

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Charles Alfred Curry

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Community Stories Oral History project

Interview # CW-A-L-2016-052

Charles Alfred Curry, owner of Curry's Market in Williamsville, Illinois, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Community Stories* Oral History project.

(This audio version was created from pieces of two separate interviews with Mr. Curry)

Interview dates & location:

First Date: November 1, 2016

Second Date: May 11, 2017

Location: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Valerie Patterson, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:40 / 1.67 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on June 9, 2017.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

Transcript
being processed

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Abstract

Charles Alfred Curry, *Community Stories*, CW-A-L-2016-052

Overview of Interview: Charles Alfred Curry, life-long resident of Williamsville, Illinois, was born on November 20, 1934. His parents were Earl and Shirley (Fink) Curry, who raised a family of six children during the tough years of the Great Depression. Florence was born in 1927, followed by Frances in 1930, Albert in 1932, Charles in 1934, Carl in 1937, and Eugene in 1939. Earl worked as a farm hand and coal miner (the Winnerburg Mine, Sherman) to support his family during the Depression, found work with Allis Chalmers during World War II, and later served as the Village of Williamsville's only maintenance man. Charles graduated from Williamsville High School in 1954 and began working in the grocery business at around the young age of eleven, one day owning his own grocery store - Curry's Market - from 1963 to 1979. In the Williamsville High School yearbook class prophecies, Charles was predicted to own a chain of supermarkets; instead, he was the last owner of the small town "mom and pop" stores that inhabited downtown Williamsville. He closed up shop in 1979, following the advent of 24-hour big-box super-stores. Charles married Doris Eilene Weidhuner in 1956 and raised three children, Brenda (1957), Allison (1966) and Mike (1970), before divorcing in 1984. He married Peggy Haening Alexander from Pleasant Plains in 2000. After the closure of Curry's Market, Charles continued in the business, working as meat manager with Kent's IGA for twelve years. He then worked for the Williamsville School District, retiring in 2002 after eight years as a school custodian. Charles enjoys retirement, maintaining his home and property, day trips with wife Peggy, and visiting with family and friends, particularly reminiscing with siblings and childhood friends about the life and times in the Williamsville community.

Contact or visit the Williamsville Public Library and Museum for additional artifacts, photographs, clippings, pamphlets and other documents that help bring this and other local history stories to life. Learn more at www.williamsville.illinois.gov.

Subject Headings/Key Words: village of Williamsville, Illinois; small town businesses; Curry's Market in Williamsville, IL; Shriners Tin Lizzy; Mason, Riverton-Lavelly Masonic Lodge

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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