

010040 Interviewer: Let's begin with just a little bit of background. Can you tell us your name, and a little bit about yourself, maybe part of your native American heritage?

010048 William: Okay, my name is William Satory, I prefer Bill. Uh, I am of Miami descent, I am also an Ontario Woodland Mati. I am also a pipe carrier for the Woodland people and have been for ... going to be 20 years. I was born and raised in Dayton Ohio, in a traditional home. My mom and my grandparents, and other elders, and my dad made sure that myself and my sister were able to have and carry and hold on to our cultural ancestry and our cultural ways. I went to, lived in Wyoming, where I went to school for a short while, came back East to not only be with my family but be with my community, and had tried to be the best human being that I could be, and to represent my family, my ancestors, my community in the very best way that I could. A lot of water has passed underneath the bridges, involvement with different communities, but I'm always striving for what would be best not only for the communities but also for the children. Uh, that brought me into the picture or the ... my relationship with Fernald, and the activities that grew from that. I believe it was in, someplace in '95, '96, approximately, I had traveled down to southern Ohio to meet with and to become acquainted with the Native American Alliance of Ohio. I had heard about the group, so I went down to meet them, to meet Oliver Collins, Barbara Crandall. At one of these meetings that took place down in southern Ohio, I was introduced to and met Joe Schomaker, where we became acquainted, and Joe asked if I would have the time to speak with him. And I said I would and for him to contact me. It was a while afterwards that Joe did contact me and started telling about Fernald. Uh, I knew very little at that time about Fernald other than it was on the Superfund cleanup here in the United States. And it was one of the very first that the Department of Energy and EPA and the federal government jumped into to start cleaning up and rectifying – the ... I am trying to think of a good word to use – the restoration of lands and the clean-up of toxic waste that had occurred there. Through the months and years, year afterwards, I got to find out and speak to residents in some of the communities that surrounded Fernald, got to know a little bit more of the story and the background, and exactly how big and how massive a project this was. I was also informed of the unidentifiable ancestral remains that had been unearthed during the excavation and preparation of laying new water lines that went through Fernald to one of the communities down there at Hamilton Township. Joe Schomaker who I through the years had become very close to and I recognized to be a very, very good man, spent hours, and maybe that is just putting it lightly, a good portion of his life working in coordinating the efforts with the Department of Energy, the EPA, the Ohio Historical Society and the federally recognized tribes and Native American organizations that were in Ohio to come to a resolution or a way to re-inter, to put back to the earth for final resting place, the ancestors. I used the term ...

010859 Interviewer: ... trying to figure out what to do with the remains...

010900 William: Right. I was going ... the term I used of unidentifiable ancestral remains means that those ancestors that were dug up, found, came from a time period long before we could say or anyone could say of what nation. If I remember correctly, these ancestors they carbon dated them at approximately a thousand plus or minus A.D. So to say that they were of Miami descent or to say they were of Delaware or Shawnee, or Cherokee, or Wyandotte or Salt Fox, that's an impossibility. But knowing that they are ancestors and knowing that these nations

that I just named were, are the indigenous people, aboriginal people of North America east of Mississippi, then that would mean that someplace along the line it was their ancestors. So collectively, these nations had to be represented and had to be able to have a say in what was going to happen to these ancestral remains. Uh, I said earlier, that I was a pipe carrier. The pipe carrier, for those who don't know, is a spiritual leader. Uh, their responsibility is to the community, to the nations, and to the native people, and that responsibility can fall in many ways. Short and sweet definition, a pipe carrier is similar to, but in some ways different from, a minister or a pastor or anyone representing the spirituality of a community. My responsibility and the responsibilities to pipe carriers are to serve their communities, to serve their culture in many capacities: weddings, burials. Some are known to be very intuitive. Some have been given the ability by the people to speak for the people, to carry messages. Others are herbalists; they are recognized herbalists that have been taught for many years the art of native medicines. So to say that one is a pipe carrier is a very small term, but it can be a very broad definition. But someone who is a pipe carrier is someone who is recognized by the community or recognized by their culture as being as such, so that means whatever they do they are scrutinized. It's not a position of glory; it is a position of servitude. Uh ...

011333 Interviewer: How did you come to be a pipe carrier?

011338 William: I don't know. (laughter) Culturally, there are many stories or many reasons why someone becomes a pipe carrier. Some people say, elders say, an individual is born into it, that this is their purpose and this is what they were brought to the world to do. And they look for signs. They look for things that have occurred in that individual's life, from birth to adulthood, adolescence, that steer them in that direction. It isn't necessarily, it isn't something that one day that one wakes up in the middle of ... from sleep then says: "Golly Gee, I am a pipe carrier now, or I am a spiritual leader now," or "I am a healer now." Because there is a lot of things that have to be learned, that have to be taught, that there has to be a natural understanding that only the creator, only the spirit world puts into individual that determines whether or not that individual ends up walking a path serving their community. All of us have been given choices to go left or right, up or down, side to side. Some people say that we all have destinies, pre-determined destiny. I can't say whether any of them are right or wrong. All I can say is that it is peculiar, it is a unique and very marvelous thing to be able to take the time and reflect back. Look at the best, look at individuals that come into one's life. Remember conversations, remember lessons, remember travels, and look back and say "Gee, you know, at that particular time that I was doing that, I didn't think anything of it. I didn't realize at that particular time at that particular day I was learning something, or I was being shown something, or I was getting to know someone, who in turn taught me something or gave me something." But now as an adult, and taking the time to look back and reflect on happenings and occurrences, I sit back, and not only have I seen it but the elders of my community, the grandparents, the old ones, the respected old ones, have sat back and watched and said, "Okay, these things have occurred, and the reason they have occurred is because this individual has got a job to do, and whatever, for whatever reason he was given the tools or the lessons to be able to do that job." It is those elders who say whether you are a pipe carrier or a spiritual leader or not. It isn't my words, it isn't my decision to say this. It was not something that Bill Satory woke up one morning and got out bed and walked over and look into the mirror and said, "Golly Gee, I am a pipe carrier today." Okay,

because with that responsibility comes with it events we are talking about now: the re-interment of ancestral remains, and what that significant importance is to our culture, the American native culture, to be able to consciously and spiritually take the responsibility of insuring that whomever they were, their final resting place is peaceful and protected, no different than society today, no different.

011944 Interviewer: So, Joe Schomaker had approached you. He knew you were a pipe carrier, and you knew that he wanted to have somebody to help with the remains.

011951 William: He got to know that I was a pipe carrier, okay. I am not an individual who looks for recognition, who carries a business card saying that I am a pipe carrier or saying that I am anything, okay. It was through conversation, and Joe getting to know me, that that information came out. And that I was of Miami descent, which I think was one of the key factors because at that particular time Joe was dealing with and talking with Chief Floyd Leonard, of the Miamis of Oklahoma, and it just happened that I knew Chief Leonard, and Chief Leonard knew of me and knew of my reputation. So this kind of helped everyone involved. Again, it comes back to circumstance, to events, things happening. There was negotiations with the federal government, to do re-interment of ancestral remains. The Miamis were now in Oklahoma, removed from their ancestral land. Their question, you know, "We are out of here, our ancestral remains are back in our homeland." Then for whatever reason I was brought into the picture, by whose act nobody knows. And it really doesn't make any difference. But the point was that I was brought into the picture, which ended up being beneficial to the whole, beneficial to these ancestors that need to be re-interred, beneficial to the Miamis of Oklahoma who were given carte blanche by the other eastern federally recognized tribes to handle and take care of those ancestors for all involved. So, through conversation and overseeing, I was asked not only by Joe to be involved, but also asked by the Miamis of Oklahoma to represent them and the federally recognized tribes east of the Mississippi to insure that these ancestors are re-interred in a very honorable, a very traditional, and a very discreet way. And so as being a servant of the people and of the community and of the culture, I did the best I could as a human being to fulfill to responsibility that was given to me.

012419 Interviewer: Can you describe to us the ceremony to re-inter the remains?

012416 William: The ceremony itself was about an hour or so. The preparation for ceremony, for the re-interment, was a lot lengthier. At the time prior to the ceremony, there was a lot of discussing going on and a determination of where had to be made. So, Joe Schomaker again took it in stride, went over Fernald itself, and with DOE and the EPA, put up four perspective sites on the Fernald area, and asked if I would come down, walk and look at the sites and make a recommendation. So I spent, took a day, went down to Cincinnati there to Fernald. And Joe, and Oliver Collins and myself, and I'm ashamed to say but I don't remember who else may have been there. But we drove around to different sites, four different sites within the confine of Fernald. And each site had it's plus or minuses, okay. But the site that was picked and approved of was very tranquil. It had already been cleaned and certified by the EPA and the DOE and the federal government as being cleaned, and certified cleaned. It was a transition area between hardwood forest and softwood. It was a meadow, very small meadow area, very tranquil, very

serene and set back in. It wasn't necessarily close to road access, but it was close enough that it didn't make it difficult to go into. One of the most pleasing things about it was that the wildlife had already started to move back in. When we entered the area, and walked over it, the first time we were up above it, uh, I can't, you have to excuse me, I don't remember the direction, but we were up on a hill, up above the site [and that particular site felt very good, but then when we went down and were shown where the interment took place, there was not question, you just knew that this was a good thing. Joe asked at that time what was needed, what had to be done. Instructions were given to Joe. And through Joe, a workforce was put together, and the new graves were hand dug, no equipment went back in there. It was done in a very, very respectful ...] **gap in tape**

020028 William: At the site that was chosen, it was to be to be get and done as I said earlier in a very good way. It was hard to, at first, to actually picture what really needed to be done and how it had to be done. Through conversation with Joe and again, with Joe's dedication and knowledge, we were informed that during the time that these ancestral remains were found and removed from where they were found, the soil at each site was kept. I don't mean all the soil, I mean a sample, a bucketful, was kept from each site of each ancestral remains. And this put an even greater height to it, because not only were we able to re-inter these ancestors to a very peaceful place but also to re-inter them with the soil that they were originally being re-interred in. Now a lot of people wouldn't understand that, or feel or even care about that, but for our people, for our culture this is important. We come from the earth. Our essence, and who we are, and what we were as human beings are taken back home where we are laid to rest. Our families, our children, our ancestors, whomever has buried us, or will bury us, they want us, they want themselves to feel that this was the final place of their loved ones. So this the soil where these individuals were buried contained their essence, what had not, what had already gone back to the earth and what was still going back. It's no different today. Our society today, we have the cemeteries, we go through great length and great time and effort to ensure our loved ones are taken care of and prepared and watched over. And for this society to be confused and unable to understand the feelings of the American natives and why their ancestors should not be disturbed, or why it is so important for the ones that have been disturbed to be re-interred back in a good, in a traditional and an honorable way, it's beyond me, it's beyond me. So for this ... the re-interment of these ancestors to take place where it did, was monumental, is probably one of the biggest steps, even as quietly as it was done and how quietly after the fact it was brought out. It still, for the American native, the aboriginal people there left, it still stands as one of the greatest steps of understanding, of healing, and maybe our people and society don't realize that today, because it basically just happened. But as time goes on, our children, and our children's children, and our children's children will look back. As long as we continue the path that we are going in and continue to be able to put these ancestors back to rest, they will look back and they will say that this was a milestone, that this and that moment was a very important time for the history, for the healing of cultures. Because Fernald represented more than just the re-interment of American native ancestries, it represented the restoration and the effort to restore, to make right. And that is a hard thing to do. No guarantee that will be done totally, or ever recognized as being done right. But the fact is that the effort is being made, an effort that hasn't been made before, to restore, to say we are sorry, to try to correct not only the damage that was done to the environment, to the ecosystem, to families, to children of families that have not even been born

yet, and to individuals that have already crossed over. I don't think there's any true reconciliation that can be done. There's an old saying that you can't cry over spilled milk. But what you can do is to make sure you don't spill it again, and make sure that those that are handling the milk know not only how to handle it in the most respectful and most competent way, but before they even handle it, look at the justification or the result, take the time and say is this site or what we are doing truly, honestly needed? And how are we going to justify what we have done or what we are doing to the next seven generations, to the next fourteen generations? How can we, what we do today, justify ourselves? A lot of people have the mind that, "Hey, we don't have to justify ourselves 'cause we are not going to be here. We can do whatever we want. Let somebody else worry about it." Well, we are the first generation that are now worrying about it. And through these acts, there have been hundreds of hours sent ... or excuse me spent looking at the ramification of what has happened, and looking at now what do we do. There have been conferences and conferences and meetings and finger pointing of who did what, when and where. Bottom line is we as a nation, we as a people did it. Even myself, far removed, not involved, not even thought of during the time, still have a responsibility to what occurred.

021143 Interviewer: Can you take a second and talk about ... you were talking before about preparations, picking the right site, and thinking through the most respectful ways of doing this. Uh, and how that was working toward a goal of making it right and apologizing to the ancestors. What are some of the ceremonial aspects, what happened during the ceremony to try to preserve the respect and honor for the ancestors?

021211 William: After the site was chosen and prepared, there are cultural things that were done to ... to show humility and to show responsibility to those ancestors. The cleansing of the soil in a traditional way, uh, songs of recognition, songs of honor, songs of respect that were sung to show the respect and the humbling and the responsibility that we were taking. And for the native people that participated, an overwhelmingness of humbleness. Even though the federally recognized nations or tribes had the majority of say in this re-burial, it was recognized by them that the people of ancestral descent, individuals like Oliver Collins, Barbara Crandall, members of the Native American Alliance of Ohio, smaller groups spent the time, the effort, their income and the drive to be the squeaky gears, to be the annoying children, and a guide for these re-interments. And they played a very large and very significant part. And because of that, the federally recognized tribes saw this and saw their dedication and saw their sincerity and by that said, you are part of this, and since you are part of this you need to be an active part of this to participate in the re-burial, to sing what songs you may have, or to give the gifts that you want to give back to humble yourselves and show the sincerity to these ancestors. And by opening that door to these people that are not federally recognized, that had been pushed aside, that have been looked down on, not only by the federal government, but also by individuals of their own culture, to stand by them and to say, "Participate, be a part of this," was just as significant as the re-interment itself.

That morning of ... there was a mist that came up over the Ohio valley. And it was probably one of the most gentle, most loving mists, rain, whatever you want to describe it, to take place. We met at the offices of Fernald, and we were taken over to the site. And when we got there, transport with these ancestors' remains were brought. Now between the very soft, loving and

gentle rain that was taking place at the time, to our surprise and to our delight, there was an honor guard. And as the transport, the vehicle carrying these ancestral remains pulled up, this honor guard saluted. And at that moment, at that time, there was a hush, a feeling of aweness, of great humility that came across the ground and the participants and the people who were there. And it wasn't just an every day thing. It was not public; no cameras, no news reporters, no videographers were there. Again, this was out of respect for our culture, and for those ancestors, but the people that were there represented the whole. There were representatives of the federal government. There were representatives of the [Ohio] Department of Natural Resources. There were representatives of the Department of Energy, the EPA. And there were representatives of the federally recognized nations. And the walk began, because we walked back to this site. And as we walked, the birds were singing. Even though there was a rain and a mist, there was life. And as we approached and came to the site, the mist stopped. And there was a quietness, a oneness of spirituality, not just of the native people but of everyone. And everyone who was at that site was there taking the responsibility. Not just the native people but everyone was participating with sincerity and truth. And that oneness came over everyone through the songs, through the preparation of the graves, through the prayers that were spoken and acted upon. And finally the placing of the dirt back over these ancestors after they have been set back to rest.

022225 Interviewer: Do you remember how you felt at that moment?

022232 William: It's very hard to describe. Quite humbled. In some ways quite childish, and not in the sense of childish in actions but childish in age, thinking back of the act that we were taking, you know. What have we done? We were trying with all hard humility, trying to wrong a right. It was awesome. Uh, again it was quite hard to put words, I don't know if there will ever be words to totally describe it.

022347 Interviewer: A few moments ago you had said that this was a historic moment, you had talked kind of about reconciliation, humility and respect. Can you talk to why this is a historic moment? What is the larger issue beyond the only unidentifiable remains? Can you elaborate about that a little bit?

022406 William: Correct. Over the years, over the decades, man's curiosity to know where man came from or to know even who we are as human beings, has pushed man to do some, some pretty awesome things, but at the same time some very distasteful things. Science is a collecting of wisdom. That's all science is, a collecting of knowledge, the wanting to know why. And because of that, societies, and it makes no difference whether it's here in this continent or of other continents, societies that we live in, through their curiosity and through their finds, want to know why people pass away and how long have we been here. And I am not saying that that is a bad thing, but what is a bad thing is that after information is acquired, the effort to send ancestors back home where we re-lay them in a peaceful way has been thoroughly neglected. None of us own anything, and we surely do not own the ancestral remains of any culture. But individuals historically say that they do have ownership. And they say this is because they have possession of. There has been legislation through the years that has been passed, stating that no, they don't have ownership. That these ancestors, and the remains of there ancestors must be given back or re-interred back to the earth. But it was not until the event of Fernald and the cooperation and

the working of so many for a common goal. And this common goal was to finally have a site that would be protected until whenever. That would be protected, that these ancestors' remains, whether they're recognized and can be identified or cannot be identified, have a place that is again sacred, and recognized as being such and protected, that they can be re-interred. And this is what happened at Fernald. In the year I, I am not for sure, I am not clear, but I believe it was in 1997, the re-interment of these ancestral remains set a precedence on the north American continent or I should say for the government of the United States of a re-interment on federal land that would be, and guaranteed would be, federally protected. No different than Arlington Cemetery in Washington DC, to be federally protected, to home and to care for these ancestral remains to be re-interred. And by this act taking place, we have opened to door for thousands of other ancestral remains that are sitting on shelves, sitting in drawers, sitting in warehouses to be re-interred. To finally give these ancestors, whomever they are, the words that their children and their families and their children's children and us as descendents, spoke at one time, that this would be their final resting place.

023014 Interviewer: As that happens, with the re-interment as a historical marker ...

030033 William: You wanted to know ... what was your question?

030042 Interviewer: You've been talking about how the re-interment ceremony was a historical marker. What would you like to see to happen in the future?

030050 William: Okay. Just today, prior to this interview, I got a phone call from Joe Schomaker, where we talked about what was happening, what was going on with the site as we speak today. And his coming very, very close that, in the very near future, and I can't say when, but within the very near future, there is a approximately over 6,000 unidentified ancestral remains just in the state of Ohio waiting to be re-interred at the site at Fernald. That does not count the ancestral remains that have been identified, that are waiting, or for the hundreds of thousands of ancestral remains that are still in museums, that are still in laboratories, that are still in universities right now, waiting for re-interment. My hope, my dream, and the dreams and hopes of the American native people, the culture, is that all these ancestral remains, whether it is done at Fernald, or whether Fernald had set precedence for other memorial cemeteries to be established, federally protected for across the United States, that the rest of these ancestral remains can be re-interred and put to a peaceful, respectful and sincere rest once and for all. And that as time goes, as this population grows and expands, and sites that are found, and ancestral remains that for whatever reason, by accident, are found will have a final resting place, that they will be able to be placed back into what all of us should feel to be the most sacred ground--our home, our last resting place--that this take place. This is our desire, this is our hope. Not just now, but has been hope and desire for a very, very long time. And through the acts, the love, the sincerity of so many that this finally be able to take place.

030428 Interviewer: You have also spoken, you have said that this was a significant event because of that context. But also, the interaction of the tribe around the re-interment was historical. Can you explain that? The interaction ...

030445 William: The best I can, and this part is very political, and maybe shouldn't be really touched on heavily. But today, society determines or says there has to be division. Honestly, as a human being, it does not make sense to me. Because division means conflict, division means indecision. Division means the lack of focus for a common ground. We are ... (interruption)

030612 William: There's a division that for whatever reason has been propagated. Prophecy tells us, and our own history tells us that as long as we stand divided, we cannot stand strong. So we say, "Who do we stand for?" And honestly, there is only one culture, and that is the culture of the two-legged people. Whether we're American natives, whether we, they are of Asian, or mixed blood, we only have one focus that we should be focusing on, and that is for the next seven generations, and looking at it in a truthful way. Not with blinders or not with recourse or finger pointing. We sit back, and there's a saying among a lot of traditional people that our past or our children's past is today our future. And what that means is what we see tomorrow to be, what we strive for tomorrow to be for us, will be our great grand children, and our great, great grand children's past. What they will be looking back on and saying, "Why did they do this?" or "Why did they leave this for us?" No different then what we are saying today: why did our ancestors, why did our parents, our great grandparents do these things? Why did they leave us with such a mess? We need to again, look at our elders, look at our history, look at the mistakes that we have made, and be strong enough, willing enough, sincere enough as a race, as a race of people, as two-leggers, colors, no difference. Not see who is blond, or who is brunette, or who is black-haired, or who is yellow, or who is white, or who is red and who is black, but as two-leggers with the responsibility to the future, and what we leave for it. Fernald could be, hopefully, seen as one of the first steps of reconciliation, not only to community, but to cultures, but to society, to our future generations, us saying maybe we have grown, maybe we have acquired some form of intelligence, and above all, some amount of humility to say we screwed up, we made mistakes, but we are strong enough and willing enough to rectify and to correct these mistakes, and not slough them off on a generation or multiple generations and close our eyes to what we have done. I hope.

031157 Interviewers: Those are all the questions I have. Can you think of anything else that you wanted to say that we haven't touched on?

031204 William: Other than not one person, brought the events about, not one generation brought these events about [at Fernald], but a whole. Now, whoever brought that whole together, nobody knows, we can only want to think that it was something greater than we. But the fact of the matter is it took a respect, it took humility, it took sincerity and above all, it took love for hundreds of people acting as one to make, and hopefully to carry on, the works that have been started. And we can only hope that none of us drop the ball. And with that, I hope and I ask for everyone to be granted strength, and to step up and do what's right. No more excuses. It's all yours.