

Lucy Damiani April 18,1972

Time: 2:30 - 3:45

1. Romeo Ronald Larabie
2. Agnes Bosselle (wife)
3. 10 Third Street
4. 679-5985
5. Not employed registered as superintendant of buildings or supervisor of cleaning staff or security guard - experience in all these fields
6. Born in Cobalt
7. mother and father both come from Buckingham
8. Married - 3 children
9. I am 57 Jears old - born Oct. 1915
10. Impressions: Cobalt has always been hopeful it has never gotten to the ghost town stage as many people refer it to. You have always been able to make a living. We came back here from Ottawa 2 years ago and found by comparison that the cost of food was lower here than in the city, but the rentals are higher - especially for a small town this surprised us - as we thought it would the other way around. I am now living in a 5 room house quite comfortable but \$125. per month plus fuel, electricity and other expenses. This I find quite high.
Education: I think the educational system has gone haywire we are building newer, larger school and centralizing in areas outside of towns where the students have to be bussed to get to classes. What are they going to do with the old schools? We could use these buildings for senior citizen housing or they could be used for technical schools or specialized courses even Manpower training centres. Right now a fellow taking a Manpower training course has to go to Timmins or Sudbury - there should be another in this area.
Unemployment: Perhaps our unemployment picture doesn't look too bright but I think its because of small market demand for silver - subsidizing silver doesn't help as the same picture arises - rather we do need another industry or smaller industries but what kind could we bring in, industries located in Liskeard so why couldn't we have these instead of everything going to Liskeard - some available jobs in Haileybury or Cobalt are being given to Liskeard our schools are located in or around New Liskeard. Soon a large hospital will be built on the by-pass close to New Liskeard. They have already acquired our Hydro office. Long distance telephone, telegram service, mail service, freight and express service why can't we locate these job possibilities. We have same facilities here, water, power, location.
Cobalt is small but we have come a long way. We are getting grants and giving people city facilities in water electricity, good municipal government with garbage and snow removal. We have a good Mayor and council going for it. Just a few years ago there was a business men's council which perhaps blocked more businesses coming in rather than encourage small business enterprise.
Recreation: Our miners festival is an attraction but we are holding it too often and also for too long (10 days). This year many towns people that I've talked to feel we should contentrate in an all out effort for next year

1973. Our 70th anniversary. I think a recreation program is both wonderful and essential for young and adults. We should be able to get a good director for the money we pay. What we desperately need is a place for older people and younger people to meet discuss their problems play cards or compare needs and have someone listen to them. We could use the lounge at the community Hall with someone in charge and perhaps everyday for certain periods such a spot would be very helpful. I have had this brought to my attention often & so I'm passing it on to you hoping it we will get to the proper channels, There has been such a noticeable improvement in the general appearance of the town since I'm back I can see the difference from 11 years ago, when I left here. New parks, new subdivision, more houses going up, the downtown section is being renovated, very good for the town and also a note of congratulations to the two newest business - new Red & White Tressider Bros. store and our new motel, which is a tremendous addition to the business section. So why not go along with these business men encourage advocate in any way we can till we build up our shopping area too many people are going out of town now for clothing, drugs, dentists, doctors, and many more. We have need of all these if we are to create a livelier town. I would like to make a suggestion - could not the town get out and sweep the sidewalks wash away some of the dirt and make the business places keep their own premises clean. This would further add to the good looks of the town rather than detract from them. I came back to Cobalt because its my home town. My relatives and friends are here and after 11 years of city rat race I couldn't take it anymore. My father was a subcontractor in the early days and contracted for Murphy Lumber Mill every fall he went into the bush and came home in the spring.

Entertainment: In our young days, we had more going for us than the youth of to-day. We made our own fun by sucker and smelt fishing, skating, tobogganing, skating, sleigh riding and in summer the gang used to go to Pete Lake. We always played baseball and hardball. My father sponsored a ball team at Mileage 104 for about 10 years. We used to go to Ville Marie, Guige, North Temiskaming and won tournaments quite often. I worked in Ottawa from 1960 to 1971 .doing mostly superintendent work in large buildings - was in charge of employees - maintenance crews etc. Didn't enjoy city living - my wife and I are much happier here. I watch TV, bowl, curl, like to fish and hunt. We have all the facilities needed for both summer and winter sports or other activities so we should develop a year round tourist program. There's a beautiful spot at Cross Lake with its three adjoining lakes, Cross Lake 1-2-3 they could buftla motel or hotel on the shores of the lake and the ski, snowmobile hills there are excellent. My one dream is to see this little town of ours get ahead. We never seem to get too much help and we've always been self-sustaining but there comes a time when you need something else for the economy and livelihood of good old Cobalt.

In his interview ~. Larabie forgot these suggestions-

He thinks the appearance of the down town area would further be enhanced if Council put into effect disposal containers in different locations through town, he feels people would use these to dispose of their refuse rather than litter the streets. We did have these disposal containers I remember in 1970. I don't know why the town is not making them available again. Also it might be suggested each place of business could keep their own premises clean and swept up with further co-operation any section of town not just the down town could be kept cleaner. Now Lucy, I noticed two buildings boarded up down town right by the bank.

One is the old Canadian Furniture Building and the other is Hermiston's museum, they do not help the appearance of the nice new buildings on that street.

Both their windows are broken so often especially, Mr. Herrmiston told me himself he was so

discouraged he might not put in windows again. I have approached him on suggestion by other people than yourself, names withheld, that he put his windows back in and I also ----passed along your suggestion that he open up charge say maybe 50¢ admission, and possibly

pass out to the visitors some little souvenir of their Visit, perhaps a booklet postcard idea with pictures of area or a little postcard with name of Hermiston Museum and a small

rock sample or such item, he has so many interesting pieces in his display it's a shame to see them locked up.

Well Lucy I guess that winds up my ideas for Cobalt. I came back here to live as I said before because the town is still in my blood and it's got to be the friendliest in the country. I like to see it looking nice and developing and I'm proud to be part of it.

Footnote:

I want to thank Mr. Larabie for his many useful comments which I have personally passed along and also the wonderful co-operation it made my interview most interesting.