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Transcript

Name: Mildred Jenny Myers

Date Interviewed: 4/20/99

Date Transcribed: 4/27/99

Tape 5

Project Number 20012

08:01:01:16

Q

First of all, I just want to make sure we have your name and everything spelled right, so, if you could give us your name and then spell it for us.

08:01:09:04

A

Okay. What do you want, the whole thing or just my last name?

08:01:12:24

Q

Uh, the whole thing.

08:01:12:15

A

I mean to spell; in spelling.

08:01:15:07

Q

Oh yeah, you can just spell the last name; that's fine. Any time you're ready.

08:01:19:25

A

Okay. My name is Mildred Jenny Myers. And...

08:01:27:28

Q

And the spelling of the last name is?

08:01:29:13

A

M-Y-E-R-S

08:01:31:04

Q

M-Y-E-R-S. I'm glad I asked that because I've been spelling your name wrong. I've been putting an AE@ in there between the AM@and AY.@

08:01:37:15

A

Yes. Several people do that.

08:01:39:24

Q

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(Laughter) Okay. UmB—we're going to start with, ah, your childhood. (Laughter) If you could just tell us about your childhood; growing up in the area.

08:01:49:25

A

Well, I was born and grew up in this square and have lived in this square all my life--I just live on a different street. (Laughter) And, uh, I went to school here and, uh, went through grade school and three years of high school here. And then I went to Harrison for my senior year because you needed to graduate from uh, an AClass A@high school to go to college, and I wanted to go to Miami University. So, I went down to Harrison for one year then, for my senior year, and went to school one year and then started teaching. Went to Miami University for one year and then, and then I started teaching. Started teaching up here in the little school where I went to school; right back in the same old building.

08:02:42:29

I'd like to tell you a story about our hot lunch program up there. We had, I had the first four grades downstairs and Edith Poe had the upper four grades upstairs. And, uh, one night after school she came downstairs and came in and she said she was concerned about something. I asked her what it was and she said well, two of the boys that we had in school, she had them both upstairs, were bringing their lunches to school; of course, we didn't have any hot lunches and she said that they were having lard fillings on their sandwiches. Now, do you know what lard is? That's from, grease from hogs.

08:03:33:12

Well, we got really concerned then, so we decided we would try to have hot lunches. So, we asked the children to bring cans of vegetables to school for us and we started a lunch program. We made vegetable soup twice a week for the children. Well, the mothers took it up then, and it wasn't long until they decided they'd form a Mother's Club. And they did and they took over then and they started bringing things for the hot lunches.

08:04:10:04

It worked out very well, but we came to find out that the lard these boys were having in their sandwiches we when we began having well, imitation butter, what did they call it? MargarineBHad margarine and you always got a little capsule with it to color it, you know. The farmers made the people who made the margarine not use coloring in it because they didn't want it to look like butter, so they would put it in little containers and put this little capsule in and you mixed it in with your butter, or with your margarine to make it look like butter.

08:04:58:21

So that's what we had, and that's what these boys were eating; it wasn't lard at all. But, anyhow, that caused us to start our hot lunch program and it grew from there. And then the mothers took it up and then they formed a Mother's Club they called it (that was before PTA) and they just fell in line and they did everything they could for us.

08:05:25:00

They had a play uh, two or three times a year to make money and we just, it just brought us all together because of this lunch program and it worked out beautifully. (Laughter.) Now, wasn't that funny? (Laughter)

08:05:40:08

Q

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(Laughter.) My mother used to tell me about that stuff. It's called oleo, isn't it? Yeah, and they used a colored capsule to make it look good.

08:05:45:09

A

Ah, yeah, ah uh. Oleo; oleo margarine. And it looked just like lard.

08:05:48:20

Q

(Laughter) You thought they were having lard sandwiches.

08:05:49:11

A

So that was the beginning of the hot lunch program.

08:05:54:21

Q

(Laughter.) Now, you went to the same school that you taught in. What were the early years of your schooling like at, at Bridgetown Elementary? When you were going there?

08:06:06:11

A

I didn't go there to school. I just went there to teach.

08:06:09:03

Q

Oh, you went there to teach. Okay. So you didn't actually go to elementary school at the same place. Okay. Um...

08:06:14:04

A

No, the school that I went to was right up here, across from the cemetery.

08:06:18:24

Q

Oh, okay. Tell us about that a little bit. Tell us about when you were in elementary school.

08:06:22:24

A

Well, we had eight grades up there. We had a... When I started, we had all eight grades in one room and then finally, why, they divided it and put four grades downstairs and the upper four upstairs. And uh, we had to go to Harrison to high school. And, uh, I graduated from Harrison High School.

08:06:44:07

And then when I came out of grade school up here, they decided to have a high school. But they only had three years, because the fourth year was important to graduate from a first class high school, so we had to go to Harrison then for our fourth year and then I went to Miami the next year after that.

08:07:03:04

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Q

Did you live at Miami while you were going to school?

08:07:05:26

A

Yeah, um hm.

08:07:06:27

Q

What was that like?

08:07:07:09

A

Oh, that was just campus. I lived in East Hall. If you know anything about Miami, there's East Hall and West Hall. I lived at East Hall for a year. I only went one year, and then I started to teach and I worked from there on up to taking extension courses and going to school in the summer and finally got my degree. (Laughter) Hard work but I got it! (Laughter.) So...

08:07:35:24

Q

That's the place to go to, still. My sister went to Miami. Let's see...was it McGraw, the, the textbook people?

08:07:47:10

A

McGuffy.

08:07:49:15

Q

McGuffy; that's it. She used to say she always had to walk through McGuffy's yard to get to class and she said it just makes me want to teach. I can't wait to teach.

08:07:57:17

Q

(Laughter.)

08:07:59:14

A

Yeah. I graduated my fourth year. Four years of college and then got my masters from there, so I had several years. A lot of that was done in extension courses and summer classes, because I taught right straight on through then.

08:08:14:14

Q

Was there a shortage of teachers in the area when you first started teaching?

08:08:19:04

A

Oh, I don't think so.

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08:08:22:26

Q

So there were quite a few; but, but you got a job right away?

08:08:27:25

A

Uh, huh.

08:08:29:05

Q

That's great. Tell us about the early years of uh, your teaching career. What was it like; what were the kids like?

08:08:34:21

A

Oh, they were great; heh, just great. I had the first four grades and the upper floor upstairs, but, eh. Those kids still come to see me, and they still write me notes, and I get cards from them at Christmas time you know, and, uh, it just makes you feel good. Uh, huh.

08:08:59:29

Q

Tell me about, uh, about the child you told me about earlier. The guy who's now a grandfather, who comes and spends the day with you every once in a while..

08:09:06:05

A

Oh, that boy, is uh, that was in my first year at Oak Hills. I taught in Bridgetown and uh. He comes to see me at least twice a year. And, uh, he lives in Atlanta. He's retired now, and he comes up and spends the day with me, takes me out to eat, and we just have a good time.

08:09:31:21

I see several of the others, and, but they call me on the phone. That's nice, but this one, is uh, he comes up to Cincinnati periodically, and he always comes to see me and we have a day together. It makes you feel good. So...

08:09:56:05

Q

What was he like as a kid in your class?

08:10:00:20

A

Uh. He was average. I remember one morning, he came to school and he came up to my desk and he said, 'Miss Myers, I have a story; I have a secret to tell you. And I said, 'Well, Milton, what is it?'

08:10:20:18

And he said, 'But you can't tell anybody.' And I said, 'Okay, I won't tell anybody; what is it?' And he said, 'I'm going to get a baby sister.' They were adopting a little girl and that was his little sister. Uh, huh. He had to share it with his teacher (huh, huh) so...

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08:10:38:15

Q

That's great. Um, let's see... What was the area like during your years of teaching; the surrounding area. Was it mostly farm land or...?

08:10:54:09

A

Yes, it was, uh huh. We had one grocery store up on the corner where there's still a grocery store and, uh, we had one filling station down the street down here. Um, the town itself hasn't changed very much.

08:11:11:23

There used to be ditches down here along the other side of the street. And, uh, they had tile to drain to the creek. And in the winter time, those would freeze over. And that's where we learned to ice skate, on those ditches over there. That was fun.

08:11:31:13

Q

Do you have brothers and sisters?

08:11:34:03

A

Yeah. I have, uh... I was the oldest of six children--three boys and three girls. I have one sister still living in Florida. And Stan Strimple's sister, his wife, is my younger sister, is what I meant to say.

08:11:59:12

Q

Um...gosh, let's see. Do you have, um, any other good stories about your students? Do you recall any good things, er, funny things that happened in your classroom?

08:12:09:04

A

Um... I'll tell you about somebody we had on the Board of Education, who's name was Albert English. And, uh, he was on the School Board. And, he thought it was his duty to come twice a year and visit the teachers.

08:12:30:19

And, uh, I remember one time he came and he was in my room looking around. He wanted to know why I had my map case above the boards in the back of the room. And, I said because I want the North facing the North, and the East facing the East, and so forth. Well, he didn't think they belonged back there.

08:12:56:25

He said in all the time he went to school, the maps were always in the front of the room so they could pull them down and the children could see them. I said, well what do you think they're going to do if I bring them back here?

08:13:10:06

He only had to find fault with something. So, he said, well, he wanted those maps put back in the front of the room. And I said okay, you put them up there if you want to. So, he put them up there and the next time he came, they were back there again and he never even noticed it. (Laughter) Oh, dear.

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08:13:31:28

Q

Was it his job to come and just evaluate you, or is that what he was supposed to do?

08:13:37:07

A

I guess so. Uh huh, yeah.

08:13:38:24

Q

(Laughter.) Oh my gosh. Let's see... Tell us about what happened when you heard Fernald was going to be built. They called it, I guess, the atomic plant.

08:13:52:02

A

Well, I was teaching at Oak Hill at that time. And, I was on my way home from school and I had my radio on. And, I heard it and I started to cry, and I cried all the way home.

08:14:07:26

I hated to think of these people who had all these good farms around here, were giving up those farms. Now, I don't know whether they were taken or, what do they call that? Eminent domain? I didn't know that, but I knew the people who lived there, and I thought it was a shame to take that farm ground.

08:14:33:08

But, the atomic plant came; and they didn't hire many people from around here. In fact, I don't know of anybody in this little town that worked there. But, they took the land and built the place and they just bent over backward to make themselves known and wanted here. And they, they've been nothing but an asset to the community.

08:15:09:03

Course, now the land is going to be... I don't know what they're going to do with that, but, eh. No, the, the atomic plant has been a blessing to the community, really. A lot of people around here got good jobs there.

08:15:27:18

Q

When you first heard it on the radio, how did they word it? How did they say it?

08:15:35:25

A

I don't remember that. I just know that they told about the farmers whose places were going to be used. And, uh. But I just thought oh, that would be something here that would be a lot of traffic and a lot of problems that could happen around a new factory that way. But none of that ever happened; everything went very smoothly, I think. And, as I say, a lot of people got jobs there, got good jobs.

08:16:12:02

Q

Did, eh, did you know what the purpose was... uh, what purpose did you think the plant was going to

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have?

08:16:24:26

A

Well...a lot of people thought they were going to manufacture things for war: guns and things of that kind. Because, people were guessing, you know, people were just guessing. I don't know, the government certainly didn't do any harm to this part of the country. As I said, a lot of people got good jobs over there.

08:16:57:16

Q

And, uh, what was your impression of the way the government handled land procurement for Fernald? Did you know any of the farmers who lost their land?

08:17:10:21

A

I knew several of the farmers, but the details I did not know. That was never discussed with the public that I know of. I have no idea what they paid, what they got paid for their land or anything. But they did take some of the good farming ground around here. Now, the question is, what will happen to it?

08:17:33:01

Q

Um, did you watch the building of the plant at all? Did you watch it go up?

08:17:41:02

A

Oh, yes.

08:17:41:28

Q

Tell us some of your impressions of that.

08:17:44:01

A

It looked awfully big and, uh, but... Other than that, we didn't, of course it set back so that you couldn't see it, you know. It was just something that you passed on the way to Hamilton. (Laughter.) Really.

08:18:05:11

Q

Did you ever discuss it with your friends and neighbors as it was being built? What it might be and what it might be used for?

08:18:15:03

A

No, not really; uh, uh.. No. We just accepted it.

08:18:19:09

Q

And, eh, how did it help America to have Fernald there?

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08:18:28:00

A

Well, that's hard to say. Eh, I, I don't know. I just, I just can't say how they've helped, outside of giving people good jobs. I, I've been over there several times. You know they've had, invited the public and took them around and showed them the plant.

08:19:11:03

They were very neighborly with us, and I, I went to those. Enjoyed them. And, uh, I think that, eh, they've been an asset to the community, really. It's going to be interesting now to see what happens to the ground.

08:19:29:28

Q

So you toured Fernald a couple of times?

08:19:34:05

A

Oh, yes, more than that.

08:19:35:19

Q

Heh, heh. Tell us about some of those tours.

08:19:37:14

A

Well, we'd go and we'd meet, and then they'd take us on a bus and take us around through the plant and explain to us what they were doing. And, uh, just make a nice afternoon for us. Yeah.

08:19:52:07

Q

What were your impressions of the, of the happenings on the plant at the time?

08:19:58:22

A

Well, we, you, um, uh. It was usually on the weekends, you know. It wasn't when the plant was really running, so you didn't know too much about that.

08:20:11:20

But, uh, they would explain to us, as we took this little bus tour around, what the different places were, but that was about all. It was foreign to us, huh, huh. You know.

08:20:26:25

But there were several people around here that worked there. And, uh, I know at first there were questions about whether they were going to be safe or not; but that was washed away because people knew that it was safe and it didn't create too many traffic problems around here except during the school bus times.

08:20:57:22

You know, sometimes they would have a little conflict there; but, no, everything went rather smoothly, I

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thought.

08:21:08:13

Q

Now the people that you mentioned before that worked there, did you know them personally?

08:21:13:01

A

Yes.

08:21:13:29

Q

Um, did they ever talk about their jobs at all?

08:21:16:04

A

No, no. Hum.

08:21:21:14

Q

Okay.

08:21:24:08

A

My sister-in-law worked there until they closed, and she never talked about her job. Uh, uh. And we never asked.

08:21:33:09

Q

Was that mainly because of secrecy, or ...?

08:21:37:28

A

I don't think so, I think it was just, you know, just lack of interest.

08:21:44:06

Q

And, uh, did you hear about all the media coverage in the late 1980's? There was a lot of media coverage about the dust collector leak out at Plant 9 and how they were letting uranium out into the environment. Did, did you hear about that at all, living in the area?

08:22:03:23

A

No, not unless it was in the newspaper; I may have read it, but I don't even remember it.

08:22:11:14

Q

Um, hum.

08:22:12:17

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A
No.

08:22:16:00

Q
I think it worried a lot more people in Cincinnati than it did people in the actual outlying areas.

08:22:20:03

A
No, we didn't.

08:22:21:13

Q
Ha, ha. Cause, like Donahue came to town and did a whole program on it and everything; so that's interesting that, that where you were didn't really impact you. Um, you mentioned before about um, the future land use. What would you like to see that land go for?

08:22:41:26

A
I've given that a lot of thought. Sometimes I think maybe the people who had their land taken, if they want, would want it back, that they could make some kind of arrangement that they could buy it back if they wanted to. I don't know whether that would work or not. Probably not...

08:23:07:20

But, eh, evidently they felt that there were some dangers there, because they're hauling some of that top soil away, I understand. So, if that's taken away, I'm sure it will be safe. But, eh, I don't know what they can use it for, really.

08:23:32:22

Uh, I would think that some company might want to buy that and they could sell it. But, to turn it back to the people that owned it before, they've already been paid for it. So, I can't see any reason why they should turn it back. They, they were compensated for that and I imagine they got a pretty good price for it.

08:24:03:05

So, uh, I don't know. And then they talk about having a, a burial ground there for the Indians. Well, that has some logic to it, too. But they didn't take it away from the Indians. I don't know, I just... I don't know, I don't know whether that would be, uh... a good place to occupy now or not. You just don't know.

08:24:40:29

But the top soil is all supposed to be hauled away that, that have any danger to it. But, uh, I don't know whether that's going to be sold or what they're going to do with it. Isn't there a meeting tonight about that?

08:25:02:22

Q
Yes, there is. It's a future land use meeting. Are you planning on attending that meeting?

08:25:07:49

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A

I'd kind of like to. Yeah, it's over at the school, I believe.

08:25:10:13

Q

Um, hum. And, there is some talk about building a museum on that area. Does that make sense to you? Or how would you feel about a museum there?

08:25:18:29

A

What would they put in a museum?

08:25:23:04

Q

I guess they're talking about a, a lot of the Cold War history. Some of the machinery that they used is of historical value and, uh, the actual process itself is interesting cause they refined uranium there.

08:25:37:27

So... Just the workers themselves, um. Dad worked there for five years and it just seems like a family. A lot of those workers have been there, some of them for over 40 years. And, uh, it's changed a lot over the years and, of course, now we're in the clean up stages and everything.

08:25:54:23

And, uh, they've discussed, you know, just sort of a Cold War memorabilia (laughter) kind of thing. Which is... And that's another question I wanted to ask you. How do you feel the cold war touched your community here?

08:26:12:15

A

Very little. Practically nil.

08:26:17:28

Q

And when you were teaching in school, what types of things would you cover as far as anything that would relate to the Cold War; the arms race with Russia, and those kinds of things?

08:26:29:07

A

Nothing. Nothing. Fourth graders weren't ready for that.

08:26:37:16

Q

When you taught... Did you teach history at all?

08:26:39:29

A

Um, um. (Shook head back and forth to indicate a negative answer.)

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08:26:42:06

Q

You didn't? Did you teach a specific subject?

08:26:44:01

A

No, I had... All of it!

08:26:49:15

Q

So it was like sort of reading-writing-arithmetic kind of things?

08:26:51:15

A

Uh, huh.

08:26:51:29

Q

Course you had fourth graders. I guess they really don't teach that kind of history until you get more like into seventh or eighth grade.

08:26:59:12

A

Yeah..

08:26:59:09

Q

Let's back up just a little bit. I'd like to go into, um, the history of the area again before the plant was here. And, um, you mentioned you had brothers and sisters and... Did you grow up on a farm?

08:27:15:10

A

No. I grew up on the other street over here.

08:27:20:05

Q

Okay.

08:27:21:00

A

We had a farm, but, uh, we didn't live on it. It was up... Part of our farm was in Miami Whitewater Park. Yeah. My dad was a fruit grower, uh, a fruit farmer. And he raised bees, had bees. He raised bees to pollinate his fruit. So, that was what we as... It was up, up upon that hill, part of it's in Miami Whitewater Park now.

08:27:50:15

Q

I heard a story about your dad and the bees. (Laughter) Tell us that story about your dad and the bees.

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08:27:56:18

A

Now, which one was that?

08:27:59:19

Q

Uh, how he moved them when he first got them.

08:28:03:11

A

Oh. Um, uh, there was a man who lived here in New Haven and had, had the bees. Uh, he kept them up here along the creek, up close to where the Hock-s farm is. And, uh, he-d go up there every day and take care of his bees and fool around with them.

08:28:25:27

And, he died. Well, he lived with his sister, and she didn-t know anything about bees and she didn-t want to know, so she decided she-d sell them. Well, my dad didn-t know anything about bees either, but he had the fruit farm and he thought that they needed the bees, so he bought them.

08:28:44:18

And then he moved them at night on a wagon pulled to, by a team of horses and, they had to go down this little road down over a creek and then up around the hill and we stood... They did it at night and we stood out in our yard over on the other street and listened to the wagon going up the hill with the bees.

08:29:09:03

And, oh, and, my Dad just got so interested in those bees. And, on Sunday morning, he-d go up to his bees up on top of that hill, and just sit up there and watch them work. And he just loved them. He loved bees now that-s a strange thing to say, but he did. He just was really fascinated with them, and eh, so we had honey. Laughter.

08:29:38:01

And in the winter time, they had honey in the great big cans and it would go to sugar, you know, well that was our Christmas candy. Laughter. Those bees had made the honey. He sold honey in big cans, and, it was really a nice thing, so...

08:29:55:08

And it pollinated the fruit, too. Yup! That was an experiment. He, he learned that from scratch; he never had been around bees.

09:01:00:05

Q

Um, you mentioned a log cabin across the street.

09:01:12:13

A

Yeah, uh. There was a log cabin there; a one room log cabin no, but, it had two stories. And, uh, the upstairs had small windows. And, uh, but it was a log cabin. But they had built around it and covered it up. So, uh, this young man across the street bought that corner when he bought the place next door.

09:01:46:15

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And, uh, he, he wanted to get rid of that log cabin, so he gave it to the Historical Society. And they took it down piece by piece, and numbered it. And they've taken it and have stored it. And, now it's going to be put together again up here on the uh, community lot up by the fire house.

09:01:15:20

They've already started and they're waiting now to find some more logs for the foundation. And, uh, so that log cabin is going to be reconstructed up there. It'll be interesting for the children.

09:02:30:05

And, uh, so a lot of people didn't even know the log cabin was there; it was all covered up, you know. And when they started taking it down they found it, why, they were amazed to find that this, there was a log cabin that close around and they didn't even know it.

09:02:52:00

So, it'll be something for history. So,

09:02:53:19

Q

That's neat. Wow! When are they going to do that? Is that soon?

09:03:01:00

A

Well, they're working on it now. I don't know; the men work on it whenever they have free time, I guess. It's a hit or miss thing; why, you know.

09:03:09:07

Q

Wow! That's neat. (Cough) When, um, when you were a child, what kind of things did you do to amuse yourselves in the area?

09:03:21:08

A

Well, (laughter). I remember, we always had a dog (laugh). We used to hitch our dog up to our little wagon (laugh). I remember that. And, uh, just played hide-and-seek and all those crazy games that kids played in those days.

09:03:44:27

Huh, I remember when I was teaching, one of the things the kids liked to do was to play ball over the toilets (laugh), outside toilets. They'd throw the balls back and forth over the toilets and, uh, (laughter). We had two; one on each side of the playground, you know, one for the boys and one for the girls.

09:04:11:00

I remember, one time, I had a little boy; he had to be excused, and, uh (laughter). He didn't return when I thought he should, so I started looking for him. And, I went around the toilet and I heard him yelling. And, the toilets had, um guards around them so the kids couldn't look in.

09:04:39:01

And, uh, I went around there and I called him. And he answered me. Well, I was standing on the outside and I thought he'd fallen in. Scared me to death!

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT

Transcript

09:04:57:00

All at once, I realized he was, had climbed in the top of the tree, and, that day, we were supposed to have a ball game. And, uh, the kids from Mount Hope were supposed to come over and play our kids a game of ball.

09:05:12:28

And, the boys had gone up here to a farm and taken some, uh, they call them gunny sacks, and put, uh, straw, all the farmers had straw stacks, you know, when they work on their wheat. So, they went up there and they stuffed those bags with straw for the bases, and, uh, this little boy...

09:05:41:03

Well, we went back into our room, until it was time for the ball game. And, this little boy went to the toilet, and on the way out, why he had picked up one of those bags, and he didn't come back and he didn't come back, so I went out and called him.

09:05:56:09

His name was Earl. I kept calling and pretty soon, he answered me. And I thought he was in that toilet. He's fallen. Here, he had taken that bag and had crawled up in the tree with the bag, and he was afraid to come down.

09:06:11:19

And then I had to go and get one of the eighth grade boys to go up and help him out of the tree. (Laugh).

09:06:19:26

Q

(Laugh). That's great. Why did you decide to become a teacher?

09:06:25:12

A

Well, I, I was going to be a nurse and my sister wanted to be a teacher. Well, it turned out I was the teacher and she was the nurse. So, (laugh), I don't know how it ever happened, but we switched.

09:06:41:09

She's now in a retirement home in Florida. But she was, uh, she was a nurse for several years. So... But I'm awfully glad I took what I did (laugh) cause I didn't like to be around sick people. Yeah...

09:07:00:05

Q

It was more fun to be around kids, right?

09:07:02:13

A

Oh, yes, yeah.

09:07:04:12

Q

Can you think of any other stories of your, uh, the children in your classrooms? Those are great! I love those stories>

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

09:07:13:27

A

I had a little boy one time that, he got a B.B. gun for Christmas. And, you know how kids are, they have to see how everything works. And, uh, he was just a small kid then; he was in the first or second grade then. I don't know which.

09:07:40:06

But anyway, uh, his brother had got the B.B. gun; he didn't. But the boy set the B.B. gun down on the floor, and this little boy came and looked down in the barrel and the brother pulled the trigger and shot his eye out.

09:07:58:11

So, he went to the hospital, to Hamilton Mercy Hospital, and he kept crying for his teacher. So, his parents came and got me and took me to the hospital to see the little boy. And I'll never forget seeing that little fellow there with that eye gone.

09:08:17:24

He eventually got an artificial eye and, so, he was fine. But, I'll never forget that. Things like that stay in your mind, too, you know.

09:08:29:21

And we used to take the kids to the zoo every year. We'd get the school bus to take us. That was a job, too. But, we did; we took them to the zoo.

09:08:47:00

And, because of the lunch program that I told you about that started the, uh, the Mother's Club, PTA it would be called now, but they called it the Mother's Club then. And that was, that was really great because they did so many things for us that we couldn't have done by ourselves.

09:09:09:16

So, if you ever have a chance to go to a PTA, go. (Laugh).

09:09:17:20

Q

How many kids were usually in your classroom?

09:09:20:24

A

Uh, I think I had, uh, as high as thirty at one time. I think that's the most I ever had.

09:09:27:04

Q

I can imagine ushering thirty kids to the zoo downtown, (laughter), on a bus. That would be a lot. Um...

09:09:38:11

A

We lost one, one time.

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

09:09:39:29

Q

Oh, no. What happened?

09:09:41:01

(Laugh). We thought we did. Uh, this family had just moved into the, uh, the territory, and this little girl hadn't gone to our school, but she'd gotten acquainted to a neighbor girl and, she knew we were going to the zoo so she came and went to the zoo with us.

09:09:58:01

And, that night, we were sitting down to dinner; my husband and I; and we had a call from the police department in Cincinnati, wanting to know if I knew this little girl. And, I said, yeah, I think I do.

09:10:09:11

And, he told me her name and I said, yeah, I think she was a new one to our school today. And, he said, well, we've got her down here at the police station; she got on the wrong bus. So, I had to go to Cincinnati and get that little girl (laugh) at the police station.

09:10:23:20

I went right to her mother first to tell her what had happened, so, and then I went on to Cincinnati and got her and brought her home. She was scared to death. Poor little thing, she cried until she couldn't cry anymore.

09:10:36:17

She just got on the wrong bus, that's all. She got on with kids... Why, I always wondered why the teacher on the other bus didn't do something about it, but she didn't. She called the police and let 'em take her down to the police station. (Laughter). So, that girl never forgot that, either. (Laugh).

09:10:57:00

Q

That would be scary.

09:10:58:07

A

Yeah.

09:10:59:10

Q

Um, let's see; what else can I ask you here. Now, you were, uh, brother-in-law, worked at Fernald briefly in the early 50's? Did you know much about what he did there, or...

09:11:17:18

A

No, not really. Uh, um.

09:11:20:21

Q

Did he every tell you much about what went on at Fernald? Or...

09:11:24:23

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

A
Um, um.

09:11:24:24

Q
He drove an ambulance, right?

09:11:26:15

A
I don't really know. My sister-in-law worked there, too, for several years.

09:11:33:07

Q
Um, hum.

09:11:33:17

A
Mary Washmuth. And her husband, I think, worked there, too. That's where they met.

09:11:44:07

Q
Okay. Uh, let's see. Did uh, any of your students, a lot of your students, did any of their parents work at Fernald, do you know?

09:11:57:10

A
Very few. I can't think of any right now. I have a nephew that's working there now, but he lives in Bright, Indiana. We have, uh, some traffic that you can know it's time for the atomic plant to be shutting down, but not very many. No, the atomic plant, I don't think they've been anything but good for the community, really.

09:12:42:14

People imagined all sorts of things you know, at the beginning, but, uh, and the people who sold, who sold their ground, I think got a pretty good price for it. But somebody said they should give it back to the Indians.

09:13:08:20

Well, the Indians; how would you find the Indians that was connected with it? There was a good many of years between the time that the Indians were here and the people that sold it, sold the ground.

09:13:28:14

Since they, were even involved in it, so, I don't see why the Indians would have any claim to it. Are you going to that meeting tonight?

09:13:46:20

Q
I might be there. Yeah. It depends on how it goes for the rest of the day at work. I have to figure what goes on. I know that, uh, I think Jim's going to be there.

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

09:13:55:05

A
I think he is.

09:13:57:08

Q
Yeah; he's definitely planning on going, being there.

09:13:59:08

A
Um, hum.

09:13:59:25

Q
It should be an interesting meeting. I know they're going to talk a lot about the future land use. Gosh, I think I've asked you every thing I can. Um, did you have anything you wanted to add?

09:14:12:10

A
No, not really; but this has been quite an experience (laughter) for me. (More laughter). What are you going to do with this now?

09:14:22:16

Q
Tum, your interview, in it's entirety, goes into our Public Information Education Center so people that are interested in doing some research about the area, can come in and look at your interview. And, uh, that's where all our interviews are going.

09:14:38:11

And, uh, it's a possibility that down the road, we may be putting together some kind of a documentary about the area. And if there is a museum on that site, you know we've been talking about possibly they might build a museum there. We're going to try to put together a program with everyone's uh, remembrances that you can go and sit down, like in a theater, or something and watch it.

09:14:59:02

A
Um, hum.

09:14:59:18

Q
We're hoping that that happens.

09:15:00:16

A
Have you seen our new building?

09:15:04:01

Q
No.

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

09:15:04:19

A

The Community Building?

09:15:05:02

Q

That, that was dedicated Sunday, wasn't it?

09:15:07:15

A

Uh, huh. We had an awfully nice program there, just, just lovely.

09:15:13:19

Q

Oh, good.

09:15:13:03

A

Just over here on Willey Road.

09:15:16:14

Q

Um, hum. Yeah; I think we supplied some support for that because they did some speeches and stuff. Well, how did that come about? How did the new Community Center come about? Um, I, I don't know that much about it.

09:15:37:00

A

Well, we needed something, and, uh, we worked hard and, uh, we built this building right up here on, what is that road? Right up here out of town? Anyway, and uh, we were using that for our meetings, our Senior Citizens.

09:15:57:26

And, we got so big that we couldn't have any more members. And, so, we began pushing for a, another building. And, we got it. We just had the dedication Sunday. And, it's really nice; it's really nice.

09:16:17:26

The Police Department and the Fire Department are still up there, so it's still being used, but... We just needed more space and, um. So, we're real happy about it.

09:16:39:08

Q

That's great. Does it have a pool?

09:16:43:12

A

Have a what?

09:16:44:01

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

Q
Pool?

09:16:44:23

A
No.

09:16:45:07

Q
Someone said that they thought it had a pool. And I said , I don't think it did. (Laughter). Well thank you so much for your time. I appreciate...