

**SAN PIERRE REVITALIZATION PROJECT –
ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT**

ST: Sarah Tannehill, interviewer

DK: (Richard) Dick Kingman

ST: This is Sarah Tannehill, working on an oral history with Dick – Richard Kingman of San Pierre, and now of Chicago. And this is December 21, 2006, and we're in the North Judson Public Library. So Dick, thank you so much for participating – I want that on the record, for sure. So you've had an opportunity to look over some of these questions, and for the tape, would you give me the names of your parents and your full name.

DK: Okay. My full name is Richard Thomas Kingman. My parents' names are Clyde William Kingman and Nelda Iris Ropp Kingman.

ST: Okay, and your date of birth.

DK: October 11, 1939, and I have one brother, Keith Kingman, who's four years younger than I am. I also had an older brother, who was born a year older than me and died the same day he was born. His name was Kent Kingman.

ST: Ah, okay. And your place of birth?

DK: Was Francesville, Indiana, in a home.

ST: A private home?

DK: I believe so... I'm not absolutely sure, but I think that's true.

ST: There's no birth certificate to say where that was?

DK: Right, right.

ST: And what was your ethnicity?

DK: As far as I know it's Anglo-Saxon; my brother's done some genealogy, and he's traced our family back to Maxon, Illinois and before that to New York, Massachusetts, and England. And that's on my grandfather's side; on my grandmother's side – Hattie Kingman – her mom was born in Hamburg, Germany. And on my Grandfather Ropp's side, and my Grandma Ropp – Sophronia Ropp – from southern Indiana, and I think they're Scotch-Irish.

ST: Okay. And I see you have a reference to a great-great grandfather?

DK: Yes. I have a middle initial of T. My grandfather, Ralph Kingman, had a T in his middle initial, and his grandfather, which is my great-great grandfather, had a T. So we go back that many generations.

ST: And the T stands for Thomas?

DK: Not in every case, I don't believe – can't say for sure. [laughter] I never knew what my grandfather's middle initial was. My brother could tell you though.

ST: It's the T that's important! [laughter]

DK: [laughter] That's right. I just got the T in there; don't worry about the rest.

ST: Okay. And Dick how long were you a resident of San Pierre?

DK: I was a resident for 18 years. Right after graduating from high school I went right to college.

ST: And that was your move away from home.

DK: That was my move away from home, pretty much. For me the clock kind of stopped – stood still – the town did, in 1957. I still remember it as it was in '57, as far as who lived in which homes and so forth.

ST: *Right, right. We'll talk more about this later, but you must see a lot of change from 1957.*

DK: Yes, yes.

ST: *So what were some of your earliest memories of the town?*

DK: Okay. Well my earliest one was when – and I believe this is true – was I was only four years old when Dorothy Kilgore talked my mother into having me go along with the trick-or-treating group. She was leading a group of kids on trick-or-treat on Halloween. And I know I had a clown costume with a big dunce hat on, and that was just so exciting! And to this day, I really enjoy the trick-or-treating kids coming around, and I'm always there to give them something, 'cause it was a great tradition in San Pierre.

ST: *It was. It was big.*

DK: It was big.

ST: *The streets were alive! [laughter]*

DK: The streets were alive. My eighth grade year was my last year, and we decided to organize, and I think we had about 40 of us all together. And we'd ring the doorbell, and we'd yell out "Trick or Treat" as loud as we could.

ST: *[laughter] Oh, that must have been scary!*

DK: Oh, yeah, yeah! [laughter] I think we were a scary bunch! That's true. And there were like robber gangs – big kids like Jack Richardson and Bill Hine, who were – I don't know – at least six, seven years older than us – and they would hide like in a field, and as we'd go by they'd jump us, and... they'd usually maybe take one or two bags, but never any real physical violence. Just a lot of scary activity... Kept us on our toes.

ST: *Highwaymen! [laughter]*

DK: Highwaymen! That's a good word, highwaymen. And one time we were at Ralph Richardson's home – he was the principal of our school, a history teacher – and we rang the doorbell and nobody answered. And we rang it and rang it, and finally this ghost comes out with a shotgun, and he's walking like this... very slowly. And so we backed up and backed up, and he kept coming and kept coming, and he walked us about halfway across the big common area? And then he finally turned back; but boy, that was an exciting moment, you know! [laughter]

ST: *Gee! [laughter] The dark side of Halloween!*

DK: The dark side! The dark side of Halloween, right, right. So Halloween was a big thing. Another time... I can go on on this... my mother was really big on Halloween, and she was a fairly good seamstress, and so she – one year – had me decked out as Miss Halloween. And I had to wear a bra and the whole bit. She was trying to teach me how to walk with high heels and sway my hips. And then she had my dad dressed as a black, and he had a real tall hat – kind of a minstrel guy – and then unbeknownst to either of us, she was dressed like a witch. And we had this big party at the school, and there's a bonfire, and you march around the bonfire and they have a kind of a judging for costumes. And she would take that broom and chase dad all around, and dad – not knowing who she was – did not want to have my mom see this woman chasing him around!

ST: *[laughter]*

DK: And I remember, I thought I'd get away with not being discovered... you know, who I was... and somebody came up to me and went *ha!*... blew hot, fogged my glasses, said, "You're Dick Kingman, 'cause you're wearing glasses!" So that ended that.

ST: *Do you have any idea what year that was?*

DK: Uh, it had to be about '55 – I was a sophomore.

ST: I almost think I remember your mom dressed up as a witch.

DK: Could be!

ST: Because I know I went to the bonfires... They were so amazing!

DK: That's great. Oh, that was a great time, you know; and then there was a dance and everything... and kind of a ball – costume ball. That was fun. And then another great memory I have is what we called The Hunt – do you remember The Hunt?

ST: The Hunt...

DK: That's when the freshmen and seniors would hide, and the sophomores, juniors, and seventh and eighth would have to try to find them. Now they sometimes would only have the seniors hide if they had too big a class, I think; and the deal was, you would start like about five – and this was, of course, late in the school year, so late in the spring, so the sun would still be up for at least an hour and a half. And Ralph Richardson would shoot off his shotgun that would signal the start of it, and then he'd shoot it off again to signal the end. And what the hunters would do, is they would go to the east end of town, and they would make a big line from one end to the other – it was a boundary of the town – and then you'd make a sweep across the town. And that was a lot of fun. And one time the senior class hid in the pickle barrels of the pickle factory. One year they hid in a false ceiling in the high school.

ST: Wow!

DK: Yeah! As I understand it. And another time they hid in a cream cellar of Richardson's yard. They squeezed the class in there! So those three I remember. And I had a place picked out for our class and then they ended it before we had a chance! [laughter]

ST: Oh, what a shame!

DK: Yeah. It was a house that had – I think it had burned down, but the basement was still there, and we thought we could maybe hide in the basement and nobody would find us down there, so that was called The Hunt.

ST: *That's amazing. No, I don't remember that one, but I left in fifth grade, so I wouldn't have gotten there.*

DK: Okay, that's why. I don't know how many years that ran, but it was ongoing. I remember participating as a seventh grader.

ST: *Oh, what fun.*

DK: Okay. I have down here another thing that happened to me is I had my arm pulled up the wash machine wringer. That was when we lived in our first home, which was near the railroad, and mom had this wash machine wringer, and I was fascinated with it. And I was holding on to a sheet, and I just tugged the sheet and I was trying to keep the sheet from going into the wringer, and the sheet just took my arm and my hand right in it, and then the rollers went about up to the elbow and just kind of ground in.

ST: *Oh, man!*

DK: Yeah. Dr. Solt... I can remember she ran me over to his office, and he had this bottle of alcohol and he just poured it on my arm, and I know there was some pain, although I don't remember the pain too much, I guess. I think I was probably in shock, and my mother was in shock! [laughter] And I still have some scars from that.

ST: *Oh, so it really did kinda tear it up.*

DK: Yeah, it ground in a little bit. So I... although the scars are almost gone... after all these years. [laughter]

ST: *[laughter] Well we can't really recommend alcohol then for [laughter] scar prevention.*

DK: No, probably a couple of sutures would have been a better idea.

ST: *Maybe so, yeah.*

DK: Okay.

ST: *Then you have a little memory of your dad?*

DK: Yes, I do. And that's a special memory. And I have... I brought along a news clipping. I used to work in the store – he had a grocery store; well, actually, I think my grandfather started the grocery store. And so, from about seventh grade on, I would work in the grocery store. And in the morning I would open it up about 7:30, and this man walked by. And I was outside putting glass bottles in the crates – you didn't have cans in those days – and...

ST: *Thank you for mentioning that. [laughter] Posterity ought to know.*

DK: [laughter] And you got a deposit, too, if you brought 'em back!

ST: *Exactly.*

DK: So, I was out there, and I see this guy go by, and I didn't think too much of it. Well, it turned out he was the bank robber. He goes into the bank and Tom Daly was the bank cashier, and he asked for a loan, and then he asked for money and he pulled out a gun, and Tom gave him the cash that he was distributing to the tellers – he couldn't get the vault open... the robber couldn't. And he couldn't lock Daly in the vault. [DICK HANDS ME NEWS CLIPPING] That's the write-up... maybe we can Xerox that... I'll bet we can. But anyway, about that time – of course I didn't know this was going on – but, so Tom Daly comes running out of the bank, he has a Springfield rifle, and he said, "Where'd he go? Where'd he go?" And about the same time my dad drives up, and he has Irv Danford in the car, and they're just pulling up to the store. And all of a sudden out of the alley behind us that runs north and south from the lumber yard – from Dolezal's lumber yard – here comes this truck, and it's going real fast, and it makes a right turn and heads west, right out of town. Well, Tom says it's gotta be the bank robbers, so dad takes off after him. And he chases him towards the Kankakee River – they go by Ernie Miller's

house, and at some point he comes to a dead end, and dad stops, and the truck turns around and comes back, and they duck underneath the dashboard, 'cause they figure he might shoot at 'em. Well what happened is when you pass Soplanda's you make a right turn and a left, and in one of those turns he threw the money away – he stuffed it in a hat and tossed the money away. And according to the write-up – I thought he threw the gun at the same time, but apparently he threw the gun into the Kankakee River. Anyway, he didn't have the gun – we didn't think – at the time, although that's just conjecture.

But dad started chasing him again, and he got back on 421. Well, by this time the sheriff had arrived – I think from Knox – and dad was chasing the truck, and there was another truck in between. And when the police car came up, dad motioned that it was the second truck up, the lead truck was the bank robber. So the policeman forced him over to the side, and that's how they apprehended him.

ST: That was pretty fast!

DK: That was very exciting. And of course the headlines in the paper "San Pierre Bank Robbed," and they had a picture of my dad, and I don't have that paper. Maybe it's in the archives in South Bend. I've always thought about going up there and trying to find that. That would be fun to do. And I had about 40-some on my paper route, and the next day they gave me 20 extra papers. [laughter]

ST: [laughter]

DK: So that was fun. And I managed to salvage that one article. And dad got home, you know, he felt like he was pretty proud of himself, and mom says, "Don't ever do anything like that again!" [laughter]

ST: Yeah, right! [laughter] Women take a dim view of heroics.

DK: Definitely, definitely.

ST: These are great stories! Thank you.

DK: Sure. That's the story of my dad.

ST: *That is a great story of your dad... I remember your dad. Let's see... So we've talked about... oh, you've talked about being Miss Halloween... So moving into a little bit different area, what is your educational background?*

DK: Okay. I have a bachelor of science degree from Purdue University in Industrial Management. I actually thought I wanted to be an aeronautical engineer. My science teacher kinda got me interested in math and science, and of course this was the time of astronauts, and at one time I even had a dream of becoming an astronaut! And when I was a sophomore at Purdue I realized that I did not want to try to figure out the drag on a wing for the rest of my life, so I decided that engineering was not really my passion. And since I was getting an A in Economics, they decided that Industrial Management might be a better area for me. [laughter] So that's how I got into business. And my first job was in aerospace – it was in General Dynamics in San Diego; and I was a procedures analyst there, and then from there I went to North American Aviation in Downey, California, and I was on the Apollo Project! And that was exciting, although I was not an engineer working on the design, I was working on some of the business systems that support the paperwork, you know, the engineering release system was mainly my area. So it was fun in that respect. But I again decided, you know, long-term future you've gotta be an engineer, and they have the up and downs in the aerospace industry, where they have big projects and then they lay off, so! I went ahead to UCLA and got my MBA while I was in California.

ST: *I don't think I knew you went to UCLA!*

DK: Yes. And I had met my wife, Jan, at Purdue in my senior year, and wrote to her. I used to send her pictures of Arizona highways telling her they were California – you know, the desert and all that. So she got talked into coming out one summer while I was still in San Diego, and yeah, we dated 40 out of 42 nights – and those two nights I had National Guard.

ST: *[laughter]*

DK: And then her parents came and rescued her and took a trip. And then she decided to come out and see if she could get a job in the San Diego area as a speech therapist. She was going to go to Michigan, graduate school, and my aunt, who lived in the Los Angeles area near Whittier, wrote to USC and got her an interview. And Jan had a very good record at Purdue – in fact, she was Outstanding Senior Woman at Purdue, which is a pretty great honor actually. So she got a scholarship to go to USC – University of Southern California – which, of course, made it much more palatable for her to come out! [laughter]

ST: *[laughter] Yeah! Somebody was on your side... how did you arrange that?*

DK: So she was there, and I was in San Diego, and I used to go... the deal was, every two weeks I'd come up, well, usually every weekend I just couldn't wait. So I'd take her out of the library... you know I'd meet her at the library. And I'd be wasted by Sunday night when I was going back... the poor thing, I don't see how she managed to get through. She was glad to see me leave! [laughter] And my boss's secretary says, "Dick, why don't you just marry the girl, 'cause you're not any good to us now!" [laughter]

ST: *You were a man possessed! [laughter]*

DK: [laughter] Love! So then I proposed in 1963 – it was December 14th at the Coconut Grove Ballroom at the Ambassador Hotel – I still remember that date! [laughter]

ST: *That was wonderful A real romantic story.*

DK: Yeah. Got that in there! And we're still together, so something must have worked.

ST: *Yeah! How many years now?*

DK: Well, we were married in '64, so... 42 years, right.

ST: *I want to go back to that, but I want to finish up with the educational piece. Were you encouraged to get an education?*

DK: Um, yes. My... Actually my parents were very supportive, I think particularly my mother. Although my grandmother did not want me to leave San Pierre, and offered to give me a Lincoln.

ST: *[laughter] Oh! To keep you there!*

DK: To keep me there. Hattie Kingman. But I managed to refuse the temptation, and another influence was my teachers, particularly Ralph Harris, who was the science and math teacher, and Ralph Richardson, and Grace Jones. The three of them, I think... not only just me, but any student that went there. And they were proud that we had scholarships that were given I think to Joyce Bolduc, as well as me, to Purdue during the commencement address. That was... the tuition was \$130 a semester in those days, and the scholarship was for \$65, which was half of the tuition. You had to keep a 4.5 on a 6-point system, and I managed to do that. I came really close to losing the scholarship a few years, but managed to keep it. That was fun. But *those* teachers...

ST: *And how did they do that? You're saying that they encouraged all the student? Or were there specific students that they said This person is really college material.*

DK: Well, I don't know as though they... I can't recall specifically too often where they would overtly talk to individuals. But I will say that... like Ralph Harris, for my graduation, gave me a book of trigonometric functions and gave me a nice little accolade, and he – I decided to take a trig class that summer after graduating to prepare me a little bit more – 'cause I was thinking, you know, engineering at Purdue. And I knew I was behind a typical student – city student – getting in. So he was helping to prepare me; that's just an example of where he was willing... and that was a freebie! I mean he just devoted his time to helping Judy Schwandt and I... I'm not quite sure why Judy was... well, she was going to go... Out of a class of nine – we had six girls and three boys – six went on to college, and three went to Purdue, Joyce, Judy, and myself.

ST: *Really!*

DK: Mm-hm. Which is a pretty good percentage, it really was. And I think that during some of the classes, like in history class, I think it was encouraged, you know, they would teach

us that it's good to get more education. But I have to admit that I don't know that it was pounded in or anything like that... just more subtly.

ST: Right, right.

DK: That's what I recollect.

ST: And did your parents have education beyond high school?

DK: No, and my mother always felt that it was restrictive, you know... she implied, so. They came out of the Depression era and it was pretty hard to have money to go on at that time. So, she was very proud... my brother went to Indiana, so she was very proud to have her children go on to college – first generation.

ST: Oh, sure. Yeah. And you've mentioned a little bit about this already, but can you talk about what your family did for a living... what their business was.

DK: Yes. My father was a grocer. My grandfather had been a grocer and had an elevator in San Pierre. My grandfather was also, I think, the first president of the San Pierre State Bank. I know the shares were the number one... you know they issue numbers for the shares, and he had the number one share! I just saw a record of that. And incidentally, my brother, Keith, who lives in Dallas, would be a really good source for you to consider, because he is so knowledgeable about history and genealogy. You could probably email him and get a lot of information that way.

ST: 'Cause he never comes back to this area?

DK: Rarely. I'm trying to talk him into coming to our alumni this coming year because it's our class 50th, which would be really special, but that's probably not likely. He just might come, but we'll just have to see. But he would be a good source.

But anyway, my father was a grocer and there were two stores in town, Dolezal's store and Kingman's Food Mart [inaudible – laughter]. We have what we called Royal Blue Food Store, with Monarch labels, maybe you remember those.

ST: *I think they're still around... The school used Monarch. I remember the big, huge tins of things for their lunches.*

DK: Oh, okay! Excellent. But Dolezal's was our archrival in the grocery business, and the butcher had a store in between – Weninger's Butcher Shop. Well, the Dolezals, I think, helped talk Weninger into moving into his [sic] facility, and that made it more difficult for us to kinda keep up, so things got pretty tough. And dad ended up – to supplement the income – by being an agent for the state to collect back income taxes – an agent for the state. And he would go to towns and stay in a hotel or a motel – he'd go as far as Warsaw, Indiana – and go and knock on doors and get dogs barking and all that to try and collect. And mom and I ran the store. And I can remember the cans getting dustier and dustier, the same cans, week after week, and dusting it off... it got pretty depressing.

And then a lucky thing happened. Tom Daly was ready to retire, and he thought that dad would make a good bank cashier. And also he wanted to sell out his insurance business, and so he was willing to sell that to dad over a period of time. And so, that was a really big break for my father, so he took the insurance classes he needed to become an insurance agent. He also took real estate... well, I *think* he did, yes... 'cause my mother also became an insurance agent. My dad died when I was only 21, in 1962 he died suddenly, and so mom took over the insurance business. She became an insurance agent, and we even had a satellite office in Wheatfield, which is where she grew up.

But it was a good time there for a while, between the time he got the bank cashier job and passed away – that was in the... it started in about 1956, I think it was when he made the shift. Yeah, because I actually worked for Dolezals when he sold out... he sold out the food stock to Dolezals.

And I had a good experience there. They treated me wonderfully. I used to look forward to... Otto Dolezal and I used to run the store on Sunday mornings – the two of us – and that was really special. And I can tell you to this day, too – Jeanette used to be Hine at that time – was one of the best checkout persons you'd ever meet. She was as fast as the checkouts are today when she was just working an adding machine! And she and I could handle a lot of volume, and I'd be packing it up, bagging it up, and taking the... of course, in those days, you know, you still helped to find the items on the shelf for people. It was just new to start going down with your cart and doing that. So we went through the transition actually.

So I worked there... Duane was really good to me, and Francis – they were the... Otto was Duane's father. And Johnny Sr. had died... I didn't even remember him... that's Francis's father. So you have the two first cousins. It brings back a lot of good memories. Carol Kesl worked there and we... But Sunday mornings were pretty special. We'd have these "rushes" as we'd call them. And I'll back up a minute if you want a list of all this.

ST *I do, I do!*

DK: Okay. Well when I was still in the 7th and 8th grade – this was work ethic, and I think it stuck with me. Dad would get up at 4:30 in the morning and we would go to Monon and pick up the *Indianapolis Star* – I doubt that it paid for the gas for him to go get it – but he would get the *Indianapolis Star*. He'd come back, and then he would go eat breakfast and I would run the store, and then he would come back, my grandmother would come and relieve him, and he would drive me on the paper route in San Pierre. Then... he would then take his own paper route, and that's another... I've gotta tell you this story, 'cause he had the paper route for 17 years.

He would get the South Bend paper for across Kouts, Hebron, Demotte, Kersey, Kniman, and Wheatfield. And I can remember riding with him when I was real young, and listening to great 1940s jazz music. And he also had a band back in the 1940s. So he worked a store... and of course, everybody... that's what you did socially. And he would play at the Crystal Ballroom at Bass Lake. And I can remember a couple of times going out there – my grandparents taking me – and that was exciting. And I can remember crossing the New York Central tracks, and because Judson had all those other railroads going across the New York Central, you would see all these pretty colored lights, and for growing up in a small town, that was exciting! [laughter] To see all those lights! That sounds pretty crazy, but that's the kind of things you remember.

But a story goes that Al Capone came out one time to the Crystal, with three other guys, and they didn't know what was gonna happen, but Al just nodded his head to go ahead with the music – they were just out for a good time.

ST: *Uh-huh... wow! So did your dad tell you that story?*

DK: I think I heard it from him, yes. So that's an oral story, believe me, that's a true oral history. I know I've been telling it to a lot of people, but that doesn't necessarily make it correct! [laughter] I can tell you another one, too, that... if I can remember his name... Lawrence Welk had a singer. And he was out at Bass Lake, and the singer danced with my dad, and my mother got ferociously jealous... I can remember that. And another time I know there was a fight at home... these two sailors danced with my mother while my dad was playing, so... I'm telling it all here! [laughter] You probably want to censor this.

ST: *No. It's all good. [laughter]*

DK: But you know that music... just today, coming down, I stopped in the store yesterday and got four CDs. It's called The Divas. It's songs back in the '40s, from Billie Holiday on... 60 songs on four CDs, and it was only 11 dollars, and it's mostly monaural recordings... it was before they were stereo... so I'm just flipping through there, picking the songs that I enjoyed... I love that music.

ST: *God, I'm hearing a soundtrack to your oral history. I'm seeing film! This is so good! [laughter]*

DK: [laughter] Oh, I love it. There's a guy – his name is John Burnett – and he's a disc jockey on a local college station, the College of Du Page. But he also has a big band, and they play at Fitzgerald's, which is a nightclub in Berwyn. And he's trying to keep big band jazz alive – specializes in the 40s and 50s. And I've talked to him a number of times, I've met him, and we e-mail. And there's nothing better than Sunday night – every five or six weeks – going to hear his band.

ST: *That must be great. It's not really the music of your teenage years, but it's the first music that you listened to...*

DK: ... that I remember, that's right. Yes. My dad actually had a disdain for rock and roll. One time he said, "I want you to watch this, Dick." 'Cause he would play for these dances... he played with Harry Schindler Band after he had the big band. He played with Harry Schindler and Mary Lois Luers from Rensselaer, who we still correspond with at Christmastime. She played the piano, she had polio – great lady, had a wonderful family.

He [dad] said, "Now Dick, I'm gonna play one note... and that's all I'm gonna do on my saxophone, and watch the kids." And sure enough, he'd go *boom-boomp-boo-doo boomp-boomp*, one note, and the kids would come around and clap. And he was actually putting down the music, because he knew that there's no... [laughter]

ST: *Monkeys could do the same thing! [laughter]*

DK: Could do the same thing! So my brother and I had about 150 LPs by the time we were seniors. My grandmother belonged to two record clubs, and she'd give us the bonus records. And then we'd save up, and it was all jazz... all jazz. And we still have some of those records. So we listened to the 1940s jazz, and of course Brubeck and the great combos that came along in the 50s and 60s. And I didn't really like rock and roll until probably 20 years later. Now I enjoy rock and roll... not as much as jazz, but it's interesting. What I can't fathom is this... what do you call it?... of today... it's just talking.

ST: *Rapping? Hip-hop.*

DK: Hip-hop. I see no musical value to it whatsoever. I think it's really an oral history that they're in the process of creating! [laughter] Maybe that's what it is, and from that standpoint it probably has value, but from a melody standpoint it sort of died about four or five years ago.

ST: *We could have a really interesting conversation about this. It's not appropriate for this, but I'd love to have it sometime.*

DK: About music?

ST: *About musical traditions. I took a wonderful class last year in African-American music, from the beginning... from slave times, slave songs, the sorrow songs, and then into the blues, and how... Jazz is about the only sort of aesthetic thing that this country has contributed to world culture. And it would not exist except for the African-American tradition.*

DK: ... Except for slavery... They imported the culture here.

ST: *Well, they were making music long before they came here, but out of that horrible experience they made something beautiful... something incredible, that everybody listens to. So it's an interesting history to look at.*

So where were we? I asked you the question what kept you here in your years as a resident, and it was basically just that your parents were here, it looks like, and when it was time for you to branch out, you left.

DK: I have a couple more remembrances. Dad was a trustee of Railroad Township, and he was responsible for taking care of the lawns... that included the school lawns and the cemetery. And in those days you had to push a lawnmower, so it was a major breakthrough when the power lawnmowers came in. And then the rotary – which chewed up the real high weeds – that was another big breakthrough. I don't know if you remember that, but I remember I was really proud when he would trust me to run a power mower. And I still like mowing the lawn. [laughter] And there was some other story... well, let's go on.

ST: *It may come. Feel free to throw it in.*

DK: Okay. Alright.

ST: *When you look back on the roles of men and women as you were growing up, what do you remember?*

DK: Okay. Well, it was very unusual for a woman to have another profession unless she was a schoolteacher or a nurse. Most of the women that I knew were homemakers – housewives. And I'm sure that has... well, it has changed. I don't know the people living in San Pierre today, but my guess is that most of them have some other job. There are... so many families have to have two jobs to make ends meet. So that role has changed. Whereas the father was the breadwinner in my day. And a lot of the guys I knew worked in the mills – even in the 50s, they were commuting to the mills. Some had small farms, and they combined them somehow.

ST: You're talking about the steel mills when you say mills – up in Gary?

DK: Exactly.

ST: And so some of them did that and farming.

DK: I think so. I think of Schumacher and Schwandt. I know that Bill and Dick Schwandt's father did that. And another person was Lorenz – Linda Lorenz's father I think did that. And yet I think they had some land.

ST: Wow, as if farming wasn't a full-time job.

DK: They needed more than they had. It was like 100, 150 acres. Maybe they owned the land and had somebody else doing the farming, and then they worked in the mills. It seemed to me they were doubling up, but that's a pretty vague recollection, so you might want to follow that up with some of the other old-timers.

ST: Yeah, nobody has mentioned that, but that's an interesting question to ask some people.

DK: You know, when I think about it, a person who would be very good to interview, I think, is Don Weninger. Don Weninger was two years older than I – I think he was in Ed Kesl's class. And he became a physician... what do you call... an anesthesiologist in Michigan City. Jeanette would have his address, and he was a role model for me, as a matter of fact. I always admired him quite a bit. And his father was Russell, and his uncle, I believe, was governor of Indiana. June... I can't remember what her maiden name is now, but you can check into that. But he would be good... I remembered for a long time, but it's not there now! [laughter] That brain cell sort of died somewhere.

ST: Or it was just replaced with something else. [laughter]

DK: Replaced... that sounds a lot better, right.

ST: You said it was his uncle you think was the governor of the state of Indiana?

DK: Possibly... no, that's Weninger. It was her maiden name. It might come to me before the end of the interview. [Schricker]

ST: *You never know. Just a question that came up as you were talking about men being the breadwinners: Do you think that in those days they felt a lot of pressure with that... Was it just something they kind of expected to step into... something they expected to take on? Or that it was stressful?*

DK: Well, I think farming is a tough occupation. And the only thing I can remember is... I can try to picture the strain on the faces of some of the farmers, trying to make ends meet, and hope that the crops were going to be sufficient. That's kinda what I recollected... I gotta diverge!

ST: *Mm-hm!*

DK: I don't know if Beverly told you, but another memory I have when I was on the paper route, was one really cold day my feet were really getting bad. And I got to Mary Helen's house – your mom – and she took me inside and took the shoes off, and decided that I had serious cold feet. And she bathed them first in snow, and then gradually warmed the water up and got the circulation going. And for all I know, I could have got frostbitten.

ST: *Had you just gone on...*

DK: Yeah. If she hadn't taken the time to do that. I can remember Becker's had a service station, and the restroom was always open. And I can remember making it to that restroom to warm up my feet before I went on to George Smith's house. I could tell you the names of most of the names on that paper route to this day.

ST: *Oh, you must know where everybody was!*

DK: Right. Yeah, there was a time when I felt kind of proud that I knew the names of everybody and every house in town when I had that paper route... [laughter] so I can really identify with San Pierre!

ST: *Well, I mean, even though you left at a relatively young age, you had a very intimate involvement with the town, from the paper route and your dad's business, the grocery store, working for the Dolezals...*

DK: Meeting people at Dolezal's, you're right. I even had a job at the Green Block Drive-In for awhile, too. I learned how to jerk sodas and make banana splits! That was short... one summer I did that. But our house – although it's so dilapidated today, I hate to even talk about it – but it was positioned diagonal from the school, and then it was diagonal from the store, you know, so it was right in the center of town, so everything was right there.

Another story I can tell you... [SIDE A ENDS HERE] Grace Jones was the English teacher, and she also, by the way, was a very good Latin teacher – I took two years of Latin. I learned more about English by studying Latin. [laughter] But the first book report – I have this fear, and to this day I don't like to get in front of a large group and give a talk – she allowed me to give my first oral book report in the stairwell of our house! [laughter]

ST: *[laughter] Oh, that's beautiful!*

DK: She finally insisted that I had to come up and stand in front of her for the tail end of the book report, but I started in the stairwell and she finally coached me up. And I picked a terrible book, because it was a book – it was a series of biographies of black people, and I can still remember some of the stories. But the point is that, how do you do a brief book report without telling the stories of every person? [laughter] So it was a long book report. That was a bad decision. So she cut my teeth on book reports; she allowed me to do that. I'm sure nobody else was allowed to do that!

ST: *That is great... Was it like shyness? Or just being onstage?*

DK: Um, you know, it's really funny, 'cause when I was real young I can remember singing at our church. I had memorized *Away in a Manger* – all three verses – and I was probably six or seven, and I didn't have any stage fright. But somewhere between then and when I was about a freshman... And then I took Speech at Purdue, and oh, I hated Speech! I really did. And then I was with Arthur Anderson, and of course you have to really present yourself and give presentations and all. And I was okay in a small group, but when I had

to go to St. Charles and talk to two or three hundred people – and all these big [inaudible] I felt intimidated. I give mission minutes at our church in Hinsdale, and there's probably 150... 200 people there, I still get a little nervous. And I always have a written manuscript with me. But usually if you can just forget about yourself and focus on what you're trying to tell people, you can get past that. But I don't know why... my grandmother was always frightened of things like lightning – my father used to have to come up there and kind of hold her hand. She really had a phobia, and you wonder if some of that rubbed off, you know. I have no idea.

ST: I don't think it's that uncommon for people to be nervous about speaking in front of a crowd.

DK: I know a lot of people feel that way, you're right. Well, it helps to have the written manuscript.

ST: That's one way of compensating, for sure. So I'm interested in hearing what changes you've observed in the town.

DK: Well, the obvious one is the lack of stores. Dolezals still existed for a long time. I can still remember the sign that said it was the oldest continually operating store in the state of Indiana. It went back to the 1870s or something like that – they had a big sign. And I think there was a fire and just a disaster.

So that ended the store, and so you come into the town, and you remember how it was, and you contrast that with... you know, I can see where the service station was, and blah-blah-blah was, and now it's not! And of course it was all very painful to lose the school. I think I was still in California actually when they lost the high school. They still had an elementary school for a few years, but then when that went, that ended that. So it's depressing; it's the case with so many towns across the country. You see it... we travel quite a bit, and it's a trend... really it's a worldwide trend. It's not just the United States. You can go to Brazil, you can go to Peru, you can go to Africa – no matter where you go, it's the trend of going to the city thinking that you're going to be able to find something to do! Because agriculture is consolidation and machines that do what laborers used to do, and so there's no job anymore in agriculture.

So we all... it's very difficult. You can't really reverse it. You can't really bring back the way it was, and you have to accept that. That's one reason I've been drawn to Beverly's project of trying to do things to at least beautify it, but I like the idea, actually, of emphasizing the education component, because I think the kids that are there should be encouraged to go on to more education, because that's really the ticket to get out of that situation.

ST: *Right, right.*

DK: It's just not gonna... go away!

ST: *Yeah. Do you see the loss of the school as sort of a turning point?*

DK: Right. That was probably the key change. I think that was... the other was more subtle. I can't tell you when the service station closed, when Zimmerman's garage closed, when Eberhart's station closed. I mean all these merchants went out of business and were not replaced over a period of time. Like my dad had the insurance agency, and then Fred Martindale, who married my mother, had the agency for awhile. But then he retired. And then I think he sold it to someone else for awhile, but I don't think there's any insurance being sold – that's abandoned now. But those all happened over a series of years, whereas all of a sudden – one day – next year, no more school! So that was pretty shocking. The school was a meeting place. It was a place for a town hall meeting, and for people to come together, and community identity.

ST: *Exactly.*

DK: We lost that.

ST: *When I remember what went on in the town, most of it centered around the school – or whatever church you belonged to. But as far as the whole community it was the bonfire, it was...*

DK: The dances, the school fair, *the fish pond!* [laughter] – remember the fish pond? Right, that’s what you remember. That brought the outlying farmers into town... I got another story for you.

ST: *Okay!*

DK: My great uncle was a barber, John Baker. And he had the barbershop underneath where the Hine’s lived – if you remember that shop. And I can remember coming in there and getting a haircut for 25 cents, and the farmers coming in with their straw hats. And they’d have some weed in their mouth, and they’d be *chewin’!* And there were spittoons at each end of this row of chairs, and a guy would just go [spitting sound] *splat!* And they would hit those spittoons so well, and I was always so impressed with that.

ST: *[laughter] A lost art.*

DK: Yes! Definitely a lost art, right. So that was sheer entertainment to go in there and get a haircut and watch the spit fly! [laughter] ... So there’s a vision from the past.

ST: *It’s all good, Dick.*

DK: I can remember... some more visions real quick... 421 became very busy when it became a US Highway – this was before the interstates. And I can remember Indianapolis Speedway on Memorial Day weekend was a big deal, and all the traffic with the Illinois plates... you could just see one car after another come by. And we used to sit on the bank corner, and instead of watching all the girls go by, we watched all the cars go by. And there were plates from all over the country because people drove a lot in those days. They didn’t fly in those days – you couldn’t afford to fly.

And another story is the Monon [Railroad] had an old cowcatcher-era steam engine, and it would stop right in the middle of town. And they had it painted – it was black with big red... the cowcatcher was really huge and red, and it made a lot of weird sounds, and clanging bells, and I can still picture that coming into town. That was a big deal.

My grandmother used to tell me how there was at one time four trains each way on each line on the New York Central and the Monon, and you know, my life was pretty

well connected with the New York Central, because I took the South Bend paper – distributed that. Knox is the county seat, North Judson and San Pierre – big rivalries. I grew up in San Pierre. Wheatfield is where my... these are all along the New York Central, get this now; all this is New York Central. Wheatfield's where my mother grew up. Demotte is where my uncle – Todd Funeral Home, maybe you remember the Todd name – that was Demotte. Momence is where my father's cousin grew up, and he would take the train to Momence. And then Kankakee – still on the New York Central – is where we had our Kingman reunions from 1920 on, until after college days. And we still have a Kingman reunion; it's in Rensselaer now, but it still goes on.

ST: That's wonderful!

DK: Yeah, it's a great tradition. I'm the only one [descended] from Ralph Kingman that goes, my brother [Keith] of course, would go. And my cousin, Terri Todd, who is now Boezeman – she and Vicky Lynn – they're both cousins – they go once in a while, but hardly ever. We're [descended from] five brothers, going back in genealogy. But that's another tradition that I recall.

And on the subject of trains, I used to... I'm telling it all! You are so easy to talk to, Sarah; you're good at this.

ST: I enjoy it.

DK: Well, I had this fascination with trains, and it started when I was a kid. At about four years old, we lived less than a block from the tracks, and the ground would literally tremble when these big steam locomotives would come running through. And I would run out on the road – it was a gravel road in those days – and I'd watch the trains go by. Well when I had my first bike I would bike over to the depot, and at nighttime I'd watch for a four-holer. And what that meant was the fire barrel, or the fire cavity of a steam locomotive would have open windows, and there would be four circular windows where you would actually see the flame as it roared by. And that was a big thrill.

And another one was I almost wished for wrecks on the mainline New York Central, because they would route all the cracked passenger trains through San Pierre, and the... um... I can't remember his name right now, but the station agent would call my father and say, "Clyde, the Twentieth Century Limited" or "the Commodore Vanderbilt

are going to be coming through,” and I would try to run over to the station to watch these trains, these cracked trains go by. That was a real thrill, you know, to see these great, famous passenger trains on the New York Central... Herman... um, it’s Herman [Krueger]... I’ll think of it. But anyway, one time he actually let me get onto the caboose of a parked train to see the inside of it. And it was all glass, colored glass in those days. It was like the inside of a sanctuary of a church, and almost had the feel of a sanctuary of a church, you know! [laughter] Holy ground, you know?

ST: Yeah, yeah! How was it outfitted other than the glass? Was it like a comfortable...?

DK: Not real comfortable. I think there was leather upholstery, if I recall. But pretty sparse, I do say. I can remember the light in there was just kind of a purple glow, and it made a big impact on me.

ST: So when would you say... what year did that stop?

DK: When they converted to...

ST: When there were no more steam engines...

DK: That happened during my high school years – actually, the Monon was one of the first railroads to convert to diesel – to all diesel. In fact, I have a video at home on the history of the Monon Railroad. I’d be glad to loan it to you, and it’s... ‘cause I don’t know how old it is.

ST: That’s a big thing for San Pierre. And I can remember – and I don’t know if your video gets into this – vagabonds coming in to town on that train. And they would often get off near my dad’s Texaco station. And sometimes he would send them over to our house, and my mom would give them a meal... you know, hand them a meal.

DK: Oh, for goodness sakes! That’s an interesting story. I do remember hoboes on those trains. I never got too close to ‘em or anything, but I do remember a guy named Jake Rubeman who worked on the Monon – on the flatcar... I mean handcar – you know, he

would repair the tracks. Real muscular guy. And Guy Clausen also did that for awhile – remember Guy?

ST: Yeah, yeah.

DK: In fact, he dated my grandmother a little bit. [laughter] But on the subject of trains, the Lincoln Funeral train passed through San Pierre.

ST: I read that at the Knox Library. I was looking through some San Pierre historical stuff...

DK: It used to be called Culvertown?

ST: Yes! And further north.

DK: And north, too.

ST: At 421 where 10 runs into it.

*DK: Yes, that's where it was. That's right. Exactly. That's about where the start of the Kankakee Marsh was. And there was a famous New York writer – the one that wrote *go West, young man, go West!* Horace Greeley, rode on a flatcar on the Monon through San Pierre – I think to Michigan City. I think that's true; that's an oral one. You'd have to substantiate that.*

ST: I think I read that, too, about him.

DK: But getting back to your question... So they were the first, and I can remember they stopped in San Pierre, you got to get on the... it was a passenger train, all diesel locomotive, and that was, of course, really exciting. And then it was later before the New York Central converted, because the New York Central still had these, I think they were Mohawk or whatever they were – big locomotives. So they were still pretty economical to run those freight trains. But they were gone by the time I think I was out of college in the late '50s, I would guess, is when they converted – all diesel. And it wasn't ever the

same. I can remember hearing... I can even hear the hoots on the Erie, and the Pennsylvania, and the C&O at night with the window open in the summer.

ST: *It was wonderful.*

DK: It was great, wasn't it!

ST: *And I can remember also that sometimes as the train was passing through, if we kids were around playing or something, we would yell to the conductor on the caboose, "Blow your whistle!" And he'd do that toot-toot-toot!*

DK: That's great! Well, we didn't think that far ahead, [laughter] but I have to divert, because we happen to live along the triple track mainline of the Burlington Northern, and we get over 100 commuter trains a day, plus all the freight. And I have a three-mile walk I do at least two or three times a week, and it's from my home... you go to the Hinsdale Pool and back, and about two thirds of that walk is along the tracks. And I got my wife excited now about trains after all these years, and she'll go like this [gestures], and they'll honk back. I think it's that they like the girls, but they don't like the guys. They don't want to honk at the guys – a male thing. [laughter] If there was a female engineer, I'd get a honk! But that's a lot of fun, and I still count the cars.

I can tell you about coal trains that start from Wyoming that are 120 cars long and go to a utility. That's how they run those trains... well, that's getting off the subject, but getting back to San Pierre, that was a big deal to get around in those days; that's how you traveled. And my grandmother, I know, would go down to French Lick, Indiana to visit, and Gosport, which is another town along the railroad. In fact, at one time, there were like three or four of my great uncles that were telegraph operators on the Monon, that were all in Indiana, and they could telegraph to each other. You know, 'cause that was a big employer... the railroads.

ST: *Did every train station have a telegraph operator?*

DK: Yeah, any town of any size, I mean. *Herman Krueger* – got the name out finally!

ST: *There you go... just stick with it. [laughter]*

DK: [laughter] It comes. I can remember I wanted to learn how to do that and never did. So there's a town, San Pierre, probably 250 people. I don't know as though Tefft had one, but I'm sure Wheatfield, North Judson, any of those towns... And there would be the clacking sound. And that meant a train was coming, and Judson would clack. And I can remember him holding some orders out for the engineer? He would have it hooked on a big circular thing, and the engineer would come down and he would hook it with his arm, and that's how he would pick up the... I can remember that.

There used to be four tracks in San Pierre! The mainlines, then there was the Y that hooked up with the Monon, and then there were two side tracks for the elevators. There were actually four tracks across... that was real big in those days. You can still go over there and kinda see where it was. And the one sidetrack went all the way to Eberhart's and beyond.

ST: *But so right now there are no tracks in town, are there?*

DK: No. They're all gone. The Monon actually goes as far north as Francesville. And the New York Central still goes as far east as that utility – they run coal trains. So yeah, Wheatfield and Demotte still have a railroad. And North Judson has the C&O and that's it. The Pennsy's gone. Erie's gone. The New York Central's gone. You know, Railroad Township, they didn't name it for nothin'. It had all those railroads.

ST: *Yeah. I never thought about that.*

DK: New York Central, Monon, Chesapeake & Ohio, Erie, Pennsylvania – All in a six-mile square, or rectangle.

ST: *You didn't forget those. [laughter]*

DK: No. They're right there, 'cause I love railroads. I'm still kind of a history buff on railroads.

ST: *Well, it was a fascinating... it was so much a part of the development of this country. It was so huge.*

DK: Oh yeah. And so many going to Chicago. Even today, it's the hub for Amtrak. I watch two or three Amtraks every day come through. In fact, my daughter lives in Iowa City now, which is nice – it's a lot closer. And I've taken the... I'm trying to think of it... Anyway, it's one of the Burlington [inaudible] trains out to Galesburg, Illinois, and to a town about 45 minutes from her. And I'll do that 'cause I don't like to drive at night. So I get to ride a train again now. So that's fun.

ST: *Any excuse.*

DK: Yeah.

ST: *What are your concerns or fears with regard to the town?*

DK: Well... I'd hate to think that it would become a ghost town, because it's such a depressing process. I know Beverly has hopes that we can capitalize on the fact that there's an interest – at least once a year – with the sand hill crane population... but, you know... I think eventually it could become populated again by retirement. Retirement has reached Demotte significantly. And next is gonna be Wheatfield. I know that when you go north from Hebron, that's all developed now – that used to be all farmland. And, you know, Kouts is still farmland... Lacrosse. But I could see, maybe 20, 30 years from now, it becoming a retirement community. I never thought of that 'til now.

ST: *I didn't either, but it makes sense. It still needs to have some services obviously.*

DK: Then it will... see then the services will come. If the population is there, then they'll come. The problem has been trying to... well, it would be nice if we had just a store in San Pierre. I wish that it would be viable, but you're competing with the malls with the big box stores, and even with North Judson, you know. So you have to put yourself in the shoes of a merchant. Can they make it? They've gotta pay for insurance, heat and utilities, and their labor, and whatever they're selling, they've gotta pay for that merchandise – carry the inventory. You know, the risk of vandalism, whatever... it's not an easy thing to do, so... But I think eventually... and maybe that ought to be something to be thinking about, is how to start making the area more attractive for retirement.

ST: And would you see that as...

DK: Farmers would have to be selling their land off, but some may. It's either going to be sold or consolidated, that's the trend with farming. I don't know how many... what the makeup is of the farms around San Pierre. I don't know if they're 150-acre farms or thousand-acre farms – I have no idea how much of that has taken place already.

ST: But I don't get the feeling that... and I could be wrong – I have so little contact here... but I don't get the feeling that a lot of the next generation is taking up farming.

DK: I agree. And as the land becomes more valuable, see, you reach that point where the land becomes more valuable to sell it for development than to farm it. That's what's gonna happen – that'll be the forcing action, no matter what the size of the farm. I think a bigger farm would be less inclined to sell off as a small farm. But I think your point is well taken, that the development will just spread eventually, and it's not that far to I-65. You need a better east-west road. [Highway] 30 is really bad. You don't probably travel that, but it's a lot of light snow; it's not the way to move through Northern Indiana.

ST: You want to go faster?

DK: Yeah, or you want some other interstate road, I guess.

ST: Well that's an interesting thing to think about.

DK: I'm gonna mention that to Beverly when we get together. It might be early, but I think that's maybe a real light at the end of the tunnel.

ST: Because I think you're right. There's a trend that can't be turned back. It's not going to go back to being a farming community.

DK: No, it's not going to reverse. It's a process that's been set in motion. There's no force that's going to reverse that at this point.

ST: So to me, then, the thing is, if that's the case, how can we make that a good experience – as positive as possible – and a beautiful experience instead of just a gradual deterioration that seems to be accelerating.

DK: Yeah, I like the idea of trying to do streetlights and replace old sidewalk and plant trees, and try to beautify what you can... maybe get more green spaces. If someone opened up a really good restaurant that might be a possibility.

ST: Well certainly that's also a draw for people looking for a place to retire – is there a nice place to go out to eat?

DK: Yeah, I think of the... there's a place along the Kankakee River north of Demotte... are you aware of that one?

ST: I think if you can tell me the name of it.

DK: Oh, Marty's Place!

ST: Yeah, my mom has told me that she's been going to that place for years under different names.

DK: That's it. And that would be... something like that... maybe it needs to be along the river here, too, because that's an attraction, seeing the water flowing along the riverside. I wish we had some hills in San Pierre – there aren't very many to speak of.

ST: Or there are houses built on them.

*DK: Yeah. Incidentally, I found out that the house that my grandparents owned was a Sears Kit House – a bungalow. I have the details of that, but my cousin, Terri... and don't ask me... she's more of a shopper, I'm not a shopper... somehow she was going through some catalog and found an old Sears Catalog, and sure enough it's the layout *exactly*. Every detail, where the fireplace is, the interior walling, the basement. It's definitely a kit bungalow, and they were selling for like \$1700. This was back in the Depression years; the house was almost done in 1931, because I have a photograph of my dad when he*

graduated from high school in 1931. And he's out there with his saxophone, and also another one with the violin, and that's another story I've got.

When the house was completed, my grandfather and Jack Krum – the two of them – assembled this kit house. And it's in good shape. Another story. My dad learned how to play violin at an early age. My grandmother, by the way, played the piano. And he got to... I was always jealous because my friends would go to catechism at the Catholic Church, and I always felt left out.

ST: What church did your family belong to?

DK: The Evangelical Reformed Church – St. Luke's.

ST: So is that the same one that Del Paulsen belongs to?

DK: Yes, yes. It's the one just west of where the old school house is. And dad was always proud that he would get to go into that Catholic Church on Christmas Eve and play the Ave Maria on the violin... and they used to rave about it, and it was a big deal. And I know I never got... I was finally inside that church 50 years later, you know! [laughter] I used to feel so left out that I couldn't go to that church! I had so many friends that were Catholic.

ST: [laughter] You know, you're kind of in a minority. Most people were not envying Catholics... and still don't!

DK: And another story is that here at Judson, during the silent movie era, he would play the background music on the violin for silent movies. I don't know how long he did that, but I know he did that. That's a definite oral story that I can remember.

ST: I wonder how long he did that...

DK: My guess is four or five years.

ST: At the Gables.

DK: Yes. The Gable Theater. And I've got a picture of him... they have a countywide orchestra and he was in that at one time... San Pierre, Judson, and Knox, I think. And that would have been neat. One time one of our music teachers organized a joint band and we used to go to Grovertown – Hamlet and Grovertown and play in that band. Judson and Knox weren't in it, but it was Grovertown, Hamlet... I think he or his wife taught there; that's how they had the connection, and so we would merge the two bands. And that brings back some more memories of marching in the band – I think it was Lichtfuss did not like to march, but we marched. And we would practice at the cemetery for Memorial Day, and we would play there. And I can remember my brother started playing in the band when he was only in the sixth grade – he played drums. So he played for my graduation, and then I had to play... that was the only time I didn't play in the band, was for my own graduation with Pomp and Circumstance. But we had a lot of good experiences in the band; in fact, I'm trying to get the Lichtfusses to come to this 50th reunion because they were our senior class sponsors.

ST: *Well, just winding this up, because I think we're about to run out of tape... if there was one person who stands out as a seminal sort of influence in your life, who would that be?*

DK: Well, the person that I look back at most fondly, aside from, you know, relationships with my parents, would be Ralph Richardson. And that's... and his demeanor was always so businesslike, and almost noble to me. And the way he conducted his history class was like we were all able to express our own opinions about things, and talk about current issues. He'd give his own conservative philosophy, of course, but he'd also give his take on history. I mean, he'd talk about... one of my favorites is the pendulum. He talked about how history is like a pendulum, and it'll swing one direction and then swing another. And I really feel that that's so true – there is a cycle of history; of conservatism and liberalism, and I see it through our American history. And of course, civilizations have a cycle. And he, I can remember, was lauding Gandhi – Mahatma Gandhi – before... *who the heck is Gandhi?*

ST: *Who knew who he was...?*

DK: He certainly did. He certainly did. And then he'd talk about Mao Tse-Tung's Five-Year Plans, and how they were struggling to accomplish that. I mean, this is high school! Isn't that pretty big?

ST: *That's big, yeah. For a small town high school teacher!*

DK: And talk about *what's your opinion?* And make you stand up and give your opinion on something, you know. And if you couldn't answer the question he would be asking you again more frequently! [laughter]

ST: *[laughter] Not knowing was not going to help you.*

DK: No, no. That did not help too much.

ST: *Oh, man. I can remember his manner, because of course I never went to [San Pierre] high school, so I didn't have him for a teacher, but he had a very dignified bearing – a lot of presence.*

DK: Oh, dignified! That's a good word. And he had a lovely wife, Janice.

ST: *She was my teacher.*

DK: Well, you're years younger than me... about ten years younger. So was Janice your first and second grade teacher?

ST: *First and second grade.*

DK: And you had Batzka – Dora Batzka.

ST: *Third and fourth, yes.*

DK: And you had Herretta Sharritt for fifth and sixth?

ST: *I wasn't there for all of fifth and sixth, so when I went into fifth grade, we had just moved into the new school, and I had Erna Eckert for just a couple of weeks, and then we moved to Michigan City. So Erna was my last teacher here.*

DK: Are you related to the Eberharts?

ST: *Yes. My grandmother was first married to... I think his name was Jessie Eberhart... and had Did and Chet and Aunt Sis.*

DK: Oh! [voice fills with emotion] Well I'm glad they're still... Chet and Ceil were my parents' favorite friends, and that brings back a lot of memories... First chance to be in a farm. We used to spend time up there in that hayloft with Earl. Earl was Keith's favorite friend, and to this day I try to come and visit with Linda and Ralph. In fact we were just there... oh, I guess it was just about... last year some time. That was really special to have the chance. I can tell another story.

Well, one of my best friends in Clarendon Hills, his name was [Gardner] Marcy, and I told him about San Pierre, and I said, "I'll just take you to San Pierre someday."

He said, "Okay." And so we picked a date and we came down. And at the time he was driving a Jaguar. So we come up to Ralph and Linda's house, and I knock on the door, and I haven't seen, you know...

And Linda comes out and says, "Hi, Dick!" And I could see Gardner's face... like yesterday, you know, he couldn't believe this. So we go out for a ride, and what happened is, Ralph was trying to talk us... Jerry Danford had a still, and so he was trying to talk Gardner and I into acting like we were revenueurs and we were coming to collect back taxes. And we had enough sense to know that this was not a good idea. But Gardner did not have enough sense not to refuse Ralph's pleading to get to drive the Jaguar.

So he's driving the Jaguar with Gardner in the front seat and Linda and I in the back, and he starts deliberately driving it off the road and wheeling it back, 'cause he loves the suspension. He wants to see how strong the suspension is. Gardner is pleading with him to settle down. Linda is actually praying in the back seat. She is actually on her knees in the back saying, "Please God, make Ralph slow down!" It was so funny... it was so funny. And I still tease Ralph about that time. Ralph is funny. So we've stayed in contact, and Ceil was one of the most wonderful people. Always had a heart a mile long, and they would pal around a lot together.

ST: *Uh-huh. I remember them talking [about Ned and Clyde]... because being my aunt and uncle, we spent a lot of time out at the farm, too. We may have been up in the hayloft at the same time... haymow! [laughter]*

DK: Right! And remember the windmill? We'd go walk out into his woodlands that he had on the other side of the tracks, and I used to like to hike in the woods behind on the other side, out toward Weitgenants. That was one of the woods... Dick Bratton and I and Joe Kingsbury, we had our little treasures. We'd take Ball Mason jars and fill 'em with pennies and baseball cards – who knows what all – and then we'd bury 'em in the woods and draw a map! [laughter] For all I know they're still buried there!

ST: *Could be! If nobody's plowed it up they're probably still there. You used to bury things here, too?*

DK: You too? [laughter]

ST: *[nodding] What were we doing?*

DK: And some stories, too. Al Danford – he taught me piano – and he was a drummer. One heck of a good drummer. Well, he played in my dad's band when they had the tavern up on the hill. He would practice, and I could hear him blastin' away on those drums. And then I can remember one time dad had the band rehearse at the tavern, and I got to hear the band, and that was special. And I can remember stories, well, one that Keith told that's pretty neat. He played drums... Al taught him how to play, and dad and him played together some. Like dad got 60 dollars and he got 20...

[TAPE ENDS HERE.]