

ARKANSAS EXTENSION HOMEMAKERS COUNCIL

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Official transcript of:

Dorothy Williams

Member of Lonoke County Extension Homemakers Council

Original Recording made 16 December 2011

at Lonoke, Arkansas

Interviewed by:

Margaret Kinley

Member Lonoke County Extension Homemakers Council

Recorded, transcribed and edited by:

Dianna Bowen

Lonoke County Cooperative Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Agent





Dorothy Williams

ARKANSAS EXTENSION HOMEMAKERS COUNCIL

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Official transcript of:

Dorothy Williams

Member of Lonoke County Extension Homemakers Council

Original Recording made 16 December 2011

at Lonoke, Arkansas

Interviewed by:

Margaret Kinley

Member Lonoke County Extension Homemakers Council

Recorded, transcribed and edited by:

Dianna Bowen

Lonoke County Cooperative Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Agent

Arkansas Extension Homemakers Council

Oral History Program

Margaret Kinley, member of Lonoke County Extension Homemakers Council

16 December 2011

This is an audio recording of Dorothy Williams, member of Lonoke County Extension Homemakers Council. This interview is part of an Arkansas Extension Homemakers Council Oral History Program, and Dorothy is answering questions asked by Lonoke County Extension Homemakers Council member, Margaret Kinley.

Questions and comments by Margaret are in boldface type; Dorothy's responses and comments are in lightface type.

I am Margaret Kinley and I am interviewing Dorothy Williams. This interview is being held at the Extension, Lonoke County Extension Office at Lonoke, Arkansas, in Lonoke County on December 16, 2011. The audio recordings and transcript of this interview will be donated to the David and Barbara Pryor Center for Arkansas Oral and Visual History at the University of Arkansas. The recording, transcript and any other related materials will be deposited and preserved forever in the special collections department, University of Arkansas Library, Fayetteville. And the copy-write will belong solely to the University of Arkansas.

Dorothy would you please state your name and spell your name and indicate that you are willing to give the Pryor Center permission the make audio file and transcript available to others.

My name is Dorothy Williams. And you spell it D-O-R-O-T-H-Y W-I-L-L-I-A-M-S, and I give my permission for this interview.

Dorothy, this is going to be a very informal interview. We want you to share your memories of your time with the Extension Homemakers Program. Both the good times and the challenges. [Pause] What has been your association with the Extension Homemakers Program?

Well, I have held every office in—that I could and sometimes double doing it and I've done it for years.

How did you learn about the Extension Homemakers Program?

I learned about it from my sister-in-law and the neighbors that was in Missouri. And then when, here in Ward or the Butlerville area, from the neighbors, Hattie Payne and Lois Rosser, and that was the Butlerville Club, at that time was a strong club.

Very good. Um-huh. How long have you been associated with the program?

I imagine 50 years.

What was the first club that you were associated with, and do you remember what year?

That would have to be about 1969 and that was in Knob Noster, Missouri.

Do you have any special memories of that first club or even of the first meeting?

Well, yes. I have, I—they always wanted to have a program. They wanted me to do the devotional to read from the Bible, I was so scared I couldn't even read. Then, but I went anyhow. Then, you know, they just overlooked me. But I took my little boy and he enjoyed goin' [going], too. And, so I enjoyed goin'. I went to Windsor, Missouri. My sister-in-law—she was president of the club, so I went with her all the time. Then we had a neighborhood club, but the men also belonged. That was a in Knob Noster. And they all seemed to enjoy it because we—we just learned all kinds of things from each other at that time. So, that was about it. Then I come ta, come ta Arkansas in 19, I mean it was 1965, and I been here about 40, 46 years. I lived in Cabot about seven years, then I moved out to the Butlerville area. It's a Ward address and from then on that's when I joined the Extension Club, the Butlerville Extension Club at that time.

Are you still a member?

Yes, I am.

And what club, and what county and what district?

I am. It's Lonoke County. And it's Butlerville Extension Club; it's a Ward address. And I don't know what district it is. Is it south [*mumble*]. The Delta District.

Why did you join?

It was something to do that I thought I could learn something because I was a young homemaker, and everybody said that I would have a good time and learn something. And I really did. 'Cause [Because], I remember I was going to make something out of an inner tube. It was like a toy and I thought it looked pretty good, but it really wasn't. [*Laughs*] But, I tried that and I learned different things to cook. And I learned how to—I lived in the turkey area, where they had raised turkeys and so I learned everything about turkeys there could be. I learned how to dress turkeys. I learned—we, we ate turkey eggs because they were—they had to grade them, you know—if they didn't pass the grade, just a little too small, or something. Well, I had all the turkey eggs we could use and they were excellent in making pies and cakes and everything. So, I learned a lot.

Well, why have you continued your membership?

Oh, I've enjoyed it. I enjoyed meeting with everybody and trying to learn new things. I'm not as active as I used to be. But, I did learn a lot of stuff.

You have listed the offices that you've have held. What are some of the committees you've chaired and are there any other special responsibilities that you've held?

Yes, I was public relations, and we had the Christmas in July. And I tried to organize and put things in the paper and help with that. And we, we did things at the fair. The new building that we have, well, its not new anymore. It was—when I was president that time is when we had—we gave the money that we collected towards this building. And we were the ones at that time that started, that did it. And so, I was with that and it was real good.

Have you attended state Council meetings. And, if you have, do you have any special remembrances of those meetings?

Yes. I've attended a lot of them. Until the last few years where I can't walk so

good anymore. But, I attended about—I went to Fayetteville. I've been to Searcy, Hot Springs Arkadelphia, and Russellville. I've been to all—many of them.

Great. How do you feel that, that Home Extension has touched your life?

It really has. I have more self-confidence since I've gone through all of this, with holding offices and everything. At first I couldn't talk at all, but now I can. And I think it's due to belonging to the clubs that helped.

What has been your favorite event or activity?

Well, we did the programs. I write and do skits and I enjoy doing that. And, we did the Grapettes and we'd, we'd act, we'd go things about the Extension Clubs that we would want people to join and get interested in it. And we had a lot of luck doing that. We'd go to other, other Extension places. We went to around Arkadelphia, I think, I—even churches would use our costumes and everything. We had a real good time with that. And also had other programs. I had the one with the horse that couldn't see. And then we went to, I think it was Russellville. And Emilea [Rooney] was the girl that did the, she was a leader. She had a pompom; she was a cheerleader—her and Mottie Robinson. And that was really, I thought that was awful cute. Them doin' [doing] that. But we did all kinds of. I enjoyed writing and doing things. I enjoyed writing the main thing.

Have you had a least favorite event or activity?

Oh, I don't know. I've enjoy them all. I enjoyed going to the state meetings. We had different speakers. And I really did, I enjoyed. And we used to have dorm parties where we went. And so, we were supposed to put on a show, Lonoke County, so I did what the EHC members do besides being a EHC member. And that turned out to be pretty good and everybody wanted a copy of it.

Right. What changes have you experienced throughout the 50 years that you've belonged to the Extension Club?

Well, that's like me, everybody's has got older and yet there's new members coming in. And when you try to get somebody to join, they don't want to or

they, as I said, they're workin' [working]. But I still try.

Good. Has the Extension Club taught you anything about people?

Yes, it has. That there's a lot of good people. Just to know the people—everyone that's in the Extension Club. To meet regularly and get acquainted with everyone. I enjoy that.

Are there any other memories or experiences that you would like to share?

Oh, I don't know. I remember one time, the—I think that's when, I was trying to think—the Home Economist that was here. She was just her first day here. And the fair was going to start. That was Ann Behnke and the police were here, they had prisoners here. They were on horseback and they said for us to be careful. And it was scary. They were out there trying to clean everything up and we were scared to death. I remember that mostly.

Dorothy, we thank you for all your contributions to the Extension Homemakers Club. And we thank you for sharing these memories today.

The Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.