

RICHARD AND CARTHA GUSTAFSON

Date

Interviewer: Maury Miller

Transcribed by Donna Duzan, May 2017

M: First of all, when and where were you born?

RICHARD: I was born in Bloomington, IL in July of 1957. Then we moved to Mattoon shortly after I was born. We lived there until I was in the second grade, then we moved to Marshall.

M: Who were your parents?

R: Roland and Marjorie Gustafson

M: Do you have brothers or sisters?

R: Two brothers, Mike and Bob.

M: So when did you come to Marshall?

R: Well, I was in the second grade, I don't know what year that would have been. In about the late 1960's I suppose.

M: And where do you live?

R: I live south of Marshall on the Grand Turn Road.

M: How would you describe the neighborhood?

R: The neighborhood is very friendly, always had a good relationship with the neighbors, people kind of look out for each other, and help each other out when needed.

M: Let's talk about your childhood, what type of things do you remember doing?

R: My dad worked pretty hard and we lived way out in the country, we just kinda stayed to ourselves, we had some livestock for 4-H, dad mostly did bookwork for a living and when we came home we would be outside and I liked to run around the woods. Didn't have too many friends because we lived so far out but I enjoyed my childhood.

M: What have been your hobbies?

R: I like fishing, and I played a trumpet for, well, forever I guess that's about it for hobbies.

M: Did you have a pet?

R: We always had dogs, seems like we always had a dog.

M: Let's talk about your family, what family activities come to mind?

R: Well, my brothers and I played Monopoly and Caroms, mostly we did a lot of outside stuff.

M: Do you remember neighborhood activities? Church?

R: I didn't grow up in church, didn't start going to church until I met my wife.

M: Where did you go to school?

R: I went to Marshall schools from 2nd grade on.

M: What school memories do you have?

R: Most of my memories were of being in band, Jim Gwyn was probably my favorite teacher.

M: How did you meet your wife, Cartha, and when did you get married?

R: Well, we met in the band room, I used to go in and help with the younger students which I still do to this day, I volunteer at the school quite a bit. I would go in and play and I guess we just got interested in each other... we dated several years before we got married.

M: Let's talk about jobs that you have had.

R: I guess my first jobs was helping neighborhood farmers bale hay. Later I worked at Supermet, which is a business here in town that makes metal powder products. That job didn't last very long, someone offered me a job taking care of hogs and I was out of there pretty quick. So, it was Gene Lindley down at West Union that I worked for. From there I went to Welsh Farms to work at their hog operation. And then my wife convinced me that I needed to go to horse shoeing school, and I have spent the rest of my working years shoeing horses.

M: How long have you been doing that?

R: 32 years I did that, I am on disability now...

M: Can you tell me a person that has had a major influence in your life?

R: I would have to say mostly my dad... his work ethic, the effort he put forth in his job, probably has made the most influence in my life... and Mr. Gwyn the band teacher through high school. But mostly my dad, the way he worked has always stuck with me.

M: As you think back on the totality of your life, what historic events stand out?

R: I guess the assassinations of President Kennedy and Martin Luther King. Just seems like there was a whole era there when people were getting assassinated, and it was a scary time. And of course the moon landing, the various wars. All that kind of stuff makes you fearful about what is going to happen in the world.

M: Now some general questions, when you think of all the inventions in the world, what modern conveniences have effected your life the most?

R: Well, I have never been too much into computers, but I was one of the first guys around who had a cell phone installed in my truck for my business. And for business use, it was fantastic, but I think cell phones have kind of ruined society.

M: And let me ask you if you were talking to someone who wasn't from Marshall, how would you describe Marshall?

R: Marshall is a clean nice town. It is friendly, has a great school system, people who work in other towns want to live in Marshall just because of the school system. It's just a nice town, I can't imagine living anywhere else.

M: Well, thank you Richard, it's been interesting and people will enjoy listening to this recording.

TRANSCRIPT OF CARTHA BEGINS THREE MINUTES INTO TAPE... first part did not record

CARTHA: I didn't do much with the cattle, that was more for dad and the boys to do. I also worked out on the farm, driving tractors, disking, that sort of thing.

M: What sort of community things have you participated in?

C: I've been very active in church, I grew up in a very small church on the south edge of Marshall, which is now closed. And we have always been a 4-H family which is where I work today, I am in charge of the 4-H program for the county. My husband, the kids and I all really enjoyed 4-H.

M: Let's talk about school, where did you go to school?

C: I went through all of Marshall's schools. From the beginning to the end. I just liked the small atmosphere and community. I also drive a school bus.

M: What are some of your special school memories?

C: We are involved in several bands, so I would say one of my favorite memories have been to be associated with the Marshall School bands. The Junior High Band, the High school bands, Jazz Bands. And I was involved with FFA and Home Ec Club.

M: Let's talk about your family, you said you grew up with several brothers...

C: Yes, I had two brothers and sister.

M: What were some of the childhood memories, did you play games?.....

C: Well, we liked to go on summer camping trips, we kind of evolved from a tent to a pop-up camper. And after all us kids left home, mom and dad got a motor home, they got fancy on us. So that was a really fun summer time activity for us.

M: What are some of your favorite family memories, certain special meals, etc.?....

C: One of my special memories were when my mom, and sister and I would make meals and take them out to the field for the guys. And of course we had family get-togethers with cousins and family for special occasions.

M: Did you have hobbies?

C: Yes, pretty much the same hobbies that I have today. My horses and riding, and playing in the bands.

M: Tell me about when you got married.

C: We got married July 21, 1979, I was just out of high school, we got married here at Marshall at the Concordian Lutheran Church.

M: Where did you meet?

C: In band, I was in eighth grade and he was a senior. He used to come in and play with the junior high band and music pretty much "played us through". We have been best friends ever since.

M: Have you always lived in Marshall?

C: I have.

M: What jobs have you had?

C: During high school, I worked in the reception area at the Cork Medical Center, and from there I worked at the Marshall Independent newspaper, then I went to work for Dean Burkybile in the Circuit Clerk's office for fifteen years then I went to work at the Extension Office and I have been there for seventeen years. And I have also driven a Marshall school bus for 25 years.

M: What piqued your interest in this particular job?

C: Well, I love kids and I love 4-H. My mother was also a 4-Her. And my parents were always volunteers too. I just kinds gravitated to this job.

M: Let's talk more generally now, when you think about the history in your life is there some particular event or person or teacher that influenced your life?

C: I have several of those. I would say when I think of teachers, I think of Truman Spittler who was the AG teacher in high school, I would say he made an impact on my life and also Jim Gwyn, the band teacher. Dick and I were both very close to Jim Gwyn.

M: What historical events have made an impact, local or country or world?

C: Oh gosh, I don't know what to say about that. I always think of 911, the first trip to the moon, those types of things that make an impact.

M: What modern conveniences do you think most effect your life now?

C: I would say telephones and computers, sometimes I think that life was much simpler without some things.

M: If you were talking to someone who wasn't from Marshall, what would you tell them about our town and why you live here?

C: It's a beautiful community, I think in general, we are a friendly community, it's so good to be in the city band and see the big crowds of people who come out on Friday evenings, and the organization that put on the ice cream socials during the band concerts, and the popcorn wagon, it all just kinda brings it together for us. And Marshall has been a great place to raise our kids.

M: Well, Thank you, Cartha, this information is going to be available to read on the web site, so thanks again for your participation.