

Participants:

Dr. Jim Rodecko

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Dr. Mike Michelini

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Mike Michelini (MM): Dr. Rodecko, Bob Heaman and I Mike Michelini are looking at a collection of flood slides that have not been viewed since the 1970's. I'm not sure the source maybe by the time we get finished I'll recognize something. I believe they might have come from Jim Kozempchak? The Kozempchak? Family had a photography business and most of what I can remember they were the college photographers and I don't know who else would have given me a complete set of oh I guess there might be a couple of hundred of these slides and of not only the college campus facilities but community facilities as well and Jim Rodecko and Bob Heaman are going to help trigger thoughts of identification what streets are, for example we are looking at the first slide, now I don't know if these are photos taken by Jim Kozempchak but he is the only photographer I know well enough. I used to think that maybe we got them from the Navy or the Coast Guard but when I started to go through all of the publications and the books I realized those photographs if the corps of engineers and coast guard took photos (mumble) were not publicly distributed. A lot of slides I believe were taken at the time to document the damage. It was almost incomprehensible to describe what the force of the river did to the communities up and down the Northeastern branch of the Susquehanna.

Jim Rodecko (JR) This looks like it was taken from the air Mike.

(MM) Yes, Jim Rodecko just pointed out that this slide we are looking at is showing Temple Israel and it's a photograph looking south the river is at the top of the photo and it shows the circular dining hall and the triangular three winged dormitory which was the new men's dorm until it was torn down because it was the old men's dorm but at that time it was the new men's dorm, one of the more recent. In fact the only new facility at the time ever built to serve as a dormitory and a dining hall. That was the big step forward in the college development and we're not trying to follow the college development but that was an important reason why we recognize everything. It's a very distinctive structure. It won national architecture awards and it is ironic that by the turn of the century it was obsolete.

OK, oh are you going to have to get up and down every time?

Elizabeth Sullivan (ES) No, I'll just stay back here.

The first photo in this our assignment in this is to try to identify as much as we can from these slides.

(JR): That looks like South Franklin Street on the bottom there.

(MM) Jim's noting that South Franklin Street on the bottom you already see that the water is up to the windowsill of first floor homes that are along S. Franklin Street. I'm sure with enough time we could identify them but this is not intended to be an accurate history of how many buildings were flooded by any means. Next, alright this is showing is that the Market Street bridge? If the Market St. well I'm not

sure. There's a handwritten list of pages of identifications that were in this box of slides that are in my handwriting so I obviously did go through them but this picture is showing three service vehicles, ambulances and things at the foot of a bridge but I don't recognize that where it could be do you? (Voice) No, no. It's not the Market St. Bridge it's not that kind of intersection so it could have been Shickshinny or Forty Fort. It could have been anywhere along the river to show that.

OK, next. This is showing the National Guard trucks pulling into some area I don't recognize it. They, the National Guard assignment is a history in itself. I have a pamphlet here, a little booklet that summarizes the National Guard activities in this state. It's an official document I found out about two months ago after all these years talking to one of my neighbors in Mechanicsburg and he mentioned he had been assigned in his National Guard unit was from somewhere near Johnstown that his unit was assigned to Forty Fort side of the river while we didn't even get across the other side of the river for a month after the flood. Everything was impassable and I'm not sure where this was taken but it shows the National Guard (mumble (?)) pulling into someplace. The unit that came to Wilkes-Barre was from Johnstown and the first day the Captain of the unit came and introduced himself to me and said Dr. Michilini how can we help you and I said well that's a good question. You know we need help everywhere and he said well we've been mucking out buildings and trying to help with that and I said Oh, my God we could use help with that. I said where are you staying, he said we are staying up on the mountain in Ashland? Somewhere above the flood levels and I said well my heavens we have dormitories the second and third floors were never flooded and they are available for you to use. You do, could we do that? I said sure you've got all your own equipment you could set up wherever you want, So the next thing I know about an hour later there's a parade of six by sixes coming down the street and his whole company goes into what is now the new men's dorm and they back up their six by sixes and the first thing they did was unload two truckloads of Iron City beer. It filled two dorm rooms of their supply of beer (laughter) brought from Johnstown so from then on we became good friends.

They set up their field kitchens and my oldest daughter was fifteen and the middle one fourteen and the youngest twelve and Michele the oldest, I had to keep an eye on her. She made friends with a lot of National Guard troops. I still have a trooper's fatigue jacket in my basement hanging there and I'm not quite sure, I'm afraid to know if it has emotional significance but I kid her about it. But we used to have meals with them whenever we could and they were just wonderful and they did so much work around the campus but back to your..(mumble).

(JR) Is it possible that's the print shop? Is it possible that's the old print shop that was over here? That was my first thinking.

(MM) What Jim's saying is there was an old print shop parking lot behind that print shop and it does have that look so we both thought about the same thing. But anyway there is a report, my neighbor said that—I have a book that the National Guard published. His name was Riz, Rizalettie (?) and when he showed it to me I said my God Riz I don't think I have ever seen this book and it has a lot of pictures. Look at this photo of S. Main St. To have the book right in front of me now and the reason I brought it up is because there is a map in it that shows the disposition of all of the National Guard units in Pennsylvania and their activity during the flood. So a number of the publications that are going into the archives are publications that were reports or summaries of the activity of particular units. PPL had a booklet, it focused on all of their activities during the flood and there are Bell Telephone building (mumble) was the center of our, they were the resource for us. You could get gas, there were

helicopters bringing fuel for generators. Salvation Army were getting sandwiches. Everything was helicoptered in because there was still no access to the city early on and there were post flood reports that were done for various reasons. One interestingly enough it was not the date of the bureaucracies existing. There was no bureaucracy structure for government oversight. There was a transition period after WWII before the cold war began with Russia in which WWII civil defense structure where you were (mumbling) watching New Jersey for a while. Jim Rodecko was telling stories about the watch houses that he used to see when he patrolled the beaches in New Jersey. But anyway those structures evolved into the civil defense unit and so General Frank Towsand (?sp) headed the Pennsylvania region (mumble) the Wilkes-Barre one and there were structures carried over from WWII that's my point. That was a contact point during a disaster but there was not a structure as we know it today where you have disaster relief coming out the kazoo from different entities assigned that responsibility. So there were reports done and it shows the magnitude of the National Guard commitment of its resources to the flood. A large part of that was due to Dan Flood. I remember some apocable stories about Dan. He called the governor and asked what the National Guard was doing. He said the first National Guard and there were a few National Guard units on the way to North Carolina for maneuvers and Dan Flood said you get those he used foul language which I won't - back on the road to Wilkes-Barre. We need them up here and since Dan controlled their budget there was no discussion. So Dan was a tremendous power at the time and I've written some things that will be part, I can't give the anecdotal too much or we're never gonna get through the slides. So anyway there are a variety of reports and then post flood municipalities had to document their need for funding and once the federal disaster relief act was passed there was a lot of fleshing out and every local government operation, the county here and in these books are references to different structures and different political people so it's such a broad tapestry that was being tied together that I would say for the first six weeks it was almost total chaos. It really focused on getting rid of everything from landfills to contractors, truckers no questions asked. Salvation Army, the Amish people, Mennonite disaster relief came in. They would knock on doors and go in and help you pull your dirty carpets and move furniture and clean out. Bob Heaman's nodding yes and Jim Rodecko and they came to our house on South River St. and really helped Ann Marie clean, and the girls. A lot of good stuff got tossed to the curb because there was no good not the luxury of time. In any event the disaster efforts were going on but there was chaos in administrative rankings. You had from General Townen and the county you had federal influences. George Romney who was the Secretary of HUD housing and urban development at the time initially was assigned the responsibility by President Nixon who was in the midst of the campaign for his second term as president in November and he was not very happy because there was still no order brought to the chaos of the flood recovery. And so he called a young state dept. guy Frank Carlucchi who my understanding was he had made his name by standing in the front door of the embassy in the Belgian Congo and faced down a mob that was attacking in the embassy and he single handedly (mumble) dispersed them just the force of his personality which I can understand after seeing him in action. He rose very rapidly in the ranks of the State dept. he must still be in, he was in his 30's when he was assigned by Nixon as the presidential personal representative to the flood. My point is there was a political as well as a strategic need for a coordination somebody who had the force of character that could lead people to do things and bring coordination to it. And everyone that had anything to do with the flood recognized that Frank Carlucchi with a lot of help from community people like Max Rosen with his contacts with President Nixon and Dan Flood with the power and influence he had and our Senators, Dick Schweiker and Scott, what was his name? I forget. There are pictures scattered throughout these books.

Next slide, boy if I talk this long on each slide we're gonna be here for 5 weeks. Oh, this is a picture of the library. This was one of the photographs that I used. I picked slides from this collection of 3 or 4 hundred photographs, I never counted them, to use on solicitation trips. We were out approaching foundations. There was no guarantee of federal money. There also was a hidden sleeper in this whole flood experience which was that our 58 buildings, probably Stark hall, the dining hall, and the gymnasium were the only 3 buildings that had been built specifically for (mumble) and oh, Dorothy Darte the fine arts building (mumble). There were 4 buildings that were newly constructed for college purposes during our experience here as faculty members and the rest of them were old mansions converted for different departmental needs. The History dept. was in an old mansion, the administrative offices were in an old mansion. All of those had been grandfathered in to meeting labor and industry standards, in other words you didn't have to pass an inspection for firewalls and stairwells and all of the requirements for public buildings. After the flood in order to qualify for any funds for restoration we had to commit to restoring them to contemporary labor and industry standards That was a very difficult burden to carry because no it was not easy to go out and solicit funds to recover from the flood. And then the government being made available through legislation being the first two months that would assist us everybody thought well their going to be taken care of with all the government funds but we had basically 1.2 million, that was a lot of money in those day, that was not flood related that were funds needed to upgrade to meet labor and industry standards that we never had to before the flood and that's a hard sell. Bob, no Tom Kelly the one in Washington, he just wrote another book, Michael Worth were two people who worked with Dr. Farley on the fund raising part of the Chancellors office and Dr. Farley had resigned the month before the flood May 1972. So Tom Kelly and Mike Worth took over orchestrating the recovery campaign funds for meeting these upgrades that were required and so we put together a set of 20 or 30 slides (mumble) that's not the library. That's the basement of Stark Hall because the person in the (mumble) was our technical person.

Next slide. But we tried to pick the most dramatic pictures. This is the loading dock behind Stark Hall. You can see the red brick and the railing. I can, that's still there right? beside Chase Hall and it shows the oh, my God, stacks of shelving, of papers, of laboratory equipment. It looks like on the right hand side there some sort of table. Next Slide. A fire during a flood is one of the most abstract and difficult situations to describe because they are contrary intuitive. You say there's all the water around here how can you have a fire but the other problem is if you do have a fire it can easily be caused by short circuiting and other things of that nature. How do you fight it and the fire company and I've written a couple of pages about our experience. If I repeated them we'd never get through these slides but to make a long story short, they teamed up boats and rotated having fire-fighting equipment in a pair of boats. One boat, the college and environmental science boat had the engine and the pump where you put the inlet into the water and you sucked up water and you pumped out the other side so that you used the flood water as you water supply for putting water on a fire in the middle of a flood. You couldn't see a fire hydrant because they were covered. The college boats happened to be paired in the firefighter mission when the fire on North, when there was a call from that there was a fire sighted under flooring on the second floor of a building at the corner of Pennsylvania Ave. and Northampton St.

Now I'm not sure that, that's it because there were 3 fires in Wilkes-Barre during the flood.

(JR) I'm having trouble placing that.

(MM): Yea that I think was a different fire because, let's do the next slide. We'll come back to the fire because I'm sure there are shots that we'll recognize. This is the scene of the river and the Irem Temple. And what would that be? The First Presbyterian church on the corner there. Anyway it's North W-B. What's that building in the center?

(JR): You know one of the problems is that a lot of those buildings have been ripped down.

(MM): Yea, Jim's pointing out that some of the buildings have been torn down plus I think the photographs cover the whole length of the river with different communities and so in some the other books I've seen they will identify this is from Shickshinny, this is from Tunkhannock and so on.

This shows a bridge here so that is probably the Pierce St. Bridge. If that's the Pierce St. Bridge then King's College is up there on the right.

(ES): Is that the Market St. Bridge? I see the eagles coming up off there.

(JR): Yea, ok then this would be taken wait no I don't think so.

(MM): No, I don't see the county courthouse or anything but that one building with the blue roof right there in the middle, no the next one over to your left that's a church isn't it? I don't know, what's that white building it's not very clear that should be an identifier. If we knew but I'm right on the Irem Temple aren't I? Yea, that's the Irem Temple so that's gotta be the Pierce St. bridge.

(JR): Yea, that has to be the Pierce St. bridge well, wait a minute ya know I think Elizabeth's right. Those look like the towers, you know they do (mumbling everyone speaking at once)??

(MM): Well, that's a puzzle but we can't spend too much time figuring it out or we won't get through a couple of hundred. Well, that looks like my station wagon. That green Oldsmobile vista cruiser and it's the Dorothy Darte center S. River St. Yea, I'm not quite sure how it relates to the flood whether it was before or after. Well, this is obviously inside a basement somewhere. It just shows the destruction. It looks like a furnace or incinerator something in the far left doesn't it? Next, ok this is Stark Hall. There's Umid Nejib on the right. I think he's the one on the upper right. That's Umid with the sideburns.

(JR): Well it could be, he's a lot younger.

(MM): Well anyway it's a picture of one of our physics dept. and math dept. people outside of Chase Hall entrance to Stark Hall and it's simply 5 people in a chain line moving furniture, chairs and everything out of the science building. Next slide. It's upside down. What's that in the left corner? There is some sign the sign is upside down.

(JR): That looks like Sturdevant Hall

(MM): Yea it almost looks like they have Alpha Epsolom whatever, I don't know. Next. These are upside down. There are students or somebody eating in the dining hall.

(JR): Any way you turn that around?

(MM): In the computer you can just flip it around but if they are all going to be that way we may have to start, see what the next one is. OK this shows the river dike.

(JR): That would be after the flood I guess.

(MM): Yea, that would be after the flood it looks like up river somewhere. I can see that dike repair. Is that a dike repair? Next. That's the same one only reversed. Next. Oh that's the mobile homes being brought in and parked up on the mountain by the water tower. Next. Oh my gosh more pictures of the trailers.

(JR): Those were common scenes .

Bob Heaman (BH): Yep

(MM): Next. I don't think I ever, oh this - we have the photo of the National Guard ceremony for the Master Sargent. We got his name and the record of that in the National Guard book. They dedicated a replacement organ in the fine arts center in his memory. I never really remember following up on that but we do have some commentary about that. Next slide. I've seen this picture before. It's a student worker it looks like who's sorting papers. I remember across the street from Weckesser on that lawn used to be outside Capin, history. They tried to dry out a lot of the files and papers from the History dept. and this was the way campus looked on a bright sunny day in July. Next.

Well, this is another one that just shows the magnitude of the flood upheaval. That looks like library shelving in the background doesn't it. Next Slide- Oh and that's what was his name, he headed housing, Don something.

(JR): Al Federahito (?)

(MM): No, it was Don something. Don Holt? It was a short second name. We could find it in the bulletin.

(JR): His wife worked here too.

(MM): I don't know that I've ever seen this. I think I still have that sweater somewhere on a shelf.
(laughter)

(JR): Is that you Mike?

(MM): That's me. I wish I still had the boots. That's Weckesser Annex. That was sorta the headquarters. Don, what the heck was his name? Oh well, we'll get it later. Next. This is a classic. See this is the kind of slide that I took around to show prospective donors to help in the recovery and it's a striking slide of a bulldozer. They broke through the window framing on the Franklin St. side of the library so that the bulldozer could get into the basement and they kinda dug out a ramp for it to go down to the basement level. They just used the bulldozer to bulldoze out all of the books. Next slide. This looks like the Stark trash pile too. Next. More files, that's Stark Hall I can tell by the white brick. Next. This was our technician and I don't know his name but he got power generators to work. This shows him sitting in the mud and wet water which they say never do that because you can electrocute yourself but he was working on an engine. I remember him. I don't remember his name but he was technically with equipment and working on getting a generator back in operation in all that mud and slime. Next Here's a, these look like library shelves. Next please. This was the dining hall. It was still the annex to Chase Hall at the time this area was.

(JR): Oh that was right outside the library here. That was the commons remember? That was a great place. Oh yea.

(MM): The college commons and it expanded that's right. It was the carriage house that had been expanded. The theater used to be in it until they built the Dart center.

(JR): Sophie was the one who was behind that.

(BH): chuckle right, right. Group laughter.

(MM): Next. This was is that the dormitory, yes cause the common is on the right hand side and it shows mostly upholstered furniture outside so it is emptying out the first floor of the new men's dorm. Next.

Oh this is a classic. There should be more and better pictures of this. This is a picture of the gymnasium on Franklin St. When the college became a college in 1947 on of the requirements from Middle States was that you had to have a physical education facility and so the first building built purposely for the college was the gymnasium down on Franklin St. It was before I came to Wilkes so it must have been built in the early 50's. There was no basement to it. The floor was planking 2 x 4 with a gravel bed on top on which there were planking on top, on which there was a layer of pine board on which there was a layer of cross matched hard wood finishing basketball floor of high quality. So there were three layers. About a foot layer of gravel and on top of that three layers of structure to support a gymnasium floor that would not vibrate or anything so it was solid. The outside walls of the building were maybe two feet wide steel beams to support the steel beams on the overhead structure. This photograph shows what happened when the flooring absorbed water after sitting in flood water of S. Franklin St. six feet deep at least. It rippled through it and there's a maintenance man standing on one of the rises in the warped floor of the basketball court. I've often regretted that I did not, well we didn't have television or the kind of live activity but we should have played a basketball game on that floor and used it for public relation purposes. Laughter. I thought of that after it was too late but the steel beams had constrained the wood and the wood expanded and it created 3 of more of these 2 to 3 ft. waves in the wood floor. But the outside of the structure you can see the beams in the back. They were so strong. Sordoni built that building and I think any building they built was structurally pretty sound. So I believe all they really had to do is take out the entire flooring and then reconstruct the floor area. Next. This is a classic photo to me personally. Jim O'Toole, Pennsylvania was host a national conference on science and engineering in Harrisburg. Governor Shapp was the governor at the time and he had formed the governor's science committee. He formed a science and engineering group. He came from an engineering background. So he attracted this national meeting to Harrisburg and Jim Toole and I, I think I was on the governor's science advisory committee at the time and Jim Toole was very high up in the state organization of engineers. We were in Harrisburg at this meeting on Thursday June 22. I called Ann Marie at home and said dear, they are having all kinds of flooding down here in Harrisburg how's Wilkes-Barre? On Thursday June 22 the river was at the 4 ft. level, up to your waist if you are a tall person. So I said well ok have a good night and 5:00 a.m. Friday we had a call. Afterwards we found out that Gen. Towand deliberately made a decision. They knew on Thursday that the river up river was rising rapidly. The storm had circled over the watershed that served, drained out through this valley and they were already predicting from the amount of rainfall and the rise in the river upstream New York that we were going to get flooded. But to call for an evacuation on the dark of Wednesday night June 20th he thought would be too dangerous to try to evacuate people in the dark and make them take it seriously so he deferred the evacuation decision. It was already made. In retrospect there was a lot of second guessing. Townand made the decision he had to make and that was do you evacuate now or do you evacuate in the

morning. They had enough confidence in the dike system that they thought the river is 4 feet now and the dike is good to 36 feet we've got some time to work with here. And so the decision was made at 5:00 a.m. and Jim Toole and I got a call in Harrisburg. Mike, they are evacuating W-B and I said, well evacuate. Put some treasured stuff up on the second floor on River St. and get out. She took 2 items, a marble chess set and a table that was a real treasure. I still have it in our home in Mechanicsburg, that I had given to her. I think that was about all we took. We took no furniture. That was about the only thing we put on the second floor. There was nothing else we could move at 5:00 a.m. and I wasn't there.

(JR): What do you suppose that's a picture of?

(MM): I can tell you I'm on my way to that. Jim asked what the picture is that got me off on this roll. So anyway Jim Toole and I left Harrisburg and we each had a car. He had a big Cadillac and this was the interstate highways that were built at the time did not have the access or continuous length so we ended up going almost back to New Jersey border to get back around the valleys where bridges had already been out and I just followed Jim Toole. We got back to campus about 10:00. So after seeing what the situation was I got the two boats ready. One behind a jeep, one behind my car, turned into the fire dept. and said ok I'm going back to the campus and see what we can do on campus. The first place that I went to was the library. This is a picture of the library steps going down to the basement and what I was concerned about was the rare book vault for the library was in the basement. We tried to get the rare books up out of the library before there would be any flooding. For the next hour we were carrying books up the steps to a higher floor. That picture I look at that pile of books on the left hand side and when the sirens blew I put a load of books on that top step. I can still see it in my mind mentally. I think I put three books in my hand that were from the rare books vault that I stuck there. Why I just didn't carry them out with me I have no idea but instinctively you respond to evacuation and so I left those books on the library step but that is on the first floor of the library down into the basement. The books were already floating or then covered up by mud and debris on them. So I look at that picture and I think oh, my God I was there.

(JR): Didn't the library staff go down in the basement and take books off the shelves and put them on tables thinking there was only going to be a foot of water. I had heard that and of course that didn't work out too well.

(MM): I wouldn't be surprised. I hope there are more slides of this but I've seen this picture published and things. One of the side stories of the library is when we were going out after the flood trying to raise money we used the picture because the library is perceived as the academic center. You know if you have a library you have a college. All of a sudden we started getting trucks delivering truckloads of books for the campus. People all over the country were donating books to the Wilkes College Library. I saw more Readers Digest condensed books than I thought existed in the world. Everybody took all their collections, I still have a shelf full of Readers Digest condensed books in my house. I have all the Life magazine books in my house. For some reason people perceived those to be of value to a library and it got to a point where God knows if we ever threw out good books but we didn't even have the manpower to sort them.

(JR): They had sales of books right out here in the parking lot.

(MM): Jim is saying they opened the cases and had sales of books so there was some kind of sorting going on. But I know as far as I was concerned that became a very low priority. We didn't spend any

manpower to sort through those books. OK Next This just shows the devastation of the basement rooms and storage were just absolutely (mumble) because the soaked the water and the current soaked everything unless something was anchored with steel bolts it just floated around.

(JR): You can see that they did put books and stuff on the tables.

(MM): And of course the ceiling tiles, I don't know what the material was in the day but it dissolved and in many places it coagulated and hardened on surfaces. My God you couldn't even separate stuff that had gotten cemented together. But imagine trying to clean, no wonder they needed a bulldozer in the basement of the library. Next. This was a physics laboratory. You can see all their, I forget the name of the instruments on the counter. But I used this slide to show the water and you can see the interesting thing that was on the table. It's also hard to figure out how to explain to people the diversity of the furniture staining. You can look at that one table and thought, oh that's how high the water got. No, that table floated up to the ceiling and then floated back down so that water line is really where the water got to and you can see the others floated down collapsed and fell over. But trying to determine. Now you can see the equipment on the counter and you see a water line. I can in the faces of the instruments. It's about 5 or 6 inches up. Next. This is the new science addition facing River St. it was under construction. This might have been a photograph because there was more brick work done on that building. Yea, this does not, unless this is taken from the back courtyard angle of that building. And the construction wasn't as far but I have pictures of the front of the building that show the water line and the building had already completed the brick work by June of 72. Next. This is the, oh look at the addition, yea I guess it wasn't as far along. Maybe it's just from the front view I saw brick work. There was already brick work facing River St. This is a photo of Stark Hall the old Stark Hall. Oh, there's my greenhouse. That was a greenhouse I got from the National Science Foundation grant in 1956 and it incorporated the greenhouse into the building. I think we got \$3,000. From the National science foundation to build me a greenhouse and a lab. That was wonderful. Next. Ok this shows the landfills and boy oh boy. Someday people will be mining through that trying to interpret the culture of the people. Laughter. How would you ever explain a trash pile like that? Next. Ok now we are going out into the city. That's the Firwood United Methodist church so we're getting into photographs. You can see the water line and look at the brick stain and the stained glass windows very clear. Next. The President's home on S. River St. built in 1936. There's a plaque marking the high water and it's about the first step up the building and the high water mark from 1972 on the President's home on 30 W. River St. is about seven and a half feet up the side of the building. I've got to get photos of that. There are markers there but they are black and they don't show up unless you know what to look for. Next. This is downtown Wiles-Barre. Oh my, the department store Fowler Dick and Walker just shows the magnitude of the clean-up mess. Next. This is a photo that shows you what a floating light pole can do to a car windshield. Next. The power of the water was amazing. Ok here's the Forty Fort cemetery. That's where my neighbors National guard unit worked. He did not talk too much detail about it. Next: This is further up river and they were trying to repair a break in the dike. I've seen pictures of one town up river where there was such a clear dike break. It was an earthen dike and you can see this was 30 maybe 40 feet wide but once the river broke through there it just went down whatever valley that was. Next: This is just a scene from I don't know. Next: These are just repairs. That looks like it was a dam or some highway or a pumping station on the left doesn't it. Next. This shows erosion of those earthen dikes seen in dry weather. The water got up over the top and started to swirl around the back. General Townand castigated me publicly one time. I was giving a talk to Kiwanis or something. He happened to

be in the audience and I said what time the dike broke. General Townand raised his hand and said Dr. Michilini, number one it's not a dike it's a levee. A levee is along a river a dike protects the ocean water. And number two the dike did not break it was topped by the flood water and eroded from the back side. He was an army engineer of course he knew what he was talking about and that's exactly true. The picture shows you that the dike didn't break. The water went over top and eroded the back side until finally there was no more facing and the facing you can see on the left hand side of the picture. The facing just collapsed toward the right side of the screen.

(JR): I thought it broke down through here.

(MM): No, well it broke through where the piling ended. Yes, so the River St. homes would not have an obstructed view and they built an earthen dike at the end of the curve the bend in the river. I have some pictures that show that. And that's where the dike was topped and eroded and the mud came back up around and that's what inundated Wilkes was that back water. We got direct flow from up river once the North of Market St. I don't know where it came in but the dike on this side of the river was not breeched until it broke through at the end of that curve. Maybe it did further north. It may have breached on the other side of the river and we got that eddy and yet there was some strong current that topped it and eroded it. It really started to break down. Next. Yea, that show the magnitude of it. There on the right hand side it almost looks like it's showing a break in the dike.

(JR): Yes it does look like that.

(MM): Next. If one thing I never appreciated was that when sealed storage containers where oil and gas are full they are very stable. And a railroad bridge, I saw a railroad bridge. That almost looks like Gateway Apartments doesn't it. That's some apartment complex here on this side. I think there was a tank farm in that vicinity. Next: This is a residential area. What's the tunnel on the left side? See the tunnel on the upper left? That was a railroad bridge it looks like or the railroad tracks in the lower left.

(JR): Could that have been in Kingston?

(MM): I don't know it could have been in South Wilkes-Barre somewhere. Next.

(JR): I bet that house was lifted off its foundation.

(MM): Next: This is just showing damage. Oh, look at the water line on the roof. Yea, this is after the flood showing you the water line. I almost missed it. Wow, imagine. Next: This looks like S. Wilkes-Barre. I've seen these pictures before. Next: I think that was one of the homes on River St.

(JR): Mike, I think that's the house I lived in when I first came to Wilkes-Barre. I think that was our, we had moved by then (mumble) where the buses were.

(MM): There are some photographs that show about four buildings and homes down where the dike left the steel and went to (mumble) and the current. This photo obviously is where the current was so powerful that it just swept away there. The rest of those mansion homes really weren't that severely damaged but there was a lot of erosion around them but this must have been taken to show the power of that water that it actually exposed the foundation at the bottom. Next: There's another home on S. River. It even eroded right under the sidewalks and everything. Next: That's the same building. Next:

(JR): That's where the river broke through. That really did a job on the dike.

(MM): That's where the river broke through with the most power. Well, that's huge. We were talking about the river being 4 feet on Thursday and it was 40 feet by Friday night. It rose a foot an hour for 36 straight hours. Can you imagine? It's almost inconceivable. I've used the statistic the Army Corp. of Engineers gave and that was the first time in geologic history, millions of years, the Chesapeake Bay became fresh water. It was flushed out by the volumes of water. Next: This, oh you see the smoke from a fire. This is a picture from S. Wilkes-Barre toward town. Yea, you can see the United Penn Bank building. Next: There's the residential home fire. That was taken by helicopter for sure. Next: That's not Northampton Pennsylvania Ave. Next: This is a very good picture to show how the fire dept. organized their people. Any street that was near a fire house that had a hill or an elevation that went down to the river they would use as a rally point and I know for the most part they worked off Northampton St. end of the street. I remember one time there was a lull. You waited to get assigned to the next rescue or the next whatever was happening. I went up and slept on the grass at the Ohab Zedeck (sp?) Temple up there on Northampton St. I flaked out. I think I slept for like five hours one afternoon. I was absolutely wiped out. Next: That's the residential fire down on South (mumble). One of the faculty women members lived in that house. She had a nickname. Al Groh knew her well. She had something to do in the theater. Not Charlotte Lord. I don't think it was Charlotte Lord.

(JR): I remember the lady you're talking about. I remember she had a nickname but I can't remember.

(MM): Yea but she lived in an apartment in the complex this complex that (mumble).

(JR): She had a sister that (mumble).

(MM): Next: OK well that's not Northampton St. because Bnai Brith (sp?) apartments aren't that tall in the lower right corner. That tall building to the right of the fire. There aren't that many floors in the B'Nai Brith Apts. Are there?

(JR): There could be. I don't know. Is that Public Square?

(MM): That's what I'm trying. Is that Public Square in the upper left center? Then this would be Northampton St. fire but it doesn't. Northampton St. fire started in the corner with Pennsylvania Ave. and this looks like it's a building right in the middle. I think this was the building. The photographer was in the building here when that house residential fire was going on and I think he got different shots of it. Next: Yea, he was preoccupied with that fire. Now there's the bridge up in the (mumble) a railroad bridge. Next: This is a Coast Guard rescue helicopter. He's going down to the roof. Next: They must have had reports of people trapped in buildings and were checking them out. Next: See that was post Vietnam war so they really knew what they were doing. Next: I remember this was in North Wilkes-Barre over toward on the way to the mall. There's some in back of there's some electrical supply family. I forget names but their business was up on that block and one of the areas up there was obviously coated with oil. It must have been a tank that got overturned or something. God that's a God awful mess. Next: Look at people's clothes hanging out to dry. Next: One of the things you don't realize being up in a boat you don't realize the streets are not level. Kinda intuitively you begin to recognize that if you could see a street sign you knew how deep the water was and if you could see a fire plug you knew how deep the water was. But there were times when I ran over the roof of a Volks Wagon once and I heard a screeching sound out in the boat. You couldn't see the car underwater. Next: This shows there is a picture, the only picture that shows the King's College buildings. Boy I would really like to have that. That was one of the. You know people knew there were two colleges in Wilkes-Barre. We say Wilkes has

this and that and you and Chris Breiseth were surprised. He never understood the differences between Wilkes and King's relative to the flood and took the impact of the flood on them. I said well Chris in the late 50's with all the urban renewal King's was offered the block for building as part of the urban renewal project so they didn't have to buy homes like Wilke's did. We had to buy our neighbors but they had been declared an urban renewal area so they had a clear block in which they could develop the campus. At the time of the flood they only had maybe 2 or 3 buildings. They had maybe 3 buildings. Their library see the left of the coal company building that's their main building. To the left of it that looks to me like it was a classroom building. One of the first buildings they built was a science building and the basement of the building had a library in it. The only things that I remember was that they had flooding in their basement of that building. Wilkes on the other hand had 58 buildings. All individually and so Chris said I always wondered why we never really had much rebuilding after the flood at King's and it's because King's never really got flooded that badly. They had basement flooding.

(JR): Even now I realize they are higher.

(MM): Yea, much higher, because the Court House did not flood. Next: Boy look at that. Well I guess it did flood a little but didn't it?

(JR): That would be the road that led to the Pierce St. Bridge on the left.

(MM): Yes. Next: What in the world is that? That's a shopping center across the river or something. Next: After the water went down that's the shopping center in Kingston. Next: There's, I have that picture. It's one thing to describe the gym floor and another one to say see how it's layered and how it curled up around the steel. Next: There's the bulldozer from the inside.

(JR): Was that the library?

(MM): Yep, that's the library. Can you go back? I don't recall ever seeing this inside view. Oh my God.

(ES): Those are not doors in the basement of the library right? They would have taken those out.

(MM): Here you mean? Yea, they took out that was that other picture we saw a while ago. They could be organized collectively probably better but as long as we know what's there. Next: See how they tore out the middle pillar that was part of the structure. Next: That young guy, I don't know if he was a Sordoni or not but he is the only guy without a hard hat so he must be a Sordoni. Laughter. Next: Don Voit. It was a short name. I'll have to look in the bulletin. He worked hard. Next: There's my famous whiskey bottle. Looters were already in there, my goodness. Next: That's a picture of the high water level. Next: That's the Forty Fort cemetery with the caskets. That must have really been something. Apparently the dug a trench that they buried the fragments and things that they couldn't identify. They didn't have DNA testing and there was no point to it anyway. It wasn't like a crime was committed. I've never been in that cemetery but I wonder if they have a marker on the trench that says this is where (mumble). I told you John Chwalick (sp?) started watching the big oak tree shaking and trembling. He was on the front steps of his house and all of a sudden seeing it erupt right up into the air and coffins coming up and he was staying. He had to be rescued by helicopter from Main St. in Kingston. The water came up so fast.

(JR): For some reason I was in his house after the flood and it was a mess. It was terrible but it was brick so it (mumble). Next:

(MM): There's the tree, see it? That's the tree. John said he watched that tree start to shake and tremble and all of a sudden it erupted right up out of the ground. Next. There's your River St. Next: That's the home that took the, boy that's the one next to it. Next: Then there's that one. I've seen in a lot of publications have those pictures in them. Next: I have a feeling these slides were from the Kazenchacks.

(JR): Isn't that Market Street on the left?

(MM): I'm looking for the roof my firemen were on. See this is from the back side. This is from a different angle. Now this is from B'Nai Brith would be to the right. We would be looking at the fire from the back. No, I know what this is, this would be the corner of P.A. Ave. and Northampton St. would be up here. This would be S. Main St. and this was the back of the fire that started up here and it worked its way back in this direction. Next: Ah, there it is for God's sake. The fire started on the right hand side corner. By the time this picture was taken it was later. It had already gutted 4 stores and warehouses. I remember there was boxes full of cigars and cartons of cigarettes floating in the water. The firemen kept picking them up and pulling them into the boat and I kept throwing them out the other side. I thought we could get accused of looting of all the things to worry about. Laughter. Next: That's the best picture I've ever seen of that angle. It started in the back corner and it worked its way this way. We tied the boat with a line connected to a fire plug and pumper up on Northampton St. down to here. Those guys shimmied up the telephone pole and got onto the roof and so there were two streams of water for the most part. Depends on the angle you shot but this is where they stopped the fire. If the fire had jumped to this block then it would have gone up Main St.

(JR): You can see the guy with the hose.

(MM): Boy I wish I knew who those guys were. I've known some heroes. Next: Now that was one of the things I always ask people. Why in the world would you park railroad cars on a bridge in a flood? To keep it from eroding the piers otherwise it would float and erode around the base of the piers but by keeping weight on it squeezes the water out.

(JR): That's Public Square right?

(MM): That's Public Square. Is there some way we are going to be able to pick and choose some of these. You could put together a pretty good sequence of things from some of these. That is an excellent picture of Public Square. Next: Hey, there's an excellent picture of the way they used the ramps, you know the street ends. The buses were there to evacuate people you know if you brought them in on the boat. There was an ambulance there. There was organization and I remember we just reported to the fire dept. and they would, I don't what kind of communications they had but they would tell us what to do, where to go, pick up somebody, go down to S. Wilkes-Barre, do this, do that.

(JR): What bridge is that Mike?

(MM): I think that's the base of Northampton St. Now this could be another bridge. This doesn't look steep enough to be Northampton St. does it?

(JR): It looks like it's a raised, I wonder if that's the bridge right over here going up Park Ave. Could it be that?

(MM): Yea that's the South Street Bridge. That looks like the S. St. Bridge, look at the end pillars. Bu the point is they made every bridge a headquarters, a sub headquarters so as far as being out in a boat you always could find some direction. Next: That just looks like S. W-B doesn't it. That's the helicopter over the Bell Telephone bldg. They had to supply the telephone bldg. with fuel for the power generators. They kept the building headquarters functioning all through the flood. What is that?

(JR): Is it possible that's the Pierce St. Bridge? The remains of it.

(MM): With the crane on it. If it's after the flood yea after the water went down. I wasn't really aware. The Pierce St. Bridge collapsed huh?

(JR): I don't know. I'm not sure they took it down. It either collapsed or it was not safe.

(MM): Next: That's the floating fuel tanks. Next: Boy that's rough water. Next: It looks like flowers there. The interesting thing is it's taken from the boat side.

(ES): That's it.

(MM): Oh wow, and it's not yet noon.

(BH): Quite a flood. Laughter.

(JR): Elizabeth is there a men's room?

(ES): There is. If you go all the way down to the corner past the stairs it will be on the left side.

(JR): Thank you.

(ES): Do you have any thoughts before I turn the recording device off.

(MM): Wow, quite an event. Imagine if there had been cell phones, live T.V., photos, twitter whatever the things are now days. Where were you was your house in the flood?

(BH): Yea.

(MM): Were you in S. Wilkes-Barre?

(BH): Yea, we were down here close to the campus within walking distance.

(MM): So you had a recovery job. Did you live in a trailer?

(BH): No we owned a house where we are now and we closed on our house before the flood. We were living in the house we hadn't gotten out so we were still down here. We got flooded out but we were able to get up there because they got out after the flood. So we were out of the area but during the flood we got flooded of course. It was a house we rented but it covered the house.

(ES): Well thank you very much.

(BH): Thank you. It brings back a lot of bad memories. How many people died?

(MM): Only one person. In my own mind I'm thinking we got back Friday or Thursday morning and the dike broke about 11:00 a.m. and they evacuated the town. When did we launch the boats because the water didn't come up in the streets immediately. It built up and I think we launched the boats the night

of June 21st. There had to be a lapse of time between evacuation and the water getting to five foot deep that you could launch your boat. You didn't go right from evacuation to the boat. I think my first experience in the boat was that evening. I think it was that evening you could get a boat in the water and the assignment from the fire dept. They gave the street where some lady in Wilkes-Barre. I remember this 250lb. lady coming out of the second story window porch roof and would not leave her dog which now I can understand. The fireman carried her. Firemen are the most underappreciated.

(JR) Did they get the dog too?

(MM): They got the dog.

(BH): I don't blame them that would have been my first thing.

(MM): That was the first event with the boat that I remember. The first night of the flood when they were evacuating people then by the next day they assigned the two college boats to PPL crews and we propelled down S. River St. When they were disconnecting the circuit breakers up on the electrical boxes that's the second thing I remember doing. I had no idea that's how they did it. But imagine you're going around in these boats. You see rescue boats one on each side. The next thing, when did that fire start was it early? I know it was dark you couldn't see very well. The first night or the second night or early morning that the fire started.

(JR) I remember standing up on High St. looking down, that would be Sat. or Sunday.

(MM): It can be figured out I'm sure there are references somewhere of when the fire started. During the day there was a fire in the apartment house where a faculty member lived. They have a lot of pictures of it. But the fire on Northampton, these pictures are very misleading because this was hours after the fire started. This was daytime and the helicopter could take pictures. When we first got to that fire it was in the middle of the night.

(JR): The T.V. channels were covering it but they had to relocate all their stuff up on the hill up there.

(MM): Roy Morgan and I saw some references in some of these books that NBC crew was photographed on Public Square after the flood but T.V. was not a big deal. 1972 seems like yesterday. But now, my God everybody's taking pictures with their cell phones. If you set off a bomb in a theater in London you've got cell phones and TV showing it around the world instantly.

(JR): You know the gym with the waves. Before that happened they had a high school dance in the gym about two weeks before. Jack Myers and I chaperoned it. These were high school kids. George Ralston got us to do it. It was Friday night and Monday morning we went in to George to report and I remember tell him well George everything went pretty well and George said well it wasn't that well boys because they ripped the urinal off the wall. Laughter. My God how did we miss that? Laughter. Then when the flood occurred we were down at the gym and George said well nobody could accuse you guys of fowling this one. Laughter.

(MM): Ann Marie and I chaperoned one of those affairs. I forget the occasion. The band was Eddie Pashinski and his Skyliners. He was a Wilkes graduate I think and superintendent of schools. But he had one of the early bands. Now I went, my daughter got tickets for the Hershey Center big concert to see Trans Siberian Orchestra and it brought back so many interpretations of the music and kids and dancing. The first time we chaperoned was with Eddie Pashinski and college kids. He had rockets and lights and

the sound. You had to lock yourself in the offices of the gym the sound was so loud. My hearings bad I can imagine that generation but at the Giant Center in Hershey to see the band I can understand how the evolution of concerts, it's multi sensory sight. They have steel runways suspended from the ceiling with guitarists playing the music and the volume. It's your sight, sound, everything is incorporated into the performance now. It wasn't Frank Sinatra and a microphone or Benny Goodman playing solo on his clarinet. That was a concert but now they are multi sensory things. That's how Mountain Productions made its millions. It provides all that environment when you see a performance. Eddie Pashinski had his band and we had to lock ourselves in the office to deaden the sound. But they never ripped a urinal off the wall when we were on duty.

(JR): They smashed it to pieces. I guess it was porcelain and they smashed it.

(MM): Those Catholic kids from St. Mary's.

(JR): I don't know what high school it was. They were quiet kids. No trouble here.

(MM): Eddie Pashinski went on to be very good friends to the college. He is a state legislator (mumble). I think Chris Breiseth cultivated a lot of political support and Tim Gilmor. They were involved in the support more than the old days when mayors if you didn't pay them off you didn't see them. You're not recording now are you?

(ES): We can be not recording.