

Abstract – John Mandarano

Interviewee: John Mandarano

Interviewer: Zack Modine, Matt Morgante, Tommy Murphy

Date: October 12, 2017

Location: SUNY Cortland Memorial Library, Cortland, New York

Length: 50:02

John Mandarano was born on February 26, 1954 and has lived in the city of Cortland his entire life. The eldest of five children he has had a good positive relationship with both of his parents and all of his siblings. He was especially close with his father who owned and operated a machine and tool shop in town until 1976. John is a Machinist by trade, a Career he was inspired to do because of his father. His Father's shop got most of its business from the Brockway Motor Company and when Brockway shutdown in 1977 most of the necessity for a Machine shop in Cortland went away as well. His father's shop, Cortland Machine and Tool is also how he became close with his younger brother, Patrick, because of his father having both of them around his machine shop when they were young. As a result of their experience in their father's Machine shop, John and Patrick have their own business venture together where they manufacture custom pieces that people order from them. They both enjoy this because they are able to pick and choose which projects they work on giving them freedom in their work. John worked all over Cortland County throughout his 40+ year career as a Machinist working for his father's shop as well as Haskell Machine and Tool in Homer, New York. Then when Haskell Machine and Tool burned down in 1978 he moved to Collier Machine in Ithaca, New York. After working at Collier for a period of time he then went back to Cortland to work for Wilson Sporting Goods, making tools and jigs and machinery for their racquetball line of products. John began working for Pall Trinity in Cortland, New York and has been working there for the past 36 years. John is also very involved in the History of Cortland He is a member of the Cortland County Historical Society as well as a board member of the CNY Living History Center. He helps plan a Brockway truck show that goes down Cortland's Main Street every August. He is also a part of planning the exhibits in the CNY Living History Center helping design the layout of what should be shown and the rotation that they should display all of the pieces of history that they have there. His passion for the history and preservation of Cortland is inspiring.

Field Notes – John Mandarano

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Interviewer: Tommy Murphy, Zack Modine, Matt Morgante

Date: October 12, 2017

Location: Memorial Library, SUNY Cortland Campus, Cortland NY

Length: 50:02

The Interviewee: John Mandarano has lived in Cortland County for over sixty years and is a tool machinist. He has worked doing many different jobs working with machinery all over Cortland County, starting in 1975 working at his father's shop, Cortland Machine and Tool until 1977, after 1977 John began moving around working at different machine shops in Cortland County in order to better learn the trade of being a of being machinist. He has worked for machine shops in Cortland, Homer, and Ithaca manufacturing many things over the years. He has seen the massive changes that have happened to businesses in the area as a result of manufacturing locations leaving central New York. He was educated locally and went to Morrisville State College. He is a member of the Cortland County Historical Society. He is currently updating a book about Cortland that was published in 1958. Mr. Mandarano is also on the board for the CNY Living History Center where he helps plan out their exhibits. [Interviewer's note: Born in Cortland in 1954 to John and Elizabeth Mandarano; 3 sisters Lila, Jean, and Joanne, and brother Patrick; Grandmother Lila Mandarano; wife Delores A. Burbach Mandarano; daughter Andrea Mandarano, a recent graduate of SUNY Cortland.]

The Interviewers: The Interview was conducted by three students from SUNY Cortland, Matt Morgante, Tommy Murphy, and Zack Modine. All three students are undergraduates at SUNY Cortland. This interview was a part of their Public History course. -- HIS 280, Fall 2017, with interviews as part of a project on the Wickwire factory for the 1890 House Museum.

Description of the Interview: The interview was conducted in a study room on the third floor of the Memorial Library on the SUNY Cortland campus. The library sits at the top of the hill on campus. John was sitting on one side of the table while all three interviewers were on the other asking him questions. There were no interruptions during the interview and we spoke with John for nearly an hour.

Note on Recording: The Interview was recorded on Dr. Faulkenbury's Zoom H4N.

Transcript- John Mandarano

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Length: 1 audio file, 00: 50: 02

Thomas Murphy: All right, this is Tommy Murphy

Zack Modine: I am Zack Modine.

Matt Morgante: Matt Morgante.

John Mandarano: John Mandarano.

TM: So John, why don't you start out by telling us a bit about yourself, your upbringing, where you are from and what you do?

JM: OK I was born in Cortland New York, 1954. I started grade school in Barry school which is right over here on Delaware Avenue and I went to school there until I was in the third grade. And then we went to St. Mary's School. From there I was in parochial school for the next six years until grade 9, and I went to the high school, Cortland High School, and graduated from Cortland High in 1973. From there I went to Morrisville. I took auto tech over there. I graduated

in 1975. And along the way I had several jobs during the summers. I worked for a contractor down in Marathon, New York for a summer. And we built houses and barns and it was a great experience. But my dad owned Cortland Machine and Tool, and I had grown up around machinery, and so I was interested in machinery a little bit more, I found out, that I was building, contracting and had taken drafting courses both at the high school with Mr. Stroh and over at Morrisville. So I really thought I wanted to be an engineer. But as time went on, I got more satisfaction out of creating whatever it was we're building from the prints. And so that was a little bit more rewarding for me so I had a chance with my dad owning a machine shop to get in there and learn the machine tool trade. He had approximately 15 people in there employed as machinists and tool makers and die makers. And so there was a well-rounded cast of characters there. And most of them were older gentlemen that worked at Smith-Corona and there was a guy there from the Wickwires, Brewers. And I think there was one more from Brockway. Of course.

JM: So the parts that we made at Cortland Machine and Tool. We made it. We had a line of our own. And it was a design that we built and that was hanking machine.

JM: And most of that product line went down in the southern part of the country and we did work for Smith-Corona we did work for Edlund's. We did and Edlund finally became Monarch and we did work for Monarch too. And then the Brockway truck. We made a lot of parts for Brockway Trucks because the machine shop was set up, specifically for making parts for the trucks. Even before my dad bought the place. One foot note, my dad was a partner with a gentleman down in Marathon and was a good friend of his. His name was John Clarke. My dad's name was John Mandarano also.

JM: We continue to make quite a few improvements in the shop, while I was there. I worked full time there from 1975 until early in 1977. My dad sold the machine shop in July of

1976. He had an opportunity to sell it and myself and my brother we were really weren't interested in running a machine shop. We wanted to pursue our careers. You know as we saw fit and he let us, so he sold the machine shop and shortly after he sold the machine shop, Brockway's went out of business in March of 1977 and that put up a big hole in the economy of Cortland. As far as the people who were affected mainly were the people who worked at Brockway. But everybody that had a sub-shop, and by sub-shop I mean did work for Brockway around this community and around New York State also suffered.

JM: And so Mack collected up all the goodies that they wanted and they took them to Allentown, along with the Brockway management. They were all offered jobs down in Allentown and two went down in Hagerstown, Maryland. Most of those guys had, you know, I'm going to say 7 to 15 years in the seniority. And they wanted to you know be vested so they could get a pension so they moved down there and I knew a lot of them and I know a lot of them when they retired down there they came back to Cortland because this is where their families were from. So in, early in 1978, I decided that I wanted to move on. Most of the fellows that I've worked with were like I said older gentlemen all had good careers. But in the beginning of their careers, and throughout their careers, they always seemed to change jobs. So in order to get a well-rounded background in machine, machinery and machine tools, I felt that I needed to move on and explore some other avenues. So I went and I got a job at Haskell Machine and Tool up in Homer on Fulton Street and I was there a very short period of time, and they had they had some different machinery there. And it was a lot different work and I was really enjoying it. And I think it was in March of 1978 that the place burned to the ground. So I was out of a job again. So, the economy in Cortland really wasn't that great. I didn't feel I was going to be able to achieve a job in Cortland or Wilson Sporting Goods.

JM: They were here and they made tennis rackets down on Kellogg Road, and they were interested, but I decided I was going to go to Ithaca and see if I get a job over there and I did. I worked for Lawrence Kolar, Kolar Machine on Cliff Street. And I was over there for a while. He again he had some different machine tools over there. He had a great, great client base of customers and just Super-Duper people can't say enough about them. I learned a lot from Lawrence and I learned a lot from Dan LeGlorio, his son-in-law. And Wilson Sporting Goods I'd been over at Kolar for a while and they called me one day and said that they had an offer that I couldn't refuse. And they did. And so I told Lawrence that I was going to have to move on.

JM: I was going to go back home and I did. And I worked at Wilson Sporting Goods for probably year and a half before that. What I did down there was I made tools and jigs and machinery for their racquetball line. They got in the racquetball business probably a little bit late but that same line of work I was doing was at Haskell's, OK. The work I was doing at Haskell's wasn't getting done. So they needed somebody that was familiar with what their product line was and so that's how I got the job. So I went down there and I did quite a lot of machine for about a year and a half, and then the sales of the racquetball rackets and the whole sporting goods line was not doing very well in Cortland and they had decided that I was going to do some other things and the other things I was going to do I really wasn't interested, and I'd heard about Pall Trinity I had done work for Pall Trinity while I was at Cortland Machine and Tool. It was all stainless work and it was a fairly complex work and I had been, I delivered parts out to Pall Trinity. I'd been in the QC facility when we'd drop the parts off. They checked the parts and I'd got to know some of the people there. So I decided that I was going to go out to Pall Trinity and put an application in and that's what I did. And it was only, I put the application in and the next day I had an interview and the next day I'm pretty sure I went to work there.

JM: And I stayed there for 36 years and I really enjoyed it. Again they had some machinery that was I think was pretty special stuff and I enjoyed running it. It was all good machinery they kept the machinery, in as far as they didn't let it really get old they turned it over. While I was there I was involved in three big product lines, the first product line that we manufactured when I went there were dryers. OK and that's what the Trinity Equipment Corporation had manufactured prior to Pall Corporation buying Pall Trinity micro. And they bought that in 1961. I went to work there in late 1979. October 15, 1979 I went to work there. These dryer units what they do is they dry air from compressors on big ships and military ships. They have compressors on there. The moisture gets in. You know, if the air is not dried then the moisture gets in, rust develops, and is not good for any of the implements that they're using on the other end of that air. So these dryers, some of them were huge and they were built on a skid of their own. That line they decided I think around 1980 that they were going to and they shipped that whole business line to Ocala, Florida, and some of the help with it out here in Cortland went to Ocala with that line and so then they moved in and they decided they're going to manufacture houses housing specifically too. And we were doing a little bit of that before but housing, specifically to put Pall filters in. And so again we use big, big machinery we had two big lathes out there, and then we acquired, in 1985, we acquired another big lathes and was even bigger it would swing, I would say 72 inches. That's pretty good size lay. And then we bought a big radial drill. Since it isn't big for a drill, it was humongous. We had to pour like 12 or 18 inches of concrete under it to support it. That's how big it was and we used it. We used all of that machinery. We manufactured some really nice housings, and they were sold all over the world.

JM: In 1996, they brought me in 1995, the decision was made that they weren't going to manufacture housing to Cortland any longer. So they decided that they were going to do that in

Houston because most of the steel we were using was coming out of Houston. Most of the port where we shipped a lot of that housings where they were going back down there. So it kind of made sense to move that operation to Houston. So they did, and that left us with a shop full of nothing again, for the second time that I was there. And I'm not really sure that the management in Cortland really knew exactly what direction we were going to go in, but they decided corporate and Cortland they knew they had a good workforce. They had a good facility, they had in this facility, there's three overhead bridge cranes and the bridge cranes they lift five ton and ten ton and they travel all over the plant. They've got capabilities to travel wherever we needed it. So as far as lifting stuff up we always had the cranes.

JM: They decided that in 1996 that they were going to manufacture water systems. And so they had a filter and what we did is we added a design force. They brought in some designers and we use some of our own engineers and they came up with the design of several different water capabilities as far as gallons per minute of filtration. Depending on the size of your operation. Let's say Cortland uses two million gallons a day. We had a unit we built the unit specifically to do two million gallons a day. OK if you want a bigger unit or there was a cushion there, if you wanted a bigger unit, like down in Pittsburgh. And they do you know maybe they do 10 million gallons a day down there. So we built these racks and you can put the racks together so you could increase your volume if you wanted to or decrease the volume depending on the amount of water you want to filter.

JM: So that's what I did for the next 16 years, I worked in a water filtration division in Pall. And I think that was very successful. I think we made a good product and they're still making it out there today. So that's my work history, and you know, basically I think I had a

great career. I by no means feel my career is over. I do own some machining of my own and I do some work when time allows, and I get to pick and choose now what I want to do.

TM: OK. That's awesome. So can you tell us about your childhood in Cortland? Like what was it like growing up here?

JM: Yeah. My childhood in Cortland was, I don't think you could get any better. My dad really liked the outdoors. My mom, she kind of liked the outdoors too. And one of the biggest things that I used to like to do is go sledding. And we did a lot of that and that was before snow machines are really you know, nobody knew what a snow machine was. So we had a hill that was on the south end of our street and was a pretty good sized hill. Then we used to go over there with the toboggans, sleds, and skis and try it out. And my dad, he liked to go ice skating. And when we went ice skating, in quite a few places and the story I like to tell is that you know we never saw any ice as nice as when the Park center opened.

JM: We usually were riding a wave. When we got to skate on the ice in the arena there, it was just it was like heaven. It was great. It was gliding and then you know there were some guys that were speed skaters around here too. And you know I'd really never seen too many speed skaters but these guys but when they got on that ice they could really travel. They could go. I say they were going at least 40 miles an hour. Yeah they had a long skate and they sharpened them themselves. Now it was great. And so you know as far as growing up in Cortland, I got to see a lot of things. You know the sledding is a thing that I, I still got my sled and it was my dad's sled before that, so it's got a lot of miles on it. And that's one of the things I really enjoyed and the other thing I really enjoyed was playing basketball. I played basketball in school and we always had. The neighborhood I grew up in there was always between 10 and 12 kids maybe 14 that were all my age. So we always had enough to have a team and we went all over playing. In the

spring we played and you know as soon as it got warm we'd be playing in the driveway. In the wintertime we would come over here to the college and get in the field house where it was nice and warm. And you know back in those days there was five courts in there. I'm going to say that was probably about 1967-1968. There were five courts in there and very nice. It was only like one game going on in there, maybe two. And so we would go in there and a lot of times the college students, we get to know some of the college students and then we break up and we go play with them and it was a great experience. And during the summer, riding a bike.

JM: We lived on the south side of the city here near the college and my grandmother lived on the east side and we from the time I was probably five years old I used to ride my bike down to her house and it's probably three 3-3 1/2 miles down and back. On the way, if I had a dime or something, I stopped at the home dairy and get a doughnut or there were a lot of mom and pop grocery stores scattered throughout the city also, and some of them had some nice grape gumballs, you know. And so you could buy a grape gumball for two cents. That was a big deal. And things like that. Every store had a little specialty novelty that they sold. But that bike got me. You know I was more or less independent on that bike, it got me where I wanted to go. And I had a great time on it.

JM: And we used to ride over to Wickwire pool in the summer and go swimming over there. I learned how to swim over there at Wickwire pool, through the Red Cross curriculum that they had there during the summer.

JM: And I went over there at a very early age. My parents were pretty much bent on me learning how to swim, and I'll tell you that was one of the most rewarding things that I think that they gave me was that ability to swim because I use it a lot and still use it today. I really enjoyed going swimming. And in Cortland, you know you got Yaman Park, and I will have to say this,

that Mr. Jim Yaman even donated that property down there for Yaman Park and he has been a super, super supporter of Cortland and a great ambassador of Cortland. He passed away last year and now we miss him very much. Those are the kind of things that we did and the bike also, you know the other thing that went on in the city was the Brockway trucks OK.

JM: They manufactured those trucks probably at the very minimum of four or five trucks a day. OK. So when I was riding my bike it didn't matter where. If I went out of that house and I rode to the other side of town, I was going to see a Brockway truck. There was no getting around it. And then you could stand down on the end of the line that came out on Hubbard Street and watch the trucks roll right off the line there. So that was pretty neat. And a lot of times you know you take that stuff for granted. But my dad being a guy that manufactures some parts for that I can remember when we used, my grandparents my mother's parents lived in Phelps, New York and we used to go out there quite a bit during the summer. And we got on the New York State Thruway, once I think it was probably the first time my dad ever was on the Thruway. First thing he said was "start counting the Brockways, I want to see how many are on this road." So that was you know like I said a lot of people took it for granted. But it was something that I still remember and I think it's I think was pretty neat. Yeah.

MM: So can you tell us about your siblings, if you had any? Their ages, their names?

JM: Oh yeah I had some siblings, Yeah. I've got four siblings I've got three sisters and I've got a brother. My sister Lila is a year younger than me, and she was a pretty smart girl. She graduated from Clarkson. She thought she wanted to be an accountant and she ended up in real estate. And she's had a good life, and all my siblings had a great life. My sister Jean is three years younger than I. And she started out doing clerical work. She ended up in Oshkosh, Wisconsin believe it or not, and her husband worked at Brockway Motor Truck. And he had some family,

and he was there when it closed, and his name is Mike Poka. Her name is Jean Poka. They decided that they wanted to stay in the truck business and so they went out and they both got jobs at Oshkosh Truck and they successfully ended a 30 year career here just lately. And Oshkosh Truck is still going very well. They just celebrated their 100th anniversary of making trucks. They got their first truck out there, the first truck they made is Old Betsy. She's in the showroom out there. And my sister Joanne. Her name was Joanne Securra. She lives in Utica, New York. Sherrill to be specific, she works at Utica Mutual. She's been in the insurance business for over 30 years. My brother Patrick, he's a machinist with Pall Corporation still today. Him and I have been in a business venture for the last 25 years. We call it Mandarano Brother Machine and Tool, and the direction of our business sometimes changes, sometimes it's real estate, sometimes its machining, sometimes farming. We are pretty versatile guys, him and I both. He's about six years younger than I am, and he and I and my dad we spent quite a bit of time together and I hit my hats off to my dad for making the relationship what it is today.

TM: So how has life in Cortland changed since you've lived in Cortland?

JM: The biggest change has been that the foundation of industry today in Cortland is a lot smaller than it was when I grew up. The manufacturing facilities that we've had around here have, to my sadness, really have gone away. I think that corporate America has basically taken them over. I still feel however that the trades of welding and machining and building are still alive and well but I believe that this community would be a lot better off if we still had those things here. Those places always contributed to the community. It's pretty difficult today to get, you know the people that we've got left, we lean on them pretty heavy, and they and they do a good job of contributing to the community. And my hat's off to them. But if the manufacturing base had lasted in Cortland, and I believe this skill set is somewhat still here. So that the

manufacturing could survive if we can get it back in here somehow, someday. But I don't see that happening.

JM: I think that some of the manufacturing in Cortland went away because they didn't rapidly keep up with the customer demands. The customer is always changing you know and it's one of the things that we did at Pall Trinity is we always tried to change the product line and make it better.

JM: And ask the customer. You've got the biggest thing you got to do. You've got to be in touch with your customers, you've got to know what your customer wants, you got to know what your customer is doing, and if your customer changes his program, you want to be there to help them change. And if you're not there, you know if you're not there or if you've got an idea that he's not warming up to that you think he should. Then we know it doesn't work. Well you've got to listen to the customer. And so as far as you know how it has changed I think that's the biggest change. I think that, you know, the people in Cortland, New York were very creative and innovative back the day. But there was certain facilities in Cortland that didn't keep up with the times and had they kept up with the times, I'll tell you what this community would have been something. Smith-Corona is just an example of that.

JM: You know they had the typewriter and the keyboard, and if they would have got with the computer program, I think they could teamed up with whoever, you know, if they thought but they didn't think that the market was going to go that way. If the market, heck you know if the market stayed with typewriters they would still be in the typewriter business. But it didn't go that way. Typewriter is a manual machine you know even when they electrified it, was not going to be as fast as a computer. So those are the biggest changes. And I think that you know when I was a kid there were a lot of shops and five and dime stores on Main Street and some of your big box

stores have come in here in and kind of taken that business away from them. Mom and pop grocery stores that's a big change. There used to be a lot of them around Cortland. And like I said, earlier they all had a specialty you know. And they're gone. And I think as far as like a neighborhood grocery store, P&C down there at Riverside, I think is probably in your neighborhood grocery store now. Where before you had the guy who owned it cut the meat and he was a cashier. He carried your groceries out. So those are some of the changes.

JM: Farming is another thing that's, you know, changed big time too, because again, the farmer that had you know he's milking 35 to 75 cows, and he can find it too hard to compete in today's market. So, you know, the guy said that their they're basically family businesses and started out as family businesses the guys that saw the way the market was going to go, increased their herd. And so now you've got guys milking between 1000 and 1500. And the cow is a machine today. They just you know when they get done with the cow then you're gone. It's got to produce some much or it's not going to be in the house.

TM: It's just meat at that point.

JM: Yeah.

ZM: What's the best change that you have seen in Cortland since you have grown up?

JM: The best change? I'd have to think about that one for a few minutes. I think that one of the best things is 81 coming through. I think that has brought a lot of commerce to Cortland. And in my opinion that was probably one of the biggest things. The development of Yaman Park down there that was huge because you only had Wickwire Pool to begin to swim and we had you know the population was growing, and I think that Yaman gets used a lot. And I think that's a big one. I'm trying to think if there was. I think that any business that invests in Cortland I think

that's big also. I know that Pall Trinity has got a big investment here. And they're currently using three buildings in Cortland. They own two and they lease the Smith-Corona building from David Yaman. That's a positive and is a good thing. The other thing the water supply in Cortland is an aquifer. And I think that the restrictions that they put on, any contamination and any of that stuff and the policing of the aquifer itself, ok because it is probably the most valuable resource that we have here. We have clean water. We really don't have to filter a whole lot of water. And I'm going to say that this central New York community is very fortunate with the Finger Lakes and with the aquifer system we've got. The protection of that I think is huge because that not only you know is a source of drinking water for us, but it's a good selling point for Central New York also, as far as you know if industry wants to come in here and they need to use water. We have got that resource.

TM: So just to add to that, I read in the *Cortland Standard* recently that I saw an article that says 10 million dollars has been awarded to Cortland for the revitalization of downtown. What do you think about that, and like what are some ideas that you have that might like you know help Cortland?

JM: I think that Cortland is well deserving of that money. I think that the state, like the governor said in that article, you know, upstate kind of got left in the dust in years past and now maybe they're trying to rectify that problem. I do know Gary VanGorder who's in charge of the industrial development in Cortland County, and I think he's done a magnificent job. And he's spent a lot of time on this project. And I know he'll spend a lot of time on each individual project that they've got in the pipeline.

JM: I think that each of the projects that they do have in the pipeline, I think they are all good projects. I don't know that I would have anything that I could add to it. But I think they are all great ideas and they can help out downtown Cortland.

TM: So, let's move on to, you have your book here. The book is detailing the history of Cortland.

JM: So I got the 1958 sesquicentennial yearbook here which Cortland [County] Historical Society published with the Wilkins Foundation back in 1958 and was the 150th anniversary of Cortland County. What they did with the book is they interviewed a lot of people and wrote stories about the schools, the churches, the parks, and the industry.

JM: And currently we're trying, the Cortland Historical Society with a pretty big team is trying to move this book in from 1958 to 2019. OK, so we're looking for 60 years of history. And my task here has been to look at the industry that was in the book and that was written about in the book, and there's about 35 or 36 of them in there. And I think there's maybe 10 of them left surviving in Cortland County. So with what we're doing with the book is getting these stories together. Like you say, most of these industries in Cortland have gone out of business. So what we've done is we've gone back in the archives and tried to find newspaper clippings or other articles that were written about them and bring it up to speed and create a story from those articles. And if we can find anybody that worked there that's still alive that and has memories of it then we're going to go down that avenue also. And we have been and we hope to get this thing done by early 2019. It's probably going to be 2019. The book also had a lot of I had like 256 advertisements in it. Because not everybody got a story in it, but 256 advertisements of businesses, of churches.

TM: So local known mom and pops grocery stores, stuff like that?

JM: Yeah right. Absolutely. Absolutely. Paving companies, cement mixing, Cortland Ready Mix. You know they're in the book that the car dealerships they were in the book and they got a picture of their dealership, and it's pretty neat if you look back on it and you know. For me it's neat because I can I look in the book and I see cars that I really recognize. You know because I was you I was a car guy from. A wheel guy, when my dad bought the machine shop I thought that was great because it was full of wheels in there.

TM: Anything to get you going a little faster.

JM: Right and anything that could make me independent. So you know when I look in the book and I see like, you know, a 1957 Corvette in there and a bunch of guys you know that probably I knew back in the day the mechanics, salesman that you know the guy that owned it you see those people and you can you know you get a sense of community there. And so that's where I want that's the biggest thing I want to put forward with this book is if we can get some pictures of things and then you know 50-60 years from now there will be a guy like me that wants to look at that book and he'll be satisfied as to you know that's the way it used to be. That's the way I remember it. I was with you guys in the 1890 House a couple weeks ago, and you saw the picture upstairs and you picked that. OK. So when I look at that picture, I see you know, I see that it's pretty empty. And so I picked out landmarks that I know are there. OK. And then I fill it in from there and it all comes together.

TM: That's awesome.

JM: Yeah I think it's pretty neat.

MM: So in the book what stories, if any, have to do or deal with the Wickwires or the Wickwire factory?

JM: Well the Wickwire brothers had a great article in here and they had a nice picture of the whole facility. The facility on the south end of town encompassed around 40 acres. It was basically it was a city within itself. They were pretty self-supported. I'm pretty sure I worked with two gentlemen and one was Jay Rundell and the other was Richard Glezen, and they both worked there. Jay worked there a good long time. He was a machinist and he would tell about stories of, they had kind of like a junkyard out back, and if they need to manufacture anything or if something broke down, a rolling mill or whatever broke down, they would go out there get whatever they needed as far as raw stock goes. They had a junk pile and they bring it back in and machine it and use it for a shaft or whatever. And Dick was a welder. And he did quite a bit of welding down there. Most of the repair work on the machinery to keep everything up and running. Those were the two guys that I worked with that knew the most about the workings of that facility. And I know that they had a power plant of some kind down there with DC power. I'm not really sure how that operated, but I know I'm pretty sure it was there. And they had their own locomotive down there to move cars in and out because it brought the iron ore that they used from northern Michigan and they floated it down on a boat. I want to say right to probably Buffalo in that area somewhere in and loaded it on a railcar and brought it in and dumped it off here right on the railcar. And then it was raw ore and then their manufacturing process, that they used to create the screen was derived from that ore. And it was, you know, all I could say was it was a good sized industrial complex. The size that you really you don't see around here anymore by any means. There were there were a lot of buildings down there.

JM: I can remember the night that it burnt. I'm going to say it was 1971 but I can't tell you exactly when. I think it was in the spring or summer but I know it lit the whole sky up. Yeah. It was just like the sun was out.

TM: So how much of it burned?

JM: There were some buildings on the South Main streets that were fairly close together. And it ran from the railroad tracks up to, there's probably up to the Melody Land right in that area. They all burnt. And then the last building burnt I think not too long ago. It was on the opposite side of the street to the main structure, the main complex. But that was the last building to go. And basically what we've got down there I think there's two, two nice steel buildings down there and Cortland Plastics I believe was down there on that site, and on the other end I'm pretty sure that Jerry Canteno and there's a rail spur or railyard down there. Right now and that's where the rail yard is where the cars used to be parked where the iron ore, all in that area. That's over on Pendleton Street.

MM: You mentioned prior, the Wickwire Pool. Was that something they had purchased for the community? What was their goal?

JM: Yes. Yeah yeah. They were also big contributors to the community. I think that pool was built in 1944 and that was donated by the Wickwire brothers. Yeah.

MM: So did they have a large presence in helping the community, and play an essential role?

JM: Yes they did. Yes. You know they did a lot for this community. Yeah.

MM: Could you tell us about other things that may come to mind that they have done similar to the pool?

JM: The pool, that was huge. And basically it was for the youth of the community. I'm sure that they are involved in the United Way campaign. Like most industries of Cortland were. The other charitable organizations I'm sure they contributed to, but I can't tell you specifically which ones. I think it was called the United Fund back then. And I'm pretty sure that they participated in that.

TM: What was that for? You mentioned the United Way campaign.

JM: What that does is they spread that money out amongst other charitable organizations and Catholic charities. And you know there's a whole list of them on child care services and child development, that kind of thing, you know. What was I going to say about other charitable things? There was something else that popped in my mind but it's popped out now.

TM: So you mentioned you are part of the Cortland [County] Historical Society.

JM: I am a member of the Cortland [County] Historical Society, but I am a member and I'm on the board of the Central New York Living History Center.

TM: OK.

JM: All right. And what that is, you want to go there? It might be dark out by the time we get out of here.

JM: It's about Brockway trucks. And what that was, there were a couple of guys who worked at Brockway that really thought we needed a Brockway Museum somewhere where we could show off some trucks in Cortland, New York. In 2000, there were two girls, Vicki Delaney

and Shirley Randolph, and they had businesses down on Main Street, and they thought it would be pretty neat if they had a Brockway parade. All right. So they put together a little thing and they presented it to the mayor, Tom Gallagher. And what they wanted to do, they proposed to block off Main Street and have a little Brockway show down there, and Tom decided they guess and council decided they were going to go for it, and they did it. And since then it's been a huge success. We do it on the second weekend in August, and we usually have about 130 trucks down there now on Main Street. It started out with 15, and we've grown into that. And then after the first show, and subsequent shows after that, we had a little parade from the fairgrounds.

JM: We used to start at the fairgrounds. Up on Homer Avenue and parade down Main Street and then go back to the fairgrounds and have a chicken barbecue or whatever. But this AB Brown Hardware property became available in 2006, and this group of people the Brockway guys that were so committed to getting a facility built for these trucks and a fellow by the name of Peter Grim came up with the money to buy a six acre campus up there on North Homer Avenue. The AB Brown [Hardware] site and it needed a lot of work.

JM: I don't think that it was in the Brown family, and they had I can't remember what year, I think it was 1995 was the last year really they did, the Browns did business there. OK. So it had been in the hands of tenants for 10 years probably. And it was it was in bad shape. So there was a group of gentlemen and women that went in there and basically demolished the inside of the building and made it what it is today. Another group of people who helped out a lot were guys from the Southern Tier Truck Club. They came up those guys also and owned some Brockways and were very helpful, very helpful and donated a lot of time and drove up here, and my hats off to all of them because they committed so much time. And it turned out very well.

And so I was on that crew of building, rebuilding and I'm still part of that. I'd say I am part of the complex and it's something that is pretty near and dear to me. Also in the complex.

JM: Ken Eaton was a local collector of memorabilia, of war memorabilia, and local history. He had a house on Clinton Street in Homer, and he called the Homeville Museum, and he has got a train collection that will rock you socks, but they needed a home for his collection, and his collection is also incorporated in this museum. So we've got the trucks on one side of it. This year we've got 12 trucks which we are pretty proud of. Every year it changes, we change, we move the trucks. Some of the trucks the museum owns and some of them stay there for two or three years. But we try to rotate those out. But we also have a selection committee that picks some trucks basically from the parade or from their travels that they invite for next year. So the trucks are not always the same in there. Once a year we change them out completely. In the same way with Ken's display is in there. His son, Chuck, and his daughter Diana they are the curators of that collection and they can change that out. Also this year we've got it, we've built the trench in there, a World War 1 trench, its authentic. And that's the big display this year. Like I said, there is also a lot of train memorabilia in there and there's a lot of local history. There's Civil War memorabilia, there's World War Two, World War One, World War Two, Korean War, Vietnam, and some Afghanistan stuff and Iraq and stuff in there.

JM: So it's packed pretty tight in there, and in the southern part of the complex, there's an old dairy barn and tractors of yesteryear. They're in there, and they've got about 20 tractors in there. This year it's red vs green. Lot of times we go by year like we went from 1956 to 1975. And if a farmer or a collector had a tractor he wanted to display in there and it fell within that category, we let him in there. And again we changed that out once a year also and there's a

grandma's kitchen and there's an old time kitchen. I've got some pretty neat stuff it's got a nice player piano in there.

JM: So that's what we're up to there. We're always looking for donations and new members, so come on up and see us.

ZM: I just have one last one. Was there anyone in particular that you could remember that played like a large role in the community or gave back to the community a lot?

JM: Well Jim Yaman is you know he's a big one with you know there were there a lot of others. In my father's generation, World War II generation, all those guys I feel were very giving. They wanted to better the community. They you know they went off to war. They saw a lot of things that they probably shouldn't have seen and they had to live with that. And one of the things I think that at least in my family, my dad really wanted to make everybody around him a better citizen, a better place to live then he grew up in. And he grew up in a fantastic family and they didn't really lack for anything but you know he was taught a sense of community. And basically those guys like Jim Yaman, they wanted to pass that sense of community on because this is their home and they want to see it you know continue on. And that's the way I see it.

TM: So is there anything else you would like to add? Just like this is your interview you know, if there is anything you'd like to say.

JM: I am talked out.

TM: Thank you very much.

JM: Thank you guys. So I hope this works for you. \

END OF INTERVIEW

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