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FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

Name: Marion Fuchs
Date Interviewed: 7/16/99 Date Transcribed: Tape: D-1 Project Number 20012

Tape FEMP023525

00:00:29
Q:
Marion, thank you for coming out this afternoon. We want to talk to you a little bit about your early ah life in Southwest Ohio growing up around Fernald, Ohio. Talk to us just a little bit first of all about where you were born, what year?

00:00:47
A:
I was born on the sixth of July 1930, in a rural home, in Sharptown, Indiana, which is south of Mt. Carmel, Indiana about ten miles north of Harrison, Ohio, I say about 12 or 15 miles from Fernald. Ah, Mom and Dad lived there until I was about two years old. And Dad and Mom bought the farm owned by the Willey family of the Willey Brooksville Gravel Company. And they moved there when I was two years old.

00:01:28
It had a hundred around a hundred acres. And I lived there until 1951 on my 21st birthday. I was helping demolish the home Dad and Mom worked so hard to get that the Atomic Energy Commission, ah – came in and took the farm by eminent domain for the Fernald project. And things have been quite different ever since.

00:02:00
Q:
Where are we sitting this afternoon?

00:02:03
A:
We are sitting at about two miles west of Campbellstown, Ohio about four or five miles from Richmond, Indiana, about three miles south of Interstate 40 and 70 right at quarter mile inside the Ohio-Indiana state line.

00:02:22
Q:
And what let you to be here?

00:02:26
A:
Well, I, I was farming about 300 acres when they came in and when they took the home base. Dad had us farming. They took my home base. I lost all my farming ground 'cause it didn't have any place, to call, for a home base to work from any more. And they condemned and took the whole farm. All they used the farm for was the main entrance into the Fernald project. Eh, every farm at that time within

the area

went up for a hundred and fifty dollars an acre. That doesn't sound much right now. But you could buy a real nice farm for 450-500 dollars an acre. And when they go up a third immediately, ah we just decided to do the best we could do.

00:03:32
Ah, our milk cows we wanted to try to save them, eh, we saved a few of them, but, eh, we supposed to be able to reinvest within 18 months, but some person from Internal Revenue Service said it wasn't a forced sale so we had to pay taxes on them. He said we could run them out on the road. That was kind of an imbecile's idea as far as I'm concerned when you're dealing with Internal Revenue Service, why my opinion was that you're guilty until you can prove yourself innocent.

00:04:10
So, we lost our all of our livestock we built up for years breeding and culling. Eh we, Dad had about 200 live hens, which was a quite bit for then. We retailed all the produce there. We sold milk, raw milk there at home, and I had hogs. And Dad and I farmed together. I had a complete line of farm machinery before I got out of high school. And, but that didn't seem to make any difference. They wanted the ground and eminent domain took it.

00:04:58:
Q:
Let's go back to the 1930s. When you were a child now on the Fernald farm. What was the life like there growing up in rural Ohio?

00:05:11
A:
It was during the Depression. There was no such thing as welfare, no such thing as public assistance. Ah, you lived by your ingenuity. We were a close-knit community, eh, the churches. The people went to churches together. Eh, you bound yourself together. We were more or less an ethnic community. Ah, we had threshing rings. You heard of old fashion threshings. I've got pictures of when we used to thresh. We filled silos together as groups. And we even hauled clover seed together as groups.

00:06:01
You didn't worry about money because you didn't have any. What little bit you did have went to pay taxes and interest. The eh the women eh cooked the dinners. Most your eh you raised and butchered your own hogs or cattle or your beef. It was your meat was, shall I say, preserved in eh jars and sealed. We didn't have anything. We didn't have electricity until 1936 from Cincinnati Gas and Electric. Eh, We lived good. There was people in Hamilton and some people in Cincinnati could not find a job. Eh people that were machinists would gladly worked for a dollar a day and your noon day meal. People didn't have the money to give them a dollar a day. The things were rough but we made out.

00:07:10
You stuck together. You worked together, you prayed together and yeah we had patch upon patch on clothes. But I say one thing for my mother and father, I never went cold. I never went hungry. We

heated by wood. We didn't have no central furnace until later years, 'til about six or eight months before the government came in. No inside plumbing coming until about then, Dad remodeled the whole house, and it was about a hundred-year-old then. It was one of your eh pins and beams built like a barn, beautiful home. But that all went by the wayside. And the house is better than the other buildings we owned as property.

00:08:00
Q:
Tell us some about your neighbors. What road did you live on? What are some of your neighbors?

00:08:07
A:
We lived on the Willey Road. Right down at the junction of 128 and Willey Road. Eh, Leo Hiep lived there. The farm owned by Doctor Simmons. And I don't know if he was in Cheviot or where he was. And after the, Dad was still living yet, Henry, they lived to the on the other side of us. They purchased the right to, purchased the farm and the gave Leo Hiep money to move out and vacated immediately. They saved their wonderful herd of Holstein cattle, they had a wonderful herd of Holstein cattle. Eh, we didn't, there were several places that we'd have known afterwards a lot of people known us said if we had known needed that, they would have sold us their property well after they sold and gone six or eight months or two years later. It's too late.

00:09:24
So we just pulled out lock, stock and barrel and it was about fifty miles from here to Fernald. So then the Knollmans' were in the back of us beyond the Atomic Energy plant. There was a people lived there with the name of eh – but anyway. There was another big farm there, that was the largest farm owned by the big clothing company in Cincinnati, but I can't think of their name right now. But they, eh, the Atomic Energy plant bought the Nippert farms – over by New Haven, and they did a trade. And in Irwins, Ray and Ethel Irwin, Ethel was one of the girls my age, Clara. They moved up towards Marysville, Ohio, and Glenn graduated from Ohio State and so did Ethel. Glenn was farming, I don't know anything about him right now.

00:10:39
Ethel was graduated with honors from Ohio State University and wanted to teach but Dayton Power & Light paid her such for what she was worth. They paid her more than what she could get teaching. She was a smart girl. I haven't seen her since the 50s, so I don't know where she is. But like I said, Bill and I played together as kids. We were decently related. Bill's grandmother and my grandfather were oh wait, my grandfather or maybe his great grandmother were brother and sisters. At any rate, one generation doesn't make a big difference. But we went to the EUB church in New Haven. And there were Knollmans' and Fuchs' and Flamens and all inter-married.

00:11:42
Oh a small community, you didn't get out too much. If I got to Cincinnati once a year, I was flying high. Of course we had no need to go. The way like I said before the way the Depression was, Dad didn't have any money to hire any help. So when I was about five, six years old, we put up hay loose. And I drove the old 28 regular farm-tractor in a real slow, slow gear. All I did was steer it. Dad load a load of loose hay and we'd all just stop and unhook. We was on rented property, come down to 128 from the Butler County line and handle all loose hay like that we make things go, paid our bills so.

00:12:40
Q:
What did the farmland look like in that area compared to this land out here, fairly similar?

00:12:48
A:
Well, yes and no. The farm that Dad had were basically all the farm around there were more rolling than this. The farm we were on some of rest of us around there carried more sand in the soil texture. If you weren't careful, you've got a lot of rain, you got a lot of soil erosion, surface erosion. That was what put Dad into got interested in the conservation of the topsoil. In 1936, the Civilian Conservation Corps came in and laid the farm out in alternating strips. At Dad's time, there were 24 cornrows wide. A cornrow is 44 inches, which was antique to what it is nowadays. And alternating strips of a cultivated crop and grassland crop.

00:13:45
Over the farm they had to change fences. How the Civilian Conservation Corps worked, I don't know. I think they were the forerunner of the soil conservation service. It helped a lot. A lot of things were there. The farm produced good. I think back in then. There was one time Dad made weighed and measured his corn. He got 125 bushels an acre. That doesn't sound much now, but if you go back the late 30s or early 40s, 40 or 50 bushels an acre was a crop. But of course we had a silo.

00:14:28
Bill Knollman's Dad had the first forage harvester within the community. He filled the silo for us for a year or two, which is a great labor saver, and we finally got a chopper of our own. We used to thresh. Dad had the first 10-foot binder which would cut the wheat bound into sheaves you had to go out and shock it. He had one of those. The neighbors came in and shock his wheat. He would go cut their wheat for them. We had this threshing ring. That was a lot of hard work. I was barely big enough.

00:15:10
They would put three dumps of wheat into a grain sack, which is about 90 pound, half a bushel, to a dump. And I was just barely big enough to drag them back. I couldn't lift them up or anything like that. You worked as a kid but you didn't know any better neither. I mean, everybody was poor. We weren't ashamed of it. I am not 'shamed of it to this day yet. And we learned to work and we had responsibilities. Dad and Mom, especially Dad.

00:15:47
I had a rifle when I was six years old. I grew up with the responsibility of firearms. If I stepped out of line, heaven help the consequences because people those days never told you twice. The first time was enough for you to suffered the consequences. And it's, eh, when I was, oh I say, ten, twelve years old, there was two places I can go in and buy 500 rounds of 22s. No question asked, 'course they knew my Dad, they knew my grandfather, they knew the whole family.

00:16:27

There were ten children in my Dad's family. Most of the boys were right there. We worked together. But you talk about that now, man, people will be so alarmed. You teach a child responsibility, and the consequences of, shall I say, not doing what is right. There's a lot of difference.

00:16:56
Q:
Where did you get your water for your farm?

00:16:58
A:
In 1936 when we got first got electric on the farm, we used to have, they had cisterns. When the dry weather hit, they had to go down to Paddys Run and haul water, all the cattle we had. That was ridiculous. So Dad and his two brothers and his father, with a well-driller by the last name of Ross in Harrison, Ohio, came out and drilled a well, deep well, I think they went down about 100, better than 100 feet. Three-inch pipe at the time, which is small now.

00:17:40
And got the most wonderful water, close to 55 degrees all the time, unendless supply, and then he piped it around to different buildings. We had electric, we had a pressure system, put it under a float, got water to the house. And piped water out to the chickens we raised out on the range. That saved a lot of my carrying water as a kid.

00:18:09
Q:
It changed your life some?

00:18:12
A:
Oh, it changed a lot. Oh we, a, now, if something goes wrong with the water system, you're out of water. It's a cruel thing to say. Those days we had the outside privy and you pumped water by hand. It didn't make much difference if you didn't have the electricity. But now you can't go the toilet, you can't get a drink, you can't do anything without electric. Quite a change.

00:18:42
Q:
What was life like during the war?

00:18:46
A:
During the war, I definitely remember Pearl Harbor, eh, Pearl Harbor Day. I had a good friend who was injured at Pearl and never saw another day of service. I had distant relation got killed when he was 17 in Germany. As far as the area right where we lived, yes, we had rationing. As far as meat was concerned, it didn't bother us. But we were all needed sugar and flour, 'cause my mother did a lot of preserving that way. So we worked it out with people we know in Hamilton, Cincinnati that they wanted stamps for meat and Mom wanted stamps for sugar and flour.

00:19:41
So shall I say, we did a lot of bartering. And, but you had shoe rationing. But we still got some war ration coupons. As far as gasoline is concerned and tires. You couldn't buy any tires, gasoline. You had three stickers A, B, and C. A sticker gave you four gallon a week. B sticker was like if you worked in the defense industry or something like that, they gave you extra fuel taving to have fuel for the farm tractor and everything. As long as they didn't catch you abusing it, you got the fuel you wanted.

00:20:33
Then when I was ten years old, had a neighbor, had a Model T truck. One day I told him, I said, Norb, whenever you want to get rid of this truck, let me know. Model T. Ok. It was about six months later, he called back. He said, Marion, you want this truck? I said, I sure do. And we had to put it in Dad's name and it was luck that when the war was on, he got a truck sticker license for that, too. We hauled a lot of feed from Fernald, home with that. You talk about fun, I took the tires off it and put wagon tires on it. It was the forerunner of the automatic transmission.

00:21:25
You take out across the field. You wouldn't get stuck if you was going up a grade and run out of fuel. There is no fuel pump on it. So what you do? You just turn round and back up the hill and your fuel flow back in the – I drove on the road and a lot of the sheriff and some of the state highway patrol knew me. But I didn't get on the state highway, I just stayed on the side roads. You do that now, why – I had a restricted license when I was fourteen to drive. Never taken a driver's test since. I got some daughters think, maybe I should, but you know how that goes.

00:22:11
Q:
Tell me a little bit about the feelings of the country as they mobilized not just soldiers but also the everything about the economy to fight a common enemy during WWII. How was the feelings of community rallying around the need to supply the military during those years?

00:22:34
A:
As far as the community was concerned. Ah, yes, we knew war was going on. We didn't approve of the attack we got from Pearl Harbor. I don't think the community as a whole had any animosity toward the German or the Japanese people. They tried to stir it up. They didn't approve of the war. A lot of boys from the community served and died. There's a lot of Gold-star mothers in the community. We had a Japanese man came in right after the service, the war was over, to come to church and I thought he – was afraid he was gonna hit a lot of animosity. No, he didn't.

00:23:22
Oh, there were some radicals. You're gonna find that out in every community. But I don't think the community approved the thing it was in. We had to get together. You had to buckle down. Yeah, we served in the war. We were glad to do it. The only thing that bothered a lot of them there, was that some of the rich people, from so-called Hamilton, or Cincinnati – you could get farm deferments then – they sent a lot of their boys out and bought them a farm so that they wouldn't have to serve. To me, that's buying your way out of service to the country.

00:24:04
I wasn't physically able to go to the Korea but I always contended that you could serve somehow. I didn't run to the army. I didn't run from them. Eh, like I say, I have some friends killed. I had one friend that was in the Normandy. They lost 95 percent of his group. I had a cousin that went through North Africa, into Sicily, part of Italy. He ended up being inebriated quite a bit. I don't know if that was caused by the war or what it was.

00:24:48
There was a lot of problems. We had a minister's son. He was one of the first volunteers. He was a CO. We went and served. He did not pick up a farm. He served as, ah, Harold Freymen, but eh – so eh – they tried to get us excited about the war, tried to stir up our hatred. They came around several night when you tried to get your work done – finishing up at night with your lights on milking, things like that. They told you, turn your lights out. Turn your lights out. Air raid warning.

00:25:30
And I finally made the remark one night, little kid smarting off, how can Germany get over here with a plane and bomb us? It didn't go over too good. But it was psychological. They spent a lot of money on propaganda in WWII here in the United States than they did in anyplace else. My opinion.

00:25:53
Q:
Do you remember hearing about the dropping of the atomic weapon in Japan in the war? (Marion: Oh, yes.) How did you and the rest of the community folks feel about that?

00:26:03
A:
First impulse, I didn't like it, eh 'cause that was a terrible mode of destruction of a lot of innocent people were killed including women and children. And the more I thought about it, I thought what's our trade-off? Now, we could have slaughtered a lot of our young men going to Japan. A lot of young women would have been left at home without their men. And war is hell. And the situation I came to conclusion a lot of people did, that it should not have been done that it would have been done to us too. I kind of come to the conclusion it was a right decision. But you do a lot of soul-searching when a lot of innocent people got killed. But there is a lot of things in life that aren't fair, but that's life.

00:27:08
We had our schooling in the area there, in Crosby Township. We had three small rural schools. All eight grades were in there at one time. People paid tuition to go to Harrison, Ohio. Then they finally got rid of one of the schools, converted one school to four grades at New Haven, and the Scott School down by Fernald, which is about a mile from Fernald. Eh, was a, four grades. I wanted vocational agriculture. They paid my tuition, which was less, to go to Ross or Venice, Ohio, which on the other side of the atomic energy plant.

00:27:58
And I studied voc-ag and farmed. I got in more trouble at school. They wouldn't let me take, only in one year I've got to take five subjects, which now they take a lot of more. I didn't go to study hall. I stand around the hall and talked to girls. The superintendent told me, said, Marion, that's all you are

going to do, you might as well go home. So I went home. Time I was a junior in high school, I was farming 300 acres and going to going to school. I was making money. In fact, I was making more money that my voc-ag teacher that was teaching me. That didn't go over too good. That wasn't my fault. That was his.

00:28:38
Q:
What year did you graduate from high school?

00:28:39
A:
1948.

00:28:41
Q:
You went with your Dad full time farming?

00:28:44
A:
We farmed together. But we had nothing fifty-fifty, only time we farmed together is here. I farmed individually there and he farmed individually at Fernald.

00:28:54
Q:
You had a piece of property?

00:28:57
A:
No. No, just Dad the farm, original farm over there..I used it as home base. Rented about 300 acres outside. They all bordered, one was on the north--one was on the northeast and northwest. Northeast and northwest to the Fernald project. And, but when you lose home base – then the, eh, of course in February, I was examined for Korea.

00:29:30
Q:
February what year?

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00:00:15
A:
But you made your own – the thing that I missed most when Dad and I worked together on the farm, I enjoyed it. And when Dad was gone or doing something and Mom went to Hamilton or something, I would have to go with her. Oh gosh, would I despise going town with my mother. She could outwalk me and going from dry good store to dry good store. So finally I saved up my money. I went to movie.

00:00:52
Well those days, a movie – a kid could go into a movie for a dime, but you sat clear down in front there you sat. You, head cocked back. You couldn't see the screen. So I got disgusted, when I was in there several times. All those movie theaters are gone now in Hamilton. I said, Can I pay an adult price and sit where I want to? Sure. I went up and paid adult price, but I kept my ticket stub. I didn't any more than sit down then the usher came in and was gonna move me down front. I said, I paid adult price and I'll sit where I please. We had a hassle for a little bit, but I won. Ha – Let's go ahead what you're going to say.

00:01:40
Q:
Ah, you said you were, had a medical exam by possible military service in Korea. When was that?

00:01:47
A:
Eh, probably February '51.

00:01:50
Q:
What was the thought about around the country about the military involvement in Korea at the end of the 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s?
00:01:59
A:
They didn't say as much about it as they did Vietnam. Their biggest objection to Korea, they called it the police action, the biggest objection to Korea – the biggest objection to Korea was that our boys could not fire unless fired upon. And the community did not like the idea of tie – of send-in fire. To this day, if I had been there, they could have court marshalled me. If somebody shot at me, I'd shoot back. Government order or no, government order. Now that wasn't fair. I disagreed with the government totally on that. So, right or wrong.

00:02:54
Q:
When did you first hear that the government was looking for possible property to site an atomic plant in that Fernald area in southwest Ohio?

00:03:03
A:
Not until the day we got the notice. They come in and says, we're taking the farm for an atomic energy refining, eh, plant. Your farm will be taken and you will be out in sixty days.

00:03:24
Q:
What date was that?

00:03:27
A:

I think it was the 6th of April in '51.

00:03:31
Q:
Was that your birthday?
00:03:33
A:
No, that was the 6th of July. We were tearing the house down. We moved out and into a little ol' home right in Fernald which had two feed stores, a little grocery store, and a service station, which is all gone now.

00:03:51
Q:
South of your property?

00:03:53
A:
What?

00:03:54
Q:
South of your property over the hill?

00:03:56
A:
Yeah. It should be south, of us, yeah.

00:04:00
Q:
Back on April 6th, you first heard about it, what had that happened? Did you get a phone call, someone knocked on the door, you get a letter?

00:04:08
A:
They just, they just drove in. Just like your truck sitting out here. The Department of Energy drove in and said, this is it. And we couldn't eat hardly a thing for 30 days. Things that we worked for all those years. Mom and Dad strove and worked hard from the depression of '32 to get what we had. We all cried like babies. I mean I literally cried. It's just, but looking back now when they can take a young man, give him a number and send him to Korea or Vietnam. We weren't hit with what he was hit with. We all had crosses to bear, but they didn't give us no warning.

00:05:09
I know why they didn't give us any warning 'cause we could have sold it or took options or everything else. It was listed as the best heavy industrial ground around Cincinnati. About 3000 dollars an acre. We ended up with 300 dollars an acre. And we waited for quite a while for that. They held up – bought the farm here. Made a down payment and had some other payments due and they held our

money. Our opinion was they tried to break us because we crossed them. We had some good friends in the banking business, Dad was a deputy director of a bank. We had a lot of neighbors, like I said before, community coming together, we had some neighbors put up money. Banks put up money for us. We did not lose this farm.

(If they came similar calls?)
00:06:13
A:
We practically got the same thing the same day. It was a complete, well, complete surprise. We'd seen a day or two before, the trucks drive, the cars drive past. We didn't pay attention to it. We should have. But it was devastating, but hey, we didn't die. I am glad we left the community with the thing that happened down around there now. It's not the same community it was. We worked together. Most all, Dad was born and raised there. Dad was born in 1902. He's still living. He's in a rest home right now. Mother died about 16 years ago.

00:07:10
Dad had been there all his life. Grew up as a child, his father was there. Dad's grandfather was there. Dad's grandfather came from Germany, Binder(?) Germany. A lot of people with the same background. We, you know, people, people of a feather tend to flock together. Birds of a feather flock together. Which I think it's okay if you put it in its proper perspective. But it was hard on Dad, it was, especially Mom too. When you spend a lifetime, then bingo, you're out. They had no concern about you. They just, sorry you're one of the unfortunate ones.

00:07:57
And some of the dirty, rotten tricks they didn't pull on us, the government. Oh, they'd deny it – so it wouldn't go on record, so you couldn't prove anything. We went into court, to try to get a little bit more money. We knew they were taking witness aside to tell them what they could and couldn't testify to. We couldn't prove it. Nowadays, freedom of information, I think we would have stood a better chance, but then you didn't. The judge just cut us off and signed the papers and out you go. A lot of the neighbors came in and helped us move and even the, eh, my teacher who I thought so much of when I was in grade school, he was upset about it.

00:08:46
He had two boys in service in II, in WWII. He said, I didn't think my boys fought for this. But no, there is a lot of people out there claim to have gotten sick, who care of the, the property they built. The only thing they used our farm for was the main entrance to the plant. We heard by the grapevine, can't prove it, but they brought a lot of the radioactive waste from the Manhattan project, stored it in underground silos there. They leaked, and now they're in the water supply. They have got wells all over that place, sometimes I drive down there. I just drive in. I still got that enough animosity to me that if you want to run me out, fine. I still got that, shall I say, deep down hurt. I've forgiven but you don't forget.

00:10:02
If we can't you can't forgive, you'll die aggravating yourself, but you go to forgive but there's just things in life you just don't forget. That's all. But oh, it was a wonderful community to live in when I was there. Yep, the churches were good, the community. There was a lot of people, quite a few of the people lived around Venice, and New Baltimore, and New Haven, and Harrison. They worked in

Cincinnati, good people, all basically good people, it's like I said before though, life style and values, and everything else have changed. It's hard for me to understand once for a while.

00:10:45
I've got four granddaughters running from ten to eighteen. And I wouldn't want to have to face things they do right now. I've got a granddaughter who just got graduated from Leon High School in Tallahassee, Florida. She's got a scholastic voice and drama scholarship to Stenson University about 30 minutes from Disney World. She just got hired by Disney. They interviewed 6-, I mean, 200, they took 15 for training. She got selected. She is now working in Walt Disney animal kingdom the Lion King puppets. She just loves it. I've got the other three granddaughters, are doing good too.

00:11:43
Q:
What do you tell your children and grandchildren about these years and your uprooting and moving to up here in this part of Ohio?

00:11:53
A:
I try to keep things positive. There is something good comes out of everything. There is no sense to me trying to tell them what happened how happened and how I felt about it. That doesn't do no good. Yeah, there is a lot of things I don't approve, but they go enough. They got more problems in this world right now as young people. They don't need to hear the negative things I had in life. It's better off to tell them the fun I had. That's the most fun anyway.

00:12:27
It's the best thing ever, just like that Model T Ford, Grandpa, you didn't do that. Well, I did – I had fun. Like when I were, Grandpa, were you let have a rifle when you that young? Yeah, I said, yeah. Shot gun, Winchester 97, man, if you didn't hold on, your shoulder would set you back and put you down. But I learned responsibility. I says that that's what you children need to learn it too to have with. But there is no sense to dwell on the negative because oh, yeah, I come up with negative once a while. I can catch myself. I am not perfect.

00:13:04
And but this younger generation needs all the positive because they got so much negative from peer pressure that it scares me, I wouldn't have to be raising children now. I wouldn't. I don't know whether I'd be parent enough to handle it. We didn't have one when I was in school. One of two things, one of the possibilities I've been thinking about eh, number one, we were ignorant. We didn't have the proliferation of knowledge we got now, or ease of knowledge. We didn't have television. We didn't have radio until I was six years old.

00:13:51
We more or less kept ignorant. I was educated in sex life. I saw all kinds of sex on the farm. I could have cared less, but it wasn't shoved in my face like you get into school and out on the street. Like I said, I got in Cincinnati once a year and I got to Hamilton. I didn't want to be run around, 'course I got older. I had a car. I had the first automatic transmission car to hit Hamilton, I had fun with it, white, ruby hood ornament, it was pretty.

00:14:31
But, either we didn't know or we didn't care. We didn't have the peer pressure we got now. And the peer pressure my daughters and my granddaughters got, it just scares me. There is nothing I can do about it. So, the only thing I did tell my granddaughter working at Disney World, right now they want her to work full time, I says no, Christen, you don't do it. My teachers were with a teacher's degree. I was never going to get sick. I had a home base. I had a couple of farms I wanted to buy and I was ready to get married. It all blew up in my face. But things we plan on don't always happen the way we want 'em to.

00:15:30
But life goes on. I spent my first wedding anniversary in Christ Hospital with paralysis in my right arm. There's a cyst in my spine at the base of the brain. They didn't have microsurgery then. Dr. Kurwood R. Hunter put a wire in that cyst and got it drained the best we can. They didn't have PT then like that. But I'm still alive yet.

00:16:03
Q:
Let me ask one more question. If you very graciously agree to be interviewed today as part of ah, a promotion for history project, can you just reflect a little bit about the value or the benefit of reflecting back on the good years, the times of struggle in the past, why it's a good idea to inform the community at large about the historical sweep of events that happened at Fernald.

00:16:34
A:
For the time, and the time period, we led a good life as far as I was concerned. Yes, times was rough. We are all at that same category. We either, we couldn't do anything about it. You learned to live together, work together, love together, cry together, bury your dead together, go to church together. The community was a solid, very well solid knit community. It was a good place to live, good place to grow up in. I appreciated being there.

00:17:17
I had a good school system I went to school at Ross. I spent eight years at the Crosby local schools. There was Crosby local school. They had good teachers, good examples. We didn't have the curriculum, or the knowledge we have now. What we had was good. I am glad I lived there. But things have changed. I hope they've changed for the better. I came here, found practically the same thing, but time and farming, everything else evolves.

00:17:55
And if you stand still, it's just like they say in sports, he who hesitates comes in last. You don't hesitate. Keep moving with some things are good some things are bad, but you got to try to find the best. Sometimes you got overwhelmed, but so called negative but you got to try to find the best. It's hard to do once in a while.

00:18:27
Q:
Yeah, I am, I am ready to end this. Would you like to say anything else? We appreciate you talk to.

00:18:32
A:
No, I appreciate you spending some time coming up here with me. Listen to an old guy. When I was just like the day I was up in Muskegon, my granddaughter play with fast pitch softball. I was in this power chair and they had the gates locked. To get in like a side gate. Another girl there and the coach said my grandpa drove three hundred miles to watch me play fast pitch softball. He can't get in. They came out with wrenches and in I went.
(That was a good day for you.)

A:
Yeah, that was a wonderful day, but I didn't feel too good to come back home that day earlier. It's better not to play, at all. Though, I appreciate you coming up. Only thing I forget to call now. I like to how you got my name.

A:
A woman called. She said she knew me. No, that was eh Harper?

Q:
Harper, yeah.

00:19:57
A:
Yeah, she said she knew me. That was a weird feeling when you said that on the telephone. You got a telephone call and two women start telling your history. You don't know who they are. I was going to think.

00:20:18:
A:
I hope it was positive.

(Non-relevant discussion)