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LeRoy Petersohn oral history interview by Michael Hirsh, March 19, 2008

LeRoy Petersohn (Interviewee)

Michael Hirsh (Interviewer)

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Concentration Camp Liberators Oral History Project
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[Transcriber's note: The Interviewee's personal information has been removed, at the request of the Interviewer. This omission is indicated with ellipses.]

Michael Hirsh: Let me just—I'm talking with LeRoy, L-e-capital R-o-y, Petersohn, P-e-t-e-r-s-o-h-n....

LP: Correct.

MH: And your date of birth is?

LP: Date of birth?

MH: Yes.

LP: August 14, 1922.

MH: Okay. Which makes you how old today?

LP: I understand that [Duane] Mahlen called me yesterday, and I understand you also had talked to Dan O'Brien. Is that correct?

MH: Uh, no.

LP: Beg pardon?

MH; No, I have not talked to Dan O'Brien. Oh, yes, I did. Yes. Well, I haven't spoken with him, but I got an email from him.

LP: Um—

MH: I got email from Dan O'Brien.

LP: He's head of our website.

MH: Right. Yes. I got an email from him. He gave me Duane's name, your name, Harry Saunders' name, and Albert Adams' name.¹ But if—when did you go in the service?

LP: Are you there?

MH: Yes, I am. Can you hear me? Hello?

LP: Yes.

MH: When did you go in the service?

LP: When did I go in service?

MH: Yes.

LP: Nineteen forty-two.

¹ Duane Mahlen and Albert Adams were also interviewed for the Concentration Camp Liberators Oral History Project. The DOIs for their interviews are C65-00082 and C65-00002, respectively.

MH: Forty-two [1942]. And you went overseas when?

LP: The outfit?

MH: Yes.

LP: The 11th Armored Division.

MH: And you went to Europe in what year?

LP: Well, let's see. Nineteen forty-three, I believe it was, to England.

MH: Okay. And then you went to—you got into Germany after D-Day.

LP: Beg pardon?

MH: You got to Germany after D-Day.

LP: I didn't get that last—?

MH: I'm saying, and when did you get to Germany?

LP: We got to Germany in 19—because we were in the Battle of the Bulge. Some of these years—

MH: That's okay. Tell me about your first combat experience.

LP: Oh, the first combat experience was we went in and freed the 101st Infantry Air Division that was all bottled up by the Germans, [Gerd] von Rundstedt's breakthrough.

MH: Okay.

LP: Because we had landed in England, and then we crossed the Channel. We landed at Cherbourg.

MH: Okay. And how long after that—was Mauthausen the first of the concentration camps you got to?

LP: No, Gusen I and II were my first experience.

MH: Can you just tell me about that?

LP: Well, we had gotten to Linz. We came down through Kohlberg and, uh—these names of these towns, they sort of—

MH: That's okay; just tell me what you remember.

LP: Well, we had pulled up to the Prüm River. That was the dividing line of Belgium and Germany, as far as we were concerned, because at that time, we had entered into Germany after crossing the Prüm River. That's P-r-ü-m. And then we hit—went up to Hanau, H-a-n-a-u, and up to Oberhof, which happened to be [Adolf] Hitler's winter ski resort. And then we started to cut south, more or less along the Czechoslovakian border, and we crossed over on the Danube at Urfahr, which was on the other side of Linz on the Danube River, and then we continued down just below Linz. Then we got the word that we were in the area of the famous Mauthausen concentration camp. Their motto was—Hitler's and [Heinrich] Himmler's motto was, "No one leaves here alive." And that was carried out.

Well, let's see. I've got one of my books out here. Well, the camp commander of Mauthausen was in charge of twenty-nine—29—prison camps. But he considered Gusen I and II—there was also a III, which I did not have anything to do with—and then his main place of office was at Mauthausen. That was a permanent camp. That camp had three sides; three sides were enclosed with rock taken from the quarry in the vicinity of the camp, where it had—let's see, what was it? It had 831 steps that were considered "steps of hell."

MH: Did you go into Gusen I or II?

LP: I was in Gusen, but it was early in the morning and everyone was still sleeping. We had no problem getting in there. The guard let us in. They knew that the day was coming, and it wasn't far off, that we would be closing in on them. But in Gusen I and II—now, I can't speak for III—there was an underground factory where they were developing the jet engine, and those people there were considered slave laborers. It was all the people that they had rounded up. It was not only Jews. There was several Russians in there, there was several—well, they had a couple Americans in there, a couple British. And the next time that I came in contact, with one of the American prisoners, he was in the—oh, what'd they call that? The underground. They were—he was working for the American government, a Seabee.

MH: Right. When you went into the camp, can you describe what you saw?

LP: Well, I can describe more of Mauthausen, for the simple reason that, at the time, we were in Gusen II. Of course, they were the healthier people, because they were working for the Germans. They were being forced to work for the German government in doing military work, such as working on the jet engine. They made a lot of ammunition there. I was just trying to find here—they were pretty well taken care of, because of the fact that they knew they were getting production for the war effort. They were pretty well treated.

It wasn't until about 11:00 in the morning on the fifth of May—that was back in 1945—it came over our radio from headquarters that we were to proceed to a special position where we would meet the vehicles and men of the 41st Recon [Reconnaissance Squadron] of the 11th Armored Division, and we were ordered to go with them. It turned out to be two groups. I never knew at the time it was two groups, because the group that we went with, you could—

As we approached the Mauthausen concentration camp, about five miles out, I would say—it was a total of about fourteen miles, twelve to fourteen miles, from down where the Gusen camps were that we could start smelling a foul odor. But we continued on with our group of three vehicles, and I believe the first group also had three vehicles. We had a scout car, a light tank, and our Jeep. And the Jeep was—we were the followers, my medical officer and I, and we went into the motor pool of the camp. Most of the guards—the word was out that we were closing in on them, and most of the SS guards had taken off; or, I found out later, that several of them had gotten into prisoners' suits.

So, as we approached the motor pool, we went up these steps to the main *Lager*, and on the main *Lager*, they had a gentleman—he spoke perfect English; I do not know what nationality he was—that came up to me and asked if he could oblige me by taking me on a tour of the camp. Well, at that time, I was free to do so, as my officer had gone in the

office of the SSers and he was gathering information there. And, behold, the first place that the guide took me was into the furnace room, where they had the furnaces going full blast, and there they had piles of people. What troops were still there had taken and hit the people with large boards: they hit them in the head. It just split their heads wide open, because the floor was all covered with blood that was flowing from these people that were piled up next to the ovens, which they were hoping to get into the ovens. They wanted to try and cover up as much of the killings.

But as we approached the camp, the most devastating right at that moment was—there were piles of bodies, piled against the walls. And the piles were full of rats, eating on the dead bodies, which was a horrible sight to see.

MH: Was this inside the building or outside the building?

LP: That was on the outside. This was as we approached the camp.

MH: What did the inmate who was guiding you say about this?

LP: Beg pardon?

MH: What did the person who was taking you around say about this?

LP: Well, he just said that they were killing people, because they had heard that the Americans were approaching, that we had—we were beating the Germans. They were giving up in such large numbers. And as a matter of fact, we had—there were so many of the German soldiers, because they didn't want to go east any further, because that would've put them into the battle with Moscow, with the Russians. So, they were all giving up to the Americans. They preferred that they turn over their rifles and gave themselves up to us.

Let's see, there was one thing I slipped by. Oh, I told you that the camp was enclosed on three sides with quarry stone. And on the fourth side, they had high-wattage barbed wire fence. During the course of this fellow taking me through the camp, I was standing with him, talking, and there were two women that appeared that just threw themselves against the barbed wire fence. And, of course, that being charged, they immediately were killed. And then the fellow told me, the guard told me—the inmate told me that they probably, he said, were gals that were prostitutes for the soldiers, the German soldiers. And he said that many of the inmates knew them and what they did, and he said they probably didn't

want to be taken alive. There were many things he told me on the side as we toured the camp. And then—

MH: Such as?

LP: Such as what?

MH: Tell me anything that he told you. I'm really interested in hearing as much as possible.

LP: Well, they had quite a—as we were making the tour—or rather, when we were approaching the camp—my officer, which was a medical doctor, a major, told me, “Just stay away from the inmates as much as possible, because without a doubt, they're lousy and with bugs, and many of them would probably have TB [tuberculosis].” Well, years after—one of our colonels went up there after several days after we had taken the camp. He just passed away from TB. The doctors that treated him in Ohio said that that's what he had contracted, and it probably had laid dormant. And we did find a lot of people with TB and infections, and just a mess. People didn't know what to do. They did make a charge on the kitchen, or wanted to get food in the kitchen; they were so starved.

My officer also told me that he wanted me to go through the barracks. And in those barracks, there were wooden cots, like double-deckers, and they had straw mattresses. The mattresses were filled with straw. One of the fellows—well, the guide that took me through—said that they slept five to a bed. And I just don't see how the five of them—they must've been laying on top of each other, because the beds weren't that big. So, when I had finished the tour, my job was I had to go into those barracks and try to determine which ones that there was any possibility of them surviving by us taking care of them and giving them proper care.

MH: Were you a medic?

LP: I was a medic, yup. I had seen a lot before we ever got to that camp, but I was more affected by seeing the people that were starved and were just skin and bone. All the things that they did to those people affected me far more than having to be out in the field patching some of our men up.

MH: When you went into the barracks and your job was to figure out who could survive, how do you deal with that?

LP: To determine, right?

MH: Yeah. How do you deal with that?

LP: Well, the very first barracks I went in, a fellow came up to me, and he had a slash on his arm. I don't know if one of the guards had done it or who had done it. I couldn't get word out of him as to what happened. But there was a fellow laying in the top bunk, and he had his arm hanging out. You will find that picture in the Holocaust Museum in Washington, because I had a buddy of mine that had gathered up a lot of chemicals for developing at Oberhof, and he developed my pictures for me. And darned if—I don't know if the colonel took it away from him or what. But anyway, that's where they—it's the same picture that I had taken, where the fellow is in the top bunk, had his arm hanging out.

I went over and I felt his arm. He had a slight pulse, very faint pulse. But then I walked over and checked another fellow, and he had a good, strong pulse; he was younger. But then I went back to the fellow with the arm hanging out, and he was gone. So, that determined, of course, we would have nothing to do with that fellow: he had passed on. But then I had to give this other fellow aid in patching him up. It was just a horrible mess, very strength-consuming.

MH: Did the inmates—the prisoners there, did they try and hug you? Did they—

LP: That was the thing that my officers warned me, to try and stay away from them as much as possible, but they just swarmed around me. In one case, there was a fellow that had gone down—he fell or just fell over—and come to find out, in investigating, he had been an SSer, and somebody had taken a piece of glass and had hit his heart. And he just fell right there in front of me, more or less. Then, as time went on, until we got things finally settled down and got them to understand what we expected them to do and not do, there were several of them that had changed clothes, trying to mingle in among the inmates, hoping to convince us. But the inmates recognized them and killed them.

MH: Wouldn't you have also recognized them, because they would've been reasonably well fed?

LP: Well, yes. When I got to see them, when the inmates killed them, yes, as I went over and looked at them, I could see that they were soldiers or people that had been well fed,

like you said. Of course, I had nothing to do with them. I probably would've been attacked if I had tried to save them or something. But I just ignored them.

MH: Were you armed in the camp? Were you carrying what, a .45?

LP: Was I?

MH: Yes.

LP: No, because according to Geneva Convention, I was not allowed to have any protection, and we had no soldiers other than the ones that were in the scout car. There were three fellows in the scout car, four fellows in the tank that did carry guns—and pistols, mostly. And then my officer and I, we were—we couldn't do anything. Well, nobody attacked us, because we had—there were three red crosses on our helmets, and when they saw that, they wanted to do things for us. And we just—we tried to be nice to them, but like my officer told me, stay away from them as much as possible. Well, that's pretty hard when you—

If you want some figures here, I've got them, because the camp commander, he was interviewed by the chaplain driver, like Mauthausen. He interviewed the camp commander.

MH: Is that Frank Zierys?

LP: Let's see. I've got to find his name. He interviewed him and two doctors that did experiments on many of the people before they killed them. Oh, golly, I thought I had this well organized so I could just—

MH: That's okay. What was your rank?

LP: Beg pardon?

MH: What was your rank?

LP: I was Technician Fifth Grade.

MH: Okay. Does the name Staff Sergeant Al Kosiak mean anything to you?

LP: Kosiak?

MH: Yeah.

LP: He was the leader of the scout car from the second group. He was not in my group. I'm trying to think of the name of the fellow that was in my group. He and I got together in 2005. We were invited by the Austrian government, all expenses paid, to come over for the sixtieth anniversary.

Oh, yes, I'll have to—well, this'll be a little more (inaudible). I'll go through this other first. I'm going to read this to myself. This is the large examination document of the confessions of the former camp commander, Mauthausen, S—S as in Sam—t-a-n-d-a-r-t-e-n-f-e-u-h-r-e-r [*sic*]. And then the rest of his name was Franz, F-r-a-n-z. I'm not even going to attempt to—it's capital Z as in zebra-i-e-r-e-i-s. Is there any question on those?

MH: No, I actually have something here in writing that has it. It says he was the SS commander of Mauthausen complex, and he died in the 131st Evac [Evacuation] Hospital at Gusen.

LP: In Gusen, that's correct.

MH: Who killed him?

LP: That was an American hospital.

MH: But who killed him?

LP: There was a soldier that ran across him. Let's see. "All witnesses going to be killed at the Mauthausen crematory"—that's what it was, where they had the ovens—"were to be liquidated at different times when the change of personnel was made. The same men had been in camp Auschwitz and could give out plenty of information if captured by the Allies. An order was given to shoot all hangmen and change them every three weeks. The

same order was given for the prisoner doctors and the occupants of the hospital. I refused to follow these orders. These orders were given for all SS doctors of the hospital by the SSer *Standartenführer* Solling,” S-o-double l-i-n-g. If you have any questions, just be sure and check with me, because I’m just going over this.

MH: Right. I’m interested in having you tell me more about what you saw. How long were you at Mauthausen?

LP: Well, we were there five days, because they were preparing for the trial up at Nuremberg. My officer was assigned one of the leaders of the German government, and so we had to go up there. He was supposed to give him a physical, but he [the German] refused to have a physical. And so then, after that, I was given my orders to go to Marseilles, France, to come home. And my officer—

MH: What was your officer’s name?

LP: Harold Stacy, S-t-a-c-y.

MH: And he was what, a battalion surgeon?

LP: He was—well, we were assigned to the Combat Command B. We were assigned to Command B, and we worked under—actually, most of our orders came down from 20th Corps through our division headquarters. But he and I were both—we were working with the—had been assigned by the Surgeon General’s office.

MH: But let’s go back in the camp in Mauthausen. This is still before the end of the war, right?

LP: Beg pardon?

MH: This is still before the end of the war.

LP: The war had not been officially ended yet.

MH: Right. So, you spent five days in Mauthausen?

LP: Well, he and I spent five days in Mauthausen itself.

MH: What else were you doing?

LP: Besides picking out the people that we treated?

MH: Yes.

LP: Well, I had a breakdown there. I had two days that my officer ordered me to rest. I'm still fighting today. I'm fighting the government, because I have mental conditions that need to be taken care of, and they're just not wanting to do anything for me.

MH: When you say you had "a breakdown," what happened?

LP: Well, I had put in long hours and that. What gave the indication that I needed some rest was the fact that I bled from the nose, I bled from the inner ears, and I just couldn't sleep. I still have that today. When I go to bed at night, I think I'm going to get a good night's sleep, and then the bodies start appearing to me, the dead bodies. So, I'm fighting that constantly. I'm seeing three psychiatrists, but I don't know what else they can do for me. I guess I'll just carry it to my grave, and that'll be the end of it.

MH: The nightmares started while you were still there?

LP: Yes. Well, after I had left there, I had the problem, but over the years, it's grown worse. It seems like I just can't—well, they had me in Hines Hospital for twelve days, and they tried to do different things on me and use different machines and stuff, and it just doesn't help.

MH: How recently were you in Hines?

LP: I'm going to Hines—I was just in Hines two weeks ago. This coming Thursday, I have a psychiatrist coming out from Hines that I'll meet here at the Aurora Clinic. They're trying all different kinds of medicines on me; nothing seems to work.

Did you want any figures at all, like Mauthausen had 18,000 prisoners?

MH: When you liberated it, there were 18,000 there?

LP: Eighteen thousand. Gusen I and II had 24,000. And then the other ones on down, I'm not familiar with them. But when the chaplain's assistant interviewed the camp commander, he's the one that gave the figures to him. He also wrote a letter, which he got a copy of. It just reads:

“My Dear Wife: On 23 of May, the day you had gone to the store for the family, I was captured by American patrols behind a tree four kilometers from the hut. I laid down my machine pistol. I ask you to tell the examiners everything you know. Tell them with vivid description of my Berlin superiors, and try to elu—eluci—” well, e-l-u-c-i-d-a-t-e—

MH: Elucidate, yeah.

LP: “—elucidate my refusal of their orders. You know our intentions, where we would rather die than have our children go through the acts that many died in the various camps. I shock myself when I was forced to lay down my pistol due to the severe wounds. After being hit three times, I remained on the ground. I am in the American 131st Evac Hospital at Gusen. In spite of my injury, I am able to tell all I can remember. Please come and tell the commission examiners about the bad things and behavior of the Berlin superiors, including Himmler. Also, do not forget the many things [Oswald] Pohl”—P-o-h-l—“did.” Now, Pohl was an important man in this Hitler group, too.

MH: This must've been a letter that he dictated—

LP: Beg pardon?

MH: He must have dictated this letter to somebody who translated?

LP: Well, this chaplain's assistant spoke very good German.

MH: Got it. Okay.

LP: So, he could figure it out himself.

MH: So, it seems he's trying to say that he really wasn't responsible. He didn't try and—he wasn't taking—

LP: Well, he was part of the upper echelon of the Germans, but he took all his orders from Himmler, because Himmler was in charge of all prison camps. He was the one that came up with many of the ideas of how to destroy the people, such as—well, this camp commander said that he would take a truck that the back end was completely enclosed, and they'd take the exhaust pipe, run it into this back end of the truck, and then he'd drive down to Gusen, or—yeah, Gusen. By the time he reached Gusen, everyone in the truck would be dead from the fumes of the motor.

MH: Where did you learn that from?

LP: Oh, I learned that from the fellow that took me on the tour.

MH: Oh, okay. Do you know what nationality the fellow was who took you on the tour?

LP: No, I didn't think to ask him, but he talked—he did mention the fact that he was a professor in a college, that he did tell me. But he talked perfect English, just like you and I are talking. He was a very smart man. I asked him, "What were you doing in here, in this camp? How come they picked you up?" and he said, "Well, I taught kids, and I was an anti-Nazi." He said it didn't take them long before they caught up with him.

MH: Did he say how long he'd been in the camp?

LP: No. I had asked him that, and I don't recall if he ever answered me.

MH: What did he look like? Was he starving, too?

LP: He was very thin. He described to me what all they ever got was soup, and the soup didn't have anything in it. He said that they just took a bunch of vegetables and threw

them in pans of water, and then that was their soup. There was no meat or anything, he said, that you'd find in the soup.

MH: Did—

LP: I'm going to let you ask questions. You ask questions, and I'll try and answer them to the best of my ability.

MH: Did the Americans—as soon as you got into Mauthausen, the prisoners must've been dying for food.

LP: Many of them made a raid on the kitchen, which was a huge building. You mentioned—oh, what was his name?

MH: Kosiak?

LP: Kosiak. Somebody had walked up to him and told him what was going on in the kitchen, that everybody was making a run on it. And Kosiak went over there and pulled out his pistol and shot in the air about three times, and he explained to the people that “If you don't calm down and give us a chance to help you people,” he said, “then we're just going to pull out and leave you to the Nazis.” He threatened them. Well, there were no Nazis around there, except those that had gotten into prisoner uniforms, because they cut holes in that barbed wire fence that had been carrying many watts of electricity, and they beat it.

MH: There was no shooting when you arrived at the camp?

LP: No, there was no shooting. Most of the guards had already taken off, or they had gotten rid of their—those that changed into inmate uniforms. I don't know what they did with their guns, but anyway, they probably threw them down that quarry and dumped them, because that 183 steps, those prisoners had to carry these stones out of there. I asked the fellow, “What did they figure the average weight of those stones?” and he said most of them ran around 90 pounds. They tried to get certain sizes, because then they could just take them up to the camp, and they had a place for them. They were building. The building was under construction, but the camp had been there for a long time. I think they said that the camp had been started in 19—

MH: That's okay. I can find that online.

LP: I think it was 1953 [*sic*].

MH: Thirty-three [1933] or forty-three [1943]?

LP: Forty-three [1943].

MH: Forty-three [1943]. Yeah, I can find that. What's going through your mind when you're spending five days in that kind of an environment?

LP: I would have been one to look for that barbed wire, because I don't know how those people ever stood it. I want to tell you a little story, if you've got time.

MH: I have all the time in the world, sir.

LP: When I went into the women's barracks, I was looking and checking them over, and I came upon a woman that had a little baby. The baby was a mess of infection. I left and went back to my officer, and I said, "Doc, would you come with me? I've got something I want to show you." So, he and I, we went over to the barracks, and sure enough, this little girl, little baby girl, was just seven weeks old. She had been born in one of the other camps. I should've had my map here; I could've told you which camp.

But anyway, she was born in this one camp. They took all the women from that camp, put them aboard coal cars, and went to the next camp and got all the women. There were 2,000 women in these coal cars that they had taken to Mauthausen. And when they arrived at Mauthausen, they were scheduled to be killed. It just happened to be that, the day they arrived there, they had run out of gas for gassing the people in the showers. Because what they would do, they would tell the people, "Well, today you get a shower. Take off your clothes."

Women, men, children, all together, they'd take them into the shower room, they'd lock the door, they'd turn on hot water, and then at the same time they would turn on the gas. And you know if you go, like, the bathroom and you go to take a shower and the water's real hot, it stings, and you more or less gasp for breath? That's what happened to them. So, after so many minutes, they would turn everything off, they'd open the doors, and they would have all these bodies laying there that they had killed.

MH: Who told you this?

LP: This fellow that was my guide, and I heard it several times after that. I'd talked to some that—I spoke some German, and I also had a fellow that was an interpreter for me, to get answers to these questions that I had. And then they would take them—the shower rooms were right close to the incinerators. They would take the bodies and have prisoners take them down to the crematory and burn their bodies. And that was another thing: The crematories were built to burn one body at a time, and when they heard the Americans were coming, they were shoving five bodies into an oven, trying to destroy as much evidence as possible.

MH: When you got there, there were what, partially burned bodies?

LP: Well, the ones on the outside in the crematory, the German guards had just killed them because the blood was still fresh running across the floor. I didn't see any burned bodies. I saw a lot of ashes; they had piles of ashes, which were from the burned bodies.

But getting back to this little girl—

MH: Right, I was going to ask you.

LP: My officer had gone down to the hospital there in Mauthausen, and he said it was just a filthy mess. We're going to take her down to Gusen Hospital. So, we jumped in the Jeep and we went down to Gusen, and then he had me go over to the 81st Medical Battalion, which was part of the 11th Armored, and get some penicillin. Now, they could only carry the penicillin because it had to be under cool conditions. So, I got a few bottles of penicillin and took it back to Gusen, where my officer already was beginning to work on her.

MH: Had the mother come with?

LP: Beg pardon?

MH: Did the mother go with you?

LP: No. The mother did not go.

MH: So, that Jeep ride, who was holding the baby?

LP: She was holding the baby at the time; she handed the baby to my officer.

MH: And he held the baby in the Jeep.

LP: Beg pardon?

MH: And he held the baby for the Jeep ride? The officer did?

LP: Down to Gusen?

MH: Yes.

LP: Yes, he held her all the way down there.

MH: The mother wasn't driven crazy by the fact—

LP: The mother was trying her best to go. My officer spoke very good German, and he explained to her that we would bring her back, but we were going to make her well, and that settled her down. So, then when I got back to Gusen Hospital, he was already lancing these blisters, and then my job was to take swabs of penicillin, and I was to clean them out. And so, that's what my job was; and his job, he was going around and sticking them with an instrument. Then, like I said, I was cleaning them up with penicillin. There were some that were in bad enough shape that we had to stitch.

Well, I often wondered. I had no contact or anything, so I often wondered if she survived or not. And in the year 2005, I was invited to come to the sixtieth celebration of the freeing of the camp. The Austrian government told me to bring a member of my family. They wanted somebody to travel with me, and I told the woman that I had another son that I surely would like to bring along. She was very gracious about it. She said, "Bring

him along. We'll take care of the expenses," and so we went over. We flew over by German—what do they call it? Luftwaffe?

MH: Lufthansa?

LP: Yeah, Luft—

MH: Lufthansa. Not Luftwaffe; that was a whole different thing. (laughs)

LP: Beg pardon?

MH: Luftwaffe was a whole different thing during the war. Lufthansa is what you flew.

LP: Yeah, I misspoke. (both laugh) Luftwaffe for Lufthansa.

So, they met us—well, we flew to Frankfurt. We got to Frankfurt too late to catch the smaller plane from Frankfurt to Linz, but we got the next flight over to Linz. They had a fellow there that ran a cab company that picked us up and took us to the hotel. That was the day before the celebration, and this was in the evening. They had a huge round table just off the bar. We were sitting around this round table, and I had an Austrian sitting next to me, an elderly fellow. I said to him, "Is Hana going to be here?" And he said, "Oh, Hana's already here. She's over seeing her mother in Czechoslovakia."

And just then, somebody in this next room off of the room we were in, yelled out, "Baby's here, baby's here!" I got up immediately and I went around the table, and she came in from the other room. I thought she was gonna kill me, she hugged me so tight. (laughs) But she was just so thankful that we got to meet.

Part 1 ends; part 2 begins

MH: How did you know her name?

LP: Because her name had popped up at the time that I was going through the camp and went into the women's [barracks]. I asked a woman there who spoke English. I said, "What is her name?" and she understood what I wanted, and she said, "Hana." Hana, H-a-n-a.

MH: So, LeRoy, how was the connection made? You're back in the United States. Who found her?

LP: Her mother—well, the war was over, and she and her mother went back to Czechoslovakia. My doctor—officer—tried to talk her into bringing her back to this country, the two of them. He was going to make arrangements for the two of them to come back in this country, because he felt she needed further treatment than what we could give her. But she wouldn't have it. She wanted to go back to Czechoslovakia, because her husband had been picked up several months before she had been picked up. She wanted to go back because she wanted to be there; if he wasn't already there, she had hopes that he would show up. He never did, so he must've been killed somewhere along the line at the time he was picked up.

I asked Hana, "Did you know by any chance, or did your mother know by any chance, which camp he was in?" and she said, "No. They wouldn't tell her." Since then, her mother has passed away. She came down with Alzheimer's, and I got to see Hana at that time.

And then, here in Aurora, we have a large Metropolitan office. On Valentine's Day, they open up the place for seniors to come; they feed us breakfast and they feed lunch, and you also get to make a phone call or two. So, the girl came to me, and she said, "Your name has come up to make a call." As we started up towards the second floor, she asked me where I was going to call, and I said, "Well, I finally made a decision. I'm going to call California." For some reason, I had picked up a paper with Hana's phone number on it, because she lived in California, and through the computer, she and I have been writing back and forth ever since 2005 when I was over there and got to see her. She has a Ph.D. She's married to a doctor that is not a practicing doctor; he works for a chemical company finding different medicines for different ailments.

So, I made that call on Valentine's, or the Saturday before Valentine's Day, and I just happened to catch her at home. And, boy, she let out a scream. "Pete! Pete!" She wanted to know how I'd been and everything. And the last thing she said to me, she said that she loved me and thank you for keeping her alive, and that would I promise her to keep in contact with her, she says, because she's going to do the same thing if I was agreeable to it. So, we still write, oh, maybe once a month or every other month on the computer. But she does a lot of traveling. She's a very smart woman, and she does a lot of traveling to Europe. Her husband—well, at the time I talked to her, her husband was over in Germany working with a chemical company over there.

MH: Do you have any pictures that were taken of the two of you together?

LP: Of her and I?

MH: Yes.

LP: Yes. Well, we had three German newspapers there taking pictures; one of them was from Berlin. Then, when I got home, I brought—well, she sent me some pictures, and I brought some out of the German newspapers.

MH: Would you be willing to give me her phone number, so I could call and see if I could get pictures from her?

LP: You know, I sort of hate to give out her number.

MH: How about her email address?

LP: I was just trying to think. I have some pictures of her and I talking after we met at the hotel, if you would want one of those. She's showing me her one arm, the stitches—

MH: Oh. Yeah?

LP: —because she said her whole body had stitches that never went away. Some stitches don't go away. So, she was talking about the stitches and how lucky she was that I had found her and that we did something for her. She's been a gracious person.

MH: I mean, if there's a way, I really would like to be able to talk to her.

LP: Oh, I see. Well, the only way I—well, I don't know. Maybe I better get her permission.

MH: That'd be good.

LP: I don't want to do anything that she would disapprove of.

MH: I understand. Do you have an email address for yourself?

LP: Her mailing—?

MH: No, your email address.

LP: Oh, mine?

MH: Yes.

LP: ...

MH: Okay. I'll send you an email that has my address in it, and if there's a way that I could borrow a picture of the two of you, if you could mail it to me, I could—unless you have it scanned on your computer?

LP: Well, like I say, if one of the pictures taken after she and I had gotten together at that anniversary, if that would be satisfactory—

MH: That'd be great.

LP: I hope she wouldn't mind my giving that out.

MH: I can't imagine she would, if she was so happy to see you.

LP: Yeah. No, she practically begged me that we keep in touch with each other. She was so grateful that—well, she was only seven weeks old and full of blisters.

MH: Was she seven weeks or two weeks old?

LP: She was seven days old.

MH: Seven days old, okay.

LP: Yeah, I misspoke. Seven days old. And, actually, my officer, being a doctor, he said that riding in the coal cars, she probably had picked up an infection that traveled throughout her body.

MH: The baby was born in the coal car or before she was in the coal car?

LP: No, she was born in a camp.

MH: Okay.

LP: Let's see. She was born in—while I'm looking here, maybe I can tell you something else that I've slipped up on. Like I said, her mother is gone. She holds a Ph.D.; very smart woman, and very nice looking.

MH: Let me ask you a question: Out of an absolutely horrible circumstance, being in that concentration camp—

LP: Well, I tell you, what gets me are these people that don't believe, and there are a lot of them out there that don't believe.

MH: Have you personally run into them?

LP: Beg pardon?

MH: Have you personally confronted them?

LP: I didn't quite catch that?

MH: Have you run into them personally?

LP: When I came back—I was a linotype operator in a newspaper, daily newspaper.

MH: Which paper?

LP: *Copley Press*.

MH: Oh, okay.

LP: Before I went to service. And when I came back, I found out that our editor said, “Oh, that’s all hogwash.” Boy, he’s just lucky that he quit and left, because I was about to lay one on him. (laughs)

MH: But what I was going to say to you is, out of a horrible circumstance, you saved a life.

LP: Well, yes, that is the thing, that I really was a basic of saving her life, that I had found her. And her mother did not give me any argument or anything. Her mother didn’t speak English, of course, and I did have the interpreter along with me. She was a gracious woman, and when we explained to her what we were going to do, she understood, and you could tell she was much happier about it, the fact that something was going to be done for her.

MH: What I was getting at, though, is, given all the nightmares that you’ve had about the things you saw, this is one pleasant, positive thing.

LP: Beg pardon?

MH: Given that you’ve had all these nightmares about the horrors you saw, but saving Hana is one positive thing.

LP: Correct. That was one thing that I should really look upon, but it’s still these piles of bodies and the rats eating on them and going down to the crematory and seeing all that, where they had hit the people in the heads to kill them, that blood flowing. I just—I don’t know. It just keeps coming back on me.

MH: I understand that.

LP: As much as I try to shake it off, it just doesn't work.

MH: When you came back from the war, how soon afterwards did you get married?

LP: Did I get married?

MH: Yes.

LP: I was married before I went.

MH: Oh, okay. Did you have children before you went?

LP: No. No, because I got married, and then it was about two weeks later I was called up. You know, my son made me another—I have a large book of my life in the Army and that, and experiences. I was just going through—he made me another copy and said, “Golly, Dad, we don't want to ever lose this or ever have it stolen or anything.” If I could get him to make a couple copies—

MH: I'd love to see it.

LP: If I could get him to make a couple copies of this, I could even maybe send that down to you.

MH: That'd be great. Are there any pictures of you from the war?

LP: Are there any what?

MH: Are there any photographs of you from the war?

LP: Well, this one that I'm interviewing Hana, or talking to her.

MH: No, but that's recent. I'm talking about from the forties [1940s], when you were in the service.

LP: Yes, I have quite a few pictures at that time. And of different conventions; we have a convention every year, the 11th Armored.

MH: When is their next one?

LP: Beg pardon?

MH: When is their next convention?

LP: We always hold it in August, the week of the fourteenth, whatever—anywhere where the fourteenth falls in there, always during that week.

MH: Okay. Where will it be this year?

LP: Boston.

MH: Okay.

LP: I understand you're writing a book.

MH: Yes, I am.

LP: Are you familiar with Tricia Goyer?

MH: No, I'm not.

LP: Tricia Goyer has written about four or five books—four, I guess. She lives in Montana, Kalispell, Montana, and she had me participate in her first book. I'm in the acknowledgements. And she has a couple of the other fellows who went into the camp. If you ever—*From Dust to Ashes*, by Tricia Goyer. She's just starting out, I think, at the time, because she called me on occasions and asked me different things about concentration camps and about my life in the Army.

MH: Right. What is your—would it be okay for me to talk to one of your sons?

LP: Yeah, I think so. I wouldn't see any reason that you couldn't.

MH: What are their—what's—

LP: You mean one of them that went over with me?

MH: Yes.

LP: One of them is more—the youngest one is the one that has really taken a great interest in my past.

MH: Okay. And his name is?

LP: Brian, B-r-i-a-n, Petersohn....

MH: Okay.

LP: You can tell him that you'd been talking with me and ask him. And then, I'll be in touch with him and see about printing out—it's all readable, very much readable.

MH: And he would know about pictures of you from World War II.

LP: Yes.

MH: Let me go back to when you're still in Europe. Was Mauthausen the last camp you saw, or did you go into any other camps?

LP: No, the war was over a few days later. And, like I said, Gusen I and II; there was a III, which I never got to. There was Camp Ebensee, which, after the war ended, the Army took it over. It had a swimming pool, and one of those things where you get on a high lift and you go from mountain to mountain. So, I got to go down there once and spent a little time. But I'd never been in—those were the only three camps that I had been in, because by the time I got to Ebensee that was no longer a camp.

MH: Were you a religious person before the war?

LP: Was I ever what?

MH: Were you a very religious person before the war?

LP: Yes. As a matter of fact, someone wrote a book concerning our feelings—it's different. Do you have a moment? (puts phone down to get book)

MH: Yes.

LP: By the way, at that convention or get-together in 2005, I received the highest award from the Austrian government that they put out. It's the award of gold—I can't remember exactly what it was. My son Brian, he would know.

I was wounded over there in the Battle of the Bulge, but I quickly radioed—this is from *Stories from Soldiers' Heart*.² Goyer, Tricia Goyer, got me to write, or tell her the story, and she wrote it. “There are many memories of war that last a lifetime: memories of buddies, lost right before one's eyes, of prisoners, of battle. Sometimes these memories meet me at the strangest times. But there's one memory above all that has changed me forever.

“Bastogne and the Battle of the Bulge can be considered no picnic. I was wounded there, and I remember sixty years ago as if it were yesterday. Our unit had been corralled in a low area. I was a medic, and this is where we'd based our headquarters. As a medic, you

² *Stories from a Soldier's Heart*, compiled by Alice Gray and Chuck Holton. Tricia Goyer contributed a chapter called “From My Tank's Perch,” using Petersohn's story.

go where you're needed. One day, we received a radio message that they were desperate for medics in the next town. The infantry had taken severe punishment and they'd lost two medical men.

“My medical officer approached me. ‘C’mon, Pete, we’ve got to move out.’ I’d been over talking to a couple of radio operators, my good buddies. I said goodbye to my friends, and I jumped in to drive the Jeep with Major Harold Stacy beside me, and we headed off. But to get to the next town, we had to cross a high point, a very high point. We didn’t know it at the time, but the Germans had that area pegged with their big 88 guns. As we hit the top of the hill, a gun shell went over us. It landed about fifty feet away, at the most. This next one landed right in front of us. We knew then we had to abandon ship. The major jumped out one side, and I dove out the other.

“On my side of the road, I spotted the slightest gully, and into it I jumped. I knew I had little protection and figured I was a goner, since the Germans were firing from my side. Then, something amazing happened as I lay there. I felt someone pushing on my back, pushing me deeper into the ground and telling me to get down. Rounds three, four and five landed on the Jeep. There was nothing left. But as I lay in that ditch, I had a sensation of protection, one I’ll never forget.

“When it was over, blood dropped from my nose and ears. The major was okay, but I had concentrations”—“I had a concussion,” rather. I wish my eyes would quit. “Problems from the shells that shook the ground. It took five days of rest before I could return to my duties. And even though I looked fine on the outside, something had changed within. I’d been a Christian since I was a small child, but I had an even greater faith after feeling the protection of the Lord pressing upon me. I’m still a strong Christian today because of that experience. Many people can deny the fact that God exists, but not me. I felt the hand and heard his whisper in the midst of it all.” That’s it.

MH: That’s very moving.

LP: I’m sorry that—

MH: No, that’s very moving. I understand that. Did seeing the concentration camps cause you to question God at all?

LP: Did what?

MH: Did seeing the concentration camps cause you to question God at all?

LP: No, because I feel that Hitler himself was not a Christian. He couldn't have been, for what he did to the human race was something that should never, never be done by anyone. A person's got a right to live on Earth just as much as anyone else. I know there's several people that—well, I went to school with some colored fellows. As a matter of fact, one colored fellow, he and I stuck real close together and we thought a lot of each other. But there's many of the whites that turned on him. I feel that way today, that they got a right to live. We don't enjoy or agree with their way of living, which is our prerogative. We still—that's what burns me up, mainly, with President [George W.] Bush. I think he had the same ideas and the same feelings as Hitler did. I hate to compare him with Hitler.

MH: It's okay, you won't offend me.

LP: Beg pardon?

MH: I said, you won't offend me.

LP: But that appears before me, knowing the Führer and his Reichstag and all that, it's just too bad that somebody didn't take care of him and get him out of the way long before it ever happened. He finally—well, he took his own life. And after all, the world was created by God, and we should accept whatever he places upon us.

MH: What did you tell your sons? You have two sons?

LP: No, I had—well, I'll tell you. I told you about the marriage.

MH: You told me you were married before the war.

LP: Before the war. We had a girl first and then we had two boys, and then she got mixed up with the wrong crowd. I was aware of it, but I also was hoping she'd disappear. And she walked off and left me with the three kids. Well, here, forty-eight years after my divorce. No, it's more than that. Yeah, it's sixty-some years now. Anyway, she got mixed up with the wrong crowd. She walked off and left me, and I kept the three children. Then I married a gal I'd known from where I worked. She had lost her husband, so she and I

got together. She had a son, so that made me four boys and one adopted son and my daughter, and she raised them for me.

MH: Is Brian your adopted son or your natural son?

LP: No, he's natural son with my second wife. And that happened—one day she and I were riding in the car, and she said, "You know, I think it's about time that you and I have an offspring." I said, "Well, gee, Jeanette, we already have five children." And she said, "Well, you don't want one from me?"

MH: (laughs)

LP: Well, that put me on the spot.

MH: That's trouble.

LP: (laughs) And she was so sweet and everything, I didn't hesitate. I said, "Well, maybe we ought to work on it."

MH: That can be fun.

LP: (laughs) So, she and I got together and we had Brian. He's the youngest. But then I had one that married a gal that—she didn't like the Petersohns, and so he called me one night and told me that he no longer wanted to be a Petersohn. I said, "You made that decision?" and he said, "Well, yes." I said, "Well, I know why. Okay, I disown you, and any of my financial status, I'll see to it that you're taken off of it," which I did. It hurt me at the time, eliminating him, because he was a great kid. He went to Northern Illinois University and got his bachelor's degree, and went to Illinois State and got his master's. Well, he ended up, anyway, being an earth science teacher at a junior high school in Oswego, the next town over. So, he is no longer considered part of the family, and that was his request. It hurt me for a few days—

MH: It's tough.

LP: I knew what he was having to go—

MH: Okay. Well, I will call Brian and talk with him a bit.

LP: Yeah, you can tell him that you had talked to me.

MH: If you could send an e-mail or talk to Hana and see if it'd be okay if I talked with her? I'll—

LP: I would want to get her permission.

MH: I understand.

LP: I wouldn't want to have you call her not knowing anything about you and I talking. But you'll find her a very sweet person if you do talk to her, I know that.

MH: Okay. And if you could look for those wartime photos—I'll send you an email with my address, but I'll also give it to Brian.

LP: Okay. Yeah, he gets on the computer more often than I do. He bought me a new computer, and I get lost on the darned thing. (laughs)

MH: Oh. Well, I'll send you an email so you can find it. I know a little about what you're talking about. I was in Vietnam.

LP: You were in Vietnam?

MH: Yeah.

LP: Oh.

MH: And when you were talking about coming under fire from the 88s, we had our own fun time with 82mm mortars coming in on us. So, you know, I know what it is trying to make yourself as small as possible and as low to the ground as possible.

LP: Well, that German 88 was—I know our armor learned a lot from what the Germans had. That 88 would go right through our tanks. As a matter of fact, over in Belgium at Bastogne, one of our tanks that had been knocked out sits in the McAuliffe Park over there. They just took it recently and rehabbed it. So, if you ever get over that way, be sure and go to McAuliffe Park.

MH: You didn't go back to Mauthausen when you were—

LP: I've been back to Mauthausen twice.

MH: What was that experience like?

LP: Well, I could see everything, but some things had been changed. All the barracks had been torn down. Matter of fact, some of the guys that were left behind when I came home were given the job of burning the barracks, because they were so infested with disease and everything, and they just put the torch to all of them. But the camp itself hadn't changed.

The thing was that got us—our outfit, anyway, the 11th Armored—was that after the war ended, it ended up that Mauthausen was in the Russian territory, and Russia was—the first thing they were gonna do was tear it down. And our association, we started writing to our senators and that, and begged them to put a stop to it. Well, then the Russians pulled back beyond the Danube River, east of the Danube, and we were west of the Danube, the camp, and so then the Austrian government stepped in and they wanted the camp to be kept.

MH: This was right after the war?

LP: This was after the war. So, then our government and our group and everything put pressure on Washington. We put pressure on the Austrian government to make a museum out of it, or keep it from being destroyed. So, it all worked out. Matter of fact, that 2005 sixtieth anniversary was held at Mauthausen, and our division placed a monument at Gusen, because we had already had one at Mauthausen. Then we also added another one later, which was in place in 2005 when I was over there.

MH: When you go back to the camp, is it like reliving the experience? I mean, do the smells come back? Do the sights come back?

LP: Well, all the sights come back. And I would say, probably, without a doubt the odors are there. I just don't pay attention to them in my mind. I'm sure if I let my mind go, I would probably without a doubt have that odor back again. Like I said, we could find that camp by just following the odor of those bodies being burned.

MH: Have you ever talked to school kids about your experience?

LP: For eight years, I was called upon by the East Aurora High School to talk at Holocaust time. The teacher was a great guy. So, then, after I got through, he would ask, "Would any of you students like to have a picture with Mr. Petersohn?" They all put up their hands. So, we had to go through that procedure, and I had to accompany each and every one of the students and have my picture taken with them. He was very kind. He sent me a group picture of every year that he took the pictures, and I have them in my book, most of them. And then, he had them also write a note to me, thanking me for telling them about the story. And he told me on the side, he said, "You know, these kids, we never talked about the Holocaust. I'm the one that brought it up and got the okay of the administration to invite you and have you tell the story." He was real gracious about it. He would have a couple bottles of water waiting for me, and got me a ticket to go into the teacher's lounge and get my dinner. So, I've been well treated.

MH: That's good. I want to thank you very, very much. If there's anything else that comes to mind that you remember later on that you'd like to tell me, as I said, I'll send you my email and telephone number. Please feel free to email or call me, and I'll call you right back.

LP: Well, I would only have one request as of right now: that you put me on your list for a book.

MH: I will do that, sir.

LP: I sure would greatly appreciate it.

MH: I will do that.

LP: Like this Tricia Goyer, she sends me a copy. She signs it, autographs it for me.

MH: I will do that. I mean, it takes a while to get these things done.

LP: Oh, sure. I agree there. I'm aware of that.

MH: Do you read much?

LP: Right now, I'm reading General Patton's history book. I've read General Patton's and General Eisenhower's, General Bradley's. I don't know. Do you have Weather Channel down your way?

MH: Yes, of course.

LP: I don't know if you've ever run across—they would show the weather, and then they were showing the Battle of the Bulge. They'd show parts of that, and then they'd go back to the weather, and then they'd continue the Battle of the Bulge film. That's been very popular up here.

MH: I meant to ask you—I know you said you were wounded, so I know you have a Purple Heart.

LP: Yes, I do.

MH: Anything else?

LP: Beg pardon?

MH: Any other medals?

LP: Well, I was awarded that medal from the—

MH: Right, from the Austrian government.

LP: —Austrian government. I have the medal of being a medic.

MH: The Combat Medic Badge.

LP: Combat Medic. I have two Bronze Stars.

MH: For valor?

LP: For valor, yes. And—

MH: What did you do to earn those?

LP: One of them was that my officer and I—every night or every end of battle when we were given the word to put up for the night, I would have to drive my officer back to each unit that was under our command and get their reports—how many got killed, how many got wounded—because every night at 11:00, the colonel, Wesley Yale, held a meeting. The meeting wouldn't get over until 1:30, 2:00, and by the time we got back and got bedded down, we were up in a half-hour. So, that meant a half-hour night's sleep. Well, there were many nights that I was too wound up and had something happen during the day that I didn't even get any sleep.

And the fact that I kept my vehicle in 100 percent shape. I also had the job of keeping track of all of the units under our command, that they had their supplies. If they didn't get their supplies, I had to see to it that they got to them. And I had lost—oh, golly, let's see. Dr. York—Dr. York was another man I worked under, Major York. But Dr. Stacy—what was I going to say? (laughs)

MH: Is Dr. Stacy still alive?

LP: Beg pardon?

MH: Is Dr. Stacy still alive?

LP: No, he died at the age of seventy-six. He had a severe heart attack, and there was no chance of saving him. I was hoping he'd live and that we could keep in touch with each

other, but it didn't work out that way. But that was my one Bronze Star. And then, the fact that I got the medical medal—after we got back, or several months after, they sent me a letter and told me that, seeing that I had been awarded the medical badge, I was entitled to a Bronze Star. So, that's how I got the other one.

MH: Good for you.

LP: But I just got an award a couple weeks ago, or a couple months ago. I think—I think I'm thinking right about it. Someone involved in my workings has to put in for an award for you, and I got a feeling that Hana had run across it, or somebody had contacted her or something. But anyway, I got a feeling that Hana had turned my name in. And so, I am now a full-fledged member of the U.S. Army.

MH: Hmm. Okay.

LP: Don't mean beans, but—

MH: Right. Tell them to send you a check.

LP: It's still being acknowledged for something outstanding. And matter of fact, I'm going to have to question her someday about it. But I have a good friend that has contact with the Army, and he's the one that told me she had put in for it for me. I don't know where he found out, but he's close to some of the big brass with the Army here. So, I got to believe him until I hear it from her. (laughs)

MH: Okay. I just found—I just went on the computer while you were talking and found *From Dust to Ashes* on Amazon.com, so I'm going to order a copy so I can read it.

LP: You mind repeating that?

MH: I just found the book *From Dust to Ashes*.

LP: Oh, you did?

MH: Yep. I found it. *From Dust and Ashes: A Story of Liberation*. I just found it online.

LP: By Tricia Goyer?

MH: By Tricia Goyer. So, I'm going to order a copy so I can read your story in that.

LP: She sent me a copy and autographed it for me, and a couple of her other books that I had just a little word in—not much, but she still acknowledged the fact that I had part in it.

MH: Okay.

LP: Well, it was nice talking to you.

MH: I thank you very, very much for your time. I know this is hard stuff to go over, and I really appreciate the fact that you took so much time with me.

LP: Yeah. Well, when I was reading out of the prayer book, it did get to me, I gotta admit that.

MH: I can tell.

LP: My eyes, they water up, and then I can't—I can't read everything the way it's written. (laughs) Well, it's nice knowing you.

MH: I really appreciate it again, sir. Thank you very much.

LP: If you're ever up this way—

MH: I do get up every so—my mom lives in Chicago. I'm originally from Chicago.

LP: Oh, you're originally from there.

MH: I worked for Channel 11 there for a long time.

LP: Oh, that's right. You did tell me that. Seventeen years, was it?

MH: Yep. And actually, I had a connection with Northern Illinois University. I used—I know the man who was in charge of their jazz music program for years, a guy named Ron Modell.

LP: That's where my son went and got started.

MH: And I did a television program. I followed the NIU jazz band for a whole year.

LP: Oh! (laughs)

MH: And did a show that got them more publicity than they've ever had before.

LP: You probably are somewhat familiar with where I live.

MH: Yes.

LP: I'm straight west of Chicago.

MH: Right.

LP: Interstate 88 is just north of me. Well—

MH: I thank you again very, very much.

LP: I hope I can help you. If you do come up with any questions, give me a ring.

MH: I'll do that.

LP: If something doesn't sound quite right, contact me and we'll get it straight.

MH: Okay. Thank you very much, sir.

LP: Oh, okay.

MH: Bye-bye.

LP: Thank you. Uh—

MH: Yes?

LP: I don't think I got your name, though, did I?

MH: It's Michael Hirsh. I'll send you an email so you have it.

LP: Oh. It's Michael?

MH: I'll send you an email. Yes.

LP: C-h-e-l?

MH: M-i-c-h-a-e-l, and the last name is Hirsh, H-i—

LP: Hirsh?

MH: Yes. H-i-r-s-h.

LP: H-i-r—

MH: S-h.

LP: S-h. Oh, yeah. We had a Hirsh here in Aurora. Yeah.

MH: So, I'll send—

LP: Oh, I didn't get your email address. Well, you're gonna send—

MH: I'm gonna send you an email right now, so you have it.

LP: Beg pardon?

MH: I'll send you an email right now, so you have it.

LP: Oh.

MH: Okay?

LP: Okay.

MH: All right. Thank you very much, LeRoy.

LP: You bet.

MH: Bye-bye.

LP: Bye-bye.

End of interview