

Martin Fritz Interview

2/13/02

1. Where was your home town?

Cedar Rapids, Signed up there.

1a. Your age when you enrolled?

23 years old

2. What did you do before going to the CCC Camp?

Worked in A+P store in IDA grove.

3. Why did you enroll in the CCC program?

Out of work and I needed money.

4. What CCC camps were you assigned to?

#1756 in Lamont and Dundee for two years(1933)

5. Were you ever transferred? Why?

Yes, transferred to Marion Camp in (1934) #3723

6. When did you work at the Camp? (Dates)

1933 Lomont and Dundee, 1934-35 in Marion, IA

7. Tell me about your first days at the camp, i.e., clothing, equipment, toiletries issued, etc.

It was rough, all green horses- had to get used to army life. Received work clothes, dress clothes and personal items. We had to shower daily.

8. What personal items did you have when you arrived?

Not much. Couldn't have cars at CCC base.

9. What were you not allowed to keep?

N/A

10. How were you billeted (assigned lodging)?

Just assigned a place.

10a. Describe the type of shelter you slept in?

Wooden Barracks approx. 20 men

10b. Who supplied your bedding and sleepwear?

The government- 2 blankets, 4 sheets, 1 pillow, 1 cot.

11. Who were your bunkmates?

Jerry Bumingartner and Merlin Buch

12. How did you guys get along?

Real good, very few skirmishes. Harry Powell was the captain of #1756, they met in Fairfield.

13. Tell me about the food in the mess hall.

Was good, but many people griped about the food. Every person was given half-pound of meat per day, with bread, sides and doughnuts.

14. Who did the cooking?

CCC guys cooked. They had 24 hours on and 24 hours off. They had 8 helpers and anyone on KP duty.

15. How were your holiday meals?

We had turkey and trimmings. Some guys would go home if they wanted to. Approx. 75-100 people would leave camp for the holidays. Each camp had approximately 200 people. Lamont=256, Dundee=256 and Marion had 200 people.

16. When was payday?

1st of the month

17. How much were you paid?

\$36/month with all going home except for \$5.

18. How did you spend your pay?

Odds and Ends- in 1934 five of us went to the worlds fair in Chicago, CCC's got in free.

19. What were your days off, and how did you spend them?

Saturday and Sunday. We played pool, boxing, baseball.

20. How was the Sabbath observed in camp?

Most of them went to church that was in the local town.

21. Tell me about he sports activities in the camp.

Baseball, basketball, volleyball, but no football.

22. What part did you take in them?

I played some ball.

23. Tell me about any personal conflicts you had, and how you dealt with them?

No conflicts.

24. What types of discipline were used to punish rule breakers?

Some guys would fight- the "boys" would break it up. If you were caught you would have to stay at camp.

25. I understand there were some educational/trade opportunities available. Did you take advantage of any of these? How?

I learned stone masonry because that was the training I needed to do my job in the CCC.

26. Who were your teachers?

Don't remember

27. Where were classes held?

At camp

28. What benefits did you get out of these classes at camp or after leaving camp?

After camp, went to work on a dairy farm and then a factory in town.

29. What were some of the main projects your camp was involved in?

Creating the dam and constructing some buildings at Backbone. Also did build some contours.

30. What were some of your duties?

Cut stone, cooking, and some watershed work.

31. What type of skills did you receive?

Stone cutting and cooking skills.

32. Who trained you (LEMs)?

N/A

33. Who were your leaders?

Harry Powell, Delvin Fulks, E.W Olmstead

34. How did you get along with them?

Good

35. How did you get your work assignments each day?

Our jobs were assigned. Usually the same job and crew day after day

36. What type of equipment did you use? How was it issued to you?

Hammer and chisel,

37. Who were some of your fellow workers, and how did you get along with them?

Got along with them good.

38. What contact, if any, have you had with any of your fellow CCC workers?

I have been in contact with about 8 in Iowa and one guy in MN.

39. How did the city kids and the country kids get along at camp?

Was very few country kids around.

40. Were there any minority groups, i.e. African Americans, Hispanic, Native American, or others, working at the camp?

None, The Arkansas boys came up and did some work and caused plenty of problems. Many of them were uneducated.

41. How were they treated by their superiors?

N/A

42. How were they treated by their fellow workers?

N/A

43. Tell me about the specific skills you learned in camp.

Cooking and Rock Mason.

44. How did these benefit you after leaving the camp?

I did a little cooking at home.

45. Were there any injuries at work?

Yes, I had a foot broke once from a dynamite explosion.

46. How were these injuries taken care of?

Doctor in the camp.

47. Were you ever injured? How?

Yes, broke his foot.

48. What diseases occurred in camp, and how were these treated?

In Marion a guy died from black diphtheria. The kid was 19 years old.

49. Tell me about any insect & rodent problems?

None, you would see a snake occasionally.

50. What work, if any, did you do outside the camp, or in the community during your CCC days?

No,

51. Were you paid?

N/A

52. What contacts did you have with the outside community?

none

53. What fellowship type organizations, i.e., Masonic, Elks, Odd Fellows, did you or any of the camp workers attend at camp, or in the community?

none

54. Would you tell me about any contacts you had with females during your stay at the camp?

Only his wife 67 years old

55. Were there any problems with other young men in the local community?

None.

56. How do you think the members of the CCC camp were felt about by the local community?

At all the camps I was in the community was very friendly to us.

57. What is your most memorable experience at the CCC camp?

Good experience all around.

58. What was your oddest experience at the camp?

none

59. What do you think was your biggest accomplishment at the camp?

Building the boathouse and bathhouse at backbone.

60. How do you think your life was changed, by enrolling in the CCC?

Learned how to live and how to get along with others.

61. What did you do after leaving the CCC?

Was a farmworker for one year. Then worked at the gambles store. I then transferred to Midom gambles store to be a receiving clerk. Drove a truck for a time after that and I have now been retired for 30 years.