

Interview with Jim and Kathy Stelzel

July 22, 2018

Gwinn, Michigan

Kathryn Johnson (KJ): My name is Kathryn Johnson, NMU Department of History, today is July 22, in Gwinn, Michigan. This is an oral history interview with two individuals, Kathy and Jim Stelzel. Our topic is education in the Upper Peninsula, particularly the eastern Upper Peninsula in the late 1960's through mid, I'm sorry, late 1960's through the mid 1970's. Will you please both introduce yourselves, one of you spell your last name, and say your birthdates for the record.

Jim Stelzel (JS): James Stelzel, S T E L Z E L. June 26, 1945.

Kathy Stelzel (KS): Kathy or Kathryn Stelzel. 10/25/ 48.

KJ: And Kathy how do you spell your first name?

KS: K A T H R Y N.

KJ: Thank you. Okay we are going to begin with Jim and then we will proceed with Kathy towards the second part of this interview. Jim can you please tell me about your education and how you became to pursue a teaching career?

JS: I hadn't planned on going into education, I was in California after high school with a friend of mine but at the same time you had the Vietnam draft and you were chosen according to picking a number and my number was 38 so I was going to go into the rice patties of Vietnam which had I been drafted I probably would have gone instead of Canada but I didn't necessarily want to go and then they had college exemptions. So my sister was at Northern Michigan University and out there I think I wrote to two or three schools in which everyone came back, Northern being the one that came back first, I started my college education.

KJ: Did you go directly from high school into NMU or did you take a year or two off and what year was that?

JS: I went directly.

KJ: Okay, and which year was that?

JS: It was 1963 when I graduated from high school.

KJ: Okay. Great.

JS: And then I entered here.

KJ: Did you know you were going to be an education major when you started or how did you decide on that along the way at NMU?

JS: I was going into business and it was all structured towards business and maybe it sound a little selfish again but in addition '67 was the height of the Vietnam War, '66 through '67, and then they had a

teaching exemption and I think I had taken various business courses and some education courses and for an additional X number of hours I received my teaching certificate, and that's how I got into Education. And then I was actually done in '67 but I just had my student teaching left, so I was doing my student teaching in Ruyard, Michigan and after my student teaching they asked if I would stay as a teacher.

KJ: That is every teacher's dream job right? That's how you want to get a job, that's great! Can I ask you a bit about the way that you found out about this teaching exemption? Did NMU have advertising? Did Federal people come in and publicize this on campus? Was it word of mouth, was it a student organization, how did this get communicated around campus?

JS: Probably in incentive, I did research and things like this. I was in my 20's when I got out and as I said I always like working with people and it also had the military exemption. Let me back track, also, when I was a junior I still had to go down and get the physical, take the busses, and I wanted to fly, because I had done some flying up here, but I found out I was partially color blind, and so I would not be allowed to fly for the Air Force, Navy, or anything else. So I said if I can't fly, let's continue the path that I was on.

KJ: Sure, okay. Great! So how would you describe the teacher education program at NMU? Were there any standout moments, standout professors, did you feel prepared to enter into student teaching and then a teaching career?

JS: Northern was a teaching college pretty much through the 50's, excuse me, their curriculum was curriculum set for... could you turn it off for one second?

KJ: Sure.

[END OF PART 1 Recording]

[BEGIN PART 2 Recording]

KJ: Can you tell me about your teacher educator preparation program at Northern Michigan University? Did you feel prepared to enter student teaching? Were there any standout moments? Were there any particular faculty who made an impact on you?

JS: I don't think anyone is really prepared, it's curriculum oriented for teaching curriculum. When you get into your student teaching area that's where it's really contingent upon who you have and I had a really good business teacher. He let me learn and watch first, and then experiment on my own sometimes failing at certain areas and also succeeding in other areas and then you would have your critique session, you had to be prepared. But as far as the college preparing you to be in an actual classroom situation, until you've been there, which again I should say student teaching is part of the curriculum. And that is where you really start gaining the knowledge seeing how you can interact with different students. It really, it's not just the curriculum, it's also, and times have changed now, we didn't necessarily have that many discipline problems that you have now, where I would never touch a student or anything like that, I would be very, not fearful, but hesitant of meeting with a female student alone now or in any type of situation unless I had cameras. None of that applied back then, we never would have even thought of that at that particular time. So yes, student teaching I think was the big area where you did learn.

KJ: Did NMU prepare you to use technology in the classroom at all as part of the curriculum?

JS: The technology back then was really your business machines, your calculators that you had, your mimeograph machines that you had, your tape recorders, your film projectors, and I always had an interest in film anyway so I did use that quite extensively, I was the audio visual director at the same time when I was teaching. They asked me if I wanted to go into that and I said yes. So but that was the technology, the Apple computer, the first time that came into being was the Apple 2+ I had and yes in the 80's, so yeah it wasn't there. As you were teaching math you had your slide calculators and things like that.

KJ: Sure, sure. Can you go back to one thing that you said, the business machines, did you say mimeographs?

JS: Right.

KJ: And can you explain what a mimeograph is?

JS: Yes, it's a copy machine. You insert your original on the drum base machine which had a crank and they had a blueish type ink and you just keep cranking and your copies come out. That's how you would make copies.

KJ: And were you preparing your students to use the mimeograph machines too? Did they participate in that or was that just more work that you had to do in the office before class?

JS: That was more of the work that you did but many times I would have some students if they wanted to make some copies it's not too difficult to learn but, let's put it that way.

KJ: [Laughter] that's great. So let's fast forward to what you said about being the audio visual director there at Rudyard what were your responsibilities for that?

JS: If teachers wanted to use film in the classroom then they would make an appointment for what hours that they wanted and I had different film crews so to speak or projectionist crews as I said and you know it was on a cart and we would move it into a classroom and they would have it set up before hand and usually there was a student in the room that we would always work with and they would learn how to use the projector.

KJ: And where was the school getting the films? And what were the topics of the most popular ones that teachers would request?

JS: A variety of different places, I can't remember, we ordered them from some central location but I just don't remember. And the topics could have varied, the home ec teacher might have used it for that, I used it for the stock market and various things. The other things we used it to, a lot of them had questions at that time about the war that was going on so there were films that came into that in some of the social settings, that maybe it didn't have to do with a particular economics course or business course but it was relevant on how we looked at the world.

KJ: Were you, and by you I mean the school as an entity, was the school obtaining like news footage and recent events footage or was it a prepared educational material for the films? If you remember.

JS: I don't remember. I really can't for that.

KJ: Sure, that's alright. Alright let's stay on this topic of technology for a little bit. So were there radios in the classrooms?

JS: We used radios on occasion but I don't remember them that much, again getting back to technology I guess the greatest example, we created our own technology. Ruyard was very good at that time, it was near an air force base. It was the second highest paying school in the state, budget wasn't really a problem and we had a lot of flexibility which I don't think you had. What do I mean by that? For instance one of my business and economics courses, what I was allowed to do, I met with the principal and said look I have an idea and we are teaching a lot of these kids just what is in a book, when they come out they have no idea how to use a checkbook, they have no idea how to buy a car, they have no idea about a house, they don't know about that, they don't know about any of these things. So one of the things I did was I got together with the local bank there and we set up checking accounts for all the kids, and they treated them as actual, I mean they were dummy accounts, but they treated them as actual accounts. And then I got in the car dealerships, I got in the funeral director and I got in the realtor, what else, any type of profession that you could think of that they would come in and that was how I used technology there. And they were happy because for instance car dealer, graduates, who's he going to go to? And so that is the kind of thing that we did, it wasn't dependent on a computer but it was more dependent on people, and the bank very helpful, and everybody else.

KJ: Yeah, it's a win win for the community and the classroom.

JS: Yeah it worked out well. The kids really enjoyed it. A couple of the other things I did as far as the business economics that I did was set up stock accounts, actual stock accounts, they had no idea at that time, it wasn't much I think if every student could afford it they bought in like 3 to 5 dollars and then we would vote and look at the type of stock and what we wanted to go into and we made 50 cents and when they got out of there I think a dollar, so we did profit. So those were some of the things that we did in the business course.

KJ: And how did students look up the stock values on a regular basis were they using the newspapers or some other?

JS: Yes that is what we did at the time. And we would do that like once a week because it wasn't a great deal of money. Some of the other things that we did, and this was more the seniors in the economics course when you were getting into, I had run across, and that was at Northern, this one program and you think it's a test but it really isn't a test you are going through and these are your choices. And so choice A, are you going to go to college or not go to college, are you going to go into trade school or not going to trade school, and then each one of these things that you choose all the way through for more education and so forth, you're probably going to advance your income and that is how it is set up. So they would start going through these choices and then wind up saying well maybe I don't really want to go this way or don't want to go that way, and that was very beneficial because it gave them a broader view of how education can be important.

KJ: Absolutely, and connecting to their future careers and opportunities and how their decisions today may impact their life in the future. That is a wonderful life lesson.

JS: I don't know if you can do any of that now because it is so structured as far as to what you can teach and the flexibility.

KJ: Yeah the teachers today are certainly confronted by issues of standardization, we'll come back to that in just a minute. What about the use of televisions in the classroom?

JS: Very good too. I use that a number of times because I mean a lot of these professional programs, especially from the History Channel, National Geographic Channel, all of these educational programs, there's no way I could produce that back then in the classroom. And they were very succinct and pithy and right to the point and I think this helped kids a lot.

KJ: Did every classroom have its own television or was it part of the AV program you wheel it in?

JS: It was the AV yes.

KJ: Were they black and white, were they color?

JS: '60s was just starting color so I would presume most of it was black and white.

KJ: And do you recall did the school have live feeds on the TVs or was it more of the recorded programs.

JS: I'm saying they had both because even back then baseball was a big thing I can remember it being broadcast throughout, world series and things like that, so yes you did have live feed to tap into but it wasn't always just for sports.

KJ: Sports are important too, that's cultural history [laughter]. Can you tell me a little bit about the Rudyard school district as a whole?

JS: As a whole I was very fortunate because again because you did have Kincheloe Air Force base, culturally it was very interesting because the kids that came out of the Air Force base naturally had more world experience. I would say the majority of them this wasn't their first stop because they are in high school. They had moved probably several times whereas the cultural from the area was primarily farming whether crops or livestock, either one. But it was a good cultural mix and I didn't really see where it was prejudiced one way or another. They really did mix extremely well. In addition, as far as the colored students coming in from the Air Force base, again you didn't have the racial, none of the racial tensions that I noticed, or I don't think other teachers did because it was just a, it was a good mix. We especially didn't have it from the Air Force side because they were used to multicultural and I think the local community, because it was a small local community adapted very well because they were not familiar with that and interested, so it worked. Rudyard was kind of a unique place back in the 60's. It was a one stoplight town, what was the population of Rudyard Kathy? Less than 1000 people I would say, maybe 700 to 900 but it was one of the better school systems in the entire state of Michigan.

KJ: That's phenomenal. In terms of the ratio of Air Force base students to local students was that a 50/50 split or 80/30, could you put a ballpark estimate on that?

JS: I'd say 75, 80/ 20.

KJ: Okay, so mostly Air Force base students.

JS: Correct.

KJ: Okay, and what about the faculty and administrators that were teaching there was there turnover too with the Air Force base? Or were they permanent residents?

JS: Well the one teacher that I took over she was from the Air Force base but the majority of them were not. They were coming from different colleges I think and Northern. I wouldn't say a lot of Northern but it was a good mix of Northern and we were all younger too. Probably the, maybe 10 years older, what was Trombley [SPELLED PHONETICALLY]? 10 15 years older, the most were in their 40's. There was one, let's see the home ec teacher was probably the oldest at that time and she was in her 50's.

KJ: Okay.

JS: So it was a young staff, I would say the majority were 30 and younger.

KJ: That makes for a very innovative faculty. Going back to the Air Force base and the international experiences that these students and their families were bringing to the school were there any programs that were set up that you can think of that were part of the curriculum or maybe extracurricular, after school programs, to help them adjust to life back in the states or vice versa to kind of teach the Rudyard local residents about the international experiences that these kids were bringing to the schools?

JS: I think they pretty much did that on their own. It really, it wasn't anything that was structured that came in. Where you would get it in the classroom would be all of the sudden you got on to a particular topic, Oh I've been here for so many years, and oh what's that like? What's different? So we take some time out and perhaps, you know discuss that. And then they would follow up amongst themselves.

KJ: Can you think of any instances where that came up in the context of business or economics where you were looking at the economic systems of other countries?

JS: There I would say you would definitely see the distinction in terms of understanding, Air Force kids were, considerable had especially in economics. It was a senior course, you had to pass to graduate which was a benefit for me because the kids were there. But allocation and scarce resources among the unlimited wants sometimes you get into that, and economics can be confusing especially if you haven't had much of a world experience. So yes you discuss capitalism in depth, communism, socialism, there is no pure either way, what are they pure, how do they interact and it's the first time that a lot of the local population even thought of some of those areas so it was a little more difficult from the technical standpoint there. And quite frankly some of them, rightfully so, could care less because they didn't see themselves going that way. But yet if they were going to raise crops or raise cattle or livestock we tried to bring it in that aspect too because it mattered in terms of business and economics, on whether you succeeded or didn't succeed.

KJ: Right, that's a great way to approach that. Alright, let's see. Do you know, in terms of curriculum, development, was there a standard curriculum that the school said you know, here are your lesson plans, here are your textbooks, go teach this. Or was it up to each teacher to really create their own curriculum?

JS: It was up to the teachers at that time and you had to do your weekly planners and project beyond the weekly planners, you know monthly and so forth. And then you would run that by the principle and he would take a look at it. But there was a lot of latitude on what you wanted to do and get that across, and that is what we enjoyed.

KJ: Yeah that freedom in the classroom is priceless.

JS: You know they would also come in and sit unannounced in different areas and you would have your ratings.

KJ: Were there any parent constituencies that were ever pressing for curriculum changes in the schools?

JS: No.

KJ: Okay.

JS: None that I was aware of. We also had the flexibility too, I can remember it didn't happen often but I always said if any parent wants to come in, you know into the classroom and help out or sit and just watch what is going on they were more than welcome to do so.

KJ: That is a great offer. Teachers today as we mentioned really struggle with this standardized curriculum and teaching to the test and all the documented evidence and tying to standards and we could say that is really an enormous issue facing teachers today what do you think the enormous issues that you faced as a teacher and your generation of teachers faced in the Upper Peninsula?

JS: Probably the reason that I left education too, and I can especially see it nowadays, is you would be wind up doing the same thing year after year after year after year and I could see where there were some teachers that that's what it was going to be and I did not like that. Every year I would try to see where I could improve or change or do something a little bit different because you are going to fail at some things believe me and other things you are going to look back on and say that really worked well to adapt and I don't think now you don't have that flexibility.

KJ: Yeah that is, I agree with you. We have touched a little bit on the social conditions in Rudyard particularly with the Air Force base, what about the school's relationship with the local Native American population? There is Sault Ste. Marie tribe of Chippewa, were they, did they have a presence in the schools in Rudyard?

JS: See again maybe I was young maybe I was ignorant, none of that stuff really ever came up. I didn't see it in the kids, I didn't see it in the teachers so it was something either through ignorance or just not awareness but everyone seemed to mix very well. And again because 80 percent of the students were from the military and they already had that cultural experiences coming through and the locals didn't have much cultural, but they wanted to experience it.

KJ: Sure, do you know if there were Native American students in your schools?

JS: I'm sure there were, just from the last names I went through but I never looked at it as such.

KJ: Do you know if the school had any Native American cultural awareness programs or?

JS: No.

KJ: Okay. So right now there is a, we have title 7 funding and it mandates Native American history and cultural education in the state of Michigan and several states have something similar to that in state standards and now mandated as well. I was kind of curious was that beginning to seep in and plant some seeds there in the early '60s or not.

JS: No.

KJ: No, okay. Alright, so how about we shift gears to the cold war, a little bit, let's return to your experiences. So can you tell me how the cold war impacted the school system, how it impacted the classroom, how it impacted your classroom?

JS: Well primarily you were on military alert, at various times it was a stacked base. So I mean you knew that military presence was important and you had the two main bases, Kincheloe where we were, and K.I. Sawyer out here. So there as always the sack planes in the air and military preparedness, but it was nothing you really dwelled on for any period of time. I say we brought it up sometimes in the classroom in terms of what was happening with the Vietnam War. The Russian Cold War was not, as presence then Russia and China always seemed to be against the U.S. and as it is now at the same time, let's just say they don't act in our interest, it was the same back then and they were always supporting the opposite sides. But it was a, Vietnam war was present, the most important thing and everything else was sideline. Kennedy was in '63 and that is when I first got out of high school, which was the height of the Cold War and almost went to nuclear war at that time. Now the kids that I was teaching may have heard of that, but they didn't know that that was almost the brink of nuclear war.

KJ: And what about the contention that came out of the Vietnam War, were there students who were holding protests were there community protests, were there faculty that were protesting did that manifest in the schools at all?

JS: In Rudyard? [Laughter]. One stop light, maybe there was one person that came out but I never saw him. I guess the protest may have been people like me that didn't necessarily, through selfish reasons or whatsoever I didn't believe in the Vietnam War, I think it was a wasted war, even more so now that it is over. If you are going to go into a war, war is hell, you better go in to win, or don't even go into war. More wasted lives between half wars.

KJ: What about the parents of your students, were they being deployed to Vietnam and how were they received when they came back home? And how did that impact the students when their parents were deployed?

JS: Again I was just there for 7 years so it was probably in between, I didn't have that much experience with it from the outside close knit family situation I think it came in more within the family and close friends of the families, where I wasn't in that niche.

KJ: Right I was curious from kind of an institutional perspective if there were a lot of parents that were being deployed you know, how was the school supporting them. But if that wasn't the case then, yeah.

JS: They were transferred in, transferred out. We didn't know much of where they were going, I'm sure the kids didn't like to talk about it sometimes.

KJ: Understandable. What about any like, duck and cover drills or evacuation procedures, did you have regular...

JS: That would have been when I was a kid. That would have been back in the 50's, I can still, remembering ducking under the desks and all that, that was a long time. We, by that time the kids and us were well aware there was no duck and cover, if it was going to be a nuclear war it was, say goodbye.

KJ: Say goodbye, right. What about some of the cultural influence of the early 1960's, you know the rock and roll, the hippie culture, the drugs, was that manifesting in your students in the school districts?



JS: Not really, not even for the teachers that much, that was just coming into being probably when I would have graduated more from '63, but if you were from the larger cities then it was there more, but coming from Northern I didn't know one person that was into drugs whatsoever at that time. I'm sure it has changed considerably now, it was alcohol, but so I really didn't experience any of that, maybe I was just naïve I don't know.

KJ: Well and what about the high school students that you were teaching?

JS: Not into drugs.

KJ: What about the rock and roll culture? Did you see changes in their behaviors or their likes and dislikes of what was going on in pop culture?

JS: I think the heavy metal was really coming into early '70's, yeah so it really didn't, it was still our time it was the rock and roll that was there. And you know that's what we grew up with too, so it wasn't cultural clash so to speak.

KJ: Did Rudyard, having this Air Force base presence, bring in any major musicians?

JS: In Rudyard [Laughter]. Let's see some of the highlights were when you had a snowstorm to jump in your scout or your 4 wheel drive vehicle and get out and see if there was going to be school tomorrow or not and then the roads if they were passable. You had different get togethers with teachers, the students, no I didn't see any of them. You're talking a small farming community, and a lot of the things that may have taken place, there were probably dances on the base set up for the kids that way but it wasn't through the schools. That was all organized by the military. See and it really didn't matter as far as teaching we didn't know if the child's parent was coronel or if the child's parent was a private coming in, so that really didn't affect us at all that way. And I don't think it affected the local kids either they could care less it wasn't a status symbol whereas on the base it may have been.

KJ: Right, yeah, like in a DOD school it really would have been, it made a difference. Alright we have touched on some of the achievements, particularly with what you said with the outreach in the community with your business class and helping students develop some of those life skills that they needed. We have also touched on obstacles that the school faced, are there any kind of big picture achievements or obstacles that you would like to discuss?

JS: I think big mistakes that some of the teachers made, looking there, is you love the kids and get along but there still has to be a fine line, you have to have some discipline in a class where they know they've crossed the line, and some instances where that is not there you're not going to succeed, you are going to lose some respect and kids will always test you, whether they are your own or not. The other area, some teachers were just mean or scared the hell out of the kids and I don't think you can succeed that way. I think you can be honest, I used to have fun with the kids, and I am not saying I was the greatest or the worst or somewhere in between, but when you would first come in be honest with the kids, look hey this is great and there are a lot of you out there that are more intelligent than I am, and that's the first thing they go wow did you hear what he said? But some of you aren't, some of you fall in the center but I have had more experience so I will try and relay that and these are some of the lines that maybe you can go up to. Sure we can have fun and everything else, but there is still, you are going to have to do some homework you are going to be able to have to respond to some things don't be afraid to challenge. And I think many kids are too much into that box, and they are afraid to say, well why? You

say that's right, well why is that right? Why is that wrong? And don't bring your political views into the classroom.

KJ: Great. Thank you. Can you tell me a little about why you left teaching and what you did after your career as an educator?

JS: Well as I said the reason I left was because some of the challenge was going out of it and I didn't want to fall in the same routine. At the same time my wife and I, and I had a partner, we built the St. Ignas KOA campground, it was a 40 acre campground so I was starting to use my building acumen and go in that area. And then I sold that, I have always hated cold weather, nothing wrong Marquette's beautiful sometimes, your one day a year but I wanted to move to Florida, so then we moved to Florida and then from there I went into business and I had a variety of different businesses, financial business, I was also in the insurance so it worked out well.

KJ: That's great. Is there anything else you would like to add?

JS: I don't know if I have covered your questions, you tell me.

KJ: We have, yep.

JS: Okay that's fine.

KJ: Okay thank you very much Jim.

JS: I don't know if I have been helpful or not but that's the flash from the past.

KJ: This is fantastic, we can just keep this going,

JS: Rudyard was a good school there was so much flexibility that you had at that time.

KJ: That's amazing, that's great.

[END OF PART 2]

[BEGINNING OF PART 3]

KJ: Alright this is the second part of the interview, and this is with Kathy Stelzel. Kathy can you please tell me about your experience growing up in Marquette and the education community and school system in Marquette?

KS: Okay, well my first school we called Little Baraga it was probably, it was the elementary school that was, later became St. Peters school. It was housed on the same site, they tore it down and built the new St. Peter's school I think in the 50's at some point in time. So that is where I went for kindergarten. And then from there I went to St. Johns school which was on the corner, almost the corner of Third and Bluff it is right next to the Bell Telephone Office which has now taken over the school, it is an empty parking lot now. I was there through eighth grade and then from there I went to Bishop Baraga High School which no longer, it's now the city hall as well across from the cathedral in Marquette. I was taught by the religious sisters, the nuns, the whole time, I always thought I had a great education. The schools were very small back then for instance when I was at St. Johns there were 4 classrooms, first and second grade were together, third and fourth, and so on and so you would have, you would be with the same kids through that whole time, I think I probably had somewhere like 20 kids when I graduated from

eighth grade and went on to high school. At that then when I went to Bishop Baraga High school that was, we were the largest class ever to enter I think we entered at 104 freshmen or something of that nature, by the time I graduated in '66 we were down to 96 children, or high school graduates I should say. And then from there I went to Northern and spent three and a half years there and got my degree, because at that time Northern offered summer school so we were able to finish up early and my degree was in Speech Pathology and from there I went into teaching.

KJ: Great. Real quick lets rewind to your experiences in Marquette. Can you tell me about the kinds of technology that you had in the classroom in the Catholic school system?

KS: Well I don't remember any technology. I do remember that on occasion we would get movies for say a Christmas bonus kind of thing, we would all go upstairs to the auditorium and we would watch some, I don't remember, some father knows, you know a very wholesome kind of a movie. And as far as technology I remember there being telephone in the school because it was upstairs and as eighth graders if it rang we had to run upstairs and answer the phone because of course there were no secretaries or anything in those days, other than that I don't remember anything in the grade schools. Now in high school again we would have movies in the classroom and that sort of thing but in fact, health class we used to watch a lot of movies I do remember that and of course you had your business classes and things like that and you had typewriters and things like that and I am sure they were manual I don't believe they even electric at that point in time. That's all I do remember as far as technology. Not much going on.

KJ: Do you recall when you watched movies in the classroom in high school what was the format? Was it on a television was on it on a reel to reel,

KS: Reel to reel, a big moving reel, projectors and,

KJ: And did the teachers bring in current events into the classroom?

KS: You know I don't recall that in high school, there may have been some it if but I honestly just don't recall. We were pretty naive and everything I think back in those days and,

KJ: No that's fine. This is also so the 60's were really the advent of mass media in terms of the magazines, so Time magazine, Life magazine, do you recall any of those periodicals coming into the classroom?

KS: To the classroom no, but Seventeen magazine was of course our go to and Teen magazine and some of those things so those were the kind of magazines. And we really didn't use the library much in those days at the school, I mean I remember there being a library, we were more apt to go to the Peter White Public Library and check out books and that sort of thing. But in terms of, my parents had magazines at home but I don't remember them having like Time or, I think they had Life and Look and those I do kind of remember, but I probably would have gotten some things because they were more current event type things.

KJ: And then did you have a television at home?

KS: Oh yes, of course. And they got colored TV after I left the house [laughter].

KJ: Let's switch gears to NMU and can you tell me about your teacher education program and the Speech Pathology program, were they two programs, was it one program?

KS: We had to take courses in both because my minor was in, math and science actually was my minor, so the courses that related to speech were one part of the day and then we did have to take those education courses in the other. You had asked earlier when you spoke with my husband if there was anybody that stood out and of course Dr. Emerick who has gone on to write many books about the local area and everything, he was one of my professors. And he was a very interesting guy, we did have a few professors that would come for various short periods of time, a couple of them were excellent and then audiology was another part that we had to do so we spent a lot of time doing testing down in the audiology center and stuff and I really enjoyed that part of it too. But then as I said the education courses theory of science or you know whatever it was that we were taking we did have to do those as well. When it came time to do student teaching we had to do two different parts of it. The first part was for the speech and language part of it we had to spend the summer up at Bay Cliff working with the students, we would drive up on a daily basis I don't remember if we went four or five times a week, there would be a carload of us, we would take a Northern car and we would drive up and spend the day up there and do our thing and then we would go home in the evening and that was I think for six weeks. At that time I am assuming it is still the same there was like maybe six weeks summer camp for children, primarily for children with muscular dystrophy were the clients at that certain time the students. So we did that for the summer and then when fall came we had to do student teaching in the classroom for that math science part of it, for me, and my student teaching was at John D. Pierce and I was in the classroom there with a 5th grade teacher and had to do science I think she was just doing the science or at least that was the only portion of the day I was there for. And then in addition to that we had to do curriculum hours with a couple of speech pathologists through the Marquette school system so I remember being at St. Michaels school doing therapy, out at a school Silver Creek which is no longer there, those are the two locations I remember so that was something that we had to do back in the day. And that would have been like 1969.

KJ: Did, was there use of technology in your preparation program and then was that same technology being used in the schools, can you tell me about the technology that is specific to speech pathology?

KS: Oh gosh I haven't thought about these in years I can't even remember, the earphones and we had this little tape recorder type thing, I can't even remember the name of it it has been so long but it was one card and you would put the card through it. And of course we would use tape recorders a lot you know and as they became smaller that became even easier to lug that around you know. So those were the main pieces, the ear pieces and then this card that I can't remember the name of this machine. Primarily that, back in those days.

KJ: And so did NMU train you on those and did the school districts have those?

KS: I know them from the school district, I don't actually remember using them at Northern, it was during that student teaching that I became introduced to those devices primarily. And as far as the technology of course the audiology lab back then of course the sound suites that they had and everything for testing the hearing it was probably very top notch back in the day. So that was the technology piece that we really go into as part of that.

KJ: Great. And then once you graduated from NMU can you tell me again which year you graduated and what did you do afterwards?

KS: I did my student teaching in the fall of '69, so I was done with student teaching basically at the end of October probably, and then I moved in with my husband because we had lived apart for the year and a half while I was finishing school and he was in Ruyard at the time and so I got a job in the Eastern Upper Peninsula intermediate school district. And I was one of three therapists that was hired by the office, my district or territory so to speak was the St. Ignas city schools and the private schools in that area. And that's when I actually began my, then I came back to go through the formal graduation but I was done then in fall of '69.

KJ: Okay great. And which schools were in the Easter UP ISD?

KS: Well it took in three counties I believe, I think it was Mackinac, Chippewa and maybe Luce county, but mine was Mackinac county and that was, I was housed in the St. Ignas city schools and at that time there was the high school, there were three elementary schools that were part of the St. Ignas city district, but in addition to that there were some outlying township schools and a private school that I had to service, one being in Meran [SPELLED PHONETICALLY], and the other in Brevort. They had little small elementary schools, there was a local Catholic elementary school that I had to service and then Mackinac Island had a school at that time there were about 150 students at the Mackinac Island school K-12 and so I would go over there periodically, not on any kind of a regular basis and so those were the schools that I travelled around to back in the day.

JS: You are doing very well but you might want to just slow down a bit they won't be able to record you that fast.

KJ: Oh she is good. Can you tell me about a typical day, what was it like travelling around? How did you know which students to work with? Who identified them, who were your contacts at a given school?

KS: Well it was the principle, because in those days the schools were so small that they really only had a principal for the most part other than the high school. My first thing, I was the very first speech pathologist to service any of these schools so none of the children had been identified at that point, so for the first several months that's what I did I did a lot of testing based on teacher referrals. You know at that point we would look at the little kids obviously and the older kids it would be by teacher referral and then you identify your case load and at the time, Michigan standards a caseload had to be 75 to 100 students to qualify for a speech pathologist so I had to have that number of kids in my case load. So after all of this testing was done of course you set up your schedule and you try to spend say, two half days in each school depending on how many students you had and the need and that sort of thing. So a typical day would be going to two schools, based on memory, and then a half a day was always your office time to catch up on paper work of course this was back before all the rules and regulations of special education came into effect and all of the paper work it was nothing like it is today. And so I sometimes I would work individually with students, I did a lot of, language wasn't even quite the focus it was just coming on the scene it was really more articulation and some stuttering, those were your primary kids at that time but I would go into the kindergartens and I would do some language kind of activities as I said that was just starting to come to the forefront at that point in time. So a typical day would be half days in each of the schools twice a week with a half a day for office time.

KJ: And so with that paperwork being so different, and you said it wasn't as extensive as what everybody has to do now but what did that paperwork look like for you?

KS: Keeping notes on students probably primarily is what you would do because there were no IEP's at that point in time, individual education plans, there weren't all the rules and regulation that this had to be filed x number of times a year or meetings with parents, even that was very different. You would send home a piece of paper to a parent at that point in time and say something to the effect of, I've screened your child he seems to have some articulation problems with the F and S or sounds or whatever and I would like to see him a couple times a week is that okay? And that was your notification there were none of these formal meetings and eligibility meeting san placements and things and all that sort of things. It was a much simpler time.

KJ: So as the first speech pathologist in the region, how did the faculty members at the schools receive you?

KS: I don't think they really, really thought one way or another at least as far as I am concerned. I was somebody coming to take a couple kids out of their classroom for a half hour and that was two or three less kids that they had, although of course they would want to make sure I worked around the reading time and the math time and that sort of thing so some of that is what went into all that scheduling as well. Today it is a little bit different but it yeah, it was very easy you know I meet up with teachers and everybody was very friendly and it just I didn't feel isolated I didn't feel like oh my gosh who and what is she, I don't ever remember feeling that way.

KJ: Right, good, and what about the other two speech pathologist who shared the eastern UP ISD region with you did you have regularly scheduled collaborative meetings, did you go to trainings together?

KS: We did go to different meetings together or conferences, I can remember going to one in Detroit, I remember one in Marquette. The Sault Ste. Marie I remember going to several of those, the, I met more frequently with the therapists that handled the Cedarville, Pickford, that area because of proximity. The therapists that was up in Newberry lived in Newberry so it was more of a hike for her to get to the intermediate office which at that time was housed in Rudyard I don't know if it is still there today but it was in Rudyard at that time.

KJ: So Rudyard was your home base then? Just a quick logistical question, how did the transportation work, did you drive your own car and get reimbursed or?

KS: Both, both. When I first started, I lived in Rudyard but my office as far as schools went was in St. Ignas which was a 30 minute drive down I-75 and that could be fun in the winter but I would, the first year, maybe the first two years I drove my own car and I was reimbursed and it was a very generous reimbursement back in the day. Then it was I think it was the third year, and I was there for four years, I think the third year we were actually issued state cars, it was, yeah I kept it at my house I would go the gas station and say fill it up and put it on the tab, I mean it was very different than today. We were very spoiled. I mean they weren't beautiful cars but they were all brand new cars.

KJ: That's great!

KS: It was great, yeah.

KJ: A nice perk of the system.

JS: You know what, I don't even remember that.

KJ: What, what do you think the achievement and obstacles that you in particular in speech pathologist in the eastern UP faced during this time?

KS: I don't know if it was just the eastern UP but because we were a new entity in the school they had no room for us. So I would be next to the furnace, I would, and then sometimes somebody else would have to use that room, so it was really the logistics of housing, other than I had an office at the high school and that was a dedicated space so that was fine. But as far as any of the other schools it was like oh well the principal is not using his office right now so you are free to use it or you know those kind of things, that was a big obstacle. And of course with it being new we made all of our own materials, we were very creative we would make games that had sounds, we would take a manila folder and cut out all these pictures and make whatever game it happened to be and then you would use clear contact paper to seal them and keep them and so the eastern Upper Peninsula school district the intermediate school district it don't think had the kind of money that say, the Rudyard school district had so we made a lot of our own we did have a minor budget to order things every year and things like that as I recall. So that was an obstacle, making your own materials finding a place to work, and the travel would get old especially if there was a snowstorm out there and it was like hmm, yeah.

KJ: Yeah that's an ongoing obstacle in the U.P. So can you tell me about your decision to stop teaching?

KS: Well we were moving to Florida and so I turned in my resignation, we had actually planned to go back the following year and then we took a trip to Florida and my husband got a job and so then I turned in my resignation and they were able to fill it right away because there were people interested in getting the job so that is why I stopped and then of course when I got to Florida I did go back into education as well.

KJ: Okay great, for how many years did you teach in Florida?

KS: Forever [laughter] no I actually taught SLD, I did speech pathology for a while in a private residential home for handicapped children and then from there I went into the school district and I taught SLD and eventually I went into administration.

KJ: And SLD is?

KS: Specific Learning Disability. And then as I said eventually went into administration where I oversaw all the paperwork and saw the difference so I did have 12 schools there that I had to monitor and sit in all kinds of legal meetings and things like that, so it was totally different than when I started education for sure.

KJ: Wow. Have you returned to the St. Ignas and Rudyard area and what differences have you noticed?

KS: Well it is interesting because last year as we were leaving the UP in route to Florida we did spend the night in St. Ignas and as I mentioned there were several schools, the schools that I taught in there was one that I just could not find. A couple years before we had driven through the area I couldn't find it so I finally stopped and inquired and it been turned into a church or something so it doesn't look the same. So that school is gone, the little elementary school on the north side of town is no longer there. The high school, I'm trying to remember and then none of the elementary schools are there, I think they built one new elementary school is possibly what happened and it is over closer to the high school if memory

serves me right. So those are gone, the one township school is there, the other township school, which was such a poor poor area, the school was crumbling back when I was teaching there, so that I did not see, and the Catholic school is gone as well. As far as St. Ignas, probably doesn't look a whole lot different than back when we lived there and taught in the area. Rudyard where we also lived, that is very different because of course the Air Force base closed I think in late '70s maybe early '80s somewhere in that time frame and of course that devastated the area because all that income was gone, all the population is gone, so it is really the local farmers and the people that have stayed behind for whatever various jobs in the area. So that's very different.

KJ: When you were in Rudyard and in St. Ignas in the late 1960's and early '70s do you recall any instances of the Vietnam War influencing the school, influencing the students influencing the faculty?

KS: None that I recall at that time, most of them were coming back by that time, from the war, and so no I don't, other than what you would hear on the news or if you had happened to know someone that had been there and didn't return or whatever.

KJ: Alright, anything else you would like to address?

KS: Marquette has changed so dramatically since I was a kid when I grew up there were a number of schools in Marquette. I, we talked a little earlier I am not sure if it's a decline in the population of Marquette because I don't really think that that has changed as much. I attributed that fact that people have less children, but as a school age child myself we had three Catholic elementary schools, we had at least five elementary schools that I can think of, we had Graveraet which was the high school this was prior to Marquette High, and then we had Bishop Baraga high school which was a thriving high school at that point in time so it has changed a lot. As far as the workings of the actual school you know of course I never taught in the school district so I can only refer to it as the student, but I felt that I had a very good education growing up so.

KJ: Yeah it certainly prepared you for a career in the profession. One more quick thing, can I ask you about the changes that you have seen over your career in terms of special education funding?

KS: Ah funding, well my experiences have been of course Florida because I was in the Florida district for so long, and we continued to lose federal funding over the years but, and maybe the dollars were the same it was just the way the dollars were being allocated, a lot of it was the demands of parents that was siphoning off the money from the families. There was a real demand for all these aids, individual aids for students, that takes a lot of money off of a school district and when you look at some of our schools that are so large, that just siphoned off so much money. And then the money is spent very foolishly. There is a, as the years went on the hierarchy of administrators became greater and greater and greater and so of course that siphons off some of your dollars and materials. I mean it just, as I said probably if you looked at the actual dollar figure it is the same or greater it is just that it had to be spread out over so many more areas. I mean when I first taught we didn't even have to buy forms. Forms can be very expensive, all these preprints, now most of them are computer generated but still. The money just goes to all kinds of different things other than what you would really like to see the money go toward.

KJ: Do you recall in the Eastern UP ISD where the funding was coming from for the speech pathology program to get up and running?



KS: No I really don't, all I know is while I was there it was right when the federal law was being enacted in 1973 for the special education for the country that was kind of Humphrey's push back in the day and so I can remember we sat and we were helping the state write rules and regulations to get the laws up and going but you know I am sure those have been refined many many times over the years. Yeah it's very expensive education for special needs students and the more needs they have the more expensive it becomes of course.

KJ: Do you recall the process of how you participated in creating some of those laws?

KS: I just remember that we sat, and I can still see us sitting in the conference room there and we were just trying to trouble shoot you know what kind of rules, what kind of things should be required for maybe and eligibility you know, what should be the process? Just kind of starting to put things in place, the process from going to identification through placement and dismissal as well from the program. What we wrote I couldn't tell you I just remember sitting there having to work on it and I am sure that each district had to submit some stuff to the state for consideration I am sure that's the way they handled it back then. But where we actually got money for our salaries I mean it must have been pretty good if we were given cars you know.

KJ: Alright anything else you would like to add?

KS: Not that I can think of at the moment.

KJ: Okay, thank you very much for your time.

KS: You're welcome.