

**Edna Ramont discusses her career at
REO Motor Car Company and Diamond REO Trucks, Inc. 10/6/2004**

1
2
3
4
5 Shirley Bradley: This is October 6. This is Shirley Bradley and I'm going to be
6 interviewing, I will be interviewing Edna Ramont on her REO Motor Car
7 memories. All right, we're at Edna Ramont's home and this is October 6
8 and we're going to be talking about REO memories and I'm going to start
9 by asking, uh, Edna [0:22] where she was born and raised and where she
10 went to school.
11
12 Edna Ramont: Owosso, Michigan. I was born in 1916, July 10. And I went to school,
13 Washington School, Bryant School, and the high school, that's it.
14
15 Shirley Bradley: And that was in Owosso.
16
17 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
18
19 Shirley Bradley: [0:42] And when did you, uh...?
20
21 Edna Ramont: And then how I got – I got a divorce. I was married and got a job in
22 Owosso at Redmond's.
23
24 Shirley Bradley: In a restaurant.
25
26 Edna Ramont: No.
27
28 Shirley Bradley: No.
29
30 Edna Ramont: In a factory.
31
32 Shirley Bradley: In a factory.
33
34 Edna Ramont: And I made \$16.40 a week and you took, paid \$20 a month rent and \$4 for
35 a babysitter, which don't leave much. And then I got a, put my
36 application over here at the REO in December or somewhere in there,
37 and I got the call to come. Well, that was just before Christmas. You
38 don't know how good that was for me.
39
40 Shirley Bradley: Oh, like a miracle.
41
42 Edna Ramont: It was. And we had Christmas, a nice Christmas. I didn't go out. I started
43 out making maybe \$40 a week. That's a big difference, you know.
44
45 Shirley Bradley: Oh my gosh.
46
47 Edna Ramont: Yes.

1
2 Shirley Bradley: [1:37] Do you remember what year you hired in?
3
4 Edna Ramont: In '42.
5
6 Shirley Bradley: In '42.
7
8 Edna Ramont: In December.
9
10 Shirley Bradley: During the war.
11
12 Edna Ramont: Uh-huh.
13
14 Shirley Bradley: Mm-hm.
15
16 Edna Ramont: Yeah. And I could tell you my, uh, badge number 323442.
17
18 Shirley Bradley: Great!
19
20 Edna Ramont: Ain't that something.
21
22 Shirley Bradley: Yes, it is.
23
24 Edna Ramont: Yeah. I gave that to Bobby.
25
26 Shirley Bradley: [1:54] Now what did they, where did they put you when you first started?
27 What did you do?
28
29 Edna Ramont: Well, we went into the Navy Department and I worked on strikers.
30
31 Shirley Bradley: [2:02] Now what's that?
32
33 Edna Ramont: A round brass striker where we drilled holes in it but there was so much
34 oil. When you got done working you was oil-soaked from head to toe
35 [inaudible 2:14]. It was terrible.
36
37 Shirley Bradley: [2:15] Did you have to wear any special clothing or anything...?
38
39 Edna Ramont: No. Well, we had...
40
41 Shirley Bradley: ...or gloves?
42
43 Edna Ramont: I had overalls.
44
45 Shirley Bradley: Overalls.
46

1Edna Ramont: Bib overalls we used to call it.
2

3Shirley Bradley: Bib overalls. Okay.
4

5Edna Ramont: And then on top of that we, we're doing the same amount of production as
6 the men but we didn't get the money the men did and Ray Reed got us the
7 same amount of pay.
8

9Shirley Bradley: He did?
10

11Edna Ramont: Yeah. And, uh, at the time, we'd get 5 minutes' break in the morning and
12 5 minutes in the afternoon. That's all you got.
13

14Shirley Bradley: Five minutes. You couldn't really go away from your...
15

16Edna Ramont: No. Uh-huh, yeah.
17

18Shirley Bradley: Just long, long enough to get to the bathroom maybe.
19

20Edna Ramont: Yeah. That's it. Just the bathroom. A lot of them smoked, you know, so
21 that would be it. And then I got transferred from there in the Navy yet and
22 I was, uh, a relief operator when they took off to go to the restroom or
23 grabbed a cigarette or then they would, I'd take their job. I got 5% more.
24 [chuckle]
25

26Shirley Bradley: Oh. Great.
27

28Edna Ramont: Yes.
29

30Shirley Bradley: So you could do the different jobs so you could, you could rotate.
31

32Edna Ramont: Yeah. I can run any of the machines. Yeah. And I just took over when
33 they went to the restroom.
34

35Shirley Bradley: Hm. [3:27] Mr. Reed that you mentioned, was he the foreman in that
36 Navy Department?
37

38Edna Ramont: Ray, Ray Reed was the president of the union.
39

40Shirley Bradley: President of the union. Oh.
41

42Edna Ramont: Oh, he was a wonderful man.
43

44Shirley Bradley: Oh, okay.
45

46Edna Ramont: Very, very...

1
2 Shirley Bradley: So...
3
4 Edna Ramont: ...for the people, he was for us.
5
6 Shirley Bradley: Oh, great. Somebody went to him and said look Ray...
7
8 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
9
10 Shirley Bradley: ...we're not getting equal pay.
11
12 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
13
14 Shirley Bradley: We're working as hard.
15
16 Edna Ramont: Plus them days they didn't do it, you know. Women didn't get the money
17 as the men did.
18
19 Shirley Bradley: I know it. Yeah.
20
21 Edna Ramont: So that made it nice that Ray did fight for us.
22
23 Shirley Bradley: [3:53] And you had how many children at that time?
24
25 Edna Ramont: Two.
26
27 Shirley Bradley: You had 2 to support.
28
29 Edna Ramont: And raise. Yeah. I was single.
30
31 Shirley Bradley: So you had to come to Lansing.
32
33 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
34
35 Shirley Bradley: Get a place to live and...
36
37 Edna Ramont: And then after I got here, well, I, I started a rooming house on Christiancy
38 Street.
39
40 Shirley Bradley: On Christiancy.
41
42 Edna Ramont: Across from the, where they had, uh, they were making poles for the
43 plane, you know, over there at the, on Christiancy Street they had that
44 factory. And I charged \$10 a week. That was for their board and room.
45 And then during the weekends a lot of their wives would come down.

1 They were from Grand Rapids and way up north and all over. And they
2 were nice guys. Everyone treated me wonderful.
3
4 Shirley Bradley: Good.
5
6 Edna Ramont: And I had my mother, she lived with me and my cousin. But I remembers
7 I bought a half a hog. I'm not a butcher but I butchered that hog.
8
9 Shirley Bradley: Really? [chuckle]
10
11 Edna Ramont: Oh, that was a mess. Then they'd bring me rabbits and I'd clean them,
12 you know, and we'd have that. You know, meat was hard to get.
13
14 Shirley Bradley: Well, yes. It was rationed.
15
16 Edna Ramont: You had to have a card to get it, see, but a lot of the guys would give us
17 their cards, see.
18
19 Shirley Bradley: [5:00] Now that half a hog, did you have to have ration stamps to get that?
20
21 Edna Ramont: No. I didn't. I bought it from a farmer.
22
23 Shirley Bradley: Oh, and he didn't require you to give him.
24
25 Edna Ramont: No, uh-uh.
26
27 Shirley Bradley: He just needed the money.
28
29 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
30
31 Shirley Bradley: Ah!
32
33 Edna Ramont: But that was funny. You should have seen me butchering that hog. I'll
34 never do that again. [laughter] You do a lot when you have to, you know.
35
36 Shirley Bradley: Oh, I've always said that.
37
38 Edna Ramont: Yeah. You do. But these guys...
39
40 Shirley Bradley: Amazing stuff.
41
42 Edna Ramont: ...were just wonderful guys. They were, I don't know, they kind of kept
43 an eye on my mother and I, you know.
44
45 Shirley Bradley: Oh, wasn't that nice.
46

1Edna Ramont: Yeah.
2
3Shirley Bradley: So it was good for everybody.
4
5Edna Ramont: Yeah.
6
7Shirley Bradley: And they had a place to live.
8
9Edna Ramont: It helped [inaudible 5:29], you know.
10
11Shirley Bradley: They could walk to work.
12
13Edna Ramont: But this one guy, his name was Dick Lowe, he says “Well, I’m going to
14 stop and, uh, but I’m only going to stay about a week or two.” He says “I
15 don’t think I’ll be here any longer.” You know, his two brothers and dad
16 moved in until I got married.
17
18Shirley Bradley: Wow. [laughter]
19
20Edna Ramont: Then they had to move. [chuckle]
21
22Shirley Bradley: That would be L-o-w, Low?
23
24Edna Ramont: L-o-w-e, yeah.
25
26Shirley Bradley: Okay, e-e.
27
28Edna Ramont: L-o-w-e, Dick his name was.
29
30Shirley Bradley: Yeah.
31
32Edna Ramont: But that was something else.
33
34Shirley Bradley: I got it now.
35
36Edna Ramont: He stopped just to stay a couple weeks, you know.
37
38Shirley Bradley: Yeah.
39
40Edna Ramont: Then I had the whole family. [chuckle]
41
42Shirley Bradley: That’s wonderful.
43
44Edna Ramont: Oh, they were wonderful people.
45

1 Shirley Bradley: [6:08] Um, so, uh, so you stayed in the Navy Department during the
2 whole, the whole war?
3
4 Edna Ramont: Yeah, mm-hm. Until we got laid off.
5
6 Shirley Bradley: [6:15] And that would have been after the war?
7
8 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
9
10 Shirley Bradley: [6:17] Like '46 maybe?
11
12 Edna Ramont: Uh-huh, yeah. And then we had our soup kitchen, you know, during the
13 war.
14
15 Shirley Bradley: No. [6:21] Tell me about that.
16
17 Edna Ramont: I mean when we got laid off, you know, well, we had that down on Isbell
18 Street down there I think it was where the tavern was at one time.
19
20 Shirley Bradley: Okay.
21
22 Edna Ramont: The tavern is there now.
23
24 Shirley Bradley: Okay.
25
26 Edna Ramont: But, uh, the farmers would bring in their food, you know. Whatever they
27 could bring in, we'd cook.
28
29 Shirley Bradley: Surplus.
30
31 Edna Ramont: Yeah. And, well, they just did it anyway to help us.
32
33 Shirley Bradley: Oh.
34
35 Edna Ramont: 'Cause a lot of people they, like Louie's family, they even came. Louie
36 and Fifi and their little kids, you know. And a lot of them brought their
37 family 'cause they didn't have no money to buy, no money comin' in.
38
39 Shirley Bradley: So the food came from the farmers.
40
41 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
42
43 Shirley Bradley: And they brought it in and gave it to you.
44
45 Edna Ramont: And then we cook.
46

1 Shirley Bradley: And you, and you gals all cooked it up.
2
3 Edna Ramont: Yeah, mm-hm.
4
5 Shirley Bradley: There was a kitchen there.
6
7 Edna Ramont: Yeah. A soup kitchen we'd call it.
8
9 Shirley Bradley: A soup kitchen.
10
11 Edna Ramont: It was something.
12
13 Shirley Bradley: I didn't know about that.
14
15 Edna Ramont: You didn't?
16
17 Shirley Bradley: No
18
19 Edna Ramont: Did you know we walked out too?
20
21 Shirley Bradley: No. [7:10] Tell me. Why?
22
23 Edna Ramont: 'Cause we didn't, they didn't want to give us a raise, the REO didn't.
24
25 Shirley Bradley: This was before the strike.
26
27 Edna Ramont: This is, this is, uh, during the war.
28
29 Shirley Bradley: During the war.
30
31 Edna Ramont: Did you know that?
32
33 Shirley Bradley: Uh-uh.
34
35 Edna Ramont: Didn't you hear?
36
37 Shirley Bradley: Uh-uh.
38
39 Edna Ramont: There was a big article in the paper at the time. There was only one girl. I
40 seen her a while, quite a long while back. I can't think of her name but
41 she was the nicest gal you can work with, but her husband was in service
42 and she was the only one that didn't go out.
43
44 Shirley Bradley: Hm.
45
46 Edna Ramont: 'Cause we all went out and we got our raise.

1
2 Shirley Bradley: Oh.
3
4 Edna Ramont: Not much but we got a little bit. And I'll never forget that. We wasn't out
5 very long.
6
7 Shirley Bradley: [7:51] So what did you do? Did you just, just didn't, you got together and
8 agreed that you'd have a walkout?
9
10 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
11
12 Shirley Bradley: And you walked out during the working day or the...
13
14 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
15
16 Shirley Bradley: You were on double shifts then or something.
17
18 Edna Ramont: Three shifts we had.
19
20 Shirley Bradley: Three shifts.
21
22 Edna Ramont: I hated that.
23
24 Shirley Bradley: Did you?
25
26 Edna Ramont: The night shift.
27
28 Shirley Bradley: [8:05] What shift were you on when the walkout happened?
29
30 Edna Ramont: That was on days.
31
32 Shirley Bradley: On days.
33
34 Edna Ramont: Mm-hm.
35
36 Shirley Bradley: Mm-hm. And everybody agreed.
37
38 Edna Ramont: Uh-huh. We all walked out.
39
40 Shirley Bradley: And you just shut your machines off and everybody...
41
42 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
43
44 Shirley Bradley: ...[8:13] walked and went home?
45
46 Edna Ramont: A lot of people don't remember that we walked out.

1
2 Shirley Bradley: And, and you just, uh, [8:18] did you all just go home or did you...?
3
4 Edna Ramont: We wa-, we walked, stood around, and then we walked the picket line.
5
6 Shirley Bradley: [8:24] How long? Oh, when you had picket.
7
8 Edna Ramont: It wasn't very long. It was only like...
9
10 Shirley Bradley: It wasn't very long. Like a day or 2 or a week?
11
12 Edna Ramont: I think it was about a week anyway.
13
14 Shirley Bradley: Oh.
15
16 Edna Ramont: Yeah. But a lot of people didn't know that.
17
18 Shirley Bradley: I must have heard it back when I – my mother worked there when I was a
19 kid but I don't remember that. Well, she didn't work in the Navy
20 Department so maybe that's why I didn't.
21
22 Edna Ramont: That was during the war, though.
23
24 Shirley Bradley: Yeah. She was in the, out on the receiving docks at that time.
25
26 Edna Ramont: Well, she wouldn't be in.
27
28 Shirley Bradley: She wouldn't have heard about it.
29
30 Edna Ramont: Uh-uh. No. She wouldn't have been in on it.
31
32 Shirley Bradley: No.
33
34 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
35
36 Shirley Bradley: Um, so when you – so they finally came and met with you and said okay,
37 okay.
38
39 Edna Ramont: Yeah. They gave us...
40
41 Shirley Bradley: You can have your raise.
42
43 Edna Ramont: Yeah. They gave us a raise. It wasn't very much.
44
45 Shirley Bradley: Was that when Mr. Reed stepped in to help get you a raise or was that...?
46

1Edna Ramont: No.
2
3Shirley Bradley: That was separate.
4
5Edna Ramont: That was afterwards.
6
7Shirley Bradley: That was separate.
8
9Edna Ramont: Afterwards.
10
11Shirley Bradley: Okay.
12
13Edna Ramont: Yeah. And then after we got laid off from the Navy, then we started with
14 the Lawnmower.
15
16Shirley Bradley: After the war was over.
17
18Edna Ramont: Yeah.
19
20Shirley Bradley: Now you're in the Lawnmower Department.
21
22Edna Ramont: Yeah. I was in the Lawnmower [inaudible 9:17].
23
24Shirley Bradley: I know that there were a lot of strikes and things in '46, a steel strike and a
25 coal strike and...
26
27Edna Ramont: Yeah. Awful lot [inaudible 9:23].
28
29Shirley Bradley: ...something else and my mother was out of work for almost a year I
30 think.
31
32Edna Ramont: Oh my God.
33
34Shirley Bradley: She worked in a restaurant down what is now the LCC Campus.
35
36Edna Ramont: Oh, is that right?
37
38Shirley Bradley: It was a little restaurant down there near the [inaudible 9:35] Sandwich
39 Shop...
40
41Edna Ramont: Uh-huh.
42
43Shirley Bradley: ...around the corner from it. And, uh, I guess the thing was then, if they
44 caught you working somewhere else then you couldn't go back. They
45 wouldn't hire you back but so it was always an open secret.
46

1Edna Ramont: Yeah.
2

3Shirley Bradley: Don't tell anybody I'm working here.
4

5Edna Ramont: You didn't. Yeah. No, you didn't tell anybody.
6

7Shirley Bradley: No. There wasn't unemployment.
8

9Edna Ramont: In fact, I worked at the 701 Club. I got – how much was it? \$15 a week I
10 think. No, I got maybe more, a little more than that but I made good in
11 tips because the boys were coming home and, uh, then, uh, but otherwise
12 my unemployment was only I think \$20 a week and that wasn't very much
13 to live on.
14

15Shirley Bradley: Uh-uh.
16

17Edna Ramont: So I did go out to 701. I was, I was, oh, not the bartender but I was the
18 server girl.
19

20Shirley Bradley: Served the drinks.
21

22Edna Ramont: Yeah.
23

24Shirley Bradley: [10:27] 701 Club, where's, where was that?
25

26Edna Ramont: That was a Veterans Club out on Grand River.
27

28Shirley Bradley: Oh, east.
29

30Edna Ramont: East Grand River.
31

32Shirley Bradley: East Grand River.
33

34Edna Ramont: It was in a home.
35

36Shirley Bradley: Toward East Lansing.
37

38Edna Ramont: Yeah.
39

40Shirley Bradley: Oh, okay.
41

42Edna Ramont: I worked there quite a while.
43

44Shirley Bradley: [10:36] And how long were you there before you went back to the shop?
45

46Edna Ramont: Well, not very long 'cause I got back in the Lawnmower.

1
2 Shirley Bradley: Into the Lawnmower.
3
4 Edna Ramont: Thank God.
5
6 Shirley Bradley: [10:45] And what did you do in the Lawnmower Department?
7
8 Edna Ramont: Machines again.
9
10 Shirley Bradley: [10:49] What did, were you, uh...?
11
12 Edna Ramont: I worked in parts, making parts.
13
14 Shirley Bradley: Making the parts for the lawnmowers.
15
16 Edna Ramont: Mm-hm.
17
18 Shirley Bradley: And you worked by then they only, [10:57] had they gone down to 1 shift
19 or where they still double shift?
20
21 Edna Ramont: We had, uh, just if I remember right, it was just 1 shift.
22
23 Shirley Bradley: Yeah.
24
25 Edna Ramont: Uh-huh.
26
27 Shirley Bradley: Do you...?
28
29 Edna Ramont: But you know when you worked on the machines, some of these people
30 didn't work very fast, you could really make the money.
31
32 Shirley Bradley: You were...
33
34 Edna Ramont: In fact, I think I was the first woman to earn \$15 in a day.
35
36 Shirley Bradley: Oh.
37
38 Edna Ramont: If you work [inaudible 11:19].
39
40 Shirley Bradley: [11:19] Now was that for production?
41
42 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
43
44 Shirley Bradley: You, the more production you turned out the more you could make, so it
45 was like...
46

1Edna Ramont: Well, you couldn't turn in more than \$15.
2

3Shirley Bradley: Oh.
4

5Edna Ramont: You wasn't supposed to turn that but I did.
6

7Shirley Bradley: Oh.
8

9Edna Ramont: I started then the rest of us went along but you get [inaudible 11:32] older
10 people, it was something, we could really make the production.
11

12Shirley Bradley: Hm.
13

14Edna Ramont: In fact, I don't want to, I'm not bragging but Carl, uh, what's the name?
15

16Shirley Bradley: Loudenslager.
17

18Edna Ramont: No.
19

20Shirley Bradley: No.
21

22Edna Ramont: Carl, he's the time [inaudible 11:52] guy.
23

24Shirley Bradley: Oh.
25

26Edna Ramont: I mean he timed you on these jobs and he made the remark he never liked
27 to time me because I worked too fast.
28

29Shirley Bradley: [laughter]
30

31Edna Ramont: I did. I was a fast, really a fast operator.
32

33Shirley Bradley: I bet. Must be.
34

35Edna Ramont: Yeah. In fact, when I left, well, I'm getting ahead of my story but
36 anyway, I was always paid top dollar, you know, as much as I could turn
37 in.
38

39Shirley Bradley: 'Cause you worked hard.
40

41Edna Ramont: Yeah. I had my production ahead. Isn't that's something?
42

43Shirley Bradley: Yeah. It's amazing. You should feel good about that...
44

45Edna Ramont: Yeah.
46

1 Shirley Bradley: ...about those years.
2
3 Edna Ramont: But...
4
5 Shirley Bradley: ...and being able to do that and support your family.
6
7 Edna Ramont: And then, you know, even when we got in the Press Room and at first I
8 went down to Motor Plant after I left when the Lawnmower went down.
9
10 Shirley Bradley: Oh, okay, so you were in the Lawnmower and then...
11
12 Edna Ramont: Went down to the Motor Plant [inaudible 12:43].
13
14 Shirley Bradley: You went to the Motor Plant from the Lawnmower.
15
16 Edna Ramont: Mm-hm.
17
18 Shirley Bradley: Oh, back, oh, okay.
19
20 Edna Ramont: I was...
21
22 Shirley Bradley: Okay.
23
24 Edna Ramont: Instead of getting a layoff I got transferred down there.
25
26 Shirley Bradley: Oh, I understand, okay. [12:53] And who did – let's go back for just a
27 minute into Lawnmower. Do you remember any of the people you
28 worked with or the foreman or anybody like that?
29
30 Edna Ramont: The foreman in the Lawnmower?
31
32 Shirley Bradley: Mm-hm.
33
34 Edna Ramont: Oh, Roy Kilvinton.
35
36 Shirley Bradley: Roy.
37
38 Edna Ramont: Was my boss. Kilvinton, K-i...
39
40 Shirley Bradley: Kilvins?
41
42 Edna Ramont: Yeah. K-i-l – what was it? Kil – [inaudible 13:12] something like that. I
43 know it's Kilvinton.
44
45 Shirley Bradley: Kilvinton.
46

1Edna Ramont: Yeah.
2
3Shirley Bradley: Okay.
4
5Edna Ramont: But, uh, he'd go and anybody come around and he'd always talk, you
6 know, about Edna how a fast operator she was and his wife didn't like
7 that. [chuckle]
8
9Shirley Bradley: She got tired of hearing him brag.
10
11Edna Ramont: Yeah, well.
12
13Shirley Bradley: [13:33] Do you remember any of the other folks?
14
15Edna Ramont: Dick Lowe was a friend of his, you know.
16
17Shirley Bradley: Oh.
18
19Edna Ramont: And he and Dick get together and he'd talk about me.
20
21Shirley Bradley: Oh.
22
23Edna Ramont: And he would never go with anybody else, you know. He was true to his
24 wife but when he'd come to Lansing he'd always stop [inaudible 13:49]
25 see me.
26
27Shirley Bradley: Oh. That's nice.
28
29Edna Ramont: Wasn't that nice of him?
30
31Shirley Bradley: That was very nice.
32
33Edna Ramont: Yeah. And, uh, all the guys are dead now. I can't think, there was John
34 and, and there was this guy from Eaton Rapids. He was sort of my boss
35 and him and his wife I remember them very well. They were nice people.
36
37Shirley Bradley: [14:14] Any of the women that you worked with that you remember?
38
39Edna Ramont: Oh yeah. I can remember them all in Lawnmower. Yeah, there was like,
40 uh, Florence Connelly. She worked in the henhouse.
41
42Shirley Bradley: In your what?
43
44Edna Ramont: In the henhouse we'd call it.
45
46Shirley Bradley: Henhouse? What's that?

1
2Edna Ramont: It's assembling the lawnmowers together.
3
4Shirley Bradley: And they called it the henhouse...
5
6Edna Ramont: Uh-huh.
7
8Shirley Bradley: ...'cause it was all women?
9
10Edna Ramont: Uh-huh.
11
12Shirley Bradley: [laughter] I love that.
13
14Edna Ramont: Uh-huh. And then Marie Sutton worked there.
15
16Shirley Bradley: Okay.
17
18Edna Ramont: And, oh, who else? I can't think of who else worked.
19
20Shirley Bradley: So...
21
22Edna Ramont: But I never liked to go on the line, you know. When they started the line,
23 you know, they started with a line these girls would, you know. And then
24 when they borrowed me to go down there, I couldn't keep up with them.
25 But let them get on the machine [inaudible 15:05].
26
27Shirley Bradley: Oh, so when they switched...
28
29Edna Ramont: Yeah.
30
31Shirley Bradley: ...when they were on the production line...
32
33Edna Ramont: Yeah.
34
35Shirley Bradley: ...where things were going by you and...
36
37Edna Ramont: Yeah. Well they started on there.
38
39Shirley Bradley: Fast.
40
41Edna Ramont: And of course, I started on the, on the machines.
42
43Shirley Bradley: Mm-hm.
44
45Edna Ramont: But, oh, there's so many of them there. And there was [Bessie Robinson
46 15:22] there and then there was, uh, Arkie worked there.

1
2Shirley Bradley: Who did?
3
4Edna Ramont: Edna Welch.
5
6Shirley Bradley: Edna Welch.
7
8Edna Ramont: Yeah.
9
10Shirley Bradley: Did you say Arkie?
11
12Edna Ramont: They called her Arkie, yeah. And...
13
14Shirley Bradley: I wonder if that was, um...
15
16Edna Ramont: Don Welch's wife.
17
18Shirley Bradley: Hm?
19
20Edna Ramont: Her husband's name was Don, one of [inaudible 15:50].
21
22Shirley Bradley: My stepmother worked in the Navy Department, bomb fuses. And she
23 had a sister named Arkie. They were from Arkansas.
24
25Edna Ramont: Yeah. They were...
26
27Shirley Bradley: And I'm trying to think what Arkie's real name was. I don't know.
28
29Edna Ramont: Arkie's name was Edna.
30
31Shirley Bradley: Okay. I, I guess.
32
33Edna Ramont: [Inaudible 16:06] friend of mine.
34
35Shirley Bradley: A different woman, I guess. I just thought the nickname...
36
37Edna Ramont: Well, her sisters worked there.
38
39Shirley Bradley: Hm?
40
41Edna Ramont: Her sisters worked there.
42
43Shirley Bradley: Did they?
44
45Edna Ramont: Yeah. You think I could think of their name right now?
46

1 Shirley Bradley: Well, anyway. Okay, let's see here now, I've got lost myself here in my
2 own memory. Um, so you went from Lawnmower to the Motor Plant.
3
4 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
5
6 Shirley Bradley: [16:28] What did you do in the Motor Plant?
7
8 Edna Ramont: I worked on machines.
9
10 Shirley Bradley: [16:34] What were you producing or what were you working on?
11
12 Edna Ramont: Well, one of the things I had to make, uh, drills, you know, you put the
13 thing in and you drill in, I mean you're, not drills but, uh, screws.
14
15 Shirley Bradley: Okay.
16
17 Edna Ramont: And boy that was rough on your hands.
18
19 Shirley Bradley: Was it? Cut your hands up?
20
21 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
22
23 Shirley Bradley: And you had to put...
24
25 Edna Ramont: You can't wear gloves either.
26
27 Shirley Bradley: Oh. And you were making drills.
28
29 Edna Ramont: Screws, yeah. We made screws, not drills, but screws.
30
31 Shirley Bradley: You were making screws.
32
33 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
34
35 Shirley Bradley: Oh, so you're putting them, something metal in.
36
37 Edna Ramont: In a machine.
38
39 Shirley Bradley: And that's cutting up a screw.
40
41 Edna Ramont: And it spins them.
42
43 Shirley Bradley: Oh.
44

1Edna Ramont: And then I worked on the machines and then they wanted me to learn how
2 to set up the jobs. That was – I’m not a setup person, I’ll tell you that.
3 [chuckle]
4

5Shirley Bradley: [17:18] What was, what do you have to do when you’re a setup person?
6

7Edna Ramont: Well, you put like running the lathes, I could do that ‘cause I know how to
8 go put the blade in, you know, and do that. But when you set up the, oh,
9 the mill-, mill, millwright machines, well, you had these great, big cutters
10 and you hold 2 of them and you get them together, you know. I wouldn’t
11 set that up. I, why what if I did something? I’d seen one guy get hurt and,
12 uh, 2 of them. Anyway, I got, then I got off of that and then I run the line
13 and there was about 5 machines, you know. I’d start but I’d go right down
14 that line and be back when the other one was ready to go quick. I was
15 running that one line but, uh, I liked it real well. I – what was that guy’s
16 name? His name was Walt, first name.
17

18Shirley Bradley: Walt.
19

20Edna Ramont: I can’t think of his last name now. [Inaudible 18:16] but he was a big guy.
21 He was a nice guy to work for too. I had – people were really good, nice.
22 I never had to complain about them.
23

24Shirley Bradley: That’s great.
25

26Edna Ramont: Never.
27

28Shirley Bradley: Um, I’m, I’m just curious for a second on setup. [18:32] Does that mean
29 that you would get the machines ready for the day and something and
30 somebody comes in and...?
31

32Edna Ramont: No. I had to run them.
33

34Shirley Bradley: You had to run them.
35

36Edna Ramont: Yeah. [chuckle] And I’m not a setup. I never, I tried to sharpen the drills
37 and I could never sharpen them, like I said so, or molds.
38

39Shirley Bradley: Oh.
40

41Edna Ramont: He worked on the big machines, the great, big machines.
42

43Shirley Bradley: Hm.
44

45Edna Ramont: And he’d sharpen them for me.
46

1 Shirley Bradley: [18:54] What were the working conditions like? Say when you started
2 out, uh, in the Navy Department and, uh, and then on through the
3 Lawnmower and into the Motor Plant, what, what...?
4

5 Edna Ramont: In the Motor Plant we had a lot of compound we used.
6

7 Shirley Bradley: Compound?
8

9 Edna Ramont: Yeah. And it kept the machines, the drills from getting caught, you know.
10 And, oh, that was a mess.
11

12 Shirley Bradley: [19:16] Was that a liquid or like...?
13

14 Edna Ramont: Yeah. Like milk. It was like milk.
15

16 Shirley Bradley: Like milk.
17

18 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
19

20 Shirley Bradley: [19:19] Was it greasy or...?
21

22 Edna Ramont: It was dirty.
23

24 Shirley Bradley: Oh.
25

26 Edna Ramont: A lot of times they didn't watch and somebody would spit in it.
27

28 Shirley Bradley: Huh!
29

30 Edna Ramont: I'm not kidding. I'm not lying.
31

32 Shirley Bradley: I believe you, my dear. You were there, you saw it.
33

34 Edna Ramont: I remember.
35

36 Shirley Bradley: Um, so the compound you put that on things so that they wouldn't get hot.
37

38 Edna Ramont: Yeah. [Inaudible 19:38], you know, and it was – I liked the job. I, no
39 matter where I was, I liked it.
40

41 Shirley Bradley: So...
42

43 Edna Ramont: And I liked the people.
44

45 Shirley Bradley: Good. So during the war, the women wore...
46

1Edna Ramont: Slacks.
2
3Shirley Bradley: Slacks.
4
5Edna Ramont: If you wore a dress, it wouldn't work. [chuckle] You had to wear
6 something, blue jeans or...
7
8Shirley Bradley: Slacks and a blouse.
9
10Edna Ramont: Yeah. I used to, I remember I got my, my black pants, they were like blue
11 jeans but they were black. Do you remember them?
12
13Shirley Bradley: Mm-hm.
14
15Edna Ramont: And I got them from Gordon's.
16
17Shirley Bradley: Oh.
18
19Edna Ramont: A lot of us wore them.
20
21Shirley Bradley: Oh yes. Yes, of course.
22
23Edna Ramont: Yeah. Remember?
24
25Shirley Bradley: Mm-hm, mm-hm. And a hat. [20:19] Did you have to wear that hat that
26 had the..?
27
28Edna Ramont: They had a net.
29
30Shirley Bradley: The net at the...
31
32Edna Ramont: Yeah, just a net.
33
34Shirley Bradley: Oh.
35
36Edna Ramont: A hairnet.
37
38Shirley Bradley: My mother had that blue hat...
39
40Edna Ramont: No
41
42Shirley Bradley: ...that had like a snood they'd call them.
43
44Edna Ramont: Yeah.
45
46Shirley Bradley: With that net thing.

1
2Edna Ramont: We didn't have them there.
3
4Shirley Bradley: Her hair went into it.
5
6Edna Ramont: Uh-uh.
7
8Shirley Bradley: You didn't have to wear that.
9
10Edna Ramont: No. But you had to keep your space cleaned up.
11
12Shirley Bradley: You did.
13
14Edna Ramont: Otherwise, you can fall and slip.
15
16Shirley Bradley: So you, so it was slippery around where you were working.
17
18Edna Ramont: It was. Yeah. You had to watch it, you know.
19
20Shirley Bradley: [20:43] How would you clean up that grease or whatever?
21
22Edna Ramont: Well, you, when if anything was on the floor like the metal and stuff, you
23 had to keep it clean.
24
25Shirley Bradley: Sweep it up.
26
27Edna Ramont: 'Cause that one old man in the Press Room, he let scrap pile up beside him
28 and he got up and he cut his wrist. He was a real old man.
29
30Shirley Bradley: Oh.
31
32Edna Ramont: I can remember, uh, Mr., excuse me, [Robertson 21:06]. I forgot what his
33 first name was but he was 80-something years or 80 years old on one of
34 those machines. You should have seen that man.
35
36Shirley Bradley: He was good, huh?
37
38Edna Ramont: Yeah. And then his son worked, uh, his grandson worked the reamer and
39 then there was like the Southwells. You know them don't you?
40
41Shirley Bradley: The who?
42
43Edna Ramont: Southwell.
44
45Shirley Bradley: Southwells?
46

1Edna Ramont: Yeah. There was Dick and Ray and his, their dad worked there. I
2 remember their dad even, isn't that something?
3

4Shirley Bradley: It's won-, I think it's wonderful. That's I think one of the wonderful
5 things about REO that it was family.
6

7Edna Ramont: Yeah. It was. But afterwards, though, you couldn't get anybody in, your
8 relatives, you know.
9

10Shirley Bradley: [21:50] After what?
11

12Edna Ramont: Um, after the war, you know. My son was, Bobby and Kenny, but Bobby
13 they wasn't going to hire him. I says, well, he's not my son. I raised him.
14 His mother died but I raised him.
15

16Shirley Bradley: Hm.
17

18Edna Ramont: They hired him because he wasn't my relative.
19

20Shirley Bradley: He wasn't blood relative. [22:08] They made that rule after the war?
21

22Edna Ramont: Uh-huh.
23

24Shirley Bradley: [22:11] Was that because so many men were coming back and needed
25 their jobs back do you think or what?
26

27Edna Ramont: I don't know what it was or why.
28

29Shirley Bradley: [**Inaudible** 22:15].
30

31Edna Ramont: It was something that they wouldn't hire them.
32

33Shirley Bradley: Hm.
34

35Edna Ramont: Then my son got hired in there, Kenny, and then Bobby stayed until they
36 pulled the rug.
37

38Shirley Bradley: [22:28] Until he, until what?
39

40Edna Ramont: Until they pulled the rug.
41

42Shirley Bradley: Oh, until they went down in '75...
43

44Edna Ramont: Bankrupt.
45

46Shirley Bradley: '76.

1
2Edna Ramont: Yeah.
3
4Shirley Bradley: Yeah. Um, okay, so you didn't have any relatives working there until
5 later.
6
7Edna Ramont: Until later.
8
9Shirley Bradley: Okay. Um, [22:45] did they train you when you first went to work there?
10
11Edna Ramont: No. I knew punch presses and machines 'cause I worked at Owosso.
12
13Shirley Bradley: Oh.
14
15Edna Ramont: See, I worked on machines there.
16
17Shirley Bradley: So you could transfer.
18
19Edna Ramont: I knew what I was doing.
20
21Shirley Bradley: Okay.
22
23Edna Ramont: Yeah. And, uh, then I went up to Punch Press afterwards. I, I wanted to
24 transfer. I liked the punch press.
25
26Shirley Bradley: Hm.
27
28Edna Ramont: Then I got up there after I left the Motor Plant.
29
30Shirley Bradley: [23:10] Oh, this is, now you're out of the Motor Plant and you go to what
31 department?
32
33Edna Ramont: Punch Press.
34
35Shirley Bradley: Punch, that was called the Punch Press Department.
36
37Edna Ramont: Yeah.
38
39Shirley Bradley: Okay. [23:19] What kind of product were you working on there?
40
41Edna Ramont: Oh.
42
43Shirley Bradley: Something to do with the trucks I guess.
44
45Edna Ramont: Well, yeah, we run the, we – I can remember running running boards.
46

1 Shirley Bradley: Running boards.
2
3 Edna Ramont: They were heavy. [chuckle]
4
5 Shirley Bradley: Hm.
6
7 Edna Ramont: Then I...
8
9 Shirley Bradley: They were?
10
11 Edna Ramont: Then I run, uh, I had oil sticks.
12
13 Shirley Bradley: Oil sticks.
14
15 Edna Ramont: Mm-hm. You need oil sticks for the oil.
16
17 Shirley Bradley: Oh, where they would test the oil.
18
19 Edna Ramont: Yeah, yeah, yeah.
20
21 Shirley Bradley: The dipstick.
22
23 Edna Ramont: Dipstick.
24
25 Shirley Bradley: Oh, okay.
26
27 Edna Ramont: We made them.
28
29 Shirley Bradley: Uh-huh.
30
31 Edna Ramont: And then I w-, worked on the fenders but they, I used to get so mad. I'm
32 short, see. It's so hard when they had them hanging up high.
33
34 Shirley Bradley: Oh.
35
36 Edna Ramont: And...
37
38 Shirley Bradley: [23:58] Did they have anything for you to stand up on or?
39
40 Edna Ramont: I had some boards to stand on, a little platform I used.
41
42 Shirley Bradley: I see.
43
44 Edna Ramont: And then one time I went out the Press Room and the Heavy Press Room
45 [inaudible 24:09]. They had me out there sometimes. But this one great,
46 big machine they had, I remember I had to put both my hands in to get the

1 parts in and I had the, the trucker was bringing me 2 big boxes and you
2 know what they were like and they had them stacked together. Well, you
3 hit that button and that machine come down, I got my, I just got my arms
4 out. I was so, I must have looked like I was about ready to pass out.
5 Anyway, they put guards over them after that so you pushed a button but
6 they couldn't [inaudible 24:46]. That was dangerous.
7

8 Shirley Bradley: They should have had them in the first place, shouldn't they?
9

10 Edna Ramont: Well, they didn't think.
11

12 Shirley Bradley: They didn't think anybody...
13

14 Edna Ramont: That could have happened to a man even because when the trucker was
15 bringing 2 boxes over, hit that button, boy, that was bad.
16

17 Shirley Bradley: This was a box of parts that you were going to be working on...
18

19 Edna Ramont: Yeah, mm-hm, mm-hm.
20

21 Shirley Bradley: ...on the press with, okay.
22

23 Edna Ramont: But that, that really scared me. [chuckle]
24

25 Shirley Bradley: My dear, I guess so.
26

27 Edna Ramont: But, uh...
28

29 Shirley Bradley: I guess so.
30

31 Edna Ramont: Then, uh...
32

33 Shirley Bradley: So that was a safety concern. Um it doesn't sound like, like now with
34 OSHA, everything is looked at carefully...
35

36 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
37

38 Shirley Bradley: ...but it wasn't then.
39

40 Edna Ramont: It wasn't then, no.
41

42 Shirley Bradley: So safety wasn't [inaudible 25:21].
43

44 Edna Ramont: And we had those old belts, you know, to run the machines.
45

46 Shirley Bradley: Oh yeah?

1
2Edna Ramont: These wide belts, leather belts, you know.
3
4Shirley Bradley: [25:27] Did they ever break?
5
6Edna Ramont: And they put, had to put oil and stuff on them to make them go
7 sometimes.
8
9Shirley Bradley: So they wouldn't dry up and so...
10
11Edna Ramont: Yeah.
12
13Shirley Bradley: [25:33] Did you, did they ever break or cause...?
14
15Edna Ramont: No. They never broke.
16
17Shirley Bradley: They never did. They kept oiled. [chuckle]
18
19Edna Ramont: [Inaudible 25:37]. You think back how they run now those machines, you
20 know, they were old ones.
21
22Shirley Bradley: Oh, I know they had old machinery inside the shop.
23
24Edna Ramont: Yeah. But it was something. And the people there, it was, uh, oh, let's
25 see, what was the girl's name? There was 2 or 3 women there besides me
26 and they're gone too.
27
28Shirley Bradley: In the Punch Press Room.
29
30Edna Ramont: Yeah.
31
32Shirley Bradley: Mm-hm.
33
34Edna Ramont: Mm-hm. Hazel Moss was one of them.
35
36Shirley Bradley: Hazel Moss?
37
38Edna Ramont: Uh-huh. And Ruth, uh, [Shafer 26:10], she died. Hazel is gone. You
39 look back, all those girls are gone.
40
41Shirley Bradley: It doesn't seem real, does it?
42
43Edna Ramont: It doesn't seem possible.
44
45Shirley Bradley: That's what I mean. Aw.
46

1Edna Ramont: And then when they are, a lot of them got something wrong with their
2 minds.
3
4Shirley Bradley: Yeah. Aw. [26:29] Um, so how long were you in the Punch Press Room?
5
6Edna Ramont: Until I retired.
7
8Shirley Bradley: Until you retired, so...
9
10Edna Ramont: And then I worked in the Canteen Store at noon and in the morning.
11
12Shirley Bradley: Oh, you did?
13
14Edna Ramont: Oh yes.
15
16Shirley Bradley: [26:39] Well, tell me first of all how, so how many years do you think you
17 would have been in Punch Press before you retired?
18
19Edna Ramont: Oh, good lord, I must have been there 10 years anyway.
20
21Shirley Bradley: Oh, okay.
22
23Edna Ramont: [Inaudible 26:51] that was the last job I had.
24
25Shirley Bradley: Was it? [26:54] And so you retired do you think what year?
26
27Edna Ramont: Well, let's see, I was, uh, 88 now and I retired when I was 56, so that
28 would be 36 years in the, what year would that be?
29
30Shirley Bradley: Let's see, I don't know what year you hired in.
31
32Edna Ramont: '42.
33
34Shirley Bradley: Oh, '42. I do too know.
35
36Edna Ramont: Yeah.
37
38Shirley Bradley: You told me that. You hired in at '42 and you were gone in '56. That's
39 14 years, so you worked at the REO for 14 years.
40
41Edna Ramont: 32 years I think.
42
43Shirley Bradley: 32 years.
44
45Edna Ramont: Oh yes.
46

1 Shirley Bradley: Where, where, what's wrong with my – oh, wait a minute, I'm sorry.
2
3 Edna Ramont: [chuckle] Don't do that.
4
5 Shirley Bradley: You left, I got the wrong figure. You hired in in '42.
6
7 Edna Ramont: Yes.
8
9 Shirley Bradley: And you were there 32 years.
10
11 Edna Ramont: Yes.
12
13 Shirley Bradley: Seventy...
14
15 Edna Ramont: I retired.
16
17 Shirley Bradley: So you retired in '74.
18
19 Edna Ramont: Yeah. Just before they...
20
21 Shirley Bradley: Just couple years before they went down.
22
23 Edna Ramont: Yeah, mm-hm.
24
25 Shirley Bradley: Okay.
26
27 Edna Ramont: Mm-hm.
28
29 Shirley Bradley: [27:53] And then after you retired what happened?
30
31 Edna Ramont: Oh, I, uh, helped, oh, probably 3 or 4, no, 3 people that I know, different
32 ones, set, um, setting up on their antiques, help...
33
34 Shirley Bradley: Hm.
35
36 Edna Ramont: ...working with the antiques. I like antiques.
37
38 Shirley Bradley: Do you?
39
40 Edna Ramont: I did. Well, I sold all mine except [inaudible 28:17] got here.
41
42 Shirley Bradley: Oh. Oh, that's gorgeous. Um, so, what was I going to ask you? Oh.
43 [28:24] When you retired, did, did you get your benefits, retirement
44 benefits?
45

1Edna Ramont: Yeah. I got \$350 for a few, not too long because then it went down to
2 \$189.
3
4Shirley Bradley: For a few months anyway.
5
6Edna Ramont: Well, yeah, some months.
7
8Shirley Bradley: Two years maybe or a year.
9
10Edna Ramont: About a year, little over a year probably.
11
12Shirley Bradley: Yeah. I think they...
13
14Edna Ramont: Then I got \$189.
15
16Shirley Bradley: Oh.
17
18Edna Ramont: So that's – and now we – and then we got our insurance paid too, you
19 know. And then we had an insurance policy too and they took that away
20 from us. And a lot of these old people, I shouldn't say old. I'm old too.
21 But anyway, I say that's what I – they were older than I was and they gave
22 up their policy, insurance, their own 'cause they figured they had REO.
23 Well, then they don't have nothing. I felt sorry for a lot of these people.
24
25Shirley Bradley: When they went bankrupt.
26
27Edna Ramont: Yeah.
28
29Shirley Bradley: Nobody had anything.
30
31Edna Ramont: They, they lost everything.
32
33Shirley Bradley: Their investment or their pension fund.
34
35Edna Ramont: Their pension and everything. Well, look at what you get, \$189. My, my
36 Blue Cross is \$500 a month.
37
38Shirley Bradley: Mm-hm.
39
40Edna Ramont: My rent is \$500 [inaudible 29:31] so where does it go? You don't get that
41 much from Social Security.
42
43Shirley Bradley: I'll say not.
44
45Edna Ramont: So I feel sorry for a lot of those people. I sold my home so I'm not hurting
46 that bad but I don't want to spend it all either.

1
2 Shirley Bradley: But you can, you can get along.
3
4 Edna Ramont: Yeah. But pay and the Blue Cross will probably go up again.
5
6 Shirley Bradley: Oh, insurance is getting so scary.
7
8 Edna Ramont: But you got to have it. It...
9
10 Shirley Bradley: I was with some friends this noon and they had to carry their own
11 insurance and they're in their 80s and...
12
13 Edna Ramont: That's bad, isn't it?
14
15 Shirley Bradley: ...it's \$500-and-some a month...
16
17 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
18
19 Shirley Bradley: ...just to carry insurance.
20
21 Edna Ramont: Yeah. Mine was \$500 but when I was in the hospital for 3 ½ months and
22 the doctors and doctors, I don't know how many doctors I had, I didn't
23 have to pay a penny.
24
25 Shirley Bradley: [30:15] And you had what?
26
27 Edna Ramont: I never had to pay a penny.
28
29 Shirley Bradley: Your insurance took care of it?
30
31 Edna Ramont: Every penny.
32
33 Shirley Bradley: Oh, how wonderful.
34
35 Edna Ramont: And all the [inaudible 30:22] bills.
36
37 Shirley Bradley: You have a good policy.
38
39 Edna Ramont: X-rays and everything.
40
41 Shirley Bradley: Great. Oh yeah, and just through daily keep, board and room...
42
43 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
44
45 Shirley Bradley: ...and then tests and medications.
46

1Edna Ramont: Oh yeah. That's terrible.
2
3Shirley Bradley: [30:33] Um, what would you say looking back about the safety at REO?
4
5Edna Ramont: Well, I think a lot of it they could have did better on the safety. One man
6 got caught in the grinder, one of the double grinders and that, he got hurt
7 real bad.
8
9Shirley Bradley: Hm.
10
11Edna Ramont: And then I had seen this man down in the Motor Plant and, of course, he
12 had sleeves on. You're not supposed to wear sleeves but he had a big drill
13 press about like that.
14
15Shirley Bradley: Oh.
16
17Edna Ramont: A drill and he was on that machine and he got caught [inaudible 31:05].
18 You know, I seen it happen and you suppose I could even yell.
19
20Shirley Bradley: You were probably frozen.
21
22Edna Ramont: Well, I was. And my setup man, I forget what his name was. He was a
23 sweet, old man but he was a grouchy, old guy and he called me out. He
24 says you should have yelled or gone over and turned it off. I says I
25 couldn't. I see people get hurt, you know, and you're not supposed to be
26 wearing long sleeves.
27
28Shirley Bradley: Because you could...
29
30Edna Ramont: Or any wedding, any rings even.
31
32Shirley Bradley: No rings, no sleeves.
33
34Edna Ramont: No rings. I never wore a ring.
35
36Shirley Bradley: And long hair that might get into something.
37
38Edna Ramont: Yeah, mm-hm, yeah. And rings are dangerous when you [inaudible
39 31:46]...
40
41Shirley Bradley: Oh, I would think so.
42
43Edna Ramont: ...drill press.
44
45Shirley Bradley: Catch them on a part of the drill.
46

1Edna Ramont: Yeah, mm-hm.
2

3Shirley Bradley: Hm. So you're thinking that...
4

5Edna Ramont: They didn't follow through on that either, you know.
6

7Shirley Bradley: They didn't?
8

9Edna Ramont: And then, you know, we weren't, we're supposed to wear sweaters when
10 they hired in the Navy.
11

12Shirley Bradley: How could you do that without long sleeves?
13

14Edna Ramont: Well, I mean sweaters, you know, the women weren't supposed to wear
15 sweaters.
16

17Shirley Bradley: Oh, you weren't supposed to wear sweaters.
18

19Edna Ramont: No. [chuckle]
20

21Shirley Bradley: Because of the long sleeves.
22

23Edna Ramont: No just.
24

25Shirley Bradley: Oh just because.
26

27Edna Ramont: Just because.
28

29Shirley Bradley: Somebody made that rule.
30

31Edna Ramont: Yeah.
32

33Shirley Bradley: [32:17] Was it cold in the Navy Department?
34

35Edna Ramont: No. It wasn't cold in there but it's just that we weren't supposed to wear
36 that.
37

38Shirley Bradley: [laughter]
39

40Edna Ramont: And then on top of that, one time, one woman, I can't remember her name
41 now, but she came, that was in the Lawnmower, she came to work with a
42 backless, you know how we used to wear...
43

44Shirley Bradley: A halter kind of thing.
45

1Edna Ramont: Yeah. And they sent her home. [laughter] Oh, you think [inaudible
232:42].
3

4Shirley Bradley: Well, there had to be lots of funny things happening too over the years.
5

6Edna Ramont: Oh, there was. I mean it was nice, though. I enjoyed every bit of it.
7

8Shirley Bradley: And the people...
9

10Edna Ramont: I never [inaudible 32:53] hated going to work. I liked my job.
11

12Shirley Bradley: You got to go to work instead of I have to go to work.
13

14Edna Ramont: Yeah.
15

16Shirley Bradley: Yeah. Um, and so I, as I have experienced so many of you ladies
17especially have stayed together over the years, stayed in touch with one
18another.
19

20Edna Ramont: Oh, I did [inaudible 33:11] with Arkie, a very good friend, and Edna, I
21mean Edna Pratt and Florence Connelly. And, uh, when the others were
22alive we used to get together, Betsy Robinson and, uh, there was Florence
23[Burlock 33:28] and I used to...
24

25Shirley Bradley: [33:31] What was her name?
26

27Edna Ramont: Florence [Burlock 33:32]. She worked in the Lawnmower.
28

29Shirley Bradley: Florence Bulock?
30

31Edna Ramont: Yeah.
32

33Shirley Bradley: Okay.
34

35Edna Ramont: Her husband was Earl [Burlock 33:37]. He worked in, um, oh, uh...
36

37Shirley Bradley: Something like B-u-l-o-c-k.
38

39Edna Ramont: [Inaudible 33:42] I think. Yeah.
40

41Shirley Bradley: Okay.
42

43Edna Ramont: Anyway, I shouldn't say but I used to get kind of mad at her. [laughter]
44

45Shirley Bradley: Really? Why was that?
46

1Edna Ramont: Oh, I don't know. The way she was, you know. "Your parts go in here!"
2 [tape ends abruptly] Get! [tape ends abruptly]
3
4Shirley Bradley: Uh, we're talking now with Jean.
5
6Jean: [Inaudible 34:04].
7
8Shirley Bradley: [Inaudible 34:05] and she's a friend of Edna's and her father did the
9 electrical work on the R. E. Olds' home at Main and Washington and
10 Edna said that she went in the house before it was torn down.
11
12Edna Ramont: Yeah. Oh, that was something to see.
13
14Shirley Bradley: [34:18] Tell me what it was like.
15
16Edna Ramont: Oh, it was a beautiful home.
17
18Jean: Oh, I know it was gorgeous.
19
20Edna Ramont: It was just a shame they tore it down.
21
22Jean: I'd like to go through the Dodge home because my mother used to play
23 there when she was a little girl. She was [inaudible 34:30].
24
25Edna Ramont: And what [inaudible 34:30].
26
27Jean: She was a friend of the Dodge's.
28
29Edna Ramont: [Inaudible 34:33] went with.
30
31Jean: Oh.
32
33Edna Ramont: I used to go with him years ago.
34
35Jean: She went to see [inaudible 34:38].
36
37Edna Ramont: That blonde guy. [laughter]
38
39Jean: I went to school with Franklin and his brother.
40
41Edna Ramont: Is that right?
42
43Jean: Yeah, yeah. They were...
44
45Edna Ramont: Isn't it something?
46

1Jean: Frank, uh...
2
3Shirley Bradley: [34:47] What, uh, what did the house look like inside, the Olds mansion?
4
5Edna Ramont: Well, I can remember the ballroom upstairs. They hadn't tore, started to
6 tear it down but they let me go through it and I couldn't get over the
7 laundry room down in the basement.
8
9Shirley Bradley: [35:02] Why is that?
10
11Edna Ramont: It was such a big place and that big mangles they, iron mangles that they
12 did to iron the tablecloths and everything probably.
13
14Shirley Bradley: Sheets.
15
16Edna Ramont: I just couldn't get over all that stuff. I mean to me it was I never seen
17 anything like that.
18
19Jean: Hm.
20
21Shirley Bradley: Hm.
22
23Jean: Well, honey, I've got to run and get this thing [inaudible 35:22].
24
25Edna Ramont: Well, I just wanted you to rest a minute. [tape clicks off]
26
27Shirley Bradley: [35:25] The ballroom upstairs, did it have that big pipe organ?
28
29Edna Ramont: Yeah.
30
31Shirley Bradley: On one wall.
32
33Edna Ramont: At the time, yeah.
34
35Shirley Bradley: Hm.
36
37Edna Ramont: But, uh, and it was so, you know, empty otherwise, you know.
38
39Shirley Bradley: Oh, everything was gone.
40
41Edna Ramont: But I couldn't understand having a ballroom upstairs.
42
43Shirley Bradley: Yeah.
44
45Edna Ramont: Wood floor, you know.
46

1 Shirley Bradley: Well, that's the way they used to do it.
2

3 Edna Ramont: Yeah. But that was...
4

5 Shirley Bradley: [353:42] Um, so but the house was empty?
6

7 Edna Ramont: Yeah. It was all empty.
8

9 Shirley Bradley: [35:44] Were the rooms large?
10

11 Edna Ramont: Yeah, mm-hm.
12

13 Shirley Bradley: We got a picture at the museum of a room that Mr. and Mrs. Olds were
14 sitting in and the two girls were sitting there and it looks to me like it
15 might have been a library room and it looked like it had a bay window.
16

17 Edna Ramont: Yeah, yeah.
18

19 Shirley Bradley: And I saw a fireplace.
20

21 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
22

23 Shirley Bradley: I wonder if that faced the front of the house.
24

25 Edna Ramont: I don't know.
26

27 Shirley Bradley: You don't know either.
28

29 Edna Ramont: I don't remember now but...
30

31 Shirley Bradley: I used to go by it all the time when I was a kid...
32

33 Edna Ramont: [Inaudible 36:07].
34

35 Shirley Bradley: ...to walk down to...
36

37 Edna Ramont: And the one that, remember that one on Washington and [inaudible 36:11]
38 and, uh, Oakland, that big white house? We had a sale there and Mr. Olds,
39 you better turn that off. I don't want to tell... [tape clicks off]
40

41 Shirley Bradley: What I want to ask is, uh, [36:25] when you retired in '74, by that time,
42 how much were you making a week? When you hired in in '42 you were
43 making \$40 a week.
44

45 Edna Ramont: Oh, yeah.
46

1 Shirley Bradley: And I wanted to see how that changed.
2

3 Edna Ramont: I think I was, was it \$100 or what, I don't know, somewhere around
4 probably \$100 a week anyway or a little more.
5

6 Shirley Bradley: [36:40] How much?
7

8 Edna Ramont: \$100 a week or more.
9

10 Shirley Bradley: So you, that, that was the difference between '42 and '74.
11

12 Edna Ramont: That's piecework. Yeah, mm-hm.
13

14 Shirley Bradley: Mm-hm. [36:48] And they, did they took things out of your pay like for
15 insurance and that sort of thing? I suppose.
16

17 Edna Ramont: Oh yes.
18

19 Shirley Bradley: Yeah.
20

21 Edna Ramont: The Blue Cross, your union.
22

23 Shirley Bradley: And your...
24

25 Edna Ramont: The union wasn't that much, you know, in them days.
26

27 Shirley Bradley: Was not, the union wasn't.
28

29 Edna Ramont: No. And, uh, anyways, they had that to pay and then our house insurance
30 we paid some of it.
31

32 Shirley Bradley: They paid some and you paid some.
33

34 Edna Ramont: Yeah, mm-hm.
35

36 Shirley Bradley: Um, did you ever...?
37

38 Edna Ramont: I had to pay it all.
39

40 Shirley Bradley: Oh. [chuckle] [37:15] Um, what about the REO Clubhouse? So many
41 people had activities in the clubhouse.
42

43 Edna Ramont: Oh, when I was little I used to go, there was the movies...
44

45 Shirley Bradley: Did you?
46

1Edna Ramont: ...you know, years ago. And then we had the Christmas party one time
2 and, uh, Mr. what's his name, well, he and I was the one to cut the ribbon
3 at the Christmas party. I know him [inaudible 37:41] his name. Awful
4 nice guy. He was from the Bronx.
5

6Shirley Bradley: [37:45] Cut the ribbon for?
7

8Edna Ramont: What was her, what was his name, you know?
9

10Shirley Bradley: Worked in the front office, worked in the offices?
11

12Edna Ramont: Yeah. Herm Everhardus.
13

14Shirley Bradley: Oh, I have heard that name.
15

16Edna Ramont: I knew it would come to me.
17

18Shirley Bradley: Yeah.
19

20Edna Ramont: And him and I we tied, uh, cut the ribbon for the party.
21

22Shirley Bradley: Oh, I see.
23

24Edna Ramont: He was a nice guy. He died. They all died.
25

26Shirley Bradley: Yeah.
27

28Edna Ramont: Passed away, you know.
29

30Shirley Bradley: Sad to see to lose folks. Uh, so you had...
31

32Edna Ramont: You heard of him, haven't you?
33

34Shirley Bradley: Heard of who?
35

36Edna Ramont: Everhardus.
37

38Shirley Bradley: I have heard that name.
39

40Edna Ramont: Uh-huh.
41

42Shirley Bradley: I know...
43

44Edna Ramont: He was real active. He...
45

46Shirley Bradley: Was he?

1
2Edna Ramont: He'd come around the shop a lot, factory even.
3
4Shirley Bradley: Hm.
5
6Edna Ramont: More so than like Clare Loudenslager.
7
8Shirley Bradley: [38:35] Did you ever work with Carl or did he ever come through the
9 Motor Plant?
10
11Edna Ramont: Who, Clare?
12
13Shirley Bradley: Mm-hm.
14
15Edna Ramont: He was my boss for the first five years.
16
17Shirley Bradley: Clare was? Oh.
18
19Edna Ramont: I told him, I was mad at him one time and I says you want me to run it like
20 a punch press I will, you know, then we get production.
21
22Shirley Bradley: He didn't like the way you were running.
23
24Edna Ramont: No. He didn't. I was the one complaining.
25
26Shirley Bradley: Oh.
27
28Edna Ramont: 'Cause they had the rate, you know, and I was working, I did work fast
29 and [inaudible 39:04] but I was mad at him. He'd talked to you anyway.
30 He was down to earth at one time.
31
32Shirley Bradley: You could talk to him.
33
34Edna Ramont: Yeah, then. And then we had, what was his name, Schultz from Owosso.
35 He was the boss there. And one time – he was a little short guy and they
36 were, this one guy was going to beat him up. He was mad at Floyd, Floyd
37 Schultz I think that's his name.
38
39Shirley Bradley: Schultz was mad at somebody.
40
41Edna Ramont: No. This guy was mad at Schultz.
42
43Shirley Bradley: Oh, somebody was mad at Mr. Schultz.
44
45Edna Ramont: And he was going to beat him up.
46

1 Shirley Bradley: Oh.
2
3 Edna Ramont: So he had to have Plant Protection take him out.
4
5 Shirley Bradley: Oh.
6
7 Edna Ramont: [Inaudible 39:46] these guys would get mad at these bosses.
8
9 Shirley Bradley: They thought they were pushing them too hard...
10
11 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
12
13 Shirley Bradley: ...for production or...
14
15 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
16
17 Shirley Bradley: ...this or that.
18
19 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
20
21 Shirley Bradley: Oh. And they threatened him.
22
23 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
24
25 Shirley Bradley: And then he had to have Plant Protection.
26
27 Edna Ramont: They threatened him so he had Plant Protection taking him out.
28
29 Shirley Bradley: Hm.
30
31 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
32
33 Shirley Bradley: Um, so, about activities there, I have there were dances, bowling, there
34 was the radio prog-, uh, station, movies, that sort of thing.
35
36 Edna Ramont: They had movies, yeah.
37
38 Shirley Bradley: [40:12] And did you take part in some of these things?
39
40 Edna Ramont: Well, just the, when we had the dances and stuff like that. And then we
41 had a, oh, like a bazaar or something and, and people would bring, some
42 of these guys could really build cabinets, really build beautiful things.
43
44 Shirley Bradley: Oh. They were skilled.
45

1Edna Ramont: Yeah. They were. And I knew, I can't tell you the name but I knew him
2 real well but he can really build cabinets [inaudible 40:39]. And, uh, we'd
3 have that and then people would buy stuff there.
4

5Shirley Bradley: At the bazaar.
6

7Edna Ramont: Uh-huh.
8

9Shirley Bradley: People would bring in things...
10

11Edna Ramont: Yeah.
12

13Shirley Bradley: ...they've made or whatever.
14

15Edna Ramont: Yeah. From the REO. Everything was brought in from the REO.
16

17Shirley Bradley: [40:51] Was that done in the Clubhouse?
18

19Edna Ramont: Yeah, mm-hm.
20

21Shirley Bradley: Uh-huh.
22

23Edna Ramont: It was big. It was a big [inaudible 40:54].
24

25Shirley Bradley: Like once a year maybe or.
26

27Edna Ramont: No. We didn't have it too often.
28

29Shirley Bradley: I see.
30

31Edna Ramont: But I can remember this one year, you know.
32

33Shirley Bradley: Yeah.
34

35Edna Ramont: But like I say, like Ardith Pappen she was the one that [inaudible 41:08].
36

37Shirley Bradley: I've heard so many good things about her.
38

39Edna Ramont: Yeah.
40

41Shirley Bradley: Uh, we met her and talked with her several times at some of the REO
42 girls' luncheons.
43

44Edna Ramont: Uh-huh.
45

1 Shirley Bradley: And we wanted to interview her and she was perfectly willing but, uh, we
2 didn't know it but she was ill at the time and she was having to go for
3 treatments every so often.
4

5 Edna Ramont: Oh, uh-huh. Yeah. She...

6

7 Shirley Bradley: And it seemed like every time we'd get a date set she'd have to...

8

9 Edna Ramont: She's like family, you know. You just love to talk to her.

10

11 Shirley Bradley: Yeah.

12

13 Edna Ramont: She's just a wonderful person.

14

15 Shirley Bradley: Is that right?

16

17 Edna Ramont: I've been over to her place and had coffee and one time I bought a settee
18 from her and I sold it to my niece and she still got it.
19

20 Shirley Bradley: Well. And you mentioned movies.

21

22 Edna Ramont: Well, that's when I was a kid that we used to go to the movies there
23 [inaudible 41:49].
24

25 Shirley Bradley: [41:49] You had somebody that worked there that could take you or did it
26 not matter?
27

28 Edna Ramont: It didn't matter evidently. I don't know. I had a cousin that worked in
29 the, he was a, his name was Ray Burhams and he worked in the checking
30 account. He was a big shot there.
31

32 Shirley Bradley: Hm.

33

34 Edna Ramont: But I didn't never see him even after I worked inside, worked at the REO.

35

36 Shirley Bradley: Oh, is that right?

37

38 Edna Ramont: He's a lot older than I was, you know.

39

40 Shirley Bradley: I'm sorry. What was his name again?

41

42 Edna Ramont: Ray Burhams.

43

44 Shirley Bradley: Burhans?

45

46 Edna Ramont: Yeah.

1
2 Shirley Bradley: B-u-r-h-a-n-s probably.
3
4 Edna Ramont: Uh-huh.
5
6 Shirley Bradley: The reason I'm asking you about spelling is somebody types this up.
7
8 Edna Ramont: Burhams.
9
10 Shirley Bradley: Burhams with an M.
11
12 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
13
14 Shirley Bradley: Somebody is going to be listening to this and then trying to type this.
15
16 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
17
18 Shirley Bradley: And if they have no idea how to spell names...
19
20 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
21
22 Shirley Bradley: It's difficult for them.
23
24 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
25
26 Shirley Bradley: So I try to get that straight.
27
28 Edna Ramont: But, uh, it was a good place to work. I liked it.
29
30 Shirley Bradley: [42:37] Can you remember anything, we've talked about some of it, but
31 anything that was really funny that happened or something that was
32 serious and was a problem?
33
34 Edna Ramont: Well, I used to, when we – I don't know if you remember but this is
35 during the war and this gal, Barb. What's Barb's name? She lives out on
36 the highway. She was from Owosso too. Anyway, she – her husband was
37 in the service and he, anybody wore, you know, high heels with straps or
38 whatever, they weren't good girls [inaudible 43:13]. Her husband,
39 Barbara had to go and talk to the, the minister or whatever, the chaplain I
40 should say, when he was in service 'cause he was going to leave Barb for
41 this girl.
42
43 Shirley Bradley: Oh.
44
45 Edna Ramont: And here he is [inaudible 43:29] me. I never did like him. Ray and Barb,
46 it'll come to me but right now I can't think of it. But you know people

1 talk and then the poor girl [inaudible 43:45] going to lose her husband.
2 Well, she talked to the chaplain and [inaudible 43:49] he got it
3 straightened out. They ended up back together again.
4
5 Shirley Bradley: Hm.
6
7 Edna Ramont: But...
8
9 Shirley Bradley: And he was away in the service during this time.
10
11 Edna Ramont: Yeah, mm-hm.
12
13 Shirley Bradley: And she was there working.
14
15 Edna Ramont: Yeah. But here she thought he was a prince and he was going to leave her
16 for this other woman.
17
18 Shirley Bradley: Oh mercy.
19
20 Edna Ramont: But anybody who wore strapless and high heels, they were no good.
21 [Inaudible 44:11].
22
23 Shirley Bradley: Is that right?
24
25 Edna Ramont: Yeah!
26
27 Shirley Bradley: I didn't know that.
28
29 Edna Ramont: Yeah. You were...
30
31 Shirley Bradley: That's funny.
32
33 Edna Ramont: It is. [chuckle]
34
35 Shirley Bradley: It meant you were kind of a loose woman if you wore...
36
37 Edna Ramont: Well, I was a wild woman. [laughter]
38
39 Shirley Bradley: Tell me. Did you wear, uh, never mind, I won't ask. [laughter]
40
41 Edna Ramont: That was cute.
42
43 Shirley Bradley: Yeah.
44

1Edna Ramont: But he did. She told me about it and then after that I let her know. But,
2 oh, there were so many nice guys and people. That's the best [inaudible
3 44:36], you know, different ones. And I got wrote up one time because...
4

5Shirley Bradley: [44:40] Why?
6

7Edna Ramont: I got wrote up.
8

9Shirley Bradley: [44:43] Why?
10

11Edna Ramont: Because – I didn't get wrote up but this guy did, he was a neighbor of
12 mine, Jerry Allman. And Louie wrote him up 'cause he stopped and
13 talked to me for a few minutes. [laughter]
14

15Shirley Bradley: Jerry?
16

17Edna Ramont: Allman. A-l-l...
18

19Shirley Bradley: M-a-n.
20

21Edna Ramont: Yeah. M-a-n. Yeah. Allman.
22

23Shirley Bradley: Okay. And Louie...
24

25Edna Ramont: He got...
26

27Shirley Bradley: ...Louie wrote him up 'cause he stopped to chat with you.
28

29Edna Ramont: Louie [inaudible 45:04]. Well, he'd see him talking to me and he didn't,
30 he was – Louie was always trying to get after me, anyway, get me mad.
31

32Shirley Bradley: Really?
33

34Edna Ramont: Yeah. He just did it on purpose.
35

36Shirley Bradley: [chuckle] Was that his idea of fun?
37

38Edna Ramont: Yeah. It was for him. He just, oh, I'd get so mad at him sometimes.
39

40Shirley Bradley: Louie Garcia
41

42Edna Ramont: Yeah.
43

44Shirley Bradley: Yeah.
45

46Edna Ramont: And then him and Lee, Larry Lee, they [inaudible 45:27] and get me mad.

1
2 Shirley Bradley: Larry Lee?
3
4 Edna Ramont: Larry Lee in Owosso.
5
6 Shirley Bradley: Oh.
7
8 Edna Ramont: I didn't know [inaudible 45:33] Owosso but he was from Owosso too, you
9 know, but, no, you, you think back how they would get me so mad. And
10 then my boss, [inaudible 45:45] left and he's my boss. [Inaudible 45:50].
11
12 Shirley Bradley: Altime?
13
14 Edna Ramont: [Inaudible 45:51] Au I don't know how to spell his name, [inaudible
15 45:54].
16
17 Shirley Bradley: Just say it again for me.
18
19 Edna Ramont: [Inaudible 45:55] I think.
20
21 Shirley Bradley: Okay.
22
23 Edna Ramont: Something like that.
24
25 Shirley Bradley: All right.
26
27 Edna Ramont: Anyway, he wrote me up the last day I worked. I quit early 'cause I had 2,
28 about 3 weeks production ahead. And so everybody was going to shut
29 their machine, even the tool room was going to shut down.
30
31 Shirley Bradley: Tool crib.
32
33 Edna Ramont: Tool, tool crib, yeah. They were going to all shut down on account on
34 how he write me up. They were for me.
35
36 Shirley Bradley: Oh, they were going to do that in, in sympathy...
37
38 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
39
40 Shirley Bradley: ...with you.
41
42 Edna Ramont: For me, yeah. That showed who the friends were.
43
44 Shirley Bradley: I guess. [46:28] Why in the world did he want to write you up?
45

1Edna Ramont: Oh, just to show he was the boss. And you know, he had enough gall, I
2 used to go, they let me go to the credit union and he'd borrow money from
3 me. That was all right but if I – the last day I figure well I can do what I
4 want to do, you know.
5

6Shirley Bradley: Sure.
7

8Edna Ramont: He writes me up.
9

10Shirley Bradley: [Inaudible 46:48].
11

12Edna Ramont: And you know what happened?
13

14Shirley Bradley: No.
15

16Edna Ramont: They tore it up in my office, Larry Lee and Jack Harris and then they tore
17 it up in the front.
18

19Shirley Bradley: Oh. So nothing happened on that account.
20

21Edna Ramont: Nothing happened on that. But can you imagine getting wrote up after all
22 these years. [chuckle]
23

24Shirley Bradley: No. After 34 years, 32 years. Oh dear.
25

26Edna Ramont: Isn't that something?
27

28Shirley Bradley: [47:07] Well, looking back on the REO Motor Car Company, what, what
29 are your impressions? When you look back, what do you think about?
30 What means the most to you?
31

32Edna Ramont: Well, it meant so much to me to have that job, to get that, you know. And
33 that it meant so much that the people they were, you'd like every one of
34 them. They were all nice people.
35

36Shirley Bradley: Like family, they went to bat for you.
37

38Edna Ramont: And I used to go through the whole plant and take up the collections.
39

40Shirley Bradley: Oh.
41

42Edna Ramont: ...for whoever, like Ray Reed died and, and, um, when, um, oh, what's his
43 name. I can't think of his name. And anyway, he was such a nice guy.
44 He's some kind of a machine repairman or something and I went and got
45 collections for him. And then one time, uh, Janet [inaudible 48:02] her
46 name was, her husband died and, you know, money was tight.

1
2 Shirley Bradley: Yes.
3
4 Edna Ramont: And so I went through the plant and got her some money and then she
5 could buy some clothes for the kids for the funeral...
6
7 Shirley Bradley: Aw.
8
9 Edna Ramont: ...for their dad. But I, I did do that too.
10
11 Shirley Bradley: You were the one that would run around and took up the collections.
12
13 Edna Ramont: Yeah. Always did.
14
15 Shirley Bradley: Obviously, you were well liked if people were willing to donate.
16
17 Edna Ramont: Yeah. They'd give it to me. And then when we had to take up for the
18 bond, you know.
19
20 Shirley Bradley: [throat clearing] For the what?
21
22 Edna Ramont: Saving bonds, we took up for saving bonds, you know.
23
24 Shirley Bradley: Oh, the, uh...
25
26 Edna Ramont: WWII.
27
28 Shirley Bradley: Yeah, yeah.
29
30 Edna Ramont: And I'd go and we had so much taken out of our checks, see.
31
32 Shirley Bradley: For the bonds.
33
34 Edna Ramont: Yeah. And one time I went to this one guy and he says, well, he really
35 couldn't afford it and I says, well, if you put a quarter in a week it would
36 help. And he did, everybody put in so much, you know.
37
38 Shirley Bradley: What they could.
39
40 Edna Ramont: And so that was a nice deal, you know. But then they had a big banquet
41 but I never went to it, in the same, I figured, well, why don't they use that
42 money instead of entertainment, you know. I didn't go.
43
44 Shirley Bradley: Mm-hm.
45

1Edna Ramont: And then, uh, what else? There was something else I was going to tell
2 you.
3

4Shirley Bradley: And there was, it had a family feel because people would be there to stick
5 up for you or support you if you needed it and to be friends.
6

7Edna Ramont: Oh yeah. I gave people money that really needed it. I never told anybody
8 there but...
9

10Shirley Bradley: Hm.
11

12Edna Ramont: Not a lot but even \$10 helped them.
13

14Shirley Bradley: Even \$5 or \$10 helps a lot.
15

16Edna Ramont: Yeah.
17

18Shirley Bradley: You could buy more with it then...
19

20Edna Ramont: Yeah.
21

22Shirley Bradley: ...than you can now.
23

24Edna Ramon: But one guy got fired. I felt so bad.
25

26Shirley Bradley: Hm.
27

28Edna Ramont: And, uh...
29

30Shirley Bradley: You didn't think it was, uh...
31

32Edna Ramont: I didn't think he should have gotten fired.
33

34Shirley Bradley: Shouldn't have gotten fired.
35

36Edna Ramont: He was, he worked on the paint line. I thought he was doing all right but
37 they fired him.
38

39Shirley Bradley: Hm.
40

41Edna Ramont: His wife was sick and...
42

43Shirley Bradley: Oh.
44

45Edna Ramont: ...I felt so bad. I did give him some money.
46

1 Shirley Bradley: Well, that was really good of you.
2
3 Edna Ramont: And...
4
5 Shirley Bradley: I bet he...
6
7 Edna Ramont: He probably appreciated it.
8
9 Shirley Bradley: He appreciated it and more than the money is the idea that somebody...
10
11 Edna Ramont: Yeah. Somebody.
12
13 Shirley Bradley: ...reached out to him.
14
15 Edna Ramont: Yeah, mm-hm. But anyway, you stop and think about certain things.
16
17 Shirley Bradley: You said something about working in a canteen after you retired.
18
19 Edna Ramont: Yeah. I worked in the morning and at night, and the afternoon [inaudible
20 50:20].
21
22 Shirley Bradley: [50:21] Was that at the REO?
23
24 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
25
26 Shirley Bradley: [50:23] Tell me about that. How did you happen to start doing that?
27
28 Edna Ramont: Oh, they needed some help so I did it. I got started and then I didn't quit
29 until I retired. [chuckle]
30
31 Shirley Bradley: [50:33] Was this, um, this was in the building?
32
33 Edna Ramont: It was in, in the Press Room.
34
35 Shirley Bradley: In the Press Room.
36
37 Edna Ramont: [Inaudible 50:38].
38
39 Shirley Bradley: [50:38] And the Canteen was what?
40
41 Edna Ramont: The Canteen [inaudible 50:40] hot coffee and snuff and any...
42
43 Shirley Bradley: Candy bars or sandwiches or something.
44
45 Edna Ramont: Yeah, mm-hm.
46

1 Shirley Bradley: [50:48] And did you go around with a cart to the different work stations?
2

3 Edna Ramont: No. I just worked at the window with, uh, I think his name...
4

5 Shirley Bradley: There was a room for it.
6

7 Edna Ramont: Yeah. We had a space for it and I think his name was Miller that I worked
8 with. He was a nice guy too. But I helped.
9

10 Shirley Bradley: [51:03] Now this was after you retired and you went back?
11

12 Edna Ramont: Now this was when I was working.
13

14 Shirley Bradley: Before, oh, okay.
15

16 Edna Ramont: See, I had my production ahead so I...
17

18 Shirley Bradley: So you...
19

20 Edna Ramont: ...snuck out a little earlier and help.
21

22 Shirley Bradley: And you, and you could do that in those days. Get your production ahead
23 and then you could go and do this.
24

25 Edna Ramont: Yeah. Not all the time but I did that.
26

27 Shirley Bradley: But sometimes.
28

29 Edna Ramont: Helped a little bit.
30

31 Shirley Bradley: That's interesting 'cause you know nowadays everybody has their job...
32

33 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
34

35 Shirley Bradley: ...and they're not allowed to go help that guy...
36

37 Edna Ramont: Yeah, mm-hm.
38

39 Shirley Bradley: ...because that's not their classification.
40

41 Edna Ramont: Yeah. And one time I, some of these [inaudible 51:29] one of them
42 worked with Bobby and he says "If it hadn't been for your mother" he
43 says, that was in the Press Room, he says "I don't know what I would
44 have done."
45

46 Shirley Bradley: Is that right?

1
2Edna Ramont: They didn't show him how to run these machines, you know.
3
4Shirley Bradley: Just put him on it and not show him how to run it.
5
6Edna Ramont: Yeah. [inaudible 51:43] supposed to make [inaudible 51:44] all right.
7
8Shirley Bradley: Oh, for heavens sakes.
9
10Edna Ramont: Well I showed a lot of people and then when I left I had 3 weeks
11 production I gave Elmer, then he had the gall to write me up. [laughter]
12 He did it just to show off.
13
14Shirley Bradley: Well, it sounds like it. I got to show...
15
16Edna Ramont: He'd been out to my house even. Why did he come out to see me but he
17 did. I was married. But he'd come out and visit. [laughter]
18
19Shirley Bradley: [52:12] Did you marry somebody from REO?
20
21Edna Ramont: No. He was from Fisher Body.
22
23Shirley Bradley: Oh, okay.
24
25Edna Ramont: Dick Ramont. Did you ever hear of Maurie Ramont?
26
27Shirley Bradley: What was it? Maurie?
28
29Edna Ramont: Yeah, Ramont.
30
31Shirley Bradley: [52:23] Now whereabouts in Fisher did he work?
32
33Edna Ramont: He was superintendent over the, uh, what was it? Well, he retired when I
34 [inaudible 52:34].
35
36Shirley Bradley: [52:34] He retired when you did?
37
38Edna Ramont: No. He retired before I did.
39
40Shirley Bradley: Oh, I see.
41
42Edna Ramont: He bought a tavern in [inaudible 52:40] Rapids.
43
44Shirley Bradley: Hm.
45

1Edna Ramont: Then his wife died and left him with three little kids and I had two. He
2 adopted my two and we raised them and I've been married, would've been
3 married over 54 years.
4

5Shirley Bradley: Aw.
6

7Edna Ramont: The kids, I'm the only mother they know and they're good to me, very,
8 very good to me.
9

10Shirley Bradley: So you have five, five children...
11

12Edna Ramont: Yeah.
13

14Shirley Bradley: ...that look out for you.
15

16Edna Ramont: Yeah. They take me wherever I want to go. If I have to go to the doctor,
17 they, every, I don't have to worry on how to get there.
18

19Shirley Bradley: That's wonderful. That means so much.
20

21Edna Ramont: And when I was there for 3 ½ months, those kids were there every day.
22 They said they've never seen a family that was there every day.
23

24Shirley Bradley: So together.
25

26Edna Ramont: Yeah.
27

28Shirley Bradley: That's great.
29

30Edna Ramont: Yeah.
31

32Shirley Bradley: [53:23] Well, have you got any last thoughts or something you wanted to
33 share with me that I haven't even thought about or?
34

35Edna Ramont: I think I told you pretty... [chuckle]
36

37Shirley Bradley: It's been wonderful. I have really appreciated it but sometimes I think
38 maybe there was something more that they wanted to share that I didn't
39 touch on or didn't think to ask.
40

41Edna Ramont: Like, uh, like in the Navy in the dining room we had a piano there and I
42 can't think of this black guy but he could really play the piano. We had a
43 ball.
44

45Shirley Bradley: He...
46

1Edna Ramont: And then they used to go across the, the tavern across the street. What
2 was their name?
3
4Shirley Bradley: Right across from the REO.
5
6Edna Ramont: Yeah.
7
8Shirley Bradley: Yeah. Right there on Baker.
9
10Edna Ramont: Oh, not Baker.
11
12Shirley Bradley: Washington.
13
14Edna Ramont: No. This was on Washington [inaudible 54:02].
15
16Shirley Bradley: On Washington.
17
18Edna Ramont: Yeah. They had...
19
20Shirley Bradley: Oh, that's right. The Navy Department was down at that end.
21
22Edna Ramont: Yeah, mm-hm.
23
24Shirley Bradley: Washington and the corner of Baker.
25
26Edna Ramont: Yeah. And we used to go over there and some of them would drink a bit
27 too much.
28
29Shirley Bradley: Hm. [laughter]
30
31Edna Ramont: You think about different things, you know, but, oh, they were all a bunch
32 of nice people. I mean they would help you. And I see them now,
33 younger guys, you know, they all remember me.
34
35Shirley Bradley: That's great.
36
37Edna Ramont: Isn't that nice?
38
39Shirley Bradley: Yes, it is. You made a good impression there.
40
41Edna Ramont: Just like when I went down there to that parade. Wasn't that something?
42
43Shirley Bradley: Yes.
44
45Edna Ramont: I just loved that.
46

1 Shirley Bradley: I did too.
2
3 Edna Ramont: And I see some...
4
5 Shirley Bradley: The REO parade.
6
7 Edna Ramont: I didn't see very many people I knew. And this one guy, I was walking
8 down Washington by the railroad tracks, he says "Edna Ramont." And I
9 didn't know him or met him, but he said he was a stock chaser, you know,
10 delivered stock but he says I was so fussy, I had to have it just right.
11 'Cause that's the only way you can make production is if you have the...
12
13 Shirley Bradley: Oh, so you know exactly where to reach...
14
15 Edna Ramont: Yeah, yeah, mm-hm.
16
17 Shirley Bradley: ...for something.
18
19 Edna Ramont: Yeah, mm-hm.
20
21 Shirley Bradley: Oh yeah.
22
23 Edna Ramont: But he remembered that.
24
25 Shirley Bradley: Isn't that interesting?
26
27 Edna Ramont: They all remember Edna.
28
29 Shirley Bradley: Well, I, I'm so hopeful of REO Town being a place now that people will
30 come to and try to, you know, because REO was so important to the
31 history of this town...
32
33 Edna Ramont: Oh yes.
34
35 Shirley Bradley: ...and so many people don't realize it.
36
37 Edna Ramont: No, they don't realize it.
38
39 Shirley Bradley: No, they don't.
40
41 Edna Ramont: No, uh-uh.
42
43 Shirley Bradley: And that gave people employment.
44
45 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
46

1 Shirley Bradley: It gave them hope.
2
3 Edna Ramont: Yeah.
4
5 Shirley Bradley: It gave them, uh, they could start building a house, educate their kids...
6
7 Edna Ramont: Oh yeah.
8
9 Shirley Bradley: ...because of REO.
10
11 Edna Ramont: It was something.
12
13 Shirley Bradley: And I have sometimes visitors at the museum and they'll say what, what
14 was REO? Where was that?
15
16 Edna Ramont: Is that right?
17
18 Shirley Bradley: And what did they make? And you want to go... [chuckle]
19
20 Edna Ramont: Oh.
21
22 Shirley Bradley: Well, I thank you so much, Edna. I really appreciate getting your
23 memories on tape...
24
25 Edna Ramont: Oh, [inaudible 55:54].
26
27 Shirley Bradley: ...and we'll, we'll treasure having them at the museum.
28
29
30/mlc