

# *Art & Digna Maynor*

## **Hillsborough Remembers**

Art Maynor is a native of Hillsborough County, a World War II veteran, and a great storyteller. He shares his memories of Tampa during the depression and the war. His wife Digna "Rusty" Maynor didn't come to Hillsborough County until 1942, but has strong memories of the sense of neighborhood that war-time inspired here.

WWII  
At Home & Abroad

**Arthur "Art" and Digna "Rusty"  
Maynor**

**November 23, 1999**

**by John D. Hooker**

This interview is with Mr. Arthur "Art" Maynor (**AM**), World War II veteran and Hillsborough County native, and Mrs. Digna "Rusty" Maynor (**DM**), wife of Art Maynor. The interview was conducted in Tampa, Florida on November 23, 1999. The interviewer: John D. Hooker (**JH**), H.B. Plant High School Senior, representing the "Juniors to Seniors: Hillsborough Remembers Oral History Collection Project."

**John Hooker:** The questions are in order from before World War II, during WWII, and the period afterwards. I'll ask questions about the nation, the county area, your family, and then yourself. I'll ask the question, then Mr. Maynor will respond, and then Mrs. Maynor will respond. First the introduction. What are your names?

**Art Maynor:** Art Maynor

**Digna Maynor:** Digna Maynor

**JH:** What are your dates of birth?

**AM:** November 24, 1927

**DM:** November 20, 1932. I'm younger than he [AM] is (laughter).

**JH:** What are your occupations?

**AM:** Self-employed.

**DM:** I'm a teaching assistant.

**JH:** What is the history of your family in the United States?

**AM:** Mine, on both sides, my father's mother came from Scotland, which would be my grandmother. His father came originally from England, but they lived in North Carolina and my grandfather moved down here [to Florida]. My mother is Cuban and her mother and father came from Cuba.

**DM:** My father, and his parents, was born in Spain. My mother was born in Tampa, and raised in Cuba with a Cuban mother and a Spanish father.

**JH:** Now we're going to begin the pre-WWII, Great Depression era segment. How would you describe the morale and national confidence during the period of the depression before WWII?

**AM:** Well it was very bad, the Depression itself was very bad because so many people were poor. It didn't relieve itself until just before WWII around 1938 or 1939 we were beginning to get some relief. But from 1931 to about 1938, the Depression was very bad on most people.

**DM:** I was probably six or seven at the time and didn't realize we were in a depression, everybody was in the same boat so, we always had something to eat, we didn't go hungry, we ate a lot of beans. But I would think that was something my mother would like to cook (laughter).

**JH:** Did people live in fear of losing their jobs?

**AM:** Yes, Yes, a lot of people would work two jobs or part time jobs. A lot of times what the companies would do because times were so bad, is a man would work part time so that another man or woman could work part time that way they both could draw a little money. My father and mother were cigar makers. My father made about twelve dollars a week. My mother working part time made about six

dollars a week. And that was about the average salary and that was pretty good money for cigar workers. Most people made less than that. Most people were afraid of losing their homes.

**DM:** My parents didn't own a home when I was a child, they rented, and we lived in New York City. My father was a short order cook in a restaurant. If he lost one job, he always seemed to find another. He was making around eight dollars a week, which for those days was not too bad.

**JH:** Would you say that Hillsborough County was in as deep a depression as the United States as a whole? Was it better or worse on the average?

**AM:** I'd say it was about the same. The Depression just seemed to cover the whole country and everybody was in the same boat.

**DM:** I didn't live in Hillsborough County until about 1942. And everybody we knew was in the same boat.

**JH:** In New York City?

**DM:** Here [in Hillsborough County]. I still did not realize there were a lot of problems (laughter). People really shared back then, in that time. We had chickens, we had rabbits in the yard. People would give eggs or chickens to neighbors, or if they grew something. So most everybody around that, we had food.

**JH:** Did people in Hillsborough County feel safe during this time? Did they feel protected?

**AM:** No, you couldn't feel safe because in our case, we had a home and we were paying on it. If you didn't pay your mortgage your home would be repossessed and you lost your home.

And a lot of people did lose their home and the worst part of it was people had their money in the banks and when you had the tragedy with the banks, they lost everything they had. Now like she said most of us got along. We had a milk cow, almost everybody had a garden because you had to grow something to eat.

**DM:** I personally never felt unsafe. My parents if they did [feel unsafe] they never mentioned it.

**JH:** How were employment opportunities in Tampa?

**AM:** There weren't any. You mostly shared jobs. Sometimes we had cigar worker strikes which did even worse and they happened in the 1930s. They walked out and of course they had a strike, and for six or eight months everyone was out of work. You have to understand there was no welfare, there was no Social Security, there was just no help, period. Like she said, either you helped each other or you were in real bad shape.

**JH:** How else did your family make ends meet?

**AM:** There was a lot of bartering. You would trade eggs for this or that. There was very little money so you had to barter for anything you wanted.

**DM:** We didn't have money as such; we lived in an old house and we didn't have a telephone, we didn't own a car, we didn't have appliances, there was no air conditioning, none of that stuff. But we didn't think we were deprived either. Today I would think I was deprived after having had it (laughter), but we never had it [those appliances] in the first place. So we grew food and had the animals and so you ate.

**JH:** How close was your family during this time?

**AM:** Well, out of necessity we were close because we had uncles and aunts, see all my family was here in Tampa, so we were pretty close. I had some family living close to us. Most of the time all of the family was within five miles of each other. We did a lot of things together, we'd go fishing to catch fish to eat. But family was all around us.

**DM:** Well all of my father's family was in Spain and my mother didn't have brothers and sisters, so I had no one like aunts and uncles and cousins. My grandfather was here, he lived with us and we had the neighborhood. The neighbors were like your family and were very close. If anyone was sick, someone else was over there to take care of them. Or they'd take care of a neighbor's kids if they were little and feed them. So, your neighbors were your family.

**JH:** How old were you during this period?

**AM:** I would have been from five to ten or twelve years old.

**DM:** I was nine when the war was started.

**JH:** Were schools affected by the Depression?

**AM:** Very much so. Most of the kids were on free lunches. Where I went to school, I went to a small country school and didn't have shoes, of course the weather was good for that too, now we didn't wear shoes going to school until I believe the sixth grade.

**DM:** Well I wore shoes. I don't think the schools had air conditioning, if they did they didn't run. We had

books. Most of us brought our lunch or went home for lunch. There wasn't a lot of lunch buying that I can remember. Most of the people at that time had the neighborhood schools and you could run home and eat lunch at home, if you were too far away, you brought lunch.

**JH:** Was your education effected or interrupted by the Depression?

**AM:** Sure, everyone's [education] was [effected]. Especially the older boys who wanted to go on [to higher education] like we did.

**DM:** My education wasn't interrupted, I didn't have older siblings. I would assume that the teenage boys and that age they would be because they were drafted before they even finished high school. Many of them could finish [their education], but they left. If they planned to go on further to college or anything, they waited until they got back or by then they decided not to do it at all.

**JH:** Did you ever have to work to help out?

**AM:** Well, there was no work to be had, but if you wanted to help out you could do something in the garden or something like that. There was just no work to be had. Other than that we went to school.

**DM:** I think I was fourteen when I had my first job, it was in a hardware store for three dollars on salary. I had to give one of those dollars at home. That was my contribution from my salary.

**JH:** What other sacrifices did you have to make, besides food and shoes?

**AM:** I think the sacrifice was opportunity. We couldn't go anywhere. There was no way of traveling and

going anywhere. We didn't go anywhere except a few blocks from my house, and we'd walk everywhere we went. I had the opportunity to get some lessons in art with the supervisor of the county. She offered lessons for free, but I couldn't get there. So, the opportunity was gone.

**DM:** I couldn't go to college. There was no way my parents could afford to pay for any schooling beyond high school. I couldn't go from high school to college like a lot of people would.

**JH:** What goal did you set for yourself before the war?

**AM:** To survive (laughter), it sounds silly, but it's true. Really, you wanted to get through that period. If it weren't for the war, times were not improving that quickly. Actually, the war is what created employment in this country.

**DM:** I don't think I had any goals, really.

**JH:** Well, is there anything else you'd like to mention about that era?

**AM:** What you might be interested in is there were no refrigerators. We had an icebox. They would deliver ice to your door. There were no supermarkets. You had a little corner store about a block away and he would have maybe three or four cans of something and when he was out of that, that's it. And everything would come to your house. The bread man came, the coffee man came, the iceman came, and everybody came to your house to bring things. The reason I mention the icebox is, things would only stay cool in there, they didn't stay real cold. So you couldn't keep anything. Of course there wasn't anything leftover to keep anyway.

**JH:** You couldn't store anything for a long period of time.

**AM:** No, you couldn't store anything.

**DM:** I remember that we had ration books, and everything was rationed: the sugar, the butter, the meat. Everything, we could only get so much and each person in the family had a ration book. I still have the ration books for my family and they have little stamps that you can tear out when you bought sugar [and other items]. When you used all those coupons, then you didn't get anymore until the following month when you got a new book. Women like my mother could not get stockings, they could not get hose because that material was used to make weapons [and war supplies]. The hose they could but was real thick cotton hose and when they couldn't get butter anymore. Then, they came out with what we now call margarine. It was white and it looked like lard and it would come in a bag and it would come with a tablet of color and you'd put that in there and mash it to make it yellow. It tasted like margarine, but it would look like lard [without adding the coloring]. That was my job, I had to mash that bag (laughter). Sometimes I had streaky yellow margarine because I really didn't want to mash that bag.

**JH:** We're now going to go onto the WWII era. Were people in Hillsborough County generally aware of the war?

**AM:** No because we did not have the [Air Force] base until the 1940s, there was no television, no telephones in the neighborhood at all. We had little knowledge of what happened in the city of Tampa, we had no knowledge of what happened in Tallahassee, in Florida, and we had even less knowledge of what was happening in Europe.

**DM:** We didn't have a telephone or any kind of communication other than a radio, and what we learned of what

was happening in the world was usually through the "fireside chats" which President Roosevelt would have on the radio. And they always made sure to listen to that and whatever was said in that program was all we knew of what was happening. If anything developed between "chats," you didn't know about it.

**JH:** So did communities grow and become stronger because of wanting to know about the situation?

**AM:** No, [the bombing of] Pearl Harbor was an absolute shock. We were unprepared, we weren't ready for anything. They were training soldiers with wood sticks for rifles because with the starting in Europe and we had so many people who didn't want to go to war we were not prepared and Pearl Harbor was an absolute shock.

**DM:** I think the neighbors were already close, but I think it made them closer because so many of them had sons who went off to war. And the neighbors would be very concerned in particular when they'd show up at the front door with a telegram and you knew that neighbor was getting notice of the death of their child.

**JH:** How did your family respond to the prospects of entering the war?

**AM:** You had to go to war, there was no choice. A lot of people said it was England and they realized what was coming, but you had enough people who didn't want us to go to war, that we were not prepared. You had people on both sides of the fence.

**DM:** I don't remember ever hearing my parents discuss how they felt about the war at all, other than that it was a bad thing. I remember my father saying that it [the war] isn't going to last very long. I guess he didn't think it would.

**JH:** How old were you when war broke out?

**AM:** When war broke out in 1941, I was in junior high school. So, it affected my two older brothers than it did me at that time. They both quit school to join up, both in the Navy. I was going to quit school in 1945, the war was still going on then, the war was until August of 1945 and it was June of 1945. So, I was going to quit school because I wanted to get in. But I was talked out of it, luckily, by a teacher and a couple of my schoolmates, to go ahead and finish my schooling and then get in [the war], which I did.

**DM:** I was nine when they bombed Pearl Harbor, and I remember that it was announced at school. They let everybody go home. I ran home crying that there was a war, I'm not sure if even knew what that meant, but it seemed to be a bad thing, and they let us out of school and told us that we better go home. I suppose I thought that it was going to come down the street and get me any minute.

**JH:** You mentioned that your two brothers were in the Navy and that you joined in later, was there anyone else in your family who served?

**AM:** My father was in the Merchant Marines, my two brothers were in the Navy, all of my cousins, and I had one cousin killed. At the same time my one brother was in the Atlantic Ocean and the other was in the Pacific Ocean. One was on the Aircraft Carrier Hornet [sank in the battle of Midway], and it was sunk, but he got off the ship all right. The other one was in a bottom feeder on the Atlantic side, and he got a Silver Star. At the same time, my first cousin was being killed just a few miles down further in the invasion there in Serrano, Italy.

**DM:** All of my cousins were in Spain, and they were involved in a Spanish war.

**JH:** How did the female members of your family survive during that time?

**AM:** They were pretty much alone. Everybody was gone, so they took over. That was probably the beginning of the women's movement. They took over the jobs because they had to. They started driving [automobiles], which they hadn't done before. They started collecting METAL and storing things for the war effort. The women were responsible for that because most men were gone.

**JH:** Did you have any sisters?

**AM:** No, only brothers.

**JH:** And your mother continued to work in the cigar factories?

**AM:** Yes

**JH:** And your [DM] family?

**DM:** My mother stayed at home. I know some of the neighbor women, whose husbands went off to war, they had to work. The neighborhood came together to take care of their children while they went to work. None of our neighbors learned to drive that I can remember, we didn't have cars to drive, we couldn't afford cars. I think that [time] was the first time I saw women wearing slacks also. My mother never wore slacks; it was always dresses and aprons. I think that was the first time I saw women wearing slacks; it was during the war. They would work at factories and I guess it was better, than dresses, to climb things or whatever.

**JH:** Where were you stationed during the war?

**AM:** Well, the war was over when I got in, but I was stationed in Hawaii. [I was stationed] at a marine air base in Oahu.

**JH:** Is there anything memorable about that area that you'd like to share?

**AM:** Well it's like living in Florida, really. The temperature is beautiful over there. The war was over, but the war conditions were not over. We went over there to relieve the Marines First Division. They were coming in from Guadacanal and different places. We were nineteen years old and we went over to relieve them so they can come back to the [United] States.

**JH:** When you decided to go to war, did you have any idea as to what you were getting into? Did you know the magnitude of the war?

**AM:** No, you never do. I didn't know the magnitude when I was in the Marine Corps. I graduated in January of 1946. I joined the same week and a week later, I would have been drafted, so I joined rather than be drafted.

**JH:** Did you [DM] have any idea as to the magnitude of this war?

**DM:** No, I think when you first know someone who has been killed, until it's someone that you know, one of the neighborhood boys or someone. It's so far away, and it doesn't have much to do with you. That's when it hits home, when you realize that people are dying, and people you know are dying.

**JH:** Did you experience a great sense of fear or loneliness during the war?

**AM:** Yes, it was the first time I had been away from home. The furthest I had been before that was north in Ocala and south in Miami. That's the first I'd been away from home. When

they put us first on a troop train and then a troop ship, you're about 3,000, 4,000, or even 6,000 miles away. I was there a year and a half. So, you have enough time to be lonely.

**JH:** How did you cope with that?

**AM:** Like everybody else, the best you could. Luckily, you got letters from home to help you out. But, other than that you just had to face it.

**JH:** Did you [DM] have any sense of fear or loneliness?

**DM:** Not loneliness because I wasn't away like they were. I think the first time someone you knew had gotten killed, that fear set in that this might happen again to somebody else that you knew.

**JH:** You mentioned members of your family in WWII, your cousins . . .

**AM:** Yes, my first cousin was in the Battle of Serrano when they were landing, he was at one end of the landing and my brother was on the landing craft on the shore. It was hit by a shell and it blew up the landing craft, and he went into the water with the men who were with him, the others were killed. When he got ashore, the Italian machine guns that had fired at him had surrendered. So he was capturing men as well as saving lives. So he got the Silver Star for that.

**JH:** And how did your family cope with the loss of a loved one?

**AM:** Well, my cousin was actually the only one nearest to us that was killed. My father at that time was in the Merchant Marines, so he was not home. He was in the convoys going across and the submarines were out there. So you worried about them.

Everybody worried about everyone else.

**JH:** So, here in the county, people pretty much coped with the loss of a family member pretty much the same?

**AM:** Like she [DM] said it comes as a shock because the telegram comes and that's the only way you know. And you had the gold stars in the window in those days. When someone was killed, you put a gold star in the window.

**JH:** With people who lost family members, how did you see how they coped?

**DM:** I didn't have any of my family members, so it was what you would see in other people. They didn't seem to cope that well with it. Many of them blamed the president and the government for getting us into a war that would take their child. Not that much they could do.

**JH:** What was your opinion of the war? Were you for it?

**AM:** Yes, because you had the country that attacked you and the countries that joined them. I was in full support of the war. But again, for us, we were hearing of places we'd never heard of before. We never heard of Guadalcanal and places like that, and almost every month you'd hear of a new place because they were invading. The Marines or Army were invading those places. So all these new names, when they put it in the paper, it came as a surprise. Just like now, the ones going on now . . .

**DM:** Kosovo.

**AM:** Kosovo and those like that are all new places. When you've been no further than Ocala (laughter).

**JH:** Were you [DM] also in support of the war, or were you indifferent?

**DM:** I myself don't remember forming an opinion of pro or con. But I know the grownups when they talked, they said it was something that had to be done. So I would say generally they favored it. Not favored it but that it couldn't be avoided.

**JH:** Did you make any lasting friendships during the war?

**AM:** Yes, made a lot of friends

**JH:** Do you still keep in touch with them?

**AM:** Some of them I still know, and the one fella from Tampa that joined, they kept us together through the whole time of our enlistment. Yes they're the only ones you knew, there weren't anyone else, and there was no family. They were your family.

**JH:** Well, I'll ask this question, but I think I know the answer (laughter). What goals did you set for yourself during the war?

**AM:** (laughter) To stay alive. Well also we had no idea what we were going to do after the war. Once the war was being won in 1945. You had to figure "what in the world was I going to do afterwards. What kind of world it was going to be?"

**JH:** Did you set any goals for yourself during the war?

**DM:** No, not really. I knew I was glad I wasn't a boy and didn't have to go [to war].

**JH:** Is there anything else about WWII that you'd like to mention?

**AM:** Well, my folks expected though I was going to come back home and move next door and my brothers were going to move next door and it was going to all be like it would before. That wasn't so. Once we left and got a taste of other places, most weren't coming back to the same place, you wouldn't come back to that little old village that it was before. And when you saw another part of the world, it just separated people and from that time on, I think we became more of a mobile nation after that.

**DM:** It scattered the family and even when they came back to the States, they had met girls in other states other bases. Like, his [AM] brother met a girl in California, and so he married her, and so he stayed in California. He never moved back to Tampa. So even though they came back to the States to live, it wasn't Tampa.

**JH:** Oh, so the war broke up the family?

**DM:** Right

**AM:** Yes, it did a big job breaking up families. Nothing was the same again.

**JH:** Okay, we'll move now to the post-war era. You mentioned about the families just now, but what other changes did you notice in the United States after the war?

**AM:** All this effort we had made and all of a sudden, everything comes to a standstill. You make a conversion back to peacetime, which is very hard. You're out there shooting and killing somebody and all of a sudden, you stop and go back to where you were. That's when psychology came in to use. First time we heard of that. Shock. Every war has a different name for the shock of war, but that's what happened.

**DM:** After the war, we started getting imports, things were coming from other countries, which everything we had was made here. We started seeing these labels like "Made in China". There was more trade after the war, that we didn't seem to have. And there was more in the shipyards, they were preparing should this happen again.

**JH:** How were the morale and the national pride after the war?

**AM:** Well, when you win, it's very good. The only thing is the confusion of all these men coming back and what were they going to do.

**DM:** The pride was there after the World War, as I can remember when the troop trains would come back, when the men came back there was always big parades. The American flag, any dignitary in the city was out to meet the train or the bus or whatever, the whole town turned out for it. If you think about after that, the Vietnam War and all of the other wars, when they come back, who knows? The family only knows, there is no big celebration like there was. The ones that came back, they were really honored when they came back.

**JH:** But that's changed.

**DM:** It has changed, they don't do that now for them.

**JH:** So here in Hillsborough County there was the same amount of pride?

**AM:** Yes, nationwide. Now before the war there was no nationwide pride because we were all little villages, but the war brings everyone together and now we had won the war, the big war, and a lot of pride.

**JH:** What changes in Hillsborough County did you notice after the war?

**AM:** Everything changed. One thing now they were beginning to manufacture cars again. There were no cars, no tires. Most cars, used by the people in Hillsborough County who had cars, were on blocks. You couldn't get tires for them. There was also gas rationing. So when we came back, all of a sudden, all of this paper, posters, refrigerators, all of this stuff was being manufactured now.

**DM:** I think the one thing that I noticed was that after the war and the men came home, the women didn't stop working, some did. Many of them continued to work; they had gained a kind of independence, and they continued to work and they also became more affluent with two salaries and they started buying all of the appliances and all of the goodies, and they didn't want to give that up. The working mom went from there.

**JH:** Was there a booming growth in Hillsborough County right after the war?

**AM:** Your talking 1946 now up to the 1950s were good. Everything was becoming available now. People were starting to get jobs. The factories were converting to domestic stuff. A lot of people had the GI Bill too. They went to school on the GI Bill.

**DM:** I think the subdivisions were started after that too. They started building houses and rather than before, each family kind of built their own house, then builders came in and developed subdivisions. There was money for them to buy the houses.

**AM:** And the government helped with the mortgages. You had the GI Loan at that time too. If you bought a house and had been in the service, the government would help you and give you special interest on buying one house.

**DM:** We bought our house for 90 dollars down (laughter).

**JH:** What changed in the lives of your family members at the time?

**AM:** My parents divorced during this period. My father had been in the Merchant Marines all this time, and my mother had been working in the cigar factories. And they hadn't gotten along too good before that but his sort of put the focus on it. Now she was working full-time to support herself. So, they decided to split up. But a lot of tension came in after the war, it wasn't all "hooray" these times. All of a sudden you're going from one stream to another stream.

**DM:** My family didn't change any, it didn't cause any changes. In the neighborhood, a lot of the neighborhood boys didn't come back home. They moved out of the States or somewhere else.

**JH:** Things got better financially.

**DM:** Yes.

**JH:** Now, what changed in your own life?

**AM:** Well we came back and my mother had bought three lots, assuming that we were going to live in that little village. And that we were going to move next door to her as you would before the war, but after being away and seeing the rest of the world, none of us came back to live in the lot. We went in different directions. It just changed your attitude entirely. I saw I had an opportunity to do a little more than my parents could do. My parents went to the sixth grade. I graduated from high school and I saw a chance where I could go to college.

**JH:** Where did you go?

**AM:** The University of Tampa

**DM:** That's because there was no USF back then.

**AM:** That's right, there was only one school available.

**JH:** And what age were you then?

**AM:** I was about 22 when I went into college. We worked about two years. When you saw what kind of work you were going to be doing, you said, "I'm going to college." I don't want to be doing this kind of work. So, the GI Bill made it available, otherwise, you couldn't afford it.

**JH:** Did the war have an effect on what occupation you chose?

**AM:** Oh yes. Before that, if your father was a cigar worker, you were a cigar worker. If your father was a carpenter, you were a carpenter. You had no way of getting out of these things. But after the war, the opportunities were wide open.

**JH:** What was your area of study at the University of Tampa?

**AM:** Education, I taught, I am certified in art, but actually I taught fifth grade first and then I taught art.

**JH:** Did many of your friends take advantage of the GI Bill?

**AM:** Yes. If you go in the lobby of the University of Tampa in those days, 1948, 49, 50, the lobby was full of wives and little kids. Where you see the coeds and younger people, you saw mostly veterans. It was just full of veterans. It was a real godsend, the GI Bill.

**JH:** Did it seem that many people in Hillsborough County took advantage of the GI Bill?

**AM:** Yes. I was amazed at how many did take advantage of it. Now some didn't finish. They would go a year or two years and they would not finish because the GI Bill insisted that you make a "B" average. If you didn't they would drop you. It sure gave them an opportunity to go.

**JH:** What goals did you set for yourself after the war?

**AM:** There was no limit. The goals I set, I went after, and most I've come close to them anyway. Anyone who wanted to, now could set goals and do something. Before the war, in the Depression, there was no hope, but now you set your own goals.

**JH:** When did you two meet?

**DM:** His mom lived next door to us, he was the boy next door. I thought he was kind of cute, and I use to sweep my front porch a lot, especially around the time I thought he'd be coming in.

**AM:** She knew I was loaded with money with the GI Bill (laughter). With the G.I. Bill, they gave us 90 dollars a month, of course that paid for tuition and books. You had to work, I wasn't just going to college.

**JH:** Looking back on this entire era, do you have any great regrets?

**AM:** No, I think it as a great challenge coming out of the Great Depression, the Depression was the most terrible thing, as bad as the war, because you had no hope at all. Then the war came and you had no choice. Then after that, everything was wide open.

**DM:** I regret not having been able to go to college, I would have liked to have done that. Then you could always do that later on, I realize that, but then after we had children. I felt like I should be home with them. And then when they got old enough I thought I might do this now. We had grandchildren that we kept for seven years, so that threw a monkey wrench in there. And now, at my age by the time I'd get out of college, I'd be 70; I'd never make tenure.

**JH:** What is the greatest lesson you learned from this era that you would like to share?

**AM:** How to survive. You take the situation you got and you got them. And you do the best you could with them. And you had setbacks all the way along but you kept going. And if you don't give up, you can get where you're going. Especially the Depression, it either made you or broke you. It was a terrible thing. You see people broke from that who never recovered, [there were] a lot of homeless people. Even when we went into the war, they never recovered from it.

**DM:** Well I think making do with what you had and sharing which the family did, and knowing who your neighbor was and caring about what was happening to your neighbor, which nowadays, people don't even know who lives two doors down from them. They really don't know if those people are well or not or need anything or not. And we had a sense of togetherness that you learned to be aware of your neighbors and what their needs were and what you could do to help. And no matter how little anybody had, it sort of belonged to the neighborhood, everybody shared.

**AM:** The greatest thing then was the front porch. Everybody at night sat on

the front porch. Everybody at night sat on the front porch. And you would walk up and down the street and visit your neighbor on the front porch. They don't build houses with a front porch anymore because of air conditioning. But the front porch and the swing is where you knew all your neighbors from.

**JH:** And that's where you both met.

**AM:** That's right.

**JH:** Is there anything about this post war era that you'd like to mention?

**AM:** No, I think it's too bad that when the other wars came, the Korean War was shortly after that. The boys went out to that [the Korean War], came back to nothing. The Vietnam boys went there and they were treated even worse [here]. It's too bad, but the country couldn't come together. World War II was big; we were attacked, the whole country was attacked. Whereas, they didn't feel it Vietnam or Korea and the country never got behind those efforts, and probably never will unless it's a real big war.

**DM:** I think unless we are attacked again, I don't think we would mobilize the country in these little wars where we go in as peacekeepers or whatever role we play. Unless our country is attacked I don't think you would mobilize this country around these scattered efforts.

**AM:** See, when our generation is gone, we were involved in the big war, and your [JH] generation knows a little skirmish of it. It's hard, you'll have one friend on one side of it and you'll be on the other side of it. There was no great cause to go in for. You just hope there is not another war, period.