

NOTICE

This transcript contains a Living History Interview conducted and prepared as part of the Fernald Living History Project. The narrations, descriptions, perceptions, opinions and beliefs expressed in this interview are solely those of the interviewee(s) and are not to be attributed directly or indirectly, to the United States Government, to the U.S. Department of Energy, to Fluor Daniel, Inc., to any Fluor Daniel Fernald teaming partner company, to any of their officers or employees, to the Fernald Living History Project or to anyone associated with the Fernald Living History Project.

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT

Transcript

Name: Anita Holmes

Date Interviewed: 4/13/99

Date Transcribed: 4/27/99

Tape 1

Project Number 20012

Tape FLHP0001

00:01:05:27

Q:

Say your name and spell it?

00:01:10:17

A:

OK. My name is Anita Holmes.

00:01:17:00

A:

Great. And um, did you live near Fernald during the early part of your life? Um, could you give us a little bit of background. When did your family move to Fernald?

00:01:28:00

My family lived there before there was a Fernald. We moved in about 1945 or 1946. My parents bought it because it was a bigger farm and they moved in and then my mom got pregnant with me in 1955 and I lived then from 1955 until I got married in 1974.

00:01:46:18

I grew up down there. And our farm was located at 3413 Cincinnati Brookvile Road. And that's right next to the plant entrance on Cincinnati Brookvile.

00:01:57:10

Q:

Great. Great. And um, Where did, where did your family live before they moved to that area?

00:02:02:16

A:

Um, they lived in Miamitown. My father was brought up on East Miami River Road, his name was Carl Mingus, and my mother was Cecilia Mingus. And they moved to Wesselman Road and then they moved to Cincinnati Brookvile. And my father farmed.

00:02:21:22

Q:

What kind of farm did, did you have there?

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

00:02:23:10

A:

We had a little bit of everything. He had hogs and cows he milked. Cows for quite awhile and we had chickens and I um had a brother that had rabbits down there at one time. And um, dad went to market. And we grew sugar corn. We were famous for the sugar corn. The Mingus's sugar corn was the best. It still is.

00:02:42:22

We had tomatoes and greenbeans and um, he trucked farmed. And then we did hay and straw for the cattle and field corn. And that was about it. That kept us pretty busy.

00:02:57:18

Q:

Um, what was your house like?

00:03:00:06

A:

It was a big ol' white farm house. We had um, no indoor plumbing we lived pretty rough. Uh every time dad got money it went back into the farm. The farm was the most important thing in our lives and we all kinda grew up knowing that.

00:03:12:28

We had uh cisterns that we used for water and if you wanted a drink of water, you took the bucket and went and you pumped the cistern and you got you bucket of water, and hauled it back in and you got a drink.

00:03:23:04

We used that for bathing and canning, and um for the animals. We pumped water and hauled it to the animals. And that pretty much went for everything. And our farm, really my mom when I was growing up she never had anything new. We never had new furniture, or new curtains, or you know, we never spent anything on the indoors it all kinda went back to the farm.

00:03:47:13

Q:

Great. Great. Um, lets see. You lived there for eighteen years?

00:03:53:02

A:

Yes I did.

00:03:54:00

Q:

And um, how big a farm was it?

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT

Transcript

00:03:56:00

A:

We had a little over one hundred twenty acres. He had uh, it was a lot of pasture ground and then we had fields that we used for planting.

00:04:08:08

Q:

Um, you spoke of the cisterns, and uh, once Fernald was put in, did you ever get the water tested in the cisterns or.

00:04:19:26

A:

No. When the news broke about Fernald, when we realized there was a problem down there, I wanted to get the wells tested, but my mom was talking about putting the farm up for sale because my father had passed away in 1967 and I was 10 years old and my mother and my brother farmed it for many years to keep things going.

00:04:41:03

And then when she got older, she wanted to sell it and I was already married and I wanted to get the cisterns tested because I was afraid that they were contaminated and we used that water for so much in our lives that I was afraid that you know, that we had just been exposed to that for so long. And I wanted to test them, and I tried to talk mom into it and at first she said she didn't want to do it.

00:05:04:01

And I then I had talked her into it and she had moved off of the farm and into a house, a different house. And I talked her into it. And my brother worked at a gravel company, and when he found out that she was talking about getting em tested, he went down and filled the cisterns up with gravel.

00:05:22:09

And he kinda of said that he filled them up with gravel, because he was afraid with her not living there, that maybe the neighbor kids would get into the cisterns and there would be an accident. But it kept us, I don't - I don't know if that was true, but it kept us from getting em tested. So I never really found out what was down there.

00:05:39:15

And it kinda of makes it bad, because now there's no way to go back and find out.

00:05:46:23

Q:

What are your memories of the plant?

00:05:49:08

I guess to me it was just always there. It was a part of my life when I was a child and use to go out and play in the yard, you know, from my yard you could see the sign over there and I never really thought that much about it as a child. It was always there.

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

00:06:03:05

And when I was real little, the houses that are across the street from our farm on Cincinnati Brookville, they weren't there and there really wasn't a whole lot to do out there. There, it wasn't a very traveled road and when I was little when they would sound the sirens when the guys would go to work and when they would get off work, I would sit on the front porch and watch them leave work and sometimes I would wave to them.

00:06:25:22

And I guess, back in my childhood days that was entertainment. But I really never really thought a lot about that being over there. It was just a part of growing up.

00:06:39:03

Q:

Um, what purpose did you and your friends think the plant served at that time?

00:06:44:14

A:

I didn't know. My mom always called it the atomic energy plant. From the earliest time I can remember, she called it the atomic energy plant. And I guess as a child I really didn't know what that meant. I had no concept of what they did. And then when I got older and realized, you know, that the sign said like um, production feed materials or something and they had the little Purina sign up, I really didn't know what they did.

00:07:10:00

I guess I had no idea. My sister at one time had tried to get a job over there and I knew it was all top secret and it was something with government, but I wasn't sure what they did.

00:07:23:04

Um, when people would call it the atomic energy plant, did, did a lot of people think it was a power plant or?

07:33:02

I don't know what mom thought it was. When um, they had originally put it in they had sent a letter out to the residents, and it talked about what to do in case of emergency, if they sounded the sirens you were suppose to evacuate. And I think we all knew that it was something that was kinda dangerous but we were never really told what it was.

00:07:54:00

And I know our family because we were on the border, and we had animals, we were told that you couldn't go over there, if your animals got out that you had a phone number to call and they would bring em back. And, and I was just always brought up that you no matter what happened you just didn't go over there.

00:08:12:28

Q:

Did you know of anyone who slipped through holes in the fence, or anything like that?

08:16:19

A:

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT

Transcript

No. I think we were pretty much scared. Or we just didn't do it. I just didn't think about it. I can remember being a little girl and we had a little cocker spaniel and I use to take her out through the fields with me and she snuck under the fence one day and went over there and she just scared the daylight out of me, because she was my beloved dog. And I, I couldn't imagine what was gonna happen to her. But luckily she did come back. (Laugh)

00:08:41:26

Q:

Um, what myths or legends really have you heard about the plant?

00:08:49:23

A:

(sigh) I guess the one that I have heard the most, is that when people died around there and they were taken to the hospital or the funeral home that the government would send someone out to take body samples. And I don't know if that's true or not, but I guess I heard it so much that I kinda believed it. And I, I really can't think of a whole lot of other things that I'd heard about it. I know it was just very top secret we didn't hear much about it.

00:09:25:18

Q:

Did you know any of the workers at all?

00:09:27:26

A:

We knew Jim Denny some what. He lived up the lane. He lived up on Christen Lane, and that was right up the street from us right directly, almost across the entrance from Fernald. And he was a photographer over there. For many, many years and he, he and his son took our wedding pictures as a matter of fact.

00:09:46:26

Q:

Was he allowed to talk about his job?

00:09:48:09

A:

No, he never did. He never really talked about it. When we talked about the wedding pictures, he had done wedding pictures for a lot of people around there, but he never really talked about his work. And um, we just never asked.

00:10:05:25

Q:

Um, tell me a little bit about your dad? Um, and working in the fields with your dad?

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT

Transcript

00:10:14:04

A:

Um. When I was little, I use to like to go on the tracker with my dad. He, he, we always had a good time together, and sometimes he'd let me, he'd sit me on his lap, and I'd ride the tracker with him. And he use to, he worked out in the fields all the time, he'd be up like at 4:00 or 5:00 o'clock in the morning and he'd be out in the fields.

00:10:31:17

And sometimes when we'd be out there, you could see dust coming over and I guess as a child, I thought it was kinda neat, because sometimes it was different colors and it was sorta pretty. (Laugh) I guess, you know, in retrospect it wasn't so pretty.

00:10:53:25

Q:

Um, You had some difficulty breeding hogs, could you tell me the story on that?

00:10:59:14

A:

Yea. When I was a child, we had a field that went right next to the house. It wasn't real close to the house, but it was adjacent, and my father at one time decided that he was gonna put hog pens out there and breed hogs. And when he put em out there, um when they would get pregnant, they would abort.

00:11:18:13

And he had problems with that for quite a while, and he tried it several times and it never worked. And he finally called an area veterinarian and the veterinarian told him that he had seen problems like that down there a lot and that you had to get the hogs off the ground. That there was something in the ground that caused them to abort.

00:11:36:03

So, he started putting em in the sheds and kept em indoors, and that somewhat helped, but we always kinda had problems with breeding animals down there. It just never really went smooth.

00:11:51:59

Q:

What um, um, you lived there during the cold war (response: ah-um, nodding head yes) for a long time. What kind of things were happening in that neighborhood or what were you hearing about the cold war?

00:12:15:00

A:

We always knew it was dangerous. There was always talk that if there was a war, if there was any altercations that we were in danger of being bombed. That there was a good chance because the atomic energy was there that that was something a foreign country would see as a sign of war or beneficial to bomb and we knew that. And I mean we were right next door. There wasn't a whole lot you could do about it, you just kinda lived with it.

00:12:38:22

And it was a scary thing. I mean, we'd hear planes fly over, and were kinda in the flight path anyway, but you would hear those planes fly over and, I mean, as a child I was scared.

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

00:12:50:58

Q:

Did you have any conception of what would happen if that area ever did get bombed?

00:12:55:00

A:

No. I, I knew it was bad because I knew my mother was afraid of it. But I didn't really know as a child what that meant. I just knew it meant something, that we were going to die that something was going to happen to us.

00:13:08:00

Q:

Were you aware of the defense system in the area?

00:13:12:06

A:

No. Not really.

00:13:17:00

Q:

Cause I've talked to other folks and they've been telling me about the defense system. I don't know that much about it

00:13:20:17

A:

Now what is that?

00:13:22:14

Q:

Um. There were, there were a number of missile sites, there not there any more. (Response: um-hm)
There were a number of missile sites that served as defense for Fernald.

00:13:30:19

A:

Now, I'd never heard that.

00:13:31:18

Q:

I just heard that myself from talking to someone else.

00:13:32:00

A:

See we lived down there for so long that I guess I feel like I should know everything there is to know, and there still times when people tell me stuff, and I, I don't know.

00:13:41:09

Q:

Well I guess there's some silos, some kind of silos, up in Oxford (Response: um-hm) ???
I'm learning a whole bunch of things. (Response: Laugh)

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

00:13:51:00

Q:

Ah, Ok. Good. Is there anything you wanted to add about your early life in the area?

00:13:58:03

A:

Oh. I guess just that I feel like I've, I've been exposed to a lot because when I was a child and we farmed, it was like it was in the water, and it was in the food that we ate. And the water that we bathed with and my mother canned, and it was in the canned goods. And, I mean, I just feel that I've been exposed from all directions.

00:14:19:01

My mother told the story when I was born, I was the only baby she had that was born in the hospital, she was 40 years old and dad was 50, and the doctor told her that at her age it wasn't wise to have me at home and so she went to the hospital. And when she got ready to take me home, the little nun came in and told her that when she got me home, she was suppose to put karo in the bottle and condensed milk in it. And that's what you feed babies back then.

00:14:44:12

And my mom laughed at her and told her that we had all these cows, that she wasn't gonna buy milk, that I was going to have the cows milk. And she, the nun told her that she'd kill me, she couldn't do that. And she said well I've raised three other kids doin' that and it won't kill this one either. And at the time it was a cute little story, but now you look back on it and you wonder, you know, if it was really a wise idea doin' that.

00:15:08:17

Q:

Did you ever have the cow milk tested at all?

00:15:11:25

A:

No. By the time there was talk of testing we were pretty well out of the farming. Mom was older and she was startin' to slow down. And she had rented the farm out to um a couple of other people lived on it and rented the farm land out. So she pretty much got out of the farming in her later years.

00:15:32:27

Q:

So, ah. How has the Fernald plant affected you and your family's lives?

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

00:15:38:28

A:

I guess its affected me because I feel unsure of things. I don't know if our health problems are caused from Fernald. And its always in the back of you mind that maybe it is. That maybe something that you did down there had some affect on what's going with us now. And, and it scars you because every time I go to the doctor and there's something wrong you wind up going through the cancer screenings.

00:16:01:20

And I guess I just feel like eventually its gonna catch up with me. That every time I go in and I get a negative test, that I feel like I've won this time, but I feel like some time I'm gonna go and (emotion) I'm not gonna win.

Q:

What kind of health problems do you have?

00:16:18:25

A:

I have problems with my, um, I have irritable bowel syndrome, and I have something else going on with that now and that their workin' on. I have borderline diabetes, high blood pressure. I've got some kind of skin rash that they have problems gettin to go away. My hands break open, my fingers, the skin.

00:16:37:21

And I've, I've had um, sinus problems, I get um, I don't know, its some kind of infections, and I have infections pretty well constantly. And I've have fatigue, just constant fatigue and I run a low grade temperature and they haven't been able to figure out what the temperature is from. They don't see any sign of infections, but its just a low grade fever.

00:17:08:09

And ah, lets see. Um. Tell me a little bit more about your father and mother and how they bought the farm, how the farm was paid for and what happened um, when Fernald was built?

00:17:26:12

Um, when my father bought the farm, he original bought it with his brother Henry Mingus. And then there was kinda of like a disagreement there, and so my father had, he borrowed some money that my mother had gotten from her parents as an inheritance and they paid off the rest of the farm.

00:17:46:58

And the farm was free and clear. And that was always told to us that, that was going to be our inherentance and this farm was free and clear. And my mother and father had raised three small children during the depression and he taken care of his mother, who had cancer and who had passed away and he, he was just so proud that he'd been able to accomplish this, and that the farm was free and clear and that it would be the inherentance that we kids would receive.

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

00:18:17:03

And when we were growin' up, we were always taught respect of that farm, that you took care of the farm above all else. That it was what counted. That it was our future. And, and my mother was very much like that too. She was a very good farm wife. She worked hard on that farm, and after he died, she carried, she was 50 years old, and she carried on his legacy.

00:18:39:17

She farmed for many years after he passed away.

00:18:46:12

Q:

Now ah. In 1973 you put the farm up for sale?

00:18:49:18

Yes. I was a junior in high school in 1973, and mom decided that she was gettin' older and she wanted to slow down, and she had been renting the farm out to um, Allen Mingus, who was a distant cousin of ours, and he had farmed the land. And she just decided that it was gettin' to be too much for her, she wanted to have some um, retirement time, so she put the farm up for sale.

00:19:12:19

And it was the only home I'd every know, it broke my heart when I saw the for sale sign out. I just, I cried like a baby. I thought, you know, the old homestead was going and that, that was the only home I had. And she put it up for sale in 1973 and it was up for sale until about 1985.

00:19:29:18

And she'd had maybe two or three lookers, and that was about it. And she had put it up for sale, originally it was up for sale for \$360,000 dollars. And she was so sure that this was going to be our big wind fall, because the houses down the road from us, they had built a subdivision, um we had know Webbers down there, who were also farm people and they ran a dairy farm, and um they put Braiders subdivision in down there

00:19:57:15

And that was just down the street from us and so mom was just so sure that we were gonna get all this money, because they were starting to develop that land. Well it just never happened. She put it up for the \$360,000 and she eventually sold it for right around \$120,000. And it was a cut but she, she was gettin' older and she was in ill health, and she just needed to be done with it.

00:20:21:12

Q:

Why do you think it took so long to sell the farm?

00:20:23:10

Well. Right when she put it up that was right when, right shortly when all the stuff from Fernald broke. And I think it was just really bad timing. I think that if she would've sold it sooner that she would of, maybe recovered a little bit more money than what she did. I think it was just really bad timing. And once people found out where the farm was located and they'd come down there and see the Fernald sign and that was pretty much the end of it. You just couldn't sell it.

00:20:53:15

Q:

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

Tell me a little bit about that time, when ah, things started happening at Fernald? Did you hear mostly about the leak out at plant 9 or?

00:21:03:10

A:

Ah. We heard about *FRESH* and the lawsuit with um Stan Chesley, mom had gotten a letter from them, wanting her to join the lawsuit. And she had spoken to my brother about it and he said that, you know, with her talking about selling the farm, that it was best not to get involved. That if she got involved in that, it would be harder for her to sell the farm. And mom (sigh) I think she was scared. I mean, that farm, like I said it was everything that we had. Everything that we had (emotion) was in that farm. And she wanted to protect it.

00:21:35:21

(Emotion) And she didn't get involved with the lawsuit, but then when things started comin' out, I tried to talk her about getting things tested and finding out what really happened down there. That if there was a way to find out if we were exposed, I wanted to know. Because we had just gotten married, and we were planning on having children. And I wanted to know what was gonna happen.

00:21:55:01

(Emotion) And, I mean, I can understand she was scared, and that she wanted the money out of the farm, (tears) and my brother advised her not to do it. And I can understand why he did that, but it was our inheritance and they wanted to protect it. But it still made it hard. Because I'll never know what happened down there or what we were exposed to or the effects its had on me or my children.

00:22:28:05

Q:

Lets go back to back to some of your medical problems (cough) that you've had. And um, lets talk about your children. Some that they've had.

00:22:38:07

A:

OK. I had problems getting pregnant when we got married. Um, I've always had problems getting pregnant. I have two children. My oldest is Cecilia and she's 22, and my youngest is Beth and she's 15.

00:22:52:07

And my oldest daughter had problems when she was a freshman in high school. She had some kind of digestive problems, and we had taken her to several different doctors to get treatment and the couldn't figure out what was wrong with her.

00:23:05:03

And, she missed 45 days of school and she had lost a lot of weight. She was very sick. And we wound up, we took her to *Children's Hospital*, and we never found out what was wrong with her. It just kinda of cleared up on its own.

00:23:17:26

And she went back to school, and at that time I was trying to get involved with *FRESH*, and I was going to the meetings, and I wanted to find out what was happening. And when she went back to school a lot of the teachers and, and the other students had seen an interview I had given to the *Enquirer* about Fernald and my living down there. And a lot of these teachers and students asked her if she had cancer or if her

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

mom had cancer. (Emotion) If her mom was dying.

00:23:44:20

And she was very upset and she had been through a lot with her health problems. And I thought at that time it was best to stepped out of the *FRESH* organization and to leave things go waited until my children got older. Because I didn't want them to be upset.

00:23:59:04

And then when Cecilia was a freshman in collage, (sigh) right around Easter of that year of 1995, she had some mental problems. And she called up and asked us to come pick her up and she had made a suicide attempt. She had overdosed on (sigh) Tylenol. And my husband was working at Champion Paper at that time and I called their employee assistant program and they made arrangements for me to take her to Bethesda in Cincinnati and get an evaluation.

00:24:27:28

And from the evaluation, they told me to take her to Good Samaritan, and they put her in a psychiatric ward for three days. And then we came up and we got her and she moved back home. (Sigh) And that month, that same month, she cut her wrists with car keys in our basement in her bedroom.

00:24:49:14

And then she was admitted to Good Sam again, and it was for another 26 days. And while she was at the hospital they had her making pottery as a form of therapy and she took one of the little pots and slammed it down on her dresser, and used cut (emotion) her wrists with that.

00:25:05:19

(emotion) And then she, when she came home, we still had problems, there were problems with her off and on. And she was in therapy for about a year and then she moved out. And I think she still has problems and she still struggles with it.

00:25:22:22

And my youngest daughter, last year my husband and I noticed a change in her behavior. And she got like she just didn't like us anymore. She wouldn't have anything to do with us. She got very hostile. And very secretive, and kind of to her self. And I know some of that's normal with a 14-year-old but this was to an extreme extent. And we knew that something was wrong. And I tried to talk to her and she wouldn't tell me.

00:25:49:58

And I knew something was wrong. And I started seeing marks on her, cuts. And I would asked her what she had done, if she had cut herself. And she told me no. That she didn't. That it was an accident. She always had a story.

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

00:26:02:13

And I wanted to believe it but I knew something was wrong (sigh). And eventually it got to the point where I knew that there was really (emotion) something wrong. So I made an appointment with a psychiatrist and we took her in for an evaluation.

00:26:19:08

And then, she had liked the computer a lot and she was always on the computer and I got on the computer and I checked her e:mail and there were letters on there that she had been cutting herself, and she had been cutting herself for over a year. And she's, both of the girls were diagnosed with clinical depression and Beth is still in therapy and she's still on medication. (Emotion) And we are still having a hard time of it.

00:26:46:20

And I just look at that and I mean, I don't want to blame it on Fernald, because I don't know. But it does but that question in your mind why this is happening. (Emotion) Because all I've ever wanted to do from the time I was very young, was to have children. And I've tried to be a good mother to them. And I just, I don't understand where this is coming from.

00:27:09:16

And I wonder if my genes were damaged or my chromosomes or, or what if I passed something on to them. (Emotion) And it breaks my heart to think that I could have done something to hurt my children this badly.

00:27:32:58

A:
I'm sorry (wiping tears from face)

00:27:35:05

Q:
Do you want to take a break?

00:27:35:25

A:
Yea, please.

00:27:37:04

Break was taken.

00:27:37:13

A:
From day one I've known I was gonna do it. And it's a hard thing to live with.

00:27:44:15

Q:
Have you discussed ???

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

00:27:47:09

A:

With my children? Oh yes. They grew up with it. They knew about it. They always knew. I was very honest and open with them about that. And my youngest daughter, she's 15 and she tells me that she doesn't ever want children. Because if this is what's wrong with her that she doesn't want to pass it on to her children.

00:28:04:04

And she's having some problems now, gynecological problems. She's 15 and their pretty sure she's got endometriosis and she's being treated for that. Plus this clinical depression and there's times I just look at her, and I mean both of them, and I just so scared. What's gonna happen to them.

00:28:25:22

Q:

Have you ever gotten any answers from anyone at Fernald about your health effects? Have you done any research or tried to talk to anyone?

00:28:35:29

A:

I've done research on the computer. I've talked to Edwa Yocum about it some yet. And I guess I just feel that some of it I don't know if we'll ever get answers or if we'll ever get honest answers. And I mean, there's a lot of that it that I think I'm, you just have to live with. That you have to trust in God. That God will take care of you. And that's what I tell my youngest, because she tells me about not wanting to have children

00:29:00:04

And I tell her, you know, cause she says like, if you would have know that this was gonna happen, would you've still had us. And I said I would because I think life is too important. That you have to pass it on and that I trust that they are strong enough people that they will be able to get through things, that they'll be able to deal with their problems.

00:29:24:06

Q:

All right. We're gonna take a little break, cause we have to switch tapes.

Tape FLHP0002

01:00:57:02

A:

I had to talk to Beth about doing this cause I said the only way I'd do was ... (off camera, voice ended)

01:01:04:05

(Unable to distinguish talk between the interviewee and possible camera person)

01:01:20:11

Um, Have you ever, Have you gotten any retribution for your difficulties at all?

01:01:28:18

We received, I received the money from the emotional distress claim. And we did file a claim, my

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

mother had already passed away when um when they were doing the ah, compensation for the farms, and we got her attorney to put in a claim for that and we did receive some money for that.

01:01:48:08

Q:

Tell me what that was like. Did they, did um, what kind of, did you have to give evidence or?

01:01:53:19

A:

Um, I went for an interview. They, for the emotional distress you had to go for an interview. And they had someone from I think it was Washington University was involved with that, I think is was a psychiatrist or someone in the psychiatri.. psychiatric field.

01:02:12:05

And um, they scheduled interviews and you went in and spoke to them for an hour and then they evaluated you and then you received money based on that evaluation.

01:02:23:21

Q:

What was that process like for you and your family?

01:02:26:22

A:

My sister and I were the only ones that I, that did it. My brothers didn't do it. And I guess for me its just always hard to talk about this. And I mean its gotten harder recently. When I went in for that evaluation, my kids were younger yet and we hadn't go through the things with my daughters. But it was hard enough talking about it then.

01:02:46:25

Because its like when you open it up, its like opening up your whole history. Its like digging your mom and dad (emotion) back up and just doing the whole thing over again.

01:02:56:06

And it brings back the lost. And I guess the, the loss is the security that you didn't know what was happening to you that you didn't have control over what was happening to you. And that things happened that weren't aware of and that affected your life.

01:03:14:13

And it, it takes away your security. You feel like, you know, that if this happened. What else can happen to me. And now that this is going on with my daughters, you especially feel it, its like it snowballs and you get to feel that there's nothing that's out of the question. That anything can happen. That you have to be prepared. Because you don't know what can happen to ya.

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

01:03:41:15

Q:

Generally, how do you feel about the government?

01:03:44:15

A:

I don't trust em. I don't think we'll ever find out the truth. I think that there's been a lot of things that've been covered up. I think they had a lot of knowledge that they didn't give us. I think that at some point they could have come over and said hey maybe you people shouldn't be drinking that cistern water.

01:04:00:13

They could have shared some of the knowledge that they had and I would like to know what testing they did down there.

01:04:06:10

Before Fernald, before the story broke. I would like to know if they knew what they did to us and didn't tell us. And I guess I don't trust the government. I don't trust them at all. And I, I really feel that what ever studies they come out with, I still feel questions.

01:04:22:20

I still feel that, they money was nice but when you look at my life the things that have happened there— no way you can buy that. There—s no way I couldn't trade it for any amount of money because things sure didn't work out the way I thought they would.

01:04:45:17

Q:

When you got your settlement you um went and talked to the tax people. Can you tell us that story.

A:

The year I got the settlement I didn't if we had to pay taxes on it or not so when I got my little tax goodies together I went to my tax accountant and I had known this woman for 10 or 12 years we had done taxes with her and when I gave her our paper work she asked about the Fernald money and what that was and I explained it to her and she asked some background about where we—d lived in reference to Fernald and I told her and she looked at it and she says that you got \$10,000 she said that for \$10,000 I would have lived down there.

01:05:33:07

And it just shocked me that she would say that because \$10,000 is a good chunk of money but it doesn't buy you a life. And it doesn't buy my kids a life. And I mean I appreciate the money but there is only so much that money can buy.

Q:

Generally, we sort of already covered this, but how do you feel about having lived in such close proximity to Fernald?

01:06:09:23

A:

It scares me I have a lot of worries about the future. I have worries about what is going to happen to me

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

and I worry about my husband having to take care of me and having to make these decisions and we've talked about them a lot and I mainly worry about what's going to happen to my kids.

01:06:28:17

But that if I've passed something on to them and what their lives are going to be like. Because I'm 43 and I feel like I've done with my life pretty much what I could. But I look at them and they have their whole lives in front them and just hope that they both have good lives. And that they don't have to go through some of things that I have.

01:06:50:14

And they don't have to make some of the decisions that I've made. And I worry about how my husband will handle it if something does happen to me and if I do get sick. And we've talked about what kind of healthcare I want and what I want done and what I want done when I pass away and how I want things handled.

01:07:09:12

And I hope that he is strong enough and that my kids are strong enough to deal with that.

Q:

You mentioned to me um your will what you wanted to do in your will?

A:

My husband and I had had a lot of fights over this. I wanted, I want to have my remains left to the Fernald Medical Project in U.C. and I've contacted them about it. I want them to have my remains because I want them to do a complete autopsy and I want them to do whatever medical test they need to do and I feel that with being as exposed as I was that it's a shame to bury my body because maybe they could use my body for medical research and find out more information about what went on down there.

01:07:57:22

And the only stipulation I have is that I want a full report sent to my family because I want my family to know the information and I want them to know what happened if they can really find out what happened down there. And I guess I look at it that maybe I've tried to do a lot of things in my life that haven't worked out the way I wanted or the way I anticipated and that maybe this is my way to give something back.

01:08:28:05

Can we take a break, I've got to blow my nose.

Q:

Let's cover what's going on at Fernald now. Are you very aware of what's happening at the facility now?

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

01:08:39:25

A:

Yeah I know about the cleanup I was at the meeting that they had the plantation the other month. And they talked a lot about the cleanup and how that was progressing and I'm glad to see that happen. I think that's partly the government taking responsibility for what they did. And I'm glad that they're cleaning it up and that their making it better for the people that live down there now.

Q:

Are you still interested in getting involved in FRESH?

A:

Yeah I am I'm interested in getting involved in it. It's hard for me to get out right now because with the things happening with my youngest daughter we have a lot of doctors appointments and there's just a lot of running around. But I am very interested in getting involved in it again. I'm sorry that I wasn't able to before I really wanted to. But my kids came first and now that they're older and able to deal with that better I would like to get more involved and maybe be of some help.

Q:

Is there anything you'd like to add to everything or anything you missed?

A:

I can't think of anything. Can you? (She asks husband).

(Off camera) I'm just going to keep quiet. Husband says mostly what I believe you've already said. I just can't trust the government to what's happened to her. I really and truthfully believe that she dies in one way or the next, I'm not too good with words, but the way I feel that Fernald's going to have something to do with it. I got a feeling that she's going to die of cancer. That's my personal opinion. You see I've got a friend at work, I was telling you about before. Him and I have fights all the time about that place. I said you believe what you want to believe and I'll believe what I want to believe.

01:10:30:04

Well my brother and I have fights about that. He believed when it all came down that a bunch of women got together and they didn't have anything to do and that they started crabbing about Fernald and that they just got a lot of people out of work and it was all for nothing. That there was nothing that really went on down there and that it was a shame that all these people lost their jobs. And I feel bad about them losing their job too.

01:10:56:24

I mean, I don't want anybody to lose their job. We've gone through that a couple of times and it's definitely one of life's low points. But I still feel like the government if they wanted those people to work there they should have made it safe.

Q:

... and the people that lived there?

Yeah and that we had a right to be safe too. Especially, since we were there before they were.

Q:

Good. Anything else?

FERNALD LIVING HISTORY PROJECT
Transcript

No that its. Gosh that wasn't on there was it.