

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec (00:00:10):

I was born in, actually, in Middletown, and, uh, came home from the hospital and (laughs) and mo- is ever- ever- ever since. Uh, the, uh, Depression years were, uh, weren't- weren't too severe fo- for me because, uh, I wa- I was kinda fortunate.

Walt Golec (00:00:38):

My, um, my father was employed all- all- all through. He- he was down in Neptune and Twine, which never closed. I mean, the people that worked there, uh, held their jobs all- all through the Depression. And, um, living-

Ken Simon (00:01:05):

Would you excuse me?

Walt Golec (00:01:07):

... living on a farm, we- we actually had, we had food, you know, and we- we, uh, had chickens and we had cows and all that. And, uh, so everybody, everyone survived.

Ken Simon (00:01:24):

Yeah.

Walt Golec (00:01:25):

And then, uh, let's see the Depression actually started in, uh, around- around 1928, and, oh, that's when I was born. And, um, I was born, like I said, in Middletown, but then I came to the family homestead in Moodus.

Ken Simon (00:01:51):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:01:52):

Which, though, is standing today on Davison, I mean, Moodus-Leesville Road, and, um, I, uh, lived there the first, um, 10- 10 years of my life. And later on my father built a, built a house up on the corner, on Davidson Road.

Walt Golec (00:02:16):

And, uh, as far as the Depression goes, what- what I, what I remember mo- mostly about the, uh, Depression is the- the soup program they had at the school. And, uh, there was a lady there that made soup by the [inaudible 00:02:35] pan full and brought it to the school. And I don't think any, I don't think anyone had to pay for it, but everybody had a, um, soup- soup mug. And it was mainly vegetable soup and split pea soup, (laughs) but it was really good.

Ken Simon (00:02:55):

Yeah.

Walt Golec (00:02:55):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Yeah. And, uh, that was one thing I always lo- you know, kinda looked forward to. And, um, let's see now.

Ken Simon (00:03:09):

What were the kinds of ... So, well, you- you- you were brought up on a, on a farm?

Walt Golec (00:03:13):

Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:03:13):

Was it, did you see any, did your dad and mom sell anything? Or was it all for your own ...

Walt Golec (00:03:18):

No, no, no. It was a dairy farm. uh, my grandfather was one of the first ones in town to get organized with, um, Brock Hall, and he used to sell milk. He used to, he used to transport it to New Haven. And, uh, as far as, uh, uh, the, uh, beef or anything like that, we- we- we, I don't recall them bu- butchering any- any cattle or anything like that. It was strictly dairy. And-

Ken Simon (00:04:02):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative). So what- what did you do for beef when you were eating? Did you buy the- the beef or ...

Walt Golec (00:04:06):

Yeah, yeah. The- the- there was a meat market. It was, uh, Morris Levine had a meat market. (laughs)

Ken Simon (00:04:13):

Oh, yeah?

Walt Golec (00:04:13):

And the people use to go there and b- buy the meats.

Ken Simon (00:04:21):

Was this in old Moodus center or was it ...

Walt Golec (00:04:24):

On the old Moo- the old Moodus center.

Ken Simon (00:04:25):

Yeah.

Walt Golec (00:04:25):

Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:04:26):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Yeah.

Walt Golec (00:04:27):

Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:04:27):

Um, so you were talking about, you know, the Depression not affecting your family very much.

Walt Golec (00:04:34):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ken Simon (00:04:35):

Uh, di- your mom didn't work or did she?

Walt Golec (00:04:38):

No, my- my mother never ... She, uh, she was a stay-at-home mom and-

Ken Simon (00:04:43):

I'm- I'm sorry. Stay-at-home?

Walt Golec (00:04:44):

Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:04:44):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:04:45):

Yeah. I mean, of course, when she stayed at home, you know, she did a lot of, uh, uh, vegetable canning and preserving vegetables and stuff like that, so ac- actually, uh, we never, like I said, we- we never really wanted for any food or anything because in- in the, uh, cel- in the cellar, they had a, uh, uh, uh, a room or an- an area that was fairly cool.

Ken Simon (00:05:16):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:05:16):

And it kept everything ...

Ken Simon (00:05:18):

Had a root cellar?

Walt Golec (00:05:19):

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Ken Simon ([00:05:20](#)):

Yeah. Okay. So what- what are your memories of, uh, you know, when you were, when you were a young child and you're eating the vegetables and other things? I mean, were, was it, did you like 'em?

Walt Golec ([00:05:30](#)):

Oh, yeah, yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:05:31](#)):

Yeah.

Walt Golec ([00:05:32](#)):

It was, ever- everything was good.

Ken Simon ([00:05:33](#)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Walt Golec ([00:05:35](#)):

Homemade, really.

Ken Simon ([00:05:36](#)):

Homemade. Yeah.

Walt Golec ([00:05:37](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. It had to be. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:05:38](#)):

Yeah.

Walt Golec ([00:05:38](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:05:39](#)):

So, um, you- you- you said ... When did you move from Moodus-Leesville to Davison?

Walt Golec ([00:05:45](#)):

Just before the war.

Ken Simon ([00:05:47](#)):

Okay.

Walt Golec ([00:05:49](#)):

1939.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Ken Simon (00:05:50):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:05:52):

And we li- we lived, well, he- he built the house up on Davison Road.

Ken Simon (00:05:58):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:05:58):

Which is next door to where my house is today.

Ken Simon (00:06:02):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:06:03):

And sorta kept it in the family. My- my daughter lives in my father's old house.

Ken Simon (00:06:11):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:06:12):

And, uh ...

Ken Simon (00:06:13):

Wh- when you say he built the house, did he, did he actually build the house?

Walt Golec (00:06:20):

No, no. No.

Ken Simon (00:06:20):

Who built the house? Do you remember?

Walt Golec (00:06:22):

Yeah, uh, Joe- Joe Buck. Remember Joe Buck?

Ken Simon (00:06:26):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). He made-

Walt Golec (00:06:26):

He- he lived up, he lived up north Moodus.

Ken Simon (00:06:29):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Yeah. Yeah.

Walt Golec (00:06:30):

Yeah. He had a son, Tony. Remember Tony Buck?

Ken Simon (00:06:34):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:06:36):

Yeah, and, uh, he- he, um, you know, he ... Well, it was a, um, a nice ... You know, lumber today is so expensive.

Ken Simon (00:06:54):

It sure is.

Walt Golec (00:06:54):

And you- you look at the house where my father had it, had it built, um, actually, you as- asked who built it. It was Joe Buck, Rudy Hoffman.

Ken Simon (00:07:03):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Rudy Hoffman?

Walt Golec (00:07:05):

Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:07:05):

Yeah. Yeah.

Walt Golec (00:07:06):

And, uh, Jimmy Shay.

Ken Simon (00:07:08):

Jimmy Shay.

Walt Golec (00:07:09):

Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:07:09):

Yeah.

Walt Golec (00:07:10):

All- all three of 'em.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Ken Simon (00:07:11):

Yeah. That was, that's Frank's father, right? Frankie Shay's father?

Walt Golec (00:07:16):

Fra- Frankie's father. Right. Yep. Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:07:16):

Yeah. Yeah. Um, so and- and this was in what year? 1939?

Walt Golec (00:07:24):

In '39.

Ken Simon (00:07:24):

Okay.

Walt Golec (00:07:24):

Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:07:25):

Um, did, um, did your da- your dad worked at the Nep- Neptune, you said.

Walt Golec (00:07:29):

Right. Right.

Ken Simon (00:07:30):

So what was the situation at Neptune, um, during the war. Did- did all the workers get draft deferments and that sort of thing?

Walt Golec (00:07:38):

Well, a lot of 'em did.

Ken Simon (00:07:39):

Yeah?

Walt Golec (00:07:40):

A lot of 'em, you know, because, uh, what they were doing, I mean, it, when you say making twine, it doesn't sound like much, but it was very critical for the, uh, the cable industry.

Ken Simon (00:07:53):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:07:54):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

The, uh, twine that they made went into the center of the cables that, uh, held the barrage balloons over London and, uh, all these ...

Ken Simon ([00:08:10](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:08:11](#)):

The D-Day.

Ken Simon ([00:08:12](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:08:12](#)):

You- you see all bar- all the barrage balloons fly- flying over, most of 'em had centers in their cable made in, made in Moodus.

Ken Simon ([00:08:23](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:08:25](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:08:26](#)):

How many mills were operating during World War II? Was ...

Walt Golec ([00:08:29](#)):

Mmm, that's hard to say. I would say probably about maybe- maybe six.

Ken Simon ([00:08:36](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:08:37](#)):

But prior to that, there was, there were, there were more.

Ken Simon ([00:08:40](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. But they were all going a hundred percent full out for the war effort?

Walt Golec ([00:08:43](#)):

Oh, yeah. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:08:45](#)):

Yeah.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec ([00:08:45](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:08:46](#)):

Um, what, um, so can you talk a little bit about ... Did you ever work in the mills?

Walt Golec ([00:08:52](#)):

No.

Ken Simon ([00:08:53](#)):

Okay.

Walt Golec ([00:08:53](#)):

No. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:08:53](#)):

Uh-

Walt Golec ([00:08:54](#)):

My father kept me away from the mill. (laughing)

Ken Simon ([00:08:57](#)):

Yeah. Right. Uh, he started young, like a lot of people. Right?

Walt Golec ([00:09:00](#)):

Yeah, wh- yeah, right- right out of school.

Ken Simon ([00:09:01](#)):

When did he start working in the mills?

Walt Golec ([00:09:03](#)):

Right out of school, uh, 14 years old.

Ken Simon ([00:09:05](#)):

14 years old.

Walt Golec ([00:09:05](#)):

And then he- he actually ended up the chief honcho down at Nep- Neptune because they were having a lot of problems there with their own, uh, I wou- I wouldn't say family, but they, you know, it was, it's hard to maintain-

Ken Simon ([00:09:28](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec ([00:09:28](#)):

... a steady keel, uh, with your- with your family. So my- my father was very, very reliable and they took a liking to him. So he- he wa- he was the one that was there whenever he wa- they- they needed somebody to stabilize things.

Ken Simon ([00:09:50](#)):

Right. Right.

Walt Golec ([00:09:51](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:09:52](#)):

So- so he became like a manager or- or ...

Walt Golec ([00:09:54](#)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:09:56](#)):

Yeah? How would you describe your dad? What kinda guy was he? And- and, you know, how, wh- uh, what- what did you, what did he do? What did your parents do socially in town, uh, when you were growing up?

Walt Golec ([00:10:07](#)):

Well, uh, m- my dad, he- he loved, he loved to garden. In fact, he, they, he had a nickname. It, these people that knew him called him Farmer John.

Ken Simon ([00:10:21](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:10:22](#)):

Because he ... And then what he would do, he- he came in very handy (laughs) during the Depression because he grew a lot of vegetables, and he gave everything away.

Ken Simon ([00:10:33](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:10:34](#)):

He would go up- up, um, the Falls with bags of tomatoes. And today, I- I have to chuckle when I go into the market and I see tomatoes at- at the price they're getting. I say to my wife, uh, "Grandpa used to give those away."

Ken Simon ([00:10:51](#)):

Yeah.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec ([00:10:52](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:10:52](#)):

Yeah. Um, was a lot of, uh, bartering at that time? Do you know? Uh ...

Walt Golec ([00:10:57](#)):

Mmm, not really. But actually, I think, if I can re- recall, I think it wa- um, oh, well, man hours. Uh, if some- if somebody had a homemade tractor that we, they would plow the, a potato field. They'd come and my father would want to pay 'em and they'd say, they'd say, "No, no. That's okay. He gave me a lot of vegetables."

Ken Simon ([00:11:33](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:11:33](#)):

So ...

Ken Simon ([00:11:34](#)):

Yeah. Um, what was your, what was your father's name?

Walt Golec ([00:11:37](#)):

John.

Ken Simon ([00:11:38](#)):

It was john. Okay.

Walt Golec ([00:11:39](#)):

Yeah. Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ken Simon ([00:11:39](#)):

And were they, uh, were your parents immigrants?

Walt Golec ([00:11:42](#)):

No. No, no.

Ken Simon ([00:11:43](#)):

Okay.

Walt Golec ([00:11:44](#)):

No, no.

Ken Simon ([00:11:45](#)):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Can you explain a little bit about that background?

Walt Golec ([00:11:47](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:11:47](#)):

Yeah.

Walt Golec ([00:11:47](#)):

And my grandfather came over here in, uh, 1899, I think it was. Yep. And, uh, they came over in this mass migration (laughs) actually, uh, from southern Europe, and actually, uh, all of the, most of your people here in East, in Moodus come from one particular area down in the southe- southern part of Europe.

Ken Simon ([00:12:22](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:12:23](#)):

And the town-

Ken Simon ([00:12:24](#)):

Is it in Poland?

Walt Golec ([00:12:25](#)):

What's that?

Ken Simon ([00:12:25](#)):

Is this in Poland?

Walt Golec ([00:12:27](#)):

In Poland, yeah. Right.

Ken Simon ([00:12:27](#)):

Yeah.

Walt Golec ([00:12:28](#)):

In Poland, under Austria in those days.

Ken Simon ([00:12:32](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yep, yep.

Walt Golec ([00:12:33](#)):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

And, um, they, um, they- they all came to the town and the town was called, the name of the town was Bielsko-Biała. They- they translated, I guess that mean, um, big- big valleys.

Ken Simon ([00:12:50](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:12:51](#)):

There were big hills or something like that.

Ken Simon ([00:12:52](#)):

Right.

Walt Golec ([00:12:53](#)):

Yeah. And, um, the, um, people from that area sorta stuck together, I- I- I would say. And even today, um, if I speak to anyone that has just come from Poland or liv- lived in Poland and tell 'em my name, the next thing they say, "Oh, are you related to the famous orchestra?" The Golec uOrkiestra is known throughout Poland.

Ken Simon ([00:13:29](#)):

Oh, yeah? Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:13:30](#)):

Yeah. And in fact, even just a couple weeks ago, the new priest that we have here in the, St. Bridget's is originally from Poland, and when my wife was talking to him and told him my, her name, he immediately said, "Oh, oh. You're from the- the- the, uh, are you related to the uOrkiestra?" And actually wa- it was kinda good because, uh, when the President Bush when to Poland on a trip, the Golec uOrkiestra was the orchestra that played for his entertainment.

Ken Simon ([00:14:16](#)):

Yeah. Right.

Walt Golec ([00:14:16](#)):

And, uh, when he came here to, back to the States and to the White House, in his speech, he was thanking the people of Poland for their hospitality and he also, and he said, "And I have to thank the Golec uOrkiestra." (laughing) I mean, you know, it's just kinda nice of a ...

Ken Simon ([00:14:38](#)):

Yeah. And- and- uh, your family is re- is like a close relation or a distant relation of the Golec uOrkiestra Golecs? Or ...

Walt Golec ([00:14:45](#)):

Well, they're from the same area.

Ken Simon ([00:14:47](#)):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:14:47](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. The same.

Ken Simon ([00:14:48](#)):

Yep. There a lot of Golecs in that area?

Walt Golec ([00:14:51](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. Yep.

Ken Simon ([00:14:52](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. Um, so did, so, uh, and- and your mom's name, it was ...

Walt Golec ([00:14:59](#)):

My- my mom, uh, her name was Budney.

Ken Simon ([00:15:02](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:15:03](#)):

B-U-D-N-E-Y.

Ken Simon ([00:15:04](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:15:05](#)):

Um ...

Ken Simon ([00:15:06](#)):

Her first name was?

Walt Golec ([00:15:07](#)):

Katherine.

Ken Simon ([00:15:07](#)):

Katherine Budney. Yeah.

Walt Golec ([00:15:10](#)):

And, uh, actually, uh, it was funny because she- she came from Deep River.

Ken Simon ([00:15:16](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec (00:15:17):

And, um, her background, her family came from the Russian section of Poland, which is up in the northern part, and when she, when she first, when she got married to my- my father, um, the Polish people in town said, "Oh, he's marrying a Russian." (laughing)

Ken Simon (00:15:42):

All right.

Walt Golec (00:15:42):

She really wasn't a Russian because she, but the area she came from was dominated by the Russians.

Ken Simon (00:15:53):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:15:54):

At that time.

Ken Simon (00:15:55):

So wh- when you were growing up, could you tell me about, um, uh, how St. Bridget's, uh, was important to the Ca- the Catholic community?

Walt Golec (00:16:05):

Yeah. Right.

Ken Simon (00:16:06):

Yep.

Walt Golec (00:16:07):

Although it was because, uh, you- you asked what they did, you know, for entertainment. You know, they- they- they put on plays, uh, minstrels and which today they probably wouldn't be able to do. (laughs) right?

Ken Simon (00:16:25):

Right. Right.

Walt Golec (00:16:26):

Yeah. Um, and, uh, they were, they were pretty active. And there was, they were, they were probably the most active during the Depression years.

Ken Simon (00:16:38):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:16:41):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Because they did- did a lot to entertain the community. (laughs) And, uh, then, um, there was always a little rivalry between the different groups, like I said. Some- some came from the Russian section of Poland. Some came from the Austrian section of Poland and German. They, you know, they, so there was a little, a little rivalry between the ethnics. Yeah, right.

Ken Simon ([00:17:11](#)):

And how- how was that, how was that rivalry expressed? Was it, you know ...

Walt Golec ([00:17:17](#)):

Well, and mostly in, I would say, mostly in ta- in talk.

Ken Simon ([00:17:23](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:17:23](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:17:24](#)):

Not a lot of street fights.

Walt Golec ([00:17:25](#)):

Yeah, right.

Ken Simon ([00:17:26](#)):

(laughs)

Walt Golec ([00:17:27](#)):

No, I, no. I (laughs) I don't think so. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:17:29](#)):

Right. Yep. Yep.

Walt Golec ([00:17:30](#)):

Well, then during the Depression years, uh, you know, I- I made it sou- sound as if every- everyone was employed, but they weren't. There were a lot of people unemployed.

Ken Simon ([00:17:43](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:17:44](#)):

And, uh, my grandfather owned the property on the Moodus-Leesville-Davison Road all the way up to Banner Lodge, uh, in the back woods.

Ken Simon ([00:17:59](#)):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Oh.

Walt Golec (00:18:00):

And, uh, they would, um ... He was, he was very generous with letting the people use his property, so, uh, you heard the- the saying of, you know, about a good Polish picnic is- is- is really hard to find?

Ken Simon (00:18:18):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:18:20):

So my grandfather let the young men in town use his property as a picnic area, so they had, every weekend, they would have a, uh, good old Polish picnic.

Ken Simon (00:18:38):

Hmm.

Walt Golec (00:18:38):

I mean, course everybody would bring, you know, food, drink and all that.

Ken Simon (00:18:44):

Yeah.

Walt Golec (00:18:45):

And, um, it made it different. What I remember also is I ... Do you know where Sa- St. Bridget's church is today, the- the current church? Well, next to that, it's all woodland today. It's all grown over. But when I was a boy, my grandfather had cows and they would pasture there.

Ken Simon (00:19:10):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:19:11):

And that, what is today is bushes and trees, when I was a boy, it was, it was like a lawn.

Ken Simon (00:19:19):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:19:21):

And my grandfather, you know, he's like the ... A lot of people used to joke about it because he would, wouldn't keep anybody off his property a- as long as they didn't abuse it. And the main thing, close the gate when you, when you, when you leave because it, he didn't want his cows to get out. (laughing)

Ken Simon (00:19:42):

Yeah.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec (00:19:43):

But anyway, it was a, it was a- a place where people came and en- enjoyed it.

Ken Simon (00:19:53):

Yeah. And this was right behind the current St. Bridget's?

Walt Golec (00:19:56):

Next- next to it.

Ken Simon (00:19:58):

Next to it. Okay.

Walt Golec (00:19:58):

Next to it, yeah.

Ken Simon (00:19:58):

Yeah.

Walt Golec (00:19:59):

Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:20:00):

So, uh, when was that church built and where- where did, where was the church before? I- I know where it was, but I just wanted you to ...

Walt Golec (00:20:06):

Okay. Yeah, yeah. Oh, yes. Yeah. The, uh, well, the church, I think it was dedicated in '50, '50, 1959. But prior to that it was at North Moodus, uh, North Moodus Road. And, uh, that was a, I think in the 1860s they, it was built. And prior to that, they had, they would have services at different homes.

Ken Simon (00:20:37):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:20:40):

And the priest from Colchester would come over here to M- to Moodus. I don't think he'd come every week, but he'd, he would come probably a couple times a month.

Ken Simon (00:20:52):

Yeah. Yeah. So, um, so in- in- in terms, and you said some people weren't employed, obviously some people weren't in the Depression.

Walt Golec (00:21:03):

Yeah, right. Yeah. Well-

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Ken Simon (00:21:05):

How- how, what- what more do you know about ... Do you know much about that? And ...

Walt Golec (00:21:06):

Yeah. I, uh, I meant to get into that. Uh, the people that weren't employed, instead of just maybe sitting on their hands, they got permission from my grandfather to build a, they called it The Shack, but they, on his property, in those days, they were, it- it was a little different. People weren't worried about getting sued and all that kind of stuff.

Ken Simon (00:21:36):

Right.

Walt Golec (00:21:37):

But, um, so- so they built this bungalow like, all out of native, local sto- local stones.

Ken Simon (00:21:50):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:21:51):

And, um, the, um, mostly the- the young men in town would go there on the weekends and play, they'd play cards. They'd actually the, uh, um, shack itself had a couple of round tables and all- all the, um, tools necessary to play poker and all that kind of stuff, you know. (laughs)

Ken Simon (00:22:20):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Hmm.

Walt Golec (00:22:21):

And they, uh, they would, uh, have some pretty- pretty good games, and they- they- they had a little- little pits where they would shoot dice. And that's how they, that's how they made a little extra money. (laughs) Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:22:40):

So, yeah. So I was gonna say, during the Depression, if you're unemployed playing those games ...

Walt Golec (00:22:45):

Yeah. Right. Well, if they had a couple dollars to start off with-

Ken Simon (00:22:48):

Yeah.

Walt Golec (00:22:50):

... that it could multiply into a hundred dollars. You know, it ...

Ken Simon (00:22:55):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Yeah. So who was your grandfather? And was he ... He was, he immigrated?

Walt Golec (00:22:57):

Yes. Yeah. Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:22:57):

Okay. So who was your grandfather and when did he come over here and- and, uh ...

Walt Golec (00:23:05):

Okay. Yeah, my grandfather came over here in, uh, the late 1800s, and, uh, he had a sister that came over just before he did. And she was, she got pre- she got his, you know, she had a job and all- all this. And she had enough- enough money to sponsor my grandfather. See, in those days, it wasn't like today, everybody can, you know, if they- they can come, they'll, they just come.

Ken Simon (00:23:35):

Right.

Walt Golec (00:23:36):

But in those days, people that came over were all sponsored by someone.

Ken Simon (00:23:41):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:23:41):

And someone was responsible for these people. But anyway, my, um, my grandfather came over here in the late, uh, 1800s.

Ken Simon (00:23:52):

And his name was?

Walt Golec (00:23:54):

Uh, well, his name was, his actual Polish name was [Vocek 00:24:00], but e- everyone called him George. (laughing)

Ken Simon (00:24:04):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:24:04):

So then he was George Golec.

Ken Simon (00:24:06):

Yeah.

Walt Golec (00:24:08):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

And he, um, he came over here and wanted to make a, make a few dollars and, uh, get established, so did me- When he came here, he got a a job at what they called the- the Red Mill, which is not aroun- not here anymore. I mean, it's just a foundation down ... Do you know going up north Moodus, there- there was a, uh, nice stone bridge?

Ken Simon ([00:24:40](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:24:41](#)):

Well, that- that was the Red Mill bridge and the mill was there, was there. My grandfather worked there a few years.

Ken Simon ([00:24:49](#)):

Okay. I'm sorry. Walking, yeah. Thank you.

Walt Golec ([00:24:54](#)):

It ain't there. Okay. Did I, did I block it?

Ken Simon ([00:24:55](#)):

Yeah. They're blocking the sound. Yeah.

Walt Golec ([00:24:57](#)):

Yeah. Uh, he worked there a few, a few years, and, uh, sa- saved enough mon- money to buy a house on Green Village Road, which is not too far from the o- old firehouse. And, um, he bought that property and- and then he- he- he bought more property. He wa- he was kinda a- a businessman, and for an immigrant, uh, he- he ended up owning, um, a, you know, you know where Green Village Ro- today is, the road to East Haddam?

Ken Simon ([00:25:45](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:25:46](#)):

Um, he owned that pro- owned that property. He, then he sold it and ma- made enough money to buy the farm where I live. And, uh, um, let's see now. Yeah, so that, so he- he moved out, lived his rest of his life on the farm there.

Ken Simon ([00:26:14](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). So he was a farmer? He farmed the ...

Walt Golec ([00:26:16](#)):

What's that?

Ken Simon ([00:26:17](#)):

He was a farmer?

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec (00:26:18):

A farmer, yeah.

Ken Simon (00:26:19):

Yeah.

Walt Golec (00:26:20):

Yeah, he ... Yep. Yeah. And then, of course, he had six- six children, and, uh, hi- his son got killed in, during the war and the same time, uh, Melvin Baron got killed at the same time.

Ken Simon (00:26:39):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:26:42):

And, uh, that's why they named the American Legion Post, uh, in town. Um, Baron was Jewish, my uncle was a Christian or Catholic, and, uh, Smith was a Protestant. So they (laughs) one of each.

Ken Simon (00:27:05):

They covered all the bases.

Walt Golec (00:27:06):

Yeah. Right.

Ken Simon (00:27:07):

And, yeah.

Walt Golec (00:27:07):

Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:27:08):

Um, di- wha- during the, uh, during the war, you were what? Teenager?

Walt Golec (00:27:15):

Teenager, yeah. Yep.

Ken Simon (00:27:16):

So what do you remember about wartime?

Walt Golec (00:27:19):

Well, we- we had some- some of the best scrap drives anywhere right here in- in Moodus, East Haddam. We were very fortunate because we didn't need or want for- for transportation to, uh, move all this junk from the junk pile to, uh, uh, reclaimer's depot.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Ken Simon (00:27:47):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:27:48):

Um, Bill [Burnough 00:27:49] was very generous with his, with the town or mainly with the s- s- uh, school student, and he would let us use his trucks. And we would, uh, there would be days where the principal in the school would say, "Okay, no ... " Ima- imagine doing that today, "No classes today." (laughs)

Ken Simon (00:28:10):

Right.

Walt Golec (00:28:12):

"Everybody go out and scrap, pick up, pick up junk."

Ken Simon (00:28:15):

Right.

Walt Golec (00:28:16):

And so the ba- back of this schoolyard of the present town office building, it was, it's two sections of- of the, uh, building came out and so that made an enclosure. [inaudible 00:28:33] that was just loaded with old cars' engines, anything metal. And, uh, we, uh, we- we would have these really big scrap drives, paper drives, scrap drives. But the scrap drives were really, uh, something because im- imagine a bunch of high school kids jockeying around, uh, a- a automobile frame.

Ken Simon (00:29:04):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:29:04):

You know. (laughs)

Ken Simon (00:29:05):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:29:06):

And, but anyway, that- that was part of the war, the war effort. And what was the other question you had?

Ken Simon (00:29:15):

Well, you know, um, uh, let's- let's move to school, okay?

Walt Golec (00:29:20):

Yeah. Yeah.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Ken Simon ([00:29:21](#)):

So you were, you were, you started in school. You're, uh, in first grade.

Walt Golec ([00:29:26](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:29:27](#)):

And did you go to the same building for all 12 years?

Walt Golec ([00:29:32](#)):

I did, yeah. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:29:33](#)):

Can you talk about that? Where was the building? And can you describe what you remember about it and the teachers and ...

Walt Golec ([00:29:38](#)):

Yeah. well, what ... The building was where the town office building is today. And first grade and when you, when go there now you kinda retrace what- what the place looks like and you go, "Oh, yeah. Well, that was the first grade. That was the second grade," and all that.

Walt Golec ([00:29:58](#)):

And, of- of course, um, also, uh, I can re- remember, uh, you know, today they talk about the, uh, uh, i- all the immigrants. Well, in those days, there were a lot of displaced persons. A lot, a lot. We had quite a few Jewish displaced pers- people that came over with their children.

Ken Simon ([00:30:30](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:30:30](#)):

So we, I, in my class, in those days, we, I ha- probably had over 50% were Jewish and, uh, displaced people that were coming in from Europe, which made it interesting.

Ken Simon ([00:30:47](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Hmm. And how did, how did you guys, you know, interact?

Walt Golec ([00:30:51](#)):

Well, very well. Uh, very well. Yeah. The, um, some- some of the, uh, kids, um, actually later on, they would come here a- after the war, and they would maybe come to the cemetery, and I was right near the cemetery, um, to visit. And, uh, uh, sometimes I'd stop and talk to them and- and they'd always say, "Oh, I remember ..." Here nobody, there was no, there was no discrimination in Moodus.

Ken Simon ([00:31:24](#)):

Yeah.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec ([00:31:24](#)):

Everybody got al- you know, got along very well.

Ken Simon ([00:31:26](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:31:27](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:31:29](#)):

Yeah. So some more about the school. Um, wh- what part of ... The Ray School was not built when you went to school, correct?

Walt Golec ([00:31:37](#)):

Um, yeah, it ... Well, it was in my last years. Uh, the ... Oh, excuse me. (laughs)

Ken Simon ([00:31:41](#)):

Okay.

Walt Golec ([00:31:42](#)):

Um, the- the Ray School, uh, was built in 1939.

Ken Simon ([00:31:47](#)):

Okay.

Walt Golec ([00:31:47](#)):

And- and I think we occupied it. Yeah, maybe in '40. But it was, um, it was actually a gem, the Ray School. It was a- a school, a school that other towns in Connecticut would come to visit because we had a, we had a up-to-date industrial arts shop, we had a printing shop. We had everything. And everything was left to the town by the, by, uh, Frederick Ray.

Ken Simon ([00:32:21](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:32:22](#)):

And, uh, we, uh, ha- it was a, uh, a nice, and a nice building. And, of course, that- that lasted up until about a, 10, 15 years ago.

Ken Simon ([00:32:37](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:32:37](#)):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

It's still a, it's still actually in existence, the Ray, the Ray Fund. I mean, they still give mon- the money from it and all that, but it's in a different location.

Ken Simon ([00:32:48](#)):

Yeah. Um, how- how big were your classes in school?

Walt Golec ([00:32:52](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ken Simon ([00:32:53](#)):

Uh, how many kids? And ...

Walt Golec ([00:32:55](#)):

Uh, classes were probably, I would say, fairly good size, and I would say maybe 35 students.

Ken Simon ([00:33:04](#)):

Yeah. Now, does ... I- I meant, you know, in your class. Not in, not in your, not in the classes.

Walt Golec ([00:33:09](#)):

Oh, in my, in my graduating class?

Ken Simon ([00:33:11](#)):

Yeah. How many were in your graduating class?

Walt Golec ([00:33:12](#)):

I think we had about 26.

Ken Simon ([00:33:14](#)):

26?

Walt Golec ([00:33:16](#)):

Yeah, I think it was. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:33:16](#)):

Pretty small.

Walt Golec ([00:33:17](#)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:33:19](#)):

Um, and so anybody in your class, uh, uh, besides you, uh, most people stayed in town? Uh, anybody, na- any names we know that maybe started businesses or townspeople would know?

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec (00:33:36):

Hmm. Well, let's see. Uh, from my class there was probably, I'm gonna say, you know, go on the, on the, on the male side, there were probably six or eight that stayed in town. And, uh, they didn't really start any businesses because I think it was a little difficult in those days to start a business. But they did stay and they all became good citizens, had families and, uh, worked themselves into the, you know, into the community.

Ken Simon (00:34:22):

Yeah. So when you were ...

Scott Hill (00:34:27):

Just for a second. [inaudible 00:34:27] mic.

Ken Simon (00:34:28):

[inaudible 00:34:28] my mic on? (laughs)

Scott Hill (00:34:33):

[inaudible 00:34:33]. It just ...

Ken Simon (00:34:35):

How long has it been down there?

Scott Hill (00:34:36):

I s- For a little bit.

Ken Simon (00:34:40):

(laughs) great. Uh, excuse me. We have mic issues.

Scott Hill (00:34:44):

I was like, "It's not coming through strong. Like, where is the mic?"

Ken Simon (00:34:44):

Yeah, well, now, you wanna start from the beginning?

Scott Hill (00:34:45):

No. (laughing)

Ken Simon (00:34:48):

Okay. Um, so, um, entertainment in town, okay? When you were in high school and, you know, you guys-

Scott Hill (00:34:57):

Yeah.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Ken Simon ([00:34:58](#)):

... everybody would, I would guess, hang out at times.

Scott Hill ([00:35:01](#)):

Hmm.

Ken Simon ([00:35:02](#)):

Um, or get together. Where did you get together? Uh, did you go down to Moodus Center and ...

Walt Golec ([00:35:10](#)):

Yeah, you know, actually entertainment, if you didn't have anything else to do, you could, you- you could take- take a walk to Main Street Moodus on a Saturday night and have a lot of entertainment.

Ken Simon ([00:35:28](#)):

How is that? Yeah.

Walt Golec ([00:35:30](#)):

I mean, we had the, uh, let's see, probably, I can't think of any offhand, but maybe three or four taverns where these, the, going, uh, over in those, get ... Well ...

Ken Simon ([00:35:45](#)):

Not the high school kids.

Walt Golec ([00:35:49](#)):

No, not the high school kids.

Ken Simon ([00:35:50](#)):

Yeah, right.

Walt Golec ([00:35:50](#)):

But they- they would be out and observe. (laughs) Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:35:53](#)):

Right. Um, ta- talk a little bit about, uh, uh, Moodus Center, um, when you were growing up and-

Walt Golec ([00:36:00](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:36:00](#)):

... what place that had in the community, you know-

Walt Golec ([00:36:03](#)):

Yeah. Well, yeah, what- what-

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Ken Simon ([00:36:03](#)):

... as a business center, retail, social center.

Walt Golec ([00:36:07](#)):

Well- well, you had all the summer resorts and you had ... Most of them used Main Street Moodus, Bill's Soda Shop, as a terminal for transportation.

Ken Simon ([00:36:20](#)):

Hmm.

Walt Golec ([00:36:21](#)):

And, um, you know, it was kinda interesting because, uh, I can remember Greyhound buses coming into Moodus-

Ken Simon ([00:36:33](#)):

Hmm.

Walt Golec ([00:36:33](#)):

... and- and somebody out there from- from the resorts would be out there and with a megaphone, "Bus number 13. Bus number 12."

Ken Simon ([00:36:49](#)):

Right.

Walt Golec ([00:36:50](#)):

With- with passen- passengers for Banner Lodge, for, uh, Grand View and all that. It was a rea- ... And then, um, of course, we- we had ta- taxis. Imagine in Moodus Center, taxis, an [Axelize 00:37:07] taxi.

Ken Simon ([00:37:08](#)):

Oh, yeah.

Walt Golec ([00:37:09](#)):

Yeah. We, um, I- I- I, we went, I went down to New York City a couple times and I said ... At that time, I guess I- I was just newly married. But anyway, I told my wife, I said, "Well, don't be surprised if- if we run across Axelize taxicabs. Sure enough (laughing) there we are in New York City, At- [Atley 00:37:37] Cab, it was called.

Ken Simon ([00:37:38](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:37:40](#)):

Moodus, Connecticut. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:37:41](#)):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Yeah. So a lot of these resort guests came in, like one Greyhound bus would have various resort visitors on it.

Walt Golec ([00:37:48](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. Yep.

Ken Simon ([00:37:49](#)):

And they, the first thing they would see and get off on is Moodus.

Walt Golec ([00:37:54](#)):

Yeah. Oh, yeah, yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:37:56](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. Um, did you, did you, um, have any interaction or, uh, go to any of these resorts for ...

Walt Golec ([00:38:05](#)):

Yeah, we used to, um, they, uh, they- they actually you- you had to know someone that, say for instance, at Banner Lodge. I- I know Herb [Lovlitz 00:38:22].

Ken Simon ([00:38:22](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:38:24](#)):

And he, you know, he'd always say, "Oh, well, we're gonna have a good show. Come- come up. Just tell 'em at the gate that Herb said it is all right."

Ken Simon ([00:38:35](#)):

Right.

Walt Golec ([00:38:36](#)):

And, uh, then same thing with Ted [Holtens 00:38:38]. Um ...

Ken Simon ([00:38:40](#)):

Yeah. I think a lot of people in town-

Walt Golec ([00:38:42](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:38:43](#)):

... on the weekends or when people had shows at BANNER's-

Walt Golec ([00:38:45](#)):

Yeah, oh, yeah.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Ken Simon ([00:38:45](#)):

... that they would, it would be entertainment for people.

Walt Golec ([00:38:47](#)):

Oh, yeah. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:38:49](#)):

Yeah. You also had to know Pistol Pete really well down at the gate there. (laughs)

Walt Golec ([00:38:53](#)):

Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:38:55](#)):

Um, so, um, I- so how did your life change? So the Depression, getting back to that.

Walt Golec ([00:39:03](#)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:39:04](#)):

1938, 1939 is when it kind of was over.

Walt Golec ([00:39:09](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:39:10](#)):

Um, and you were 10, 11, 12, something like that?

Walt Golec ([00:39:14](#)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:39:15](#)):

How did things change? Did it change at all? Did, you know, after the Depression?

Walt Golec ([00:39:21](#)):

Not really that much because, uh, if you wanted to, wanted ... Well, the termination of the Depression kind of, uh, went together with the ending of World War II.

Ken Simon ([00:39:43](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:39:45](#)):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Everything at the end of World War II, everything sorta stopped for, only for a short time. And then, uh, your businesses got reorganized if they, from, uh, making gliders in Deep River back to making pianos, you know.

Ken Simon ([00:40:09](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:40:09](#)):

So it- it- it was a little, probably ... Let's see. War was over in the summer, and now, probably from a, may- maybe six- six months or so, it was a- a- a time when there wasn't too- too much going on. Everyone was just sorta marking time.

Ken Simon ([00:40:33](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). So they're, I mean, the mills at that time, they were still existing. Then they stopped doing wartime work.

Walt Golec ([00:40:44](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:40:44](#)):

Uh, and ...

Walt Golec ([00:40:45](#)):

Well, it, see, one thing with the mills, it was really, they were fairly fortunate. It- it didn't take much for them to convert from making centers to barrage balloon cables to centers for yoyos, you know, the little tops.

Ken Simon ([00:41:02](#)):

Right.

Walt Golec ([00:41:03](#)):

They used to make those. They were, they were (laughs) they were the big suppliers of, uh, the thing was called, you know, the Duncan, Dunk ...

Ken Simon ([00:41:14](#)):

Oh, yeah. Duncan yoyos, I think. Yeah.

Walt Golec ([00:41:15](#)):

Yeah, yo- yoyos.

Ken Simon ([00:41:15](#)):

Yeah.

Walt Golec ([00:41:16](#)):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

And all of that twine was from Moodus.

Ken Simon ([00:41:18](#)):

Really?

Walt Golec ([00:41:18](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:41:19](#)):

Huh. That's pretty cool. Um, so you- you served during the Korean War.

Walt Golec ([00:41:25](#)):

Yes. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:41:26](#)):

You went over to Korea?

Walt Golec ([00:41:27](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:41:27](#)):

Yeah. Can you talk a little bit about that? You were how old and what your memories of that were and ...

Walt Golec ([00:41:32](#)):

Yeah. Uh, I, again, I- I've been pretty fortunate throughout my life. Um, I, um, you know, you know how young- young, uh, young men and guys get together and they say, "Well, let's do this. Let's do that"? So anyway, bef- before this all started, I joined the Guard, the National Guard, and, um, my- myself, uh, Danny Morris, Johnny [Cromish 00:42:06], Casper [Engely 00:42:09], and, um, hmm, it was five or six of us.

Ken Simon ([00:42:17](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:42:17](#)):

Um, and actually, uh, we were the first. They said, "Oh, you won't get called. You won't get called." (laughs) But anyway, we were, we- we happened to be the first ones to be called. And- and we, uh, we were called and went in through- through- through the different training. And, um, we were lucky. Uh, we- we, no- none of us got wounded or anything like that. And, uh ...

Ken Simon ([00:42:55](#)):

How long were you over there?

Walt Golec ([00:42:57](#)):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Well, I, we, I was fed- federalized for two years, and I spent, uh, about ha- ha- half of my time in the States and the other half we went over. We were heading for Korea and we just about got to Korea and they changed our orders because, uh, they, um, we- we were in a anti-aircraft outfit and, um, with a, with a very good firing record.

Walt Golec ([00:43:32](#)):

And there, the war at that time was getting a little hairy. The Chinese would, came in and they were starting to get a little rambunctious there in, uh, South Korea.

Walt Golec ([00:43:45](#)):

So anyway, uh, we, um, were lucky. We were in- in the Straits of Japan, where in North Korea our orders got changed. And instead of, uh, landing in, uh, Korea, we landed in Yo- Yokohama, Japan and set up ai- air- aircraft protection of our air base called Itazuke.

Walt Golec ([00:44:25](#)):

And they gonna, planes into Korea and North Korea at a, at a (laughs) at a regular basis, so they needed air, they needed air protection. So anyway, we got tag- tagged for that job, and I stayed- stayed- stayed there the rest of my time in Japan.

Ken Simon ([00:44:45](#)):

Hmm. Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:44:45](#)):

Which was almost, yeah, it was just about a year.

Ken Simon ([00:44:48](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:44:49](#)):

And, uh, we were lucky. We had a good place to sleep and a lot ...

Ken Simon ([00:45:00](#)):

Um, so you came back. You were, like, 20?

Walt Golec ([00:45:06](#)):

Um, 20, um, twe- yeah, 21 maybe. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:45:10](#)):

Okay.

Walt Golec ([00:45:11](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:45:11](#)):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Uh, so what did you do?

Walt Golec (00:45:14):

Well, what I did was, um, I got a job at Viking Instrument here in East Haddam, but it was a, you know, kind of, uh, a nothing- nothing job. So I, um, I was, I- I decided to take advantage of the GI Bill, and I went to the University of Hartford nights. I did that for a f- a few years.

Walt Golec (00:45:50):

And when I got to the point where I thought I had something to sell, I went to Pratt Whitney and applied for a job and got hired ri- ri- right away. And I- I sa- got hired with Pratt and I stayed there 30, 32 years. (laughs)

Ken Simon (00:46:08):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:46:10):

Yeah. And- and while I was at Pratt, I was still going to school, which made it a little difficult because, uh, you know, I was newly married and, uh, working and then coming home. Then driving back to Hartford because so- some of my classes were later at night. And, uh, it all worked out, though.

Ken Simon (00:46:34):

Yeah. Yeah. 32 years at Pratt.

Walt Golec (00:46:37):

32.

Ken Simon (00:46:38):

Wow. Did you have different job there or- or was it all the same?

Walt Golec (00:46:42):

Yeah. I, um, you know, I- I- I actually worked in experimental and then when Pratt bought the, uh, facility in Middletown, I said, "I am, uh, maybe get transferred there." So I- I got transferred there and I spent, mmm, maybe 10 or 15 years with, uh, the, uh, operations of the, of the facility.

Walt Golec (00:47:25):

And but basically, uh, I- I was pretty much the, you know, the s- the same, where I got involved in a whi- for a while there in, um, in- in generally the material handling facility part of it.

Ken Simon (00:47:46):

Hmm.

Walt Golec (00:47:46):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

So I- I di- I did that because like when they do the engines, they have a hoi- uh, hoist that bring the engines up and then they're hanging and they actually go all over the plant from point to point, which was kinda interesting.

Ken Simon ([00:48:10](#)):

Did other people from town work at Pratt?

Walt Golec ([00:48:12](#)):

Yeah, there was quite a few of 'em. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:48:14](#)):

Yeah? Yeah? You guys, uh, did you carpool or you all went up different times?

Walt Golec ([00:48:19](#)):

Mmm, uh, whi- for a while there, I think maybe, but it made it a little difficult. I mean, if- if you were maybe out in the shop, uh, running a- a machine or something like that and started to work at 8:00 in the morning-

Ken Simon ([00:48:40](#)):

Hmm.

Walt Golec ([00:48:40](#)):

... and finished at 3:00 in the afternoon, you could carpool.

Ken Simon ([00:48:46](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:48:46](#)):

But like always with me, it seemed that at 2:30 in the afternoon, uh, some crisis developed (laughs) and I- I had to stay longer. And so- so I said I'll- I'll drive my own car.

Ken Simon ([00:49:02](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. Um, so what are some of the, uh ... I know you were involved with the Lion's Club.

Walt Golec ([00:49:11](#)):

Oh, yes. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:49:11](#)):

Can you talk about the Lions Club and- and- and its relationship and how important they ha- were at the town? How, uh, were you there when it started? Or ...

Walt Golec ([00:49:22](#)):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

A coup- couple years after. I was, um, pretty active in the Lions Club. I- I held just about every position. I was preside- president, uh, secretary and treasurer and, you know, a- all these different positions. And, uh-

Ken Simon ([00:49:44](#)):

And how important was the Lions Club at that time to the community? What were the kinds of things you did?

Walt Golec ([00:49:50](#)):

Well, the Lions Club, everyone really always really liked the Lions Club. They still do, and they're respected. If you belong to the Lions, you could do most anything, I guess. Um, and the- the Lions helped a lot of, a lot of people.

Walt Golec ([00:50:12](#)):

Uh, uh, you could just imagine if the Lions Club was in existence during th- the, uh, Depression. Even though it didn't really hit East Haddam that hard, it very, it still was needed.

Walt Golec ([00:50:27](#)):

And, um, the, uh, people would turn- turn to you if they were, needed anything. They'd turn to the Lions, and Li- we would help people that couldn't afford glasses, couldn't afford hearing aids. The Lions would always take care of it.

Ken Simon ([00:50:51](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative). Um, uh, all businessmen in the Club at the time?

Walt Golec ([00:50:57](#)):

Yeah, well, when- when it first started, maybe, uh, for a very short time because there's so much, there's so many people you can drain on, uh, drain. Um, yeah, when I first started, it was strictly business, almost strictly business, but then later on it was average rung of the guy on the street.

Walt Golec ([00:51:27](#)):

You know, it was sorta like myself. I- I wasn't in business, but I was a good citizen, and I- I got into the Lions Club.

Ken Simon ([00:51:36](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative). So you were active and were president of the Club at times. Um, times.

Walt Golec ([00:51:40](#)):

I, yeah, I was president, yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:51:41](#)):

Yeah. Um, you also, um, were active in the American Legion?

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec ([00:51:46](#)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:51:47](#)):

Can you talk a little bit about that and what that organization did and does for the town?

Walt Golec ([00:51:53](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:51:54](#)):

And how, and, you know, what you did for that organization.

Walt Golec ([00:51:56](#)):

Well, they've done a lot. Yeah, they- they've- they've done a lot, you know, as far as, uh, helping veterans. And I- I was the commander back in, mmm, I've forgotten all of the ... Maybe the middle-middle '50s and, uh, the Legion was always very, you know, patriotic. Of course, it was always a little closer to my heart because my uncle, it's named after my uncle.

Ken Simon ([00:52:33](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:52:35](#)):

And, um, it was, uh, they always did a lot for the town, you know, for the, for the youth of- of the town.

Ken Simon ([00:52:45](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative). What are some of the activities that- that took place there?

Walt Golec ([00:52:51](#)):

Well, the, um, I was commander before the building existed. (laughs)

Ken Simon ([00:52:56](#)):

Yeah.

Walt Golec ([00:52:57](#)):

And but they, uh, they always were very much involved in the baseball program.

Ken Simon ([00:53:03](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:53:03](#)):

And, uh, little- little league just started back in the late '60s, I guess, and the- the Legion was one of the, uh, groups that su- supported 'em quite a bit.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Ken Simon (00:53:20):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative). Um, so let's- let's turn to something different. When you were growing up, uh, Moodus-Leesville Road was dirt?

Walt Golec (00:53:28):

Dirt. Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:53:30):

Was most of town roads then that you remember, were they dirt? Were they tarred?

Walt Golec (00:53:35):

Oh, quite a few. Quite a few. Uh, just locally, I'll say, Moodus-Leesville Road was dirt. Neptune Avenue, I don't ever remember that being dirt.

Ken Simon (00:53:51):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:53:53):

Uh, this road out here, I don't remember ... I always remember that being pa- hard paved.

Ken Simon (00:53:59):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:54:00):

But, uh, I think East Haddam in those days had well over a hundred miles, I think, of dirt road. Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:54:13):

But were they paved within a short period of time? Or over a years or ...

Walt Golec (00:54:18):

Uh, over years.

Ken Simon (00:54:20):

Over years, yeah.

Walt Golec (00:54:20):

Years, yeah. Because, um, Moodus-Leesville Road was dirt. Sam [Payor 00:54:29] was first selectman, and I remember my father was, you know, almost begging, "Sam, when you gonna get Moseley's little road done?" "Don't worry, John. I'll get it done. Don't worry." (laughing) That went on for a couple years and every ... But it did get done. And they actually did a pretty good job on it and say where the state came over and took it over, which was okay too. Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:54:57):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Hmm. Mm-hmm (affirmative). Um, when did you get your first car?

Walt Golec ([00:55:01](#)):

Um, well, I think it ... Yeah, it was right, well, af- right after I graduated, you know, I-

Ken Simon ([00:55:10](#)):

You remember what it was?

Walt Golec ([00:55:11](#)):

Yeah, it was a Chevy, '49, 1949 Chevy.

Ken Simon ([00:55:17](#)):

Uh-huh (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:55:17](#)):

Fleetline, uh, with a straight back.

Ken Simon ([00:55:19](#)):

Yeah.

Walt Golec ([00:55:22](#)):

Was it ... And I had-

Ken Simon ([00:55:22](#)):

Was it new when you got it?

Walt Golec ([00:55:23](#)):

What's that?

Ken Simon ([00:55:23](#)):

Was it new? What?

Walt Golec ([00:55:23](#)):

Yeah, it was new. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:55:25](#)):

Yeah.

Walt Golec ([00:55:25](#)):

Yeah. I always tell my wife-

Ken Simon ([00:55:27](#)):

Yeah.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec (00:55:27):

... She, "I- I got so darn many cars. I shoulda kept those cars. I would've been very wealthy today."
(laughs)

Ken Simon (00:55:34):

Um, I know, I know. My first car was a 1968 GTO.

Walt Golec (00:55:38):

Oh, yeah. Right.

Ken Simon (00:55:39):

Which is worth like, \$100,000 today if I had it.

Walt Golec (00:55:42):

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:55:43):

And I would have it if it weren't totaled twice. (laughs)

Walt Golec (00:55:45):

Yeah, well.

Ken Simon (00:55:46):

Uh, once by me.

Walt Golec (00:55:48):

Yeah. (laughs)

Ken Simon (00:55:48):

Um, so, uh, you mentioned the American Legion supporting baseball, little league baseball teams.

Walt Golec (00:55:56):

Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:55:56):

I mean, do you remember when Moodus had its own teams?

Walt Golec (00:56:00):

Oh, yeah. Moodus always has.

Ken Simon (00:56:02):

Yeah?

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec (00:56:03):

Yeah, they- they had a, actually it was a semi-pro team, um, and they- they, uh, would play on Sundays, and everything in Moodus, in the surround area would stop 'cause it was baseball time. And they had, uh, Golab's Electric, which was also active in the community. They would take their truck. They had a PA system with a big s- uh, speaker horns, and they would ride all around town starting early in the Sunday morning.

Ken Simon (00:56:47):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:56:47):

And they were playing- playing music and getting the people hepped up to go to the baseball game. Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:56:53):

Yeah.

Walt Golec (00:56:54):

And they would too because in those days, this was just right after the war, and we were still using the baseball field up behind Da- Davison Road on, not Davison Road but, uh, Mo- Moodus-Leesville Road.

Ken Simon (00:57:12):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Hmm.

Walt Golec (00:57:13):

And, uh, they would pack the people in. I don't know how they got-

Ken Simon (00:57:18):

Yeah.

Walt Golec (00:57:18):

... They would find enough area for them to si- sit.

Ken Simon (00:57:22):

How were the teams? Uh, and did, were we like, was the Moodus base-

Walt Golec (00:57:26):

Moodus was the excellent team. I remember Moodus would go on, beat Middletown, beat a lot of these tow- towns that had .. They were supposed- they had good teams.

Ken Simon (00:57:40):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:57:40):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

But not until they played Moodus.

Ken Simon (00:57:42):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:57:44):

You know.

Ken Simon (00:57:44):

After the games, where did people go?

Walt Golec (00:57:46):

Mmm, well, in those days Oak Inn was the place. That's where the, um, daycare center is today.

Ken Simon (00:57:57):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:57:58):

That was a, you know, go there and get sandwiches. You can get beer, mixed drinks, wine, anything.

Ken Simon (00:58:07):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (00:58:08):

They- they used to ... Now, they- they would go there and then, of course, our Main Street Moodus. We had, uh, let's see, three or four taverns. Everyone would go and get their nice cold beer.

Ken Simon (00:58:27):

Right.

Walt Golec (00:58:27):

Yeah.

Ken Simon (00:58:28):

Right. Um, speaking of old Moodus, um, what are some of ... I know you talked about a couple of the stores and the people. What stands out in your mind about old Moodus Main Street in terms of stores, in terms of people, some of the shopkeepers? Wha- what comes to mind?

Walt Golec (00:58:46):

Well, Fri- I'm gonna say Friday night was when everyone from- from all the backwoods-

Ken Simon (00:58:55):

Hmm.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec ([00:58:55](#)):

... would come to Moodus (laughs) to- to do their grocery shopping. And, you know, and there was a lot of activity. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:59:03](#)):

This was at, uh, was it at First National then?

Walt Golec ([00:59:05](#)):

Fir- there was a First National.

Ken Simon ([00:59:07](#)):

Yeah.

Walt Golec ([00:59:07](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:59:08](#)):

Yeah.

Walt Golec ([00:59:09](#)):

And then that closed and I think the name of the store was Ray- Ray's Market maybe. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:59:16](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([00:59:16](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:59:19](#)):

What else about Moodus, um, you know, what- what- what comes to mind? Uh, you know, when I think of Moodus, I think of Sam Paris standing outside his store.

Walt Golec ([00:59:29](#)):

Oh, yeah. (laughs) Yeah. Right. Right. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:59:31](#)):

(laughs) You know, with his cigar.

Walt Golec ([00:59:32](#)):

Yeah, yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:59:33](#)):

Yeah.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec ([00:59:34](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:59:34](#)):

Um, well, anything-

Walt Golec ([00:59:37](#)):

Well, things like that do.

Ken Simon ([00:59:37](#)):

Yeah?

Walt Golec ([00:59:39](#)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([00:59:40](#)):

Um, so what would you say Moodus was like growing up, just in a, in a sentence or two? How was it to grow up here and be a young man and ...

Walt Golec ([00:59:50](#)):

Well, it was good 'cause everyone- everyone knew me and I knew everyone.

Ken Simon ([00:59:55](#)):

Yeah.

Walt Golec ([00:59:55](#)):

So it wa- it was good because, uh, it wa- it was, it was great. Yeah. You know, the, um, but everyone, um, every, you know, when they's went ... I'm- I'm thinking about a little story. Uh, when I, actually, well, I was already in the Army, and, um, course everyone in Moodus knew everyone in Moodus. And in those days, you remember Louie Shakeman?

Ken Simon ([01:00:33](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([01:00:33](#)):

He used to do a little writing for the paper and all that.

Ken Simon ([01:00:37](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([01:00:38](#)):

And, uh, uh, uh, uh, I guess somebody, he got the word that, uh, um, that we really missed the kielbasa from Barry Market.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Ken Simon ([01:00:59](#)):

Oh, yeah.

Walt Golec ([01:01:00](#)):

And was funny because, uh, Louie Shakeman wrote the article. (laughs) And it sa-

Ken Simon ([01:01:06](#)):

About the kielbasa at Barry's?

Walt Golec ([01:01:07](#)):

Yeah, right. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:01:08](#)):

Yeah.

Walt Golec ([01:01:09](#)):

It's ju- just like today: Don't believe everything you read.

Ken Simon ([01:01:12](#)):

(laughs)

Walt Golec ([01:01:12](#)):

He, oh, uh, my mother made a package and fro- froze the kielbasa, wrapped it well and sent it to me. It- it got to me. I- I wasn't, I want in Korea. I- I was in supporting unit. But Louie Shakeman got wor- got word that Barry's kielbasa went- went to Korea, so in- in The Middletown Press, the headlines, Barry's Kielbasa Hit Front in Korea. (laughing) And- and it really- wa- wasn't so.

Ken Simon ([01:02:00](#)):

Right.

Walt Golec ([01:02:00](#)):

But anyway, they said, "Oh, yeah, that's Walt Golec and, uh, Dan Moss and Ryan." (laughs) Yeah. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:02:05](#)):

Yeah, yeah. Yeah. Um, who- who were some of the ... You talked about Dan Mor- Moss and- and Johnny Cromish-

Walt Golec ([01:02:12](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:02:13](#)):

... and, you know, well-known names around town.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec ([01:02:16](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:02:16](#)):

Who else in your contemporaries comes to mind that, you know, was in Moodus, in town all their life and- and made a mark here? Who- who would you say would those people be?

Walt Golec ([01:02:27](#)):

Mmm, well ...

Ken Simon ([01:02:35](#)):

Besides you? (laughing)

Walt Golec ([01:02:36](#)):

Yeah. It's hard. It's hard, it's hard to say. Course I- I al- I always think of the Berwick boys. They've been, they did very well.

Ken Simon ([01:02:50](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([01:02:50](#)):

That, Don-

Ken Simon ([01:02:52](#)):

When did they start their butcher operation?

Walt Golec ([01:02:54](#)):

What is that?

Ken Simon ([01:02:55](#)):

When, do you know when they started, uh, their shop?

Walt Golec ([01:02:58](#)):

Who was that?

Ken Simon ([01:02:59](#)):

The Barry brothers.

Walt Golec ([01:03:00](#)):

The Barrys?

Ken Simon ([01:03:01](#)):

Yeah.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec (01:03:01):

Um, I- I think, yeah, they started that in, mmm, on a part-time basis during the war, but after the war was over, they expanded and, uh, did very well. But then what happened was, it just so happened, uh, they, uh, they got sick. And not all at the same time, but one of 'em passed away, then the other one passed away. And they, there was only maybe one left. They said, "Yeah, I can't do it." So that was that.

Ken Simon (01:03:36):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah, they were definitely a team.

Walt Golec (01:03:38):

Yep.

Ken Simon (01:03:38):

Yeah. Um, I think everybody in town went to Barry's Market for their meat.

Walt Golec (01:03:43):

Oh, yeah. Yeah.

Ken Simon (01:03:44):

Yeah. Um, who else comes to mind? Anybody? Any- any names that ...

Walt Golec (01:03:51):

Hmm. Well, I alway- I always re- refer to the Berwick, like I men- mentioned, to the Berwick boys. No, he ... Is it Don? Is- is he the, uh, doctor?

Ken Simon (01:04:07):

Dr.?

Walt Golec (01:04:08):

Berwick?

Ken Simon (01:04:09):

Berwick? Yeah.

Walt Golec (01:04:10):

Yeah. Yeah.

Ken Simon (01:04:10):

Uh, Phil. Phil Berwick.

Walt Golec (01:04:13):

Yeah.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Ken Simon ([01:04:13](#)):

And his son Don.

Walt Golec ([01:04:14](#)):

Yeah, right. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:04:15](#)):

Is also a doctor, yeah. Um, was Phil Berwick your doctor?

Walt Golec ([01:04:20](#)):

What's that?

Ken Simon ([01:04:20](#)):

Was Dr. Berwick your doctor?

Walt Golec ([01:04:22](#)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:04:23](#)):

Yeah.

Walt Golec ([01:04:23](#)):

Yeah. He wa- he was kinda disappointed in me because, um, when he came to town, I was working in the Moodus Drugstore. And he just got out of the service, and he had his office upstairs in the drugstore building. And when he found out that I wasn't gonna become a pharmacist, you know, he- he was very disappointed.

Ken Simon ([01:04:51](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([01:04:52](#)):

He, "Oh," he said, "You're small [inaudible 01:04:54]." Because I was working in the Moodus Drugstore at the time.

Ken Simon ([01:04:58](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([01:04:59](#)):

And in, and in those days, the drugstore had a soda fountain and- and all that.

Ken Simon ([01:05:06](#)):

Oh, yeah.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec (01:05:07):

And I- I worked. I had a white coat, you know.

Ken Simon (01:05:10):

Right.

Walt Golec (01:05:10):

And looked presentable, and he said, "I always thought you were gonna be a pharmacist." But, uh, but so happy (laughing) I didn't become one. But we stayed friends, yeah.

Ken Simon (01:05:22):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). And who was the owner of the drugstore?

Walt Golec (01:05:24):

What's that again?

Ken Simon (01:05:25):

Who was the owner of the drug-

Walt Golec (01:05:25):

Oh, in those days? Uh, Ray Mc- Ray McMullen.

Ken Simon (01:05:28):

He did own it in those days. Yeah.

Walt Golec (01:05:30):

Yeah. And- and he was also state commissioner of pharmacy.

Ken Simon (01:05:34):

Oh, he was?

Walt Golec (01:05:34):

Or pharmacy commissioner, I guess. Yeah.

Ken Simon (01:05:36):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (01:05:40):

Yeah. And then, of course, in- into politics, we had a very active, uh, Democratic. Your- your mother was-

Ken Simon (01:05:49):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec (01:05:50):

... uh, very, very active in it. And we would have these gigantic picnics at this time of the year, because, uh, they, uh, wou- would always have a, um, a big fall rally.

Ken Simon (01:06:09):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (01:06:10):

And it, we'd always get (laughs) it, get it done for nothing because we'd have Jack Banner, would have all these, a lot of food left over.

Ken Simon (01:06:17):

Yeah.

Walt Golec (01:06:19):

And we'd use this for some of the, have a lot of food would be donated, and everyone would have ... And- and there would be no admission.

Ken Simon (01:06:29):

Yeah.

Walt Golec (01:06:30):

It meant, that's when we were really, would have, um, a real- real good turnout.

Ken Simon (01:06:36):

They were, yeah, those were big. I remember those, yeah.

Walt Golec (01:06:38):

Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yeah, you probably went to them.

Ken Simon (01:06:40):

Yeah, I did. Yeah, next door, you know.

Walt Golec (01:06:42):

Yeah, sure. Yeah. Yeah.

Ken Simon (01:06:44):

So, um, so- so lemme start a sentence for you and you complete it. Repeat what I say and then finish the sentence, okay?

Walt Golec (01:06:55):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative). Okay.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Ken Simon ([01:06:56](#)):

So Moodus to me is ... Moodus to me ...

Walt Golec ([01:07:03](#)):

Moodus to me is the place I grew up.

Ken Simon ([01:07:11](#)):

And?

Walt Golec ([01:07:11](#)):

And the pla- the place that I often think of.

Ken Simon ([01:07:22](#)):

And how would you describe it, whe- when you think of it? What are you thinking of, you know?

Walt Golec ([01:07:29](#)):

Well, I- I can recall or I think of the Moodus I knew was different than the Moodus and East Haddam (laughs) that we have today. Really, 'cause I can go, uh, uptown today and not- not know anyone. But the Moodus I knew, I- I would know just about everyone. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:07:53](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). How did, uh, in back in the day, how did Moodus residents relate to East Haddam village residents?

Walt Golec ([01:08:03](#)):

Well, there was always a little friction, yeah, and there still is, I guess. But the, uh, the ones that caused the friction are, they're, uh, mostly all gone now.

Ken Simon ([01:08:15](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([01:08:17](#)):

And we have new people. Yeah, yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:08:20](#)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Walt Golec ([01:08:21](#)):

And these new people that come in fr- from New York, they're all pretty good, they're nice people. Yeah. And, uh, it's I think it's improving, you know.

Ken Simon ([01:08:37](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec ([01:08:37](#)):

As far as the- the, uh, town itself goes.

Ken Simon ([01:08:43](#)):

Yeah. I mean, back when in the '40s and '50s, '30s, '40s, '50s, into the '60s, uh, Moodus was the, was the more prosperous part of town, do you think? Or was East ...

Walt Golec ([01:08:59](#)):

Yeah, yeah, it was. Yeah, there was more going on in Moodus. In fact, uh, a- a lot of times in- in those days, uh, there was a- a wall between East Haddam and Moodus.

Walt Golec ([01:09:20](#)):

And every so often, it comes up where we say, "Well, they have to do away with one- one of the post offices." And in those days, uh, the average citizen of Moodus would go cra- go out of their minds if they ever started to think about closing the Moodus Post Office and having one post office for the whole town.

Ken Simon ([01:09:47](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([01:09:48](#)):

But it's different today. You- you mention it, "Of course. So what? It's okay."

Ken Simon ([01:09:54](#)):

Yeah.

Walt Golec ([01:09:54](#)):

Maybe it's a good idea. (laughing) You know, it's only ...

Ken Simon ([01:09:58](#)):

Um, I, now, i- is there anything we missed that you would like to talk about?

Walt Golec ([01:10:06](#)):

No, no. No.

Ken Simon ([01:10:09](#)):

Well, Bruce, you got ... Is Bruce back there?

Bruce ([01:10:10](#)):

Yeah. Uh-huh (affirmative).

Ken Simon ([01:10:10](#)):

Got any questions?

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Bruce (01:10:12):

Walt, did you ever go up to the movie theater?

Walt Golec (01:10:12):

What's?

Bruce (01:10:12):

The movie- The movie theater?

Walt Golec (01:10:13):

Oh, the movie theater, yeah.

Bruce (01:10:16):

Can you talk about that, what it was like?

Walt Golec (01:10:18):

Yeah, that- that was, you know, gave us, uh, gave us all something to do. Course that was, that was before television.

Ken Simon (01:10:25):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (01:10:26):

But, uh, the Moodus Theater was, it was a cozy little theater. And, uh, it had movies ... Now, I- I've forgotten. Now maybe during the summer they might've had shows there every night, but in the win-off- off season in the winter, they'd have, it would be open. Uh, mmm, Sa- Well, I know it was open Saturday night, Sunday matinee, Sunday night.

Ken Simon (01:10:59):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (01:11:00):

And maybe on Monday, but, uh, but during the summer, it was open all the time.

Ken Simon (01:11:06):

Yeah. I- I know when I went there, it was double-bills and newsreels.

Walt Golec (01:11:12):

Yeah. Yeah, yeah, right.

Ken Simon (01:11:12):

And yeah.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Walt Golec (01:11:13):

And that, and that is one thing that kept us up on the war effort too because, uh, you got all your news from newsreels.

Ken Simon (01:11:23):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (01:11:23):

I forgot what the name of it was, but it was good.

Ken Simon (01:11:27):

Yeah. Um, do you remember Continental Hall?

Walt Golec (01:11:29):

Oh, yeah, yeah.

Ken Simon (01:11:30):

Can you talk about that a little bit and- and what you remember?

Walt Golec (01:11:32):

Yeah, I, uh, that was a little bit before my time. It was still there, but it wasn't being used.

Ken Simon (01:11:39):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (01:11:42):

Uh, and but then we had, um, well, uh, it wa- it wa- it really wasn't being used, but it was available. Uh, it gave us a place. I remember going up there a lot of times on a Saturday afternoon or a Sunday afternoon with a basketball under my arm.

Ken Simon (01:12:00):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (01:12:00):

And going up there and just shooting baskets. But then when I went into the Army, there was a hurricane up here in the, in the '50s. In 1950, to be exact. And it got blown down. But it was a, uh, it was, for its day, during its, during its time, it was a, uh, substantially, uh, you know, a- a good, pretty good-sized building.

Ken Simon (01:12:28):

Yeah. I mean, and when you were in school, were the basketball games being played down at Count-Continental Hall at that time?

Walt Golec (01:12:35):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Uh, they were, uh, I think probably until I was maybe- maybe in the sixth grade.

Ken Simon ([01:12:40](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([01:12:41](#)):

But then they, uh, stopped using it because actually, it was getting to be creaky.

Ken Simon ([01:12:47](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([01:12:47](#)):

You know, the building would be. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:12:50](#)):

Yeah. And that was located where, in your memory?

Walt Golec ([01:12:53](#)):

Uh, that was, uh, right about where the, um, um, Moodus Post Office, where- where it's located today. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:13:03](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah. So it's kind of across from the theater.

Walt Golec ([01:13:07](#)):

What's that again?

Ken Simon ([01:13:08](#)):

Was kind of across from the Moodus Theater.

Walt Golec ([01:13:10](#)):

Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:13:11](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. Um-

Scott Hill ([01:13:13](#)):

Just caught that chair a little.

Ken Simon ([01:13:15](#)):

It's my chair's creaky?

Bruce ([01:13:16](#)):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

No, the chair. No. Remember the red chair?

Ken Simon (01:13:20):

Oh, yeah. The red chair. Yeah.

Bruce (01:13:21):

It's that connection with [crosstalk 01:13:22].

Ken Simon (01:13:22):

Yeah, there's a chair, which I know you know.

Walt Golec (01:13:25):

Yeah.

Ken Simon (01:13:25):

From the theater. Yeah.

Walt Golec (01:13:27):

Oh, yeah.

Ken Simon (01:13:28):

Um, so what, so you went there as a- a teenager?

Walt Golec (01:13:31):

Teenager, yeah.

Ken Simon (01:13:32):

Yeah. Yeah. Wha- what'd you guys do after the, uh, movie?

Walt Golec (01:13:36):

Go down to Bill's Soda Shop, get a Coke or something, you know. Yeah.

Ken Simon (01:13:42):

Yeah. Yeah. Weinstein's wasn't around at that time?

Walt Golec (01:13:45):

It was. Weinstein's was there, but Bill's seemed to attract more of the younger people.

Ken Simon (01:13:52):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (01:13:53):

But Harry, Harry was good too.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Ken Simon ([01:13:55](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah.

Walt Golec ([01:13:56](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:13:57](#)):

Di- did Bill- Bill Le- Levine, was it all, um, ice cream and soda or did he make burgers and hot dogs?

Walt Golec ([01:14:03](#)):

The burgers and hot dogs, yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:14:05](#)):

Yep, yeah. How were they?

Walt Golec ([01:14:06](#)):

They, you know, I'm not ... I'm just tasting 'em. (laughing) Yeah, they were, they were pretty, they were good. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:14:12](#)):

Yeah.

Walt Golec ([01:14:12](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:14:13](#)):

Yeah. Uh, Harry had the better comic book section, I know.

Walt Golec ([01:14:16](#)):

Oh, yeah, right. Yeah. (laughing) You know, it's funny. Uh, uh, when I, when my daughters were getting a little, you know, maybe first- first grade, second grade, every Sunday we would have sort of a regular routine. We would go uptown, get the paper.

Walt Golec ([01:14:36](#)):

We'd go to, uh, Harry's, uh, I mean, Billy Levine's and get a soda or something, and then kinda shoot the breeze with the guys that were there. And my dau- and my daughters would say, "Dad, ca- can we go down to Harry's and read the comic books?" (laughing)

Ken Simon ([01:14:55](#)):

Yeah. Harry must've loved that.

Walt Golec ([01:14:56](#)):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Yeah, yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And- and it's, to this day, they remark about it. They- they'd go in to, and go into the, uh, comic book. And Harry would look over and he'd say, "What do you think this is? A library?"
(laughs)

Ken Simon ([01:15:11](#)):

That's exactly correct. That's what he said to me.

Walt Golec ([01:15:12](#)):

Yeah. Did he? Yeah? (laughing)

Ken Simon ([01:15:12](#)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Walt Golec ([01:15:12](#)):

But- but he didn't cha- chase you out, you know. No.

Ken Simon ([01:15:16](#)):

No, no. He let you stay there and read it, but, you know.

Walt Golec ([01:15:18](#)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:15:19](#)):

Um, so, uh, uh, I'm pretty, I think I, I think we've pretty much done it. Yes?

Bruce ([01:15:27](#)):

Yeah. No, that's, uh, um, when you were, when you were a kid, Walt, did you have a telephone in your house?

Walt Golec ([01:15:32](#)):

Uh, n- ye- Well, I was already maybe eight years, eight- eight or nine years old before we had a telephone. Yeah.

Bruce ([01:15:41](#)):

Okay.

Ken Simon ([01:15:41](#)):

And the number was a three-digit number, I bet. Right?

Walt Golec ([01:15:44](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. And it'd, and it'd go through the operator.

Ken Simon ([01:15:47](#)):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Yeah. Party line, most likely.

Walt Golec (01:15:49):

Ye- yeah.

Ken Simon (01:15:49):

Yeah.

Walt Golec (01:15:50):

And the operator would be sitting up in the, right across from Shady Brook Resort.

Ken Simon (01:15:56):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (01:15:56):

And that's where the thon- telephone station was.

Ken Simon (01:16:00):

Yep. Yep. Yeah, I know we had a party line of, like, three people when I was growing up.

Walt Golec (01:16:04):

Yeah. Yeah, right. Yeah.

Ken Simon (01:16:05):

Hmm.

Walt Golec (01:16:06):

Yeah, we- we had a party line.

Ken Simon (01:16:08):

Yeah.

Walt Golec (01:16:09):

And different people on Davison Road. You know, you'd could hear- (laughs) hear them talking. They could hear us, so yeah.

Ken Simon (01:16:17):

Yeah. Yeah. Not that anybody ever eavesdropped.

Walt Golec (01:16:19):

No, no. Right. Yeah. (laughing)

Ken Simon (01:16:22):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Um, so okay. Unless there's anything else that we missed that you- you would like to talk about?

Walt Golec (01:16:28):

Mmm, no, not really. I think we just about covered everything.

Ken Simon (01:16:33):

Yeah. Are you happy that you stayed in Moodus all your life?

Walt Golec (01:16:37):

Yeah. Yeah, I am. Yeah.

Ken Simon (01:16:37):

Yeah? Yeah. You don't feel you missed anything out there in the ...

Walt Golec (01:16:41):

No, no. No.

Ken Simon (01:16:42):

Yeah.

Walt Golec (01:16:43):

No, I, you know, I traveled quite a bit. I've been out ... Oops.

Ken Simon (01:16:48):

(laughing)

Walt Golec (01:16:48):

I keep ...

Ken Simon (01:16:49):

That's okay.

Walt Golec (01:16:49):

Uh, yeah. I, uh, keep forgetting. Um, no, I got, I've traveled all over the world, uh, you- you know.

Ken Simon (01:16:57):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec (01:16:57):

I've been, well, in the, in the service, I've been to Japan and Ala- Alaska and various places. And then later- later on, I did all ... After I got married, we went, uh, all over the United States. I've been, I've been to Europe. My daughter lives in Paris.

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

Ken Simon ([01:17:18](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([01:17:19](#)):

I go over to see her once in a while. Fact, she's here right now visit- visiting.

Ken Simon ([01:17:24](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Walt Golec ([01:17:26](#)):

And, uh, so, no, it's a, it's a good home base.

Ken Simon ([01:17:33](#)):

Yep. All right. Well, I think that's- that's it.

Walt Golec ([01:17:38](#)):

Oh. I hope it- it was what you-

Ken Simon ([01:17:39](#)):

(laughs) Did I wear you out or are you okay? (laughs)

Walt Golec ([01:17:43](#)):

Yeah, yeah. I- I hope it's what you-

Ken Simon ([01:17:46](#)):

Well, thank you very much.

Walt Golec ([01:17:47](#)):

Yeah. Well, I hope it's what you're looking for. It's what-

Ken Simon ([01:17:49](#)):

I- I think so.

Walt Golec ([01:17:50](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:17:51](#)):

I think so. It's been, uh, an hour and 21 minutes we've been talking, so ...

Walt Golec ([01:17:55](#)):

Yeah. Wow. Yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:17:56](#)):

WALT GOLEC – Verbatim Transcript (- :10 TC offset)

So it's pretty good.

Walt Golec ([01:17:57](#)):

Yeah.

Ken Simon ([01:17:58](#)):

I thank you very much.

Walt Golec ([01:17:58](#)):

Well, it's-

Scott Hill ([01:17:58](#)):

Yeah, thanks, Walt. Have a good one.

Walt Golec ([01:17:58](#)):

Okay. That's quite all right.