

**Richard Hegmon, an African American, discusses his
memories as a resident of the Fisher Body neighborhood**

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2
3
4
5 Marilyn Coulter: [recorder clicking] Fisher Body Historical is interview with, uh, the
6 community. Today is March 22, Wednesday, 2006. The time is
7 approximately 1:25. We're at the Frank Dryer UAW Local 602, Frank Dryer
8 Greenhouse. First, we'll introduce the team.
9
10 John Fedewa: John Fedewa.
11
12 Marilyn Coulter: And my name is Marilyn Coulter. And today we're here with...
13
14 Richard Hegmon: Richard L. Hegmon. [laughter]
15
16 Marilyn Coulter: Okay. [0:30] Mr. Hegmon, can you please spell, um, your name for us,
17 please?
18
19 Richard Hegmon: Uh, H-E-G-M-O-N.
20
21 Marilyn Coulter: And your last name?
22
23 Richard Hegmon: Hegmon, that's...
24
25 Marilyn Coulter: And you're Richard?
26
27 Richard Hegmon: Yeah.
28
29 Marilyn Coulter: Okay. I'm sorry. [0:40] And today, um, can you also give us your address?
30
31 Richard Hegmon: Uh, 2148 [sniffing] Bruce Avenue...
32
33 Marilyn Coulter: Okay.
34
35 Richard Hegmon: ...Lansing.
36
37 Marilyn Coulter: Okay. [0:49] So, uh, Mr. Hegmon, are you married with children?
38
39 Richard Hegmon: Yes, I'm married.
40
41 Marilyn Coulter: [0:53] And, um, where were you born and where were you raised?
42
43 Richard Hegmon: I was born and raised here in Lansing, Lansing, Michigan.
44
45 Marilyn Coulter: Okay. [1:00] And, um, your education?
46

1Richard Hegmon: I, uh, graduated from the, from J. W. Sexton.
2

3Marilyn Coulter: Okay. [1:07] And, uh, your military? Were you in the military?
4

5Richard Hegmon: No, I wasn't in the military, no.
6

7Marilyn Coulter: Okay. Uh, now, you were, uh – you worked for General Motors but you also
8 were born and raised right here in the Lansing Community.
9

10Richard Hegmon: Correct.
11

12Marilyn Coulter: [1:22] Um, what we wanna know from you as being a community person –
13 um, can you tell us whatever histories or memories you have about, uh,
14 Fisher Body, Lansing, General Motors, um, living in the community where
15 the factory was? Can you give us some of your histories and share some a
16 your memories with us?
17

18Richard Hegmon: Uh, there's, there's so much, that, from, uh [throat clearing] memory,
19 [inaudible 1:46].
20

21Marilyn Coulter: You s-...
22

23Richard Hegmon: There would be kids goin' through. Bein' able to go in and outta the – in
24 them days, some of the – in the medical department and everything. The
25 kids – it was more open at that time. You could g-, [inaudible 2:03] the
26 plant. Um...
27

28Marilyn Coulter: [2:07] Now, was that for both facilities? You said you could go into the
29 medical facilities?
30

31Richard Hegmon: Yeah, we used to – over, over, over at the main plant, you know...
32

33Marilyn Coulter: [2:14] At the main plant, you [inaudible 2:14]?
34

35Richard Hegmon: Yeah, main plant. Sometime we'd go in there. Um, if, if you wanna talk
36 about the, uh...
37

38Marilyn Coulter: Primarily with Fisher.
39

40Richard Hegmon: ...with Fisher, Fisher Body. Uh, most people always remember the beauty
41 of, uh, of the grounds out in front. But, uh, and that, the – how the building
42 was kept on the outside. But if you want me to give the other side of it as a
43 community, as a Black person, young Black kid in the, in the neighborhood
44 – I think the story you might want...
45

46Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.

1
2 Richard Hegmon: ...is the fact that at that time, uh, one of the – it's summertime. And we're
3 talkin' about in the late '30s, before the war. Uh, one of the entertainment,
4 uh, in the, in the community was, uh, go watch [sniffing] softball games, at,
5 at the s-, West, uh, uh, Side Park, which was on Saginaw Street. And, uh, so,
6 uh, the people from the west side, uh, would walk [sniffing] from, uh, the
7 Williams and St. Joe areas, uh, those avenue areas to Saginaw Street...
8
9 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
10
11 Richard Hegmon: ...to watch the game. Uh, and that meant coming up Dennison Street. Uh,
12 the last paved streets would be on the end of, uh, uh, West Street, before you
13 got, uh, and, and anything west of, uh, um – or noth-, nothin', uh, there was
14 nothin' paved west of Dennison. And where J. W. Sexton is now, goin'
15 south, was all woods.
16
17 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
18
19 Richard Hegmon: It was all woods and so [clicking] we would cut through as a shortcut. And,
20 uh, Fisher by that time, was all along, uh, [Verlins 4:06]...
21
22 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
23
24 Richard Hegmon: ...and, uh, and so we come along there at night and, uh, the, the guys
25 worked there would start lookin' out the window. They'd see us comin' and
26 they would start catcallin'.
27
28 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
29
30 Richard Hegmon: And some-, and sometime, well, there, there could be, uh – we could, we –
31 there could be maybe 20, 30, 35 people, you know, kids and sometime men
32 and women, too would come along and go walkin' to the game.
33
34 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
35
36 Richard Hegmon: So they would look out the window and they'd start callin'.
37
38 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
39
40 Richard Hegmon: You know, jungle bunnies, coons, [harassed us 4:41]...
41
42 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
43
44 Richard Hegmon: ...nigger...
45
46 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.

1
2 Richard Hegmon: ...[inaudible 4:44] started callin'. So, uh, [every time 4:48] some people
3 hollered the names back.
4
5 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm. [throat clearing]
6
7 Richard Hegmon: So this went on [throat clearing]. Uh, so we got sick of it, full up.
8
9 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
10
11 Richard Hegmon: So we would start stoppin' [throat clearing] in the fields over here, which is
12 – where the school [throat clearing] start pickin' up rocks.
13
14 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
15
16 Richard Hegmon: [coughing] So they start callin'. We start breakin' windows out, goin', goin'
17 along Verlinden.
18
19 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
20
21 Richard Hegmon: And we, we, we – if that – when we heard a name, we'd break a window.
22
23 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
24
25 Richard Hegmon: And, uh, we broke a lotta windows. [laughter] [Inaudible 5:23]. So, uh, uh,
26 the rock-throwin' and breakin' windows apparently didn't stop it. So we'd
27 go along and, you know. And the plant [inaudible 5:33] guys, they would
28 come on out and chase us, you know. Well, they never caught us. So, so we
29 found that, we found that, uh, change a strategy.
30
31 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
32
33 Richard Hegmon: A few guys would get rocks and the rest of us would get on, get the big
34 lumps of the, of [inaudible 5:50] clay.
35
36 Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
37
38 Richard Hegmon: And we found that the – one guy throw a rock, the guys would – they would
39 see the rock comin' and they would, they would duck...
40
41 Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
42
43 Richard Hegmon: ...you know. And the next two guys would throw clay.
44
45 Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh, hm.
46

1Richard Hegmon: Everyone hides. They had the screens up on the windows.
2
3Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
4
5Richard Hegmon: So when the clay would hit the windows...
6
7Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
8
9Richard Hegmon: ...it would go through and splatter.
10
11Marilyn Coulter: Ah.
12
13Richard Hegmon: Okay. Well, you know, and then we'd take off, you know. Uh, it was back
14 in like – it must've been like in the '70s...
15
16Marilyn Coulter: Hm.
17
18Richard Hegmon: ...when I got involved in the union like that. In fact, after one a the
19 [inaudible 6:25]. And I, and I'm tryin' to think. I can't rack my brain.
20 [Inaudible 6:30]. I'm tryin' to think some a the guys I knew from, from
21 Fisher Body. [And I 6:33] can remember back, uh, oh, uh, [thumping] oh,
22 some a the guys that were involved in union leadership at that time. Uh, um,
23 [inaudible 6:43] and I'm tryin' to think a some a the guys. And, and, uh, the
24 fella I'm thinkin' about, I can picture him, right, but I cannot remember his
25 name. But he, he had been on [inaudible 6:52], uh, committee. And he had
26 been really gettin' involved and, and...
27
28Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
29
30Richard Hegmon: So I got, we got talkin', you know, about, uh, some of the problems in the
31 plant and I brought this story up. And he got smilin'. So he, I, he gave me
32 his side. Every time we'd throw that clay in there, stones in there...
33
34Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
35
36Richard Hegmon: Those guys were eggin' us. I'm, his, his – I'm give ya his side of it. Because
37 we were doin' somethin' the union guys couldn't do. We were stoppin' the
38 line.
39
40Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
41
42John Fedewa: Hm.
43
44Richard Hegmon: Every time that we'd go in there, we would, uh – that dirt would mess up the
45 [laughter] enamel of the car. They'd have to yank 'em off. So that...
46

1 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
2
3 Richard Hegmon: ...would stop the line. And all those years, you know, all I, I could see the
4 racism started.
5
6 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
7
8 Richard Hegmon: I couldn't see...
9
10 Marilyn Coulter: They were – you were givin' them a break.
11
12 Richard Hegmon: We were givin' them guys – that's the only break those guys – at that time,
13 uh, they, they didn't get breaks.
14
15 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
16
17 Richard Hegmon: So that, every time we did that, uh, we we're giving those guys on, on the
18 line a break.
19
20 Marilyn Coulter: So you thought they were being malicious and they just knew...
21
22 Richard Hegmon: Well...
23
24 Marilyn Coulter: ...that you were a way to help'm.
25
26 Richard Hegmon: ...I think they were, they were [inaudible 7:59]. Some of'm were...
27
28 Marilyn Coulter: Yeah, sure.
29
30 Richard Hegmon: ...bein' malicious but there was another side [inaudible 8:02]...
31
32 Marilyn Coulter: There was another – there was an additional [inaudible 8:04]...
33
34 Richard Hegmon: Yeah, yeah, yeah.
35
36 Marilyn Coulter: It's wrong but it's gonna give us a break.
37
38 Richard Hegmon: Yeah, yeah, yeah.
39
40 Marilyn Coulter: Yeah. [8:06] Did you ever have any confrontations with the, um, security or
41 they'd just come out and chase ya away?
42
43 Richard Hegmon: Well, they would try to catch us [inaudible 8:14] [throat clearing] [laughter].
44 [Inaudible 8:16].
45
46 Marilyn Coulter: Mis-...

1
2 Richard Hegmon: In fact, we had, uh, [inaudible 8:20], right. I'm talkin' about kids that come
3 up durin' the Depression.
4
5 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
6
7 Richard Hegmon: And, uh, we know that it was comin' on. We very seldom, you know, they'd
8 be – uh, they would call the police sometime. We'd know they'd be lookin'
9 for us, so...
10
11 Marilyn Coulter: Hm.
12
13 Richard Hegmon: ...we had a – on the way back home, we'd, uh, go down Saginaw and, uh,
14 go one a the bakeries. I can't remember now if it was, uh – one a the big
15 bakeries had a bakery there on Saginaw.
16
17 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
18
19 Richard Hegmon: Uh, and usually late at night they would have all their little pastries, you
20 know, like the, the...
21
22 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
23
24 Richard Hegmon: ...you know, the, oh, cupcake things they sell in the store, you know, that
25 you, you pass by...
26
27 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
28
29 Richard Hegmon: ...and all that.
30
31 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
32
33 Richard Hegmon: They'd have that sittin' out there on the, on the trucks, all loaded up, you
34 know.
35
36 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
37
38 Richard Hegmon: You know, uh, we would, you know, um, um, um, lighten their load on the
39 way home. [laughter] [Inaudible 9:11].
40
41 Marilyn Coulter: [9:14] So, so Mr. Hegmon, how far did you live from Fisher Body, in
42 proximity? Or did you just live on...
43
44 Richard Hegmon: [Inaudible 9:19].
45
46 Marilyn Coulter: ...the west side community?

1
2 Richard Hegmon: I lived on Main, Main, uh, uh, between, uh, Butler and, uh...
3
4 Marilyn Coulter: Okay.
5
6 Richard Hegmon: ...[Wayburn 9:26].
7
8 Marilyn Coulter: So actually, you lived closer to the Oldsmobile facility.
9
10 Richard Hegmon: Yeah, yeah, right.
11
12 Marilyn Coulter: Oh, but now, um...
13
14 Richard Hegmon: Many, many Blacks lived, lived, uh, in this area though. [Inaudible 9:33],
15 you know, there wasn't very many houses out in this area...
16
17 Marilyn Coulter: Back in this time...
18
19 Richard Hegmon: ...at this time.
20
21 Marilyn Coulter: ...and so...
22
23 Richard Hegmon: Right.
24
25 Marilyn Coulter: ...[9:38] and the timeframe we're talkin' about then is like 1935, '37, you
26 said?
27
28 Richard Hegmon: Yeah, between, I'd say between '30 – well, let's see I'm – I would say
29 between, I'm gonna say between '35 and uh, and uh, and uh, '40, you know.
30
31 Marilyn Coulter: Between 1935 and '40?
32
33 Richard Hegmon: Yeah, yeah...
34
35 Marilyn Coulter: And...
36
37 Richard Hegmon: ...yeah, '41. I would say, I would say the late '30s, you know, yeah, '35 to
38 '40, that would be, yeah.
39
40 Marilyn Coulter: So I know there were other parts of General Motors. Like you said, um, you
41 can remember the, the, um, the, the, post-Depression years and with that,
42 now, you said also somethin' about you can remember back during when
43 there was a strike here. And the guns...
44
45 Richard Hegmon: Well, when, when, when...
46

1 Marilyn Coulter: ...and stuff out in front.
2
3 Richard Hegmon: ...I remember when, uh, when, uh, UAW was tryin', tryin' to, uh, get into
4 General Motors. And they, they, uh, had, uh, they had the, uh, [inaudible]
5 10:31], uh, uh, [sniffing] [inaudible 10:33] field artillery and machine gun
6 that they set up down there on, on the pavement on the [inaudible 10:42].
7
8 Marilyn Coulter: Really?
9
10 Richard Hegmon: Yeah, they had to keep, uh, you know, to keep order down there.
11
12 Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
13
14 Richard Hegmon: So, um, you know, had to keep the – I don't know if it was to keep the
15 strikers from – can't remember now if it was to keep the strikers out or
16 what, yeah.
17
18 Marilyn Coulter: Now, um, you were...
19
20 Richard Hegmon: That was mainly in '36, '37, somewhere in there.
21
22 Marilyn Coulter: '36, '37, now you went to J. W. Sexton, you said.
23
24 Richard Hegmon: Mm-hm, yeah.
25
26 Marilyn Coulter: [11:07] And this was in what year?
27
28 Richard Hegmon: Say what?
29
30 Marilyn Coulter: [11:09] What years were you at Sexton?
31
32 Richard Hegmon: Uh, I was started – uh, I graduated January and then we started in, uh, it was
33 '43, '44 to '47, yeah.
34
35 Marilyn Coulter: Okay.
36
37 Richard Hegmon: I started in January [inaudible 11:21].
38
39 Marilyn Coulter: '43 to '47. [11:23] Now, there were certain things about – what did you
40 know about Fisher Body, Lansing comin' up?
41
42 Richard Hegmon: Well, I, I, I knew that it was only – there wasn't any Black work there. And
43 I knew it was [laughter] – all I could see was a, was a bunch a, bunch a
44 White guys that would come to the window and call you some bad names.
45 [laughter]
46

1 Marilyn Coulter: Uh, and so...
2
3 Richard Hegmon: [Inaudible 11:46]. You know, I didn't – well, I'll tell ya it was durin' high
4 school, durin' high school, I had [inaudible 11:53] because now, durin' – I'd
5 been in, you know, high school really durin' the war. So I would [sub 11:57]
6 durin' the war.
7
8 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
9
10 Richard Hegmon: And, uh, one other thing I would have at Fisher Body that – at that time,
11 [inaudible 12:04] at Sexton. Now, [because of the shortage 12:07] and like
12 the, like all the north end the building, we didn't have any, any, uh, heat.
13
14 Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
15
16 Richard Hegmon: Right and, uh, [clicking] the track team – we didn't have any kinda track. In
17 fact, we used to have to go and try to, uh, practice track on Fisher Body's
18 parkin' lot on the back road. [laughter] [Inaudible 12:25]. When it was time
19 to run track, we'd get some fresh air. We'd track – track run on their, on the
20 gravel, on the, on the....
21
22 Marilyn Coulter: [12:32] So Sexton High School used...
23
24 Richard Hegmon: Yeah, yeah...
25
26 Marilyn Coulter: ...to practice the track and field in the...
27
28 Richard Hegmon: Oh, yeah.
29
30 Marilyn Coulter: ...Fisher Body's parkin' lot?
31
32 Richard Hegmon: Yeah, that's where we'd practice.
33
34 Marilyn Coulter: [12:37] Around the cars and things?
35
36 Richard Hegmon: Well, that, you know...
37
38 Marilyn Coulter: [Inaudible 12:40].
39
40 Richard Hegmon: ...on the corner, there...
41
42 Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
43
44 Richard Hegmon: ...wasn't that many cars.
45
46 Marilyn Coulter: Oh.

1
2 Richard Hegmon: Yeah, so we practiced [at night 12:43], yeah.
3
4 Marilyn Coulter: Ah.
5
6 Richard Hegmon: Like, when we'd run, you know, outdoors, that's where we would practice,
7 the track out there on the parkin' lot.
8
9 Marilyn Coulter: Oh. [phone ringing]
10
11 Richard Hegmon: 'Cause we didn't have any track around the school. [Inaudible 12:52].
12
13 Marilyn Coulter: Excuse me. [background conversation]
14
15 John Fedewa: [Inaudible 13:00].
16
17 Marilyn Coulter: I forgot to take – turn off my phone, sorry...
18
19 Richard Hegmon: Hm.
20
21 Marilyn Coulter: ...a massive snafu. So as a, as a teenager, you practiced the track and field
22 out on [throat clearing] the, uh...
23
24 Richard Hegmon: Fisher Body parkin' lot, yeah.
25
26 Marilyn Coulter: Fisher Body parking lot.
27
28 Richard Hegmon: Yeah.
29
30 Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh. [13:14] Did you know many, um – how did the community view
31 Fisher Body?
32
33 Richard Hegmon: Well, I think they viewed Fisher Body like, you know, like we did, uh, uh,
34 uh, all the other places we knew, hopin' to get, get in there and get a job.
35
36 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
37
38 Richard Hegmon: [Inaudible 13:29]. People, people hoped to get in there and get a job.
39
40 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
41
42 Richard Hegmon: I think one a my neighbors – Mr. Parker's one of the first ones to come in,
43 get a, get a job with them.
44
45 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm. [sighing]
46

1Richard Hegmon: And, uh, so, but, uh, slowly and all as the, as the war effort started, and then
2 they opened – things started to open up. Um, actually it ties – I can tie in to
3 Fisher Body and could give you an idea a some of the, uh, employment. Uh,
4 [throat clearing] when I first came in, into the [Ford 14:02] plant...
5
6Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
7
8Richard Hegmon: ...there was a lot of, uh, really hard feeling.
9
10Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
11
12Richard Hegmon: [coughing] Sorry, excuse me. Because it – that was right after, uh, they
13 negotiated the contract in '46, like that. But durin' the war, uh, [throat
14 clearing] there had been, uh, a group that they tried to keep [Bill Dean
15 14:29], and th-, a bright guy by the name a Bill Dean...
16
17Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
18
19Richard Hegmon: ...from bein' a hammerman, running a hammer.
20
21Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
22
23Richard Hegmon: Um, a lotta the guys that – who had the best jobs – at that time, the hammer
24 was, was high up rated – one a the highest paid jobs in, in the plant. And,
25 and, uh, but, I think they, uh, makin' more than machine repairman.
26
27Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
28
29Richard Hegmon: At that time, [inaudible 14:51] the kinda pay we're talkin' about. And, uh, a
30 lotta the guys that, uh, were hammermen in there were White guys that came
31 from other plants and out of, uh, Bay City and some other places.
32
33Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
34
35Richard Hegmon: It was – and a lotta them were southern guys, you know. And, uh, so was
36 gonna try to get to run a hammer. Those guys, uh – they set him straight.
37
38Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
39
40Richard Hegmon: And bright guys got a chance to get on certain jobs. Um, since we were
41 makin' war material, the Army told'm, "You strike, you go in the Army."
42 So that broke the strike up. And that's how Bill Dean got to be the first
43 Black guy in Lansing to, uh – throwin' a hammer.
44
45Marilyn Coulter: Ah.
46

1John Fedewa: Hm.
2
3Richard Hegmon: And, uh, so, and I, and I and so I ended up bein' the last one, [laughter] you
4 know...
5
6Marilyn Coulter: So-...
7
8Richard Hegmon: ...but, uh...
9
10Marilyn Coulter: So he was the first and you were the last. Now, because you did not actually
11 work in Fisher Body. You worked at the...
12
13Richard Hegmon: No, ac-, actually I [inaudible 15:46].
14
15Marilyn Coulter: You, you worked....
16
17Richard Hegmon: I was in and outta Fisher Body as, like I said, benefit rep and you know, and,
18 and, [thumping] and, uh...
19
20Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
21
22Richard Hegmon: And, uh, I [inaudible 15:55] in and outta Fisher Body.
23
24Marilyn Coulter: S-, so you worked at the Ford's plant...
25
26Richard Hegmon: Yeah, yeah.
27
28Marilyn Coulter: ...and you became a benefits rep and a active member of UAW...
29
30Richard Hegmon: Yeah.
31
32Marilyn Coulter: ...Local 1618.
33
34Richard Hegmon: Yeah, yeah.
35
36Marilyn Coulter: [16:04] But now, what was it that kept you outta Fisher Body? What were
37 some things that you might've heard or whatever that...
38
39Richard Hegmon: Well...
40
41Marilyn Coulter: ...kept you from going into Fisher Body...
42
43Richard Hegmon: Like I said, I had, I had heard...
44
45Marilyn Coulter: ...outside a the money, [laughter] [inaudible 16:16].
46

1Richard Hegmon: Yeah, yeah. I had heard, I – in fact, the, the – when General Motors called
2 me within three years, I had a choice to go to Fisher Body...
3
4Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
5
6Richard Hegmon: ...uh, plant, Ford's plant or the main plant, you know.
7
8Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
9
10Richard Hegmon: They all called me within, uh, two or three days. And, uh, it – the guys who
11 – the few Blacks I knew in Fisher Body, [Clifford Green 16:36] and, uh,
12 [Phil Taylor 16:37] and some of those guys...
13
14Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
15
16Richard Hegmon: Okay, those guys, they came outta the service and went, went into Fisher
17 Body. And they all were given some of the work but wet sanding jobs. And
18 then, that was a hard – with, you know, uh, hard, dirty, you know...
19
20Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
21
22Richard Hegmon: ...bad job wet-, you know, wet sanding.
23
24Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
25
26Richard Hegmon: And so everything I heard about the job – and they had, and some a these
27 jobs over on the line – I didn't think it was somethin' I wanted to do.
28
29Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
30
31Richard Hegmon: I knew [coughing] what they expect [coughing] about the j-, the line
32 [coughing] [inaudible 17:08]. And I, [inaudible 17:11] not stand in General
33 Motors [inaudible 17:14]. Figured, well I'd, I'd go on to [inaudible 17:16]
34 was. So I'd, you know, go where the money was. And, you know, 'cause I
35 didn't plan on [inaudible 17:20] that would get money together to go to
36 college. [laughter]
37
38Marilyn Coulter: And, and go to college.
39
40Richard Hegmon: Yeah...
41
42Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
43
44Richard Hegmon: ...uh-huh, right.
45
46Marilyn Coulter: So...

1
2Richard Hegmon: So I ended up there [thumping] 47 years, so [laughter]...
3
4Marilyn Coulter: So now, with the, um – Lansing then, um – three different plants called you
5 at three different times. The jobs were very prel-, prevalent, right, back then.
6
7Richard Hegmon: [Inaudible 17:40].
8
9Marilyn Coulter: Lansing back at that time, when you hired in, it sounds as though there were
10 jobs every place ‘cause you just said three different plants...
11
12Richard Hegmon: Mm-hm.
13
14Marilyn Coulter: ...called you to work. [17:49] So was that – there was an abundance of work
15 in Lansing back then...
16
17Richard Hegmon: Uh...
18
19Marilyn Coulter: ...unlike today?
20
21Richard Hegmon: ...yeah. I think that, uh, at that time, it, it, especially, yeah, they were hiring.
22
23Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
24
25Richard Hegmon: You know, uh, and I think I might’ve been, uh, right on the first a that.
26
27Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
28
29Richard Hegmon: Because they hired a bunch a people in ’48 and, and in ’49.
30
31Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
32
33Richard Hegmon: And so I, I would think I was just, just happened to – just lucky enough to
34 be on the first...
35
36Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
37
38Richard Hegmon: ...you know, uh, uh, started bringin’ people in...
39
40Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm. [sigh] N-...
41
42Richard Hegmon: ...in.
43
44Marilyn Coulter: Now, you had a lot of connections with General Motors and Oldsmobile.
45 [18:27] I know you – could you briefly share the story, again, about how
46 your parents actually got to Michigan?

1
2 Richard Hegmon: [18:35] We got to Lansing?
3
4 Marilyn Coulter: Yeah.
5
6 Richard Hegmon: Oh, well, we got to Lansing because they were – my dad, uh, uh, been hired
7 on, uh, [inaudible 18:42], building a hotel. My dad was brought in to, to, uh,
8 be a maître d’ or head waiter, you know. And he...
9
10 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
11
12 Richard Hegmon: ...got – and he hired, uh, for, uh, you know, uh – he had a connection. He’d
13 worked as a foreman, uh, uh, on the, on the, on the dining cars out in
14 Chicago...
15
16 Marilyn Coulter: [19:00] So he was a Pullman porter?
17
18 Richard Hegmon: Well, he worked the dining car a ways, all, all through the Midwest and,
19 uh...
20
21 Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
22
23 Richard Hegmon: ...in Chicago. And, at that time, um, those guys kinda – they – a lotta them
24 worked circuits.
25
26 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
27
28 Richard Hegmon: And they would work like from, uh, in Arkansas, Atlantic City. So a lotta
29 those guys knew each other. So...
30
31 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
32
33 Richard Hegmon: ...my dad knew a lotta those fellas. [He worked with’m 19:20]. And so, uh,
34 when he come to Lansing, he was able to contact some of’m and say, “Hey,
35 I gotta job up here”...
36
37 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
38
39 Richard Hegmon: ...”and I’m, I’m starting at a new hotel.” And so that’s how he was able to
40 call guys from all over different parts and, you know, get a, get a, uh, get a,
41 uh, staff of people here for – [over to 19:36], you know, start a...
42
43 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
44
45 Richard Hegmon: ...hotel. He wanted to, he wanted the hotel was being one a the best hotel
46 this side, you know, in this part a the country...

1
2 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
3
4 Richard Hegmon: ...compared to the, both Cadillac and, uh, and, uh [inaudible 19:51]. So I...
5
6 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
7
8 Richard Hegmon: ...so he wanted the best. [clicking] So...
9
10 Marilyn Coulter: [19:55] And you did – and you said, you personally also knew some a the
11 Olds family yourself?
12
13 Richard Hegmon: Oh yeah, yeah. [thumping] Well, uh, Mrs. Olds she was – stayed right there
14 and lived right there in the hotel, so...
15
16 Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
17
18 Richard Hegmon: ...and, uh, so I knew her before – real, real well, yeah.
19
20 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
21
22 Richard Hegmon: And I, I remember R.E. Olds, you know...
23
24 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm. So, um, uh, goin' back to the, uh, plant and the community here.
25 You, um, working here, living here and you said something that some
26 people knew – they knew about the grounds. [20:25] What was it about the
27 grounds? And was General Motors considered a good neighbor or it was just
28 a showplace for a factory?
29
30 Richard Hegmon: Well, I was sayin' how nice they kept the outside grounds, you know.
31
32 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
33
34 Richard Hegmon: They had the, they had the big beautiful, uh, uh, Fisher Body coach out
35 there, you know, in front...
36
37 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
38
39 Richard Hegmon: ...you know. And there was, uh, the grounds were just kept, just beautifully,
40 you know, so...
41
42 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
43
44 Richard Hegmon: ...it was always – it was somethin' people liked to be just goin' along and
45 see...
46

1 Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
2
3 Richard Hegmon: You know, like that, so all that, uh, you know, that was a [inaudible 20:52]
4 as far as the way they, uh – the grounds was always, you know, part a the
5 beautiful, you know, the beautification of, you know...
6
7 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
8
9 Richard Hegmon: ...of, of Lansing.
10
11 Marilyn Coulter: And, uh, I know you – we had talked earlier a little bit to you. We're talkin'
12 about some of the different hiring practices that you thought people had to
13 deal with back then insofar as grandfathering in and things like that. [21:15]
14 Did you...
15
16 Richard Hegmon: Well, I...
17
18 Marilyn Coulter: ...want to talk about that a little bit?
19
20 Richard Hegmon: ...yeah, that's a area. If, if, uh, if, uh – the best way to get a job was to know
21 somebody, have some [inaudible 21:22] there. Uh, and, uh, to [inaudible
22 21:26] to, to the right fraternal organizations. And, and, uh, if you played
23 ball on certain ball teams, they'd help you get in, into, uh, into [inaudible
24 21:37] plant. Uh, if you, um, if you, uh, like I said, belonged to the right
25 church [clicking]...
26
27 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
28
29 Richard Hegmon: ...things like that. Yeah and all those – all that stuff, you know, involved –
30 we'd get hired in.
31
32 Marilyn Coulter: [21:52] So now, when you say if they played ball, do you mean like if they
33 were like an old football star or was it...
34
35 Richard Hegmon: Well, I seen some a that, yeah...
36
37 Marilyn Coulter: ...a city league?
38
39 Richard Hegmon: ...some a that, some a that, yeah.
40
41 Marilyn Coulter: [22:01] Was it a silly...
42
43 Richard Hegmon: In fact, um, one a the head guys that, uh, used to hire in and get a [hour rate
44 22:06], he, he had, he had played ball. And at that time, GM had their own,
45 uh, baseball team like that.
46

1 Marilyn Coulter: Oh.
2

3 Richard Hegmon: So naturally, they tried to hire [laughter] some a them just for ball players.
4

5 Marilyn Coulter: [22:17] Oh, so now, was General Motors participating in city leagues or
6 somethin' like that?
7

8 Richard Hegmon: Yeah. I think, yeah, yeah [inaudible 22:23].
9

10 Marilyn Coulter: And so they had to get their good ball players. [laughter]
11

12 Richard Hegmon: Oh, yeah, yeah.
13

14 Marilyn Coulter: Yeah, that's okay. [22:27] And, and so, and Fisher Body did that also, yes?
15

16 Richard Hegmon: I'm not sure if they all played. It just seemed they all played on General
17 Motor's team. I'm not...
18

19 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
20

21 Richard Hegmon: ...sure if – I don't remember Fisher Body havin' their own team.
22

23 Marilyn Coulter: But it was just a General Motors site...
24

25 Richard Hegmon: Yeah, yeah...
26

27 Marilyn Coulter: ...site team.
28

29 Richard Hegmon: ...Actually, it was a General Motors team [inaudible 22:45], you know.
30

31 Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh. I know I've heard in some a the other interviews where people said
32 that they played ball out here, like durin' breaks and stuff. And...
33

34 Richard Hegmon: Hm.
35

36 Marilyn Coulter: ...where they practiced and stupid stuff like that.
37

38 Richard Hegmon: Yeah, we used to have a ball diamond that was over there by the front – by
39 plant, plant, uh, you know, where, where our plant is out front [thumping]
40 [inaudible 23:02], yeah. [thumping]
41

42 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
43

44 Richard Hegmon: They had a ball diamond out there, yeah.
45

1 Marilyn Coulter: [23:09] Mm-hm. Well, so now, are there some other things about, um, living
2 in a, in a General Motors town and – that you’d like to share with us?
3

4 Richard Hegmon: [Inaudible 23:23] so much [laughter] [inaudible 23:24].
5

6 Marilyn Coulter: You can just pick any particular thing, any particular memory that you
7 remember. [23:30] I mean it – what impact did the plant have on the city?
8

9 Richard Hegmon: Well, I think that, I think we were, uh – I think Lansing, um, it has, has, uh,
10 benefitted from General Motors. I think General Motors definitely
11 benefitted from Lansing.
12

13 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
14

15 Richard Hegmon: And, um, uh, I think General Motors made a mistake, uh, when, uh, when
16 they pulled, uh, some a the work outta Lansing in, uh, back in the, in the
17 ‘70s...
18

19 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
20

21 Richard Hegmon: ...instead of, uh, instead of increasing it.
22

23 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
24

25 Richard Hegmon: And because, uh, when they [inaudible 24:17] when we had some a the best
26 [inaudible 24:21] cars in the world.
27

28 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
29

30 Richard Hegmon: And some a the best quality cars...
31

32 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
33

34 Richard Hegmon: ...in the world. And I think that work should’ve been – General Motors
35 made a serious, serious, you know, marketing mistake when, when, uh,
36 when they did that.
37

38 Marilyn Coulter: [tsk] Um, how – right now, um, you’ve worked for General Motors, um.
39 You’ve been a member of 6 – of 1618. [24:43] Um, what are your thoughts
40 on, um, having grown up here now and having the plant close? How do you
41 feel about that now?
42

43 Richard Hegmon: Well, I [throat clearing] you mean havin’ my plant [inaudible 24:56]?
44

45 Marilyn Coulter: Well, your plant’s closing....
46

1Richard Hegmon: [24:57] Are all the, all the plants?
2
3Marilyn Coulter: ...Our plant is closing. As we speak right now...
4
5Richard Hegmon: [Inaudible 25:00].
6
7Marilyn Coulter: ...they're tearin' it down.
8
9Richard Hegmon: [throat clearing] Well, I, I, well, let me put it this way. If you look at the
10 [inaudible 25:05] and, uh, um [clicking] – When I first got involved really
11 [clicking] – Well, I'll put it this way. I remember back in the '70s, at one
12 time, um, I – your plant was [clanking] – they had, if I remember right, I
13 would think around – you guys were probly up around 9,000 people, if I
14 remember right.
15
16Marilyn Coulter: Hm.
17
18Richard Hegmon: And, or better. Um, 'cause we were up pretty close to three thousand in our
19 plant. Um, main plant had probly about, uh – they had, if I remember right,
20 somewhere around 18,000 to 25,000 in, in the main plant.
21
22Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
23
24Richard Hegmon: If you take a local like, uh, 70, uh, 5, uh, uh, 659 over, over in, over in Flint,
25 those guys had over – I, I think they had one local and if I remember right,
26 they had – and I [inaudible 26:11] but I think they had up around 100 –
27 better than 100,000 guys – people workin'.
28
29Marilyn Coulter: Hm.
30
31Richard Hegmon: If you'd take all those guys – we're talkin' about all in Flint and Lansing,
32 Saginaw and right here in, in, uh Cadillac and in, in, Detroit and all. We're
33 talkin' about – I would think and, and [inaudible 26:33] but I would think it
34 would come close to, uh, maybe 200-plus thousand jobs...
35
36Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
37
38Richard Hegmon: ...that were eliminated. [Inaudible 26:45] General Motors still makes cars.
39
40Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
41
42Richard Hegmon: But jobs were eliminated, you know, so income, family income was
43 eliminated.
44
45Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
46

1Richard Hegmon: Now, and [bargainin' 26:58] power was eliminated.
2
3Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
4
5Richard Hegmon: Now, I think that, uh, somewhere down the line, uh, um, this outsourcin' ...
6
7Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
8
9Richard Hegmon: ...of, uh...
10
11Marilyn Coulter: [Inaudible 27:14].
12
13Richard Hegmon: ...we're not, uh, not only outsourcing, uh, uh, jobs, we're also, we're
14 outsourcing a lifestyle.
15
16Marilyn Coulter: Yeah.
17
18Richard Hegmon: And I think that's done by not only General Motors, uh, business in this
19 country. I think we're askin' for some serious, serious, serious problems.
20
21Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
22
23Richard Hegmon: Because you can't put people, thousands and thousands a people – can't
24 keep puttin' young people in jail and prison who – 'cause they can't find a
25 job.
26
27Marilyn Coulter: Yeah.
28
29Richard Hegmon: And you can't tell people we can't give ya – people aren't gonna go hungry.
30
31Marilyn Coulter: They gotta do somethin'.
32
33Richard Hegmon: And so what do you [eat 27:51]? I remember, I remember seein' the guys
34 [thumping] ride the rails, railroads, hobos ridin' rails, uh, you know, when I
35 was a kid...
36
37Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
38
39Richard Hegmon: ...comin' in. I had relatives that would come in hoboin', you know.
40
41Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
42
43Richard Hegmon: I don't think we're gonna go back to hoboin'.
44
45Marilyn Coulter: No, I don't think...
46

1Richard Hegmon: I don't think...
2
3Marilyn Coulter: ...we will.
4
5Richard Hegmon: ...I think people will be on the streets. So, you know, I think somebody –
6 leadership, business and government, they better start doin' some serious,
7 serious thinkin'. We'll get this country back goin'.
8
9Marilyn Coulter: [28:19] Now, I don't remember [throat clearing] [tsk], I don't remember the
10 exact date, but were you a youngster, um, back when they had the Lansing
11 Labor Holiday – when they shut the downtown – when the labor union shut
12 it down?
13
14Richard Hegmon: That would've been, yeah, that would've been in the '30s [inaudible 28:37].
15
16Marilyn Coulter: Do you remember that at all?
17
18Richard Hegmon: Not – I can't say I – I remember, uh, hearin' about it but I don't, I don't
19 remember anything, you know...
20
21Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
22
23Richard Hegmon: ...definite about it. [Inaudible 28:49].
24
25Marilyn Coulter: You were young then.
26
27Richard Hegmon: Yeah, I was too busy, yeah, too busy with other then. [laughter]
28
29Marilyn Coulter: Yeah, [inaudible 28:52]. [laughter] But, um, okay, so, um, is there anything
30 else you'd like to share with us?
31
32Richard Hegmon: [Inaudible 29:01].
33
34Marilyn Coulter: [But, um, well, that's it 29:06]. But now, can you – y-, you said like
35 initially, you can remember when they were building, uh, Sexton and the
36 Greenhouse that we're in now.
37
38Richard Hegmon: Mm-hm.
39
40Marilyn Coulter: [29:16] You remember the – when it was all wooded area?
41
42Richard Hegmon: Yeah.
43
44Marilyn Coulter: You remember that. [29:22] Were there anything else about the community
45 that you remember as a child? Or as a person working? [Inaudible 29:30].
46

1Richard Hegmon: [29:31] Anything that pertains to Fisher Body?
2

3Marilyn Coulter: [29:33] Mm-hm, yeah, or the, or the west side of Lansing, where the plants
4 were.
5

6Richard Hegmon: Well, uh, it, uh, like I say, all this here – out here by Fisher Body – at that
7 time, was, was considered almost like out in the country. [laughter]
8

9Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
10

11Richard Hegmon: [Inaudible 29:47] you think about it. And then, uh, uh, and, and west of, uh,
12 uh, say west of Dennison was go-, goin' on the [inaudible 29:56].
13

14Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
15

16Richard Hegmon: With thoughts of, uh, uh, anything like [inaudible 30:03]. In fact, we used
17 to, uh, like we used to go, uh, out and hunt [and stuff like that 30:13].
18 [laughter] [Inaudible 30:14]...
19

20Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh.
21

22Richard Hegmon: ...[inaudible 30:15] and like that, so in them days it was all – that was all
23 woods, you know. And, uh, um, uh, Lansing has, you know, just
24 expanded...
25

26Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
27

28Richard Hegmon: ...so much, you know. [tsk] Uh, as kids, uh, [background noises] bein' at
29 that time, we didn't...
30

31Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
32

33Richard Hegmon: ...have the cars. We didn't have T.V. and like that, so we did a lotta
34 walkin'.
35

36Marilyn Coulter: Okay.
37

38Richard Hegmon: Like we [inaudible 30:39] walk from the west side to where Sears is now
39 [inaudible 30:42]. Uh...
40

41Marilyn Coulter: [That's a ways 30:46]. [laughter] That's a long ways. [laughter] That's a
42 very long way. [background conversation]
43

44Richard Hegmon: It is now.
45

46Marilyn Coulter: Woo!

1
2 Richard Hegmon: Uh, Friday nights, uh, all the kids in Lansing, uh, durin' the '30s, uh, uh, R.
3 E. Old's Clubhouse used to have free movies.
4
5 Marilyn Coulter: Really?
6
7 Richard Hegmon: And so all the kids in Lansing would go up over there and you could go over
8 there. And, uh, I think popcorn, I think was a penny or [inaudible 31:08], I
9 think was a penny. Um, you know, um, this is Depression time.
10
11 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
12
13 Richard Hegmon: The kids would go there and that's where we'd go see a movie. And then
14 summertime, I, and I've – I can't remember now if the city or, or [inaudible
15 31:19] and, and they would, they would have, uh, movies for families.
16 They'd go out there and set on – they'd all get on the grass to watch movies,
17 you know...
18
19 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
20
21 Richard Hegmon: ...movies, you know, on, on the grass in summertime.
22
23 Marilyn Coulter: Hm.
24
25 Richard Hegmon: That's some a the things that I remember.
26
27 Marilyn Coulter: [sigh] [31:34] So you worked for General Motors and you were active –
28 now, um, how many years did you have of service with General Motors?
29
30 Richard Hegmon: How much?
31
32 Marilyn Coulter: How many years a service did you have with General Motors? [background
33 conversation]
34
35 Richard Hegmon: I had almost, uh, 46½ with'm, you know...
36
37 Marilyn Coulter: Forty-six and a half years. Oh my God! [thumping] And, now, I know that
38 you were a UAW GM benefits rep.
39
40 Richard Hegmon: Mm-hm. [Inaudible 31:51].
41
42 Marilyn Coulter: [31:51] And how long were you a benefits rep?
43
44 Richard Hegmon: Well, I was one a the first ones they put on, so I – about 30. [background
45 noises] I think I went on in, uh, think I went on in, uh, '69 or '70. [sighing]
46 [Inaudible 32:05]...

1
2 Marilyn Coulter: '69 or '70...
3
4 Richard Hegmon: [Inaudible 32:06]...
5
6 Marilyn Coulter: But, but now that now...
7
8 Richard Hegmon: ...[inaudible 32:08], in '90, '93.
9
10 Marilyn Coulter: [32:11] So what was it like for, bein' an African-American male, and, um,
11 bein' active in the union early on? [sniffing] Um...
12
13 Richard Hegmon: We had to fight.
14
15 Marilyn Coulter: You had to fight....
16
17 Richard Hegmon: We had to fight because...
18
19 Marilyn Coulter: ...[32:25] for the positions?
20
21 Richard Hegmon: ...there was a lot of, uh, uh, uh, there was a lot of, uh, racism in the UAW
22 too.
23
24 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
25
26 Richard Hegmon: And I think that what – one, one a the things that I [inaudible 32:36] – one a
27 the best I remember is [inaudible 32:40] UAW, meetin' [inaudible 32:42].
28
29 Marilyn Coulter: [32:44] You had a [inaudible 32:44]?
30
31 Richard Hegmon: Oh yeah, uh-huh.
32
33 Marilyn Coulter: [32:45] Can you tell us a little bit about the opportunity to meet [inaudible
34 32:46]?
35
36 Richard Hegmon: [Inaudible 32:46]. In fact, I, uh, I had a, I, I, I, uh, in fact I met [inaudible
37 32:53]. And, uh, uh, I was [thumping], the, uh, I think, uh, I met about
38 every, you know, [inaudible 33:02] at UAW. I was [inaudible 33:07]
39 fortunate to go there to, uh, uh, four or five nights, go to conferences. I got a
40 chance, to, uh, to meet people, uh, and went all over the country. Got a
41 chance to meet pe-, political people, been to the White House....
42
43 Marilyn Coulter: Really?
44
45 Richard Hegmon: Uh...
46

1 Marilyn Coulter: [33:20] With the UAW?
2

3 Richard Hegmon: ...[inaudible 33:21] the White House the day they were – to see Carter and
4 we never got it finished. It was the day that, uh – they were – decided not to
5 participate in, uh, the, uh, Olympics, so we...
6

7 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
8

9 Richard Hegmon: ...uh, the tour was cut short. So we didn't get a chance to, you know, see the
10 whole White House. But, uh, um, so I got a chance to meet, uh, you know, a
11 lot of, uh...
12

13 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
14

15 Richard Hegmon: ...people, w-, w-, and, and go a lotta places. And I'm very thankful to
16 UAW. I was very supportive and I always will be.
17

18 Marilyn Coulter: [33:54] So now, you initially hired in to GM in what year?
19

20 Richard Hegmon: And, and [inaudible 34:00]. I want to say right now and go on record and
21 acknowledge [sayin' 34:03] that these guys – retirees that are talkin' about
22 goin' through this suit...
23

24 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
25

26 Richard Hegmon: ...uh, for their benefits are, are [clanking] crazy. [clanking] Because, uh, as
27 a benefit rep, I know what [inaudible 34:19] really was way back in the
28 '70s.
29

30 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
31

32 Richard Hegmon: And those guys are jeopardizing not only my, uh, retire-, uh, benefits and
33 [retirement 34:27]. They're, they're, they're jeopardizing, uh, uh, these
34 people in the plant too.
35

36 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
37

38 Richard Hegmon: They need to keep their mouths shut and let the UAW leadership and [them
39 34:38] work, work it out.
40

41 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
42

43 Richard Hegmon: And keep, and keep it to where it's at or...
44

45 Marilyn Coulter: [Inaudible 34:41]. Now, now, when did you hire in again to, at, at the plant?
46

1Richard Hegmon: Hm?
2
3Marilyn Coulter: What year did you get involved at General Motors again?
4
5Richard Hegmon: I got involved with the union?
6
7Marilyn Coulter: No, what year with General Motors?
8
9Richard Hegmon: In, in '47.
10
11Marilyn Coulter: In '47. So you came in a year after they had initiated the Fair Practice Unit
12 with the UAW civil rights – the Fair Practice Department in the UAW...
13
14Richard Hegmon: Uh...
15
16Marilyn Coulter: ...[inaudible 35:05].
17
18Richard Hegmon: ...yeah, yeah. I can't remember what year they started that.
19
20Marilyn Coulter: 1946.
21
22Richard Hegmon: Yeah, but it wasn't, uh –it didn't mean a whole lot. [laughing]
23
24Marilyn Coulter: Didn't mean a whole lot.
25
26Richard Hegmon: In fact, I, and I say that...
27
28Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
29
30Richard Hegmon: ...because, uh, uh...
31
32Marilyn Coulter: [Inaudible 35:20].
33
34Richard Hegmon: Yeah, in fact, I [squeaking] – one a the first representatives from our local to
35 go to the Fair Practice, uh, conferences and I can't, I can't remember...
36
37Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
38
39Richard Hegmon: ...the [inaudible 35:31] guy's name that was headin' it in the [inaudible
40 35:33]. And they didn't have much, didn't have much a that.
41
42Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
43
44Richard Hegmon: That would've been in the '50s, if I remember right, or early...
45
46Marilyn Coulter: Really.

1
2 Richard Hegmon: ... '60s. And he didn't have much...
3
4 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
5
6 Richard Hegmon: ...[help 35:40] at all.
7
8 Marilyn Coulter: Mm-hm.
9
10 Richard Hegmon: [Inaudible 35:42].
11
12 Marilyn Coulter: Uh-huh. We have other team members here now. We have...
13
14 Female: [Geri Smith 35:46].
15
16 Richard Hegmon: [Inaudible 35:46].
17
18 Cheryl McQuaid: Cheryl McQuaid.
19
20 Richard Hegmon: [Inaudible 35:48] you guys.
21
22 Marilyn Coulter: You have to f-...
23
24 Richard Hegmon: Yeah, I have to [inaudible 35:52] but I can come back some time.
25
26 Marilyn Coulter: Mr. Hegmon, I want to say thank you so much for starting the memories.
27 We're gonna put this on pause and we're gonna come back to you again.
28
29 Richard Hegmon: [Inaudible 36:00]. I can answer questions better than I can think a
30 somethin'. [laughter]
31
32 Marilyn Coulter: Okay, All right.
33
34 Richard Hegmon: Yeah.
35
36 Marilyn Coulter: Thank you.
37
38 Richard Hegmon: Yeah, yeah.
39
40 Marilyn Coulter: And we will. And I...[recorder clicking]
41
42
43/hms