

Chad Hewitt's Interview with Mr. Kiiskila

- me: interviewing Mr. Eugene Kiiskila
- me: my name is Chad Hewitt
- me: Mr. Kiiskila graduated from National Mine School
- me: date of interview is December 15, 1990
- me: ready
- gramps: should I put my teeth in
- me: ya I suppose
- ~~me: ya ok.~~
- gramps: ya ok.
- me: I'll start with a biographical sketch, when + where were you born?
- gramps: National Mine 1915 / February 12 1915
- me: Do you have any brothers or sisters?
- gramps: all together I had 7 brothers + 2 sisters.
- me: Could you name them for me?
- gramps: Albert + Henry, Matt of course he's dead now, Ronald + Ray, Martin and Paul, and my 2 sisters were Ellen + Beith
- me: Do you know when and where your parents were born?
- gramps: My father was born in Finland and my mother was born in National Mine I guess.
- me: O.K.
- me: Do you know what years you attended National Mine School?

gramps: I started in 1920

me: finished when

gramps: graduated in 1933

me: Do you remember any of the Grade school teachers you had?

gramps: Yes we had Miss. Roberts, Ruth Roberts, Miss. Peterson, and a Miss. Millimaki, than I remember most.

me: Did you have a favorite?

gramps: Miss. Roberts was a favorite I guess she was liked by everybody she was our third grade teacher.

me: Why was she your favorite?

gramps: Well she got along with the kids and the kids got along with her the kids all liked her

me: interesting

me: Do you remember any stories about your grade school teachers or anything

gramps: nothing to special no not off hand I can't think of any

me: Can you remember any names of your junior High + High school teachers names

gramps: ya we had a Mr. Griggs, Mr. Annala was the principal Mr. Griggs was the Quarter teacher Pat Gleason was the manual training teacher Dorothy Gleason Pat's wife was the music teacher.

me: did you have any favorites

gramps: Mrs. Gleason she was a wonderful person. she put on some beautiful plays at Christmas time in the spring of the year

me: Do you have any interesting stories about High School?

gramps: Not really pretty, dull days wasn't much activity when I was in High School years of the Depression.

me: Oh come on there must have been a couple?

gramps: (Ha Ha Ha) maybe nothing, not can't think of any right now

me: that's OK.

me: How did you get to school did you take a bus or walk

gramps: there was no buses we had to walk about a mile to school there was no such a thing as buses no hot lunches we had to come home for dinner.

me: What time did school start?

gramps: 9:00 in the morning

me: ours starts at 8:45

me: how did the kids dress back then.

gramps: Now the kids what

me: Dress back then what did they where

gramps: neat clean

me: was there a dress code

gramps: no there was no dress code

me: What kind of subjects were taught

gramps: subjects reading, writing, + arithmetic, geography, manual training, the girls had domestic science, what you guys call it now it's not domestic science any more you are taking it yourself

me: What

gramps: What are you taking up at school

me: I don't know

gramps: Learning to cook

me: Home Ec.

gramps: Home Ec. that was our domestic science that was only for girls boys didn't take it then days the boys had manual training

me: were the girls allowed in shops?

gramps: no girls in shops girls took domestic science Home Ec.

me: What was your favorite subject?

gramps: My favorite subject it wasn't arithmetic I didn't like algebra geography

me: I know what you mean. I don't like it that much either

gramps: I managed to get a B average I didn't like it geography was a good subject.

me: that's one of my favorites too Why was it your favorite though did you have an interesting teacher did the teacher make it fun to learn Why was it your favorite Why was it your favorite

gramps: well you learn all about the world for that matter learn about the states and country

me: What subject was your worst that you had lots of problems with.

gramps: to begin I had problems with algebra + geometry to begin with

me: understandable

gramps: but ya; took Latin for 2 years & liked Latin.
it was a lot like Finnish to read ya know

me: uh! pretty cool

mc: Was there any special clothes or any special sayings
that you had back then.

gramps: no nothing special

mc: none that you guys said to each other.

gramps: nobody wore neckties them days (and)

me: not even the teachers?

gramps: the teachers did alright especially during depression
times were rough

me: uh

gramps: in fact the year graduated 1933 they had to
close the schools a month early

me: yah

gramps: because there was no funds no money left in
the state to pay the teachers even we graduated
on the 5th of May 1933

me: WOW!!

gramps: the oldest kids on short notice a weeks notice
to prepare for graduation

me: a speech a graduation speech

gramps: we each had to give a speech

gramps: there was only six in my graduation class anyway
we all had to give a speech

me: Were there any Validictorians or Salutatorians?

gramps: Salutatorians did you say

me: yah

gramps: yah there was both

me: Who were they

gramps: Martha Manty was Validictorian + Helen Christen was
the salutatorian

me: uh

gramps: 3 boys + 3 girls in my class

me: How were kids expected to behave?

gramps: We had to tow the mark - I remember one time
we couldn't feel around I remember one time
he come in with metal clickers on his heels you
know and he come into the assembly hall pounding
his heels hard on the floor purposely harder than
he had to you know Mr. Aynsley was the
teacher at the time head of it there of the assembly
room he said that an empty waggly makes more
noise than a full one ^(clapping) he blot that lad

me: What kind of punishments were given?

gramps: none too severe

me: was there suspensions and stuff like that
groups: there was nobody suspended

me: like writers, like teachers give detentions, and stuff like
that
groups: like what

me: detentions

groups: no uh uh sometimes in grade school who had to stay
after a little bit for half an hour or so

me: did you have to at all

groups: I never had to stay after no

me: you're one of those good students Well

me: What kind of extra-curricular activities were offered
groups: We used to have banquets and stuff after a
basketball game we have lunch is served for

the basketball players and visiting teams

me: so they basketball teams were there any plays
and stuff like that

groups: oh ya

me: was there a track team

groups: no we just had the one team

me: uh did you participate in any?

groups: I played three years of basketball

me: Do you remember any special times you had when you were on the basketball team

gramps: We had a good record one year we were undefeated

me: What year was that

gramps: oh 31 1931 we were the district champs then we went into the U.P.s and we lost lost in the U.P.s

me: How many kids were on the team?

gramps: there was 10 I guess 10 people

me: What position did you play

gramps: Left forward left forward

me: did you win any trophies and stuff did the team win any trophies.

gramps: oh yes we won trophies

me: Consistently

gramps: district not consistent look in the trophy case 32 we won also 33 we took second place in district the district was held in National Min in 1933 that's the only year it was held in National Min

me: How big was the gym was it regulation size for Highschool

groups: you see that gym in National Minn

me: is it the same size now

groups: the one that's in National Minn there ya

me: that was the size you played on for High School

groups: ya

me: Well winning those trophies did that have a special impact on the teachers & students at the school

groups: no I guess not

me: did you have any like plays, acting and stuff like that or programs

groups: every spring we put on a opera

me: were you in any

groups: I was in there ya

me: What were they like

groups: Well more like a musical and alot of singing

me: we have like some of the today like spring concerts was the band plays + choruses and stuff

groups: we didn't have band then days there was no band in the school

me: Oh do you have any stories about the plays you
 heard or that you were in funny or serious

groups: No all I can say is that they were well appreciated
 by the public and they were well directed by Mrs. Gleason
 she was a wonderful

me: oh

groups: wonderful teacher for plays and stuff + musicals

me: What was lunchtime like at school

groups: Well people that were brought in by a bus from out
 south brought a lunch with them lived in the
 location had to go home for dinner always

me: oh

groups: no meals to be served

me: No hot lunch then

groups: no hot lunch no

me: What about high school

groups: no no

me: so most people went home to eat lunch except for
 the people out south.

me: Who was the principal when you were at National
 Mine

groups: Mr. Annala was the principal

me: Was he nice

gramps: strict real strict he was

me: reminds me of the last home for history

gramps: he's the one that said the empty wages make in more
me: than a full one you could not feel around
with Mr. Annala

me: I wonder if its hereditary

me: Did you have lots of homework when you went to school

gramps: that of who

me: homework

gramps: no not too much we took a book home every ~~week~~
a while we had 1 or 2 study periods

me: 1 or 2 study halls

gramps: everyday ya

me: wow

gramps: at least one study hall a day

me: What subject did you have the most homeworks in

gramps: most homework you mean

me: ya what class

gramps: would probably be arithmetic & geometry & algebra

me: Oh

groups: although Latin we took Latin for 2 years we engaged
subject we learned to talk Latin and write it you know
we even made crossword puzzles in Latin and that's not
easy to do even in English it is quite a chore

me: ya

groups: we had to make run in Latin

me: then you had to walk home then after school it's right

groups: ya

me: Was it hard walking through the winter walking to school

groups: pretty tough winter time especially

me: how long did you have for lunch to walk home and
back

groups: 1 hour 15 min. we started at 1:15

me: We only have 30 min to 45 min,

me: After school we did ya go what did you do did
you play sports or anything with your friends

groups: we played ball winter time go ski riding basketball
courts out in the location outside basketball

me: standunking it

groups: standunking

me: were did you hang out did you have a hangout at certain place or did you have a hangout

groups: didn't have any hangouts we seldom went to town sometimes on Sunday we go to gym hall and little bit of cribbage or smear

me: When you graduated what was it like What was it like when you graduated

groups: like I told you we only had a week to prepare for the graduation program we had to have a speech it wasn't much it wasn't the kind of graduation you have now a days its just each student give a speech that's all

me: did you have to wear those gowns + hat

groups: no no gowns or hats

me: ties or anything

groups: you had to have a suit w. put a suit on ya suit + tie white shirt

me: What was the average length of one of the speeches

groups: O.k. maybe about at the most 5 min.

me: what special memories do you have of graduation?

gramps: kind of what

me: special memories you had

gramps: after graduation when we graduated there was no kind of celebration, all we did was go for a walk up the road that's all took a walk to town nothing going on no kind of program it was the heart of the depression, in 1933 nobody was working

me: were you able to keep contact with your school hood friends

gramps: oh yes even yet today I see some of them ~~at~~ my graduation partners

me: Oh

gramps: out of the six that graduated 2 are dead now

me: Oh did you have a teacher that had an impact on your life

gramps: not really Pat Gleason expected us to tow the mark behaviour selves no swearing was allowed

me: still isn't

me: so all in all school has pretty much changed

gramps: quite a bit yes

me: OK

gramps: that's all