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Mrs. Ralph Strunsbury

[0:00:00]

Mrs. Strunsbury: Maybe that would be the best.

Interviewer: Okay.

Mrs. Strunsbury: For you to ask me the question.

Interviewer: First question I asked you was when you became aware of this depression.

Mrs. Strunsbury: Yes, well, I think that was – my father worked at Crib's *[phonetic]* **[0:00:17]** pigment plant. And he was laid off probably within I'll say '29, and then he went on construction work, which didn't last too long. That must have been mid '30. But in that particular period, we lived in the third floor of his apartment building.

The man that owns the Artesian Water Company came to mother and asked her if she would like to move next door, the house was taken, move next door, it would be easier because we would be in a home with the three children. Central heat was there and I can't remember any down payment involved here, but it was just \$25 a month rent.

And the \$25 would be applied to buying the house, how much it was, well, I can't remember that. But I know that we were in the home a very short time when then daddy was laid off from even the construction work, which most have been in the beginning of probably 1930. At that time, they were building the first edition to Craig's school and I remember daddy going up to the school every day and to see if there wasn't something, it was quite handy, could do most anything as far as mechanically or with his hands or anything like that, and willing.

He kept going up every day and coming home nothing, nothing, nothing. And finally, one day he came home and said he was going to be put on night watchman for the school that he didn't – his contact, he didn't have one. And so he would give me the job as night watchman at \$1.25 a week. This was a big help because nothing have been coming in for quite a long time.

But we had chickens and we did manage to have chickens when we moved over into this house because it's kind of large yard to it, had peach

tree in the back and had a pear tree, grape vine, and, of course, we always had a garden during the summer and mother would can and preserve and nothing was wasted. I remember with the grapes, we could take it all, she would make jelly and then juice, grape juice.

And when the grape juice – the only time the grape juice was drank or brought out was at Christmas time or if one became ill in the family, then we were able to have a glass of grape juice. Mother always seems to feel that the grape juice was strengthening for us and I remember that.

Interviewer: Yeah, *[inaudible]* [0:03:58].

Mrs. Strunsbury: And then, yes. And the American Store down at the corner, which was a small store, but this was very common in your little town and mother was a very good cook and she loved it, loved to cook and bake, and so she went to Mr. Moore, which was the manager of the American Store and asked him if she baked the pie, would he try to sell them for her and in this way we could stay off of public assistance, which she didn't want that, and he was very kind and he said yes.

I remember this very well because I was the one that had to take the pies to the store and then go back down and see him and he was sold at the end of the day and if three was sold, we were able to buy 30 cents worth of food or whatever we needed.

[0:05:09]

And then with my father having us the night watchman work, we manage to get through the winter pretty good. Then along with this night watchman's work though, this would be in 1930, the winter of 1930, it was a very difficult winter.

I do recall that because mother – we couldn't buy coal for the heater so she closed off the rest of the house and we lived in the kitchen, which we had this bucket a day stove, which heated our hot water, and we had the hot water tank also in the kitchen, and along with the cooking we were quite comfortable.

We never had our electricity turned off, some people, I think they did, but we didn't because mother was very practical and she saved the electricity for the homework in the evening. And she had a washer, she had bought a washer just before my father got laid off. She had bought a washing machine from the Dollar Power and Light, and so she saved

electricity for doing our homework in the evening, for the ironing, and for the washing of the clothing.

And as soon as the homework was finished in the evening, then she got out the oil lamp and we burnt an oil lamp to play games or whatever recreation we would do in this – it was a large kitchen, it was rather an old house, and so it had a large kitchen. But I hated that oil lamp. Oh, I think that was terrible and I was – a kid, I guess I sort of felt ashamed of an oil lamp. I really don't know of anyone else that used an oil lamp and to me that was just – it's just horrible. Of course, I kept all this feelings within. I didn't express them to my mother because I realize that times were hard and that she and my father were doing the very best that they could.

Then the summer of '31, things were still very bad. I can't remember what daddy was doing, whether he had been able to go back on that road work, building roads or something. But I know that when my brother – my brother died, he was drowned and I know that daddy wasn't working then. I believe that was in August of '31 and that night that – it started out as a fun time, we were all going swimming and meeting friends. Some place in Stanton, we were going swimming.

And at that evening, just as it was getting dusk, someone said clear the way, there's a child drowned, and they brought my brother out of the water and my mother looked at the child and she said, "Oh, it's Earl." And that night, when he died she had 65 cents. It was all the money that we had, but a neighbor came to mother and asked her if she owned her home, and she was a friend of the family, and she asked mother if there was anything that she could do and if she needed any money. And so she gave mother \$15 and with the \$15, mother was able to – I'm sure she didn't use it all for clothing for my sister and I, but it was used for clothing at this particular time.

Friends were very kind then, I do recall, but when mother got the insurance, which was just a small policy on my brother, but fortunately, it was in case that accidental death, she would get double, which this was an accident, classified as an accidental death. She paid Mrs. Purb back the \$15, which she had given to my mother.

[0:10:04]

And thinking of insurance, I do too remember that mother, little by little, she sold her insurance policies to keep the insurance up on my sister and

I and my father, because she felt that this was more important than insurance on herself.

Now, just within '31, now '32 comes along and it just wasn't any different, it seemed like. The winter was bad and we saved the wood for special times, maybe Sunday or when the minister would come home. Occasionally, the minister too would – they invited him to the house for Sunday. The whole family went to church, went to Sunday school and to prayer meeting. This was a necessary part of our way of life at that time, was church. In fact, for the various parts of people I think this is really the only time that you got out, was to go to church. And so we save the gas and we manage to always have a modest tea. I remember that, but it was only used for going to church and back home again.

But occasionally, you would the minister to come home with you, and when that happens, they you knew it was winter, you knew you were going to have some fire in that heater and the rest of the house would be warm, the bedrooms, and what have you, and also that you would have chicken. For dinner, daddy would kill a chicken, which we had chickens, we had eggs, we manage always to have eggs, not always have meat, but we manage to have eggs and fruit.

Then I believe that '32, that winter, the State Highway Department had bought a new, a new snow plow. This was something new. Apparently, they didn't have this equipment before and daddy doing construction work, such as running a steamrollers and what have you.

He knew how to operate this snow plow that the State Highway had just bought. So he was called. We had a real bad winter and a lot of snow and it drifted and I recall daddy being gone all day and night for two and three days at a time driving the snow plow. And so this brought in, I don't recall how much money, but it brought in some money to keep us all of that assistance, welfare assistance.

Then the man that...

Interviewer: Why was it so important to keep off the welfare?

Mrs. Strunsbury: Because if you went on Welfare in those days, you were really looked down upon. It isn't like it is today. I mean, if you're on need welfare today it's a different situation entirely. You look at it differently. But in those days if you have to go on any assistance, I mean, , everyone seemed to know it and you were really down and out when you had to accept that and you'd...

Interviewer: ***[inaudible] [0:13:43].***

Mrs. Strunsbury: No, there wasn't. No. And you did everything that you possibly could to prevent going on assistance. I mean, it wasn't only our family, but other families as well. And I'm sure that there were some that needed to be on assistance, but since my mother was practical and handy, and my father was willing to take anything, we were managed to stay off of this assistance due to the frowning upon it.

So now, let's see...

Interviewer: ***[inaudible] [0:14:37]?***

Mrs. Strunsbury: Oh, yes. And then this winter, a man that owned our house knew our situation, of course. And so he was having a man come down from the – I believe it was in Connecticut. They were giving the wells out of Tuxedo Park and they needed welders.

[0:15:04]

And this man, I believe, ran a school for welding in Connecticut. Well, he was coming down. And so Mr. Taylor came to mother and asked her if she would be willing for him to board with us, knowing that mother would do most anything and this baking and everything that she was doing.

And so she said yes, she would be glad to have him. And the fee for him coming and boarding with us, he was willing to pay \$10 a week, which is quite a bit of money at that time. I mean, this was just I guess almost like a \$100 would be to us today. But I can remember so well, I mean, this \$10 a week was, oh my, it was just unbelievable. And he was a very nice man and jolly, and he just brought a lot of fun and joy within the home, not only his money, but he himself.

I know he was a German man, but he was, oh, ever so nice. And so this was big help to us, through this particular year. Then...

Interviewer: ***[inaudible] [0:16:20]?***

Mrs. Strunsbury: I believe this is in '32. And then after this work with the Artesian Weld Company was finished, actually, Mr. Jacobs went back home and went back, found ourselves back in the same situation again. And so what was going to happen next? What was mother and daddy going to do next?

And our medical was taken care of, Dr. Edward Miller and Dr. Striker *[phonetic]* **[0:16:51]** were our doctors and whenever we needed a doctor, they never refused to come to the house. Yes, they knew our situation that just wasn't going to be any money.

And so Dr. Striker asked mother if she would like to open a restaurant in Newport. He owned the building where the American Store was and it had two or three apartments in it and also there was another store and it had closed. And he felt possibly mother would like to open a restaurant. So he came to mother and asked her if she would do this. Well, she knew the work involved and yet she knew the need, and she said yes, she would. And this was the first restaurant that was in Newport at this time.

And she get all the cooking and daddy made a counter out of scrap lumber and we used cigar box for the cash register. And he also made the tables and she made the table cloth and what have you. And really surprisingly enough, we really had quite a business there because everything was homemade, but it meant that mother would get up when it was still dark in the morning until they're just – you just didn't have regular hours like you do today. And she was there at daybreak and she was there until there just wasn't any other customer possibly for an hour to come in at night. That might be 11 o'clock, it might be 12 o'clock.

But nevertheless, I mean, you just didn't close the door because it was a certain hour. You kept it open hoping someone else to come in. And during this particular time of the restaurant, my sister was three years older than I, and she was taken sick. And they put her in the hospital for a week and found that it was a heart condition. Brought her home, she had to stay in bed for five months. And at the end of five months when she was told that she could get up out of bed, she had no clothing to wear. She had grown about 5 or 6 inches. And here again, with all the work that mother was doing in the restaurant, she still found time to make some clothing for my sister.

And of course, if you have one or two dresses, I mean, you didn't need to have a wardrobe full of clothing, just a couple of things.

Interviewer: *[inaudible]* **[0:19:40]**.

Mrs. Strunsbury: Yes. Well, the neighbors were, as a general *[inaudible]* **[0:19:48]** thing, yes, they were. Of course, you didn't really talk too much about those circumstances.

[0:19:57]

But except for one neighbor, it was just she and her husband and they all – oh, I can remember they had a new car just about every two years and they had a nice home, nice bungalow and flowers, roses and what have you, just the things that you sort of would like to have for your own.

And she came. He was talking to mother one day and apparently discussing about the hard times. And the bank in Newport had closed and apparently they had some money in the bank and had lost it. And so she told mother, she said, "But Mrs. Lori *[phonetic]* **[0:20:38]** you can't really feel the depression or these hard times as those of us that own things and have lost them. You own nothing so there is no loss for you. And I can remember very well how this hurt my mother, because how hard she had worked to keep us off of assistance and then for someone to say an unkind thing such as that, I'm sure, it was said maybe not in the way that we would -- mother took it, but nevertheless it wasn't very kind during that particular time.

But they had, this family, as I say, it was just she and her husband. They seem to me, what I would say, go off during those times. And then school, there were many children in school that had much more than what we had. And then there, I'm sure, I know, one particular family that had less than what we had. And we had no buses. Everyone walked to school, I mean, it wasn't the population like it is today. And you had eight teachers. I was eighth grade at that time in Craig's school. And 20 or 25 children at the most in each class and your teachers taught music and art, and what have you, I mean, you didn't have a special teacher for each thing.

Interviewer: *[inaudible]* **[0:22:36]**?

Mrs. Strunsbury: Not that I can remember. Of course, naturally, we had geography and history. But the depression years, you just, I mean, it as something that just apparently had made history yet. Everyone was in the situation, but you just didn't talk about it. I mean it was an accepted thing, but no, you weren't taught that in school. But everyone knew everyone in school.

Interviewer: Do you remember when Franklin Roosevelt became the president?

Mrs. Strunsbury: Yes, I do. I do remember. That was quite a reaction at that time, a feeling of hope and looking forward to things getting a lot better, not overnight so to speak, but little by little, you could feel that this was the answer to what we had been going through. And, of course, you did bring in – was it the WPA?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mrs. Strunsbury: And, again, he also brought – I remember when mother had the restaurant, he brought the NRA and if you had a business of any store, I believe you did have to sign up for this NRA. All of these things were an encouragement to those that had really been quite poor on a matter of two or three years before that.

Interviewer: *[inaudible]* [0:24:41].

Mrs. Strunsbury: It seemed, in our situation, mother continue with the restaurant and daddy finally did go back, not with the money or anything like that, like it was before he worked.

[0:25:04]

He went back to the construction work and I think he made about 25 cents an hour when he was on regular 40 hours a week.

Interviewer: WPA?

Mrs. Strunsbury: No, this was not. My father did not go on WPA because this was classified even so as assistance, yes. But daddy didn't do that. And mother was rather proud, she really didn't like the idea of having to put fine in the window of the restaurant that she was a member the NRA. But I think this was a required thing that everyone in the business had to have this. I believe I did mention about the electricity being conserved for our homework and heat.

The years, as well as I can remember, I graduated from Craig's school, I think it was in '38. And by that time, things were better, although I remember oh so well I had learned to ride a bicycle, a two wheel bicycle, longed to have a two wheel bicycle. Oh I longed that bicycle. And I knew that it was impossible for my mother and father to buy a bicycle because they were rather expensive for poor people.

I had a girlfriend that had one and so this made me want I guess even more, although she was very generous and letting me ride hers all the time too. But when I was in the eighth grade, mother managed to buy me a second hand bicycle and she gave it to me and it was a total surprise. It was Christmas. It was a total surprise, a second hand bicycle, and I remember that bicycle so well.

But by the time I was in the eighth grade, the bicycle really was a lot of fun, but didn't mean quite as much to me had I gotten it, say, in sixth grade because I was -- I'm older I suppose. But there again at Christmas time, I remember, between '31, '32 and '33, '34 in those years, no matter what we asked for for Christmas time -- now, we didn't ask for a long list. We asked for one thing. And somehow my mother managed to get that one thing that we're -- a pair of roller-skates, that we would have the roller skates, and then we would have a big dish with nuts and candy and fruit on it, and this was Christmas.

Interviewer: ***[inaudible] [0:28:14].***

Mrs. Strunsbury: And a Christmas tray, a beautiful Christmas tray, which we all shared and decorated and what have you. Mother always made a lot over Christmas. And I can remember when Christmas time came and she was able to get this one particular thing that we would ask for, how happy she seemed to be when she could see the happiness in us, because we would ask for these things, but we just didn't think that we would get them. And then when Christmas morning come, I mean, we would have that very thing that we had asked her for, and I remember my roller skates because I loved the roller-skates. And so this was one Christmas that I enjoyed.

Interviewer: Did you have a radio in this time?

Mrs. Strunsbury: We did not have a radio until -- she took in another boarder, took in another boarder, and he was working, and he's also paid \$10 a week. And he bought a radio, he bought a radio, and we were not -- as children of course we were not allowed to touch it. It was put in the living room. It was a good radio and we weren't allowed to touch it. But in the evening when Mr. Russell was there, we were able to listen to the news, the Lowell Thomas and what have you, and everyone had to be very, very quiet, because they were just anticipating better times, better times. And I can't remember exactly when Mr. Russell came to live with us.

[0:30:03]

He was with us once for 10 or 15 years, I guess, but he bought the radio.

Interviewer: Do you remember the things that you listened on?

Mrs. Strunsbury: Well, as I say Lowell Thomas news, Fibber McGee and Molly, I remember that.

Interviewer: Do you remember the things that President Roosevelt do?

Mrs. Strunsbury: I remember his speeches. I cannot remember any promises or anything like that except discussions later on where -- such as this WPA that was brought in and the NRA, but I do remember the speeches, but I cannot remember the content of the speeches.

Interviewer: ***[inaudible] [0:30:59].***

Mrs. Strunsbury: Yes, yeah, Amos 'n' Andy, yes. And they were on 15 minutes. I think it was seven to -- Lowell Thomas came on first and then Amos 'n' Andy came on. I think it was a 15-minute program and this was a big, big treat to listen to these programs.

Interviewer: Did you like the music?

Mrs. Strunsbury: Yes, I like the music. And my sister, I would say that my sister like the music even better than I. She had a much better voice than I and she would sing the song. I was more or less on tomboyish side. I like to be outside. And this could be from the fact that my sisters being bed, she liked different things than I.

But she learned to play -- one year she got just a very inexpensive guitar for Christmas. She asked for that and she got it. And she played the guitar quite a bit. But before the depression came, she was fortunate enough to have piano lessons. And I remember through the depression longing to have piano lessons like my sister had had, because I remember her taking the lessons and I would just go banter the piano and just bang on it and long for it to know music as my sister. I never had that opportunity. My mother never could afford to give me.

Many years later, I've heard mother speak that she wish that she could have given me the piano lessons as she had been able to give to my sister.

Interviewer: ***[inaudible] [0:32:53]?***

Mrs. Strunsbury: Well, Bill Cosby was quite popular at that time and I suppose you would say it was jazz music. I think that changes with the years. We have rock and roll, and what have you now. And then it was sort of, yeah, everyone say, oh, it doesn't have any tune to it, it doesn't have any tune to it, and you say the same thing about the music today, it doesn't have any tune to it.

So, I suppose it's just about -- probably mother and daddy felt towards music then as probably my husband and I *[inaudible]* **[0:33:38]** music today.

Interviewer: *[inaudible]* **[0:33:45]**?

Mrs. Strunsbury: Oh, no. Not until my mother had the restaurant. Then my sister and I were able to get on the bus, which is 8 cents. And of course, that was right there at the restaurant, stop right at the red light in Newport. And we were able to go in and go to the movies, and go to the 5 and 10 to buy a 5 cent bag of candy, which was a big treat.

And generally, about once a month we were able to do this. You see money was becoming a little more plentiful when you were able to do that, and think the movie was only 10 cents. I believe it was 25 cents. It would take us 15 cents for the car fair -- no, it was 30, and 10 cents for the movie and 5 cents for the candy.

Interviewer: Did you like the movies?

Mrs. Strunsbury: Yes. Yes, I like the movies. Let's see, I can't really recall what I -- who is popular then, but Betty Davis, Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm, I believe. I remember seeing Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm who played in that, and Shirley Temple, I remember Shirley Temple very well.

[0:35:02]

And I think we managed to see all of her movies and how she seemed to win the hearts of everyone. And the dancer.

Interviewer: *[inaudible]* **[0:35:19]**?

Mrs. Strunsbury: Yes, Betty Stair..

Interviewer: Ginger Rogers.

Mrs. Strunsbury: And Ginger Rogers, yes. And *[inaudible]* **[0:35:25]** the musical, it was mainly musical, were all strictly comical.

Interviewer: Did you go on Saturday mornings?

Mrs. Strunsbury: Saturdays, yes.

Interviewer: *[inaudible]* **[0:35:36]**?

Mrs. Strunsbury: Well, this is like a *[inaudible]* [0:35:42] and they were generally musical, music. On the light side musical.

Interviewer: *[inaudible]* [0:35:49]?

Mrs. Strunsbury: No, not especially. No, it was just – this was a type of movie that they had been, I mean, it wasn't just children shows, no. It was just a regular theater and just shows.

Interviewer: *[inaudible]* [0:36:11]?

Mrs. Strunsbury: Went to Comrade's.

Interviewer: Yeah. Was she learning about the situation that's happening, the things that were going on in Europe or in Asia, Hitler and Mussolini at that time?

Mrs. Strunsbury: No. I can't recall anything like that. Of course, now we're out of the '30s then, aren't we?

Interviewer: *[inaudible]* [0:36:37].

Mrs. Strunsbury: No. If so, it was not -- I was at the age, where by that time I was, what, 10, about 10 years old, and I would have been 12 years old. I was sort of at the age where I didn't care about too much that was going on around me, and I was getting to be a teenager and going through...

Interviewer: *[inaudible]* [0:37:13]?

Mrs. Strunsbury: Well, what it meant to be a teenager to me was, there wasn't enough money to do what I would like to have done, such as they had dances in high school and I believe they were on Friday night and they were 10 cents and I couldn't go because that was a waste of money. My mother didn't really approve dancing anyway. So, it just wasn't the 10 cents for the dances.

And the same way with the sports. If I got to see a football game, I could consider myself very fortunate. And by this time many people were beginning to pull out of – this would have been in '39, '38 and '39. By this time, I mean, people were beginning to really get on their feet once more and it did seem that we had been so far under, so to speak, that even by this time we still were not what you would say out of feeling the past years.

My father never did seem to bring in the money that he had once brought in and actually he was older. And my mother, after having worked so hard through these depression years, her health began to get pretty bad. And in fact, I was really -- I quit school because I wanted to be an art teacher and I knew that that was out of the question.

And I thought, well, if I can't continue on with my education, if I can't see what I would want to be I might as well just quit. I know it was the wrong attitude to take and I'm sorry for it today. But I quit and went to work, and when I was 16, I quit school, mainly because there was more competition in school than what I had been used to in grade school. And then I felt that I would just quit.

Interviewer: *[inaudible] [0:39:59]?*

[0:40:05]

Mrs. Strunsbury: Yeah. Yes. There would be people that would come. I can remember people knocked on the door and my mother would always give them food. If they asked for money, of course, we didn't have any, but she would make them a sandwich and give them food and coffee or something like that. I can remember that. My mother would share. Whatever we had, she would have been willing and she did share.

Interviewer: *[inaudible] [0:40:35]?*

Mrs. Strunsbury: Yes, in the beginning, yes. And then there seem to be a change. Now you did ask me about Hitler, and I supposed I can recall there was discussion about the war and especially when the draft came along. I do remember that because the people's attitude was that Roosevelt end and we would stay out for or re-elect him. It was a re-election.

Now we have re-elected him. Now he's bringing up into the war. And also saw the reaction of people in the same American Store that I spoke of where the pies were sold, years later standing in this American Store, approximately maybe 9 10 years later, standing in the same American Store, I have overheard women saying, "Oh, I hope the world doesn't end yet. I hope the world doesn't end yet. I still have somebody to pay for. I still want to get so and so."

And that sort of made feel very strange because I didn't feel that war should -- they should based their material things on more getting it through defense work and what have you. But this was, of course, in the '40s then.

Interviewer: ***[inaudible] [0:42:33].***

Mrs. Strunsbury: Well, I think maybe you misunderstood. Unfortunately, I was one of the ones that was in, yes. Well, it was sort of unfortunate. Yet, as I look back on it, my children will never understand what it was like during those years, and it was a very unfortunate time, as I say. When I think of it now, I think of how hard my mother and father worked. I didn't realize it at the time.

So just based on that, I think that was an unfortunate thing that my mother and father had to work. And yet, I'm thankful for the experience that as I look back on it and how it – my mother kept us off, my mother was so determined to keep us off of assistance, and there is a way, proven that there is a way stay off of assistance, if you really have the will to do so even today, I think this is true. Things sometimes are made too easy for us in this day and age to accept assistance where it was looked down upon then.

Interviewer: ***[inaudible] [0:44:28]?***

Mrs. Strunsbury: I suppose, yes, I think so.

Interviewer: In what way?

Mrs. Strunsbury: Well, I wouldn't want my children to have experience in such as the one thing. And as I say, because it is unhappiness involved here and I believe it does create within one inferiority complex, I really do feel.

[0:45:02]

And for another thing, I know that there are kids today that drop out of school for various reasons, but as far as – that today, I mean, I don't go along with that. I was almost forced to drop out of school. I was one of those that was almost forced to do it.

I'm sorry. I'm sure that if I had had the strong will that my mother had, I wouldn't have done it. But when I became 16, naturally, I was afraid, my mother couldn't keep me in school, If I did want to stay, and I felt that that I could earn a living.

Interviewer: ***[inaudible] [0:45:54]?***

Mrs. Strunsbury: Yes. Yes, I did, one by one. They did and yet they were, I mean, a lot of my friends that went on and graduated from high school and even further their education.

Interviewer: ***[inaudible] [0:46:15]?***

Mrs. Strunsbury: I think they would panic.

Interviewer: ***[inaudible] [0:46:40].***

Mrs. Strunsbury: Well, we all really had a lot in this last 20, 30 years. And the generation, your generation and my children, possibly we have not really taught them, maybe it hasn't even been taught in school the conditions that existed during that particular era, because they just can't – a dollar and 25 cents a week, what is a dollar and 25 cents to my child today, a hamburger plate and it's gone.

So I think that they would almost panic if they had to face and of course it was a sudden thing, I mean, it came upon us within two years. I mean, we were really living high and within two years, I mean, we were down to rock bottom, so to speak, except for my mother's will to carry on. And my mother, of course, was raised on a farm and I think possibly this had a great deal of bearing too, where even farmers today, I mean, they don't have to endure what they endured years ago. I mean, everything is mechanical and what have you. And in those days, everything was done by hand, I mean, you labored. But I really think that there would probably be a panic if a depression came, as it was in those.

Interviewer: ***[inaudible] [0:48:46].***

Mrs. Strunsbury: Yes, I suppose the government would, then what the government was able to do at that particular time. I really don't – even here I'm sort of at a loss because our government seems to be so poor even now. And I can't speak about the government because I was really too young to understand the different things.

Interviewer: ***[inaudible] [0:49:31]?***

Mrs. Strunsbury: Oh, yes. There were many, many people that were unemployed. As I said I was raised in Newport and there were many people that were unemployed and yet there were many people that didn't feel the depression too. I mean, it was quite a contrast, many people that did not feel the depression. For instances, a friend of mine that I ran around with.

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Her father was a boss at a leather company. And she didn't know that there was a depression, didn't know at all that there was a depression. It was a big help to me because she was able to share her bicycle.

But I mean, putting all juggling aside, she really didn't know that there was a depression. And when I went to work, girls that I worked with have bachelor from the city have told me that they didn't notice there was a depression from Wilmington. A girl, her father has worked for a dairy company, Clever Dairy, I guess it was, and she said that she never realized that there was a depression.

And so, it's an experience that I went through that I can't say that I would want to get through it again, of course, I wouldn't. But I suppose it taught me many things.

Interviewer: Would you say that there was a lesson that the depression taught to you or to the people of America?

Mrs. Strunsbury: Well, I can't say to the people of America, but to me, yes. I try not to relate to my children my experiences. When I was your age, I didn't have this or I didn't have that, because I feel that this is unfair to them. Personally, I feel that this is unfair because it was not a happy time and I think we want our children to grow up in a happy atmosphere. There was happiness within the home and they were still sadness there too. I know, my mother worried, many, many hours are worried.

As I say, it didn't really mean too much to me then, but I realize now that I'm older that my mother, there was many hours of worry and anxiety as to where the next meal was coming from.

Interviewer: ***[inaudible] [0:52:35].***

Mrs. Strunsbury: That was it. When Roosevelt came, as I mentioned, they were looking forward to something more secure. And then with the re-election, it seemed to change because of the war, I do recall that. But, yes, it was looking bright, bright day tomorrow.

Interviewer: ***[inaudible] [0:53:12]?***

Mrs. Strunsbury: Well, I'm thankful for everything that I have today, very, very thankful for it, because of the contrast of my young life, I'm thankful for it. Determination that my children, I have a daughter that has already

graduated from school, we wanted her to further her education but she chose not to. And our boy is in high school and he's at the age where, give or take, but he's going today in school if at all possible. And this is the thing that I think has been the most impressive for the depression year, that I was a dropout due to the lack of funds to probably want things and not being able to have them, an allowance and things like that. And if I say when I...

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