

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Life on the East Side of Youngstown

Personal Experience

O.H. 1272

WILLIAM WARD MALONEY

Interviewed

by

Ronald W. Stoops

on

July 12, 1989

WILLIAM (WARD) MALONEY

Mr. Maloney was born September 30, 1920, in Youngstown, Ohio. He was the son of Frank Maloney and Catherine Ward. Mr. Maloney is known by all who know him as "Ward." Mr. Maloney is married to Helen. They have three children: Cheryl Schuller, Terrence Maloney, and Maribeth Rizzi.

Ward was raised on Berkley Avenue and then resided on Oak Street for ten years after returning from World War II. Ward served in the Army from 1942-1945.

Ward was a member of Immaculate Conception Parish and attended East High School. He was an outstanding baseball player at East and in the AA division of Youngstown. He has been enshrined into the Hall of Fame for East High School, East Side Civic's and the Old Timers Organization-all for baseball. He is a regular member of the East High Thursday Breakfast Club.

Ward worked at G.F. Business Equipment from 1940-1942 and from 1945-1982 when he retired.

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Life on the East Side of Youngstown

INTERVIEWEE: WILLIAM WARD MALONEY

INTERVIEWER: Ronald W. Stoops

SUBJECT: childhood experiences, entertainment, East Side
of Youngstown then and now.

DATE: July 12, 1989

S: This is an interview with William Ward Maloney for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program by Ronald Stoops Jr., on Life on the East Side of Youngstown during the 1930's, 1940's, and 1950's, at 512 Geneva Avenue, Struthers, Ohio, on July 12, 1989, at 1:30 p.m.

Mr. Maloney would you like to begin by telling me a little bit about your family or your personal background?

M: Well, my personal background is that I was born on the East Side of Youngstown on Berkley Avenue, which was quite a big thrill in itself because living on Berkley Avenue was like living in a city with a country atmosphere of the big woods in the back. That was really something. Big picnics every Sunday and different nationality groups. And we all enjoyed that.

Anyhow after my twenty-two years of living on Berkley Avenue and going to school at the Immaculate Conception, Ursuline High School for two years, and East High School for two years I went to the service and participated in World War II in the Infantry. I would say that

I was in a few countries like England, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, and Czechoslovakia. We snuck into Czechoslovakia because we weren't allowed there after the war. About twelve of us went around the back way to get into there and the Russians were there. We stayed through the whole daylight hours of that one day and those Russians never bothered us. We don't know why yet.

S: When you say that you weren't allowed there was that because of an agreement with Russia?

M: Yes. But we wanted to go to Czechoslovakia anyhow to just say that we were there one day. Then eventually after the war was over we came home and within two weeks after I was home I got married to Helen McCabe and eleven months later we had our first daughter. And we went on to have a boy after that but he died. He was named after me. He died after six weeks. He was born with an enlarged heart. Then we had Terry and Betsy.

When we first got married we lived with my sister Catherine, and then we moved next door to my mother-in-law's for awhile and lived there. Then eventually we bought a house on Oak Street right near Loveless and we lived there for ten years. Then eventually we bought this house and we have been here for about thirty-two years now.

S: Is that right?

M: Yes. I worked at the GF for forty-two years, twenty years in the shop and twenty-two years in the industrial engineering department. I retired in 1982 at the end of May. That brings me right up to here except for the baseball that I played.

I played with the East Side Civic's and I played for the Scher Tailors, the Youngstown Manufacturer's, Safron Cigarettes, and the Home Club.

S: Well, the East Side Civic's and the Home Club were pretty big rivals how did you manage to be on both of those squads?

M: I played with the Home Club. By the way I pitched and won the first game that they ever won.

S: Is that right? What year would that have been?

M: I was over the hill. That was maybe in 1951 or 1952. I had a bum arm. I wasn't supposed to get anybody out but they decided that I had been around a long time and I pitched. We beat Landsingville and I will never forget some of my friends on the Landsingville team said to me

after the game, I threw a three hitter and they said, "Ward, you should have been ashamed of yourself winning a game with the junk you had today." I said, "You are wrong. You should be ashamed of yourself for not being able to hit it."

S: How about brothers and sisters? You grew up on Berkley...

M: I have three sisters. My youngest sister was eight years older than I and then Mary was twelve years older and then Inez was ten years older and they are all dead. My mother died when I was six and a half years old so I don't remember her too well. But my dad lived till he was a little over eighty-eight years old. So, even though there was a tremendous difference in our ages, my dad was forty-eight when I was born, we were pretty close due to our love of sports and the natural love that you have between a father and son, but a lot of it came from sports.

S: You were raised primarily then by your father.

M: And my sisters. See, my sister Mary was eighteen years old and my sister Inez was sixteen years old. So, Inez stayed home and took care of the house and Mary got a job at the Truscon, which did help out, but Catherine wasn't old enough yet for anything.

S: How about your dad, where did he work?

M: My dad was originally from Buffalo, New York, but he worked on the railroad and came to Youngstown to help teach some people their jobs. It was a small town and not too much was going on. He came for two months and he stayed right here for the rest of his life. He met my mother and got married. But dad was a railroader until the strike of 1920 and he lost out during that period some how or another and I am not even too sure how that even happened. Then he had multiple jobs like a lot of guys would out work, but he ended up working at the Truscon in the shipping department until retirement. He was one of the lucky ones. He paid into Social Security for one year and collected out of it for almost thirty years. So, he was right at the right age bracket.

S: He just made it in. How did your dad end up at Berkley Avenue on the East side of Youngstown? Was it just coincidence that it just happened? Or was it was just some railroad friends?

M: No, when he first came to Youngstown and was working on the railroad he lived in a boarding house down near the corner of McGuffey and Albert Street. Do you know where

that is?

S: I know where the corner is.

M: There used to be some boarding houses there that even I don't remember. That is where he lived. He went to the Immaculate Conception Church and my mother and all of their family went there and that is how he met my mother. I have absolutely no idea where my mother and dad lived before they came to Berkley Avenue, but what brought them up to Berkley Avenue I think is the McBrides, who lived across the street from us, Mrs. McBride and my mother were sisters. I think that that is how that happened.

S: Okay, very good. Since you did grow up on the East side and did start a family on the East side, what would have been a typical day have been like on the East side? Say before you went to the service.

M: Okay. The typical day say even in the winter, because during the Depression, which you have heard so much about, none of us had any money. I am telling you about an evening first, we are going backwards in this day.

S: That is fine.

M: We used to go down to the corner to Chick's Store and stand around the corner.

S: Chick's Store, what corner would that be on?

M: The corner of Berkley and Springdale. We would be standing around on the corner and it was real cold and we said, "What are we going to do here?" There was an Isaly's down on Albert Street so everybody would go home to see if we could get one penny until we got five pennies. Once we got the five pennies we would go down to the Isaly's and buy a nickel's worth of peanuts and sit and talk all night.

S: At the Isaly's?

M: At the Isaly's.

S: And this is when you were a young adolescent say twelve, thirteen or older than that, maybe fifteen or sixteen?

M: Maybe fifteen.

S: So, if you could all scrap up a penny that was your quota?

M: Well, until we got a nickel and then we bought a bag of peanuts and that got us in and we knew the girl, Pauline Opritza, she went to East High School too. Her people owned the store and she worked in there sometimes.

Then the best way to tell another day would be Sunday rather than a school day. We went to school and we would come home and whatever. But on a Sunday, like I said about the picnic grounds in back of Berkley Avenue in this big woods many nationality groups had their picnics there each Sunday and fireworks afterwards. So, every Sunday afternoon, regardless if you went to church or not, Sunday afternoon you went to the picnic grounds. Not only for a lot of fun but that is where you met all of the girls.

S: Oh, really?

M: Yes, they came from all over.

S: They came from all over?

M: Sure. And really that was our Sunday in those days until we got a little older.

S: Did they sign up for the pavillion ahead of time?

M: Oh, yes but I don't know how they went about that, but they did do that. And there was a dance floor there and they would have a band and it was really something special. You take people from all over town and they have heard of the Berkley Woods and the picnic grounds. I don't think that it is like that now but it was at one time.

S: How about the different nationalities, do you remember anything unique about the way people picnicked or the food that they prepared?

M: I wish that I could but I can't. But the street that I lived on was unusual in this respect, you could almost name a nationality and someone of that nationality lived on the street. The fact is that I am a full-blooded Irishman and I can remember one time one of the neighborhood kids hollering, "Hey Irish." And I got mad at him because all of our friends were multiple nationalities and still my friends are all that way. I say that I was fortunate to have been raised rather on Berkley Avenue than a particular nationality neighborhood and all of my friends like Vincent Mucci, is Italian. He was my best man. The guy that I see most today is Dave Cerny and he is Slovak. Harry Meshel, the State Senator, was from that neighborhood, and he is Greek. I could go on and on. That is how the neighbor-

hood was.

S: It didn't matter.

M: No, that had nothing to do with it. I wasn't lucky that my mother died at such a young age, but I ate my first pig in the blanket at Paulie's house, they were Hungarian, and my first dandelion salad at the Beck's, they were Croatian. They were always inviting me in because I had no mother.

S: That sounds interesting. So, you started telling me about the evening and then a Sunday, how about a summer day when you didn't have school?

M: Okay, I would like to say 5:00 in the morning but that wasn't true, but we would be up at that field hitting those softballs all around that field. The whole neighborhood was loaded with balls.

We would start out the day, and these are mid-teenage days, and we would start playing ball at 5:00 in the morning and we didn't have a bad player on our street, we ended up robbing some guys over on the other part of the East side, like Cecil Lawan, and Red Wayland ended up playing with us, and a few others.

S: So, each street had their own team?

M: No, each neighborhood. But the fact was that one team was at the end of the street and the other team down at this end. That was an unusual neighborhood and had an unusual amount of boys.

S: Did you give yourselves names?

M: Oh, yes we were Club Berkley. And the strangest name of the team in our neighborhood was a bunch of fellows that lived down where that new Truscon office is right now, but it is not new anymore, they called themselves "The Mad Russians." There were about five guys of Russian decent that played for them and when asked, "Who are you going to play tonight? We'd answer, "We are playing the Mad Russians."

S: What year would this have been?

M: This would be in 1933, 1934, 1935, even 1936.

S: Russian wasn't a very popular thing I mean wasn't there some animosity towards them.

M: No, not them. Not at all. There were just about four or five Russians on the team and they called themselves

the Mad Russians. There was another team over the other way, and there were three or four teams that were pretty close to one another and they called themselves the SOR, the Sons of Rest. That was the name of their team.

S: The Sons of Rest?

M: Rest, yes. They were the first team to get jerseys too. They sewed SOR on it. But we did a lot of playing ball, most of us. I never did learn how to dance and yet I was the attendant at the Senior Prom at East High School and didn't know how to dance, you figure that one out.

S: Well, I don't think that you are strange, there are a lot of boys...

M: You can ask my wife about that they asked her, "Well, how is he doing?" She said, "He stunk." That was our day.

We used to go up towards Landsdown Airport a lot and right between Republic Avenue and Thornhill, which is now that Kimmelbrook area, there was a big dip there with lots of green apple trees and we used to go up there and fill our waistline with apples and go up to Landsdown Airport, especially if they were having an air show there, which they sometimes had, and we always had our apples to eat. Then we would come home.

And we roamed those woods a lot. It was quite a large woods and we used to spend a lot of time up there. We would play Tarzan and pretend that we were in the jungles. We would get some water and some tea bags and make a cup of tea or something, whatever we could do, and pretend that we were out in the jungle. Mike Beck, an ex-East High football player, was the strongest one in the neighborhood and he could swing from one tree to another, but I could yell just like Tarzan. So, he would swing through the tree and I would yell like Tarzan.

S: That sounds like fun.

M: Oh, we had a lot of fun.

S: Did you cook out in the woods and roast some weenies?

M: Not that so much but potatoes. We used to mud roast potatoes.

S: You will have to explain that to me.

M: You take a potato and pack it with mud, completely with

mud, and put it right in the fire until that mud got red-hot, which it would and knock off the mud and you had a cooked potato.

S: Is that right?

M: Oh, yes. We tried that with corn a little bit and I suppose that it might have worked but we weren't too good at that. We used to do things like that a lot.

S: And where did you get those? You wouldn't have gotten those from neighbors' gardens now would you have?

M: Oh, no the potatoes we would get from home. Each guy would bring his own potato or something like that. But the reason that we had so much fun then, and I know that you have heard these stories maybe from your grandfather, Tootsie, that we had more fun than you guys because we had nothing. Well, that wasn't our choice to have nothing, it just happened to be that way.

There weren't too many cars on the street, there were cars but not too many. We used to draw a court right on the street and play paddle tennis with your hands and have tournaments.

S: Right on the street?

M: Right on the street.

S: Now would the street be dirt or what?

M: Pavement, brick. Like I said, nobody had too much money then, nobody. Every now and again somebody would lose their house. My father many years said, "Thank God for the Home Savings & Loan," to take care of him you know. Derkatch's, they lost their house and they had the nicest house on the street too.

S: Now would that be during the Depression?

M: Yes.

S: In the 1930's?

M: Oh, yes the 1930's.

S: You were born in 1920 so you lived and you were growing up right during the tough times.

M: Yes. We were a little fortunate our family. My dad used to get two or three days a week work.

S: Did he work for one of the government projects?

M: No, he worked at Truscon. He had enough time there that he would get a few days. And I can never remember being hungry during the Depression, but like my wife's family and others had actually gone hungry. I remember my brother-in-law telling me once that when they were living over there in the other part of the East side that he came home for lunch many of times and would stop a block away from home, turn around and go back to school. I said to him, "Why did you do that?" He said, "There was nothing to eat anyhow." Maybe they got a little bit of breakfast or supper and maybe not even much of that. A lot of people moved all over the East side because when the rent came they couldn't pay it. There were some real bad times then.

S: How about soup kitchens?

M: There were those but I never saw one.

S: How about the churches, did they help any?

M: The church now I can remember the nuns asking, "You look like you need a pair of pants, or you have a big hole in your shoe, do you need new shoes or something?" And most of us would say, "No, no my mother and father is going to buy them for us." Almost everybody said that but you got them anyhow. If the nuns thought that you needed it you got it. Now how they got the money I don't know but they did help out a lot.

My wife can remember...They had it real tough. Her and her brother would come to school and a nun would take them both up and feed them breakfast knowing that they had none. So, it was a little bit tough and there were a lot of poor people and there were a lot of people who helped.

S: You mentioned that you didn't have much and I know that you played a lot of baseball, did everybody have their own glove or did you have to share a lot?

M: In our real young days, say up to fifteen, we didn't have any gloves, we didn't use gloves. The catcher might have a glove and sometimes the first baseman but I can remember playing a lot of games without a glove. And you are really racking my brain...And I can't remember when we all first started to get gloves. I can't remember even how we got gloves. I have no recollection of that, but all of a sudden we were playing with gloves.

S: That was probably a wonderful Christmas gift if you got one.

M: Oh, yes. I remember when I first started to play with the East Side Civic's in 1939, and my dad had to buy me a glove and a pair of shoes and I never thought that I would ever get them but I did. I was the first guy my age to play with the Civic's from our street. Johnny Yank had played earlier and he was from our street too. Boy that was a thrill. I thought that I was in the big leagues. I was eighteen.

S: You didn't have many gloves, how about bats and balls? Did you have to scrape money together or what?

M: Yes, but we had this guy by the name of Mike Beck, he was two years older than we were, and he is dead now, but Mike always somehow somehow could chisel some business guy out of a couple of bucks to buy a couple of bats or something and I think that we got our first jersey with CB on it, Club Berkley through Mike's doing. I think that we all had to chip in a little but every so often he got somebody else to chip in the rest. He was really a promoter. He was good and a good athlete. Mike did so much for all of us.

S: You said that there were some really tough times and you mentioned some families that really went without and lost some homes, but were there some people that actually did well and lived decent in the neighborhood or actually prospered during then?

M: I don't think that anybody truly prospered using that word literally but there were some people that did pretty well, like the Beck's father was a policeman. He didn't always get paid in money. They got paid in script. That is what they called it. But eventually that would be made up, but they could buy things with that script. I can remember Timmy Beck telling me how he would go down through the backyards to Ponzio's house and bring them a meal. The Beck's had a little more.

I can't remember too many others. I think that the Muntean's down the street, I don't think that they ever went hungry either. Mr. Muntean, like my dad would get a couple of days here and there. Enough to put food on the table. Ed McKenzie up the street was a policeman too. They always had food all of the time. I can't remember...I was so darn skinny in those days maybe I didn't get much to eat but I can't remember ever going hungry.

S: We were talking about a typical day and a lot of baseball, up early and out to Landsdown Airport, was it a must to come home for supper? I remember when I was little...

M: Oh, no we wouldn't always come home for supper. My sisters, remember I had no mother, they would send my father up to the field to get Ward to come home to eat supper. He never pulled me out of a game. He waited till the game was over, we would come home. And we would both get warmed up supper.

S: Come home, eat, and then go back out?

M: Oh, yes. Sure. But always let me finish a game. Of course my dad...He played with the Buffalo of the International League so he had a great love of baseball.

S: We want to get into that a little bit. It seems that everyone on the East Side knows everybody else on the East Side and that they are always so proud. As soon as you meet somebody...If they knew that I was from the East Side...

M: "I am an East Sider too."

S: Yes, or "I knew the family from the East Side." Why do you think that there is that feeling?

M: I really don't know but on the East Side, and I lived on two parts of the East Side, and everybody was so friendly and so neighborly with each other. Not that you went and visited in their house all of the time or went up for your morning coffee or whatever; yet some of that did happen, but it was just that everybody seemed to like each other. I can't understand it.

S: Regardless of nationality or money?

M: Right. Money meant nothing. It was just that everybody seemed to get along with each other. And I know where I lived I was in every house on that street for some reason or another at one time or another, "Come in, come in, come in." They'd say. It was a wonderful place to be raised I will tell you. It really was. I am sure that if your dad ever told you anything about that...Or maybe did you ever talk to your grandfather a little bit?

S: Oh, yes I talked to him too. I don't think that they would have traded it for anything in the world.

M: Oh, no.

S: And that is why I am trying to get why it is.

M: I wish that I could tell you why but it was just that everyone was so neighborly and so many people have moved off of the East Side now, not taking down any

other section of town because I don't mean to do that, but they will say, "I don't even know my neighbors." But maybe that is their own fault too you don't know that. But on the East side everybody knew each other and it was like a small town and we were friendly with each other that was the important thing.

S: Going in and out of each other's houses?

M: Yes, you know with the boys. Well, with like Mrs. Beck, that was the house that we gathered at, our gang, and when we were little we used to go over and call out loud, "Hey Tim, Hey Mike" and out they would come. Then when we got a little older Mrs. Beck said, "You come and you knock on the door and you come in my house." She spoke broken. She was Croatian. She was a second mother to me, that woman really was.

Anyhow, later she said, "If you want to come in this house you come in if the door isn't locked." So, that house was like our meeting place. We used to play cards there. We would play 500 or we would play hearts, things like that. Then we would play for match sticks and that is where we did all of that in Beck's house.

S: Would you consider the East Side a close community?

M: Oh, absolutely. And I am sure that I am not the only East Sider to tell you that. You will hear that from anybody who ever lived on the East Side. Especially, my age who came up through the Depression. Maybe the Depression and not having too much much have brought us all together, I don't know but as far as I know it was always there, that closeness. I still say to people, "I live in Struthers now but I am an East Sider at heart." And I am sure that others feel that way.

S: Was the East Side considered a typical side of town or was it a...

M: It was considered a tough side of town.

S: A tough side of town?

M: Yes.

S: How did they get that reputation?

M: The East Sider would fight at the drop of a hat with anyone from another side of town. I can remember one time down at the ARCO Club they used to have a big baseball get together every now and again when it was on Albert Street, and Birdie Tebbets, was going to be the speaker this night. Have you heard of Birdie Tebbets?

S: Yes.

M: Okay. He said, "I know you guys here and I hear that I am on a tough side of town here." So, somebody must have told him that but I don't know. But that is how he started his talk. I don't think that the East side was really that tough-minded as the reputation said it was but they were a little tough to beat physically.

S: I want to get into that a little bit. I know that you are so interested in sports and have been active in it especially, baseball. One Hall of Fame after another. East High School Hall of Fame. The East Side Civic's Hall of Fame, you coached the East Side Civic's in a Double AA baseball league; do you think that there is a connection between this pride and how important was athletics...Do you think that that had a lot to do with the character and the personality of the East Side?

M: Absolutely. I heard Bob Commings. Have you ever heard of him?

S: Oh, yes.

M: One time he was giving a talk and during this talk said that he was "...very proud of his East Side bringing up" and he thought that if it wasn't for that East Side bringing up, the manner of which he was brought up, not only by his parents but everybody else, that he would have never been as successful as he is. He actually said that. And he is a reasonably good success I would say.

S: Oh, yes. Bob and Iowa.

M: Sure. Whether he made it great at Iowa is not important but he got there.

S: Right. That is for sure. You used the word tough again...

M: Yes, tough. Fighter Bob Commings no, but tough. He was one hundred and seventy-two pounds, captain of that team with Alex Karris.

S: I think that what you are getting at is, and maybe I am wrong, but I don't want to put words in your mouth, but not tough necessarily fighters but competitors like tooth and nail.

M: Oh, yes. The East Side like to win. That is the reason that they went on strike to get rid of football coach Littler, and Littler is a nice guy.

S: Do you want to explain that a little bit, Harley Littler.

M: Harley Littler was the football coach and the basketball coach, and he was a very successful basketball coach...

S: For a very long time.

M: But he didn't do too well in football and everybody thought that he had the material. Of course the material was big and husky and he went for all husky guys.

S: What years would we be talking now?

M: Well, I don't know when Littler first came to East High School, but I know when he left...1935 is when coach Dick Barrett came from Campbell Memorial High School.

S: Right.

M: Or course Dick Barrett turned the program right around quick, but how that came about was the students went on strike.

S: The student body?

M: To get rid of Littler plus parents came and stood out in front of the school.

S: You mean that during the school day they just refused to go to school?

M: That must have been but I wasn't there at the time I was too young. But I think that they did it during the school year. I am not sure. It almost had to be.

S: But they protested in some fashion?

M: It had to be and some how or another they got rid of Littler and got Dick Barrett in and then Dick Barrett's first year East High School was a Three-Way City Champion.

S: Didn't they go on and kind of dominate the city then?

M: Yes, them and Chaney.

S: Them and Chaney?

M: Well, all of the teams were good then. Rayen and South had fabulous teams. Johnny McAfee was the coach at South and he had the reputation that if he wanted to beat you he wanted to beat you this year and he didn't care about the other teams he would beat you. It might

be his only victory but he beat you. But Dick Barrett was if not the best coach in town, he was very close to being the best.

S: Who was East's big rivalry back then?

M: Chaney.

S: East and Chaney.

M: That was the Thanksgiving Day game. See, it used to be Rayen and South but then East and Chaney came along and one year East and Chaney would play on the Thanksgiving Day game and the next year Rayen and South is the way it worked because the rivalry was similar between the two. And East lost a heart-breaker or two to Chaney.

S: A heart-breaker or two to Chaney?

M: Yes.

S: They would be the favorite and...

M: In 1937 East was number one in the state and they had won eight and zero or nine and zero and they were going to play their next one and Chaney beat them. I am not sure if that was the year that Chaney beat them six to zero or two touchdowns to one. I know that there were two heart-breakers like that and I just can't remember the scores.

The one game I will never forget. John Jackson went for a long run and I can't remember if they won the game or not but it was surely a good one. And Frank Sinkwich, the Heisman Trophy winner, was knocked out of the play on this side of the field and here is Jackson going down the other side and Sinkwich got up and caught Jackson.

S: Is that right?

M: Yes.

S: Now did that rivalry continue into the 1940's and 1950's?

M: Oh, yes. I don't know how it is now. I really have no idea who East considers the biggest rivalry but it used to be Chaney. Then there was a big rivalry between Chaney and Mooney as time went on.

S: That was probably the 1960's or 1970's.

M: Mike Deniro played with Chaney. He played third base with me on the Civic's.

S: We are getting more recent because even I can remember that.

M: Yes.

S: It seems like to me that a lot of successful athletes or a lot of the athletes around town and the names that you hear about especially, even in baseball from the East side...Is that true? Do you feel the same way?

M: Sure. When I was a kid I was a bat boy for the East Side Civic's and they were the champs almost all of the time then. The whole team then that I thought were big leaguers they are all dead now. So, it was that long ago that they were good. The East Side Civic's started in 1920.

S: As an organization?

M: And a ball team. Oh, they went down hill every now and again because players got mad and went with somebody else or you are not supposed to say this but somebody would slip them a few extra dollars to play.

S: You mean that actually happened?

M: Sure. It happened to me.

S: Somebody payed you to play?

M: Sure. I made \$1000 one summer.

S: To play for which team Home Club?

M: No, the Youngstown Manufacturers.

S: Is that a Double AA league?

M: Yes.

S: In town?

M: Yes. There may have been guys who got more than that. See, I got what I asked for. If more than one team wanted you in those days, in the late 1940's and I think during World War II but I wasn't here at that time, you could demand something. They would say, "How much do you want?" Well, they offered me so much to start with and then they said, "We will give you \$25 for every game you pitch." And I said, "No, I don't want that." They said, "What do you mean?" I said, "I want \$15 for every game whether I pitch or not." And with that plus the \$300 they gave me to start that made \$1000 in 1947. That is where I got my down payment for

my first house on Oak Street.

S: Talking about that house on Oak Street...You were raised on the East Side and you went to the service, came back, got married, had a house on...

M: Well, we lived here and there and whatnot for awhile.

S: Lived around a couple times and then you bought a house on Oak Street.

M: We bought a house on Oak Street.

S: Why did you come back to Oak Street on the East Side?

M: Simply because we felt that we had to get a home. We were living in with people. My wife found this house. I was busy playing ball. She bought the house and I never saw it.

S: The one on Oak Street?

M: Yes. It was a small five-room house. It was real nice. It was one of the newer houses in that neck of the woods, but a small house on a very small lot. But it was fine for us. It suited the daylights out of us.

But the funny thing about that house when we moved there, I was in the thick of playing ball at that time, and meeting a lot of guys that I went to school with that hadn't seen, "Hey, Wardie give me a ball." All the balls that my father had saved for me with the game and how I pitched or whatever I gave them all away. I wish that I had never done that.

S: Is that right?

M: I gave them away to the guys in the neighborhood to let them play ball.

S: You were playing ball in the 1940's was that Double AA?

M: Yes.

S: Hardball?

M: Yes. I never played hardball in any other league except Double AA. I played softball with the GF too. I played with them in 1951. I played about thirty-five games with the Double AA league and one hundred games with the GF.

S: Getting back to the East side again, how about for entertainment did you do any particular things? What did kids do?

M: Movies mainly when we were younger. We would walk downtown. Even on a Sunday you could get in for \$.10 before 6:00 p.m. and we used to do that. That was our big entertainment other than playing ball. Or we used to go to football games and we had no money so we would always sneak in. But there was one cop up at Rayen High School and there was a little part of the fence that was loose and he would raise it for us and let us go in. He was a nice guy.

S: Did you walk up there?

M: Oh, yes. You walked everywhere. Well, Dave Cerny and I, used to go and see two girls way out on Southern Boulevard and we walked from Berkley Avenue out there to see them.

S: Wow. But that is all that we did.

M: Sure.

S: You mentioned earlier about not having very much and so on, bicycles weren't too popular?

M: No, I never had a bicycle. My wife never owned one and right after we got married I bought her a bike because she never had one and she wanted one.

S: If you were a little kid...If you could have had something what would you have asked for from Santa Claus if you could have had anything? What toy?

M: A pair of roller skates. And I finally got one. I will tell you how I got it. I was the bat boy for the East Side Civic's and I got a \$.25 every Sunday and Woodie Wilson, lived next door to me, they were a little better off than most of us, so Woodie got a pair of skates and he used to say to his dad, "I wish Ward had a pair." Because we were friends. His dad said, "I will tell you what you will do, you tell Ward Maloney that every Sunday when he gets a \$.25 he gives it too you to give to me and I will buy him a pair of skates." So, that is how I got my first pair of skates.

S: And you payed him back or did he save the quarters?

M: Every Sunday I gave Woodrow the quarter. Now whether his father let him keep that or whether he had to give back to his dad I don't know. But his dad did buy me those skates and I paid them \$.25 a Sunday. And I wanted a pair of skates real bad and that is how I got them.

S: Now did you pay him \$.25 and then he saved up enough

quarters to buy the skates for you or did he buy them ahead of time.

M: Oh, yes. He bought the skates and I payed him. Woodie was looking for me after every game on Sunday so I wouldn't get away and spend any you know. But I always gave him the \$.25.

S: Roller skates and bikes weren't too popular. How about wooden scooters?

M: I can't remember them too much. They might have been around but I think that Billy Paulie ended up getting a bike and Huntsie Wetzal up the street got a bike. I don't know how they got them.

S: How old were you then?

M: I might have been around thirteen years old. I remember that.

S: What do you remember about East High School? Going and coming to school-did you walk? I am sure that you walked.

M: Oh, we walked to school.

S: Did you come home for lunch?

M: Yes, and this one year the periods mixed me up and I don't know what period I had gym but the next period was lunch. So, in the spring we would be out playing ball for gym. There was a colored guy that lived in our neighborhood that we used to act like we were going to be left fielders so we could get a five minute jump on lunch. Do you know what I mean?

S: Yes.

M: We would get way out there by Parker Street there in the back of the school and about five minutes before everybody was just starting to go back in we would head for home. So, we got a five minute start heading for home and we ran home to get more time for lunch. Then you walked back to school. Those were great days.

But going to East when they had such great football teams. We used to hang around after school to watch them practice. I don't know if you guys do? Mooney too? Some of the kids watch them practice?

S: Yes, once in awhile.

M: And the better the team the more kids there were. We watched them practice an awful lot. We used to go to

East to see an awful lot of basketball games. East had the best gym in town. It was a stage and they could put more people in there and we did that a lot at East. I made a lot of friends at East High School in just those short two years. And some kids that I didn't even know when I went to Ursuline and then went to East. But then I went out for the East High Baseball Team not thinking that I could make it and I did. I got a uniform and I always say that Andy Rinaldi and I were the only two guys listed as pitchers didn't pitch too much. But it is funny about me being with the East High Baseball team because my wife doesn't remember me being on the team and Vincent Mucci, my best man doesn't remember, and Dave Cerny doesn't remember, and Bob Burns, who played football with Cecil lawman and Red Wayland, he was the other end, he fortunately said at one of the breakfasts at Luciano's, "I remember you being on the team because I was there with you." But nobody else remembered. They didn't come to the ball games. They didn't come to high school games. We would play high school and nobody was there just us.

S: For the baseball games?

M: Yes.

S: How about the Double AA, I know that you played there along time and you coached the East Side Civic's for five years and won four championships, it seems to me but I don't know, were there some big crowds back there?

M: If the newspaper was right ten thousand people at Oakland Field so they said. Now we saw maybe seven or eight thousand.

S: For one game?

M: Yes. Well, one game at night.

S: Was this a championship?

M: NABF. That used to come here. It came here for twelve straight years.

S: That would be the sixteen to eighteen?

M: No, no age limit, Double AA.

S: Oh, this is Double AA NABF. Okay.

M: Yes. That was the big thing at the time. And it would be twenty-four teams from all over the country that came here. it started on one Saturday on through to the next Sunday. That is how long that it lasted. Maybe I

shouldn't say this but I still hold the NABF strike out record of sixteen against Flint, Michigan in 1946.

S: Against Flint, Michigan, was that here at Oakland Field?

M: Yes. What a night that was. Best Jeweler's gave me a \$12 wallet, Peter Wellman gave me \$10 in war stamps.

S: \$10 in war stamps for gas and food?

M: That is what they called it. No, that you could cash it in for money. And somebody else gave me \$10. And then Lugstig Shoes, through Jim DeNiro gave me \$60. So, that night I came home with \$90.

S: So, baseball obviously had the communities attention?

M: Oh, right after the war you couldn't believe the people that came to the games. We had like six or seven thousand for the playoffs, the first half champ against the second half champ or a big game leading into it. There were tremendous crowds.

When we lived on Oak Street we could walk to Oakland Field. When I used to get to the game, especially if I was going to pitch like an hour or one hour and fifteen minutes before time, my wife would have to go before me to get a seat.

S: Is that right?

M: Yes. There were tremendous crowds.

S: I see that you are a member of the Baseball Hall of Fame at East High School, and for the East Side Civic's, and you are also a member of the East High Thursday Club. Can you tell me about that?

M: That is a bunch of people that meet every last Thursday of the month for breakfast at Luciano's Restaurant. You may not believe this but we get about forty to sixty East Siders there for breakfast every month.

S: What age group?

M: Anybody just as long as you are an East Sider. We don't care if you didn't go to the East High School or not just as long as...Well, I suppose that you would have to go to East High School, but we have had outsiders like, Sloko Gill from Campbell came a couple of times. Another guy from Rayen came. But primarily 90% were East Siders and that is what started this East Side Hall of Fame.

S: Would these guys be mostly sixty or sixty-five year of age and on up?

M: Oh, yes. Littler comes all of the time. My God he is about eighty-seven or eighty-eight.

S: Were you one of the organizers of this?

M: No. That is funny because the two guys that started this hardly ever come anymore, Ace Congemi and Red Wayland. They started all of this.

S: How long has this been?

M: I have no idea because it was going pretty well before I ever heard of it.

S: How long have you been going to these things?

M: Oh, off and on now about two or three years. There were years when I didn't go. So, it may have been about ten or twelve years that I've been going.

S: It seems like the East Side has a lot of these. I read in the newspaper a short time ago that there was an East Side reunion out at FireStone Park for a group of guys.

M: Well, you take some of these people that come to this breakfast, they played on East High's very first team in 1926. There are some of them that are there.

S: Harley Littler was the coach of that first team?

M: I don't think so. A guy by the name of Mitchel I think might have been the first coach. I would have to check that out but I am pretty sure. Littler came after that.

S: If I am not mistaken Harley Littler coached my grandfather in the 1920's.

M: Oh, I am sure that he did.

S: How about your fondest memory growing up on the East Side? Any particular one? I know that you have had a lot in baseball.

M: In baseball, the happiest day that I ever pitched was in 1946 when I was playing with the East Side Civic's and Lustig's Shoe Store used to bring in a pitcher from Akron, I forget his name now, he pitched against the colored professional teams that were big leaguers at that time. Anyhow they thought that they would try me so they called me up and said, "How would you like to pitch against the Birmingham Black Barons?" I said, "I

would love it." They said, "We'll give you \$20." I said, "That is fine." In 1946 that was more than what I made in a day. And I beat them three to two.

Going out there I thought to myself, "I am not going to beat them, these guys are next to big leaguers." Now whether that is true or not that is the way that I felt about them. And we beat them three to two.

S: Now this was a group of colored players?

M: Oh, they were in a Black Professional League.

S: I know that they weren't allowed in Professional Baseball at the time.

M: No, they came here for exhibition games and we used to get big crowds for that.

S: How about on the East Side back during your youth and that...A lot of problems...Were there many blacks around or did they mix with the other groups?

M: Yes, very well. But I think that at that time the blacks did live in the poorer sections. Like on Berkley Avenue there were about one quarter of about one half of the street...About a half of a block and on one side of the street they were all black so we played ball with those guys and they pitched with us but then as we got older they would leave and go to an all black team, but as we were younger we all played together.

On Garland Avenue, down back of there were a lot of black people down there at that time. To my knowledge, I can't remember having any real problems. Some fights, but you weren't afraid. The whole thing was there was no fear. "I better not go into this section." Or if there was a section that you would be afraid to walk in it might be a tough white section and not the way that it is today. I can't recall having any serious problems with black or white. We played with the blacks just like we played with the white.

S: How about your days at General Fireproofing?

M: I worked there for forty-two years.

S: From the time that you came out of the service? Is that when you started?

M: No, no I started in 1940, two years before I went to the service. And how I happened to get that job was a bunch of guys were going to get together and start the Scher Tailor Baseball Team, and Paul Birkholtz and the two Baumert's, and Johnny Barber, who was a councilman

at that time, came to my house, and this was after only one year with the East Side Civic's, and I was going to be nineteen and they asked me if I was going to play ball with them the next year. I very nicely told them, "No, because the East Side Civic's gave me my start and that is where I am going to stay." So, one of them said, "Are you working?" I said, "No." They said, "What if we got you a job." I said, "Now you have a ball player." So, that is how that happened.

S: You worked for GF and you played for their team?

M: Yes. I didn't play for the GF team right then...I did in 1941. But they got me a job with the GF and I played for Scher Tailor Hardball Team, double AA. GF had nothing to do with it, they just got me a job. A couple of them had some influence I guess. Then I worked two years at the GF and I played with them in 1941. I never played with them again until 1951. Because there was a year or two that I didn't played softball.

But I played with them in 1951 and we were State Champions that year. They were State Champions in 1948 also, but I didn't play with them then. Ev Birkholtz was a third baseman and I was a third baseman. When he quit playing I took his place and that was in 1951. Then I played with them for about ten years. But the GF in those days had at best 5,000 employees and now there is maybe 200 or 300 now. We used to call it one big happy family at GF. There were strikes but not nothing too serious.

S: How about getting your job back after the war...Was that difficult?

M: Oh, no. That job was waiting for me. I guess Uncle Sam had that set up. Then for one year after you came back you had super seniority over everyone else, even if the guy could be your father, you had super seniority for one year. I was lucky that I never got laid off from GF. When they did lay off I had just enough seniority to stay on. Everything worked out pretty well. I liked working at the GF.

S: How about East High School Baseball? I know that you are in the Hall of Fame and that you had some good seasons...

M: I only played with them for one year, the Spring of 1938. This was a good baseball team. We had a bunch of good athletes at East at the time. We had won the district championship, I might have District and Regional mixed up here, but we won the District Championship and we were going to go to Canton to play in the Regionals. We were all up at East, had a big lunch and

were ready to go, and Littler told me, "You are pitching the first game." I pitched somewhat with that team but not a whole lot. Cecil Lawman and Charlie Joachim wore themselves out I don't know.

But we were all ready to go to Canton and Littler gets a telephone call, "You guys are thrown out of the tournament, you're all inelligable." Well, Littler knew at the time why but we didn't. But the basketball players that were on the team, like Jimmy Best, Ace Congemi, Cecil Lawman, Jack Green, played basketball down at the Christ Mission, we used to pay \$.05 to get in and see them play and that kicked us out of the baseball tournament.

- S: Because they played basketball during the baseball season?
- M: I don't know when they played. But like Littler said...He told me this many years later, he said, "I wouldn't have cared if it was a second place team that turned us in but it was the last place team, Warren Harding."
- S: So, they made you forfeit the tournament?
- M: Yes, they threw us out. The people had to pay to see them play. It was other than high school. I guess the high school rules are very strict. I never got to pitch that game and we never got to play in the Regionals.
- S: I know yourself and my father even went to Ursuline for one year, he lived on Garland Avenue and went to Ursuline for one year, his mom wanted him to go to Ursuline.
- M: My parents wanted me to go to Ursuline.
- S: So, my father went to Ursuline and he, like you, decided in a year, and you after two years...
- M: Well, that was after I first got there. I didn't like it.
- S: From what I understand my dad didn't like it so much either. Why do you suppose that you would want to come back to East High School?
- M: Well, the main reason was that I was the only guy in our neighborhood of all of those guys that was going to Ursuline, only one person. I used everything. The tuition was \$50 a year and I even used that with my sisters, who were handling this situation, and they finally decided to let me go to East High School. That saved them \$50 a year, which was a lot of money.

S: Sure.

M: But the main reason was that I wanted to be with my friends.

S: Not too many people from the East Side went to Ursuline.

M: Oh, no.

S: Did your wife go to East High School?

M: All of the way through. She graduated in 1941.

S: In your opinion, or why do you think that the East Side was different? I know that you have talked about this already but why do you think that the East Side may have been different from any other side of town or neighborhood?

M: The comradery. That is the reason for it. It seemed like the love that people--using that word loosely--and the love that the people had for one another, and stuck up for one another you couldn't talk about an East Sider to another East Sider, and taking them down a little just wouldn't work. We stuck up for each other a lot.

S: If somebody from another side of town had something negative to say you wouldn't tolerate it right?

M: They didn't accept that too well. There may have been some street fights amongst each other, never me I was never a fighter, but there were a lot of them around that I saw. I can't explain it but boy it was there. Like I have said people from the East Side that have gone away and said that they don't even know their next door neighbor, that might be a slight exaggeration but there is something like that. Everybody seemed to get along well. The East Side was like the other side of town, it was a big side of town, we are talking about a lot of people that got along pretty well. They were proud to know each other whether they were good at sports or tiddly winks.

S: What would a guy do...It seems like...I get this that "we played baseball or football or basketball. What would a boy do if he wasn't interested in one of those things?

M: I could only think of one in our neighborhood that was not the least bit interested in sports and that was Woodrow Wilson, but Woodie could do anything with his hands. I am sure that there were other guys like this

too. Woodie built a crystal set, it was like a radio with earphones, and he built this and I used to go upstairs and we used to sit in that bedroom of his and listen and then finally Woodie improved on this and made it so that you could hear without the earphones, he had made a little speaker for it.

Now that wasn't all that Woodie could do as time went on he always worked a little extra and he could do anything. Woodie died and even people here on Geneva Street not only missed him because he was a nice guy but because they were waiting for him to get better so that he could do work for them in the house. Woodie repaired for everybody and that is how Woodie was. He turned out to make a lot more money than all of us with that side work but that was pleasure to him.

I am sure that there were some other guys. Then there were some guys that didn't participate in sports and became real good dancers and had all of the girls wrapped around their fingers and maybe some of us didn't.

S: Were the boys in your neighborhood very interested in girls?

M: Oh, yes. But there weren't too many of them that were good dancers.

S: Not too many good dancers?

M: No.

S: But a lot of good baseball players?

M: Yes, good enough to be on the neighborhood team. I can't think of too many of them on the street that were good dancers. There might have been a few that I didn't know about but most all of those that I found around here that I played ball with, not too many were dancers.

S: How do you think that growing up on the East Side has affected your life as an adult and as a father and your work?

M: It has affected me this way, but I have no animosity towards anybody or anything and I truly mean that. I think that it was that bringing up in my particular neighborhood that almost every nationality that you could think of...

S: And the blacks were included?

M: The blacks included. Means to me that I like to feel

that I don't take a person by what they are but how they are. We used to get into some religious things at work once in awhile but no argument just talking. Anyhow we would get into some things at work maybe me and Bill Wolfe would be talking like that and he would always say to me, "I can't figure you out Ward." He used to call me the "peacemaker." And I told him I said, "Bill, I was ecumenical before the Pope John thought about it." That is what I told him. That is just how I feel about things and most people who know me know that I am that way and I think that most of the guys that I was raised with are probably still that way just because of where we came up from. There were a lot of mothers there that could hardly speak English.

S: You told me that you were up early and out to play ball, did you have to go many chores around the house?

M: I wasn't one of those that had to do many chores around the house. My chores were primarily girls things. Like I used to have to do the dishes and sometimes I would have to clean the house. But to build anything or to make anything that wasn't me.

S: Did you have to cut the grass?

M: Occasionally. I used to cut the front grass and my father would cut the back grass. I used to shovel the snow and things like that but handyman I was far from.

S: I guess that I should ask everyone, maybe it is interesting... You lived through a lot of the Depression and you served in the war, what are your feelings on President Roosevelt?

M: I think that most guys that weren't Republican. You know what I mean there is that way on the one side that no matter what the other side said was no good. I thought that he was a pretty great man and we know now that he has made some mistakes with what he gave to Russia and all of that stuff but at the time we didn't know that he was doing that. He was still that great man. A lot of people that are older than I am, the mothers and fathers of my age used to say, "Thank God for that man in the White House." You know for what he did for the Depression, whether it was right or wrong we know that he got the country back on its feet and a lot of people say that he didn't get his country back on its feet but the war did. So, you can take it how you want. At my age we probably thought that he was a great man.

S: Do you remember listening to him on the radio?

M: Oh, yes. What a speaker. A tremendous speaker. He was

pretty well thought of I think all over the world. The war was over as far as we were concerned when we got the word that he died and the German people were asking us, "Roosevelt died." That was really something that the man died. But I don't know of too many people that were really against Roosevelt unless they were extreme Republicans. The only ones at that time...There were some good guys that ran against him like Alf Landon was supposed to be a fine man you know. Roosevelt was just unbeatable and with the war going on nobody wanted to make a change, but it is possible that going into that last term maybe there should have been a change, whether it should have been a Democrat or a Republican I don't know because they claim that he was sort of ill that he gave Stalin "Old Joe" a little bit too much. But I think most people my age think that he was a great man.

S: Is there anything that you would like to add or say about the East Side? You have told me that it was a close community and that it was special. Has it had an influence in raising any of your children do you think?

M: Yes, to teach them how to do just what I said a little while ago, to take a person for how they are not what they are. And fortunately my three kids, whom I love very much, Cheryl, Terry, and Betsy. In fact I let them get into an argument about it sometimes. Maybe I am leaning the other way or something.

S: They are too much like you right?

M: Yes.

S: Any particular places that you used to hang out at? For example, swimming or the park?

M: Well, we went swimming at a regular pool at Lincoln Park and that was quite a walk for us. But what we also used to do was go out to Crab Creek, outside of the GF where the water was clear there and we called it "Slippery Rock" and up a little further was another place that we called "Two Targets," where the train would run over and bang, bang. We used to go skinny dipping there. We had no bathing suits. We used to go swimming there a lot. And sometimes way out by Apple-Gate Road out on Hubbard Road down in there was another place that you could swim. That is what we used to do but if we wanted to go swimming we would get trunks and go to Lincoln Park.

S: Anything else that you would like to add?

M: You know I can remember, of course this wasn't all the East Side, but when they first opened the downtown and

it stayed open till 9:00p.m. on Monday nights we used to all walk downtown that night and run through the crowd like this and just have a lot of fun running through the crowd on Monday night. But it was just us together walking downtown. I guess that there were crowds...One team against another with quite a bit of animosity but you know I can't remember any fights. I really can't. I am sure that there must have been some but I can't remember. Football was different. We had street football teams. I never played high school football. We had a 135 pound team, I can't remember the year, but we beat everybody that we played.

Talking about food, I remember one time that my father got a pay of \$40, the biggest pay that he got. So, we were going to have the best Easter. We never starved but we never had anything fancy. We had a ham and a few other things in the icebox on the back porch, the icebox not refrigerator, and we got up Easter morning and it was all gone. Somebody stole it.

S: Is that right?

M: Yes, so things like that went on. And some of the kids that weren't getting too much they used to go "white dogging," that would be stealing the white milk off of the front porch.

S: Is that right?

M: A lot of people had milk delivered. That happened.

S: They didn't have anything.

M: And they would go and do that.

S: Sounds like a great place to live.

M: It was. I heard somebody say one time and I was in my twenties, "Why, don't you get off of the East Side? It is getting too tough a place to raise your children." But I never quite felt that way about it. But it did change. It's not a side of town that I would want to live on now.

S: Not now?

M: No.

S: I just went by there. I have been through there in the last few days and it has changed a lot. A lot of vacant and run down buildings.

M: Oh, yes. Like we had this golf outing in Hubbard last Friday, this group of guys, the Hall of Fame people.

And we had some hot dogs and hamburgers afterwards and they were talking too about who lived where and what not and my house is down it is not even up anymore.

S: My dad's house on Garland Avenue is down, just in the last month or two.

M: Is it?

S: Yes.

M: Well, it has changed outside of the West Side and a little bit of the South Side, it isn't the same.

S: Okay, well thank you very much Mr. Maloney. I appreciate your time.

M: You are very welcome.

END OF INTERVIEW