

54.00.15 Interviewer: So, being out in farm country, the kids were outside playing a lot, did you have neighbors that you played with or mostly you and your brothers or ...?

54.00.26 Margie: Well, the house was pretty far way from other people, we would go to their house, or they would come there, that I can remember. There weren't houses, you know, real close together. It was a little ways to the neighbors.

54.00.40 Interviewer: You said your mom recalls, or you recall your mom saying that you needed to take a bath to deal with itching skin. (**Margie:** Yes). Do you remember that sort of directly in terms of what it felt like, or what the sky might look like on a day or ...?

54.01.10 Margie: I can't remember. I was uh, I was around four when I was there. I can't remember ...

54.01.15 Interviewer: What happened in terms of the general health of your parents during this time, either your dad or your mom.

54.01.23 Margie: Okay, mom, she took sick with cancer. She got cancer and died from it. The doctor said that the water was contaminated and that had caused her cancer and dad's had tuberculosis and health problems that he, you'd have to talk to him about, but he doesn't talk too much about that. And my brother, his health was not too good. Myself, it's ... I was born with a heart murmur, I had rheumatic fever that I remember and other than that, now my health is not real good. I've got back problems and I've had a heart attack and my brother and father, you have to talk about to them about that, if he'll talk to you about it (laughters).

54.02.23 Interviewer: What year did your mom got sick?

54.02.25 Margie: She got sick ... I'm gonna say after '55, '56. She died in '62.

54.02.40 Interviewer: So it was while you're still living in here? When it started? Cancer in what part of the body?

54.02.48 Margie: They diagnosed it as cervical cancer is what she died from.

54.02.54 Interviewer: You were really young sounds like when she first got sick. Do you remember talking either to her or other members of the family about what it was like?

54.03.06 Margie: No. It was just kept from me. Uh, all I can remember is going back and forth with her to the doctor.

54.03.21 Interviewer: What source of information as you're thinking about it today, you said a minute ago the doctor told your mom that the probable cause of this cancer was contaminated water. How do you know that's what the doctor told her or how that was shared with the family?

54.03.40 Margie: We had ... dad had proof from the doctor. And the doctor has talked to dad. And when he found out he went to Fer... he told the bosses at Fernald and they told him that there wasn't anything he could do about it. Uh, they threatened him, they said he would lose his job if he said anything to anyone. Of course, he did tell, you know, he brought it out and told that it was bad.

54.04.11 Interviewer: Who did he tell?

54.04.13 Margie: The people at Fernald. And I ... as far as, you know, the names you'll have to get that from him. Uh, he started purchasing bottled water and then after that he started looking for a place to move, to get out of there. And that's when we moved to Gieringer.

54.04.30 Interviewer: Where is Gieringer?

54.04.32 Margie: Gieringer is off the East Miami River Road. That's in Cleves. It's considered Cleves. It's next to Miamitown.

54.04.41 Interviewer: That's quite a way south of Fernald, right?

54.04.45 Margie: It's about ..., yeah, it's six miles or so. Maybe a little more.

54.04.52 Interviewer: Where did you attend school after you moved?

54.04.56 Margie: Charles T. Young School in Cleves. And then onto Taylor.

54.05.02 Interviewer: Taylor High School?

54.05.03 Margie: Hum.

54.05.04 Interviewer: In those years after your mom passed away and you moved from the site a little bit, your father was still working there for a while?

54.05.11 Margie: Hum.

54.05.12 Interviewer: When did he stop working?

54.05.18 Margie: I don't remember.

54.05.21 Interviewer: When you got a little older, as a teenager, uh, in the school or in the community, was there a discussion about Fernald?

54.05.33 Margie: No, no, it didn't come out until later. Later on, and then it was like: "We told you, we told you!" You know, it's just for me finding out, you know, later, it's really hurt and made me angry, you know, how things were operated, how it was done. Negligence.

54.06.09 Interviewer: Now, where were you living in the 1980s? Have you always kind of stayed in the area?

54.06.15 Margie: '80s. Yeah, I was in the Cleves area.

54.06.23 Interviewer: The reasons I asked is that it was 1984, 1985, 1986 when the news media started breaking revelations about some well water being contaminated, and then industrial releases in the air from uranium and then more generally about the environmental and health issues at Fernald that unfolded over almost a decade of news media coverage, etc, do you recall picking up a newspaper and starting finding out about this and connecting back into, you know, your own childhood and your mom's health thing?

54.06.59 Margie: Right, we had discussions and stuff. Dad and my brother and myself. And, I actually wrote David Mann and quite a few people, I wrote and put anger. I was angry. You know, just kept brighten. And I went to attend some of the FRESH meetings and stuff to find out and the input I've got from the research that they had done, it was really remarkable, it was right on, right on, you know, the problem what had happened. And I was like, you know, it isn't right. It was wrong. They totally was wrong. I don't know and all the people their rights was just ... I don't know, they couldn't stand up for them or something, couldn't just pursue it. Not enough for them to stick together or what ... I don't know how to explain that right. But it was wrong.

54.08.04: Interviewer: Who is David Mann?

54.08.06 Margie: He was a newscaster? David Mann.

54.08.12 Interviewer: I think I remember he was a mayor for a while and he was also a member Congress for a while.

54.08.15 Margie: Okay, I wrote to him.

54.08.18: Interviewer: Now, in the '80s, 1980s, at some point a group of area residents, led by Ken and Lisa Crawford filed a class action lawsuit. It took a while for that to unfold but did you participate in that action, with that group or not?

54.08.40 Margie: I went to a couple of the meetings and talked with Lisa Crawford over the phone. She lived in the same house or close by there too. It could have been the same house, I'm not positive, that we lived in, after and they interned, and got compensated for bad water. You know the contaminated water.

54.09.08 Interviewers: What was it contaminated with according to the doctor?

54.09.11 Margie: Uranium.

54.09.14 Interviewer: Did you ... uh ... at the time when more information came out of the media, was it explained sort of how the water was contaminated to the, getting to the actual wells around the property? What was the process?

54.09.32 Margie: Well, where the silos had leaked and got, I guess, into the soil. You know, were it leaked into the soil. I am not sure.

54.09.46: Interviewer: Have you talked with Edwa Yocum from FRESH (**Margie:** Yes). She is a ... deals with health issues. What have been your conversations either a while back or more recently with Edwa?

54.10.02 Margie: Well she ... her input was telling me about ... in the females they were having a lot of bladder problems and stuff, which from the medical monitoring that I participated in has showed that I had bladder problems. Dolores, my father's wife now, uh ... she has had a hysterectomy and the doctor told her that she had been exposed to radiation, a lot of radiation. I don't know where she would get that other than my father, you know, as far as that. My father's had prostate cancer, diagnosed with that. So, something just gets your mind thinking, you know, it's right back there to that, you know, uranium, or whatever. Mrs. Yocum has told me that there is new testing and stuff too that in your bones possibly that you could find out. The biopsy that, you know, if you have so much of it in your bones. So I don't know.

54.11.21 Interviewer: So, to back up just a second, you've participated in the Fernald Medical Monitoring Program?

54.11.26 Margie: Yeah, I go there every year, for one ...

54.11.29 Interviewer: How does that work?

54.11.31 Margie: It's pretty conclusive testing where they do just about, you know, everything for you that they can, they can offer.

54.11.42 Interviewer: Where do you go for that?

54.11.45 Margie: That's in Forest Park, that's Mercy Hospital, Fairfield.

54.11.51 Interviewer: Uh, do you remember the first couple of times you went, did you feel like this was a good thing or you feel sort of apprehensive about taking tests about your health. How did you feel when you started to participate?

54.12.08: Margie: No I feel comfortable there. They do a good ... and I feel that it's helpful, if it can prevent further illnesses.

54.12.23 Interviewer: What sort of other information did they give you about maintaining good health or any other things? Along with just doing tests out there, did they give you advice about different health issues or?

54.12.39 Margie: No, no ... it's just regular routine going, you know, get your visions and ears and blood pressure and chest X-rays and for myself they offered the mammogram and the PAP Smears. Basically, that's it, blood work ...

54.13.02 Interviewer: I'd like to get back to when you were speaking with your family, you first decided when the news media covered the issue more in 1980s, you decided to write a letter to David Mann, initially, but what was your decision process to get to the point when you actually said I'm going ... I need to tell someone my feelings and that this letter writing was the choice you made. But what were you thinking when you decided to put pen to paper or typewriter or whatever it was and actually write a letter. That's, 'cause that's a step beyond just reading about it or just kind of doing nothing, which some people did, too. Why did you choose to write somebody about it?

54.13.51 Margie: Uh, to let them know that it had happened, you know. My mother was the first and probably the youngest that had illness from this, from the whole thing. And so I just, you know, I felt it should be told.

54.14.13 Interviewer: Do you remember what ... did you ask for some specific steps or what do you remember anything about what you wrote in that letter?

54.14.35 Margie: I don't, I don't remember. Basically about the same thing as I am telling you now, about the contamination and how it affected health.

54.14.52 Interviewer: A few years after the residents filed a class action lawsuit, the work force, the workers started to organize, they ultimately filed suit as well. I don't know if your dad got involved with the workers' action or not.

54.15.09 Margie: Now, the workers they ... they had no choice ... they had to file separate workers, they didn't have a choice. And Mrs. Kelly I talked to, her husband passed away. She said she actually took his bills from the hospital to Fernald and told them "these are yours." And they took care of it. Now he's gone and I don't know this ...

54.15.53 Interviewer: We interviewed Corilla Kelly. She was the first person, one of the first people we interviewed ...

54.15.55 Margie: Did you?

54.15.57 Interviewer: When did you go talk to her? Was this ...?

54.16.00 Margie: Just ... uh ... there was just an article in the paper from Lisa Crawford, or was it. I could be wrong there. There was an article in the paper on Fernald and with the intentional negligence of the plant. So I got a hold ... my aunt and uncle had told my father about Mrs. Kelly and I got a hold of her to talk to her. Mrs. Kelly and I got hold her and talked

to her and too see, you know, how they pursued the lawsuit, you know, what action they took and, you know, who their lawyer was and so forth.

54.16.45 Interviewer: Was this fairly recently or a while back?

54.16.47 Margie: This has been a couple of weeks ago. It's recently.

54.16.52 Interviewer: What did you feel kind of hearing from the wife of the worker who has now passed away about some other things she was telling?

54.17.02 Margie: The same. I feel the same that she does. From what ... taking to different ones, it just goes right back to ... it was the plant's negligence. So many people that I have talked to that has got ill, some kind of cancer. And it's basically been cancer from ... it's linked right back to the Fernald. From the Fernald ...

54.17.33 Interviewer: Now, when you say the plant's negligence, do you feel the responsible party is the company that operated the plant?

54.17.40 Margie: Yeah, I feel it was the owners of the plant. It was intentional. They knew about it back in ... well '51 at the earliest and then when it was brought in the papers of all these dates and stuff, and you know especially when the leaks and stuff occurred, I was like ... it was, it was really kind of scary, you know. It was just, I don't know, it made me mad. Or they knew about it, but they wouldn't let it out. I mean, years and years later then it comes out. Then the government gets involved. And where was it at, you know, before? And what's the cure? Where is the cure? What is the cure? They were doing what they can to clean it up but, you know, I don't think they're gonna have enough time.

54.18.42 Interviewer: When you say that you feel that they knew about the releases and the hazards involved with that. What makes you say that you feel what they knew about that it wasn't something that was accidental or escaped their attention? Because of the way what happened when your dad talked to them? Or why do you that feel they knew about and didn't say?

54.19: 04 Margie: Oh yeah, whenever he told them back then and then for as much just by reading the information as much as that it has had leaked into the soil and contaminated like that, that had to have been going on for sometime. It just don't, you know, it just doesn't ... a leak overnight isn't going to do that much damage. So ...

54.19: 34 Interviewer: What do you think should be the remedy for workers, or families or residents who were not part of any legal settlements that happened, you know ten, fifteen years ago, there was still sort of out there, maybe thinking their health problem were respon... were due to Fernald, but not sure what to do about it. What are folks like you in that position, what do you kind of seeking in terms of a remedy for this problem?

54.20.16 Margie: Like for people still living there and stuff?

54.20.22 Interviewer: For people that were affected, maybe moved away, but weren't part of the lawsuits but still feel they were harmed in some way. Maybe a long time ago, but they were harmed in some way. What do you see as a remedy for those people?

54.20.44 Margie: To try to fix it. I don't, I don't know, I don't know.

54.20.54 Interviewer: What, how old were you when your mom passed away?

54.20.58 Margie: I was 7.

54.21.01 Interviewer: What kind of, just sort of when you think about your mom, what kind of memories ... I know it's hard when you're 7 year old. Do you remember what your mom sounded like or what your mom looked like? Just any memories about your mom that you want to share.

54.21.19 Margie: This might sound, but I remember when we would get in trouble, that's about the only thing I can remember. Her punishing us, you know, well reading to us and uh, I can't ... She was in and out of the house you know towards the end and all I know is that she was going back and forth to the hospital. All I was told is that my mom was sick and that's ... I didn't know. And ... this is later when you've grown up and found out what it is, when you find out what caused it and ...

54.22.13 Interviewer: When did you find that out? Did your dad tell you and your brother at some point or ...?

54.22.19 Margie: That wasn't until ... uh ... that was a while, probably in my late '20s or something. It's hard for me to remember.

54.22.40 Interviewer: But your dad didn't say right after she passed away why that happened or what did he kind of tell you and your brother about your mom's passing away. Did he say she was sick and passed away or ...?

54.22.56 Margie: Yeah ... not, not, that was a growing thing too, as we was growing, we just kind of had to ask questions and him answering as we were growing.

54.23.10 Interviewer: When did you start to ... did you have curiosity about why she got cancer. 'Cause cancer happens to different people, you know, for different reasons.

54.23.23 Margie: It was hard. It affected me even in school and as far as science I didn't want to know about certain stuff. It was hard, it was hard for me. I didn't want 'em to tell me anything. I didn't want to hear nothing. That's how I accepted that. It was, it was hard.

54.23.49 Interviewer: So when ... did many years later, your dad came forward what he thought was the reason that she died or how did that conversation happen? Did you guys ask him

at another point? Or this is what was triggered by the Fernald media coverage in late 1980's. What led you to revisit that issue.

54.24.10 Margie: Yeah, it was ... then it was later on when it was coming out and ... it was then. And, you know, we've talked about it and I just pursued you know as much as I could go on and find out and talk about what I know.

54.24.36 Interviewer: I am doing these interviews for benefit of high school teachers, science and history teachers. That we are trying to create some lesson plans to teach kids about the history of Fernald in the future. If you were asked ... let's say if you were asked by a local high school to come in and give a talk about, you know, your feelings and experiences with the Fernald plants afterwards. What would be some of the things that you think the students today would ask or what would you think would be important for them to know about what happened at Fernald?

54.25.17: Margie: My mind's a blank right now I don't, I can't think of anything right now. I don't know uh...

54.25.36 Interviewer: Do you have kids?

54.25.37 Margie: Yes.

54.25.38 Interviewer: Where did they go to school?

54.25.40 Margie: It's in the same area. At Cleves.

54.25.49: Interviewer: Did you have sons, daughters?

54.25.53 Margie: I've got two sons and a daughter.

54.25.57 Interviewer: What were their favorite subjects? Did they like math, or science or history or reading or ...?

54.26.08 Margie: Uh, I couldn't really tell, I don't know, I never ... They are all grown now. That's hard to remember too.

54.26.20 Interviewer: When did they graduate from high school?

54.26.25: Margie: Uh '87, oh gosh, my memory is just ... I don't have none right now.

54.26.39 Interviewer: So it's mid and later 1980s. Did they have any questions? Did they ever ask you about Fernald? Your own kids, did they enter into this conversation with you and your dad about what happened to their grandma who they never met but were they interested in all this?

54.26.56 Margie: Somewhat. Yes, somewhat. It ... my oldest one. My oldest one, Tim, he was more questionable about it. But the younger, the other two, not too much.

54.27.16 Interviewer: Is there any occasion for your father to talk with your kids about what he did for a living or his experiences at Fernald or that doesn't come up typically?

54.27.30 Margie: No, not. Or the other kids, my brother's kids neither. It's not really a conversation that's easily talked about. I ... I don't know. I am about done. (Laughter)

54.27.52 Interviewer: Andrea would like to ask you a couple of questions. She usually has some good ones. She listens to the conversation and kind of says "well, what if, you know, can we follow up on a couple things. I don't know if you have any ...

54.28.04 Interviewer 2: Well I do. I have a couple of things, Margie, which I thought would be really, uh ... I don't know if you would like to talk about it to Steven. That is ... how would you ... Could you tell us a little bit how you think growing up near Fernald affected your life, you know? I mean if you were gonna step back and look at someone who lived you know in another city. How do you think it affected your life? How did it impact you given all that you have been through. Could you tell us a little bit?

54.28.40 Margie: I think it affected it severely. It's ...just along with other sick, it's just ... I don't know how to ... I don't know how to say it. Uh, it's just it's made a change, you know, it mentally, mostly I guess I'd say, you know, it's just ... I don't know how to say it it's just ... odd.

54.29.23 Interviewer 2: I mean do you feel it's shaped who you are today or do you think about it everyday or has it come up ...?

54.29.35 Margie: I try not to, no. I try not to think about it everyday. I mean, I'm going on. I mean I seem to do okay going on. But it does when you are talking with other people and stuff, you are sharing their feelings and stuff and things that has happened to them. And I am like see, why did it even have to happened like that if they knew about it back then, you know why didn't they, uh, you just, you can't do that to people. You know you just can't say: "We know about it. There's nothing you can do about it. And you just hush up about it." I don't know I wasn't there. I was a resident by there, you know. It's a shame that it happened like it did. You know it's still like that they are doing a lot of clean up and stuff from what I understand but to find out that someone that lived in the house that we lived in how many years later and still had contaminated water. I am like, well they are not doing too much clean up. That's what I said. I think they will run out of time, will run out before it ever gets cleaned up. And that's been proved by lot of people that's already died. I don't know. It's affected my life. It's made me bitter to an extent. It's hurt to an extent. And that's about all I can say.

54.31.21 Interviewer 2: You mentioned before that you thought it also affected your dad. Do you want to tell us a little bit how you think would how, how you think that it affected him?

54.31.30 Margie: He kind of went downhill. Kind of went down and stuff after mom died. Uh, it took a long time, it took a while before he could you know deal with it I guess I can say.

54.31.56 Interviewer 2: Do you feel that he wanted to protect you and your brother from knowing about what she might have died from? I mean, did you feel that when you said he didn't tell you until you were older. Can you tell how do you think?

54.32.15 Margie: He probably didn't want us to be worried about anything. He just wanted us to grow, you know, just keep growing up as normal as we could. You know and probably didn't want us to worry about anything. And in turn he was probably worried about all the time himself. So ...

54.32.38 Interviewer 2: Did you ever feel that ... or ever wondered why that negligence happened? Did you remember talk to other people or him about why ...?

54.32.49 Margie: Oh, yeah, I have questioned a lot of times why. To my own ... my ... you know ... why? Why did a lot of things happen? When you don't get an answer, you just accept, accept it sometimes and say well maybe ... maybe I will find out one day why. Maybe, might so ...

54.33.20 Interviewer 2: Again, if you want to tell some students what you learn ... they can learn from you, you know, your experience, which is a very important story. What would you like to tell them so they can learn from you, you know?

54.33.43 Margie: Just to read, and pay attention. Read as much as they can, listen as much as they can and ask questions about, you know, issues as much as they can that's brought up about that. About the uranium or contamination or anything in the air, uh, revolving around that. Anywhere, anywhere in the world that they are. It's like mold and stuff. But just ask and read and listen as much as they can. That's all I know.

54.34: 35 Interviewer 2: That's good. Thanks.

54.34: 36 Margie: You're welcome.

54.34: 39 Interviewer 3: Can we get the first couple of questions about Paddy's Run?

Interviewer: Just explain again, where your house was, your name, and your current address, we will do that again and where you grew up and where your house was situated on Paddy's Run Road. That's like the first couple of questions. He wants to make sure we get that. Let's do that again. What's your name and address again?

54.35: 08 Margie: My name is Margie Cook. I live in 6732 Hillside, Cincinnati.

54.35: 16 Interviewer: Where did you ... uh, you were born in Harrison.

54.35.18: Margie: I was born on Carolina Trace Road in Harrison.

54.35.22 Interviewer: And when did you move a little bit closer to the site? Where was that house located?

54.35.30 Margie: I was on Carolina Trace for about a year. That's where I was born. And then we moved closer to the site on Paddy's Run Road. That's ... unless I have the paper 118 something Paddy's Run Road. It's set in back of the Fernald plant. If you are going towards Ross' it's set ... and in back of it, there's a little road called Paddy's Run. And it was across the railroad tracks from the K-65 silo, where they have dumped the uranium, the contamination. That leaked a lot from that particular silo into the soil and around the land.

54.36.18 Interviewer: And what was your source of water on that property?

54.36.22 Margie: We had a private well. It was private well water.

54.36.25 Interviewer: Where does that get water from?

54.36.30 Margie: That was ... I can remember pumping. But that I don't know where that water came from.

54.36.37 Interviewer: That water provides what? Bathing, washing and drinking?

54.36.43 Margie: Yes.

54.36.45 Interviewer: It was run from a tap or just in a sink?

54.36.47 Margie: It was a pump. Yeah, I can remember outside pumping, going out there and pumping the water into tubs and ... that's all I can remember. I don't know if it went inside, they ran it inside somehow, I don't know. I don't remember that.

54.37.07 Interviewer: How long did you live there?

54.37.10 Margie: We lived there until '61. I am going to say about 4 or 5 years.

54.37.18 Interviewer: Your mom got sick while you lived there, initially?

54.37.23 Margie: It could have been before. Could have been before. But the worst part was from Paddy's Run. Because we were in that area before I was born. We were in that area. How long I don't know. I don't know.

54.37.50: Interviewer: Okay. Thanks for doing the second part again. Thanks a lot.