

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY  
ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM  
G.M. Lordstown Plant

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O.H. 1937

Joseph Malinowski  
Interview  
By  
Robert Thomas  
On  
April 26, 2001

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INTERVIEWEE: JOSEPH MALINOWSKI

INTERVIEWER: Robert Thomas

SUBJECT: The G. M. Lordstown Plant

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This interview with Joseph Malinowski was conducted at the Austintown Library in Austintown, Ohio on April 26, 2001. The time is 7:00. My name is Robert Thomas.

M: I am not from the area.

T: Where were you born at?

M: I was born in Cleveland, Ohio.

T: OK. Did you grow up in Cleveland?

M: Grew up in Cleveland. Went in the military in Cleveland. Spent almost twenty-three and a half years in the military.

T: Really, what branch?

M: Marine Corps.

T: OK.

M: Retired from there, well I got stationed here in Youngstown. And we decided to live here. We liked the school system in Austintown so we decided to settle down here.

T: OK.

M: Got out of the service and went to GM for a job. Well, I retired, and I couldn't get hired. I guess they weren't hiring or at least they weren't going to hire me, so they said. Five years later I went and got a job. At G.M.

T: Was that after twenty years in the military service?

M: Twenty-two years in the military.

T: So you were 40 then?

M: When I come out of the service I was 39.

T: OK. Then what drew you towards Lordstown? As opposed to –

M: Well- I figured if I was going to work I might as well work for General Motors and make the best of it. They had the best opportunities of everything, especially medical care. Even though I had the government covered, but um, retirees, they promised us stuff but we never got what we were promised.

T: From the military.

M: Right.

T: What year was it that you started at G.M.?

M: '78.

T: What was it – how did you go about getting in there? Did you just go up and apply?

M: No, I asked a gentleman who was working there if they were hiring at General Motors? And he told me no, and I needed a job. I said "Gee, I could use a job, you know", and he said "I'll tell you what. I'll get you an application." He says "I prob'ly can get you in there but I can't pass your physical." So I passed the physical.

T: Was that difficult, to pass the physical?

M: I didn't think so.

T: How did the military train you for that?

M: After the military, it didn't bother me. In fact, the doctor told me – he says I have a little problem hearing, and he says, basically, after 22 years in the military, if that's all that is wrong with me, you're in good shape. And I have stayed in shape since then. I always stayed in shape. I retired maybe thirty years ago and I fluctuate within ten pounds of my retirement weight.

T: That's good. When you went into G.M. what was your job; what was your first job out there?

M: I was a spray painter.

T: Painting cars?

M: Yeah, painting cars.

T: Any specific training or anything, or just –

M: Oh, they trained me on the job, ...

T: That was before the robots painted the cars and that.

M: Well they still have hand painted – still some people spray paint.

T: Are there?

M: Not all of 'em are robots yet. But they will be shortly.

T: Did you paint the whole car, or did you paint one side and another guy –

M: No, I painted one side and another guy painted – we had certain parts we had to paint. I painted maybe... as an example when I started off I painted part of the hood. I painted what you would call; I was in the primer group at the time. When I first started. I painted the hood and he would paint this side of the fender, well he would paint my side of the fender, well but then he would paint that what we called the hatchback which is the trunk section. He would paint that, we'd paint around our doors, and things like that there.

T: Was there any specific hazards? Did you have to wear a mask?

M: Well, no, at the time we had what they called a waterfall. It ....kept the paint spray out of the ...

T: Kept the mist out of the air so you didn't breathe it so much.

M: Right.

T: Was that what you retired from doing there?

M: No, when I finished up I retired off of the C shift.

T: OK.

M: I went to the van plant in '83 and worked there until '91. Almost all of '91. I came off vacation and I transferred back to where the car line was. The got a ....

Processed all of the vans... so I went over right away and I was lucky 'cause I got in the body shop –

T: You got right back into the –

M: Right. I got back in and I got a job I really wanted to do, actually. Because until they closed the van plant and all the bunches came over from the van plant, they could only take the jobs that were open. Didn't have a choice – just took the jobs that they had open.

T: Sure. Did you like the van plant better, or worse?

M: Well the van plant was nice, we were – I don't know how you'd say it – we were more of a family in the van plant it seemed like in the department you worked at compared to over in the car plant 'cause you had so many people. Over in the van plant you may only have 1,300 people while over in the car plant you had 5,000 people working. Made a big difference. But usually in your own little group, the section you worked at in the body shop, or even in the paint department, or wherever you might have been. They probably had their own little groups there. I enjoyed working there.

T: Did you make a lot of friends? A little closer bonds over there?

M: Oh, yeah. You know sometimes some people ask me, do I miss the people out there, or do I miss my job, or do I miss G.M. No, I don't miss General Motors. I miss the people. I spend more time with them sometimes than I do with my own family. You figure we worked ten hours a day, I was always out there an hour early before work. I never was late for work. I missed one day of work all the while I worked there.

T: That's pretty good.

M: They knew more about me than probably my whole family did. 'Cause I spent more time with them. I remember when my kids were small I'd be leaving to go to work and they would be coming home from school. I'd wake up and they'd be on the school bus. I'd try to wait 'til the school bus got to the corner and just before they stopped I'd be able to wave to them. So, on Fridays, all my Friday mornings were for my kids. Even though I had to go to work, I would come home from work and I'd stay up and I would take 'em to breakfast and we'd have our little discussions and that.

T: You worked the night shift then.

M: I worked the night shift all the while I was there.

T: Did you like that?

M: I liked it, yeah, I liked it. During the winter it was rough, 'cause you can't really do much in the winter anyhow, but in the summertime it was nice. I'd come home from

work at only 7:00 or 7:30 in the morning, I'd stay up in the summer and cut my grass, do this, do that, then I didn't go to sleep until 1:00 or 2:00. Sleep until it was time to go to work, or have dinner, and I sat with the kids and the wife and talked and stuff.

T: Did your wife work too?

M: No. My wife never worked.

T: She stayed at home. That's a full time job, too

M: That's right. That was her job, the kids and the house.

T: How about your friends and that? Did you socialize with them after work at all?

M: Oh yeah. We socialized – in fact, when I worked at the van plant, every Saturday – we worked on Saturdays; we'd get off at – we only worked an 8 hour day on Saturday, so we'd go to work at 3:00 and get off about 11:00, 11:30 and we'd go out for the evening – the whole bunch of us. We'd all go out together, we'd sit around and have a beer or two, eat pizza or a sandwich – we'd throw so much money in the kitty... and we had like I said a little party after work. We did that almost every Saturday we worked. It was nice. I still run into them.

T: That would be a lot of fun. That'd be good. When the steel mills were closing, about the same time you started working at G.M., did that have any effect on you, or did you feel repercussions out at Lordstown because of that?

M: I didn't have no effect, no. It didn't bother me one bit. I just felt sorry for the guys – just like now, as an example when they talk about this CSC, they closed them people down. Rough for the guys who have 20 years, maybe, who wants to hire them anymore. Say they don't discriminate, but I know it is a fact they still do.

T: They want the younger –

M: Even General Motors does. They want the younger people. Like I was 39 when I come out, and by the time I got to General Motors I was almost 45, when I got my job, and there is no place on the application to ask me my age But my age was written on my application.

T: So it did affect it.

M: That's right – so it had something to do with it. But of course like I was informed when I took the application in, "I can get you a job, probably as long as you can pass the physical". And I passed my physical and got my job. Wasn't bad.

T: Was your job real physically demanding?

M: No. There isn't a job out there that really physically demanding for anything, just monotonous. Time consuming.

T: How do you put up with the stress of the monotony, the repetition?

M: Well, you just put up with it. You want to work, you gotta do it.

T: I've interviewed a few people and some guys said they read a book while they...

M: Or a paper or something, I - Once in a while if I found a magazine that I wanted to read and get a good story out of it, I'd sit there and read it while I was waiting for the next vehicle or something.

T: Did the management frown on that at all?

M: Yes. Yes, they did. They frowned on that, radio playing, I guess just about everything. Well I always looked at it this way, hey, as long as my job was done, and done right, what's the difference to 'em standing there reading a book as long as I paint my car, or put the sealer on the car, or put the doorknob on it, or the windshield wipers on it - or hang the door properly and stuff like putting all the welds where they're supposed to be, what's the difference if I have time to sit and read a couple sheets or a couple lines out of a newspaper or a book. You know? Just to kill time. Because as an example, in the body shop, sometimes the line goes down, my God, the line goes down for hours. What are you going to do, just stand there and wait for hours and hours and hours? If you had a book, at least you could sit there and read a book or, work the crossword puzzle, things like that. There was a lot of people did. They didn't want you to leave your job station so the only other thing you could do was have a book with you to read.

T: You had like one area you stood in the whole day?

M: Yeah. My job area might be, say from this wall to that wall with each car, start with each car here and by the time I was finished with the car it would be over there and I'd have to come back here and get the next car.

T: About a thirty or forty foot area...

M: About the length of a car. A foot or two on each side sometimes. Depends on the line speed.

T: OK. When you started there, what was the car being built, in '78?

M: Oh, God. We had what, the Buick and the Olds...

T: The Starfire?

M: Yeah, the Starfire and all that. The Skyhawk. That's what it was. Been so long, I can't remember.

T: Yeah. Any special things you remember about any of the cars that were built?

M: No, not really, not painting them. Because you had to paint every car the same way. I had a certain job to paint on that car and that was it. And the only other jobs I had as an example, like that were being built like in a body shop when you show off certain spots. You put different parts to the car. Before you can weld and stuff, yeah, you would have to watch what you were doing there. Just take with the vans. Certain van, you wanted a van, say a three-quarter ton van compared to just a half a ton van, well there is something extra put on the van –

T: Heavier springs?

M: Heavier springs, yeah. Other than that...

T: It was pretty much all the same? You were painting them?

M: All the same. Right.

T: Some of the gentlemen I interviewed, they had trouble fitting this panel on, or –

M: Right. Well, you do. A lot of times you do. They have trouble, and parts you shouldn't use, and they come back and tell you to use 'em. Hey, you know, which I think is wrong, but then it's the first thing out of their mouths when something would come out in the town, and be in the newspaper. "Well the employees are doing it". The employees were just doing what they were told. I can remember one time, we ran out of what we call 'risers'. On vans. And the ones we had were all rusted. And we refused to use them. And we were ordered to use them. "You will use them pieces." Five years later that van, the front end of that van rusts apart and the riser falls, the whole front end falls in, who do they blame? They don't blame G.M., or G.M. don't. G.M. blames the people that put 'em on – "They shouldn't have used them parts". Many a time that used to burn me up a lot. Used parts when we weren't supposed to.

T: So they wouldn't listen to you if you had a suggestion.

M: Right, right.

T: They just said "Do it". What exactly is a riser?

M: Alright – it's a riser, like on a van, that brings up that front end on the van. It's an extra piece that goes on the body. On the what we call the ladder van. And it brings up the front end of the van where you reach it.

T: Oh, OK. Hooks onto like the frame?



M: Right. The riser goes on each side of the frame, and ... torque panel...

T: Was there a lot of that where there was problems with stuff and you had to --

M: Well, not too much, but every so often when we did have a bad part they would still tell us to use it. And like I said that used to irk me. 'Cause I mean, I wouldn't buy that van! If I was going out for a van and I knew that was one I built and I didn't want them parts on there, do you think I was gonna buy that van? No way!

T: Yeah.

M: There was no way I'd buy it.

T: Do you think they got better about that over the years?

M: Over the years they got a lot better over there. And of course you can't blame the foreman, and sometimes you can't blame the regular supervisor in charge because the Plant Manager tells you "I want so many cars out and I don't care how you get 'em out", or "I want so many vans out, and I don't care how you get 'em out. You get 'em out. We got a quota of 400 vans for the ship." They wanted 400 vans on the ship. They didn't care what they were. We'll worry about that when we're done. Same thing with the cars. You know they want, say as an example on a ten-hour shift they want 800 cars out. Depended on the line speed. Most of the time it was 800 cars a night, on each shift. That's what they were.

T: What did you think about the Saturn project when G.M. started that. I know it probably maybe didn't directly affect you, but --

M: Well I didn't know what it was going to be like. I was asked if I wanted to go over and I didn't want to relocate. I liked it here, my kids were it. The one was in high school, the other was getting ready to go into high school, and I mean, all her friends were here. I knew what it was like on a military base. You only spent so many years on a base and you got moved. They can move you in the middle of a school year, and your kids had to get out of school and get transferred to another school, go to a school where there is nobody around. It wasn't more for me, it was for my family. But if it was just myself, and I would have had to go, I would have went. Just like in '94 or in '93 when we closed down to get ready for the new Vega, the new Cavalier - that model, I didn't know if I was going to have a job here or not. But they guaranteed me a transfer anywhere I wanted to go. Of course my kids were still in school - my one daughter was still in school and she went to college, graduated - just using that as an example. I would have hated to move her. But I would have gone on my own and just came home.

T: Do you think it would have been a better deal, or why would you have gone?

M: Well I... to work. Like I said, I had an obligation – I was raising a family. Kids were in school, I had to make sure they stayed in school, got educated.

T: I mean as opposed to staying at G.M.

M: No, I mean they would have transferred me to any G.M. plant I wanted. That's what I meant. I could have got transferred. I could have went to, as an example, Fort Wayne, Indiana. They had the forging plant up in Defiance, I could have went up there. But it got to the point I didn't have to leave.

T: Were a lot of people transferred?

M: A lot of them took it, yeah. Just as an example, in the late, uh, '91-'92 when they closed that Cadillac plant, the C plant down in Cleveland? They brought all them people down here. Well they had a choice, see? Be out of a job completely because they had no place to transfer there or they could come down here to work. And for quite awhile they bussed them from Cleveland to here. For a few years, I think. They wanted to work, so it wasn't too bad for them, but you figure every day – come down here for 10 hours, 2 hour bus trip here, 2 hour bus trip home...

T: Makes for a long day.

M: And 10 hours on the job – like you said, makes for a long, long day.

T: How 'bout the union? Were you involved much with the union when you were out there?

M: I didn't get involved with the union until... about '93 I guess. Since I am involved now with them since I retired and I was involved before that.

T: What effect did that have on your life and quality of work?

M: No effect whatsoever. Just that if I needed to do something. I do a lot of work with the Veterans. I'm the retirees Veterans' Rep. If they got a problem, they come and see me – and I pass on all the information I find out. I pass it out to the retired Veterans. I also pass on sometimes to the regular Veterans Committee which I am a part of also, if they don't get some of the information and I have it, I pass it on to them and they can pass it on to the other people. I do a lot of Veterans work now, I'm heavily involved.

T: Ok. So, how does that fit with the union?

M: Well a lot of time I had problems getting off of work because I had something to do with the Veterans, and the union would get me off. And I would tell then why I needed time off – I'm going to the Veteran's thing. When I get done if I have time, and they're still working, I'll come back to work. Didn't bother me any. But I wanted to do

the things for the Veterans. If not, I would call off and take a day off. Or take a vacation day.

T: Do what you had to.

M: Right. But while I was working, they treated me nice. I got off a lot of times at like 7:00 at night and I'd be back at 11:00 at night after I got done doing some stuff with the Veterans and I'd come back. I always told 'em, hey, you give me the time off and I'll be back. You know, you help me out, you pat my back, I'll pat yours. I would even go on a different job if I had to, when I come back, just so I could fill in for them.

T: When you retired from G.M., I hear the same story from a lot of people. You get a cake, and you get a...

M: Well, the people I worked with threw me a big party. I got a beautiful party. In fact, it surprised me. Normally you get a cake and coffee. But my people threw me a nice party.

T: Was that before the shift started, or something like that?

M: No, during the shift. In fact I didn't have to work that last day I was there. Got to walk around in a suit and tie. I went in, I figured that I might not have to work all day, but I'd have to work some of it, you know, somebody gets sick or something. Then I'd have to go on the line. But everything was fine. They had people and I was able to walk around saying goodbye to everybody that I knew all over the plant. It wasn't just my department.

T: Would you like your children to work at Lordstown?

M: No.

T: How come?

M: I don't think it's good. Not now, not the way things are now. They both went to college, my son's a police officer. He's in the West side of the state of Ohio and he's a Sergeant there and he's in charge of the Juvenile Section. He's in a small community. My daughter works for a big company - John Deere. Right now she's West Coast Director, I guess you could call it. She's got 13 states out where she takes care of. She's only 25 years old. She makes more money in a year than I made in 4 years out there.

T: She's doing well...

M: And I'd have to work overtime to make the kind of money she had. There's a big difference - you know, my kids asked me to get 'em a job, a summer job. But when they get jobs at G.M. they don't want to turn the kids loose to go back to school and I didn't want that to happen to my kids. I wanted them to get their education. Even when they

were going to college, my daughter said "Well I'll work" and I don't want you to work – I want you to study. She had a full time job and she took like 20 hours going to college. That was rough, but it paid off in the long run. I feel good that my kids have college educations and things. It's not easy.

T: Well there's a lot of college-educated people though at G.M.

M: Oh, year, there's a lot of them. But they work the line, also.

T: Sure.

M: Why go to college if you're going to work on the line. To me it's a waste of education. Education's great, because I know when I was stationed in Hawaii, you were a dipstick if you had a college education. So it's a different generation. You picked pineapples in the field all summer long or all year long, but you got a college education. Over there they had nothing else to do, either. I realize that. I think that they should go to college, get a good education, get a good job. I know they're hard to find sometimes... In fact, my daughter fell into hers. She took a friend of hers for the interview and they hired her instead. I could beef about that.

I couldn't wait to retire, I'll tell you that.

T: Why.

M: I'm happy to be retired.

T: What are you doing to keep busy?

M: Work with the Veterans, every day. Meeting yesterday, two meetings Tuesday.

T: That'll keep you busy.

M: Sure. Like I said, today, I thought it was going to be a free night. My wife is the one that reminded me. She said, what are you doing Thursday? And she went to a meeting tonight for the veterans. And I says if you gotta go to the meeting alone, 'cause it's way out in New Springfield, if you gotta go to the meeting alone, I'll drive you out there. If one of the other girls are going with you and you can drive together, you guys go. And if neither one wants to drive, I'll still drive you out there. And she reminded me when I came in, 'cause I worked around the yard today. She reminded me "Joe, you got that gentleman meeting you at the library." She put the note on my briefcase – 'Library, 7:00pm'. I says, oh, my God, that's right. Forgot all about it.

T: I'm glad she reminded you.

M: Yeah, I am too, really, because I wouldn't want to put it off any more. But I like working with the Veterans. In fact Sunday, we got our answer to May Day – what we call VFW District 8 which is 4 counties in this area. We got Mahoning, Trumbull,

Portage and Summit County, we're District 8. We got a Loyalty Day parade and it's our answer to the Russians or the Communists' May Day. Monday at 6:00 we'll be down at Southern Park Mall for Mahoning County we have Loyalty Day, do it exactly at 6:00 in the evening.

T: Do you expect a pretty big turnout?

M: Well we got some big turnouts before; I hope we get another big turnout, yes.

T: Were there a lot of veterans that you worked with out at G.M.? In your same position: put 20 years in the military and then -?

M: I don't think there were too many of them. A lot of them just put their time in it. 'Cause they worked at G.M. like when Vietnam – they worked at G.M. and they got their call up and went to Vietnam, came back and got their job back.

Well, when they built the plant here, when they broke the ground, I used to drive by it on the turnpike. I used to think 'boy that's gonna be a big place' cause at first we didn't know what it was when they first broke ground they didn't have a sign up. I said 'well, no sweat' – who ever thought I'd be the one working here? Never had the general idea I'd stop here and retire right here in Austintown, you know, the Youngstown area and end up working out there. 'Cause I did, when I got out of the Marine Corps, I spent 4 years, I got journeyman's pay for furniture – repairing and making furniture. I was finishing furniture so I got journeyman's pay for doing that. But couldn't make a living on it unless you get to a store, but most of the stores had their regular person – workin' for years. Far in between... the work... and then people don't want to pay the cost of getting it done. I went to work at G.M. and never thought I'd be there at all.

T: Were there a lot of reservists there?

M: You mean at G.M.?

T: Yes.

M: A lot of reserves, yes.

T: No trouble letting them get off weekends and one weekend –

M: Not to my knowledge, no. Well the law stated that on their weekend trainings once a month and on their two-week training in the summer that their employers had to let them go. It was Federal Law. And they'd try to get around it, but – hey – I got the law on my side. Fool with me, Uncle Sam'll get on you. It's true. I mean, they signed a contract with the Federal Government saying yes, the people that work for us, when they have to go for military training we will give them off.

T: What were the most fondest memories of G.M. Lordstown that you have?

M: My retirement.

T: Your retirement (laughs)

M: Naw, well, we had some good times. You know, even at the plant. We had Christmas parties...

T: Right in the plant?

M: Yeah. We'd have Christmas parties...

T: While the plant was running, have sandwiches...?

M: Right. Well, everybody would bring something in, a hot dish or whatever. Or we'd order from one of the places out that they let 'em come in and cater for us... I mean set up like a buffet for us and it would come down time for lunch and we would all go in there and eat. Two or three years I ran the Christmas party for my line and we ate from 6:00 when we started 'till we got done at 4:00 in the morning and then I had to give food away so that I could take the stuff home empty. But we had good times, we had good times. We had parties, like I said, when I worked at the van plant, on the line on Saturdays – every time we worked on Saturdays we always went out after work; after 8 hours we went out.

T: Somewhere here in Austintown.

M: Sure. We used to come right up here to the Lodge. Right down the road.

T: Good place, sure.

M: Nice place to go – and they would accommodate us all. 'Cause I had to leave early Saturday, 'cause going to work at 3:00 I'd tell 'em "Hey look, we're going to be here at 11:30. I want so many pizzas ready" and stuff like that. They'd even have the pizza ready for us so we didn't even have to wait. So it was pretty nice, and what we did there is – like I said, we threw our money in the pot, we'd tell 'em, if they didn't like pizza, and somebody wanted a sandwich, you just let 'em order a sandwich. It was all right with us, we didn't care. They were paying for it anyhow.

T: They were probably glad to have you, too because you were regular.

M: 'Cause they knew every other Saturday or every Saturday night we would be in there because I'd stop in there and tell 'em, "Hey, we'll be in tonight." We'd go and stay there maybe until they close. 1:30, 2:00.

T: How many people would usually go?

M: About 40 of us. The whole line, the whole line would go. Once in a while somebody wouldn't show up. In fact one year, I had the whole line from the body shop over there at the van plant over to my house for a New Year's Eve party. Out of everybody, only had one guy show up late. He came the next day.

T: Awful lot of camaraderie amongst the workers.

M: We had a good time. People said "You gonna invite so-and so" hey, "He's the Foreman, he's the Supervisor..." so what? He works with us on the line. We have a problem; we go see him. We can't invite him out for a beer or something? Why worry about it? I didn't care.

T: What were the things you like to forget about most about G.M.?

M: Nothing, really. I enjoyed it; I enjoyed it. I don't regret working there. Like I said, it was a job. I had to have a job. I had a young family; 'cause I didn't start my family 'till I was almost retired from the military.

T: So you had a lot of responsibility?

M: Yeah. All my responsibilities so I figured I had to do something.

T: You were stationed here in Youngstown.

M: Yeah. Well I got stationed here on a hardship. Come out of the jungles of Vietnam, my mother was dying – they just pulled me out, sent me right home.

T: That had to have been rough.

M: Yeah. Going all the way in my fatigues, .45 strapped on my side, stunk like hell.

T: What did you do, fly right from there –

M: They put me – I come out, it must have been 3-4:00 in the afternoon outta the field, I was on a plane by 6:00 at night. We were leaving.

T: Really?

M: Leave from there to Seattle, then I flew from Seattle to Los Angeles, then from Los Angeles International right to Chicago, then from Chicago right to Cleveland.

T: That's a long flight. That's a long time in the air.

M: Yeah. The only thing different from coming from over there is the hours are different. 2:00 in the morning, walking around, there's an 18 hour difference – time change.

T: Yeah. That probably took some time to get adjust to.

M: Yes, it did.

T: Is there anything we haven't gone over that you think should be put down for...

M: I don't think so. No. I'm not too good at these interviews so I wouldn't know.

T: I'm just a student myself.

M: I like it; I enjoy myself now. People ask me what I do and I say, "You know what I do. I work for the Veterans all the time". In fact, my wife always says "God, it was nice when you were working because once in a while somebody would call you up for the Veterans and you'd tell 'em "I can't do it, I gotta go to work tonight". Now it's "Sure, I can do it."

T: No excuse.

M: Now I've got no excuse. I fact, in my home neighborhood, where I live I put the flags up all the time. The whole neighborhood there; I put up about 600 to 700 flags up there all over the place from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

T: Great, great, what neighborhood do you live in?

M: I live in Brookwood, out where by Kirk and Raccoon...

T: Ok, just down the street then.

M: In fact a couple of neighbors come out and say: "Ah, must be that time of year again, gotta be Spring time. Here comes the man with the flags." In fact if I forget one flag, man... they come out and say: "Hey, you forgot my house" "I'll be back, I'll be back..."

T: Pretty much it on everything I had to ask you. Nothing else you think is important about G.M. Lordstown...?

M: No. It's a good place to work, though, I'll tell ya, you get good benefits, but you got - the work is boring. Everybody says: oh, it's easy money. It's not easy money. One; it's monotonous. Not easy money. They say: Oh, you guys out at G.M. get paid good money. You get paid because you gotta do a good job, too. 'Cause if they can't sell them cars you're not going to get no money either. And eventually you're not gonna have a job because they'll have to close down. Like you mentioned earlier about the steel mills. They started to close down in '74 and that, before I went to General Motors. And then you hear the old timers - not only the old timers, but some of the younger ones that worked there a few years before they closed down. They always say, like I said about the



money G.M. makes. When the steel workers were working, they made good money. And they didn't work hard, they didn't work hard at all. I know a guy that he said he used to sleep all the time. He worked out at a steel mill. He'd sleep, he'd work 15 minutes out of an hour maybe. And sometimes he could work a half hour and have almost three or four hours off early, depending how the traffic was. 'Cause he had to load the trucks. It'd take him 10 or 15 minutes to load a truck. If he could get two trucks loaded, he was off for at least 4 hours.

T: That's not the way it was at G.M. though, on the line? You had to work...

M: No. Oh, no. When the line went down there was nothing to do. I'll admit, we could sit around, could go over and play cards, or lay down and rest, something like that there. 'Till the line started up. Sometimes when it broke down you were down for hours. But then they would try to make it up. They would ask you to stay for an hour, work over another hour after shifts, something like that there, or they'd turn around and make you work on a Saturday. So they got their cars out of you, so they had to pay you to get 'em. When you went in on Saturdays it was time and a half. But they wanted their cars and they wanted them one way or the other. And they paid you for it. That's the way big corporations wheel and deal....

T: Well that should do it. Appreciate you taking some time.

M: My pleasure.