

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY
ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

YSU History

O.H. 2178

Pat Shively
Interviewed
By
Sam DiRocco, II
On
April 28, 2004

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

YSU History

INTERVIEWEE: Pat Shively

INTERVIEWER: Sam DiRocco, II

SUBJECT: YSU History

DATE: April 28, 2004.

P: This is an interview with Pat Shively, for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on YSU History, by Sam DiRocco, II, at Ms. Shively's house, on April 28, 2004. At 8:00 p.m.

D: Could you just start off, Pat, describing where and when you were born?

S: I was born in Youngstown, at St. Elizabeth's hospital, in 1950, July 13, 1950. My family is from Girard, and I lived in Girard throughout my whole life.

D: Do you have any siblings?

P: I do. I am the youngest of three children. My brother, Walter, is eight years older than I am, and my brother, Eugene, is five years older than I am.

D: What were some activities that you did as a young child? Hobbies, or what'd you play? What was a typical day let say, in the life of Pat at the age of seven or eight? If you can remember?

P: I can. I laugh because William Greenway has written poetry about his childhood, and as I read his poetry it reminded me so much of mine. I was the one who was always

writing the plays. And all of my friends had to dress up in costume, and we would use my basement, and I would put up this awful sheet across what became the stage in the basement. And I would write these plays and then all of my friends would be in them. And then we'd have variety shows and we would develop themes, and when I read a lot of William's poetry, one of his poems is something about North Avenue (childhood on North Avenue), and I grew up on Washington Avenue, in Girard, across from North Avenue school, so the lives really paralleled. If I wasn't writing plays and producing plays I was involved in sports. I was very, very active in sports. In elementary school – I grew up in a town that knew...there were no boundaries to color, race, religious backgrounds. I had no idea, and I can't believe when I watch shows like *American Dreams*, and I see what was going on in the 1960s, I can't believe that none of this ever made its way into my mind, or my home, or my life. In elementary school I was on a track team with three African American girls, we were unbeatable, we were absolutely unbeatable, and we went on into high school. But they were three of my best friends, and I had no idea that there were to be boundaries, or there were boundaries at that time in history.

D: Anything outside of track? Softball? Were there options open for you?

S: No, keep in mind that at that time period there were few organized women sports. I played women's softball, I was on every intramural team, I was on the track team, and the only competition sport we had at Girard High School was gymnastics. And so I was on the gymnastics team, and I competed locally and then I went on to state and national, which I know is hard to believe at this point in my life, but my specialty was balance beam, but I competed at all rounds. I did floor, uneven parallel, balance beam, and vault.

D: So gymnastics, sports, the theater in the basement, very active, always involved.

S: Yes, and then I started writing. When I got into high school I started writing professionally, or if you wanted published writing, starting with the high school newspaper and then on to the home town newspaper. And I was the guest D-J for WHOT Radio. So I've always had that background.

D: Was there ever an influential teacher in elementary school or in junior high? You said you took a quick tilt towards writing, was there someone who put you on that path?

S: You know there really wasn't. I mean I remember that my second grade teacher passed away and I went to the funeral, Ms. Longo. And I remember that that had an incredible impact on me that she was gone from the classroom. And Mrs. Davis in fifth grade gave me a cat, which my mother was really unhappy about. But to say that there was a teacher who really molded my growth, there wasn't until I was in high school. My homeroom teacher, Mr. Maricourt. I never really had him for a teacher he was just my homeroom teacher, but he was just such a neat guy. He was very supportive. No matter what I did, Mr. Maricourt was sure that I was going to do it the best of anybody. And then we had this nutso English teacher that I did not have, that served as kind of an inspiration to

everybody. But not one particular teacher who said, "You've got a gift." Actually it was the other way around.

D: This was at Girard?

S: Yes.

D: And you graduated from Girard then in...?

S: '68.

D: Did you have plans or hopes to attend universities? Did you know what you were going to do after you graduated from high school?

S: Again, keep in mind the time period. We're talking about the sixties. I wanted to be an airline stewardess. That was my goal in life, I was going to be an airline stewardess, and I still have the rejection letter that I got from...I think it was American Airlines. I was five foot three, and you could not be any less than five foot six to be considered for the airline school. So when I got my rejection letter from American Airlines, I decided then that I was going to go into the Peace Corps. And then I realized that I was afraid to go overseas so I was going to go into VISTA, Volunteers in Service to America. And that was the time when the writing really took off. The hometown newspaper asked me to write for them, the radio station asked me to work for them. And I decided at that point I wanted to go to college, so I have to take a step back and explain, again, this was the sixties.

D: This has been the theme that's been running along a lot of the interviews.

S: I refused to dissect in high school. And because of that I was put into the secretarial courses. So when I graduated I had taken things like business math, business English, short-hand typing, business machines, and I decided that I was going to go to college. And I remember very well – and I guess when I think about teaching, and why I became a teacher, unlike many students who become teachers because of someone who has influenced their life, I became a teacher so that there would never be anyone out there that did the type of things that some of those teachers did to us. Including the guidance counselor who looked at me and said, "There's not a college in the United States that would take you." And so the day I got my acceptance letter from Ohio University, if I remember correctly, I think my father took it up to the high school and gave it to the guidance counselor and told him that he thought that he owed his daughter an apology.

D: That was a pretty bold statement for sure.

S: I had a math teacher in sixth grade – and I always told my kids this story as a teacher. We played around the world in math. I never got out of Ohio. I mean math was not my thing. And this man made me stand at the board all through recess, all through lunch, and I remember crying and being humiliated, and to this day – when I took classes here at

YSU and the algebra teacher called on me, my hands got sweaty, my heart started racing, I was thirty-eight years old and this panic of that experience in sixth grade...

D: Because you're going back to it.

S: Yea. So when I decided to become a teacher it was because I did not want people to have the experiences I did. So when I went to college at Ohio University it was to go into the journalism.

D: And how long were you there?

S: I went summer, fall, and spring. And then I was offered a full-time position at the *Daily Times*, a Phoenix Publication newspaper. And as any growing eighteen year-old will think, why do I need to go to college to get a degree to do what I'm already doing? So I took the job at Phoenix Publication.

D: And then you came to YSU?

S: I didn't come to YSU until I was thirty-five years old.

D: Let's go back if we could and talk about some family background. You have two older brothers. You mentioned your mom and your dad real quick. What were their occupations when you were growing up?

S: My mother was one of the few women who held full-time jobs. When I was very small she worked at McAllister's Dairy. McAllister was – and again in the fifties and sixties in the Northeast Ohio area, McAllister's was very popular because they had an icon. Little Mac he was called, with a straw hat, and he always rode a tractor. So she worked for McAllister's Dairy. And then when I was six years old she started working at Rodney Ann's Candy Store. And Rodney Ann's had four different locations. It was like the early version of Gorant's, except it was also a soda shop. And when you think of shows like *Happy Days*, that's what Rodney Ann's was like. My father worked at the Ohio Leather Company all of his life, as did all of his family. Both of his brothers worked at Ohio Leather during the war. When dad and his two brothers went off to war the women went to work at the Ohio Leather Company. Both of my brothers worked at the Ohio Leather Company, and my father worked there until 1971. He was the third to the last person to leave the Ohio Leather Company.

D: So he was there many, many years. Literally to the end.

S: To the end.

D: Were your father and your mother originally from this area?

S: My father was born and raised in Girard. My mother was born and raised in Sharon, Pennsylvania. And that's some neat history. They have a wonderful, wonderful history.

They both came from Irish decent. I think they were third generation Irish in the country. My mother and my grandmother cleaned for the Buhls. The Buhl mansion, the Buhl Park over in Pennsylvania. My uncle, my mother's youngest brother, sang with the Lettermen. And at the beginning of their fame my uncle went into the Air Force and became a lifer in the Air Force, but he sang with the original Lettermen.

D: Wow.

S: So that's kind of a neat Sharon Background. My dad's family, he said they were Pennsylvania Dutch, but he was born and raised in Girard.

D: So then you came to YSU? What were the years for that?

S: I came back to YSU in 1985.

D: Heading towards a degree in...?

S: Elementary education. My daughter was at Guy Elementary, she'd gone to E.J. Blott, and then Guy, and Middle Liberty High, and I was a Girl Scout Leader, and a stay-at-home mom for many years while Julie was growing up. I didn't go back to work until 1981, and I worked for an accounting firm. Now during this time I was doing free-lance writing and free-lance photography, but I was home with Julie. So I worked at the elementary school with her and the middle school and I really liked it. I decided that I was going to come back to college. In 1985 I was working full-time at Tri-State Measurement as an accountant, numbers no less, we measured the flow from natural gas and oil wells. And so I worked full-time and I came back to school part-time in elementary education. And my first experience, and I think it would be what we would maybe call our tech classes now where you go out into the elementary school, I spent about three solid weeks in the elementary school and said, "Okay, I can't do this for the rest of my life." And at the same time they asked my husband and me to advise our church youth group. And so I started working with the teenagers and realized that that was where I wanted to be. So I switched from elementary to secondary, and I wanted to teach journalism. But again, at that period of time in history we had no journalism major. So they suggested I go into comprehensive communications, which would enable me to teach English, speech, journalism, reading and methods. So when I graduated from YSU – I started part-time in '85, I quit work in '87 and came back full-time. When I graduated I had 236 undergraduate quarter hours. But it was a good experience. And while I was here in the YSU community I worked for Dr. Schramer, Jim Schramer, as his research assistant doing American literature before 1800, and I also worked as advisor to Liberty High School *Leopard's Roar*, and then I worked as Assistant Copy Editor at *The Jambar*.

D: And you have one daughter?

S: Yes we have one daughter. Actually Julie graduated from high school the year I graduated from college in 1990.

D: Okay, so that's when you finished at YSU, in 1990.

S: Right.

D: Could you maybe describe – Girard isn't too far away from Youngstown. How has this area changed in your eyes?

S: I think of things that I missed, historically, from our area. One of the things that I vividly remember, I came from a blue-collar town, everybody worked for the Ohio Leather Company. If they didn't work for Ohio Leather they worked for the steel mills, and it was my way of life, it was all I knew. I was twenty-two years old when the steel mills closed, but yet I missed that part of history because I guess maybe I was very self-centered. I had a child, I was in Niles with her, I never realized what an impact that was having on our city. I very vaguely remember, it was either in a *Newsweek* or a *Time* magazine cartoon, and it had our steel mills, an etching of our steel mills, and above it, "Youngstown, Ohio," and the caption was, "Last one out turn off the lights." Even then I didn't realize the impact that was having on our area. When I came back to college one of the things that I took here was photography, and I started spending a lot of time at the empty steel mills. It was then that I realized how much history I had missed. The closing of Idora Park, the closing of the steel mills, the closing of the leather works. Hindsight is a wonderful thing.

D: Let's go back to the leather works. Was that the heart, if you could call it that, of Girard?

S: Oh absolutely.

D: How did Girard change after that closed? You said it was in '71.

S: When the leather works shut down we had a group of men – and my father worked sometimes as a bar tender at the VFW, he was very actively involved in the VFW. But we had a group of men who at the age of let's say fifty to sixty had lost the only employment they ever knew in their lives. And so people like my father were tending bar at Prodnick's as a job. My uncle, my oldest uncle Jim, went to work for a furniture company moving mattresses. My youngest uncle went to work for an insurance company. So the impact that that had on the city was that it forced these men out into something they never had any training whatsoever. And I guess the bottom line is, as dad often told me, many of them ended up at the VFW all day long. It was a sad time in Girard.

D: Because they're past that age where they can go back and try and start anew. So after 1990 then – and we should note that Pat has provided some copies here of the Girard news describing the return of her father and uncles from World War II.

S: This was a story that was done when all three of my uncles, my dad and his two brothers, were in the service. This is from World War II, although I do have all of the information, I guess again I needed to become less focused on myself, and realize what

was happening. So now I've started gathering all this material that daddy had saved. This is my dad, that's his youngest brother, Ray, and his oldest brother, Jim. This is the front page from the Girard news from August of 1945, but I have a lot of historical information now that I have gathered from my uncles, and my aunt, and my father from things like the leather works. I have a brick from when they tore the building down. My girlfriend has a report that her daughter did on the pollution of the river next to the Ohio Leather Company. So I've kept all this stuff now because I felt like I missed it.

D: I just wanted to get that on the tape so when they go through and listen, if this has been misplaced they make sure to look for it. That's excellent. So in 1990 you get your degree from here at YSU in technically not journalism but...

S: Comprehensive Communications.

D: So from there you then...?

S: I stayed at YSU. I graduated in August and I started teaching in the Reading and Study Skills department in September. I taught here from '90 to '91, '91 to '92, and was scheduled to come back in the fall of '92, and I got this phone call completely out of the blue from Mineral Ridge High School. They were looking for an English teacher. So I went because the problem with YSU was I was limited service. One quarter I taught four courses, which is big money. One quarter I taught one course. And then that summer I was to teach and they only had five kids enrolled in the class so they canceled it. So when this interview came up at Ridge it meant a constant income. So I went on the interview pretty much to appease my husband, because I was quite happy here at YSU, and I got the job. That was the second week of August and school started two weeks after that, and I was teaching ninth and eleventh grade English. It was like, "Oh my God!" It was bizarre. Had I not had the training that I had here at YSU I would have drowned the first year of teaching. But I had Virginia Monseau. Now when you talk about teachers that have had an impact on your life, you've got people like Virginia Monseau, who was just an absolutely inspirational teacher. Betty Greenway, who told me when I was here that I needed to think about being a teacher. Betty Greenway was one. Barbara Brothers served as a mentor to me. And Virginia Monseau and Stephanie Tingley helped me to realize what a classroom should be like and what you should do in a classroom. And Dr. Monseau had us do unit plans. It was because of that – and this is so weird, this like four stories in one so I'm babbling. I mentioned that we were advising our youth group at church. That was the year before they went on their out-of-country seminar, so we went with them. For twenty-one days we had fourteen teenagers in Japan, and that experience was life-changing for all of us. One of the things that we did in Japan was to visit the Hiroshima Peace Park. We stayed at the Hiroshima Friendship Center. So then I come back to the United States having lived through this unbelievable trip. We have a sister church in Akita, which is Northern Japan, and so we went from Akita clear down to I think as far as Okinawa. Anyway, I come back to YSU and we have to do a unit plan on a young adult literature book. So I'm in the library and I see this book by John Hersey. *Hiroshima*, by John Hersey. And I think, "This would be perfect." So I developed this unit plan with that book as my base, using the book *Sadako and the Thousand Paper*

Cranes, because in Japan my students learned how to fold Origami cranes. So I built this unit. So know that story. That was for Dr. Monseau. And she liked it so well that she asked me to present it at OCTELA, which is the Ohio Council of Teachers of English Language Arts, which I did. So now I go to Mineral Ridge, I had gotten this job, and I had two weeks before school starts and I'm opening these cupboards, and there on the shelves are sixty copies of John Hersey's book. And I went, "Okay, this was meant to be." And my unit was called "The Price of Peace." And I used several other pieces of literature with it, but that was what I did with my junior class that year. And it was because of people like Jim Schramer, Betty Greenway, and Virginia Monseau, and Stephanie Tingley, and Gary Green, you would not remember him but he was one of my teachers here and he passed away. Those were the people who inspired me.

D: So inspiration, these life experiences coming together and forming these unique classes, these unique themes within the classes.

S: Yea.

D: So you stayed at Mineral Ridge until...?

S: Until I came back to YSU in August of this year.

D: Oh, August of this year? I thought that you'd been back longer than that. So we came at the same time.

S: Yea we did. And so I was able to bring with me all of these experiences that it's almost like I'm on this path in life that I am meant to be on. Sometimes it's not my choice, but when I get there I realize that's where I was meant to be. And when I left Mineral Ridge I had the best class I'd ever had, ever. They were amazing, they were an amazing group, and it was very difficult to leave that behind, but if I hadn't done that then I would have missed this.

D: So you were there for ten years?

S: I was there eleven years.

D: Eleven years, okay.

S: In eleven years I taught all four grades out of three different text books. Every year I wrote a new curriculum. And again, I became a better person because of that. The third year that I was there during the Price of Peace, the story of *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* is that she tries to fold a thousand paper cranes. Sadako is suffering from leukemia as a result of the atomic bombing, and she tries to fold a thousand paper cranes and she only gets to 687 and she passes away. And her classmates make the rest and a thousand cranes are buried with Sadako. Now in the Peace Park, Hiroshima Peace Park, there's a statue of Sidaco with the golden crane, she's holding the golden crane. So my third year there, my junior class read this and it had such an impact on them, the whole

unit had such an impact on them, that they chose to make a thousand paper cranes and send them to Japan.

D: Wow, these are juniors?

S: These are juniors. And it was so surprising to me. And that was the other thing, Mineral Ridge is a community in itself, it's a different kind of place. And there were people in the community that had a real problem with that. So what I did was to come up with an alternate assignment, my students could make cranes to send to Japan, or they could write letters to be given to the war veterans here in the United States. And so they had that choice. But they made a thousand paper cranes and we sent them to the Hiroshima Peace Park. Actually we sent them to the World Friendship Center where we had stayed and my friend there took them to the statue of Sadako, and so I took pictures from this end and my friend took pictures from that end and we put them all together. It was really neat, and that was just one of things that happened when I was there.

D: Did any of your students at Mineral Ridge, have you taught any of them or helped them while you've been here at YSU? Do you know where they're at?

S: Okay, if you look up in the wall, *The Rampage* is the high school newspaper at Mineral Ridge, and so when they graduated Matt Vross and John Vogel made that for me, they were my editors in chief. And so in eleven years I had these wonderful editors just time after time after time. Now *these* (pointing) are the most recent because this is the *Purdue Exponent*, which is the largest college newspaper in the United States, and that front-page story was written by Matt Vross. *This* is the *Ohio State Lantern*, which is the second largest college newspaper, and that front-page story is written by my former sports editor at Mineral Ridge. And Chalet Seidel, who taught here at YSU, was my very first Ridge editor. They're all over and we all keep in touch.

D: Did you have any involvement with the yearbook or was it more just the newspaper?

S: Newspaper and Literary Magazine. (End of Side A of Tape)

D: (Beginning of Side B) So your former students as we just discussed, they're writing at the collegiate level now at Ohio State and Purdue...

S: And at the professional level. One of my former editors is – I have two, when I was at Liberty the boy who was my editor in chief at Liberty is now writing for one of the largest papers in Toledo, and he's teaching journalism, which I think makes my heart even happier that not only is he doing it, he's teaching it.

D: When were you at Liberty?

S: I was at Liberty from '88 to '90 as newspaper advisor. And during that time we evolved into this wonderful newspaper. The kids were great. I've had students that have one twenty-thousand dollar renewable scholarships at Mercy Herst. I had a girl who won

a full-tuition scholarship at Albion in Michigan. And the last editor in chief that I had is the recipient of our four year journalism scholarship here at YSU. And so when I came back to YSU, and I've told this to my students and I actually wrote an article for *The Jambar*. I always wanted to write for the *New York Times*, and then you reach a point in your life where you realize that's not going to happen because I was not willing to give up my family for my career. So then my goal became, "I may never get to do this, but someday someone that I taught is going to be there," and I have no doubt. And I think when I came here that's a lot of what we're about at this place. I have reached the point in my life where the best thing that I can do is mentor, and so here at the Center we do that.

D: So your students come in and...?

S: I do intervention, I'm a learning specialist. I have the reading certification K through 12, and I've worked with reading throughout my entire career, that's what I taught initially. And so when my students come in we do everything from, "Let's set up a time management sheet to see if you can manage your job, and school, and all of your responsibilities, to let's set some goals." I have a girl who was valedictorian at Ridge who was on my newspaper staff who has now transferred to YSU and she's decided to go on into Holistic Medicine. I meet with her every week. We do all of the services that we provide here at the Center as far as the goal-setting, the time management, the mid term review, and now we have an individualized learning plan for her. I've tested her to see what type of learning style she has, what techniques work best for her. We've done the left brain-right brain; we know how she learns the best. Now we're applying all of that with her individual studies. Of the students I see - and this is one of the things that's bothered me about the Center, that we've tried to promote - its not a place to come to if you're in trouble, it's a place to come to if you want to succeed. Five of students that I work with on a weekly basis have four points.

D: It's fine-tuning and sharpening.

S: Right. And so I work with probably...I couldn't even tell you how many Ridge students have been in here that initially they came in to say "Hi," and "How are you?" But then they realize what the Center does. And they may have missed out on it freshman year but they're back now, and I have sophomores, I have juniors, and I have one senior. The Center is everything that I as about in teaching rolled into one place.

D: And you're back at YSU, you said you loved it when you were here.

S: I do love YSU. I am an YSU person. I started directing YSU's Press Day in '91, and so I became very involved with YSU in '91 and even though I was at Ridge I never really left. I came back here for my Master's also.

D: When was that?

S: I started back in '93, and I got my Master's in '97.

D: Was that in Journalism or Education?

S: It's in English. And talk about modeling, people that you want to be. Dr. Gary Salvner, Dr. William Greenway, these are people whom I've looked at and I've said, "This is what I want to be." Dale Harrison was here, he was our director of journalism. Caroline Martindale was here. These people I can't say enough for the English Department at our school. And our Education Department. I think I got wonderful training to be an educator because of the Education Department here.

D: You noted at the very beginning of the interview, Pat, that throughout your life you've always been doing poetry or writing on your own. Do you still continue that now?

S: Oh absolutely.

D: Is it something that you do...do you feel peace when you do it? Maybe describe why or how often you do it.

S: I write constantly, and again these are all lessons that I've taught my students and I've shared with my students. When I advised the literary magazine my work was published along with theirs because I wanted to model for them. I had a girl who was my best friend; there were three of us that ran around together. Well, I had a whole group – again, this goes back to Girard's history, there were no boundaries, there were no cliques. So when you say like now we have this group, and this group, and this group, I don't think that existed in Girard. We had the girls from St. Rose, but they immediately became our group. And so all of these girls, there were eight of us that were inseparable. And three of those eight still lived in the area and so we hung out together, and the point of all this is one girlfriend got melanoma and passed away. We were at her house and I went home that day and the only thing I could do was write, and that's what I did. Anytime in my life when I'm up at night because I can't sleep. When my father passed away, when we buried our Sheltie, our miniature collie, and I sat up during the night and I wrote poetry about it. And I tell my students it's a release for the soul. It may not make any sense when you read it the next day, but I have journaled all of these experiences in my life through my poetry, and I continue to do that. When my father died I was in William Greenway's class, "Poems and Paintings," and I used Thomas Kinkade's painting *The Garden of Promise* and wrote a poem about my father based on that painting, and it was published in Thomas Kinkade's magazine. So my work has been published lots and lots of different places from my high school paper to things like Tomas Kinkade's book. William Greenway had an article published in the English Journal and I submitted part of that article because I used that same activity, that "Poems and Paintings," with my students, because I know what writing can do, so I wanted them to see it.

D: So expression, writing, it's you, it's your life.

S: It's my life.

D: Anything else you would like to add to the interview, Pat?

S: I'm not sure, I mean like I said its just I have been reflecting a lot since we talked about doing this, and I realize that I am what I saw other people being, and I realized that that's where I'm at now. This is one of the things I wrote to my mother – when my mother turned eighty-six I had all of the family write letters to her because she had Alzheimer's, and I wanted her to have a very tangible thing to look at. So I wrote her this letter in her book, and in it I said people will joke and say, "Oh my God I've become my mother," and I said, "I think I'm honored. I'm honored to be able to say I've become my mother." And I look now historically with my aunt and my uncles at all of the things, that long history in Girard, the history of the valley. In photography, and it's so precious to me because it's gone. I took a picture, which is another aspect of my life we didn't even get into, but I'm also a photographer. I took a picture of the Briar Hill Pay Station. I don't know if you even remember Briar Hill was the biggest steel mill. And I took this picture of the Briar Hill Pay Station, and they had the turn stiles so the men could line up to get their paychecks, and they had the times posted when the paychecks could be distributed. And one of the pictures that won me an award was this Briar Hill Pay Station totally overgrown with weeds, and broken windows, and of the steel mill in the background. Now it's gone. I still have the picture but the pay station is gone. The things that I've captured in photos that are now gone, I think that's such a valuable part of history and I'm so delighted that YSU is doing this.

D: Yea, we're pushing for the 2008 Centennial, and I know with the 2010 program that the city is working on, their goals and things, these are things we need to talk about. And the pictures, and the expressions, and the literary that goes along with it is just wonderful.

S: Well you know we've captured at least during my college career - the *Penguin Review* was our literary magazine, and many of the pictures in there are from our valley, and I hope that they've thought about going that avenue too.

D: Right, as you said now, a lot of it is gone. There haven't been people working there for many years now, but a lot of it's now completely gone, it's either been destroyed or it's fallen. So those pictures are definitely needed.

S: I think the Briar Hill Pay Station is now becoming the ramp, the 7-11 branch. And that was something I just took for granted, and now it's completely gone. I mean Mom and I used to get the bus at Girard Banish's Newsstand. We'd get the bus and we'd come down to downtown Youngstown and we'd shop. Strouss-Hirshberg, McKelvey's, we would come down her every Saturday, Mom and I would get on that bus and we would come downtown. There was a huge five-and-ten that was two or three floors high, and I was just in heaven.

D: Now describe. Was is bustling? Were there cars and people everywhere?

S: Oh absolutely. I mean you'd go into Strouss's and you'd go done the stairs and it was just like this wall of people. And now you go downtown and it's so sad.

D: I remember my grandmother, she would say – not weekly down in Leetonia and Columbiana County but like maybe once a month her and the girls would come up and they'd go shopping, and it was an experience.

S: Well, even as teenagers, this group that I ran around with, we would come down to Strouss's because they had a teen board, and Sally, one of the girls I ran with, was on this teen board, and they would have fashion shows. So we would all come downtown, we would all go to Mill Creek Park. I grew up at Idora Park. And when I think of the things that are gone, my brother made a record, you could make records at Idora Park on the midway, and I don't know whatever happened to that record, but he was singing "I'm Looking Over a Four-Leaf Clover." And I have those memories of the fun house. I walked in to Mark's in Boardman, and I did my shopping, I was checking out, and I stopped cold. It was like this major flashback, it's the woman from the fun house at Idora Park. And I don't know if you can understand this whole concept, but I suddenly felt like I was five years old again. And I stood there and I looked at this thing and this flood of memories one little thing prompted. When I go by Ohio Leather Company, I get kind of choked up. I used to walk down there to meet Dad day after day, and those are all things that are gone now.

D: Did a lot of families leave the Girard area? Did the population go down after that? Like you said, the gentlemen that had worked there found jobs here and there, but did some families leave the area?

S: The families that ran with my dad never left Girard. And that's something that I think is very unique to our area, at least I believe it is. My brother-in-law always says, "Born in Hubbard, lived in Hubbard, died in Hubbard." I think that my girlfriends, the two that never left Girard, would never leave Girard. They were born there, they work there, they live there, and they're going to die in Girard. And the one girl did. But all the people my dad ran with remained in Girard. They weren't even snow birds. That wasn't something that the Girard people seemed to do.

D: But the younger families, the younger individuals that maybe worked there, did they move?

S: Well, I don't remember them being younger. It seemed like they were all my dad's age, all in that fifty range. And I think they're roots were deep enough that they weren't going to leave.

D: Did your dad see this coming? The leather company closing?

S: He knew it was coming.

D: Okay, it wasn't an abrupt thing.

S: No. And that's when I think of my dad and his family, the one thing that I will always remember about them is what we often called the Protestant Work Ethic. In thirty-two

years my father never missed one day of work, not one day in thirty-two years. That to me is just...

D: And that's why he was one of the last three to leave because he was such a pillar there.

S: He was. And when the company shut down, he did not skip a beat. He went out and looked for another job. Mom was still at Rodney Ann's; she was the manager at Rodney Ann's now. Daddy got a call from Cincinnati, from the U.S. Shoe Company in Cincinnati. The man who had been president of Ohio Leather Company went to Cincinnati to work for U.S. Shoe. He called daddy to join him. Wouldn't you?

D: I was just going to say it makes sense.

S: The Protestant Work Ethic. So at the age of 53 Mom and Dad pulled up their roots and they moved to Cincinnati. They remained there until 1981 when Daddy retired, and then they came back to Girard. But what guts that took. My mom would go out – the bus rider to Youngstown – she'd go out front of their apartment in Norwood, she'd get on the bus, and she'd go to downtown Cincinnati. Total stranger to the area, she ended up making all of these friends on the bus, and all these women who went to the YWCA to do crafts and projects down there, she became very good friends with all of them. But they changed their whole life because Daddy said that's what he had to do. They went to the war because that's what they should do. They worked because that was their job and that's what they were paid for, and he went to Cincinnati.

D: In the Navy it looks like?

S: He was in the Navy. Uncle Ray was in the Army. Uncle Jim was in the Marines.

D: They usually split up siblings like that. That's what they did with my great uncles. Pat, I want to thank you very much for the interview. A lot of great stories. Obviously a lot of impact here in the Valley. I just really appreciate your time. Thank you very much.

S: Alright, you are so welcome.