

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Smoky Hollow

Personal Experience

O.H 1383

VITO F DONOFRIO

Interviewed

by

Joseph Mancini

on

December 4, 1990

VITO F DONOFRIO

Vito Donofrio was born in Krebs, Oklahoma on January 23, 1918. His family moved to Smokey Hollow when he was six months old to a house near Oak Street Bridge. They later moved to their house on Emerald Street in which Vito lived from 1919 to 1958. Mr. Donofrio attended Madison, St. Columba, and Rayen High School respectively. His father, Ralph, worked at Truscon Steel and raised money to support a family of four girls and three boys. His mother, Magdaline, was busy raising the family and taking care of at least two boarders at a time.

Vito worked several jobs while living in Smokey Hollow. He worked as a newsboy and remembers going to the Newsboys' Club organized by Mike Lariccia. He also worked for the CCC camps in California for six months, and the PWA for one year. Vito also got a job with Republic Steel because he was a real good softball player. He then became involved in the construction business and eventually started his own company, V & D Painting, which his son Vito is now in charge of.

Mr. Donofrio fought with the 80th Infantry during World War II. He can remember the Battle of the Bulge which he was a part of. Mr. Donofrio married his wife, Jennie, and they continued to live in the Hollow for seventeen years. They then moved out in 1958 to Austintown where they live today. Mr. Donofrio was honored by being selected the honorary mayor of Smokey Hollow in 1972. He is a member of St. Christine's Church and the ARCO Club. Vito was a well-respected hardball and fast pitch softball player in his time. He played for many teams including his division hardball team in Europe after the war. He enjoys baseball and football and being retired.

M This is an interview with Vito F. Donofrio for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on the Smokey Hollow, by Joseph Mancini, at 3451 Black Oak Lane, Austintown, Ohio, on December 4, 1990, at 8 30 p m

Can you start off by telling me where you were born and what the date was?

D I was born January 23, 1918 I was born in Krebs, Oklahoma We moved to Youngstown here down the Hollow when I was at the age of six months

M Do you know why you moved from Oklahoma to the Hollow? Was there a reason?

D Yes We lived in a small home over there and it caught on fire

M Oh, really

D I was in the crib and my mother forced the door open to get me out She got me out

M Holy cow

D We lost a brother in that house

M Oh, I did not know that

D Yes, it burned right down to the ground

M Did you know somebody that lived in the Smokey Hollow? Is that the reason that you moved here?

D I do not know why my dad moved here, but I am sure that he had other people that he knew that moved in this area and they knew that Youngstown was a mill town and that they hired people and everything.

M Did you move into the house that you lived in most of the time in the Hollow?

D No, no that was our second house on Emerald Street We lived just near Oak Street Bridge We had our first home down there

M How long did you live there?

D Well, not very long because I cannot even remember I was real small when we moved on Emerald Street I was a child

M Then you lived the majority of the time on Emerald Street?

D Right, on Emerald Street

M What schools did you go to? Do you remember?

D I went to Madison and St Columba

M Did you walk to all of those schools?

D Oh, yes They did not have any buses at that time

M Was it like that in the wintertime or all of the time?

D All of the time

M Do you remember what your father did while you lived down there?

D He worked in the steel mill He worked at Truscon Steel

M His whole life?

D Yes

M Did you work while you lived down there? Do you remember?

D Yes, I worked as a truck driver. Well, first of all I was a Newsboy up until I was about thirteen or fourteen years old Then when I was sixteen years old I lied about my age and I went to the CCC Camps.

M Oh, did you?

D Yes.

M Is this during the Depression?

D Right

M Where did you go for that?

D California.

M You lied about your age?

D Well, I was lucky to not get into one of those fires really I got out of that

M Oh, really How long were you out there?

D Six months

M Six months?

D Then I came back home and I went to work with the PWA twice a week Then, like I mentioned, before I was lucky to get a job down at the Republic Steel plant playing ball

M Oh, that is right. That is how you got to working by playing ball?

D Right

M No kidding?

D I was with my brother-in-law Paddock, that is what they called him and Felix Malone and three or four other guys that got on the softball team and we got a job down there

M No kidding. When you came back from the CCC Camps you worked for the PWA, what kinds of things did you do for them?

D Well, the old Chaney High School Actually all that it was then was in the back there was just a mountain of dirt so we just leveled that off

M Oh, really? And that is what you did two days a week?

D Yes, two days a week

M When you were at the News Boys do you remember the News Boys Club?

D Oh, sure

M What kinds of things did you remember about that?

D Oh, we played basketball there and we had parties there We talked a lot with groups and we had movies there

M Do you remember Mike Lariccia?

D Yes, I do He was the main man there

M What kinds of things did he do for that club?

D He was like the organizer He got all of these boys together and kept them together

M Was it Hollow kids mainly?

D Mostly the Hollow, yes

M What did your family consist of? How many brothers and sisters did you have?

D I had four sisters and three brothers

M Were you the youngest or oldest?

D I was the youngest of the boys

M Did they all go to St Columba's also?

D No

M Did they have Catholic schooling?

D Well, they went to Madison and Rayen

M Oh, they went to Rayen?

D Yes

M And you went to St Columba's?

D Yes

M Well, why did you go to St Columba and they did not? Did they attend St Columba?

D No When I was a young boy I used to get up at 4 00 a.m to go downtown and get bread with my mother They had two stores downtown that would give free bread to people that needed it So, by getting up that early in the morning then I would come home with her and then I would go right back out and deliver a Plain Dealer

M Oh, really?

D Then right after that I went to school So, when I went to school I was always sleeping So, I did not do too good at Madison, so I went to St Columba's

M So, then the rest of your family went to public schools?

D Yes

M I see. Do you remember Nick Johnson?

D Oh, yes He was an organizer He got the kids together and showed them how to play football, and he always had a good team

M. Did you play?

D Did I play? No I played baseball but I never played football.

M Did your brothers and sisters work too? I mean did they have jobs down in the Hollow?

D My oldest brother did He worked at General Fireproofing at the time Then my other brother he never worked My sisters never had a job No of us ever had a job My father did not even have a real good job

M This is during the Depression?

D During the Depression

M Do you think that it was especially tough on Smokey Hollow people during the Depression?

D Well, it was tough on everybody really.

M Well, I mean because it was the working class?

D Yes, right I guess that most of the people that lived down the Hollow the only two places they had to work was at Truscon Steel and Republic Steel

M When people got jobs, let us say, at GF or Republic did they tend to get relatives to come in to?

D It seemed that way yes It was sort of a family affair One family would get the other family in Sometimes you had to pay for your job

M What do you mean by that?

D You bought the job

M Oh, really?

D Oh, yes

M Do you remember any instances?

D I do not remember any of them

M Specifically?

D That was just the rumor down the Hollow that if you want a job you have to buy it

M No kidding?

D Oh, yes

M Do you remember any strikes when you were living down there at maybe GF or Republic or Truscon? Any steel strikes?

D I remember a strike, but it did not affect me at all

M Did it affect the Hollow at all do you remember?

D Well, they were off for awhile then they went back to work, but it was not that bad really though

M Because I know that there were a lot of threats of strikes and I did not know if any of them really affected the Smokey Hollow or not

D Well, I guess that it struck the whole city really when they did strike I do not think that it was that bad really Not around here anyway I do not remember any shootings or any fights

M You moved down the Hollow in 1918 when you were six months old right?

D Yes

M When did you move out? When was the first time really?

D The first time that I moved out was in 1958 I moved up here

M 1958?

D Right.

M So you were down there from 1918 to 1958 and you spent most of that time on Emerald Street?

D Right

M Can you describe what your house looked like physically? The inside and the outside and the rooms?

D The inside we had three bedrooms upstairs and we had a large living room, dining room and a kitchen. The kitchen was very small until we remodeled it and made it larger.

M Okay.

D Then as the family started getting bigger and everybody was getting married and then we converted one of the bedrooms and made a bathroom out of it. So, we had just the two bedrooms while I was still living there, but the rest of the family after they got married they moved out.

M Did most of your family, brothers and sisters, did they move out of the Hollow?

D No. They still moved in the Hollow. None of them moved out of the Hollow.

M Oh, really?

D They stayed right there.

M In different houses in different areas?

D Right, in different houses and in different areas. In walking distance.

M When you got married did you move into a different house?

D When I got married I stayed right there with my mom and dad.

M Did any of your other brothers or sisters do that?

D No.

M They moved to different houses?

D Yes.

M Is your wife from the Smokey Hollow?

D No, she is from the East side.

M What did she think about the Smokey Hollow?

D I do not know what she thought about it really, but she stayed down there.

seventeen years down there with my parents

M Oh, really?

D Yes, never no arguments or any trouble Nothing And my sisters, one of them lived across the street and another one lived two doors down the street, and the other one lived right around the corner They were all close, see

M Yes

D At night we would go over or they would all come to the house and have a cup of coffee and before you know it they are talking and making donuts and all

M When you were dating your wife did she like the Hollow?

D She never complained about it

M Really?

D No

M Do you ever remember anybody complaining about the Smokey Hollow? Maybe like one of your friends' girlfriends that was not from the Hollow?

D Never

M Really?

D Never

M That is interesting Was your house typical of all the other houses, pretty much?

D They were all pretty much the same They are straight up and down houses with a front porch No back porch or anything

M Did a lot of your neighbors add on and build other rooms?

D Yes, they did A bathroom or added another room Basically, that is about it

M What would you consider the boundaries of the Smokey Hollow?

D The boundaries that I always thought of was Summit Avenue and Scot Street, and then Wick to Albert Street

M Is Oak Park considered part of that, too?

D That is Smokey Hollow

M Because I once heard that some people thought that it was just a little too far up, but you consider Oak Park?

D. No, no I would consider Oak Park

M Crab Creek?

D Crab Creek is the Hollow.

M Did you have a coal furnace in your house?

D Yes

M Until when? Do you remember?

D Well, then we got a gas furnace and I would say that we had the gas furnace from the time that I moved out for about ten years

M What was it like having a coal furnace?

D Oh, man My dad used to order coal and we used to have a coal bin, that is one room in the cellar where all the coal is stored We would have to get up early to get the house warm for the rest of the day

M Oh, really?

D That means cleaning out ashes and taking them out in the backyard and dumping them back there until you got a big pile back there then you took them down to the dump It was a chore

M Did you have to clean the house a lot, do you remember?

D Oh, they used to clean everything The rafters and everything

M Because of the dust?

D Sure

M How about up in the regular part of the house?

D A lot of the people used to wash their walls twice a year

M No kidding?

D Yes

M Because of the soot?

D Yes

M That is what I heard. If you had a coal furnace you had to clean your house all of the time. Did your family ever take in boarders at your house?

D Yes. We had borders in our house. We had two of them. I do not know how long that they stayed with us but, like I said, we had one large bedroom upstairs and my mom had four or five beds in that one room and that is where they all slept, all of the boarders, me and my brother until moved out.

M Can you remember how much your mom charged them, or did they not?

D I do not remember.

M Did they just stay there until they got on their own feet?

D Right.

M Were they usually relatives, do you remember?

D Close friends and relatives.

M Piasons.

D Right. Piasons.

M Were you all from the same area back home?

D Yes.

M Today, if somebody says that you are from the Smokey Hollow, people cherish that. Why is that so unique when somebody says that? What does that mean?

D I do not know it is just a neighborhood where the people were really, really close. You could walk in anyone of their houses and no sooner you walk in that house, they put the coffee pot on or they gave you something to eat or something like that, you know. On Saturday or Sunday nights you would all get together and go over somebody's house, and they would talk and, like I said, they would make donuts. And just shoot the bull, that is all. We always had company. Always.

M Really?

D Oh, yes There was never a dull moment. The doors were always opened to everybody

M When you moved up here was it like that? Up in Austintown?

D No

M Did you miss that part of it?

D. When I moved up here it took me two years for me to get used to this place up here When I moved here, every night I had to go down to my mother's house

M Oh, really?

D Then I would stay there until 11 00 p m and come home and sleep

M No kidding?

D The next day, the same thing

M Wow

D Every, every day I never got used to this place here

M Really?

D Yes It took me a long time

M Really?

D Oh, I still think of the Hollow I think of the things that we did down there A lot of good times

M That is a good example that you have right there in your hand, the key

D I do not think that Vito has seen this key yet

M Don Mastro Pietro told me that you could have a skeleton key and that it could open up thirty houses down the street Nobody ever locked their doors anyway So, nobody ever used the key They just left them in the door The doors were never locked

D Well, this was in the drawer there That is a real antique

M They have security systems down there and everything The stores that your

family shopped at, do you remember the main store down there in the Smokey Hollow that your family shopped at?

D Yes, Ciarnello's

M Ciarnello's What kinds of things did they carry? Do you remember if they were just basic or not?

D It was lunch meats and chickens and ham and all kinds of steaks and things, like pork chops

M Did you always shop at that one or not?

D Most of the time, yes 95% of the time, that is where we always went to shop

M Can you ever remember your family having to go outside the Hollow to get certain goods or products or was there a grocery store?

D Well, Toot's Market downtown, they used to have quite a variety of different things Or East Federal Street had all kinds of stores there where you could get chestnuts, walnuts, wine barrels, and wine and grape boxes with grapes in them to make wine But most of the groceries that we bought were from right down in the Hollow.

M Do you remember the names of the other stores down there?

D There used to be a Yager's down there Tucci's was down there I think that Lariccia's had a little store and L'Abate's had a little store

M Do you remember any other service stores that were down there, besides grocery stores? Maybe there was a dry cleaners place? Do you remember any other than grocery stores down there?

D No, I do not remember any other stores like dry cleaning

M Any service stores or anything?

D No

M They were just mainly all grocery stores?

D Right

M Did you guys have a garden? Did you grow a lot of things?

D Yes, we had a garden. A very rich garden.

M Oh, really?

D Yes. It was black.

M How did you guys do that every year, if it was black?

D When my dad made wine and the stems of the grapes were smashed, the remains were thrown out into the garden.

M Oh, really?

D Yes, and that is what made it rich.

M Did you throw your ashes out there, too?

D Well, the ashes, we always kept it separate from the garden. We would not throw it on the dirt because we always wanted to keep that dirt nice and dry. Maybe just a little, but not that much. But we always took our ashes down the dump all of the time. There was a dump on Andrew's Avenue.

M And you just took all of the ashes and dumped them there?

D We just took the ashes and dumped them down there.

M Besides a garden, did you ever raise any animals down there? Chickens or rabbits?

D No.

M Do you remember people doing that?

D Pigeons. My brother built a pigeon coop in the back, attached to the garage.

M Oh, really? What did he do with them? Just raise them?

D He just raised them and then he let them go. But other than that, I do not know of anybody trying to raise any animals down there.

M Really? I heard that a lot of Italians raised their own rabbits and chickens.

D Well, some of them had some rabbits, but there was not that many.

M Did your family make their own wine down there?

D Yes, we made our own wine

M Did you ever sell it?

D No

M Did you ever hear of people making it and selling it?

D Yes

M Was that legal?

D Well, no it was not. If you got caught, I guess that you would have gotten thrown in jail for it, but there were not a lot that sold it.

M Did you know anybody who used to boot-leg or sold wine or made whiskey down there?

D I knew a few of them.

M Do you remember the people who used to get arrested?

D Oh, sure.

M No kidding?

D There were quite a few boot-leggers down there.

M Do you remember a lot of those stores giving credit?

D Ciarnello's used to give credit.

M Did they?

D Yes.

M If you did not have the money.

D You paid every month.

M During the Depression, were there a lot of people doing that?

D Yes. That is when they mostly did it because I think that Truscon paid twice a month and the money did not reach that far, so you had to get credit.

M Right So, most of the people worked at GF, Republic, Truscon?

D Yes

M Do you remember any other places where people from the Smokey Hollow may have worked? Do you remember any of these places?

D Not that I know

M Talking about ethnic backgrounds, you are Italian Did you ever remember any ethnic problems between, maybe, Italians and Slovaks or Polish? Did everybody get along?

D Everybody got along that I know of Now it seemed like they were separated a little bit One street had a lot of Polish and Slovak people on it, and that was Adam's Street Then Kirkland Street was mixed Some were Italian and some were not, they were Polish Then, like our street, Emerald Street, they were mostly Italians A couple of Irish

M Did that usually stay that way?

D. Yes

M You were sectioned off?

D Those people stayed there and they did not move out

M You moved up here in 1958

D. Right

M. How did the Smokey Hollow prepare you? What kinds of values or attitudes did you pull out of the Smokey Hollow, living down there for almost forty years? How did that prepare you?

D To move out? It did not prepare me to move out because, when I left the Smokey Hollow, I thought that I was leaving a palace of something because I did not want to move out of there My wife said, "Well, we stayed with your parents for seventeen years " And we were trying to have children and finally the doctor told my wife, "Well, maybe you are not relaxed where you are at Maybe you will be better off if you move out on your own and maybe this way you will be relaxed " Well, we were having this house built and while we were having this house built, she got pregnant with Vito

M Later on, while you were living in the Smokey Hollow, did you work toward the

late 1950's?

D Yes, I worked

M What did you do?

D I worked at Republic Steel and then the war broke out. Then I went to work for the government. I was on the Secret Service at the time with them. Then I got drafted and I went to the Army. After the Army, I still went back and lived down in the Hollow.

M Did you work at Republic then?

D No, I was a truck driver. I did not get that job back at Republic.

M Oh

D I drove a truck for two years and then I went into construction. I got into painting and I have been a painter ever since.

M After the war, were there any feelings that you wanted to leave the Smokey Hollow, or were you happy down there?

D I was real happy down there. Yes, I liked it down there. But we did not have the room down there and, like I said, the doctor told my wife that we would be better off if we moved on our own and maybe she would be more relaxed.

M What kinds of things did you get from Smokey Hollow to raise your child and to live up here? Obviously, people from the Smokey Hollow have something, there is something about them.

D After we moved up here we had Vito. Even when we had Vito, we still went down the Hollow quite often. And you could almost say that Vito was raised down there.

M Oh, really?

D Well, sure. He played ball with all of those kids down there and everything.

M No kidding?

D Sure. All the kids that he knew were from the Hollow.

M I did not know that.

D Oh, yes

M He probably lived more down there than up here

D Well, see, we played ball on the street and Vito played ball on the street with his friends, with the younger generation

M Down in the Hollow?

D Oh, yes They continued to play ball down there right out on the street

M No, kidding Did you used to play a lot of ball at Harrison Field?

D I played a lot of play down there

M That is the main field

D Either that or Oakland

M Oakland?

D Yes Then GF had a field and we played over there for awhile Stambaugh Field

M This is all mainly with softball?

D Softball Well, I was a truck driver when I first got out of the Army, and I played on McKelvie's baseball team I do not know if you have ever heard of McKelvie's baseball team or not?

M No

D Well, anyway, they have one of the toughest teams in the city.

M Oh, really?

D And I got on their baseball team as a pitcher I had to give it up on a count of my arm My arm went bad and I could not throw a baseball anymore So, I went to fast-pitch softball.

M That is where we all end up You mentioned the war You lived down in the Smokey Hollow and you were working Did you get drafted to go to the war or did you sign up and get drafted? Where did you go right from the Smokey Hollow, do you remember?

D I went to Tennessee

M Tennessee? Did you train there?

D I trained there and then from there we went to Kansas City I trained in Kansas City and then we went to Arizona There was desert training there, and then from Arizona we went to New Jersey and we were shipped out from there

M Then where did you go right from New Jersey?

D Europe We went to England, and then from England we went to France

M You went right to France?

D Yes.

M Do you remember what year that was?

D No, I do not really But it had to be around 1943

M Do you remember what outfit you were with?

D Oh, sure, the 88th Infantry Division

M 88th Infantry Division?

D Yes

M Do you remember the places that you fought?

D Yes

M Can you name some of them?

D All through France and into Germany

M Do you remember the names of the battles?

D I was in the Battle of the Bulge

M What was that like?

D Oh, terrible

M How long was that? Do you remember?

D The Battle of the Bulge was in 1944 Now we were in Southern France when the

Battle of the Bulge broke out Then they took us out of Southern France and they sent us to Austria, and that is where the Germans struck hard, right through Austria They had a couple of divisions and we were in reserve like, and then they did not go any further than that. That is when we took up the action from there

M Do you remember what the main problem with that was? Do you remember why the Americans were on the run? I mean the Allied Forces?

D Well, the Germans gave them their last push That was it They gave them everything that they had

M What were the feelings right after the Battle of the Bulge? Do you remember? You started advancing again towards Germany more, and what was the feeling?

D Well, the news that we got was that it was getting close to the end So, we were happy about that

M When the war ended, where were you at?

D Actually, when the war ended, I got on the Salem Softball Team We were still in Germany I got on the division softball team and that is where I met Dibby DeAngelo I do not know if you have ever heard of him or not

M No

D Well, anyway, he used to manage all of our softball teams here in the city

M Oh, really?

D Yes He was in another division and we were supposed to play their team They moved into the same hotel that we were in, but when I was looking for Dibby I could not find him because he was in the hospital and he had tonsillitis So, I was on a softball team there and we won something like twenty-seven games, and we lost one

M No, kidding? Did you ever play any German teams?

D I played a lot of baseball with them

M Oh, really?

D No, German teams

M When the war ended, you went from Germany to where?

D From Germany I went to France, and then from France I got shipped back home

M And that was right after the war in 1945?

D That was right after the war. I got home right on Christmas Day of 1945

M No, kidding? Was there a homecoming for Veterans? Do you remember?

D No After we got through playing ball, they promised us that they would ship us home right away Now our division got home October 11th, 1945 and we were still in Germany. So, you can imagine how mad we were

M The baseball team was still there and the whole division went back?

D That is right, they came back home I will tell you, we started riots and everything

M Did you guys start losing?

D Now this is after the season

M Oh, the baseball season is over?

D Yes, the season was over and they were shipping us from one camp to another and telling us that from here they were going to fly us back into the States "Do not worry, you will beat your division home," but we never did Like I said, on October 11, 1945 our division was home and we were still in Germany.

M You got home on Christmas Day?

D Christmas Day

M Did you play against any big league players?

D Well, there was one kid who was a catcher for the Pirates

M Oh, really?

D He was in our firing chamber He screwed himself up by riding one of these German bicycles He fell off of it and ruined his shoulder

M He was done?

D He was done

M No, kidding?

D Right There were a couple of farm hands that we played against, and there was one of them on our team. He was a second baseman I cannot remember his name There were a couple of pitchers, too

M What position did you play?

D I pitched

M Oh, you pitched?

D Yes, I pitched baseball

M When you got back to the Hollow, what was it like? Did it change at all, do you remember?

D There was not so much of a change There was nothing to be changed But it was nice to be back home, really

M What was one of the things that you did when you got home that night ? Do you remember?

D Not really It was just family

M Right.

D I played a lot of ball

M Did you go around to people like your relatives in the Hollow and visit them?

D Yes

M Did they come to your house when you came home?

D Well, they generally do Friends and neighbors came over to see me

M When you went into the Army, did a lot of people from the Hollow, did they go in at the same time? Did you guys get drafted together?

D No, it was me and my brother-in-law, we were drafted together We all left at separate

M Do you know of any of the people that were killed in action?

D Well, sure, my cousin Ralph Lazazzara He was killed in action

M Oh, really? Where was he at?

D He was going to Japan and I guess that the Germans sunk the boat that they were on

M Do you know of any of the other ones? Do you attend that Memorial?

D There was another kid, Moore He was killed in action He was from the Hollow There are quite a few but right now I cannot remember their names

M Do you attend the War Memorial?

D Yes

M. Do you go every time?

D Well, I missed a couple of times throughout the last four or five years.

M What is that like? What do they do at that?

D. Well, they have a ceremony and name the boys there that were killed from the Hollow and then, after that, the Golden Eagles set up a little stand and they give you a shot of whiskey or a bottle of beer, coffee and donuts Did you ever go to one?

M No But I think that I am going to go this coming Memorial Day

D You should go

M I found out so much about it, I would like to see what it is about.

D It is very interesting

M I was hoping that they do something on Veteran's Day, but they do not They did not this past November 11

D No, they do not It is fixed up real nice

M I think that next Memorial Day I am going to go up there and see it Did you go to the Korean War?

D I did not go

M You were still living in the Hollow Do you remember some of the people that went or do you remember what the feelings were?

D: I was living here

M Oh, you were living here?

D Yes I moved here in 1958

M: 1958?

D The Korean War was after that

M The Korean War was 1950 to 1953

D 1950 to 1953? Oh, boy I am lost here

M I am pretty sure that it is 1950 to 1953 I do not think that it is 1960 to 1963 That was Vietnam

D That is what I was thinking about

M Do you remember anything special that was going on in the Smokey Hollow?

D: Nothing I do not even remember any of the boys that went there

M: Oh, really?

D No

M: Were they a lot younger?

D They were, right Even my own nephews were not in the Army at that time They did not go to the Korean War

M Can you compare any other area in Youngstown similar to the Smokey Hollow?

D Brier Hill

M Did you know a lot of people from Brier Hill?

D Sure

M Did they have the same kind of feelings and attitudes about life?

- D Nobody had the same feelings I do not know what those people down there thought, but I guess that it was about the same thing
- M A lot of ethnic backgrounds?
- D Yes
- M Do you think that people that did not live in the Smokey Hollow when you were living there, do you think that they viewed Smokey Hollow people as working class, middle class? Like Wick Avenue and Wick Park are real close to you That is rich with Fifth Avenue
- D Right
- M Do you think that they looked down on the Smokey Hollow people?
- D No, not really
- M Did you ever hear of any?
- D No, I never heard of any
- M Did you used to walk up there at all, to Wick Park?
- D Yes, we used to go up there when we were young kids All of those big houses up there used to have apple trees in the back of their yards and we used to go and steal the apples from their yards We did that many of times But I never heard of anybody or never any trouble We seemed to get along
- M What role did the church play in Smokey Hollow? What church did you belong to when you lived down there?
- D Our Lady of Mount Carmel No, I was St. Columba
- M You went to school there
- D Yes
- M Were you ever an alter boy?
- D No
- M I heard that the alter boys from Smokey Hollow always got the early masses
- D I do not know

M They always got the 6 00 a m masses and the kids that lived up on the North side got the 12 00 p m masses. Was the church real strong down in the Smokey Hollow? Do you remember?

D Our Lady of Mount Carmel?

M Yes.

D Sure it was

M Do you remember any special things that they may have done?

D Well, every year some Saint Day, I do not know which one it was, we had a band They called it The Dukka L'Abruzzi Band We used to march through the whole neighborhood

M Were you in the band?

D Yes, I was in the band

M What did you play?

D I played the saxophone

M Oh, really?

D Yes Sometimes we would walk and sometimes we would drive in a truck We would just do it to collect money for the church

M Were most of the people Catholic?

D Most of them were

M Do you remember of any other churches?

D St Stanislaw

M That was mainly all Slovak?

D Right That was just above Summit Avenue there

M Do you remember any other religions that may have been strong down there? Any influence?

D No There were mostly Catholics

M That Dukka L'Abruzzi Band that you mentioned, what kinds of things did they do in there?

D Well, they had a lot of weddings there

M Did you have your wedding there?

D Oh, yes We had several weddings there

M Was your wedding there?

D No, my wedding was not there My wedding was in the house

M Your house?

D Yes, right in my own house They did not even think of a hall then

M Oh, really?

D Yes

M When you had your wedding, did a lot of the people cook and bring it over?

D No, no They cooked right there When I got married my parents cooked right there in the basement My aunts came over there and helped, and then our family Everybody helped one another We prepared the food and served

M Did you get married at Mount Carmel?

D No, I got married at Immaculate Conception

M Do you remember the church having any other social gathering just for Smokey Hollow people? You talked about the band Maybe they were having meetings or community organizations?

D Mount Carmel is the only one that I know of

M That did stuff?

D Yes

M What kinds of things did they do? Did they have meetings for the people? Parties?

D Well, I do not know about meetings Anytime that there was a wedding they had

it over at the Dukka L'Abruzzi, which is right across the street from the church

M Do you remember Father Franco?

D Oh, yes Sure

M What was he like?

D He was pretty strict

M I heard that he was tough

D He was If you missed mass on Sunday, boy he let you know about it

M He knew?

D Oh, yes

M How would he know?

D I do not know

M I heard that he was tough

D He was tough

M A lot of people talked about him being strong down there You talked a little bit about recreation You obviously played a lot of sports to keep your self busy down the Smokey Hollow What are some other things that you may have done for entertainment?

D Bowling

M You bowled?

D Well, we went roller skating for entertainment

M Do you remember where you went?

D Rayenwood Auditorium

M Where was that at?

D You know where the Bell Telephone Company is on Rayen Avenue there?

M. Right

D Almost across the street there

M So, it would be where YSU is now?

D There was a garage there Now they called it an auditorium They used to have fights there and everything Roller skating Everything

M Really? Did you used to go and watch fights there, too?

D Now?

M No, I mean then.

D Oh, yes Sure I saw a lot of fights there at Rayenwood Auditorium That is what they used to call it

M It is gone now?

D Oh, it is gone now That garage is there now

M Oh, really?

D Yes And then behind it, I think that it is an electrical outfit back there on the other street coming in from behind

M A Electric?

D I do not know which one it is No, it is not A Electric.

M I know where you are at though Did you used to go dancing?

D They used to have dancing in there, also

M Oh, really?

D Yes, we used to go up there and dance I went there and I went to the Martz Downtown I never went to the Elms Ballroom

M You never went there?

D No I might have gone once or twice

M It was not your regular?

D No, I never made it my regular

M Did you used to go to a lot of movies downtown?

D Oh, yes

M Was it \$ 5 and you stay all day I heard?

D At the Region Theaters Double feature for \$ 5

M You would go to one for a double feature and then you go to the next one right down the road and people would just stay there all day

D Right Double feature.

M. But mainly sports? Was that your main entertainment?

D Right

M Did you used to play at Oakland Field?

D Yes We did softball at Oakland Field

M Was this when you were playing for the Republic Steel?

D Now this is when I was playing for Silzio's Painting Then I played for the Golden Eaglette's

M This is when you were younger?

D Right

M Okay

D Then there was another team that sponsored us Steve Russo was on my team

M Did he sponsor a lot of teams?

D Well, he did, yes

M Did you ever play for any of his teams, Steve Russo's bar or whatever?

D Russo's Tavern Yes, I played on Russo's Tavern

M Did you play on a lot of teams?

D Oh, yes See, like this Silzio's, he sponsored a team for maybe two years, and then someone else would take over.

M Were the guys on your team mainly from the Hollow?

D Mostly

M Oh, really?

D Yes

M What was probably your best years? Do you remember?

D I cannot remember I do not even want to tell you our best year

D Go ahead

D I was forty-two years old at the time Now we had a good team and this team, I forgot who this team we played, and we were playing for the championship

M In Youngstown?

D Here there was a fly ball and I was playing left field at the time A fly ball hit up into the outfield and if I would have caught it the ball game would have been over They had two men on base Here I thought that I had the ball and I took my eye off of the damn thing and it dropped

M Oh, man

D They scored the two runs and we lost

M And that was your best year? Have you seen the guys? Do you ever talk about that?

D Oh, gee No, I never brought it up

M You did not, but did they?

D They did not either

M Did you ever go on any vacations? Do you remember any family get togethers for the weekends?

D No Maybe on a Sunday, we used to go to Ashtabula for a picnic

M Oh, really?

D Yes

M Did you used to get together with other families from the Hollow?

D Yes, quite a few of us

M Did you have a car?

D Yes My brother had a car. I had a car My cousins had a car We used to go to Idora Park a lot

M Did you?

D Oh, yes A lot of picnics They would have Italian Day out there General Fireproof had a day out there One of the mill companies had a day out there

M Did you take the trolley?

D No, we drove Somebody in the family drove

M Were there a lot of people who had cars down there?

D That had cars?

M Before the war?

D Almost all of them did before the war

M Oh, really?

D Yes.

M I heard from most people that they walked

D Oh, sure, a lot of people walked When I was younger and could not have a car, we used to walk all the way out to Idora Park

M That is a long way

D A lot of times we used to hang on the street cars

M Illegally?

D Yes You know, we used to get in back of the bumper and hold on for dear life It was crazy but we did it

M You mentioned the Golden Eagles You are still a member, are you not?

D Oh, yes, I am still a member

M What was the first year that you remember being a member?

D That I was a Golden Eagle?

M Yes.

D Oh, boy It was right after the war I cannot remember what year it was, but maybe it was 1958 or 1959 Wait I came out in 1947, so it was right after that

M Do you remember when you were growing up, like in the 1920's and 1930's, do you remember the Golden Eagles? Was it around then?

D No

M Do you remember when it began?

D No

M What made you become a member of the Golden Eagles?

D It was just everybody from the Hollow

M Were there any stipulations? Like you had to be from the Smokey Hollow? Maybe born there?

D No, we had some outsiders

M Did you?

D Yes But the majority of them were from the Hollow.

M When you first joined, what kinds of things did you guys used to do?

D They had a ball team, but I was not on it then They did go to Alliance to play a team, or they would go to Steubenville to play a team or some place in Pennsylvania to play a team And then teams would come to Youngstown to play Almost every time that they had one of these games, if we went out of town they would feed us

M Oh, really?

D Yes And they would give us drinks And when they came over here we did the same thing for them

M Okay, I see what you mean

D. We all chipped in and we made it comfortable for them.

M Was there like an official membership? Were there a list of names? When you went to your meetings did somebody call a role?

D No, we just went to a meeting

M Did you have membership dues?

D Yes

M Do you remember how much they were?

D No, I do not But they had a monthly meetings and kept records

M Do you remember where they were at?

D The meetings?

M Yes

D. Well, first they had Ciarnello's store and they used to have meetings downstairs there Then they moved into an empty building across the street where there used to be Tucci's Grocery Store, and we used to have our meetings there Then we bought a building right in front of Harrison Field

M Is it still there?

D I am almost sure that it is.

M Is it like set back a little bit?

D Yes

M Okay, it is still there

D We bought that building there and we had our meetings there all of the time

M Were there a lot of people that came to a meeting?

D Oh, fifteen or twenty

M Oh, really?

D Yes

M Did you just talk about things?

D That is all, we just talked about what we were going to do or plan on different things.

M Talk about the games?

D Right

M Did you guys do anything for charities or anything? Like raise money?

D No

M Did you guys ever do anything special for the people in the Hollow?

D No, not really.

M So, it was just for you guys You mentioned the Golden Eaglette's What was that?

D That was a gamblers club Well, actually, we started the club. It was me and my cousins and my brother-in-laws, and we started a little club of our own and we called ourselves the Golden Eaglette's Then we always wanted to buy a club room, which we did We bought a house on Andrew's Avenue and that was our club So, we started to get a lot of members and a lot of outside members

M And the Golden Eagles was a separate thing?

D Separate thing all together

M I see

D We had social games every weekend, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. We would play cards from Friday night all the way to Sunday Poker and things like that Or we would shoot craps A lot of people played craps

M Was this legal?

D Well, it was not legal but we never got any trouble because of it The cops never bothered us

M Speaking about the police, did they ever patrol a lot in the Smokey Hollow?

D At that time, no They did not have too many cruiser cars out at that time.

M If there was a cop, did everybody know who the policeman was who patrolled the Hollow? Like Bill the cop, or something? Do you remember?

D I will tell you that I never remember any cop coming around there

M They probably never had to

D I never remember the cops coming around there

M Really?

D Yes There were no special friends None of the Smokey Hollow boys were policeman

M Oh, really?

D There is only one and his name is Herman Ross Sferra's brother He is the only cop that we know that came out of the Hollow

M Really?

D Yes Then there is another one, and we call him Tiger Joe

M Did you guys play ball with the Golden Eaglette's, too? Was there a separate team?

D No, we did not have no team Wait a minute, I will take that back We did have a team It only lasted about one or two years and that is all because they broke up.

M Did you ever play for the Golden Eagles?

D No

M Rival?

D Those guys were tough That is when I told you that Steve Russo was on our team DiGiacamo, Stevens and myself

M When you guys got these teams organized, did you raise money to go and buy the equipment?

D Yes We also chipped in some of our own

M When you guys traveled, did you pay for your own ways or did you guys raise money for social games?

D We just raised our own money

M What kinds of things do the Golden Eagles do now?

D The Golden Eagles?

M Yes

D We are going to have a Christmas party, which is on the sixteenth of the month, that is something that we have every year With the members who are left We bring our wives and we have a nice dinner Then if you want to hang around and play some cards or something like that, you stay there and play. Then we have a treasure chest, \$30 a ticket, and you get your meal The rest goes towards the prizes

M Where is that held at, do you know?

D. At Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church.

M Both of those are held at Mount Carmel? The dinner, too?

D Most everything is Then we have our dance, the Golden Eagle dance, and it is held at Mount Carmel That is \$30

M Are these held once a year, basically?

D Yes, you bring your wife and all the drinks are paid for and everything

M That is nice

D Yes, we still get together

M Do you still have a membership?

D Well, we have a membership and there are sixty of us as members right now When we have our dance we have about one hundred and eighty people

M That is nice

D With our treasure chest we get a little more than that

M Did you have a president or a vice-president? And who is the president now?

D Bill Santore

M. Oh, really?

D Frances Santore

M Does that rotate or do you vote?

D He has had it for so long Pat Ross had it for a good many years I do not know how long he had it Then he passed away and Frances Santore and Joe Caruso Do you know Joe Caruso?

M Yes

D He is a strong member Dom Conti is a strong member Then this Joe Mastro Pietro helps out

M Were you ever president of that?

D I was Man of the Year

M That is the mayor?

D Right, that is the mayor of Smokey Hollow That was a great honor

M What did they do for that?

D Well, it was on Dom Conti's birthday and there was about one hundred and fifty people there and they selected me to be the Man of the Year It was really surprising

M What kinds of things did you have to do?

D You do not have to do anything It is just an honor

M Did you get an award or something for that?

D Well, they give you the key to the city

M Key to the Hollow?

D Right

M That was a big honor for you?

D Oh, yes

M Should they do that for everybody that gets that honor?

D Most of the time they always pick a man from the Hollow

M That is nice Something to think back on

D I guess that they had one or two fellows not from the Hollow

M Well, you would think that that person would have to be from the Smokey Hollow

D Right

M That really would not make sense

D Well, that is what they said, "The guy is not from the Hollow, why honor him?" I do not know if you knew him, but his name was Earl Porter

M No

D That is Dom Conti's brother-in-law

M So, they honored him?

D So, they made him Man of the Year, mayor of Smokey Hollow There was a little static about it

M You mentioned some nicknames, what was your nickname?

D Ice

M Why did they call you Ice?

D When I was a young kid I used to knock these ice trucks and then I also got it from playing ball I was an outfielder and they said, "When ever you run, you run like an ice wagon " So, that name stuck to me, and they still call me Ice

M Are you Little Ice or Big Ice?

D I am Big Ice

M Who is Little Ice?

D. That is my cousin

M Do you remember some other nicknames of some of your buddies?

D Oh, Salami, Poosh, I could go on and on Louse, Suitcase, Stiff, Bubates, Beans

M Why did they call those guys Suitcase?

D I do not know why Herman Ross is called Beans. Dom Conti had a name, but I do not want to repeat it

M Do you remember Pubby Looby?

D Yes Turk, Dibby, Creamy.

M Do you remember Chink, Gitanio.

D Yes

M I wish that I would have met him

D Everybody had a nickname

M Did the women have nicknames?

D No

M Just the guys?

D Right, just the guys

M Do you remember any organizations just for the women from down there?

D No But now they do

M What is that?

D Smokey Hollow Women This has been going on for about four or five years They have a big crowd

M Does your wife go?

D Yes, she has been going

M Do you know what kinds of things that they do, or is it just a reunion?

D: We just have a reunion, that is all It is a dinner

M Is that at Mount Carmel?

D They have it at Mount Carmel and they have it at Mr Anthony's This last time they had it at the Wick Pollock Inn on Wick Avenue

M. Back then, did they have an organization when you lived there?

D No, this is only within the last four or five years

M The university, when you were living down there, what was Youngstown State University like? It was Youngstown College How big was it? It is right next to the Smokey Hollow

D Alright you know the one building there?

M Jones Hall?

D Yes, that is the only thing that I can remember that was there

M That was it?

D That was it Then the little Y was right behind it

M Right

D The building is not there anymore

M Is that where the News Boys used to meet?

D Right

M That would be right where the Planetarium is right now There is a building right next to it.

D It is not there anymore That is the only building that I ever knew of

M When you moved up here and used to go down there, were they starting to build

- or were they moving down into where that big parking deck is now?
- D I was surprised when I went down in the Hollow and I saw that big parking deck I said, "Holy crap, when the hell did they build that?" It was something new and when you walked down there, it was not the Hollow
- M Were there houses where that was?
- D Oh, yes
- M Was there?
- D Oh, yes Sure, Walnut Street had houses all of the way
- M See, I cannot picture that because all that I see is that parking deck It is hard for me to picture what it was like with houses.
- D See, where that parking deck is right now, Steve Russo used to live right across the street from it Directly across the street Even right now, if I go down the Hollow, I am really amazed because I said to myself, "Where in the hell have all of these house gone to?" There were so many houses down there and it looks like a little field
- M Yes, it is all parking Did you ever go into Casease's?
- D Oh, sure I did not make it a practice to go there that often, but I went in there a few times
- M What was it like back then?
- D Well, after we got through playing ball, we would go in there and have a beer and walk out No man could go in there and sit down If you did not go in there and buy a drink, he would throw you the hell out right away
- M I heard that he was a tough customer
- D Oh, he was
- M Did they have one of the first televisions down the Smokey Hollow?
- D Right
- M Did you used to go in there and watch fights?
- D Well, he got one and then Tip Top Cafe, which is down right on Emerald Street,

they had a television. And we mostly were there. Well, before all of that, we used to go up on Belmont Avenue, and there was a place up there that had the fights on and everything. That is where we used to go.

M Speaking of fights, did you know Tony Geniro?

D Sure, I knew him.

M He was a prized fighter, right?

D Yes.

M Was he from the Hollow?

D He is from the Hollow. And then there is Red L'Amare, who is from the Hollow.

M Oh, really?

D Yes, he was another good fighter.

M Did you know Tony Geniro personally? And, if so, what was he like?

D I did not know him personally, but I saw a lot of his fights and I saw him.

M He used to come down to the Hollow?

D Oh, yes.

M Was he a nice guy?

D Well, he was younger than me.

M Was he?

D Oh, yes. He was alright.

M A good boxer?

D Oh, a real good boxer. I will tell you who is better than him is this Red L'Amare. He was a hell of a good fighter.

M What happened?

D He went a long way.

M Did he?

D Then he finally quit

M He probably got hit in the head too many times

D I guess

M Do you remember any unaccepted people living down in the Hollow? By race or ethnic background?

D No

M None at all?

D None I do not remember any

M When you moved up here was it any different?

D To this neighborhood?

M Yes

D Much different

M Did you feel any pressure being Italian up here?

D It was much different.

M Really?

D Oh, yes

M Do you know your neighbors as well?

D Not as well as my neighbors down the Hollow, no Over here they never come here and we never go there It is not like down the Hollow, where you would go to somebody's house and they would give you coffee, feed you or whatever you want But not up here, no.

M Why do you think that people began to move out? I see the Hollow as it is today, and it is hard for me

D People think that they are bettering themselves

M That is not why you left, right?

D Well, I moved out, like I told you, because of my wife

M How about your friends that you grew up with? Did they just to get a better job and to own their own house?

D Well, yes

M Did a lot of the people that you knew, like your friends, would they buy a house in the Hollow? Would they move out of their parents house to buy another house right in the Hollow? Did that happen a lot?

D No I do not know of any

M Were there a lot of jobs? Did GF start to slow down a little bit maybe?

D I do not know why I guess a lot of people just moved out to better themselves, that is all, because they were raising their own families and they probably figured that it was time to move out of the Hollow It was starting to get bad down there

M It seems like such a shame because I see Smokey Hollow as it is now Have you ever gone back down? When was the last time that you were down?

D Oh, I have not been down there for quite awhile now At least a year and a half

M What was it like? Do you remember? Is your house still there?

D Yes, it is still there From Don Conti's store, the first house you see is our house

M I think that Emerald Street towards the bottom is where most of the houses are left in a row Everywhere else there is a house here and six lots

D On that side of the street

M On that side of the street there are about fifteen houses that are still there

D As you are going down Emerald, on the right hand side of the street there as you are passing Dom Conti's building, where they have the grocery store, the first house that you see standing there, that is our house

M Yes, I was down on Court Street yesterday and there is like a building on Court Street on the right hand side If you are going down Court Street, there is a warehouse that sets back, like a smoke stack

D Way in the back?

M Right What was that?

D That company used to be called Shuller, but what they did there, I do not know.

M I never noticed that building and they have a big smoke stack and it is set up against Oak Street You do not know what they did there?

D No I do not know if it was a sheet metal outfit, but something in that order I do not know I never found out, either

M Did people tend to marry within the Hollow? Did a lot of your friends marry girls from the Hollow? Was that common?

D Not that I know of

M So, they went outside the Hollow?

D Yes

M Do you keep in touch with a lot of your friends?

D Oh, sure

M Do you?

D Yes

M Where is the farthest that one has moved? Did they usually stay in the Youngstown area? Did you have friends from the Hollow that moved out far away? California? Do you keep in touch with them?

D No, not out of the state, no

M Have you ever seen somebody that moved out?

D No The only one of that I know of that has moved out of the Hollow and he moved to Georgia They call him Sam Gordon He was a little older than I was Dom Rosselli, Dom Conti, they all went to school together

M Does he come in?

D Now they had a grocery store down the Hollow

M Boy, it seems like there were so many stores down the Smokey Hollow

D They were on the corner of Adam and Kirkland I do not know if the building is still there or not.

M Have you ever seen this guy? Does he ever come in at all?

D He used to come in, but not anymore

M Did he ever talk about the Smokey Hollow? What were his feelings moving out of the state?

D I do not know

M See, some people that live here can go down and see it, and hear about it and go to these reunions Did he ever?

D He used to come in But for the last four or five years he has not come in at all

M Besides the War Memorial, do you attend the Golden Eagles?

D I do not go to any of the meetings We do not have that many meetings The only ones that attend the meetings are just the officers, and that is only about four or five of them

M How about the golf outing? Do you attend that?

D I go there, but I do not have anything to do with it I do not work with the boys or anything

M Who organizes that? Do you know?

D Chubby DiGiacamo and my cousin George Joe Caruso used to collect the fees

M. Is he related to you?

D No He used to collect the fees for this golf outing, but that is all of the guys from the Hollow, like the Golden Eagles.

M Do a lot of guys attend that?

D Oh, there is over one hundred and fifty.

M What?

D But they are not all from the Hollow

M Oh, really?

D See, this is another group that started with just us, my cousins, my nephews We started it. We used to go out every Sunday and play golf, and then after golf we would have a sandwich or a beer or something like that. Then it started to get bigger and bigger, and now it is up to one hundred and fifty guys and they are all outsiders That is the biggest part of them

M No kidding?

D Oh, sure From the Hollow there is only about thirty of them The rest of them are all outsiders

M Where do they have this at?

D Well, I think that this year they will have it over at the Country Side

M In Campbell

D We went to Yankee Run We were at that course in Hubbard there We were at the one out there in Brookfield

M You do not play? You just go out there?

D I am too old I do not want to get out there in that sun

M Do you remember when the University wanted to build their stadium down there?

D Do I remember it?

M Yes

D I remember when they built the stadium

M Do you remember when they wanted to build there stadium down in the Smokey Hollow?

D That was talk, but it was always talk

M Did you want them to build it down there?

D Sure.

M Why was that?

D Well, because it would be right in the Hollow

M Even though the houses would be gone?

D We always thought that they would take Harrison Field

M Right

D To build the stadium, but that never happened. As a matter of fact, the university never did buy anything beyond where they call it Wick Oval, until they started buying all of this property down there now. I do not know what they are going to do with it.

M Make it parking.

D: That is all that they are doing now, is making parking lots out of them.

M You have not been down there in a year and a half. There is a lot of parking down there now.

D I bet.

M They have knocked down a lot of houses. I was just talking to Carmello Giatano and when she sold her mother's house, she wanted to sell it to the university and they said, "No, we do not want it." Then she sold it to a private realtor for \$1200.

D \$1200?

M Youngstown State University buys it off of the realtor for \$10,000. Can you believe that? And they knocked it down and made it parking. Is that amazing?

D \$1200, oh cripe.

M That is amazing. What is probably your most memorable experience of the Smokey Hollow? I mean, if you could just pick out one feeling that you would have about life down there?

D Everyday was the same.

M Enjoyable?

D Oh, yes.

M Really?

D Yes All of the time

M Do you ever remember any crying?

D No The only crying that I ever remember about down there is a fellow that lived up the street from us there, he was chasing a colored guy and the guy shot him Now why, I do not know What I heard, he was trying to molest a young girl

M This is later on? Towards when you were ready to move out?

D This is when I was still down there and fairly young It has been some years ago

M Do you remember a guy by the name of Peaceful Sam?

D Yes

M Do you know what happened to him?

D Yes I did not know Peaceful Sam I knew his son and I only knew him because he was around our age and I knew him from school also, but that is it He was a big racketeer, mafia

M No, kidding?

D Yes, they had several down there

M Do you remember any houses that had tunnels or anything like that?

D Yes, right across the street from Tip Top Cafe to one of the houses across the street, there was a tunnel

M Did you ever see it?

D No I was down in the basement but I never saw the tunnel all the way through

M Did they use that for moonlighting, probably?

D Yes, that is what they used it for.

M But your most memorable was probably everyday life?

D Yes, everyday life

M When you were living down there, was there anything you would change?

D Nothing to change

M Nothing?

D I love it the way that it was

M Nothing at all?

D Nothing

M Are you sure?

D No Well, times were bad down there and the people did not have money You could go to anybody's house and they would welcome you, even if they did not have it, they would do something just to make you feel comfortable They would either offer you a glass of wine or a cup of coffee or something to eat. They were just friendly people

M I have interviewed eleven people and they have probably been the nicest people in the world I mean, just the people that I have met

D A selected group

M It is true It is hard to meet people like that anymore because like you said you more into these new neighborhoods and everybody is working and you do not get a chance to meet anybody Your neighbors are like, "Hi, how are you doing?" And that is it It is not the same

D Well, that is the way that it is around here Now, when I first moved here they did a little, but not anymore

M Did you ever wish that you could see Smokey Hollow as it was one more time?

D Sure I would I sure would It would bring back old memories

M Do you know why they called it the Smokey Hollow?

D Well, on a count of the steel mills At night it would get smokey, and that is how it got its name

M Do you know how they spelled it? I heard that there were several different spellings I heard that it was S-m-o-k-e-y and there was S-m-o-k-y Hollow

D No S-m-o-k-e-y

M It was always S-m-o-k-e-y H-o-l-l-o-w?

D: Right, that is the way that I always knew it

M Because I have heard different spellings of it There has even been S-m-o-k-i-e

D No.

M. Is there anything that you could add?

D Well, you know, I will tell you, a nice experience that we had down there is when my mother used to make bread

M Oh, really?

D We had a backyard oven and it was about half the size of this room here

M No kidding?

D We would burn wood to heat it up and then after all of the wood is burned to ashes, my mother would get a long pole we would have, when corn season was around we always saved a lot of leaves from the corn so that we could tie it at the end of this pole, and she would wet it and dump in water to clean all of the ashes out of the oven Then after they are all cleaned out, she would make a loaf of bread about that big, seven or eight of them and put them in this oven.

M How often did she do this? Everyday?

D: Once a week

M. Do you miss that?

D Boy, talk about good homemade bread, brother, she made it Then she made some pizza

M Did a lot of people do this? Did a lot of people bake bread down the Hollow?

D There were quite a few But there were not many of them that had an oven like we had

M Oh, really? A lot of boccie courts down there?

D Oh, yes

M Did you used to play?

D Yes A lot of boccie courts?

M Were there teams, leagues or just guys get together?

D Guys get together. You know, these old timers, they would not let you on their boccie course You had to watch them I will tell you that they really played for blood. Just for a glass of wine They had this patrone

M What is that?

D Patrone is the boss

M Okay

D He gives out the drinks to whoever he wants

M Oh, really? Is that how they play?

D Yes, they play for wine

M No, kidding? Did your father play boccie?

D Oh, he boccied, but we did not have a court

M Oh, really? Do you remember who had the courts?

D Well, there was one across the street from us My uncle had one down the street. There were a couple of them up the street

M Did they play for money?

D I do not know if they ever played for money There was no money to play for

M I should have thought of that Do you remember Crab Creek, when it used to flood?

D Oh, sure

M Were you ever affected by it?

D Oh, yes. Are you familiar with Emerald Street at all?

M Yes, I have been up and down there so many times

D Well, I saw the water come almost up to our house

M That far?

D Yes

M How about the people that lived closer, what happened to their houses?

D They were flooded out

M That had to be almost up to their windows.

D When I saw that it almost came up to my house that did not happen too often, but Andrew's Avenue did flood out quite a few times. Almost every time that we had a big storm, Andrew's Avenue was flooded. A lot of the houses down there on Andrew's Avenue were built high.

M Well, the ones on the bottom of Emerald are built up high, too, were they not?

D: Right

M Did anybody ever complain and have the city come down?

D What were they going to do? If anybody was going to fix it, it would have to be the governor. The city could not do it because they did not have the money. We had streetcar tracks down there and everything.

M: Eventually did they fix it?

D Eventually they put sewers down there.

M Do you remember any of the roads being changed? Some roads are cobblestone still down there.

D Sure, Emerald Street.

M How come some are cobblestone and the rest are not?

D See, Andrew's Avenue used to have a trolley car going there and that used to be all dirt road.

M Oh, really?

D It was all dirt road.

M But your streets were cobblestone?

D Yes, our street was cobblestone

M And Andrew's Avenue was dirt?

D Yes, it was a dirt road

M There were not as many businesses on it?

D No, there was not any business on there at all

M Do you remember the Snow of 1950?

D Yes, I do

M What was that like?

D Oh, boy

M Where were you at?

D I was at home

M You were not leaving the house?

D Well, we could not leave because the snow was pretty high and we had to get it shoved out, but after a couple of days later, my cousin that lived right across the street from us, some of the guys managed to get there, we played poker and that poker game was going on for three days

M During that snow?

D. Yes

M There was nothing else to do?

D Nothing else to do

M For three days you played poker?

D Three days We played for pennies No big money because there was no money there It was 1950

M Do you remember Dr Marinelli?

D Sure, he was my family doctor

M Was he like the doctor of the Hollow?

D Yes As a matter of fact, he saved my life

M How is that?

D I had a gall stone and he said that I had a diseased gall bladder and I had to be operated on I never asked him what he meant by a diseased gall bladder, but when they put me in the hospital, I was starting to turn yellow

M Jaundice?

D Right He looked at my eyes and saw that I was getting yellow and right away he told me to go to the hospital

M How old were you?

D I was married then, twenty-eight That is why I say that he saved my life I was a sick guy I really was

M Were your parents from Italy?

D Yes

M Did Dr Marinelli speak Italian?

D Oh, sure

M That probably helped I heard that that was one of the main reasons that he was popular He knew a lot of people because he was able to speak Italian and you could tell him Did your parents speak any English?

D No

M Broken English?

D Well, later on during the years they spoke a little bit My mother could not speak it at all She had us speak Italian all of the time

M Can you speak Italian?

D Little I did more when my mother was living and we were living with her I used to speak it pretty good because I had to answer every time she asked me

something, but right now, I do not think so

M Not unless you do it all of the time, it is hard

D You forget

M I heard that that was one of the main reasons he was popular, was because he could talk to people better than they could explain to him

D He was a good doctor

M Some people had specialized in certain things For example, if you needed something done, you could go see this person Maybe you needed a will read.

D Oh, yes

M You never had to leave the Hollow?

D Right

M If you needed something done, like a chair fixed, this guy made chairs because he was a carpenter, so he would fix your chair?

D Yes.

M Did you have any special?

D No, I did not have any special

M Do you remember going to certain people if something needed done?

D No

M I heard that one lady, Donetta Veccharelli, she would paint people's throats Like for swabbing for a sore throat If you had a sore throat you went to see Donetta She would stick that swab down your throat, put some medicine on your throat How about mid-wives that delivered babies? You really never had to leave to do certain things

D I guess there were some people like that I remember one that comes to my mind, Pete Lansay Did you ever hear of him? He was a coach for East High

M Oh, maybe I have

D He played for East High and now he is a big star out in California His mother

was one of those ladies

M Really? Were there any blacksmiths?

D Yes, there were blacksmiths There were quite a few of them Three that I know of that were right on our street

M Oh, really? Well, do you have anything else that you would like to add?

D No

M Thank you

End of Interview