

Slippery Rock University

Department of History

History 401

Pennsylvania History

'AN ORAL HISTORY'

Baseball

Tutor Dr. D.D. Dixon.

**Students. K McGarvey
N Mills**

November 1994

This interview was carried out on Tuesday, October 25, 1994, at precisely 2:30pm in the afternoon. The location was the 341 Franklin Street, Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania. The interviewers were Nicholas Mills and Kenneth McGarvey, students of Slippery Rock University, and the INTERVIEWEE was one Mr. R.C. Boyer.

INTERVIEWERS

"The first question is, are you a native of Slippery Rock ?"

INTERVIEWEE

(Mr. Boyer nodded his head in response)

INTERVIEWERS

"Can you recall your first experience of Baseball ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Are you sure you want to hear it ?"

INTERVIEWERS

"Yes, of course we do !"

INTERVIEWEE

"A bunch of us kids started playing baseball, OK. I think I was thirteen years old. I was one of the youngest, but E.B. Crotwell - and I don't suppose you guy's have ever heard of him - used to be the athletic director of the College. His son, Ed, and a bunch of us guy's, we gotta little baseball team, you know just kids. You gotta remember back in those days there wasn't any money, no cars, there was nothing. So all we did was play ball - that's really the truth. We went up to that hill up there and played ball. So the first year we just, you know, walk out to wick and play a game, walk up to Forestville and play a game. We Walked ! We had no transportation. So the next year, why, EB. Crotwell, Coach Thompson, they started to get involved a little bit and they were all members of the American Legion down there."

INTERVIEWERS

"The American Legion ! Roughly, what year was this ? 1938 ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"A long time ago. So the next year they talked the Legion into us joining the Legion League - Butler county Legion / American Legion. And they bought us some uniforms and some catching equipment because we were lucky to have a glove to tell you the truth and a ball. So the first game we played - I hate to tell you this - and at the end of the first year when just us kids were playing, they took us down to Saxonburg. Now Saxonburg had been in the American Legion baseball for years. A lot of these towns round here had been in it for years - all but this one. Well, we went down and got beaten by thirty three to two. (laughter)"

INTERVIEWERS

"Just like the team they have now !"

INTERVIEWEE

"Well, the thing was, we were just, you know, we didn't know very much."

INTERVIEWERS

"What was the team called ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Well they called it the American Legionnaire's. That's the only game we played that year. Next year we got uniforms and they worked us out. Now Coach Thompson...., at that time the College ran the high school and the elementary school. Now all the student teaching came down there. So do you know what we did in Gym class ? We played baseball. Coach Thompson was our - he was our supervisor."

INTERVIEWERS

"It was all baseball ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Yeah. Well, we did play football and basketball under the Coach you know. The next year we started out early in the spring. So, the College had a baseball team - it wasn't to much of a baseball team then - cos. they weren't into it like they are now. So Coach said you guy's come on up. We practiced with them. Well, that summer we started out to play. When we went to Saxonburg we didn't have any uniforms, we had about two bats and about two balls . Next year we started out to play. And we didn't do to bad and we didn't do as good as we'd have liked to have done naturally, you don't want to win every game and we didn't. But we won. But our big problem was we didn't have enough people - enough kids. So, the third year we got a lot better - we were getting a little older then see, a little stronger, we knew a little more. Well when the Legion started out they asked Coach to get somebody to Coach us. So we got a fellow by the name of Joe Hennings. He was a graduate of this College up here (Slippery Rock). He worked for the gas company then. And he was a College trainer up there - football , basketball and everything else. And then Coach he kind of got interested in all this. He would come over and see that these kids are serious - they want to play ball. Then he'd come up and start helping Joe out and he taught us a lot and we needed it. So, we played. The third year we did pretty good - almost won the county championships, but not quite The fourth year we did win it. And Coach Thompson actually coached us that last game - the game that won us the championship and I've never forgotten it. We played Butler - at Butler - Pullman Park - Butler. And Coach said to me - cos. I pitched then. See we had only so many guy's. I caught. The second game he caught and I pitched. So Coach, he told me, "now look the first pitch you throw, you get as close to that guy you can get without hitting him". Well I got close enough - I hit the bill of his cap but being a kid you didn't, you didn't realize just exactly what he was teaching you. About the fifth inning, I understood exactly what he was teaching me. Its scared the hell out of them kids. Now his wilder than a march hare. So we won the county championship. He end up going, we played one game, one series of game. In the next series, we had to play New Kensington. And we didn't win that

one. They had some guy's down there who could play Ball. But after that, the Coach would say to me, I was a senior in high school, I played football, basketball and baseball, "were going to have Alumni game up there. How about coming up and catching for us". I said yes I'll up. Well you got to remember the College at that time was not very big - only about twelve hundred to 1500 students. Know, we knew all the football players, basketball players, baseball players. We knew them all. Personally. So I'd go up and catch for the Alumni team. This Eddie Cotwell ended up being the athletic direct for West Chester State College. Now they had Atlantic baseball school down here in Butler. And Eddy Cotwell and Bruce Adam's, made the team sponsored, by the Pittsburgh Pirates. They made the team. Eddiie Cotwell was offered a scholarship to Duke University. His dad said "No. Your not going to College, not right up there". Eddie went up there and he played football and he played baseball. So then the war came along. And that ended all. It ended everything. "

INTERVIEWERS

"In those days, in the early days, were there strong community ties, linked with baseball ? Did the community actually get involved ?".

INTERVIEWEE

"No. Not really. No. This town has been funny for years. Now I'll get to that. So after the war was over. When we guy's came home you know. They wanted to start American Legion baseball back up again. Now Pop Storr. I don't know whether you guy's have heard of him or not! Well he was Coach up at the College. Coach had retired. He became football Coach. Ker Thompson. Pop Storr had played for Ker Thompson. He recommended him for the job. So Pop said "how about you being the Coach ?". So I said "OK, I'll try". So we gathered up a bunch of kids, went up on the hill up there. And we practiced. And we worked. Well Judge Bridon down there in the courts he was one of my Ball players. Bob Weldon, his out in Illinois, he is a Stockbroker. Dale Shafer, a graduate of this College. His up at the Mayo Clinic, Michigan or Minnesota where ever it is. One of the two. His a

physical therapist. And we had a catcher, his name was Kondi, he was from Annandale out there in Boyers. He had to work in the summer time. Cos. everybody was poor, they didn't have no money."

INTERVIEWERS

"Were you working at the time?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Me? Yes I was working at the Cooper bus company, Grove City. And so the old Kondi went down to play Butler. And my wife's probably the only woman ever sat in the dug out, Pullman Park, in Butler. Now we had a kid who was a pretty good ball player, Bobby Jack. His a lawyer in Dallas right now. Texas, yeah. A big shot. But he was two days to old. So I thought what the hell, I'm gonna take the chance. I got Bobby to go along. At that time Butler had a minor league Ball club down here. By the Yankee's. So we had Penn State umpires. That's what they called the league, Penn State. Bobby went out to pitch. So anyway we couldn't do any good against Butler. Not having a good pitcher. We didn't have the talent to play then. About the second pitch the umpires call time out. I thought "oh were caught". What he had, he had a charm bracelet. He had a charm bracelet on. The umpires made him take it of, we didn't caught. We lost by one run but it didn't make any difference. Its just because we didn't have the talent-that's all. We, just didn't have it!"

INTERVIEWERS

" But they were more of an established team."

INTERVIEWEE

" Oh yeah. They had been established down there for years. We weren't. So er after that year the Legion decided to build a building down there, its apartments now, okay. So they wouldn't sponsor a Baseball team. So I decide I'd start playing Baseball again. Well coach Thompson had a cousin down in West Sunbury. And he recommended me for a catcher for them. Now he played in the Butler County league, pretty good league at that time. So I went down to West Sunbury and I plated for a year. We had players from New Castle, Clarion, all over Gods creation down there . And what used to

get us, you would look up in the crowd you know. You would see people from Slippery Rock watching the Ball game, and if you go up here in the hill you never see them. You never understand why they would not support a team in Slippery Rock?"

INTERVIEWERS

"Why do you think"

INTERVIEWEE

"I have no idea to this day I can't understand these people. So they formed a Petroliom- Chicora league. Petrolia, Chicora, Bruin, Hillairds, Ridgeville. Out here in Branchton, this little town in Branchton. They made a diamond out there. I went out there to play. That's about two miles you know.... So went out there to play for three or four years and the last year I managed the Branchton team. That year I decided, hey we gotta get some young people into this, not us old guys we are getting to god dam old for this. Now went up to Forrestville and got a guy by the name of Vic Ceranea, Cubby Ararea, Bubbles Ararea and a pitcher I had played with down in West Sunbury, Dean Lumwick. I took a fellow by the name of Dale Shafer, Lefty Hazelteen. No the only reason I call him lefty, I think his right name is Bob used to run a news-stand down there by the side of the bank. His father gave it him. And Sid Synder."

INTERVIEWERS

" Is that the same one from Berlin?"

INTERVIEWEE

" No. They interviewed him because he called me and told me. And I took these three kids, they were just kids. So I took them out there and started them to out to play. Well actually they were pretty good ball players - they were - they, were decent enough ball players. Didn't have any experience but they knew what they were doing. So this Vic Sereena, up here at Forestville. He was about 6ft 4ins tall, lanky guy, about that big around. Boy could he throw a baseball! His only problem is were the hell is it going, you know his one of those guy's, if he was batting against yeah you didn't want your

spikes dug in. You might have to duck in a hurry! He was that fast. He was probably the fastest thing around here - including the College players and anybody else."

INTERVIEWERS

" What happened to him ?"

INTERVIEWEE

" Well up in Forestville at the last year he wasn't pitching. They put him in relief. You know - to save a ball game. OK. This arm - this bone right here in his arm - he wouldn't warm up. He was bull headed as hell. You know - anything Coach told him you could forget it. This arm right here - this big bone right here came right out through his skin - the first pitch he threw. And of course they took him up to hospital and in any situation they kinda went along with it a little bit - helped him out, paid for it. So Vic spent a couple of years of and then I got him down in Branchton. He could still throw like hell- gosh could he throw! And then we went up to Parker to play one time...just a kid, seventeen years old. Never played in a league like that in his life. Was a pitcher, I thought what the hell give the kid a chance, see what he could do. We put him in to pitch, well he went six innings - pretty good. The seventh innings he started to get into trouble - they started to catch on. So there's a big dark cloud coming over - and when you look out from the batting box - my God! You can't forget this you know. The batters looking right into it. And the baseball is hard to see. So I brought Vic in - let him warm up and brought him in - pitched the last innings. The first pitch he throw - it might have been in the Allegheny river - I don't know where it went. The umpire was right behind me, I was catching - he was right behind me. and he accused me of putting it in my pocket, and I said "search me, I don't know where its at". Well, he said "I don't know either". So they went out and said to Vic "hey put your hands up, we want to search you! Did you throw that ball?". Vic said "hell yes I throw it". It could be in the Allegheny river for all I know - I don't know where the hell its at! But we played and we had a good ball counting. So after that was over the Petroleum Valley League kind of folded. So there was nothing to do - I actually quit playing baseball."

INTERVIEWERS

" What year was that?"

INTERVIEWEE

" Forty, forty nine, I don't know. Something like that. So I was looping around town and a young fellow by the name of Harris Betino, his brother got killed during World War two. He was a B17 pilot - but got killed in Texas - didn't get killed overseas - an airplane crash, OK. Having graduated from College up here and there was nothing to do, he wanted to become a pilot. Now you know where that sports shop up there - right across from Sheetz's - that's where they lived. Now Harry said to me one day, "lets start a little league" - sounded like a good idea. So the Sheetz's brothers, which I know you guy's don't know, they were strip miners and they lived up here. They thought it was a good idea - they had a couple of young boys you know. So they brought the equipment in and right behind I called it Synder's Garage - its where the tire shop is right now, OK - they grated it all out for us - made us a ball field. So in order to sell the little league to the people of Slippery Rock and the kids, I was working out at the Cooper Bessamer and the guy was the head dog of the Grove City league. I got a hold of him and said, "how about brining a couple of teams down here and playing an exhibition - so the people could see what this is all about. So they did, they brought a couple of teams down and played. Well the people went right for it. Right away - Boy this is alright. So now we didn't have any equipment so we had find a way get some equipment. B.D. Marsh up in Grove City owned a Goodyear tire store. He ended up owning the Pioneer drive in, or I forget what they call the drive in, but used to be in Grove City - outside Grove City. He owned the Pioneer, he was pretty wealthy. And he sold the Grove City all their uniforms, all their equipment, bats, balls and everything else. So Harry and I went up to see him - we need \$800 worth of equipment. He said, "hell I'll give it to you - trust you for it". So we went and got the equipment - \$800 worth. So, by little league rules, each sponsor had to donate \$250 - so that was that - buy use the uniforms, catching equipment, so on. So Sheetz's right away put \$250 in. Well Sid Synder Grand Dad he said, "hell I ain't gonna be out done,

so his \$250 from Synders Garage". You know they owned all the bus service around here then. So we had five hundred dollars right way. "

INTERVIEWERS

"Pretty expensive"

INTERVIEWEE

" Oh Yeah"

INTERVIEWERS

"This 1950, don't forget that the average wage was about six dollars."

INTERVIEWEE

"Yeah, it wasn't to much. So the veterans had a club down here just outside, and they said they want in. Good. So they gave us \$250 - we now had \$750 - so now we had to get the fourth payer. So we went to the Rotary Club - you know what there like - don't want to do nothing. So we insulted them - we had a big meeting down at the Legion Hall. Duck Sheetz's is actually the one who did it - he just got up and insulted everybody. And that's all you can say for it. He gave a speech and said "you fuckin bastards", you know. So the merchants in town and the Rotary Club went together and they gave \$250. Now we had everything paid for - had a little bit of money left over. So we started the little league. Well after it got started the first year full year - some of the people started to get really interested. Well, Wally Rose was the Coach of the College up here and he got interested. He came down, wanted to know whether he could - we said hell yes he could. Damn right - glad to have you. Now we got some of them people interested then and now you see where the little is at up there. Its working but it took a lot . Then we played, we had an independent basketball team up here - I played on it. Eddie he played on it. He was the athletic director at Butler High School - played football up here at the College. Wayne Brennon who was Superintendent of the school pavilion but now is retired. Bob Hoggs, taught school out of Moniteau he played. And we had two College guy's, I can't remember their names - and one College teacher called Bill MacKay."

INTERVIEWERS

"Oh, the MacKay Education building."

INTERVIEWEE

"Well, Bill, he was a little all American the way, when he graduated out of College. He was a good ball player, I'll tell ya, he was sharp. So they played with us. Now I suppose our big deal was, we used to go and use the gym at the College then - like I say the College isn't like it is now. They call it a University now. He used to go up and use the gym. Of course Pop Storr, Ker Thompson, them guy's knew use - we knew all the ball players. We were all friends you know. So one day the College is playing Westminster up here. Now Westminster didn't bring their freshman team - at that time freshmen could not play bar city ball. Pop called down the street to Eiseley's. He said, "can you get the gang together and come up and play the freshman team - were hurting. The place is packed". Yeah I can get them together, were all sitting in here. So we gathered up our clothes and up we went - and we beat the College freshmen by one point. One guy I'll never forget is Wile Fox. He played in on the football team - good ball player - good ball player. Well, he came down after the ball game, after Westminster, all came down to Eiseley's - they'd come down with us. Were sitting there drinking coffee and coke, having a sandwich. But it was all friends then you see - there was no - you know, there....."

INTERVIEWERS

" They were good days?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Oh, they were...you hear us old guy's talking about the old days but they were good days."

INTERVIEWERS

" That's right because you knew everyone and everyone was your friend or your neighbor".

INTERVIEWEE

"Yeah! We used to go up there you know. After that, well! Hell we used to.... the fire company down here, they had freshman initiation up here at the College, we used to take the trucks up - right where the field house is at now. We flooded a piece of ground in there and the freshmen and the sophomores would have a tug of war to it. But it was all friends, it was all good times you know. Now the University has got so big. One of the reasons a lot of us dropped out of the American Legion down here was..... we wanted them to build that building so there be a basketball court in it. Now as long as Coach Thompson was active up in the College and Pop Storr was active up in the College, we could get in up there you know. We used to go up there and we'd go down into the locker room put our tennis shoe's on, go up there and sit against the wall. Pretty soon you'd know there'd be a ball thrown in our direction and the basket down. We would get to play. They were our friends and the College guy's were our friends. So, we played, we had a good time - a good time. Every once in a while you run into some of them you know."

INTERVIEWERS

"You've had a pretty rich and varied experience, you've played and you've managed."

INTERVIEWEE

"Yeah! Yeah even with Sid Synder when he was in junior high school I used to go up there referee ball games in the high school. he was a pretty good basketball player, good shot."

INTERVIEWERS

"Did the team get any, you know, did they win any big leagues around in the area ?"

INTERVIEWEE

" No. Nobody that I know of ever went. There was a couple of guy's got in what was class D ball. Dean Sereena I was telling you about. he got into class D. He was signed up by the Cincinnati Red's up in Eire. But Dean was about twenty eight years old by then. He was a good pitcher-dam good. He played about a month up there, then he quit I asked him "What did you quit for ? he said " I'm to old

and they don't pay enough, you know, I've got a wife and two kids to support. I gotta get to work up here, I can't fool around doing this". Dick Seveena probably would have been taken by a major league ball club, if you could control him, coach him. Like I said he was as bull headed as hell. And nobody could tell him nothing, he just went out there, wound up and he throw it and he was probably the fastest thing around here- without any doubt. In fact Sid Snyder and them guys they followed us. They had a Basket ball team and a Baseball team and they wanted to play a warm-up game up here. So a bunch of us went up, hell, we hadn't played Ball in years. We went up, I got Vic to come down. I think I pitched the first couple of innings. I put Vic in, they couldn't touch him. He was to fast-wild-my God. When you was catching that guy you wanted your traction's on cos. you didn't know where it was going. Now we played Hilards out there- we had Vic pitching. It started to rain a little bit so we all got into cars. Siting in the car, Vic said, "Hey I want to throw that guy a curb ball". Everybody burst out laughing- he couldn't throw a curb ball if his life depended upon it. All he knew - he had it. He had it.

INTERVIEWERS

" That was more of a gift ?"

INTERVIEWEE

" Yeah, it was a gift. Most people don't have that speed. I never had it."

INTERVIEWERS

" Like cricket Freddy Truman was the fastest bowler."

INTERVIEWEE

"Yeah. Some guy's you know they have speed and other don't, that's all. But we played Ball, had a good time. Used to have a basket up at the back of the home - back there - oh yeah. Judge Brydon, a Judge in Butler county, Bud Vincent a chemical engineer for Amoco, they'd all come down here. They called it Boyars stadium. Nobody was interested in basketball and what we did out there was purely coincidental cos. they were just rough on us. Never forget they were down here on night and

Pop Storr was Coaching the high school. Then all of a sudden, decided, hey they had a game that night. There took of and beat it for the gym up there. So the wife and I, we went up. Walked in the door, Pop looked at me and said, "what the hell are you doing with my basketball team, cos. there all dirty, covered with ashes and everything else". I said, "well we were just warming up down there". He said, "yeah there warmed up alright". But they were good kids."

INTERVIEWERS

" Did you during those years, did you follow the professional baseball league - did you have a favorite team ?"

INTERVIEWEE

" Well, the Yankee's were of course the favorites during those years. And we went to some park games you know when they first started to get up in there, when Dick Grow and those guy's played. We went down and the only thing I've got to say about Three Rivers Stadium is how, we could go down there the year the Pirates beat the Yankee's in the world series. Went down there, don't know how many times - took my boys down, OK, wife went along to. Go down to Fort Field I could get box seat tickets, not in advance. Go down to Three Rivers and try - you can't do it. Companies had all bought them out. You sit way up and look down where the box seats are. There all empty. You can't get down there."

INTERVIEWERS

" You think as a result of that baseball has lost some of its grass roots ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Oh, I know it has. You don't have any community baseball round here anymore."

INTERVIEWERS

"So where is the nearest community team. What would you recognize as a respectable team round here ?"

INTERVIEWEE

" Oh, yes sure, we played out at Branchton Cross roads, that's were the field was at. You look up there and half of Slippery Rocks out there - you know watching."

INTERVIEWERS

"Yeah, but I mean is that team still playing now ?"

INTERVIEWEE

" No. No!"

INTERVIEWERS

" Where is the nearest now ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"That league's all gone. What happened was we all got to old and nobody came along behind us, you know. Sid Synder and his gang they tried to follow us, they had a Ball club here. Pretty good Ball club to."

INTERVIEWERS

"When you look at it, people like yourself were instrumental in starting the league's, really ?"

INTERVIEWEE

" Oh yeah sure. They have a Butler county league now - nobody round here, I don't think there ever will be."

INTERVIEWERS

" If you wanted to go and watch a match now which is the nearest place you could go and watch a decent team ?"

INTERVIEWEE

" Butler. I think they have pretty good one down in Mars and Evans City."

INTERVIEWERS

"So its the really big towns, no small towns have got one round here ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Evans City and Mars are small towns."

INTERVIEWERS

"You think its gone down hill" ?

INTERVIEWEE

"Oh yeah. All the sports for people - well sport has gone down hill period. Look at the University up here. Scholarship and all that! Now I used to go to every College Ball game there was. Wife went to. Didn't matter where they always went - we went. We went when the guy's were playing because they wanted to play, you know what I mean. Didn't get any scholarships, they had to do their studies. They had to do their work right you know. And it was fun to watch them whether they won or lost, it didn't make any difference. One of the best Ball games I ever saw was over here at Westminister. I can't remember the Coaches name, I tried to think of it a couple of times. They had a period up here were they got three or four bad Coaches. They got this guy in, he was a good football - Alan Jackson. I know you never heard of them He used to Coach Clarion, retired now. But Alan Johnson and this guy over here a doctor - can't think of his name lived at Cooper Street, Knew him well to - that's the hell of it. Anyway his first year they went over to play Westminister and they didn't have much. Best football game I ever saw they almost beat Westminister. In fact they would have if it had not been for a penalty and that was one of those questionable one's. I'll tell you, those kids played hard - them guy's -played hard - they played Ball. I was down at the service station getting gas and the Coach came in. The guy who caused the penalty was one of the guards - playing guard on defense - good ball player. Said did you say anything to him, "no sir not a word". Said "that kid was playing his heart out. That call was so rough I said that very question. The Quarter back for Westminister at that time, the Cleveland Browns was scouting him. A black guy. The kid was good - can't take that away from him - he was good. But they had him running for the side lines all the time. he wouldn't try to go up field. He was scared as hell - there wrapped him up a few times - he didn't like it. But he

was good. The next year they didn't walk over Slippery Rock anymore. Alan Jackson was an all American of Penn State. The Coach - damn can't think of his name - he played for Penn State. So now you had a offensive Coach and a defensive Coach. First State championship this College won - they won."

INTERVIEWERS

"So its all football oriented at Slippery Rock - there's no baseball."

INTERVIEWEE

"I don't like it this way. My daughter went to College down in Arkansas and she was all enthusiastic about the football program, there basketball program. Til she got out there and found what those guy's were getting. Playing football, basketball, getting cars donated you know and all this jazz. And that really takes the fun out of it. Pop Storr told me one time, along time ago, said the best football he watched, the best sports you van watch is small town, high school, whether there good or bad it makes no difference. Their playing for the fun of it. Their playing because they want to play."

INTERVIEWERS

"Its like that in England we have what you call Sunday league football league. You go to Sunday league football, everyone who plays it, they all put their hearts into it."

INTERVIEWEE

"That's right they play for the fun."

INTERVIEWERS

"Baseball today is like another sport, its to commercial."

INTERVIEWEE

"Oh yeah. Its big business now - all money. And these baseball players are getting entirely to much money."

INTERVIEWERS

"Are they as good as the guy's you played with in the thirties, forties and fifties ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"I don't think their better. They got more coaching, they got better equipment, they got you know a lot more things those guy's didn't have but those guy's could play ball. But these guy's are getting entirely to much money. Its just ruining them as far as I'm concerned."

INTERVIEWERS

"Do you miss it by the strike ? Because its usually on the T.V. ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"I don't give a damn if they never start up again. I'll tell you the truth. I love baseball, I love to watch the Pirates, I love to watch baseball. I have a big T.V."

INTERVIEWERS

"If they love baseball they would just play."

INTERVIEWEE

"That's right! What's this idea of getting four or five million Dollars a year like Barry Bonds out there, getting seven million Dollars a year. There's no ball players in the world worth that. You know it, I know, and everybody else knows it. There just not worth it."

INTERVIEWERS

"Better of charging less or giving a bit more to the fans in way of facilities."

INTERVIEWEE

"Yeah everybody knows whether there in England or Pennsylvania the United States. The management has to make money. If they can't make money your not going to have a job."

INTERVIEWERS

"Would you blame the management ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Partly. Partly. Because when these guy's were asking for these big contracts they went and give it to them. Down here in Butler.....(small talk with Mrs Boyer now took place).....up in Harrisville,

Forrsetville out there everybody had a ball club and the guy's all worked some place, come home at night change their clothes, went out and played ball."

INTERVIEWERS

"It was a good thing to do in an evening give the kids something to do."

INTERVIEWEE

"We all had fun."

INTERVIEWERS

"Do you think if there was more of these small teams there would be less juvenile crimes ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Oh yeah. Sure it would. Damn sure it would."

INTERVIEWERS

"Cos. its something for the kids to focus on."

(Small talk with Mrs Boyer at which stage of the conversion she brought in refreshments)..... Youth club, baseball teams, you know the kids can channel their energy, excess energy they've got in the summer - gives them something to do.

INTERVIEWEE

"Well that's the good thing about sports."

INTERVIEWERS

"You think America would be a nicer place if they played more baseball ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"More sports. More sports for the young guy's."

INTERVIEWERS

"Do you think there's less ethic in baseball than there was forty years ago ? Was it a more honorable game ?"

INTERVIEWEE (More small talk)

INTERVIEWERS

"Which was your favorite team in the area, was it the Pirates or was it a local team ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Well I root for the Pirates now but I'm getting, she knows (meaning his wife) disenchanted with some of them cos. I heard those guy's, when this strike started, J. Bell, the Pirate representative. His made two million dollars a year. The last time we were down in Pittsburgh at a ball game went up to the ticket window, tried to get tickets you know. You could see right through the ticket window, you could actually see the field and they were out on the field, OK. And this ticket taker said, "them guy's are all millionaires". He was absolutely right."

INTERVIEWERS

"Yeah, they pull up in the big fast cars, the Jaguars."

INTERVIEWEE

"Yeah just like those professional football players - look at the money those guy's are making."

INTERVIEWERS

"So there's definitely been a decline in the ethics of the game ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Why sure there has ! Now your playing for money, your not playing for sport or anything - your playing for money now."

INTERVIEWERS

" Do you think you get this in the national teams as well ? In our nation... there playing for how much they can get of a sponsor if the Pirates win the world series. There earnings go up. When you played it was a team game."

INTERVIEWEE

"It was a team game and a fun game!"

INTERVIEWERS

"What do you think of it now ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Its all money, its all money. It Its all business now, if you don't win your out that's all. That's all there is to it anymore. Look at the managers. Look at the Coaches. These big schools, they are fired. Managers in baseball, fired just because they didn't win. Yet there not playing the game, now they can do about it."

INTERVIEWERS

"That's right. One time you could afford to lose a season. Years ago you would lose a season and say we would do better the next season. Who was the best player ? I've heard of Babe Ruth but I don't know who he was. "

INTERVIEWEE

"Well, I don't know Lou Garret. Played for the Yankee's."

INTERVIEWERS

"What time period was that ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"I think that was in the early forties."

INTERVIEWERS

If you were asked, who would you say was the greatest player ? Most would say some-one from the thirties, forties or fifties, never any modern day players ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"No because those guy's were not making that kind of money, they played because they wanted to play. I think Joe DeMaggio.....ain't no ball player worth that kind of money. President of the United States don't get that kind of money. You know I just don't go along with this . I know those guy's

got just so many years to play football, basketball or baseball, but that's their choice. Its not my choice or any body else's. Its their choice."

INTERVIEWERS

"What do you think the game has lost and how do you foresee it in the future ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Its gonna be rough in the future."

INTERVIEWERS

"You think so ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Oh yeah, this strike and everything is gonna make it."

INTERVIEWERS

"That's sad isn't it ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Yes, its awful sad. I don't think..... I am really against the unions in these sports - I am really against them. If I sign up for your ball club - whether its cricket or what the hell - I sign up for one hundred thousand dollars for three years, that's what I should do. That's what I should do because I signed that contract. Now you got guy's down here in the Steelers, there having trouble with a couple of their players cos. they want their contracts renegotiating. They Ann's getting enough money! They signed that contract for X number of dollars, by God they oughtta live up to it. They can't blame that on my account - that's not my fault. That's them, they signed it. Ball players got agents you know taking so much of the top. Its ridiculous."

INTERVIEWERS

"Even have their own personal therapists and little things like that which cost you now. That's why they are getting so much money because of hangers on."

INTERVIEWEE

"Yeah,look what they are making on a commercial!"

INTERVIEWERS

"There's something definitely been lost in the game today ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"The games gone. The sport of the games gone! I gotta say that . Pop Storr told me that about watching Football, basketball and baseball and, in small towns, high schools and everything thing else. That time he told me I didn't really believe him. I know now from the College up here when guy's wanted to play they may not have been the best but.

INTERVIEWERS

"And that's what baseball meant to you ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Yeah, but they played and they tried - by God you can't beat that".

INTERVIEWERS

"The way I equate it, I equate it a bit like some of the English sports like cricket. They play to enjoy the game!"

INTERVIEWEE

"The same thing".

INTERVIEWERS

"It was the taking part in it!"

INTERVIEWEE

"Just like golf. I played a lot of golf. I did , don't now, but I did. And there's a guy called Paul....people down town have heard of him. Anyway I played a lot with him. Played on different courses. We played for fun, if you won you won, OK!. If you lost you lost, so what!. You play the best you can and that's it. Now I got this Slippery Rock league, its made up of college people and town people, teachers and everyone else. Now Paul called me and said, hey you oughtta start playing golf again, there is a lot of money to be made out there. I am not playing for money. I am playing for pleasure!"

INTERVIEWERS

"When a sport is played seriously it becomes it becomes restricted and not everyone can participate."

INTERVIEWEE

"That's right! Hell, if I was playing golf with you and you, shot ninety for nine holes it would not bother me one bit. What's the difference ?"

INTERVIEWER

"Yes, you play and at the end of the day you go and have a drink together or whatever."

INTERVIEWEE

"Yeah, of course."

INTERVIEWERS

"When you played after the game did you meet up with the other team ? There are some sports were teams meet up after a game and others were they do not."

INTERVIEWEE

"We used to play up the hill and there was a bar out there. The name of Jim West's - its way out in the Boom Docks. We all go out there and everybody would have a beer, talk the ball game over. No

animosity, no nothing you know. The ball game was over, sit around and have a hell of a good time. We take our wives. Some thought we hadn't have the women - some the wives there. We had a good time."

INTERVIEWERS

"There is only a couple of sports in England were they actually do that - were they have like cricket they eat afterwards, even in Rugby. In rugby in England, most of the time, they meet up afterwards. Over here I don't think the big baseball teams, you know, as soon as the games finished they don't socialize afterwards."

INTERVIEWEE

"No. No!"

INTERVIEWERS

"They always did in the minor leagues and the small leagues ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Why sure they did. They did in the warty leagues. Hell our favorite thing is we always liked to head towards Butler - they had a hot dog shop down there - we got one here now, but did not have one then. Everybody liked to go down that way. Evans city, Mars, Chicora ways come back through Butler and stop off at the hot dog store."

INTERVIEWER

"That's the thing what baseball has lost the most ? The enjoyment has gone out of the game ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Yes, its gone out now completely."

INTERVIEWER

More serious ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Its all business now".

INTERVIEWERS

"Do you think if there was more of the junior leagues, the game itself would be more richer ?".

INTERVIEWEE

"Oh yes, sure it would, sure it would. They got a little league up here now I think. But its nice to see these kids playing ball. You know, as well as they may be, most of them will never be college players. You know their not good enough. No. But their staying of the streets. They've got something to do."

INTERVIEWERS

"There's still a few of them, the only thing they've got to do is to go down to Sheetz and hang about there for a few hours. Do you think if there was more games, or sports in general there would not be as much trouble ?".

INTERVIEWEE

"There's gotta be sports. The superintendent of the high school, we started to get sports, well my daughter played basketball and soft ball. When I first got it in. He was against it. I said, no, no! A girl has to have sport to. Maybe not football or anything like that . But they should play volley ball, and if they want to play. Give them something to do."

INTERVIEWERS

"That's right, its the choice isn't it!".

INTERVIEWEE

"Yes it the choice - don't make them do it!".

INTERVIEWERS

"When I was at school if you were forced to make sports that you didn't like you hated it. The ones you liked, if you could play them, you put everything in to it."

INTERVIEWEE

"Your damn right!"

INTERVIEWERS

"What do you think, after this strike is over, baseball will come back or is it in the decline now?"

INTERVIEWEE

"I'll tell you this I won't go to Pittsburgh to see a ball game - I won't go again. My insurance man gets free tickets, says his not going down, I'll go down, see if they bring rookies in. The guy's who are trying whether they win or lose - I will go and see them. I not going to see those god damn millionaires! Just Ann's gonna do it!. That's what I feel about it - I Ann's going down."

INTERVIEWERS

"Was any of your younger family involved - you said you've got some sons and daughters. Were any of these involved in the Baseball league?"

INTERVIEWEE

"My eldest boy played little league ball. My youngest boy played little league football. My daughter played soft ball and she played basket ball. She was a pretty good ball player. Probably the best one out of the whole crowd. My youngest boy was a good Baseball player. In fact he played in the county league all star team. He was a pretty good ball player."

INTERVIEWERS

"What did he do - did he just go into industry?"

INTERVIEWEE

"No, he is working up the high school."

INTERVIEWERS

"Was any of the older family like your father involved with the game ?".

INTERVIEWEE

"No."

INTERVIEWERS

"So you were the first one in your family ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Yeah, I think I was. I had a couple of uncles who played football and stuff like that. My dad didn't play."

INTERVIEWERS

"We now need a little bit of your early history - where you were born etc. ?".

INTERVIEWEE

"July twenty, 1924."

INTERVIEWERS

"Where were you born ? Were you born in Slippery Rock ?".

INTERVIEWEE

"No. I was born in Grove City hospital - Grove City."

INTERVIEWERS

"You've lived in this area all your life ?".

INTERVIEWEE

"Oh yeah - all my life. I've lived in this house all my life, right here".

INTERVIEWERS

"Was it your huse or was it your parents first ?".

INTERVIEWEE

"First of all it was my Grand Mothers/Grand Fathers. My mother died when I was only four years old. He brought me down here - that's what they tell me. And then the way it ended up I owned two ninths of it. My dad bought the others out. So when he died it was my house. So I've lived here all my life - right here."

INTERVIEWERS

"When you broke off during the war, where were you ? In Europe ?".

INTERVIEWEE

"Yes, I was in the Five Rangers Battalion".

INTERVIEWERS

"You were in the Rangers ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Yes".

INTERVIEWERS

"Really!".

INTERVIEWEE

"Yes".

INTERVIEWERS

"And where about in Europe did you go to ?".

INTERVIEWEE

"I went to Germany, Belgium and France, Austria".

INTERVIEWERS

"Where you in the D Day landings ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"Oh yeah. I was there half an hour before the first landings. I know what that was like."

INTERVIEWERS

"Why were you there before the first landings ?".

INTERVIEWEE

"We went in half an hour before the first wave. If you seen any of that sixty minutes, Three Company, Second Battalion climbed the cliffs. Was in the fifth, our job, was to come in behind."

INTERVIEWERS

"To knock the strong points out ?".

INTERVIEWEE

"Yeah, we went in half an hour before the first wave. In fact was up on the hill were the first wave hit."

INTERVIEWERS

"My Grand Father was in D Day. He worked for a RAF Battalion - he would fir American Typhoons anti tank aircraft. He came over on the second wave. To one of the first air bases established."

INTERVIEWEE

"I was nineteen years old!".

INTERVIEWERS

"You felt as if you were really old then didn't you!".

INTERVIEWEE

"I tell you, you learned some lessons in a hurry. Not nice one's! But you learnt some in a hurry."

INTERVIEWERS

"No Baseball played during the war years ?".

INTERVIEWEE

"No. Not that I know of. I think the major league played".

INTERVIEWERS

"Once the war started everything stopped ?".

INTERVIEWEE

"Yes, everything stopped. In this area there was a fellow went to college name of Gooseman. He was telling us after the war the major leaguers - the guy's drafted out of the major league. They formed them into Baseball team. They traveled to different camps and played exhibition games to entertain the troops. Gooseman said he was Fort Meely. he said they got a camp team up. And they were gonna play these major leaguers. Like I said, this Gooseman was a good pitcher. Elony Fletcher used to play first base for the Pirates he turns up. Gooseman thought to himself I am gonna show this guy. I'm gonna put the whamie to him. He said as far as I know that ball might be in Allegheny territory. I don't know where the hell it went. He said I have never seen a Baseball hit so hard in my life. We p-played soft ball after the war was over in Europe. There was nothing for us to do. We were on our way home. So they started organizing soft ball teams, basket ball teams. We all played. There was nothing else to do. That's what we did - we played basket ball - soft ball. For all we knew that boat was headed ball across the way.

INTERVIEWERS

"That was a good time ?".

(Small talk about dog and t.v.)

"Did you go over to D Day to celebrate 50th anniversary ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"No, because you had gone over to Paris and the rooms were booked. My oldest son and daughter were trying to get me over there. But everything was taken up from Normandy - all the region."

INTERVIEWERS

"They were ?".

INTERVIEWEE

"No I didn't. I would not mind going over but I didn't want to go at celebration time. No. I would like to go over and....."

INTERVIEWERS

"Just go over and have a look yourself ?".

INTERVIEWEE

"Yeah".

INTERVIEWERS

(Small talk about British t.v. show depicting veterans returning to Normandy years later)

INTERVIEWEE

"I would not mind seeing that cemetery".

INTERVIEWERS

"The one still has though the just been laid last year. You know the grass is cut every few days. I have been to a few of them as it is part of France. I go through to go to Paris. They really still take care of the cemeteries.(Small talk about Slippery Rock and the college. Mr Boyer asks how we arrived at the college. Local problems are discussed and the recent fire at Keisters. General attention is paid to fire safety simply because Mr Boyer is a retired fire chief. After refreshments Mrs Boyer became more and more involved in the interview and frequently voiced her opinions. She talks about her involvement with the college and the need to get towns people/community more interested . Most

sports are discussed briefly, especially the spirit in which they were played under. Baseball is mentioned . The interview resumes from this point)

INTERVIEWEE

"You guy's don't know Casey. He used to be the manager and coach. He used to say they were not trying to make Casey's team. This is supposed to let the kids play. You've got fifteen guy's in your team - let em all play. Don't matter how good they all are. That's got nothing to do with it".

INTERVIEWERS

"That's right! Its got nothing to do with it. The idea is to get them into the team. To get then involved".

INTERVIEWEE

"Yeah, let them play. What they do is turn friend against friend. (short four way conversation then ensued) I tell you the last year Harrisville were involved in the little league, we took a all star team. The best players we had went to Butler to play, one of their teams. Now we didn't know to much about the rules in Butler as far as fans were concerned, Coaches were concerned and every thing else. first place you had to do, you had to let the kids coach. First and third base. Which is a good idea. Let everybody be involved. All the kids be involved . The next thing we learned in a hurry was if you if you got a kid playing, your up in them stands your screaming at em. they just say noting to you. They just walked out there (meaning the parents) and took their kids out of the Balgame. You sat up there enjoy the Ballgame. A dam hard shot. This is a kids game. You know. Lets knock this off. No fighting between the parents or the people. No. No. Let the kids play. Well it got so bad before we quit. We used to go to the little league ball games up here. We never had any problem playing, it was just something to do. The parents would not even sit with each, if the kids were on different teams."

INTERVIEWERS

(Talk about local game and how in a friendly game of volley ball the players are alternated in positions to give each player a chance of a game. At which point Mr Boyer intercedes).

INTERVIEWEE

"Yes when I was working in the little league you know. You had fifteen players on a team. And I had a kid down there, I'm telling you the truth, if I stood from here to here (approximately one yard) and throw him a baseball. It would probably hit him on the head. Just tossing it. He couldn't play baseball to save his arse. So his dad came to me one day. He wanted to get his kid involved. I let him be a Coach . Third base Coach. He was happier than hell. That kid was happier than hell, boy. "I'm involved now, I'm in this ball game". And he was a good Coach. Well a few years later, I didn't pay much attention. He was Don Murry's son. I didn't pay much attention. The high school down there had a baseball team. And I was reading the Sports page one night and just happened to look at Riddick in left field. This was the kid who could not throw a ball to. So I asked a couple of people, so down at the street and they said yeah its him. The thing is we had kids in little league, that when we first started they were good. But they never developed any further. They didn't get better. We had kids that were no good, that's a bad term. They couldn't play baseball. But they ended up being good when they got older."

INTERVIEWERS

"You didn't throw them away because they were no good ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"No. We didn't throw em away. We kept em. Let em play. Now we had a Coach down there supposedly, I don't know what the hell he was. Chambers or something lived out there in the corn room, out there in the ridge. Supposed to have been a major leaguer at one time. I don't remember him. I'd never heard of him. But he was playing Casey Stinggal. And he never substituted anybody.

He wanted to win regardless. And he didn't care how you played the game. That's not what little league is all about and sports are about. Well they had a little pitcher that Royster kid. Remember you said they ruined his arm. Oh, yeah they ruined him. They pitched him every game. Oh they ruined him. he was eleven or twelve years old."

INTERVIEWERS

"Because he was the best one of the time, just didn't rest him ?"

INTERVIEWEE

"He was the best one so he played. And after in little league he just could not pitch any more. (More small talk. Mr Boyer then reminisces about the old days)...I liked it back in the old days when you didn't get no scholarships. If you want to play football, you went out for football. If you wanted to play soccer, you went out for soccer. If you wanted to play basketball you went out for basketball."

INTERVIEWERS

"But you still had all your studies to do."

INTERVIEWEE

"And you played because you wanted to play. And the Coaches tried to do the best they could with you. If you won fine, if you lost so what. But they had some good ball clubs up there in those days. They had as good a soccer team as you would find one."

INTERVIEWERS

"They haven't got a good team up there now."

INTERVIEWEE

"They played Pitt up there. Pitt was big time you know. Big time. I remember Archie Dodds he was Coach of the soccer team and he said, "the only thing I know is that we were playing for the damn uniforms". Because they had fancy uniforms. (Laughter). But those guy's were playing because they wanted to, no scholarships. No one was given them any books or free broad or any of this jive. No,

you've got Indiania and Edinboro up there for example. They give out scholarships all over the place. Negative football players. This Coach at Indiania. He was the Coach at West Virangia. And you otta know he didn't take that job down there because of anything else but that he would get the scholarships down there. Now that's not right. Its not right. There's a lot of good high school athletics around the country but even high schools like Butler, Sceneca Valley, New Castle, North Hills. You look at the papers. Those high schools are out to win. They don't give a damn, there out to win. That's sportsmanship's gone out of it."

INTERVIEWERS

"What annoys me is that in some of the sports now they fight on the pitch such as football, ice hockey and that. That is not a professional sport." (Small talk of English game, t.v. and sports in general.)

INTERVIEWEE

"Its not like it used to be, even the NCCA basketball. Basketball, I don't if you would call it a gentlemen's sport or not but you played basketball and you played for the fun of it. You did the best you could, if you won fine, if you lost. You lost, that's all. Not today boy. You got to win. You got to win. (Small talk on the merits of Harlem Globe Trotters and Olympic team of Magic Johnston). What you have to remember is that I went to my high schools fiftieth reunion two or three years ago. And in the book they had a picture of our high school basketball team. We didn't have a guy six feet tall. We finished up fourteen and two. There was no one six feet tall. Now you have to be seven feet tall or you can't even play."

INTERVIEWERS

"Not a question of whether you can play, only how tall you are." (More talk of Harlem Globe Trotters. Talk of local team and reaching finals at Kansas City. Also about Magic Johnson and Michael Jordan as well as players wages and earnings.)

At which point the tape and interview ends.