

Interview with Edward Marting
Interviewer: Stephanie Durbin
n.d.

Q: your name

A: Ed, Edward Marting.

Q: Ok and you were born in what year?

A: 1928

Q: and where were you born?

A: Evansville, In

Q: have you lived here all your life?

A: No, I lived in ah... ah... Columbus, Indiana. New castle, Indiana. Tempi, Arizona. Plus being in the service twice... So I've been all over.

Q: How many brothers and sisters do you have?

A: One of each.

Q: are they older or younger?

A: my brother is a year and 11 months older, and my sister is younger. She is deceased, died of cancer in 2002, and she was 7 years younger than me.

Q: so, you and your brother kept a good eye on her... huh? (Laughter)

A: Well my brother was gone, and I was in the military when she going through her wild years.
(laughter)

Q: So how long did you live in Evansville when you were a child?

A: until the depression hit, this was when I was about 3 years old.

Q: did the depression cause your family to move away?

A: yes, they went to the farm, back to the farm where they grew up.

Q: was that your dad's farm or moms? Or was that more your dad's choice or mom's choice

A: probably, my dad made the choices of the household. They both lived in the town that we moved to though. In fact, we bought were my mother lived, and my grandmother still lives on my dad's farm. This was all in Crawford County.

Q: so, did you help on the farm when you got older?

A: yes, I did; you didn't have to get very old to start working on the farm.

Q: so how old were you when you started working on the farm?

A: ah probably eight or nine years old behind a team of mules. That was a dirt-poor farm in Crawford country, Indiana. With no tractor, and I was doing a man's work at ten or twelve years of age.

Q: So, typically what would a day be like working on a farm for a ten or twelve-year-old?

A: Ah... well you were pretty much limited to day light hours because we didn't have electricity til' I was thirteen years old. We used oil lamps. And you got up with the day light and you weren't up to long after sundown.

Q: and you did that five or six days a week?

A: (laughing) seven days a week.

Q: seven days a week... wow

A: right... right. Yeah if you got livestock, chickens, then it was working every day.

Q: so, then what did you and your brother and sister do when you weren't working on the farm?

A: Ah... as kids? Of course, we played. We didn't have swimming pools or anything. Of course, you go to the creek and watch the snakes go up over the bank while you were swimming.

Q: Do you think or believe that living on that farm helped you and your family through the depression?

A: absolutely! And it helped me through my childhood too. I'm really thankful for my farm background I don't think you could have a better one.

Q: good.

A: So, everything's easier after that.

Q: I bet, you've already been through the hard stuff, can't get any worse right? (Laughing) **A:** exactly (laughing) nothing like the good ol' days... ha-ha not so good! So that was probably in the 30's right. So, do you remember the floods in Evansville?

A: After the flood when it receded. We saw the destructions and damages, but it didn't bother us because we were on the highest points of Crawford County.

Q: So, during the Teenage years did you get off the farm or did you work all the way up through the years?

A: I went to grade school. We walked about a quarter of a mile there and a quarter mile back. We were in a school of 18 in all 8 grades. There were five in my class, by far the biggest class there.

Q: 18 kids... wow

A: then I went to French Lick High School. I was going there when war was declared. The Principal called us all down to the gym and announced that Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. I remember that really well. And as soon as I graduated high school in 1945. I joined the Merchant Marines that summer. And then went to New York City, which I never been to a big city before, and trained at Chief's at Bay in Brooklyn, New York. And I was in the Merch Marines, the army transport service actually. We transported hospital patients, and... ahh. I made 15 round trips to Europe and was discharged after 2 years. My dad wanted me to come back to the farm... but that didn't last too long. (laughing) You know that saying once you've been to the big ol' city it's hard going back to the farm. Absolutely true! So, after 6 months I went to

work in Louisville, Ky., At V.F. Goodrich. Then I came back to Evansville to work at Chrysler Corps. Then was drafted for the Korean War. So, I went into the Army, trained in Breckinridge, Ky. Spent 2 more years there. And so then umm, I went back to Chrysler immediately and enrolled in Evansville college (now U of E) so then I graduated in 3 years and 3 months, I majored in accounting. Then I went to work in the state board of accounts in 1956. And umm, then I decided I wanted more education and to a leave of absence from state board of accounts, and enrolled in Indiana State college and got my MBA for accounting, and when I got through there I resigned from the state board of accounts and went to Tempe, Arizona, and enrolled in Arizona State University and ended up getting my Ph.D. in accounting and finance. And from there I applied at two or three places, but me and the wife both had ill parents, so we returned to Evansville to take care of them. And then got hired by ISUE, which was a branch of ISU, now it's called University of Southern Indiana. I was employed there for 25 years and retired in 1993. We taught the first year in the old centennial downtown Evansville. Now the fifth third bank is sitting there. Retired in 1993, and my wife died in 2006, I've been widowed now for 3 years and last year I moved into this assisted living complex and just taking it easy and enjoying life.

Q: just enjoying your dinners and your raisins. (laughing)

A: ha-ha... that's right. No medicine, except a baby aspirin, a multivitamin, and my 9 gin-soaked raisins (laughing)

Q: your 9 raisins that you swear by.

A: supposed to help with arthritis and keep the elephants away.

Q: nine a day keeps the pain away.

A: not eight not ten but nine!

Q: so... when you went to school did, they do the basics or get you ready for further education.

A: no, just the basic reading, writing and arithmetic. We had a one room school, no electricity of course. A heating stove in the middle. All eight grades were in this room, so you heard everything being taught at the front. And it wasn't a bad education either. It was good

Q: how many teachers?

A: just one teacher.

Q: so how did that work. Did she go to your 5 people and teach?

A: she would go through the grades. Starting with first grade then second. The grade would go to the front and learn for a bit, don't know how long though, not long.

Q: so, when she was teaching them what would you do?

A: you would sit at your assigned desk, work on your assignments. The rest of the time; I don't really remember the subjects by detail. They weren't too hard. I can't remember how long we spent on the subjects if it was split by days or hours, I don't really remember.

Q: did they teach you history?

A: oh yeah, we had history, math, spelling, and a Christmas play that was great.

Q: so, when you heard about Pearl Harbor and you came home how did your parents react?

A: I don't really remember how they reacted. My father didn't go into the service, so we were probably affected less than most people because we were on the farm. We got gas rationing coupons. Sugar was sort of limited. We made home brew. When things were hard to get, we stopped making home brew and never made it again after that.

We didn't have a refrigerator, so we hung it in the well. And that cooled it enough to drink.

Q: so, when you decided to enlist what were your parents and brothers' thoughts?

A: well my brother didn't live there anymore. He got kicked out of high school, so he went to Washington the farthest away place that was still in the country. So, I don't know he was effected. My parents weren't really effected that much.

Q: so, were you scared or ready to go?

A: I wasn't scared. I thought the Merch Marines were the same as the marines and Army. It took me 5 times to get in the Merch Marines. I didn't get the G.I. bill when I was with the Merch Marines. But when I went to the Army, I got the G.I. Bill. And I was only 40 miles away from home for two years to get the G.I. Bill.

Q: Now the G.I. Bill. You said you wanted to get that so you could go to school right? Can you talk a little about the G.I. bill?

A: well, the G.I. bill helped with Financing homes and other stuff, but I used it for schooling.

Q: what was the eligibility for the G.I. Bill?

A: you have to have served the country during the hard times for the country.

Q: why do you think you got the Bill the second time and not the first time?

A: because I was in the Army and not the Merch Marines. The Merch Marines applied for the bill, but they were turned down.

Q: ok. I get it. couple of grocery questions? Milk now 3.50 for you back then in childhood

A: well we had our own milk cows so that was free.

Q: gas?

A: gas, cheapest was .19 cents a gallon... I owned a BW in 1975 1 owned it and it had a 10.5 gas tank. I owned it for three years before I put 3 dollars in the tank to fill it up.

Q: back then though, 3 dollars would be what now?

A: would be probably like 15 to 20 dollars.

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Q: did you meet your wife in Arizona or Evansville?

A: I met her in Evansville, I lived with my aunt and uncle when I worked at Chrysler and my aunt sold Avon and my future wife came to pick up her Avon order and that's where we met.

Q: did she go to Arizona with you? Did she go to school there too?

A: yes, she was enrolled at U of E when I was in the Army. She graduated in 1954 and I graduated in 1956. And she got her Ph. D a couple of years before I got mine. But we both got our Ph. D's for Tempi Arizona at Arizona State. She got hers a couple of years before mine.

Q: Then both your parents got ill and you came back. Did you have kids by then?

A: We had kids by then. When we went to Arizona our girl was four and our son was eleven.

Q: was it hard to balance school and kids?

A: they grew up by themselves and they loved it. We had an apartment right next to this big swimming pool. They were good kids. They never got in trouble. All me and my wife knew were Arizona school and library.

Q: did you try making your classes work with the kids, so someone was always home with them?

A: No, we were in a lot of classes together. We had day classes because the kids were in school then. Our 4-yr. old daughter was in pre-school we kept her there for kindergarten because it was a learning preschool and we thought it was better for her even though she could have gone to the public school.

Q: Then you came back to Evansville, what made you choose USI at the time?

A: well as I said before it was because our mothers were dependent on us, they needed someone to look at them

Q: how was teaching at USI?

A: great, loved it never had a discipline problem in 25 years.

Q: what classes did you teach again?

A: business finance

Q: what levels, freshman or graduates' courses?

A: we were actually brought here to teach MBA classes, but we taught all the way from freshman to seniors.

Q: so, after 25 years and you retired did you know how not to work?

A: Retirement flies. People think when you retire time slows down, but that is just not true. I came here I be able to reorganize things.

Q: what do you do on a typical day now?

A: ah... I read, I got friends, I go to Walmart (laughing)

Q: something people don't know that I know is that you are 81 years old and you haven't been to the hospital in 10 years. How do you think you stay so healthy? What's your secret?

A: nine Gin soaked raisins. (Laughing) I think a lot is a positive attitude. I could sit here and be depressed. I could go to the hospital every other day or you could look at life and say it's been great and stay healthy.

Q: do you think you have gotten all that you can out of life?

A: I've had a good life! Very good, it's exceeded my expectations. "Came along way from Crawford county farm life to a Ph.D. in accounting."

Q: just grab life by its horns and live the moments.

A: if anyone ever listens to this tape the more education the better

Q: keeps the mind strong!

A: yes, it does, absolutely!

Q: You're very proud of your car, you bought it when you were in the Army.

A: No, I just, this is a long time ago 1975 I ordered it in Wolfsburg where it was made. I picked it up then drove it through 17 countries in Europe. And My hobbies, We haven't covered that yet, was travel. I was in Europe 11 times in 15 years. From 3 weeks up well, I took a sabbatical for 6 months right before I retired. I went to Germany and Poland.

Q: so, where were your favorite places to go? Towns or countries...

A: Pretty much... all of it. Italy is nice and Germany and France. It's all... I love Europe. I never had a bad experience. People are friendly; I never had a bad trip.

Q: were there any places you wish you could've seen?

A: well I wish I crossed over into Africa to Gibraltar. And I didn't. The two towns I wish I did see where Athens, Greece and Istanbul, Turkey.

Q: so, you don't travel anymore?

A: not much, not much.

Q: you don't think you'll take one bigger trip over there?

A: well who knows (Laughing) no one knows what this year will bring.

Q: didn't you say you would only take one suitcase when you'd go?

A: it's not even a suitcase; it's like a duffel bag that you would take to the gym. That's the way I traveled. Well except when I took my sabbatical, I took more clothes and books to Poland. I took my textbooks that I had gotten. Poland didn't have any books at that time.

Q: so, describe your car, your "baby" that you liked to call it.

A: My BW. It was a rabbit not a bug. I had a couple of bugs before I got the rabbit. It was an old style of course.

Q: so, are there any historical events that you think made an impact on the U.S. that you think changed our views on things?

A: umm, well recently 9/11 and our economy right now is changing it drastically. A lot of retirement funds are going (Laughing) including mine. But it'll be back I still believe in the stock market. The newspaper today looked promising. They think the recession might be ending this year, which is good.

Q: And thing historically? JFK, Birmingham wall

A: I was adding on to the house and under the house putting the cast iron pipes together when I heard that JFK had been murdered. Yeah, that was quit an event. That certainly did change some things.

Q: what about blacks and whites integrating schools and restaurants?

A: I was in accounting... I mean a county where there were no blacks in the county. There was only one family in French Link. Really nice family, he owned a shoe repair shop. The name was Jumping Jack shoe shop.

Q: so, when you were seeing more of it, did you see attitudes change? Did you see the bad violence and the way they were being treated?

A: oh yeah, because the train stations would have two rooms one for the blacks and one for the whites. And ahh... when I started that is now USI, we hadn't almost no blacks and in the business classes we were 90 percent male and when I retired it was 60 percent female and 40 percent male. A real transition, and of course more blacks or African Americans.

Q: Now are there things in the past that you miss? Did you like certain things and how they worked and wish they are still used today? For example, women were staying home and men working. Now it's like they both work all the time. Are there certain things like that that you wish stuck through?

A: Well they have to now; I stick with what I said early I don't want the good ol' days. I like the times now. I WOULD BE HAPPY IF FEWER WOMEN DROVE WITH CELL PHONES IN THEIR EARS! It's absolute danger. I almost got ran over because a woman wasn't paying attention. I would have been run over for sure if I didn't have a lane to get over in.

Q: there making laws no that make it illegal to do all that.

A: well good. (Laughing) They eat with one hand and text with the other.

Q: and steer with the knee (Laughing)

A: (Laughing)

Q: do you think the world is scarier now than then?

A: absolutely!

Q: is there a technology that you just loved that it came. For example, Television, radio, electricity.

A: well T.V. is a great medium of entertainment for older people. Although I don't turn it on in the daytime. And well the computer will continue to change lives. I'm still not up to where I should be on that. But it changes so fast. Guy 81 years old tries.

Q: do you think you're as modern as you can get?

A: well I could get more modern, If I wanted to work hard, but I'm not that industrious anymore. I do have a computer though. I turn it on daily. I check my email and play with the internet.

Q: I would consider that pretty modern compared to a lot of elders.

A: yeah, I check things out. I look for cars and buy things. It's a good year to buy a car, to buy a lot of things

Q: yeah, they have this new tax rebate for first time homeowners. The tax credit. so, looking back 50 years and looking at now what do you think the future will be like in 50 years.

A: we can't even imagine it. We can't even imagine. I think it will be much more technology. But we can't imagine it though. It will be so much different.

Q: looking back on it can you fathom how much has developed? Or have you not realized it until you look back on it.

A: well people in our time had no idea that you could send a picture over the air in televisions or that computers can do what they do as fast as they can. Or this recorder here, how it doesn't have a tape. No, I don't think we can imagine 50 years from now.

Q: well now when looking back, what do you want to be remembered by?

A: that's your toughest question. That I was a reasonably good guy you know. And that some of my students will remember me I guess, that I really did try to help them. Especially the black students I had. Because if there is any salvation for them it's education because it tough you know to have money and jobs and one parent. It's tough for them. But I guess that's what I want to be remembered by.

Q: do you still stay in contact with some of your students?

A: not really, a few maybe. I don't go to the university much.

Q: but I bet you got a lot of thank you's?

A: yeah, but you don't get as much as you would think, but your rewarded. It's a good profession

Q: Well I guess this concludes our interview. Thank you

A: thank you, if you have any more surveys or interviews, well I'll be here.

This Interview was taped and took approx. 34 min and 25 seconds.