

Amie Bennett

Francis De Caire

me: This is Amie Bennett, today is January 28, 1986. I am interviewing Fran Decaire about his life. The reason for this interview is for National Mine School and the Red Dust project. This interview is going to be taken place at Fran Decaire's house.

Fran: Is it 99n'?

me: yeah (laugh)

Fran: ok

me: where + when were you born?

Fran: I was born in Ishpeming Michigan, (pause) November 5th 1942

me: OK

Fran: But, Don't ask me what kind of hospital it was, cause I don't remember that one.

me: Ok, What are the names of your parents?

Fran: Earl Decair + Margaret Decair !?!

me: what did they do for a living?

Fran: my mother was a house, ~~house~~ house mother + my father drove a truck for Clairmont Clawmont Transfer for !?! a while, then he went up to Hercules Hergulize power company and worked, then he was a dispatcher out there at Trystate at a job in missouri

me: Oh! How many brothers + sisters do you have?

Fran: no brothers 2 sisters

me: Oh! (laugh) Describe life as a youngster.

Fran: ~~kinda~~ kinda hard to do cause I can't remember ^(little pause) I can't tell ya cause I don't ~~remember~~ remember what I did as a youngster I went Ice ~~skating~~ skating I went well! Highschool we'd go ice skating + ~~ski'n~~ ski'n, Before that I don't remember, nothing a (pause) I don't remember nona that stuff (saying the whole thing jokingly)

me: (laugh) were did you go to school?

Fran: I went to the Salsbury school + I went to St. John's Catholic School + I went to Ishpeming High school →

I graduated from Ispemins High School in 1960

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me: Well what was school like?

Fran! (pause) I can't really tell ya cause I don't remember what (pause) I can't remember what school ^{was} ya know Its Been so long I don't think back at it.

me! ya What was your favorite subject?

Fran! Industrial Arts, Shop

me! really? I hate shop.

Fran! Well we had machine shop.

me! were you in any sports?

Fran! Football my freshman year. That was all.

me! What were the teachers like?

Fran! Like as usual you don't like um ya know ya know you don't like your teachers like everyone else ~~but~~ but if you look back at em now + I'm good friends with em now. I see em in town + I talk to em all the time.

me! How much homework did you get.

Fran! Lots, Lots

me! How was the discipline like?

Fran! Strict real strict. And they should have it ~~now~~ now-a-days to Just like they had =>

in the Catholic School

me: what did they do?

Fran: They made sure ~~you~~ you did your duty Behaved
they ~~cracked~~ cracked you one!

me: ok!

Fran: ~~They~~ they did too!

me: How did you get to + from school?

Fran: My 2 feet we walked

me: How far was it?

Fran: 1 mile

me: I'd die (pause) um what chores did you have at home?

Fran: Now + back then it was ~~cuttin~~ cuttin wood, rake the lawn, cut the grass, shovel the snow. We ~~had~~ had those modern snowblowers, snowplows in ~~them~~ ^{new} days, ~~number~~ 2 shovel ^{we cracked it} or snow scoop. scooped it away

me: what did you do in your lesiure time?

Fran: Well I went ice skating ski ridden on the hill over there

me: what'd ya do after you graduated?

Fran: I'da know where do I start out now Start out

worked down at Air Base then I went 6 months
 in the Army. got out of the Army then I worked
 down at the base again for a while. At ~~Greens~~
 Gas Station ~~for a while~~ then I worked ~~at~~ ^{work} at the ~~mine~~ ^(Stinback Mine)
 for CCI Republic Mine 1965

me: ok. did you ever get married

Fran: Yes

me: To who

Fran: Judy Stinback Windjuck River Wisconsin

me: I didn't know that

Fran: For some.... what?

me: That she was from Wisconsin oh yeah thats were she
 me my mom

Fran: well certainly!

me: um how many children do you have?

Fran: I got 3 a set of twins + one other
 one. Becky Beth + Debbie

me: Are they growing up the same way you
 did

Fran: Naw they got more things nowadays then we
 had

me! um well

Fran! I'm I right?

me! Ya Did any unfortunate ever happen to you that you'll never forget?

Fran! Fell 60 feet off the roof at Republic Mine in 1966, I ~~was~~ crushed my spinal cord & broke my 2 legs & I had to learn to walk all over again, I was paralyzed from the waist down. I had to learn to walk a right together Right from scratch

me! well who who was there at the accident?

Fran! Nobody I was all by myself

me! wa ~~was~~ ^{woa}

Fran! I laid outside for a while then they found me, later on

me! Really How long did you stay in the hospital?

Fran! 6 months St. Vincent's Hospital | Green Bay Wisconsin 8th floor • I believe room 828

me! Ok How'd you react when you were told you ~~could~~ couldn't walk

Fran! Well I told the doctor he was alien
me! ok

Fran! That I was gonna walk

me! And you did

Fran! I did ya I made a liar out of him

me! What was the stay like in the hospital?

Fran! It was boring! I laid in bed for 3 months
couldn't move roll around roll around bed ya
know well how else is a stay in the hospital
when ya have a cast on each foot well
hu (laugh)

me! Was there any physical therapy?

Fran! ya After the 3 months I laid on my back I
had therapy for 3 months in the hospital then
I've been Every day for me for walking each
day is a little ~~more~~ more exercise + more
exercise see everthing I do makes me
stronger. see

me! Who helped you the most?

Fran! Well myself I think cause the way my
attitude I had tords walking ~~and~~ And all
the people around me. But I was just determined
that I was gonna walk And that was gonna
be it

Then there was alot of friends back in friends
+ everything so they all helped me I I was
~~young~~ young + I was a lets see ^{I was} ~~only~~ only 22 23 at
the time so I had more will power to
fight back at doing things ya see all your
friends out there doing ~~different~~ different things you
wanta ~~go~~ + do the same thing But I never
got that far but I'm walken not runnin
but ~~walkin~~ walkin

me! Yeah, Did any fortunate thing ever happen
to you that you'll never forget?

Fran! Ida that Ida know ya I walked again
I cant really say I did

me! when when were you able to walk again?

Fran! Well its been since 67 slowly on crutches
then braces + I still ~~wear~~ wear them ~~braces~~ braces but
ya know I walk with a walker + everything
but everythings slowly come back. partly not
all the way

me! who made the greatest impact on your life?

Fran! I imagine my wife Judy

me! how

Fran! she pushed me forward ya know

me! Yeah my mum said you'd say that

Fran: (chuckle)

me: Is there anything you'd change?

Fran: no I wouldn't change nothin I had a good life Its not much fun But I'd like to give it a pain in that anyway You see alot of people alot worse off then you are but just be thank your in the shape you are & thats about it thats about it