

Edmonds Family

Side 1:

Phelan is in the 9th grade of the North Buncombe High School on Clarks Chapel Road and Flat Creek Road in Weaverville. Gareth graduated from North Buncombe and works at the Office Depot (enclosures). Gary works at Office Depot where I met him and asked for an interview. Wilma works for the Micro Switch division of Honeywell in Mars Hill.

[38] Gary said blacks own property in the Asheville area and there have never been many in Weaverville. There are few jobs in this area.

[65] Factories locate where there are resources - water and transportation. Hendersonville has this but people in Weaverville and North Buncombe have to commute to the city of Asheville, Arden or Skyland to get jobs.

[75] Wilma works in Mars Hill for Micro Switch for Honeywell. They ship all over the world. She has been there two years and works part time. There are three shifts that don't rotate. She was born in Marshall, NC.

[106] Gary's father and grandfather had a boarding home in Asheville and told him that moonshine was distilled in many basements in the city.

[114] Marshall is in the Guinness Book of Records as being, along with Manhattan Island, the only two complete cities in America. Manhattan is full and can't expand and Marshall, with the river on one side and rock mountain on the other, can't expand.

[129] Gareth said that the Office Depot, being a big chain, is putting a lot of pressure on small stores like Hoyles (see "Red" Hoyle tape) but the small stores can give personal service and special orders. He wants to stay with the store for a year or so and then have his own business.

[168] Gary feels that new jobs will be in service. It is hard getting assistance in the large store and often the employees won't know enough about the product. He thinks that specialty shops will offer employment to people who learn the line and give the service.

[191] When his father was a young man the men were worked like dogs - it was like slave labor - and then the unions came along and put a balance in the situation but the balance has now "toppled over" and it requires four men to do a job that should be done by two. This has forced prices up.

[208] There is little unionization here. Companies send work to be done to the South where wages are lower (this is "plan B") and when wages go up here they will go farther south ("plan C"). (see Laura Gordon tape). [Ross Perot]

[218] He worked for Blue Bell in Greensboro. Cloth was flown to Puerto Rico, worked on and flown back here to sell. Some of these "starving to death countries" are going to get all of the

business. There has to be a balance somewhere. People will have to provide services and do things for themselves where they have control.

[239] When you work for somebody - hours for dollars - you have no options. People living here are getting minimum wages and are providing service to other people. If you have your own company you can earn more. He thinks that dealing with consumables (i.e.. soaps) and offering yard service are options.

[250] He has found that retirees, escaping the cold, will move to Florida, where they tire of the heat. They then move around this area. After retirement they become bored and open a little shop. People with college education leave this area for larger cities and better paying jobs.

[300] He delivers heavy items to customers who have home offices. He lived in this area most of his life and after military service he drove tractor trailers for 18 years across the country. He is training a man to be a back-up driver and became aware of the fact that one street in the city changes its name 5 times!

[349] Wilma uses catalogues to shop. Montgomery Ward is opening a new store in the Asheville Mall and Sears, also in the mall, is discontinuing its catalogue.

[364] When he was growing up and living in this area (Edmonds Road is named for his family), there were no large groceries in the area. They went to Asheville once a month. Now, with the good roads, they will drive 12 miles to Westgate bridge, pick up a video and return to watch it. In 1965 Amoco gas went to 25 cents a gallon.

[395] It used to be a treat to take Saturday or Sunday drives and have a picnic. There is no rural America any more.

[404] He is one of the "baby boomers" born after WWII. He remembers the road being built over his grandfather's property. All the surrounding land was owned by the Edmonds and little by little the family sold off parcels. The road is 1/2 mile long. They now have mail service and school bus service. Pumpkin Center is down the road.

[448] His grandfather and one of his sisters bought 10-20 acres. His father told him about stamps that were needed for purchases during WWII. During the Depression the people lived on the land with houses and wagons for transportation. They didn't need to go to Asheville often.

[487] She went to school in Mars Hill. This was the home of the old Baptist College. The family is Baptist - there are 5-7 different kinds. The Baptist Home is near Square D and his great aunt was there for a short time.

[520] The Southern Baptists are more organized than the others - Free Will, Earth Baptists, and Missionary Baptists. They go to the Missionary Baptist Church.

[540] He has not seen Cline in person but has watched him on TV and heard positive things about him. A lot of preachers start out on their own and don't belong to the Convention (see

Cline Tape). He teaches Bible Study to the boys in the Jr. High. She also taught in the Jr. High. [Billy Cline]

[583] After church they often stop in town for Sunday dinner. There have been changes in cooking habits. Anyone can learn to cook like mom - they can open a can and turn on the microwave!

Side 2:

When he was 6 or 7 years old he used to watch the semi-trucks go over the mountain on the old highway (now 19/23). He was fascinated by diesel power and after returning from the army he learned he could go to school and learn how to drive one, while making 4 or 5 times a week what he was making for Xerox. He worked for Blue Bell out of South Carolina. He moved here, married and continued trucking for 12 years. He enjoyed it but realized that the children were growing up and he was gone too much of the time. He also found that food and phone calls to home cost a lot. In 1990 he moved to his present home.

[2/50] Wilma went to work 2 years ago. Gary doesn't get home until late and she is on the 3-11 shift. She sees her friends at church and over the weekends. Her department is small with about 30 people. She had a short training period, started out working part time and now has a steady job.

[2/70] Gary said that now that the boys are grown they both need to work to pay for food and gas. In the Northeast and Florida wages are higher than NC. The unions help workers get more money but costs go up also. The power of the unions affect everyone. He was a non-union driver.

[2/122] His brother works at Gerber's in Skyland. He makes \$3 more an hour, but they have strikes which wipe away profits because of shut downs.

[2/140] When he was working for Xerox he was told that workers in the different regions received wages based on the buying power in the area. Hamburgers here cost 75 cents and \$1.25 in N.Y. Gas is higher in NJ - \$1.50 a gallon - as self service is against the law.

[2/163] Phelan is interested in nature - animals and paleontology. He went to the dinosaur show at Proffitt's in the Biltmore Mall (enclosed). [A dog is barking in the yard] He wonders whether dinosaurs made sound. He is also interested in plate tectonics.

[2/319] Gareth has a job now and is trying to decide on his career. He is interested in mechanics and electronics. He won second place in a state-wide competition. He is interested in T.V. and V.C.R. repair. He wants to stay on the "breaking edge."

[2/379] Wilma assembles switches and gives me a sample (enclosure).

[2/387] Gareth went to Square D (see enclosure).

[392] Wilma shows me how the spring works on her switch.

[2/447] Gareth tells me how the switch functions [you will have to hear it].

[2/480] These parts are sent all over the world. Honeywell supplies major brands needing electrical switches.

[2/517] Gary said that, with his trucking background, he can tell that with the highways going through the area will grow. Asheville has always been 60-61,000, but when I-26 ties into I-40, there will be an expansion. The workers are here and the area is just right for small industries.