

Francie Arnett: Our backgrounds are very similar as far as our parents, our mothers at least.

Greg Arnett: Yes.

Gina Games: Here. You guys, come sit over here. I will go back and forth, and we will do the end together.

GA: I've got nothing to say.

GG: [laughter] Come on, Greg.

FA: If you want to say something, say it. Now is your chance.

GG: Yes, do not worry. There is no right or wrong to this.

GA: I know, but it's...

FS: I was going to tell you about the day the kids left the sheep in the house too.

GA: Oh, yes. [laughter] Oh, my God, yeah. But Francie and I, our families share a lot of similar backgrounds. My mother, her family was from up around Scranton, Pennsylvania. That's where the bituminous coal, the metallurgical coal is mined. It's a harder coal. It's what they make the coke out of to produce the iron. But I can remember, as a kid, traveling up in Pennsylvania. I had six other siblings. I came from a large family. I had two sisters and four other brothers. All of us kids piling into the station wagon and taking a trip. That was before the interstates were in place. Traveling to Pennsylvania. It was a two-day journey traveling there. My mother always told us kids, "Now, you kids, you don't need to go back home and tell anybody about how my mother lives." Because she was somewhat, I think, embarrassed that her mother still cooked on a wood stove in the kitchen. They had a party line telephone that if you picked up the phone, there could be six other families maybe sharing that line. There was no secrets. I was just amazed that you actually could cook. You had a fire in your house, cooking on a stove, and it was hot. Oh, my God, it was hot. It was the summertime. They're all in there, cooking and everything. Then I remember my Uncle John, he was just a few older than us. "John, run downstairs and get us some water." He was going down into the well. They had a rope and a bucket that they pulled the water out of the well, out of the basement of the house, and brought it up. It's just like, well, you just turn the faucet on to get water. What are they doing? It must be broken or something. I just never got the concept of any of that stuff. But I can remember just on the way home, and my mother just telling us, "Okay, now you kids just don't need to talk about this, okay?" It's like, well, what? I never understood the whole principle that people cooked on wood stoves. That it was just such a different type of experience and all. I can remember we'd be driving out in the country, and you'd see smoke rising out of the ground. My mother would say, "Yes, there's underground coal fires. The mine accident, that happened when I was just a little kid. Well, when I was little, and your parents – you hear them talk about when they were little and that was like, oh, my God. When dinosaurs walked the ground. Well, that was that big mine explosion. They never did get that fire out. You'd actually see the smoke coming out of the ground. That was a strange experience. So many little things of just growing

up and being aware of the coal mines and not really understanding the impact of that type of employment, that people actually went underground and mined the coal. I can remember driving through Pittsburgh, and all the smell was just horrendous. Once you smell coke burning in the metallurgical – or you see the kettle cars, bottle cars with the molten iron ore in them, and just all the activity. Because it was always at night when they tried to travel with us. Just amazed to see steel mills and coal mines. It never entered my mind at all that someday I'd be in that environment and working in it. When you started in the mills and listening to the old-timers, when I was young and in the mill, and talking about their parents, or when they were young and having the Pinkertons up in the towers with rifles and the strikes and shooting, I mean, murdering the workers, and some of the strikes when they were trying to form unions and such. It was a violent, violent time. It really, really was. What those folks went through to have a safe place to work. Because twenty-seven years, I was a firefighter paramedic as a hobby. So, I was on the emergency response team in the mill. The fatalities that I was involved with and the loss of limbs and what we went through in my time in the mill, of trying to have safer work rules in place and guards on equipment, and actually having safety classes and making people aware and responsible for how they worked and how their partners worked in the mill to make sure that everybody was working safe and that everybody had their protective clothing on, your glasses, your hard hats, your steel-toed shoes. But I think that's an important part that we've lost in just the past ten years, how we've slipped back. But that's all. That's all I wanted to say.

FA: I don't think so.

[end of transcript]