

Frank: My name is Frank Ventrosco.

Interviewers: Well, Frank, tell me a little bit about your life. What did you do? I know you were photographer, right?

Frank: Yeah.

Interviewers: You are a photographer.

Frank: I went to five years of school over at Allegheny Campus for it. In 2001 I stopped smoking and I said, well, if I got \$6 for two packs of cigarettes a day, I got \$6 or \$7 for a box of film that last me a week. So I quit. And I saved all that money up that year. And I got a camera and all the equipment and went to school. I'm a happy man. I'm still living. I'm not dead from smoking them cigarettes.

Interviewers: How did you get interested in photography?

Frank: My wife was dying. She...She had a stomach operation. Well, I...I don't know. Angel came down and saved my life I think. She was dying from a stomach operation of Allegheny Hospital. And I was depressed and I said "I can't be depressed for all my life with this problem." So for some reason I went to school. Everybody said, "Frank going to school. Come on. [Laughs] Not Frank." Well I show everybody. I showed everybody up.

Interviewers: So do you have a disability?

Frank: Yeah.

Interviewers: Do you mind if I ask you what it is?

Frank: They never told me.

Interviewers: What do you mean?

Frank: I was tested out. I don't know what they said to me at the time, you know. I didn't pay too much attention. They probably told my wife, but I don't know. They did tell me I got...got a learning disability.

Interviewers: Okay.

Frank: Everybody got problems. I got...I got problems with my legs.

Interviewers: And are you on medication?

Frank: Yeah.

Interviewers: Yeah. So how long has that been? A long time or just recently?

Frank: A long time.

Interviewers: And did that affect what you did in throughout your life or are you just... ?

Frank: I just go by day by day.

Interviewers: You went to regular school.

Frank: Yeah. I dropped out when I was 18. I got a job working for the city.

Interviewers: What did you do there?

Frank: Parks. I was landscaping all my life. All the way up to the Gulf War, well 1990... '72 I started working in the cemetery. In '81 I broke my leg in the cemetery and my legs got bad after that. 800 pound headstone went on me.

Interviewers: What were you doing?

Frank: We was moving a headstone. We lost the balance on it. I got pinned underneath the stone. Almost died.

Interviewers: Did you? What did it...I mean it what, smashed you leg or?

Frank: Um hmm

Interviewers: Day by day. Yeah. Well what was so...tell me what was interesting about your life.

Frank: What do you want to know?

Interviewers: I want to know everything.

Frank: I feel like I'm in a police department.

Interviewers: No. Tell me some of the a...You went to regular school.

Frank: Yeah. I dropped out when I was 18. I got a job working for the city.

Interviewers: What did you do there?

Frank: Parks.

Interviewers: Oh.

Frank: And I was landscaping all my life. All the way up to the Gulf War, well 1990... '72 I started working in the cemetery. In '81 I broke my leg in the cemetery and my legs got bad after that. An 800 pound headstone went on me.

Interviewers: What were you doing?

Frank: We was moving a headstone. We lost the balance on it. I got pinned underneath the stone. Almost died.

Okay so that happened so then you couldn't work...do that kind of work anymore with your legs?

Frank: No.

Interviewers: So then what did you do?

Frank: Got on disability.

Interviewers: But then you eventually you went to CCAC.

Frank: Um hmm.

Interviewers: So you were married.

Frank: Yeah. I was married three times. The first marriage, I was married. My son got killed. He got shot to death. It was in the news. That happened about 12 years ago. The second marriage, my son is a fireman out at Sharpsburg right now. A volunteer fireman. And he's a chef.

Interviewers: So, Frank, what...in terms of your life, like, has it turned out the way you hoped it would, or...?

Frank: I wish I was rich.

Interviewers: Don't we all.

Interviewers: Where do you see, you know, your life going? Do you think you'll keep going with photography. Is that something you're...

Frank: I love it. I wish I...I wish I did it back in the 60s.

Interviewers: Yeah.

Frank: To shoot pictures of hippies and a (? - 0:08:42) back in them days. I could have be famous now like other people are.

Interviewers: Frank, is there anything, like, we're doing this CD for people to hear and to learn about people's lives in this area. Is there anything you'd really like to say?

Frank: I can't think of nothing.

Interviewers: Got any words of wisdom?

Frank: Let it be. [Laughs]

Interviewers: I don't know. You're a comedian. I don't know. You missed your calling. Oh, my. Oh, my. Beatles.