

They were good people, and this was sad news. She felt fortunate that she had the opportunity to meet them and preserve their memories in her research.

**Finding Subjects.** The names of elderly people who lived on the land that is now Redstone Arsenal were obtained in a number of ways. One was by asking the person being interviewed if he or she could provide the name and telephone number of someone else who had lived on the arsenal land. This was not always productive. The person who agreed to be interviewed was not always sure that his or her friends or relatives would want to have someone intrude in their lives and didn't want to be the one who gave out names and telephone numbers. If the subject being interviewed did mention a friend or relative but seemed hesitant to give contact information, the subject was asked if he or she would call the person, explain the research, and discuss the possibility of talking with the researcher. The researcher never pressed a subject, and always suggested the phone call be made later so that the subject could speak privately and freely. This did result in a few additional interviews.

One method of finding people to interview was telling whomever she knew that she was endeavoring to write about the old communities that had been on arsenal land, and she wanted to meet elderly people who had lived there. Some arsenal employees suggested names of other arsenal employees who might know someone. Following up these leads resulted in a few interviews. When the researcher explained her plight to a woman she always talked with when she visited the Humane Society of Greater Huntsville, the woman said she herself had lived on the arsenal and consented to be interviewed. When the researcher was waiting for a prolonged period of time in a doctor's office waiting room, she struck up a conversation with others who were waiting, and this resulted in another interview. Before discussing her research with strangers, she first ascertained, in a conversational manner, if the person or persons were originally from Huntsville. If not, the researcher did not pursue the topic further.

It became apparent that the people with whom the researcher had talked were talking with others. The researcher received a number of telephone calls from people who were interested in the fact she was writing about the former communities and the people who lived in them. A few people who called knew from limited oral history and records research that their family had lived "on the arsenal" back in the 1800's; they called to seek information. One person called and asked the researcher to speak about her work at the local meeting of a Black historical society. The researcher agreed, asking that the public announcement of the meeting include a statement that the researcher wanted to meet residents of the pre-arsenal communities on RSA. Three calls were received from people whose families had owned land on what is now the arsenal and had been forced to sell to the War Department in 1941. They were interested in learning more about what the researcher was doing, and they agreed to meet with her; this resulted in interviews.

The Huntsville Madison County Public Library was searched for materials relating to the pre-arsenal communities. This included newspaper articles. Issues dating back to over twenty years ago of both *The Huntsville Times* and *The Redstone Rocket* contained interviews that had been conducted with former residents of Pond Beat and Mullins Flat