

This is Shelley Richer interviewing Mr. Joseph Hengelmann in the Fort Erie Centennial Library on October 8th, 1985.

**S.R:** Hello Mr. Hengelmann, and how are you today?

**J.H:** Fine.

**S.R:** What is your date of birth?

**J.H:** May the 18th, 1909.

**S.R:** Where were you born?

**J.H:** In Romania.

**S.R:** When did you come to Fort Erie?

**J.H:** In the year of 1928, in August.

**S.R:** When you came to Fort Erie where did you live?

**J.H:** I did live, at that time, on Bertie Road. It was not paved, only mud, a mud road, it was not paved on Bertie Road. If you walked up Bertie Road on a rainy day, you had to have boots to cross the road. There was only a small cement road from the South End, from Queen Street, connecting Bridgeburg, a cement road. If two wagons passed, there was no room left anymore for any person to stand on the road. It was only a narrow cement road.

**S.R:** Would you recall when they started paving?

**J.H:** Oh, around the '30s, around the mid '30s they started paving all the road in town, like the Niagara Boulevard, Bertie Road, Queen Street, Princess Street. They were all paved in the '30s, early and late '30s. All the work, labour work was done by hand. There were no bulldozers, no asphalt spreaders, all of it was manually done.

**S.R:** You saw this being done?

**J.H:** I seen it being done, and I worked during the off season up there too.

**S.R:** Could you tell how it was done then?

**J.H:** Well, they spread the asphalt, in those days, and raked it with big heavy rakes, men were raking it level with a two inch depth. They were all wearing wooden clogs, their shoes got too hot to work on there. Then the automobiles started coming over more and more. Our biggest and most exciting days were always on the ferryboats when the races started, people coming over to the races. We virtually brought over thousands of people, 4 or 5 thousand people in a day,

and then took them back too, after the races. There was an awful crowd in those days.

**S.R:** Was that all by cars or...?

**J.H:** They came by cars or walking. There was a taxi stand right next to the ferry landing. Mr. Thompson and Mr. Collier were the owners of the taxi company.

**S.R:** That's cars?

**J.H:** That's for cars. They were taking the passengers up to the racetrack from the ferry landing for 25 cents a head. That was very cheap. Those were very exciting days. There also was a train running from the landing to the Erie Beach Amusement Park, two trains. One left Erie Beach and one left the ferry landing, carrying the passengers to and fro. Erie Beach was a very beautiful amusement park at one time. I like it better than the present Crystal Beach.

**S.R:** Do you recall what the railroad train was called? Did it have a special name?

**J.H:** No, no, just the Erie Beach train. It didn't have a name on it. They were all... Fix's were the owners of the ferryboat. The train and the amusement park was still owned by Bardol's. After Mr. Bardol died, his sons did take it over and it did not last very long.

**S.R:** Could you describe the amusement park, why you liked it better than Crystal Beach, what it had to offer?

**J.H:** It was... the amusements were not such high rides like they have over there. In our days, I think it was nicer in our days. Today it's everything too fast, and even the dancing. The Dance Hall was a very beautiful hall and there were many dances up there with many name bands playing up there.

**S.R:** Do you remember any of the names?

**J.H:** No, no... oh, Miller and all them guys. I can't think of their names anymore.

**S.R:** You said the Bardol's owned Erie Beach?

**J.H:** They did own Erie Beach, 'til the sons... then Mrs. Bardol died afterwards and the sons gave it up and they let everything run down. That's how Crystal Beach became so big, no competition.

**S.R:** Would you know anything else about the Bardol family?

**J.H:** No, no, no. The boys were big playboys, so they were never around.

Mama used to always take care of the business.

**S.R:** What about when the father was alive? Would you know when he died?

**J.H:** Oh, '20... I couldn't tell you exactly, or I wouldn't gamble on it.

**S.R:** Was it before you moved here or after?

**J.H:** Oh, they were always living in the summer in Erie Beach, and in the winter in Buffalo.

**S.R:** You moved here in 1928, was Mr. Bardol, the father, alive still?

**J.H:** Still alive. He just... I think he died in 1928 or '29. I'm not sure. There should be other records that tell it.

**S.R:** Where did they live in Fort Erie in the summer?

**J.H:** They lived right in Erie Beach. They had a nice beautiful home next to Erie Beach. I don't know if the building is still there. I haven't been there in 30 years, that way. It was a beautiful home up there on the other side of Erie Beach. They did own all that land up there.

**S.R:** They owned it all?

**J.H:** Oh yeah, they did own it. They were the sole owners of a lot of land and everything, and it just went down and down hill.

**S.R:** When the amusement park started going down, did they start selling land?

**J.H:** Down hill, yeah. There was nobody to take care of it and then it was just vandalized. The same as the Dance Hall. It was a beautiful Dance Hall. There was also a boat running from Buffalo to Erie Beach, continuously.

**S.R:** Do you remember the name of that boat?

**J.H:** Oh, the Canadiana. Those boats also ran to Crystal Beach.

**S.R:** Did the Canadiana also run to Erie Beach?

**J.H:** Yeah, oh yeah, in her maiden days. Oh yeah, that's... I don't know, my memory is not accurate anymore. I don't know what else I could tell you. Yeah, I worked for the Fix's for over 20 years.

**S.R:** What did you do working for the Fix's?

**J.H:** First I started as a deckhand.

**S.R:** You worked on the ferryboats, right?

**J.H:** On the ferryboats always. Then I was an oiler, then became fireman, and I worked my way up slowly. In the dying days, just when they...

well, I couldn't say I was an engineer on there, because I didn't get my papers until after they left here.

**S.R:** But you did do engineers work but you just didn't have the paper to show you were a qualified engineer?

**J.H:** In those days you could do a lot of things under supervision, run the boat back and forth. The old Orleans was acquired from the ferry company in Lévis, in Quebec, next to Quebec City. The Orleans used to run, for about 30 years in the St. Lawrence River, from Lévis and it landed, the Orleans landed just below Chateau Frontenac, the landing. They purchased it, acquired it and brought it down here.

**S.R:** Do you know when that was? Just the approximate year.

**J.H:** Oh, '27, '28, at the termination of the Newtown and Jamaica. Those were the early ferryboats here.

**S.R:** Were they here when you came?

**J.H:** When I came they were still here and then they left in '28.

**S.R:** You said that the Fix's owned the ferry, were they sole owners?

**J.H:** In the last dying days the Fix brothers owned it.

**S.R:** Who owned it before then?

**J.H:** Bardol and Pardee.

**S.R:** Did they start the ferry business or did they buy it off somebody else?

**J.H:** They bought it off somebody else. That is beyond my knowledge. I wasn't here in Canada then. Then Mr. Pardee sold out and then Bardol became the sole owner.

**S.R:** Would you know when that was? Were you here then?

**J.H:** It was just before I came.

**S.R:** Then, when did the Fix brothers buy it?

**J.H:** The Fix brothers, they started running it in 1930, they bought it, and that's when I started.

**S.R:** Do you know why the Bardol's sold it?

**J.H:** Well, because he died. I think management, there was no-one here to manage a boat, the maintenance and everything. The boys were just college boys and they didn't care.

**S.R:** Would you recall any captains or any other people that worked on the ferry?

**J.H:** Oh yeah, I recall the captain that has been on there the longest was Morris O'Connor and the other Captain was Hank Ruch. The engineers in those days were Mr. Ben Baccon, his wife is still alive, and Mr. William Newman. During the summer there were many engineers and different engineers, but I cannot recall them, because during the summer they were running two boats, and in the winter, during the off-season, there was only one boat. It left here every 20 minutes with 20 minute round trips. In the summer, around May, they started running two boats 'til the end of Labour Day. One boat left the Canadian side, and the other boat left the American side and they were always passing each other in the river. Their business was so great and so big, that sometimes we'd have a line-up of cars, before the price went up, oh, beyond the Peace Bridge waiting. People didn't care, but later on people got to be in a hurry. They didn't go anyplace, but they still were in a hurry to go and they wouldn't wait for the ferry, and that's how it became... the price and the wages. You know, I worked firing, shovelling coal, for 25 cents an hour, but that was more money then than when you make 10 dollars an hour now.

**S.R:** So the ferryboats paid their employees quite well?

**J.H:** Yeah, 25 cents for a deckhand, then a fireman got 3 dollars a day.

**S.R:** How long were the hours?

**J.H:** The hours then were 'round the clock, 12 on and 12 off. You worked your 12 hour shifts one week, and you worked your 10 hour shifts or 12 hour shifts the following week. It was after one o'clock at night they quit running 'til six in the morning. We worked from six 'til one, and from one 'til one in the morning. One shift was short one week and the other shift was long. One shift was 12 hours and the other shift was only about 8 or 9. It all depended on the business. Sometimes we had to run overtime. The Customs were standing out in the rain or snow, with the boots and raincoat and hat on, checking people and everything.

**S.R:** Where were the Customs located then?

**J.H:** The Customs were located in the present building of Mr. Ziff's office.

**S.R:** Louis Ziff?

**J.H:** Louis Ziff, in the rear, and in the front was a drugstore... Mr. Elliot.

**S.R:** Was there ever any smuggling going on?

**J.H:** Oh yeah, everyday you could see people smuggling back and forth because the evidence was left in the washrooms and laying up on deck. That way they could turn their shirt pockets and trousers. But as an employee on a boat you always had to keep yourself clear so you could work, because work was not plentiful in those days. It was, but not good work. You had to mind your own business. Oh yeah, I was on there a couple of times when a big dumptruck in Buffalo backed on the ferryboat and we went down mid-river and they were dumping all the seized whiskey the Customs' guys seized in Buffalo.

**S.R:** They dumped it right in the river?

**J.H:** Right in the river. But it was carried away. Young boys, they did dive and everything but the current carried it away. Nobody was able to find, even a case. But I witnessed a couple times when they dumped the whiskey right in the river.

**S.R:** Did anybody really get in trouble or have things taken from them for smuggling?

**J.H:** Well, not that I know of on the boat, but maybe people for petty smuggling. Well, they had to pay their duty. That's all it was, petty things. There was nothing spectacular on the ferry. Well, I saw a lady come over with a car and after a Customs' examination, she was pulled over to the fence and a Customs' officer found, underneath the dashboard, a pair of ladies shoes that were approximately \$1.95, in those days. They seized her car for that smuggling, because she did not declare it.

**S.R:** Did she get her car back afterwards for a fine?

**J.H:** I don't know, I never followed it. In those days we had to work so many hours, there was not time to read a paper. There was just work and sleep.

**S.R:** You mentioned something about "sparrows". Could you explain what a sparrow was?

**J.H:** Oh well, sparrows was what they called them. They were, the sparrows were, the spies that weren't sitting. They were roaming around watching the Canadians. In those days, everyone knew each other.

We had a population, in those days, in the Village of Fort Erie, only about 900 people. They knew each other by name, by first and last names. You couldn't go in a store and not see someone you don't know, in Buffalo, they spot you and they turned you in. I don't know if they got paid or not, I don't know.

**S.R:** Could you describe to me what a ferryboat is like?

**J.H:** A ferryboat is like a nice small cruiseship or a grand yacht, except it has been remodelled for cars, to carry cars. It was a seaworthy boat. That's all I can say.

**S.R:** Where did the cars go on the boats?

**J.H:** They go on... on one end they drove on, and when they landed in Canada, on the stern they drove off, see. And the same in Canada then, the cars going back drove on at the stern of the boat, they drove up at each side of the engineroom to the bow of the boat, then when we landed on the other side, they were all facing off. They were always off.

**S.R:** So the boat never turned around, it just went back and forth without turning?

**J.H:** No, it never had to turn around. In Buffalo they were discharged at the bow. Then the cars drove on the stern of the boat and after we landed in Canada they drove straight off. There was no shuttling or shifting boats, and you just drove straight off.

**S.R:** You mentioned that the prices for people went from 5 cents to 10 cents, and for cars it went from 10 cents to 25 cents. Reasons for this were the inflation of wages, coal...

**J.H:** Oil, coal, and...

**S.R:** Could you tell me the cost of the coal?

**J.H:** It was around 3 dollars a ton for soft coal, a ton.

**S.R:** What is it now?

**S.R:** Well, now it must be, the soft coal, around 100 dollars or more a ton. We also carried horses and wagons, the farmers going over, you know. We had the iceman, he did peddle a lot of ice in Buffalo. He went over on his wagon. He had a horse wagon and everything, Mr. Houck. Mr. Houck, he's an old...

**S.R:** And he was the iceman?

**J.H:** He was the iceman. He was peddling ice.

**S.R:** Was he from Fort Erie?

**J.H:** Yeah. He bought the ice, here in those days, at the old Peace Bridge Arena. See, this is the new one. The old one caved in.

**S.R:** Do you know why?

**J.H:** In 1936, I think, we had... the day before St. Patrick's Day... a heavy snow storm, wet snow, and the weight of the snow brought the roof down, one day before St. Patrick's Day, before the skating club was going to go and have their tournament and show. They were putting a show on and Sonja Henie was supposed to appear that day, but she never had a chance because of the collapse of the roof. Sonja Henie was the olympic skater before your time. She was a very famous... just like we had Barbara Anne Scott in Canada years ago. Sonja Henie was the famous, at that time, olympic skater and she was supposed to appear on the St. Patrick's Day skating, or like the skating club, they'd have a show and everything, put on skating and everything, but the day before it collapsed. That arena was the original home, ice rink, of the old Buffalo Bisons hockey players.

**S.R:** Why didn't they play in Buffalo?

**J.H:** There was no place to play then. There was no Memorial Auditorium. That was built afterwards. That's where they used to play their hockey games, in Fort Erie.

**S.R:** That must have kept the ferryboats busy too?

**J.H:** Oh yeah, we were always busy taking... a lot of people used to come and leave their cars on the other side. There was plenty of nice... but now they've got the sewer disposal there with all the buildings up. One night... and they'd leave their cars there and they'd cross on the ferry to go to a hockey game. After the hockey game they'd have a dinner here and at the bootleggers have their beer.

**S.R:** Where was the bootleggers?

**J.H:** All over, every house. Every house made a little extra money.

**S.R:** What kind of restaurants were there at the South End, or did they go to people's houses to have their food and their beer?

**J.H:** There was the Anglo American... well, it's burned down now. It was run by Mrs. Hunt. For restaurants, there were two of them. The McKinnon Sisters, they made the finest pie you could buy around



here. Next door was Mr. Land. I think he's still alive if I'm not mistaken, the Chinese Mr. Land.

**S.R:** What restaurant did he own?

**J.H:** He did run the Blue... used to call it the Blue Roof and it was right next to the McKinnon Sisters.

**S.R:** What was theirs called?

**J.H:** Just the McKinnon Sisters... the McKinnon Sisters and the Blue Roof. Mr. Land is still alive someplace out on Sunset Boulevard or the other street and he's got his yard just like in China and everything. Years ago, after he left Fort Erie... and when he did... he's the one that started that restaurant where now... in Crescent Park, up there on the corner. I can't think of the name of it.

**S.R:** The Italian restaurant?

**J.H:** Yeah, Cirillo I think owns it. They've got the go-go dancers up there and everything. They used to have it. I don't know if they still do. Well, Mr. Land started that business up there.

**S.R:** You mean Ryans?

**J.H:** Ryans, they started that business and then they got too old and Mrs. Land had some kind of ailment. She lost one leg. They were all doing the work themselves, and with the children.

**S.R:** It was a family operation?

**J.H:** Family operation. See, my son grew up with their children, they were good neighbours. They were Chinese people and they were very good. Like, many times... I seen here an article in the paper some time ago that Skippy, he was the first Chinaman in Fort Erie. That's not true. When I came to Fort Erie, Skippy wasn't here. Mr. Land was here before him. Then when Skippy came, Skippy Wong, they were here. The Pong brothers did have a laundry, one on Jarvis Street. Right now, approximately where Brunton's store is located. His brother had a laundry in the South End on the Niagara Boulevard, right approximately where... which is the second Chinese restaurant... I think it's Happy Jacks. Yeah, just about approximately there. Those were the Chinese in 1928, and Harry Wong of the Niagara Hotel.

**S.R:** Where was the Niagara Hotel?

**J.H:** The Niagara Hotel, right across from Ontario Bakery. Where the parking lot is.

**S.R:** Where the marina place is?

**J.H:** It was there, but they moved now to the foot of Bertie Street.

See, where the marina place was there was a lumber yard before the marina. There was a big lumber yard up there, and coal and everything... Vestman's Lumber, Tommy Vestman. Oh yeah, I'm going back quite awhile. It was where all that grass and everything, you see. Starting at the St. Pauls, down this way to the Ontario Bakery, that was all a lumber yard at that time. Where the marina is now there was the Niagara Coal and Lumber.

**S.R:** Why did this lumber business move out?

**J.H:** Business, just like now they are dying, all the yards, one folding up after the other... and wages, mostly wages I suppose, and the price. Oh, we had a lumber yard, Niagara Coal and Lumber. They even had a depot on the foot of Gilmore here, right where the ministers house is, and everything. There was a lumber mill and storage and everything up there. They had men working in there manufacturing doors and windows.

**S.R:** Is that in between the library and the beer store, on the same side as the library?

**J.H:** No, on the other side of the library just past the beer store. You know where the beer store is? On the other side of the beer store is a house, a minister's house, it belongs to the church. That's where... also it was lumber. On the extreme corner there is a gasoline station now. By golly there's... he was quite a name in town, Hans Frederick. People should know him, the old people. He was the owner of the gas station in those days. There was not much... like I say, 900 people, families. There was all... up on top of the hill where, across from the hospital there was only one farm. That was all farm, the Sherk farmland across from the hospital.

**S.R:** Why was it all sub-divided? Did Sherk's just die off...?

**J.H:** Well, this Mr. Sherk died... his son was in insurance and he died...

**S.R:** There was money to be made in selling lots?

**J.H:** Then they started lots, and now they've got nice buildings up there right across from the hospital. There was not much. There was only the Bank of Montreal. It was in the old King Edward building, at the present King Edward, but it was a lot different, the building

was different than it is now, downstairs. Next door to the Bank of Montreal was the post office. It is now on Princess Street.

**S.R:** Who was the postmaster, would you know?

**J.H:** Mr. Plato.

**S.R:** Do you remember who the bank manager was?

**J.H:** One was Mr. Wiseman, he just died recently in Fort Erie. Before him was a Mr. Johnson. The other bank was call, at that time... not the Bank of Commerce. I forgot it now. It was right at the corner of Forsythe and the Niagara Boulevard. There is a Chinese restaurant in there now. Those were the two banks we had in those days.

**S.R:** Did we used to have a Sterling Bank?

**J.H:** Yeah, the Sterling Bank.

**S.R:** Oh, that used to be the Bank of Commerce?

**J.H:** Yes. I don't know if it still is, but when the Bank of Commerce moved, and they took the sign off, it was still in the building when they built the building, the Bank of Sterling. The Sterling Bank of Canada I think it said.

**S.R:** That's the same area that the ferryboat landing was on, right?

**J.H:** The ferryboat landing was exactly where Mr. Louis Ziff's office is now.

**S.R:** At Agrette's Store?

**J.H:** Yeah, Agrette's Store. See, when the ferry company folded up, Mr. Agrette bought that property and he built the store there. That's where it is.

**S.R:** When did the ferry fold up? When was it's last crossing?

**J.H:** In 1950, on Labour Day.

**S.R:** That was her last trip?

**J.H:** Yes, at approximately 11 o'clock in the evening. We went down river to her home port.

**S.R:** Where was that?

**J.H:** Fix's at one time... well, they're all dead now. Only Mrs. Fix is alive, and her daughter Gladys, and from the other brothers, the two girls are still alive. They used to have, own in those days one third of Grand Island. They were very great big friends of the blackies that were smuggled over from the U.S. to Canada, during Prohibition

and so on. They had a boat and docks up there, and restaurants, and saloons, and a little dock up there, and everything.

**S.R:** And they helped the black people to come into Canada?

**J.H:** Yeah.

**S.R:** Would you know anything more about that?

**J.H:** No I don't, only what I heard the kids, the young Fix's talk about, what their dad done, and everything.

**S.R:** You don't remember what that was?

**J.H:** No.

**S.R:** Was the New Orleans the last boat?

**J.H:** The New Orleans was the last boat.

**S.R:** Do you know where that went to after it went to the Fix's?

**J.H:** Scrap, it was scrapped. After they took it down here, and then at the Island, Grand Island, they removed whatever they wanted and the rest of it was scrapped, burned up with torches. So was the old City of Toledo, she was scrapped. And the Grand Island was sold to a cyndicate up Lake Erie, I do not remember what place, and they didn't take care of it, and she sunk. She's sitting on the bottom someplace in Lake Erie.

**S.R:** The Grand Island was another ferryboat?

**J.H:** Yeah, it was a ferryboat too. The Grand Island came up here in the summer when they were running two and three boats. She was the original boat at Grand Island before they built the Grand Island Bridges. See, the Grand Island Bridges were started when I came here. There were no bridges when I came here in 1928 on Grand Island. Have you been over the Grand Island Bridges yet. Well, they were not here then. The **S.S.** Grand Island was carrying hay wagons, and cars, and everything, back and forth from the mainland to the island. She was built so that a hay wagon could get on.

**S.R:** This **S.S.** Grand Island, did that mean that there was three boats at times?

**J.H:** Well, sometimes they tried three boats running, one playing in the river and one leaving from the docks, but it didn't work out. They had the third boat in the summer here in case of a breakdown. See, you had to have... business was so great with cars and passengers, and if you had a breakdown it did not take long to break the fire

and get steam up. In one hour to an hour and a half you'd have steam up and she'd be operating.

**S.R:** Did you ever have breakdowns?

**J.H:** Oh yeah, many times.

**S.R:** Were there ever any accidents or close calls on any of the ferryboats?

**J.H:** Not on the ferry. There was no accidents or close calls.

**S.R:** What about the ferry having it's little ride down the river?

**J.H:** We went in the ice, in 1936. We got in slush, and the ice was so heavy and great, that it did take us down and through the bridge.

**S.R:** What happened?

**J.H:** Then the Internation Tug, that's what the name of it was, it was a tug operated by both governments in the Niagara River. In the summer it was based right above the ferry dock and in the winter at the foot of Austin Street, in Buffalo. That's still a Coast Guard office.

**S.R:** The one by the ferry docks, is that in Buffalo too? Did it always stay in Buffalo?

**J.H:** Yeah, it always stayed on that side, because there was no place that it could tie up here, and they had a nice little shanty up there where they could sleep.

**S.R:** Was there any damage done to the boat?

**J.H:** Oh yeah. The hurricane deck was completely sheared off. That included the pilot house, the smoke stack, all the life boats, just like someone took a knife.

**S.R:** Did it take very long to repair?

**J.H:** No, no, about a month. It happened in March, and in May we were... Well, then they had... like I say, they had the Grand Island. And the City of Toledo could not run in the winter. The City of Toledo was a giant boat. It was a passenger boat before it became a ferryboat, from Buffalo to Cleveland. It was a big side-wheeler. Have you ever seen those side-wheelers? It was a big side-wheeler.

**S.R:** The ice would break it right?

**J.H:** Well, naturally the ice would get in amongst the buckets and then it would just jam it.

**S.R:** Was it the Orleans then that hit the bridge?

**J.H:** The Orleans went down the river with the ice.

**S.R:** What boat did you use then during the month of repairs?

**J.H:** For one month there was none.

**S.R:** You had to use the Peace Bridge?

**J.H:** The Peace Bridge.

**S.R:** Is there anything else that you can recall that you'd like to talk about?

**J.H:** Well, during the ferryboats, the South End was a very busy street. You couldn't walk the street, there was so many people buying groceries, such things as cheese, peameal baccon, jam, and other meats too. It was... with the American money it was cheaper and people liked to buy it here. They'd go with full hands. That was the most thriving town you've ever seen, during those days.

**S.R:** Was that still when it was the Village of Fort Erie?

**J.H:** Well, then the Village of Fort Erie, that was the grocery store of Frank Hapgood, the grocery store of Mr. Rubels, and butchershops like Frank Kohl, that's an old, old name, and Freddie Wolfe, were butchershops. They were all on the South End. There was plenty of butchershops and plenty of grocery stores. There were small grocery stores like on Bertie, Thompsons, and they folded up I guess. Who is in there, a bakery now I think... Thompsons's grocery and meat. It was all restaurants and stores, from the King Edward Hotel... next door was Dr. Douglas's home, the old Dr. Douglas. They were, right now situated is the Bank of Montreal, and that's where Dr. Douglas's home was. He was still alive when I came here. When he died he willed all his money for the hospital. That's how our hospital got started. The oldest hardware store, two of them were in the South End, Mr. Hawley. He was also Mayor of our town. Mr. Hawley and Mr. Johnny Jukes, they were our hardware stores. They were here in 1928, those hardware stores were, they were right there then. That's a long time ago.

**S.R:** Is there anything else that you'd like to mention before closing?

**J.H:** No, no. The hotels... the same hotels were then that you've got now, the Queen's Hotel, and the Anglo American, and the King Edward, and also the Niagara Hotel. Believe you me, they had three policemen only, then, but I liked what they done. No-one interferred with them and they kept nice law and order. Only three

policemen we had, Mr. Howie, Police Chief, Mr. Sam Brown, Constable, and... I can't... I think Matthews come afterwards.

**S.R:** Was Mr. Kent in there at all?

**J.H:** Walter Kent, he started with the Town of Fort Erie then. Before Mr. Kent there was Brown... Andy Griffen, he became Chief then, later on. Local people... Matthews was our motorcycle policeman in those days, not a retired Chief of Police. He's still alive I think, Chirp Matthews. At that time, nobody knew him by the name of Matthews, it was Chirp. Because in 1928 when I came here, he was driving a taxi cab for Mr. Thompson, the Thompsons.

**S.R:** The ones who owned the taxis to the racetrack?

**J.H:** To the racetrack. Naturally, you only paid a quarter from here to Erie Beach, your taxi fair, that's all it was, a quarter, unless you went a distance. Those are the old ones. Oh yeah, they even... during the races the crowd was so great that I seen that one day Mr. Dunn pulled up with his moving van, opened his back doors and put the people in and took them up to the racetrack, hundreds of people, you'd just jam them in. The rush was so great, you know, when the City of Toledo came over, she carried 75 cars, and she carried about 1,000 people. When they got off, some of them were running to the track, some of them walking, but the few taxis we had, they couldn't carry it. Now Mr. Dunn, I seen at one time, he pulled up with his big moving van... I'm going back quite a few years when Chuck was still a young man, Chuck Dunn. Well, nice talking to you.

**S.R:** Well, thank you very much for the interview.

**J.H:** Well, if I can think of something I'll stop, but I'm getting lately so that I don't even want to read the paper anymore.

**S.R:** Thank you very much.

**J.H:** You're welcome.