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MF215 Guide to Farming Deer Foot Farm

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Guide to Farming Deer Foot Farm

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Northeast Archives of Folklore and Oral History

5729 Raymond H. Fogler Library

University of Maine

Orono, ME 04469-5729

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Summary Information

Repository:	Northeast Archives of Folklore and Oral History
Creator:	Roberts, Chris
Source:	Mink, Keith B.
Source:	Mink, Grace
Source:	Mink-Roberts, Sue Ellen
Source:	Gushee, Natalie Irene (Mink)
Title:	Guide to Farming Deer Foot Farm
ID:	MF215
Date [inclusive]:	1930-2003
Physical Description:	1 box Box contains five audio cassettes.
Language of the Material:	English .
Material Specific Details:	Audio files are the primary source material. Transcriptions are the transcriber's best effort to convert audio to text, but should be considered secondary to the audio.

Preferred Citation

Author last name, Author first name. Year. NA[four digit unique series identification number] MF215 NAFOH. Raymond H. Fogler Library Special Collections Department, University of Maine, Orono, Maine.

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Scope and Contents

Oral history of the multi-generational Johnson-Mink Farm, later known as Mink Dairy Farm, then Deer Foot Farm, Appleton, Maine. Chris Roberts interviews his grandparents Keith and Grace Mink, his mother Sue Ellen Mink-Roberts, and great-aunt Natalie Irene (Mink) Gushee

about the family farm and its operation through the first three generations of ownership. The property was acquired in 1897 and became a truck farm producing produce, eggs, and dairy.

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Arrangement

NA4268 Keith Burton Mink and Grace (Grinnell) Mink, interviewed by Chris Roberts at Deer Foot Farm, Appleton, Maine, Monday, March 10, 2003. Chris Roberts is the Minks' grandson. Keith Mink was born April 6, 1922, at Deer Foot Farm, and was 80-years-old at the time of this recording. Mink (1922-2010), a World War II Veteran, lived on the farm his entire life except the period he was in the service. The farm was multi-generational with Mink growing up with his maternal grandparents, Lyndon M. (1869-1933) and Nelle E. (Mitchell) Johnson (1870-1937), and parents, Ivan A. Mink and Irene L. (Johnson) Mink, living in the same farmhouse. Keith Mink discusses the history of the Johnson-Mink Farm (aka Deer Foot Farm), his grandmother and mother both working on and off the farm, Lyndon Johnson keeping cattle for beef, dairy cows, veal calves, and chickens for eggs. Irene (Johnson) Mink growing fruits (strawberries & raspberries) and vegetables (potatoes & beans) and making butter, taking meat and produce to Rockland to ship out on "the Boston boat" or by driving 30-miles to sell to stores in Augusta, driving his grandmother to Augusta in the Essex [produced by Essex Motor Company, 1918-1922] at age 9 and receiving his first driver's license at age 14, getting electricity for the first time when he was 9-years-old [1931], mending fences, milking, cutting wood for lumber, haying using a horse rake, family genealogy, his grandfather dying of cancer on the farm, funerary practices, house fires, and dividing up family property. Both Mink and Grace discuss the importance of him being the first male child born in his generation of the family and his mother teaching school for seven years before his younger brother, Lyndon A., was born. Mink speaks about the Depression era, hiring farm hands to help with potatoes and beans, his father starting a milk route in Rockland to earn 8-cents per quart of milk instead of the 2-cents per quart offered by the creamery in Union, selling milk, cream, butter, and eggs to restaurants and stores in Rockland during the Depression, harvesting ice and using the ice house to cool down the milk, how his mother was able to feed children a hot lunch in a one-room schoolhouse, how his paternal grandfather Ali Mink never played fiddle again after the death of his son Neal, how Mink himself had "no choice" but to be a farmer, and the differences between "today" vs. "years ago." RESTRICTED. No release on file. No transcript. Recordings: mfc_na4268_t113_02_01.mp3, mfc_na4268_t113_02_02.mp3, mfc_na4268_t113_05_01.mp3, mfc_na4268_t113_05_02.mp3. [t113_02A&B, t113_05A&B] Time: 03:12:20.

NA4429 Natalie "Nat" Irene (Mink) Gushee, interviewed by Chris Roberts at her home on Sennebec Pond in Appleton, Maine, March 18, 2003. Roberts interviews his "Great Aunt Nat," age 82 (born May 3, 1920, at the Johnson-Mink Farm aka Deer Foot Farm) about growing up on family farm and living in Appleton. Gushee reviews the family genealogy, her single aunts and uncles, family entertainments, her father's disappointment that she was a girl and the importance of her brother Keith being born the first male child of his generation of the family making him the favorite, how her life changed following the death of her grandmother,

Ivan Mink working himself to death, Irene's filing for hardship status with the government in order for Keith to be discharged from duty in the Korean War and return to work the farm. Nat describes her mother's controlling nature and attitude toward her children and the farm and the impact of Irene's behavior on her children. She explains that she knew at a young age who she would marry, buying and moving to the George Ames farm for \$2,300 and scraping by in the first years of marriage, eventually having nearly 700 acres of land including a gravel pit, raising squash, dried beans, blueberries, and wood, selling off the dairy herd and poultry, raising, processing and selling blueberries, her fear about the associated costs of freezing the crop, selling out when her husband, Carlton, was diagnosed with cancer. She speaks about her grandmother's intelligence and business savvy, but the recorder is stopped during discussion of specific land acquisitions. She discusses changes that took place following the Korean War, going to nursing school and earning her LPN following her husband's suicide, traveling internationally and her preference for traveling alone. She talks about her children, getting older, planning for home healthcare as she gets older. RESTRICTED. No release on file. No transcript. Recording: mfc_na4429_113_03_01.mp3 & mfc_na4429_113_03_02.mp3. [t113_03A&B] Time: 01:19:19.

NA3960 Sue Ellen Mink Roberts, interviewed by Chris Roberts at her home in South Portland, Maine on March 13, 2003. Sue Ellen, Chris Roberts' mother, recounts her childhood growing up on the Johnson-Mink Farm, also known as the Mink Farm during the 1950s. She reviews a brief genealogy and leaving home in 1973 when she married; Ivan Mink's illnesses that create cognitive impairment that transitioned into dementia; her grandmother, Irene L. (Johnson) Mink, providing at home healthcare for a number of elderly family members as well as working the farm; her grandmother's social and business life; her father, Keith Mink, telling her more about his mother's influence on him than his father's influence; Irene Johnson being more the head of the household than her husband; Keith Mink's relationship with his mother and wanting to please her, consulting with his mother regarding farm business; little knowledge of her grandmother prior to her marriage or why Irene stayed on the farm; all of Lyndon Johnson's daughters becoming teachers; Irene controlling the farm's money; Irene leaving the farm in 1955 to move into Herb Mitchell's property to care for both her husband, Ivan, and cousin, Herb, both of whom had dementia; Irene's being well-read and well-informed about current events. Sue Ellen describes the farm house buildings; where her childhood swings were located; the produce and livestock raised on the farm during her father's childhood; her uncle Lyndon taking over the chicken barn following Irene's departure from the farm; what Keith raised for livestock and produce; her mother caring for the vegetable garden for family use; putting up food for winter; her emotional connection to the farm; the layout of the farm and outbuildings when she was a child; playing on the farm as a child; changes her father made to the farm; the emotional impact of a large rock being removed from the landscape by an aunt, as well as the impact of losing all the elm trees from Dutch elm disease; dreaming about the farm as it was; playing in the snow as a child; playing in the "fat people cemetery" and how it got its name; and her parents' cottage on the lake; and Appleton Ridge. She discusses her sentimental perspective of the farm and how it was impacted by family dynamics following the death of the family matriarch and how being pushed by their mother to work tirelessly impacted the Mink siblings, their lives, and relationships. RESTRICTED. No release on file. No transcript. Recording: mfc_na4435_113_04_01.mp3, mfc_na4435_113_04_02.mp3, mfc_na4435_113_06_01.mp3, and mfc_na4435_113_06_02.mp3 [t113_04A&B and t113_06A&B]. Time: 02:23:10.

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Administrative Information

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Controlled Access Headings

- Folklore
- Oral histories
- Appleton (Me.)
- Agriculture -- Maine
- Dairy farming -- Maine
- Deer Foot Farm (Appleton (Me.))
- Mink, Keith B.
- Mink, Grace
- Mink-Roberts, Sue Ellen
- Gushee, Natalie Irene (Mink)

- Johnson, Lyndon M., 1869-1933
- Johnson, Nellie E. (Mitchell)
- Mink, Ivan A.
- Mink, Irene L. (Johnson)

Collection Inventory

MF 215, Collection Summary

Title/Description	Instances
MF 215, Collection Summary, undated Digital Object: MF 215, Collection Summary	Text MF 215

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Keith Burton Mink and Grace (Grinnell) Mink, interviewed by Chris Roberts

Creator: Roberts, Chris

Source: Mink, Keith B.

Abstract: NA4268 Keith Burton Mink and Grace (Grinnell) Mink, interviewed by Chris Roberts at Deer Foot Farm, Appleton, Maine, Monday, March 10, 2003. Chris Roberts is the Minks' grandson. Keith Mink was born April 6, 1922, at Deer Foot Farm, and was 80-years-old at the time of this recording. Mink (1922-2010), a World War II Veteran, lived on the farm his entire life except the period he was in the service. The farm was multi-generational with Mink growing up with his maternal grandparents, Lyndon M. (1869-1933) and Nelle E. (Mitchell) Johnson (1870-1937), and parents, Ivan A. Mink and Irene L. (Johnson) Mink, living in the same farmhouse. Keith Mink discusses the history of the Johnson-Mink Farm (aka Deer Foot Farm), his grandmother and mother both working on and off the farm, Lyndon Johnson keeping cattle for beef, dairy cows, veal calves, and chickens for eggs. Irene (Johnson) Mink growing fruits (strawberries & raspberries) and vegetables (potatoes & beans) and making butter, taking meat and produce to Rockland to ship out on "the Boston boat" or by driving 30-miles to sell to stores in Augusta, driving his grandmother to Augusta in the Essex [produced by Essex Motor Company, 1918-1922] at age 9 and receiving his first driver's license at age 14, getting electricity for the first time when he was 9-years-old [1931], mending fences, milking, cutting wood for lumber, haying using a horse rake, family genealogy, his grandfather dying of cancer on the farm, funerary practices, house fires, and dividing up family property. Both Mink and Grace discuss the importance of him being the first male child born in his generation of the family and his mother teaching school for seven years before his younger brother, Lyndon A., was born. Mink speaks about the Depression era, hiring farm hands to help with potatoes and beans, his father starting a milk route in Rockland to earn 8-cents per quart of milk instead of the 2-cents per quart offered by the creamery in Union, selling milk, cream, butter, and eggs to restaurants and stores in Rockland during the Depression, harvesting ice and using the ice house to cool down the milk, how his mother was able to feed children a hot lunch in a one-room schoolhouse, how his paternal grandfather Ali Mink never played fiddle again after the death of his son Neal, how Mink himself had "no choice" but to be a farmer, and the differences between "today" vs. "years ago." RESTRICTED. No release on file. No transcript. Recordings: mfc_na4268_t113_02_01.mp3, mfc_na4268_t113_02_02.mp3, mfc_na4268_t113_05_01.mp3, mfc_na4268_t113_05_02.mp3. [t113_02A&B, t113_05A&B] Time: 03:12:20.

Controlled Access Headings:

- Oral history
- Dairy farming -- Maine
- Appleton (Me.)
- Mink, Keith B.
- Deer Foot Farm (Appleton (Me.))
- Johnson, Lyndon M., 1869-1933
- Johnson, Nelle E. (Mitchell), 1870-1937
- Mink, Ivan A.
- Mink, Irene L. (Johnson)

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Natalie "Nat" Irene (Mink) Gushee, interviewed by Chris Roberts

Source: Roberts, Chris

Source: Gushee, Natalie Irene (Mink)

Abstract: NA4429 Natalie "Nat" Irene (Mink) Gushee, interviewed by Chris Roberts at her home on Sennebec Pond in Appleton, Maine, March 18, 2003. Roberts interviews his "Great Aunt Nat," age 82 (born May 3, 1920, at the Johnson-Mink Farm aka Deer Foot Farm) about growing up on family farm and living in Appleton. Gushee reviews the family genealogy, her single aunts and uncles, family entertainments, her father's disappointment that she was a girl and the importance of her brother Keith being born the first male child of his generation of the family making him the favorite, how her life changed following the death of her grandmother, Ivan Mink working himself to death, Irene's filing for hardship status with the government in order for Keith to be discharged from duty in the Korean War and return to work the farm. Nat describes her mother's controlling nature and attitude toward her children and the farm and the impact of Irene's behavior on her children. She explains that she knew at a young age who she would marry, buying and moving to the George Ames farm for \$2,300 and scraping by in the first years of marriage, eventually having nearly 700 acres of land including a gravel pit, raising squash, dried beans, blueberries, and wood, selling off the dairy herd and poultry, raising, processing and selling blueberries, her fear about the associated costs of freezing the crop, selling out when her husband, Carlton, was diagnosed with cancer. She speaks about her grandmother's intelligence and business savvy, but the recorder is stopped during discussion of specific land acquisitions. She discusses changes that took place following the Korean War, going to nursing school and earning her LPN following her husband's suicide, traveling internationally and her preference for traveling alone. She talks about her children, getting older, planning for home healthcare as she gets older. RESTRICTED. No release on file. No transcript. Recording: mfc_na4429_113_03_01.mp3 & mfc_na4429_113_03_02.mp3. [t113_03A&B] Time: 01:19:19.

Controlled Access Headings:

- Oral history
- Dairy farming -- Maine
- Rural women -- Maine -- Social Life and Customs
- Women -- Employment -- Maine -- History -- 20th century
- Roberts, Chris
- Gushee, Natalie Irene (Mink)
- Deer Foot Farm (Appleton (Me.))
- Mink, Ivan A.
- Mink, Irene L. (Johnson)

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Sue Ellen Mink Roberts, interviewed by Chris Roberts

Creator: Roberts, Chris

Source: Mink-Roberts, Sue Ellen

Abstract: NA3960 Sue Ellen Mink Roberts, interviewed by Chris Roberts at her home in South Portland, Maine on March 13, 2003. Sue Ellen, Chris Roberts' mother, recounts her childhood growing up on the Johnson-Mink Farm, also known as the Mink Farm during the 1950s. She reviews a brief genealogy and leaving home in 1973 when she married; Ivan Mink's illnesses that create cognitive impairment that transitioned into dementia; her grandmother, Irene L. (Johnson) Mink, providing at home healthcare for a number of elderly family members as well as working the farm; her grandmother's social and business life; her father, Keith Mink, telling her more about his mother's influence on him than his father's influence; Irene Johnson being more the head of the household than her husband; Keith Mink's relationship with his mother and wanting to please her, consulting with his mother regarding farm business; little knowledge of her grandmother prior to her marriage or why Irene stayed on the farm; all of Lyndon Johnson's daughters becoming teachers; Irene controlling the farm's money; Irene leaving the farm in 1955 to move into Herb Mitchell's property to care for both her husband, Ivan, and cousin, Herb, both of whom had dementia; Irene's being well-read and well-informed about current events. Sue Ellen describes the farm house buildings; where her childhood swings were located; the produce and livestock raised on the farm during her father's childhood; her uncle Lyndon taking over the chicken barn following Irene's departure from the farm; what Keith raised for livestock and produce; her mother caring for the vegetable garden for family use; putting up food for winter; her emotional connection to the farm; the layout of the farm and outbuildings when she was a child; playing on the farm as a child; changes her father made to the farm; the emotional impact of a large rock being removed from the landscape by an aunt, as well as the impact of losing all the elm trees from Dutch elm disease; dreaming about the farm as it was; playing in the snow as a child; playing in the "fat people cemetery" and how it got its name; and her parents' cottage on the lake; and Appleton Ridge. She discusses her sentimental perspective of the farm and how it was impacted by family dynamics following the death of the family matriarch and how being pushed by their mother to work tirelessly impacted the Mink siblings, their lives, and relationships. RESTRICTED. No release on file. No transcript. Recording: mfc_na4435_113_04_01.mp3, mfc_na4435_113_04_02.mp3, mfc_na4435_113_06_01.mp3, and mfc_na4435_113_06_02.mp3 [t113_04A&B and t113_06A&B]. Time: 02:23:10.

Controlled Access Headings:

- Oral history
- Appleton (Me.)
- Dairy farming -- Maine
- Family life
- Mink-Roberts, Sue Ellen
- Deer Foot Farm (Appleton (Me.))
- Mink, Ivan A.
- Mink, Irene L. (Johnson)
- Mink, Keith B.

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