

**Kennesaw State University
Department of History and Philosophy
Summer Hill Oral History Project**

Interview with: Weldon Dudley
Interviewed by: Ava A.W:
Location: Mr. W.D's home at 99 Shaw St, Kingston, Georgia
Date: May 2, 2003
Transcribed by: Susan Estep
Edited by: Melissa Massey, LeeAnn Lands

THE FOLLOWING ORAL HISTORY HAS BEEN EDITED BUT MAY STILL CONTAIN ERRORS DUE TO TRANSCRIPTIONIST'S LACK OF FAMILIARITY WITH PARTICULAR PLACES OR PEOPLE. USERS ARE ADVISED TO LISTEN TO THE ORAL HISTORY RECORDINGS IF A NAME IS IN QUESTION.

Biography: Mr. Weldon Dudley was born in Cartersville on April 20, 1950. He had two brothers and two sisters. Before he attended Berea College in Berea, Kentucky, Mr. Dudley worked at Lewis Carpet, a carpet manufacturing company.

Keywords: Elliot Spencer, Aubrey Street, Jones Street, Mt. Zion Church, Weldon Duree Dudley, CH Leechman Company, Erwin Street, Rosetta Conner, Richmond, Moore Street, Crooked Street-Weaver Street, Bartow Street, Moon Street-M.L. King, Straight Street, Ralph Lowe, Chemical Products, Union Carbide-Viskins, Slab Stadium, Brotherhood Lodge, Delicacy Shop, Blue Room, Baker Street, Mull Street, Shanoah Street, American Legion, Roosevelt Street, Nobel Hill, Dublin Street, Mechanicsville, West Main Street, Railroad Street, Miller Store, Harold Parks, Wall Street, John Morgan, Ray Hill, Horace Lee Jones, New Frontiers, Haytown, Lockheed Martin, Fannie Mae Sidney, William Roberson, Charles "Buzz" Crane, Marilyn Long, Lewis and Blanche Miller, Carl Wilkins, Justice Benham, George Washington Carver Park, Arthur Carter Bishop, Sugar Valley, The Mission, Baxter Roberson, Elder Jones, Adairsville, The Masons, Reverend Jeffrey Milner, Reverend Ralph Mitchell, Lay Leaders, Beatrice Morgan, Ralph Lowe, Rosetta Strickland, Maggie Holland, Bessie Shell, Joe Weems, Nancy Beasley, Lester Maddox, Deborah Livsey, Professor Morgan, West End, Morehouse College, Spelman College.

(Tape 1, Side A)

[MAP DISCUSSION]

W.D: This was a two-story building and it had a gym in it, a classroom, I'm not sure what was downstairs.

A.W: So this boy scout thing was a separate thing?

W.D: Yes.

A.W: Now, was that where they used to have some activities that I've heard about where they would—some . . . ?

W.D: Sell hot dogs?

A.W: Yes.

W.D: It was Bessie, I think was the first to sell it where all the boy scouts met. We called her Ms. Bessie. And then high school was out and then it was down the hill, the football field was.

A.W: Is that where the Stone Stadium stairs that they built kind of rock by rock?

W.D: Yeah, they were in between, it was kind of like right there, you'd come out of the front of the school and then it was a little, there was a refreshment stand right, it was close to here. It was right up on the football field. You've probably seen a lot of this already.

A.W: That's okay. I wanted your perspective of it too.

W.D: The stairs kind of went from, a long set of steps; they're gone—they may be still there—but it kind of took you up to the upper level, to this level, this went down hill and that was just a football field and then the high school was kind of like that. There was a good bit of distance between them but not much. And it goes . . . there's the gym right here.

A.W: So is that the old gym?

W.D: This is the new one.

A.W: The new gym.

W.D: That's the old one.

A.W: Okay.

W.D: This is where I went to school, let's see, that's where I went to school, I went originally and I went from first to fourth, I was actually in the fourth grade—one, two—seventh grade. It was part of, we started maybe four or five months and then we moved out to here. And then this right here is the office above the football field. And then we had a long press box, I guess; we didn't call it that, I don't know what we called it.

A.W: Yeah, I know what you're talking about, kind of at the stop of the stairs.

W.D: Yeah. Mr. Spencer was the one. Elliot Spencer was the announcer.

A.W: Elliot Spencer, okay.

W.D: Hm-hm. He's deceased now but he was a teacher.

A.W: He was a teacher too?

W.D: Hm-hm. He just died a few years ago. So, and then from there our church steps were right there. Morgan home is...

A.W: Do you know if their house is still standing?

W.D: Yeah.

A.W: It is? Is it a two-story house? White?

W.D: Yes.

A.W: On Jones Street.

W.D: Yes.

A.W: I've tried—I've heard that it's the two-story white house on Jones Street but I've been down there three times and I don't know why I can't find it.

W.D: This is Aubrey Street going down, this is Jones Street.

A.W: Is that the church right there? Mt. Zion?

W.D: Yeah.

A.W: Okay.

W.D: And on that one corner of Aubrey and Jones is the house he was in. That street goes .

A.W: So it's on the corner?

W.D: The top of the hill on the corner.

A.W: Okay. I don't know how I missed that.

W.D: This is 147.

FORMAL INTERVIEW BEGINS

A.W: Look's good. We'll come back to it in a little bit but I'm going to ask you some questions if you remember anything else that you want to add on there if you'll add it in the blue pen so there's a contrast in that. First thing is that we have to make sure that we're actually recording, okay, I can hear good. All right, basically can you state your full name for me please.

W.D: Weldon Duree W.D.

A.W: Okay, and were you born in Cartersville?

W.D: I was born in Cartersville in 1950, April 20.

A.W: April 20, you're birthday just passed there.

W.D: Sure. Easter Sunday.

A.W: Easter Sunday. You didn't get to take away from your birthday celebration because of Easter, did you?

W.D: Oh no! Best birthday I've ever had!

A.W: Well, my birthday is in November so my parents used to do that; "oh this is partly your birthday-Christmas!" [laughter]

W.D: My grandma was like that.

A.W: Do you have any siblings?

W.D: Two daughters, Inga who is now thirty-three and Tisha who is twenty-six.

A.W: Who else did your household consist of?

W.D: When I was in school?

A.W: Yes, when you lived in Summer Hill.

W.D: Wait a minute, you asked me siblings.

A.W: Siblings, yes.

W.D: Cross that out. Siblings, I had two brothers and two sisters. I'm sorry.

A.W: Did any of those siblings attend Summer Hill schools?

W.D: All of them.

A.W: All of them did.

W.D: I got two older sisters and an older brother, he was five years old than me and he graduated in—his name is in there. Yeah, and so is my oldest sister.

A.W: Okay. And as far as the household in Summer Hill, did you live with both your parents?

W.D: Yes, both mom and dad.

A.W: What did your family do for a living or your parents do for a living?

W.D: My dad worked for the Texaco company, the CH Leechman Company, they owned a Texaco Service Station, a Texaco distributor—this man sold coal, sand, brick block and everything back in the, up until about the '70s. Leechman's was a garage, or that's what everybody called it.

A.W: Yeah, called it a garage.

W.D: My mother was just a maid for the Conner family.

A.W: The Conner family. Are they a family that lived in Cartersville?

W.D: They lived in Cartersville. The lady is still alive, she still lives on Erwin Street, on that corner. Rosetta Conner unless she has remarried.

A.W: Corner on Erwin Street. And did your mother be a maid for her for most of her lifetime or did she have odd jobs between them?

W.D: I think she worked a few odd jobs but she worked for that lady for many years, I'm telling you. I guess I was out of high school, yeah, something like that.

A.W: When and how did your family come to live in Summer Hill?

W.D: We moved a lot and I don't remember . . . but lived in an area called Richmond—this is on Moore Street. We lived on Summer Hill and I think we moved a couple of other times but we moved into the housing projects, I guess I must have been about in the fourth or fifth grade or so, we moved into the new housing projects. We called it Crooked Street back then and now it's Weaver Street.

A.W: I've heard Crooked Street. It was Crooked Street and now it's Weaver.

W.D: We were one of the first families to move into that area.

A.W: I've seen on the old maps a name of Crooked Street.

W.D: Yeah, it's still there. Yeah, Crooked Street and Straight Street when I was there.

A.W: Is that the gray kind of brick buildings with the laundry lines in the back?

W.D: No.

A.W: That's Stockley, isn't it.

W.D: That's Stockley. These were like a block below that right off of Bartow Street.

A.W: All right. Now, basically when your family was living in Richmond, in that area, just, even going back with your ancestors, did they originate from this area here?

W.D: My dad was actually born and raised up until he was, well, he was born in Red Bud, Calhoun, Georgia area and my mom was born here, as far as I know, here in Cartersville. My dad's mother died at an early age with three little, small kids, so my dad's grandmother actually raised my dad and they lived just right off of Moon Street which is now M.L. King, just across the highway there. But I don't remember, I was too little. I was real young. I don't even remember my grandmother or my granddaddy. I don't remember anything.

A.W: Okay, they passed away in your childhood?

W.D: Yes, many years ago.

A.W: You already described where you lived—

W.D: But when I started school, we were living in the Richmond area.

A.W: And you went to Summer Hill at that time?

W.D: I went to Summer Hill to elementary school; I went to this old building. I walked to school every day. I can remember one winter my closest friend, we would walk to school every day; we came home in the snow and ice, the wind was blowing. That was probably the worst storm I remember before I was, I guess I was in the second or third grade then. It was cold that day. No buses in the city at that time. The family didn't have a vehicle at that time so we all walked to school every day. We were used to that.

A.W: So brave the elements to get there.

W.D: Yes.

A.W: Did you guys always live there on Bartow Street or did you move within Summer Hill?

W.D: We lived, if I can remember, I know we lived in the Richmond area and then we moved to Summer Hill right there off Weaver Street, it's called, Crooked Street.

A.W: And you stayed there most of your school career?

W.D: Stayed there from about the fifth grade until I graduated.

A.W: Okay. Can you describe your house?

W.D: When we lived in Richmond it was a little wooden house; you could see through the cracks. It had like an unfinished basement. It was real high up on a hill and we had to walk up kind of between this man's pig pen and his house—it was the Hendricks family—up real high. I can remember my mother cooking on a wood stove and I can remember eating breakfast in that house. And it was, I don't remember now if it may have been two or three bedroom house but I remember hauling, picking up slab, well, I was a little small so—real tiny then—but getting in a little coal, picking up a little wood for that big pot belly stove in the middle of the house. We had a outdoor toilet, had—I don't remember if we had a one seater or a two seater but I can remember my grandmother—she lived with us most of our lives—out washing clothes in that big black pot. You probably don't know anything about that. Fire out in the big pot, not my grandmother, my mother, I remember had a stick and they poured oxygen soap—was that what it was called?

[background voice: Hm-hm.]

W.D: Oxygen soap. And then she'd ring them out in a separate bucket but I remember that.

A.W: Do you remember the inside of the home that you lived at on Weaver Street?

W.D: Oh yeah. I thought we were—moving where we were we didn't have, we had indoor water but we didn't have a hot water heater. I can remember we had an ice box and I'd put a chunk of ice in it. But when we moved from Richmond to Summer Hill on Crooked Street these were brand new housing projects. Just like new homes at that time

and we moved into a three bedroom. I'm trying to remember, both of my brothers were there and one of my sisters was there for a little while before she got married, and it was natural gas, leave the heat on all night, had a bathtub. And I remember in Richmond I can remember that little, I don't know what you call it, that number two washtub that we had to take a bath in right in front of everybody and in the winter time. So I thought that was the nicest thing we had in my home. Well, my youngest brother and I shared a room; my older brother was five years older than I was so he moved when he graduated from Summer Hill he went into the Air Force so it was just my mom and dad, they had their own room, my youngest brother—he was about seven years younger than me, we shared a room for awhile until my sister moved and then we all had separate bedrooms so I thought that was great.

A.W: So you had a separate bedroom at that time.

W.D: Yeah.

A.W: What was the outside like?

W.D: Oh, it was brick. A brick home. They're still existing. Had windows and screens and I didn't know what that was like. I can remember they were real new and the grass had not really grown at that time and right on my front porch we shot marbles. We would make our rings. We'd shoot marbles off my porch for years. I don't know when we finally stopped shot marbles.

A.W: So you could shoot marbles in your front yard?

W.D: Yeah. I had to be ten or eleven and I lived there until I went to college in '68.

A.W: Did it have a porch on it in the front and back?

W.D: Yeah. It had a front porch and it also had a pretty good sized front porch, almost the size of this room here and it had a small back porch but it also had a real nice kitchen and it had a pantry. I remember once I—plums were plentiful in that area and I was going to make some plum wine and I didn't know, I had the top too tight and it was aging and it exploded on me. All our food had that smell for a long time.

A.W: It exploded in the pantry?

W.D: In the pantry. It got all over the shelves and everything so that was not a good night. It was not a good day. But we made that stuff several times.

A.W: What was your relationship like with your neighbors?

W.D: Well, next door it was probably really one of my best friends. We were classmates together, went to school from about the fifth grade until we both graduated in the same class. And the family, I still call her one of my mothers, she's moved from there, and their dad, but we used their telephone—we didn't have a telephone at that time—didn't many black folks have phones at that time. But I would spend about as much time in their house as I did at home and it was the same way with him, Willy. And it turns out that his son married my daughter. When they were in diapers they grew up together. Well, they knew each other and my mother would keep my kids—she was our babysitter because my wife and I both worked, after we got married we worked the evening shift. I've got a picture of my daughter and his son in diapers somewhere. And everybody was just shocked when they started dating and I guess they were always close but nobody knew it and they started dating about their, I guess they were juniors in school and they both ended up at the same college and they got married after she finished. But my neighbors, the one thing that I most remember is that the mother next door, she would

give people a whooping. She would put them in the bedroom and just with a switch she'd get them all. And I made the mistake of going over one day when she was whooping a couple of them and I can remember, she told me, "Come in here. You need it too." And I ran out of the house and I didn't go back over there for a couple of days! We were just like family. The oldest daughter still gives me a Christmas present every year; we're still the best of friends and she's aunt to my daughter now. We ended up working together at Glad for many, many years I guess so it's just like family. You'd go by and visit at Christmas and she keeps me a piece of cake, she still keeps, she has a way of baking some pecans with some coating that's just, I get those and my wife gets them so we still extremely close.

A.W: That's good. What was your role in your household?

W.D: I guess my mom taught all of us a little bit of how to cook, you know. I made cornbread, that was usually the thing that I would cook. I don't remember a whole lot of having to do house cleaning, I just don't remember doing it. All I can think I was dependent until my baby brother got older. I worked with my dad every summer from about six or seven years old at that service station on Saturdays and then through the summers I worked on Sundays because my dad worked every other Sunday so I'd go over and work with him on Sundays on his work day.

A.W: What did you do at the service station when you went with him?

W.D: I pumped gas. I learned how to drive, I couldn't hardly see over the steering wheel but I drove a big tank of trucks because they put them in the garage every night, gas trucks, big trucks, and they had little, small pick ups was what we, I would help my dad haul coal. I can remember riding with my dad, some nights we'd go to Canton to deliver gas late.

And then when I was old enough to get my driver's license I was still working with him some and I drove from Canton and I had that big truck one night and I thought that was cool.

A.W: From Canton to Cartersville?

W.D: I had just turned sixteen.

A.W: That's where I live so that's a good drive.

W.D: That's a good drive. No traffic back then. Things have changed drastically. But you know, I can remember washing a few dishes but it wasn't like I had to do it. My mom was home every day when I came home. She went to work for this Conner family most of the time after we went to school. A few times I can remember some special holiday she'd go down and help them do breakfast. She didn't do breakfast, she did lunch and kind of fixed their supper. So when I come home my mom had our dinner waiting and I can remember, I still tell everybody I'm a meat-eater now. My wife don't cook without meat, no meal. I just insist on that. I tell everybody I was a vegetarian until I graduated from high school because at that time I'd come home and there'd be a pot of beans.

We'd eat great on Sunday. We had a full feast on Sunday. That's the one time a week I knew we'd have chicken or ham or roast, we always had a meat, but every other day a pot of beans or a pot of turnip greens. And we'd eat that pot of beans, it would last two days, one day, three days. That pot of beans, after it was gone then she'd cook another pot of beans, you know, pinto beans back then or big butter beans. I remember I liked those. Cornbread. My mom always—my dad worked from eight to eight at that time and a lot of times it was dark, late before he'd get home. And if he ever had to make a trip he didn't come in till late and my mom would always would fix his supper so she would

have it waiting on him. I can remember just watching his plate. I only helped fix it a few times but I don't—I do remember after we'd been there several years I painted a couple of rooms. That's about it. We had to clean our rooms, clean our closet. I don't even remember if I made up my bed. I'm not sure that I did until I really got up into high school and I might not have done it then. My mother, she was always there most of the time so were most of the mothers in that area. Most of the mothers didn't work, they didn't have full time jobs back then so, I mean, every house would have a mom, you'd come home from school and talk loudly because everybody's mom was telling you, you know, there was a lot of respect for everybody that was in that area. That's about all I remember. When I got older I can remember this program, they had a little work program in school and I think you had to be sixteen so when I turned sixteen I could work. I think it was about a dollar or less and you could work so many hours and I would help one of our assistant principals grade papers or do different things to work. During the summer time we would paint, paint the whole school. There was a little crew of us and that's where I got my painting skills. I remember doing that so I made some, I'd bring home like sixteen dollars a week and I thought I was rich. And then I could buy my own bologna and meat through the week. And I could make better French fries than McDonald's because that's what I would eat everyday when I was at school. I got tired of that. That's all we had. Dad didn't make anything. One thing that was one of my duties, when I did work on Saturdays, or even if I had to work on Saturdays, my mom would go to about four different grocery stores and she would always buy all the cheap items—it was not one-stop shopping—she'd go to one store and bring a sack. Sometimes I'd go with her another store and I don't know why she had sacks. And then she went to

another store. There was a Kroger, an A&P and another store; all near the service station and then when she was finished my dad would usually go on a coal trip where he'd take her home in one of the trucks that was there. Sometimes I'd ride and just help her put groceries in and sometimes she'd have to take a taxi and I'd help put the groceries up. That's about it. I don't remember anything else.

A.W: It sounds like that you guys mostly shared dinner as a family except whenever your dad had those late deliveries to make.

W.D: Right. Sundays, it was, even when I was smaller, we all ate dinner Sunday. We always ate breakfast every morning until I got in high school and then, you know, I was close to the school so they'd have a little breakfast there. But we always, even when my dad wasn't there, my mom sat down with me and my brother and we had dinner.

A.W: So Sunday was a special time, Sunday dinner.

W.D: Sundays we had, yeah. And I'd tell my wife and my other friends that in that day and age, preachers, the pastor was always invited to somebody's home on Sunday and we would entertain because my family really loved our pastor, all of us. But we'd entertain, they'd come after church and stop at the different houses and eat every Sunday. I can remember a lot of people telling me when the preacher came the kids had to go outside. You didn't make noise, you didn't talk when adults were there, and you didn't even get to eat your regular dinner. Kids had to wait till everything was gone. But at my house we sat down with the preacher. It wasn't like we were going to get scraps. We got that piece of chicken we liked; everybody was served at one time. And I was so proud that my mom never made us do that. But I thought, we didn't have that much but it was a special little added feature when the preacher and his wife would come. I always thought that

was great because you'd hear about every other kid . . . or if you were at somebody else's house you had to wait.

A.W: What was the preacher's name?

W.D: There was a Reverend Deacons; he was the pastor when I was small. And I don't remember him well. And Reverend Eugene Mitchell was our church pastor for about twenty-nine years. When I actually joined the church he was just like family for everybody; he would come and eat at our house a lot, he and his wife Maddie. Even after I got married he was special. He married me and my wife and he was there when my kids were born and he buried my mother. My dad—I don't think he buried my father but he married all of us and he'd come see us, come to everything, ball games, so he was special to us all. I remember even, if I wanted to go in his house, the kids just played.

A.W: So you'd get invited to the preacher's house too?

W.D: Oh yeah. We'd come home from school and stop in there and he'd be sitting on the porch or playing checkers and he could beat everybody in town. When we were big enough to try and play he'd just, it was embarrassing he'd beat us so quick. When we got a lot a little older everybody learned how to play. But the other thing, well, I'll let you ask the questions.

A.W: No, you keep going.

W.D: I can remember when we moved into the projects that was the only street in any black neighborhood that had concrete streets so everybody bought skates. You'd come down Straight Street which was elevated and we'd all skate and then we had to make a sharp turn to go onto Crooked Street, at that time, and it would be twenty-five or thirty of us kids in a line and just going off, we'd make that turn and the last five or six people would

always end up on the bank because you swung around. Everybody had skates. The first time I ever got a pair of skates was then because we didn't have anywhere to skate, you couldn't skate on the dirt and the other roads were not real smooth at that time. This was back in the late '50s or early '60s. That was fun.

A.W: I remember riding my Big Wheel on the straight driveway and making a turn at the end and I'd always wipe out in the grass and I don't know how many times my mom yelled at me but I was a daredevil.

W.D: Yeah, I remember both of my daughters had Big Wheels.

A.W: We're brave whenever we're young.

W.D: Yeah.

A.W: What holidays were celebrated at your house?

W.D: Christmas was the holiday, I mean, you know, we didn't get every much but we always got a little something at Christmas. Easter, we'd always get something new. Not always a full outfit like my wife, but we might get a new pair of shoes or a new pair of socks or maybe a new shirt. Every now and then I would get a new suit.

END TAPE 1, SIDE A

START TAPE 1, SIDE B

W.D: Labor Day was not a real holiday, we didn't enjoy Labor Day because at that time we'd started back to school. I can remember cotton was still a big thing. When I was coming up people would have to, right after Labor Day somewhere in there would be the county fair and cotton was in at that time so all the kids would go pick cotton and try to get three or four dollars so you could go the fair. Three dollars was enough money to go two days.

At that time, school would let out at noon on Wednesdays—I don't know if anybody's told you that—the whole high school, the elementary school was shut down so that everybody could go the fair. That was a school day. Everybody, black, white, all the kids. That was our day when we could get in for a little bit of nothing. That was the day. It wasn't a holiday but that's what we thought it was. Somewhere around Labor Day and it was pretty cool because cotton had started to be picked. I would pick an armload; I wasn't much of a cotton picker. I was little, real tiny. When I graduated from high school, I think I weighted 113 pounds. I wasn't very big. I kind of got away from, I can remember once we moved into the projects it changed a little bit. Cotton was, my grandmother and my mother both picked a little bit when she wasn't with that family. But school was out, that was the day.

A.W: So you made money depending on how much cotton you could pick?

W.D: Yeah. And everybody did that at that time. And when I got a little older I could work at the service station with my dad. On weekends I'd try to save a little bit. I don't know if I got seventy-five cents a day or whatever, fifty cents a day but this was good money when you were six or seven years old up until I was about ten or twelve I guess. No, I guess I worked there until I was about fifteen or sixteen years old. I didn't work as much after that because I started this little school program you know, where we'd go probably about six or eight months of the school year and then they had a summer program. And then you had to, I guess the minimum standards, you couldn't make, I couldn't make myself much money. We were at the bottom of the scale.

A.W: What was your, well, I guess your first job would have been this kind of working with your dad at the service station?

W.D: Working with my dad at the service station, that was my first; then in the fall I would rake leaves for the family that my mother worked for, two or three times. That was another fifty cents a day or, like I say, I finally got up to about seventy-five cent and I just thought I'd quit! I worked at the school, you know, I was making more money so I wouldn't do that any more. I think my older brother did something like that too. I know he worked at the service station with my dad until he got out of school, you know, on weekends and during the summer and then I kind of took his place.

A.W: So when you graduated did you continue to work at the service station?

W.D: No. At the time, not very much. After that, the summer before I went to college I worked at a place called Lewis Carpet, carpet manufacturer. It seemed like everybody who, we were eighteen at that time so we could get a little job and we all made as much money as we could working, seemed like we were working third shift at that time, pulling this wet carpet out of the dryer and trying to straighten it up a bit. And that was, yeah, that was all I did. I helped one of my teachers. He did painting on the side as a second job. Name of Ralph Lowe. I guess he would be my star teacher if I had to pick one but I had a lot of them. Thought I was always the teacher's pet. He would paint houses; he always had a job in the summer and he finally convinced me not to work for the school one summer and work for him and I made more money with him than . . . he still paints. I still help him every now and then. So, a lasting relationship.

A.W: Wow. Then you went on to college?

W.D: Yeah.

A.W: And what age did you go into college?

W.D: I was eighteen. I went to Berea College in Berea, Kentucky. I didn't stay but a year and then my wife and I got married.

A.W: Is that where you met your wife?

W.D: No, I met her in, let's see, I think I was just going into the tenth grade, near the end of my ninth grade year, just before graduation, I think, because I saw her when I was going into the band room—I played trumpet in the band—she was coming up the steps with one of her, her best friend and we met. I knew her name and I guess she knew my name so after that summer, then the next year we were pretty close. I knew she'd be the one!

A.W: [chuckle] Where did most people work in Summer Hill?

W.D: Most mothers, as I say, worked for somebody and well, the men just worked service station, a lot of them were cooks at different places; some of the men worked at a place called Chemical Products; most of them like seven days, twelve hours, they were never off. They were some of the wellest to do families, you know, they worked regular, I mean, they worked every day. It was either called Chemical Products or Thompson and Wyman, I'm not sure, but that's where a lot of men worked at that time. Everybody could get out and then Chemical Products came on a little bit after that. And then—no, no—it was in 1959, the company that I worked for opened and they started making Glad bags not long after that and they hired a lot of ladies. So that's when things really picked up and it has . . .

A.W: What was the name of that company?

W.D: It was Union Carbide at that time. Viskins is the original name and then it became Union Carbide and I went to work for them in 1970 and I been employed—I quit for a little while—but I been employed with them since then.

A.W: Wow.

W.D: A lot of my neighbors, the neighborhood, mothers went to work there and some of the men got on there. Yeah, in 1969 or '70 I went to work there. Still there.

A.W: And at that time, I guess, you were married at that time?

W.D: Oh yes. When I went there.

A.W: Okay. I'm just thinking about the neighborhood in general; describe the Summer Hill neighborhood to me.

W.D: Before the housing projects were built there, I can remember a black ball field, it was called Slab Stadium, you may have heard of that.

A.W: Hm-hm. I've heard of Slab Stadium.

W.D: And it was on Bartow Street and I can remember the local party house was called Paul Thomas's. I don't know if you remember that.

A.W: I haven't heard that one. What was that called again?

W.D: Paul Thomas. Yeah, he owned a little bootleg place, nightclub type thing at that time. That was the place to go in and there was also, I think it was called the Brotherhood Lodge and they put pool tables in there and some of the young people could go in there. Nobody could go in Paul Thomas unless you were an adult. And I don't remember seeing many ball games there but I do remember that wall that you couldn't see inside the ballpark. That was on Walker Street and it took up, it was all that housing project area.

A.W: Now, I've heard of the Brotherhood Lodge and I've also heard the Brotherhood Hall. Are they one and the same?

W.D: No. The Brotherhood—hm, I don't remember which was which but one of them ended up being the old school building. I think that was the Brotherhood Hall.

A.W: Because there's a Brotherhood Hall that still stands there.

W.D: That's it. The Brotherhood Lodge was a building right where the Wheeler Morris Shopping Center is.

A.W: Where the shopping center is.

W.D: It's located right there. I can remember a man named Grote, Isaac—what was his name? I can't think of his last name—but he was like a proprietor there. And I learned to shoot pool in there. They let about all age groups go in there.

A.W: So is that also known as the pool hall because I've heard people call it the pool hall.

W.D: Yeah, that was it.

A.W: Would there be a reason why certain people wouldn't want to go in the pool hall?

W.D: No.

A.W: Because I do remember in some of the interviews they talked about, you know, "Mama didn't want me at the pool hall."

W.D: Well, it was more of adults. Later I lived there, and I knew the man so some of us kids could go in the daytime. I don't know what happened at night, I mean, we didn't go in there at night at all.

A.W: Okay, so maybe it was an adult-type of place at night.

W.D: Yeah, at night.

A.W: Yeah.

W.D: I can remember the barbershop, you've probably heard of the Delicacy shop. I remember that. We could get ice cream and little hot dogs. Another place was called the Blue Room. That was an adult place. Couldn't go in that. I remember going in there in the daytime because I knew the lady [unclear] but it was an adult entertainment. And there

was another place on Baker Street, I don't remember the name of it, but it was another little juke joint, kind of adult place.

A.W: Was the Blue Room like a dance place where they played music?

W.D: Yeah. And they played music in there. They also at this other little place, and I just don't remember the name of it on Baker Street, a little shack, you know, little booths, little dance area, juke box and all that type of thing. But I was pretty young then but I do remember it. I think I went in there in the daytime because I knew everybody. And then, some little place in Richmond I don't remember what it was called, but it was a pool hall, the Delphi Shop. And then the library was down the hill. That street is closed off now but there was a library that was kind of a place we could all go and hang out a little bit.

A.W: Kind of like a community place too.

W.D: Yeah, right. It was on the corner of Mull, and I don't know if that's what they called Shanoah Street but they closed it up after they started developing that area with the library.

A.W: What was it like growing up in Summer Hill?

W.D: Kids had to respect all the adults. It wasn't like, you know, because if I went off and cut up with somebody I got an open hand. I didn't get many but I knew I'd be disciplined. I had to respect and you know, you couldn't use foul language. But I do remember I had a place called Cussingville, me and my buddy on some trees where we'd go out and cuss.

A.W: [laughter]

W.D: I got caught smoking once. But we knew everybody, you, and all the teachers knew everybody, you know. I remember my mom come up to the school once, I had made like a seventy-nine or eighty, first one in my life and she just chewed that teacher out. She

said, “You can’t teach him no better than that!” I got straight A’s after that. You didn’t want your parents to come to the school, you know, it meant you was in some serious trouble. I can remember staying, you know, you’d spend the night with a friend and you’d go—there was a place, it was the American Legion--you may have heard of it—it was the white one thought and there was a ball field where the fair was and we’d play football there and baseball.

A.W: That field behind the Legion?

W.D: Yes.

A.W: You know that streets run in front of it?

W.D: That’s MLK.

A.W: Yes.

W.D: And we played ball on Roosevelt Street, it kind of looped around us.

A.W: Roosevelt Street.

W.D: So the corner of Roosevelt and M. L .King and we played . . . they county was the one that let us played and the Legion was up on top of the hill. We played there, everybody would show up on Saturdays behind our house, projects now, and put up basketball goals. There was one almost on our house, but it was directly near. It was on a bank. I remember when you go up to the top of the bank and you could shoot down at the goal. We played basketball, football, I mean everybody; even girls played with us. You know, in that time, growing up, one thing I remember about school, and I never understood it, but in the winter time the Catholic kids didn’t have to come, they didn’t have to ride the buses, because that was the only black school in this whole area. Nobel Hill was gone then. They rode the buses to Summer Hill, this was high school kids at that time. They

eventually got Bartow School, before my wife ended up graduating, that was the first of eighth grade and then they'd come to Summer Hill. So in snow or bad weather they didn't had to come to school, they had an excused absence. But if we didn't go to school, we just got marked absent. I never understood that. But we played and played ball—later on this old school turned into a recreation center and we played. I think they had, there was poles in the middle and we played basketball inside. They had little rules and you could do different things. You could play a little music. What is that thing kids jump on?

A.W: Trampoline?

W.D: They had a trampoline inside. A real tall one and we used to jump on it. You had to take turns because there were so many. I think they eventually put a little pool table and that was a big place. It had a telephone in there, a little payphone where everybody could call. You know, we knew everybody at church and when graduation came everybody would come. I can remember, even there was a little band, when I finally got to, I was in the eighth grade at that time, but when homecoming weekend at that time, was the event. We would usually have a parade; you would work on your floats. The entire week we would, each class would have a float; we'd borrow things, if anybody had a car we'd decorate it; but you just shut class down working on your float. And then we'd have our parade on Saturday. Downtown Cartersville just shut down and there was probably as many white folks watching us at that time as black. I mean, that was it; everybody in Bartow County came for that.

A.W: Yeah. Were there any whites that participated in the parade or was it just blacks?

W.D: It was for the black school. See, it was total segregation. All black kids went to Summer Hill and the white kid went to Cartersville High School. And they had Dublin Street School and there may have been another school, Cherokee I believe it was. We didn't associate. I mean, I knew the kids that my mother worked for and I got a lot of hand-me-downs. Then we'd, just see them. We knew everybody. Some of us would play together, you know, and we'd see each other but you either went to Summer Hill, Richmond, Mechanicsville or West Main and we went to our own churches. We didn't have any events together, not until, it may have been '68. I guess in '66 a couple of kids, maybe a little earlier, went to the high school, what we called the white school at the time. And then we got a little bit closer together where some of us would go to their football games; some of them would come to—there was always a handful of people—families that lived next door to each other. When we moved to Summer Hill in these projects, there were no white families for four or five blocks away. The closest place I remember was a little store called Miller's store and that family lived—I guess because they had the store. And then at Railroad Street—I don't know what's happening to me [coughing].

A.W: The same stuff that I got with this . . .

W.D: Let's turn it off for a minute.

A.W: Okay.

W.D: Miller Store and it was, it was a whole family. And my mother worked for a family and my daddy worked for, and just a few, you know, at these two stores, just a small amount of people, there weren't any white folks. The only white family I ever remember coming to our house when we were in the projects was my dad's boss man would come

sometimes if they had a problem and he was off, this Conner family would come on special holidays or something sometimes. We had a man that had a little store in his car, one-armed man, I don't remember his name, Mr. Chapman I believe; the paper man had a paper route and this little man, he sold, bologna, eggs, different things out of the trunk of his car. We'd see him and then, you know, I knew people who worked at the service station and that was a pretty big service station so I knew a lot of people, you know. But after they'd leave the service station, I didn't see anybody. There was just nobody in our area. We just stayed in those four areas and that was it.

A.W: Were you known by any nicknames?

W.D: Yeah, Tweet.

A.W: Tweet?

W.D: Tweety-bird.

A.W: [laughter]

W.D: One of my classmates told me once, his name was Harold Parks, told me I was so little that I looked like Tweety-bird and that's when it came out at that time. You know, we had little cartoons so he told me I looked like Tweety-bird and I got a few friends that still call me that. Tweet.

A.W: So it stuck with you.

W.D: That's about the only one I remember. A few people called me by my middle name, Deray. My wife still calls me that.

A.W: When you're in trouble? Just kidding. [laughter]

W.D: No.

A.W: I always call my husband by his middle name if he's in trouble. [laughter]

W.D: She calls me Dudley when I'm in trouble.

A.W: Okay.

W.D: Yeah.

A.W: It's always different, I notice that. You mentioned the kind of games you used to play when you were little with the marbles in the yard, but what else did you do for fun? You used to play in the field behind the Legion.

W.D: We played football. We also played football right behind our house. There was a big area, there was a basketball goal and there was a big enough area where we could play football and baseball and then later when the school actually—I think I was in the fifth grade—there was this rec area and we would go play basketball in that year round. That was it. I don't remember, you know, we didn't play a lot of baseball. We were not really interested in baseball because Summer Hill, at least during my tenure there, never had a competitive baseball team. I don't know if any black school had. We were competitive in football and basketball and other literary things like, what did they call it then? They had some name for it when you would have a library and you would have someone debates on a lot of different things. But for playing, we just played in the street; we would have streetlights there, you could stay out kind of late, sit up and talk and play.

A.W: It's a big difference when you don't have video games and all that stuff kids have now.

W.D: Oh yeah. We didn't even have a television. I remember our first television when we were living in Richmond. Then when we moved to Summer Hill in the projects we had a little television, had a little antenna, black and white, you know. And it didn't always work so I was at the neighbors' a lot watching television. Saturday mornings I was in

front of the television: Popeye, the Lone Ranger, you know, you'd watch cartoons for about four hours and that was it. And then we'd go out and play some kind of ball.

A.W: As an adult, or maybe you know, like eighteen and up, you know, you mentioned the adult places to go. Did you typically go to those places for fun when you were a little bit older?

W.D: I never really took an interest in that. I didn't like that, still don't, going to a club. I went a couple of times and it just wasn't what I wanted. It was usually drinking, fights all the time, husbands and wives were cheat'en and all that type of thing and I just didn't like that so . . . but after I got married, a lot of people our age, they were not nightclub people either and we would go to each other's home on Friday nights or Saturday nights and we'd play cards. And we would entertain. It would be four or five couples, sometimes two tables. We were at my house one weekend, we'd go to one of the other's house and we just rotated around. There was about eight or nine couples.

[thunder]

A.W: I told you the storm followed me up, didn't it? It sure did. But as far as like did you go to the movies or was there a bowling alley?

W.D: Oh yeah, we'd go. There was, we called it a picture show at that time. There were two and I only remember one, it's still on Wall Street. I don't remember the name of it now.

A.W: So you still weren't able to go to the Legion at that time? Is it still white?

[someone walked in]

W.D: Storm.

A.W: It followed me in.

W.D: Okay. But they had a place called the American Legion. I didn't like that, a little young. And then they had a place called Queens place and that was another little place; that was in Richmond, on the far end. But I never did frequent those. Neither one of us did. We would go to basketball games. When we were young, we'd go to high school football games, that type of thing, every weekend.

A.W: What were your favorite hangouts in the neighborhood, even as a child? Was there a certain place everybody would meet?

W.D: Right at the end of projects we all would love to meet right on my front porch or the next-door-neighbor's front porch. And then after fifth grade we all met at the Rec, we all called the Rec. That was the old school, originally the elementary school. The city has built a gymnasium there now. But that was it, everybody went to the Rec, every day, every Saturday, all through the summer and we played basketball inside. And usually you could go down and sit in the stands and you could see the school; we'd play football out there on the football field a little bit. But I guess the Rec was the hangout. If you were not at the Rec you were at the high school gym. We never said John Morgan gym, it was just a gym. And those two places were our hangouts. And then I don't know if it was in '65 or '66 they built a swimming pool right next to the . . .

A.W: The pool that's still there?

W.D: It's still there. And we'd hang out at the pool every summer, either the Rec or the swimming pool. I was pretty young but it was called a Delicacy shop. By the time I got into high school it had turned into just a barbershop so it was not a hangout for kids. The barber shop was not far from us, you know, we'd sit out there on a block wall and sit out there on Saturdays and just talk to everybody, even the men sitting out there would tell us

stories. And then we could go to that Brotherhood Lodge a little bit and shoot pool. We played checkers different places, you know, everybody had a little old checkerboard. Co-cola caps were the checkers. I don't know if anybody ever told you that. And then either up or down was your black or your red. And we made bows and arrows out of co-cola caps; you could bend them up and put them on a little stick and everybody made a bow and arrow; they could do little flips and things, not much. That's about it.

A.W: I'm not keeping everybody from dinner, am I?

___: No, I'm just here because of that storm.

A.W: Yeah, I knew it was going to be pretty bad. It was getting down to the wire on doing my interview for the class though.

W.D: And we would hang out at different houses, you know. Some days we'd be on one corner on one house, things like that. And the two places we played ball. There was two goals; there was the little one right behind our house and then up about two blocks was another basketball goal and it was lower so we could touch the net at that house and we hung out there.

A.W: Were there any particular customs or celebrations that the Summer Hill residents observed? You already talked about the homecoming parade as a Summer Hill thing.

W.D: Summer Hill had the largest black gymnasium for, not only Bartow County but there were tournaments held there, basketball tournaments every year. It was always held at Summer Hill. And then after we moved to the projects I could go to the cage because I could walk home at night by myself or with my buddies and that was a big time; graduation was always a big time. Everybody would come whether they had kids or not, to high school graduation.

A.W: I heard whether you went to church or anything, everybody came, even if. . . .

W.D: You had Baccalaureate on Sundays. I mean, Mt. Zion was full. Usually it was Mt. Zion because it was the biggest church. But graduation, everybody was there. I mean, it was the thing to be there. The fair was always big. And homecoming, as I said. Those were the biggest and I guess, when we were, before we got this new pastor, he's a real Minister, he started Vacation Bible School, so we all looked forward to that; I mean, it was interesting.

A.W: Is that in the summers?

W.D: In the summer.

A.W: When you were out of school?

W.D: Yeah.

A.W: And they just had certain activities at Vacation Bible School?

W.D: We studied a little bit but we played most of the time in the classes. Very similar to today when we would have our arts and crafts that kids have today. Oh, I guess there was a Bartow School, we would go to Bartow's graduation and they graduated and then would come to Summer Hill up until '66 or '67, some of the kids started going to Cass High; a lot of them went to Cass High, the white school. I don't remember major events, you know, basketball games was always big. And the things about basketball games, sometimes there was a dance afterward; but after every football game there was a dance. We didn't think about that. There was always a dance. A lot of times the visiting team would stay for our dances. It cost, I don't know, something like a dime. We stayed just like a couple of hours, almost till midnight or a little bit later. And the gym was open, it was at the gym. Teachers were there, chaperones, parents would come in but they let the

kids dance and we just danced. There wasn't a whole lot to do other, than being in there dancing. Homecoming was huge. I mean, that was probably one of the biggest weeks. I can remember also kind of as a fundraiser mixed in with a little bit of entertainment, I think it was on Fridays, we would have movies. The whole school would go to the gym and as many classes as you could get out of, you had to do it in your age groups but there would be a big projector with a big screen and we would show a movie. That was better than going to the picture show. By the time I got to high school I was kind of in charge and I collected money and I would get out of class to run the projector but that was a big thing.

A.W: So you had a fundraiser that went back into the school?

W.D: Went into the school funds. That's about it.

A.W: How has the area changed?

W.D: A lot of—after the projects came in, that was what we called them, new projects—

END TAPE 1, SIDE B

START TAPE 2, SIDE A

A.W: You were out of school, after you found out that Mr. Morgan is no longer going to be the principal . . .

W.D: I didn't realize that it was that early but after I moved to, I got out of here on February 12, 1968, Tuesday was when it was, announced and then, that he would be something like an administrative assistant, we walked out of school, after that. I got somebody's name—one, two, three, four, five, six—six of these names and all of us were signing as leaders and we walked out and shut the school down for one day, actually I guess we

demonstrated on February 14 and the 15th. It was closed on the 16th still right after we went to lunch. And Ray Hill was the superintendent at that time and they got all upset with us. We got a group called the New Frontiers involved trying to help us with some legal things that we could do to try to make sure that we had one black principal in this city of Cartersville school. It seems like it was four or five different schools and we didn't have, well, it was four different schools at that time and one of these guys named Horace Lee Jones took us to the state capitol and we got some information, we got populations, black, white and everything and it seems like at that time it was twenty-six, twenty-seven percent blacks in the school system and we felt that out of four principals we were due one black. And it was to no avail, we did not. We went through a lot and thought we had won but . . .

A.W: Did you present it before the school board? Is that what you did the research for?

W.D: Yes. We got a lot of the community involved and I mean, we got Wiley; Wiley was a community guy involved after that and we got some documents because they wouldn't share anything with us and we met him and—the principal was out of town at that time, he was not even there when we shut school down—and he came back and you know, we were going to try to negotiate with him through these different teams that had worked hard and then some other adults got involved after that. Finally, I think Mr. Morgan decided to tell us he didn't want to be principal. And he was going to take this job as an assistant to the superintendent, you know; to help bridge the gap; try to work with all the schools. We lost heart after that. Eventually we just kind of gave up the battle. And he worked in that job for a long time.

A.W: You mentioned the New Frontiers; is this a . . . ?

W.D: It's a civic group. It's still in existence; it's been around since 1962. A local for black men that helped bridge this gap there trying to negotiate some things with people without making a scene, talk to the superintendent, they would make recommendations about teachers. That still goes on. I remember that group. They would go to the sheriff if there was a fight at school or something. They'd go over to the parent's house to try to get things settled out without having a race riot or something because the school system, other than that major difference racially it went well compared to most communities.

A.W: Integration went well?

W.D: Yeah. There were fights every now and then but it was not ready to burn everything down, not the whole schools fighting or anything like that. And I think New Frontiers played a huge role in that.

A.W: I heard of some other interviewees that actually were still in school and went to Cartersville High School. Some of them wore black armbands as like a symbolic thing.

W.D: I left and went to college so I don't know what happened. I went to school that September, I believe so I don't know, I was gone.

A.W: Hm. You were gone for most of that?

W.D: And then after we came back, you know, there was not a whole lot of things. There are always some issues, being called a believer and little groups fighting, but nothing, I mean nothing like you've seen on television with these beatings and so forth.

A.W: What are your fondest memories, if you can choose one? [Laughter]

W.D: Hm. Fondest memory. It's tough I've got so many. Graduation, I was valedictorian in my class and I guess that.

A.W: Wow. That's great.

W.D: Also, I got what they called a Conatus Award, I think that's how you pronounce it, which was like a top male student and I got this scholarship to go to school, so that was probably one of the other ones. One other thing we did was proms too.

A.W: Was it at the same time of year like, homecoming is always in the fall; proms were kind of in the spring?

DW: Spring, yeah. One other event that we, it was a super memory is the—I remember I had been sick; I was on the basketball team and I had been sick for a couple of weeks or so, whatever it was—I couldn't practice for a couple of days before the ball game and I was a starter at that time. I was out sick and somebody else played but I got to the play the last two minutes or so and they put me in and I scored the ball, passed off and I scored two points which actually tied it up at that point and a couple of minutes later I scored the winning points. That was kind of unusual. Also in school, we had a lot of intramurals. Each class played basketball, had a little tournament every year so that was a lot of fun. Well, I guess that. And then my sweetheart here—

A.W: That's got to be one of the top ones right there.

W.D: Yeah. That's one.

A.W: Did you ever go elsewhere outside of Cartersville for home, than Summer Hill? Other areas or other towns?

W.D: We always traveled with the football teams and the band would normally travel so that was big for us. I mean, we had to have transportation. If anyone had a car we just piled in, you know. Not many times for entertainment. We would get to go to a lot of different ball games and events like to literary events or some other competitions that we would

travel to. I don't remember, we didn't have any transportation so we didn't have any place to go.

A.W: So you probably stayed in your own area.

W.D: In that area.

A.W: And speaking of being able to go throughout Summer Hill and Cartersville, was there anywhere that you felt that you couldn't go?

W.D: Well, we couldn't go in the front door of most restaurants. There was always a little back door. There was one place that I don't think any blacks could go in and it was called Haytown. They had a little window and some of the best hot dogs in town. And also there was a place that was called Hurricane, it was a little drive-in restaurant near Cartersville High School; I couldn't go there. I could go to other places—there was one more place I kind of resented, some of these restaurants at that time, because we worked right across the street from what was called the Four-way, it still is. We went in the back door, we ate, paid same price as anybody else, went in the back door. And I can remember “colored only” signs, “white only,” signs, I'm old enough to remember all that.

A.W: So they were signs that were specific.

W.D: Oh yeah. Even when we went to the movies we had to go to the balcony. What's the movie theater in Cartersville, babe?

___: The Grand.

W.D: The Grand Theater. I got it, the Grand Theater. When we went all the white folks were in there; the balcony was the only place that the blacks could go. But we had our own, we had these little narrow stairs, we came in a different store, a small door, had our own popcorn machines and everything; you had to buy your candy and everything separate. I

don't think I ever went to that until after I had been married. I don't even remember back in '68 ever seeing black folks in the other seating area. So it was kind of restricted. I remember I had to walk through some white neighborhoods when it's almost dark, you know, because if you're off playing you had to usually go through something and I can remember once I was walking home from the store and this truck of white kids came by. They called me the big "N" word and just drove off, made all kind of insults and I can remember that very day and you know, I didn't, didn't go many places by myself.

A.W: What about the Legion? Was it a movie theater back then?

W.D: I never went to it.

A.W: I heard it had a separate entrance as well.

W.D: I think it did but it was closed by the time, from what I remember, and I just went to the Grand Theater.

A.W: Where is the Grand Theater located?

W.D: It's still in place on Wall Street.

A.W: On Wall Street, okay.

W.D: The Legion was on Main Street and I remember seeing it and I don't think I ever went in it. I don't ever remember going in there. Restaurants, places to eat, you didn't go in, couldn't go in anybody's bathroom. I remember seeing a few water fountains that said "white only" and we had to go around to a different place. Even at that service station for a lot of years it was, it had one restroom said "white only". We had to go back in this little back hall way. And eventually it came down.

A.W: So do you feel that integration, when you graduated from high school, did a lot of those signs start to come down then or did. . . ?

W.D: Some of them were, there are places still in town, I guess it's just sort of traditional, so black folks don't go in there, a lot of black folks don't go in the front door of the Four Way.

A.W: Yeah, I heard there's still some that have a back way.

W.D: A lot of people, I mean, I go in the front door. I don't go often but I go sit right up front and nobody says anything but they just still go in the back. There are some other places that are like that. Some other places are like that. Ross's Diner, they were like that. I mean, it was a big area, it was just for black folks though. Probably as big as the front section, same booths and everything, but we were always near the kitchen. It's hard to put dates on these things. But by '68 a lot of them had come down, a lot of them did start coming down. You know, they couldn't keep us out of there! And then these kids somewhere, if parents would leave kids alone, they'll kind of bond. Oh, "You can't play with him, you can't do that. You can't go home with him."

W.D: You want a Coke or something?

A.W: A Coke would be great.

W.D: Do you got a Coke? She didn't hear me.

A.W: So basically where did people engage with each other as a community?

W.D: Church. Black church has always been the place to go. I mean, a lot of information was shared, a lot of, you got your public information and a lot of your direction and pastors sort of were the ones that if you got in trouble they could get you out, a few people. At that time, you know, we didn't like it, we didn't like that much about teachers, but they would, if you had a problem, they'd take care of you. They'd do what was best for you. It was the best church and . . . churches primarily

A.W: And you mentioned the lodge as well was kind of a place that people would go to.

W.D: Yeah, usually it was all men. I mean, the other place that was for adults only was the juke joints. The Delicacy shop was the place for kids. And the barbershop. There was always a checker game going on in the barbershop.

A.W: Who were the prominent or recognized members of the community while you were there?

W.D: Obviously, everybody who was in education, the principals. The Morgans were always one of the families—there were Lockheed Martin came into play at that time and anybody who worked at Lockheed made money and their families were the ones that cars and the first ones to get colored television, started brick homes, buying their own homes, nicer homes; there was a lady named Ms. Fannie Mae Sidney, she was kind of a, had her own little sales, she was one of the, she was a lady that always had something; she always drove a nice car, if you needed to be bailed out of something, I know people would always—I never had to—but they would go find Ms. Fannie Mae. The Kay family, Reverend Kay, I can't remember his first name, he was a pastor.

A.W: K-a-y?

W.D: K-a-y. He was the one that would go down to talk to the judge to let this kid go, he's good family. He was pretty prominent. Him and his wife. The Roberson family, William Roberson, he worked at Lockheed and his wife was a school teacher. And the Morgans, they were one of the families that built nice brick homes. A guy named Buzz Crane, Charles Crane, built one of the first brick homes and we thought that was unusual.

A.W: Are those like those ranch-style homes you see now that started to build at that time?

W.D: Yeah. They're still there. And thirty-five, forty years ago, they were the houses. I'm trying to think of anybody else. There was a lady named Marilyn Long always had a little house, but she sold beverages from it. She was always pretty influential lady. And then this other lady Queen [unclear] was a family that had selling and had a little house and everybody knew her.

A.W: Kind of like a bootleg seller?

W.D: Yeah. Don't put that down. [chuckle] The, you know, one of my families that I always thought a lot of was Lewis and Blanche Miller. They were sort of distant relatives. If you were married to them, whatever. But one of his sons was [unclear] and they always had a real clean home. They were, they weren't rich folks but she was a beautician and he worked at one of these hardware stores. He drove a truck home, you know, he could drive that truck home. And I think he worked at one of these mines for awhile, but their house was always quality; I think that was the first colored television I ever saw. They had a phone; the kids had several bedrooms—they had two boys—they had a basketball goal in their yard; they always had a car, you know. Seemed like the most prominent people were bootleggers—Carl Wilkins. He had another little club, I forgot about that one. And he started the first black taxi company. So he was pretty prominent. And then these people, Kenny's, you know, had a lot of land, Ms. Morgan was a Kenny. And the Benham, Judge Benham. Oh, I forgot about the main place, the beach. George Washington Carver, I don't know how . . . that was the place to go, that was the place to go in the summer time. All black in the state park, George Washington Carver Park, their family was actually the superintendents. They ran the beach, they had a boat, you know. There was a huge dance hall and there were buses that would come from Atlanta and

Tennessee to that place. Maybe I told you that, I forgot about that. That was the place that you wanted to go. And we had boy scouts at that time and the boy scouts had a campground, I think it was C.H. Weston, probably about two miles below the beach and we would go camping and it was a daily—if you were there on a Friday or Saturday, there was a hike when you'd go to the beach and you could go swimming. That was the place and the Benham's were definitely prominent. And their son, one of them went in, two went in the military and I think one made captain or colonel or something and you know Justice Benham's story. And they lived in the projects just above us before they became, before they were in charge of the beach area. Her story of why they quit, I didn't know that. Justice Benham says that something happened with him, his dad; one of the state superintendents was saying something about his boy can't do this or something, a derogatory statement . . .

A.W: In reference to him being black?

W.D: Yeah. And the little kid, he said he couldn't, I don't remember the exact incident, but told him he couldn't do it and his dad quit, he left that place. I think he eventually worked at Lockheed so it was good. Anybody that worked at Lockheed at that time, they had a little—the Carter family, Arthur Carter was one who worked at Lockheed, he always had a nice car, had some land out in the county. I'm trying to think of some other families outside of Cartersville who lived in Bishop, Sugar Valley, those people.

A.W: I've heard of Sugar Valley.

W.D: The Mission area was a black area, Mission, Sugar Valley. The Robersons were a big family out there in the Mission area. The Weems were a big family. They weren't rich folks but they had . . .

A.W: Even with these different levels of some people having things and others not having things, meaning material things, it seems like, did you guys seem to share those things? I mean, you went to watch TV at other people's homes and . . .

W.D: Oh yeah. This Roberson family that built this nice home that's still there. They had a basement, they had a pool table. We'd go to his house, you know, the kids were there and we could go downstairs and spend the night there sometimes with him, Baxter Roberson, he was one of the, he left Summer Hill I believe in '67 and went to the white school, Cartersville High School. And his mother was a teacher in the county and his dad worked at Lockheed so, I played with him. Now, he was one of the person who—they had two sons—they always got a new suit every Easter. And it got to be where they would sometimes get a change of pants with it, you know, not only a two-piece suit or three piece suit but they would have another pair of slacks or a jacket you could wear with this.

A.W: So I take it Easter Sunday was the day to go and show off your new duds that you got?

W.D: Yeah, no matter what it was, even if it was a pair of socks, a pair of shoes. Yeah. I remember going to Summer Hill when we didn't wear tennis shoes or shoes that had cardboard in the bottom. Back then you'd get your new soles for something like three or four dollars but I can remember that well. I remember my brother, he always had his shoes shined. Didn't want nothing in the bottom of those. Cardboard shoes. That's all the families I can think of right now, I'll think of a lot of people after you leave, probably.

A.W: Well, a lot of those families that you mentioned, are they still now actively involved in the community?

W.D: Oh yeah. The Roberson family was in the New Frontiers, one of the Wheelers was in the New Frontiers, Mr. Carter I bet you was in that; Elder Jones, the Jones family, he worked at Lockheed. So when the New Frontiers was formed, you know, a lot of black folks couldn't have anything an this group of men would meet to help work on things, even back in '62.

A.W: Have you been a member since the beginning?

W.D: No, I've only been there about fifteen or twenty years.

A.W: Only. That's a long time still! [chuckle]

W.D: The things that these people did, a lot of folks don't know about but the reason they could do it, they didn't work in Cartersville. They all worked at Lockheed and you couldn't call this boss and say, "Fire that person." No good buddies for that group.

A.W: So that was common, if someone stepped up in the community to speak out, you had the fear of losing your job?

W.D: Oh absolutely. Everything you had. You might get put out—not that many people owned homes but you might get put out of your home or lose your job or something to get demoted, you know. There wasn't that many black supervisors anyway, but you know, you could just lose it. You ain't going to work for nothing.

A.W: So this New Frontier kind of developed out of people who didn't really work in Cartersville, saw a need and were trying to fill that need.

W.D: That's the group, fill a need.

A.W: And they're still active today, you're still active today.

W.D: Still active in trying to support the African-American community.

A.W: What types of things are you involved in today?

W.D: Oh, we've got a mentoring program for like eight to twelve years old, we try to provide a role model, positive role model; we provide scholarships, about five scholarships every year; we recognize—this may sound racist—we recognize African-American kids if they excel, we've got an academics award; if they get the highest grade in math or if it's some club, you know, that you would not be recognized at graduation or anything, you know, they may be the third or fourth student in athletics, we recognize them and we give out best athlete award; finally let some females win; we've got what we call the Frontier scholar which is typically the person with the highest average in school or probably one of the best all around students.

A.W: Was that from Cartersville or Bartow County?

W.D: It includes Bartow County. And I hate to say this, but we recognize African-American kids, trying to be positive to them, you know, and it started years ago with the recognition and it still carries over today. A lot of time all you need to do is give a scholarship to get them in that first semester, first quarter, they could find a way so that's a good boost to be able to pay tuition or buy books, whatever. We still do that. We sponsor some other little basketball teams, recreational type things; we do several different fund-raisers; we've helped people with their utility bills and other needs. I can recall a couple of years ago, there was a lady from Adairsville that had to have these special glasses, some unusual prescription and she didn't have the money so I think they taken her money and we paid—and that was many years ago—we donated like \$175.00 which was unreal in the 1980s. You didn't have that kind of money. We never told a soul, even these people who would help with rent or even when somebody would get in trouble, we would go to the school on their behalf; or go to the sheriff's department, we've got an open invitation

to talk to them; the superintendents of schools always had a relationship with them and kind of, they've asked us at times to get some black folks to apply for some of these jobs.

A.W: So you have good relationship with the school system and different community organizations around here?

W.D: Oh yeah. Both county and city police departments. We don't have that much of a relationship with the city any more but the county sheriff, we've always been able to go to him. A lot of times you might not get anything done but you can sit down and he'll talk to you. And say how we feel that's not right or whatever. And with the school system you can still do the same thing.

A.W: Sounds like a good organization. It's important too, still to this day.

W.D: And the role models, these were men who had a decent job, a family man, you know, church members, who were not guys to just hang out at all these, you know, these guys drink a little bit, and did everything but they were positive role models. They always have been and I hope we always will be and help people. I mean in all sorts of ways, I can't even think of all the ways. One of our, I guess our goals or part of our charter was, you know, the betterment of the community. It didn't say African-Americans or Hispanics or anything but the betterment of the community, to help provide better employment opportunities, better education. And naturally we gear it toward trying to make sure these African-American kids had some opportunities. And they were presented with some information. A lot of times scholarships to black folks, we didn't know about it. There's tons of money out there, the grants you can get and we're still working on some of those, sharing information, getting facts, helping get people jobs. We still—I worked for Glad, a prominent manufacturer, I was, at one time I was assistant

department head over three other people. Somebody moved here and needed a job, “Okay, use my name.” You know, you had a reference and that was important. And then typically most of the people in the Frontiers were working people, well respected, so, you know, they don’t send just anybody.

A.W: Do you think that spawned out of the Brotherhood organization because I’ve heard about the Brotherhood Hall being similar in trying to help the community.

W.D: Yeah, they were similar but in some of those Brotherhood Halls there was females as well. They had different charters or whatever they call them. But now these men took a step toward education, you know, and trying to provide scholarships. We saw integration coming and it was a way that it wasn’t . . . a lot of those Brotherhoods were church related in a lot of cases, I mean, there was a lot of spiritual things. This group was not about spirituality. I mean, it was not affiliated with some church organization. These were guys that saw needs and saw mistreatment, knew about opportunities and had to have ways to get that information out so a little bit different.

A.W: Yeah. So the Brotherhood Halls were typically organization in the church?

W.D: A good bit of them. But I don’t know anything about them. My grandmother was a member of it and I was so little, you know, and, what do they call them, the Masons?

A.W: Masons, yeah.

W.D: The Masons and the Brotherhood Lodge. There are still some people, they still have what they call St. John’s Day at our church. They rotate it around. But I don’t know anything about them.

END TAPE 2, SIDE A

START TAPE 2, SIDE B

W.D: I don't know these steps and these type things; I've just heard some things going through it. But they did some good things, provide scholarships. But this was a group of men. For some reason black ladies could survive even if they were by themselves. I don't know why they did it but if you look back at history you'll see there were a lot of single parents and the black ladies survived but the men were kind of held back. There were more black female teachers than males; and when you had a male he was usually in charge, a principal or whatever, a basketball or football coach, something like that. I don't know.

A.W: So most of the teachers were female?

W.D: Oh yes. Absolutely.

A.W: At Summer Hill.

W.D: Yes.

A.W: And the administrators tend to be male like Professor Morgan?

W.D: Yes, yes. And his assistants usually, were always male from the time I was involved.

A.W: Well, to kind of gear off a little bit more of the Summer Hill community, I know that church is absolutely vital to the members of Summer Hill. Tell me about what you feel the role of the church is in the community?

W.D: Oh the churches actually helped with employment; there's still a lot of information in black churches that this company is hiring; if there were needs it was supplied through the churches; if the family got burned out or something everybody would give what they could, take up donations—still goes on today. Most churches have educators in them as well so they taught Sunday School, that type of thing, you know, and then even in black

churches you had an opportunity to, this goes on today, to get these black kids where they can get up in public and do public speaking, give some of that additional training whether it was a single parent family or even somebody who didn't come to church. Everybody didn't come to church. Teach them a little bit of discipline and spirituality and that camaraderie, you know, that support, that person that you can still tell a secret to with some people and not get it out. Some of the churches, and they still do it today, have scholarship, try to help get kids in the school. Always trying to make contacts to help some individuals. Sort of like what the New Frontiers did. I think we took it to a different level, a different organization doing it. Black church has always been big on education, I mean, some of our parents, and some even before that couldn't read and write, but they learned to read the Bible. Everybody has the opportunity today if they want to read but traditionally black churches, it don't take any thought, they didn't. A man read or the pastor read or one of the teachers read and that was it. It's all changed today. It's a lot better. You know, I think when there were meetings, community type meetings where something needed to be done, it was always at a church, always at a black church. It had to be a little bit of a secret, you know, depending on what was going on.

A.W: So did the church, like I know you attend Mt. Zion, how long have you attended Mt. Zion?

W.D: Hm. Since I was twelve years old in '53. I joined when I was twelve.

A.W: Did the church really take any political stances? You said that sometimes they had to have the community meetings kind of in secret; were they taking a political stance against something?

W.D: That happened but there was not, you know, certain issues that were not very, very few blacks running for any offices. I'm talking about when I was a teenager. A lot of the, I guess employment was one big thing; trying to get people jobs, trying to help keep kids in school. The politics that's even spoken of now, you know, we need the, it might not be a choice, but you don't want that other person. I can remember hearing those stories when I was coming up.

[side conversation]

A.W: There's a rainbow? Oh wow.

[tape off briefly]

A.W: I haven't seen one like that in I don't know how long.

W.D: Not that big.

A.W: No.

W.D: It was a full arch.

A.W: Not that big at all. We were talking about church; can you describe the church, like type?

W.D: Well, we were a Missionary Baptist Church and I think our church was, maybe we're about to celebrate our 139 or 140th. The history of our church, the founding pastor actually preached a sermon about free—I don't remember, I can't quote the scripture off the top of my head but he was preaching a sermon, some of the blacks went back and told their—this was slavery days—told their masters what he preached about and they said, “We're going to be free.” So they built gallows to hang this pastor, Reverend Jeffrey Milner and they typically give you a last request and his request was, “Let me preach.” So they said he wanted to preach. They say he preached so hard, such a powerful sermon that they cut the rope and let him go. That's in our history books.

A.W: Wow.

W.D: So there were a few lynchings around here—I was too young—but the church has helped put that part up. We do have some Caucasian members now, you know, it's typically been black for a number of years but it's a pretty progressive church. We are one of the, well, for a few years Mt. Zion was the largest black church in northwest Georgia. Still probably ranks pretty high if you take out the Kennesaw ones. Probably Kennesaw has some bigger churches but we've still been, people say we're one of the leading churches on account of the, even [unclear] those folks, that church type of thing, you know, typically some of the more prominent families went there and always had a lot of education. It's a, I think our membership is somewhere around 700. We don't have that many active but still large membership.

A.W: It sounds like history is an important part of that church, that they've kept records.

W.D: Oh, we keep documentation and believe it or not, I've known five pastors in my life, in my fifty-three years and I've got a photograph of all five. In my computer I put all five of them together. One that everybody knew from my age was Ralph Mitchell. I have a separate picture of him and I took a picture of the other four at his funeral and I just put them together in a shot. My pastor, he says, "Who is that man?" He said he knew the other four but he says, "Who is that?" I told him, "Reverend Mitchell." He said, "It can't be!"

A.W: [laughter] "How did you do that?"

W.D: Yeah. He couldn't believe it. You got me! But it's nice. I blew one up for our anniversary which is coming up the fourth Sunday of this month.

A.W: That'll be nice.

W.D: Yeah, that'll be nice. Yeah, everybody hasn't seen that so I'll get it framed, it'll be nice for the church to have. Yeah.

A.W: What about music when you describe your church? What about music?

W.D: You know black folks like gospels, it's a little different that traditional southern gospel. I mean, music has always been a part of African-Americans, even from when we were slaves. There was something about the music, a lot of stories told, a lot of plans were shared, you know, for slaves, one of the few places you could go and probably speak out. Our music today—fortunately our church has six different choirs which is unusual for any black church. Two youth choirs, male chorus, then three different mixed choirs. We rotate Sundays. Typically the two youth sing on the same Sunday, I mean, they share different parts of the service. They sing something. And then we've got what's called a mass choir which is everybody and that mass sings on the fifth Sunday. That's why we have a choir anniversary and it's important. Seems like it's an important part of our service. I guess typically music enhances the service, you know. It may be entertainment but it's a lot of—it probably is entertainment—but it's still one way to get people active in the church, to give them an opportunity, you know, and get them there. It helps them keep them coming regular. Somewhere along the line they should have gained something from it. But I think that's true probably of every black church, they've got two musicians. As long as I can remember, from the days of Reverend Mitchell days, after I joined the church at twelve years old--I was going before that—he started what was called a Pastor's Choir which was teenagers. A little bit above elementary school but teenagers. And we were the biggest choir of anybody because all of the kids, you know, all the teenagers sang and, you know—have you ever heard the song “Oh Happy Day”?

A.W: Hm-hm.

W.D: That was one of the songs that we sang. And that was real popular. I mean, still we got two different youths and that's one of the ways to keep the kids a little disciplined you know, in a group setting. Because a lot of them aren't even in school yet so all they have to do is stand up there. I can remember the old lady that donated the church its first organ. Her son was killed in Vietnam War, one of those missing-in-action planes—he was a pilot—he was shot down and no remains and I think part of the money she got from the government she bought an organ and it is still there. And she put in there thirty years ago. Any anybody that ever comes out of church loves our organ. It's a Hammond Organ and it is fabulous.

A.W: The sound quality is different.

W.D: It's still there. Even these keyboards and things don't sound like our organ. You know, our church is still one of those places where a lot of, it's still a community event. They say Mt. Zion is still the biggest church. Martin Luther King celebrations, the Emancipation programs, still when we had the churches, the graduation was always held at Mt. Zion. That church service always was held at Mt. Zion for all the black folks and it's still there. Some renovation is happening to the church but it's still the biggest church and still pretty active in the community. It's got a lot going on for the bank, that type of thing. But music, I think, not because I'm in it, but I think we've got the most unique male chorus that I've heard; we can sing in harmony with, a lot of times we can do six parts; most men's choirs sing one part where we can do—and we always have four. We've been, we've been very blessed with being trained, at least started with our

... I mean, everybody that hears us and we've had different musicians amazed that the men can sing in parts. So it's just kind of [unclear].

A.W: You mentioned about the people and the attendance in the church; I know it's primarily an African-American church and historically it is and lately whites have been coming and visiting the church; how does the church in general feel about that?

W.D: Oh, great. There's a family that was real close to our daughter, they joined our church, she's still one of my neighbors and she moved back to her father's church—she's married to a black guy—and she's comfortable, stayed there for several years. We've had few others and kids always come here. And I can recall a few years ago where our Pastor Choir swapped program pulpits with one of the other churches here in town for a day. Great Day! A white choir and a white minister leading our service and we did that at their service. I don't think that happens in many places, even in the metropolitan area.

A.W: It was an experience.

W.D: Great community relations. And it gave both congregations an opportunity to see first-hand you know . . . when you go to a funeral, we've always shared funerals, or you may go to some special event, but it was enlightening to both sides. Both of them got different music so they were just thrilled with our choirs and the sermons delivered what's called an "hupit" and a slightly different delivery but same words, same message, but different delivery so it was unique.

A.W: Yeah. Sounds like a neat experience. I'd like to see that. What types—I'm going to skip something here—we've heard the term lay leaders; I know that from what I've heard that's not typically Mt. Zion's terms for the . . .

W.D: We've got a layman's department. Lay leaders and Laymen's in black churches anyway, are not necessary ordained and we've got a laymen's men's department and we've got a female—we're in the Kennesaw Association—and typically most people refer to laymen as men of the church and usually you have a president—he does not have to be a deacon, does not have to hold any office in the church, you know, just members of the congregation. And you know, lay people can be deacons but ministers are usually not considered a layperson.

A.W: What is their role of the layman?

W.D: A layman is—another thing is camaraderie, some fellowship, some development in some cases, it's probably true in your family whether it was a male or a female, the male kind of sets the tone; he can either, in God's instructions, males first, the only one you can have a politicking male is I think it helps kids. Even though he may not be the dominant person or the wife may not be submissive but it's a structure and it works. I'm sure in your household it's important to have your dad around. I mean, everybody loves mother, I mean, mother . . . there's just something different about having some male influence. Men don't get that from mothers. Something probably even with you, but there's something for a daughter and a father as well. You know mama, but daddy is daddy. So I think that helps teach us something. We've got a lot of training involved and it is support of the pastor, you know, it is the training center primarily. And our layman's department has a breakfast every, the second and fourth Saturdays of each month. They generally invite every church and have different speakers come in on any subject; it doesn't have to be Biblical, any subject. We've had policemen come in, we've had the mayor come in, we've had people in the juvenile system that have talked about

recognizing drug paraphernalia and things that happen at school. We had a guy come in and do a little seminar on guns and how kids can hide them in coats. We saw a video, the guy had about twenty guns and you just saw him with a trench coat on and you'd never know that. Sharing that information, you know. We've had little outings where we've taken the kids fishing, you know, developing some kind of a relationship. Black teenagers have a lot of disadvantages, a lot of it may come from themselves you know, too many of them are in prison for not doing the things, not very positive, being into drugs and everything so this is a way to help develop them, teach them the way they should be. I'm not talking about family structure but there are other things to do than selling drugs.

A.W: Positive male role models within the community. Sounds like that's an important thing in Summer Hill. What types of things are preached about and have they changed in your fifty-three years there, the types of things that are preached about?

W.D: I think it's more of an effort of Bible study, at least under our current pastor. I can remember when I was coming up, Reverend Mitchell was there for nearly thirty years and he really didn't want his membership to bring a Bible. He's going to read it to you, he wanted to have enough faith and trust from his membership that he was going to read it correctly and he was going to preach on that. And now, you know, we got our own Bibles, you got to follow your minister. Know enough about stories, you read it for yourself and go back and study, so our pastor is big on education, big on knowing scriptures and knowing what he's talking about. Not just a person up there hollering at you and preaching to you. Both old and new Testament and there's a lot of relevant things today. Our pastor now makes a special effort to teach doing a part of his sermon.

It's not entertainment; you've probably seen television evangelists who run all over the stage and try to be popular.

A.W: Yeah, I've experienced some of that.

W.D: Don't play games. This is God's word. Trying to make us understand.

A.W: Yeah.

W.D: I forgot one thing I was telling you about this—when you asked about black role in politics—well, it still goes on. They get gifts for seeking office.

A.W: Would they speak at church or would they just attend and maybe point them out during the sermon?

W.D: Our pastor will not let one get up and speak, this current one. Before they would get up. You know, he will recognize them and say what office they may be and he'll say it right in front, I'm not telling you to vote for him, that's not my job, you go vote for who you want or vote that man.

A.W: Hint, hint, hint!

W.D: And he says if he--he's kind of unique—he'll say that, "All right, everybody that don't vote is not saved!"

A.W: Yeah, I've heard that voting is one of the important things that the church emphasizes to everybody.

W.D: Always.

A.W: Did you go through any changes yourself while attending this church as a result of going to Mt. Zion?

W.D: Oh I guess, you know, when you're a teenager; I guess you just join a church with the crowd. That was where a lot of my friends were members of Mt. Zion, my family, my

mother, and my grandmother were raised in Mt. Zion. My dad attended a different church; he didn't join that until five or six years before he died. But it was out in the county so we couldn't get to it. I became a deacon; I was saved early, really didn't know what it was, only aware that; I stopped drinking; I wasn't a hard liquor drinker but a little beer, still love it today but that's not the way to do it, you can't be a servant of God and embarrass his Kingdom, that type of thing. I learned how to type and help my wife and all, try to be head of the family. My wife knows her role and I know mine, share equally but try to be the head of my family and teach them the spiritual sides as well as trying to provide for them, that type thing. So I kind of rededicated myself. I'll have to admit, when I was in church, as long as I can remember, but not long after we were married, we tried to get established with a job and right out of school and working overtime and sleep late or whatever and kind of drift away awhile. That's kind of common with a lot of teenagers. And then as their parents say, they must be in bed on Sunday morning, can't stay up on Saturday night. And then you come back and there's still a gap in our church at that age group and you work hard to try to give that group something to do. They, too many of them want to be entertained and you've got to have their attention to study hard like, you know, there's a lot of times that you might say, "The sermon doesn't make sense. I didn't get it today." But then that makes me go study. "What are they talking about?" Whereas our youngest daughter, "He can't preach," but she remembers, but some of these kids are like, "He can't preach." But I think it helped my family, helped me on my job. I prayed once to make the step for total tithing, you know, going from what I bring home to that step of paying full time. I prayed about it. I got a raise that was to the penny.

A.W: Wow.

W.D: And I did that when I was chairman of the deacon board. One thing about our deacon board too, I mean, it's probably not, but for the last six years we've rotated chairs, typically in most black churches, once you're chairman of the deacon board, you're chairman for life. And it gave me an opportunity to I guess, build my character, you know, because when you deal, get involved with all the problems, all of the issues, all of the gossip, you're your pastor's closest ally. When he's away, the chairman of the deacon board is in charge. He might not preach but the chairman of the deacon board leads the service, I mean, that's the person who combats many things. He's in charge of everything that goes on just like a pastor is up there. I did that for two years. I learned, I learned to be a better listener. Not to be so judgmental, try not to, I always try to hear people and not stereotype anybody, but I can look beyond a person and I think that helped me. And being on the deacon board, you know, it's a different responsibility when you try to meet those qualifications and I think that's what changed me.

A.W: Yeah. Well, one of the last things that we want to talk about is kind of the school itself; you described Summer Hill School when ever you were drawing your map. Your original building I know was wood; the elementary school building was wood.

W.D: Yes.

A.W: And this building, was this one primarily, it's brick, right? I don't have photos of this.

W.D: This addition was brick; all of it was brick and block, that addition.

A.W: There's this L-shaped addition here.

W.D: Yes.

A.W: Okay.

W.D: That L was brick and everything.

A.W: And this was grades one through eight originally?

W.D: Yes.

A.W: Okay. And you left when you were in the fifth grade and went to this building.

W.D: Yes.

A.W: And did this go all the way up to twelfth grade?

W.D: Yes. By the time, I don't remember how many years—it might not say in that little package I gave you—but I'm trying to remember, it may have been through six or one through, I think it was one through eight and then nine, ten, eleven, twelve. But see, the difference is there were, it was a county school where the other first through eight grades and then see, you had to combine for city and county so there really was not enough room in that first building.

A.W: So is that basically why they kind of expanded?

W.D: Yes.

A.W: And you mentioned that you walked to school. Did the bus system, when did the bus system come into play? Or did most of the residents walk?

W.D: The county had a bus system, always had a bus system as long as I can remember. But the city schools didn't get a, there was no, I don't even remember then if there were buses for the white kids, I'm trying to think, but I know there were none for black until about 1965. There was a man named Mr. Perdue that actually started, got his own bus and started picking up kids. They had to pay a dime a week or something.

A.W: So you had to pay for the bus to pick you up.

W.D: Oh yeah, you had to pay for that. I guess he was affiliated with the school system but he started the first all black inter-city bus system. I walked to school from first grade to graduation.

A.W: But you probably lived close enough that it was just . . .

W.D: When we were on the hill it was close. It was probably a mile or so. That was good. I could go to everything then. I couldn't walk to Richmond at night. You had to pass through a couple of different white communities as well.

A.W: What were your favorite subjects in school?

W.D: Math. I was a straight A student, but I struggled and I had to work to do any language subjects.

A.W: Like English?

W.D: Oh yeah. Small sized math, just still, my kids still call me for problems for math. I was always excellent in math and it was my easiest subject and I could be three chapters ahead and I never . . . but I was not a very fast reader, I guess that was my worst and I never really liked to read. . . And my mother read seven days a week. I guess I saw her all buried in her book and it made me to where . . . but I did mention I was valedictorian, but I still had to work at any language or writing term papers.

A.W: Who were your favorite teachers?

W.D: I guess I got a ton of them. But I always felt that in every class, the homeroom teacher was my favorite, you know. I just felt that, it might not have been but Ralph Lowe was one of my favorite teachers. He taught me for four years. He taught me math, my subject.

A.W: Your favorite subject.

W.D: Yeah. Golly. The Morgans, Mrs. Morgan . . .

A.W: Is that Beatrice Morgan?

W.D: Yeah. I studied with her. I drove her to college once. She'll tell people today that her two daughters in laws were in college when we went in the tenth grade. She was getting her master's degree and she would go to Atlanta University and I think one or two nights a week I drove her to school, drove all the way to Atlanta. And here was two teenagers, three teenagers driving their car all over Atlanta for three hours while she was in class. So she was definitely one of my favorites. I was close to him, you know, Mr. Morgan. But Ralph Lowe was one. I had a French teacher, Rosetta Strickland, she still calls me her son, and my first grade teacher—I guess everybody loves their first grade teacher—

END TAPE 2, SIDE B

START TAPE 3, SIDE A

W.D: The first teacher that I had a crush on, Maggie Holland was her name. She's married now and lives in Tennessee. And once we moved to the new school she left a year or so after that. Robert Cotton was probably one of my favorites. He was the assistant principal, boy scout leader, Mr. Cotton had what everybody referred to as his sons. He always kept three or four boys that were sort of his friends—they were called his Cotton boys—you could drive his car, you administered his tests, you had a little job with him, you know.

A.W: Sounds like you were the favorite in most the cases. [laughter]

W.D: Ms. Morgan, I ran the, got out of class when I wanted to, I was kind of a runner by my senior year in school, you know, if they needed us to go pick up something Ms. Morgan

always sent me. She sent me to rent the movies, I was a band runner, kind of a section leader so the band directors—I didn't get along with one of them though. Ralph Lowe was my basketball coach so that was another closeness. He was our basketball coach and after he got married his wife worked at a different school, she worked at the elementary school. So right after school he'd give me his keys, well, I'd go pick up his wife, which, we didn't have a car. I thought it was great I could drive a new car. I'd go pick her up, take her home and come back to school and go to basketball practice. So I could drive his car any time I wanted to.

A.W: Wow.

W.D: And then, who else was one of my . . . Ms. Bessie Shell, she lived to be about 103. She was at our church. She was the one who had a store. Everybody loved Ms. Bessie. She would have to be one of my . . . there are probably a ton. I mean, I liked all of them. Oh, there was a fifth grade teacher or seventh grade. A lady named Ms. Anderson. I know I was her pet because my uncle was one of her pets and she always said I reminded her of my uncle and I had it made in her class. I remember for like our final exam—it might have been sixth grade—my average in math was like 105 or 106; I didn't have to take the final exam. And all the tests were on the board, I wrote the test on the board. And I got 100 or something and of course when I did, I said I got everything right but one answer, that's all I had to work for. Joe Weems, he was just a relative, I know I was one of his pets. He took me and a couple of other guys to a district science fair. And that was always a big thing, you know, competition and we won first place in the district. And we went up another step and it turned out my sister was living in Lewisville, Georgia, all the way down in Macon and they had a little educational publication, a little magazine and

they published our pictures in there. My sister's family, her in-laws saw that because they had that down there and they sent that to me. Joe Weems always talked about that picture. He was a sixth grade teacher. I can't even remember what that science project was now but that was a big thing. I liked everybody. Nancy Beasley was, you probably know her, she wasn't one of my favorite teachers, she never was, and I would pick her up. She was probably one of my toughest teachers.

A.W: Was she one of the strictest, do you think?

W.D: Yes, she was my English teacher and that was my toughest subject. And then she developed an advanced class which was unheard of and she picked students from the different grade levels, different high school classes and you know, when I was working with juniors and seniors or whatever, I don't remember my whole group, and she worked me so hard! I had to make an A. I mean, I was going to make an A but I had to work too hard and she always, she's still critical today. When I talk in front of her, I think about what I'm going to say. I make sure it's the right tense, pronounce it right. She's always strict. And she made a lot of people better. Today I would say she was one of my least favorite but one of my most influential teachers. Ms. Smith, my—the lady that taught the other first grade, she always loved me, I don't know why but she always love me and she still calls me her son. But she never taught me. But I was one of her favorites. I can remember when I was in high school I could leave my class and go to this one.

A.W: To go visit whoever, huh?

W.D: I'd go to the elementary school and go in every teacher's class and say hi. See if they need some help, direct their class, color for them. Ms. Smith was probably my favorite.

She would have to be one of my tops. First grade teacher. I knew I was her pet. Even till I graduated, still today, I think I'm still one of her pets.

A.W: [chuckle] Did you belong to any clubs or organizations affiliated with the school? I know you said the band.

W.D: And the boy scouts. I played band, played trumpet for four or five years; and I was a member of the basketball team; we had a glee club. I haven't seen that in my notes. That was a . . . when you graduated did they do memory books?

A.W: Memory books, yes, I have one from when I was a senior but you know they stopped doing the cards, you know, with everybody's name and you'd trade cards. We never did that for some reason but I remember my sister did that but she's nine years older than I am. She would do some of her cards. Did they do a memory book and a yearbook?

W.D: One of the biggest racists in the world, Lester Maddox, was governor.

A.W: How is he in that picture?

W.D: We went to the state capitol; that was one of the . . .

A.W: Oh, I remember a governor teaching classes one time, Governor Talmadge. He was extremely racist too.

W.D: Yeah. But that one was raciest.

A.W: What was his name again?

W.D: Lester Maddox. He owned a restaurant and passed out ax handles to keep the blacks out when we tried to integrate.

A.W: Where did he live?

W.D: He was in Atlanta in the '60s and all. He got re-elected a few times. But it turned out I think he employed more blacks than any previous governor.

A.W: Do you mind if I take a picture of that? A digital picture because we could put that with our stuff.

W.D: The class of '68.

A.W: The class of '68. I'll try to see if I can get that in there. This is my husband's camera. Ah-hah, look at that; he'd be proud how quick I got the screen to come up. I was playing with it last night. See, I got the class of '68 in there too. Yeah, he can probably change it to the high quality, super high quality, but that's okay.

W.D: [Unclear] were pretty big. I was in so much, I was in every organization. I was in the, we had like a little drummer; I was in the play. Wow, this is taking me back thirty-five years.

A.W: Wow. Well, I did want to let you know about some of the artifacts that you have mentioned; you don't necessarily have to donate, you can loan in your name would be kept on there and it would be on loan from you for a period of time and if you ever felt that you wanted that returned it could be returned. And we've had some people who have loaned pictures because we're scanning everything at the school on our computers and things like that and Dr. Lands makes sure that, you know, they get returned as well.

W.D: Okay. Why don't you take a shot of my band uniform? I may donate it later.

A.W: Yeah, but she said do hold on to something like that until the community center gets a little more finished.

W.D: I only know of one other existing. We had a student body, a student council, I was always on that.

A.W: Is this some of your memories that you wrote down, just like names in the books?

W.D: Yeah, yeah. You know, I wrote that down, those two things about that protest the last year and the—this thing's torn apart, it's thirty-five years old—I was always either president of my class or vice-president, every year.

A.W: Yeah.

W.D: We—I can't think of this other group, maybe it was YMCA or something like that, we had like a local chapter. It wasn't very big. I was on that. I guess that's about it.

A.W: You were very active as far as organizations go in school. What did you typically do after school, like on a typical day when school was out?

W.D: Oh, if it was good weather, when we were in high school—you talking about high school or elementary?

A.W: Well, both.

W.D: We would play a lot. Later on when we moved to this school, the Rec was the place.

A.W: Oh yeah, you talked about that earlier.

W.D: That was the gathering place. And we would stay there till dark or we would play basketball. A lot of basketball was played then. I was so little I didn't think I was interested in football. I was too little to play. So I wouldn't let anybody hurt me. I was always there. Church was full of activities, you know, and I was involved in, let's see, [unclear].

A.W: [chuckle] Yeah.

W.D: And that took a lot of hours.

A.W: [chuckle] Yeah.

W.D: I worked, you know, I had a little job for part of it. I worked a lot of nights, you worked two or three hours after school doing different things except when I was playing ball or in the band. I practiced my trumpet a lot.

A.W: Yeah, after school?

W.D: I'd go home and even when I wasn't playing my horn I always would practice. I spent a good bit of time developing myself on that. That's about it. I worked a little bit but I was running with the guys, skating, playing.

A.W: Do you feel you received an equal education to that of white schools at Summer Hill?

W.D: Let me tell you, we had some different subjects, we didn't get to some math classes like calculus and so forth; we never got new books, we always got reconditioned school books because—we didn't know that at that time, you know, "These are your new school books." And you'd be flipping through and you'd see somebody's name in there, pages missing, three pages missing, that type of thing. I think our teachers made up for what we didn't know because they taught us everything in the books that they could but they taught us a lot of lessons on how to survive. So there were not that many opportunities early for me, I mean, during the Summer Hill days, so they tried to get us prepared so we would have some opportunities, when opportunities came we were prepared. But you know, we didn't have—that band uniform was one of the first uniforms we ever had and it lasted, I don't know how long the band was around but probably fifteen, twenty years we had to wear the same ones. You just moved around till you'd find one to fit; some were too big, some were too little, we didn't, never got the athletic equipment, nothing new. But as far as, I think that I learned a lot about life in Summer Hill; I might not have got all the formal education but I thought we learned a lot of morals, that think was taught

to us, respect for elders. You were even taught to respect females. You know, if somebody . . .

A.W: You had female teachers!

W.D: Yeah, but the male teachers, we would have seminars where the principal or one of the assistant principals would get up and say, “You better not mess with one of these girls. I don’t want to hear of a fight.”

[coughing]

A.W: I’m sorry.

W.D: No problem. You want some water.

A.W: I don’t know what’s gotten in to me either; it’s this drainage that gets me every time when this allergy season rolls around.

W.D: We were, I think one advantage I guess is that when you were slower, some of the kids that didn’t advance as quick, got more attention. I wouldn’t say that I was, I guess I was blessed with being able to do my homework and get excellent grades but I saw some people who didn’t do well get attention, instead of just. . . . That person probably got more attention than I did in my classes. And it wasn’t just at school. I know they’d have to come late or the teachers would have them come by their house and all. I think we missed that and it may be too that all of the regulations and all the forms the states require now may be where teachers don’t have, at least they don’t devote as much time to the, on the perimeters on the slower kids.

A.W: Were class sizes typically smaller? You mentioned there were a lot of kids in the one building though.

W.D: Yeah, but my graduating class I think had thirty-seven.

A.W: Yeah, that's small to today's standards.

W.D: Right. We didn't have, I don't even remember, probably Deborah Livsey's class was the largest graduating class ever. If you look on the sheet you can see that we didn't have big classes. I mean, there were a lot of people who went to school who didn't graduate. They had to go get a job or go into the military, whatever they could do. The families were a lot larger than today and as soon as you got of age you had to go get you a little work or whatever. But I don't ever remember, and that class was so big they had two different homerooms.

A.W: Wow.

W.D: So that was unusual for us.

A.W: I think I'll take you up on that water.

W.D: We didn't have material things. What we had we were taught well.

A.W: They'd teach you things that weren't in the books.

W.D: Well, you know, we had a little typing class, you know, all those old typewriters. I guess I was—my senior year we got the first electric typewriter ever, at Summer Hill and I got it. I think we had two, I got it. I was still a pet! And I learned how to type and that was unusual for boys to take typing at that time but it helps me so much more now on my computer, you know, at least I know where most of the letters are. But it's so different for you, you're in this computer age. Guys, you know, will get a job, even in the military or the service station or a janitor, even when you could, if you got on one of these new first job or janitorial jobs.

A.W: You mentioned you weren't much affected by desegregation because you had pretty much graduation but what was your family's reaction to desegregation if they had one?

W.D: Well, I talked about going to Cartersville High School, transferring to the white school before my graduation class, because my wife did, she went ahead, a lot of her friends went ahead and got started but I don't remember any reaction from my—I was gone at first—my brother, only one at home, he was seven years younger than I was and he was in the elementary school so I didn't have much first line contact with my family is what I'm saying, of what was going on. You know, when I went to college I had a white roommate so that was my rude awakening. You know, it was small number of blacks but the incidents, a few from the students and people in that area, but nobody ever hurt me, I got my feelings hurt, but no physical or threatening to hurt me. So I thought that was a blessing to be away from that type thing.

A.W: Do you think that was typically the experience of members of Summer Hill? You didn't really experience true violence of the situation; it was more of a threat that was always kind of unspoken to that area?

W.D: Yeah. You knew not to be around that person, you just don't watch that person, don't go around that girl, you know. I can tell you this; I remember vividly during our protest . .

.A.W: When you walked out because of Professor Morgan?

W.D: The Ku Klux Klan rode by.

A.W: Goodness.

W.D: I mean, it was serious back then.

A.W: There was about eight of you, that you listed in that book that participated in that.

W.D: We had the whole class.

A.W: But you got the whole class involved.

W.D: We got the whole school involved.

A.W: Oh wow.

W.D: We shut the school down.

A.W: Yeah. So everybody walked with you.

W.D: Everybody. Even elementary kids. We left. And the whole high school marched downtown. We didn't get to the streets, we walked down the sidewalks and everybody was looking at us. Boy, we were . . .

A.W: Wow.

W.D: You know, the Klan, and then the New Frontiers stepped in and I said, "When will they ride by our house?" They had guns and those men were, not all of them, but a lot of them were pretty boys and they weren't going to go after us. They didn't. I don't know much about lynching, gang beatings, I mean, not first-hand; I heard about it. I have to say that Cartersville has probably been a unique area, probably had less racial issues than any other community, big or small. Kids fight, that type thing, but as far as that transition being reasonably smooth, I think Cartersville, Bartow County, we would have been a model for everybody else.

A.W: So basically, what was your relationship with white families before like '68, '69? You had, and did it change after '68, '69? That type of time frame.

W.D: The only involvement I really had on a regular basis were the family that my mother worked for.

A.W: The Connors.

W.D: Right. I mean, we knew them, we saw each other, we'd speak, but that was it. I'd go to their house to help my mother with some things, I raked leaves, and I knew them. And I knew this man that I never liked that my daddy worked for. I never liked him but I knew

him. His brother actually ran it. He was the one that was more fair and always would give my dad a little something. He didn't make any money but he'd give him a couple of bucks, you know, to kind of supplement. He'd say, "John go take that truck and go do what you need to do." But the other man was hard. I don't know how my daddy was so dedicated to him. I hated him. I guess that's a bad word to use but I still have no use for that man. If he walked in here today, I mean, I'd have nothing, nothing positive to think about him. He supplied our family but he denied us a lot of things. I didn't play with any white kids when I was in school the whole time. We always lived right in the middle of a black neighborhood and it just, I mean, just every now and then, I mean . . .

A.W: You also didn't have transportation like you were talking about to let you go to other areas.

W.D: Yeah, we walked from Richmond to the West End, I mean, and we knew routes where there were no . . . for me, because like I said, we didn't have a neighbor that was real close, not any kids. You know kids will get along and play but I didn't have any. I mean, I just went around it. And when I went to college I had a roommate, I had two different ones, and I mean, we got along like brothers. But there were some other people that didn't get along. But I don't know of anything surprising.

A.W: Yeah. Were those few relationships that you did have with those different whites, did that change after the late '60s? Like you mentioned with the other gentlemen it didn't.

W.D: Not really. I grew up, this family that I knew, she speaks to me today. I see her, you know, and she even—when my daughter got married ten years ago, I don't think we sent her an invitation because my mother had been dead for several years but she read it in the paper and she brought one of the nicest gifts. I knew her from my mother, you know.

And then she recognized the name because it had been just very little contact between us after . . . because I'm talking about several years. And then, my dad still worked for that family at the service station and I remember . . .

A.W: After you kind of went and started your own thing you didn't go back?

W.D: Even after my dad, the man sold the business, my dad kept working for that family; he went and was like his caretaker in his yard, took care of his yard and worked out there. I don't if my dad ever got a raise. I don't think he ever got above fifty cent an hour. I don't know if he ever did.

A.W: For all those years?

W.D: All those years. He may have got to seventy-five cent an hour. I don't know if he ever brought home more than \$50.00 or \$60.00 a week. Ever. Even when he worked for those folks all that time. That's the one negative thing I got about my dad; I just couldn't see how he could deny me things, you know. I mean, I love him and I thought about how I come up an excellent mechanic because of him and that's what I did on my job in engineering because he taught me how to use my hands, taught me fishing, gave me great work ethics, but I couldn't see how he could work for that man. When other people worked for Lockheed who were making four or five times the amount of money, you know. If you were making two dollars an hour that was good money back then. Or if you were even making a dollar an hour for all those hours was good money. And here this man never gave . . . promised him things for fifty years, promised him a home, promised him a car and he never got a dime. He died a pauper. I remember when he was, his health started to fail, he was still out there trying to cut grass. He made so little that I offered him a full time job to come over to my house; "Come cut my grass. I'll pay

you as much as he did. I'll give you my truck to drive." All he had to do was just come over to the house where we lived. And he never would. He had to work for Mr. Carter.

A.W: So he still worked for him?

W.D: Oh yeah, he wouldn't' do it.

A.W: Wow.

W.D: Then he worked for his son after he died and then he finally died. Never got a penny. He worked eighty-four hours a week.

A.W: Oh my goodness. Now I gave you my cough.

W.D: No, I cough a lot. That some of the tougher things I remember. I remember when the man sold the business, the man came to our house, he bought the Texaco distributorship, the gas distributorship, he was a millionaire. That man originally owned all the way back from Highway 20 to Canton. He sold that property; he owned it all until he died. That's why nothing was every built up through there until the last twenty-five years or so. But like I said, when I was driving the truck there wasn't nothing up there; he owned it all. It was all woods. But I don't remember . . . my relationship with whites really came after I got out of college, on my job, because when you were the minority, even on my job, but I had some excellent relationships. Obvisouly there were some things that happened, but I had friends and even relationships where I could use his truck, I could go to his house; we would eat out of the same lunchbox and it didn't matter; if I had something he knew he could get half of it, if he had something, you know, we'd share. Was that during Summer Hill days? No, nothing. Never went to a, I don't think I ever went to a football game or a basketball game at Cartersville High School until these three or four blacks transferred to Cartersville High. I remember seeing a few white guys that would come to some of our

football games but there were some families that lived next door to white families and they were obviously a lot closer. And they would go watch each other play football, through the fence in some cases, but you know, they would, that was the field that I was seeing. And I didn't even know them.

A.W: Do you think there's a place for all black schools in today's society?

W.D: Well, I heard one of my close friends say that integration was a step backwards for black folks in some cases. I mean, a lot of us talk and all that type of thing, the disadvantage

END TAPE 3, SIDE A

START TAPE 3, SIDE B

W.D: . . . in special education classes. A lot of times they don't know, can't do, but they don't pass some of these tests. And those kids that really, some of them need a little bit of special attention and extra help don't get it at white schools. I mean, it's going on today. It even goes on where my granddaughter is; they want to put her in special ed or in some classes. "What are you talking about?" "If she needs some help you tell us what she's not doing." You look at these alternative schools and it was something like ninety percent and then the whites get out. Prison systems, you just think, just look at the distant pictures today; I guess we, you know, those of us that do well, I mean, get A's are at an advantage. Those of us that are below average, it's negative for them. So with my kids, my granddaughter, being in New Frontiers we're always involved in things; we've read those statistics and found, you know, it's been maybe public knowledge, but we've got some educators that will share some things about Africa-Americans, and a lot of cases, the Hispanics scored more on this standardize test. I got the data and looked at it and

some of these new tests come out the CRCT, our kids won't pass it and not that they don't know it, it's just that they don't do well interpreting some of these written statements about, you know. And I know that's part of life but it kind of gets to it.

A.W: Yeah. I understand. Just to kind of round it off to talk about your experience just in a larger sense, you talked about your family for a while didn't have a car; when did they finally get like the first car, TV, phone?

W.D: We had a television early; we had a phone but we didn't keep it very long, we couldn't pay the bill. I remember my daddy finally bought a car and I don't know, we called it Charlie; it was a four-door car with the doors that opened out and you know, it wasn't fit to drive anywhere but, and I don't think I ever went, maybe it was a few year before I turned sixteen maybe we had it. And then the next car we got was inherited and we probably got that about my senior year. But most of my transportation was one of my buddies. Actually, one of the Morgan's the oldest one, married a girl from here, Paula's cousin and we double-dated. I mean, I had a ride every Friday, Saturday, Sunday. We rode together, you know. It was just five blocks up. I'd keep that car for a while and we went to movies, went out to get hamburgers or something, we were together; I'd drive, he drive, you know, that type of thing. I guess we had a television; I remember when we lived near Richmond I remember we had a television.

A.W: Yeah, you had talked about that. How you had to wait.

W.D: I don't know, the first colored television we ever got, we're talking about my parents, my brother was in the Air Force, I'd say he was about five years older—at least he was five grades ahead of me—so after he got married, it wasn't too long when he got married after he was in the Air Force, he was transferred from one place to the other. I don't remember

if he was transferred from Texas to maybe New Hampshire and he didn't have enough room for that television.

A.W: [laughter]

W.D: Twenty-five [unclear]. My mother kept that thing after it quit working for ten years. It was not ours, it was my brother's.

A.W: You talked about how you felt that everybody kind of shared everything, is kind of what I'm getting the feeling of, you know, when they had a car or somebody else would let someone else loan it; but when did you actually get your own first car on your own?

W.D: After I was married. My wife and I bought a car. Well, we hadn't been married too long and I started working and needed transportation so we bought a car. Used Dad's car was not till, like I say, but for me it was when I went to work, it was Union Carbide at that time then we bought a car. We have had one ever since. Got too many now. [chuckle]

A.W: Yeah, everybody seems to have to have one to get around. We've talked about the civil rights movement and how you became involved on the local level; did you ever become involved on a bigger level than Summer Hill?

W.D: Martin Luther King was killed in '68; I actually went to the funeral.

A.W: Which was in downtown.

W.D: I went to the viewing with Mr. Cotton, he took us, he took his boys. I didn't actually walk in the funeral procession because somebody had to drive his car from Ebenezer to over near the Clark College area, somebody had to drive. So me and one of the other guys drove his car over but it was about three others of us that actually walked down there. Now as far as being in any other demonstrations, we didn't have transportation to go anywhere.

A.W: Was that part of the procession, the actual march? Because I heard that a march was kind of organized around King's viewing, a civil rights march. So that procession was the march basically.

W.D: The one that I'm talking about was actually at his body, I got to view his body. I'm not sure, it seems like it was either at Morehouse or Spelman College. I got in line for two hours, three hours, just to walk by and view his body. Now they had the funeral service at Ebenezer, you know, he had to be invited for other folks. And at that time it was on a hill, a real high bank and we got there early enough that I stood up on the banks with some other guys and we could see the funeral right in the front of the church so we got to see many, many people. I saw Wilt Chamberlain in person. He came to the funeral. He was that much taller than everybody else. I was a senior in high school and we were just, everybody was pointing out different people. And I saw the little wagon, we watched it roll on. I saw them load him up and that type of thing.

A.W: Speaking of people who are important, who is the person who you feel is the most positive influence in your life, or who was your hero, so to say?

W.D: I guess if I got a role model, it had to be Ralph Lowe, he was one of my favorite teachers, he was my man teacher. He's still one of my best friends. I actually called him one of my dad's. He's ten years older than I am so he came right out of college. But his daughter calls me and my wife uncle and aunt; he was always one that was, right out of college, he was always sort of neat-looking. He commanded respect from everybody, you know, he was, he wasn't that strict but he didn't put up with anything. You know, he was not Ms. Beasley and you've probably talked to her a little bit, she was, you know, she was so tough. He was tough but in a different way. He didn't get tough until he had

to get your attention. And I was his pet; I know I was his pet! No doubt about that. I was his guinea pig, I always got the blame for everything that went wrong, and I got straight A's. He was, you know, a family man, married, went to church every Sunday, was a deacon, he was helpful to people. If somebody needed something he was always that positive person. I always wanted to emulate some of the things that he does. And he's still one of my role models because he's still somebody I look up to. And I had a little twist, we both belonged to a Christian movement and you have to have somebody that you answer to, and he picked me. I was like, 'You can't do that.' It tore me up. I was quite emotional for that. He's got me involved in New Frontiers; he got me involved in Sunday school when he went to Mt. Zion and he was always at church, even during our school. He's probably the one—him and the Morgans, the Morgans were always influential—but Ralph Lloyd and Robert Cotton. Those would be my two most influential. Mr. Cotton was assistant principal and boy scout leader, teacher and everything.

A.W: Now, when did you leave Summer Hill?

W.D: I graduated in '68.

A.W: And then you went to college. Did you move back to Summer Hill after you came back in from college or was that when you got married and moved out this way?

W.D: I got married right after I got back, we moved back out here after we'd been married—I lived with my parents for a little while—and then we moved up here; and then we went to Texas; and then we . . .

A.W: Did you go to Texas to seek employment?

W.D: Well, my brother was in the military out there but he was retired from, he was out of the military but his wife was there and my brother talked me into quitting my job; he came home one Christmas, told me about everything going on out there, “Come on, you can stay with us till I get you a job where I work.” You know, thoughts of a big town and everything and we went out there, three months never found a job. Quit a job. I went to the employment office, talking to a white guy, filled out my application and everything he asked me what I want and I told him, sought what I was making and he said, “You won’t make that much money out here.” I think minimum wage was like \$1.60 at that time, I was making like \$2.39 which was, that might seem like nothing to you but in 1969 or ’70 that was decent money, good money for Cartersville. The only people that made any more money on an hourly basis in Cartersville were people who worked at Lockheed or some other place like that. But I’ve been here for about thirty-something years, thirty-two years, thirty-three years.

A.W: But is there anything else that you remember about the map that we can finish up with?

W.D: I don’t know. I can tell you some things about this school. There was, the band room was under the gym, I didn’t think about that. You want to add that?

A.W: Yeah, add that in here.

W.D: You remember the band room, don’t you babe?

__: Hm-hm.

W.D: You remember where it was, right inside the gym?

__: Hm-hm.

W.D: Downstairs, that was the gym.

__: It was right on the side.

W.D: You had to go all the way down the side of it. I don't see anything else; I mean, this little building right here was important. And then I guess the lunchroom, where was the lunchroom. I'll put that down.

A.W: You mind if I take a photograph of you doing the memory map?

W.D: Not really.

A.W: You don't mind?

W.D: I don't mind.

A.W: Okay. This way we can show people [unclear].

W.D: I'll kind of fake it.

A.W: You can just work on it.

W.D: All right.

A.W: You don't necessarily have to pose.

__: Take it over here, I don't like that side.

W.D: Oh, she's just taking this.

__: While you're writing on the map?

A.W: I'll get another one over there.

__: Yeah, I like this side.

A.W: [laughter] Here, I'll try to get more of the doorway there. There we go. That's a good picture.

W.D: You want a picture of my uniform?

A.W: Yes, I do want a picture of your band uniform. I've heard about it.

__: You've heard about my uniform?

A.W: Well, you had told me about it. I couldn't wait to see it.

END OF TAPE