INTERVIEWS WITH ANNA GRACE ROZA GARY **Winder, PA**

February 29 and March 14, 1984

By Mildred Allen Beik

MB = Millie Beik
AG = Anna Grace Roza Gary (July 12, 1912-September 27, 1998)

Beginning of the Interview on February 29, 1984

Beginning of Tape 1 Side A (February 29, 1984)

MB: Oh, you're sweet. That's really nice. Why don't you tell me what your full name is, first, so that I have that?

AG: My married name?

MB: Well, give me your maiden name, too.

AG: Okay. My maiden name was Anna Grace Rosa, R-O-S-A.

MB: Oh, hmm, hmm. And when were your born?

AG: I was born in this town, Windber.

MB: Okay. And you're now Mrs. Gary.

AG: Right.

MB: And then your married name is Mrs. Gary?

AG: G-A-R-Y. My husband's name was Alex.

[Phone rings, and after the interruption, they resume talking.]

MB: Okay.

AG: My husband's name was Alex, Alexander.

MB: Okay. Well, maybe you could tell me a little bit about your early life. When were you born?

AG: 1916.

MB: 1916. What's your birthday?

AG: 1916, July 12.

MB: July 12. Okay. So, could you tell me a little bit about your parents? Like your mother, for example?

AG: My mother [Annie Rosa] was born in Europe, in Hungary. And she had had two brothers in this country when they decided to have…They sponsored their sister--

MB: Oh.

AG: (continuing) because, well, it was easier to save a little money in this country because in Europe it was very difficult to save any money to buy property because property in Europe was all owned by titled people. [A noisy car or motorcycle on the road outside is heard.] And if they [the immigrants] came to this country and saved some money, worked and saved a little money--they had better wages in this country--they'd buy land from these rich people, fertile land, because they, the poor people, only had the poor (emphasis) land. It was hard to raise stuff. So they would buy more land, and they would go back--

MB: Oh.

AG: (continuing) because actually it was a better place--well, for them (emphasis), it was a better place to live if they had a little bit of good land. So when my mother came to this country, being an attractive young girl, she was soon married, you know.

MB: Oh. Where did she come from in Hungary? Do you remember the name of the town or province?

AG: The same town like Elizabeth [Dutzman, a mutual friend].

MB: Oh, from Olaszliszka?

AG: Well, it [the province] was called Zemplén. Zemplén. Now that was like, over here, Somerset county.

MB: Oh, okay.

AG: Zemplén megye ["county" in Hungarian]. But it was important for them to always name the county.

MB: Oh.

AG: And the town was Tiszahagy (spelling?). It was named after a river that flowed through the town. The river was called Tiszahagy [Tisza]. So they named the town the same.

MB: So when did your mother come to America? Do you know the year at all? About when?

AG: About 19--, oh, no, about 1905.

MB: 1905? Was she a child then or grown up or--?

AG: No, she was only about fourteen years old.

MB: Did she come by herself then when she came or--?

AG: There was always more people that grouped there, you know. They would issue from the town. They'd issue the passports, a certain amount of passports.

MB: Uh huh.

AG: So she came with a group.

MB: Oh she did? Do you know who the group, who all she came with? Are there any names mentioned?

(Aside): I want to move that [recorder] closer to you.

AG: Oh, there were two girl friends of hers. All I can remember is that she would call one Marishka; that would be Mary. And the other one would be Anna, Annushka. But I couldn't remember the last [names]. I don't remember she ever mentioning last names.

MB: Had the brothers been here before, and they worked?

AG: They were here. They worked in the mills in Youngstown, Ohio.

MB: Oh, okay.

AG: That's where my mother's…the destination was [pausing] Youngstown, Ohio. In the meantime, they were making the coal mines, the coal mines [were] being opened up, and the wages were a little bit better. So her brothers came. There was two of them. They came to Windber.

MB: I see. Do you know how they found out about Windber mines then?

AG: No, I don't know.

MB: Okay.

AG: Well, maybe through the papers (pausing) because they used to publish Hungarian papers because most of the people, they were all immigrants, you know. They came from Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, all those places. So they used to have foreign [language] papers. I remember when my dad used to get the Hungarian [paper]. It used to be called *Szabadság*, and, in English, translated, in English, it's *Liberty*. So when they come to Windber, my mother was with them.

MB: How did your mother come?

AG: She was staying with the brothers.

MB: Okay.

AG: She was like their housekeeper even though she was only fourteenk [years old].

MB: I see.

AG: In Europe kids grew up fast. They learned how to cook and everything. So she was like keeping house for them. So when they come to Windber, they come to [mine] 40. The brothers rented a house down there. I don't know which house it was. But, in the meantime, my dad was boarding nearby with relatives. When he comes, he comes straight to Windber because this is from where he was sponsored.

MB: I see.

AG: So these people lived at [mine] 40, and my father was boarding there. [He was] a young fellow. They soon…There was a woman shortage in this area.

MB: Oh, I see.

AG: So, heck, when a young girl would come, my gosh, there would be a dozen men to this one (emphasis) girl, you know. But my father [Michael Rosa]…being a very, very (emphasis) handsome fellow and very talented….Because he had no experience in operating machine. Even in those days, they had coal cutting machines. But, as soon as he was shown once, he caught on. It came to him naturally. He was just born with that one; he was gifted, that way. I have a brother like that. He can install furnaces; he can build; he can build. He never went to college or never even finished high school. But, it's a gift they're born with. So that's how my father was.

Soon they were married. My mother fell for him although she did not like America at all because she come from a beautiful town, you know. Over here there was the coal dust and the company houses, and the streets were all mud, you know. Windber was a bad looking place at that time, whereas in Europe they had nice green land and cleanliness, clean, clean air, clean. Their food, everything, it was homegrown. She just didn't like America. But once you come here and you go back, they call you a failure.

MB: Oh.

AG: You know. If you went back without a lot of money and [without] buying stuff, buying land [you were considered a failure].

MB: I see.

AG: But her brothers, they prospered. They made enough to buy them--what was enough for them to buy some fertile land. They left America.

MB: Oh, they did!

AG: My mother was already married and living down at [Mine] 40. But not in one of the company [houses], no. Well, they lived in a company house, but soon afterwards when the children started coming, my father rented a farm. You know that farm, who lives there now, Pritts.

MB: Pritts. Did you live there? [Did] they live there?

AG: That's where I started my first year of school, you know, from that farm house.

MB: Where did you go to school, then?

AG: Down Scalp. That house already is dismantled, you know.

MB: Oh, where was it located?

AG: Yeah. Coming down the hill from [mine] 40. And that school house. Now I don't know. It's some kind of a borough building or what.

MB: Oh, I see.

AG: On the right side there, that first school house coming down the hill. I don't know. Did you ever go to that?

MB: That's the one I went to. Yeah. Paint we used to call it. I don't really know. I don't know if that existed or when it was built. Quite honestly, I'm curious.

AG: That's where I went to school.

MB: So, let me just ask a few more questions about your parents and when your brothers went back. Did they go back and farm and buy farm land?

AG: [correcting Beik]: They were my <u>uncles</u> [emphasis].

MB: I'm sorry.

AG: They went back, and during the influenza outbreak--I think my mother said in 1917, when the influenza broke out after or during the world war or after World War I--both her brothers died.

MB: In the flu epidemic?

AG: Yes.

MB: Oh dear.

AG: Their wives were still young, and they remarried. And my mother never kept in touch.

MB: I see.

AG: Well, her own family was growing, and times were hard always at the coal fields. Maybe a couple months out of the year. That's why my parents then moved on this farm to grow their own. We had, you know, they had their own cows. They raised hogs, the vegetables and everything because, in the end, there was nine children.

MB: Oh, wow. Which one were you? In the order of birth?

AG: I was the third one.

MB: Third one. Can you name your brothers and sisters for me?

AG: Oh, sure. There was Alex, and, well, we called him Geysel because in Hungarian, it's Géza. But now we always called him Geysel. That name is called Jess, Jesse. J- E- double S- E. But anyhow, he was killed in the mines. He was always called Geysel, all through his school years. So the second one was Geysel. And then mine. Really my mother always called me Anna [accenting the first syllable "An" of the name], but, that's pretty. When I got my middle name, I shortened it to Ann Grace.

MB: Uh huh, that's pretty.

AG: And then I have a brother. He's living in Las Vegas. Michael. He was named after my dad. And, then, my sister Margaret, and after Margaret was Helen, Mary, Irene, and Ethel. Are there nine there?

MB: One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine. Yes, you got them all, counting yourself. Could you tell me a little bit about your father? You talk about your mother. Before she came here, did she work in Hungary anywhere?

AG: No.

MB: Before she came here? Like housework or anything--for other people?

AG: Her dad was caretaker of the vineyards--

MB: Oh.

AG: (continuing) of a rich family. And they had, they had land that my mother helped, helped with.

MB: Oh, she went out and worked, too.

AG: Yeah, in the fields.

MB: Had she gone to school at all, do you know?

AG: Oh, yes, it was compulsory to go, until they learned how to read and write and socialize. That was another thing. They all had to know how to socialize.

MB: Did she go to a church school or a government school?

AG: Well, at that time the church was also the school.

MB: Oh, okay.

AG: The minister or priest--my mother was Catholic--the priest, he was the teacher.

MB. Oh, okay.

AG: He even acted as a lawyer, you know, for them. That's the way it was in those days.

MB: I see. Okay. So when she came, did she know anything…What languages did she speak?

AG: She only spoke Hungarian. It was hard. But, my father learned the language fast. And you know he had to because going to work in the mine, their bosses were English. So he learned fast. And it was [from] him my mother learned. As a matter of fact, when I started my first grade, I couldn't even speak English.

MB: You couldn't? Oh boy!

AG: So I had a tough time because when the teacher would ask my name, when I finally learned that (emphasis) much, when I learned what it meant when she was asking my name… See, in Hungarian, you always say your last name first. And my last name could have been used as a first name, Rosa.

MB: I see.

AG: So she would say then, "But what's your last name?" And I didn't know what she meant, my last name. And she got very short tempered with me because I kept on saying "Rosa Anna, Rosa Anna." And I even pronounced it more (emphasis) Hungarian because, in Hungarian, Rosa is a rose, a flower. She got so short tempered with me; she slapped me, you know.   See, see [in] those days teachers were mean. Oh, boy, I am telling you. [In] those days, sixth grade was like twelfth grade now. We knew [when we were] given a test. I know when I applied for work, there was a high school graduate, and I had two years, but I got the job. She didn't even fill out the application properly.

MB: You knew how to do that?

AG: We were given a test, you know, figures.

MB: Hmm, hmm.

AG: She flunked that. So there, you know, the teachers were so mean that you had to, you know, you were so scared [that] you really (emphasis) had to learn.

MB: We can talk some more about school, but maybe you could fill me in a little bit more about your father. Was he from the same area of Hungary, or from somewhere else, that your mother was?

AG: He was from Hungary but from a different county. His is easy. They called it Apa, "A-P-A." Sometimes you call your dad that, you know. ["Apa" is the Hungarian word for "father."]

MB: Uh huh. What did his family do, and how did they come here?

AG: His family, they were skilled people. I guess that's how, where, my dad got his gift. They were all tradesmen. So he wasn't from a poor family.

MB: I see.

AG: But, unfortunately, his dad died when he was twelve years old, and a few months later his mother died.

MB: Oh, dear.

AG: So, yes, he had a tough time because he became an orphan. And there was not like here all kinds of help for orphans. So he was kicked around from one relative to another.

MB: Oh.

AG: So when he was about fourteen years old…He loved animals, horses especially, and there was, I don't know what you would call--in Hungarian it is called "gróf" [count]--but that's some kind of a title.

MB: Oh, I see. Okay.

AG: And this fella had stables. So, when my father was fourteen years old, he went there to work as well. I guess, you would call him a stable boy. But, in the meantime, he learned so much about a horse, and he could ride. By the time, I think he said, he was eighteen years old, when he raced with a train.

MB: Oh, on the horse.

AG: He was racing on horseback with the train. And, here, he won, you know, but the horse dropped dead. And my father had a sword. I don't know why, what the purpose of the sword was. I think he was in the army then. And they always had…Over here, I don't know, I guess

they carry guns, but over there it was swords. And he was a cavalry man knowing so much about horses. And he was in such good health that he passed [the test to become one]. You had to be almost perfect to become a cavalry man. So how it happened that he got into this race, and when the horse fell, the sword went through my dad.

MB: Oh dear.

AG: But he was six months in Berlin Hospital, general hospital, six months. And he had… He was saying that he didn't have a drop of his own blood. It was all blood that was given to him, but he survived. But, after, see, when he was kicked around from relative to relative, you know, until he was fourteen, he went to these rich people where he became a good horse runner or whatever you call it.

MB: So then he went into the service, I guess. Didn't you say?

AG: Yeah. It's hard to recall exactly, but I'm trying to piece it together.

MB: So when did he come here?

AG: So when he came out of the hospital, after six months, he was in his early twenties. They were reading then. There was rumors that this country was looking for coal miners.

MB: Oh!

AG: "Come work in a coal mine." So he applied. So when he went to the…What do you call the place where people go to apply?

MB: Some kind of passport office? I don't really know, a governmental office to get a visa and passport or a steamship agent or--?

AG: And, yet, you see, I forgot how you call it. Because we was to Europe a couple years ago.

MB: A travel agent of some sort?

AG: When you apply, it's through Washington at first. Well, anyhow, he wanted to come to America. He heard so much that you could make a better living here.

MB: Do you know where these rumors came from or how people heard that? Did they--?

AG: It was through papers.

MB: Oh, through papers in Europe, too?

AG: Yes, through the papers. Unlike today, you would call them employment agencies.

MB: I see. Okay.

AG: And [in] those days, they had…America and Europe had connections, connections, for America needed help. [America] needed workers because this was a new country, and there was not many people here. So, my dad applied and, oh yeah, oh, he applied, [but] he didn't go for [a] passport. He thought maybe he could come. I don't know why he didn't. I guess because he was hurt. He was afraid he might not pass. You know that he was in a hospital so long. So he didn't go for a passport. He just went straight to the port, you know.

So here, when they asked for the passport, they saw a young, nice looking man, a strong man. So my father pretended to be looking for it, you know what. The guy was impatient. He said, "Go!" (Beik laughs). So my dad never had a passport. So when I said that these people sponsored him, it wasn't so. He was corresponding with them. So they told, they wrote to him that if he comes to America, he can live with them.

MB: Do you know who that was?

AG: Adelines [Steve and Mary]. They still have people named Adeline down in [mine] 40. Adeline.

MB. Were they from the same area?

AG: Yes.

MB: In Hungary? That he was?

AG: They were distant. They almost considered their people that came from the same town like relatives, you know. Okay, they were good friends. When he come here, that's back when they opened the mines, [mine] 40 and [mine] 30.

MB: Oh (impressed), that far back. In 1897 was when Windber was founded. Was it that far back that he came? He came right at the very beginning?

AG: Yes.

MB: And he came right to Windber to work at [mine] 40?

AG: Yes. And then he…Then there was a strike, and then he went to the mills in Youngstown, Ohio.

MB: Was that the strike of 1906?

AG: Yes. He went to Youngstown, Ohio, but already he, they, were married. My parents were married.

MB: So, when did they get married then?

AG: They were married in the Windber Orthodox Church.

MB: Oh, St. Mary's Byzantine Rite, I guess.

AG: I don't know what you would call it. Now that Orthodox Church is up on a hill.

MB: Right. They [Sts. Peter and Paul] split off from the other one [St. Mary's].

AG: You know that old building that used to be a church. It's still there. It's beside the Greek Catholic church.

MB: Right.

AG: You know that old building [later demolished]. Well, that was a new (emphasis) church then. My parents were married right in that building, and I wish I had a picture of it.

MB: I really ought to take one for you.

AG: Yes. They were married in that church, but I can't remember, I don't know the priest's name.

MB: Do you know what year that was? Was that 190-?

AG: I think they were married in 1905.

MB: 1905. And you mother had come to Windber shortly before then?

AG: My mother came to Windber. Her destination was Youngstown, Ohio, but my dad's was in Windber.

MB: So he was already here. So she came from Youngstown to Windber?

AG: Right. With her brothers.

MB: About when? Do you know when that would have been? Just approximately?

AG: They got together and got married in 1905.

MB: Okay. Did your father have any stories about that strike? There's very little [about] that, except in the newspapers, about it. There isn't much information that I've found.

AG: When the strike was over, they did not win because the people had no money; the companies could hold out. And the people soon got hungry and went back, you know, to work. They really didn't organize until 19--, 1930 or 1932. You know. But before that, they were striking quite often. And there was even killings because, you know, some of the men like my father, he had to be a strikebreaker because we lived on that farm then, and we had all that livestock. See, my mother and my dad…He worked in a mine, but he would help when he'd come home on weekends. He'd help with the farming, but he needed money. Their living wasn't... It was just for our benefit, for the kids, you know, to keep the living costs down.

MB: So, when did he go to Youngstown, then? Did you say during the strike? Are you talking about 1906 then?

AG: He went to Youngstown. I wasn't going to school yet.

MB: Oh, you weren't born until 1916. I am just trying to get the time frame because there was a big strike in 1906, and then there was a big one in 1922.

AG: Well, in 1922, I think I was about six years old.

MB: Oh, so that's the one (emphasis) you would remember, but--.

AG: Yes, well, vaguely. That was here. I remember that my dad was working. But we lived up on that farm house. See, the company…By that time, we didn't live at [mine] 40. We moved to Elton to a bigger farm.

MB: Okay.

AG: And my parents hired a farmhand to help out with the farm because there was a big strike and my dad was working. But he had to. The company had a big building here where all the strikebreakers were boarding. And the guards would bring my dad home on weekends to Elton on the farm. And, in the meantime, they were putting people out that were striking. The company was putting them out of the houses here, you know. And there was a family up in that farmhouse that had to move.

So the company moved my dad's family to this farm here because there was a danger of being bombed. They used to bomb homes where the men were. Yeah, well, you couldn't blame them because it wasn't fair that they went to work, but my father couldn't afford to strike because he had to take care of not only a family--by that time we had more--there was more kids in the family and the livestock and everything, you know, that he had. And the people that they moved out was living in tents. My father said, "We can't win. Nobody has money. We can't win." So he couldn't see his family suffer like that.

MB: Do you remember seeing people living in tents or hearing about them?

AG: Even though we lived in this farm, it was company owned. We would have had to get rid of all the livestock and everything and go live in a tent.

MB: Do you remember seeing people living in tents?

AG: Oh, my yes! And the guards (emphasis)! The company had guards. Oh, my gosh, they were parading with those big guns up and down the street. And these poor people they put out, they took them right out in the middle of the road and left them there. Even then they could only stay so long on the road. They had to move.

End of Tape 1 Side A

Beginning of Tape 1 Side B (February 29, 1984)

AG: And the union put up these tents

MB: I see.

AG: It was a tent village, you know. And, eventually, they all had to go back to work. Some the company never hired back, if they were more ornery while the strike was going on. See, some of them--before they brought in a lot of guards--they set fires to company property and all that. Well, those people never were hired back. Yeah. But the others that had to go out because there was no other way [were rehired].

They [the guards] held my father, and they kept guarding our house because of my father's, like I said, in those days he had that gift of cutting coal, operating the coal machines. So he was very important to the company. And he not only operated the machines-- today they have high paying mechanics there to repair machines--but my dad could repair his own machine, and for very little, the same wages. And the wages were low.

So, my father, in order to make a decent pay, he used to work twelve and sixteen hours. I remember when my dad came home--he went to work in the morning--he came home [at] five o'clock. And then he, all he did he… Mom had a canvass on the floor for him, and he lay down. He ate something and laid down for about two hours and went back to work. So, you see, he worked 24 hours without much rest. No wonder he died. My father was 50 years old; he was dead.

MB: When did he start working in the mines, and then how long did he work? What years would that have covered about?

AG: What years? Anyhow, when he died he had twenty-five years of service.

MB: Oh, I see. When did he die?

AG: My dad died in 1940.

MB: 1940.

AG: In that same year my brother, the second one, he was second, Geysel, he was killed in a mine; he was twenty-six years old. And that was in 1940. My husband's father died in January, and then my father died in April, and then my brother was killed in September.

MB: Oh boy (sorrowfully).

AG: And in that same year there was an explosion at Portage in the mine, and sixty-six people were killed.

MB: For heaven's sake. So there were a lot of accidents around that really touched your family.

AG: My brother was killed by the motor. He was a motor man. He was running the motor, and it jumped the track and pinned him against the wall.

MB I'm sorry.

AG: It sent twenty tons of steel, pinning you [him] against the stone wall.

MB: Had he gone into the mines fairly early in life?

AG: Well, at that time they had to be at least sixteen [years old]. Before that law came in, there was kids twelve years old working in the mines. But by the time my brother Alex went to work in the mine, [you] already he had to have papers [showing you were] sixteen years [old].

MB: So how many of your brothers went in the mines then?

AG: All (emphasis) of them.

MB: All of them.

AG: My oldest brother, he died. Oh yeah. He was the first in the family. Alex. He died in '63 from silicosis.

MB: He did? Oh boy (sadly).

AG: He was driving down the street. He was going to park, but he started to die as he turned the bend.

MB: Oh dear.

AG: He started to die. [Noisy cars can be heard as they pass outside on the road.]

MB: Did your brothers get to go to school very much here?

AG: Yes, it was compulsory. You had to go to school until you were sixteen.

MB: Oh, so they did. Alex did. Geysel did.

AG: All of them, Alex, Geysel.

MB: And Michael, I guess.

AG: We all went until, you know, second year high.

MB: So all you girls went to second--

AG: The reason we didn't have to go to graduate… Only the ones that wanted a career as a teacher, and they only had to go to high school, and they were teachers.

MB: The times were different then, weren't they?

AG: But every summer, until so many years, they'd have to go three months to--they used to call it Indiana State Normal School, every summer for I don't know how long. But only doctors, lawyers went. They could afford it. There was no such thing as help. But to be a nurse, secretary, or anything like that, two year's high school was all they required.

MB: Okay.

AG: Now I understand that even nurses have to go to college.

MB: That's true, more and more.

AG: I don't think…I guess because there are too many teachers, they have to have jobs. (Both laugh).

MB: Oh, boy. Let's see. Did your parents…If you think of things like education and hard work and religion and, I don't know, careers, what did they stress when you were growing up? Among those things? Did they stress some more than others?

AG: Oh, religion was the first thing.

MB: Was it?

AG: Oh, yes. And strict morals.

MB: Oh, yeah. Tell me a little bit more about these things.

AG: Strict morals. If a fella was courting you, the whole family was around. If there was a dance in those days, it was either the church holding it, a benefit dance for the kids; it used to be called the youth organization in the church. So they would have [it], like come harvest time in September, when the grapes come. We used to call it "the grape dance" when they would harvest grapes. And then they would have these grapes hanging in the halls where the dance was, hanging. Say, one bunch of grapes would be twenty-five cents. And it would be a big wreath. That would be, I think, in those days it was two or three dollars. And whoever picked that big wreath for the girl he was dancing with, it had to be almost your fiancée. (Beik laughs.) Because the quarter dance was the one who consented to dance with you. <u>And you have to dance with him, you couldn't refuse!</u> (emphasis),you know, because who was there? My mother and all her friends and their kids. So, by gosh, you didn't dare to [refuse].

There was one kid. He couldn't dance, and I just didn't want to dance with him. But I didn't dare to refuse him because his mother was my mother's good friend. So, this is the way it was. So they were chaperones. [More noisy cars pass outside.] There were no cars. Only the very well to do had cars. So you can imagine Saturday night when the dance was like a parade coming up, you know, [with] our mothers and kids coming from the dance.

MB: Did you have dances often?

AG: No, in September, in the fall. There was always like at Christmas time, Easter, and other occasions. Oh, there were a lot of weddings. Even at Christenings, when a baby was being christened, there would be a dance, a big feast and a dance.

MB: Oh.

AG: Not like now. See, they didn't have beer gardens or places [like] that. So people would cook up their own entertainment. A wedding would last a week. (Beik laughs). We were at a wedding. We used to make noodles, you know. The women, the mothers, would make the noodles, and then we had, they used to call it, *chiga* [a Hungarian word for shell-like noodles]. There was a board, and we would take, they would cut it [the dough] in squares for us. And then

we would take that noodles on a board, and there was like a little stick and roll it, and these boards had grooves in them. I think they sell noodles like that now in the stores. Like shells, you know. And we'd roll, take a little square and roll it up with the stick, and they would be so pretty and tasty in soup. Chicken and soup was the main course. Well, you could call it a feast. It was the main course. So it took us one week to make those noodles.

MB: Oh, wow!

AG: Every night when we would go to the abbey because it was always the women, after the husbands would come back from work, and it was always in the evening until the wedding date. There'd be music, singing, folk singing,

MB: What kind of singing was it? Was it in Hungarian?

AG: Hungarian. Strictly Hungarian.

MB: And they sang in Hungarian.

AG: Boy, it was beautiful! When we went to Europe now, they held an anniversary party for us because it was [our] fifty years anniversary. My kids wanted us to spend our anniversary there because my husband didn't see his people for fifty-five years.

MB: Oh, wow!

AG: And they made a feast, and all these young people, how beautifully they were singing. The mayor of the town was there, and it was more beautiful than my first wedding.

MB: Oh, goodness. Can you sing a Hungarian song for me? Would you sing something for me?

AG: (Either ignoring or not hearing Beik's request, she continued): The social and the morals.

MB: Strict!

AG: If a girl…like today, they glorify (emphasis) a girl who is having a child out of wedlock. It's like glorified (emphasis). In those days, a girl had to jump off a bridge if she was pregnant.

MB: Did you know anyone who did, and who was an outcast? Did you know anyone who was treated like that?

AG: Oh, my, yes. My husband's sister-in-law. You see, they loved each other. And when my husband's brother came to this country--he was American born too--my husband sponsored him. He [her husband] came first; then he sponsored his brother. Well, when he came here, my husband was already boarding at that house. So when his brother came, by that time they [the couple running the boarding house] had a fifteen-year old girl.

MB: Oh.

AG: And he was boarding there. Well, they fell in love. This fifteen year old girl [fell in love, too], and…But she only had one brother. There was just her and her brother. And, in those days, people like that were considered above the others because they had a little bit more. They didn't have big families, you know.

MB: I see.

AG: So when her parents saw that they were serious--and he asked for the girl's hand, but she was only fifteen years old. But in those days it didn't matter. The younger you were when you got married, the more of an honor it was.

MB: How old was your mother when she got married? Do you know?

AG: I think she was sixteen.

MB: Sixteen. And your dad was about what?

AG: Well, he was in his early twenties, about twenty-three, something like that. So my, I'll call him my brother-in-law, so what did they do, you know, living in the same house? They did tell my brother-in-law to move, but by that time she was pregnant.

MB: And, then, how was she treated by people after that?

AG: Oh, my gosh. Her mother, you know that even though the mother kept close tabs on her, but they found time to get together, and she got pregnant. Probably, you know, when the old people fell asleep, you know.

MB: Sure. So, did they finally accept her back into the family, though? No?

AG: No. They had to run away. See, he was then…My husband was already then working in Elwood City, Pennsylvania, because the coal mines were so bad here. So he got a job there in the mills. And, when his brother asked for Irene's hand, the parents refused. [They] said, for one thing she's too young. Well, that's the excuse they used. She was too young.

So, she was getting bigger and bigger, you know. They says that we will just have to [try to hide the pregnancy], you know. Her mother was even asking proof of her periods. And, see, in those days people had their own chickens, and every Sunday was a chicken dinner. So, whenever they and Irene, that's the girl's name, she would be the one that would chop the chicken's head off. So, she would always dip a cloth in that blood for proof. See, that's how they could mislead her. But, when they figured they can't wait too much longer, they would just have to leave. So my brother-in-law gave the excuse that, well, he's going to Elwood City to work. And he promised Irene that he's gonna come back for her, you know, as soon as he gets a house there or something.

So, in the meantime, they had a cousin living, my husband and his brother, they had a cousin right down the street here. And <u>she</u> (emphasis) made it her business. She went…How shall I say? My brother was supposed to take…He was in front of the house with the automobile, you know, to take Burt, that's my husband's brother, to take him to the train station. Understand? In the meantime, this cousin comes down the street, and she goes and tells that [to] the girl's mother, "Why don't you let this couple get married because she <u>has</u> (emphasis) to? Your daughter is pregnant."

And then all hell broke loose. My gosh, you know, here my brother…It was just his luck that he had a flat tire. He was fixing the tire. And Burt says to him, "Please, hurry up and take me to the station because she threw her daughter out, too, with just the clothes on her back."

She [the mother] says, “Why are you asking for her hand? Go! Because I don’t ever want to see you again!”

So, here, in the meantime, that day the miners worked a half a day, and Burt says to my brother, “Hurry up and take me to the train station before Irene’s father comes home” because he was known to be violent when he got mad. So, he probably would have shot them, you know, because, like I say, morals were strict.

MB: It was strict in those days.

AG: They figured that she ruined their reputation. You know. They were thinking about themselves in those days, not about the kids.

I’m going to turn this [the heat] on. It’s getting chilly in here. [Beik turned the recorder off temporarily and then resumed the interview.]

AG: There were better morals in those days.

MB: You said divorce was--

AG: [finishing the thought and emphatically]: out of the question.

AG: As a matter of fact, the Catholic religion did not condone, you know, you had to get married for life whether it was good or bad. But I was just going to tell you, show you. See, there, this is an old picture.

MB: Oh, yes. That’s nice.

AG: And this is an old picture.

MB: Now tell me who these people all are.

AG: This is my husband’s sister. These are her children. This is her sister, her children. And this was his youngest brother and his wife. We visited them this last time; we were there. And this is…I don’t have my glasses on. It looks like a school picture.

MB: It does. Is that <u>your</u> (emphasis) school picture?

AG: No, no. But this is his mother, my mother-in-law. See, these are people that are old already.

MB: Oh, you do have old [pictures]. That’s beautiful.

AG: His sister, she is really pretty, but she’s not young any more. But what I was going to show you [was] my own. [Noisy cars pass.] I wonder if I have it here.

MB: What are you looking for?

AG: I’m looking for a certain picture. And this is my doctor son. I was visiting my one boy when they had a new baby. This is my brother-in-law. The one I want to show you…This is, pictures taken, this was taken when my son graduated from medical school. That’s…There was

a picture I wanted to show you. This will take forever. [Beik turned off the recorder while Anna Gary searched for more photos. Then she resumed the interview.]

MB: You said your parents considered religion so important. Can you tell me--

AG: They were both Catholics.

MB: Did you go to St. Mary's and the Hungarian Catholic church?

AG: Yes. But I was married in Detroit.

MB: Oh, okay. Where you baptized in a Hungarian church or--?

AG: My grandparents, no [correcting herself], my godparents were Slovaks. They came from a Hungarian part, but they talked Slovak. But they could still speak Hungarian, too, but they called themselves Slovaks. So, there was a Slovak church in Windber. And at that time, it was said, you always took the baby to the godparents' church.

MB: Oh, I didn't know that.

AG: So I was baptized in St. [pausing]--

MB: Sts. Cyril and Methodius?

AG: Yeah. And the priest only retired not too long ago that baptized me. Father [John Lach]. Everybody knew that name.

MB: Yes. I think I read he died last year. I think. So there's no chance to interviewing him I'm afraid at this point. Too bad I didn't do this [oral history project] sooner. So, did your parents raise you so that you went to church every Sunday and so on?

AG: Oh yes. Every Sunday morning. Yeah. Every Sunday. And if you didn't go to church, you were looked down on.

MB: Oh.

AG: People didn't have cars. So, on Sunday morning, this was like a parade [with] people walking to church. Kids, everybody had seven, eight, nine, ten kids. It was the whole family marching to church.

MB: Oh boy.

AG: Yes, it was…If you didn't go to church and something happened, like you wanted a christening or a death or something, the priest wouldn't [perform the service]. You had to be a member of the church. I don't know if today you have to be, but in those days you, you [did], because the whole town was one big family.

MB: Hmm. Okay. Can you recall any childhood memories that were particularly vivid or anything that stands out that you could think of, like in your early childhood or later childhood? A vivid memory? Anything that was outstanding?

AG: Well, I don't know. My whole childhood I always thought was real. I enjoyed my childhood.

MB: Did you? Did you have to work hard?

AG: No.

MB: [Somewhat surprised], Oh, you didn't?

AG: No. I was always home. I got married from home. I helped with the chores at home.

MB: Okay.

AG: Being the oldest girl in the family, there was, and my mother didn't have a washing machine, so we washed clothes by hand. And anytime she had a baby…I was only ten years old when I was making noodles, you know, because mom had a baby.

MB: Did she have the babies in a hospital, or did she have a midwife?

AG: No, only very poor people had the babies in the hospital. See, the hospital… Childbirth didn't cost anything because we had the company hospital, you know. And the company doctors cared [for] them, and the nurses. But if you had the baby at home, you had to have somebody to take care of the kids that were already there and cook and bathe the baby, you know.

MB: But your mother had the children at home.

AG: She had the children at home. Until, well, yes, she had all the kids at home. But she didn't have to have help after I got old enough to do stuff and my brother, my oldest brother [also]. Oh, he did work hard. Oh yes (emphasis)! He not only worked the farm, but at night…I'll never forget. We had a great…The farm kitchens were all big, and the kitchen was bigger than these two rooms put together and bare floors. And bare floors, when they scrubbed [them], you could eat off bare floors. Even the chairs weren't painted. They had to be scrubbed. And he used to do that at night.

MB: I see.

AG: He not only went to school, but before he'd go to school, he'd clean the barns out and fixed up the beds for the cows. [He'd] milk cows before he went to school. When he came home from school, chores again: chop wood, pile coal there. Oh, he (emphasis) worked hard. But I didn't. I can't say I worked hard because, by the time I got older, a couple years older, my mother had a washing machine.

She (emphasis) worked hard. She really worked hard. But when she would have a baby, I would. I was ten years old but, she was still, not that she compelled me to learn, but I was so fascinated when I would see her hands in dough. So, one time, she saw how anxious I was, so she gave me a little, just a cup of flour or maybe two cups of flour, and it turned out pretty good. And to roll it out real thin, we had these long rolling pins, [and] you'd keep turning the dough over on the rolling pin. And, my gosh, it was…By the time I rolled the dough out, it was just like that table--big. And then you had to cut it real thin and real fast without cutting your fingers.

By the time I was ten years old, I could do it. I'll tell you what. The younger you are, that's when you learn. Because I never went to Hungarian school, but I could read and write.

MB: Oh.

AG: You have to be very, very young, a child, to so I always say start, a foreign language should be taught in school in the first grade.

MB: I agree with you. I agree with you. That's something.

AG: And it's a shame that they don't teach a different, just one, language here. It should be compulsory to take another language because, look at our presidents, they can speak just English. You see those politicians from there. What a good choice of words they have. They have the accent, but then you can see [that] they are educated. So what else?

MB: Well, I was just thinking about, you know, growing up. Did your parents expect you to get married? For example, did they want you to do something else or what?

AG: This is the one thing. Here I was going to school, and I had my heart set on being a nurse when my mother was hospitalized with a kidney condition. Even she told me, you know, she says, "I think you should be a nurse." You know they were all so healthy looking and clean and all pretty. So, when I became, when I was in second year high, I wanted to because that's all you needed. And here <u>my father</u> (emphasis) was dead set against it. He said only <u>bad</u> (emphasis) girls go for nursing. He saw one of the books of my friend's [who] was already in training. And she grabbed her book out, and it showed where a women [was] in child birth and everything, [including] the nude body. My God! Then my mother was shocked. I don't know what [how] they expected me to be a nurse without seeing a body, you know. But they thought that that was terrible. So, okay. But I was allowed to get married. My husband, that was beautiful. I was going to school, and he, by that time, he lived here on a farm.

MB: Above mine 35-36?

AG: That farm house up there. You can't see it from here. From the kitchen you can see it. It wasn't that big; it was added on since then. It was summer. Well, it wasn't summer, but it was early fall. It was a warm day. In our orchard, it wasn't fenced off because anybody could come up; it was company owned. So they used to come up under the apple trees, and they [the men] were playing cards, and this was already….We used to come home from Windber [from school], way up to here for lunch times. You can imagine how fast we were.

MB: It was quite a walk.

AG: It was lunch, and the mines weren't working. So, there was a bunch of these greenhorns. They were a bunch of guys, my husband and his brother and some relatives, young fellas. They were playing cards, just playing for fun under one of the apple trees. But one of the fellas was among them that was the boarding boss, you know. All these young fellas boarded at his house. So he said, "Now <u>there's</u> (emphasis) a girl I want you to take to my house."

My husband says, "Who?" I had long golden curls. I was considered attractive. And when I was going to school, this fellow says, [correcting herself] my [future] husband says, "Who is that young girl?"

"Why, that's the girl I want you to meet. She lives up in that house."

So, by golly, there was a wedding, and the people that were getting married, they still live here. They started to live here, they got married, and they're still here. There was this wedding. And in those days you didn't have a certain amount of flower girls or ushers. <u>Everybody</u> (emphasis) was a flower girl you know. All the girls.

See, the wedding party was starting from the house, a wedding [party]. Today they go just like nothing, but in those days, it was just beautiful. They always had one that…There was like a speech. And the bride…He [the groom] would be speaking for the bride, and he would say a beautiful poem, thanking the parents, like if <u>I</u> (emphasis) was saying it, for raising you and for everything, I can't remember exactly how it was. But then he would tell you when to kiss your parents, you know. And your parents was behind you, crying, you know, because the poem was so sad.

MB: This was the taking of the bride from the family right before the wedding then?

AG: Right. Out of the home and to the car and to church. And this would be the poem, and it was beautiful. Anyway, it made everybody cry. People used to gather around just to hear it, you know.

MB: Was it one set poem, or did people make up their own?

AG: It was…They had a book on it. But they had to learn it by heart.

MB: I see.

AG: And they would pick out always the saddest one. It even made the bride--

End of Tape 1 Side B

Beginning of Tape 2 Side A (February 29, 1984)

MB: Just wait for a second until it [the recorder] starts.

AG: So, like in this wedding…When I went to the wedding, then, my mother was there, too. They were guests. So, they were matching up the ushers and the flower girls; they were called bridesmaids, you know. And when it come to me, my husband calls out in Hungarian--he couldn't speak much English yet--

MB: Oh.

AG: (continuing) "She's mine."

Well I just looked because, you know, to me, the kids I went to school with, they were the young ones. Now, like when I looked at my husband, to me, he looked like, I thought he's old, you

know. But he was so nice, so well mannered. See, they learned this in school in Europe. They learned how to, they learned how to ask a girl to dance. They learned how to ask a girl to be a wife.

MB: Oh, really?

AG: Not like here. Compared to here, the guys were like animals here. Nothing. Hey, you want to dance? Hey, when they come to court a girl, they blow the horn outside, you know. (Both laugh.) So, then, my husband comes to me real nice, and he says, in Hungarian, he says, "*Szabad kérem kísérni este*" I don't know how to translate that, but it is a very polite way of asking a young girl. "Will you be my partner?" I wish I had, I used to have an Hungarian book here [for] translating because my husband was learning it. But, I forgot how to say things.

MB: Well that's all right.

AG: Anyhow, I was so fascinated. It was such good manners, you know. It made you feel so, like on a pedestal. I told him, "Of course."

So he escorted me to church. He had, by then, he had a car. And later on that day, oh there was a big thing, big feast and everything, you know. So the groom came back and asked me to dance. You know, it was impolite not to go to dance with the groom, especially. But he says in Hungarian to the groom, he says "All the dances are taken."

MB: Your husband said this to the groom at this wedding?

AG: Yeah, yeah. And the groom understood. If he had been a different person…He says, "That's okay, Alex." They were good friends. But, I had to sneak away from the--it was around 9 o'clock at night--because there was so many of these greenhorns, my husband's buddies. They came from the same town. They all were asking me, "May I escort you home?" "May I escort you home?" I would have got killed if I came home with a guy.

MB: (laughing) Oh, I see.

AG: So my husband, you know, he wouldn't let me out of his sight. But, somehow, I snuck away, and I came home.

And my mother….I don't know if you're familiar with what they call in Hungarian kucsina [spelling? of a Hungarian word for a certain pastry], it's pixie. Did you ever eat pixie? Well, my mother made that. See, this is in November. And my husband died in November, too. Well, anyhow, this was in November, and it was chilly. My mother made this kucsina, and when I snuck home, you know, our under slip….My mother used to make them. It had like a bra to it, like a middie, you know. And then the slip was attached. So I took off my bridesmaid dress. It was a real sheer rose color. So, I didn't want to stain it eating this kucsina, so I took it off, and I was just in my slip. We used to call it petticoat.

And our porch up in the house when it was old, the porch and our stairway, when you came from the porch, the stairway was right in front of you, you know. There was just a little landing when you turn into the kitchen. Here I am sitting by this great big table. It's a great big square table, you know. You needed a big table for all the kids, the big family. I'm sitting there eating this kucsina, you know, and here it is. There's a loud rap at the door.

Well, right away I scampered upstairs because it was a disgrace to be caught in your slip, you know. So, I scampered upstairs, and I hear my [future] husband, you know, talking to my mother and my father. And he said that he wanted to walk me home, but she disappeared, and he said [that] someone told me she come home. And my mother says, "She's just a young girl. She's not allowed to be coming home with a fella."

And my husband says, "Well, I just wanted to walk her home." He said "I like her very much." And he says, "With your permission, am I allowed to come up sometimes?"

And my mother says, "Well, there's no harm in you coming up." These greenhorns were lonely, too, for someone to talk their language. And when he came to our house, it seemed like my mother was his (emphasis) mother, you know. My mother says, "Of course." She says, "I understand. I was a greenhorn at one time, too. It felt good to be with somebody who understood me."

So he started coming, but like I say, never alone, you know. We were always…Then when I reached sixteen, then he left. See, he went to Elwood City. He went to work in the mills there. In the meantime, I was growing up. And in the meantime, my dad was getting sick, and we moved to Detroit.

MB: Oh.

AG: So, when he heard we were in Detroit, he came over there.

MB: When did you move to Detroit?

AG: In the '20s.

MB: The '20s.

AG: Wait, I think it was about '28, I think, when we went to Detroit. And then, in '29, the big depression broke out. I remember that.

MB: You were in Detroit then.

AG: Yeah, we were in Detroit. People were committing suicide and everything. They were losing all their savings in the bank. And people going almost barefooted because they lost their jobs. Now they have soup kitchens. Well, they had a soup kitchen then, too, but you had to stand in line. And no shoes and your clothing, and, oh, it was a pitiful sight.

MB: How did you get to--

AG: It was under a Republican administration, too, when that happened. It always seems that that's what [happens]. They [the Republicans] put you down so far you have to beg for a piece of bread. Well, anyway.

MB: Your [future] husband followed you?

AG: Yes, my husband--

MB: He followed you to Detroit?

AG: Yes.

MB: How old was he when he first met you, and how old were you?

AG: Well, he was 19 when he came here.

MB: Oh, okay.

AG: And I was like, I think, like I was about thirteen or fourteen years.

MB: When you first met him?

AG: When he came here. I didn't meet him right away. Well, when I was in the wedding, I was fifteen years old.

MB: Oh, okay. That points it in time.

AG: That's why my mother says that she's too young. Why, I really did look younger than I was even. You know what I mean? I was very small. I was, when I got married, I was ninety-nine pounds.

MB: Oh, how old were you when you got married then? How old were you when you got married?

AG: I was already eighteen. I was eighteen when I got married.

MB: Did you get married in Detroit then?

AG: See, after a while, when I got a little bit older, I wasn't, I didn't want to get married.

MB: Oh.

AG: And it seemed like, see, if you know somebody so long, they become like a brother. And you know, like we never had much lovemaking because, you know, you don't do that to a friend of the family, you know, lovemaking. It was embarrassing. I wasn't shy anyway, you know.

And I start meeting [others], when we'd go to dances with my husband. He was single yet, and we would go to dance. Hungarian dances.

MB: In Detroit?

AG: And I start like getting attracted to other guys, you know, after a while.

MB: Sure.

AG: And I had so many chances, you know, with other guys. As a matter of fact, I had a cousin that couldn't stand my husband. She had no reason. She just didn't like him. She thought I deserved somebody better.

So, here there was this Hungarian fellow, but he was American born, and he was an insurance salesman, and he also sold…In those days, to sell washing machines, they used to come to homes, you know. So she wanted me to meet this guy.

MB: Oh, I see.

AG: Understand?

MB: Right.

AG: Already, already I agreed to marry my husband. And the wedding clothes. See, among Hungarians, it was the custom the groom always bought the first outfit, the wedding clothes. It was a custom. He paid for the wedding, not like nowadays when the girls [pay]. He paid for the wedding, and he paid for the wedding clothes.

So she brings this guy over to our home. And like I say, before that [time] I was being attracted to fellas, but I had honor in me, you know. I promised my husband that someday when I get old enough, I'll marry you, you know. And I knew the hurt I would cause if I married someone else. I think there was more honor among young people in those days, too. But there one day he pinpointed me. He says, "Look," he says, "I'm working yet. Times are getting hard. I've saved us some money. Let's get married" he says then, "because we don't know what's in the future." He says, "I have a little money saved."

But, you see, he was working, and my parents, my father, too, was working full blast and my brothers, too, but there was shop after shop being closed. And he says, "Won't you marry me until [while] I have a little bit of money?"

He knew I wanted a wedding. I wasn't going to just get married like that. All girls, I think they were dreaming of big weddings in those days. So I said, okay, I agreed.

So what did he do? See, in those days, even though the bride gave the consent, but he had, he had a party come to ask for my hand. And then there was a big celebration. After this is when my cousin brought this fella.

MB: Oh, I see.

AG: Maybe things would have been different, you know, if….But I was never sorry after that. I married my husband although, you know, we had bad times. But my husband was a one-woman man. And he always had me on a pedestal. You know. And when I saw my friends--what kind of husbands they had--they were running around. And I know for [a] fact because some of my husband's friends and relatives, behind his back, they were making advances to me.

MB: You knew.

AG: And I respected my husband so much afterwards. When I found out, I was glad I didn't marry anybody else.

MB: You were very young, too.

AG: Well, anyway, she brings this fella, and [he was] like very good looking and [had] a lot of money. He already…But he wasn't young like my husband. He was about thirty, thirty-two years old. And because my cousin and him, they took me to see the home he had. And my wedding clothes is all altered and everything, you know. The people were all invited. He wanted, he said he will pay all expenses for my husband, will pay him for everything it cost him so far.

MB: You must have had quite a decision to make.

AG: But I told my cousin, "How can you hurt my husband [fiancé]? How can you hurt Alex like that?"

I did not have the heart because I knew it would have destroyed him. Not because he couldn't find another one, but the shame. It was a big disgrace to be jilted at the altar, practically, you know. As young as I was, I was putting myself in his place. How would I feel if he was doing that to me? So, actually, it wasn't great love. (Laughing) I married my husband because I felt sorry for him. But then I learned to love him because he was a good man, and he took from himself to give it to me and to his kids.

MB: Can you tell me a little bit about his background and his parents and so on? Whatever you want to tell me.

AG: See, in Europe, they don't have what you call high school. By the time, let's say it's like here you'd call it eighth grade. Then you enter trade school, whatever you're best fitted for. I guess they give you a test like. Well, my husband was best fitted for…First, they wanted him to be a minister. He knew the Bible so well

MB: A minister or a priest?

AG: Well, he was Lutheran.

MB: Okay. He was Lutheran. That's interesting.

AG: So my husband, by the time he got older, he didn't want that. He didn't want to be a minister, but he had a very good head for carpenter work.

MB: I see.

AG: So that's when he entered trade school. Not like here that you're going to school forever before you work. So, that's what he was, a carpenter. And he had to…I think he went to Poland for work. That's where his job took him, to Poland. Before he decided to come to America because being American born--

MB: Okay. Tell me about that because I don't think we got it on the tape. He was born in America?

AG: He was born in America. His parents took him back when he was about five years old.

MB: To where?

AG: At that time it was Hungary. Now it's Czechoslovakia, but then it was Hungary. And he went to school until he entered trade school. Then he went to work in Poland; [he was] still in his early teens.

MB: As a carpenter?

AG: As a carpenter. Then a time came. It [the draft] was compulsory; there the draft was [is] compulsory even to this day. You had to put so much time in at a certain age. I think it was twenty or twenty-one years of age. You had to put time in service, and it was drawing close . And once you went to service there, you lost your America[n] [citizenship]. You became a citizen there.

MB: Oh, I see,

AG: And he heard so much about America, you know, although he says it's different when you come here. From [being a] carpenter [you had] to go on your belly in a coal mine, big coal. But he also heard there were better chances here. So he got in contact with his uncle who was his mother's brother, and he lived here in Windber.

MB: Oh, I see.

AG: Because you had to be sponsored. He had nobody. I think he had enough money. But you have to have a sponsor to come here, you know, since you didn't know [the] language or anything, but in case you run into hardship, whoever sponsored you was responsible for you.

MB: So he came here about when then that time? [Traffic outside is noisy].

AG: About 1926.

MB: Okay. Now, his parents, did they come to Windber, or had they been in Windber before?

AG: Yes, when his father worked in the mines here.

MB: In Windber?

AG: Yeah. That part I don't know, who sponsored or not.

MB: He lived here until he was five [years old] in Windber? Your husband had actually lived in Windber?

AG: Yeah, in the meantime, they [his parents] had three children in that five years. And they went back with three children. That was one sister and a brother I told you about.

MB: That's fascinating. Did he ever know English when he lived here as a child or [had he] just spoken Hungarian?

AG: He was only five years old; he didn't start school yet.

MB: So he spoke Hungarian here.

AG: He spoke Hungarian here.

MB: So when he came over in 1926, he didn't know any English, and he had a hard time, too.

AG: Well, his dad knew some, but he never talked English at home, you know, because the wives always was the last to learn, because all the other wives were all Hungarian. Where you gonna learn from?

MB: So his parents had gone back, and they stayed there, though. And he just came over then.

AG: Yes. They stayed there. And when my husband came here, he was here a couple years when his dad tried to come back. But he didn't pass the examination. Where did they call it? At the port?

MB: The health exam?

AG: He didn't pass. And so, not being an American citizen, he couldn't come.

MB: And your husband was an American citizen because he was born here so that made it easier.

AG: Right. And he didn't go to the army there. So he didn't lose his citizenship.

MB: Oh, I see.

AG: And his uncle sponsored him.

MB: And he [the uncle] was in Windber already. He had a place to go, to board with him there.

AG: Well, yeah, his uncle was married.

MB: Well, okay. I'm just trying to get--

AG: He stayed there for a little while. Then, from his uncle's place, they all went to board over at Irene's place. When his brother came, already he was over at Irene's, the girl he [the brother] married. But they were so much in love and everything, yet they're the ones that divorced. She divorced him. She was thirty-six years old when she divorced him.

MB: That must have been hard, too, but--

AG: Oh, she almost destroyed him because he was a one-woman man. And then he met this other girl, and he had a very happy second marriage.

MB: Oh, that's nice.

AG: See, Irene always, I guess that she was only fifteen when she got married. And, you know, she was a very attractive girl. But she fell for…You know, I don't think any marriage would last if you believe everything guys will [say]. You know, the ones making passes at married women. You don't trust men like that because they just want you for a one night stand, but Irene fell for everything. They would admire [her], she was telling me. She says, "You know the guys told me I have the most beautiful legs."

I look at her legs. Well, I just saw legs. (Laughing) I didn't see what was outstanding, you know. I thought they were lying.

MB: They were lying. [It was] a line.

AG: I thought she was talking like a silly teenager. And here she was thirty-six years old, already with kids, with practically grown kids. So she fell for all that, and she, she thought she was always about her looks came first, taking care of herself. And in one of those [photos], she's already in her, she's in her sixties, but she, she's got the body of a fifteen-year old. She's in a picture there, one of those pictures. I'll show it to you.

MB: What did your mother's generation think about women looking good? What did they think? [Both talk at same time.] How did they see that?

AG: Well, I'll tell you. Hard work, hard work didn't hurt. It didn't seem to because I remember when my mother, when they asked her her age and she would say she was thirty-eight years old, they would say, "My gosh!" My mother was a very pretty woman, and she had nine children, but actually there would have been eleven. This was like miscarriage[s]. But my mother never went over 100 pounds to the day she died.

MB: Wow. That's fantastic.

AG: Not because she took care of herself. Well, it was work that kept her like that.

MB: (Beik laughs.) Oh, wow.

AG: Heck, she would have her baby, and, three days later, she was cooking, washing clothes and everything after her baby was born. So, I remember where other (emphasis) women…You know, in those days, too, they had some women who'd fall for a man's flattery, and then they'd run away, you know. And, you know, they thought that they never wanted to talk in front of children. But that's when we'd listen the most, you know--

MB: (laughing) Right.

AG: (continuing) when we thought they had some juicy tale. I would be hearing them discuss a certain woman on the street. And I used to take milk to these houses because we had the cows up here, too, and people in those days. It wasn't like nowadays where you have to have dairies, you know. They just bought directly from the farm, you know. And I would deliver the milk. And here I knew the woman they were talking about, she, because I delivered milk there. And they were all young. See, they were all young people in those days, you know, the young immigrants. And this woman was so very pretty. But she did use a little bit of lipstick and, see, cosmetics.

MB: Your mother was simple?

AG: Yes. My mother had thick [hair] to the day she died. She was in her seventies, but her hair was jet black.

MB: Oh, really.

AG: And thick, curly, real curly, beautiful waves. She could sit on her hair.

MB: Oh.

AG: And then, when she fixed it up, you know, and then she had delicate features. She had small, delicate features. She was beautiful. She herself, you know, she was [beautiful]. But there was a lot of women like that.

Some of her friends would be fat, you know, because they slept late, and they were buying milk they didn't have. See, even the people who lived down the street were…Most of them had milking cows they were raising at home. They were busy, you know. Gardening. But some of the women had it so good. Their husbands didn't want them to keep no boarders. They didn't want them to bother with cows. They didn't want, the husbands didn't want them. So those women got fat. I had them picked out. They were fat; they were ugly. It was only the trim women that was nice to me.

So this woman that ran away, yes, that's what they were talking about. She ran away with another man, and the man was a single fellow. Eva was married. They just ripped her apart. And this single fella took her away. But she had about ten boarders and no wash machine in those days. She worked so hard. She probably went away from the hard work, you know.

MB: Did your parents keep boarders besides living on the farm? Did they keep boarders in addition?

AG: Yes. These boarders were my husband's first cousins or brothers.

MB: Oh, okay.

AG: That's the only boarders. But whenever they had their wives come here, or they went back, some of them, you know, brought their wives. When that broke up, no boarders. There couldn't be. There was too much work. And boarders, by that time, went out of style because most of them either went back, or they had their wives come here.

MB: Okay, well, you got married. You were married in Detroit? Then did you have your wedding then in Detroit?

AG: Yes, that's where I was married.

MB: How did your dad get to Detroit? Did he go to an Hungarian community there?

AG: Yes, but my dad spoke perfect English.

MB: Oh, I see, Okay. Because of the--

AG: My father was, when he was hired, even though in those days if you were over forty, it wasn't so easy to get a job, even in those days, in those days especially because there's a lot to choose from, the young people. But my father was so gifted. See, [from] that little time he worked in Youngstown Ohio, he understood machinery so well. And, like I say, he was his own

mechanic. You didn't need no mechanic when my dad handled the machine. He right away was advanced.

MB: So he was able to get a job in Detroit?

AG: Yes, get a job, and he advanced.

MB: Where did he work?

AG: The company was called Kelsey Hayes Wheel. They built the wheel for the cars. My father, in no time at all, he had men working under him.

MB: How did he get the job originally? Did some relative work there or did he--?

AG: No, no. He filled out an application.

MB: Oh, and he got it that way.

AG: And after he was interviewed and whenever they…See, in those days before you started, no matter what was on their application, but they took you to a machine, and they would ask you what's this and what's that.

MB: I see.

AG: And my father laughed, you know.

MB: He knew how to do it.

AG: So he was hired right away.

MB: Oh. So then tell me about your wedding and your life in Detroit? Did you stay in Detroit for a long time?

AG: No. Because we stayed in Detroit I think two years. Oh, wait, I was sixteen when, well, say three years.

MB: Uh huh. Did you come back to Windber then?

AG: And we came back. Already it was bad there. But, like I say, my father was still working [in Detroit]. But my dad felt himself getting sick, and my mother needed an operation. And they did not have no hospitalization in the company in those days. Everything had to be cash. And here this was eating up all the money for my mother's hospital. And, over here [in Windber], if you worked for the company, all it cost you was a dollar a month and your whole family is taken care of and childbirth, anything, you know. Just a dollar a month covers everything. And there was still little kids in the family, you know for my dad. My dad was only in his forties.

MB: So your parents moved back here, too?

AG: My dad, after mom had her operation, and dad, he wasn't feeling well, you know, when he come back. The only reason he came back was…Because going back in the coal dust, because that was choking him. He used to cough, and it would hold on. You know what I mean. He couldn't take his breath, and there was no medication in those days. So he came back. He didn't even tell us he's coming back. He just disappeared one night.

And I remember my mother asking my oldest brother, "Where's dad?"

You know, there used to be a neighborhood bar not too far, a Hungarian bar, and my brothers went looking for him. And here, about several days later, a big truck come. I was then married, just married. Wait, we were married--

End of Tape 2 Side A

Beginning of Tape 2 Side B (February 29, 1984)

MB: So then, you and your husband moved back then.

AG: A big truck came, and, see, when I got married, I just, we just, stayed at home.

MB: Oh, I see. You lived with your parents then. Did you live with your parents then when you got married?

AG: Yeah. We stayed on with my parents (pausing) 'cause, you know, till we got a house. My mother said, "You might as well stay home." But it was my mother who talked to me to come back [to Windber]. She was afraid to let me there [in Detroit] because I was just newly married and my husband had a lot of relatives. She thought that maybe they'll make trouble there. They won't treat me right.

MB: In Detroit?

AG: In Detroit. Yeah.

MB: Because she wanted you to come to Windber?

AG: But, you know, I didn't want to come back regardless because over there we had gas stoves, bathrooms. Over here they didn't have that. They still had coal stoves, no bathrooms, you know. And I thought, well, going back to that whereas we had so much convenience. And we lived in a beautiful brand new brick home, and coming back here to the…Oh, when I thought of the houses here. But she was sick. She was just operated on, and I was the oldest girl. So finally I agreed, reluctantly, you know.

I never did like Windber. Always my hopes were [that] we were going to go away from here. But then the years passed. Then the kids started, and I wanted my kids educated. And then it

was an asset to live in cheap rent because we was able to save. But in the city, there was always a lot of expense. I thought, "Well, after my kids…." I was still young; my husband was still young. I thought, "Well, after the kids come out of school, maybe then," you know.

MB: You'd move away?

AG: We'll go away then, and the kids can help with their college expenses. They can work and go to college. But it didn't….What happened [was that] my husband got hurt in the mine.

MB: Okay. I wanted to ask you. He worked in the mines then when he came back?

AG: Yes, he kept on working until he got hurt. That was in '58. 1958. He got hurt and disabled.

MB: He worked from '32 or '33 until '58 in the mines?

AG: Anyway, it was thirty-seven years I think. They figured it. I think so. Well, anyway.

MB: How did he get hurt? Did he--?

AG: He was hurt in the mine. Betty [Mrs. Elizabeth Dutzman, her friend] knows. My husband then was on the critical list. He wasn't expected to live because he had broken bones in his body, see, and after forty years of age, broken bones are dangerous. You develop blood clots because [there is] no mobility, you know. You're in the bed all the time. And that's what happened to him. He developed blood clots in his lungs. He was hemorrhaging blood through his mouth.

MB: Oh, dear.

AG: We were all summoned. Betty came up, too. He wasn't expected to live because that disabled him. He wasn't. So, what little money we had….What were you going to ask?

MB: I was just going to ask you, When you came back, did you live in mine 35 then or--?

AG: Right, all the time.

MB: Ever since then?

AG: Because, you know, works was never too good here, and the rent was cheap.

MB: How much did the mines work in those days when you first came back?

AG: Well, in the summer it worked two days a week. Then, beginning in like September, see, because coal is mainly used for heating, not like now, [when] coal is used for a lot of other things, not just heat, you know. That's why coal mines will never go out of existence. If they say it's [for] heat, they are lying. Coal--nylons is made out of coal. Medication is made out of

coal. Well, and a lot of things are made out of coal–material, clothes. So anyway, beginning in September, until the works would pick up in September then, they worked every day. Then they worked every day until spring, see, like about May, April or May. Then they'd work pretty good, but the wages were cheap.

A coal miner earned $2.00 a day, but there weren't checkoffs [the deduction of wages from company payrolls for the purpose of paying for union checkweighmen who monitored the weighing of coal]. You know what I mean? There was a $1.00 a month, but your coal was free. Your electricity was maybe a $1.00 a month. But it's hard to pay even little bit when there isn't much wages there, you know. So then the wages weren't that much. But things were cheap. Of course, now there's no wages at all for some people, and yet everything is so high. In those days you could buy a loaf of bread for five cents, a loaf of bread. Milk was, I think, six cents a quart, you know. But still we managed to save because I didn't have a big family.

Betty had a big family. She couldn't save because when he [Betty's husband] did work, he was a spender. See, my husband wasn't. We sacrificed a lot. So did Betty, cooking and baking and everything. But her husband, when he would get a good pay, he gambled it, you know, and he drank. I mean I guess all coal miners drank to a certain extent. It was even good for them but not at the expense of their families.

MB: So how many children did you have then?

AG: (Concerned that her friend might overhear what she said): Did this go on the tape, too? What I said about Betty?

MB: I can take that out. No, she's never going to <u>hear</u> (emphasis) it. [Beik stopped the recorder, and they discuss this situation. Mrs. Gary was reassured that Betty would never hear the interview. Beik then resumed the oral history.]

MB: Tell me about your [family]? How many children did you have then?

AG: Three. I had five, but two [died]. I had a little girl in '47. She lived a day and died.

MB: Oh.

AG: Then I had a little boy in '61. I had this RH negative blood.

MB: Oh, you did!

AG: I was fortunate that I had my three children that lived early because, see, in those days they couldn't, they didn't even know why my babies would just turn yellow and die. There was something in their blood. My blood was negative, and my husband's positive. That caused…The red corpuscles would eat up the whites. So I had the three children, and the two lived only a day and died.

MB: What did you want for your children then?

AG: Oh, while others were spending on clothes and buying furniture when they did get income to spend money. Because then, like in the '50s, coal industries were better. They [the coal companies] were paying [better] with the union, you know. They were paying very good wages. No hospitalization [no charge for the miners]. They paid for all medical care and everything. So yeah, we got into some money. My goal was [that] my children will have to be educated so they don't ever (emphasis) feel what we went through.

Oh, before I forget, my oldest son [Jesse Gary], he not only, I'll show you his card, but he teaches computer science at Roosevelt University.

MB: Oh, I would like to contact him.

AG: Of course, you know, Jess helped himself a lot.

MB: Well, tell me, he teaches computer science?

AG: Yes. And the second one, Ernest, he is a supervisor of, it's called SWECO, but it's Southwestern Electric Company. But he calls it SWECO for short. And he is plant manager.

MB: Oh, where's that? Tell me.

AG: And [proudly pointing to a photo of another son, her third living child] this one (emphasis) [Clifford Gary] is a doctor.

MB: Oh, boy. He went from the coal mines into being a doctor and--

AG: Right.   Every penny we ever saved, and during the war, you know, we bought bonds. Everything went. Even those old kitchen chairs were mortgaged because, see, in the meantime, here and, by the time he was in, he already had his pre-med. But he was to enter medical school [when] my husband had this accident and was disabled. Disabled without any compensation, only while he was--how shall I say it?--while he was in the hospital, he was getting, I was paid compensation. As soon as he came out of the hospital, by design (emphasis), they sent him in the mine because that was the only way they could get him off disability. Understand? So, they sent him in, and he was not allowed to go in because his lungs was shot.

MB: Oh boy.

AG: He went in, and then, by design, they sent him in. And then, a week later, they shut the mine down. But this was all secret, you know. Well, so there we were. My husband couldn't go away for a job because he couldn't pass the physical. And most of the money went off to the colleges to the boys.

MB: I don't know how you managed. I just don't know.

AG: I can't tell you how I, you know, how. I went to work. I was getting $5.00 a day. I left the house at 5 o'clock in the morning, came home [at] 7 o'clock at night. And, out of that $5.00, seventy cents went for my car fare, for bus fare to go to work. It was $4.30.

MB: Where was this?

AG: I worked in a store. My wages was, I think, thirty cents an hour.

MB: In Windber you worked in a store?

AG: No, I had to go to Johnstown. There was no place to work in Windber because times were bad then. The people who worked a long time were there. Over here they worked until they retired or died or what, you know.

MB: What store did you work in?

AG: There was no factory then, but later on, then, you know, my boy was already in medical school [and] I started working for Bestform. But, you know, already--how shall I say?--they were paying pretty good. There wasn't very much benefits, but I was pretty healthy yet and strong. I didn't care about benefits but that I was helping him [Clifford] through.

After his second year of medical school, we didn't need much help. He was already like…He had patients. He had work-like experience already, you know, and they were paying for his education. So it got better. But believe me, before that, it was very tough.

And my other [son], like Jess, he couldn't help me because, see, Jess was married while he was in college. So what happened? That was in the Korean conflict. If you got married, they purposely drafted you. So he was drafted right out of college. But when he came out of college, they lived here a while while he was in service. They were just married. He was in Harrisburg in--what is that place called?--that camp?

MB: Oh, okay. I don't know. That's all right. It's not that important.

AG: Well, they trained…Well, anyhow, that's where the soldiers trained. But his wife was from Detroit, so she stayed here until he put his two years in. But then (suddenly remembering the name of the camp) he was stationed in Indiantown Gap. He was stationed there because already you know he had college. So he was the one that would issue the discharge papers. He was always stationed there, and she would stay here, and he would come home like weekends.

MB: So, they had a hard time getting through school and getting started.

AG: So, when he came out of service, he went back to college, but you have to give his wife credit, too. Even when he was issued a diploma, she was given one, too. (Beik laughs.) On there it says "PHT," "pushing hubby through," because then they were having babies, too. It wasn't because she worked, but she worked at home. She made her own clothes. She did her

own curtains. She tried to keep the kids quiet while he studied. She sacrificed, too. They gave her the diploma, too.

MB: Now let me think about your (emphasis) work. Did you work outside the home before your husband was in the accident or--?

AG: Oh, no. No way! (emphasis) When I went--

MB: How did the Europeans think about women working outside the home?

AG: Well, now it doesn't matter. There aren't that many European women around here now. (Beik laughs.) Everybody is working, even when they're having little babies. At least when I went, I didn't have no babies, you know. But I don't think I could have worked then because…No one knows. You know who worked? Someone who had a career, like a school teacher or a nurse, you know, because they could get help to watch their kids. But not (emphasis) laborers' wives. But I am glad I didn't work when my kids were small. I always feel I took good care of them; [I] took good care of my husband. I don't miss that at all.

MB: Okay.

End of Tape 2 Side B

End of the Interview on February 29, 1984

Beginning of the Interview on March 14, 1984

Beginning of Tape 3 Side A (March 14, 1984)

MB: I'd like to talk about the immigration of families. I thought maybe today we could deal with Windber itself more because you moved away to Detroit and came back.

AG: For two years I was away.

MB: So, most of your life you lived in Windber then.

AG: Oh, yeah.

MB: So you know a lot about it. Okay. Could you tell me about it when you were growing up? How would you describe Windber to somebody who hadn't seen it, someone who had never seen a mining town?

AG: Well, at that time most of the people…We were children of young immigrants. As a matter of fact, they built the town, these immigrants. And there was no conveniences. There was no paved streets. There was no sidewalks. People didn't have much money because at that time wages were low. But it seemed that everybody grew their own vegetables. Our mothers baked, cooked, made their own noodles. So, we were well fed. We grew up healthy. We were…Like now you hear of children having leukemia and all kinds of illnesses and being born handicapped. That was rare (emphasis) in this [place] among our people. That was rare.

So we didn't have to have, and the children didn't have to have, a birth certificate to start school. All the families had large families. All the mothers and fathers had lots, from eight to ten to twelve kids and even fifteen. There was just an article in the paper yesterday about Kush, Frank Kush.

MB: Oh, the coach.

AG: Yeah, the coach. He was one of fifteen children.

MB: Oh boy.

AG: His parents lived down the street here. His dad died when he was just a boy, and his mother did the best she could. [She] brought up those children, and they all turned out real good. Well, anyway, we grew up healthier than children are today because today parents work. They don't have time to cook and take care of their kids like in those days [when] the mothers stayed home to take care of the children and cooked.

There was no washing machine, but we were always clean. Most of us, my parents…I remember I was about ten or twelve years old by the time my mother had linoleum in the kitchen. She used to scrub the bare floor. Even the chairs were bare. She had to scrub them. But everything was really clean.

Well, we, I grew up on a farm, but the living standards was the same as the people that lived in the village, too, you know. They had their own cows, hogs, chickens, and no conveniences because I remember we didn't have electricity.

It was my...That was one of my chores. I had to, regardless where I was playing, like on a Sunday, but it was, that was my job to clean the shades on the…We had a kerosene lamp. From the ceiling you had to pull it down to clean, but it was beautiful. It had a china shade, real china.

MB: Uh huh.

AG: It was white with roses on it.

MB: Goodness!

AG: And that was my chore. I had to keep the chimney clean on it and pour kerosene, trim the wick.

And as I got older, before I left in the morning to go to school--not like today, they have buses--you see these big healthy kids, strong looking kids riding the bus a mile away--we were walking two and three miles through snowdrifts. Like the older ones in the family, we'd ride piggyback on a brother or sister through the snowdrifts and go two and three miles away.

MB: Uh huh.

AG: Well, that part wasn't exactly Windber; it was called Elton.

MB: Oh, when you were there.

AG: Then a strike broke out, and we moved. My father was what you call, they called them strikebreakers, you know. But he felt he couldn't afford a strike. By that time there was nine children and although I…He couldn't--

MB: That was 1922?

AG: Yes. He couldn't afford to strike so the company moved us. He was working up here in one of the mines. So the company moved us to that farm house up here. By that time, when I was going to school to Windber…Before I left to go to school, I had to milk two cows.

MB: So you did (emphasis) your work. When you think of Windber itself, was it laid out like with different nationalities living in certain places?

AG: Yeah, it was all ethnic people.

MB: Where did like the Hungarians live, and where did the Italians live, and so on?

AG: Well, the Italians lived in the west end section. No (correcting herself), not the west end, the east end. [The] west end is going towards Scalp, going toward Johnstown, toward where Mrs. Dutzman lives. That's the west end, but [the] east end is up towards the high school. That's where it still is. Almost all the Italians [live there.]

MB: What about the Hungarians and Slovaks?

AG: But the Hungarians and Slovaks and Polish people, they were mostly in the west end where our church is, the Hungarian church and the hospital, in those areas. And then at the mining villages like 37, 40, 35, and 36.

MB: Those were mostly Hungarians and Poles and Slovaks?

AG: Yes, these ethnics--Polish, Hungarian, and the Slovaks.

MB: Uh huh. Okay. Yeah.

AG: [The] Italians are still in the same place.

MB: Did you say that you went to the Reformed Hungarian Church last time, or was that your husband?

AG: My husband.

MB: He went to the Reformed. Was there any problem [with] like a Catholic, a Hungarian Catholic, a Roman Catholic marrying a Reformed Hungarian?

AG: Oh, definitely! (emphasis) Oh yeah. There was discrimination.

MB: Tell me about that. I don't know much about that.

AG: Today, there isn't. But at that time, oh yes (strong emphasis), if you married like I married. My husband was Lutheran. And if my husband didn't change, I couldn't go to the Catholic

Church. I couldn't get communion or anything. But today it doesn't matter. You get married regardless.

MB: Was he Lutheran or Reformed? Or how did they--?

AG: Well he was Lutheran, but then, see, they didn't have no Hungarian Lutheran [church].

MB: Oh, I see.

AG: Since my husband grew up in Europe…He was born here,--

MB: Right.

AG: (continuing) but he grew up in Europe. Well, when he came here, he had to go [to church] because my husband was religious. So he had to go to a church where--

MB: So he went to the Lutheran one on Somerset?

AG: No, not there. First he went to the Reformed church because it was all Hungarian-speaking people.

MB: Oh, I see.

AG: They were all Hungarian at the Reformed church. There was no Slovak or Polish among them, strictly Hungarian.

MB: I see. Okay.

AG: So it was closer to the Lutheran religion than the Catholic.

MB: I see.

AG: Because the Catholic was strictly alone, you know. Like Protestants. Protestants can be Presbyterian, Lutherans, and so forth, but Catholics were just alone.

MB: So there were conflicts then sometimes between--?

AG: Yes. Oh, yes. It even broke up marriages.

MB: Was it mostly the religion, or was it their nationality like that was--?

AG: The religion.

MB: The religion, not the nationality.

AG: Yeah. It started with Martin Luther. Is that his name? Martin Luther? I almost said Martin Luther King. (Beik laughs.) But Martin Luther was Catholic, and he broke away because he disagreed with the some of the, some of the, aspects of the church. Well, anyway, the Reformed was closer to Lutheran because it was Protestant.

MB: Okay. So which church did you go to after you were married, if you went to any?

AG: Oh. We were supposed to get married. My husband wouldn't change. But my mother…She claimed at that time that they were, [for] twenty-five years, members of the Hungarian Catholic Church, and this was in Detroit.

MB: I see.

AG: And my mother…She was against this, you know, about the religion because they worshipped the same God, and yet, because one worships standing up and the other kneeling down, that made such a difference, you know.

She had an argument with a priest, you know. Well, she came with us, you know, to ask the priest if he'll perform the ceremony because they used to announce it in church when there'd be a wedding coming up.

MB: Right.

AG: So when the priest said, well, that he cannot perform the ceremony unless my husband turned, my mother argued with him that he'll still be worshipping the same God. She got real upset that being twenty five years a member of the church and then don't get the services he was supposed to perform. But he said he would do it in the parsonage but not in the church, that we would be married just like in his. You see, my wedding was planned. I had a big wedding. And my mother says that she believed in a church. She did not believe in a priest's house.

MB: I see. Oh.

AG: She said (angrily),"It's all right for the priest's house but not the church?"

Well, she didn't believe in that. So we went [to] my husband's brother. He was already married. So he took us to the Lutheran church and asked the minister there; they were called ministers. Only the Catholics are priests. He agreed right away.

MB: Okay.

AG: So he married us. And another thing the Catholic priest demanded [was] that if we have children, they all be Catholic. Well, my mother thought that was such dictatorship, to dictate to us that where you're going to worship and what your children are going to be. So that was another reason. Not me (emphasis). I didn't care. So, we were married in the Lutheran church because there was no demands.

MB: I see. Okay. When you came back to Windber, did you go back to church?

AG: But when we came back to Windber, I still kept going to the Catholic Church. My children were still baptized because--not that I (emphasis) wanted it, not even my husband--my parents dictated that.

MB: I see.

AG: In a way, they still wanted the Catholic Church. It was just to show them that we were going to be married in a church without my husband turning.

MB: Right. Did your husband go with you to a Catholic church then?

AG: Yeah. As a matter of fact, my husband wouldn't have minded turning.

MB: Yeah, interesting.

AG: He really even told me he used to like…He had more friends in the Catholic Church than in the Reformed. Well, he was just a young kid, too, when he come here, you know, and all his friends, they seemed to be Catholic. And he used to go a lot to the Catholic Church. But he wouldn't have minded turning. But my mother just wanted to show the priest that he's not going to turn. (Beik laughs.)

MB: So there were a lot of other marriages where there were problems then with the religion more than with the nationality?

AG: Among other people because the young listened to the older people, you know, about the religion. They were ordered around. Even the one family, one friend, a young couple, friends of ours… They like ran away and got married because the boy was Protestant and the girl was [had] very strict Catholic parents. But she herself was, I mean, religious-minded. So they ran away. There was a place called Cumberland, Maryland, where runaways went. Runaways used to go there.

MB: Uh huh.

AG: I guess you heard of it?

MB: Yes, I have.

AG: So when they come back, well, her parents figured that since they ran away and were married, they may as well get married in church then, but in the Catholic church. Well, the priest wouldn't do it. Well. that depended on the people, too, that belonged to the church. They were against it. Not the priest, himself; it was the religion itself.

MB: Okay. So there were probably--

AG: Her husband would not turn. He said, "Absolutely not." (emphasis) He didn't care if it cost him his marriage, he's not gonna turn. The girl said the same thing. So what did they do? After they had the baby, when the fella went to work, the mother and father of the girl, the Catholic, talked the girl into having the baby baptized while the father was in the mines working.

MB: Oh, I see.

AG: So, when he came home and learned later that his kid [was baptized], what they did, it broke up the marriage.

MB: Oh, strong feelings. How did the nationalities get along? Did they get along pretty well together, or did they fight?

AG: As far as I know.

MB: Yeah. What about between the eastern Europeans, all of them, and the people who were English or who had been American born for generations or something. Were there problems sometimes? Do you remember?

AG: Well, yes, I remember, as kids, you know, in school, even the school teachers, they started to favor the children that were American born of parents, American-born parents. Well, we were American-born parents, but at that time there was few. I am talking about immigrants.

MB: Yeah. Right. Right.

AG: So that even the teachers favored them because--\

MB: You told me that.

AG: As young as I was, I noticed it. We would, for the slightest thing, we would be punished, and I mean punished (emphasis). In those days they used rubber hoses.

MB: Oh!

AG: They pounded your leg with it, and, boy, if that didn't sting! But the kids that was American born, of American parents, they got away. They would do it, and we would be punished for what they did wrong, you know. Such as like in the elementary grades. I am talking about the elementary grades because when you got to high school--well, I'm not going to tell my story. When the teacher would leave the room or something and kids got unruly, but she would always have one to watch them. So whenever she would come back, this one would squeal on who was misbehaving. And there could be ten American kids misbehaving and one ethnic, but the ethnic would get punished and the ten Americans wouldn't. We would be punished for all their misdoings. So this discouraged kids from…Many [were discouraged from] going to high school.

MB: Oh, really?

AG: After they were finished with elementary grades, they didn't go to high school because there was so much unfairness going on in the school. It was more like a reformatory. Like a reform school. So many of them dropped out. And in those days you could go to work in the mine even at fourteen years of age. So they preferred to go to work [rather] than to go to school. Well, by that time, they learned their…Even to this day, the Amish people believe they learn their figures and your writing and arithmetic, and the rest is Bible.

MB: Yeah. Did your husband ever think that, you know, that people got better jobs with the company if they were American born?

AG: Definitely.

MB: Oh, do you know any stories? Can you explain that to me a little?

AG: It wasn't always so because the ethnic people were better workers. The American workers never could pull the candle to the ethnic people. They were loyal; they were honest and hardworking.

MB: Yeah.

AG: And some of them were born skillful.

MB: Like your father.

AG: Yes. So, if the company noticed, they didn't care if you couldn't speak a word in English. But if they noticed that you were skilled and knew how to handle your job, handle your machine, you were in. But how shall I tell you that you advanced, but not (emphasis) your wages?

MB: Oh, they promoted you by title then, you mean, to a different job?

AG: Yes, kind of like foremen, assistant bosses.

MB: Oh, I see.

AG: But they didn't get such high wages, but it was higher than a laborer.

MB: I see. Okay.

AG: Now some of the laborers, if they were piece workers, they made out pretty good because they worked like a horse. They loaded a lot of cars. Sometimes it cost them. They didn't last long. They died early because they worked too hard and swallowed too much dust or got killed. You know they were rushing to make money in the mine, and they'd get careless and a rock [would] fall, and they'd get killed. There was a lot of young immigrants getting killed in the mines.

But, like you say, as you say, about getting better jobs [it was possible], if like I say, through hard work and your skill. You understand the stuff that was important to them. Like my father was important to them if you strike because he could chop up a lot of coal, you know. It wasn't done by pick, you know, pick and shovel. He was [held] in high (emphasis) regard, but that doesn't mean that they paid him a lot of money.

MB: Yeah. Right. Huh. Well, did any of your family ever know the Berwinds at all, any of the Berwind family? Did they ever meet any of them?

AG: (Indicating she had not heard or understood what Beik had asked): I beg your pardon.

MB: The Berwind family who owned the Berwind-White company. Did any of your family ever meet any of them?

AG: The Berwinds.

MB: [Both talk at once]. They did not live here.

AG: They did not live here. They lived in Philadelphia.

MB: Yeah, I know that. I haven't met anyone in Windber who knew them.

AG: But if you were a favored worker then, well, they had like supervisors or bosses. If you were a favored worker then, they had their club.

MB: Oh. Was that the Wilmore Club or something they called it? Oh, well, anyway, go on. I'm sorry [to interrupt].

AG: It was called the Berwind club. Well, then you had access to socialize. You had access to the club to socialize with them if they gave you a title, if you were a night foreman or assistant

boss. The general superintendent was a big shot. He probably did that, associate with the [Berwinds].

MB: Was that Mr. [E. J.] Newbaker? Was that Newbaker?

AG: Newbaker.

MB: Now was he from Windber or did they--?

AG: Mr. [A. J.] Cook. Newbaker was general superintendent. Mr. Cook, he was supervisor, and then, from then on, they had the assistant bosses. They had more of those because they had sections in the mine. You see each section had to have a boss.

MB: I see.

AG: So these assistant bosses, they were called assistant bosses. Now, like Cook, he was the super of all of them.

MB: I see.

AG: And the general [superintendent] was over the whole industry, the whole.

MB: I see. Oh boy. Do you think that those were the most powerful people in the town then?

AG: Prominent people.

MB: Prominent. And the burgess, I guess, too.

AG: And the mayor of the town and the ministers and priests.

MB: Oh, they were powerful.

AG: Because every time there would be like a banquet at the church, these [people], the general supervisor, and all of them [the Berwind top bosses] would be invited. They had a special table for them.

MB: Oh really. They were always together?

AG: They was always. How shall I say? There was <u>never</u> (emphasis) equality, socially, you know.

MB: These people who ran the company, though, they weren't from Windber? Didn't the company bring them in like from Philadelphia? The Berwinds were from Philadelphia. Newbaker wasn't from here, was he?

AG: Not that I know of.

MB: I don't know if they lived here.

AG: I think so because they used to be like promoted from somewhere else.

MB: I see. They'd bring them in.

AG: Berwind [she means the Berwind company's Windber mines] was a big mine, but Berwind had smaller mines, smaller operations. And if they had favored, gifted people, they were promoted, and they'd come to the big mine.

MB: I see. Okay.

AG: I guess just like school teachers, first year, elementary, kindergarten, elementary. And you'd get your promotions by higher pay, higher grade, as you prove your worth, I guess.

MB: Okay.

AG: Anyway, it used to be like that. Now they say there [are] so many bad teachers. I don't know. [Beik laughs].

MB: Can you remember many elections when you were growing up? Like for president, or for the city, or for the state? Any elections at all?

AG: My parents…My mother never became a citizen.

MB: Oh, okay.

AG: My father, he was already sick. In fact, he had his first papers.

MB: He was born here so--

AG: My father? No! My father was an immigrant. My husband was born here.

MB: Oh, I am getting them confused. I'm sorry.

AG: My husband was a citizen. That's why he came when he was 19 years old. See, in Europe, it was compulsory to serve.

MB: Oh, yeah, yeah. That's right. I remember you telling me that.

AG: But my dad, he even came here without a passport.

MB: Oh, so he couldn't vote ever. They couldn't vote then, your parents.

AG: No, because he didn't go for his citizen papers. By the time he did, he did go, he was fifty-two years old when he died.

MB: Oh boy. He died young.

AG: But he was…This school house was operating then. And at night these immigrants that didn't have their papers yet were going in there for instruction.

MB: Oh, I see.

AG: So my dad got his first papers. And then they had to wait so many months to go for their second papers. They made progress with their [lessons]. They had to learn a lot. I remember I used to have to…I would ask the questions, and he would be studying, you know, and he would be answering and what he didn't know. You know what? Those people knew more about our

government than we did because they learned. Now you ask me how many members [there are] in Congress, I don't know, you know. Maybe, because I heard or read [such information] some time ago, but I was never interested.

MB: But they had to pass tests on that.

AG: And they were learning at a time in their life when it stuck.

MB: Yes. (Beik laughs).

AG: I know because I would ask dad a question, and he would answer. I didn't know if it was right or not, but then there was a book. It had the answers, you know.

MB: So you could test him.

AG: And I told him, I said, "Gee, dad, you know more than I do."

MB: He was learning more than you were in school.

AG: But he died, see, before he was called because they would summon you, send you summons, to go, you know. You had to go to Somerset for the main purpose.

MB: For the hearing or--

AG: For the examination.

MB: Oh boy. That must have been…Many people must not have been able to vote in all those early years of Windber.

AG: Right. And another thing, the country was always Republican, you know, because the operators were all Republicans. But my father used to say that, in the mines, like now at election time, that the people who could vote--the bosses--would go to them, and if they didn't vote Republican, they would lose their jobs.

MB: Oh boy.

AG: If they ever found out that you didn't vote Republican, you lost your job.

MB: Oh boy. So I guess this area didn't vote for Democrats until the '30s or something.

AG: When [Franklin Delano] Roosevelt [was elected], when the big depression was, when the people were standing in lines for a bowl of soup. Because now…They didn't have at that time any kind of help for the people. No way! I remember when we lived in Detroit, a man came to the door. My mother was in the hospital, and this man came to the door and asked me [for food]. I was just a young kid, and I cooked soup that day.

See, when we came back [to Windber] from Detroit, my father was working full blast [in Windber] and my husband [also]. But my dad came away soon after I got married because mom was [sick], and they had no hospitalization. Did I tell you that?

MB: Yeah, you told me that.

AG: Well, this guy comes to the door, and he asked me for something to eat. He says he hasn't eaten for a couple of days. And then he showed me. He lifted his foot up, and there was no sole. There was a little bit, but it was all holes. And my dad was sitting on the…And this guy came at a time when I was ready to serve, and I put [in] a lot of meat. I made soup because that's what the families cooked mostly in those days. My brothers…I had two brothers working besides my dad. So when he asked me for something, I said, "Sure!" (emphasis) I gave him [the person who came to the door] a great big bowl of soup, and then in another bowl, I put a lot of meat. There was hardly any left over for, you know,--

MB: For your family? (Beik laughs).

AG: (continuing) Yeah. He was so hungry, and I felt sorry for him. After he left, my father said to me, "You fed the whole meal to that guy."

"Well," I said, "we can go buy more meat, but that guy doesn't have no money." But he just said that. My father did. He said that.

MB: He didn't mean it. Do you think people helped one another a little bit more during these hard times?

AG: They couldn't, they couldn't because everybody was--

End of Tape 3 Side A

Beginning of Tape 3 Side B (March 14, 1984)

AG: Soon after that, we came back here, and my brothers came back, too.

MB: And the mines weren't working much, I guess, here?

AG: The mines were only working two days, but at least you had free hospitalization.

MB: Yeah, and your mother was very ill.

AG: My mother was sick, and the whole family had it [some illness]; [there were] even baby cases. When we come back, I was married, and I was pregnant. I didn't have to worry about money with the baby coming, you know. So that's what brought my dad back. Although, and another thing here, although when we came back, mom still made a big garden. We didn't have cows or anything because by that time we lived in one of these [company] houses.

MB: Okay.

AG: But how shall I say? You went to…There was no relief. There was no handouts like there are now. But the company, see, through the company store--Did you hear that song?

MB: Yeah. "I owe my soul to the company store." Yeah.

AG: They would give us a credit. I wasn't in the same boat [as many other miners' wives] because there was just the two of us, and somehow when the works picked up, my husband

worked almost around the clock to make some money. And we soon paid our bills off and had saved enough that whenever the slowdown came again, we didn't go into debt, you know.

But now anybody that had more kids and didn't work as hard as my husband, maybe they couldn't, didn't have as much strength, or didn't believe in overdoing it like that, but my husband had a lot of pride. He never wanted to….Well, anyway--

MB: It was a hard thing to get through those days.

AG: The works would pick up. These poor people that had to charge everything. As a matter of fact, the company would tell them how much they could <u>spend</u> (emphasis).

You know what? I had a friend. Her husband was called out. He was a motorman, and he was called out for an extra shift. The [scheduled] guy didn't show up, the regular man, so they called him out. So they used to call them "due bills" [a written acknowledgment of a debt to be paid in services rather than cash]. The company would give them, say, you wanted ten dollars. Well, the company would say, "I'm only going to give you five dollars." And you had to make do. If the rest went hungry, that was tough. This is the kind of life there was.

MB: Yeah.

AG: So, this friend of mine…They used up their due bills. So when he was called, and it was [for] the night shift he was supposed to go. They used to have night shift.

B: Right.

AG: So he went to the store for his lunch because they had used up their due bills the day before. So he went to the store. That building is still there at the end of the street.

MB: Right.

AG: He goes down there. Smutko--his name was Bill Smutko. He [a company store man] was a "son of a b--." He [her friend's husband] goes down there, and he says that I have to go to work, but I have no lunch meat. And this Bill Smutko said, "That's tough." 'Cause his wife was telling me that. He says "That's tough."

MB: The store [boss] said, "That's tough."

AG: Yeah. So this fellow says. But he [her friend's husband] was so anxious to get that extra shift because it meant a little bit more for him and they had two kids. So he comes home, and he took the motor out of the washer. See, we didn't have washers, but his wife had a washer.

MB: Oh.

AG: He took the motor out of this washer, and he went and sold that motor to somebody that their motor was bad, whatever price they had. And he sold it to buy lunch meat.

MB: Oh boy. Yeah. People must have had it really hard at that time.

AG: Well, a few years later he was killed in an accident.

MB: Oh boy.

AG: So, yeah, it's in the Bible that a rich man has as much chance to get to heaven like cattle through a needle, the eye of a needle.

MB: Yeah.

AG: That's true. So now, when they're crying, today's the same thing. The only thing now is there's help. But when you read in the papers that there's people asleep on the streets, where the heat's coming from, the registers, from the sewers or wherever, I don't know. Well, how come there's such? And then they call it a great country. This is what I can't understand. At least in those days, you were, how shall I say? For an example, I had two children. No, I just had the one child then. We just had moved in this house. First, we moved in that long row of houses up there. We used to call that the honeymoon shacks. Our rent was only six dollars a month, you know, but in those days, that was enough. So the people who got married, the young people, all came to live there because we were close to the railroad tracks to get our coal.

MB: I see.

AG: Our husbands would go down there and get the coal off of the tracks, you know. Now I pay fifty to sixty dollars for a ton. At that time you got it for free. So we moved there because we needed all the help we could get, the young married people. My very good friend, her husband broke down. He got mentally sick. They had five children. They lived in the next row of shacks. So, what happens? She went for help for the Red Cross because, see, there was no relief or anything.

MB: Right.

AG: So somebody told her to go the Red Cross. She goes to the Red Cross. This I know because I went with her.

MB: Oh, okay.

AG: This young lady at the Red Cross headquarters says to her, "We don't handle such cases."

And this woman [Anna's friend] was a few years older than I was. She says to her [the Red Cross woman], "Well, who handles it?" She says, "I have five children?"

And yeah, it was winter time, and of all things--oh boy, when it rains, it pours. The only heat she had was a coal stove, the coal stove that served [for] cooking, baking, and heating. The grate broke, and it was winter.

MB: Oh.

AG: She could neither cook; she could neither heat the house. And the Red Cross woman says to her [that] they didn't handle such cases. "So where shall I go?"

She [the Red Cross woman] said, "I don't know." She said, "Do you have a mother? Do you have parents? Go to your parents." And the parents were just as bad off, you know. They didn't have nothing either.

So we were a little bit better off. My husband says to her, "Until" (because then she was appealing to the church). See, this is another thing. I always respected the Protestant churches more than the Catholic churches. Catholic churches in <u>this</u> (emphasis) town never helped nobody. As a matter of fact, if you didn't pay your dues every month, and you had ten children, but maybe the father got killed in the mine--and he [the priest] wouldn't bury [the miner]. First, you had to pay up your dues, and [if] he [the deceased] was back [in arrears] a couple years, you had to pay it up. This is what the Catholics were.

MB: I've heard that.

AG: But the Protestants were different. They were always better people. Well, anyhow, in the meantime my husband says to her, "Bring the kids down here." I was then living in this house. He says, "We'll share our food." I made a great big potful of pig[s] in a blanket. You know what I mean?

MB: (Laughing) Yeah, stuffed cabbage.

AG: Stuffed cabbage. That meal. Then the church, the minister, told the people about this family. So they brought her up a new grate for them. They [the parishioners] delivered flour, sugar. At that time the flour used to come in big sacks.

MB: Yeah.

AG: Sugar, too, in twenty-five pounds. All kinds of canned goods. And it was winter time. It was deer hunting season. They brought her a lot of deer meat. Oh, all this was from the Protestant church.

MB: The Lutheran Church?

AG: That's the help. Yeah. One poor person helped the other poor person who was poorer, you know.

MB: Oh boy. That's really touching.

[There was an interruption, and Beik briefly stopped the recorder.]

I'm thinking what else to ask? Oh, I know what I wanted to ask. We were talking about the '30s and the depression. So, what did you think of FDR [Franklin Delano Roosevelt] then? In the '30s?

AG: Oh, we worshipped him. To this day [we worship him.] Many times, you know, he was brought up as not being faithful and all that. Nobody's perfect. We're all born with faults. We all have some faults. But he and his wife, being born with silver spoons in their mouths, and to be that concerned about the poor people, we just thought that they were a godsend. We worship him to this day, he and his wife, both. Eleanor went down with the coal miners into the mines to see their working conditions, where they're working, and how they're earning.

You know what the coal miners earned? My husband used to go in with the five o'clock man-trip, worked all day, came home at four o'clock. So the next day he earned $1.50. Because, see, one day he had to clear away all the rocks; it had to be strictly coal. See, today [she meant in the past] they have [had] what they call "dead work" [work removing rock and other debris to get to the coal, but work for which the miners were not paid]. They had to clear away a lot of rock, and it was with machines [today]. My husband and the miners in those days would be digging with a pick and shovel.

MB: Yeah, pick and shovel. Oh boy.

AG: Yes, Eleanor and her husband, to this day [we worship them]. What their other, what their private lives were, that was their business, and that was their sin, which we all have of some sort of sin. But their compassion for the underprivileged people! Never since then was there anyone like them.

MB: I guess that Windber began, or the miners began, to vote for Democrats when Roosevelt came in.

AG: That's it.

MB: I guess they had been so afraid before, but I don't know.

AG: They are accustomed to the Republicans now, even to this day. Now [look] what's going on. These younger voters, they better be careful; they don't know. They had it too good, but they need a lesson. So now the way they are voting [is] like a beauty contest because the guy is better looking, his wife is better looking, and they're voting for that.

MB: So what did you think of John L. Lewis?

AG: He was another godsend. (Beik laughs.) Things didn't become perfect, but we had a decent living. We was able to educate our children. We didn't become rich. But, yes, he was only able to perform because Roosevelt, see, the government allowed the people to organize.

But when the Republican Party was in, they brought guards in when the strike was. They killed people then. They raped women here, and what all went on. It was just terrible!

There was a farmhouse up here. She [Mrs. John Rykala] was a young woman. She had her first baby. When she came home from the hospital, three guards raped her while her husband watched.

MB: Oh boy. That was in the 1922 strike.

AG: Right. That's the kind of company [it was]. The guards were criminals. And how shall I say? When that era ended, when they brought the people down on their knees, and the hunger it was just…You know you still have to give credit to the common working people because there was no violence committed. Even though they were…Like now they have enough to live on, but they still go killing and stealing, but in those days they didn't. They didn't steal. You could walk down the street; you could have your house open; you could probably have dollar bills on the porch, and nobody would touch it.

MB: The sense of morality was different.

AG: They were <u>good</u> (emphasis) people. There was no violence. Not like now. So when that, they voted out, Roosevelt won in a landslide. I think if he would have lived, to this day he'd still be in office. They gave him a third term. It's in the history books.

MB: Of course.

AG: When he died, we were all scared. We thought it was the end. The Republicans are coming.

And we're scared now, because this [Ronald] Reagan, he cut out the elderly, and now if he gets another term. And this is what [Gary] Hart is saying, when he says in his campaign speech, he says, "We're going to reform Social Security." Well, who's on Social Security? How much reforming are they going to do? Yeah, take it away from Reagan and them. They are getting it, and he has millions.

MB: He doesn't need it. Do you remember when Social Security came in? Do you remember when because that was about 1938 when it started.

AG: Yeah. Oh yeah.

MB: Do you remember anything about that? Do you have any stories about that?

AG: At that time, it was strictly for the elderly, when you get older.

MB: Yeah, it wasn't--

AG: And along the line, they started to give it away. They gave it to…They had different programs for different situations.

MB: Disabled or--

AG: Yes, right. If you became disabled, they had a program for that. But what did they do? Social Security was... Like now they have this lottery, and they have a lot of funds in there, and they are itching to touch it now, you know, in Pennsylvania. I don't know about other states, but they have so much money in this lottery. Why do they have so much money? There is red tape. Sure, they will help you with the taxes on your house, providing you're hardly living on anything. So naturally that money is growing.

Now, tell me who can live on $7,000 a year? Two people. Why, for rent you are paying that much, you know, if you're not owning your home, you know. So, naturally, there is so much red tape on what they'll help you with that the funds grow. So they have a lot of money there. Now they're itching to touch that.

They did that with Social Security. It was growing because it was strictly for retired people. So when it got so much money in there, they start giving it to people that should have been getting welfare instead of Social Security, like widows with children. They had that kind of program for people like that. So what did they do? They start digging into Social Security so that became like bureaucratic. Somebody had a good job. Say you were head of that to distribute funds. Well, you were getting a good salary so [that] the more people went on it, the better for you because if it wouldn't have been growing with people, your salary wouldn't have grown. You got so much, and that's all. So this is what ruined it. And they are going to do the same thing with the lottery now.

MB: Oh boy.

AG: They're going to give it away. They even gave the Social Security money away to foreign countries. Like I don't know whether it was Sweden or Norway. When you people [Beik's family] left this area [in the 1950s], there was a lot of unemployment here.

MB: Yes.

AG: Okay. After their unemployment checks ran out, nobody cared about you. If you had a home and you went on welfare, they took your home, if you had insurance or anything. It would be better if you didn't know about it because it wouldn't hurt then. But I read an article in the paper at that time where in--I don't know which country--Norway or Sweden, American (emphasis) money was used to give those unemployed people checks until they did find a job, where[as] over here they only gave it so long. Our money! (emphasis) Our taxpayers' money! Sure this is a great country. For whom? (emphasis)

MB: You went back to Europe where your husband was born and saw something of that.

AG: Yes, we went back after about 55 years.

MB: Wow! You traveled some.

AG: And what we saw there, I had, we had, a different conception because of what we heard all the time. But now I am just talking about the town where we were.

MB: What was the name of that town again? I can't remember what you said.

AG: Košice.

MB: Okay, Košice, yes. That's in Hungary.

AG: Well, it's Czechoslovakia now.

MB: Okay. All right. Yeah.

AG: Before it had a different name with the Hungarian, Kassa. Now it's Košice or something like that. Well, anyhow, it's Košice. Before we left here, especially after the war ended, we were sending so many packages and money there because we thought that they were so bad off.

MB: Probably they were then.

AG: Yeah, but it was our money that built them up at our expense, you know.   Because when we went there now, I thought, "Gee whiz, we're going to…." That's why I took a lot of our savings. I didn't know. A lot of people take clothes. I took some.

MB: That's heavy to carry around.

AG: But I thought maybe they won't be able to use it. I don't know their sizes. I never saw them.

MB: Right.

AG: So, I thought, "Well, I'll take money. I'll sacrifice that. I'll give them so much money so they use it the way they need it."

So when we went there, I was <u>surprised</u> (emphasis), they had everything. They had more than I did. They had beautiful homes. The old people are just like the old people here. Some of them, you know, are getting pretty good income from their retirement. So they are helping their kids to pay for their home and stuff like that. But, [they] say way over there, the old people say, "We don't want it now. Let the kids enjoy it."

So where we were staying, the son…The old people had the big house, and they gave it to the son. And then the son built like a two-room cottage, and it had a walkway, a breezeway.

MB: That was nice.

AG: Well, the only thing the old people didn't have was the inside toilet because now, over there, the sewage system is poor. That's where, you know, Russia was getting all these pipelines from us, you know, to make these pipelines for sewage systems. So [that's what] they had, the old people. Well, the son had a toilet built in, toilet and bathroom, but the old people was using the outhouse.

MB: I see.

AG: But the toilet, the sewage system, was so poor that it was running in an open ditch. So when you walked down the street….

MB: It's not nice. Yeah.

AG: They had--

MB: Who was your husband seeing there then? Again, now who were the relatives?

AG: My husband's sister. It was a brother-in-law. And it was a nephew and his brother-in-law. These were the two people I really loved because he [the brother-in law] even told me, he says… "You see they address you very beautifully over there. They have very high regard for older people, especially relatives." They call you, "my dear." They call me "Annuska." That means "my dear Anna." "Annuska" means "my dear." Okay, he would tell me, the father, that was my husband's brother-in-law, he would say, "Annuska, don't give them anything. They have, they have everything. These people are so selfish." He would tell me that. He gave my husband a new sweater. He says [that] they had their anniversary, the 50th year, the year before we went there. So he got a lot of these sweaters and handkerchiefs and stuff.

MB: You also had your anniversary, didn't you? Was it you?

AG: Yes, I made the mistake of mentioning it. But I didn't want them to do what they did (Beik laughs) because my kids told me that they helped, how should I say?--they helped us with the tickets as a gift for us.

MB: I see. Oh, that was nice.

AG: They said, "You go and see whatever relatives are left."

MB: Right. That was a nice thing.

AG: So I told him it was our anniversary. Oh my God! They started cooking and baking, and then even the mayor was there. See now, I have all of these pictures. And now I have to go start digging them out. If I had known you were coming I'd have had them ready.

MB: Oh, well, when I come back in the summer.

AG: You think you're coming back?

MB: Yes, I'm going to come back. You can dig them out for me. I'd like to see them.

AG: Some parts are here, and some parts are [not]. I'll have to look for them.

MB: I'd like to see them. Yeah, that would be nice.

AG: Well, anyhow.

MB: Did they have a party then for you?

AG: Oh, what a party! It was as big as a wedding. They had musicians, and the young people, they sang so beautifully. But see their main language now is Czechoslovakian, Slovak, see?

MB: Did you understand it?

AG: They learned this in school. They can't sing in Hungarian because they don't know Hungarian songs. Only some, if they learned it from the parents, because they changed governments, you know.

MB: Right.

AG: And they were singing in Czechoslovakian [Slovak], and it was beautiful, these young people [singing]. And the mayor, he read. We had the pictures. There was a write-up in the paper. I have that, too.

MB: I would like to see that, too. What anniversary was this that you were celebrating there?

AG: [Our] 50th.

MB: Your 50th. That was 1980.

AG: 1980.

MB: Oh boy.

AG: There was a big party, and the mayor was there, and he was reading for the occasion. He read it in Hungarian.

MB: Oh how nice. Did you have trouble with the Slovak? Did you understand it?

AG: Well, no, because, see, the children of the relatives, they learned when they was real small; see, it was Hungarian. And the parents just talked in Hungarian. But now that the government changed, the schools are Slovak. I don't know where the "Czech" came from? What kind of language is that? But they're called Czechoslovakia, but the language is Slovak.

MB: Slovak--they use there.

AG: But what "Czech" has to do with it, I don't know.

MB: It's a slightly different, different dialect.

AG: They do. They'll say "the Czechs." Alex's one sister cooks a meal, and she says this is a "Czech" meal. It was delicious. So what did she do? I told her to write down the recipe. It was so delicious. It was pork, sauerkraut, and it was "out of this world" dumplings, you know. So she wrote it down because I could read in Hungarian. She sent me that recipe. The ingredients I don't understand. (Beik laughs.) You know what I mean? The amount because their measurements I don't know.

MB: The metric system--

AG: Oh, yeah. Okay, I could use that.

MB: Well, Mrs. Gary, let me just ask you just a couple other questions about Windber because this tape is just about ready to end, before we end this.

AG: Something important.

MB: Could you maybe tell me: Is there any other important town event that we haven't covered that you can think of, or something you would like someone else who never knew anything to know about? Anything at all that I've missed asking you about that you think is important or some historical event? Anything in the town's history that you can remember?

AG: No, I don't know. We celebrated the 76th anniversary of Windber.

MB: Okay. Can you tell me what you like about Windber?

AG: Well, to be truthful, I don't like Windber at all.

MB: (Laughs) Okay.

AG: I always miss Detroit, you know. But what other people like, for instance on this street, even today with all the crime and everything, I am not afraid to leave my door open.

MB: Oh yeah. That's nice, I guess.

AG: You don't have, "This is mine." Now I didn't experience anything mean since this crime is supposed to be going up. But now, like when years ago, when kids were small, they would throw maybe snowballs at your window or house or--

End of Tape 3 Side B

End of the Interview on March 14, 1984