00] And the Silver house was on... No, it was not Eddy Road. It was 105th Street on the sou[th]... On the west side of 105th was the Silver house. It was a big old 1880s house, and he could go from 105th Street right up to the Temple [Tifereth Israel], which is still there. The Temple's a great building.

**Nina Gibans** [01:01:30] The Greco Temple. That's Greco.

**William Morris** [01:01:33] Greco. Yeah. Greco and George Mayer.

**Nina Gibans** [01:01:35] Mm hmm.

**William Morris** [01:01:37] Combination. Interesting combination.

**Nina Gibans** [01:01:39] Right.

**William Morris** [01:01:42] George Meyer did Wendy Lang's house.

**Nina Gibans** [01:01:45] Yes, I've been there. They're moving. The current owners are moving again.

**William Morris** [01:01:51] Again? Who's moving in now?

**Nina Gibans** [01:01:54] It's for sale. Wanna buy it?

**William Morris** [01:01:57] Yeah, I'd love to buy it.

**Nina Gibans** [01:01:58] Andrews Road.

**William Morris** [01:01:59] Yeah, I know exactly where it is.

**Nina Gibans** [01:02:01] Right.

**William Morris** [01:02:02] My mother took me there when I was ten years old. They were building it. We went to see two houses: Bear Run [Fallingwater] and the Lang.

**Nina Gibans** [01:02:13] Andrews Road.

**William Morris** [01:02:17] We went to... When I was ten, I was interested in architecture, and everything I learned in the fifth grade is what I am today. All my interests were then.

**Nina Gibans** [01:02:38] Ten years old.

**William Morris** [01:02:40] Miss Huntley.

**Nina Gibans** [01:02:41] Which school were you?

**William Morris** [01:02:42] Fernway School.

**Nina Gibans** [01:02:45] Fernway.

**William Morris** [01:02:45] Mm hmm. She was a fantastic teacher.

**Nina Gibans** [01:02:50] What did she do that really turned you on to architecture? What did she do?

**William Morris** [01:02:55] I started drawing the houses across the street.

**Nina Gibans** [01:02:57] Oh!

**William Morris** [01:03:00] From where I lived.

**Nina Gibans** [01:03:00] On Fernway.

**William Morris** [01:03:02] On Elsmere.

**Nina Gibans** [01:03:03] Yeah.

**William Morris** [01:03:05] Just one day I sort of started drawing, just drawing the houses, and they were building a house across the street. There were empty lots in Shaker at that time, and I was fascinated with it, you know.

**Nina Gibans** [01:03:23] Did she do anything to you as a class about the building that was going on?

**William Morris** [01:03:30] No, but there were other things. She was kind of an historian. And that's when you got your first unit of American history. And I just sailed through that course. It was fascinating to me.

**Nina Gibans** [01:03:50] Was that American history or local history?

**William Morris** [01:03:53] American history.

**Nina Gibans** [01:03:54] Oh, okay.

**William Morris** [01:03:54] But it was local also.

**Nina Gibans** [01:03:56] Mm hmm.

**William Morris** [01:03:56] She had Shakers come in, old Shakers who had lived here in Shaker Heights before Shaker was closed, the community was closed, and they went to live... Most of them went to other Shaker communities, but a lot of old women went to live in houses, you know, in places like Eastview, small Arts and Crafts houses that were kind of beginning to go up in that area of Warrensville and Chagrin. And she had them come in to the class and dance like, you know, do their Shaker dances. I was ten years old. It was fantastic.

**Nina Gibans** [01:04:43] Right.

**William Morris** [01:04:44] And so I was very interested in history. By the time I was five years old, I could, I knew all the presidents, when they served. I knew... I could put together huge maps of the world. I just had a... It just came to me naturally.

**Nina Gibans** [01:05:13] Has that continued, that interest in history?

**William Morris** [01:05:15] Yes. I'm back on a history kick. [laughs]

**Nina Gibans** [01:05:20] We need you to interpret what's going on today, I think. [laughs]

**William Morris** [01:05:24] I'm... The last book I just finished last week was on Savonarola by Lauro Martines, which deals with early kind of Italian Renaissance, what was going on. Then I immediately, I read one about the Medici, and there are so many things that are going on at that time that are so relevant to what's happening today.

**Nina Gibans** [01:05:58] Yes.

**William Morris** [01:05:58] And it's just unbelievable.

**Nina Gibans** [01:06:02] What about the vision in the city?

**William Morris** [01:06:07] Which vision?

**Nina Gibans** [01:06:07] Our... Yeah. [laughs]

**William Morris** [01:06:10] Does the city have vision?

**Nina Gibans** [01:06:12] Oh. Well, what's your vision for the city?

**William Morris** [01:06:18] I'm... I don't have one anymore. I was a great booster for you for years. And I was convinced that, you know, it was really going to take off, Cleveland.

**Nina Gibans** [01:06:32] When was this?

**William Morris** [01:06:34] In the '50s.

**Nina Gibans** [01:06:35] Oh, I see. Mm hmm.

**William Morris** [01:06:37] And the '60s, and it never happened. And then suddenly, instead of having half of the Fortune 500 companies or something like that or a third of them having their headquarters here, we're down to maybe one or two—in my lifetime. And it's a disaster because my entire practice was predicated upon these kind of wealthy families employing my clients.

**Nina Gibans** [01:07:26] So, yes. So you were serving people that wanted something special to live in and so on?

**William Morris** [01:07:34] Yes. Right. And who were, many of them, first-generation, college-educated. And they had some idea that there was a world outside Cleveland. I found out there was a world outside Cleveland when I was ten years old from Ms. Huntley.

**Nina Gibans** [01:07:59] Right. Well, so the Euclid Avenue project, though, takes our main and one street that you've just talked about.

**William Morris** [01:08:09] Well, when I was working for Richard Hawley Cutting, and it would... They formed a partnership with... Which was called Cutting, DeLeuw, and somebody else. And their job was to build or to lay out a program for a subway for Cleveland. It was to go from the Terminal Tower and fan out or to serve Cleveland from there. So you wouldn't have to walk up Euclid Avenue...

**Nina Gibans** [01:08:56] Right.

**William Morris** [01:08:56] With your father.

**Nina Gibans** [01:08:57] No, I remember the...

**William Morris** [01:08:58] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [01:08:59] Subway project.

**William Morris** [01:08:59] Yeah. And I was assigned to run around buildings in downtown, office buildings, to talk to the owners or whoever, the managers of the buildings, find out how many people were working there and what they wanted. And there was a survey that lasted for six months or something like that. I was running around all over town and I got the whole thing compiled and Praeger, Cutting, and DeLeuw decided that, without even going through it, that the subway should run from the Terminal Tower to City Hall through the Group Plan to Ninth and Superior and up to Halle's and back down to Terminal.

**Nina Gibans** [01:10:16] So it was a loop.

**William Morris** [01:10:18] It was a loop. And I was convinced that the subway should run up Euclid Avenue because it was the only... That was the only place where there was anything to serve. But they were convinced that this, that there would be buildings popping up in the locations, subway stop locations that were off of Euclid Avenue. I told 'em they were crazy. They were... They were thinking of New York City. They were not thinking of Cleveland. [laughs] And they didn't like that and they fired me.

**Nina Gibans** [01:10:51] Oh! [laughs]

**William Morris** [01:10:54] And that was fine with me because...

**Nina Gibans** [01:10:57] is this Malcolm Cutting?

**William Morris** [01:11:01] No. This was Richard Hawley Cutting, his father.

**Nina Gibans** [01:11:05] Oh, his father. Okay. Because Malcolm is coming here today.

**William Morris** [01:11:09] Oh! [laughs] I didn't know Malcolm. He wasn't working for them then. But Richard Hawley Cutting had a kind of vision. But the guys that they brought in from Chicago and New York didn't, I didn't think. They had a vision, but it was for something that... And that's what led to essentially the Erieview plan, because the subway was to run and serve that. And the Erieview plan was off base, too, because it was trying to create, you know, a different city than what we really had. What we had was a one-horse town. You know. It was a one-horse town with one street. And everything that could could reinforce that street would be something that would be valuable in the future. And they took and pay... Took just the opposite approach, just like Praeger, DeLeuw had done. You need multiple centers to be a city.

**Nina Gibans** [01:12:24] Well, which brings us to the renovation of that street, though. So what can happen there? You okay?

**Emma Yanoshik-Wing** [01:12:34] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [01:12:34] Okay.

**William Morris** [01:12:37] Well, I don't... I've always thought that they should kind of connect University Circle and downtown. I thought that would be a very good idea. And anything along the way that could happen would probably boost Euclid Avenue.

**Nina Gibans** [01:13:02] Do you, I mean right now, there are all the orange barrels, but beyond that, there...

**William Morris** [01:13:09] Well, I just don't... I don't... I don't think people want to ride buses, period. I think it's that simple. Your generation, for instance, who've ridden in school buses for twelve years to go to school, doesn't want to have anything to do with public transportation and buses. My generation thinks it's a real comedown to ride in a bus. But riding in the subway train, probably, they could pull it off. But I don't think they're going to pull it off with a bunch of buses. I think it's typical RTA thinking that people should be riding the buses because it's cheaper for us to operate them than it is rapid transit lines or subway lines and things like that. But that's not gonna bring people. Then for a while they we're gonna run a streetcar up, which would have been a great idea because when the streetcar ran there, it was wonderful.

**Nina Gibans** [01:14:17] That's how I got downtown.

**William Morris** [01:14:18] Yeah. Yeah, I got downtown from on the rapid line.

**Nina Gibans** [01:14:26] So... So you're not too hopeful?

**William Morris** [01:14:32] No, I'm not. I mean, it's an inexpensive way out for RTA to go because they don't have the vision or the people who could go to Washington to get the money for a real kind of high-speed system.

**Nina Gibans** [01:15:00] Well, it is true that when you go to Washington or you go to San Francisco...

**William Morris** [01:15:05] Yeah, it's wonderful to ride those trains, and you go to Vancouver in British Columbia, they have a fantastic new system that they just put in.

**Nina Gibans** [01:15:16] Seattle.

**William Morris** [01:15:19] Well, it's better than Seattle's.

**Nina Gibans** [01:15:22] Well, it's newer.

**William Morris** [01:15:24] It is... It's better planned. Vancouver is the most interesting city in the Western Hemisphere. And I haven't seen all the cities in the Western Hemisphere, but Vancouver is what everybody's been talking about for the last hundred years. They've done it. Cleveland's talked about it, and we've done nothing except tear a bunch of buildings down. But Vancouver has really done it. I haven't... It's... It's a fan... I mean, just... It's a city built in the water, almost, where you can go up into those high-rise buildings or over one of the bridges that go over the canals and waterways and see big fish swimming right in town. I mean, that's how clean the water is. In other words, it's where we talk about cleaning up the Cuyahoga River, they have pristine rivers in that city. I mean, it's wilderness. And they have a thousand-acre park in the middle of the city, which is absolutely gorgeous there. And it's not like Central Park at all, which is kind of manicured. This is wilderness park in the center of the city.

**Nina Gibans** [01:16:53] What do you think of...

**William Morris** [01:16:54] And you can come down from your high rise and get onto your boat, and it's two steps, because the high rise is built right on the waterway. Or you can come down in your high rise and get into your car and drive for five minutes and you're up into the mountains and it's snowcapped, into snowcapped mountains for skiing, you know, five minutes from downtown Vancouver. It's an incredible city. It's so beautiful.

**Nina Gibans** [01:17:33] So we don't have the environment, but we have other things. We have never developed the lake.

**William Morris** [01:17:41] That's environment.

**Nina Gibans** [01:17:43] Talk about it. What... Can we do something about that? Should we do something about that? Should we sacrifice other things to do something about that?

**William Morris** [01:17:54] Yeah. While they're running buses up Euclid Avenue, we could run the bicycle path from Painesville to, or from Buffalo to Toledo. That'd be a big thing. I'd like to be able to ride a horse around Lake Erie.

**Nina Gibans** [01:18:11] What about the ca... The... Well, the canal, you know.

**William Morris** [01:18:14] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [01:18:15] Development. Have you followed that at all?

**William Morris** [01:18:18] Yeah. That's a step in the right direction, I think.

**Nina Gibans** [01:18:27] Because that's our land. Bill, are there other things you'd like to talk about? And maybe Emma some questions.

**William Morris** [01:18:41] She's been writing like crazy. [laughs]

**Nina Gibans** [01:18:43] No, yours has been fascinating because it's been very different.

**William Morris** [01:18:48] Well, I was trained... Cornell, the dean of Cornell was not an architect. He was a city planner. So we had city planning courses up to here. And I got kind of interested in it. Not as much as Ned Reich or somebody like that got interested in it, but it kind of fascinated me. And the problem with this country is that zoning is a very poor way of creating a plan. And that's what we have. That's all we have. Zoning. And it has nothing to do with city planning. It may have had in the beginning, but it doesn't anymore.

**Nina Gibans** [01:19:51] Mm hmm.

**William Morris** [01:19:59] And Americans don't like master plans. They see it as a kind of European imprint over the chaos that we have.

**Nina Gibans** [01:20:13] But there are things like Millennium Park. Have you been there in Chicago?

**William Morris** [01:20:20] What is it, the old Grant Park?

**Nina Gibans** [01:20:22] It's a new Millennium Park between the art museum and that whole territory beyond which is eco-sensitive. It is a band shelter. It is a bike... You can bike to your, to there, change your clothes, get ready for business, shower, whatever. It's got sculpture pieces that are interactive. It's, it's a wonderful park. And somehow they got it all together and did it. And you can walk it, and it's wonderful. Now, is that something that appeals to you at all for...

**William Morris** [01:21:08] But what we need on our lake is really first-class housing, first-class housing. I mean, they should take the Burke Lakefront Airport and turn it into Venice with canals all the way through it and boathouses that you live in. I mean, that would be something that would put Cleveland on the map and make it very desirable to live by the lake.

**Nina Gibans** [01:21:34] That's a new plan. Yep. Sure would.

**William Morris** [01:21:40] But I don't know that they could make that happen.

**Nina Gibans** [01:21:47] It takes some group of people with vision and the wherewithal to gather the funds to do it.

**William Morris** [01:21:55] And there should be a lot of really first-class housing around Whiskey Island, which is a beautiful, almost pristine wilderness now within seconds of downtown, really. And there should be a kind of funicular that goes from the top of the Terminal Tower right down to Whiskey Island or across the river over to the peninsula they're talking about building.

**Nina Gibans** [01:22:26] Or a wonderful bridge.

**William Morris** [01:22:28] We've got plenty of wonderful bridges.

**Nina Gibans** [01:22:30] Oh, yes. But one to Whiskey Island.

**William Morris** [01:22:33] Oh, one to Whiskey Island, yeah. Right now you have to kind of take your life in your hands to get there.

**Nina Gibans** [01:22:40] That's right. Have you been there?

**William Morris** [01:22:44] But they have a beach at Whiskey Island—beautiful beach—that all they need to do is kind of rake up the old pop bottles and things like that that are sitting around on it.

**Nina Gibans** [01:23:04] So what about things like the Huletts? Would you save those?

**William Morris** [01:23:09] Yeah. I'd not only save 'em, I'd operate them.

**Nina Gibans** [01:23:18] Yeah. I'm sad that anyone let that drop.

**William Morris** [01:23:21] I think... I think the whole Flats, industrial flats should become a Disneyland, an industrial Disneyland. What was like life in between 1870 and, you know. All those... I could take you through the old Republic Steel area, and it's... It's magical. I don't know whether they're going to keep that or not now.

**Nina Gibans** [01:23:55] The salt mines and the...

**William Morris** [01:23:57] Yeah and this... And just, oh, I take people there from out of town and they can't believe it. Jesus Christ! [laughs]

**Nina Gibans** [01:24:07] Yeah, that's, that's a wonderful piece of history. It is.

**William Morris** [01:24:09] Yeah. Now, that should be... That could be a kind of industrial Disneyland.

**Nina Gibans** [01:24:17] Is there... You mean Disneyland or is there a...

**William Morris** [01:24:20] Well, but...

**Nina Gibans** [01:24:22] You mean a fun place.

**William Morris** [01:24:22] By Disneyland, I mean...

**Nina Gibans** [01:24:24] Fun, educational.

**William Morris** [01:24:25] Fun, educational. Something that people would want to come to.

**Nina Gibans** [01:24:30] Interactive.

**William Morris** [01:24:32] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [01:24:33] And all of that. They get to...

**William Morris** [01:24:36] See steel being made.

**Nina Gibans** [01:24:37] Right. Well...

**William Morris** [01:24:40] And you can still see it.

**Nina Gibans** [01:24:41] Yeah, I guess I was lucky because Leadership Cleveland's first groups did do that. So we got to Republic Steel and we got to the salt mine. Yeah, the bridges, I feel like I own them.

**William Morris** [01:24:58] Yeah. Well, people are amazed when they see this...

**Nina Gibans** [01:25:02] Right.

**William Morris** [01:25:02] Latticework of bridges from when they're down low in the Flats there.

**Nina Gibans** [01:25:07] Right. We brought the sounds of the bridges out to the Children's Museum with telephone cable. But I know what you mean. It can be done. But it's... It's in bits and pieces now with no cohesive...

**William Morris** [01:25:26] No. And I think people should could come to Cleveland, like to come to Nantucket.

**Nina Gibans** [01:25:40] Well, maybe they would if they could live on a, rent a houseboat.

**William Morris** [01:25:45] Yeah. Or come up on their boat from Florida rather than coming up by car. Why not?

**Nina Gibans** [01:25:56] Sure.

**William Morris** [01:25:58] You know, and when I was a kid, we used to have steamers that went to Detroit, Buffalo, and...

**Nina Gibans** [01:26:06] There you go.

**William Morris** [01:26:07] Cedar Point. We used to go to Cedar Point by boat.

**Emma Yanoshik-Wing** [01:26:19] I have a just... I just have a question. Especially when you were talking about having been a booster for the city in the '50s and the '60s and watching all these companies leave and with them leaving people that you had kind of hoped your business to, I guess, kind of cater to through people that you work with, but did you ever think about leaving Cleveland or was that not even...

**William Morris** [01:26:47] Oh, yeah, I thought about it. But I just... Well, I got this job with the builder, and it was like first-class education. I mean, I know more about putting a building together than anybody in this city. And that includes people who work for Turner.

**Nina Gibans** [01:27:23] Well it's a marvelous story. The educational part is so different from everybody's...

**William Morris** [01:27:27] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [01:27:28] Story that nobody realizes that. But.

**William Morris** [01:27:33] But that's why I got all those houses up in Pepper Pike and places like that, because I knew how to put them together.

**Nina Gibans** [01:27:39] Right.

**William Morris** [01:27:40] And all I had to do was just explain it to the builders. I mean, when I worked in Kelly's office, we did all these details that nobody could in their right mind could put together. [laughs]

**Nina Gibans** [01:27:56] You mean you had to interpret it to the builder.

**William Morris** [01:28:00] I had... I had to go out and get the bids for the buildings. Like when we did McDonald's in Elyria. I mean...

**Nina Gibans** [01:28:13] You did that with Kelly?

**William Morris** [01:28:15] I did the.... I got the bids.

**Nina Gibans** [01:28:21] I see. Okay.

**William Morris** [01:28:22] He knew nothing about it. All he wanted to do was sit down and design stuff just like he had at Harvard. You know, that was it. That was architecture as far as he was concerned.

**Nina Gibans** [01:28:34] You need both, don't you?

**William Morris** [01:28:36] You have to have both because they just stay drawings then otherwise.

**Nina Gibans** [01:28:41] But there are three things you need, I think, that I've heard. From Jim, I've heard the great need for some philosophic base, for some base of design principles. That's one. He thought that Yale did that for him.

**William Morris** [01:29:02] Yeah, Cornell did that for me.

**Nina Gibans** [01:29:04] Then when we get out to the West Coast, nobody had that. But they knew how to do drawings. So that's the technical part. And you were talking about learning that very quickly.

**William Morris** [01:29:16] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [01:29:17] Right. And the third one is, of course, the infrastructure stuff that you learned along the way. So there are all those components. But I guess if you don't have a design sense...

**William Morris** [01:29:31] Oh, that's... If you don't have the design sense...

**Nina Gibans** [01:29:33] You might as well stop there.

**William Morris** [01:29:35] Yes. So the schools are doing the right thing.

**Nina Gibans** [01:29:39] Uh huh.

**William Morris** [01:29:40] The other stuff you can get when you get out and, but it's harder and harder to get it. I had to get down on my knees and beg the state to let me take the licensing exam because I was ready to take it after I'd worked for this contractor for three years. I knew everything and, but I hadn't served the proper apprenticeship, you know. They wanted me to work for architects, but they did let me take it. And they failed me three times.

**Nina Gibans** [01:30:22] Oh!

**William Morris** [01:30:24] In design, which was the one thing that I could've...

**Nina Gibans** [01:30:32] Oh, Bill.

**William Morris** [01:30:33] Should've been passing.

**Nina Gibans** [01:30:34] Well.

**William Morris** [01:30:35] But what... I did, I did, in fact, have a license before I had ever worked for an architect, and then I worked for architects after that.

**Nina Gibans** [01:30:45] Well, I think when you were ten years old, you were ready to spring forth.

**William Morris** [01:30:49] Yeah. Well, my grandmother lived in Uniontown, Pennsylvania...

**Nina Gibans** [01:30:54] Uh huh.

**William Morris** [01:30:55] Which is at the foot of the mountains where Bear Run was being built. And they owned the store in Uniontown, equivalent to the Kauffman's store, and they were all old friends from the old country, not from the old country, but the generation before, they all knew each other.

**Nina Gibans** [01:31:17] Right.

**William Morris** [01:31:18] And she said to me, we have some friends who are building a very... How did she put it? Very unusual house up in the mountains. Would you be interested in going to see it? So I said, sure. So we went up to Bear Run while they were building it.

**Nina Gibans** [01:31:36] Oh. Bear Run is Frank Lloyd Wright.

**William Morris** [01:31:42] Yeah, that's one... Well, from a housing point of view, what he spent... I mean, it's the most important house he did after probably 1910 or so.

**Nina Gibans** [01:32:05] There's a house on Elandon?

**William Morris** [01:32:07] Yeah, that they claim is a Frank Lloyd Wright house....

**Nina Gibans** [01:32:10] No.

**William Morris** [01:32:10] But I don't...

**Nina Gibans** [01:32:11] But it's a student, perhaps.

**William Morris** [01:32:13] I'm... I figured it was somebody who'd worked for him.

**Nina Gibans** [01:32:15] I've gotten that far. I think it's about 1912, but it's a student. And I've got stories but they aren't on this. They aren't for this tape.

**William Morris** [01:32:29] Okay. [laughs].

**Nina Gibans** [01:32:33] Anything else?

**William Morris** [01:32:33] There's a wonderful Prairie School house in Springfield, Ohio.

**Nina Gibans** [01:32:41] A Frank Lloyd Wright?

**William Morris** [01:32:41] Yeah.

**Nina Gibans** [01:32:42] Yeah. There's one, I mean, around here, there's Oberlin.

**William Morris** [01:32:46] Yeah...

**Nina Gibans** [01:32:46] There's...

**William Morris** [01:32:47] Three of 'em down in Canton.

**Nina Gibans** [01:32:48] And there's Madison County and there's Willoughby. Those are the, those are the signed and sealed plans. So...

**William Morris** [01:33:01] Bruce Huston's office did the working drawings for the Willoughby house.

**Nina Gibans** [01:33:05] Bruce?

**William Morris** [01:33:06] Huston, where I worked.

**Nina Gibans** [01:33:08] Huston? I'm going to ask you to write the name down because....

**William Morris** [01:33:16] Okay.

**Nina Gibans** [01:33:18] I know that's on the tape but...

**William Morris** [01:33:23] Well, we'll start with Richard Hawley Cutting.

**Nina Gibans** [01:33:32] I have all the plans for the McDonald House.

**William Morris** [01:33:35] Mm hmm.

**Nina Gibans** [01:33:36] They're renovating it now.

**William Morris** [01:33:38] The kids live in it, you told me.

**Nina Gibans** [01:33:39] The kids live in it. And one of... It's a possibility for this exhibit, of course. But have you been in the Ford House? The...

**William Morris** [01:33:54] No, I haven't.

**Nina Gibans** [01:33:55] It's amazing. It's a wonderful... On Mather Lane.

**William Morris** [01:33:58] Yeah. I know the house, but that was done after I worked for Kelly.

**Nina Gibans** [01:34:03] Yeah. Right. Yeah, McDonald was the first house. Anyway, so we have all those plans and stuff. Well, that was good. That was good because it was so different.

**Emma Yanoshik-Wing** [01:34:20] Anything else, or I'm gonna stop it then?

**Nina Gibans** [01:34:20] Hmm?

**Emma Yanoshik-Wing** [01:34:21] Anything else that we didn't... I'm going to stop it then.

**Nina Gibans** [01:34:23] Yes. I thought you had.