

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

**Interviewed with:** Elmer Felton  
**Interviewed by:** Melissa Massey  
**Location:** Etowa Housing Authority  
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**Transcribed by:** Diana Godwin; October 2004

**THE FOLLOWING ORAL HISTORY HAS NOT BEEN EDITED AND MAY CONTAIN MIS-SPELLINGS OR OTHER ERRORS DUE TO LACK OF FAMILIARITY WITH PARTICULAR PLACES OR PEOPLE. USERS ARE ADVISED TO LISTEN TO THE ORAL HISTORY RECORDINGS IF A NAME IS IN QUESTION.**

(Tape 1, Side A.)

M.M: Can you state your name for me?

E.F: Elmer Beasley Felton.

M.M: And when and where were you born?

E.F: Bartow County, September 23, 1949.

M.M: And did you have any siblings?

E.F: I have a younger sister and an older brother.

M.M: And what were their names?

E.F: My brother's name is Loyd Franklin Beasley, and my sister's name is Danny.

M.M: And who else did your household consist of?

E.F: My parents, Loyd and Catherince Beasley.

M.M: And what did your family do for a living?

E.F: My father was an electrician for Good Year, and my mother was a homemaker.

M.M: And what do you think of when you think of Summer Hill?

E.F: Fun. I had lots of fun at Summer Hill, and the teachers, because I thought they were so very, very stern at that time, but it was very good because it prepared me for college, little did I know it was going to be like that, but everything that I needed for college they prepared us for.

M.M: And where did you live when you lived in Summer Hill?

E.F: Where did I live?

M.M: Where did you grow up?

E.F: In Cartersville, right here in Cartersville on Carters Street, I spent time here and visited my Grandparents who lived in (unintelligible).

M.M: Okay, can you imagine walking into the house you grew up in and describe it for me?

E.F: Sure, because it's the same house I live in now. (laughing) Well I moved back to Cartersville to take care of my parents, because they are in the 90s, well my mother is in the 90s, my father recently passed last year, and then we didn't walk in we usually just ran in to get our things to play and ran back out, but usually my mom was cooking or sewing, because she sewed for the neighborhood, and generally that's what it was, everybody had to be off the streets by the time lights came on. You know you heard that in jokes and everything like that but it was true, every kid that was out in the yard playing or anything like that had to be in if the street lights came on, you were in your yard, and coming home is virtually about the same thing the house is still the same. The street has changed a little bit, because they have torn down some of the old houses and built up apartments, play grounds, and things like that now.

M.M: Now what's the yard like outside?

E.F: Well when I was growing up I thought it was a huge yard, and it's huge now when I have to cut the grass, its just a medium sized yard.

M.M: Did you play in the yard as a child?

E.F: I played in the yard, all the neighborhood kids, our house was one of the gathering places for the neighborhood kids to come and play, and we had a walkway and then another little step that led to the sidewalk, that you didn't play on unless you were you know going home, you were on your way home then you were there. As you got older we would skate on the sidewalk, ride our bicycles through the yard, just general kid stuff, hide and seek, and all those little games, tag, we played (unintelligible). We had a pretty good baseball, I don't know how we did it, but we played baseball in our yard, which is not a big yard, but like I said when you are a little kid its huge, and basically it was just a fun place to be.

M.M: Now what was your relationship like with your neighbors, did they visit regularly?

E.F: Like I said once before, the adage, it takes a village to raise a child, everybody knew you, and they took care of you and if they saw you doing anything you weren't suppose to be

doing, you were reprimanded and then you were sit home and you were reprimanded again. I had very caring neighbors of which they moved away to other areas in the city, but they're still like family, and that's the way it was, there was no you know, get out of my yard, stay out of my yard, or anything like that, everybody was like another parent, and you respected them, and they treated you as like part of their family.

M.M: Now what was your role in the household?

E.F: I was the middle child, I suffered from middle child syndrome. (laughing). I had an older brother and a younger sister, and I was kind of the bouncer in between, and my mother gave me responsibilities like as we were growing up you got older, you had to learn how to cook, well you learned how to manage your house, you learned how to cook, you learned how to clean, and you learned how to just household things like that, sew, you had to know how to hem and darn, then you darned a sac you didn't throw it away and buy another one, or you ripped out a hem, you had to re-hem the hem, and things like that. My daddy and my brother normally took care of the outside, and my mother and I took care of the inside.

M.M: Now did you share dinner or supper with your whole family every night?

E.F: Every night we had dinner together, we had breakfast together, and you had to eat breakfast, I don't care how late you were for school, you sat there and ate it, because it was your fault because you got up too late to rush, but we had all our meals together, it was not a you doing this or whatever, because you didn't have soccer practice, or baseball practice, and all those other things the children have now, it was you go to school, you go to church, if you were in an after school activity, which was usually either boy football, baseball, or track or something like that, and girl you had basketball or band. I was in the band, or you went to the library, but it was no missing meals, and basically everybody that I knew had dinner together.

M.M: Now was Sunday dinner a special time?

E.F: Sunday dinner was very special that was the biggest meal of the week, and you went to Sunday school rain, sleet, hail, or snow, you went to church, and after church everybody drove home and had dinner, and you visited friends or you visited relatives, normally we visited relatives, and as I got older there was a time, because my daddy would take us out

after dinner to teach me how to drive, which I loved Sundays, because he was teaching me how to drive a straight shift.

M.M: Now were there any special foods that you remember having?

E.F: My mom use to make tea cakes, and she taught me how to make tea cakes, and that was a really, they were just so good, and she made, well she always made cakes, she always, we always had desert, and her favorite was sweet potato pie, and this lemon pound cake, which was very good, and everybody in the neighborhood, but when you had one like every week it tends to be, I am sick of sweet potato pies, and this cake, but she made tea cakes, and I love the tea cakes. And she made homemade breads and that was just, we could sit up after they came out of the oven, and you could smell it all over the place, and it was so good, and she would make some honey butter, so very, very good.

M.M: Now what holidays were celebrated at your house?

E.F: All of them. Easter, we had to learn these pages of Easter speeches that were expected to be recited on Sunday Easter morning, and we had Christmas plays and speeches you had to learn, and Christmas you know, that's what we did.

M.M: Now were there any particular customs or celebrations that only the Summer Hill residents observed?

E.F: No, nothing out of the ordinary that I can remember, basically every family did the same thing, Christmas. Christmas you get up as early as you possibly could and then you would call your friends, what did you get, what did you get, and then after breakfast you would go to each others house, and you would display your things in your bedroom, because this is my stuff, and we would put it out and say come here, and show it there so we would have it all displayed out, then you would go to their house, and they would have it all strowed out for you, you would see that, but everybody got a pair of skates and you would hear, (.....), going down the streets, because they were roller skates with a key, and that key was a proposition, because if you lost it you couldn't use your skates, so everybody normally had it tied on some kind of chain or something around their necks, because this is my skate key, and I can not lose it, or you got a bicycle, and everybody was rolling between the bicycles and the skates or wagons or something like that, those little cars shaped like fire engines or things like that most of the kids got things like that, or dolls. I still have a doll that you pull the string and it says, Mama, that was fun.

M.M: Now what was your first job?

E.F: My first paying job? (laughing) I played for the church, if you could consider that a job, and I got paid for that.

M.M: Which church?

E.F: St. Luke, I belonged to St. Luke (unintelligible), and that was I guess the first job I had, you know I had to the songs and everything ready for church, but outside of that it was at Good Year, yeah I got a job at Good Year.

M.M: Now where did most people work who lived in the Summer Hill community?

E.F: They worked at Lockheed, Good Year, Nantucket I think was another place, and I can't remember what this place is over there, the dam, I think that's about it was either, Good Year, the dam, Lockheed, and Nantucket I think that's what it was, where they made plastic, I can't remember (unintelligible) places.

M.M: Now when you were growing up in Summer Hill were you known by any nicknames?

E.F: No, just Elmer.

M.M: Now as a child what did you do for fun in Summer Hill?

E.F: We went to the baseball games in the summer they had leagues, recreational leagues I guess you could call them, we would go out and watch those during the summer evenings and when they built the pool down there we would swim and then they had converted to elementary school into a recreation center we would go up there, and we would play basketball, or we would dance and ride our bikes. We use to ride a lot of bikes, and we use to walk a lot, because nobody had a car so if you wanted to go from your friend's house you either rode your bicycle or you walked.

M.M: Now where were the baseball games held?

E.F: The baseball games were held on the football field from the school. Everything was held down there, we had, that was it the baseball and when school was in that was the football field so our football games were played there and all the baseball games during the summer were played there. The gym really wasn't opened up for the summer except during school and that's where we had all our basketball games and things like that. When we had tournament time the kids would come in and spend the night with families in the city, because there was no room, and black people couldn't use the motels or

anything like that so they came in, families took them in, then they played to basketball tournaments, that's basically what we did.

M.M: Now as an adult what did you do for fun in Summer Hill?

E.F: Well, let me see. (laughing)

M.M: Where were the favorite hangouts?

E.F: We didn't have any hangouts really, we had, we had a lot of house parties and which were great, because it was no, nothing like you know you were afraid to let somebody in, because they would come and shoot you up and have fights, because I never remember a party that I went to where there was any kind of scuffle, had a lot of house parties, and we had a lot of picnics at the beach, that's where we use to go, that was a favorite hang out was Lake Altoona, George Washington Carver Park and on Sundays and holidays especially 4<sup>th</sup> of July, that's where everybody went was up at the lake, and they had a little snack bar thing inside and had a juke box, and everybody would be in there dancing, and the young kids would be at the little park where they had swings and some kind of little merry go round and sliding board they used (unintelligible), and down further they had, you could go swimming or bowling, or anything like that, but that was the main hangout, because that's where the big kids went. You met so many people, because buses from every where would be there, and they had all these cute guys, and they weren't from Cartersville, and you could go and meet them and have fun, that was one of the main hang outs.

M.M: Now how has the area changed economically over the years?

E.F: Well, we have a bank on every corner just about so Cartersville is making some money somewhere. Well, when more lets see, after all the marches, and Martin Luther King's venues in getting everything equalized, jobs came up and black people were hired so they became more economically stabled and could afford better things for their families and stuff like that, so its grown quite pretty much.

M.M: Now what is your fondest memory of Summer Hill?

E.F: My fondest, maybe the proms, decorating for the proms. Kids don't do that anymore, and when you became a junior, the junior class gave the senior class a prom, and we, my class of '67 was one of the bestest classes at Summer Hill. We did a lot of, we were a lets see how can I put this, we were, I think we were a very smart class, basically everybody was

pretty much on the top level of doing work and everything like that. We did a lot of plays, there was a lot of talent in my class, we had a lot of poets, and actors, musicians, mathematicians, and things like that, and anything we decided to do, we did it, we stuck together primarily as a class, but the prom I think was one of the highlights of graduation and everything like that, because we decorated the gym, because you didn't go to a hotel and you know order caterers and all this kind of things like that. We planned this prom, and we had a disco ball light, and we had, we cracked glass and everything for this kind of fountain effect, it was just a fantastic that we gave the seniors that year, and I think that's one of my fondest memories that I can, Homecoming was another one, I forgot all about Homecoming. Homecoming was another event at Summer Hill that just everybody (unintelligible) town was just proud of them, the band was high stepping, and we thought we was the bomb. The football team, it was okay, but we had floats, and we invited other schools, other school bands, to participate in the parade, and we had decorated cars, and we had the boy scouts and the girl scouts, that was another thing as I was talking, I was in the brownies and the girl scouts, and we use to go on camping trips, and we did a lot of hiking to Altoona where we camped out, that was an experience camping out outside with the bugs.

M.M: Now the girl scouts were affiliated with the school, correct?

E.F: (agrees)

M.M: Who was the sponsor do you remember?

E.F: I don't remember exactly who the sponsors were, our leaders were Miss Johnson and Miss Maurice, Maurice I think her name was Williams, but we always called her Miss Maurice, but we had, and Mr. Cotton, Robert Cotton, I think he was a teacher over at Cartersville high at one time, but he did the boy scouts, but basically where we went the boy scouts went too, I guess because they could help us out if something came up, but that was fun times, because we just walked and sing and that was really a lot of fun.

M.M: Now were the proms themed?

E.F: The proms were themed, I don't remember what our theme was, I really don't, and, but they were a lot of fun, disco lights and all this kind of stuff. This was another thing we use to do, we use to have talent shows, and each class would you know come up with

some kind of thing, but we had the best talent in the school, so it was a hands down winning situation for us, and we also had a lot of duop groups, do you know what...

M.M: Yes.

E.F: ...we had a lot of duop groups, and I was in one called the Vogues, and we should have patented that name, because we might have gotten some money when *In Vogue* came out, we had some (unintelligible). We might have gotten that, but we went on this show called, The Stars of Tomorrow, it was a local television thing like Star Search, and it showed every Saturday, I think it was on Saturday, but we were, we got our little group together and practiced, and practiced, we went down to the studios a couple of times, and we appeared on Stars of Tomorrow, I'm a star. (laughing) That was one of the big high lights that we had, and people would call in, call in you know you could appear in everyone of them twice, that was, we tried, I think we were going to try to get the footage, if they saved anything like that back then, but that was another highlight, I almost forgot about that.

M.M: That's neat.

E.F: Yep.

M.M: Now did you go anywhere else for fun in Cartersville like the movies, or...?

E.F: We went to the movies, which was the Grand Theatre, or either the drive-in, and the Grand Theatre was like a quarter I think, or fifty, it wasn't a dollar, it wasn't as much as a dollar, it was like a quarter or fifty cents, somewhere around there, and we use to go, and one of the movies that I remember seeing was like, Westside story, and everybody got so motivated, because we came dancing home, we were just jumping and running up and down the street like crazy, but it was fun, we use to go to the movies that was another place that we went to.

M.M: Now where was the drive-in theatre located?

E.F: The drive in theatre is where the theatre is now on Tennessee Street that was the drive-in, where the movies are located now.

M.M: Now was there anywhere you felt you couldn't go?

E.F: There was a lot of place we felt we couldn't go, it was the like unspoken thing, but they had the signs up when I was growing up, you know, black water, white water, what is it white water fountain or colored water fountain, or if you went to a restaurant you could

be served, but it had to be in the back of the building or something like that, but in my house my dad said if they can't serve you through the front door, you can't go there, so we never went to any of the little places that you know you had to go to the back or whatever. My mom's cooking was too good to even miss something like that so I really didn't care about it, and the schools I don't ever remember running into any kind of right in your face prejudice, everybody in the town unless I was really, really sheltered kind of got a long, because one of the, Wayne Cardello, whatever his name is, use to be my neighbor, and he had some little rabbits and stuff, and he use to come over and play with us and everything like that, but we would play together, but that was it you know, if we saw you on the street or something like that, you might look and go like that, but you never would you know, I know this black woman, or I know this white child or something like that, but we never, that I can remember had any kind of racial something.

M.M: Now where did people engage as a community?

E.F: Then or now?

M.M: Both, lets do both.

E.F: Engage as a community...

M.M: The church, the (unintelligible)

E.F: ...it was usually at church, because the emancipation proclamation was a time that most of the black community gathered for that occasion that was as a whole, that I can remember aside from churches, you know church activities, everybody kind of intertwined with every church blended in with each other, aside from the whole community gathering that was one of the things that the community gathered for was the emancipation proclamation program.

M.M: Now what about the lodges, what can you tell me about the different lodges?

E.F: The Masons, and the Eastern Stars...

M.M: I've heard Brotherhood Hall.

E.F: ...the Brotherhood Hall, my mother was an Eastern Star, and my dad as a Mason, (unintelligible), I think that's Masons. All I can remember is that they were in meetings, I was in a lot, but I can't remember what it was...(laughing)...I was in one, and we just had meetings, and it was more like a civic type of activity. I was in the (unintelligible) Church that was another youth group thing aside from that and Bible School, summer

Bible School and things like that, that's all I can tell you about that, I know they use to have meetings, and they would have like parades and stuff and all the women would wear white dresses and then they would have the big meeting at a church or something like that, but I really wasn't that interested in it so, although I had attended I really didn't pay attention to them. Now we had PTA, that was the Parent Teacher Association, I was big on that, and my mother was president, I think she was president, because I use to have to go to all those PTA meetings, and she would make me play the piano for some of their programs, and the posture that I am sitting in is the way I sat through the whole thing, because I really didn't want to be there, but every meeting that she had, she made me go to them and play, I guess she (unintelligible) waste for anything you are going to play.

M.M: Now who were the prominent or recognized members of the community?

E.F: Well everybody knew the Morgans. John Anderson and his wife, Miss Wheeler, Dan Wheeler, the Stricklands, lets see, the Wilkins, Miss King, I don't know what Miss Kings first name is, but basically the ministers of the community and the members of that church were, everybody basically knew them. The Greens and the Beasleys, because everybody knew my daddy, because he was all about fixing something for somebody.

M.M: Lets talk more about the church, you said you attend (unintelligible) now, have you always attended?

E.F: Always.

M.M: Always, can you describe the church for mr?

E.F: When I was growing up it was a huge church, it had like these steps leading up the this building with the big pillars and stuff like that, and inside it had these two big potbelly stoves on either side of the church, and then it had a raised pulpit and a raised choir stand, and that's where I went to church and Sunday school, and that's where I grew up going to church, everybody you know, and that was that. And my mother was the Sunday school teacher, my daddy was the superintendent of Sunday schools, and we had our little choir, and they had you know three or four choirs and everything like that, and we had our church plays and that's where I said all my Easter speeches, and Christmas speeches, and Mother's Days' plays, and we had YPD meetings there; we had Sunday school conventions there, we had mock weddings, we had Tom Thumb weddings, it was a home next to home, that's where you met up with your friends and your families, and that was

it. When people had funerals the church would gather, and the community would gather, and they would serve the families and whatever else they needed they were there for that, and they had weddings, it was you know, the church family was there, and we had Easter egg hunts and stuff out in the yard and all this kind of thing. It was nice, the preacher was always like a grandfather or something like that, he was, you respected them, it was no you know molesting the children, and some kind of pedophiles hidden by clothing, they were just plain old regular working people that came up and gave a sermon, and you respected them for that.

M.M: Now how many people do you think were in attendance every Sunday?

E.F: When I was a child, maybe a hundred or a hundred and fifty something like that.

M.M: Now we've heard the term, lay leaders in the church does that apply at this St. Lukes?

E.F: We have, yeah, the same thing does, how do I explain that, they are like the deacons and the stewardess, and people of office in the church who are there to help you know with the church, and church functions and things like that.

END TAPE 1, SIDE A

BEGIN TAPE 1, SIDE B

E.F: (unintelligible) (laughing) things like, now on some occasions he preached definitely Hell and brim fire and all this kind of stuff, you're going to go to Hell if you do this, and you're going to Hell if you do that, and then some sermons it was how do reach, how to be saved, and things that you should do, and text from the Bible, and he would elaborate on that, basically that was it.

M.M: Now did your church ever take any political stances?

E.F: None, going up that I can remember.

M.M: Do they take political stances today?

E.F: Yes, we have, during election time, which is sometimes the only time we ever see them, they will come to church and give their spill about what they want to do, or why they need your vote, and some people, I won't say stance, because some people are urged to vote for more than others sometimes they would give say, well we will do (unintelligible) better if you would cast your vote for this person, or they would give so and so is doing

this, and so and so is doing that, and you would chose which one you would rather have in office to represent you.

M.M: Now did the church go through any changes while you attended there?

E.F: Well the older church was torn down, like I said I was young and really didn't pay any attention, but I really can't tell you what year that was done. The church was torn down and before it was rebuilt we had service in the (unintelligible), and that's a little bit like a home with a pastor and his family stays that's they use to call it a (unintelligible), and our new church was built in this place. Summer Hill has changed because there was no library across the street, it was just woods, the housing from St. Francis Street was different, there were older houses, that's what was the reconstruction or whatever when they were doing all the rebuilding, that's changed, and all of Summer Hill, because they built the housing, the housing projects was still there, but the houses surrounding that have been changed so that's basically when they tore that church down that was kind of like the beginning of the whole you know tear down rebuild frame of mind, I guess in Bartow County.

M.M: Lets talk about the school.

E.F: Okay.

M.M: Can you describe the Summer Hill School for me?

E.F: Well now or from then?

M.M: From then.

E.F: Okay, the Summer Hill elementary school that I attended looked like a big old house, and as you walked from Jones Street onto the front plate, it was a play yard, and it had a little rock fence surrounding it, and you walked up the steps, and you walked into the building which was an auditorium and on either side were offices, and then they had classrooms surrounding the auditorium, and you could go straight through, and you would be going out onto the porch which would have some more little classroom buildings, you could go down stairs and around the building and there was more classrooms, and like I said the cafeteria was down stairs, you could go down stairs to the cafeteria, and it had another little basement around the side and that was Miss (unintelligible) store, and from the other, from the side of the building you could go into classrooms that was like the first grade and that was it. You could go from the court yard, it had another set of steps that

you walked down, and you went around to the building and that looked more like a driveway than any kind of play area but that's all it basically was. And from there the football stadium was being built, and the guys from Mr. Anderson's brick masonry class built the stands and the wall, and they constructed the football stadium. The field was always there but it was nowhere to sit, it was just you know haphazard stuff, but that's what it looked like then. The classrooms had the wooden desks they weren't moveable, they were stationary so it was no pulling this chair around here, pulling that chair around there, it was a seat you sat in it that was it. The desks were in front then you had black chalkboards and that was it. It was a very dull, (laughing) as far as you know it was no bright paint, there was no pretty, pretty pictures that I can remember, except for your drawings or something that you had tacked around the room, or if you had Valentines Day that you could put little Valentine things that you made on the way, but that was it, and no child that I know that I went to class with was traumatized from not having all this electronical equipment, and computers, and all this type of thing. We might have been a whole lot smarter had we had them, but you know we just had to use our brain then. Now it's a shame that's why children cannot count and can not read, because the machine is doing it for them.

M.M: Now you walked to school, and a majority of the students did walk to school, now the bluebird bus it was only used for band, is that correct?

E.F: For band and the kids that came from (unintelligible) elementary, because they didn't have a...Summer Hill high school was the only black high school in Bartow county, so the children, the students from (unintelligible) came to Summer Hill, and the students from Emerson were bused to Summer Hill but that's what the bus was for then.

M.M: Now what were your favorite subjects?

E.F: I liked English, and I liked History, I think those (unintelligible).

M.M: Who were your favorite teachers?

E.F: I liked Miss Magwood, Miss Magwood was, did she teach Biology, I think she taught Biology, and she was a good teacher that came in and with us she was really good, because she had this killer body, and she would wear this skirt that (unintelligible), oh if I could look like her, and Ralph Lowe was another favorite teacher, because he was young and cute, just out of college, and he would say these silly poems and stuff in the morning.

And I liked Miss Smith, and who else is another favorite teacher that I had, June Hill and Matthew. Matthew was a teacher of mine too.

M.M: Now you said you were in the Girl Scouts, were you involved in any other clubs or organizations?

E.F: I was in the SLAGS, and that was, you don't know what that is do you?

M.M: Is that the student library...

E.F: Yeah, that's what it is, and I was in the Future Homemakers of America, lets see the Future Homemakers of America, the SLAGS, I was in band, Girl Scouts, what else did we do, I think that was the only organized things that we had to do, oh I was in the choir.

M.M: Now do you remember and special things that you use to do with SLAGS, or the Future Homemakers?

E.F: Yes, we had, with the SLAGS, we had conventions like in Atlanta, and each district, I guess, had to present a talent, and Bibby, Bibby Morgan, and Jerry William Young, and myself did this thing with the Ink Spots who were black (unintelligible) group, and we did a tribute to them for one of the meetings. Of course, I got to play the piano for another one, but those were fun, those were nice, and for Future Homemakers of America we had a sewing contest, and I think Faye, who was Miss Smith's daughter, I think she took first place, and I got second, because the Beatles were really big then, and I made this little blue suit, collarless with a pink lining and a pink blouse, and that was, because like I said the Beatles were big, and that was the kind of jacket that they wore, that was because I thought I had, that was the suit, navy suits were big back then too. And we had groups for cooking, that was always fun, because we're in a group, and we use to cook and we use to invite some of the staff to come and taste our dinner, and what else did we do. We had fashion shows, we had a fashion show with that too, that was fun.

M.M: Now what did you do after the school day was over?

E.F: I came home, well after school day including basketball practice, because that day I played basketball for about a minute, (laughing), and band practice, which I was in band pretty much from when I started school until I got out of school, because we had a primary like step band, or thing like that.

M.M: What did you play?

E.F: In elementary school I had the churns, when I went to high school I played, I started out playing and then I went to saxophone and from saxophone I played hobo, so that's what I played in band.

M.M: Now, go ahead.

E.F: I lost my train of thought, where was I going to say, it was something that...oh we had a step, not a step team, but a drill team that Matthew had when we were in gym class, because gym was, oh that was another favorite class that was gym, because aside from tumbling, we had social dancing, can you believe it, social, we had to social dance like the waltz, and tango, and square dance, it was none of that humping and bumping and stuff like that, this is for civilized people dancing when (unintelligible). So we had that to do, that was a lot of fun because we never knew how do to tango, square dance, or anything like that, so we learned how to do that, that was fun, and we had a drill team that coach Hill did, and we were very, very good at that, that was another one of the favorite things I use to do, and volleyball we use to challenges each other with volleyball in classes, and stuff, (unintelligible), but after school I had to come down the same direct way I went to school, couldn't go across Jones street, I had to come down Jones street then at Carters street come down Carters street, I mean come down Bartow street and stay there till I got back home. No going across the hill, because every time I went somebody would tell, why I don't know, because you know whether I went down or across I still came out at the same spot, it didn't take any more time or less, you know it didn't take me out of my way but that's where I had to go.

M.M: Now did you have a lot of homework?

E.F: It seemed like tons of homework, but I don't think it was anymore than you know hours or maybe half a hour, it all depends on how much time you just looked at it and said you didn't want to do it, but it wasn't an over accessible amount of homework that I can remember us having to do.

M.M: Now you talked about the basketball team, the football team, you said you played volleyball, were there any other sports the kids participated in?

E.F: Track, they had, that's the only thing I remember was track, baseball, basketball the normal stuff.

M.M: Now you graduated in '67, and what did you do after that?

E.F: I attended Elisabeth ? City State University. One of the teachers there, our band teacher David Williams was teaching band, he left the school because he got a position there, and he, well we got scholarships, a lot of scholarships so we went to that school.

M.M: And you majored in music?

E.F: Majored in music.

M.M: Now how did education affect your life?

E.F: Well, how did education affect me, it got me a job. I feel very confident in every day situations and things like that, I have no problems about social gatherings, I have no problems about speaking, it gave me a command of the English language. I found in just talking to people, students, parents, and things like that who did not receive it or who didn't finish school that they have problems about you know talking to you, because they are afraid, because you are educated that they can't speak to you because they are afraid the language isn't up to par, and I don't know whether they were parenting skills or whatever, but I felt really good about (unintelligible) my daughter who by the way was a merit scholar, and...(laughing).

M.M: What was her name?

E.F: Her name is Courtney Felton, Courtney Danielle.

M.M: Now what did you do with your music degree?

E.F: I had, well like I said I got married and I moved to Virginia. In Virginia, music teachers don't really, they die, and since no one had died while I was there, I gave some private lessons, such as, I had private lessons, and I was an assistant director at one of the churches that I attended, so that was the only thing that I could do with that there. Oh I also made some little recordings, they didn't go anywhere, but I did some little recordings like that, yeh.

M.M: Wow. Now do you feel that you received an equal education to that of white students?

E.F: I think so, because I, you know as far as taking tests and being prepared for college, like I said they gave us a really good, as far as English, at that time I don't know what they do for college prep, but you know the college prep when you had to take the SATs and when you went to college you placement test, the English was a breeze, the Math was a breeze, all of it was fairly easy, and I think its all because they drilled (unintelligible) that hated, and all the basic. You had to think, you had to use your brain to do the things, you know

we had a sly rule, kids don't even know what a sly rule is. We used sly rules and protractors, and all, they gave us the basic things, and since I never attended Cartersville high school I really don't know you know in a classroom, to say well we had this, I know our books we didn't have the same type of books, but we made do with what we had, and what we didn't have we used the library to find something to elaborate on that thing. I wish one of the things that they had taught was black history when I was in school, we didn't have any, except for that, you know we recognized somebody's birthday and maybe give a talk on that, but it was so, so many other black people besides George Washington Carver, and Booker T. Washington growing up that we didn't really get a chance to explore, because we didn't know.

M.M: Now do you feel there is a place for all black schools in today's society?

E.F: That's a tough question, because there is no all black communities, there is no all black anything, there is no all white anything so I can't see an all black school, and an all white school when you have to work together, you live in the same communities and everything like that, so I would say no.

M.M: Now how did you feel when they destroyed the school?

E.F: Well, I thought maybe they could do something else with, or if someone had had the insight or to just keep it up, its nothing else that we have in Cartersville. No, its no remember the...every black thing that was in Cartersville, which was the school was the only thing its no more, so it was kind of like independence was gone, and you just have to, the feeling was still there, but you know you just have to get use to it not being there.

M.M: Now when did your family get their first television, car, telephone, and how did they impact your life?

E.F: I never remember not having a television or telephone or car, so we went on vacation every summer, my dad was one of those people, I guess they had planned a trip but to me they just wake up ready to go, because I don't remember ever planning things, all I remember is like we had to wake up in the middle of the night and hit the road, and we were some where else, and I was like where are we going, (laughing), that was it I can not remember not ever having a car, or television, or telephone.

M.M: Where would you go on vacation?

- E.F: We would usually go see family members who went to, everyone on the east coast like we went to Detroit, we went to New York, we went to Florida, Alabama, North and South Carolina, Texas, Kentucky, Ohio, Chicago, just...
- M.M: Now how did racism affect your life, and your family's life?
- E.F: My dad could not, well he had, well the pay scale was different although he (unintelligible) I remember him always saying, saying that you know he did the bulk of the work and everything like that, and they asked him, because he was really good at what he did, and a lot of the people that came in were his supervisors that didn't know as much as he did, but they would pay that so that's one of the things I remember him saying. And you know he was just on that pay scale, and he had a supervisor that didn't know how to do anything and that was the only thing affecting was the pay scales, and you know other job opportunities that he could have, but he was over looked for being black.
- M.M: Now what was your relationship to white families before desegregation, you mentioned that the children played together but that was it.
- E.F: Well we had white neighbors; it was no different then than it is now, same thing.
- M.M: Okay. Now tell me about the years of the civil rights movement, were you ever involved in it?
- E.F: I was in college during the Civil Rights movement, and we did a lot of sit-ins in Elisabeth city, North Carolina, and we did a lot of protest march, marches. We got some of the restaurants there open, because they were not open to black people at the time. It was no violent type of thing, like I said, we did a lot of sit-ins, a lot of marches, and the city just said okay and that was it.
- M.M: Now what was your initial reaction to when you heard about what Martin Luther King was doing, or Malcolm X was doing?
- E.F: I was in the Black Panthers, because they were like in the spotlight in that time, I thought it was great, I thought it was really great, and I really couldn't understand why it was so traumatic for white people to sit with a black person. They had maids, they had you know black people working for them, but as far as dining with them, or shopping with them, or drinking out of the water fountain or anything like that, as in my youth at that time I really didn't understand that, but I couldn't see why, I could not see why they were

prevented, and that since I was there I was going to be one of the persons to have attended.

M.M: Now you weren't in Cartersville...

E.F: I was not in Cartersville.

M.M ...during that time, but did you ever hear of any major demonstrations, or sit-ins that happened here?

E.F: No, I never, I don't remember anything, you know nothing...

M.M: (unintelligible) Okay. Now how did global events like the Great Depression, World War II, Civil Rights, Vietnam affect life in the community of Summer Hill?

E.F: It changed the black ratio of men in Cartersville, because a lot of them were killed. One of my classmates was really gung ho to go to Vietnam, and I think he was over there during training, and the first week or month or so that he was shipped to Vietnam he came right back home (unintelligible), and a lot of them were shot up, and I guess (unintelligible) wouldn't come home, but anyway they got to come home, but you know the effects of those wars really didn't do anybody any good.

M.M: Right. Now we talked about there was Mt. Zion and there was St. Luke, were there any other major churches in the community?

E.F: Well there was several other black churches, I guess anybody who went to them would say their church was major, but no (laughing).

M.M: Okay. Lets talk about Slab Stadium.

E.F: Slab Stadium, oh okay.

M.M: What can you tell me about it?

E.F: That's where we had all our football games, and like I said, Mr. Anderson had his brick masonry team or class, it was a wall, it use to be a wall that is standing from the top of Summer Hill to the bottom of Summer Hill, and they built that wall, they built all the steps, they built everything. They had the whole things, they built the back, his class built that stadium.

M.M: Wow. Now the dump, it was located near the Summer Hill elementary school, is that correct?

E.F: It was behind Summer Hill, I can't tell you exactly, but I knew it was behind it.

M.M: Now the café, and the Della Contessa, and the barber shop, and I had heard there was a laundry shop, and a records store, do you remember those?

E.F: A laundry, oh that was at the Wheeler's Plaza.

M.M: Okay.

E.F: They came up, Dan? Wheeler built that, and it had a record shop, and a laundry mat, and another little café up there, but like on the way home I would always stop at Caps, and we would just stop and talk, because he was like a friend of the family and stuff, and we would just talk and if you had enough money you could get you one of those good hamburgers that they were having (unintelligible), but that was what was Summer Hill then.

M.M: Now were there any other local restaurants?

E.F: It was another little, it was another little café or whatever on Bartow street, but it was torn down with the reconstruction of, when they put those, that housing projects over there, it was also a baseball field over there, I forgot about that, it was a baseball field over there, and we use to play baseball over there. As a matter of fact, my brother when we were growing up, and he didn't want to take care of me, but I followed him anyway, and he would drag me over there, but it was a baseball field, I forgot about that, before they built those housing projects over there. It was also a juke joint across the street. I'm going to tell you right now (laughing) juke joint across the street, I forgot about that going up there, but everybody...

M.M: Who owned that?

E.F: Oh shoot, Tom, it wasn't Thompson, it will come to me in a minute I think, but if it don't you can call me back if I can get it, but like I said we had our regular street, alcoholics and stuff, who would also, if they saw you doing something along they would say, (unintelligible), but they would reprimand you and make you go home and stuff, and they were respected too, because it was like a weekend thing, or you know this it you know what they did but normally you know it was pretty good.

M.M: Now were there any other places that you were aware of that drinking took place?

E.F: That drinking took place, well it was you know those pictures that you see with; it was always a little juke joint or a little house or something like that. You weren't allowed to go in there, and like I said the people that ran them respected everybody as well, people

know who do, who would participate in that, knew (unintelligible), but it was not like okay it was a (unintelligible) in your face, I'm selling liquor, I'm not suppose to kind of thing, it was kind of hush, hush.

M.M: Right, now I heard the place called Tin Top, have you heard of that?

E.F: No.

M.M: Okay, now what can you tell me about the old public housing verses the new public housing?

E.F: The old public housing it was just there, (laughing), everybody got along, and it was no, you know it was just some where to live as far as I know, just public housing. We always called them the projects and when they built the new ones like there was all open fields and things like that it was the new projects. We use to love the road, because we use to skate on it. It was nice smooth pavement, and we would just skate, skate, skate all around on (unintelligible) street, Weaver Street, and all this type of thing like that but that's all I can...

M.M: Now are you aware of any other older buildings in the neighborhood that were significant to the community?

E.F: The Moores' house was on the corner, Dr. Moore, and Mr. Emanuel's, (unintelligible) Mr. Emanuel's house is being torn down right now, there are other buildings still standing, because they were all torn down.

M.M: Now I heard of Moore day, what did you all do on Moore day?

E.F: It was just like a tribute to Dr. Moore.

M.M: There was no special parade or anything?

E.F: No.

M.M: Now the name Summer Hill, do you know where it came from?

E.F: Absolutely not. (laughing) I really don't, and I've never questioned it ever since it was just always Summer Hill.

M.M: Now who is the one person who has most positively influenced your life, or who are your heroes?

E.F: My heroes, I respected a lot of people, a lot of my teachers, but as far as any of them being my heroes I can't say that any of them are. I really had, I really looked up to my grandparents, really, really, because, I use to call them Big Papa, and Big Mama, and

they could, my grandfather just, seemed like he could just, along with my dad could do anything. They could do anything, because he was a farmer, they were farmers, and she could make anything, and he could make anything, and they grew everything, and it was just so amazing.

M.M: And what were their names?

E.F: My grandfather's name was Daniel, and my Big Mama's name was Big Mama.  
(laughing), you know I can't remember...

M.M: That's okay, that's fine.

E.F: I think because I never called my Big Mama...her name was Alice.

M.M: Alice, okay.

E.F: It took me a while to remember that, because I never called them by their name.

(Abrupt end of interview.)