

Lucy Damiani April 12,1972 1:15 3:00

1. Ernestine Merla
2. Ernestine Tognali
3. 72 Nickel Street
4. 679-5667
5. Retired housewife
6. Angera Prove Of Varese Italy
7. Mother and Father both born in Angera, Varese,Italy
8. Widow
9. 73 years old
10. I have always liked Cobalt my home is here, my friends are here.

Impressions: Its a good friendly town to live in. It would be nice to see more work for men, more stores for shopping, and something for the young people. At my age I don't mind the peace and quiet but I would think the young people would like more to do.

Education: We should definitely retain our grade 13. We have always had a High School my son went to school there. There were years when we didn't have have many students as this year so I hope they do their utmost to keep grade 13 here. There is already too much going out of town and travelling on buses. The schools are larger, the students don't get individual attention they are away from home for a longer period of the day and really I cannot see any advantages to it. They have been closing schools since my son went quite steadily. The schools are gone from Gillies, West Cobalt, Kerr Lake, North Cobalt. It would be better if students were to go to school in their own town. The lower schools could all be under one roof whether French or English Protestant or Catholic. It seems pointless to have all these separate buildings going and there is too much discrimination.

Economic situation: We should try to keep our mines going. I don't know what can be done about unemployment but definitely the government should give us a subsidy to help keep the mines going when there is a low price on silver. There must still be mines that aren't worked out and with good grade ore left.I think its high time we developed other industries besides mining in the North, but first of all we have to do something about our freight rates and freight delivery. This has been our drawback in enticing secondary industries. I don't know enough about these things but I do believe we'll ever survive if we stick to mining only we have so much in natural resources, lakes in abundance, electrical power, forest for wood and pulp. We also have rich farmland the clay belt at New Liskeard and West Road.

Recreation: There were many adults taking classes at Recreation Hall and we should continue our program and definitely organized sports are good for the youngsters as they need a push to get going nowadays. I would like to see a recreation hall for senior citizens to meet talk, play cards or games and pass the time.

We should have a larger shopping area it is so awkward going out of town and this also means money that could help the economy of Cobalt is going somewhere else. If we had a shoe store, a large department store like Kresges or Woolworths,

a drug store is another business we badly need, really all these would be an improvement to the town. In this respect we seem to be going backwards rather than advancing. There are some empty lots in town being used for garbage and litter. This detracts from the nice parks or clean lots we have. I would like to see them cleaned up. The two parks certainly improve the appearance of Cobalt and so do the new Red & White and Silver Motel. The old buildings the town has renovated are really attractive now. As for the unclean lots I don't mind paying a bit more on taxes just to have these cleaned up. There should be an agreement wherein a welfare recipient should be made work or else forfeit their benefits. This winter the winter works program kept some employed and its nice to see the activity. We should have more projects going for the unemployed. A senior citizens home would be a good thing for this town many of our old people are eking out an existence in small unlivable rooms. They shouldn't have to live out their lives like this and we can use a low cost homes project. The average laborer cannot pay \$125. to \$145. a month for rent the cost of living is already so high in other commodities, food, clothing, hydro, telephone and many other items. I came to Cobalt on May 24th, 1924 from Italy on the liner "Conte Verali" which docked at New York. From New York I went to Toronto and North Bay coming to Cobalt. My husband had come the year before and I came with my son Silvio who was 3 yrs. old at the time. My husband worked at the Nipissing Mill, 8 hours a day and a 5 day week. My husband worked a lot of overtime hours in winter especially he worked for \$3.25 a day. We lived in a home on Russell St. Then we bought a farm at Bass Lake and moved there in 1927. There was a single storey bungalow style house on the property which through the years we renovated. The property had about 160 acres of land mostly bush, which we cleared a section of and turned it into a vegetable dairy & chicken farm. One year we had as many as 25 cattle, we ended up asking my brother to come over as it was too much work for us alone. So in October 1927 my brother Enrico came over and lived with us and helped us out. There was much work to do at all times the animals had to be fed. We built root cellars to store vegetables and perishables, cows to milk and in winter the men set traps for animal pelts which used to bring in a good price. Mostly fox some beaver and we tried mink for awhile but they needed too much care so we went back to bush animals. The winters were long and dreary but we always worked so time passed. Often our roads were blocked for days after a storm and the men couldn't begin to shovel all the snow. Later on we were being plowed out by township. We had to go out to the well for water and for lighting we used coal oil lamps until 1952 when Hydro put their lines in then we had electricity and we also installed a pump in the house for water. We had wood for cooking and heating until 1952 then we converted to electricity for cooking and installed a new floor furnace oil operated. We used to come up to farmers market in Cobalt every week at the beginning we had poultry, butter, fresh dairy cream and vegetables later we turned strictly to vegetables and sold to some of the stores. This meant more work as carrots had to be packaged, turnips waxed and potatoes bagged. There was always a ready market for our

eggs which we quite often sold by the basket. When my brother died in 1964 we quit coming up to the market cause we found it was too much. My husband had already passed away in 1961 so I sold the farm in 1965 to Lorraine Farms Ltd. They were going to use it for a potato farm as the quality of our sand grown potatoes had the reputation of being as good as Holland Marsh potato. My son Silvio went to school. He always walked in winter and in summer he rode his bicycle. He started out going to school in Gillies a typical little red school house in the country under the tutorship of Miss Cookson then for the higher grades he came to Cobalt later going to the Cobalt High School then on to Queen's at Kingston to become a metallurgy engineer and when graduating in 1953 he was employed by Inco and has been there ever since.

When I sold the farm I moved to Cobalt to the house I am presently occupying on Nickle Street. I can visit friends and they in turn come to see me. I also enjoy watching TV or I go to teas attend Caboto Club functions or play cards. There wasn't much time for leisure on the farm it was always work and more work. But in 1962 I took a trip to Italy to visit sisters and relatives. Then in 1969 I went back again. I enjoyed seeing everyone. But I wouldn't like to live there. Times have changed and I wouldn't live anywhere else but Cobalt