

**Appendix 2: Excerpts from an Interview with Thomas Cahalan (older brother) by Dr. Talmage Egan,  
May 22, 2019.**

**Dr. Egan:** Can you tell us about your family, about where you grew up, about your brother and sister, and a little bit about your early family life?

**Tom Cahalan:** My sister, myself and my brother were all born in Harrisburg. Shortly after my brother was born. . .we moved. My father and a couple of his buddies built our house in one of Michael's favorite places called Stony Creek. . .Stony Creek is kind of a unique place. It's probably 10 miles north of Harrisburg. It's is a crystal-clear, spring fed stream. Where we lived it was probably 50 feet wide, maybe 3 or 4 feet deep over rocks. . . It's really where Michael learned to fish and swim. . . He knew every fishing and swimming hole that was there.

I can remember him getting up every morning. My dad bought him a fishing pole from Woolworths; I think it was around 3 to 5 bucks. . . He would take that and he didn't particularly like to dig for worms but while the farmers around us were plowing, he would get in behind them and pick up worms for an hour or so. . . He would leave in the morning after breakfast at 8 or 9 o'clock and you wouldn't see him until late afternoon. He would come back and say I caught this fish and that fish. . . it was just his passion. . . If he caught a really big one he would always release that one back. . . That's how it was; it was a pretty rural setting and we loved it.

**Dr. Egan:** Did Stony Creek play a role in Mike's swimming career?

**Tom Cahalan:** Yes. I don't think the creek ever got warmer than maybe 75 degrees in late August early September. . . It was just cold but we would swim in it all summer; we had a couple of places where there were deep holes. I got a ladder and got up into this

tree and we hung a rope from it. So that was our swinging thing out there over the creek. . .

**Dr. Egan:** I remember Mike mentioning swimming at the YMCA.

**Tom Cahalan:** Well, for the first several years that we lived in Stony Creek we went to parochial school, catholic school in downtown Harrisburg. Then Michael and I for some unknown reason decided to become altar boys. So, my dad would drop us off at the Catholic Church at 7 and we would do the 7 o'clock mass and then just walk the 3 or 4 blocks up to the school. . . Michael and I were pretty good swimmers but we didn't have any technic or anything like that. At school one day he actually saw a sign about the swim team at the Harrisburg YMCA. So, we went down there and signed up. The swimming practice started at 4 o'clock. So we would leave school and walk the 12 blocks to the Y, go in there and do swimming practice and then my dad would be leaving work and either he or my mother would pick us up and take us back home. That is how our swimming careers started.