

**MARY AND HAROLD RAPPUHN**

**Wayne:** This is Monday, August 2, 2021. I'm Wayne Summers, along with Jan Upton, and today we are interviewing Mary and Harold Rappuhn in St. Johns. Why don't we start with you, Harold? Why don't you start a little bit by when and where you were born?

**Harold:** I was born up in the thumb area of Michigan, up in Tuscola Co., in 1930 and graduated from Mayville High School in '49. We got married in January of '51.

**Mary:** We had a 70th anniversary this year.

**Harold:** I was in the service '51, '53, and then after that I went to Michigan State and stayed there. I graduated in '58 from Michigan State and kicked around in several different jobs. Then I ended up about 1960 employed with State of Michigan with the Department of Transportation [MDOT]. I stayed there until I retired December 31, 1995. We lived down in Haslett on Coleman Road. We were on the south side of the road. I think that was Ingham Co. The north side was Clinton Co. We moved up in Clinton Co. in 1966, moved up here to the farm on Airport Road in 1966 and stayed there until just last year when we moved here. When we originally bought the farm, I did end up doing some farming. I didn't buy it with that in mind. The renter that we had it at that point was not satisfactory and I said, "Hey, I can do better by myself." I had to finally gear up and did farming for a few years, especially when the kids were still home and they could help me. When they graduated from high school, I lost my health and then Maurice Gove—I think everybody knows Maurice Gove—he kept pestering me about wanting to rent my land. Finally, I think about 1980, I rented it out to Maurice Gove and it's been that way for 'til just two years ago. I'm now leasing the land with Dave Motz.

**Mary:** Good farmer.

**Harold::** Mary, when we moved up to the farm, that's when she got antique bug. I'll let her tell her story.

**Wayne:** Mary, how about you? Where were you born and when?

**Mary:** I was born in Mayville at home. Back then you could be at home and--

**Harold::** I got to help you? Her parents were farmers. She was born and raised on a farm. She was there until we got married there on the farm in Mayville. You graduated from Vassar High School and that was the extent of your education other than crafts, took a lot of workshops and stuff on crafts.

**Wayne:** How did you two meet each other?

**Harold:** My parents rented a house that her parents owned, which was right there by their farm. That's where it all began and I worked for 'em some on the farm and that's where it all started.

**Wayne:** So, you weren't a farm kid up 'til working...

**Harold::** Yes, I was. My parents were in agriculture. I was born on a farm too and my dad--I think in the early 40's during WW II--he sold out and got off the farm but up until then we was pretty much all agriculture related.

**Wayne:** When you were in the service, Harold, was that during war or between wars?

**Harold::** That was during the Korean War, during that conflict period.

**Wayne:** Did you serve in Korea or was it--

**Harold::** I never left the states. I was with the Air Force and never left the states so I lucked out there.

**Wayne:** What did you do for the Air Force?

**Harold:** I was electronics technician. I worked on the Bomb/Nav systems, the autopilot and the Bomb/Nav system on the B-47, which was their new bomber at that time. That was the new state of the art. That was the primary airplane I worked on. Then I worked on some others too, doing the electronic system. I even got to see the to B-36. That was that big monster airplane and a few others but I worked on the flight line maintenance on the Bomb/Nav system.

**Wayne:** Did you get to fly in them sometimes too?

**Harold:** I did not. I could've and I wish now I would've, but I didn't. The B-47, that was primarily a three-person crew: pilot, navigator, and co-pilot. If you wanted to ride on that, it was not a very comfortable position to be in. You're down there sitting in almost the hatch area and there's no visibility. You're not up there where you can look out so it wasn't very inducive to want to take a ride on that.

**Wayne:** What was the ones that had the gunnery thing underneath like the bubble that you could--

**Harold:** That was your B-17's, 24's and 29. They had all the bubbles in the artillery. The B-47, it had a tail gun. I think the navigator, in essence, would operate that but that's all they had in terms of armament. That was primarily a bomber. With all the latest electronics, I guess they felt they could avoid any conflicts of getting shot out of the air.

**Wayne:** When you went to Michigan State, was it university or is it still college at that time?

**Harold:** It was still college. It had switched when I was there. It was MAC.

**Wayne:** Do you have any particular memories of attending there?

**Harold:** We had a family then and we lived in the barracks and I went there under the GI Bill. If it wouldn't have been for the GI Bill, it would never have happened and then I had to take part-time jobs too. You know, getting a degree was a struggle. It was a lot of work. It took me a little longer than four years to do it 'cause I was working part-time. I worked at General Motors part-time and a couple other jobs. We lived in the barracks.

**Wayne:** The old Quonset huts?

**Harold:** No. They were actually barracks. After WWII they got the big influx of GI's coming to school so they went through a mammoth expansion and they, literally, brought barracks in from Fort Custer, from Battle Creek. They were a 4-family unit and paper-wall thin but it was cheap rent. I don't know how many they had there but they had a ton of them. The Quonsets were for the faculty and some of the offices. Students didn't get Quonsets. We didn't qualify. Yeah, it was interesting. It was unique in terms of all the people living in those

barracks were all very involved in trying to get an education and struggling together to get by and what have you. It was interesting time.

**Wayne:** What was your degree in?

**Harold:** I got a Bachelor of Science, primarily in agriculture, with a minor in engineering. When I went to MDOT, you'd think I would've applied my education in terms of the Bachelor of Science. No. You would've thought I'd be employed in something in agriculture, but with MDOT I was transportation planner and I had to write reports. I had a responsibility then was doing corner studies for locations of the various highways we were building around the state. That was the primary responsibility the most years. The latter few years it was a little different but the degree prepared me in terms of writing and English. English for me was a struggle. I never dreamed, when I graduated high school, I'd ever be going to college. That was never on my mind. Going to State was playing a lot of catch-up in terms of education---to have the prerequisites for the various courses I wanted to take. It was more challenging. Our students graduating from high school now are much more prepared to go on to community college or whatever. I think, academically, they're much more prepared than what we were at that time.

**Wayne:** Mary, while he was going to school, what were you doing?

**Mary:** I was home with four kids.

**Wayne:** That'd be a full-time job.

**Mary:** Yeah, more or less. I remember one time, next door, they had their TV on. Our TV wasn't working right then and all we did was listen in. That was a easy sell.

**Harold:** Well, I think I'll have to help her out here. There was a program that I really wanted to catch. It could have been a basketball game or something. I don't remember what, but like I say, the walls were paper-thin. If you would eat crackers or eat celery, you'd hear could hear it. I was setting in the closet watching my TV but listening to next door, their audio or whatever. If it was a basketball game or whatever. That always sticks with Mary, but she worked. She did some waitressing at Kellogg Center at the Kellogg Restaurant for a time. Primarily, she was a homemaker.

**Wayne:** How old were the kids at that time?

**Mary:** Oh mercy, I don't know. How old are they?

**Harold:** Allan was born in '52 so he would have been like six years old; and there was Brent and Brent was a year younger [1953-1966]; and then Cary was a year and a half younger. So they were—

**Mary:** --and David was a year younger than them.

**Wayne:** So none of them were really able to take care of themselves or be left alone.

**Mary:** No. It worked out somehow.

**Harold:** Well, I had to work my schedules around working. When she did her waitressing, it was in the evening meal, I'd have to try to be home then. Probably one thing that really stands out about going to State then was the registration process. It was really overwhelming. I think I even seen some kids just throw up their arms and walk out. We'd have to go to this huge auditorium [MSU Auditorium] and all of the staff of all the various courses are all sitting around the tables all around us on the floor and things are on the board. It's almost like watching Wall Street and the stock market. You're seeing the course that's available. So you, "Okay, I can grab that one." By the time you get that one and you want to go to the other one, the other one is closed. So you got to start all over. It was very interesting, The first four years like that, it was a zoo. After I got to be a senior, you got pre-registered and pre-enrolled so that was much more enjoyable, but early on, all in all it was crazy. If you had to work your schedule around working, it was a struggle getting courses so you work it with your work schedule and you think you've got something all worked out and by the time you'd get up there to say, "I want this one" get enrolled, it's gone. You got to start all over and it was wild. I, literally, seen kids just throw up their arms and just walk off. They couldn't handle it.

**Wayne:** So, Mary, how did you first get interested in crafts and which craft was the first one?

**Mary:** I got a basket that was made by Great Aunt Ann and the only reason I know is I had a paper in there saying I was eight years old and then I've got the basket. So I don't know which one came first.

**Harold:** If I can help you out, Mary had a stroke in '09 and her memory isn't what it used to be. Actually, when we were in the barracks and I was going to school, you got started in copper enameling. You bought a kiln to do the copper enameling. You got started in that.

**Mary:** I have most of that in the other room if you want to see.

**Harold:** But she has all that natural talent. I mean, she's got more talent in her little finger than I've got in my whole body. If there was something out there to craft that you wanted to do it, she'd do it.

**Wayne:** Did you start out with baskets?

**Mary:** What did I start with? Oh, copper enameling.

**Wayne:** That was the very first? So you didn't really do things until around when you were in college?

**Harold:** After I got out of college. She did some copper enameling when I was in college but she didn't do baskets yet. I think you might've flirted with some painting. I don't remember for sure. It really got started in earnest when we moved up to a farm in 1966. That's when it really got started. We had the Banner Grange, by the crow flies, a mile and a half from us. The Raseys had an antique shop there too. Through some other friends, they wanted to go up there and that got her started. Then she'd go to garage sales and auction sales, and buying all these antiques, a lot of the stuff that we got here that she bought. Then she got started in doing painting and weaving. You bought the looms to do weaving.

**Mary:** --Buy looms.

**Harold:** During those years was when she really got started.

**Wayne:** Once you came to the St Johns area, basically. I guess I would have expected that you would have been doing it before that or taking courses. It was mostly self-taught?

**Mary:** Yes. I liked workshops too. I'd go down to Tennessee. I flew down there and then out east.

**Harold:** On the weaving, she went to New Hampshire several different years. When she bought looms, they had workshops out there two or three weeks at a stretch. You learned how to do all that stuff.

**Mary:** It was fun. She went to a lot of workshops, basket weaving, and stuff. Then she started teaching painting.

**Wayne:** What do you paint in, what medium?

**Mary:** Well, all mediums. Dr. McLaughlin, the doctor here at St. Johns, she bought two of my looms. Maybe you don't know her.

**Harold:** He was asking you about your painting. Oil, what else?

**Wayne:** Was it mostly oil or--

**Mary:** Some oil.

**Jan:** Did you do all of those over there?

**Harold:** Where's the big one, the farm setting that you painted?

**Mary:** The big one? Cary's got that.

**Wayne:** Do you paint from your imagination or did you paint because you were viewing something?

**Mary:** Viewing something. Sometimes something come up that would be--

**Harold:** Well, it wasn't number painting, that's for sure!

**Wayne:** I'm just saying that 'cause some people, they have to see the object before they can paint it and other people can do it completely from their imagination.

**Harold:** I think most of it was from seeing objects on a postcard or something.

**Jan:** And florals, she had a fabulous garden so some of her inspiration came from her gardens. A lot of it.

**Harold:** She was self-taught. Anything she made up her mind to do, she's gonna do it right. She'd get into it a 100%. She'd get into it 500%, not a 100%.

**Jan:** It was museum quality work.

**Wayne:** Have your children taken on those talents?

**Harold:** No.

**Mary:** They enjoy my work. That's as far as it goes and Felice is a great one to appreciate anything that I can give her.

**Harold:** She did whittling, those Santas you can see over there. She got started in that. Was it up at Stanton that we used to go every year?

**Mary:** Yeah. I think it was.

**Harold::** She did that for 20-some years.

**Wayne:** Is it wood carving?

**Mary:** All that's wood carving.

**Wayne:** Amazing! Did you go to craft fairs or something to sell them then?

**Mary:** Yeah, I sold some things and--

**Harold:** She took classes from different carvers. There was a fellow over in Ovid area or Owosso area, and then the last one we had was in Grand Ledge.

**Jan:** And her weaving, she was a member of the Lansing Weavers. They sell beautiful things out there.

**Harold:** Then you're a Master Gardener. How did you obtain all that? Did you have to go take classes?

**Mary:** No. That was a lot of work but it was worth it.

**Wayne:** The gourds that you've painted, are those ones that you grew?

**Mary:** I grew some. Indiana, I went down there. Anything you want to know about gourds, they had it and you could buy anything from that big a gourd to that, all kinds. Then you can decorate 'em. All those have been decorated more or less. I just like that kind of stuff.

**Jan:** It's not craft, it's art.

**Wayne:** Definitely.

**Mary:** Everything in the cupboards is too.

**Harold:** The Michigan gourds, they're not desirable gourds for doing the kind of work that she's doing. I think the gourds have to be grown further south. They're much thicker.

**Wayne:** Does it take a longer growing season?

- Harold:** Apparently. She would go down to Indiana and come home with a carload of gourds.
- Mary:** The first time I went down there-- He always comes out to unload the car. He took one look in there. Never mind. He went in the house and I had to unload.
- Harold:** She wouldn't just buy a one or two.
- Mary:** I had room in there for myself.
- Wayne:** Nothing else, nobody else.
- Harold:** There were a lot of conferences and workshops that you went to learn how to do that?
- Mary:** It was fun. I liked that.
- Jan:** She was so good at it.
- Wayne:** The jewelry that you're wearing, did you make that?
- Mary:** No. This is my high school ring. I can still wear it.
- Wayne:** Oh, my goodness, and you still have it? .
- Harold:** She lost mine.
- Mary:** I don't remember that.
- Wayne:** Did she have it around her neck at one time with it?
- Harold:** I don't remember. She had me around her neck.
- Harold:** She has made a lot of bead jewelry, a lot of regular jewelry.
- Wayne:** And I know you've made jewelry. That's why I was asking.
- Mary:** I did. I've made a lot of jewelry. I've gone through my jewelry. I found that when I was hunting through there and I found this beautiful ring. It was Dad's ring, my father's ring. He was a good farmer. He didn't wear it very much. I have one grandson that starts with a "B." He got it. That was only last week, not too long ago. I found that and I gave that ring to him. It didn't fit just right but I found it anyway. He's the only one that I knew of that would enjoy it, appreciate it.
- Wayne:** When did you start making jewelry?
- Mary:** Oh, gosh, I don't know that at all. One time this friend that's from the UP, she was going through the things that I did. All the things that I did, she figured it out. I liked New Hampshire. I went there about six years, didn't I? That was nice. I got some of the baskets I bought from--I think that one way up on top inside I bought from a basket maker that was a fifth-generation basket maker. He didn't have any there to show me. I

said, "Well, I'm coming next year and I tell you what, I'll call you that I'm gonna come and I want three in a row." So I called when I got there and maybe he made 'em all right then but he made 'em and I got 'em. It's in Bethlehem. It's way up in the top of New Hampshire.

Then, when I come along, I was taking a basket class too from Martha Wetherbee. You probably heard of her. She said, "How did you get those baskets? I've been trying to get a basket." So I told her the secret. "You say you're coming a certain time and then you call," and he probably made those in during that time. I liked that program on there. What is that?

**Harold:** Oh, the animal program on TV.

**Mary:** --because it's in New Hampshire.

**Harold:** It's the *North Woods Law* program. They're doing that with New Hampshire. They're doing Texas and Louisiana. It's the conservation people. They're out and about doing the enforcements of hunting and fishing and all that stuff but New Hampshire is particularly nice because of the scenery.

**Mary:** All the scenery is just like-- Oh, I remember that their roads were always clean and nice unlike these roads.

**Harold:** If I can interject, I think, Mary wishes that she had some Indian blood in her. She always had a hankering to study Indian lore. I know, when we were in Haslett, you had a friend. They were actually Indian. I guess I forgot about that. What did you make? She took classes from several Indian craftspeople up north someplace, especially on doing the quill boxes.

**Mary:** I forgot that.

**Harold:** They used the porcupine quills and she made several of those. She took classes from Indians on doing those in person, also basket makers.

**Mary:** She was a jewel. She lived—

**Harold:** --up around by Indian River or someplace, I think, but it's immaterial.

**Mary:** I went with a friend from Lansing. We went there two or three years, didn't we? Anyway, that was fun.

**Jan:** They used the materials that they had access to.

**Mary:** They had--

**Jan:** --porcupine quills.

**Mary:** I don't know where I got them, somewhere.

**Harold:** Well, some of the quills you got were roadside kills. People pick them up for you and got 'em and delivered 'em to you.



**Mary:** We went up and stayed there and made those quill baskets. I said I wanted a porcupine. We don't have porcupines around here, so up at the college, she said, "I know there's a fellow that makes something" and she said she would-- So when she got word, she called me and I went up and got the porcupine. I got home and I fixed it all up on the table outside and picked all those quills off. I just so happened to have made a stew that night.

**Harold:** We were all suspect that we were eating that porcupine.

**Mary:** And he was worried.

**Harold:** She was kind of devious in that regard. She'd kind of fix some different food and dye it and camouflage it, make us think it was something else. We had to be on our guard.

**Wayne:** What's the most devious thing she did?

**Harold:** It depends who you're talking to. I think the one I remember and Felice does too, is you tried to fix some salad or whatever with dandelions, I think. That didn't go over too good.

**Wayne:** A little on the bitter side?

**Harold:** I don't remember. It didn't taste good anyway.

**Mary:** Picky picky!

**Wayne:** Did you like playing jokes on them or was this—

**Mary:** Oh yeah.

**Wayne:** Were you big into like April Fool's jokes or--

**Mary:** Just jokes like that but you see he still stayed with me though.

**Harold:** I had too much invested in her. All of the various workshops she has taken and stuff, I think it would qualify her for a degree of a sort, the equivalent to a four-year college degree really. There's so many of them that she's taken at different times.

**Mary:** In Tennessee I had a good friend. I met her when we were going down south to Alabama to visit our son and I looked in and said, "There's just a little store. We might as well go in there and see what that's all about." So went in there and she had these baskets. She had those and she had one I liked and it wasn't quite finished. I said, "Well, if I bought it now, would you send it to me?" "Yes, I would." So she did and that was the start of-- So I said, "Well, next year they're having a basket convention and maybe you would like to teach it. You can fly up and I'll pick you up at the airport and you can stay at my house." So she did and that was the first of many times flying. I remember flying down and he said, "Now, what kind of basket do you want to make?" Down there, it's all oak baskets. So I said, "Well, let's make it colorful." So we start right from scratch. The last time I called, she had died. We're getting to that age, you know.

- Wayne:** So the materials that you used came from all kinds of different sources? Did you sometimes make your own materials?
- Mary:** Yes. If I had an oak log. You split the log and you soak it in the water real good for a while and then make it. Some baskets are oak. The basket material for this area would be black ash. And they're different, you know. I can't explain it but they're different and then the black ash. Well, they're different.
- Jan:** The grain.
- Harold:** If I can help you out there. She'd get the log. Let's say it's ash. It may be six inches of caliper and maybe six feet long or whatever. You've gotta keep it moist and, literally, you have to pound it. You have to take a sledgehammer or a mall, and you gotta beat onto it. That loosens up the growth layers, the bark, and then you can peel it off in strips. Then you have those strips and you have to work on them more to get the thickness that you want. You're working with the log and you're stripping it to get the wood off and then you have to separate those layers to get the one-- Then you you've got to, not sand it, but scrape on it with a long sharp knife or whatever to get it down to the various widths that you want for making a basket. That was on doing baskets and then in weaving she bought wool from farmers that had their sheep and then she'd process that wool and dye it different colors, process that wool and have to spin it, then comb it, and card it. Is that the term, card it? Then you got to spin it to get it down into threads the size that you want to or do the weaving. I can remember some on of that dying. I don't know what all she used for dying. Sometimes it wasn't the most pleasant smell, natural dyes that she learned from the various makers, the Indians or basket people, or whatever, to get the different colors that you wanted. It was kind of cruel at times.
- Mary:** That brings back lots of memories.
- Wayne:** Sounds like it took quite a while just to get ready to start weaving. Did you ever help with some of that prep work?
- Harold:** On the stripping of the logs--yes. I helped her on that, the pounding on 'em and getting the various strips off there. Beyond that, she pretty much took over and did what she wanted and got it the way she wanted. The weaving, I didn't help much on that.
- Mary:** I got some woven things in the room.
- Harold:** Do you remember what materials you use to get the different colors?
- Mary:** I don't remember.
- Harold:** Didn't you use some flowers and different items to get the colors that you wanted to make the--
- Mary:** Well, you should have came about 10, 15 years ago.
- Wayne:** I'm wondering if you maybe grew some of the plant materials that you needed to use in your garden?
- Harold:** Not the trees, but the plants, yes.
- Wayne:** You might not want to wait for an oak tree—

**Harold:** Exactly.

**Jan:** Wasn't there a willow shrub that you bought that you used?

**Mary:** Willow?

**Jan:** Did you ever weave with willow? I mean baskets with willow.

**Mary:** A little. Some, not a lot; mostly with the oak and with the black ash.

**Jan:** They had built a whole room on the farm. They put on a big double garage and a whole huge room above it. That was all her looms and just full of art stuff. It was to die for, a whole room just for yarns, weaving materials, a whole wall of books, just magazine material.

**Mary:** I realized that as I went along, what would I do if something happened to me? The kids, they wouldn't know a thing. They'd throw it all away probably or something. So I started to downsize. That's when I sold those two looms to Dr. McLaughlin. Do you know? I seen her the other day going into Dr. -?- because I go there and, "Mary, hello. How are you now?"

**Jan:** She would remember.

**Mary:** I, believe it or not, remembered her. That was neat.

**Harold:** I'll interject this. When she was all buying antiques and stuff and she got the bug. The Banner Grange, just up there in Greenbush township.

**Mary:** Do you know that. Do you know the Banner Grange?

**Wayne:** I've heard of it. It's on my list of places to zip by.

**Harold:** The Raseys [Peg and Larry] lived next to it. They ended up eventually buying the hall but this was probably in early 70's. I don't remember exactly, but anyway, the grange disbanded and so they sold the contents. They had an auction sale and they had all these tin cups that they had for their membership—to drink their coffee, their liquids, whatever all they had. They had a hundred of them or maybe more. They had big box full of them. I think Sherman or Sherwood, he was the auctioneer. Mary went to that sale and they were selling those tin cups.

**Mary:** They were nice to paint on.

**Harold:** Larry Rasey, he was bidding and Mary was bidding onto them. The first one, maybe the high bid was, let's say \$3.50 cents. Of course the auctioneer was thinking, Oh, great. There's how many here, a hundred and you're going to take them all at that price. "No, I want one." So they had to start all over again and then between Mary and Larry, they were going back and forth three or four times on doing this at different prices and only taking one. The auctioneer finally figured out. We gotta do something different. We could be here all day and all night selling at this rate. So we're going to sell, say in groups of five or 10 or something. They were jockeying to try to get the cheapest price. They were about two hours getting rid of that batch of cups and I guess everybody in the crowd would just, just abuzz about

what this process was and how they finally got those sold. The Raseys, they had an antique shop. They bought the grange and turned it into an antique shop and so they were heavily in the buying and selling antiques. Do you have any of them around that you could show them?

**Mary:** It was fun.

**Jan:** Do you know the history, Harold, of that little cemetery that was on the corner of your farm?

**Harold:** Yeah. Darn it. I wish I would've looked that up. The Gardners [Samuel Gardner] was one of the earliest landowners of that land [1840] [Gardner's Corners]. It would be the corner of Kinley Road and Airport. Around 1850, I'm guessing, but along in there, they set aside a parcel of land there for cemetery purposes. It had to be before 1850 'cause the first monument there, I think, it's got 1851 on it. That was for cemetery purposes. They deeded it to the township but the township never took the ownership of it. Maybe they did it early on in the first few years but when we bought the property in 1966, that cemetery was overgrown. A lot of the monuments were broken and it was just overgrown. It looked terrible. It wasn't taken care of. Between the boys and I and through the years, we finally got it all cleaned up. I repaired the monuments, the ones that I could repair, and got it looking pretty good and it still is looking pretty good. The township, finally last couple of years, it's kind of taken over ownership and they are now maintaining it. They're mowing it, what have you, so it's looking real good now. I think in 1956 was the last burial there. Here's a list of people that are buried there. I probably could make a copy of that for you or get copies for you if you wanted the copies.

I've got some history of the township. On our property there was a livery stable. Again, around 1850 it was built and it was overnight lodging [Gardner House]. They had a liquor license. They had dancing there. I've got something that says on a good night they took in \$150. At that time, I guess they thought that was pretty big money. I've been told by another individual--his grandparents owned the land at one time--but he claimed that the first barrel of whiskey that came to Clinton Co. came to that livery stable there. It burnt down in 1860-something [1872] So there was a lot of history there with that. That was the traveled way of Lansing to wherever up north.

That cemetery is called the Gardner Cemetery and then there was a Gardner School down on the corner of Walker and Airport. That's now gone. When we first moved there in '66, our kids went there for a couple of years 'til they closed it and they consolidated and brought everybody in town. Three of our kids got to go there. I think maybe '68, '69 they closed it but that school is now gone. That's pretty much on the cemetery.

**Wayne:** Was there ever a store on that corner?

**Harold:** I've never heard that there was a store there but there was that livery stable, the overnight lodging. I've had some old residents say that they can remember Indians coming there and getting their whiskey. How true it all is, I don't know. I had a couple of fellows that came up there with metal detectors and they were finding a lot of iron, different stuff. Apparently, at one time, a homestead was there too and maybe even some other buildings because some of the hardware was old machinery, iron, and stuff. Then there was household items that they were always coming up with. They found some coins but nothing really too earth-shattering in terms of a find but it was kind of interesting.

**Mary:** They couldn't talk. When they came to the house to see if they could, they signed. I know who that was. He had a paper and pencil.

**Harold:** They were deaf mute.

**Mary:** They were from Lansing. Now, they come out to the new ones that live there. They asked them if they could and they told them that yes, they could as soon as the crop was gone. I thought that was kind of nice.

**Wayne:** They could very well find things.

**Harold:** If you want to explore further, I probably got downstairs someplace, the date when that land was deeded for cemetery purposes if you know need to know that information, If you get ahold of that big book-- What's the word I want? The old history of the county and the townships

**Jan:** Oh, that big book of history, 1880? Is that where this where this is from?

**Harold:** That gives quite a bit of history of Bingham Twp. there.

**Mary:** Would you like a glass of water or anything?

**Wayne:** So you definitely have an interest in history also.

**Mary:** Genealogy.

**Wayne:** I know, Mary, at least you were at time on the museum board. Correct?

**Jan:** She did a lot of work for the museum. Remember when you used to sit on the floor and make-- I know you did a lot of other things too but I remember seeing you sit on the floor with a group of women and making all these cedar ropings every Christmas.

**Mary:** Yeah.

**Wayne:** Anything of hers in the museum right now?

**Jan:** They have donated things to the museum.

**Wayne:** Do we have any of her baskets or artwork now?

**Jan:** I don't think we do, do we? No. Good idea.

**Harold:** Well, I've been thinking for some time that there ought to be--

**Wayne:** If you decide that you want to donate something at some point, I'm sure that we'd be glad to take some of it.

**Harold:** We did donate what they call that "black ball box" which came from the Banner Grange. Mary bought that at that auction sale. Do you know what I'm talking about, the black ball box?

- Wayne:** Where, if you wanted to join the Grange, as long as there wasn't a black ball in there, you were good to go.
- Harold:** There was quite a few marbles. There was three or four black balls and then others were gray or different color. We donated that.
- Jan:** Part of this summer's exhibit is the little prescription bottle from Millman's Pharmacy that used to be in the first block of North Clinton Avenue so we're using that this summer for part of the display.
- Harold:** We came across another one. It bothers me. I don't know what happened to it. It got in with the auction stuff and got sold, a pharmacy bottle again. That should be at the museum too but during all the of that confusion at that time--
- Mary:** All the confusion; boy, that was confusion!
- Jan:** That auction sale was a sight to behold.
- Wayne:** I imagine it would be with all the stuff that would have been there. Well, not just the house, which was packed full of Mary's art, but Harold had a few things out in the barn too.
- Mary:** He made sure that they sold all the nails. All the nails! I didn't have one nail to pound in the wall.
- Jan:** They had two auctioneers going.
- Harold:** You were at the house, Mary. She loved driving the nails in the wall hanging up pictures. At the farmhouse, when we took them all down, the whole wall looked like Swiss cheese. I made sure there was no nails when we got over here. I didn't succeed. It's started to happen but it's a little more controlled and our son has got a little more involved in trying to corral it but he's worked against me in a way that he got her some nails that I didn't want her to have. That's another issue. Mary, she doesn't like to see any open spaces. It's got to have something in it. Now you can't see her studio upstairs and that was just full.
- Jan:** Fabulous!
- Harold:** I think they carried down around fifteen different pieces of furniture, cabinets that they carried down for the auction, a couple cabinets like this, different pie safes and spool chests. We had one big piece of furniture, that big red piece, when you first came in the house there. That thing was huge. In fact, it almost ended up staying with the house because of having a problem getting it out but the auction people and another young fellow, they were pretty persistent. They said, "We're going to get that out," and they did. They got it out. They got it to the garage and it was sold in the garage and somebody else had to... What kind of money we got for it, I don't know. That came from over towards Portland. I don't remember the name, this guy out in the country, that he had miscellaneous buildings just full of all kinds of old furniture. Mary spotted that and she had to have it and it was way back in the end of one with all kinds of other stuff around it. How are we going to get it out? And the guy said, "Don't worry about it. We'll get it out." Well, they got it out.
- Jan:** They got it back in your house.

**Harold:** I remember that sale. He eventually had a sale over there and I think Stanton had the sale. I think it was about a five-day event. I mean, old barns, all up in the loft was just hanging with chairs, just chairs kazoo, and all kinds of stuff.

**Jan:** Didn't you serve on a local--was it elected or appointed--township or county? What have you done?

**Harold:** I was eight years as treasurer of Bingham Twp., elected, and then I was appointed on the County Planning and Zoning Commission. I was there about thirty-five years between the planning and zoning and some of those years I was also on the ZBA, Zoning Board of Appeals. When I was the township treasurer and on those boards, I was, literally, going to a meeting every night of the week.

**Jan:** And still working part of the time.

**Harold:** It kept me occupied.

**Wayne:** Couldn't get in trouble!

**Mary:** That's what he thought about the nails.

**Harold:** Some of those nails, I mean, she didn't get just a small brad. She got a spike!

**Mary:** Oh, I did not!

**Harold:** Up there in the studio over--

**Jan:** Sometimes you have to.

**Mary:** If you put two in--

**Jan:** That's right.

**Harold:** What's she saying--

**Mary:** She gets it.

**Jan:** Yes. You don't have to go around adjusting it.

**Harold:** That's our grandson up there and he was killed in Afghanistan August 8, 2010. [Referring to display of medals on the wall for Army Specialist Bradley David Rappuhn]

**Mary:** Boy, I tell ya, moving after fifty-four years, try to remember where anything is.

**Wayne:** We thank you very much for your time.

**Mary:** Goodness sakes, yes!

**Harold:** I hope you can glean something from it.