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REMINISCENCES

OF

HARRY SNYDER

Snyder, Harry W.

Interview by  
Harriet F. Miller  
February 27, 1975

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Harry Snyder  
February 27, 1975

MILLER: This is an interview being conducted on the 27th of February, 1975. This is an interview for the Oral History Project with Mr. Harry Snyder. Mr. Snyder what is your position with the telephone company?

SNYDER: Commercial manager of the Alliance area.

MILLER: Commercial manager of the Alliance area located in the Alliance office. Let's get started with the Alliance office and talk about the time you started and what's happened in the office since that time.

SNYDER: In 1950 on December the 6th I was transferred from the Akron operation to supervise the Alliance business office functions and relative public relations efforts. Upon my arrival in Alliance, the business office was located at 400 E. Main St. At that time we had six people working in the business office, an outside installation repair crew totaling twenty-one men. We had approximately 140 full time operators. The chief operator and the three assistant chief operators assigned the work. The coverage was seven days a week. We offered private, two party, four party, and ten party services for Alliance, Atwater, Marlboro, and Sebring which is controlled by this particular operation. At the time of my assignment to Alliance, I was told the telephone company was in a position where a new complete modern exchange was necessary to replace one that

had been in operation since 1916. The plans were well under-way and property was purchased at the corner of Arch and Rosenberg to provide building space for a new all automatic office which we referred to in telephone jargon as the central office. This is a building which houses all your switching equipment and your operators. The project was finally launched in 1965 in December. It was completed and the office was turned into operation at 2:06 a.m., November 13, 1958, at which time the company on that corner invested \$2,800,000.00. The office was the most modern at the time but yet, at the time of its announcement it was obsolete on the planning board which goes hand in hand with the Bell Telephone Company's program of planning for tomorrow. The city of Alliance and the Alliance area in my assignment in 1950 had approximately 9,000 residence customers and nearly 1,000 customers listed under business categories. Today we have in the Alliance area 17,000 customers, over 31,000 telephones. That does not count the number of businesses which are in the area of about 1,800 business services. will fall on December 6th of this year, our company

has invested approximately \$13,500,000.00 in telephone improvements in this area. I'm proud to say that there are earlier?

nothing but private and two-party lines offered for service.

SNYDER: Yes. on many rate adjustments through the period of

time most favorable to the customer by eliminating mileage

MILLER: In other words the boundaries haven't changed?

charges and to quote and example, prior to our cut over in

SNYDER: There has been no change, no growth. The first and of course an interesting step from the historical standpoint was the extending of free calling to Sebring, which is six miles East. Upon my assignment here that was a 10¢ long distance call. And in 1954 that came to end and we consolidated Sebring and Alliance exchange and eliminated long distance. Then to pursue that field a little further, the next addition of any importance to the area was the extension of free calling service between the Atwater and Rootstown exchanges. And then the last two were the privilege of calling Homeworth and the Paris exchange of the General Telephone Company without paying long distance. The most favorable thing to say for the Alliance area has been a continued steady growth. There has never been a major outburst of new customers but our growth has been steady. We've continued to plug along and keep getting bigger and better as the saying goes, as the years roll by. I might at this time point out that during my period of assignment here as the manager, unfortunately nearly a quarter of a century, which will fall on December 6th of this year, our company has invested approximately \$13,500,000.00 in telephone improvements in this area. I'm proud to say that there are nothing but private and two-party lines offered for service. There have been many rate adjustments through the period of time most favorable to the customer by eliminating mileage charges and to quote and example, prior to our cut over in



1958, a private line in the village of Limaville cost \$13.50 a month. Now they have the same rate as a customer in the city of Alliance itself. So, we have made many improvements. We have gone to the most modern dial switching office. We offer touch tone telephone service which was the second exchange in the state of Ohio to have it. It has been well received. At the present time we have approximately 3,000 touch tone customers in the Alliance area. Keeping in mind at the present it is only offered in the Alliance exchange. We have worked and tried to come up with the most modern conveniences that the communications industry has to offer to the general public and at the same time provide excellent telephone service of top notch quality.

MILLER: Now in your period that you are converging here, we talked about the 1950 situation when you had 9,000 customers and six people in your business office and twenty-one men on your installation crew and one hundred and forty full time operators. Now with your increase of 9,000 customers to 17,000 how has the staff situation changed?

SNYDER: The staff situation has changed rather strangely. Our requirement for outside men is increased to where we have installing and repairing telephones and maintaining equipment. We have approximately 38 people involved in the assignment.



MILLER: When you say people, excuse me, do you mean men and women?

SNYDER: Men and women. I know at the present time we have no female installers but, that is next. The operator, of course, as such I regret to say this, as of 2:06 a.m. March 2nd, 1975, telephone operators in Alliance will become a thing of history.

MILLER: How many do you have now?

SNYDER: We have 11 working now and at that time there will be no more. The people that work have all been transferred to other jobs and absorbed within the company. There has been no one who lost their job over this, but, a major factor behind this is the cost of doing business in today's market place. 85% of our income, 80 to 85% of our income is tied up in wages. As wages go up and the demand for higher wages increases the company must find means of meeting its obligations and in doing so being fair to the customers, the stockholders and employees. Unfortunately, automation is the only path that we have been able to find that would provide this out. In otherwords, today if we had to maintain a force of operators and without automatic equipment, just as a rule of thumb, yes, it would take us about 640 full time operators without dial equipment to handle our calls if we maintained just dial. Without direct long distance dialing we would have a force of about 140. This is another evidence of changing times.

MILLER: How about now we covered the telephone operators which are going to be nill, how about your office staff?

SNYDER: The present time the office staff we have one more person. We have seven full time representatives, the manager and the assistant manager in the office.

MILLER: In effect then this is kind of the termination of operations here in Alliance?

SNYDER: It is as far as the long distant operators are concerned. As far as I can see in the future we will always have people working in Alliance. Our work load here requires daily that we have a minimum of 49 people available, that is installers, repairmen, construction men to do the job necessary, an absolute minimum. That would mean and I'm thinking too, we are on a 24 hour turn in our offices, we had probably adjust that figure to about 60.

I think that this is not the end of the telephone, it's the end of the operator as such in an era that goes hand in hand with the telephone and the picture of the operator putting the calls through in the storm and emergency calls and what have you. We still have our operators but with our new automated equipment your operating problems will be handled in the Akron office.

MILLER: And what does this mean, say to girls in Alliance or boys who would be considering careers as a telephone operator?

SNYDER: Unfortunately, it closes the door. The future in the telephone industry as far as the operator is concerned has definatly reached a stalemate. There will always be requirements for operators. The telephone industry basically is 66% female. The requirement for operators, and this is all over, for example in the nearby town of Salem they closed their traffic operation of 77 operators. And that is to completely eliminate all their long distance operations. Programming is routed into Youngstown. There will be operators but the opportunities especially in a town like Alliance and as far as employment in telephone companys it means that there are 40 some jobs that we just wont' have any means of filling.

MILLER: Right. Well, that tells us something about that career. How about your other opportunities as far as construction work?

SNYDER: Construction installation as long as economy is good, under normal conditions we normally add a couple of new men every 18 months, which is small but it is a good steady job and we are trying to build out force up and maintain it. We have a seasoned group of veterans now and in the immediate years to come they will be forced to retire. Some of them may retire early which will change this picture a little. The main thing it is all based on is the economy of the country and what the demand is for our product, and the fast contined good growth of the Alliance area.



MILLER: So the operations here, once we cease the operators or have no more operators, we will have installing, repairs and some business.

SNYDER: Construction and a business office.

MILLER: And a business office. But primarily now, most of the operation or operator functions are going to be switched over to automated equipment which means it will be the Canton office that will....

SNYDER: Into Akron.

MILLER: Oh, into Akron. Clear to Akron from here. Now we're going to talk a little bit about the linesman's job with the telephone company. We're interested to know from the time you began with the telephone company you started as a lineman, did you not?

SNYDER: I started as an installer which installs telephones. A lineman is basically the gentleman who, and I use that term strongly, a strong gentleman who set poles, strung wire, erected cable, and pulled cable in underground. Frankly in 1939 when I started in the business the telephone industry as far as manpower was concerned was just exactly what it said, manpower. We did not have the nice modern trucks that we have today to go out. You want to drill a hole to set a pole you have a automatic auger off of a power



drive, it lifts a pole up off the ground on a winch and drops it in a hole for you. 35 years ago the hole was dug by hand. You dug the hole and then you used pole pipes and three or four men were necessary to push the pole in the hole, and then you tamped it. Now they have augers, huge earth augers that fit on an automatic drive and drill your holes. We built miles of open wire which each pole had to be climbed and if there is a cross arm on it with, one the cross arm had ten circuits, you had to tie down ten wires. Today we don't pull the cross arms up on the poles. Our goal today is to put everything under ground, eventually. To cite a specific in 1972 we removed 168 poles in our At-water exchange and planted the wires underground. And it used to be we would see a telephone pole you would think a farmer had a telephone. Now the only way to find out basically is to knock on the door and ask, if you are searching for a telephone. The whole picture as far as our equipment for our men to work with. When I installed telephones we didn't know what an electric drill was that drilled through a wall. In 1946, when I transferred into the engineering department, we were starting to get electric drills although I never was assigned one. I drove a repair truck and installation truck for three years before I had a heater in it. That's changed, now if the temperature gets under I believe it's 15 degrees, our line crew doesn't go out to work. They stay in the garage and do things that should be done other times on the trucks.

operation and every thing has been for the better. If I

They don't work out in the rain and this is all a change of what we had. You know we are always looking for things better than what we had not what we had to compare it to the good things today and the advantages we had. We still had a lot of fun, it was good hard work. I enjoyed it. And one thing about the telephone industry, once a man went to work for the company they very seldom ever lost them. We have men with service over 40 some years on the job today and it has been their life. It's a disease that gets in your blood and you love the work and the people and what you do. There is a normal amount of grumbling and griping, as part of the American pastime to complain, but they were service oriented and the customer came first. That was the most important thing. There have been many changes, but with modernization, mechanization, real nice trucks, better highways to get you around on, easier to work by less of the open wire type construction which took a cross arm and ten pins. I seen a time when a pole with seven and eight arms of wire on it, you had to climb up through the wire to get up on the top arm to work and it's all gone. In otherwords it's speedier, you don't have the climbers out of your truck as often as you used to have which were painful sometimes when you didn't know what you were doing. We used bucket trucks which swiftly take our men from the ground up on the pole. Without climbing the pole they don't need to worry about falling, they are safe, insulated, well guarded, and it's a well planned operation and every thing has been for the better. If I

started out today I certainly wouldn't want to go back to the old method of doing things. Believe me.

MILLER: Do you find that with all the new equipment they have to work with, does anybody keep track of the accident records? Do you have fewer accidents?

SNYDER: Yes, our accident record is definitely lower. It's one thing with the Bell system complete all over the country in Ohio Bell, safety first. If there is any question in your mind that you can't do a job safely you don't do it. If you need other equipment there you stop. There is never any criticism of a man or an employee who finds a situation where he doesn't feel he can do it safely. There would be criticism if he went ahead and injured himself. But if he called someone out to help him or called for advice, this what we want. We furnish safety goggles, safety gloves, safety everything. That can all be undone by the lack of good common sense and trying to attempt to take a chance. And this is one thing, we definitely found, we keep an excellent record of accidents. And thank the Lord they are very limited.

MILLER: Very good. How about any interference or scrutiny the telephone company has had from OSHA, the Occupational, Safety and Health Act.

SNYDER: Well, I'm happy to say to date they made visits to



our building and find little things as a ladder rung broken or cracked, or a door way that didn't have an exit sign over it, but they have not picked us up on any one major item. There have been minor items and I regret to say I feel these people are out looking for something. The emphasis within our own organization is safety; ventilation, lighting, heating, stairs you name it. Certainly they have a job to do and I do think that sometimes you reach the point where you can't see the forest for the trees or visa versa, but maybe somebody coming in giving a little fresh look at it. We've had no major write ups from OSHA. We have been inspected, believe me.

MILLER: Very good, I'm sure all other companies wish they could of had a similar experience with OSHA.

SNYDER: It's been a disaster in other industries, there is no question. And again I'm not critical of them, this is a way of life, this is the way things went on for years. Dad did it this way, and Uncle Joe and I don't see any reason to change it. Men weren't complaining. If you stop to think.

MILLER: And in this day and age, I'm sure men would complain if they had anything to complain about.

SNYDER: No question there, is there?

MILLER: Then, how about your underground cables now that you are putting in lieu of your poles. What's been the



experience with repair on these? Is this a better situation causing less opportunities for damage to those?

SNYDER: This point you just made, less opportunity for damage. Occassionally we'll have a water problem or a cable will crack underground. But through storms, water, we don't have automobiles knocking off our poles. That seemed to be the number one target on the hit parade for anytime anyone became inebriated no matter what they went through they always run up against a telephone pole. This was a tremendous expense, going out erecting the pole, loss of service to customers and general all around mess. Now they can leave the highway and run all they want but they will never have any affect on us. Certainly we have problems occassionally where undergrounds give us trouble but in no way do we ever get into the problem that we used to have years ago. For example, the tremendous snow storm this past fall did affect us here, but the major affect from the snow storm was the snow and ice falling off the roofs and knocking the service wire off the house that served the home. We had no major loss of service due to cables or poles falling down because we didn't have that much up in the air. I can recall in 1951 we had a snow storm over here and we lost the service, the complete exchange service. We couldn't call Marlboro, we couldn't call Atwater. And Atwater and Marlboro in turn were isolated. The only place they could call was within their own exchange simply because we had miles and miles of open wire construction. The rain

hit on the wires, the wires reached the diameter of up to inch and a half to two inches in diameter and the weight was too great to support and down they came. We had crews in here from Toledo, Akron, Canton, Ravenna, alone to help our construction people getting the lines back up. So I would hate to think what would happen in 1974 if we still had the old type construction for telephone service.

MILLER: Yes, quite an improvement. When did they start putting their wires underground?

SNYDER: Well this has been a program that started in Alliance heavily in 1954, there has been a minor part of it for years underground, but the major distribution stuff started going underground about 1954 in conjunction with our new exchange. And we have just continued right along.

MILLER: How about if we leave the construction angle and go to the telephone operators again? How about taking us on a little tour of the changes?

SNYDER: All right. The telephone operators used to sit years ago originally and wear a great big heavy two piece head set chest high transmitter that weighed, or felt like a ton after wearing it around for a few hours, and sit there and watch lights blink and buzzers ringing, now sits at a small console, and in the early days they had to dress immaculate. Today we dress with the times. Slacks are in

order, blouses are in order and no question. And they are more comfortable for the girls. And instead of sitting at a desk elevated with your foot on a rail about 12 to 16 inches from the floor, now you sit at a nice desk, you have a row of buttons and keys in front of you and no cords. They have a real light weight head set that doesn't weigh as much as a pencil through which you talk and listen to your customers. The lighting and the surroundings are one hundred per cent better, air conditioned offices. These today are a far cry from the early telephone operator, for example, the first year I came to Alliance they had just put air conditioning in the traffic operating room. It used to be a multitude of huge circulating fans like the early Humphrey Bogart pictures; the big fans that swept around over the head. As a matter of fact when we closed the Alliance exchange in 1958 some of the fans were still up, but they were not in use of course.

MILLER: No, because of the air conditioning. Would there have been heat coming not only from the warm summer climate around here but would the equipment generate heat?

SNYDER: The equipment in the operating room generates some heat anytime you have lighting. There's heat from light but it is not heavy at all. The biggest would be body heat, and the sun itself, consequently that fan is blowing all over the place.

MILLER: It ought to make some people happy anyway.



MILLER: Plus even though a telephone operator was sitting down she was active, in other words she was constantly busy to handle the calls.

SNYDER: You're busy and the thing today, in years gone by you used to go to put a call through to Chicago, all right, so you get on a Cleveland trunk and you go to Cleveland.

Then the operator would pass you through to Fort Wayne, Indiana, and then maybe to Chicago. Now you don't do anything. You just stick a plug in and get on the trunk and dial the area code and zing you're in Chicago, Wisconsin, California, Michigan, anywhere in the United States because it's all automatic. And the time, it used to take 10 to 15 minutes to build up a train to make a call completed. You could get from Cleveland to Omaha, Nebraska but you couldn't get from Omaha to California. And now we're direct dialing overseas callers.

MILLER: Is that true? I didn't know about the overseas calls. So if I were placing an overseas call in Alliance it could be handled by your operators who are still here?

SNYDER: Right away. Not only that, customer overseas calls are going to be dialed in the near future. Probably within the next 30 days, to certain points in the world. I don't know whether this is going to bring on disaster or what.

MILLER: It ought to make some people happy anyway.



SNYDER: It will make someone happy certainly. I've had people often tell me that they have called their son over in Hawaii in the Army or something and they've reached Hawaii and talked to them just like calling Sebring.

MILLER: It certainly brings the world a lot closer doesn't it?

SNYDER: I've had occasion to call Hawaii to an Army post, or no Marine base, and I talked just as if I was talking to someone in Canton. The information I needed was received and it was real quick.

MILLER: Well, it's changes that bring about a lot of benefit. How about your requirements for operators? With the change of equipment and now that they operate with buttons instead of these cords that they used to use? I can recall applying at Ohio Bell in Akron and wasn't there a requirement as far as the length of your arms? You had to be able to reach a certain distance?

SNYDER: I'm married to a very lovely girl who was turned down as an operator because her reach wasn't long enough. In those days a girl had to be a certain height and have a certain arm reach so that she could sit at a position at the board and take a cord and reach to the nearest jack strip, without standing up on the rail to reach it. This was one of the problems. Educational requirements have not

changed through the years. We do ask for high school graduates. We do have a pre-employment test. As a matter of fact it has been adjusted to lighten the expectancy from a potential employee. But that part of the job is still the same. The hours are still the same, eight hours a day or seven and a half with a half hour for lunch. That part hasn't changed. I think the hours are more consistent now. We used to work split shifts. You would go in the morning and work 8:00 to 12:00 and be off and be back in at 8:00 at night and work till 11:00, what they call split shifts. We had to keep the people on the job when the traffic load was up. But with our major companies going the direct dialing route and the less expense to the customer to place a long distance call if they dial it themselves we don't need the people. We don't need them at the time. If industry dials their own calls it's approximately 50% cheaper than if you go through the operator, and we try to stress this. Again, it's the cost of manpower handling the calls, or shall we say lady power, that makes the difference in the rate. We've gone overboard in our advertising to dial yourself, dial direct, save the money.

MILLER: I think this is very true. Nearly everyone has seen the efforts the telephone company has made in emphasizing dialing direct in order to save.

SNYDER: I might add one point. We've been criticized for advertising, spending any of the customers money. But I

think this is definitely to their advantage that they know this. And by advertising I mean bill inserts, news releases. We release to the television and radio and it tells a story because the reluctance of people today to read written material. It's astonishing to me to find that 30 to 35% of the people are all that ever read an article.

MILLER: And as a Librarian I can say that is astonishing to me too. Somewhat depressing too. Reflects the times and our dependence more on visual....

SNYDER: This is our way of life, everything's in a hurry and we want it all at once without any effort.

MILLER: Right. And the emphasis and stress on television and other forms. Well let's talk about the Alliance community now. Have we pretty much covered the telephone operations that we could talk about?

SNYDER: I would say we have. We hope to continue to be a good strong part in the community and do our part in the community, with the contribution of necessary operations in the town and in the area. But also we want our people to be a people person, be a part of the town in which you live. This is one thing that has always been stressed. And countless hours have been donated and company time has been donated on worthwhile community projects. My observations is after, and I hate to say this again, a quarter of a century in this town, it has come a long way, a long way. When I came to Alliance downtown Main Street was, I



used to kid about cobblestone and brick pavement and rough. The Jaycees took up a project to hot top or asphalt downtown Main Street, that's how it got done.

MILLER: And that would have been in the 1950's?

SNYDER: The Chamber of Commerce got behind the thing and this wasn't done or completed until about 1953 or 1954.

Because I was in the Jaycees just as an exhausted rooster when it was finally completed. And that was an asset to the town. The thing that amazes me as I look back is the development of No. 1, better highways; your railroads are going by the boards. The essential thing is highway, access in and out of the community. The immediate development of the business community on the West State Street after the widening of that road out there should be a good criterion for anyone searching for information as to why things should be done.

MILLER: Then I would imagine we could go from that statement to the assumption that you would be in favor of widening Union Ave. This is a current topic under debate by City Council.

SNYDER: It's a current topic. You know I've spent many hours and weeks and months and years on the highways in this area and I would have to withhold any comment on that for one reason. I would never be satisfied to widen Union Ave. if route 62 is completed North of the town. Then if it

indicates a need for widening I would be the first to want to go along with it. So many projects are geared up and people think they have the answers but the proof, the way I look at it, is always in the pudding. If this traffic is routed North of the town, and there are traffic studies to indicate, there is a lot of traffic on Union Ave. that will never materialize.

MILLER: In other words, let's not put the cart before the horse.

SNYDER: This is what I'm afraid of here if we start tearing Union Ave. up. We've got other projects that certainly should be looked at before this. I greatly favor, for example, the construction of Mahoning Ave. north and across the river, and arrive at an access point on North Route 62, to take the industrial traffic from the North end of town, what of it there is, off of Union Ave. If the traffic that's now flowing Union Ave. to get on 62 to go to Canton, shall we say, or go to Salem. If they could just turn North and grab on to 62, which we will benefit from in 1975, I hope, then we'll have something as a bench mark. Right now we have nothing except speculation. Traffic studies made by the State Highway Department does not indicate a tremendous traffic load on North Union Ave. or Union Ave. It's heavy now but the traffic from Alliance to Minerva is not that great. I don't have it at my finger tips but I'll

go back to my original statement, I withhold any comment. I don't think there should be any effort made until we get these other projects out of the way. We started out with a five step project in 1966. One was the completion of 62 from Alliance to Canton. Number two was the North leg which is under construction to take Alliance traffic North of town and give an industrial artery for Babcock and Wilcox Transues, Alliance Drop Froge. Any industry in the north end of the community could come in on 62 and drop off at Sawburg and go in and that is completed or near completion. The third step was to take it from North Union Ave. to Salem. Part of that is completed and the drawings are on the way for the other ones. The fourth item was the widening of State Street to Mutt and Jeff Hill which is completed. The next item of business of the highway program was to encourage work with Stark and Mahoning county on the widening of Mahoning Ave. taking it across to and across the river, east of town which would give us an artery from the present Route 62 at Mahoning Ave. over to the new 62 above River Road. And in doing this any traffic that would come out of any of our industries in the east end of town would have a straight shot to the highway. You would never see them on Union Ave. Now unless there is some great gold mine that is discovered south of town, which would require more traffic on Union. I don't favor just going in to tear up to tear, because you have a Junior High School, you have many nice

Hill in one shot. And the second link was the project that they are working on right now from Mutt and Jeff Hill



buildings on Union Ave. At the moment I don't speak in favor of it, I'm not against it when it's proven to me that it should be. You can't stand in the way of progress, but sometimes we get progress out of step with something else.

MILLER: We should point out I think at this time in the tape while we're starting to talk about these roads leading into Alliance and the work on 62, your involvement with the Alliance Chamber of Commerce. And especially in getting this 62 project. Wasn't that what you worked on?

SNYDER: Oh yes. It was a great experience. I had a lot of wonderful help. I think of some of the men that departed from this life, Dale Walborn, Russ Kuntzman worked very diligently on the program, and never failed when it was necessary to go to Columbus. We made numerous and I mean numerous trips to Columbus to meet with the highway department. The cooperation from the Salem Chamber of Commerce was the greatest, wonderful people, Howard Firestone, George Rogers, Al Cleveland, you name them, they represented the whole community feeling in these meetings. We never had any opposition. We never had any dissention among the group. That's why the project is where it is today.

MILLER: And exactly what did this project do?

SNYDER: Well this project took Route 62 which was dumped out on a field over on Route 44 from there to Mutt and Jeff Hill in one shot. And the second link was the project that they are working on right now from Mutt and Jeff Hill

to Union Ave. on 62. you went up a big one. Of course

that is pure speculation on my part.

MILLER: And we should located Mutt and Jeff Hill a little more specifically.

from Mutt and Jeff Hill to North Union Ave.

SNYDER: Mutt and Jeff Hill is the extreme west end of the Alliance community. It is about a mile beyond the city limits west of Alliance.

miles of open field from Union Ave. to where we pick up

MILLER: Heading west on old 62 or what is now State Street. 62 at Salem and four miles of that is already under con-

SNYDER: On old 62. And that was one of the crookedest, poorest roads I ever traveled in my life. Unfortunately for many years I had to travel to attend district meetings in Canton. Many, many accidents and it's a heaven to get on that road and travel now.

SNYDER: You'll go west and go right on through Salem and there

MILLER: And I think particularly at Mutt and Jeff Hill this old Route 62 that's now being replaced by a modern divided highway came to probably its worst curve, and many accidents occurred on that old curved highway.

dollars worth of highway construction funds to slow down

SNYDER: Many people were killed there on that Mutt and Jeff curve. For the natives around here they all are familiar with Mutt and Jeff but you made a good point, to somebody else Mutt and Jeff Hill doesn't mean a thing.

rate one of the top priorities.

MILLER: No. Any ideas how it got it's name?

MILLER: When 62 continues on out of Salem we are going to...

SNYDER: I've never heard, I don't know. I guess from the idea of a big one and a little one. Because at the end was

a little dip and then you went up a big one. Of course that is pure speculation on my part.

SNYDER: No, you'll pass south of Youngstown but you'll

MILLER: It certainly fits. So now 62 is being constructed from Mutt and Jeff Hill to North Union Ave.

SNYDER: North Union Ave. at Gaskill. And the nicest thing about it is we were approximately nine and eleven tenths miles of open field from Union Ave. to where we pick up 62 at Salem and four miles of that is already under construction and open, coming from Salem back.

SNYDER: 62 will continue on to the Pennsylvania border. At

MILLER: So when we get our construction heading on out of Alliance towards Salem we are going to meet a highway already there.

SNYDER: You'll meet and go right on through Salem and there are two projects down there which will probably, and if money I'm sure would have come out of the government now would have been done. But the government froze two billion dollars worth of highway construction funds to slow down the inflation. Now they are going to have to do something to build up some employment. I see where they are going to release the money and the State matching funds and I hope the State can come up with the money because this should rate one of the top priorities.

Industry was always interested in what are your highway

MILLER: When 62 continues on out of Salem we are going to....

I think that it's going to happen.

SNYDER: Clear to the Pennsylvania border.



MILLER: And passing through Youngstown?

SNYDER: No, you'll pass south of Youngstown but you'll have access on the lakes of the River Road which I think is referred to as Route 7, it's a divided highway. You'll link with 7 and then you'll go north. When this road is finished you'll be able to go east from Alliance and pick up route 7 and go to Ashtabula without a traffic light.

MILLER: And then 62 will continue on.

SNYDER: 62 will continue on to the Pennsylvania border. At this setting I do not know what the disposition decision is of the Pennsylvania Highway Department about wanting to continue it on, but there is something in the wind.

MILLER: I see, so this will be a nice route for us if we want to cut over to Pittsburgh.

SNYDER: Sure, if you want to go to Pittsburgh it will be beautiful. You can shoot to the turnpike and get on and you'll have easy access to the turnpike. It's going to be, the most important thing is the opening of avenues to new industry and new business. Many times while working with the Alliance Development Corporation or we do it or the Greater Alliance Area Development Corporation as it is know now. Industry was always interested in what are your highway facilities. We've got some good answers for them now, and I think that it's going to happen.

MILLER: What is the situation with industry in Alliance right now? Of course any community if it's going to live and grow has to be concerned about bringing in new industry. You mentioned now we've changed from a railroad town, because of course the railroad has bypassed this community so we are developing our highways. Would you classify Alliance as an industrial town?

SNYDER: I would classify Alliance as a well diversified industrial town. We no longer are heavy steel. We have electric motors, an excellent plastic manufacturing corporation. We have our old standbys, the heavy industries such as Morgans and Alliance Machine. The Babcock Wilcox development here has been fantastic with their tremendous research facilities, and the new expansion of the B&W Tubular products; the small shops, there are many small job shops in the machine shop field, foundries that didn't exist. As far as I'm concerned I can see nothing but good for Alliance.

MILLER: This you think perhaps would help us rather than being tied to being a steel town for instance and coming under the fate of what ever happens to the steel industry, we have better opportunity because of our diversification.

SNYDER: I think right now I must point out that Transue Williams are still quite busy. At one time they used to be tied directly to the Automobile industry. Anyone tied

SNYDER: I served three terms as President. I was on the board eight years.

directly to the automobile industry is down 50%. Transues are practically out of it. They are a little into the trucking field but they are in a lot of other fields which makes them better prepared to weather a so called dip in economy, our Republican recession or Democratic depression. I guess that's how it is classed.

MILLER: So, for the future we ought to stand pretty well no matter what happens.

SNYDER: I would say. As long as you have diversification you're never going to find any, well, Armak for example. It was formerly Armour. They had their ups and downs but there is always something going in one of these shops, well the majority of them shall I say. We're not like, maybe you saw on television, the carpet center of the world is completely flat. In Georgia, I can't remember the name of the town, but they have been affected so strong from this recession that 65% of the people are out of work. There is one plant, the carpet capital of the world is flat because of carpet, the demand is down. And as long as we have a diversified product we are better off.

MILLER: Let's talk a little bit about another aspect of your service to the community, and that is service on the Board of Education. If I remember you served on the Board of Education, President in your term?

SNYDER: I served three terms as President. I was on the board eight years.



MILLER: From when to when?

SNYDER: I was on the board from 1960 through 1968. And it was a wonderful experience. I met a lot of wonderful people. I am very proud to have been a part of the improvement of the educational facilities in Allaince. The greatest thing that ever happened in this town was the healing of the community wounds behind Dr. Hammrick to get this new high school, which we need to take our hat off to nobody on this accomplishment. The other thing that I'm very happy to have been a small part in was the follow up of the Vocational Training program in the schools. While serving on the Board we looked at figures of our graduates every year and at times there were 40 to 41% of them going on to college. Which let's use 40% for example, that tossed 60% of our youngsters out on the unassuming public, not particularly trained for anything. The best lesson in life was a trip to the Industrial Training Shop, which was small at the time, to find that all the youngsters who took machine shop training, some eleven of them, in graduating all had jobs. The young ladies who took typing and shorthand all had jobs. But again this only amounted to maybe another 4 or 5% of the graduating class. Now with what facilities are available we're training youngsters that can go and say I can do this.

MILLER: No matter what the job is.

SNYDER: It used to be before I can't do anything what do you mean? The world we live in today is filled with mechanical monsters. It's reaching a point where the wife in the house can't repair the light plug when it burns off, she can't find the fuse box to replace fuses because there is an automatic reset, and there are no fuses. The husband of today, if he isn't equipped to use tools, then you have to call a service man in your home to do a job, you might just as well figure you're going to lose part of your days earnings to put some small gadget back in service that you should be able to fix yourself. And I think that with all the mechanical gadgets around us today, the man who steps out and becomes a plumber, electrician, a welder, a skilled mechanic, makes a very good earning and basically is equipped to stand up and say I can do the job and go anywhere and find employment, because of his training. And this is a necessary requisit because we know, based on information from the learned group, that service people are needed to make these machines function. And the more of them that are dumped on the public the bigger the requirement is going to be for this kind of training. And there is nothing finer than a very good craftsman. And we need more of them. I think as far as the young ladies are concerned the training to become a dental assistant which is a good, I'd say a fine job, or the beautician, or the nurses aid, maybe she wants to go on into nursing. The basic tests in these fields may make a better engineer, a better nurse, a better

doctor, a better designer. This is why I look at the fact that we all can not come out with a PHD in some particular field and then suddenly find that we know more than what we should and we don't contribute anything to the everyday that we have to face. The need is there and frankly I've gone overboard on the desires as here to have young people trained. I think we should take more emphasis on the field of everyday life such as a little, not a little but more knowledge of commercial law. They should have a better understanding when they sign their name on something, what involvements they can get tied up in. Just explain terms of commercial law or the program that Dr. Wesley Watson did such a wonderful job through the years, in Alliance High School POD; Problems of Democracy. I participated in a seminar where they had representatives from various businesses talk to the *students and hold an open forum, rapid fire questioning* of the participants. I think that through the years of my own children participated and we have three daughters. All of them were in Problems of Democracy classes and one of my daughters took the part of a witness in a murder trial, another served as Prosecuting Attorney and another one was in some kind of a panel discussion. We have got to broaden our youngsters in the down to earth vernacular of the school of hard knock, that they understand these things. Because everything isn't as rosey as painted in books and pictures and yet it is a wonderful life.



MILLER: Do you suppose that maybe the schools now in their vocational training are reflecting the change in the economy or in the emphasis in the job market from one that for a while was so highly geared to the professional, the college graduate. Now I guess the old advice to go to college because you can earn more money, if that's your sole reason for going, doesn't hold true.

SNYDER: Well, again I'm proud that Alliance under the leadership of the various people in the school fields, school boards and the superintendents, a fine job done by the present Superintendent Hammrick, in selling this vocational training. Because, I think Alliance is head and shoulders above any town around here for miles. You name one community our size that has the tremendous installation we have. For example automobil mechanics, this is our real life. They're going to have to be mechanics and they have a fine shop. Alliance, Ohio, was the first city in the state of Ohio to get a grant from the state for vocational training. And that was incorporated in our new high school and many many thanks to Miss Susan George who was on the State Board of Education who helped front this and the tremendous job that one Dr. George Ewing did in selling this program in Columbus along with Lyle Crist.

MILLER: These would be your School Board members now.

SNYDER: The entire School Board of Bill Steffy, Charles Henschen and Dr. Hammrick and all concerned. A for Alliance and A for the first and alphabetically we went to the head of the line and the product is there for the public to appreciate, and I'm sure they do.

MILLER: I think they do. This of course what we are referring to is the new Alliance High School which was opened in 1973 was it?

SNYDER: 1972.

MILLER: 1972. It's been that long ago? Yes it was 1972, you are right. With an outstanding Vocational Educational Department. Truly it is one of the finest.

SNYDER: In one swoop we went from rags to riches.

MILLER: Yes indeed. Those who remember the old building on Broadway and Arch Aves. can certainly make the comparison.

SNYDER: I'm glad it's a memory, because I was always dissatisfied with that building. Of course you can't do anything, and I realize you have to do the best with what you have and I think we turned out some wonderful products. It isn't what's on the outside or the cover of the book it's what's inside and I think Alliance stands behind no one in fine young men and young ladies that have been turned out and the fine mark they made in life. It's also nice to have something.

MILLER: A good facility.

SNYDER: A good facility is right.



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