



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Cuyahoga Valley  
National Park

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## Farming in the Valley: 2011 Oral History Project

The following are transcripts from two audio clips in the **Changing Landscape** section. Visit <http://www.nps.gov/cuva/historyculture/changing-landscape.htm> to view the entire page.

### Land for the National Park

*Hazel Broughton, who grew up in Everett, describes residents' fears and concerns about their homes and farms during the creation of the national park in the 1970s.*

"Well in 1975, when Park Service first came, their idea was a little radical for the times. They really rubbed people the wrong way, because they came on strong, they said what they were gonna do, and it didn't sound like we, as residents, had much choice. I can only say for myself. Some people carried a grudge, probably still do, I don't know if they're still alive. I haven't. They treated me fairly. However, the scare tactics that, I don't know if it was just gossip or if it was planted . . . who knows. But they came across kinda strong saying, you'd better sell your house. You'd better sell to us. You better move, because you don't know who's gonna keep your roads up. You don't know who your police department's going to be. You don't know who your fire department's going to be. Your emergency squad. It's all going to be under par. Well this was really strong for 1975, for the simple reason here we were, all of us that lived in Everett . . . What are we going to do? Are we gonna have to sell? Well, we didn't *have* to sell. We could have taken life estate, but with those things that they had mentioned, it gave us a fear. A fear of what's going to happen if we stay. So, most of us, we would talk when we would see each other: What are you gonna do? Well most of us hadn't made up our minds.

"My neighbors that were directly across the street, they decided to take seven years. They would live there seven years. One of my friends up on Northampton Road, she took live estate. She did live there until practically the end of her life. On looking back, I think . . . and I believe most people would agree . . . the strength of what they came on with was a scare tactic enough to make people *want* to leave. Because if you had to worry about all these things, and not know, your decision was, I'm gonna move. We knew we had a deadline. Once they came and approached you, you had so long to decide what to do. You could either stay, or you could go.

"Now, of, course it's not the same park, but I hold no grudges because I felt that I was dealt with okay. I am glad the park has developed it. The trails are wonderful. I have walked them, and I think the relationship that Peninsula has with the park now is *very* good. The things they have developed for people from the cities to come in, for kids. Look what they can learn!

-more-



They come and see the blue herons. They come and see the eagles. You know. There's places they can fish. But I think the park has been good, and I'm glad that they're there, because they preserved *a lot*."

## **Farming Fades**

*Martin Johnston, a farmer from Valley View, talks about the decreasing number of farms in the Cuyahoga valley.*

"In the '50s there used to be, all parts of the valley was farmed, every bit of land you could farm. But as time went on, obviously there was less farmers because it was more beneficial to go work in the steel mill or the automobile factory. Well in our village, Valley View, the land went for a commercial activity, in some respects. And people got older, didn't farm it. There was two of us farmed in the valley, quite a bit of the land. Foote's . . . well, three of us technically: Foote's, Walter's, and Johnston's. Walter's phased out. Things have changed when the park got it. Deer population was growing and, because the rules and regulations of the park and the deer, people backed off from farming it. Today it's hard to farm in the valley with the deer population as such."