

Heena Loomba: So today I'll be conducting an interview with Mr. Ken Maynard and to begin the interview I would like to ask where and when you were born...

Ken Maynard: I was born on the 27th day of March, 1934 on Spiker Ave. in Woodbridge in a log cabin.

HL: Woodbridge, Ontario?

KM: Woodbridge, Ontario.

HL: So do you have any like brothers and sisters?

KM: I have a brother and a sister. I have a brother who is 18 years younger than myself. The sister is a year and there months younger than myself.

HL: Wow, so you said that you were born in a log cabin...

KM: In a log cabin, yes.

HL: Could you give us more details?

KM: It was a building built probably in the early 1820s, it was the street now is called Park Drive. It's just off Clarence Street in Woodbridge if you know where Clarence Street is, it runs off the main street in Woodbridge. I was born there because my father, he owned property on Park Drive, that area and it was being built for summer cottagers that came to Woodbridge from Toronto. Woodbridge was a focal point as were a lot of the surrounding communities for people in the City of Toronto. They didn't go very far, they came to Woodbridge and they either camped here or they rented a little cabin which my father had built. They built...I think, ten of them. And they would be rented by the week, so a person would come from Toronto, rent the cabin, stay there for the week, have their little holiday during the summer months and my father was building a house at the time but there was an old log cabin in this property and that's why I was born in this particular house. The house that he was building was finished about 4 or 5 months after I was born and they moved to that house.

HL: Interesting, so you said that you were around people coming and going like tourists, how did that...

KM: They were Toronto tourists, they weren't tourists as we think of the tourists today. They were just getting out of the city for a little fresh air. And to enjoy the facilities of the Humber River which was very prominent in their lives. They did the same thing on most of the rivers in the north, the Don, a lot of the rivers around here. Some of them had small dams so there was swimming facilities, there was fishing...it was a recreational thing. Plus there was fresh air and space because some of these people lived right down in the heart of the city and they didn't have any of this. It was quite an interesting time, Woodbridge was very very much a part of that kind of scene, generation of people that came to the country. Woodbridge was known as the prettiest little town between North Toronto and the North Pole, if you can believe it. There was actually a sign that said it was the prettiest little town between North Toronto and the North Pole.

HL: That's nice...

KM: Yeah, it would be a little bit of a joke today. Most young people, I'm sure, would imagine coming to Woodbridge or Pine Grove, just south of us here, because it was another community there of cottagers and most of those cottage areas, or cottage properties, have been torn down or converted to a three story. Or in some cases \$800,000 home because they're beautiful properties.

HL: How was life when you were younger in Woodbridge...school, friends, the people, the community...

KM: I went to a four room school which eventually was changed to a five room school because they converted the basement rather than put an addition on or a portable. They finished the basement and in grade 6 we had our classes in the basement of the school. It was a continuation school there so rather than go to high school you could take your continuation there. That's just prior to my time because when I was in school, when I graduated from public school I went to high school in Weston. That was the closest high school...

Weston?

KM: WCVS – Weston Collegiate and Vocational School.

HL: Is that in Toronto?

KM: That's in Weston, do you know where Weston is? Weston is part of Toronto now, it's Lawrence Ave and Weston Rd and north. It went right up to, well we used to call it, Mason Corners...

HL: How'd you get to school everyday?

KM: The bus. The tough old hard riding bus, and we would start from Woodbridge...before, eight o'clock because we picked up students along the way. All through Humber Summit, any idea where Humber Summit is?

HL: No...

KM: Humber Summit is just south of us, on, what's it called now, we always called it Weston Road, it wasn't Weston Road, Weston Road was further east than where we went. But we called it Weston Road because it went to Weston, it was just south of Woodbridge. And they referred to it as Humber Summit because it was really the summit of the Humber River, it was a high area. And another part of the area was called the Pines, and the reason for the Pines were

HL: So how was the community like in Woodbridge back then?

KM: Well it was a small village of 1800 people which one major employer and that was Robinson Cotton Mills.

HL: Right...

KM: And they had one police officer and initially before that, they had someone who rode a bicycle around Woodbridge and enforced the law. It was only after the Second World War that we had a police officer and he was retired or former military police officer who was a Woodbridge person. His name was Herb Weatherall

HL: Nice name...

KM: Weatherall?

HL: Weatherall...

KM: Herbert Weatherall...

HL: So were you ever affected by the impacts of World War II?

KM: Was I impacted by it? That's a good question, I'm still being impacted by it. Take no offense at this, but I grew up in a village that had one Roman Catholic family, one Italian family, no other ethnic groups...

HL: Yeah, it wasn't very multicultural back then.

KM: It was, they were all English speaking, if you heard someone else speaking another language on the street, you'd be, some of the old people they would have been terrified, they would have that that it was an invasion. I mean it was that unique, the one Italian family, I think they were Italian, he was the section worker on the CPR railway and his name was Nick Poona [sp?]. Now he was very much part of the community but didn't speak very much English, and then when I was maybe in my early teenage years we had a shoemaker in Woodbridge and his name was Tony Szkidowski [sp?] and he was a Polish guy. He became part of the community as well...other than that everyone had an English name (laughter). They were all English. Well English heritage...our family has been in Woodbridge since about 1860 in Woodbridge.

HL: Wow...

KM: My great-grandfather built the carriage works in 1874. Right on the main street in Woodbridge, do you know where the Railway overpass is on Woodbridge Ave?

HL: Right, yeah...

KM: Right, that property running up from James Street down to, quite a piece down the street, was the area where he manufactured wagons, buggies, wooden eavestroughing and cisterns [...] and anything related to wood.

HL: So you seem like informed about what your great-grandparents did and everything. So would your parents stuff like this when you were younger?

KM: Yes. My father, my grandfather, I spent a lot of time with my grandfather. They lived next door to us, that's why I know so much of the village.

HL: So you like probably take an interest in stuff like this?

KM: I have an interest in history. I would very much like to have taught history...

HL: But instead you have the insurance...

KM: Instead I have the insurance business, I started my own insurance business in 1965. I had worked in the business for about ten years, then I started my own business. But history is really a forte of mine.

HL: Did you take a lot of history courses and?

KM: No I read...

HL: You read...

KM: Yes. I have actually consulted York University about taking a course on history. So I was interviewed by a couple of professors there and they said why don't you come and teach...

HL: And?

KM: Forget about learning, teach. Help them with some of the courses. Which I haven't done because I'm still working, I haven't retired...

HL: Right...

KM: It would be an interesting thing to do...

HL: Would you want to teach?

KM: Oh I would love to do that...I really think that young people are deprived of their history. You don't get the kinds of stories that you should get with history. History is living, its breathing, its exciting...I mean it's not, "this happened in 1823 or 1832 and so and so did this." I mean this guy breathed the air that you did, he had passions, he ate certain meals, he...you know, this is a living thing, you gotta look at it not as something that has died or is dead, but something that is living and breathing. It's exciting, it's exciting – I just took my grandchildren on a trip to Kingston. So we travelled down through Port Hope to Picton, all that area. We stayed down two places and I taught them about the United Empire Loyalists. And also the War of 1812 and Pierre Berton is a friend of mine, he was a client of mine, his wife and family they're still clients of mine so I knew Pierre very well. And I took two of his books with me because they were, the two books that were written about the War of 1812 are exceptionally good books I think. They give you real insight into what these people were all about, how inefficient they were, how much of a lost cause the War of 1812 was, his books are the Invasion Across the Border and the War of 1812. Have you read them?

HL: No, I should...

KM: Read them, you'll enjoy them. He talks about some of the American politicians that the invasion of Canada is only a matter of marching. We march and they'll all fall on the bandwagon. And, they'll become Americans but it wasn't so because the United Empire Loyalists had left the United States because of Republicanism, they wanted a king, they wanted a monarchy, they wanted a democratic government without the kind of Republicanism that was existing in the United States. And that made a big difference so when they got here they found that the Canadians that were here didn't want any part of them at all, they fought them tooth and nail at every turn. They even retaliated, the Canadians and the British militia. Fought them to a standstill at Niagara Escarpment with Sir Isaac Brock. General Brock, standing there with his arm out like this, his arm got struck by lightning. So part of his fingers are missing now, but they didn't want any part of this. Even so much so, they captured places in the United States, they marched across the border and took some of the American area including, they burnt the White House, they destroyed the White House and that's why it's white because it was charred so they painted it white over the burns to cover up the burns. And that was in 1813, great story...great books, read them.

HL: So if you could teach class, about the history, what would some topics be that you would get at...Maybe like World War I? War of 1812?

KM: I know something about World War I, probably a little more about World War II...I know a lot about British history and a lot that's recorded and seen on television today about English and British history is not correct, I don't know where they get their information, they quote Kings having said something, or having did something that were not so. I don't know where they are who they consult but they don't do a very good job...And you see Edward VI did so and so, but it wasn't Edward VI at all...I don't know where they get this from. But you see it all the time...

HL: Do you feel that Canadians, that teenagers in Canada should know about history and stuff like [...] (16:46)

KM: Absolutely, they should know about Joseph Brant. They should know all the Indian chiefs that fought in the war of 1812 and what they accomplished and how proud they were of their accomplishments. We don't get that, what is there to say that you're Canadian, how different are you than an American? You probably eat the same chocolate bars, you watch the same TV shows, you watch the same shows on TV, all kinds of things, the same computer, the same cell phone, what makes us even different? You should know your history. And that's what is really lacking today, there isn't enough time spent, go to another country, go to another country and you'll see the time that is spent learning their history. Go to France, learn, see what they learn about their history. They know their history, you ask certain Canadian students about what they know about their history and they don't know anything about it. And it's exciting, the founding of the Hudson's Bay Company, Frobisher, the original discovery of North America...George Vancouver and Vancouver Island, Captain Cook did a lot of discovery in the coasts of Canada. Does anyone ever tell you that in school? Not likely. You've probably heard of Champlain. Maybe something about Étienne Brûlé. They should tell you that sort of thing, they should tell you what he was like, because he wasn't dull, far from being dull. He was a real man's man...he was a paddler, he paddled right by on this river right here with Champlain. Went north to Lake Nippising and further west to Manitoba, portaging all the way. He was a rugged individual...Wasn't always the best kind of person, but he was a legitimate he-man. Had great sway with the ladies, now those are the kinds of things that you should hear because then you get excited about him, he was different, he was really something. They just worshipped this guy and even the native people thought he was just wonderful. When he died, the Iroquois ate his heart...he was that impressed, they were so impressed by him that they thought eating his heart would make them similar to him.

HL: Wow...

KM: Isn't that a story? True. And, he, there's a hotel in Penetanguishene named after him, the Brûlé Hotel. He wouldn't want to stay there, it's a pretty rough place, I stayed there once and it was enough for me. Lots, lots of Canadian stories, lots of wonderful, great, Canadian people.

HL: Yeah there are...

KM: If you had interviewed Pierre, he certainly would have told you this. Berton loved this country.

HL: Back to your personal life, where did you meet your wife?

KM: I met her at Young Peoples at the Anglican Church in Woodbridge. I had known the family for a long while because I was their paper boy. Mind you, she was six years younger than me so I didn't pay any attention to her at all until she was a little bit older.

HL: It says that you volunteer at the Christ Church...Anglican...

KM: I am the warden of Christ Church. I'm presently the president of the cemetery board. I'm being lay delegate to Synod.

HL: I'm not too sure about the Anglican culture because I'm not Anglican but you could you explain what you do?

KM: What the Anglican Church is?

HL: No what you do, your part in the Anglican Church...

KM: Well a warden is the administrator of the church, there's two, there's a people's warden and a rector's warden. Now we have a Bishop, are you Roman Catholic? (HL: No..) It's very similar to the Catholic Church except we do not have a pope, we have a bishop and we have an Archbishop of Canterbury. The founding was started by Henry VIII, he was a churchman and Henry was disillusioned with what was taking place with the Catholic Church and he started his own church which was the Church of England...England, Anglican. So we're very similar to the Catholic Church, he was trained in the Church because he was the second son of Henry VII. The second son is normally, of the monarchy, was trained within the church. He was trained as a priest, even though he was never licensed or given a church but that's how he was trained. His older brother, who was the Prince of Wales and expected to become king died and he assumed the role of monarch. And so far, and went so far as to marry his brother's widow and that created a whole bunch of problems as well because he never gave him a son and that was a terribly important. To have a son, because you had to have a male heir. And when she didn't, he asked for a divorce, of course she was a Roman Catholic, she was a Spanish princess and the Pope would not grant a divorce. There's a whole, you know, the reason he didn't grant a divorce was because he was the Holy Roman Emperor and he was her uncle so it was all political so he didn't give Henry the divorce. So Henry just shoved her aside and married Anne Boelyn, you know that story...Anne didn't give him a son either...She gave him Elizabeth I.

HL: Wow, we know that you have sons too...

KM: I have three sons.

HL: When they were younger would you constantly tell them stories?

KM: Oh yes, probably not as much as now. I was too busy with all kinds of other things.

HL: Did they take an interest?

KM: Yeah, I think my oldest son probably least. I don't know how much interest they have, I know my second son does, who is now the president of the company. Jamie.

HL: You have grandchildren too right?

KM: I have four grandchildren, three boys and a girl.

HL: So you don't want to make sure you preserve your history?

KM: We've taken them on a tour, as I have said, to tea s. My wife comes from a family who were United Empire Loyalists, they came to an area down by Hamilton. They came after Washington had defeated the British army in the last battle and they created in New York a Republican government and they didn't want a part of this because they had been traditionally a British subject, British citizens and as a result they decided to move to Canada. They came to Canada and whether this is complete true or not I don't know, and it is rumoured from letters that were received from Egerton Ryerson, you know the school Ryerson, you know Egerton Ryerson was an educator in Ontario and he wrote letters stating the family had come to Canada and they had employed slaves so they brought their slaves with them, of course they were free people at this point, they had been given their freedom but they were still attached to the family, but they kept them because a lot of these people had no means of support. If a family discarded them they, who was going to look after them, so they brought them with them when they came. Their name was Spohn, and that's kind of a unique thing too because,

although they were loyal to the British government and British citizens, they were originally German. Their name was Spaan, it was changed to Spohn and they were referred to as Pennsylvania Dutch, well they weren't Dutch at all – it was because the German word for German is Deutsch so they referred to the local British people there as Pennsylvania Dutch or yeah Pennsylvania Dutch but they were German. Great history, we have a lot of written information about their families. They came to Ancaster, you know where Ancaster is down near Hamilton? That's where they immigrated to, they came up the Niagara parkway and her family had owned great tracks of land in Albany, New York. We've visited that, I tell you if they had retained that land they'd be billionaires today in Albany in New York State.

HL: So you travelled to New York State have you ever thought of moving to the United States?

KM: Me? Heaven's no.

HL: No, why not?

KM: I don't think it has anything to offer us. I mean we have the best of the world here, we are truly blessed in this country. I visited maybe thirty-five countries in the world and I haven't found anything any better.

HL: No?

KM: No. Personally, I hope we don't blow it and I can be very critical of what we have in this country and how we do certain things at certain times but generally we're pretty fortunate.

HL: How would you consider us fortunate?

KM: Fortunate? We have such tremendous freedoms here. We have far greater freedoms than the Americans have. They're much more controlled that we are – we are almost inclined to be socialistic – we have health care that's second to none in the world, there are criticisms of that too and I'm as critical of it as anybody because I think a lot of people cheat. They've plugged some of the holes, there are people that live two years in Florida, still carry a Canadian passport and they want to have a hernia operation, gallbladder operation, they come to Canada and want to have one free. I think they should pay for it, they should be treated as Americans. We're very generous, we're a very generous people.

HL: Out of the 35 countries that you've visited what are some of your favourite countries?

KM: It's a toughie. We just came back from Egypt, well I say come back...We just come back from Egypt the end of February. I was very impressed with Egypt, it has a lot of social conditions, a lot social problems with poverty, population, traffic in Cairo and those kinds of things but I think they're genuinely trying to do something. It's very peaceful, there's a lot of armed people, a lot of armed soldiers and police officers and we went to the Cairo Museum which was probably the greatest Egyptology museum and collection of archives in the world. It equals the British Museum. You ever been there? The British Museum? It was just unbelievable. But to get in, you had to show your passport, you had to have some identification other than the passport - surrounding it were armed guards behind armour plated shields. It stood this high with a peephole in the centre of it so if they saw any problems they could get down behind that. Do whatever they had to do as far as the mob is concerned or the rioter, whoever it was. They could deal with that but I think the reason that it was such high protection, high security around some of these places was that if, if the Cairo Museum was destroyed, it would destroy twenty-five percent of their economy because the people are there to see the museum. That's how they attract their dollars so they have to make it secure. We've had displays here of Tutankhamen but nothing compared to what you see there, what they found in Tutankhamen's burial at his tomb in the Valley of the Kings.

Ramses the first, Ramses the sixth and the ninth and we went down inside their tombs. We weren't in Tutankhamen's because our guide, who was a lecturer at Cairo University, said it wasn't nearly as good as the others because it was a very plain inside, it had wonderful things inside because it had never been looted. And the reason that it had never been looted was because it had never been looted w aoh that followed him by a hundred years built his tomb on top of Tutankhamen's. His tomb was looted but Tutankhamen's was buried below it, as a result it was never ransacked. But the other tombs, Ramses I, you went down that steep, it was almost like going down on a ladder but the murals on the walls and the paintings are just like the day they were put there which was about 3600 years ago. They're just breathtaking...

HL: So I guess part of like the reason Egypt was so fascinating was because of the culture?

KM: Well there has never been anything to quite equal it, the culture, the development, the knowledge that these people had were phenomenal. Because it was a very strong, militarily, its location was good, it has great production of food because of the flooding of the Nile River, so they could develop sciences so they could determine when it was to flood. Agricultural technologies developed as a result of that, their building skills developed as a result of that because they had to know how to control the levels of water and divert water. We went to the pyramids, we rode camels out to the pyramids and from Giza, I thought that we, you see people in pictures on camels, I thought you got out there and they say "get on the camel and we'll take your picture." But we rode from Giza on camels, my wife and I to the great pyramids and they're phenomenal. You can't believe the size of these things, the immensity of it and everyone said, "oh they were built by slaves." Apparently, they claim now they were not built by slaves, they were built by farmers in their off season because the Nile flooded, they planted, they had this free time and what do they do with the free time? This is good good political sense on the part of the Pharaoh, "I'll keep you during that period of time, between the time you sow your crop and the time you reap it." So what he did, he gave them excellent health care, believe it or not, he fed them and he clothed them. And for that they worked on building his period which is one of the most incredible monuments in the world, even today, nothing to equal it.

HL: Some people would say that Canada lacks culture, would you argue with that?

KM: No, we lack self awareness. We have a great culture, we should learn about our culture. What other countries had fur traders, explorers that achieved the things that ours did. We have culture, we're a young nation in time of occupation. But, we're not a young nation in times of a democracy, in terms of a government, of a formal government - we're younger than Italy, we're younger than Germany. Are you aware of that?

HL: Yeah...

KM : You are? Good. Because the Canadian constitution was drawn in 1867. Italy wasn't until 1870 something, Germany wasn't until around the same. They were a collection of city states, there were fifteen different nations in Italy. Now, they call themselves Italians, it's different, although, it existed since the time of the Etruscans. It still as young as a nation, as one nation, its young, I mean it was Venice, and there was Naples, and there was Rome and you know. I could go on and on and on, all the cities, because they were virtually city states. And the same was true, not city states in Germany, but there were principalities in Germany. Saxony, they were small little states, that's where the Georges, King George I came from in Germany to England, he was invited because he was a relation, he was a relative of the British monarch. And when they cease to exist, they didn't have any more family, they invited George to come over. They referred to him as the "snuffy old drone from the German hive." Now does Canada have culture? Are we proud of our culture, do we know anything about our culture? What is our culture? You asked me, what is our culture? What do you think our culture is?

HL: Well, we're multic...like, we...

KM: Is that right or wrong?

HL: What's right?

KM: Is it right that we have a multicultural...

HL: I think it's right, I don't think it's wrong.

KM: I, we had an exchange with Woodbridge, New Jersey in Rotary and there were people in that club whose name was Giovanni, it was an Italian family and we would ask them "Oh where did you come from? Where was your family from? What nationality are you?" "An American. ...ian, a lot of Canadians this, "Where do you come from?" "I came from Spain or I came from Portugal, or I came from England or Italy or Germany." You know, I sometimes wonder, you ask me "where did we come from? where did our family come from?" I mean they've been here a long time, my grandson is the seventh generation Canadian but we still think of where we came from. ...e from England, we came from Kent, south of London.

HL: Right...

KM: I don't know where that's right or wrong, I don't know. I mean I think you should be proud of where you come from and you shouldn't lose sight of that fact, you should know something of where you come from but I think you should be, I think we should say, be more inclined to say "I'm a Canadian." Our family's roots go back to Albania and I know very little about Albania. Americans pledge allegiance to the flag, to the country, they sing their anthem and their hand is on their heart. I think that's a bit of a jackass thing myself, I really do. But that's the way they deal with, they're different, that's different, that's completely and totally different than what it is to be Canadian. There's a lot of great Canadians. Do you know what Canada and Canadians have been responsible for in the realm of medicine, or electronics or engineering, it just goes on and on and on. I was told we had a speaker at Rotary one night and he spoke about great Canadians and their monuments. And there's a monument at the cemetery in Aurora and it's the shape of the Empire State Building. I found this really interesting, so I made a point of going to Aurora and finding the stone in the cemetery of the Empire State Building and apparently, this man was a civil engineer and he was very very talented. And he is a Canadian, educated in Canada and he had built certain structures here and he was hired by a Japanese company to build high rise buildings in Tokyo. Tokyo, sustained a very severe earthquake and in that particular area the only buildings left standing were his. Were his buildings so he did something right, so with this, the Americans when they were going to build the Empire State Building in New York City contacted him and he became the chief engineer of the construction and that's why his memorial stone is the Empire State Building. Because he was the chief engineer of that construction but his reputation was established by the quality of his construction of these buildings in Tokyo. Great Canadian ... Alexander Graham Bell, how about insulin? He was born in Alliston, these people are all around. What Canada has achieved in World Wars, not that you'd be proud of war, but Canadian soldiers are second to none.

HL: They helped build a bomb in World War II...

The French attempted to capture Vimy Ridge, the English tried to capture Vimy Ridge and failed, the French tried it again and failed, the four time the Canadians were selected to have a go at Vimy Ridge because they were disputed to be among the finest army personnel in the world. And this was a small nation, a nation in the First World War of maybe 15 million or less. They had a general, they were put in charge of it, and the general was Sir Arthur Currie. So, Arthur Currie was a real estate broker, he was

trained in the militia, he was a militia officer and he did instruction as a militia man and he rose to the rank in the First World War as general. He was the most unlikely looking general in the world. He was built like General Charles de Gaulle, he was built like a pear. He didn't look the robust, vigorous kind of strong man, he had narrow shoulders and a big waist. He looked like Charles De Gaulle, if you ever seen a picture of Charles de Gaulle, next time you see it, look at it and he was built just like that. But he developed techniques that won them Vimy Ridge. We've got a lot of people, a lot of people. And a lot to be proud of...

HL: Yeah, so travelling is one of your hobbies I guess right? Out of the thirty-five countries you've visited, what are some of the other countries that you want to visit?

KM: That I want to visit?

HL: Yeah...

KM: Well, there's one I didn't think I wanted to but I've changed my mind. That's the Galapagos because I don't think there should be much of a footprint on Galapagos. They now have tours there that are really sensitive to the area, you don't impact on it and yet you can still see it which I think is fantastic. We've been close, I've been around South America from Brazil, we went around the coast and through the Straits of Magellan and up the coast to Valparaiso. We've been there but maybe we might go there, it's an expensive thing to do. I'd like to see it, see how life changed, how that isolation changed the species. I'm just reading about Charles Darwin now, I thought I knew a lot about Darwin but I didn't know very much about him until I started to read this book. Really interesting life, he was a minister, he was a reverend, educated in the Anglican church to be a priest, changed his mind.

HL: What type of books do you like reading?

KM: Biographies, histories, I read the odd novel but not that many. I don't read as much as I'd like to, not enough time.

HL: So we know that you've volunteered about places like the Woodbridge Rotary club (KM: Yes) could you give us more details?

KM: What is the Woodbridge Rotary Club? What is the Rotary Club? Well, if you look at the card, I'm a big promoter of Rotary, it's called the four way test. It was that, that slogan was developed during the depression because people were scrambling to make a dollar. There was a lot of unethical businesses going on, [...] if you're a member of rotary, this is what you should adhere to. And, I've had several people comment on that and I've had people...it's now registered by the way. One was a priest, I can't tell you what church it was, he said that he used my card and he preached his sermon on that, on the four way test and I mean you can't go too far wrong if you adhere to those principles. Is it fair? Is it the truth? Is it going to build goodwill? Better understanding? If you really adhere to it you're going to be successful. You should be, so anyway, Rotary is an international organization started by Paul Harris in 1904 in Chicago, he was a lawyer. He was from Illinois, back woods area, lonely and he was in a large building in Chicago and he didn't have any companionship, he didn't know anybody, so he went around to a few of the offices, he got 5 guys together and said "why don't we get together, talk about what we do." Which they did, and from that they started the Rotary club and it was rotary because they rotated from one office to the other. One meet they met in one guy's office and the next week they met in someone else's office. And their first international project, the first project they had not international, the first project they had was there was a local doctor whose horse had died. So they raised enough money to buy him a new horse, very simple, so that's how Rotary started and Rotary has turned into a huge international organization of business people, it now includes women which is good. It's in 119 countries of the world,

it's in all of the democratic countries, it's not, it wasn't behind the Iron Curtain, as long as there was a Soviet Socialist Republic it wasn't in Russia, there's no Rotary clubs in Russia, in Hungary, in Czechoslovakia, or Czech Republic...I was at an international convention in California, I guess it was in San Francisco when Spain was readmitted to Rotary because when Franco claimed an independence from the Monarch in Spain, and that was prior to the Second World War, you know about the Spanish War do you?

HL: A bit...

KM: It's not something a lot of people know of. Anyway, he was asked to leave Rotary, the clubs were asked to leave so I was at an International convention when he had given up they appointed King Carlos and it became a monarchy again, a democratic monarchy. And they were readmitted to Rotary which really was a sensational thing to see when they were killing their charters, it was exciting.

HL: So what have, like, what are some of the things that you guys have raised money for?

KM: Our biggest most recent project was the eradication of polio. Gates has given I don't know how many millions of dollars for that purpose and he asked Rotary to match it and that's what we're attempting to do now. Polio exists in four countries of the world now, only four. In some parts of India, Afghanistan...Sudan...and there's four. Isn't that strange...

HL: Maybe Paksitan, Sri Lanka...something like that? It's close to that...

KM: No...I don't know. I think it's in the Caribbean...

HL: Oh really?

KM: They're that close, and the desire and the impetus was to eliminate polio by Rotary in Rotary's 100th anniversary, so that would have been 2004. And here we are 2009 and we still have a little bit of polio in the world and Rotary hasn't quite accomplished yet, and they expect to do it, the big drive is to eradicate it within the next couple of years.

HL: Could you explain what polio is?

KM: What is polio? Well, that's interesting, do you not know?

HL: I'm not too sure about it no...

KM: I was told that, a week or so ago, that young people would not know what polio was...Do you know what polio is (asking someone else in the room)? It's a disease that affects the bones and your motivation, it's crippling, it's a crippling disease. So much so that I can remember as a kid, that there were outbreaks of polio and my mother would not let me go to the CNE because it was a contagious thing. And there were people that were in iron lungs, you've never heard of an iron lung I guess, it was a breathing machine so you'd spend three years in one of these things that would artificially cause to you breathe. They're called the iron lung, it's a very debilitating, it's a terrible disease, it was a terrible disease, it created all kinds of problems. Rotary's reason for wanting to tackle polio was that its not a disease that necessarily kills you, it's a disease that prevents you from earning a living and you have to be cared for so it takes two people out of society, it takes the person who has the disease and the person that has to look after the individual with the disease people taken from the community and that is a very expensive thing in the third world countries. You want somebody growing rice you don't want them looking after their third sister who has polio. So that was the reason that they wanted to

eliminate polio...You never heard, you didn't know much about polio? You know I was told that, I couldn't believe that – that's how infrequent there is a polio in the world now...that you haven't heard of it...

HL: We focus more on diseases like affecting us now in Canada...

KM: Yeah yeah, no I understand that but I would have thought that people still would have known about polio.

HL: No, I wasn't too sure about it but I'm glad I know now.

KM: Salk vaccines, you know the Americans that developed for, an oral vaccine. This is what Rotary has distributed, it has to be refrigerated so it's taken from community to community, we employ doctors to go administer it and its done orally. And I think in China they did as many as two to three hundred thousand people in a day. And that many people involved in it, so it's a wonderful program. We're working on AIDS as well...

HL: That's good. You said polio affected you as a child when polio struck in Canada?

KM: Oh absolutely, I had a very good friend that had polio and it affected the way in which he walked. You would think he had a clubbed foot or something because he's...he just walks differently because it affected him. And I saw him not more than two months ago and he told me, although he was supposedly cured, he says it has had an effect and it looks like it has almost returned. And this happens apparently, people who have gotten better eventually have sort of slid into a problem thing again. Not that they have an active, full-blown case of polio, it's a problem in his movements.

HL: How were the medical conditions when you were younger?

KM: Well, I said I was born in a log cabin, it was the 27th day of March and I'm told it was one gigantic snow storm so I was born in the log cabin because my mother did not go to a hospital. She had a couple of women that assisted and the doctor, who was Dr.[...] MacLean who lived just up the street, carried his little black bag and he walked down to do the delivery and I was born.

HL: Yeah...

KM: That's how most people were born. I had my father's birth, the doctor's bill for his delivery and it said, confinement and delivery seven dollars. That's how much it cost, how much does it cost to delivery a child today. How much does a pediatri...not a pediatrician what are they called, an obstetrician, what do they charge for attending a pregnant woman and doing a delivery, I wonder how much it is. His was seven dollars. In 1904...

HL: Yeah...

KM: Yeah...our medicine, I think, is fantastic.

HL: But some people would argue that our medical advances might end up badly in the future because scientists are started to do things like creating fake hearts, fake lungs and using...

KM: Genetics...

HL: Yeah...What are your opinions about that?

KM: Well I'll get into serious trouble because I already do with my wife about some of this. When they had the outbreak of virus, not a virus, in Walkerton with the water remember that situation? If that situation had occurred in a community in China no one would even have known about and no one would have died. There, our water is so clean that there's no contaminants, our whole life is so clean that it's creating a problem for us I think. I think that a lot of people, there's more and more people with lung congestions, asthma, it's a very frequent high disease at the moment. Ask people now, "Oh I can't breathe." Why can't they breathe? I think it's because the diseases that we've had in the past are non-existent, our bodies are built to fight these, we have antibodies in our system that fight these diseases, those antibodies have nothing to do, they just sit around and do nothing and as a result they attack us, they in turn attack us and create a problem for us. And I think that's going to be a major problem. All this experimental stuff, I think is a bit of a problem, this swine flu thing, I told my wife "I think it's just a bunch of nonsense." The only people that will die, and this is a terribly judgmental thing to say, will be people that would die within a month or two with whatever the disease was that they had. I'm not sick, my family isn't sick, so I say this kind of thing but it's scary that I think that we try to prolong life to people that really have no quality of life. My mother just died...(HL: I'm sorry) and she was 95. And she has a great life, raised a family, had good life, did some travelling, enjoyed everything she did, made a contribution to the community but she had what looked like symptoms of a heart attack. She had stopped breathing and resuscitated her and taken her to a hospital put her on a breathing machine and she was there for five days, six days. As soon as they would take her off she wasn't breathing well so it was something other than, they claimed that she didn't even have a heart attack, there's something else. And she said there's no way, you'll resuscitate me, there's no way you'll keep me on any sort of machine, you know, she decided and she pulled this thing, breathing apparatus, off her face which the nurse could not believe, the nurse was terribly upset because she said no one was able to do that before. It was time, and I think this is the kind of thing that medicine really has to be careful about, really has to watch, don't prolong a life that really isn't a life, that's just a vegetable. Or requiring more and more health care, I think we have got to be sensible about these things. I mean for my mother to lay in that hospital for another three weeks or four weeks and finally have expired would have cost you and I and all the taxpayers a lot of money. When she didn't even want to do this, when she made a decision not to do it. Do you think that, do you agree with me...

HL: No, that makes sense.

KM: Do you prolong life? Who knows maybe the next one is a lot better than this...Some cultures think it is, I think you have got to be sensible about it. Sometimes you get, you're criticized for having thought that way but there's some common sense to be applied here.

HL: We should be sensible about things like medical advances and everything...How about environmentally? I mean things have changed from then and now, the whole issue about global warming, what do you think?

KM: I think the world's population is far too large...

HL: I agree...

KM: And I don't know how you control it...Man is designed to create man, that's why we have all our drives that we have. This isn't something that just developed yesterday, this started right with creation that we're promoted and driven to produce, more children. I think we have to control that...and I don't know how you control that, I really don't. I think we maybe do it in Canada and some of the G7 countries better than they do in some of the third world countries. But what you have to do is improve the standards of living in the third world countries because if we were in Sudan or Tanzania or someplace, you have six sons and seven daughters because you want that gene pool to be spread and you want them to

be, care for you in your old age. When somewhere else, you should be providing for yourself in your old age because you provided something but as it is you can't afford to do that, you'll never achieve that. So, you would die in a heap someplace unless you had the six sons. So, but I think world population is the biggest population, we consume far too much of this planet. We consume too much oil,, too much gas, too much coal, too much of everything is consumed by too large a population. I don't know what the magic figure is, I don't know how many people there should be in the world, but you got a billion two hundred and fifty million in China, you have now got a billion people in India...How do you possibly care for all of those people and with medicine becoming better and fighting of disease, you extend that population, you increase them. Because you saved the life of one child here, to have four children there which in turn adds to the population. If you look at statistics and see how the world's population has changed since the turn of the century, not this century the previous one, it blows you away, it just blows you away. Because there's no war, I'm not suggesting that war was a good thing, but there's no war, a lot of the diseases have been eradicated, standards of living are starting to improve too. So the population of the world will continue to grow, when does it reach its maximum, how many people can the world tolerate, how many people are in the world right now? (I think six billion). Yeah I guess so, because I think 1 in 6 is Chinese or oriental. It's shocking. But we were given these things, we were given this drive in the stock market, in the schemes which you see being promoted, it's all greed, its' desire to have and to control and to be more and more and more and more. It's, and these are the old traditional things within the Bible, this is what the Bible says, any great teaching says, you know greed is a terrible thing.

HL: How do you think Woodbridge has handled it?

KM: How did Woodbridge handle it? (laughter) That's a good question...Well I think there's a lot of greed, I wouldn't want to accuse one ethnic group but we have more than we need, how many Rolex watches do you need? How many \$3000, \$4000 suits do you require? Is that greed? Did you see a house, there was a picture of a house in Vancouver, it just sold for six million dollars or something and it's owned this house is owned by a goaltender for one of the national hockey teams. This is his home, is there something wrong with that? He didn't invent insulin. He didn't create anything, he played goal for our national hockey team. He played hockey for a national hockey team and he lives in a six million dollar home? Isn't there something really amiss there? Who needs that? So, that's part of us, our being. You condemn the guy that sits around the corner and doesn't do anything, the people that you're proud of are the people that have achieved something because they've worked hard to achiev
That's what I think is happening in Woodbridge, there's a tailor in Woodbridge, he had some suits stolen, the suits were worth I think \$2000 a piece. The suits are made for NBA basketball players, one basketball player will have 5-10 of these suits made at one time. So does he wear one suit a day and throws it away? I mean we just consume too much, we're consuming too much. But so far we've been able to do that in the West. But it all comes crashing down on us around our ears every once in awhile which we've just had with the economy as its gone, there again, I think that's a bit of a farce. If you go out on the road, on the road in the weekend, see the number of cars on the road, see the quality of the cars on the road, the value of the cars on the road, did you go to any restaurants you couldn't even find a place to sit down. They were full, everything was full, everything was going full tilt, where is the recession? Where is this so called depression? IT only is a depression if you've lost your job and haven't had anything to do for six months. Otherwise, there's no recession, there's no depression. Do you know anyone that has lost their home? I don't think that's a very good thing to have, but do you know anyone?

HL: Not their home..

KM: Oh, what did they lose?

HL: Their jobs.

KM: They lost their job, but they still have their home, they still probably have a car. That's the sort of thing that has to be changed and that is creating supposedly this wonderful thing of consumerism. That's what they try to encourage, they extend the use of credit cards and the government lets you pay on time to buy something, you pay for a piece of furniture two years down the road. You pay a penalty for it, but you have it now. A time when you got it the day you could afford it because you had the money in your hand. That's what's creating the problem, if all that consumerism was taken away, we wouldn't be worried about whether the planet would remain green, it would definitely be green. We just consume too much and we're so bent on this that we will go to the extent, in Canada and other countries of the world, where we are shipping pulp wood to Japan, or to China I should say China in this case, to make paper to send it back to us to use. There's something wrong with that, we pay for that transportation of that pulp wood, we could make the paper, we make the finest paper in the world. But our standard of living is so high that we can't afford to do it. It's cheaper to put oil, in these freighters and send that pulp wood to China, manufacture it, turn around and send it back to us. There's something wrong with that kind of economy isn't there? What else do you want to know?

HL: You said that, you know, you volunteered at the Woodbridge Fair and stuff...

KM: Yes.

HL: So what would you do at the Woodbridge Fair? I've actually helped out at one of the Woodbridge Fall Fairs before, last year...

KM: At Woodbridge?

HL: The Woodbridge Fall Fair...

KM: Yeah?

HL: Yeah.

KM: Do you remember me?

HL: I don't think I saw you or I'm not sure.

KM: Did you do one of the surveys? Or did you, were you in one of the buildings to ask questions about what they saw in the building? Did you do that?

HL: Yeah I was in the buildings...

KM: Which one?

HL: I'm not sure. I know there is this one where I was helping little children, we were just keeping them entertained.

KM: Okay, because we had one, I've been in charge of the vegetable, the agricultural and the horticultural displays and competitions.

HL: Yeah I remember them bringing I think pumpkins...

KM: Giant pumpkins...so that's what I've done, I've been manager of the fair years ago. 1967...I've been president, I've been secretary, been the treasurer. I've been very involved with the Woodbridge Fair, it

started in 1847. One of the oldest organizations in the York county. That's an interesting thing too, it started to improve breeding stock and education among farmers. You could, somebody would bring their Ayrshire cow there and you could see Ayrshire cow and knew that he had good cattle and you wanted some of that gene pool of that particular milk producer so you would contact him, that's how you got together and you're related to that, also there's sheep and goats, and there's chickens. It goes on and on and on. There were five criteria for the society, an agricultural society, one was the eradication of weeds but mostly it was breeding stock, improvement of breeds and stocks of various kinds and of course also a big place to come and visit your friends that you haven't seen in six months because it was so rural. People came from Purpleville, Snowball, those kinds of places to see Woodbridge Fair. I've been involved for a long time, my oldest son is the president now.

HL: That's nice...

KM: Well, I guess (laughter). It's a lot of work but he's president.

HL: What do you like about living in Vaughan compared to somewhere, I don't know, Toronto let's say...

KM: How would I know?

HL: Have you ever thought of moving anywhere else in Ontario, in Canada, in general...

KM: I...about twenty odd years ago I looked at the possibility about buying some property in North Toronto. There are lovely homes in North Toronto, it has subway lines, it has bus services, it has shopping at your fingertips, it makes sense to me because some of those little communities in North Toronto are beautiful communities. Nice homes, tree lined streets, unfortunately I think that a lot of people as they retire, get older, move north where they don't have any social services at all, they have to drive everywhere, it doesn't make any sense to me at all. That's why I stay in Woodbridge because we are close to any of these things...No I never really thought about living anyplace else. Oh yeah, I've been in the mountains in British Columbia, that's pretty impressive, there are certain communities in British Columbia on the coast that are quite nice, in Victoria...our friends just moved to Vancouver Island so they think it's really nice there and it is. They have a bald eagle that nests on the top of the post in their garden, it's all very nice, but my family is all here. My grandchildren, my mother was here, my sister's here, my brother's in Bolton, my whole family is here. So this is where I am.

HL: This is a bit off topic a bit but you were saying that many Canadians aren't too proud about being Canadian right, do you think maybe it's because...

KM: They might be proud enough...but they don't say it enough.

HL: We're not like, I don't know, our provinces aren't joined or something...

KM: Pardon?

HL: Do you think maybe it's because of our provinces, we're all like, like there's that whole thing about Quebec trying to be its own country and stuff...maybe do you think that's why?

KM: Probably as a province, Quebec is more proud of its heritage than anywhere else in Canada. It's kind of retained that. A lot of people in Quebec don't know much about their history though, they're kind of brainwashed I think, in some circles I would be prepared to say that, but I think they are...because they wanted to retain that culture. Whatever that culture that is, because its more identifiable than the rest of Canada's culture unless you're a native. I mean what's my culture? I'm Canadian Canadian Canadian.

Probably as much Canadian as you can possibly be after this many generations. Size has importance, yeah size is an important thing. The communication of what do I have that's in common with someone in St. Boniface, Manitoba or Wawanesa, Manitoba, I know very little about growing wheat, I don't know anything about sections of land. A thousand acres of wheat, I guess that happens in most countries though doesn't it. Or what do I know about the fishing trade in Newfoundland, I mean I've seen it, I've been on a fishing boat but I don't know much about their life. I know it's, actually it's a good life, places that...we were in lots of meadows in northern Newfoundland. Which was the Viking settlement and when I was there I thought it would be a wonderful place to live but I can imagine what it might be like in January or February, you wouldn't want to be anywhere near there because it's so exposed to the North Atlantic and it's wild (laughter) but it's a beautiful area in the summer months. I'm pretty content being right here I think...Do you all live in Vaughan?

HL: Yeah, I live in Kleinburg actually so I go to Binder Twine if you've heard of it.

KM: Yeah I know Binder Twine, I know the man that started it. Actually, I bought a business from him. [...] Victor Ryder, Vic Ryder, he started Binder Twine because in the centennial year they wanted to find a project, as a lot of communities did, to celebrate their centennial year, and he said "yeah, let's do this" – the Shaws, you've heard of the Shaws? The Shaw brothers...the Shaws had a hardware store in Kleinburg and they sold binder twine to the farmers and that's to put in their binders when they bound up their wheat sheaths. And Shaw sold more binder twine than any other store, major sellers within the area. So the binder twine company, manufacturers would have a little bit of a get together and invite the farmers who bought the binder twine from them. And that's what Vic was bringing back, binder twine has changed drastically, now it's a line of sales people, I always go but it's really different, really different.

HL: If you could talk to a bunch of high school students right now and maybe give them a life lesson or something like that because you've seen a lot, you've experienced a lot, what would one thing, one really important thing be that you'd tell us. The high school students...

KM: What would I tell to a group of high school students? To pursue a quality of life you mean?

HL: Anything...about like living their life or responsibility...career wise

KM: I would think, accept a sense of responsibility. Be responsible, be responsible for yourself, be responsible to your community. Do the things that you think are right, live by the principles of right and wrong, honesty. Work hard, there's great rewards, you don't have to be graspy, you don't have to be as I say, own 3 Rolex watches, my watch tells exactly the same time as a Rolex watch, it's good watch but it's worth about a tenth of the price of a Rolex. Maybe it doesn't impress as many people, I don't know, just be yourself, be good to your family. Have a faith, that's another thing we seem to be lacking these days, we don't have any faith, people, it's not fashionable to go to a church or go to a mosque, maybe they still go to a mosque I don't know, but a lot of people aren't going to churches. There are principles there, sure there are a lot of things wrong with them, there's lots of things that happened in the Old Testament that you'd want to stray away from but generally it gives you a grounding, a principle. I mean you have to be principled. You got to know where you're going, if you have a family, you want to give the family the best that you can give them. Get an education, very important, get an education. Not an education that you think is going to be a glamorous kind of thing, but the thing that you really want to do. Maybe, entomology, the study of a worm or of an insect or something, maybe you'll make a great contribution to Canada, who knows...

HL: Right...

KM: We got a lot of great young people, really, I think anyway. You see in the papers so often they're critical of our younger generation, they're doing this, they're doing that, they're bad, they're taking drugs and they're...you know, there's a lot of good young people. There's a lot of older people that take drugs as well, they must be because it certainly is a thriving business. You see all the busts that they have with all these marijuana grow ops. Lots of those around, unfortunately. I hope it's been interesting.

HL: Yeah, thank you Ken for this interview, I really appreciate it.

[...]