

Project: "Carbondale Remembered"

Date: Friday, November 12, 2004

Time: 9:15 to 11:15 CST

Place: John Randall Parrish's Office at 1400 W. Main

Tape number: Side: A & B

Interviewee: John Randall Parrish

Interviewer: Dede Lingle Ittner

TAPE 1, SIDE A:

Dede Ittner: Give us your full name and where you were born.

John Parrish: John Randall Parrish. I was born January 16, 1920, in Vergennes

Township. Just south of Vergennes, on Route 13 when it was a mud road.

(Dr.) House came out. He was late and there was a midwife. They had mid-wives in those days. He got there in a horse and buggy. In January, of course, it was muddy and all like that.

DI: That is so interesting. I think that it would be nice if you included your parents' names at this point.

JP: My mother's name was Hallie Elizabeth Parrish. Her maiden name was Kimmel. She was raised just west of DeSoto. My dad's name was John Russell Parrish. He was born in Vergennes. His great-great grandfather came from North Carolina. When he was 18, his father gave him \$100 and a horse. He rode the horse from North Carolina to Vergennes, Illinois. There is a Parrish cemetery up there. He got the big farm from the government in those days.

DI: That's right that would have been done back then. That is wonderful. How about your siblings? (Your) brothers and sisters?

John Parrish, an interview conducted by Dede Lingle Ittner, 12 November 2004. Transcript, Carbondale, Illinois Preservation Commission's oral history project, Special Collections Research Center, Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

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JP: I have one sister, Lucy Parrish, who was a school teacher in Carbondale, in the high school, for many years. Then she taught in Granite City before her retirement. She played the organ for the First Methodist Church, in those days.

DI: When were “those days?”

JP: That was in the 1940-50’s. She was 3 ½ years older than I am. I am now 84. I’ll be 85 in January 16 (2005).

DI: No brothers?

JP: No brothers.

DI: I’ll tell you what lets do next. Let us just stop for a minute and then you come back with the story-I think it was the 1925 event- that you want to tell us about. It (the story) was part and parcel of how you ended up here in Carbondale.

-Pause-

DI: John’s going to share with us how the family happened to come to Carbondale that goes back to 1925.

JP: It was 1925. There was a tornado in DeSoto. At that time we were living in DeSoto, just behind the post office- there on the corner. They built the house back on the same foundation after the tornado). There was a concrete porch. They bolted (on) the concrete porches. That day that the tornado hit, I remember I was 5 years old. Things like that stay, of course- in your mind no matter what age what age you were. My father and I- my father stayed at home that day- he was operating the coal mines just north of DeSoto at that time. He was going to go to Murphysboro. My mother was baking in a coal stove that morning. He saw the clouds coming up. He thought, “Well, I better stay home and go after the storm.” In those days, you went out on the back porch, every time it stormed and you reached up and pulled the electricity off. You never left the electricity on because it didn’t have a ground wire in those days. If the lightning struck a wire it came in and burned your house down. We went out on the back porch and we were going to do that. I remember going out with him. He says,

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“Oh! That’s a tornado!” It sounded just like a freight train. I can remember that as if it was yesterday. Then we ran back in the house and started down to the basement- we had a full basement. It hit before we got to the basement. My dad fell over my mom and me. He was a tall man and my mother was very short of course I was only five. He fell over the both of us. He had ribs broken mostly was what he had. It blew the house over to the- well it came out of the southwest- it blew the house over toward the east, the northeast. With the fire in the stove it caught everything on fire, and burnt up everything we had. I do have a rocking chair and my sister’s doll buggy- I still have them. They (the toys) were up on Main Street, which was just a block away. The rest of it... we didn’t have anything. That’s when we came to Carbondale. My dad built a house there at 503 West Freeman Street. My dad built that house. That was the days when they had an old scoop shovel and one horse. He dug it himself. My grandfather lived out on a farm right near Murphysboro, out next to the Jackson County Golf Course. He owned a farm there. My dad got one of his horses and a little scoop. One person- that’s the way he dug the basement of our house. We moved to Carbondale in 1925. I was 5 years old.

DI: That was your first home in Carbondale?

JP: That was my first home.

DI: What school did you go to?

JP: I went to Brush School

DI: It was all ready already there?

JP: (Yes). My sister was always there- she was 4 years older me- so when I graduated from the eighth grade, she graduated from high school. When I graduated from high school, she graduated from SIU. In those days it was (Southern Illinois) Normal University, a teachers college. ‘Course we never had anything. I can remember my first Christmas in Carbondale. My dad, he had the house pretty well finished, but we didn’t have any furniture. Somebody had given

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us an old couch that made into a bed. We put that in the living room and my mother and dad slept on it. In those days they had an old day bed- they called them day beds. We put that in the dining area and my sister and I slept on it. The first Christmas (in Carbondale) I can remember my dad had saved all the pieces of lumber when he built the house and we burnt it in the fireplace. On Christmas Eve we sat there. In those days the nails came in a wooden keg. He had a couple wooden kegs. He saved everything like that. It had a 2 x 6 or a 2 x 8 across it. The four of us sat there on the edge of the fire on Christmas Eve. No presents, no nothing. We didn't have anything. We sat there- well we just sat there and talked. In those days, families did a lot of talking together. We always ate together. So we sat there. The next morning my Grandpa Parrish, that's him right over there- that's a picture of him there on the wall. He and grandma came in a horse and buggy. He lived on a farm and he went out into the woods and got a Christmas tree. He brought a Christmas tree in. They had gone and got a present, one for me and one for my sister. That's what I had that Christmas.

DI: Do you remember what the present was?

JP: No, I don't. In those days, in the wintertime we had a- oranges always came in crates in those days. We had a crate outside the kitchen window; we didn't even have an icebox. We had iceboxes, but you didn't have (electric) refrigerators. In the winter time, we put this crate outside the window and we stuck our milk, butter, and all that stuff out in this box in the window. In those days in the downtown area, the stores stayed open (late). All the cars park at a 45 degree angle. People would take their cars down on Friday night or Saturday night and park all up and down the street. Now a lot of times the man would take it down (early) and park it then the whole family would walk down and get in it and sit. People would walk up and down the streets and talk to each person in their- sitting in their cars. Everybody visited. The stores all stayed open until 9 o'clock.

DI: This was in the 20's?

JP: This was in the 20's- yes. Also the 30's, the 20's and 30's...

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DI: Did you get to go downtown at other times when you were a little guy?

JP: Well I'll tell you what- I sold,- when I was nine years old, approximately eight or nine years old- I sold Liberty Magazines and Saturday Evening Post, up and down Illinois Avenue. In those days the (State) highway department, the engineering department was up over the third story of the Old National Bank there on the corner of Washington and Main Street. (Demolished in 2006). If I'd get over there early enough, before they went to work- they worked on Saturdays even-and we'd always get our magazines on Friday afternoon- if I got over there early enough- if some of the other boys didn't beat me to it- why I could just about sell all of my magazines out to the highway engineers.

DI: Where did you pick up your magazines?

JP: I can't remember that.

DI: I just wondered. The Illinois Central (trains) made such an important role.

JP: They came in on the train, I'm sure.

DI: Now for those children and other people, who don't remember, The Saturday Evening Post was actually a magazine, wasn't it?

JP: The Saturday Evening Post and Liberty were both magazines.

DI: I think you mentioned to me that that you have the bag.

JP: I still have the bags that I sold the magazines in. My mother later (used it for clothespins). In those day my mother of course didn't have a dryer, just had washers. In fact, she had a washboard when we moved to Carbondale. We didn't have a washing machine. She had a washboard and tub. She would scrub on the washboard our clothes and then she would hang them out on the line. Really in those days and if you hang them out on the line today, they are so fresh.

DI: They were fresh then, weren't they?

JP: Oh, they were fresh then, wasn't so much in the air today and I guess it wouldn't be that way (now). Back in those days, I mean they just smelled great. My mother used the bag for many years, for clothes pins, to put her clothes pins in. In fact, I

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have some of the clothes pins that she used; they're still in the bag. In those days when I got a little older, I had a dog named Cal. My grandfather (before) he passed away, he had trained him. When my grandfather died my grandmother gave him to me. His name was actually Calvin Coolidge.

DI: I wondered if he was named after the President.

JP: He was named after the president and we called him Cal. He was a little fox terrier. He did all kinds of tricks. I taught him to go up a ladder- up onto the garage and around steps too, it wasn't easy. I set him up there, about halfway up and he would just take off and go right on up and get on the roof. Then I would go get him. I used to have shows with him. I would charge the neighborhood kids a penny. They would come over and I would put a little show on for them. They wanted to see him perform.

DI: These are wonderful (memories). Kids now-days don't even know what we did. What other things did you do as a kid?

JP: Well, in those days of course we didn't have toys and stuff in the stores. I used to make (toys) out of wood, I'd carve a gun. In those days there were inner tubes that went in cars, in the tires. We would cut those inner tubes just maybe ½ an inch, to make rubber bands- just like rubber bands only bigger. Then we'd put a clothes pin on one end of the barrel. I made rifles and I made handguns. We put there- in those days- they came out with a spring loaded clothed pin-you put that on the end and you would press that and it would release it. That's the only toy guns we had.

DI: Scooters, wagons, bicycles?

JP: Scooter. I made scooters. I made a wooden scooter. You take a board and a pair of skates- in those days they had (roller) skates. The skates would turn, especially the front one would always- you could turn it slightly. You could take the skates apart and you put the front part of the skate on the front of it (the

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scooter) and you put the other part in the back. You made a scooter. Put a little piece of wood (up and down) and across for the handle.

DI: Now I see the kids on skateboards. Where did you use the scooter, because I don't think the sidewalks were concrete at that time, were they?

JP: No, not all of them. The streets were all brick. There are a lot of brick streets around Carbondale. I can't see why they don't make more brick streets because they last many, many years. The contractors just don't want to make them, or (be) talked into it because they have so much work.

DI: The first sidewalk was kind of rough?

JP: Yes.

DT: Wagons, bicycles, tricycles, did you ride bikes?

JP: For many years we didn't have bikes. I had my first bike- I saved my money when I sold magazines- and then another thing that I did when I was 9 or ten years old, I sold ice cream bars. They called them "novelties" in those days. I had a little box, I had to put ice in it and I sold them up and down Illinois Avenue.

DI: You were an industrious young man. It carried on into your adulthood. Do you credit anybody for getting you started on that?

JP: Well, my cousins and Uncle Arthur. Gordon Parrish and Bill Parrish, Kenneth Parrish, they were all cousins and they owned the dairy. Gordon told me one day, why don't you sell ice cream bars up the down the street. So I did, and when I was in high school, I worked at the dairy in the summer time. In those days not many kids worked because there wasn't much to do. I worked when I was a freshman through junior, summers. I made ice cream by hand. In those days you made ice cream bars. You would take a big- they had a mold for them- a bar of it. Then we would cut them and stick sticks in them. We would take each one

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of them and stick them in the chocolate. I worked there from noon to midnight for a \$1.

DI: That dairy kept going for a good many years. That was what people really needed.

JP: It kind of made me sad the other day, they tore it down. (The dairy on East Walnut was demolished in 2006). There's a brick right there out of it. The mayor gave

me. I went up there and he said how would you like that. It was such a mess over there. They had all that junk and stuff over there. I complained about it.

DI: We (Carbondale Preservation Commission) tried to save it and we couldn't.

JP: That brick building should have been saved, the way I look at it.

DI: The (original) one, yes right. I wish we could have.

JP: They could have. The other one was built on. When I worked there in the 30's, I guess I started working there in 1934. The dairy was in half of it, and the next summer they made it the whole building. There was a machine shop in the west end of the building. The dairy was in the east end.

DI: Do you know anything about the yellow tiles that were facing that one area, the one portion of the (west end) of the building? I guess they were called dairy tiles, the cream colored tiles. I haven't been able to find anything about it.

JP: The tiles, of course, were the around the walls because it had to be clean. I worked there before the pasteurized milk. In fact I was working there when they started pasteurizing milk. They got these big (pans) and you put it up to a certain temperature. The farmers would come in on that east end and bring their milk in every morning. In those days, I worked on a farm so I would go out and stay with my Grandma Parrish, which lived west of the Jackson Country Club.

Where the Parrish (subdivision is) that house, Uncle Homer lived in. That was my uncle's. He lived in there and he farmed that part of it. My grandfather owned all the way down to Wood Road. Uncle Hugh lived down there, Uncle Hugh farmed down there. Where the lake is now, near that subdivision, I used to camp there

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when I was a kid. We would go out there and in those days that was quite a ways from home.

DI: That would be quite a way from home; the folks didn't just run you out of there.

JP: We walked out there. I camped down where the bottom of where the lake is now.

DI: Did they have cows to provide milk?

JP: Yes, they had cows. He would bring me into the dairy, when I would go out there I would stay with my grandma, but when he would come in on Monday morning, I would meet him down at the dairy. I would ride out there with him. Then I worked out and I pitched hay that was when it was loose hay. I would milk cows.

DI: That's terrific. I'm glad we included that in this. My memories of milk deliveries from Parrish were on cold mornings when the cream was at the top and everything sort of came out of the bottle. If mother didn't get there fast enough, they froze.

JP: Well you know, I mentioned about the orange crates in the windows of the kitchen. In those days they didn't pasteurize. If you had whole milk, they had separators in those days. The cream would go this way and all. Most the time it was whole milk when it was in the dairy. They would freeze outside the window. The cork would come up to about an inch above the milk bottle. You could either stir it back up again, or you could use as cream for your coffee. In those days of course, whip cream was whipped cream. Wasn't just artificial like- it is today.

DI: Mom actually used it for cooking. It was a bonus when it was on top.

JP: My mother did, too. When we had whipped cream for pumpkin pie, it was pure whipped cream. You could buy cream if you wanted too, but most of the time she would save what was on the top.

DI: That was a wonderful detour. We have got you now through high school. But you said you went to SINU?

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JP: Not for too long. I want to jump back to another incident that happened to me that might be interesting. When I was going to school, my sister was there at the same time. We were playing; two of us were playing in the school yard at recess. I was running a race with another boy on the school ground, and a boy was riding a bicycle. I ran into the bicycle and cut my head real bad over my left eye. The blood just poured out. In those days of course, they sent you home. They didn't have a nurse. They went and got my sister. We lived on West Freeman Street. That was several blocks south of our school there. They sent me home- walking! My sister walked me home. In those days 1 out of 50 people had a car. The doctor's office in those days was up above where Mary Lou's is now. Her place was a huge drug store. (Hewitt's). The doctor was up there. Dr. Beadle, he had a dentist office up there. It was over the five-and-ten-cent store which was next to where Hewitt's Drug Store was. My mother couldn't drive, but we had an old car in the garage. My dad was working. There wasn't any way to get me to the doctor; however, she ran over to the neighbors- when my sister and I got home- she ran over to the neighbor that could drive and said, "Come take me back downtown." The Brush School and where the doctor was within a block of each other- just a block or two away. They took me up above the Hewitt's drug store, which is Mary Lou's now. He wasn't in. I sat up there for over an hour. I can remember I had a rag- trying to stop the blood. He finally came in. When I was fifteen years old Dr. Crane took my tonsils out up above there. I sat in the chair- in those days they had what was like a dentist chair in every doctor's office. My tonsils were infected. He finally decided to just take them out. He was trying to get me well and he couldn't, so he just took them out. He had a little pan he put in under my mouth and cut the tonsil and I spit it out and then he did the other one and I spit it out. Then he took iodine- iodine is 90% alcohol- and swabbed my throat. That was the best medicine. It killed the germs. He sent me home. In those days, if you had one milkshake or two a year you were lucky. If you had enough money you

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might have more. He told my dad, “Now you feed this boy milkshakes for the next two days!” I just loved milkshakes. It was worth going to get my tonsils taken out, just so I could have milkshakes. I got up and went home, walked downstairs and went home. The next day I went back to school- the next morning.

DI: While we’re talking about high school, I think it would be fun if you would mention any teachers you particularly liked or didn’t like, and any classes you particularly liked. I think people are interested in the high school teachers that were there back then.

JP: I think the teachers back then were very helpful and I don’t know if I ever really had favorite teachers. I can remember a couple that I didn’t care for. There’s only one that stands out in my whole school that I really, Earl Hanson was a young man that was there. Nice looking. Well, Earl lived here in town and worked at SIU for the last part of his life.

DI: What did he teach?

JP: I’m pretty sure it was math.

DI: What did you like, class-wise? Did you have any favorite classes?

JP: Well, no, not necessarily.

DI: I’m curious whether or not they had (school team) sports back then.

JP: Oh yes.

DI: That was something that you liked to do?

JP: Yes, everybody in those days, in fact all the kids, went to the football games.

The teachers back in those days they were all into all the games, you didn’t have to pay them to be there, like they do today. The teachers all volunteered, that was the basis they were hired on, that’s what it was. The teachers would all take tickets. They had football games. See, I graduated in 1938 and the four years that I was in high school we had the best football team I guess that ever was.

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DI: They probably are still telling those stories. Where did you play, where was the field? Was it right behind the high school?

JP: Yes, right behind the high school. Back there where they built that addition on, it was right there.

DI: For the sake of this tape- CCHS is on the corner of N. Springer and High St. It is now used for Alternative Education and the Boys and Girls Club. The

new Carbondale Community High School is on the corner of Giant City Road and East Walnut. We need to explain that (because fifty years from now no one will remember the old and new high school locales.)

JP: The years that I was there, I don't remember what year it was- when I went to school- the gym was inside of a building and it had a stage. They played basketball there. You would sit in the auditorium.

DI: At that time, when CCHS was on Springer, it was a relatively new building. It wasn't real old was it?

JP: Oh no, they built it the year that I was a junior- that's when they built the gym on the north end of the building. They had manual training there. Manual training I really liked, we made things. I (made) a wooden waste can and an end table. I still have them at the house. I have several things that I made.

DI: Later we called it Industrial Arts and I don't know what they call it now. (Building Trades)

JP: When I got out of high school- in those days the college (S.I.N.U.) was a teachers' college. Where we were raised, we had three bedrooms in the house that my dad built. We didn't have enough money live on. That was back in the depression. The girls would come down to the school here and they would get a room. We rented all three bedrooms in our house when I was growing up. I mentioned that we had a daybed and my folks slept on the couch, that's what we did. We rented- two girls to each bedroom. We had six girls living there. They also had the right to cook in the kitchen. Most of the girls were the Whiskey girls

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(sisters) from DeSoto who lived on a farm. They came down here. They were some of the people- that's what my mother got started. Mabel was one of them and Genevieve was another. Genevieve, I don't know whether she's still living or not. She was living in Murphysboro.

DI: Well, you had a house full! That was before there were many dormitories?

JP: No (not many) dormitories then. Everybody stayed in a house. Many of those houses were down (Normal Avenue) from the Old Main entrance. There were big two-story houses (out) there. My dad was Chief of Police here back when I was growing up. That was when (in 1928) Charles and Luella Hundley, a (prominent) couple got killed (murdered). The house that they lived in was on W. Main. It is still called Hundley House. That was when my dad was Chief of Police. The (Hundley's) son lived in a big two story house right behind them. (It was thought he killed his parents).

DI: I'm going to put that down in my notes because a lot of people have mentioned that. That's kind of a (unsolved mystery) "A Carbondale Story".

JP: I have the shells, the spent shells at home. I have a little cabinet that (was in Dad's office) and a police hat and a billy club. In those days there were a lot of people that carried straight razors. I have about five or six straight razors that my dad had taken from people.

DI: They used them as weapons?

JP: Yes, they used them as weapons.

DI: I had never seen one, but they (would sure) make a dandy weapon.

JP: The spent shells were in that case there.

DI: Do you want to tell me a little bit about attending college? (SIU)

JP: Well, the whole thing is that I thought I would go to school. So I went to school for two terms. I guess I decided that I was smarter than the professors. But in those days, you didn't have to have a college degree to have a job. There was a café (Carter's) right there on the corner. I spent more time in there than at school. I

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got a job after two terms as a parts manager and shop foreman for Chrysler garage, Lee Chamness. It was down there on South Illinois Avenue, about where the depot is. I worked for Eason Motor Company first. When Lee went in business, I moved down there with him. If you look on that picture over there you can see the building. That's where I worked in 1938. Another thing in those days, when I

worked there in 1939, the 1940 Plymouths came out. You see all these cars today- you see all the different colors on them- they were all black back then.

DI: Henry Ford said one color- black. All (cars were) black for many years...

JP: In 1939, when the cars came out, they had beige. That was the first time in 1939. I bought a four-door Plymouth. All of them had running boards up until 1940.

D.I.: That was your first car?

JP: Yes. Running boards and no running boards- you could buy them either way. I ordered a beige car with no running boards. I had the best looking car in Carbondale. Everybody had running boards, and here I was running down the street with no running boards and it was beige. In those days when you ordered the car, if you wanted a heater or a radio, the factory didn't put them in. When they got to the garage we had to put them in. It was extra. A lot of people, even though it was available, didn't have the money to get it. I paid \$895 for a four-door Plymouth with a radio and a heater.

DI: That was one of the last pre-war cars, because they quit making them.

JP: Yes, it was the last one. In those days another thing that they did, the insurance company if you totaled the car out. They would not give you the money, they would go out and find you a car with about the same mileage and everything on it and give you the car. My dad wrecked a car in a wind storm down on Route 3, turned over, and he broke his back. He was paralyzed from the waist down. They ended up buying me this car. I had 124,000 miles on it. They

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asked me how many miles it had on it and I said, “Well, I don’t know you’ll have to look on the speedometer.” They looked on there so they found a car with 24,000 miles on it. A lady had it, a school teacher.

-Pause-

DI: We were just discussing a car his dad got, so tell us, John, about the car.

J.P.: Well, it was my car, I bought it. When I went to WWII, my dad was driving it too. We still didn’t have much money in those days. Everybody had to work. My dad was offered- while I was in the service- \$1,500 for it. That was in the 40’s when they didn’t make cars anymore.

TAPE 1 SIDE B

DI: John is going to give us a quick tour through his tour of duty in WWII and then we’re going to discuss downtown Carbondale.

JP: I went to work at the Ordinance Plant for a short time. They were building the Ordinance Plant out at Crab Orchard Lake. I worked out there for awhile. Then I decided to just join the service. I helped build that place out there. Course, they were just starting to make bombs when I left out there. I went in the service, they sent me to Chicago and I enlisted. Then I went to Camp Crowder, Missouri. From there I went out to Sacramento, CA. I was out there for some time. They were going to send us to South Pacific. They put us all in one big barracks- all that was going to get on the (same) boat. Each day they would call so many names out, then would put them in trucks, take them to San Francisco, and put them on a boat. There were about 15 of us that left. They were taking about that many at a time. When they came in and called all our names, they said. “Ok, the boat’s full so go back to your barracks.” So I never did go over seas. However, I decided that I wanted to be a pilot, and I signed up for that. I went to college a little bit more. Then I went to Texas and I started the training down there. Germany war

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was over and I had been in long enough that I had enough points to get out. I asked to get out in 1946. I was in the service from 1942-1946.

DI: Did you actually get some flying time in?

JP: No!

DI: Did you ever follow it up?

JP: Well yes, but I stopped that, too. I'll tell you what happened. I kick myself a dozens times since then. I came home from the service, we had one year for

unemployment. We could draw for one year. So I thought I'll just not do anything for awhile. I wasn't home two days and the Sheriff came over, and wanted me to be Deputy Sheriff. Tanner Hanson wanted me to be a Deputy Sheriff. He was going to quit; he only had nine months to go. I said no I'm not going to do anything right now. He said I'll give you a week. I'll come back on Friday. He came back over and talked to me. I still said no I don't want to. He kept going on and so I said ok I will. So I was Deputy Sheriff for nine months. Then they needed a state policeman. In those days it was politics and I was on the right side. I stayed on the state police force for seven and a half years. In the meantime, Adlai Stevenson got in. He made us civil service, I was one of them that stayed on. Because what they did was take half the democrats and half the republicans, made them half and half to start off with. Some of them got laid off, but I stayed on. Then I hauled Adlai Stevenson around. He would come down here that was when the University was building a lot of buildings around here. I would meet him at the airport. He made a little speech, when they opened all the new buildings he would come down.

DI: Were you with him the night that he opened the new University School?

JP: Yes.

DI: I thought you were. I was one of the ushers. I didn't know who (the Governor) was but I recognized you. My family knew you. It wasn't until years later that I was talking about that experience to somebody, and they said well you know who

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that was that came that night. I must have been a seventh grader. They said the man that you took down there with the state policeman was the Governor. Then it was like a big deal.

JP: Adlai never cared about seeing the buildings. He always had another guy with him. Those people would go all through the building and analyze it. He would come back and get in the car. Adlai and I would sit and talk until the guy went

through and the other guy would come out. Then I would take them back to the airport.

DI: Well that night he came in the front door, walked down to the gymnasium, gave his talk, and then walked back out.

JP: Got in my car and sat.

DI: Well, I'm glad we shared that. [Laughter] What did you do after the state police?

JP: Well, I was there seven and a half years. I lacked six months from getting enough time to retire. I had the A&W Drive-in out here. I bought it. I took a leave of absence and decided not to go back to work.

DI: Would you like to walk me down the Illinois Avenue, or would you rather first tell me about the Sizemore killing?

JP: Lon Sizemore was a night policeman, he worked at night. Sometimes he worked by himself and sometimes he had a partner, Catos Adams. Catos was with him that night and it was about two o'clock in the morning. Two o'clock in the morning in Carbondale everything was pretty well quiet. Adams went home; Lon dropped him off at home. Sizemore got this call over in the northeast part of Carbondale. They were playing cards and they got in a big fight over there. He went in and one of the guys sitting at the table had a gun. He shot and killed Lon Sizemore. They knew who (the shooter) it was of course. They took off chasing him back of Harry Graters, behind Spires Grocery Store.

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DI: That would be the corner of East Walnut and South Washington.

JP: There was a cornfield there. He got in that cornfield and they ran him down through there and they shot and killed him right there.

DI: His grandson is on the force now. Nice, nice young man.

JP: Lon Sizemore was one of the nicest people.

DI: Is he the only officer we've had killed in the town's history? Not a bad record.

JP: That record... a lot of people didn't realize that Lon had been killed. The newspaper ran an article a couple of years ago. But I knew all about it.

D.I.: We did a re-enactment out at Woodlawn Cemetery. Helen Deniston knew Lon's grandson (and he) came- it was the year before last. He's researched it.

JP: I could have told him a little bit about it. They said that Lon Sizemore was the only policeman in those days that worked by himself at night. But there was also Catos Adams (some nights).

JP: Let's go back to the corner of W. Oak Street and N. Illinois Avenue. There was Len Cully Gas (Standard Oil) Station. Right across the street was Vogler Motor Company-The Ford Garage-and it's still there, they still do some repair work there. You came across the street there and there was. Max's DX Service Station over there on the corner. This is back in the 30s and 40s. Max's DX Service Station later moved up on the corner of University Avenue and West Main Street, there on the corner up to the Methodist Church. He built a station there. On down there was a (auto) parts store; it was out of Marion. This is all on the west side of the street. Then there was the Franklin Hotel. (NW Corner of W. Jackson and N. Illinois) That was where the inter-urban from Murphysboro to Carbondale ran back and forth. That was where it stopped- right there in front of the Franklin Hotel. You went down and got on it there and then you went through to Murphysboro, just north of the golf course, the Jackson Country Club Golf Course. They crossed that road there on Country Club Road and Lake Road.

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They had a station there- a little building there- that's where it stopped. Then it went to Murphysboro. Then you come on across it on the east side (of Illinois) there was Winters Clothing Store. A guy named Winters owned a clothing store there on the corner, he also was mayor at one time. It seems like back in those days every time somebody was mayor, they lost all their business. Winters went broke there after he was mayor. A building that burnt it was Rechter's) Clothing Store at the time. We go back down on the east side, south of E. Jackson in

between Oak and Jackson Street (on the east side) was (Peskeys) a barbeque place. There was a gas station there. Nyle Huffman, the funeral director owned that gas station. He owned that back in those days. Hill's Produce was there. They sold produce to all the grocery stores. That was there. Up there where the Winters store was, there was a clothing store right there next to the railroad track on W. Jackson Street. The guy that owned it was out of Herrin.

DI: Was it (J.V.) Walker?

JP: Yes it was (J.V.) Walkers. He had one in Herrin and one in Carbondale.

DI: Now the block I don't know very much about is from the hotel down to the bank. We're on the west side of Jackson and North Illinois Street.

JP: It's on the south side of Jackson and the west side of (Illinois) because on the other side was the Train Office where trains come and unload. There was a furniture store and it was a chain. I can't remember the name of the people that owned it. Then the next one was Kaiser's Grocery Store. In those days they had real grocery stores all over Carbondale. Then the next was Renfro's Furniture Store. Then Ross's- no, it wasn't Ross. Take that away. They had a son and he took it over when they passed away. (Possibly, Roscoe Schulte)

OBVIOUS CONFUSION IN THIS PART

Then on this side of the alley there was a Renfro's Bakery, they had a bakery on the south side of the alley there. I don't remember the father's name, but the son took it over. Renfro was president of the First National Bank, it was his dad.

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(Then it was Carbondale Savings and Loan). Later on the bakery moved across the alley behind the Schulte's place. Eva Taggert had a women's clothing store there. It was Taggert's. Then the next one was Zwicks. Harry Heart managed it, it was a women's store. Dave Entsminger owned Entsminger's. It was a sort of bar and the kids went in there and danced to the jukebox. That was in the days if you had enough money and you was tall enough to put it on the bar (counter) you could get yourself a drink.

DI: What did you kids call that when you "hung out"?

JP: "Jelly". They had booths, then they had this canopy that hung over and it was dark back there, and we'd go in there and dance to the jukebox. They had pinball machines back in those days. I never will forget one time I went in there. My mother sent me downtown to buy a loaf of bread. I had about 40 cents and the pinball machines paid off in money in those days; if you hit 5 you got 5 nickels out. I ended up putting all the money in there and I was standing there thinking- now what am I going to do. Dave was a real nice guy- Dave Entsminger- he knew I was playing on that. He come over there and asked what was the matter. I told him and he said (to wait) just a minute. He goes up and gets the money and gives it back to me. He said when you get some money you can pay me. I took off out of there. I never did do that again. [Laughter] The next one was Eb Etherton ran the bank. Bill Etherton (ran it) later on in life. He was the son, he was my age. Then we're up to Main Street now.

DI: Why don't you tell us about the stop light?

JJ: On the corner in those days, they had a stop light that said STOP and GO. It didn't have any yellow, just red and green. My dad was Chief of Police back in those days; he kept the stop light going. It was just a single box about a foot square, all it had in it was a round belt on it and it had a clock on it. All you had to do was set it and it would work. I don't know why they have all this fancy stuff on them today. [Laughter] It takes a wizard to adjust them and all. Every once in awhile the belt would break and they would call him and say the stop light is not

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working. It would stop either on green or red. One time I went down there with him and the belt was broke, he couldn't make it tight enough, he couldn't adjust it. So- he said he had to run over to City Hall and I'll get a belt, you just change it, I was just a little kid. So I watched the cars and just before they would get there I would put it on STOP. [Laughter] I had a lot of fun doing that. Next one was Hub Cafe.

This was in the early 30's. Then there was a loan company back behind the Hub Café- that building is empty right now. Upstairs, up over the Hub Café, was a little barbershop. Oh, by the way, I have to cut back. This is something people don't realize. Where the law firm is (NW corner of W. Main and N. Illinois was Carbondale National Bank. In the back part of that, downstairs, Was a barber shop. Hedgepath was a barber. There were three or four of them in there. That's where I got my hair cut when my mother quit cutting my hair. Now, Nick Masters- there was a bar down there below his café. The Ratskeller was down below the café. You would go in the restaurant and go down to the bar or you could go in from the outside.

DI: That's something new, thank you for that.

JP: There's a barber shop above it. Then the next one was the Cline-Vick Drugstore. Now, upstairs, starting at the Cline-Vick Drugstore all the way over the Hub Café and that loan company was living quarters. People would live there, they had apartments there. I always remembered I had a friend that lived there. I would after school go down and go up in his apartment, I thought, oh wouldn't this be great to live downtown. They still have some apartments there.

DI: What's in the next building?

JP: The next building was the James Café. That was the fellow that sold the café out and he donated all the money to a church north of town. He bought a truck and he put loud speakers on it and he went all over southern Illinois preaching the gospel over that (loud speaker). The next one was Ross's Clothing Store. They later

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moved down there by Fox Drugstore (near W. Walnut and S. Illinois). (Back up on the west side of the 100 block of S. Illinois), by the alley was Hewitt's Drugstore. That was when they had a little counter. They had the cokes and milkshakes and stuff like that. It is now Mary Lou's (Restaurant). At one time-a short time- in the (other side of the ally) there was a 5 and 10 cents store. Next to Mary Lou's (south of it) the staircases went up. There was Higgins Jewelry Store.

He was a watchmaker. He lived down on College Street. The next one (building) was the Green Mill. Well, The Green Mill was owned by Licos and later on their boy and the girl (took over) and out (on route 13 east) near the lake (Crab Orchard) across from the subdivision; they had a restaurant out there-The Gardens.

DI: My husband and I went there for inexpensive hamburgers, things like that. Nice place. You were in the inside the Green Mill? What was it like?

JP: They had a counter as you walked in on the left side. They had booths in there.

DI: What did they serve that you liked? Was there a specialty?

JP: They served meals. The Hub Café served meals, too.

DI: You were gone during the war so this might not mean anything to you, but it was mentioned that during WWII a lot of these restaurants were opened 24 hours a day because of the troop trains. I would imagine that (WAS THE REASON.

JP: Well the Hub Café was always open 24 hours. The Green Mill wasn't.

DI: According to Pauline (Presley) they did start staying open to feed the troops. Carbondale was right on the railroad.

JP: When I was in the army I traveled trains quite often. The troop trains, I don't know if they did in Carbondale or not, they didn't feed them on the train. The railroad stations had big restaurants in those days. We all got off the train and would eat there then go on.

DI: The Green Mill did have a big sign outside that was (tall windmill with green lights and the wheel turned).

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JP: Yes, and then there was a shoe store. I can't remember the name of it. (The Bootery) Then there was Patterson's. Pat ran it for awhile and his dad, Sam Patterson. They sold men's clothing.

DI: Did they end up with a hardware store, too?

JP: That was there on Main Street. That was a different Patterson. That was George Sam Patterson.

DI: Now we're at the corner of Monroe and South Illinois.

JP: The next one- Golde's- was a clothing store, I can't remember what it was before it was Golde's. The next one- it was a clothing store too, at one time there was a restaurant there. He married the Hewitt girl, and he lived out here in the Hewitt house, Tom Mofield. That was men's wear. Then there was a furniture store right here on the corner, it was- that was on the alley. Then across the alley was an appliance store and upstairs was GMAC Financing. Upstairs, over it. The next one was a jewelry store. It was owned by two or three different people. There was the big store that Archie Stroup bought later on. Vancil, yeah, Vancil. Next door to it was Ross's at one time. Ross's moved down there. Then the Fox Drugstore and up over it was the dentist, (Virgil) Beadle was up there and there was a doctor up there at one time. Dr. Crandle was up above The Dime Store for many years. And Dr. Crane was up there, too. Dr. Crane went to Texas not too many years after he took my tonsils out. Across the street was Coxes.

DI: Do me a favor, go back up to Monroe and start down on the east side of S. Illinois so we can get the hotels that were there early on.

JP: Prince Hotel. Mr. Prince lived on College Street and his brick home on College Street is still there. Then there was Noel's Taxi Cab- there was a little small building- at one time he was running it out of the hotel, but he moved right there beside the hotel- there was a space of about 10 feet. Leo's Tavern was next to the rail road.

DI: We were talking about that place not too long ago.

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JP: Leo's had good food too. They were open 24 hours.

DI: That's neat because there's a picture that we have. I think that they even run it in the Carbondale Communique. It shows a cab we thought was probably from Noel's.

JP: It was (called) Checker Cabs. Starting down the block from the Prince Hotel-Kimmel had a Yellow Cab there for years. There was a gas station there on the corner. Next to it was a Mobile gas station. It was run by Ike Brandon. (The NE corner of W. Walnut and S. Illinois)

DI: When you were a little child, was the post office along in there? You probably didn't know that...why would a kid know there the post office was? I remember a Sear's order store... that was later, much later... well let's just leave that (200 Block) area. Anything further down? I think you worked on the next block at the Chrysler place.

JP: Okay, okay now. There was Cox's Clothing Store- that was before the war- that wasn't back in those days. He came from a little town over there--

DI: We're still on South Illinois?

JP: (Nods) Up above there was the Cox's Hotel- up over that corner. The hotel wasn't owned by Cox back in those days. There was a paint store in there. Then there was a little restaurant and on the other side of the alley there was a fruit stand. Before that there was a little (Greek-owned) restaurant and that was when they came out with the Coney Island (sandwich). It was a very small place.

DI: Are we on the East or West side?

JJ: West side. Later on where the market was- an old building- Walgreen Drugstore was put in there. Later on it was torn down. I don't know why it in the world it was (torn down) but it was. On the corner (Elm and University) was a Standard Oil Gas Station, owned by Tin Ear Johnson. They built a new building there later. Okay- we go back to Walnut Street and on the (corner) of Illinois Avenue- on the Southeast corner- was Sponsler Gas Station. That space is still there. You would

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drive up and they had two pumps there. That was it. Of course- back in those days you pumped your gas up. If you wanted five gallons, you pumped five gallons in it and it would drain out automatically. The next store was a hardware store- I think it was. Those stores are not there- they tore one of them down. here was- I forgot the name of the store- in 1938- it was Chrysler Plymouth Garage. Keller owned a gas station there. All that Keeler did was selling

gas, but he loaned people money. He had a safe there and they would come in and hock- that's one of the first hock shops in Carbondale. They would and hock a ring or a watch or something to him. That's how he loaned money. He did that more than he sold gas. The next one was a big two story building. (Points to picture on wall). That was a florist shop at one time, Buzby Florist. My memory is still pretty good. I don't know who lived there.

DI: Your memory is excellent!

-RAN OUT OF TIME, TAPE AND ENERGY-

Editor's note: I thanked John Randall and HE admitted he had really enjoyed it. "Not as hard as I thought it would be".

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