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Transcript

Name: Lou & Bob Brewsaugh

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Tape FLHP0241

02:01:01

Q:

First of all if you can one by one, I guess we'll start with you, if you can give me your name and spell it.

Lou A:

My name is Louis Brewsaugh, and my first name is L-O-U-I-S, last name is B-R-E-W-S-A-U-G-H.

Q:

Okay, Bobby.

Robert A:

My name is Robert Brewsaugh, first name is R-O-B-E-R-T, and last name is B-R-E-W-S-A-U-G-H.

02:01:27

Great, and ah, first of all if you could tell us a little bit about ah, the background of your family. Um, how much you know about the background of your family before, you know, ah, well, you know in the early days.

Robert A:

Well, the background of the family is, it goes back to France and in those days you had of course the King and there was certain people that were in government and the man we are descendant from was named Brissot, B-R-I-S-S-O-T. And so then in 1793 he faced the other fraction of the government and the people went to that group of people, I mean went to the other guy and ah, so they guillotined him, 1793.

02:02:17

Robert A:

So the family ran for their lives, the whole family, and they came to the United States. When they left there they made; the name was B-R-E-A-U-S-A-U-X. And then when they got here, they knew men was sent after them to try to kill them, and so they spelled it many different ways. The family started scattering then and ah, so our part of it they ended up with B-R-U-S-A-U-G-H and later that was finally changed to B-R-E-W-S-A-U-G-H which was German to try to throw them off even more.

02:02:52

Robert A:

See, they had no way to know that the King of France was dead, in fact the men that were sent to kill them didn't know it. And ah, so, anyway the Brewsaughs then finally married into the Boone family. So that's how that came about.

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Q:

Great, and in your experience were, I know one of you was born, which one was born in the train station?

02:03:17

Lou A:

I was born in the train station at Fernald.

Q:

Can you tell me a little bit about ah, your early remembrances of the train station.

02:03:25

Lou A:

I was born there January 25, 1938, and they said that when I was born that day that there was a blizzard that was going at the time. And ah, of course, you mean, when I was young I remember a train station that was in the middle of the tracks and ah, the ah, at the end of the train station on the lower side there was a water ah, metal water tower there.

02:03:53

Lou A:

The sliding tracks went behind the station, so we was really in the middle of the tracks. And ah, during that time, I remember the passenger trains were stopped there and they were steam operated passenger trains.

Lou A:

And ah, (clears throat) the ah, I spent a lot of time in the office with my Dad when, you know, when he was running the trains and things like that. When he was doing telegraphy on the phone and all that kind of stuff and I was out in front of the stations a lot when the trains come rumbling through.

02:04:25

Lou A:

And ah, we had living quarters in ah, the station which was, the Chesapeake and Ohio was one of the, the few railroads in the United States that offered living quarters to the people that worked for them, like the agents, and stuff.

02:04:42

Lou A:

And my bedroom was right next to the track within probably about 15 feet from where the station set to, to the main line and at night we'd be in there sleeping and them trains would come rumbling through. I remember that, and I remember the pump at the end station there that we'd go out and get water out of the pump and we'd bring it in the house and that's the only way we had the water.

02:05:05

Lou A:

And ah, course ah, all the other facilities which was the ah, restroom facilities was out back, just an outhouse. And they had an outhouse for the passengers and they had an outhouse for of course for the family that lived there.

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02:05:20

Lou A:

And then right next to it they had a coal shed that where my Dad and I would go out and get the coal and bring in and we'd fire the stoves which ah, in the office they had a potbelly stove and that stove in the office. And in the house we had a warm morning stove in there, which was still coal, fired stove.

02:05:37

Lou A:

And ah, we'd bring, Mom ah (clears throat) Mom would raise chickens down behind the, behind the garage it was all the way down, and ah, well my Dad raised them too and we'd, and Mom would clean the chickens like on Saturdays, I'd go out there help her.

02:05:53

Lou A:

And sometimes Bobby would go there too and help her and ah, so what, that's how we, you know, we also hunted rabbits around the area and things like that and we'd, you got all our staples and everything from Lacey's Groceries and from Hayhurst Store and everything. So that ah, was what our live existence was there.

02:06:14

Q:

Wow, now you were a little older when ah, when you moved into the station, is that right?

Robert A:

Right.

Q:

How old were you when you moved into the station?

02:06:22

Robert A:

I was three days shy of being six-years-old.

Q:

And what are your remembrances of the early years of living at the station?

02:06:29

Robert A:

The earliest thing I remember is when I walked into it I'd never been into anything like it and ah, like I said, we moved in there on August 20, 1932, three days shy of my 6th birthday. And stand there and watch the trains go by, it was a different experience.

02:06:48

Robert A:

And like Louie was talking about the chickens and so forth, we raised hogs. We always raised four or five hogs and we had tame rabbits, which we raised. We raised ducks and ah, we had a little bit of everything; game chickens, and, and bannin chickens both, long feather chicken.

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Q:

Now what was it like to live right next to the tracks like that? Did you guys ever get any sleep or (laughing)?

Lou A:
We got.

Robert A:
You never noticed it.

Lou A:
You got used to it.

Robert A:
You never noticed it.

Lou A:
Yeah.

02:07:17

Robert A:
I never, I never was ah, having any problems with it even when we first moved in.

Lou A:
I can sleep right through noise now it doesn't bother me cause, you know, you get used to it. Oh, I'd wake up in the middle of the night, I'd hear a train coming through and I'd kind of wake up, you done it too, haven't you (directed to Robert)? You'd kind of wake up and just kind of, I'd listen, I'd just lay there in bed and listen to the trains, you know, when the engine comes thundering through, you know, boy she'd make a racket, you know.

02:07:42

Lou A:
But ah, then when the cars, after the engine passed and all the thumping of the engine on the tracks. See when they come through them drivers was slinging down they would, it would thump as it come through. And ah, so then after that it was nothing but clinkety-clack, clinkety-clack, clinkety-clack. That was it, put you back to sleep.

02:08:01

Robert A:
Now it was nothing for our Dad to handle train orders like, if he'd get three engines. Now here's a man missing his right arm and missing his left eye and he has these ah, they were hooks in those days. This is before the string change orders came out and he would ponk, ponk, ponk, catch all three of 'em.

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02:08:23

Robert A:

And there was some times when he'd have another engine deadheading, when he nailed four of 'em like that. And Bob Schwing ah, the guy that belongs to our historical society, he can attest to that fact.

Lou A:

Now Bobby was talking about the ah, (microphone interference) the string ah, hooks that came along after the, after the hook or what do you call them (directed to Robert) the hook?

Robert A:

Yeah, railroad hooks.

02:08:46

Lou A:

Ah, then they came along, what it was, it was ah, like a Y or like a V rather, and it was on a pole. And it had a order, it had a string on it and they would turn that string, wind it up and put the string, the order in it.

Lou A:

And when they'd come along they'd snag at it, the engineer would snag it off of the engine with his arm out like that (arm extended out) and ah, they would show down to like about 35 miles an hour when they'd do that. Coming through there so, and after he'd pick up the order and he'd read the orders and then he'd go on.

02:09:17

Robert A:

But when they had the ah, when they had the _____ they fire-balled it. They were flying. There'd been trains come through there 80 and 85 miles an hour, coming off of that hill from Dent, Ohio.

Q:

So was that mainly freight or a lot of passenger trains that came through.

Lou A:

Both, I guess we had probably, what five, six passenger trains a day (directed at Robert)? Probably five, I'd say, I'm not for sure about the numbers.

02:09:42

Robert A:

Um, I was at home very little during in daytime. I was always working or else in school, from the time I was a little kid on.

Lou A:

It was at least two passenger trains a day. Sometimes it was more than that, it all depend, sometimes they'd run specials through and ah, but they had one, one train in the morning and then usually you'd have about two in the afternoon. And one would be; one going through in the morning usually go; would be going towards Chicago.

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02:10:06

Lou A:

And two of 'em in the afternoon would be coming through, one get, come through about 11:00 going to Cincinnati, and then be one come through about 4:00.

Q:

So how much contact did you have with the people who were passengers on the train? Did they ever stop at the.

Lou A:

Oh, yeah, they had to.

Q:

What kind of people were traveling back then?

02:10:24

Lou A:

Oh, well, when I was a kid ah, there was people traveling like ah, a lot of people was in the war, you know, during the ah, a lot of GI's. Ah, lot of ave-, you know, average people that back in those days 1940's. And ah, I was a kid during, they had waiting room in there, a passenger waiting room.

Lou A:

So Dad would sell 'em the ticket for the train and then when the train would stop and they would board the trains and then they'd go on. That's the way it worked. So it just worked like a regular train station.

02:10:55

Robert A:

See for young kids we had quite an experience because um, my Dad would have railroad passes for us and we could travel the railroad. Pretty neat.

Q:

Where'd you go?

Robert A:

Oh, like Indiana, well for us it was mainly relation, different parts of Indiana. As you go on up towards _____ and so forth (Lou A: yeah). And ah, anyway there was no facilities so far as food or anything and if you were going by yourself or something, Mom would fix you a chicken dinner and, you know, just pieces of chicken and some bread, and so forth.

02:11:26

Robert A:

And ah, you would sit there and watch the world go by. I mainly liked to stand in the back of the coach and watch the track get narrower as it, wanders on down.

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Lou A:

Now, Mom, when ah, when I was in school, Mom would usually go down to Staunton, Virginia. And ah, that's where she was from, Staunton Virginia, and I would go down with her in the spring, I'd get, take spring break. And we'd go to Cincinnati and now we wasn't catching the train there at the station, but we'd go to Cincinnati and then we'd go to Staunton Virginia down there and stay, then we would come back.

02:12:02

Lou A:

Now I, then later on in the summer at least once during the summer, sometimes twice, I'd get on the train and I'd go to Muncie. And then sometimes, now as I got older then Bobby would come and pick me up in his Chevrolet and bring me back, and sometimes I'd come back on the train, but usually you'd come and pick me up, didn't ya (directed to Robert)?

Robert A:

Hmm-hmm.

02:12:20

Lou A:

So, I was up there, see ah, Mom's people moved from Virginia to Muncie, Indiana so, this is where my Dad met Mom at, was at Muncie, Indiana. So, that's where she was from. Now Dad was from Corinth, Kentucky and ah, he ah, lost his arm, just tell a few things about him.

02:12:43

Lou A:

He lost his arm when he was about 14-years-old and he was on ah, had a threshing machine accident where, where it was a steam engine it was threshing; and he fell underneath of it and it cut his arm off. And ah, so then he went on to telegrapher's school and he was born in 18_____.

Robert A:

He was born in 1891.

02:13:04

Lou A:

1891.

Robert A:

March 2nd.

Lou A:

Okay, he's more on the dates than I am. He was born in 19, ah, and anyway when he cut his arm off, then he finished high school back there in that time, which is almost unheard of during those, that was like a college education, so he went to telegraphy school in Chicago.

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02:13:20

Lou A:

And he learnt telegraphy and his first job was at Molead, Moline (Robert A: Illinois) Illinois, that was his first job, was it third shift or second shift (directed to Robert)? I don't remember which he done.

Robert A:

Well, he did, he did ah, fill in down there at Corinth a little bit before he went down there.

02:13:39

Lou A:

But his actual job, his first job was there. I think he said he went to work on second shift, didn't he (directed to Robert)?

Robert A:

I don't know ah, generally it was with these guys.

Lou A:

Well, he, right so, anyway that's how he got into railroading. That's how he became an agent and so he railroaded for, if I'm right about the numbers, it's 57 years, wasn't it (directed to Robert)?

Robert A:

Close to it.

02:14:01

Lou A:

Fifty-seven years, he retired at 75 from the Chesapeake on the Ohio Railroad Chicago Division and he was oldest agent on the Chicago division at the time he retired. And that year was?

Robert A:

Ah, 19, 1965 before Mom died.

Lou A:

1965.

02:14:20

Q:

Tell me a little about the telegrapher's equipment. What did it look like, how did it work?

Lou A:

That's his department (pointing at Robert). I'm mean I'm familiar with it but he's more familiar with it.

Robert A:

(Laughing) You have the key, and then you have the, I don't know what the other parts called, at the, that actually makes the clicking. See, and you have a little switch where you can open and close the circuit. And you open the circuit in order to send and then you close it and the other guy will send to

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you. About a 100 years ago I did know the code, but ah, from the service and this that and the other. But ah, not now.

02:14:55

Q:

How fast could your Dad read messages?

Robert A:

Oh, anybody that wanted to send to him, that was it, he had it. He was really sharp. He was so sharp that even with the one arm and one eye, he would go to Peru, Indiana and when they'd go on vacation and he worked the chief train dispatcher's job. In fact, they had, they wanted him to take it over one time and he says, "No." He says, "With the animals I raise and everything."

02:15:26

Robert A:

He says, "I'm ahead just as much money wise and I'm much happier. I don't want it." They actually asked him to take that. That's were you have all these yards in all like in Cincinnati only much bigger, ya know. And, here it was, he could handle anything that came up. And like I told you before, he actually could, just with his head, just reading and getting the figures, he, he was faster than most people'd be with a calculator.

02:15:55

Robert A:

Just his head, that's all he used – just real fast.

Q:

Wow. That's amazing. Um, tell me a little bit about the community at the time. Um, what was it like, what was school like, what were your friends like?

02:16:13

Lou A:

Well, the community was as the town almost stands today, uh, which I noticed they was renovating the Hayhurst store down there as far as I can tell. Is that true (directed off camera)? I think. I mean they're doing something down there. But anyway the elevator, the Coop elevator was a lot higher than it was after they built it uh. They tore the top down since they sold it off since they don't use the elevator.

02:16:40

Lou A:

Then Benny Coursin's, Coursin's elevator there. Uh, the original elevator was why the rail-, was why the railroad was built there in the first place. Is that correct (directed off camera)? I keep asking Jim. But uh, that was there, then the Coop elevator, then the Hayhurst store and then Cecil had a gas station there which was a Gulf gas station. Then behind that he had a garage.

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02:17:07

Lou A:

So then right next, uh, right next door to them lived uh, I don't remember who originally lived in that house (Robert A: Oh, I, I, that was Sharings). It was Sharings house and then the door, and then the one next door to it? Do you remember?

02:17:20

Robert A:

I don't know because before, you're thinking about that was Mr. White.

02:17:25

Lou A:

Um-hmm (Robert A: Yeah). Then Charlie Ezret lived in the end house down there. Uh, Charlie, Charlie Ezret and uh, the Ezret boys _____. And then, across the road was the elevator and then Coursin's. There was a house there that Coursin's rented. They usually rented to the people that worked for them and uh, that blockhouse there.

02:17:50

Lou A:

And then course then behind there, there was, uh, Coursin's had sold a lot of stuff they had a store like in behind there, a feed mill store. Uh, not only a feed mill but they also sold like lumber and they sold about anything you could get there. You go over and buy a pair of coveralls, you could buy a, a red handkerchief, a blue handkerchief ya know. Stick in your pocket. You could buy a hat.

02:18:12

Lou A:

You could buy gloves. And that sit in behind the house there was like a store. And then right next to that was the Hayhurst's, with that Dave Hayhurst and his wife. And uh, what was her name?

Robert A:

I keep thinking it was Florence--

02:18:26

Lou A:

Yeah, Florence. That's right. And uh, course then all the rest of it was all farm filled around there. And then if you go up the road, Paddy's Run Road there, to the left there was Camel's house. And Mr. and Mrs. Camel lived there, which eventually that house, that house caught on fire and burned down. And then to the right was Corey Scott's house.

02:18:50

Lou A:

And she was a lady that had; she had never been married. She was a schoolteacher, wasn't she?

Robert A:

I believe so.

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Lou A:

I believe she was a schoolteacher. And she lived there in that, that Corey, in the Scott house there. So the chemical plants and all that was not there. There was nothing but a wheat field ya know, like I showed you on the picture. And so that, and as far as the schools uh, I went to school up here at New Haven for four years and then I went to Scott school down there and then I went there for four years.

02:19:25

Lou A:

Or, I went there for three years and then the Crosby Township School was built and I finished my eighth grade there in uh, Crosby Township.

Q:

And what was school like for you?

02:19:37

Robert A:

Oh, I think it was more or less like most people, quite ordinary. And uh, Louie was talking about school; he graduated from Harrison High School in 1956. Didn't want to leave that out. Anyway, I graduated from Scott school that was 1941. In 1945 from Harrison, and 1965 Ohio, Ohio Mechanic's Institute in Cincinnati.

Q:

Now when you guys were kids, what did you guys do for fun?

02:20:09

Robert A:

(Lou laughing) There was no other kids around. You made your own fun. I generally went out in the woods, well in the early part I'd go out with a BB gun and then uh, soon after that I'd go out with a .22 rifle. Spend it that way; take the dog with me. But most of the time I worked. There was so many people around there that wanted you to work.

02:20:30

Robert A:

I, I worked after school a lot of times and everything else. And then I started in quite young driving a truck for Walter Coursin, Walter H. Coursin, delivering feed and everything else.

Q:

What are some of the jobs you did, the after school jobs you did?

02:20:47

Robert A:

Well, there was farm work or else working for Walter Coursin, which was driving, delivering, things like that.

Q:

Who were some of the farmers you did farm work for?

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02:20:59

Robert A:

Uh, Jake Fuchs, Dick Fuchs, and Mr. Crawford and Meade Plotenger especially and uh, Roy Hears. They were the main ones.

Q:

Now before the Fernald site was built the atomic plant uh, did you spend much time in that area up there, in those fields up there?

Robert A:

Oh, yeah

Q:

I know the Fuchs farm was up there (Robert A: Yeah). What was that area like before the site came along?

02:21:32

Lou A:

It was (Robert A: Go ahead). There were uh, uh, Fernald; there's a track that goes up north and makes the curve up around that goes across the bridge there. Uh, the only, the only house that was up there at that time was um, McConell's house (Robert A: Um-hum). And then on the, right after you crossed the trusses there and then up on the other road that was.

02:22:05

Lou A:

Uh, mm, I can't remember that, boy, can't remember the names of 'em. There was another house up there. I can't remember the name of the people that lived in it now. Was their name Farmers? That was their names.

Robert A:

Well that would. Yeah, that was after, that was the time I went in the military.

02:22:20

Lou A:

Yeah, Farmers was their name, I think. Uh, anyway the area up in there where the atomic plant at, there was really nothing up there except it was just uh. If you drive out past the park, out into the park area out here where there's just nothing but cornfields and things like that. That's all that was up there at that time, that particular time.

02:22:40

Lou A:

So when the, when they had started talkin' about putting the atomic plant in, which was like, (Robert A: 1950) they started talkin' probably talkin' 1949 or '50 when they had started talkin' this here. They contacted Dad and told him that they was gonna bring the plant in, or you know, had been talkin' 'bout doing uh, bringing the plant in. So, what they done is, they had him go up and do some research, walkin' research for 'em, you know, things like that there for a railroad.

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02:23:13

Lou A:

So you know, getting the information and everything. And I would go up there with him, and we'd just walk around you know, and he would take and jot down different things and all that. And he would turn it back to the railroad so they would get some kind of an idea what the like you said, the train o' the land was and all that kind o' stuff.

02:23:29

Lou A:

And so he played that kind of a role, as far to getting information for the railroad. Which the railroad talk to government I guess, and all that stuff went on which, eventually, all played the key which probably eventually lead to them making the decision to put the atomic plant where it's at today.

02:23:50

Robert A:

When that chemical plant first came in, wasn't that in the beginning, wasn't that Virginia Carolina Chemical?

02:23:56

Lou A:

Yeah, it was Virginia Carolina Chemical, but that didn't come in until after the atomic plant.

Robert A:

Yeah, but the funny thing was, they did everything possible to buy that ground from Corey Scott. And uh, so they would talk to Corey about it and make no headway at all. My dad told 'em, he says, "I can get that ground for ya." He went and talked to Corey, 'cause we knew her real well, and most people didn't. She was a very, she was to herself, you know, really isolated from people.

02:24:27

Robert A:

And my dad talked to her about it, and told her the advantages and all, that she could have a roof over her head for the rest of her life with that kind o' money, and so forth. And it was 97 acres, and she sold it for a thousand dollars an acre then. And a lot of people I've heard say around here, "Oh, land was selling for you know, big money" you know, compared with that, for those days. It wasn't.

02:24:50

Robert A:

Most o' the ground was selling for 700 to 800 dollars an acre; she got a thousand. And so they were so pleased, I don't know what they gave my dad, but even though he wasn't a real estate man, they did pay him something for that, as a gift. But he could do anything that he wanted to do. He just didn't care to go beyond what he was, because of the way that he was with one arm and one eye. He was content to stay where he was at.

02:25:18

Lou A:

Talkin' 'bout, talkin' 'bout the area up there. Uh, before the atomic plant came in, I had a Wizard motor bike (Robert chuckles). And, not the one you're thinking about (Robert A: I'm thinking about

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the one that was made up). Oh, yeah (both chuckling). That was one that was (Robert A: That was a different story). That was a bad scene over that, I got caught by the police (Robert A: The police got him). Out in the road riding without license, and without, you know, _____.

02:25:46

Robert A:

He tried to get away from 'em, and he went around Corey Scott's barn. And there was nothing there before, and here was this fence facing him, this wire fence.

Lou A:

I was trying to outrun Hamilton County Sheriff (Robert A: And they got him). Sheriff caught me (laughs). Anyway, I was brought back home, and I was, got suspended, you know, for a while. But anyway, now this was a Wizard motor bike, which this was all legal. I could ride it you know, on the highway. And uh, but I'd go up through there, and I'd ride that.

02:26:14

Lou A:

Do you know what a Wizard motor bike is? It was a bicycle, a regular bicycle, and had a motor in the center of it, that drove a belt that drove the rear wheel. Now those things 'd get out and they'd run 45, 40, 45, 50 miles an hour, if ya crank 'em up. And uh, so I used to ride that up through, by, past where the atomic plant and all up around in there, you know.

02:26:36

Lou A:

So uh, those, those days, was out like you say, playing, you know, having a little bit o' fun. A lot o' times we'd go rabbit hunting back in through there wouldn't we? And you know (Robert A: Um hmm). We'd go up in through there and we'd chase snakes and you know, like any other kid. We'd go mushroom hunting back in there and stuff like that, you know.

02:26:54

Lou A:

And uh, the Essert boys, after they had left Fernald, they moved up there in the house that sits right down below where the lady that started the uh, um, wasn't it Crawford? Is that her name, Mrs. Crawford? Where they live at, that's where Charlie Essert lived at. And then the boys, and then Charlie and Johnny, and then the girls which was Charlotte, and uh, I can't remember what the other girl's name was (Robert A: I can't remember).

02:27:24

Lou A:

And then there was the two twins. And uh, so I used to go up there all the time. I used to ride motor bikes or bicycles up there, and we used took 'em up over there, and we used to take and run through the woods you know, like I said. Chasing each other and stuff like that. There was, us boys, we ran all over that place, where the atomic plant is at today, and on into the back towards Fernald there, and on in there.

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02:27:47

Lou A:

So, and then I'd go up there a lot o' times, I'd go up there with Cecil Hayhurst, which is Chuck. And we'd just go up there and just walk around. We'd hunt papaws. You know what papaw is? Used to hunt papaws and things (Robert A: Our dad used to love those things). We used to go blackberry, now Dad and I used to go blackberry, (clears throat) blackberry picking back up towards that area.

02:28:06

Lou A:

Back up in through there a lot o' times, we'd go blackberry picking up in there, and things like that. So there was really nothing there, except, it was just farmland, just rolling, acreage, upon lands, you know – nothing.

Robert A:

Oh, with the group o' kids that I could be with, they were busy working also. But way at the end of the evening, I'm talkin' toward dark. We would hit the creek. And uh, if the creek wasn't deep enough, we would build dams in which the county would have to tear out. Did have to put, we would build dams with ah, _____ and everything and they would put men all the way down through there make sure no farm or anybody got caught. And, when the water would be released before it would go to the ah, big Miami River.

02:28:58

Lou A:

But now then, ah, talking about the creek, we had, up underneath the bridge up there on Willey Road (clears throat) Willey, excuse me, Willey Road up there. Ah, we used to camp up there. The Essert boys and it was ah, I can't think of all the kids used to, we used to go up there and camp all night. We'd build a fire underneath that bridge and we'd camp like hoboes up there, yeah, we done that a lot. Yeah, that was.

02:29:23

Q:

That's great, we need to take a break and ah, switch tapes here.

Tape FLHP0242

03:01:05

Q:

Okay, so you were speaking to me about your high, was that in high school?

Robert A:

Oh, yes.

Q:

When you were in band and stuff. Could you tell me a little bit about those years?

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

03:01:14

Robert A:

Yeah, we had four years of band there, in high school. And then after that why I knew the music teacher at Mt. Healthy, his name was McClain, Mr. McClain. And he told me, he said you don't look any older than what these kids do and he asked me for parades down in Cincinnati, if I would play for him.

03:01:34

Robert A:

And so the last time I played for him was before I went in the service, I was 23 years old. And of course we both had piano; we played trumpet. As I got older, that stuff kind of went by the way side.

Q:

Tell me about playing "Taps," was that for Memorial Day or?

Robert A:

Yeah, Louie was a little kid, right on up as he got older, and Louie would be up here and he would play "Taps" and I would be down just beyond the little knoll (Lou A: up at the cemetery) cemetery, I would be down over that little knoll there and I would play the echo.

03:02:18

Lou A:

I'd get nervous after I'd take that, I was playing "Taps" I'd listen for the echo, come on Bobby (laughing) echo. That worked out pretty good. We done all right.

Q:

Was that Memorial Day celebrations, mostly?

Lou A:

Yeah, yeah.

Robert A:

Yeah.

Q:

Pretty neat.

03:02:32

Lou A:

Ah, I was in, I played in Harrison band between '52 and '56 out there, I played trumpet out there. So I was active in band and also I was active in Glee Club and so on and so forth out there. I went to Harrison High School (Robert A: Yeah). And then when I got out of high school, then of course I went in the Air Force, I was 23 when I went in the Air Force.

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

03:02:54

Lou A:

I was, kind of was hanging back and they was coming after me with (Robert coughs) the draft so I said I want to be an airman, so you know, I'll go in the Air Force, so I went in there. And so I went in the Air Force, I played in the Drum and Bugle Corps in there, so. I carried it on in the Air Force with me.

Q:

That's great, and tell us a little bit about your military service, Robert.

03:03:15

Robert A:

Well, I went into the military service that was at Fort Dix, New Jersey. And usually when it came to tests and so forth, I wasn't the greatest but somehow or another my tests rose fairly high there and then I went to Georgia. I was in the gun battery and the gun battery was a little bit rougher than some of the other stuff.

03:03:35

Robert A:

And so, here we were between 40 and 50,000 guys down there and they needed a few men to replace certain units there. And ah, just a small handful, and somehow or another, my tests down there also came out good enough that I went into what you would know as radar control; we called it operations. I was ah, part of the Eastern Anti-Aircraft Defense command, 209th Group. And we were 5-17th AAOD operations.

Q:

Great, and ah.

03:04:16

Lou A:

I was, I was in Strategic Air command in the Air Force.

Q:

Did you ever ah, I mean, where were you stationed when you were in the Air Force?

Lou A:

I was stationed, why I was stationed in ah, Lockland Air Force Base (Robert coughs) in ah, Texas, and then I went to Whitman Air Force, and then I spent most of my time all at Whitman there during the four years that I was in.

03:04:33

Q:

Great.

Lou A:

That's where my daughter was, that's where our daughter was born at in _____
Missouri.

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

Robert A:

As a part of Eastern aircraft, air, Eastern Anti-Aircraft Defense command, I have gone to ah, air-ground control under substations, Air Force and spent time there also.

03:04:54

Q:

Now you, when you joined the service, you just missed the draft?

Robert A:

I went in as the draft. I tried to enlist earlier two different times and I was too late. Remember I'd told you I'd been so sick, I was too late. I couldn't make it. So then I, I decided to go to the Wright Plant and work 'cause I knew I'd go into the military and I decided to go to work and get a few dollars in my pocket before I went.

03:05:21

Robert A:

And, I went down to enlist in the Marines, I was okay there and I would have gone in but the ah, they dropped the bomb. So then in 1948 they called me for the draft again, and I went down to Cincinnati and ah, anyway I was on my 15-day waiting period and they called it off. So, then in 1949 I met my wife, and so by guise, here the Korean War broke out in '50.

03:05:54

Robert A:

And we knew what was gonna happen and I was heading towards 24 years of age, I was 23 then. So ah, anyway I got a draft notice and if will remember Ross Ohio ah, well anyway back in those days ah, people here got their mail it'd be ah, Harrison, I mean it'd be New Haven Road, wouldn't it (directed at Lou)? In those days (Lou A: Hmm-hmm) and ah, everybody else did.

03:06:25

Robert A:

But our mail would come from Ross, and so they got it mixed up and they had me on Ross County Draft board. So I went down and seen 'em and they said, "well, you forget all about it, you come later." And I told 'em, I said, "there's no way." I said, "I'm going now." And they said, "you're gonna go later." I said, "no way." I said, "I'm sitting here tonight when you close up."

03:06:44

Robert A:

So some guy came in about an hour later, he says, "are you the one causing all this trouble?" I said, "I guess so." He says, "well," he says, "now this group goes down tomorrow." And he said, "you be here" and he was tapping me on the shoulder, he says, "or I'm gonna send the M, the MPs after ya." And I tapped him on the shoulder and I said, "don't you worry one bit. I'll be here."

03:07:06

Lou A:

Now I worked at, I worked at GE (Robert coughs, "excuse me") I worked at GE in Evendale, when I went in the Air Force, when I enlisted, went in. And when I come out of the Air Force, I returned to GE out in Evendale.

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

Q:
How long were you at GE?

03:07:22

Lou A:
Thirty-seven and a half years.

Q:
What was your job there?

Lou A:
I was a welder, production welder.

Q:
For the engines or?

Lou A:
Yeah, for the, I worked on the engines.

Q:
You know a lot of people that I talk to around here have a feeling that Fernald was kind of a major target (Lou A: hmm-hmm) and they also mention GE as being a target.

03:07:38

Lou A:
Yeah, GE was a target too.

Q:
What was it like working in a place like that? Did you ever worry about that at all?

Lou A:
No, no, not at GE. GE's huge (Robert A: Well see that's) that's big, that's where the old Wright Plant and ah, yeah, you don't, you don't want to work at GE. It's just like going to working anyplace else except just a large plant. Down there it's, down there everybody either had a bicycle that they rode or had a golf cart that you went somewhere or you walked it, which is a big thing.

Q:
Wow.

03:08:11

Robert A:
You know how they had the night units that surround these certain cities and then important places, well that's what we were. We were artillery, but we had received night missiles. And I had worked at Philadelphia and in the control room I worked in was Swarthmore College, it used to be a girl's college, now it's a co-op. And I worked in Pittsburgh and I also worked at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, which is the ah, oh (snaps fingers) darn it, I can't think of it now, _____ a military reservation. I worked there too, covering that.

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

03:08:53

Q:

Now there's missile bases close to here, right?

Robert A:

Yeah, Oxford.

Q:

Can you tell us, do you know anything about those? What they were there for?

03:08:58

Robert A:

They were there to protect that area. And I don't know what they were protecting in that area, but they were there.

Lou A:

It was an air-defense command. Yeah, I was in, I was in, we, the Air Force transferred from out of, when they transferred to B-47 bombers over, and they went to Minutemen missiles also. That was to protect, it was strategically placed throughout the Midwest and that was part of the Strategic Air Command ah, the missiles, silos, which protected, you know. And also the Air Defense command like he said, in Oxford, and so on and so forth. And that was for protection of the area.

03:09:44

Lou A:

That was in case of an attack would be an anti-attack or what do you call it.

Robert A:

See, even though Louie and I were in at different times, the units that we were in they worked hand and glove with each other.

03:09:58

Q:

That's neat. Lets go back again to a little bit more about the area before Fernald came along. Tell me about Tony's Hill.

Lou A:

Okay, (Robert and Lou chuckle) Tony's Hill, if you go, if you go west from where the station was at in Fernald, and you go past Paddy's Run Road, just as you cross the bridge, you go up the hill, that's Tony's Hill. Now that name got Tony's Hill the, name was gotten from Tony's Hill, because the way I understand there was supposed to have been a hermit that lived there at one time.

03:10:28

Lou A:

Now that's the story and his name was Tony, correct (directed at Robert)?

Robert A:

As far as I know.

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

Lou A:

As far as we know. That's, now I don't know if there's been some conflict about this story or not, but anyway, ah, the, Tony Hill was basically, well it was part of New Haven Road and it was a long hill. Well, as kids we'd go up there and we'd ride bicycles and we'd take, I've even come off the top of that hill up with a pair of roller skates on before.

03:10:59

Lou A:

Go to the bottom of it. Have you ever come off a hill like that with a pair of roller skates (chuckles) and I mean you're moving when you get to the bottom, if you can stand up. So, anyway ah, we done a lot of playing down at Paddy's Run creek and up over the area and we done a lot of blackberry picking, we used to chase snakes and try to catch 'em, if we could catch 'em.

03:11:21

Lou A:

And ah, where all those houses are built back up in there now, we had a sled-riding path that came down off of the top. In other words, as you come up to the top of Tony's Hill, then there's another hill that goes up on top of that, that knoll up there were that house if built today, all the way up at the top.

Robert A:

At Indian Lookout up there.

Lou A:

Yeah, at Indian Lookout, and we had a sled track that came from the top of that, came down across the flat, went down all the way through the woods, all the way to the bottom of the creek down there. And that was a long ways.

03:11:51

Robert A:

And you had a very sharp turn down there.

Lou A:

And we would take sleds from the top of that, we would have fires built down that at night, we would build fires. And Hayhurst boys, in other words, Leroy or Roy Hayhurst, they called him Roy; and Cecil, which is Chuck, they'd be up there with us. And my sister Betty and then there was Johnny Fuchs, who used to go up there and ah, the ah, what was the boy that lived across on Tony's Hill there (directed at Robert) what was his name ah?

Robert A:

Roger Bundle.

03:12:22

Lou A:

Roger Bundle, and ah, I mean, all us kids from Fernald and, you know, the Essert boys ah, also lived down there by the school (directed at Robert) ah, Bookets, (Robert A: Booker). Bookers, all the Booker boys would go down up there, you know, and ah, everybody would go up there and sled ride. We'd sled ride at night there a lot. Well we'd sled ride during the day too, but we'd sled ride also at night.

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Transcript

03:12:49

Lou A:

And we'd have big bonfires up there and we'd come down the hills and sled, we even had bobsleds up there and we used to roast wieners up there and we used to all kinds of stuff up there. And ah, it was a lot of fun. That was Ton-, that was ah, that's Tony Hill.

03:13:07

Robert A:

Yeah, my ah, with me a lot of times I'd be by myself, nobody else around so I would just sled ride along the edge of the road and of course that hadn't been cleared off in those days. And so I'd be at the top and I would run and flop down on that sled.

Robert A:

Well, the first time it happened I was so surprised my dog was running with me and the minute that, that sled hit the ground with me on it, I felt something hit me and he had his legs wrapped around me, riding to the bottom. So, he'd do that from then on, his name was Jigs.

03:13:45

Q:

That's great.

Lou A:

That ah, what, to tie something in to the winter activity to the town of Fernald from Tony Hill, a lot of time we'd go up there and we'd sled ride and then we'd come back a lot of time on Saturday it would start; a lot of time on Saturday it would usually start out in Hayhurst's store over there.

03:14:04

Lou A:

And down in the basement they had ping pong table and it would be snowing and we'd play ping-pong down there. Remember that (directed to Robert)? (Robert A: hmm-hmm) Bobby'd be down there too, we'd play ping pong, everybody'd be down there playing ping pong. And you'd walk out the back, you come out the back there, you had an entrance out the back out there.

03:14:20

Lou A:

What we'd do is, it would be snowing, we would take and sometime during the day, usually why Cecil would make snow ice cream or Leroy would. And we'd go out there and we'd gather up the ice cream, we'd make snow ice cream.

Lou A:

And then usually at night, it usually wound up that the snow would be big enough and deep enough we'd be up there with bonfires on Tony Hill. And we'd be building bonfires and sled riding and that was a whole day's activity. So this went on, you know, a lot of times.

03:14:46

Q:

That's great.

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

Lou A:

We had the snow; we'd sled ride.

Robert A:

We would ah.

Q:

We need to change tapes again here – oh you're poking me.

(Tape cuts out and begins again)

03:14:56

(Comment off camera: _____ stories about your school days at Scott's School, since that's)

Robert A:

I didn't really have anything exciting from Scott's School.

(Comment off camera: Oh, okay)

03:15:05

Lou A:

Well I can, there's, there's ah, yeah I got one story. Well, maybe a couple.

Q:

(Laughing) We're gonna, we'll talk to you first about the station. And then we'll go to the schools part.

(Comment off camera: Don't forget if you have stories about your Dad's association with the Dillinger's)

Q:

Yeah, I'll ask 'em.

Robert A:

Oh, okay.

03:15:26

At that point I'll ask you about that, I have that as a note to make sure I ask you about that.

Lou A:

Thanks Jim (directed off camera).

(Everybody laughs – Robert coughs)

Q:

Okay.

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Transcript

03:15:35

Robert A:

Boy, he could, he could open a safe.

Lou A:

Thanks Jim (directed off camera) I was trying to get out of there today (laughing).

Q:

Oh that's what he could do, I was trying to, somebody was _____ what it was he could do, I forget what it was he could do. Okay, are we rolling (directed to cameraman)? Oh, we're rolling. Excellent. Okay, can you tell us about the station? Again.

03:15:47

Robert A:

Well, there was one funny story that came about and the, some of the boys up and down the line they would, we would go different places and we would box. And I was in that quite a bit even though I was pretty, but I always did okay. And so this one big kid came in working with the bridge gang. He was working there for the summer. And he had me beat by about two years.

03:16:13

Robert A:

And he was those kind, he just didn't have a neck. It'd be hard to hurt 'em. And so, I thought, "Well, I'm gonna get pounded I guess, but I'm gonna do it." Mom found out what was going on. She, it was supertime. She says, "I know what's gonna go on." She said, "And, I'm not gonna let it happen." And uh, she said, "your gonna take your boxing gloves and go down there."

03:16:36

Robert A:

"But, but I got other news for ya, you're not. Because I'm not gonna let you go back and get them." 'Cause she, she knew I, I had only one way to back there to get them through the house. So she said, "you're gonna sit here and eat a full supper, this, that, and the other. Then you can go down later cause there won't be any boxing gloves round."

03:16:54

Robert A:

Well, what Mom didn't know, you had the rain barrels out there with the buckets on top of them. Well, my boxing gloves was on top of there. But my dad, he, he kind of figured I'd outsmarted Mom. You don't outsmart Mom. It just, it just doesn't happen. And uh, so any way, we were down there, we was going at it. I didn't think there was any way at all to stop 'em.

03:17:19

Robert A:

But, see I was born lefthanded. Everybody made me change over, so I did everything right handed, even throwing a ball and all. And so I was boxing left hand, as a lefthander on. And suddenly, I changed around the other way and I don't know how, but I had him going down. And never had, never had the least idea on my dad was there and uh, so that's the way it turned out.

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Transcript

03:17:42

Robert A:

Then Mom didn't say anything. Well, since it turned out okay. But, I put one over on her.

Lou A:

Talking about the bridger gang. Uh, when I was a kid the bridge gangs used to come in there and I used to go over and spend a lot of time with the bridge gangs. And (clears throat) I would be in where the cooks was at and fix, ya know they would fix uh, supper for the gangs, and stuff, dinner and stuff like that. So I spent a lot of time in there. So I, ya know, I stirred a few pots with 'em.

03:18:13

Lou A:

Used to sit over and I used to eat dinner with 'em sometimes and things like that. So, the bridge, like you said the work gangs, the bridge gangs they called 'em come in there why. Ya know I got to spend quite a bit of time with them and there was people from all over the country, ya know, and different nationalities, and so on and so forth.

03:18:34

Lou A:

So, uh, what the bridge, what they'd do is bring railroad cars in there which was old passenger was, it was gang cars what they was. They was like old passenger cars and they had living quarters in 'em and they also had big stove, big cast, long cast iron stoves and stuff that they actually put wood in em and coal and they would cook that way.

03:18:53

Lou A:

And, uh, so they was in there a lot. They would be working on the track. They would take old rail, they'd take rails up and they'd put down new ties. And they'd put new ballasts in it. And they'd _____ out there ya know. And ya know the old work gang where they'd be driving the spikes. That's actually, ya know they would be in there. They would be singing and driving.

03:19:13

Robert A:

Gandy dancers.

Lou A:

Gandy dancers and you name it. So then they, what happened over the years is time went on is everything improved. They made a, they made a uh, machine that came along that would come in, it would jerk a tie out, it would cut a tie in two, it would the ties out of the side, it'd stick a tie in the side of it like that there (swings arms). And then they'd be uh, like there was several machines in a row.

03:19:39

Lou A:

And it'd come along, it would drive the spike, pump, pump, pump, pump. Like that, that's the way it went. Right on that's the machine that replaced those men. So, ya know, in other words, technology back then replaced the man. So it took a few people to do what it took a whole gang, on a whole gang train to do.

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Transcript

03:19:58

Lou A:

But I remember the days when they'd come in and they'd have a steam engine on the front of the gang train coming in here with the thing and there'd be a steam engine on it ya know. And Bobby remembers this too (Robert A: um-hum). And, he was there. And then they would have, what they had what they called uh, er, I don't know if ya know what I'm talking about.

03:20:18

Lou A:

Ya know what a motor car is? Okay, they had, well you probably had them at the Pilot Plant up there, I'd imagine. So anyway they would have motor cars that they would actually take the gangs out to work on the track. In other words, they would have a motor car and they'd have these little cars behind 'em.

03:20:34

Lou A:

And the guys would get on the seat and the tools and all that and, and they would go down the track and that and they'd go to work on whatever they got to work on.

Q:

So where were, where were a lot of those gangs trains, where would they come from? Just travel across the country working on tracks?

03:20:48

Lou A:

Yeah, for Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad. They, they was just strictly Ch-, C&O Railroad and they would come in and work like Chicago division where ever they needed them to fix track at and things. Ya know they hadda constantly replace railroad ties. In other words, railroad ties rotten even though it had creosote in it would rot.

03:21:05

Lou A:

And then ya know the water would get down, the trains running across and the sloshing and they'd eventually come apart. So what they'd do is they'd jerk them ties out and they'd put new ballasts in the there and put new ties and pack 'em ya, uh, new ballasts around. Which ballast is gravel.

Robert A:

I, I think their home base for our part was Richmond, Indiana, I believe.

Q:

Well, that's interesting, that they would travel across the country like that.

03:21:29

Lou A:

Then when they was down there with the tracks (Robert clears throat) got done so many miles of track that they had to do, then they would move on to another place like they might move on to uh, say, uh,

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Transcript

Richmond, Indiana. And they would base there for a while, ya know, until they work on the track. And then on to Muncie, ya know, so on and so forth.

03:21:48

Robert A:

If they had to cut a certain size, they had a special hacksaw and this hacksaw, it was deep enough to cut the rail and it was quite heavy. And they would put a blade in it and reverse the other blade. It would be two blades and they would saw a rail in two and then they would carefully burn the holes so they could fasten them to the other piece, other section of rail. And bolt it. It was interesting to watch that.

03:22:15

Lou A:

Course then like I said, technology came along and they used a machine to all that after awhile. And then they came along with what they called a welder reel. It was a continuous welder reel. They would put the reel section together and the welder; automatic welder would come in there and weld it. And they'd go on. So that's why, that's why on a train that you ride on today you don't hear the clickity-clack, clickity-clack cause they don't have the gaps in the rail. Cause they have what they call a solid unit welder reel.

Robert A:

And then every so far they have a expansion. But uh, anyway, there was, there was just so much you were able to grasp but other people wouldn't know the least thing about.

03:22:55

Lou A:

Now also, as technology moved on. It went from the steam engine; it went over to the diesel. Now that was a big, that was a big thing in the railroad, especially at Fernald when this happened. In 1949 the first diesel pulled into Fernald and it was a (clears throat) a, a, I think it was a F-7. I, I don't know exactly. I, I can't keep up with all the numbers on the thing.

03:23:24

Lou A:

But, but anyway it had uh, it had three units on the front of it. Which we call three units is three engines, in other words it had one head engine and then it had two units behind it which was power units too. And it, it pulled in, in 1949. It was the first one they pulled in there. And uh, then during the war also when I was a kid, I would stand out there.

03:23:50

Lou A:

And watch the trains come through with tanks, army trucks, complete trains of convoys coming through.

Q:

Wow.

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

Lou A:

And I even seen planes come through at times, too, on flat, on uh, flat cars with planes with the wings folded back, on, tied on the side of 'em.

Q:

So a lot of Army uh, equipment coming through Fernald.

03:24:12

Lou A:

Yeah, during, yeah, during the war. During the uh, And uh, also in 1945 when the war ended, the station had been moved at a, to the other side o' the track. When the war ended, when they announced that Japan was defeated, a fire truck came from Harrison, through Fernald. And it had a dummy Japanese hanging on the back up by his neck, an effigy, and the war ended. And that came through about uh, I think about 8:30, 9:00 at night, heading for New Baltimore.

03:24:53

Q:

How do you guys feel about the fact that they dropped the bomb?

13:24:56

Robert A:

I'm very pleased they did, they should have dropped more. But I know they didn't have the material that they didn't have. In fact, in order to be able to make the first two, they used what was captured on that uh, submarine that was supposed to go from Germany to Japan. Remember that?

Lou A:

You wanna know my personal opinion? I think they should have dropped _____.

03:25:16

Robert A:

But there was one other thing though. Instead of Japan, they should have dropped on Russia, because uh, with your kamikaze pilots, I believe it's somethin' like about 287 ships were hit. Because o' those kamikaze pilots. All we had to do was back off. Japan was starving to death. They couldn't do anything, and the more they sit there, the more they would uh, use fuel.

03:25:39

Robert A:

And uh, they were eating everything imaginable. I have a list at home uh, all kinds of bugs and everything else. We should of let them sit there and back off, no damage to our ships. And we should've laid into Russia, and if we'd a done that and kept the rest o' the world where they couldn't do what they wanted to do, you wouldn't have any o' this trouble today.

03:26:00

Robert A:

But uh, due to Truman, I always figure, my own personal opinion, Truman was a winner. Because we done that, and uh, we should of done it to Russia. And he should of known that there was another war

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Transcript

coming up. So when they brought our ships back from Europe, they were showing fighter planes over the side, starting tanks up, running 'em over the side.

03:26:25

Robert A:

All kinds of ammo from your 30 caliber to your 50 caliber and beyond, and this should never have been done. Because when the Korean War broke out, the guys I was with, some of 'em, they had uh, brothers and cousins that were fighting, and they were giving them ten rounds of ammunition apiece. And they'd say, "Where do we get the rest uh, of our ammunition at?" "Off your dead buddies."

03:26:49

Robert A:

And Truman wouldn't permit any used amm-; I mean any old ammunition to go over there. And uh, he'd want 'em to have nothing but new. Well, there was no way to give 'em new ammunition. And down in Georgia, this is a Camp Stewart, Georgia. This is a fort story now. And we were down there, and on purpose, we were burning up ammunition, just firing it.

03:27:13

Robert A:

And, everything, from your quad mouse, which is .450 caliber, we each one were having our turn in there, and we were firing at these drone planes and so forth. And we went so far that we dug out machine guns from World War I, the water-cooled ones and fired 'em, so, there ya go.

03:27:33

Q:

Wow.

Lou A:

I think, I think that it should have been dropped earlier than it was. I don't think that we should tolerate any dictator in this world. There should not be any wars at all. Any country that that decides the dictator take over should be put down. If it takes a nuclear blast or whatever to do it, to annihilate 'em, that it should be done.

03:27:56

Q:

Now we'll get a little bit more of Cold War history, too. I'd like to talk to you a little bit about how you feel about the Cold War and Fernald and all those things. Um, but before we do that, let's, let', let's backtrack just a little bit because I know we wanna cover uh, Scott School, just a little bit. And you had a story about Scott School.

03:28:10

Lou A:

Um-hmm. Well, okay. Scott School, there was a, when you went to Scott School, you left New Haven School and went into the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade. Mr. Star taught the seventh, and eighth grade. I can't remember what teacher it was taught the fifth and sixth grade (directed toward Robert). (Robert A: Where at Scott School?) Yeah.

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03:28:31

Robert A:

Well, you had it different than we did. I was there all eight years.

Lou A:

I can't, I can't remember which uh, which, there was a lady, I think.

Robert A:

Was that Linda L. Robinson; was that Linda L. Robinson? I'm pretty sure. Yeah.

Lou A:

Could be, I don't know for sure. I don't remember now. I'd have to go back to the records and look.

Robert A:

Linda L. Robinson, I'm positive.

03:28:46

Lou A:

Yeah, but anyway, we uh, I remember I'd uh, would sit downstairs you know, we had 5th and 6th grade downstairs, and upstairs we had 7th and 8th grade. And I would, of course, I would, Mr. Star, he was, he was pretty tough, you know, and I would always think, you know, (chuckling) it ain't gonna be long before I'm gonna be up there, and you know, I just wondering how it was gonna be.

03:29:07

Lou A:

So I finally got upstairs in the 7th grade you know, and uh, there was a few times that Mr. Star, I never did get sent to the cloak room, but if you misbehaved in Mr. Star, you got sent to the corner in the cloak room. And ah, the ah, I remember when we used to go outside and we used to play, and if you acted up out there, Mr. Star, he would send you, stand you up against the building up there. He'd make you stand up against the building.

03:29:35

Lou A:

And ah, so that, that's some of the history of, of that. After school, after, now I was only there during the 7th grade and I went on to the 8th grade at Crosby. That's when they built the new school. Now after that happened, that school there was closed. Pottinger, I don't know if that land had belonged to Pottinger or if they bought the land back, I don't remember now.

03:30:05

Lou A:

But anyway they got cont-; they got possession of the school. So what they done, they started packing corn down there. I don't know if you're familiar with that operation or not. So, when I was a kid I used to go down there and work. Now, I used to take and work for Dick Fuchs, the farmers around here and things like that. But Dick Fuchs I worked for quite a few years for him.

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03:30:28

Lou A:

And I, in fact, started out at 9-years-old I was carrying, he asked me one day, he said, "you want to carry water?" He said, "I'll pay you for carrying water over to the threshers." And that was right next to the depot there. And so, I carried water over and Dick paid me for doing that. That's my first job, nine-years-old.

03:30:43

Lou A:

So then the next year why, I done the same thing, and then there was the, he asked me if I wanted to hoe corn, you know, and so on and so forth. So, I was out there and that's how I got started working for him. So I worked for him clear up until I was about ah, I guess I was about 14-years-old and then I went to work for ah, down at ah, (Robert A: _____ school) for ah.

(Tape ends)

Tape FLHP0243

04:01:03

(Cameraman: rolling)

Q:

Okay (laughing) okay, corn.

Lou A:

Okay, all right, so after the school was, came back to Pottinger back there, well anyway I went to work for Pottinger, and I used to pick corn. Now, we'd go out early in the morning, then we would do it with a horse and sled. And we'd have, what we'd do is we'd pick corn and the horse would go down and, you know, go down to the end of a row and we'd turn him around and start back up the next row.

04:01:28

Lou A:

And we'd haul it in on a sled. Now, if you was picking corn if you had, we had one horse that would, would do this a lot and we had a, you'd be picking corn like that, why the horse would take off and run down to the end of the row (laughing). You wouldn't be but a half way through the row, it'd take off down to the end of the row.

04:01:46

Lou A:

It just didn't want to stay up there. So, we'd have to bring it back down through the row and turn, go up the other end and bring it back down. And ah, so then we would bring it back and we would, there would be people there, a lot of people in the community. From New Baltimore and from Fernald and people who worked for him, ah, kids, even ah, housewives done it, you know.

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04:02:08

Lou A:

And a lot of people did, and they would pack the corn in baskets. And it would go to what they called Albert's Store, I don't know if you're familiar with Albert's Store or not. But that was, Alberts was in business here (Robert A: oh forever) forever in ah, Hamilton County. So, they would pack it and they would take and, take it to Albert's Store.

04:02:28

Lou A:

And also we would take ah, ah, there would be some of that corn would go down to Cincinnati on the market down there and I would go down with 'em at the market and we would stay all night in Cincinnati down there. And then when the market open up in the morning we would be selling corn.

04:02:47

Lou A:

Now, I went down there with Dick Fuchs a lot, and Johnny, we would go down and we would sell corn down there like that. We'd stay all night in Cincinnati, we'd sleep out on the truck. And so that was part of, you know, part of our life from the community at that time.

04:03:00

Lou A:

And ah, so the, in other words, the farms played a big role in the community at Fernald here, so, you know they was intertwined ah, between the community and the farmers a lot. Especially ah, with the Fuch's farms and also with the Pottinger's farms down there.

Q:

Great, now you had mentioned a lot of military equipment coming through on the rail (Robert A: hmm-hmm) and ah, you want to talk about torpedoes.

04:03:31

Lou A:

Okay, what a torpedo ah, what they'd do is they'd put a torpedo on a rail and what it was, was a small charge that had a, like two lead bands on it. They'd take it out and lay it flat on the rail and every so many torpedoes would mean a certain _____ to the engineer.

04:03:51

Lou A:

Now I don't know exactly what the _____ was.

Robert A:

Most of it was getting on the brakes. They, my Dad would get as far up the line as he could or down the line as he possibly could and they would go by him, even. In other words, he would place those there as far as he could get 'em (Lou A: yeah, and when that train). And it would blow a whole hand off. They're not like a shotgun shell, I mean, they'll blow a whole hand off.

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04:04:16

Lou A:

When that train would hit it, it would go POW, like that and the engine, it would be loud. It sounded like a shotgun going off or louder really.

Robert A:

See, they were folded, they were folded with that in there and kind of pressed a little bit and there was like two tabs came out, it was all part of it. And you bent 'em down over the rail which isn't to dangerous, but the only way my Dad could do that would be to hold his hand on it like this here (demonstrates with hand held out) and bend it and turn around and other way bend it.

04:04:41

Robert A:

In other words, he's pressing down on that torpedo. And that's dangerous.

Lou A:

Also another thing too, Dad was ah, another thing too was it was a no-no with my Dad. This was a strict no-no. You was not supposed to walk those rails. You ever see a kid walk rails? You ever try that when you was a kid? Yeah, I done it and I also got in trouble. Bobby's done it too.

04:05:05

Robert A:

I used to, I never got in trouble, but I used to (Lou A: he never got caught [laughing]) I used to take the side tracks and I used to, I used to run on 'em and I became so good at that and that's a little story too. I was in the military, I wasn't supposed to be home, so I didn't dare get caught or anything, and ah, so anyway our train had trouble. And they were inching along towards Pittsburgh and I had to go to Harrisburg.

04:05:31

Robert A:

And be in the next morning. And I called that evening down here and so, by guise, here I was I thought well, what am I gonna do. So, they've, we finally go to Pittsburgh and we were running and I asked somebody out there, I said, "where is that train going to Harrisburg?" "That's it pulling out." And so, here was all these guys and I was clear at the end of the lining 'cause I was first.

04:05:58

Robert A:

So, here they were, and I thought I can't run with them, and I broke off to the side and I was used to, some of us older ones used to play, weren't supposed to, but we'd play tag out there and run across those tracks cattycorner. And I could jump 'em on an angle, I could jump pretty far for my size, and ah, so, anyway I was gradually passing all these guys and I got out there and I was running over those tracks.

04:06:23

Robert A:

And where ever I had to my foot would hit on a railing that was dark and ah, so I got up there, I caught the train and they had a platform down there of course so nobody would get there, to get up. And the

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conductor told me, he said, “you can’t get on here.” And I said, “I’m here now” and he tried to get my bag to throw it off, and then I grabbed him by the wrist.

04:06:46

Robert A:

And I said, “No wait, I’m not gonna leave this train unless somebody goes with me.” And so, the next guy came up there and the conductor stood up then, he was looking back to see who else was coming, and I helped the other guy up. So then the third one was running along and he passed his bag up to us, he was getting further and further back, we threw it back off.

04:07:05

Robert A:

But, see what gave me the advantage to that ah, running like that, see it happened to be instead of 20/20 vision, I was born with vision that really excelled in the 20/20. They had one astronaut that had 15/20 vision, I think it was Carpenter, I’m not sure, remember he could see the smoke from the train.

04:07:25

Robert A:

Well, see my right eye was 13/20 and my left eye was 15/20, and it stayed that way until I had an accident. And I had two operations I still have good enough eyesight that I can pass the driver’s test with no trouble. But ah, that was funny though, I thought, gee whiz, I made it just by that much.

04:07:48

Q:

Let’s talk a little bit about ah, something that Jim mentioned to me that your Dad ah, had I guess some contact with Dillinger.

Robert A:

Yeah, anyway my Dad used to go work in Chicago a lot and I don’t know why they trusted him, might have been the fact that he only had one arm, and ah, but he was ah, very sociable. He’s not like Louie and I; we’re not that sociable are we (directed at Lou)?

04:08:15

Lou A:

Oh yeah (laughing) I don’t know if that will work.

Robert A:

But anyway you, I’m congen-, I’m congenial and you’re sociable I guess. But anyway, my Dad, he could talk to those guys and wormed his way in and enjoyed being with ‘em and he would sit there and they would never have any money on the table, they would play for pennies.

04:08:33

Robert A:

‘Cause they didn’t need any money they were getting low they could rob. They would play for pennies, so what they would do for those pennies, they’d have matchsticks. And my Dad, why would be there with ‘em, he’s with Dillinger and he was also with Capone the same way.

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04:08:46

Robert A:

And so, in those garages they taught him, they'd have these safes lined up, and they taught him to open these safes. So then, anyway, he moved here to Fernald and some of the word traveled after him and so the police when somebody would die and nobody knew the combination to the safe, some business or something somewhere; they would come and say, "well, Bob, how about going with us. Got another one for ya."

04:09:17

Robert A:

And he'd look up at 'em like that and grin; (snaps fingers) throw it open. That was a known fact, he could crack a safe.

Q:

So did the Dillinger's gang ever come here?

Robert A:

Hmm, that's another story too. They came here and this is at the Pavilion, in Ross, it was known as Venice in those days. And so, anyway, my Dad went in to get some cigars and some cigarettes and he was in there just a few moments and he came out, told my Mom, I bumped into such-and-such.

04:09:54

Robert A:

And well, it was a member of the Dillinger gang. And he didn't say anything to 'em but he looked him right in the face and so ah, anyway this is after Dillinger'd been nailed, when they were trying to get the rest of the gang and all. So ah, anyway, he came back out there and that big Oldsmobile he had, he put that thing in reverse and backed up and vroom, we were, all of 'em, he only had his left arm and he shifted over here (brings arm across body) and we would shift it like this here, push it up and pull it back, that's the way he drove.

04:10:30

Robert A:

And he'd hold that wheel with his, stub of his arm. So, we went flying into Fernald and next thing I knew they were putting us in bed, that was Betty and I, our sister, and ah, all the lights were out. So then we sat for a solid week ah, with the lights out and then one evening I think it was Saturday evening, a knock came at the door of the ah, office itself.

04:11:02

Robert A:

And course there's no operator on second shift in those days it was all open, so we knew it (coughs) excuse me. So, anyway, ah, when that happened, they suspected something and you know how your office juts out from the station like that here. And here was two guys in really neat suits from what they were telling me.

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04:11:24

Robert A:

Real neat suits like they were tailored and so forth, and they wanted to know how to get to Shandon and so my Dad was there and he had a .38 caliber revolver which I have today and like this here and he was using the stub of his arm and telling 'em how to go and this that and the other, he had that .38 with the hammer back on it.

04:11:43

Robert A:

And what they also didn't know, Mom was standing there, the office desk lacked about that much, (demonstrates length with hands) from being to the window. And Mom was standing there like this here with a double barrel shotgun with both hammers back.

04:11:56

Q:

So they were worried about _____.

Robert A:

They weren't, they weren't even with Dillinger gang or anything, those guys went to their graves without ever know that they were standing with, in front of two guns with the hammers back on 'em. Double barrel 12 gauge and .38.

04:12:15

Q:

Oh, my gosh.

Robert A:

But, oh excuse me. There was one other thing too, one of the Dillinger's gang ah, used to be a _____ in Muncie Indiana. His name was Richie; well Richie family all came from Virginia back in the like 1890's. Mom came here in 1898 and I mean, 1900, she was born in 1898. So, ah, anyway this guy was part of Dillinger's gang and Mom was also a Richie. Whole family moved up here, but Mom was a Richie and this guy was one of the Richie's up there.

04:13:00

Q:

Wow, now ah, when the Atomic Energy Commission came into town to start looking for an area, your Dad was kind of instrumental in helping them with locating the site?

Robert A:

According to Louie, cause I was in service.

Q:

Okay, so do you remember the AEC coming around or?

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04:13:19

Lou A:

No, I don't remember that, but I remember Dad was, he was starting to get involved in it. He didn't say too much about it until after he, you know, he started the footwork and everything. And then, well, he made mention to Mom, I remember he had, well he had talked about it, you know. They was talking about bring it in.

04:13:35

Lou A:

Or looking at the site, in other words, they were looking at the site at the time, but I think they was like looking at about four different sites when they, like they do whenever they come in with a plant. And ah, so, he done the footwork in order to get the information to the railroad company. Which the railroad company needed the information about the train and the land and stuff like that, you know.

04:13:57

So I guess, now I don't know for sure what they did with it, but I apparently presume that they probably made _____ and things to the government. You know, they said, this was a good area and that, in other words, they had to put a spare in, you know, so he kind of made it, pretty much foot walked that to and then there was also agents from the railroad that came down and went with him and so on and so forth.

04:14:20

Robert A:

He would have been the initial survey of that (Lou A: yeah) when it was made.

Lou A:

So then when they come in and they sent, course _____ sent a team and stuff in there to study the thing. So actually, when it first started happening he just, in other words, he come in and took the raw information that they had and just like, you know, you just walk out and take all that information and say, well, this is what we've got.

04:14:43

Q:

Why do you think they ah, located the site where they did?

Robert A:

I think I know.

Lou A:

Well, one, one thing that the rail service that they had into it and also it's centrally located and ah, it's, its pretty much hidden back in here, you know. Ah, who would think of ah, (Robert coughs) like if you was a Russian who would think of an atomic plant in the middle of a corn field. I mean, it's just that simple.

04:15:04

Lou A:

Ah, that's, that's my opinion.

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Robert A:

You had that big underground aquifer (Lou A: yeah) to do your work with.

Lou A:

You mean the aqueduct stuff (directed to Robert)?

Robert A:

Yeah, aquifer runs through under the ground (Lou A: yeah). There was different water at 28-foot in Fernald than what there was at 38-feet. Figure that – that's all together different.

04:15:23

Lou A:

Yeah, see what that is, what the aqueduct is or, is an underground river. And so that supplied, where they could drive wells and get an abundant water supply. That was another thing, like Bobby said that. So it was isolated out here too. It was, I think that was the main thing, part of it, part of it. It was several different things that played that role.

04:15:52

Q:

Do you remember them building the plant?

Lou A:

I do.

Robert A:

And I do too. My wife worked for Fluor construction company. Her name was Jean Alice Grazer.

04:16:03

Lou A:

Yeah, I remember them cutting the ah, spurs in, back in there and everything. In fact I used to go up there and run around until the times, 'til they run me out. Some places you couldn't get into, you know, but it, I remember them building the plant and the dozers running back in there and all that kind of stuff. I remember the equipment coming in. A lot of it come in on rail. Some came in by truck.

04:16:23

Lou A:

It was a boon for the community. The community it uh, it just took off, ya know.

Q:

So, you said you were running around back there while they were putting in the railroad lines?

04:16:37

Lou A:

Well, yeah, I went, I walked, I went back in there with my dad, ya know. Walked around in, back in there when they was putting in the spur and everything. They was grading and stuff, ya know. And none of that was blocked off at that particular time it was being built.

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Q:

Did you know what the plant was for while they were building it?

04:16:51

Lou A:

Yeah, I did (Robert nods head).

Q:

How did you know? Who did it, did it come out in the paper?

04:16:56

Lou A:

Well, I knew, my dad said what it was.

Robert A:

They wrote me and told me.

Lou A:

My dad said it was for making uh, atomic uh, the what do ya call it, the uh, the salt or what (Robert A: It's a fuel). Yeah, it's a nuclear fuel what they was making. I mean that wasn't no secret around Fernald what they was doing up there. Yeah, you know they wasn't going to make feed up there like everybody thought they was going to do.

04:17:24

Lou A:

I mean, but there might have been some people that think they was going to make cow feed up there but that wasn't so. Most of the people around this area knew what the atomic plant was going to be used for. It was used for, was going to be used for the purpose of the war. That was, everybody pretty well knew that.

04:17:40

Robert A:

There's something too I'd like for you to check out. And that is, I understand in upstate New York there is a two-story college by the name of Fernald and that's were they started the whole ba, a, a, I'm talking about World War II and everything. That's were they started the whole business at as far as your atomic bombs and everything. So check into that.

04:17:04

Robert A:

And the odd thing is that it happens also to be the name of Fernald.

Q:

Do you know why they call it Fernald?

04:18:14

Robert A:

No.

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Lou A:

Do you mean the plant? Because it was close to the town of Fernald.

Q:

No

Lou A:

It was within a half a mile. It was a half a mile north of Fernald. What else would they call it? Ross?

04:18:24

Robert A:

Fernald, Fernald. Jim, I don't know if he can tell 'em. Can you tell them anything about how Fernald came about? Its name. Hum (From off camera: You remember)?

Lou A:

Of how Fernald came about? (From off camera: Yeah, the name.) You, you (looking at Robert).

Robert A:

I must have missed that. I don't know. (From off camera: Your railroad talk, remember. When you did your program on the railroad?)

Q:

No, that's okay.

04:18:50

Robert A:

Which, you talking about the plant? (From off camera: No, no the town.) The name, the-.

Q:

The town of Fernald, yeah, how did the town; the town of Fernald get its name?

04:18:58

Lou A:

I'd have to get my paperwork (laughs) It's over in the-.

Q:

That's okay we can cover that later. (From off camera: It was an original banker, investment banker.)

04:19:06

Lou A:

Oh, okay, he remembers it. I don't remember it. I've got it written down over there. Eh, (From off camera: George Fernald) Okay, you, you tell them that. Okay, George Fernald was the original investment banker for, for the railroad and that's how the town of Fernald got its name.

Robert A:

You know talking about bankers, did you know these railroad engines have plates on them that tells you that they are leased from certain banks.

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04:19:38

Lou A:

Yeah, that's the same way with a jet engine. Like GE builds jet engines. They lease them to banks. In other words, they're leased by the bank. In other words, like the Bank of New York uh, owns a jet engine. Ya know, cost a million bucks or better. So they, so they, what they do is they own the engine and they lease it out. Same way, same way with a railroad engine.

04:20:00

Lou A:

Trucks are the same way on the road. They're leased.

Q:

Now something that I've heard from a lot of plant workers, and uh, your wife worked there,

Robert A:

Yeah, but that was just the construction part of it.

Q:

Just the construction part it? Later on after they started building it (Lou A: I worked for-) better they had uh, a, an engine that heated, a steam engine that they. Did, did you guys, did your dad have anything to do with the steam engine that they had pulled in there to supply heat to the plant?

04:20:28

Lou A:

Uh, I'm not familiar; I'm not real familiar with that. But, yeah, my dad had something to do with that. I don't know the particular story on it. But I remember when they brought the steam engine in there that, to supply heat to the plant. However, they did it or whatever, I don't know. I'm not familiar with that. That, yeah, that was a reality.

04:20:48

That happened but as far as knowing the particulars on it, I do not know that (clears throat).

Robert A:

Well, you know when I was fourteen; I received my Social Security number or card. I can't tell the number of it, cause you don't give that out. But anyway the railroad, they have their own retirement system. So if you do any work for them, you don't have a Social Security card, they gave you a special one.

04:21:14

Robert A:

And the only thing I can say, like everybody else's was twos or threes ya know starting out, mine started with a seven. All these years.

Q:

That's great. Um, as they were building the plant and you were watching it go up and those kinds of things, um, what, what year did you marry your wife?

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04:21:38

Robert A:
1951.

Q:

1951, so that was the very year that they were building the plant (Robert A: Right). Um, did she ever tell you about what was going on during construction up there?

04:21:47

Robert A:

No, not really. Uh, I can't remember the boss that she had. I would recognize the name if it was said. But, oh, uh, when they bought the ground up there and they bought that from oh, Ervins, and uh, she started working in that little milk shed there. And she was working with Alberta Donna Worth and Mildred Jacobs.

Q:

Great, now something that the uh, um, a lot of people have covered uh, was eminent domain. A lot of the farmers lost their land. Eminent domain, mainly the Fuchs family lost an awful lot of ground to eminent domain. Did uh, you guys knew the Fuchs family (both: Yeah). Now how did they feel about losing their land to the government?

04:22:40

Robert A:

Well, I don't see where it's any different for them to lose land than for other people to lose their right to go about living like they've always lived and all of the sudden they find themselves in the service. So I, you might say you feel sorry for them. They lost the land. But I don't feel anymore sorry for them then I do the people that went in the service. I mean you have to go in. That's part of it.

04:23:03

Robert A:

A lot of people shirk it; I never intend to shirk it and never did. I did my duty.

Lou A:

You asked a question about how people felt about it. Well, I was, I was a kid then, so, ya know, really I didn't, ya know, I don't know how they felt about it. That's a, that's a question that I can't answer. 'Cause I never talked to one of them, ya know, about it.

Q:

And let, let's cover a little bit about the fact that the ya know, it's sort of a, the patriotic duty of the gov-, the cou-, sort of the area here. Um, as far as Fernald goes, they, how do you think Fernald contributed to America's goals?

04:23:47

Robert A:

(Lou A: Um.) I think this whole region of Crosby Township really contributed equally. I really do. People stepped forward and they did what they had to do and some of them, well, uh, evidently died

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and some of them were injured. And I happened to turn out to be lucky. I ended up with a job. I was in Eastern (Lou clears throat) Antiaircraft Defense Command.

04:24:13

Robert A:

I was working as antiaircraft intelligence specialist. And so I had a pretty good job. I had no rank. And when I was finally discharged from the service, I was discharged as a corporal. But you had no; there was no real chance for rank.

04:24:29

Lou A:

I think, I think it contributed greatly to the winning of the war, Second World War. The only, the only that, the issue that I could see, that was, that bothered me was the fact that I think that Hamilton County officials should have let the populace of Hamilton County, give them more information so that a lot of people could understand why the plant went in.

04:24:56

Lou A:

And that's why I think they have had adverse reactions from some people to the plant. Because, they either didn't understand the information that was given 'em in the first place, or they didn't pay any attention to the information that was given 'em, or it wasn't explained fully to 'em what was goin' in there.

04:25:14

Lou A:

And any time that you have an atomic plant goin' in or a plant like what ya have out here now, you have some risk of, of situations like the pollution that has happened, and so on and so forth. And I think that everybody in this area was pretty well aware of what was goin' in there, and I think that everybody was pretty aware of what was happening up there.

04:25:39

Lou A:

And as far as the releases and stuff from the air that was given up there, I don't think that shoulda happened. I think the officials shoulda controlled that better to where that those releases and so on and so forth didn't happened. I'm in the monitor, I'm in the Fernald monitoring, the medical monitoring program, which my wife is now, too, or she's been added, too. And the, you understand what I'm saying?

04:26:07

Lou A:

In other words, I think that the, the officials of the plant, that was at the plant at the time runnin' it, should've had better control on the operations. Those mistakes should a not happened, and they coulda been avoided, but of course that they did. So, as far as me bein' upset with the plant bein' there, and even what happened up there, no, I'm not upset with the plant.

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04:26:33

Lou A:

But the only thing is I, I think that it could a been handled different that it was. That was the only mistake that was made. But as far as it helping the community, it had, I think it had more pluses for the community than minuses, so.

04:26:49

Robert A:

You know, so many people were afraid of the atomic bomb, and our government was, they seemed to have no responsibility at all, and I mean, as far as they were concerned. Now there's ways that you tell people how to eat food that comes out of their gardens. It's quite simple the way you can do, or what you can and can't eat. Or what you do to it so you can eat.

04:27:14

Robert A:

And there's two different ways you can filter your water, and they never told them either way, I mean, quite simple ways that you can filter water, and they never told 'em either one. See, as far as your water, uh, the one way, you can have, keep yourself 55-gallon drums, try to keep 'em full o' water. And you only disturb that once every 24 hours.

04:27:38

Robert A:

And you'll break the bucket, just over the edge o' that, and let it slowly trickle in, just real slow, and you won't disturb it. You'll bring your bucket out, you don't, the next day, you go to the other buck, other barrel. And another way to do it is you can have yourself a piece of pipe, and you can fill with charcoal, the fine charcoal, and you put in lumps with it. I'm not talkin' about briquettes.

04:28:07

Robert A:

Briquettes'll do ya no good; it has to be lumps. These pieces, individual pieces of charcoal. And you pour your water through that. And the uh, fine charcoal can be used over and over again. The radiation will all go there large pieces of charcoal, accumulate there, but you get rid o' that.

04:28:29

Lou A:

Personally, in my opinion, there should of been no radiation leak, leakage out there at all.

Q:

In 1994, there was a lot of media attention about uh, dust collector releases out at Plant 9. When you first read about that, how did you react?

Lou A:

Well, I didn't like; I didn't like what I was reading, no. That shouldn'ta happened. Under no circumstances. That tells me that somebody made a mistake doing their job. I mean, I know I'm on film a saying that, but that's the way I feel about it; it shouldn'ta happened.

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Q:
Do you need to change tape?
(Cameraman: yeah)

Q:
We'll change the tape.

Lou A:
Maybe they lost that in the.

(Tape stops)

Tape FLHP0244

05:01:01

Q:
You're doing it wrong (directed to cameraman). Rolling.

(Cameraman: Oh, sorry. Rolling)

(Everyone laughs)

Q:
Okay, um, yeah, you mentioned about your half brother.

Robert A:
Yeah. My half brother is Eugene Mars. And uh, Eugene worked up there at the atomic plant on the train that would run down in Fernald and so forth. And uh, the gentleman that was over him was Carl Long. That's all I can tell ya on that.

Q:
Since, were you still living close to the tracks at that point, when Fernald was built, and after they ran process?

Robert & Lou A:
Um-hmm.

Q:
Did you know what was goin' in and out of the plant? The shipments that were goin' in and out?

05:01:48

Robert A:
Not really.

Lou A:
No. No.

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Q:

Were there, do you know that there were shipments going by that were, that were goin' into Fernald?

Lou A:

No. It was.

Robert A:

Oh, we were quite aware that there would be, you know. I mean. No.

Lou A:

Well, I didn't, I mean, you don't really know what's on a train (Robert A: no). I mean, on a train. If you got a boxcar there's going by, you don't know what's in it, you don't know what's in the tank car or whatever, so no we didn't have no idea what was going into that plant.

05:02:13

Lou A:

When a train went by even if it came into the siding there, we wouldn't have no idea what was going in it. My Dad wouldn't either, and he wouldn't tell us if he did anyway 'cause that was classified information. My Dad did not release any classified information whatsoever to nobody, period.

05:02:27

Robert A:

What we were, what we were quite aware, there was only one way to get stuff in and out of that plant. That was by railroad.

Lou A:

I mean, it could have been truck, but as far as we knowed, it was, I would, I mean, it was only common sense to tell ya that there were thing going into the plant on railroad or trucking system an so on and so forth. Anybody knows that's general information.

05:02:45

Q:

Now you mentioned that your Dad never let, let out classified information. Did he have any kind of clearance from the government, do you know?

Lou A:

I have no idea.

Robert A:

I don't know, I know with me in the military they, they came into Fernald and they investigated me before I went into radar controls. They investigated me every way they could.

05:03:05

Q:

So your father was keeping track of the shipments that were going.

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Lou A:

The only thing he was doing, when he got a car that came in there or whatever was for the atomic plant, the only thing he got was a bill of lading, which a bill of lading said that that car was to be spotted on the siding. And that, that car was supposed to be spotted and it would go into the plant into siding up there.

05:03:25

Lou A:

In other words, just have a bill of lading that said shipment to Fernald atomic plant and that would be it. He would have no information whatsoever of what was in that car or anything else. There was nothing to tell him, except that that car was from destination ah, West Virginia or wherever it was coming from to the atomic plant and that's all he knew. Nobody knew anything other than that.

05:03:48

Q:

Where were those cars coming from? Do you know?

Lou A:

No, I have no idea. They could come from anywhere. They could be coming from California, Florida, wherever; who knows where (Robert A: I figured it was). Nobody even, nobody even knows, you know, you wouldn't know if they was, what cars were coming in, only, only my Dad would know what cars was coming in and he wouldn't talk about that anyway.

05:04:09

Lou A:

He never, (Robert A: I was) he never talked about, my Dad would never talk about any kind of classified information or anything concerning his job and I never heard him talk anything particular about the atomic plant period. I mean, about stuff like that, I mean it was something that.

05:04:28

Robert A:

I always believed in my own mind that a certain amount was coming from West Virginia. Is there any truth to that (directed to interviewer)?

Q:

Actually I don't know, 'cause I'm not sure where they would have brought the railroad shipments in from. Most of the stuff that was coming into the plant was Belgian Congo, ore from the Belgian Congo (Robert A: hmm-hmm) and ah, also from the Colorado Plateau and Canada, (Lou A: see I didn't know that). Those were the three places that they mined ore, (Lou A: hmm-hmm) ah, Belgian Congo, Colorado Plateau, and Canada (Lou A: Hmm-hmm).

05:04:58

Q:

But I don't know where it actually came from otherwise (Lou A: hmm) and I do know that they did some shipments from upstate New York of ah materials that came down, so (Lou A: hmm-hmm). That's, that's ah, I don't know whether it would have come through West Virginia, it's possible that ah, the boats would have landed in Virginia and would have, you know, from the ore.

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05:05:19

Q:

I don't know, I know the ore came in by boat and then was railroaded up to Fernald.

Robert A:

Well, remember I told you I saw that about that small college and that was from upstate New York and it was Fernald of all names. I saw that on a building.

Q:

A lot of the materials that was made for the Manhattan Project was made up near Niagara Falls. Somebody talked to a few (Robert A: hmm-hmm) gentleman who actually worked in the Manhattan Project and ah, (Robert A: hmm-hmm) that was all happening in that area up there. And ah, there was some processing going up, up in that area and a lot of the by-products were shipped to Fernald to extract the uranium from.

05:05:58

Robert A:

Well, see there was NIKE units up there to protect it, protect up there at Niagara Falls and I was supposed to go there and ended up in Philadelphia instead.

Q:

Wow, have you ever done a site tour, either one of you?

Robert A:

No, I'd love to.

Lou A:

No.

Q:

You've never been on site?

05:06:15

Lou A:

No, not since it was built, no.

Q:

We'll have to arrange a tour for you. Would you like that?

Robert A:

Okay, (Lou A: yeah, I'd take a tour. Yeah, I'd like to do that) yeah, hmm-hmm.

Q:

That would not be a problem. I think that would be interesting. So one of the issues that we discussed a little earlier was drinking water. In 1994 that was kind of an issue too that ah, with the aquifer was polluted. How did you react to that?

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05:06:38

Lou A:

Well I didn't (Robert A: I) I didn't like the ideal of, I mean, I didn't like the situation, you know, I mean (Robert coughs) because I drank water from that, from that I mean I been in, I was half a mile from this plant and then I went to Ross and I lived in Ross until 1961 when I went in the Air Force.

05:06:57

Lou A:

And then 'course I came back home after that and I lived in there Ross until probably about ah, I say 1967. So, I drank water from that aqueduct, duct, quite a bit, that's where we get our water from. And no, I didn't like the ideal that it even happened because I think they should have took better, more precaution than burying that stuff.

05:07:20

Lou A:

And keeping it from leaking. I don't think that should ever have happened. That's, that's just inexcusable, that, what happened up there. But it happened, so now what we've got to do is clean it up and that's what I wanted. I want it cleaned up, completely.

Lou A:

Now, I've heard different types of projects and I know of one of 'em, one of 'em, project that was canned that, that I think they probably they should have spent a little bit more money on it and a little more research and they might have been able to solve the situation.

05:07:49

Lou A:

I don't like the idea way I understand it, there's supposed to, let out, resealing these silos and leaving them sit there. And I don't care for that. I'll be honest with ya, I think those things should be gotten out of there. I think it's inexcusable to reseal them silos. What're we gonna do leave it for our grandkids to try to dispose of?

05:08:08

Lou A:

We're the ones that created the situation. We need to do it now, and if we need the government to back us on what we have to do.

Robert A:

See I believe (Lou A: 'cause I) go ahead (directed to Lou).

Lou A:

'Cause they held responsibility and that ah, they're responsibly and it should be done.

05:08:32

Robert A:

See I believe that when you tear those out you may end up unleashing something that you really don't want to unleash. Because I have an ideal, they're concrete right (directed to interviewer)? All right,

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you pour your concrete base and so forth, and the outside is _____. You know what _____ is don't you (directed to interviewer)?

05:08:48

Robert A:

All right, so that, that keeps, it's just like a vault ah, somebody's buried, that keeps the water from getting in, or anything from escaping. And of course your ah, rebar sticking up out of it going into the outside walls it holding it tight together.

05:09:06

Robert A:

I'm just afraid that they shouldn't do anything to those until they actually find a way to do something with it, you know. And putting this, filling this with sand or whatever they're gonna fill it why ah, I think is even worse than leaving it empty. If nothing else I would have poured over the top of that so nothing can get out of the top, I would have poured something _____, which would could easily been broken out later on.

05:09:34

Robert A:

When you did have a way. I'm afraid you're gonna unleash something that you shouldn't be unleashing.

Lou A:

Well, I read in the paper I, I didn't go into it in detail, I just kind of glanced through it, aren't they going back underneath the sites and reinforcing 'em or something like that (directed to interviewer)?

05:09:51

Q:

I'm not aware of the, any kind of reinforcement. The only reinforcement that I know that they've done on the silos is they shored them up with soil, years ago, in the '80s. They were worried that they were cracking.

Lou A:

What's underneath that plastic?

Q:

Um, it's a bunch of different types of liners that they, well, are you talking about the waste pits?

Lou A:

Yeah.

Q:

Or are you talking about the silos _____.

Lou A:

I'm talking about the silos that holds the hot stuff.

05:10:16

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Q:

Ah, the silos are actually just concrete silos. I don't know exactly what's underneath of them, (Lou A: hmm-hmm, well didn't they have) I can't, I do know that they shored them up with soil (Lou A: they). Now there's been this like long ah, process of trying to decide what to do with the material that's in there (Lou A: hmm-hmm).

05:10:30

Q:

'Cause a lot of that came from the Belgian Congo. See.

Lou A:

Didn't there, one, one project they talked about it was in, it was in the paper I remember. That they was talking about turning it into glass or something (Q: hmm-hmm vitrification) how come they didn't go ahead with that project (directed to interviewer)?

05:10:43

Q:

Um, that's an interesting story, it's ah, they tried the vitrification with clean dirt and they were running the vitrification 24 hours a day (Lou A: hmm-hmm) seven days a week because they wanted to see how it was actually gonna hold up when it actually had to process the real material that would be coming out of the silos.

05:10:59

Q:

So, as they were processing this, processing this plain, clean dirt just to make sure that it would hold up, um, they had a problem a couple of days before Christmas I will, I can't remember the year. But I know that I was there, so it's been since 1994, I think it was 1996.

05:11:12

Q:

Christmas of '96, couple of days before and ah, the vitrification process didn't hold up with that much soil coming through it 24 hours a day, seven days a week (Robert A: hmm-hmm). And they leaked, now it wasn't anything radioactive it was just a leak in the vitrification process. So, they, they haven't exactly abandoned it, they're still looking at that process as an option so.

05:11:32

Lou A:

Which, the way I understand it, the way I had gotten feedback off of it, that the government doesn't want to spend the money in order to process it.

Q:

Oh, no, they built the Pilot Plant. I mean they spent the money to build the Pilot Plant. That is still something that's under consideration for treating the waste that's in the silos.

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05:11:50

Lou A:

Well, I think that's, I think that's ah, I think that's an area that they need to pursue in order to, like I said, to eliminate the problem that you've got 'cause we don't want to leave it for our grandkids. I mean, it would be awful, we've left enough for our grandkids as it is, but to hand them this here on top of that, this is something that we need to clear up and I would like to see it cleared up in my lifetime.

05:12:10

Lou A:

And, you know, I'm gonna hold everybody responsibly for cleaning it up. In other words, I want the process completed and I want it done, I want to be able to live long enough to see it, you know what I'm saying. It's gotta be done.

05:12:25

Q:

Well the good news is that we're shooting for 2006.

Lou A:

Well, I might make it then, hopefully.

Q:

What's, what's your feedback on the cleanup um, have you been following much of what's been going on?

05:12:37

Robert A:

No I haven't, but it's like I said, I think now is the wrong time. I think they are gonna have to advance with this a little bit before they ever try it, because I believe that ah, opening a can of worms. And you see, normally with the ground that you have there like Fernald, with all that sand, it's like out at Sharonville, well ah, normally with the ah, with that.

05:13:03

Robert A:

I'm not talking about radiation, but with everything else water will purify itself in about 20 feet going through there. And ah, but with this radiation I don't know how far it can get or how far it's gone.

Q:

How did you?

Lou A:

Now see that's another thing, with pollution of the aqueduct, how do we know people all the way south of this plant is not drink that water that's been polluted?

Q:

Ah, they ran in city water about two or three years ago, so any water that's being used here for drinking water is all being taken from the city of Cincinnati.

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Lou A:

I know that, but I'm, I've got, I'm sitting in Harrison and I have a well.

Q:

Oh sure yeah, they've tested, they've been testing wells for years. They've tested all the wells south of the plant and they've been doing a lot of work with the water.

05:13:48

Lou A:

How far out around the plant is has it been polluted as far as the well contamination (directed to interviewer) (Robert A: in distance)?

Q:

Not very far. Actually not very far. I mean I could get the real answers for you.

Robert A:

Well that's a heavy substance isn't it (directed to interviewer)?

Lou A:

Well, I've seen, I've seen the information.

Q:

Yeah, uranium is a very heavy substance so it doesn't go too far.

05:14:02

Lou A:

But, so you're talking about minute (Q: hmm-hmm) situation, but the only thing of it is though if it's got those wells polluted, and I'm quite sure that it still reaches out further.

Q:

The Knollman's wells have been tested for years and they actually haven't had any problems so, they're right across from the plant (Lou A: hmm-hmm). That's, that's about the extent that I know. I can tell you that they're, they're undergoing a huge system of cleaning the water up now. They built a huge plant, they were just finishing it when I got there, it's called Advanced Waste Water Treatment.

05:14:32

Q:

And it's ah, if you're facing the plant it's off to the left near the Pilot Plant, (Lou A: yeah) this big huge building with these big tanks and ah, they have an injection and re-injection well system going that's cleaning out the aquifer. It's sucking out all the water, running it through wastewater treatment and putting it back into the aquifer.

05:14:49

Q:

(Lou A: hmm-hmm) And it's really an experimental process, (Robert A: high pressure) it's never been done before. So, and they, they for a long time were evaluating whether that was gonna work. They would put some dye in the water and watch it, see how it goes to the flow, does it go through.

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05:15:02

Lou A:

Is that what, is that what they're out there, I've seen 'em out there before like, it looked like they had these wells, I'd go down Willey Road (Q: hmm-hmm). I've seen them out there where they're working, is that what they're doing (directed to interviewer)?

Q:

Hmm-hmm, they do water samplings (Lou clears throat) every day and ah, they're seeing how that's working so, of course it's a brand new process because it's never been done before. So, it's pretty interesting. Um, having lived by Fernald, do you worry about your health at all?

05:15:26

Robert A:

Well, with that circle that they have ah, you know, where it told everybody that they should be checked, I'm just barely clear of that circle, just right on top of me. But ah, I don't feel any real danger from it whatsoever.

05:15:43

Lou A:

Well, as far as feeling, now I don't worry about it or anything like that. But the thing of it, the way I think, the way I understand it the hottest years was 1958. And I lived ah, in 1958 I lived at Fernald there, and then we moved to Ross, so I, my wife lived at Ross too. So, we both been heavily exposed. Bobby lived away from there at that time.

05:16:06

Lou A:

So, Bobby, Bobby had already left the area so he wasn't exposed like we was. And I don't worry about it but the thing of it is though, yeah I'm concerned. I mean, I know, you know you're gonna die of something but the thing is though, that I don't know how much I've been exposed to this thing. I don't know how much my wife's been exposed to it.

05:16:26

Lou A:

And I don't worry about it but yes I have a high concern of what has been done to us. And the people in the area ah, during the times of these releases, during the 1958s and so on and so, so forth. Like I said that should never have happened. We should never have been exposed to that stuff, if the officials of the plant and I'll also say Hamilton County was to take and had more concern about what they was doing.

05:16:57

Lou A:

I'm thinking there was mistakes made there that shouldn't have been made. And you know that's, I'm just telling the facts here, that's.

Q:

And you're in the medical monitoring system (Lou A: hmm-hmm)? Can you tell us a little bit about that?

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05:17:11

Lou A:

Ah, you make an appointment, you go over there and it's one of the best physicals that you can get. I mean it ah, if you've got something wrong with ya, they're gonna find it. That's for sure. They're very nice to us over there and everything and of course the government pays for the whole thing.

05:17:28

Lou A:

I appreciate the fact that the government did that. I appreciate the fact is that I get, I get the free medical monitoring service and they keep track of my health. That way if I do have cancer or something like that it might be caught early enough that, you know, ah, it can, you know, be something done about it, but ah.

05:17:48

Robert A:

My Mom died from cancer, there wasn't very much cancer in our family at all.

Lou A:

Mom died of cancer and ah, (clears throat) my ah, father-in-law, he just passed away a couple of years ago and he, we're quite sure he was probably eat up with cancer.

Robert A:

Well, see she died of a heart attack but that, ah, that heart attack came on because of all the treatments that she'd had.

05:18:11

Lou A:

But ah, they ah, the doctors over there are very nice and the people that sets up the appointments very nice. They make it very convenient, you go right over to Mercy Hospital and you go in there and you do your thing, you know, you're back out. They send you a questionnaire, you know, asking different questions, they monitor your health and all that kind of stuff. And see if you're under any stress or whatever. They, yeah I'm satisfied with that program.

05:18:33

Lou A:

Ah, I'm not satisfied with the payment on the settlement that we got. I don't know if you've been told that before or not. But I think that the little, few little measly bucks that we got out of the settlement was not satisfactory.

05:18:46

Lou A:

It should have been, it should have been more. And when they de-graduated ah, then there also was certain mistakes made in there, the early part, such as my wife lived in the house that her brother lived in. In other words, both the kids lived in that house over in Ross, so what happened was they paid my brother-in-law more money than they paid my wife and they come along and they paid her half of what.

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05:19:13

Lou A:

And do you know why? Because they said they made a mistake on the line. On the line, now that actually was a fact. My wife got half of what my brother-in-law got out of that settlement. And I argued with 'em I said, "how can they" and they said, well, they made a mistake and went ahead and paid it to him.

05:19:28

Lou A:

And they could retract what they'd already done and I said well, that's poor bookkeeping isn't, you know? I mean, that's a fact. I must, you know, that's a fact. And yeah, there's some things about this here, there's some things about this Fernald settlement that I'm not satisfied with.

05:19:45

Lou A:

I wasn't gone far enough in the community. And they should have come on down and dipped down and took Bobby and guys like that, cause they was (Robert A: We were borderline) they was in borderline but they was still within the area.

05:19:57

Lou A:

I mean, the fact of it is, if you was exposed then you should've been, there should be restitution taken for that. You know what I'm saying. You've probably been told this before (chuckles) so.

Q:

Do you think the settlements were fair, I mean, as far as not just what you got but what other people got too?

Lou A:

How do you mean by that question?

05:20:20

Q:

Well there were a lot of people that lived maybe further away than you did that got more money. Have you ever heard anybody else's settlements?

Lou A:

That lived further away that got more money?

Q:

Or lived in like the same radius, that may have received more money than you did?

Lou A:

Well, yeah that's the, that's what I'm talking about. The mistake that happened. That's just what I told you right there is why people has said that to you. That what happened was my, my, what

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happened was, like I said, there was two children in my wife's family, her brother and my wife. And of course his father and mother. They lived in the same house. Lived right over there on Venice Boulevard.

05:20:59

Lou A:

They paid my brother-in-law more money than they paid my wife because they said, so I questioned them. I mean I argued with them about that. So finally they told me they said there was a mistake made. And that's why you heard this. Yes, people got paid that lived further away got paid more money so on and so forth. Or in the same place so on and so forth. That's why that came about.

05:21:20

Lou A:

That's why you heard that story. I just told the truth about it right there. That's a fact. That's a fact.

Q:

Did you all, did you all ever attend any of the public meetings that went on like as soon as this story kind of broke?

05:21:30

Lou A:

No, I never did attend no, the meetings because uh, I just never took the time to do it because uh, you can go to public meetings and you can talk all day long but like I said the facts. Uh, you know, if they don't take the action that needs to be taken uh, you're just spinning your wheels. That's the way I feel about a lot of town meetings.

05:21:55

Robert A:

And news media covers it anyway.

Lou A:

Yeah, news media covers most all of it anyway.

Q:

If you could go back 30 or 40 years and say something to the Atomic Energy Commission people, what would you tell them?

05:22:07

Lou A:

I would take and tell them. Thirty, forty years ago if I knew what I knew now first thing I, I'd come in, I would ask the government, I would ask the government to put the type of people as head of that plant that had the expertise that could handle the job. That wouldn't allow any mistakes to happen. 'Cause there is no excuse whatsoever for mistakes to happen.

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05:22:31

Lou A:

Especially at a atomic, any type of atomic energy plant. Or if, in my personal opinion, if people would do their jobs like they're supposed to you wouldn't be having mistakes. But what happens is, people don't do their job right. They just kind of like halfway it and go about. So what if something happens? I seen it happen other places. I don't want to name the name of the company, but I seen it happen.

05:22:55

Lou A:

Where people just don't do their jobs. So what happens? Bam. Something serious happens it's a fact is you go back, somebody ain't doing the job. That's all. I mean it goes on all the time.

Robert A:

What I would do is I would tell them to take test bores out there in the desert and find a suitable location where there is no water trapped down there. And build that plant there. After all we are piping water to cities hundreds of miles away. You, you've heard about that. It'd be the sensible way to go. You could bury whatever you wanted.

Q:

And uh, you, how much contact did you guys have with um, with plant workers? How many people did you know that worked at the plant?

05:23:46

Lou A:

Mm, I knew a couple and I worked with one guy at GE that uh, that worked at the plant. He was a, a, he was a machinist out there. And then I uh, uh, another guy lived in town there. His name was Stephens. He was in maintenance I think out there. And uh, so those and also uh, uh, Betty worked there for a while, didn't she (directed to Robert)?

Robert A:

I don't know.

05:24:15

Lou A:

Yeah, Betty worked; my sister worked at the atomic.

Robert A:

Oh, yes she did. Yes, she did.

Lou A:

Yeah, she did. She worked in the office up there. She worked at the atomic plant.

Robert A:

Yes, she did.

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05:24:23

Lou A:

And uh, see I'm trying to think uh. Who else worked up there (directed to Robert)?

Robert A:

Hum, Bobby Clevenger.

Lou A:

Did he work up there?

Robert A:

I think he did.

Lou A:

I don't know (shakes head) Bobby came, Clevens he came over to GE there. He worked at GE there. He got sick.

Q:

Did any of those people discuss their jobs at Fernald? Ever tell you what they did?

05:24:50

Lou A:

Um, well Bob just said he was a machinist up there. That was all. Naw, he didn't go into detail about it.

Q:

Were you aware that the people that worked at the plant had to have Q clearance?

05:25:02

Lou A:

Naw, I wasn't. No. Uh-huh.

Q:

I think it's interesting to talk to the surrounding community and see how much they knew about uh, you know what was going on inside the plant.

05:25:13

Lou A:

Well, I would imagine that they'd have to have clearances. I mean, I, I've had clearances in my jobs over the years. I've had-

Robert A:

That's, that's like clearance I had with the Army. I could walk into Air Force installations where a lot of your people in the Air Force couldn't walk.

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Q:

Yeah, it was the same thing with uh, the folks at Fernald. Most of them had Q clearances to work there. So, so some of them (Lou A: Yeah, yeah) had top secret clearances.

05:25:37

Lou A:

Well, I would, ya know, I'd, like I said, I would of presumed that they would probably have clearances. I mean at uh, at a government facility like that.

Q:

Um, did you ever hear any sort of myths or legends about the plant? Or-

05:25:54

Lou A:

Oh, you mean like cows disappearing or -

Q:

Yeah (laughs)

Lou A:

Or like a big fireball? Cow would be standing there and a big fireball or whatever (laughs).

Q:

That's a new one on me. Tell me about that.

05:26:03

Lou A:

Oh, was that you I was talking to the other day on the phone?

Q:

No, that was Sharon.

Lou A:

Huh?

Q:

That was Sharon.

05:26:06

Lou A:

Oh, was that Sharon. Yeah, she was talking about, what? Cows disappearing or something like that? I don't know

Q:

I don't have any idea. That's a new one on me.

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05:26:15

Lou A:

No, I didn't. I never heard any myths about the plant. What's, I was just joking around with you.

Q:

Did you ever hear any?

Robert A:

No, I never did.

Q:

A lot of people in the surrounding community have told me that they've uh, you know, heard that there's gold and jewels and stuff in the silos. And that kind of stuff.

05:26:32

Lou A:

Oh, yeah (laughs). Maybe I'll go out there and dig it up.

Q:

That's right (laughs).

05:26:37

Robert A:

Oh, that's like I uh, I know that they had experiments trying to make gold. And they were flying charges at very high; ultrahigh speeds and they could produce gold. In other words, they could produce it from lead. And uh, what was it, Merlin the Magician, wasn't that years ago that they talked about could do that. And, but the only thing is it cost them so much money to make it, it's not feasible.

05:27:05

Robert A:

In other words, it's just foil when they make it. But they can fly high charged particles, (Lou A: yeah) high speed particles at this lead and turn it into gold.

Lou A:

Yeah, I've seen that. It was on television.

Q:

Um, they're tearing down buildings out there pretty fast. Have you, have you guys been driving by to see anything, what's going on up there?

Lou A:

I haven't.

Q:

Buildings are coming down pretty quick uh, out at Fernald. And, and what would you guys like to see done with that thousand fifty acres when the plant's gone?

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05:27:38

Robert A:

I think, myself, revert it back to what it was. I don't see any reason it couldn't be farmland. Except for a certain amount there whatever they deem it should be. Ya know, whatever they think should be kept free of that. But I don't see any reason it couldn't go back to food and so forth.

05:27:56

Lou A:

Well, I, I think what should be done with the thousand what, 50 acres? Is, I think that they should continue with the Indian burials out there, and I think that they should build a museum out there. And I think they should make it a nice museum where people can come from all over the world and you know, look at it. I think they should, the rest of it and everything, they should bring it back to its natural state.

05:28:27

Lou A:

And you know, with forests and where the animals can roam and so on and so forth. And I think that also that they should have like a uh, visitor's center where people, in other words, people can come in, well, okay, like a museum with a visitor's center and everything built in there.

05:28:45

Lou A:

But I think it should be pretty much kept in a natural state to what it was, and not, where you can go in there and I think that everything should be in there about the atomic plant and the surrounding community and so on and so forth. And if they would decide to use it for anything as far as the community's concerned, uh, then they should put it in there.

05:29:04

Lou A:

In other words, it should be open to Crosby Township and Hamilton County, and the people that, of the, of the Hamilton County and the state of Ohio should be able to go there and enjoy. And uh, be able to see what everything was all about, you know, the history of the whole thing.

Q:

Good. Let's just switch tapes; I have just two more questions.

Tape FLHP0245

06:01:05

Q:

Um, something I wanted to ask you (pauses) Uh. Generally, just uh, how do you feel about having to lived so close to Fernald (pause)? The plant?

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Lou A:

Well, it don't, (clears throat) it doesn't bother me, I mean as far as. It, it's a part o' my life. You know, it's a big part o' my life because it come there when I was a freshman in high school. So it was a lot o' memories of the plant, you know. So, whenever you mention Fernald, I also automatically just think o' the Fernald plant because I mean, I was so close, I was within a half a mile o' the plant.

06:01:51

Lou A:

So Fernald was part, and like my dad was an agent there at Chesapeake Ohio Railroad, so. And everybody in town talked Fernald, you know. You go to Ahearse Grocery, Fernald, you know. "Oh, I work up Fernald Atomic Plant." "Oh, you do?" "Yeah, okay." So, it, it's just a large part of, of it.

06:02:14

Lou A:

You know, even as I go by today, like my uh, mother-in-law still lives in Ross. So my wife and I go Willey Road now since the other road closed. Even if we go 128 goin' up there, I look over at the atomic plant as a part o' my life. I mean it's there. And it uh, it's been a friendly plant, I mean it's not a, I don't have a problem with the plant, it's been a friendly plant, you know.

06:02:36

Lou A:

I just say that uh, the plant itself has been good for the community. But then there's also, some things that was not ran, right up, right up there that was not good for the community.

Q:

That sort o' leads me to my next question, too. How do you think the plant changed the community from the time you guys were kids to now?

06:02:57

Robert A:

Well, for one thing, Paddy's Run Creek that we knew of cannot have kids swimming in it, or at least they couldn't years ago. There was a chemist that lived up there, above the Depot, or north of the Depot. And I had my German Shepherd, King out there. And he told me, "Don't let him in the water." He says, "I've tested it." He says, "If he gets in, why, walk him around so he gets it off of his feet and so forth." He says, "He doesn't wanna ingest anything that's in there." He was a chemist.

06:03:30

Lou A:

The Paddy's Run Crick came, became polluted from runoff from the plant. I mean that, the plant even admitted that. They found out that it was polluted. That's somethin' there that should of never happened. That's another thing that the officials should of never left happen, because that was a nice crick. It's got a lot o' memories for us. And it was a, I mean it was a beautiful crick.

06:03:53

Lou A:

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I, you know, I, we went down there and we catch the crawdads, you know, we catch the frogs, we jump in the water hole with the snakes down there you know, go swimming down there. See they took that away. That couldn't happen, because they didn't take the precautions in the plant, to keep water from running off there, which could a been done, if they would a done their job right, and they wound up polluting the crick, and that's inexcusable.

06:04:16

Robert A:

See, I wrote a poem about that, I wrote "The Atomic Ditch" and afterwards, I changed it to "Paddy's Run Creek" (Lou A: He actually did). And I, I have some things is published. I have two poems is in the Library of Congress. One 1998, and the other one 1999.

06:04:37

Lou A:

He read it at the Historical Society over there. And um, it, actual facts (chuckles).

06:04:47

Q:

A lot of the uh, people that you were friends with when you were children, how do they feel about that very thing, about uh, the crick getting polluted?

Lou A:

Well, they don't like it, no.

Robert A:

I've never talked to any of 'em about it.

06:05:02

Q:

How else has uh, has the plant affected the community and the actual ground it's sitting on, you know, as far as like, how has it affected.

Lou A:

Well, I think it affected the community 'cause every time you mention Fernald Atomic Plant everybody thinks what, of the situation we have today, you know that's the first thing. I mean, it's been publicized in the *Enquirer*, and so on and so forth. So's every time somebody mentions Fernald Atomic Plant they look at it like, you know, well okay. That's the silos, pollution, you know, so on and so forth.

06:05:33

Lou A:

I just asked my wife the other day when we went up there, I said, "do you think" I said, "they're getting it cleaned up?" But I said, "do you think it will ever be cleaned up in our lifetime?" You know, she said, "well, I don't know."

06:05:44

Robert A:

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You don't know, when you're, when you're on a trip and you talking to people and mention Fernald, right away they're aware of it. But ah, the way I figure it is when you talk about the atomic plant right away I think about Russia and China and I know it's a necessity no matter which one of us it hurts, it has to be put somewhere.

06:06:07

Robert A:

But, I think the only mistake they made wasn't in choosing in who it should be, put in there, because all of us should be the same on that, but I think they should have headed for the desert and pumped the water to it.

Q:

Now something else you may have read about is waste shipping. They ship a lot of the waste off site by rail (Robert A: yeah). How do you guys feel about that?

06:06:30

Robert A:

I believe it's much safer than trying any other means. I know things can be de-railed but ah, I think in a way if you're doing that, I think in a way if they had ah, another engine as a scout vehicle running about a mile or two ahead of 'em, I think it would be a lot safer.

06:06:57

Lou A:

But they're not doing that now are they yet (directed to interviewer)?

Robert A:

Yes they are. Well they ship.

Lou A:

Well, you say they're, what are they shipping out of there actually – waste material (directed to interviewer)?

06:07:05

Q:

Well, they are getting ready to dig up the waste pits and once they start digging up the waste pits they're going to be drying the waste in this big facility they built (Lou A: yeah). And ah, with these huge dryers and once they dry these, cause you know, if you travel with, with ah, wet waste, what happens is it tends to precipitate (Lou A: sure, yeah).

06:07:24

Q:

And like all the water can leak out. They don't want that to happen, so they're gonna dry all the waste.

Robert A:

When they're drying it out, will they have scrubbers above it?

Q:

Huh-hmm, oh yeah. That whole system I've seen the whole, the blueprints for it and it's really well

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built. That's done by a company called IT.

Lou A:

And, and they're gonna ship it to where?

06:07:39

Q:

Ah, it's going out to Envirocare in Utah.

Lou A:

And then how's it going to be handled out there?

Q:

Um, they put it in um, sealand containers, type strong sealand containers (Lou A: hum-hmm) and ah, everything is documented like in triplicate. They know exactly what's going to go in there.

06:07:55

Lou A:

Well, here's, here's another thing. You're shipping stuff out there, you turn around and put it in a container and they're putting it off for our grandkids to handle later on. This needs to be addressed right now to where we can destroy the stuff to where it's inactive. And this is, you know, the only thing I can see, okay, my personal opinion, the only thing I can see is, as a concerned citizen I'm going to say this.

06:08:18

Lou A:

I see this being dug up from here, this being dried out, this being shipped by rail, put out there in a container, okay we took care of that. Now, 50 to 100 years from now our grandkids and great-grandkids are gonna say "what are we gonna do with this stuff?" What're you gonna do shoot it to the moon?

06:08:34

Lou A:

It's got; we need to address this issue to what we can actually do with this now. And I, I don't understand why it's not being done (Robert A: what we need to). That's a question that's never been answered. Can you answer that question for me?

06:08:46

Q:

What can be done with it or? Well, they were, they had talked incineration but that's not safe either.

Robert A:

I think what we need is (Lou A: doesn't) more tunnels in the mountains and just back those railroad cars into there and seal that baby up.

Q:

Have you heard of Yucca Mountain?

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Robert A:
Yeah.

06:09:05

Q:

Have you guys ever heard of Yucca Mountain (Robert A: yeah)? 'Cause Yucca Mountain, they're trying to ah, consolidate all the waste, like in the least um, the least populated areas of the country that's like the big initiative that's going on with Congress right now so, that's what they're studying out there for.

06:09:17

Lou A:

The only, the only thing that bothers me is that we're still sitting on the waste.

Robert A:

Yeah, but right now you don't have the knowledge to do it.

Lou A:

Guess that's what I don't understand why we're not getting the knowledge to, to destroy this stuff. I mean, what are you gonna set, you know in other words, we created something that can't be deactivated.

06:09:37

Robert A:

Well, you can't whip the common cold, so you have things like this you can't whip (Lou A: hum-hmm) right now.

Q:

Yeah, there's a lot of new technology coming into play but this is like never been done before either. So, you know, they don't know exactly how to handle this.

06:09:51

Lou A:

How come they can't, how come they can't seal it and store it on site up here?

Q:

Well they are doing some of that. Have you heard of the On-Site Disposal Facility, what they're building right now?

Lou A:

Well, I've heard some thing.

Q:

Well, you guys need to take a tour.

06:10:03

Lou A:

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Well, (Robert A: yeah, we do) you know, okay, you asked a question here and I'm gonna, I don't, okay. I don't have a problem with 'em storing on site if they put it in the proper container verses shipping it to somewhere's else.

06:10:18

Lou A:

As long as they can put it in a container and it makes it safe. And then if they looking at the issue of destroying the stuff to where it can't be active any more whatever. I don't have a problem with that. But I think, but if it's safer to ship it out there and store it. I think the safest thing should be done, you know. Okay, we got, in other words, we've got a bomb so you've got to handle it as such, I understand that. I don't have a problem with that.

06:10:47

Q:

Most of what they're burying on site in the On-Site Disposal Facility is like building rubble (Robert A: yeah), so it's not really (Lou A: yeah), it's not even very radioactive at all, you know, it's not very contaminated.

Lou A:

Well, I don't have a problem with that 'cause there's certain, you know.

06:10:58

Q:

So, they're building a great big facility, it's really neat (Lou A: yeah). You guys will have to come out to see it, it's going to be 60 feet high, and it's taking up like (Lou A: yeah) quite a bit of room. And ah, the other waste that they're shipping out to the Nevada Test Site. Now to Envirocare in Utah and those types of things. They know exactly what's in every box.

06:11:16

Q:

(Lou A: hum-hmm) And so, what they do intend on doing is when the technology is there, they intend on trying to address that waste (Lou A: hum-hmm) again 50 years from now when maybe they have a better technology but ah, it's like from what I can understand from our scientists on site that's the saf-, safest way to get rid of the low-level radioactive waste, it to ship it out west.

06:11:37

And that's what they're doing (Lou A: hmm-hmm, yeah) but they do know exactly what's in every box. That facility is amazing.

Lou A:

I'm not so much concerned about that. The thing that really concerns me is the silos up here (Q: hmm-hmm) is remaining. That's the thing is, I don't want no more pollution out of that silo. It was, how many's up there (directed to interviewer)?

06:11:54

Q:

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There's four silos, two of them have ah, waste from the Belgian Congo (Lou A: hmm-hmm) and then the third is black oxide. Which they're pretty sure they know what they're gonna do with that so, the big problem is Silos 1 and 2.

Robert A:

I know one thing that will retain radioactive and that is asphalt. Doesn't matter whether it's your roof or what, asphalt will really retain it.

06:12:21

Q:

And most of those building materials and roads and stuff, when they take all that stuff up, is gonna go into the OSDF (Robert A: hmm-hmm).

Lou A:

We live with radiation every day. Our basement's probably got more radiation in it than.

Robert A:

Ours is just barely, ah, we're above it, but we're just borderline.

06:12:37

Q:

Radon?

Robert A:

Hmm-hmm.

Lou A:

Yeah, that's the way with me (Robert A: yeah). I've got; I'm about right at four. (Robert A: how about) I'm not worried, you know, I'm not gonna worry about it and I'm not gonna put in no anti-pollution system or anything like that. 'Cause most, if you check anybody's basement around here you're probably gonna read four or five.

06:12:56

Robert A:

But how do I know it's not coming from my paneling and the rugs, you know. It can come from both.

Q:

And naturally occurring uranium is everywhere (Lou A: right) (Robert A: yeah). You know, they call it background.

Lou A:

That's why I say that, you know, we don't have no, in other words, is basically, if you look at radiation, radiation is in the world period. (Robert A: hmm-hmm) It's been there every since the beginning of time. You pick up a rock; it's got radiation in it. It'll probably, you know, set off a certain amount of radiation.

06:13:27

Robert A:

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Radiation can be handled to a certain extent ah, if anybody want's to turn their farm over to me, I'll live the rest of my life on it, if they want to sign it over to me.

Lou A:

Probably just concrete slab underneath there _____ radiation (laughing).

Robert A:

I'd enjoy it, I'd enjoy living on a farm if anybody wants to sign it over, I'll live there.

06:13:45

Q:

Is there anything that we didn't cover, you wanted to cover? Anything we didn't; anything you want to add?

Robert A:

I can't think of anything really, can you (directed to Lou)?

Lou A:

Ah, I made mention of, I, want did I made mention of now. There was something else we was gonna tell her.

Robert A:

Well there is.

Q:

Well, there was something I wasn't sure whether you guys knew, did you know they had been working on the railroad tracks, the trestle at Okeana and since you're a railroad, children of the railroad.

Robert A:

Well, I saw, I saw this there at Okeana about three years ago and I thought there is no way I'd ride an engine across that thing, because they even had, I'm not talking about bolts through it, I could see from the road it looked to me like lag bolts and hanging loose. And I thought there is no way I would ride an engine across that thing.

06:14:34

Robert A:

It was about three years ago I saw that. And they're just now getting to it (directed to interviewer)?

Q:

Oh, it's done.

Robert A:

Oh, okay.

Q:

It's been done for about a year. They pulled out all the old wood and replaced it with metal

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(Robert A: hmm-hmm). And they did that because of the trains that were coming from Fernald going out west (Robert A: hmm-hmm) are going out over that Okeana trestle.

06:14:50

Robert A:

I'm not sure about the number of years, it wasn't too many.

Lou A:

Oh, we didn't cover the train wreck and flood.

Q:

Oh, yeah. Yeah, if you could tell us a little bit about the train wreck. What were year did that happen?

06:15:00

Robert A:

1953, I believe it was October.

Lou A:

Yeah, I was a ah, sophomore in high school when that happened. I was, the station was on the side that is was originally was, it had been moved from the track. It'd been, some of the history of the station I'll tell you that right real quick.

06:15:20

Lou A:

It was sitting in the middle of the track and it was jacked up and turned around in the year, what was it (directed to Robert) 1945?

Robert A:

It was ah, that was November of 1945.

Lou A:

They raised it up and they put it on piers, on ties, and turned it around and rolled it across the track. Well, they brought it across the track then they turned it around or did they turn it as they (Robert A: they turned it as they went) right. They turned it around, the station, and set it down where it was last originally at before they tore it down.

06:15:47

Lou A:

And it set from here to I'd say where that wall is at from the track (Robert A: yeah, it was further away than what it was before) right. Mom, so mom had went to Lacey's Store that day and I had come home from school. I'd come home from school and ah, she ah, she said she was going to go to the store and she asked me if I wanted to go with her and I said, no. I said, I'm gonna stay and hang out around here, 'cause Dad he had some feeding and stuff to do down there.

06:16:16

Lou A:

He had some ah, he had some chickens down there and stuff. And so, on down on the backside of the

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garage there. So, I was in the house there and I had, I had just, I had been outside with him, I just walked back in the house to get me a drink of water and grab me a sandwich, you know how you are as a kid, you're always hungry, you know.

06:16:35

Lou A:

So, I went over and I was making me a sandwich and everything, I had just walked in the, in the living room which is ah, in the next to the kitchen there. And this train was coming through and of course the engine went on through and was rolling on and it was a diesel so it was about four, four engines on the front of it and it was ah, freight train coming through.

06:17:00

Lou A:

That had ah, it was all freight. Anyway, the engine came through. So, I'd say it probably had, maybe it had, maybe at 85, 87 cars on the back of that engine, on the back of the train. And the train was going through clickly-clack, clickly-clack. All the sudden I heard the train jerk. It jerked like that (moving hands from side to side) and then it jerked again, and I thought something's wrong.

06:17:23

Lou A:

So, I went to the kitchen, and just as I went to the kitchen I seen what was wrong. Here come the boxcar up behind there, it had came off the track and it was rocking like this (moving hands and body side to side) here. It was going back and forth, just rocking on the back part of the train. I says, "oh," I says, "oh, man." I knew what was gonna happen.

06:17:42

Lou A:

And I seen that thing, it plowed into that, plowed into that railroad crossing there at ah, right there at the station. That boxcar came up on end like that, it upended. And all the train was plowing right in behind it. It was about like 16 or 17 cars behind that in the backend.

06:18:03

Lou A:

It came all plowing through there, by that time I was, I hit the floor. And anyway after all the noise and the dust settled and everything I go running outside and I couldn't find my Dad and I mean, there was coal dust everywhere. You couldn't even, I couldn't see nothing.

06:18:18

Lou A:

And I was, and pretty soon I was hollering for my Dad and I said "Dad." And then all of the sudden I heard somebody holler, "Louie, Louie." And I, it was my Dad and then I found him and he was all right. 'Course Mom was at New Haven and she later on she had heard about the train wreck and she came home.

06:18:40

Lou A:

And I got pictures over there, I mean it was, it was a mess and we all lived through it. But that was an

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experience right there. That was really an experience.

Robert A:

Yeah, surprising part is, here's the, here's the depot, the end of it and this is going north, (demonstrating with hands) and this is a pole there, a telegraph pole. Well somehow or another, and then Mom had a clothes pole there, a post. And it went through that whole business, never touched anything and it put those railroad cars right straight through in between the outhouse and the ah, coal shed. And Mom's clothesline post and all never hit any of 'em.

06:19:22

Robert A:

And started on the other side then, and piled cars up and threw coal. There was, the ah, the garage was pretty far back from the depot and the doors were opened like this here (demonstrates with hands) and it piled all that coal up, my Dad could see it coming, he ran back into the garage in order to get out. And it almost filled that garage to the ah, top about like this here (demonstrates with hands) (Lou A: yeah). And him in there and he did get out to get to Louie.

06:19:52

Lou A:

It did, it did hit the end of the depot. It took the roof off of the end of the depot in the corner. That's the only part of the depot that got hit. And there was twisted rail, you could, I walked out, when the dust all settled and I found Dad and everything and the sun finally came back there was rails just twisted like donuts in there.

06:20:12

Lou A:

I've got pictures of it over there. And ah, Cecil heard, Hayhurst, he heard it happening too. And Cecil said all he seen, he seen that car coming down there and hit that, hit that ah, ah, crossing there, and he said the first thing he thought about, he knew that, well of course, you know, us. He didn't know Mom was gone.

06:20:34

Lou A:

He said, "oh, man." You know.

Q:

'Cause you were so close to the track.

Lou A:

Yeah, oh yeah (Robert A: hmm-hmm). Wonder we didn't; wonder it didn't kill us.

Robert A:

And even at ah, this distance was like this here ah, when we were on the other side of the tracks I would say the distance was no more than two-thirds this distance.

06:20:53

Lou A:

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If it had been on the other side of the tracks it would have killed us, because it, it would have took the station out. 'Cause that's where some of the cars went. I heard some of the cars went to the right, but most of 'em plowed right up through there and was taking the rails out as it went.

06:21:06

Lou A:

In other words, when it hit that crossing that boxcar, when she jumped up like that, it kind of like twisted. It didn't come right, it just kind of like twisted and it came over and it went right in the ground like that. I seen that happen.

06:21:16

Robert A:

See, like only 1 month of being 7 years to when that depot had been moved otherwise that depot would have been wiped out. Him in it, (Lou A: yeah). Hard to tell where my Dad would have been at that time.

Lou A:

It threw, it threw the trucks out from underneath of the cars, it threw 'em clear out into that field on the side, where the ah, where the chemical company's at. It threw, it actually had, it had those big heavy trucks from out underneath them cars laying out there. It was laying, there was a truck laying out in the backyard out there not too far from where Dad was at. It just took, it went everywhere.

06:21:50

Lou A:

I mean, you're talking about tons and tons of steel and you're talking, that train was probably going, probably 70, probably 65 miles an hour when it happened. So, you're talking about tons and tons of steel. Them cars coming, I mean, they weigh tons themselves, especially loaded. So, it was a mess.

06:22:10

Q:

It's a good thing they moved your house.

Lou A:

Yeah, I guess (Robert A: hmm-hmm).

Q:

Now in 1953 there was a, is that that same year that was the flood.

Robert A:

No, '37.

Lou A:

Okay, there was two, there was two, okay. There was two floods (Q: yeah). Okay, 1937 I wasn't here I wasn't born until 1938, but 1937 ah, how far did it get up (directed to Robert)?

Robert A:

Oh, it got up to, it came right on up around Fernald there (Lou A: yeah). It had everything blocked off (Lou A: yeah). And there was no way in or out and all the railroad lanterns, we had several

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railroad lanterns. My Dad kept them lit so anybody coming in could use them. And ah, I would be out there and they would be all kinds of trainmen there and men, bridgemen and everything else there.

06:23:01

Robert A:

And ah, it was something to see.

Lou A:

Then there was a flood in 1956 wasn't there? Was it '56 flood or '58 flood.

Robert A:

Oh, no, no, no, no. 1959. (Lou A: yeah '59). It was 1959.

06:23:17

Lou A:

'59 if you go down there to where 128 is and where the stop sign is, well they got a traffic light there now. But that's the, stop sign was sticking out of the top of the water. That's how, where the water came up all around Fernald there. And we, when the water went back down everybody would go down, there was people going down there and they was getting them fish out. Where the puddles would, you know, left the holes at.

06:23:38

Lou A:

They was pulling carp out of there like you wouldn't believe. Catfish, big ones, and ah, now, I'm gonna kind of jump you from this flood, there's one thing that we didn't, that I would like to cover in here. Is back when I was a kid, I remember hobos coming through the station there. And my Dad and Mom would give 'em something to eat.

06:24:02

Lou A:

And so, that was part of that history there, I remember that.

Robert A:

Never locked doors in those days (Lou A: yeah).

Lou A:

And also on the back part of the station there we had a big willow tree. And 'course we had a nice garden area out there, Mom had a nice garden area with, like Bob, Bobby said they poured the concrete in there and everything. And ah, we also had a swing out there and all and now on the willow, on the willow tree if Mom got mad at you, she'd just go over there and she'd get her a piece of that willow switch and you got a whoopen with a willow switch. Right Bobby (directed to Robert)?

06:24:45

Robert A:

That would be ah child that would be child abuse today.

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Lou A:

Or a belt. There's been a few times I got it with a belt (Robert A: Or a broomstick), or a broomstick, yeah, you got it with a broomstick too (Robert A: but ah). 'Course, I used to start all the trouble, I'd get them in trouble, you know, then Bobby'd say, Bobby'd say, "I'm gonna kill you."

Robert A:

And there's something that nobody ever mentions or anything and that is Leroy Re-, Leroy Hayhurst. That guy, now he could do anything. Didn't matter what. Hydraulic, electric, anything and he had no real schooling. He came out of high school out at Harrison. He was 18 years my senior and in fact when Cecil came out of service in 1946 uh, Roy had that building built on the back of the store.

06:25:38

Robert A:

So, that he could have uh, lube service and so forth in there. But, and hunter, he was a good hunter. We used to coon hunt all the time.

Lou A:

I used to work on my cars over there (Robert A: yeah). Used to let me work on my cars there.

Robert A:

Yeah, and that was a lot of fun for us at night. We would uh; we would be there. Louie came along later on this. But we would be there and playing ping-pong. Different ones like Cabel Raily, and he lived up above Tony Hill there a little ways. And uh, aw shoot, we'd play them maybe 2:00, 2:30 on a Saturday night. I mean leading on into Sunday morning, about 2:00, 2:30.

06:26:17

Robert A:

And then go back home and Mom'd get you back up to go to church. And, but, eh, you had a certain amount of fun even though you're isolated from other kids.

Lou A:

We used to go over to the store uh, when I was a kid we'd go over to the store. Of course, Bobby did too. Uh, when you walked into Hayhurst store there, that was the community. That was the center of the community there really. And course, Banny's uh, Coursin's Feed Mill there, all these here guys worked in the feed mill, ya know. They ground meal and all that kind of stuff.

06:26:49

Lou A:

And done deliveries and things. And uh, Clepo Otto he was, he ran the mill too. And uh, anyway at dinner time or you'd go over and first thing you walked in the store, right on the left-hand side was a Coke cooler there. And if, if you wanted, if you wanted a Coke you'd open it up and throw in a RC crown or, or root beer whatever.

06:27:12

Lou A:

You'd open it up and there'd be bottles setting, Coke bottles setting down there or RC Crown, down in

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the water. And it had a cooler. Now earlier than that they had ice in there. And the ice-

Robert A:

Yeah, they definitely kept it cold.

Lou A:

Right, so anyway, next to that there was a candy case. And you could buy candy bars for five cents, Clark bar. You could buy Clark bar, Hershey's, whatever for five cents. And I think the Cokes, what was they (directed to Robert), five cents too?

Robert A:

They was five cents.

06:27:38

Lou A:

Yeah, five cents for the Cokes. Get you a Coke and a Clark bar and, spew, open it up, uh, on the opener. And, back in the back, back there they had table back there that had Coke chairs like these here back there and all the guys would come over and eat. And I used to go in there and I'd sit in there and I'd, course they used to kid me all the time in there, ya know, the guys would.

06:27:58

Lou A:

Ya know I was just a kid, ya know. So, I'd go in there and I'd spend the day in there. And I remember Leroy, he'd uh, somebody'd order a ham sandwich or whatever. And he had bread back there and he had a, a slicer and a butcher block and all that. And he'd go over to this here case and he'd take uh, ham loaf out of there and throw it up there.

06:28:19

Lou A:

And, ya know, slice her off and make you a ham sandwich or whatever, with onions on it, pickles, whatever. And they sold them there and uh, so ya know that was a community uh, center point right there was Hayhurst store. Yeah, they played a big role in Fernald. So it was, in other words if you look at Fernald, if you look at Fernald in itself, if you take and go back in the uh, uh.

06:28:41

Lou A:

If you go to any town in America. Any small town in America, that was Fernald.

Robert A:

And see, before these chairs you sat on empty, uh, earlier than that than him they uh would sit on empty nail kegs, put something over it to pad it. Oh, there was another thing too, talking about Hayhurst's store, well, this little boy I told you about, that's me, came there in August of 1932 and so that first week why I'd be with my dad and my dad, he'd walk in the store and get whatever he wanted.

06:29:18

Robert A:

And he'd say, "Charge it." So, by gosh, I was going to school and all of a sudden one day I thought

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well that'd be pretty neat. It happened to be, I started in the beginning of the week and I'd go in and get a bag of candy, pick out the kinds I want and tell them to charge it. That went on for a week until my dad caught on. Boy, it worked real good. He laughed about that (laughing).

Q:

Well, we're about out of tape (everyone laughs) I think we have like nine –

Lou A:

We about used all the tape.

Q:

(Off camera conversation) All right, go ahead and stop rolling. (Off camera: Rolling, quiet please). This is nat sound. (Off camera: Okay, rolling. Cutting)