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The screenshot shows a webpage for Clayton Homes, a brand under AARP. The main article is titled "Be Confident Before Your Next Home Purchase" and features three testimonials from retirees. The first testimonial, by Clayton Homes (Paid Content), describes how an off-site built home offers freedom and lower expenses. The second testimonial, by Mesha and Jerome from Maplesville, Alabama, shares their experience with a custom-built home. The third testimonial, by Darla and Terry from Mexico Beach, Florida, discusses the benefits of a modular home. The article concludes with a call to action to visit ClaytonHomes.com.

Be Confident Before Your Next Home Purchase

3 retirees share their story to finding a new manufactured home with just the right fit
by Clayton Homes (Paid Content)

Downsizing in retirement can mean more freedom, from fewer chores to fewer expenses. An off-site built or manufactured home, so called because it's built in a facility and then transported and assembled on-site, may meet that need.

Many retirees have reached the same conclusion. According to the Manufactured Housing Institute's (MHI), as of 2018 more than 22 million people in America live in manufactured housing. Similarly, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau reports that approximately 32% of manufactured housing households are headed by a retiree.

Off-site built homes make sense for older homeowners for a number of reasons, including affordability, quality, style, and the potential for lower utility costs. These couples share how their homes inspired them.

Country dreams come true

Mesha and Jerome, from Maplesville, Alabama, live in a subdivision near the city. They had grown tired of commuting to the popular wedding and event venue they own on the family's 200-acre property. When Mesha saw one of Clayton's farmhouse floor plans, she knew the house had the rustic Southern charm that would blend in with the rest of their property, including the converted airplane hangar that has been the site of many celebrations.

"I didn't look at any other homes, I told Jerome I wanted the farmhouse," she says.

It took the couple only four months to have their new home built and move-in ready. Home with customized features such as a stone fireplace in the living room, a wood beam in the master bedroom, and a permanent brick foundation.

When they're not busy planning events and entertaining their grandchildren, the couple watch the sunset on their front porch each morning, and end every evening watching the sunset from their back porch.

The storm that passed them by

Couple Darla and Terry standing in front of their manufactured home

For Darla and Terry, of Mexico Beach, Florida, a modular home allowed them to speed up the home-building process while still achieving the quality they sought.

After researching the nuts and bolts — literally — of how these homes are constructed, the couple was confident that their new floor plan would offer all the design features and amenities they wanted, all while saving more money when compared to traditional site-built housing.

In October 2018, Hurricane Michael moved toward the panhandle of Florida, including Mexico Beach. The couple evacuated to Alabama before the storm made landfall as a Category 4 hurricane. When they returned two days later, their home had suffered only little damage, though many of their neighbors' homes weren't so lucky.

Darla and Terry credit the quality construction, workmanship, and engineering for the reason their home is still standing today.

Home on the range

Couple Darla and Harold standing in the kitchen of their manufactured home

Darla and Harold purchased their first manufactured home in 1999, to be close to Harold's mother. They lived in the home for 23 years, but after Harold's mother passed away in 2016, the couple sought their next step in life. They decided to stay on their family farm, but wanted a new home, situated on a beautiful ridge on their property overlooking the Smoky Mountains. Building a site-built home would mean eliminating features they wanted in order to meet their budget. A new off-site built home was the answer.

The couple worked with a Clayton home consultant to customize their new home, selecting such features as a raised roof, which gave them nine-foot ceilings in the middle of the home and a dual-tiered, coffered tray ceiling in the kitchen.

"The net a cove," Darla says. "But if I was, I would cry over this kitchen."

Clayton has home options in a variety of sizes and price points.

Click here to visit ClaytonHomes.com to get started exploring homes today.