

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Smokey Hollow

Personal Experience

O.H. 1387

DOMINIC A. MASTROPIETRO

Interviewed

by

Joseph E. Mancini

on

November 8, 1990

DOMINIC MASTROPIETRO

Dominic Mastropietro was born on March 5, 1919 in Youngstown and moved to Emerald Street in Smokey Hollow in 1922. He has three brothers and one sister. Dominic attended Madison, Hayes, and the Rayen School and graduated in 1938. He is the only child of his family to graduate from high school. During the Depression he sold newspapers around downtown Youngstown with his brother, His father, Joseph, passed away when Dominic was eight years old and he did not know him very well. His mother, Caroline, worked raising the family. One of the main incomes for the family was the taking on of borders at their Emerald Street address.

Dominic got a job with Truscon Streel in 1939 and worked their until his reitrement in 1982. He married Marie in November of 1945 and they had three children. Dominic Jr. (44), Diana (44), and Carolyn (41), were all born and raised in Smokey Hollow. Dominic moved into his in-laws house with his wife after their marriage. They continue to live at the Carlton Street house in Smokey Hollow.

Dom has enjoyed living in Smokey Hollow his entire life. Even after many of his friends have moved out and begged him to move out, he still insists on living in the Hollow. He believes he has made a home for himself and that he is to live in it. When Smokey Hollow began to deteriorate, he insisted that he stay because this is where he grew up. He brags that Smokey Hollow is better to live in now because what Youngstown State has done for security.

Mr. Mastropietro has belonged to Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church his entire life. He is a member of the Holy Name Society

and attends the Smokey Hollow Reunions held each year. He enjoys gardening and golf in his spare time.

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INTERVIEWEE: DOMINIC A. MASTROPIETRO

INTERVIEWER: Joseph E. Mancini

SUBJECT: Life in the Hollow; Depression; work and family life.

DATE: November 8, 1990

JM: This is an interview with Dominic Mastropietro for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program on the Smokey Hollow, by Joseph Mancini, at 257 Carlton Street, Youngstown, Ohio, on November 8, 1990, at 8:00 p.m.

Can you tell me where you were born, the date, and some of the schools that you attended.

DM: I was born March 5, 1919. I attended Madison School for grade school and went to Hayes Junior High School and then from there I went to Rayen High School. I graduated in 1938.

JM: Were you born in your house or in a hospital?

DM: I was born on Rayen Avenue in a house. I forget the name of the street but a liquor wholesale place is now.

JM: When did you move into Smokey Hollow then?

DM: We moved here on 245 Emerald Street in 1922.

JM: These schools that you went to, did you walk to all of them?

DM: Oh, yes.

JM: What was that like?

DM: From here to Rayen is two miles one way.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: Madison School I would say is about three fourths of a mile and Hayes would be a mile and three quarters.

JM: What was it like walking?

DM: I did it everyday rain, snow, and sunshine we walked.

JM: Can you remember school ever being canceled?

DM: No. It was never canceled. Today they cancel for every little thing.

JM: Did your parents work? Can you remember what your parents did when you lived down in Smokey Hollow? Your father?

DM: My father worked for a little company that was on Andrews Avenue but I don't recall the name now. My mother never worked.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: She took care of everything plus the borders. We had borders.

JM: Did you?

DM: Yes.

JM: Were the borders usually relatives?

DM: Actually, some were relatives and some came from the same hometown. They call them piasons. They came and bordered with us until they got on their feet and then they moved out and called their own family from Italy.

JM: Did your parents usually charge a lot?

DM: I don't know. I never asked. I suppose that they paid a little bit for food and things like that.

JM: So, usually it was until they got on their feet?

DM: On their own and then they would call their families to come in.

JM: Did your father work at this place most of his life?

DM: No, no, no. My father died when I was only eight years old.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: I don't know too much about my father.

JM: Okay.

DM: My older brother worked.

JM: Speaking of your brother, how many brothers or sisters were in your family?

DM: In my family there were three boys and one sister. My one brother was born in Italy.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: Yes. Then my other brother was born here on Elk Street. They moved out of the Hollow just before World War II started. I am the only one who stayed in the Hollow.

JM: Are you the oldest or the youngest, the baby?

DM: I am the youngest. My brother that came from Italy will be eighty-four years old.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: My other brother would be about seventy-five years old now.

JM: Did they attend the same schools as you did or not?

DM: My oldest brother went to Rayen but he only went the first year and then had to go to work. That is when Rayen was on Wick Avenue and Rayen. Then when they moved the school to where it is presently he had to go to work. My other brother had just finished grade school and then he went to work. I was the only one that went all the way through.

JM: You were the only one that graduated?

DM: Yes.

JM: Was it because you didn't have to go to work?

DM: Well, it was because they had to and I didn't. Both of my brothers worked and I went to school. I have lived in the Hollow all of my life.

JM: We are obviously in your house, but for tape purpose can you describe what your house looks like? How many rooms?

DM: Well, in those days they had all wallpaper. Then we had to scrap them up and get a steamer and go into all of the rooms and take them out and do the plaster a little bit and then paint them.

JM: As far as the house that you lived in most of your life did it have four or eight rooms or what?

DM: Well, the one that I came to before I moved to here had five rooms. Two were upstairs and three down stairs.

JM: Did you have a coal furnace?

DM: Yes.

JM: What that like having a coal furnace?

DM: Oh, gee sometimes we had to go down to the railroad yard over there and get coal. You couldn't get coal. Then we used to get lumber. We used to get old railroad tires and saw them for the furnace.

JM: Oh, no kidding?

DM: Yes.

JM: What did you do with your ashes?

DM: We threw them in the garden.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: Yes. It was good for the soil.

JM: How about in the wintertime?

DM: We put the ashes in the garden during the wintertime also.

JM: Really?

DM: Yes. We threw the ashes in the wintertime and then when we would plow the ashes up with the dirt.

JM: Yes.

DM: That makes nice, good, and loose soil to grow.

JM: I heard also that a lot of times they would throw in on the road so that it would help for traction sometimes for trucks and cars. This might have been later

on.

DM: Yes.

JM: It was interesting to hear what they did with the ashes. In your house was there a certain room in your house that people spent the most time in like the living room?

DM: The kitchen was too small so we were in the living room and the dining room. It was a big room. At least twelve feet by fifteen feet.

JM: Was it cramped living with three brothers and one sister? What was it like living in a little house like that?

DM: In a little house like that we would all get one room and the borders would take turns sleeping, when they work in shifts.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: Yes. When one came home the other one came out.

JM: So, they would share the same room?

DM: Yes.

JM: No, kidding?

DM: Yes.

JM: Wow. I never heard of that. Was your house typical of all of the other houses in the area?

DM: No, it was just about the same of any other house in the area.

JM: Four or five rooms?

DM: Well, there would be five rooms. Most of the houses were about that same size until later on when they added on. That is when it they were a little different. We did that too.

JM: Oh, did you?

DM: Yes, we added on a bigger kitchen and another extra bedroom for the downstairs.

JM: Do you remember when that was or the time period?

DM: That was right after the Depression, about 1940.

JM: Did you work while you lived in the old house?

DM: Oh, yes after I graduated I went to work at Truscon Steel.

JM: Oh, did you?

DM: Yes.

JM: Did you work there most of your life?

DM: All of my life I worked at Truscon Steel. Forty-two years. I retired in 1982.

JM: Wow. As far as the people who lived in the Smokey Hollow, did a lot of them work at Truscon Steel?

DM: Oh, yes. That is where my brother worked, both of my brothers. Quite a few people from the neighborhood worked at Truscon Steel.

JM: How about GF? Did a lot of the people that lived in the Hollow work at GF?

DM: Yes, quite a few of them. Mostly they worked at Truscon Steel and GF.

JM: Was Republic Steel big?

DM: No, it was Truscon Steel then and then Republic took it over in 1940 or something like that.

JM: Do you remember how you got your job? Your brother worked there and then did you get in?

DM: My oldest brother worked there and so he got me a job when I graduated. There were a lot of jobs in those days.

JM: Yes. Is this before the Depression?

DM: After the Depression.

JM: Okay.

DM: I graduated in 1938 and I went to work in 1939.

JM: What was it like growing up during the Depression down in the Hollow?

DM: It wasn't too bad. Everybody seemed to work together. All of the neighborhoods got together. Everybody helped one another.

JM: Yes.

DM: I know during the Depression a lot of times we had to go to what they called a "Soup Kitchen."

JM: Oh, really?

DM: Yes. It was down at the old St. Columbus Church up on Wood Street. They used to have a Soup Kitchen there. My brother and I, my brother who is next to the oldest, my mother used to tell us, "Go up there and get your lunch."

JM: Oh. Had your father already passed away?

DM: Oh, he passed away.

JM: So, were your brothers working at the time? Did you work during the Depression?

DM: No, I didn't work I sold newspapers.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: Yes.

JM: Where at?

DM: I sold newspapers downtown. There used to be an old oyster house that was downtown and I used to have the other one, I forgot the name of it but the house is still there now.

JM: So, you used to sell newspapers?

DM: Ravenwood is the name.

JM: Okay.

DM: Then we used to go to the Brass Rail. We went to every restaurant to sell newspapers. From one corner to another.

JM: Did you do good business?

DM: Well, we had enough change to go to a show. At that time it was a \$.05 or a \$.10 to go to see a movie.

JM: How old were you at that time? Were you a teenager or younger?

DM: Well, let's see...Oh, about twelve years old.

JM: Okay. As far as Smokey Hollow, what do you think personally...What makes it so unique? Like when you hear

people today...I hear people today talking, "Oh, I am from Smokey Hollow." Why is it such a unique thing or what made it so unique?

DM: Because it is amazing that everyone was together. They all worked together and they all took care of one another.

JM: Oh, really? Can you think of any incidences or any examples?

DM: Well, it never seemed like we had any trouble in those days. You could go and walk the streets and come home late at night like 12:00 or 1:00 in the morning and nobody would bother you. Doors were opened. If you did have a key you had one key that fit the whole neighborhood. It was a skeleton key.

JM: That is amazing. You just don't hear about things like that today.

DM: Everybody had fun in those days. Everybody in the family made wine.

JM: This key here would fit a bunch of houses then?

DM: Yes, most of the houses. Then after World War II things got a little rougher and everybody changed locks. But in those days you didn't have to do anything. It seemed like every weekend there was a party going around the neighborhood.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: Quite a few of those Italian kids at that time knew how to play an accordion.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: And that is all that it was an accordion. They had fun drinking wine and then of course my neighbor next door used to bake bread out in the outside oven.

JM: Oh, really? I heard that there was a lot of that going on, baking bread.

DM: Right. In those days they came with flour to the home. Ninety-eight pound sacs of flour.

JM: Wow.

DM: Then they used to save the sac and make bed sheets out of them or pillowcases. Nothing went to waste.

JM: You mentioned a garden, did everybody have gardens?

DM: Everybody practically had a garden. A lot of times they used to have grape harbors.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: The only grape harbor I think that there were three on Emerald Street and they had bocce courts.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: They made their grape harbor round and then everybody was playing bocce and they would play for wine.

JM: Oh, really? Did they ever play for money?

DM: That I don't know. A lot of times they wanted to see who was going to be the boss, and second boss. They would play a game for that and see what wine they would give out and the second boss would ask the first boss, "Should we give this guy a glass of wine?" And he would say, "No. Better give him another one." So, he would drink it.

JM: That is my kind of game. Did you have a grape harbor?

DM: No. We didn't have one. We had a big garden in the back.

JM: Did you mainly eat what you grew or did you sell it?

DM: No, no everything that we grew we ate or canned it for the winter. In those days nobody cut grass because there wasn't any grass.

JM: It was all gardens?

DM: Yes. The only grass was in the front.

JM: That was probably really small.

DM: The ground was really used for growing things to eat.

JM: Was this during the Depression mainly or the whole time?

DM: No, most of the people liked to have gardens. That is what I say, everytime. We used to get a kick out when the horses were pulling the wagons and the horses would mess the streets and everybody would run out there and grab it and throw it for the garden.

JM: A little fertilizer.

DM: In those days we had what they called it an ice box and

you used to put a sign out on the post of the porch and when the ice truck came they knew if you wanted twenty-five pounds or fifty pounds of ice. They would deliver it to the house.

JM: So, he wouldn't even have to come to the door to ask?

JM: No. There was a sign and you put it on the post, twenty-five or fifty pounds if I can recall right.

JM: Do you remember how much that twenty-five pound block of ice would cost?

DM: No, we would get the ice block and put it in the ice box and that is how you kept your food.

JM: Do you remember how much that would cost?

DM: No, I don't know what the price was then.

JM: What about the stores that were down in the Smokey Hollow, I heard a lot about the stores. Do you know what specific store that your family shopped at? Was it Nazerine's or Ciarnello's?

DM: We used to shop at Conti's Store. The building is still there and is used to be Conti's.

JM: Is that where the Tip Top Tavern is now?

DM: The Tip Top used to be...Well, in those days the people did a lot of boot-legging.

JM: Oh, really? Is that where they did it? Was that a bar or something?

DM: No. The Tip Top...They used to get the whiskey there and the people used to go and get it and it was illegal but they did that.

JM: Was that during Prohibition?

DM: Yes, during Prohibition. Where I live now, back then they had a garage full of whiskey cans. It was raded one night at 2:00 in the morning.

JM: Do you remember what year that was?

DM: That was down during the Depression. I know that everybody else the next morning went and drained what was left in the cans. There were five gallon cans.

JM: Do you remember, if any, that anybody really got in big trouble down here because of that?

DM: No, there wasn't any big trouble around here. I don't recall any bad things. Like I said before, it seemed like everybody was one big, happy family. They used to do a lot things in the old country and they brought those customs when they came over here.

JM: Did the stores give a lot of credit? Do you remember?

DM: Yes, they used to give a lot of credit.

JM: Did they used to help out a lot of people?

DM: Yes, they helped out a lot of people.

JM: Do you remember any incidents where they really had to help somebody out like during the Depression?

DM: Oh, yes they would give them a little bit and then when they got the money they would pay them. They used to have a store next door here. An old lady used to run it. When her and her husband went to Italy she came back and the husband died there.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: Yes. She had a little grocery store there. It was a duplex. It was a little store on the ground floor. Everybody used to go in there. I remember that they used to have those cellars like they had in the olden days with the spokes and they used to shove the money through the window.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: Yes.

JM: What kinds of products did she used to sell there?

DM: Mostly canned stuff and candy for the kids. We had one next door and then there was one on the corner there where the brick building is now and I can't remember what they called it.

JM: Okay.

DM: Then there was Nazerine's, Conti's, and Waynio's, and Ciarnello's.

JM: Yes, I have heard a lot about Nazerine's and Ciarnello's, and L'Abate's.

DM: Tucci's had a store right where MVR is.

JM: I heard that there were so many stores down in Smokey Hollow that when people had to go shopping for like the

necessities like the canned goods that they really never had to leave. Can you ever remember your mom having to go downtown to go and get products or get goods?

DM: Only one place where my mother used to go and get meats and stuff was Deluxe. It was just down the hill before you get to town. Where Haber's is now.

JM: Okay.

DM: It used to be called Deluxe Meat Market.

JM: Talking about the boundaries of Smokey Hollow, what do you consider the north, east, south, and west boundaries? What makes up Smokey Hollow?

DM: Well, what I think makes up Smokey Hollow was Walnut Street, at that time it was Maple Avenue to the north. The boundary over here was Crab Creek to the east. Then the other one went almost to town and it where Summitt Avenue is. Summitt Avenue is gone now and...

JM: Via Mount Carmel now.

DM: Yes. That was the boundary line.

JM: Is Oak Park in there?

DM: That is in there because Maple Avenue was up further.

JM: Okay.

DM: That is where the Juvenile Center is at now.

JM: Okay.

DM: That was Maple Street and Oak Park was just below. That was included.

JM: Okay. Was Oak Park kind of a separate part? Was it different than this part of Smokey Hollow? I heard that it was.

DM: Over there they made those cement homes and they had the park in between rows of homes on either side.

JM: Oh, I see.

DM: That is why they called it Oak Park.

JM: So, it wasn't the same as this side with Emerald Street?

DM: No. It was a pretty good distance between the rows of

houses. I still think that it is that way now.

JM: Is it?

DM: Yes, but smaller.

JM: As far as the quality of life in the Smokey Hollow like during the Depression, we talked a little bit about that, when do you think that the quality of life was the best down here? You lived down here from 1922 till now, what period of time do you think was the best time to live down here?

DM: I don't know. To me it seemed like right around the Depression area.

JM: Really? Why was that?

DM: Because everybody seemed to be together then. Then when things started to pick up people were moving out and others were moving in, different people moved in and things started to get a little bit out of hand.

JM: It seems like when times were tough people really tried to pull together down in the Hollow.

DM: See the only blacks that we had down here were the ones on Valley Street.

JM: Is that where Dr. Pighese lived?

DM: No, no. Where DeBartolo lived in that brick building. Right across from that was the flats. There were two rows of flats but they were all blacks and they were good. They all went to school and I think that right around just before the war started they tore them down. We had quite a few blacks and they went to grade school, we walked together and their was no problem.

JM: Oh, really? That brings me up to another interesting question here, did all of the ethnic backgrounds get along? Can you remember if there was any problems maybe between the Italian's or Slovak's or Jewish people? Was it always tight no matter what ethnic background you came from?

DM: It was always together. We had Polok's, black's and it seemed like there wasn't any trouble at all.

JM: Can you remember any incidents...

DM: No, not at all.

JM: That is amazing. No one can ever remember.

DM: Because heck on Walnut Street there were three Jew's living there. In fact the house that my mother bought a Jew owned it.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: Yes, they moved out and they sold it to my mother. There were quite a few Jew's down there at the time. Even before the Depression hit it was nice because those were the good years then. Then the Depression hit but everybody still stuck together until World War II started and then things began to get out of hand because a lot of people were leaving. A lot of the old folks were passing away.

JM: What was it like living down here during the war? During World War II?

DM: It wasn't too bad.

JM: Was everybody really working?

DM: Practically everybody was working. A lot of them went to the service.

JM: Can you remember any of your friends going to the service? Or any of the veterans, they were probably a lot younger than you were, that were killed overseas?

DM: Oh, yes. Those are the ones that are on the monument up there on the corner.

JM: Did you know any of them?

DM: Yes. In fact I practically knew all of them.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: Yes.

JM: Do you attend the memorial services?

DM: Yes, I always go up there.

JM: What is that like?

DM: It is on Memorial Day.

JM: What kinds of things do they do up there?

DM: Well, they have a speaker talk about it and they have the ones shooting the rifles. Then they have a little get together after the doings.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: Yes, they go down to the church that is on the corner, down the basement for soft drinks and coffee, rolls.

JM: That sounds like a real nice thing. That speaks highly of what they do. You first lived on Emerald Street and then you moved to Carlton Street, is that when you got married?

DM: I got married in 1945.

JM: How did you meet your wife?

DM: Well, my brother lived next door, his family, and we had good times together outside playing patroller. They had a patroller in those days who would put the records on. One would bring the wine and the other would bring the goodies to eat. There were no cookies, they would bake mostly bread. Once in awhile they would bake a cake of something. But mostly bread, and sausage. We used to dry the sausage up in the attic. It seemed like it was more pleasant.

JM: And your wife was from the Hollow?

DM: No. My wife was born in Niles.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: She was born in Niles and then when she was one year old they moved here.

JM: Did you had any children that grew up down here most of their lives?

DM: Yes. All of my children graduated from Rayen High School. Then they went to Youngstown State University and now they are all gone. They all moved out, got married and have their own families. One lives in Maryland and the other one is up in Rochester, New York.

JM: So you have two children?

DM: No, three children. My boy lives in Hubbard.

JM: Your children all went to Rayen High School?

DM: They all went to Rayen.

JM: Can you name your kids and their ages?

DM: The first two children was a boy and a girl and they were twins.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: They graduated in 1964 from Rayen High School. Then they went to college in 1967. In 1970 my first daughter got married and she moved away. Then my youngest daughter got married...

JM: That is alright as long as I get down how many children you have.

DM: My youngest got married and right away she moved down to Maryland. Then my son got married here about eleven years ago and he moved to Hubbard. He is a principal.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: Yes, at Baker Elementary.

JM: They grew up in Smokey Hollow right in this house, what kinds of things do you think that they got from down here? What kinds of values do you think that they got here that when they moved out they took with them?

DM: Well, I think that they got the things that a lot of good...To go places and see if your neighborhood is just as good as the neighborhood that they came from.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: Now so far, lucky all of my children moved away and they all have good neighbors. But some on the street, it isn't the whole street but at least the neighbors are great.

JM: Yes. But as far as family, it seemed like one of the big things that kept Smokey Hollow real tight was family. Did your children keep that same feeling? Do they still visit here?

DM: Yes. They try to teach their traditions...They are friendly with most of the people and not to get in any kind of arguments. You know how they grew up around here and so do they.

JM: Yes.

DM: They had a lot of fun.

JM: What was the consensus of their feelings when they moved out of here? Did they miss it? Did they miss Smokey Hollow? Have they ever said anything to you?

DM: No. Actually they are starting a life of their own.

JM: How about when they first moved out? Did they miss it?

DM: Well, they missed it for the first year. Of course our one daughter moved far away. She didn't like to go but she had to go where her husband got the job.

JM: Yes, that is true.

DM: But after that then she got used to it. It is hard when you leave home for the first five or six months up to a year.

JM: Yes.

DM: But then they realize that once they start having the children then they realize that they have to make a family of their own.

JM: Can you compare other areas in Youngstown to Smokey Hollow? The same kinds of attitudes and feelings?

DM: Well, I really wouldn't compare them I just read in the paper of the different areas. No you can't compare it to what it was like in Smokey Hollow.

JM: Nothing? Really?

DM: In a lot of neighborhoods you hear or listen to on television that there is all kinds of trouble. So far in the Hollow, even with the small population that we have left, there still doesn't seem to be too much trouble.

JM: Oh, really? Why do you think that that is?

DM: Well, a lot of the ones that did have trouble there...When the people moved out they tried to rent their homes and then they find out that instead of renting them the University takes them over and this way you don't get any riff raff. Whoever comes around then...The houses aren't worth anything after they leave. Now since the University has been getting most of the property they will buy it. if they couldn't get rid of it they would rent it.

JM: Have they ever put any pressure on you to sell?

DM: No. They said, "When you are ready to sell you have to go to the University."

JM: Oh, really?

DM: Yes. Most of the neighbors now have to go to the University, because I don't know what they are going to do. I don't know what their plans are. So, far there is

no problem.

JM: I once heard that Briar Hill may have had the same kind of...

DM: Briar Hill was nice because they used know a lot of kids from Briar Hill up at Rayen High School. It was the same like Smokey Hollow. Now that is all broken up too.

JM: Yes.

DM: But it isn't like Smokey Hollow is now, Briar Hill is practically all gone. Smokey Hollow is still here yet.

JM: Yes, it is still here.

DM: The University has taken most of it but you get a little patrol even from the University.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: Yes, they patrol the place.

JM: Can you remember any incidents where they may have helped out? You are talking about the YSU police and security?

DM: Yes.

JM: Can you remember anything that they may have done around here to help the incidents.

DM: Usually if you would call them and you would see something...Because one time we saw a truck, a pickup truck that stopped in the street in front of the house and we didn't know who the heck that it was so somebody in the neighborhood called security of Youngstown State and they came down in two minutes.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: So, they looked around and they came up to the door and asked who the truck belonged to and I said, "Gee, I don't know. I looked out and that truck was just sitting there." I didn't know who it belonged to and it was running with no key in it and the truck was running. So they called the City Police and they came down and here was the truck and it was still running and here it was a stolen truck and they left it there.

JM: No, kidding?

DM: So, they had to get Passarelli to get it and haul it out of there. But if you call them for anything that

you see in the neighborhood the YSU security will come faster than the City Police.

JM: Do you remember YSU wanting to build their stadium down in Smokey Hollow?

DM: Yes, I heard about it. They were supposed to build their stadium down here but I don't know what happened.

JM: What do you think?

DM: They kept buying property and we thought that they were going to build the stadium down here.

JM: Did a lot of the people want them to buy up their houses to build that? I have asked people before and they said that they wished that they built the stadium down here, do you feel that way?

DM: Well, actually I don't feel that way now, no. Because where would I go? Every place that you go today...I am up in age and it is too late in the game to move now. If they told us before that they were going to build it that would have been different and you could have made plans to go somewhere, but they didn't. The only one big fight that they did have was when they built the parking deck.

JM: Oh, really? Do you remember that?

DM: Yes. They had a lot of old homes over there and they were pushing the owners to sell them.

JM: Almost forcing them to sell it?

DM: Yes, but they wouldn't hardly give them any money. Where would you go if they gave you only \$6,000?

JM: Nowhere.

DM: No place. You can't even buy a shed. That is what the people were hollaring about. Then they said that they were going to make the parking deck go up to their backyards. See I don't know what happened. I think who ever got into this gave the people a little bit more money and then they finally moved out and the college took everything but MVR. They don't want MVR yet at that time. But the deck is built pretty close.

JM: It is squeezed in there. Especially now since they have one across the street and another one across the street. You never know what is going to happen.

DM: There is no more property. The only one left on that side is Filamore. He moved to Oak Park up there. That

is Oak Park up there.

JM: Yes.

DM: Wick Oval.

JM: Speaking of Wick Oval, what was it like...You used to walk to Rayen, what was it like to walk up through Wick Park and see all of those nice homes? Did you guys used to stop ...

DM: We used to cut through Wick Park to go to Rayen. There were nice and big homes, but not today. I used to love to walk around Wick Park because it was about a mile. We used to go walking over there but not anymore. You can't even go in the daytime anymore.

JM: It isn't safe. When you lived back in the 1930's and 1940's do you think that people who didn't live in Smokey Hollow viewed people who lived in Smokey Hollow differently? Do you remember hearing of any prejudices or anything? Like people living in Smokey Hollow were middle or low-class?

DM: I don't recall anybody saying anything because we used to have Harrison Field over here and every Sunday morning they used to have the big softball games.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: Everybody used to go down to Harrison Field. They used to come from all over the city to play there and we never heard of any arguments or anything. No fights.

JM: You never heard anybody say anything bad about Smokey Hollow?

DM: Everybody wanted to go on Sunday morning to watch the ball game.

JM: What role did the church play in the Smokey Hollow? Did they have a strong...Was the Catholic Church strong in Smokey Hollow?

DM: Yes, at that time it was pretty strong. Mostly the Italian people were Catholic. In those days when they had a festival they used to march from the church all the way down around the Hollow with a band leading. That was Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

JM: Is that the church that you belong to?

DM: Yes. That festival was when they had Mount Carmel Day in those days. They used to get a big band, the Pasarella band. Then we had Monseniur Franco. He would be

there with the statue of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. And they would all walk through the Hollow.

- JM: Was Mount Carmel sort of like the patron church of the Hollow?
- DM: Yes.
- JM: Did it sort of hold its hand over and watch out? Can you remember any incidents where the church helped out any people? Like during the war do you remember the church doing anything special for Smokey Hollow residences?
- DM: No.
- JM: Do you remember a place called the Dukka Della Brutes?
- DM: Yes.
- JM: What was that like?
- DM: Oh, that was a nice club. That was right across from Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church.
- JM: What kinds of things did they used to have there?
- DM: They had all kinds of things there. They had big holidays and dances and all of the Italian people like the men would go up there and play cards and drink.
- JM: Did you have your wedding reception there?
- DM: No.
- JM: It is gone now right?
- DM: Oh, yes. It is all parking lot now. They sold the property to the church and it was a good thing because then this way no others could get that hall. The one who owned it sold it to the church.
- JM: Oh, I see.
- DM: The commissioner or whoever owned it collected stuff, bought it up, and then they had to tear it down.
- JM: At least it stayed with the church.
- DM: Then there used to be another big grocery store right next to the club it was called Sam DiGiacomo.
- JM: Oh, really? Is this Chubby's dad?
- DM: I don't know.

JM: Was there a Chubby DiGiacomo?

DM: That was his father. He is an insurance man.

JM: That is Frank.

DM: The DiGiacomo's at that time had an Italian store there.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: I heard that that was a nice store. I heard that it was right out of Italy.

JM: People would walk in and anything that they wanted they got. It was just like Italy.

JM: That is what I heard that it was a nice store.

DM: He used to sell grapes to people who wanted to make wine.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: And he used to get it from California.

JM: Did you used to make wine?

DM: Oh, yes.

JM: Did you? Do you still make wine?

DM: At that time about two hundred gallons.

JM: Oh, really?

DM: Yes. If you went over then the Fed's would get you.

JM: Did you ever go over?

DM: No. They never bothered. The only thing that they were going over at that time was what they used to call Raisin Jack.

JM: Oh, the hard stuff.

DM: Yes. In those days everybody had hard stuff. They even ad it on the table in the dining room. It looks like water but it is clear.

JM: This was during Prohibition then?

DM: Yes.

END OF INTERVIEW