Melissa Maki
Violet Solka

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She was 15 during the G.D.

me - When and where were you born?
Gram - I was born June 5, 1914 at home in national mine.
me - Who were your parents?
Gram - They were Charles and Lillian Roberts
me - How many children were in your family?
Gram - we had 9 children, 7 girls and 2 boys - but three died at birth - 2 girls left (me & my sister)
me - What was it like growing up in this area?
Gram - It was fun we had other friends and neighbors to play with.
me - What kinds of responsibilities did you have?
Gram - I cut and hauled wood, I washed clothes by hand, I carried water with 2 pails on a hook, picked berries twice a week to sell. I baked cakes and pies for mother, I cooked supper many nights. I helped dress and helped the children to bed at night.
find out where she sold them.
me - Could you share some of your childhood memories?
Gram - I used to run down to the ice cream ~~man~~ wagon when the ice cream man came, ~~and~~ to buy ice cream. I rode many times on the delivery wagon to deliver groceries. I used to ride on the hay wagon with my grandpa to haul hay into the barn.
get name
When the national mine school burned down it was a very sad thing to see to lose all the things we had planned there.
When the Herculese Powder Plant blew up there were many people that were sad, to run to find out if their loved ones were killed or not. that was a very sad thing to see.

When I was 10, I had an operation on my eye with no anesthesia that was bad to have 4 nurses my dad and one doctor to take care of me.
When I was 6 years old I fell off a horse and cut my head. I had 3 stitches that time.
I went sledding many times with a bob sled down Brook's Hill.
We went skiing many times. I jumped over the hump many times.
Went ice skating on the pond near home.
I jumped off the barn one time to jump into the hay.

me - What times did you share with your grandparents?

Gram (mumble) - I went to grandmas house to help her make butter. I helped grandpa to feed the animals. Went down every sunday morning to play piano with them. I helped Grandma to scrub floors, then grandma told me old stories. → what kind of old stories - find out!

me - What kinds of games did you play?

Gram - The most important games I played were canover, baseball, hopscotch, riding in a barrel down a hill, I played hockey quite a few times.

me - What were Christmas's like then?

Gram - Christmas, on christmas Eve we'd first put up our Christmas tree, we'd trim it, we'd light, we had living candles, we ~~lit~~ lit them. After that mother used to put a big ham in the boiler to boil for Christmas Morning.

pickled ham is an English tradition

We would have ham for breakfast. Then we would open up our presents to see what Santa had left us. He had left us many nice things, my most important thing though was a buggy and a doll which I cherished. Then after that we used to go outside, sleigh ride on our new sleighs till dinner when mama called us in for dinner.

me - What was school like?

Gram - School was fine we used to have a lot of fun up there. We used to play and ~~through~~ throw snowballs at one another, and slide down the hill.

me - Did you walk to School?

Gram - I walked about a mile and a half everyday to school. We carried our lunch buckets through many snowstorms we still got there to school. I used to take care of a little girl and take her to school with me. Every time we went there we stopped at her grandmothers on the way grandma gave us suckers with one on one end and one on the other and that was one of our surprises we had.

me - Did you like school?

Gram - I liked School, I went almost every day unless I was sick.

We used to carry our lunch bucket, peanut butter sandwiches every day. We'd go down the basement and have dinner with the janitors where it was nice and warm.

me - what subjects did you like?

Gram - I liked most of all subjects, especially spelling and arithemitic. And most of all the subjects I liked.

me - How old were you when you quit school?

Gram - I was 14 when I quit school. The reason was I had to go to work to help out our large family.

me - where was your job?

Gram - my job was at the Gossard factory in Ishperming. I was a seamstress there.

me - Did you live in National mine all your life?

Gram - I lived in National mine all my life

me - Could you describe what it looked like?

Gram - It was a small community at that time dirt roads we had many farms but they were all small farms. And we didnt have many other things there. We had a horse and buggy for to ride in, there wasn't many cars at that time, or else we had to walk. There was no other transportation.

Me - How were you dressed when you were young?

Gram - I was dressed, like older people we had to have such heavy clothes for the winter. Hats and scarves and snowboots and snowpants and long legged underwear. we used to be dressed realy warm.

me - who was the first family member to come to America?

Gram - my Grandpa and my dad were the first of my family to come to America. My dad was 16 when he went to work for the Cleveland Cliffs mines.

me - what country were they from?

Gram - They were from England.

me - did you ever travel far from home?

Gram - The furthest I'v went from home was to Ishpeming when I was 12 years old, we went to the Show for the first time.

good quote

me - What was transportation like?

~~Gram - Transportation in my days was poor~~

Gram- Transportation was poor in my days we just had the horse and buggies a few cars, there were street cars. Went to Marquette one time to go and get my eyes and ears checked we went on the train, it was fun, I had to walk as far as Salisbury to get on that train.

me- did you have a car?

Gram- we had no car.

me - Did you live during the Great Depression?

Gram- I lived in the Great Depression and it was very hard times we were short of many things to eat, And short of foods.

me - what did you think about the bombing of Pearl Harbor?

Gram- That was very sad news to hear for we did not know how many people in the United States were killed in that bombing.

me- who did you hear about it from?

Gram- we heard it from our neighbors next door for we didnt have any other way of hearing it, we didnt have a telephone.

me - what did you think about the dropping of the atomic bomb.

Gram - That was an awful thing too, I didnt remember much about that but I know my parents were very excited when they heard it.

me - How did WW II and the Great Depression affect you?

Gram - Oh, It was bad we had to go short of a lot of ~~food~~ different kinds of foods and there was a lot of clothes we could not have that we would have to have others that give us clothes.

me - Did any of your family members go overseas?

Gram - I had a brother that ~~who~~ went to England He never returned until the war was over. I had one brother that ~~who~~ was in the United States navy.

me - Did you think that we would win the war?

Gram - We didnt know if we would but we were hoping we would and we did win the war.

me - How would you compare times today with when you were young?

Tiffie?

Gram - well, times are much better today than when we were young. There are more jobs and more opportunities.

Tiffie?

Today - more jobs and opportunities and there was more money for clothes there was, there was more radios television and more of everything in this time now.

me - what is your life like now?
(long pause)

Gram - Now I like living with my ~~daughter~~ daughter and her family its nice, its nice not being alone. They have 2 children, my grandchildren, one boy and one girl.

You have an excellent childhood account! The emphasis of your story should be your Gram as a National Mine native - what it looked like then - her activities and chores - paint a vivid picture of what life was like.

Since you are lucky enough to have Gram live with you, perhaps she can add more specific details as you write your story.

Childhood - red
School
Chores
games - blue

job - purple

National Mine
Looks like - orange

Travel - green

times today - black

life now - yellow