

In 1995, my sister had my grandpa Charlie sit down to record his life story. The very beginning of the cassette is lost, but most of it is still intact. On this tape, my grandpa talks about what it was like growing up the second oldest of eight kids on a dairy farm in Massena, New York. My grandpa passed away when I was six years old, so this tape is one of the few ways I have that let me feel close to him again. Throughout my tenure at Cazenovia, I knew that I wanted to do illustration for my senior project. I wanted to be able to use my art to tell the world a story that was meaningful.

My childhood was filled with oral reiterations of family adventures. I was always drawn to these stories and I found myself wanting visuals for them. With the use of illustration, I am able to tie together both narrative and visual elements. Each illustration is based off a fragment of the recorded tape paired with my visual interpretation. All the text featured in the comic comes from the recording. I had my dad write out a transcript of the recording for me to incorporate into my comic pages. With the inclusion of the handwritten text the story becomes more personable and ties together three generations. The inclusion of the audio recording allows the audience to experience my grandpa's story firsthand. This collection of illustrations serves as the beginning of a project I intend to continue. My grandpa said that he "could write a book on his childhood experiences" but he was never able to complete the task. With my work I aim to preserve his story and illustrate his legacy.