

Oral History Interview 2
Norman Penfield interview
Conducted by Donald Little & Kristen Magann
October 5, 2016
Transcribed by Donald Little & Kristen Magann

Start clip 1 at 0:00

Interviewer: This is Kristen Magann and Donald Little interviewing Norman Penfield on Wednesday October 5, 2016 at his office at 103 P. Rickman Industrial Drive in Holly Springs Georgia. Hi Norman.

Penfield: Hello there!

Interviewer: Please state your full name.

Penfield: I'm Norman Allen Penfield.

Interviewer: And when and where were you born?

Penfield: I was born uhh well in Adairsville, well I was born in Rome, Georgia, but I lived in Adairsville my entire life.

Interviewer: When did your family originally move to Adairsville?

Penfield: It is my understanding they moved here in 1916. From Bessemer, Alabama. My Grandfather, he uh was in the ice business and he heard that there was a farm for sale in Adairsville [coughs] the southside of Adairsville and had a lot of orchard trees. Good deal, so he went there and bought the farm. Then uh, uh with his ice background he started an ice service. To deliver ice for refrigeration. For the iceboxes, to go door to door. As well as have an ice warehouse next to the Little Rock Café on old highway 41. So if he was out on a delivery [coughs], you could pick up your ice at the icehouse. I, I can't really remember the door to door service because refrigeration came around by time I can remember. But, uh, I do remember a lot of people that would come and get ice. The icehouse has uh, the big old [hand gesture]. I don't know how much they weigh. At least a 100 pounds. Big slabs of ice. I remember the ice pick. Even as a kid, you'd take the ice pick [hand gesture showing how they would use the pick] and you would break it off into sections. And they

had a little pattern that would tell you how much each block would weigh. We would charge by the pound, but they did not have the scales there. They could tell by how they divided that big chunk of ice up whether it was quarters or halves or whatever and then charge for it.

Interviewer: So what reason did your family have for choosing Adairsville?

Penfield: [Long gasp] I wasn't around, so I have no idea. [laughs] Really, I do in ways because the uh, uh peaches...the Georgia...Adairsville had roots of farming peaches. Back at the turn of the last century, Adairsville was one of the biggest peach producers in the country. This farm had quite a bit of peach trees on it, so I assume that was the reason they came to Adairsville. It might of just been a good deal on a farm. I really don't know. I never...

Interviewer: Can you tell us about your childhood home and its previous resident?

Penfield: The uh, I talked to my sister,. She's eight years my senior. In fact, I volunteered her for this too, but she spends most of her time in South Florida. She has a home down there. But anyway, the house was actually built before the Civil War and you asked about Ms. Topsy. She grew up there, but it was here uncle's house, Mr. Whitworth. I do not know his initials or whatever. I'm sorry. But uh, Ms. Topsy was quite a person, a historian. This is not the first time you heard her name. She grew up there in our house. And uh, there was a Yankee soldier in the Civil War killed there. There are bloodstains up the steps and then my in my old bedroom. Before they carpeted, as a kid, I would point out that a Yankee soldier was killed there in the Civil War. You want me to get off on the ghost now?

Interviewer: Yeah, you can talk about the ghost.

Penfield: Ms. Topsy, was a uh [exhales], she sort of believes in ghost. Let's put it that way and could communicate with them on top of that. I'll get into that and talk about the séances. She claimed the Godfrey from Barnsley Garden; his ghost lived on our house. Anytime a door would shut or an unexpected sound...[waves hand nonchalantly] ahh that's just Godfrey. That's what we said when I was growing up. So, I grew up with a ghost in my house or I thought I had one. It was sort of fun. Because he was a friendly ghost, he wasn't a bad ghost.

Interviewer 2: This was a story Ms. Topsy would tell you?

Penfield: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. Ms. Topsy tells stories, good Granny. All us kids loved to get around Ms. Topsy when she would tell her ghost stories. And she had some goodies too. Lord have mercy, they were all supposed to be [air quotes] true. I don't know if this is the right place, but she felt, I don't know what the term is, but she felt she could communicate with them as well. They had a, I never attended one, but they had séances where they'd make the tables walk by putting their hands on the table lie a Ouija board, but they took the Ouija board one step further. Across the railroad tracks from our home is a grave of two unknown soldiers from the Civil War. One time they asked the Ouija board what was their name and the Ouija board spelled out their names. She supposedly did the follow up and to find that was the names of those two soldiers.

Interviewer: What was the address of that house?

Penfield: Uh, we never had numbers; I had to look it up to tell you [laughs]. When I was growing up there wasn't anything. 311 South Main Street. It's funny how you can remember certain things and can't remember yesterday. But our first telephone number was 97J. There were no numbers. It was all party lines, so you knew what ring you had to pick up the phone. As kids, we figured how to sneak on other people's conversations by unscrewing the microphone and listen in. [laughs]

Interviewer: What is the status of that home currently?

Penfield: Pitiful. When mother and dad passed away, my sister and I divided the inheritance. I gave Patty the house because I would never move back to it. I took the farm on Cheabrock road. She toyed with the idea and then decided not to move into it and then sold it. The house has been butchered. When I say that, it was a three-bedroom house when mom and dad passed away and then they turned it into a six-bedroom cause they take like the carport and turn it into two little bedrooms. I suppose it was for someone who had a big family. Whether it was blood family, I don't know. It's gone down.

Interviewer: What was it like to grow up in Adairsville?

Penfield: Wonderful, but I didn't know it at the time. [laughs] What was it like, oh it is...like Mayberry. It was carefree, no locks on the doors. Everybody had a good time. Unless you did wrong. When I got out of sight of mother's call, I went to the lumber yard, which was a no-no for me. They were afraid something might fall off. Us kids, we liked to play in the sawdust piles. Dig tunnels and such. They were afraid we'd fall in and suffocate. We did fine. I know I made me some notes here. Now some of my favorite memories...]

Interviewer: What were some of your favorite memories?

Penfield: There was the first swimming pool in Adairsville. Now, I tried to find someone who knew all the dates on it. They didn't charge for it. It was a public pool. That is where...that is where I learned to swim. It closed around 1950. I have a video of the... on the Adairsville photos and memories. Jack Brought which was one of the men who lived on our street. When he came back from World War II, World War II I guess he bought one of those 8mm cameras. Those were a big thing and he was in the Pacific and he brought one home. He began to video the pool and I remember as a kid watching that video because his son was my age and I ran him down and I got him to digitize that video. It was something to see with them old cars and especially those women's bathing suits. Man, they looked sharp. I fairly remember that and I was like 5 years old or pretty close. Swimming was big to me. I remember when it closed because the PTA built a public swimming pool around Park Street or teachers row. Right in the swamps to and the skeeters. The town was spring fed. We had great water always had. Before they had filtering systems and they would clean the pool, when you would jump in you would come out blue it was so cold. It was fun, had to do something.

Interviewer: How has the community changed since you were a child?

Penfield: I'm not finished yet. Let's see...ok the other big activity was the scouts. And the scout hut, which was on top of Boyd Mountain, and my dad helped to build it. How we didn't all die from drinking that old cistern water because we didn't have no well on top on the mountain there. Before I was old enough to be a scout, when they would meet every month you could see the lights on top. Anyway, I always wanted to be a part of that. Chief Boyd was the scoutmaster. You probably heard that name. He was the oldest scoutmaster in the country. He was a veteran of World

War I. The brother of Carl Boyd who was the hero of the first system...whatever. Anyway, the scouting was fun and we met there over night once a month and we had what was known as a game of fox and hounds. Divided the scouts to either foxes or hounds. And the foxes would go out into the woods with no flashlights or nothing. Well, the foxes would go out and hide and the hounds would go find them and try to tag you before you got back to the scout hut. Then you reverse and the hounds became foxes and so on. How someone didn't die [laughs] because we were running through the woods full out. I remember hitting a barbed wire fence. Oh yeah. We were young. It was a different world back then. Uh, the other thing was my Kool Aid stand. I was an entrepreneur early in life. I didn't just have a table; I mean I built me a little stand there on south Main Street. My sister would be so embarrassed, her boyfriends would come by and I would hit them up to come buy some Kool Aid. Gotta use what you got. Oh and the gin, the two cotton gins were big time. They were right on south Main Street. Just up from our house and in the fall those things would be going 24/7. That was another taboo that I was not supposed to be there, but all us kids had to go watch the men. Because there was big stuff going on. Wagons would come in with the cotton and be backed up a quarter mile long and all the machinery going. That was big stuff. But it only lasted a couple months in the fall. But that was big time. When I got older and started driving we had the gatherings on the square. The gathering on the square, if you were lucky enough to have a date on Saturday night and after you took her home, you would head to the square and we all would sit around and tell lies. [laughs] We had a good time. That's another one of the questions you asked me about when dad was mayor if I was good or bad. At that gathering, anybody who had a hot car and if the cops weren't around, they'd go out and lay a little rubber. Down the main street there, not where all the cars were, but by the depot, the long stretch there. I happened to buy a Corvette in 65 and of course they were all after me. Egging me on saying they know my dad's mayor but you need to burn that little burn out. I said, "Naah boys you know I can't do that." Knowing good and well I was going to. So towards the end of the night, I drive down to the end of the street where the Methodist church is and next to the police station. I looked and the police wasn't there. We only had one police car back then by the way. So I back down and of course, I let the thing fly. I come down and as I came in, cause at the end you gotta turn left or you run into the stores at the end of the thing. I come in sliding, just burning and the police come down Bowman's corner and they were

blowing the horn at me because they thought I was going to run all over them. [laughs] Ahh, I got a scolding for that. They gave me, uh they let me go. They took me to the police station and told me why I shouldn't be doing that with dad being the mayor and so on and so forth. See, like I told you earlier, it was like Mayberry. It was a different time back then. They had tolerance back then. Anyway, that is some of the memories I have. My childhood stuff.

Interviewer: What was your dad's reaction when he got the call?

Penfield: He never got the call. They let me go. They ran down to me and said don't do it again. Now another one though, coming back to the same thing, when we wanted to do a little racing we would go over to 140 but then I-75 was built and it stopped in Adairsville from the north. Before it was finished, they took the traffic off in Calhoun. So there was a dragstrip there and it was perfect. It sat there for years. Well, you had politics come in to figure out how it was going to cross Altoona that is why it was held for many years. With environmental studies and so forth and so on. So we had a quarter mile marked off where that bridge where 140 crosses 75. So when someone wanted to challenge somebody, you had everybody stand on the bridge, so you had verification of who won from the bridge. Well, this particular Saturday night, I did not go because me and my girlfriend, at that time, were out late and so I just went on home. The next morning I wake up and my dad was sitting by my bed...

Clip II Beginning at 0:00

Penfield: ...looking down at me and says, "All right son, tell me about it." I said, "What? I knew sometimes, but this time I don't. What are you talking about?" He said, "Coots dead and I know you were there." Coot was his nickname. I couldn't tell you his real name. I don't remember. He had a Satellite, a new Chrysler Satellite and this other guy in town had a red Chevy Supersport Chevelle that had been boss dog in town. Until the Satellite, until Coot bought the Satellite. And I, it took me a good week for me to get someone to tell me what happened. What really happened was that they went out to see who was the fastest. Thank goodness that Coot let his girlfriend out on the bridge. Well, he went ahead of the Chevy Chevelle and he was going to show out, get in front of him like he was passing. Well, as I told you, 75 hadn't been finished and the shoulders hadn't been there. It was a sixteenth drop from the ground up to

the road. He ran off the road, and drove back on the road; he overdrove it and turned, threw him out and rolled over him. When it came to rest, the car was on top of him. They had to [inaudible] Thunder Road. But I was not apart of that. Did not have anything to do with it. That was the drag strip when I was growing up. It was a good one too.

Interviewer: Did they close down the drag strip or monitor it more after the incident?

Penfield: Oh yeah, that was the end of the drag strip.

Interviewer: How has the community changed since you were a child?

Penfield: It's funny, people will ask me where I am from and I will tell them a little town halfway between Atlanta and Chattanooga. When I was real small, I remember an operating blacksmith shop. It was run in between two gins [inaudible] shoe the horses and mules. Well, the last time the Atlanta Telephone Exchange moved out fifteen years ago. So in my lifetime, I've seen the town go from a one-horse town to metropolitan Atlanta. I don't know if that answers your question, but it is a borough of Atlanta now.

Interviewer: What else did you do for fun as a teenager in Adairsville besides drag race?

Penfield: [laughs] Well, I was older then. Come down to the creek and throw rocks at water moccasins. [laughs] We'd go to the depot and watch them load the freight. Big stuff on Friday night. Oh lordy mercy, what did we do? The swimming pool as I already covered. The scout hut. We rode, we rode bicycles everywhere back in those days. I mean that was a way of transportation. Not the way kids do now. They get on mountain bikes and go on trails. We rode them everywhere. That's a way of life. I really don't know, well the big thing was the school activities and church. Because we didn't have anything else. We didn't have a skating rink. We did skate, but we skated on the streets.

Interviewer: What would you do at the church?

Penfield: Just different activities. Can't remember now. Social activities. Get together and tell stories. I can't tell you anything big specifically. Frankly, school and church were the only organizers of group activities.

Interviewer: So your father opened Penfield Chenille. What was Penfield Chenille?

Penfield: Chenille made bedspreads. Back in those days, those bedspreads were a big thing. Especially if it had the overlay. I guess you may have heard of Peacock Alley which ran from Chattanooga to Atlanta and back in the old days, before machine tough ting during the Depression Era they took the sheets of cloth and yarn out to the farmers and rural people and the whole family would put the yarn through the yardage and cut the nap and make it fuzzy and that was chenille. That's the way, they say a lot of people would have starved had they had not had chenille. Then the tough ting machines came along to make this all mechanized and this was the forerunner of the carpet. This is why this area is one of the largest carpet producing areas in the world. This is the only difference between chenille and carpet is that carpet you don't cut the nap. The same technology basically applies. They got in on the chenille at the tail end. I'd say chenille went out in the late 70's. He sold out and retired in 75.

Interviewer: How long were you open?

Penfield: I was in the third grade, so I was 9 or 10 years old. And I didn't like it. Because he and my mother had the Little Rock Café' in downtown. The building still there but it's [the café] isn't. The little rock is still there, which is a big rock. You know where the police station is, it is the building right across from it o 41. You'd know it by the big rock that is coming out of the porch there. I liked the café because it made me real popular with all my buddies because they would get free candy and goodies. When he built the plant, he sold the café of course and I didn't have any trading ability with chenille bedspreads.

Interviewer: Was Penfield Chenille successful?

Penfield: Oh yeah! Very much so. When I say that, he operated it until 75, sold out and retired and enjoyed a 29-year retirement off of it from the income, money he made out of it. But again, chenille was dying out and carpet was coming in. So at his age, he was 62, he didn't want to retool because it did require different tough ting machines. It would have required a sizeable investment and he was at the age of retirement anyway.

Interviewer: How did Penfield Chenille impact the local economy?

Penfield: It was one of the three largest employers in the town. Penfield Chenille, Cooman Chenille, and Childers was three of the plants in Adairsville. It didn't have the impact that the peaches did at the turn of the century, but it did employ about 60 people.

Interviewer: What are some of your memories growing up around Penfield Chenille?

Penfield: Sweeping the damn flo...the floors [laughs]. Well, I swept floors, I folded bedsreads, took them to laundry. Dad's partner, Vern Cooman that owned Cooman Cheniille. Put them together, they were, by far, the largest employers in town. The laundry was out at Cooman. The bedsreads had to be transported out there to get bleached and dyed and tried and brought back for folding, packaging, and shipping. I rode, I helped Max Dunt, he's still alive, I can't believe it. He drove the truck. The big old box truck that we carried the bedsreads. I really liked him because he wouldn't squeal on me for going out and smoking cigarettes [laughs]. That was one of my bad, in fact the only I remember getting a whipping for was sneaking out and smoking cigarettes. I was determined I was going to smoke them and they [parents] were hell bent and determined that I was not. That was our clash with my mother and dad and me. Bad boy. I was always sort of the black sheep in the family anyway. But I worked in the shipping department, when I say worked I mean helped. I never drew a paycheck out of the place. Well, I tell you, I made some money out of it though. In vending, without a vending machine. It was all honor system. I brought sandwiches or bought candy by the box and put them out. It was an extension of my Kool Aid stand.

Interviewer: Can you tell us about your father's pet Buckshot?

Penfield: [sighs] Not really. The story behind it was that he was a lamb that its mother rejected. He and mother picked him up and fed him by the bottle and it was like a puppy to him. I mean he'd follow him around everywhere he'd go. He took him to the office with him. The Rome paper came over and did an article and took a picture. That article there doesn't have the picture. That's just a 50th anniversary article. He was the only mayor in the state that took a lamb to work with him.

Interviewer: When was your father elected mayor?

Penfield: That's a good question. It was in the early sixties. I called my sister to get the dates. It had to have been in the 62 or 63 area. I remember he served eight years. So, from the early sixties to the late sixties. Middle sixties was his time.

Interviewer: Did he ever talk about the things he wanted to achieve for Adairsville as mayor?

Penfield: He was very business positive. He wanted to attract-. He was a progressive in that matter. In fact, the industrial park, the new one close to 75, he was instrumental in getting that built. I'm sorry, I can't tell you all the names. He also wanted to get quality. He didn't want just a bunch of junk businesses in town. I remember him telling me about the roads. I didn't think about it much then. He would talk about the curbs and sidewalks, but curbs and sidewalks would cost about as much as the roads. So, that's the reason we don't have curbs and sidewalks everywhere. Roads came first.

Interviewer: How did his service affect your life in Adairsville?

Penfield: Not a great deal. Other than the, in fact, I can't say anybody held it against me. I had enough respect that I wasn't going to show my fanny unless I had to [laughs]. Like I say, I had a couple of slips. But I recovered from both of them. What me to tell you the worst one?

Interviewer: Yes

Penfield: I can tell you that because I was 16. That would uh have been in 62. No, 63, it had to have been 63. I was driving the family car and I had one of my buddies, Sonny Parker. He was a policeman of Adairsville long after what I am about to tell you. We were out just riding around and he was a basketball player. The bus left at 6 o'clock to go out of town for a game. So we were just killing time. We were going down Hall Station Road and all of a sudden, Mike Kemp who was another buddy of ours who wasn't but 15 years old, he comes by us in a '57 Oldsmobile just flying. Turns around comes back. Now his father owned a used car lot by the highway and he had gotten this car of the lot. Beautiful four-barrel carburetor, 380 engine, da di da di da. He said to come on and take a ride. So we jump in the car. Sonny's in the center and I am on the side. He floors it and burns rubber up to the top of that hill. When we get to the crest of the hill, The

Georgia State Patrol meets us [gestures to indicate the cars were traveling in opposite directions] I look around and see the state patrol hit the shoulder...the dirt looked like a ski from a boat you know. I said, "Man, he's coming." Mike then just floor boards it. We came down Park Street, we turned on Park Street where the San Suchi Club is, ran two cars off the road on top of that. He threw that thin into a slide and right there you can see where he dug up asphalt. We hit the dirt roads thinking we could shake them. Couldn't shake them. This thing went on for 45 minutes. This was on the radio station in Cartersville. They were broadcasting to stay away from this area ya know high speed chase. The brakes got so hot there were no brakes. He would come in to where we were going to turn and throw into it and we were going to slide. We hit the ditch on the other side, he would gun it and it would straighten us up and we'd go. It took the back bumpers and bent them out. We figured out we couldn't shake them on the dirt road, we hit old 41 coming back into town and they clocked us at over 120 MPH. Came in took a left on Chestnut Street, I believe it was, went back across the railroad, and went left. We figured if we got on Thunder Road, the old logging roads, toward the mountain, we might be able to shake them there. This road going south is parallel to my home street, Main Street. And I am locked in, just holding on because whatever-. In case we hit anything. There is an S-curve and there was a farm in that S-curve. There was barbed wired fence all along there. We hit a bump and I see a wheel just flying through the air. The right front tire had sheered off. And we went into that barbed wire fence and we were taking down posts because we were traveling. We were hitting at least 80 to 100 MPH. [Made sound indicating how fast they were hitting the fence poles] and they had put up a new telephone pole. It had a lot of dirt around it and the car came up and rested on that dirt. If we were off by another 100 feet, I would not be here today. We didn't know that we had out run them. I mean, this car was made for top end. It took five minutes for the cops to get there. And when they did [laughs] there was more than one, let me tell you. The back tires were in the ditch and there was water in the ditch and they were so hot there was steam coming up everywhere. Remember, my father is also the chief of the volunteer fire department. The police were not kind with us. They were very upset. They threw us in the back of the police car. If the door had been open on the other side, I would have just gone on through. We were just sitting in the back and I look up and here comes the green Chevy pick up truck across the railroad tracks, my father. He saw all the steam and heard about the commotion and wanted to come see if there was a fire. I'll never

forget it. He parks and he was nonchalant and was like “What’s going on?” The police chief comes over and whispers something to him. I see this look come upon his face and he turns around and looks over and just turns around like “Aww, man!” Ah well, that was not the best time of my life. It was aiding and abetting is what they charged me with. We had to write a thousand worth thing on the dangers of riding with unlicensed drivers. How far in the jailhouse would you be if you did something like that? Mike had to do the same, but his daddy got really fined for letting him have that car.

Interviewer: What are your memories as a child or an adult about the depot?

Penfield: Go watching the freight...

Clip III beginning at 0:00

Penfield: I actually rode one of the passenger trains to Atlanta. But I don’t really remember. I know you asked about segregation and I don’t really remember. I asked my sister and she don’t remember any segregated waiting room either. Could have been, but don’t know. She remembered it was three dollars to go to Atlanta. That was big money back then. Big money.

Interviewer: Your father is credited for saving the depot from demolition. How did that happen?

Penfield: When the railroad abandoned the depot, now they stopped the passenger service in the 50s, but they still used it for freight well into the sixties. Now dad used it a lot to ship out the bedspreads, and when he learned of the plans he asked if they would lease it to him for use as a warehouse for space for storage of his raw materials. Which he did. But when he sold out, before he did that he and my mother were dabbling in antiques. My sister and I would call it their junk. I remember a Chippendale set they brought home in pieces. And later in life we found out what junk was worth. When he retired, he and mother used the depot for storage of all their antiques. And they opened up a little antique shop called “The General Antiques.” I don’t believe they had regular hours. You had to know when they were going to be there. They would open it up for the festival this past weekend or whenever it was and special occasions. They ran that until-. I am not actually sure when they turned it over to the city,

which turned it into a museum of course. But when their health started failing I guess about twenty years ago, roughly. Because mother passed away in 02 and dad in 03. So, I'd say about twenty years when they deeded it over. When I say deeded it over, they had one of those 99 year leases for like one hundred dollars a year. I'm not sure. So there wasn't much money involved.

Interviewer: What was the town's reaction to the depot being saved.

Penfield: Nobody cared about something like that back in those days. The one in Canton was just tore down and hauled off...gone. Some little towns like Adairsville; here in Holly Springs you know they turned it into a nice little place. At the time, I assume you are asking about how they felt then not today, but at the time nobody cared. They didn't have the vision my dad did [laughs]. By the way, there is one story that I want to tell...go ahead [inaudible].

Interviewer: You can go ahead.

Penfield: Um about the bell. When dad was building the plant it was located on city property. He bought it where the old courthouse and maintenance shed was. In fact, the front part of where dad's office is where part of that building was. They moved it over to save it. The old maintenance shed, they didn't save it because there was nothing to save. Well, they started cleaning that out and moving it. There was that bell, 32-inch bell. It was the original fire bell of Adairsville. Because dad was the chief of the volunteer fire department, they said, "Why don't you take the bell." He said, "Ok, I will." So he took the bell and he moved it to our backyard. I hated that bell growing up. The reason being is that is what my mother called me with. So, when my buddies and me were out where we weren't supposed to be they had the luxury of saying they couldn't hear the vocals. I did not have that luxury because you could hear that bell all over town. From the schoolhouse, over to the lumberyard, whatever. Well, as I said, about twenty years ago, mom and dad were preparing their will and they told us that if there was anything specific to put your name on it. I said, "I got to have the bell." Dad said, "I know you are going to put it in your garden..." because I have a garden behind my house. He said, "I want you to take it now, so I can see what you are going to do with it before I die." So there is the picture there, the article of basically what I just told you about the bell in the garden. Named the garden the Bell Garden.

Interviewer: So you were able to explore Bogle's Corner. What was Bogle's corner?

Penfield: Oh Bogle's corner. That's the corner building, was it Gilmore and uh [pause] old 41. The old timers called it the bull neck. Where they got bull neck from that, I don't know. Bogle, Ms. Bogle had a dress shop. She was the only dress shop in town from my sister's recollection from up until Ms. Keg put one in in the fifties. Ms. Bogle had the dress shop and had the living quarters upstairs. Her and her son lived there and her son was grown now, he died I forget how, but I believe he died in 92. But anyway, he was much, much older than me. He was grown. They were the only merchants who had their business and their living quarters upstairs. It was always fascinating to go by there at night and see all the lights and wonder what kind of living quarters did they have. Did they have a penthouse and there was always a wondering there as a child. When Ms. Bogle died about forty years ago, Bella her son moved away to, I since found out to Ranger, GA to live out his life. They just boarded up the place and it would sit there for forty years. My nephew was able, about a year ago to run down the heir and buy it. He asked what they wanted and they said the military uniforms and they left everything else there. That's when I was able to go in there with my camera and it was like walking into a time capsule. I remember as a little kid my sister would drag me in and I remember the display case. It's still there just as it was when I was a child. The dressing room was there. All kinds of-. If you look at the pictures I took, it was a nice little apartment up there. Not by today's standards. Real sharp little place. Bella himself was a photographer by the way. I went through photographs and he has some interesting pictures. [Begins to laugh] Most of them were portraits. And there were a few girly shots. They would be rated G today. And he had so 8 and 16mm film. I took some of the 8 and had them digitized. He was a lot better at still photography than he was at motion photography. The only one that was of any interest was a fire. A filling station fire. Best any one can figure out, it wasn't in Adairsville, it was in Acworth. Off old 41 in Acworth, really interesting. The other ones was vacation pictures in Silver Springs Florida. Now one of them was a video of a funeral [makes a face of confusion] A still shot fine, but not with the camera on the casket going back and forth. Bogle's was a unique little place.

Interview: What does your nephew plan to do with it?

Penfield: He wants to develop it. I can't really say. He bought the building next to it and he is negotiating for the other two next to that. He's trying to buy the whole block right there. I think based on what he's told me. He'll do shops and so forth and so on, but he is really still out to lunch on what to do with it.

Interviewer: Tell me about your family?

Penfield: My wife Linda Penfield. Linda Joy Penfield. She's a joy for me. My daughter is Samantha Penfield. My wife and I both say we are both north Georgia hillbillies. She was born on the opposite side of the ridge as me in Camelia and we just followed the ridge down to Atlanta where we were married. We've been working our way back to the mountains ever since. We raised Samantha in Dunwoody and Sandy Springs and when she got out of school, we bought the house up here [Holly Springs] about 24 years ago and built this building 20 years ago. Been here living the dream.

Interviewer: That's all I have. Thank You!

Penfield. I hope I was of help to you. I know Carl Hollaran was on your list and he's a bit older than me, so he maybe able to get into a little more depth than I. Maybe some of this stuff will be helpful.

Norman Penfield Interview Index

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