

BLODWIN (BLONDIE) LEWIS ANDERSON

Interviewer: David Neal

Interviewed on: June 3, 2003

Interviewer: And what was your maiden name?

Blondie Anderson: Lewis. I have been known since my high school days as only Blondie. There are many, many people that do not know my real name.

Interviewer: Is that a reference to your hair when you were younger?

Blondie Anderson: Yes!

Interviewer: Ok, your age and your date of birth?

Blondie Anderson: I am 80 and I was born March 30, 1923.

Interviewer: Where all in Franklin Township have you lived?

Blondie Anderson: I was born in Franklin Township on Townline Rd. and I lived there until I was 3 years old and my parents moved to the corner of Old State and Townline Rd. in Washington Township. In 1956, my husband and I moved back to Franklin Township, on Crane Rd. and 98. We lived there until 1980, when we built this home here.

Interviewer: So you have lived in Franklin Township or real close to it your whole life?

Blondie Anderson: Oh, always on the dividing road.

Interviewer: You had mentioned earlier some property that had been in your family. Do you want to talk about that?

Blondie Anderson: Yes, it's up here on the corner, where we had moved to, on the northeast corner of Old State and Townline. It goes down through here I am on it now. We have sold quite a few pieces off from it. It was 150 Acres. My great-grandparents built the house that was there at the time; it was in the 1800s. They lived there and my grandparents lived there, and my Mom and Dad lived there and my husband and I lived there. My children, have had their homes, all three of them, down past me, but on the same property. My grandchildren and my great-grandchildren so I think it made 7 generations that have lived on the same property.

Interviewer: Where did your grandparents come from?

Blondie Anderson: I was just looking at my book last night. I think they came out of Michigan. I don't know any further than that.

Interviewer: What were their last names?

Blondie Anderson: Jenkins, then my grandmother married my grandfather Lewis.

Interviewer: What were their first names?

Blondie Anderson: Rosella was my great-grandmother and my great-grandfather was Ransom [John Jenkins]. My grandmother was Flora Jenkins and she married Ira Lewis [Jacob Westly Lewis]. I never saw my grandfather; he died at an early age. My grandmother remarried, and she married

a gentleman by the name of Arthur Davis who shot his arm off hunting one day. He was crossing the fence and the gun went off and shot his arm off by the shoulder. He was my grandpa and I sure thought the world of him!

Interviewer: Now, your grandfather, Ira Lewis [Jacob Westly Lewis], that you didn't know, was he originally from this area?

Blondie Anderson: I don't know anything about him but I do have some literature that people have given me from way back. On paper, I think I have his ancestors too.

Interviewer: Your grandpa Davis, was he originally from this area?

Blondie Anderson: I really don't know.

Interviewer: We're really focusing in this interview up until the 1940's. So we will be looking at up until your teenage years. What was your home like?

Blondie Anderson: According to today's standards it was pretty sparse. Good day though! I look back and I had a wonderful childhood! It was through the depression. My Mom made all of my clothes and our home was heated with two stoves, one in the kitchen and one in the living room. No conveniences that we have today. We burned wood. But as I said it was very sparse.

Interviewer: Do you remember when you got conveniences like inside water, hot water, and a toilet?

Blondie Anderson: Yes, but it wasn't in my teenage years, it was after we were married. It was in the 1940's. As a matter of fact, I can't tell you just when, but it was in the 1940's, I can tell you that.

Interviewer: How about electricity and telephone?

Blondie Anderson: The electric came in the 1940's and the telephone did too! I got my telephone when my husband was in the service and he was in for 2 years (1945-1946).

Interviewer: What about automobiles?

Blondie Anderson: My Dad had an automobile, maybe for 2 or 3 years that was all. Most of the time, it was horse and buggy, horse and sleigh, and horse and cutter. Now when I was born up there in Franklin Township right straight across the road. My grandparents lived on my Mother's side. My Grandpa Pulling was the only person in the area that had a new Model T or a Model A Ford. I remember it because it was such a wonderful thing to get in it and ride. It had the windows that were "Isinglass" is what I think they used to call it. Kind of an Eisenglass it would crack real easy. He would take us kids to town every once in a while, to Edinboro, which was a great thing back then.

Interviewer: While we are talking about them, do you want to talk about your grandparents on your Mom's side, their names and their backgrounds?

Blondie Anderson: That was Howell and Ellen Pulling. She used to be an Ellen Sisson. As far as I know, they always lived there. They lived there when I was born and they both died and had their funerals in that home. As a matter of fact, I have a picture of it.

Interviewer: How did you do refrigeration back then?

Blondie Anderson: We had an old icebox. There was a man that went through, I don't remember if it was once or twice a week and we would get a big block of ice from him and put it in the icebox. Then in the wintertime, my Dad had built some type of a box just outside of the kitchen window and they used to raise the window and put the things out there to keep them cold.

Interviewer: How about washing machines?

Blondie Anderson: Scrub boards, washboards, and then Mamma graduated to a type of a washer that had a handle, that you pushed the handle back and forth and there was something in the middle that moved when you pushed the handle. That was a big improvement for my Mom.

Interviewer: Ok, let's talk about family members, parents, siblings...

Blondie Anderson: I had no brothers and sisters. I was an only child. My grandmother Davis lived with us up here on the farm. The house up here on the farm was built back in the 1800's, but sometime or other; there was a house on Old State Rd., west from that place in the corner, probably about 1/2 of a mile. It was moved up and attached to this house that was built. They made a hallway between the two houses. My grandmother and grandpa Davis lived on the other side. We lived on this side. Then after Grandpa Davis died that kind of stood empty and Grandma moved over into the side with Mom and Dad. Then when my husband and I married we moved into the other and occupied it. We had our children there all but the third one.

Interviewer: Did you have lots of aunts and uncles?

Blondie Anderson: My Dad had three sisters, so I had three aunts. As a matter of fact, up on Townline Rd. where I was born, there was a driveway between the two houses. My aunt and her husband lived on the other side of the driveway.

Interviewer: What were your aunt's names?

Blondie Anderson: That one was Ocie, she was Ocie Lewis and she married George Hush. That house is still standing and is being occupied. Now the one I was born in on the other side of the driveway is gone.

Interviewer: How about your other two aunts?

Blondie Anderson: They didn't live real close around here. As a matter of fact, I don't know just where they did live.

Interviewer: Do you know their names?

Blondie Anderson: Oh, sure! Cassie Lewis and she married Ben Eaton. Then there was Lillie Lewis and she married Mr. [Charles] Phillips.

Interviewer: What other relatives did you have in the Township?

Blondie Anderson: I had a great uncle, that I always thought the world of and he lived in Franklin Township between the corner up here and the where the schoolhouse was. He probably was less than 1/2 mile from the corner. He lived in kind of a shack and he had a long white beard. A lot of kids were afraid of him. I don't know too much about his past, in a way, he did marry and have one child. They went to Michigan and when they were in Michigan his wife and his child went west somewhere and he came back here. I never knew her, never seen her and she and the child never came back.

Interviewer: What was his name?

Blondie Anderson: Honeywell Jenkins

Interviewer: Let's talk about your friends and neighbors growing up.

Blondie Anderson: Well, up here on the corner, right across the road lived the Dunton's. Jay and Jenny Dunton and they had four children, two boys and two girls. The boy Blair was born the same month I was. Phyllis was younger, and we all went to school, up to Townline School. We used to walk all together. Then on the other corner were Charles and Cora Harris. Then my aunt and uncle that lived across the driveway, where I was born, moved this way and lived on the other corner up here. They lived in Franklin Township on the southwest corner and we had moved to the northeast corner. So, they lived there for quite a few years.

Interviewer: Did your parents have friends besides your neighbors?

Blondie Anderson: Yes, they had Reginald and Evelyn McCombs who lived on Townline Rd. in Washington [Franklin] Township and they had one daughter Arlene. She and I were very close friends. They also had another couple north of the corner called Audreine and Lillie Bush. His father lived with them, who was Swedish and he talked Swedish. I remember him because he used to call me his little dancing girl. When I would go there, he would always get me to dance. I would dance around the table and that's all I can remember of him.

Interviewer: Did you guys go and visit neighbors a lot and have people over?

Blondie Anderson: Yes. We played cards, my parents would play cards and the kids and I had small games to play. The McCombs' and my parents were together a lot, probably close to every weekend for supper Friday and Saturday night and playing cards. They were real close.

Interviewer: What is your fondest childhood memory of any season?

Blondie Anderson: Oh, probably Christmas! My Mother always made Christmas such a special time. Daddy would go

and cut a tree in the woods and bring it in. We didn't have very many ornaments but we used to string popcorn and make chains out of colored paper and there were a few bulbs. I look back now and the most amazing thing on that Christmas tree was they had candles that were in little things that clipped on the tree! They were lit! I would look back and think of that and think, "oh my word, how did we ever think of doing such a thing!" My Mother always made Christmas, but we didn't have anything. I think I was 10 or 11 when I got my first doll. It was the only doll I ever had other than the one my Mother had which was a tin doll. They got me a baby doll when I was 10 or 11 years old.

Interviewer: Was it bought or did your Mom make it?

Blondie Anderson: They bought it; I got very few bought things.

Interviewer: What would you say was your favorite Christmas gift? That doll?

Blondie Anderson: Uh hum! Yes!

Interviewer: If you didn't have electricity, how did you light the house? Did you use candles or lamps?

Blondie Anderson: Lamps, kerosene lamps. We had lamps all over the house. We had these Aladdin lamps that had a mantle inside of them, which would break very easy; it was kind of a cloth thing. If you bumped it very much it would shatter. They gave a good light.

Interviewer: Let's talk about your marriage. Who did you marry?

Blondie Anderson: I married Ray Anderson in 1941. We met many years before because we went to school together at Townline.

Interviewer: Where did his family live?

Blondie Anderson: They lived north on Townline Rd. in Franklin Township.

Interviewer: What were his parents' names?

Blondie Anderson: Louis Anderson was his father, but I never knew him because he died when Ray was 10 years old. The sad part of it is, his mother just lived with a man in the township and never was married. There were 10 children in the family. Well, 6 Anderson's and then 4 of this other one.

Interviewer: Who was the other guy?

Blondie Anderson: William Heiter, wonderful man.

Interviewer: What was his mother's name?

Blondie Anderson: Mildred, she was a Brown, then she married Anderson, then she lived with Heiter.

Interviewer: Where did you get married?

Blondie Anderson: Well, I'll tell you! We eloped! Way back, when we were in grade school, we thought we were in love.

Interviewer: You were pretty young still?

Blondie Anderson: Yes I was! We had a wonderful marriage though, and many people said it would never last! It lasted for 58 years. In school, in recess time, the old school, you know had a wood stove, coal or wood and it sat in the middle of the room towards the back, with a big metal shield around it so that kids couldn't fall against it and get burned. In back of that along the wall were some school benches. I can remember at recess, Ray and I would walk back there and steal a kiss! And there we were in grade school! Really, that's where it all started, because after we got out of school. My mother was very much against the whole thing, because partly of his family situation. It made it very hard. He used to carry my books, my lunch pail, and we had a little hill to go up. She found that out, and she would get so that she would go up to that hill and watch down the other way and make sure he was not carrying my books and my lunch pail. It was a bad situation because I do not think that Ray and I would have eloped at that time because I quit school when I was a junior. I think I would have finished school if she had not refused to let me see him. Now my Dad would help me get out to see him, but my Mom was very much against it. I think that it was because of his families' lifestyle. He had a sister that had a baby at 16 and all those kinds of things. You know back then that was a terrible thing, today it's pretty common. I do have to say this, after we were married my Mom thought the world of him! As a matter of fact, when my Mom passed away, I said she thought more of him than she did of me! She really loved him, and he was so good to her.

Interviewer: Where did you elope?

Blondie Anderson: To West Virginia, our license was bought there. We were married in Costonia, Ohio. We left one night, my cousin went with me and his mother went with us. I left a note with my other cousin to give to my mother in the morning, but he was foolish enough to go give it to her that night! She even left my father up here on the farm to shift for himself, and went to Edinboro. We didn't have school busses and I had to stay in Edinboro to go to high school. She went down and stayed with me so that I wouldn't see my husband, so I wouldn't see Ray. Of course, you know, I was a bad girl and it didn't work because I seen him anyway. So when my cousin went and gave her that note, she didn't come home that weekend. She wasn't supposed to have it until morning but she got it at night. She called the police and had them all out in Meadville after us, and we didn't happen to go that way! We went over to Conneaut and down through that way. Everything went fine. We got back home with ball-headed tires and 25 cents between us. I just can't imagine how we did that the way we did. I mean you couldn't have done that today. Nobody would have done that today. But I did finish my education after I got married. I went to school and got my diploma.

Interviewer: So no honeymoon?

Blondie Anderson: No, but we've had a good many since. We traveled; we've hit every state in the United States but two!

Interviewer: Which two?

Blondie Anderson: Washington and Idaho.

Interviewer: Who are your children?

Blondie Anderson: We had three girls. Almeda May Anderson, she was named after her two grandmothers. Almeda was Ray's Mother's middle name and May was my Mother's middle name. She was born January 9, 1942. Lou Rae Delilah Anderson was born March 4, 1944. She was supposed to have been a boy, so her name was supposed to have been Louis named after his father and his middle name. But she was a girl, so we took the "s" off of Louis and called her Lou Rae! Then our third girl came along quite a few years later; Robin Sue Anderson was born in November 1953.

Interviewer: Do any of them still live in the township?

Blondie Anderson: My oldest daughter lives right here on this property, just up two houses from me.

Interviewer: Who did she marry?

Blondie Anderson: She married Dale Ellis, who was from around here. His parents lived in McLane. My other two, Lou Rae married Archie Jones who was from Edinboro. His father and mother both were Chiropractors in Edinboro at the time. My Robin married a gentleman that was over from towards the Waterford area. That marriage dissolved after many, many years. She is remarried to a wonderful, wonderful husband.

Interviewer: Let's talk about schools. What schools were in the township that you can remember?

Blondie Anderson: There was Townline, Eureka, Silverthorn, Franklin Center, Mohawk, Goodban, Schaeffer, and that's all I can remember.

Interviewer: You went to Townline?

Blondie Anderson: I went to Townline.

Interviewer: Do you remember any of your teachers?

Blondie Anderson: Florence Swift, Ethel Stafford, Thora Harris, David Reno, Janette Mathewson, Velma Hayes, Delbert Hayes (we always called him "Daddy Hayes"), and that's it.

Interviewer: Was that a one-room schoolhouse?

Blondie Anderson: Oh, yes, and you know it's still standing up on Townline Rd. I'll tell you what, it's been remodeled and my sister-in-law and brother-in-law lived there. She's passed away but he's still there.

Interviewer: What were the grades there?

Blondie Anderson: Eight, and there was only between 12 and 15 kids in the whole school, that took up eight grades.

Interviewer: After that you had to go to Edinboro?

Blondie Anderson: Yes.

Interviewer: You mentioned all of your classmates earlier. Who was your best friend?

Blondie Anderson: I had three of them. Arlene [McCombs] Carlson was one of them, Charlotte Harned, lived just down past the school in the next house, and she lived in Franklin Township. We were real close friends; we used to travel, after I moved up on the corner here, she and I used to walk back and forth, which was probably close to a mile with our doll buggies in the summertime. Then, Arlene Carlson was a close friend; actually, the only time we spent (we didn't go to school together) together was when our parents were together for socializing. Then Goldie Kovaly, they moved here when she was 5 years old. They lived north of us in Washington Township, but on the same Townline Rd. They moved here from McKeesport, and I can remember the first time I saw her, her Dad came up to see my Dad and he had her with him. We were both the same age, my birthday is in March and her's is in May. They were Hungarian; her Dad had broken English. She had black hair, and a little red dress on and little red earring in and you never seen kids with earrings in back then. I thought she was the greatest person. She and I went all of the way through school together until our senior year. We were together we were inseparable. That was probably my closest friend.

Interviewer: Are any of them still alive?

Blondie Anderson: Yes, Arlene is alive, Charlotte is dead, and Goldie... I am just so happy over it because even after we all got married, Goldie and her husband and Ray and I were very close. She had two boys and we had the first two girls. Her boys were born two months after our girls. The guys worked together in Erie and rode back and forth together. They lived in McKean. Her husband was an alcoholic and she finally left him and raised her two boys. When she remarried, they moved over to Avonia, she went to work, I went to work, and we were just not close anymore because she was so far away. It's been that way ever since. She must have moved away late 1940's maybe and she's been away. Then, the second husband died. She's married for the third time and they moved back into Pennsylvania, but way up the other side of Springfield. It was always long distance [by phone], we never called; we would see one another maybe once a year. Two [eight] years ago, we kept track of each other, knew what we were doing, so about two [four] years ago, she moved into Franklin Township! She lives over here on Silverthorn Rd. We are back and forth; we call each other every week. It's so good to; I was just over there on Memorial Day. She called and wanted me to come over. I went over, I took my scrapbook over, and I'll tell you we sat there all evening her and I at the kitchen table, laughing and laughing. Saying, "do you remember this, do you remember that?" Then I would bring something up. Her husband, [Norman Hetz], was in the living room and he said, "I have never heard two people as old as you are giggling as you two have, like teenagers!" It's nice to have this relationship back again with her.

Interviewer: Did your parents live on a farm?

Blondie Anderson: My Dad had 50 some acres and of course, he was a small farmer. He couldn't compete with the Dunton's across the road or the Harris' on the other corner. He did all of his farming with a team of horses. He had a

walking plow and a drag, that now they would call it a disk I guess. Then he had a float that he built. It was just boards that he put together lengthwise; planks, not boards, and he put big rocks on them. He would go over the ground after he went over it with the drag. It would just crush up all of the big lumps. Then he would drag it again. He didn't have a lot of cows but we shipped milk.

Interviewer: What kind of crops did he grow?

Blondie Anderson: Corn, wheat, and of course the clover, to hay for the cows. He was a market farmer. He went to market every Friday. Now, when he did not have a car, he road with Charles Harris who also did the same thing. The old market house on 14th and State St., they would take their stuff to market. Now Daddy had chickens and he had a great big wooden churn. Now that's before he shipped milk. He had a separator, that he would milk the cows and bring that in and the milk would separate the cream. Then the cream for a week was kept and put in this big wooden churn (which I sometimes would do it) and made the butter and made the butter milk and made cottage cheese, which they called back then "smearcase". Oh man, it was so good, nothing like it today! Then he also butchered chickens that he took to market. He would take eggs and his buttermilk and butter.

Interviewer: Did you ever get to go to market with him?

Blondie Anderson: Oh yeah! That was a big deal to go to market! About the 2 or 3 years, that he had a car. I can remember it so plain; he would park up where the parking lot was up in back of the market. And at lunchtime (and Mom would go), they would buy a ring of bologna from one of the market places and we would have crackers. Isn't it funny that such a simple thing! We would go back up in that car and eat that ring bologna and crackers. That was the greatest thing! But you see that was probably the only time I ever got bologna. When Daddy would go with this gentleman, when he came home another big thing is, he always brought me fig bars (cookies) and red bananas. Oh man! They were delicious. And the fig bars, back then, were in a big barrel; you just pick them out and put them in a bag, how many you want. That was another big deal for me when I was a kid.

Interviewer: You mentioned him selling milk. Where did he sell it too?

Blondie Anderson: When he graduated from going to market, and then sold the milk to Carnation. In the wintertime, our roads were not plowed so 2 or 3 of the farmers would take turns and get together and take a sleigh with a team of horses and take it down to the highway down on McLane. Then the trucks would pick it up there.

Interviewer: Do you remember any of the neighbors getting tractors?

Blondie Anderson: yes, Dunton's and Harris' had tractors, they had electricity, and they had telephones when we didn't have them.

Interviewer: Was there a lot of sharing of equipment?

Blondie Anderson: Well, not with my Daddy because he didn't have any to share. I do remember there was somebody

who went through the community with a thrashing machine. I don't remember who it was because it might have been different ones at different times. I would imagine that was the way they made their living, doing the thrashing for people. We would have to get their meals for them when they came. That was a big day too. You would always have to have some help. Mama would always cook for thrashers but my aunt would come and help her or this lady down below, this Mrs. Lillie Bush might come and help her. I would say there would probably be 15 men to cook for. They would have dinner and supper both for them. The neighbors also had to have their thrashing done that way. None of the neighbors had thrashing machines. It would be just one person within the community that probably could afford a thrashing machine.

Interviewer: You mentioned butchering chickens. Did you have pigs also?

Blondie Anderson: Yes we had pigs.

Interviewer: Your Dad did all of his own butchering?

Blondie Anderson: He did all of his own butchering and took care of all of our own meat. When he would butcher a cow, Mama would can the beef. The pigs, he didn't have a smokehouse and he never smoked the meat. I was just telling somebody the other day; they said they couldn't imagine what it would be like. But it sure was good! Side pork, which today is bacon and it, was put down in salt, just packed in salt. Oh, my goodness was it good! They would bring up some of that and slice it and Mama would boil it in water to get the salt out and then dip it in flour and fry it. Then Grandma would make headcheese and then we would make Liverwurst and then the hams and shoulders from the pigs, we had great big crocks and there was some kind of a brine made with brown sugar and I don't know what all was put in it. And they were put in this brine and they would have put a big plate over the top of it and they would put a heavy stone, so as to hold it all down. They would bring up a ham, cut a slice off and Mama's cook stove, she would take a piece of wax paper off the bread wrapper (we never had wax paper, the bread was not in plastic, it was in wax paper), she would take that and polish off two burners, just polish them off and they would shine and not use a skillet, but cut slabs of that ham off and throw it right on the lid of the stove. Oh, man, was that ever good!

Interviewer: Did your Mom do a lot of canning?

Blondie Anderson: Oh, yes! She canned strawberries, but they were wild strawberries. We didn't have domestic kind of strawberries. She used to pick strawberries, I used to help, and she canned all kinds of fruit. I can remember another fruit, which today is so costly, but back then it was not that costly, was pineapple. My Mom used to buy quite a few pineapples, and she would can pineapple, so that we would have them for the winter, peaches, and apples. We always had an apple orchard. And plums and prunes, and all of those things and Mom canned them.

Interviewer: Where did you keep all of that stuff?

Blondie Anderson: We had a basement, it was a dirt floor, but didn't have cement on it. There were shelves; Daddy had put shelves up down there.

Interviewer: How big of a garden did you have? You mentioned an orchard. Was that just apple trees?

Blondie Anderson: No, we had the prune, prune trees, plum trees, apples, and we had red currents. Mama made red current jelly. We had a quince bush. She always made quince honey. I don't think you can even buy quince honey or jelly, I don't think there's probably a tree around that's called a quince tree today. But they had two of them; oh, that was so good. They had black currents too, red currents and black currents. Mama made jelly. We always had a good big garden because she canned everything. They always raised popcorn and so we had our popcorn in the wintertime.

Interviewer: Next we have the list businesses from in the Township at the time.

Blondie Anderson: The only thing I that I can remember was a cider mill in the Center on the east side Route 98, which would have been in Franklin Township. Also, there was a buggy shop in back of the Franklin Center School on Old State Rd. The school was right there on the corner of Old State St. and Route 98 and this buggy shop was kind of in back of it. That's the only ones that I remember in the Township. Now the doctors and the dentists that we had were in Edinboro. And I think there was a feed mill/ gristmill at McLane and there may have been a sawmill at McLane too. I'll tell you why I don't remember a lot of those things; I never got out of my yard until I went to school to Edinboro. I never knew what it was to go anywhere because we didn't have anyway to go. Mom and I, back when they had the trolley car that went from Edinboro to Erie, I remember Daddy taking us to McLane with the horse and buggy and we would catch the trolley car to Erie to do some shopping. I remember also the first silent movie, I don't know how that came about, but Dad, Mom, and I went to a movie in Erie, which was a silent movie. My Dad just thought it was the most ridiculous thing he ever saw. They were happy times too! Much more happy than the kids are today, really.

Interviewer: Do you remember the price of any of these commodities?

Blondie Anderson: Bread was 10 cents a loaf.

Interviewer: Where did you buy these things, up in Erie?

Blondie Anderson: Well listen, my Mother made bread. We didn't buy bread back in those days. My mother made everything. Somebody was just talking to me the other day on the phone and was talking to me about noodles. I said, "My mother always made noodles." She said, "Yeah she could remember when her mother did too." She would hang them on a noodle rack to dry. And I said, "You know what Janet? I made noodles, when we were first married; I did just like I had always done and like my mother did." I made noodles.

Interviewer: Ok, flour?

Blondie Anderson: Well I remember during the depression time, when things were bad. It was bad for my Mom and Dad. If it hadn't been for some friends that helped them out, I don't know how they would have ever gotten along. They gave them a lot of the staples, flour and things like that. And my husband, he had a horrible childhood, absolutely terrible. I don't know how he ever came through it. But he's told about a lot of things when he was a kid. He used to take lunch to school. He would have to take cold pancakes with lard on them. Even though everything was sparse, I was very fortunate because I had all of that stuff. I had cottage cheese, I had milk, and I had butter. My Mom canned, we had everything but some of the staples during the depression time like the sugar and that type of thing and flour. But we had eggs, we had meat, we had it all.

Interviewer: What about clothing? Do you remember what clothing cost back then?

Blondie Anderson: I don't because my mother made all of mine!

Interviewer: What about toys?

Blondie Anderson: I didn't get any toys.

Interviewer: What about candy?

Blondie Anderson: I don't remember. It must have been as I got older, I remember being in a store in Edinboro where you could get sticks of candy for a penny. I used to get some of that once in a while.

Interviewer: What about land and house values?

Blondie Anderson: Oh, my goodness. The only thing I can remember, I don't think they ever bought any. You know kids back then weren't involved in that. The only thing I can look back and this was after the '40s, it was 1956, see Ray and I didn't have to pay anything. The only thing when Mom and Daddy passed away we had inheritance tax to pay up here on the property, because I inherited it. When we bought over on Crane Rd. and that was in 1956, we only paid 8,500 dollars for that piece of property.

Interviewer: How big was it?

Blondie Anderson: It was maybe 2 Acres; I don't remember how big it was with the house on it.

Interviewer: What about furniture and household goods?

Blondie Anderson: Way back then, I wouldn't know. I know we had a davenport and chairs. Probably they were things that were handed down to my Mom and Dad, undoubtedly. I am sure they didn't go out and buy anything. I know when we cleaned house, they used to take the rugs out and put them on the line. They had a carpet beater, we used to go out and pound the daylights out of it, to get the dirt out of them. The dust would fly all over; you were a mess when you got done.

Interviewer: What kind of chores did you have on the farm?

Blondie Anderson: I was a spoiled kid. I was an only child, my Daddy spoiled me, but my Mother also spoiled me. She wouldn't let me go to the barn. She wouldn't let me get

messed up in any way, I've heard my aunt say that when I was a baby, I had colic very bad and they would walk the floor with me all night or all day. She used to say when you would fall asleep, when she went to lay you down, she had to pull every wrinkle out of everything you had on so you wouldn't lay on a wrinkle and by then she had me awake again. So I liked to go out and do things, but my Mom wouldn't let me. But I did a lot of housework and I learned at a very early age how to cook, to bake, and to clean. My Mom always told me, "If you only have 2 orange crates in your house, one to sit on and one to eat off, you keep them clean." That's what I learned.

Interviewer: When you moved to Edinboro, did you do any work there?

Blondie Anderson: Oh, yes I had to, because I had to pay my room rent. I worked in the school library. I want to say I got 58 dollars a month. I am not too positive. I think that might have been it.

Interviewer: What did you do in the library, were you a librarian?

Blondie Anderson: Took care of the books, checked them in and checked them out and got them all on file and so on.

Interviewer: Do you remember any Civil War or World War I Veterans living in the Township?

Blondie Anderson: I don't, but I had a great-uncle that was in the Civil War, but I didn't know him. And I had one also that was in the Navy at the time.

Interviewer: Let's talk about churches in the Township.

Blondie Anderson: Well, they held church in Townline School but my Mom and I, they had church at the Silverthorn School, which was over on the next road, which is just a mile apart. That's where she and I went.

Interviewer: What was the denomination there?

Blondie Anderson: I don't think they called it a denomination but it was a Baptist preacher from Northeast that would come, in the summer time only, because he couldn't get here in the wintertime. That's the only time we went was in the summer time. Mom and I would walk because those were the times when Daddy didn't have a car. My Dad was not a believer and I just thank the Lord that my Mother instilled in me that part of my life. I can remember so plain in the summer time going to Sunday school. We used to have Sunday school class out underneath the apple tree, all of us kids. Then, Rev. Shreve would come from North East and would preach.

Interviewer: Who taught Sunday school?

Blondie Anderson: I don't remember. I want to say Nellie Mathewson was one of my teachers. Now that was at the schoolhouse, it wasn't at a church. They held the church services at the schoolhouse.

Interviewer: You just couldn't stay out of the schoolhouse could you?

Blondie Anderson: That was the Silverthorn schoolhouse and my husband went over there, I think one year before he started coming up to Townline.

Interviewer: Let's talk about fun, recreation, and all of those kinds of things when you had time.

Blondie Anderson: Sure, we had lots of fun. In the wintertime, sliding down hills and the parents wherever we were at, when we got done, you know they would have us in for hot chocolate and cookies. It was always homemade stuff.

Interviewer: Did you have sleds?

Blondie Anderson: We had sleds. The first broken bone I had, I fell over a sled and broke my arm one night. I think I was about 8 years old. I had a terrible time, then I broke it again, and it didn't want to heal. Oh, my! We had an awful time. I went to school with a leather thing on my elbow because the bone didn't heal and it was turning to honeycomb. But I guess it got all right after a while. I remember they made me carry a lunch pail with a brick in it to keep pulling it down because it was up there so far. Different than it is today. Then in the summer time, all of kids would get together, 10 or 15 of us and we would have a wiener roast, have a corn roast, maybe walk 3 or 4 miles to somebody's orchard whenever the parents said we could use it you know. All of us would gang together, pick up a kid here, pick up a kid at the next place, and I look back at those times, build a bon-fire, never once did any of us think of having beer let alone drugs, never thought of such a thing. We just went and had good clean fun.

Interviewer: Where did you do your corn roasts and wiener roasts?

Blondie Anderson: In people's orchards or pastures. I can remember right up here on the corner, Dunton's had property, they lived in Washington Township, but they owned property right across the road in Franklin Township. It was an orchard from there clear down, oh quite a ways down past those other houses. It was old orchard, like old wild apple orchards, so we used to go there quite often. And then we would have them down in mine, in Mom and Dad's place. And then where Goldie lived, down the road further. We would have them in her orchard. Wherever we decided to have one, we asked the parents and it was always ok. We would build a fire, get sticks for the hotdogs and then we would have corn roasts in the fall, which was better eating corn then they can do it on the grill today.

Interviewer: None of those fires ever got out of control?

Blondie Anderson: Never. We never had any trouble, we were very careful. But can you imagine getting 15 kids together and as I say, now they have cars, they have to race the cars, they've got to have beer, and they've got to have drugs. We never thought of such stuff.

Interviewer: Did your parents drink at all?

Blondie Anderson: Never, smoked and never drank. The only thing that would happen there, when I would go to a

wiener roast or a corn roast, my Mother would send my Dad to see where I was at, to make sure that I wasn't with Ray.

Interviewer: That was the biggest worry!

Blondie Anderson: Uhuh!!!

Interviewer: Now were there any Township or school activities?

Blondie Anderson: At school, we had "Box Socials", now they were held usually on the holidays, like Valentine's Day, Halloween. They always had a program; we had a stage and have curtains. We would practice those skits for weeks and weeks. When the time came, we would have this for the whole neighborhood and it was open to the public and after we would have the play or the skits or singing whatever we had. Then we would end up with a "Box Social" at which time the girls would pack a lunch for two people, probably in a box about as big as a shoe box or a little bigger. We would decorate it with crape paper and beautiful bows to make it pretty. Then we weren't supposed to tell any of the boys what color our box was and then they would bid on them. We had one gentleman in the neighborhood that was an older man, (my girlfriend and I were just talking about that the other night) how we were always scared to death that he might get our box and we would have to end up eating with him! He was dirty, he was just everything, and he would always go to those "Box Socials". But the neighborhood was always invited. My mom would always go and she would decorate a box. They all did it see.

Interviewer: Do you remember who got your boxes?

Blondie Anderson: Oh yeah! I just brought a box down from the attic about three weeks ago, and in there were the napkins from one of the Valentine's "Box Socials" from when my husband...my boyfriend bought my box.

Interviewer: You told him which one was yours didn't you?

Blondie Anderson: I did and I shouldn't have because what happened, I usually did because I wanted to be with him. I told him and when he started bidding on that box (and you see those boys back then had 50 cents, 75 cents, or a dollar at the most to pay for a box, they didn't have any money) and I told him which one was mine and when he started bidding, one of the other boys (John Olsavski), he decided that it must be Blondie's box so he was going to bid on it and poor Ray had to pay \$11.00 [\$8.00] for that box! The poor kid didn't have the money, he had to go to his mother, and his mother loaned him the money. I've got the napkin and I just put it in my scrapbook, because I am making a scrapbook of Ray and I. I couldn't believe when I opened that box and found that napkin from that "Box Social".

Interviewer: I hope that was a good \$11.00 [\$8.00] lunch!

Blondie Anderson: Oh my! And one year in school, we were very, very bad kids. There were 4 of us that had gone through school together, all through the 8 years. Thora Harris was our teacher and she took a leave in the second semester, to have a baby. They called in Janette Mathewson to substitute, and she had been kicked out of every school there was. She just could not control kids, and all of the kids in

every school knew it, and of course we knew it. And we sure took advantage, and whatever happened to keep us out of reform school, us four kids two girls and two boys, Blair Dunton, Jimmy Wheeler, Goldie, and I. I will tell you, she would teach about 2 or 3 days and we would have her sick. She didn't drive, so she stayed to the neighbors at Leeson Fellows and then she couldn't get to school for 2 or 3 days. Then they would call Velma Hayes in, who really knew what discipline was. Some of the things that we did were terrible to that Janette Mathewson.

Interviewer: For example?

Blondie Anderson: We weren't even going in the schoolhouse for all day. She couldn't make us. We had every school desk and seat torn up from the floor. Back then when cleaned those plank floors, they did it with a green cleaning thing and it made it kind of slippery. Blair Dunton sat in back of me and when I sat down in my seat, he would give it a shove and it would slide clear up to the board. She finally wrote a letter to all of our parents and all of our mothers came to school one day around 2 o'clock in the afternoon (they were going to straighten these kids out) and we hadn't even been inside yet, we were all outside playing. Mrs. [Jennie] Dunton had been a school teacher years before and she said she wanted us all in the schoolhouse. She really made us go in. She said, "Now I want you all to get in your seats!" I said, "I don't have a seat." She said, "Well, you go sit on the floor where it was!" We used to put some of the smaller kids, they used to climb up on a cupboard that kept the books in and it was probably about a foot and a half from the ceiling. Phyllis Dunton would climb up there and we would give her a pail of water with a dipper and when Janette would go to get her down, she would pour a dipper of water on her. Can you believe that? One day we stayed outside throwing stones at the bell just to hear the bell ring and then when Janet would stick her head out to get us all back in, a stone would hit her on the head. We broke her glasses 5 times in one year! I shouldn't be telling that kind of stuff!

Blondie Anderson: We had a county superintendent that would come to the schools once a month. So, he came out and left a rubber hose for Janette when she was the teacher. I don't think that he had been gone 5 minutes when we had that away from her. She never got it back! I really got scared one time, because Blair had shoved me up the floor and she went after me, slipped on the floor, and fell down, so I got scared over that. But she was ok. Then the younger kids, Phyllis Dunton, I remember her one time she said that she had to go to the bathroom so Janette let her go. All of a sudden she's yelling down there "Help, Help!" Janette looks out the window and Phyllis is straddling the roof of the toilet. So Janette sent Goldie and I down to get her down and of course we got up there and we couldn't get down either. So then, the boys had to come and help us down. Another one was, the girls hid in the woodshed, you know the woodshed had great big round knotholes in it. So the boys went and got pails of water, they would throw it in the knotholes, and they got us girls soaking wet. So we went and told Janette, "We've got to go home because we are soaking wet." So she let all of the girls go home. So then, the boys said, "there wasn't any use for us staying here." So all of the boys went

home too! One day, we got to playing the organ and Goldie's brother Bob, got to ringing the bell and of course, the teacher couldn't hear the bell ringing because the organ was so loud. The Fire Company came! Well I guess that's enough of that!

Interviewer: Do you remember any other township gatherings?

Blondie Anderson: Yes, they had a group called the "Jolly Five", it was five different families, and their children and they would meet once a month. I was just reading some papers that my mother was the secretary of it. They would have refreshments and the parents would play games, the children could enter into them if they wanted to. She was secretary and they would write funny sayings about each person. She had in there one time that, "It was known last week that Howell Pulling drove Osie Lewis to town to buy toilet paper!" Just funny saying about each person. That met once a month, hilarious games, we would just laugh and laugh and laugh. Then once a year, they had a picnic, called the "Ramblamb Picnic", where it ever got its name I do not know! That's the only time us kids ever had ice-cream cones, was at that picnic. I couldn't eat ice cream; it made me sick every time I ate it. And then we had reunions and we always had a school picnic the last day of school. But it was picnics, but you know the parents had parties and they don't do that today. They had fun parties that kids could enjoy that parents enjoyed. As a matter of fact, probably ten years ago (I am the head of a lot of ministries at the church) and I held a party down there to the church in the basement. I called it an "Old Fashion Game Party" and I had some of the games that we used to play. Our pastor he just could not get over it! Everybody had so much fun! Everybody could play it, he was there and his grandparents were there and played too! He said, "Oh, Blondie, you have to do this again, just do this again!" We had "Button, Button, Who's got the Button?" and "Hide the Thimble." All of those kinds of things.

Interviewer: How do you play those kinds of games?

Blondie Anderson: Well, you take a great big twine string and put a button on it. You all sat in a circle and you all take a hold of the string and go like this (passing the button hand over hand) and somewhere that button is being passed all of the time. Different people will guess who's got the button. When they find out who has the button that person has to go in the center and then they watch to try and find out who has the button. And you don't want to hang on to the button real long, you want to get it to the next person you see. Oh, that's fun! And then the thimble, you hide the thimble and people look for it and "I spy!" Lot's of fun!

Interviewer: Who were the "Jolly Five?" Do you remember the five families?

Blondie Anderson: My Mom and Dad, my Aunt Osie and Uncle George Hush, Maribell and Sam LeSuer, Reginald and Evelyn McCombs [parents of Arlene Carlson], Martha and Lenny LeSuer [parents of Lyman LeSuer], and I think it started with five, but I think it gradually grew because my grandparents, Ellen and Howell Pulling were in on it and that's the only ones that I can remember. [Evelyn LeSuer McCombs and Lyman LeSuer are sister and brother.]

Interviewer: Do you remember anything about politics and government from when you were little?

Blondie Anderson: I just know we had a county superintendent who came to the school once a month but I do not remember whom he was. Charlie Harris was a justice of the peace and possibly a tax collector. Perry Mills was a road supervisor and he lived on Old State Rd. in Franklin Township. The plows just didn't go through, they just couldn't. If you got a real, real bad storm, you just couldn't get through the snow.

Interviewer: What were the roads like?

Blondie Anderson: Well, they were all dirt. My husband and I (which would have been in the early '40s) lived in the other apartment of this house up here on the corner; he could not get back and forth to work. So, him and the neighbor would walk to McLane and he finally decided to stay in Erie for a week at a time, in an apartment, him and Bill. During one of those weeks, I was across the hall to my mothers and my babies were asleep in their cribs and I just went over there, we were sewing. I was going back and forth, I was checking on the children. I walked back in there and I smelled wood burning. I thought, "Oh my goodness why do I smell wood burning (because we were burning coal)?" , I looked, here's the flames coming down through the ceiling, and back at that time, what were your chimneys like? It went up through the attic floor and there was nothing around it, nothing to protect. All you had, you didn't have drywall like you have today, you had what they called plaster [wall] board or it was like a cardboard on the walls. Well, the upstairs attic was not board; it was thick plank, about 2 inches thick. We didn't have a sink; we didn't have water in the house. I had a pan of dirty dishwater and (the snow was so deep I hadn't taken it outside to dump it) and I grabbed that and I threw that up there, which it made a mess but it finally controlled the fire enough. I managed to get upstairs, and the upstairs was the attic and it was just blue with smoke. It had two windows, one to each end, I crawled on my hands and knees and I put my foot through the two windows. Then I got back over to where the stovepipe came up through and I couldn't lift those boards because they were planks. And I screamed for my Dad of course, with that stuff, he would faint away. But anyway, I got another pail of water and I got it down in there and I did get it put out. I cut a hole, Daddy brought me an axe, I cut a hole downstairs, and I was able to get it put out. But, we couldn't get a fire department. I don't know how the neighbors all knew about it, but Byron Harris came dragging a big fire extinguisher over, but I had got it put out by the time he got there. He couldn't even walk through the snow. You have no idea what winters used to be!

Interviewer: Do you remember any Township roads that had different names back in the past?

Blondie Anderson: Well, Fry Rd. was Townline Rd. I see the question is when was it changed to Townline and why? I don't remember when it was changed. It's been changed since the 40's. Why it was changed, I don't know. I was thinking about it the other day, there was a family north of Old State Rd. by the name of Fry, Harvey and Minnie Fry;

they were brother and sister. Now whether that was the reason for changing it, I don't know. I drove a school bus! My dad drove a school bus with the horse and the sleigh and a wagon. Then, when Ray and I moved in there, then we took over. We bought a panel truck (a huge, huge panel truck). We only hauled kids to Townline School, from a long ways down. That had to pass state inspection, the police had to inspect it and we had to build seats along the side in the panel truck. We took all of the other seats out and put wooden seats in, with so many inches per child, pertaining to the number of children that we had to haul. We hauled the children and when he went to the service, I hauled the children. Back then, if the gas line plugged up, I just got out and took the tire pump, blew it and cleaned it out. You didn't have cars like you have today. I put chains on in the wintertime and there have been nights where I would have to shovel. But, my boys on the bus would shovel with me. One night, I got the boys pretty near taken home when one of the boy's dads met me, because he knew I was going to have trouble. He said, "Don't try and go back that way alone! I will help you get down to the corner and then you take this dirt road in McKean Township, they've got it clean." I had to go back down to the highway and come back to McLane and we lived up there on the corner then. That was an experience! I drove the bus while he was in the service.

Interviewer: Do you remember any major natural disasters?

Blondie Anderson: We had a tornado one time that went through. It didn't hit our place, but it took a silo down on 99. It kind of went south of us, which at that time was a big deal. We didn't have storms in the summertime like that. I'll tell you another disaster it was a fire. I'll tell you why it was a disaster, because I ended up in the hospital. We were headed for a dance; it was a Saturday night. This was back in the 1940s. We pulled out of our place, and we got up to the hill on Fry Rd. We happened to see this blaze west of us. Ray turned around and came back down and we went that way. We got clear over to it, turned around, came back, and went up Fry Rd. to head for the dance. It was dusty and of course this road wasn't even blacktop. Some of the firemen were coming from Edinboro down Fry Rd. and the dust was so thick you couldn't see. It was worse than any fog. We hit head on with one of the firemen, right up at the top of the hill. Ray's sister was with us, and I was sitting in the middle, the windshield broke and she started screaming. Ray jumped out and got her out of the car, layed her on the ground and she was bleeding all over. I thought, "Gee, I have to get out there and help." Of course, we had running boards on the car. I went to go put my foot on the running boards of the car and there wasn't any feeling in it. I bent down to look at it, the bone was sticking out, blood started running, and then I couldn't see. I had cut my eyelid and it had fallen down over my eye. So, the couple that was going to go with us was right there on the hill and they heard the crash. Their Dad had just left, so they thought it was him, so she came running out. Then she called Royce, and they finally got us into Royce's car. Ray didn't go with us because he had to get the car off of the road. They got us down to the doctor's office and another couple down the road that was going with us too, they stopped there and she rode with us, got us down there.

My sister-in-law screamed all of the way. She didn't have any broken bones, but she just screamed all of the way. They called the ambulance, got her in the ambulance and they were going to call another ambulance for me. I said, "No, just let me sit up in the front seat with Mr. Kiehl. So, I had rode in the front seat with him. He had given me a shot because the doctor looked at my foot and said, "I can't take care of that, you're going to have to go to the hospital." I was afraid that I was going to pass out and go under I wanted a special doctor. So I said to Mr. Kiehl, "Now you stand by me until we get the doctor because I want so and so and don't let some other doctor look at me!" Finally, my husband got there, they had wanted to get me to lie down, and I wouldn't do it. I was sitting in a chair. When he got there, he got me laid down. So, I spent a week in the hospital because I had broken ribs and a broken ankle. So that was a disaster that fire and the automobile wreck, all over the fire.

Interviewer: What ethnic backgrounds do you remember in the Township, immigrants and such?

Blondie Anderson: The only one that I really remember was this friend of mine Goldie, they had come from Hungary. That was really the only one that I remember. Well, Grandpa Bush, they were Swedish. But, now Ray's great grandparents came from Sweden. Now I suppose Grandpa Bush must of came from Sweden. Then this Goldie's parents came from Hungary.

Interviewer: What diseases do you remember being prevalent during your childhood?

Blondie Anderson: All of the childhood diseases back then. When we would get a disease in school, my Mother kept me out of school because she didn't want me to ever get a disease. I did get measles and I can remember them putting a bed in the living room. Because back then, you were sick! I lay two weeks in that bed by the window. Kids would come to the window to talk to me, but I had to keep the curtain closed no light in my eyes. That's the only disease I had, because my Mom, as soon as chicken pox or anything broke out, she would keep me home. Consequently, I had them when my kids had them. I had chicken pox, supposedly whooping cough, and the whole thing. I got the mumps and my husband got the mumps when my kids got them in school.

Interviewer: They are a lot harder on adults.

Blondie Anderson: Yeah they are. I was sick in bed and my husband was sick in bed.

Interviewer: What did people die from at an early age?

Blondie Anderson: The flu. I don't know what they really, an awful lot died from the flu. This Charlie Harris, lost I think his Mother and Father. That might have been diphtheria, I don't know for sure because that was before my time but I've heard him tell of it and some of his brothers and sisters. It might have been diphtheria or it might have been what they called the old fashioned flu. It's a different flu than we have now.

Interviewer: Where are people buried?

Blondie Anderson: Most people are buried right down here in the McLane Cemetery.

Interviewer: Do you know of any other cemeteries in the Township?

Blondie Anderson: No, not in the Township.

Interviewer: In the area, where people from the Township were buried.

Blondie Anderson: Well, I was just reading in my genealogy book last night, there is cemetery on Old 99 between McKean and McLane, and there were some people buried there. I don't know the name of that cemetery either. I don't think that it's visible, I think it's completely gone.

Interviewer: Is there anything that we missed that you would like to talk about?

Blondie Anderson: No, I guess not. I'm thinking of this road out here. One time my Dad was very sick and I had to get him to a doctor. I had to call Perry Mills, who was the snowplow driver to see if he could get the road open so that I could get out. Something like 3 hours just with the plow trying to get through. He finally got it open so that I could get my Dad to the doctor. You know, we didn't go to the doctor. If we had anything wrong with us, we didn't go to the doctor; it was taken care of at home. If you got pneumonia or something, they put mustard [poultice] on you and drew it out of you. We didn't have antibiotics. They didn't even have them back then. Get some herb tea down you. Back when my kids had pinkeye, put a warm tea bag on your eye, and it always worked. My daughter about 2 years ago, she works for a therapist, and she got a sore eye. The therapist told her, I want you leave early today, I think you have pink eye. Go to the doctor. So she left early, she went home. She said, "Mom, it used to work years from now, why won't it work now?" So, she put a tea bag on her eye, kept it warm and bound it up around her head at night. She got up the next morning, took it off and it was fine! She went to work and he said, "Did you go to the doctor?" And she said, "Yes I did." He said, "Well, what did he say?" She said, "Well look at it." He said, "It looks fine. What did he do give you medicine?" She said, "Well he took care of it!" So then, she told him what she did. So, I don't know of anything we've missed!