

**Kennesaw State University
Department of History and Philosophy
Summerhill Oral History Project**

Interview with: Reverend Louise Harris
Interviewed by: Melissa Massey
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(Tape 1, Side A)

Melissa Massey: Can you state your name for me?

Louise Harris: Good Morning, my name is Reverend Mildred Louise Young Harris.

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

L.H: I was born January 21, 1949 that was when I was born. I was born in the Bartow County area, I was born in Kingston, GA and I grew up there and I attended school at Bartow County Elementary in Cassville and later attending Summerhill High School in the Cartersville area.

M.M: Did you have any brothers or sisters?

L.H: Yes, I had one brother his name is James William Young Jr. and I had two sisters of course my oldest sister she is deceased her name was Patricia Ann Young and my youngest sister which is the baby of the clan her name is Shirley Jean Young Dudley.

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

L.H: Well my mother and my father, James William Young Sr. and my mother Sara Louis Young that was our household.

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

L.H: Well my father was a farmer, number one we owned land my grandfather, the family owned land and my father worked the land up until he was able to acquire a job with the railroad company at

that time it was L&N railroad company. My mother was a home attended back then they called them housewives she was there at the home she took care of us and made sure that everything was in order and in place and we had the proper things that we needed and got us ready to go to school and took care of our, took care of us getting or homework and stuff like that, but my Daddy did take care of farming the land, trying to take care of us and then started working for L&N railroad and from there he went to Georgia Craft where he retired.

M.M: Now what do you think of when you think of Summerhill?

L.H: When I think of Summerhill I think of a place, a very, a place of comfort, a place of love, a place of tenderness, a place of education, a place that is very dear to my heart, a place that just makes me smile, a place that I wish was still standing in it's entirety as it once was, and it was just a place that much learning was there of course number one, but it was a place that hovered a lot of love and a lot of concern in a lot of potentials of individuals to succeed in the world , so it was just a great place to be, it was a place that I loved if I had the opportunity to turn time back, I would turn it back to (laughter) age fifteen, fourteen – fifteen, ninth grade and go through that high school year again at Summerhill High School because it was such an enlightening episode in my life.

M.M: Now you said you lived in Kingston.

L.H: Yes.

M.M: Can you describe the house that you lived in , imagine walking around in it?

L.H: The home that I lived in, in Kingston, GA. It was just a frame home and of course back then my father was able to maintain the house quite well because he was a self entrepreneur and self taught and he was a carpenter so of course he had built our home and designed it himself and built the home himself and so we had four maybe a six room house, we had three bedrooms, a living room, and a kitchen and later on my father put a bathroom in the house. First we didn't have a bath, we had outdoor plumbing and stuff like that but later on my father did put those necessities in the house as well, but we lived very comfortable considering times were hard back then but we lived quite comfortable and my mother always made our clothing you know dresses and little skirts and our under-slips and things like that out of little flour sacks, she would save the material and then sometimes she was given the opportunity to work outside the home and do some private home care and of course the people that she worked for were very generous and they would always give her things that we could use, sometimes my mother would bring those home and wash them and press them and you know we could wear those, and we had a very loving environment, a very loving, Christ-like home of course. My father was very stern in his religious belief, and of course my grandmother and my grandfather was as well but we had a very loving home.

M.M: Is the house still standing by any chance?

L.H: Of course yes, the house is still standing at this time in fact we're right now in the process of trying to do some renovation on the house so my mother can continue to live comfortably in the house she is living independently in the house and by herself, yes indeed the house is still living and it's much livable.

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

L.H: At the house, and the Premises? The house you know we have a lot of land because we lived on a farm so of course we have a lot of acreage so the yard now in my home house where my mother is, we have a lot of flowers in the yard, we have a lot of fruit trees near the house, well we have the little house that we call the smoke house where my father worked when he would have hog killing time which would be in the fall of the year and he would process the meat and put the meat in the smoke house and smoke the pork down and smoke it and salt it down and it would preserve the meat, so we would have you know ham and sausage and all that good stuff, but all of that is still standing, we just took the clothing line down a couple of days ago because we had someone cutting grass of the proper and they didn't know it was there and they almost ran into it, so we took that down, but I can just vividly just remember clothes flying in the air when my mother would hang them out and when we would hang clothes and as soon as we would have clothes for miles stretched in the air it really wasn't that many but the clothes would just fly in the air and it would be so beautiful, but the yard is still very pretty, my mother still gets in the yard and she still has her little flower garden and she tries to have a couple of tomatoes plants out there in flower garden and some pepper plants but the yard is very, very pretty and the house is still pretty and I love my home house and where I come up.

M.M: Now, what was your relationship like with your neighbors?

L.H: We were very close, our neighbors, in fact in the area where I live there in Kingston, where my Aunties husband had passed away and my cousins, the other cousins their Daddies had passed away, seems like everybody's dad was gone in the area, my Daddy was the only one that was there, we were the only ones that had a Daddy at our house and of course my Daddy sort of served like, served as if he was the Daddy of the community because they all looked dup to my father and we were just very close knitted in our little community in the little are that we lived in of course the name of the street is Coleman Street, but it was a Young settlement because most of the land over there belonged to the Young's and the individuals that lived in that area had purchased land from my grandfather and we all lived there together but we were very close all of us sort of shared meals sometime we would get together, I can remember we were the first family to get a T.V. and the first family (unintelligible) this area, and the first family to get a telephone and so we got our T.V. the whole community, I can remember everybody coming and taking a seat the children on the floor and the adults on the couch and they brought chairs in and some brought chairs from their house because we didn't have enough and just to look at the black and white T.V. and it was the Ed Sullivan show that we were looking at that evening and I remember when we finally got our telephone and everybody was coming to see the telephone and listening for the telephone to ring, it was such an episode it was so wonderful and I could remember when an individual would call our house for our neighbors and my mom would go to the

door and when she didn't go to the door, at the edge of the yard and would yell for the neighbors and our cousins to come to the telephone we would have to go and yell and you know and yell for them come and we'd go back and tell them hold on they're coming. Sometime it would be long distance but that was the way life was, and it was beautiful whoever cooked, everybody ate it was just like that, someone needs some sowing done and one parent couldn't do it and another one could then it was done. If a child was sick and the parent wasn't there other parent took care of them and of course when we had a lady in our community her name was, one of our neighbors was Misses Pauline Paisley she was a midwife she delivered all of us in fact she delivered the whole little city of Kingston, whites and the blacks and all of us just got along we didn't see any color and that's why we were able to see stuff like segregation on T.V. it just, you know it just behooved because we just weren't used to that, that just didn't even, that wasn't a factor in our life.

M.M: Do you think you were first exposed to segregation when you went to school, was that your first real...?

L.H: Actually, I believe right after we were getting out of school, you know because even when we went to school and even in the Cartersville area there was never anything like that you know the community just got along well there, nothing in the Cartersville, Kingston, Bartow County, Cassville, you know I never saw anything like that we all got along well even though we went to different school, but we all got along well even though we lived in different areas everybody got along well, from my perspective from what I saw.

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

L.H: Well my role in the household, well I was so much like my dad in a like it was just as if I had a calling to be an entrepreneur myself, I just have that much characteristics of my dad and his genes in me foremost my sisters they all wanted to stay in the house and learn to cook and clean and of course with me being a female those traits were embedded in my too and those traits had to be nurtured and of course my mother wanted those episodes to rise higher in my life and of course I took on that too, but I still had a yearning just to learn how, what made other things click so I took the opportunity because my father was a barber and he also laid bricks and he also laid the blocks and stuff like that because you know I told you he could build how, and so I wanted to learn and so I hung around my dad a lot and I did learn how to lay some bricks and mix mortar and I learned how to do some construction work, I know, I know what the entity is when it comes in terms of building a house and I just learned design and I just love the feel of design and my Daddy was strong on his walk with the lord and I had that yearning as well, you know to learn more about the bible and just learn what made other things click as well. So I learned how to drive the tractor and I learned what different tools were and I learned to walk the land and I knew where different plots were and I knew what different seeds were what he was planting you know I just yearned at that and I learned all of that.

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

L.H: Absolutely, that was a must in our family, it wasn't something that was you know (unintelligible) or anything like that it was a time that the family came together and it was a very loving time because during the day you know all of us we had our chores and of course you know we were in school as well too we were taken from the home and we were outside of them and so when dinner time came my mother had prepared a delicious meal most of the time my oldest sister assisted my mother, just an absolutely delicious meal, you know full course meal you know with all of, you know, the everything that was necessary for the growth of the body, we took that opportunity to sit down of course you had you know to wash your hands, you didn't come to the table with your hands dirty and if you hadn't gotten dirty outside you had to go and wash up and change your clothes, got to change up before you came to the dinner table. I your feet was dirty, you had to wash your feet absolutely, you came to the table clean and very mannerable and of course we would come there, my father sat at the head of the table my mother was at the other end of the table and we took our place at the table and all of us we sat at the table with our hands in our lap and our hands were crossed or either down to the side and our, my father would give the nod and we would bow our heads and grace would be extended over the food and the blessings that the lord had extended over us during that period of time and asked for the lords blessing to continue to fall on us and after that my father would reach for the foods and he would begin passing, you know dip, put on his plate, beginning passing, and then it would go all the way around the table till it goes back from my father and my mother would have it arranged on the table and after we got our food we would commence eating and you know no elbows were allowed on the table, you know we ate properly because you know my father and my mother deemed it very necessary that we learn you know the etiquettes s of life so we would be prepared when we go out into the world that we would be able to sit with Kings and Queens if necessary, I remember that very vividly (laughter), they would say 'oh no, you cannot do that, now you must, you must.' Even our hair was combed and brushed, my mother would comb and brush our hair you know we got old enough we would do it our selves, but you know we were just intact at the dinner table, and of course after our dinner was consumed we got up from the table our plates you know everything, you know our utensils that we used, our butter knife never touched the table it'd lay across our plate the way my mother had taught us, and then after our dinner was consumed all of our utensils had to be on the inside of the plate, my mother made napkins for us to use, our napkins was folded and laid back on the table in place and we would get up and push our chair under the table, stand behind our chair and we would take our soiled dishes to the kitchen and then we would clean our plates out and put the leftovers in a little pail and that would go out you know to the pigs or to the dogs or something like that, and then we would commence cleaning the area, my mother and my father didn't clean the kitchen, that was our duty to clean the kitchen, the girls we would clean the kitchen then my brother he would sweep, and that was his job he had to sweep, he didn't do the dishes of course , the girls did that, my father always said that's not a man's job but my brother did he would, he would have my brother to sweep and then my brother would go off with my dad and they would have something they called a manly talk.

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

L.H: Oh yes, Sunday dinner were even more special, because at that time we were able most likely my mother or my dad or somebody would kill a chicken, see we wouldn't have fancy food during the

week days, it would be basic stuff like pinto beans and cornbread, okra, squash, or something like that and you know the breads and just a little bit of meat, not too much meat during the week but on Sundays we would be able to have you know the full layout with the collard greens and all the potato salad, all the fried chicken, the dressing, we would have some of everything laying on the table, and of course my daddy he would hunt on the land too, and sometime he would see an old possum laying up there and you know it would be quite scary to me, because I didn't like the possum at all, usually my mother would have him lay it on the table with an apple in it's mouth (laughter) . But I never did taste the meat but I'm told it is quite tasty.

M.M: Now what was your first job?

L.H: My first job, now let's see, well, I guess my first job when I was in High School and I was able Misses Nancy R. Beasley, she's very instrumental in my life, and I hold her very high in my life and is a person who steered me in the right direction when I was in High School Misses Beasley had made an announce that the Cartersville medical center had a program that was called the candy stripe program and they wanted some volunteers and if anybody was interested in being a candy stripe to let her know and of course I volunteered, I volunteered and I told her I knew I lived in Kingston and I didn't know if I would have transportation to get there but she made that available and I volunteered and I remember very vividly Misses Beasley and some (unintelligible) taking us to the hospital to meet the administrator that was over the program and we did sign up and we went through a little orientation program and we were accepted into that program, I remember it was Belinda Strickland, Margaret Ann Ford and myself it was three of us at the time from Summerhill High School that went to be Candy Stripes at Cartersville memorial hospital at that time was what the name was, now it's Cartersville Medical and it was just so enlightening and I just loved helping people and I loved reading to the sick, you know their cards and some of them couldn't read the, were too ill to read the newspaper and wanted us to read the newspaper or read an article out of a magazine and I just loved that and we would brush some of them, you know go brush their hair, do them with the little flowers, or some would want us to go down to the little store the craft store, the hobby shop and purchase little things for them and we would do that and one of our little jobs we would go and just kind of tidy up the room you know tidy up their newspaper and their magazines and if some of them had some things in their luggage like some little gowns and they wanted us to hang them up, if the family had brought some in we would do that, but I remember that, that was my first job, even though it was volunteering and I love it, it was wonderful.

M.M: Now would you describe the Summerhill neighborhood for me, the boundaries that existed?

L.H: Believe it or not the boundaries around Summerhill High School was very furbished, it was very, even though it was during harder time than what we live in today everybody in the area had a care a deep care of how life should be , they didn't have very much but they lived very well and they took care of what they had even though some was living in public housing what we call housing authorities properties at this time now, they treasured their homes as if they were living in mansions that belonged to themselves. They took quite, they were very immaculate in other words, their yards were well groomed their homes were taken care of quite well, and the children they came from the home, the

families made sure they were clean and they were polished and you know we all came and we went to school and we played together and we worshiped together but it was just absolutely wonderful and I can remember now too that Mt. Zion. Mt. Zion Baptist Church and St. Luke AME Church the two churches that were in the area they were just, they were beacons for us, when of course the school was there for us, on top of the hills the top of some hills there were those two churches and it seems as if those two churches just sort of showered blessings for us because if it was something that school was not able to get for us those two churches went together and provided those things for us.

M.M: Wow. Now what did you do for fun as a child?

L.H: Well, for fun I enjoyed swimming, I couldn't swim I'd done a lot of floating and of course on our land, we had a creek on our land so whenever we had the opportunity we ask, sometimes we would slip off but most of the time we got in trouble for that because my dad told us that something could happen by slipping off and going to the creek but you know we would ask but I enjoyed going to the creek and swimming and also in Kingston where I lived I enjoyed because all of us you know the white s and the blacks all of us got along so well it was a little wishing well in downtown Kingston and so all of us would go downtown Kingston and go to the Wishing well, the black and the white kids, we all had roller skates and of course you know we weren't, my parents weren't able to afford to buy any, but the family the Malone family that my mother had worked for they gave us some skates one Christmas so all of us would go downtown Kingston and we would put on our roller skates on our shoes and we would just skate up and down the streets there in Kingston and so I enjoyed doing that as a child when I was there and of course when I was in high school I enjoyed being in the band and you know I was a majorette of course in the band and so I enjoyed that, that was a highlight of my life as well.

M.M: Now where were the favorite hangouts as you got older, where would you go?

L.H: Of course there were no hangouts in Kingston, there were none at all in Kingston an actually to tell you the truth there wasn't any in Cartersville so we just sort of would hangout around the top of the hill which was Old Summerhill High School and at that time they had turned it into like a community center and so we would go there. Old Summerhill High at the top was the community center so we would go there they would have different little things on the weekend, little sock hops and things, and sometime they would have sock hops at the gym hey would always have things at the gym for us to at Summerhill High School so we would hang in the area at the school an at the top of the hill at Old Summerhill high so we didn't get very far from our boundaries and of course we would ride on the other side of town we would go to the Dairy Queen at that time because there was no McDonalds, no Burger King, no Chick-Fil-A, no pizza parlor or anything of that nature we would simply be there at Summerhill and the church had a lot of activities that would house things for us, you know just exciting programs that we were very eager to attend and then when we would leave, we would leave and go to Dairy Queen and then later on they built Kay's Castle when they built Cartersville Plaza , so that was a given opportunity to cruise through the parking lot, go to Kay's Castle get an ice cream and then sort of cruise through Cartersville Plaza. So that was the highlight of our life and believe it or not the black and the white children we'd cruise and we'd get along just fine.

M.M: Now what is your fondest memory of Summerhill?

L.H: My fondest memory of Summerhill is just attending Summerhill, just getting up everyday knowing that I was going to Summerhill High School and I was going to be part of the activities that day and I was going to be able to intermingle with you know my fellow students and of course with my teaches and be able to learn what was being presented that day those are the most fondest memories and just walking down those halls and hearing the lockers open and close and then when the classes would change, you know all of us come out in the hallway and we would see kids from all over the county because at Summerhill it was children from Adairsville, Kingston, Uharley, Cassville, Delishon, Sugar Valley, Emerson, Riddel, Whits, Pine Log, and the Cartersville community, you know all of us were engulfed in there together and it was just such a beautiful entity and so it was just like a rainbow and you know I'm a writer too and I love to write and I guess that's kind of what was popping up at me at that time and I would just love to you know just see all the magnitude of the people and even though we were like shoulder to shoulder and elbow to elbow and you know all of us would meet up and we would exchange words you know talk and stuff like that and of course you'd meet your little boyfriends and stuff it was wonderful, it was just so wonderful.

M.M: Now where did people engage with each other as a community, was it the churches, or was it a lodge, or a local restaurant?

L.H: Most of the times it was at the church, people would engage together, would come together at church for programs and then we would have programs at the school, at Summerhill, we would have major programs and events there, major plays, presentations, you know skits and things like that. There was a lodge of course and the lodge was very vivid, but we were mainly at the school and at the church.

M.M: Now for those plays you were talking about, is it just the members of the community that have children or did the audience come from people who didn't have children at the school too?

L.H: Well the audience came from people who didn't have children at the school too, it was a very open thing, but everybody came in together, yes it was individuals that did not have children at the school as well, some that had already graduated and gone on and they would come back and offer their input and we, I mean we had support from all four corners and it was as if the ones that were educated from Summerhill left and went on you know for higher learning, they all would come back and they would offer their expertise, they did everything to me, this is my perception, they did everything they could to make sure that the generations that were coming through Summerhill High School would continue to evolve to a higher and higher level, it was just that caring and that close and you know to, in my heart today I still feel that from all of the, everyone that have passed through those doors, we still have that closeness, we still have that bond, and we still sort of push each other, even though some of us have reached our golden years, they're still pushing, saying 'reach, continue to reach for the stars, continue, the sky is not the limit, you can go beyond that,' and you know it and I'm pushing you know and they're still pushing, so it was just that type of feel and it still is, and even though some have gone on to their grave it's just as if they're echoing from their grave you know the late Stanley Morgan and

some more that have gone open to their grave it's still as if you can hear their echoes saying 'don't settle for nothing, don't settle for less, reach for the unreachable,' you still hear that, at least I can, and I know others too because I see that they are still very vivid in roles today and they're still....

(Tape 1, Side B)

M.M: Now who are the prominent or recognized members of the community while you were there?

L.H: In Summerhill, in the Cartersville area it would be the Beasley family, Lloyd and Catherine Beasley, now these are individuals and of course our teachers, of course all at the school Mrs. Nancy Beasley, Mr. and Mrs. Morgan, Ralph Lowe, Mrs. Coey, Mrs. Milton, Mrs. Decatur, Mrs. Strickland, at this time Mrs. Labe, Mr. and Mrs. Hill June and Mathew Hill, Mrs. Elzina Williams, you know and the list can go on with all the teachers there at the school at that time, but in the community as I've already stated the Beasley family, Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Beasley, Lloyd and Catherine Beasley, the Hendrix family was very visible , the Callahan family, James and Annie Callahan, the Weams Family, Joe Weams and his family, you know everybody was just out there and the wanted to do their best to help individuals along the way.

M.M: Now you talked about how the whites and the blacks really got along very well, but do you recall any areas that were considered whites only or blacks only, and do you every remember seeing any signs?

L.H: Oh yes, I remember that, of course that was there, there was a little place that was called the four way café here in Cartersville and that little entity still stands at this time, and it had individuals, it was a very small little restaurant, and individuals could go in, and event though blacks worked there and served you know cooked the food and everything, individuals the white could go in and they could sit at the counter and they could eat their food, but it was little window on the back side that it said 'Colored' and then well you know blacks would have to go to the back and would have to order through that little peep hole and your food was handed out that window, you know you gave your money and then your food was handed out the window and I can remember at the bus station in Cartersville, because a lot of time I would have to ride the buds when I go home, after stayed over for activities at the school and of course the Beasley family, they provided housing for me too when I could stay over in the area, I practically grew up in their home so I could be involved in after school activities and my brother stayed with the Cotton family, Robert Cotton he was another teacher there at the school, but even at the bus station, they had a dinner there at the bus station and blacks were there working at the bus station they had counters in there that the white could go in and sit down and eat, but the blacks had to go all the way to the back and it was a little bitty hole back there that you could order some food and you extended money and they would give it to you and yeah there was little restrooms that would say for Colored , and you know the nice restrooms was up front you know for the whites and we would be on the back some where a little dirty dingy thing and little old water hose it would be as if the nice cool water, the water with the refrigerator on it, it was cool cold water it would be for whites only, and somewhere around the corner it would like a little hydrant or a little something , well hydrant with a

man makeshift type thing with the faucet turned up and you would turn it on and the water would come up and you would drink that way. Yes, that did exist.

M.M: Now where was the bus station located?

L.H: The bus station was located on Main St. there in Cartersville and at that time, actually now it is a law office, at that time right across from it was a supermarket that was called the big apple and across from there it was the funeral, it was funeral home on that side, which is now Cartersville police department, and right beside the bus station I believe it's a Presbyterian church there that sits right there beside the bus station. But it wasn't to far, Main St., Carter St. runs into Main St., it was in walking distance from the school, everything in Cartersville is walking distance, at that time because we walked everywhere.

M.M: Now lets talk about the church, tell me about the role of the church in the community, tell me more about it.

L.H: The church was certainly a beacon in the community, the church stood very high and it was recognized very highly, we looked up to our ministers you know the ministers of the churches, we looked up to the deacons and the stewards and the mothers of the church and stewardesses and deaconesses of the church they had very prominent roles and they were men and women of such noteworth it was that a characteristic was gleaned on them they lived and they displayed Christian martyr-ship and it was something that we looked up to as a very highly person to be deemed such respect and we did and the church was there for us for any given opportunity that we fell into, the church was there to comfort, and then with some of the civil rights stuff that was coming up and on the scene at that time the church was there as a comforting post for us because we could go to the church and have plays and would be able, someone you know have a little movie some kind of way, we would get the movie from the Billy Graham foundation they would mail the movies in to us and we would go there and sit at the church and we would look at the Billy Graham movies that Billy Graham would send us, when we couldn't go to the Grand Theatre and so you know the church was just there for us and when we couldn't go to the other entities sand sit down and purchase a meal and have a nice banquet we could go to the church and do that, it was there we had the facilities and we could go there and it was if you know, you were just made to feel just so important.

M.M: Now because you lived in Kingston, did you ever attend a church in Summerhill?

L.H: Of course I did, of course, and like I said the Beasley family had opened their home to me, in fact their daughter their oldest daughter, Elma and their niece Drusilla, we were best friends, Elma and I best friends and they had opened their home to me, had spoke with my mother and father and told them that I could stay there with them whenever I needed to stay over and go to school instead of trying to catch the bus and go home, I could stay there during the week and come home on the weekends, or you know I could just, I had a home, I had a room there, because their oldest brother was off at service and so his room was available and their cousin Drusilla was staying there as well because she lived in

Cassville, and so we were able, Drusilla and I were able to use their oldest brother Lloyd Jr.'s room which it was twin beds in there and we used that room and we lived there with them and of course we attended church, we would go St. Luke's and I remember very vividly, Mrs. Beasley, she was over the choir, the children's choir and she was making little choir dresses for the children for them to sing in the choir and she made, she was cutting the dresses out and she made dresses for, little jumpers little red jumpers and wearing little white blouses, and I remember her telling my mother to get me a blouse and she made one for me too and I was in the choir and I sung in the choir too.

M.M: This is at St. Luke's right?

L.H: This is at St. Luke AME, and I remember because at Mt. Zion we would always have programs there, the Emancipation Proclamation Program, we'd have programs there and a lot of times we would have our Baccalaureate service it would be housed there at Mt. Zion because it was larger than St. Luke, but both of the churches they would, sometime you know when our band would be going out of town and stuff, you know they would prepare food and you know send it to us, and they were just there for us.

M.M: Now what types of things were preached about?

L.H: Well of course you know we had that hell, damnation you know, you got to live right you know that, we had that none of that was spared that was of course preached but we had encouraging sermons with the preacher telling us that we were God's chosen generation, we were god's children too and we were not to feel as if we were made less than anybody else, that we are all equal in God's eyesight and sermons were preached that we must regardless of any kind of abuse or any kind of mistreatment that we had gone through or were going through we must not you know turn a cheek that is wrongfully toward our brothers and sisters that might have kind of oppressed us, we must love one another, love was always preached in the black church and it's still preached there today and I'm sure, I know there's preachers in the white church, because I'm in the ministry and it was always preached that you must love your brothers and sisters regardless of the color of their skin and even though we had been oppressed we must not let hatred rain in our hearts and in our minds, we must look beyond that and press forward to the mark of a higher calling.

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

L.H: Any political stance? Well, of course the church is not supposed to take any political stance of course the church was there for the members when we had to be a place of coming together because we didn't have any place of coming together so yes indeed the church did open it's doors for us to come together to take so we could be enlightened as to what to do when it came time to take a political stand, yes indeed.

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

L.H: Well the only change that I can think of, or say that the church went through in changing was that it grew, the church grew, the mission and the philosophy of the church has never changed it has maybe gotten a little clearer to the individuals as to what the mission of the church is all about, but the church in essence just grew, it continued to grow and continued to open it's arms and envelope around the people and helping the people and then reaching out and helping other people that's the only way that I saw that the church grew you know that's the only change that I can say that the church made, they grew and it was for the betterment for the church.

M.M: Let's talk about the school.

L.H: Alright

M.M: Can you describe Summerhill school for me, what grade levels did it serve?

L.H: Well, Summerhill High School, even though it was Summerhill High School, tacked on the back was an elementary school as well it was like a little kindergarten and the elementary school which was you know grade 1, the little pre-k or whatever, little nursery or something back there, grade 1 and up until the eighth grade was tacked on the back and then the high school was 9-12, so in essence Summerhill Elementary, High School it was all combined together but it was all thought of as the Summerhill High School, and at the time you know on the backside it was sort of a, maybe a tan brick color on the back of it, but on the front it was the red brick and it seems as if the building was such a big school you know it was, even though it was a small school, it was a big school because it housed so much love and the school it was well taken care of, not only did we have you know janitors that would take care of the sanitation of the school, all of us, the principal, the teachers, the students, the parents, all of us pitched in to make sure that our school remained you know clean and stood for integrity, stood for a place of essence of a higher learning entity. It was just that, of that magnitude, it was something else and to this day you know our eyes gleamed just to see the little (unintelligible) that has been replaced on the land where the Summerhill School once stood and I tell you Summerhill will always remain our Queen, yes indeed.

M.M: Now, you had to take the bus in because you were coming from the county.

L.H: Yes, Right.

M.M: And because most students walked to school or were bused in from the county, was there ever the stigma of city kids vs. county kids?

L.H: You know believe it or not, there was not that stigma there at Summerhill High School. We all got along well, now I'm speaking from my perspective, my perspective, this could have happened to classes that were on the scene before I was there or you know underclassmen but of course during the episode that I was there, no, no, no, no, we were all treated very fairly because the city students you know they often wanted to go and see where we came from because we brought such richness to the

table you know and they wanted to see well where, 'where did you come from?', you know they wanted to see.

M.M: Now what were your favorite subjects?

L.H: My subjects? English, literature, I love to read, I love to read, English and literature my favorite, and then home economics, math, I love math, but English and literature was the major subject that I love because I love to read and of course I became intrigued with mathematics and numbers you know and I love math as well and of course you know when you love to read, in everything that you would become involved with it would kind of engulf your attention so I loved home economics and I loved to short hand and once I learned the concepts of it, it was just like it was a yearning, I was just really hungry you know to learn it, and I don't know and then I mastered the type writer and it was just like a speed thing, and I could just type that, type through that typing. But number one was English and literature and I could still hear today Mrs. Nancy R. Beasley standing before us, stepping away from her desk and taking her podium and standing there and she would stand before us and she would say, 'Ladies and gentlemen, we must pronounce our words very clearly and properly that is the number one thing here in our class, we will not have any sluriness at all,' and I remember that and I thought ' Oh, I want to be just like her' (laughter) 'I want to be just like her,' whenever I'm given the opportunity to just stand and expound on anything I want to give it as if I'm giving it for the last time and when I speak I want it to be a table that is set well.

M.M: Now who were your favorite teachers?

L.H: Well of course you know, by what I've already said, you know that I do not have any favorites, I must say that, to correct the records here, but I must let you know that when I was in elementary school Misses Margaret Johnson, she was such an inspiration to me, Mrs. Mary Allen Beavers, those two there they were such an inspiration in guiding me and preparing me for High School and once I reached high school Mrs. Nancy R. Beasley, I don't know why you did not know that would roll off my tongue as number one, but Mrs. Nancy R. Beasley she is such a jewel in my eyesight and in my heart and I love her dearly and she just stood as such a beacon when I was coming along, I don't even think she knew I looked up to her as much but I did and of course, Mrs. June Hill she was very you know, she dealt with a whole lot of my life too, in the business administration part and I highly look up to her, yes it would be Mrs. Margaret Johnson, the late Mrs. Mary Ellen Beavers, Mrs. Nancy R. Beasley, Mrs. June Carter, no Carson, no Hill those would be the individuals at the level of the high school there. Oh Mrs. Beasley, she made sure you know she just, she wanted, she wanted everything, everything that was available for you, she wanted, she wanted to prepare you so you would be able to grasp and you would be polished enough to receive it, she was just that articulate, she also served as our librarian of the school and eagerly, I eagerly rushed and told her that I wanted to be on part of the SLAG association and those were students that worked in the library and they were SLAGs, S-L-A-G, SLAG association and I remember a couple years she took us to Atlanta and we would go to SLAG conventions and you know it was just wonderful, she would take us to oratories, to speak contests and things of that nature, she would encourage us to write, in fact like I had mentioned earlier, I am a writer, I've written for several

newspapers and magazine, and associations, and I love to write, and I love to write plays and skits, and she would just push that little nudge up out of you, and she gave us that opportunity as well and she's a writer herself too, surely is.

M.M: Now you mentioned you were a SLAG, did you belong to any other clubs or organizations?

L.H: Yes I was, I was a member of the FBLA, I was a member of the home economics association, I was a member of, I had, let's see the FBLA, the home economics associations, the SLAG association, I just I can't think of the rest of them now, but I was in everything, oh, I was on the newspaper staff of course, and I was on the yearbook staff, and the musical, the band, the Glee club, we would sing, we were the marching band and the concert band, and in the home economics area, I done quite well at home economics learning you know designs and of course I won a trophy one year for that, so I guess I would consider myself an all around student I just tried to get involved in everything that I could get involved with.

M.M: Now the band, you mentioned you had a marching band and a concert band, if you were a member of the marching and were you required to be a member of the concert band or could you choose to be in either or?

L.H: You could choose to be in either or, but we had such a beautiful musical program you wanted to be in both, Mr. Williams, David Williams at that time he was our band instructor, he was the minister of, well he was on our Music department, he was just so good, he was just so wonderful, and he'd just you know it was just as if he wanted to be involved in both of them and later on he was given an opportunity to go and take up with the musical department of Elizabeth State University in Elizabeth City, North Carolina and at that time, Mr. Bostic came and took over our music department and he was just as good, so oh yes, you want to be a part of both of it.

M.M: And you were a majorette?

L.H: I was a majorette, yes, a very high stepping majorette. Oh yes, with our blue and white on and our little tassels, white boots, polished, white polished boots and with the taps on the heel and the toe of them, with the little tassels, blue and white tassels, and we had our little skirts and our little jackets, you know that material was wool.

M.M: Oh wow.

L.H: Yes! I think about it today you know and of course you know we would be out there marching because we would start school in late August and go back after Labor Day and so you know it would still be hot and we would be marching and those things would be hot, then of course you know it was some cooler days later but those things were hot, and then of course we would go to band festivals and I remember going to Albany State, and Savannah State, going over to the Tuskegee Institute, and Morris Brown, and Clark, we work go to different places like that Fisk University and one time we were

scheduled to go to TSU, but we didn't make that trip that year, but we went to all of those colleges for band performances, we were real good, we were real good, and of course when we would have our Homecoming, everybody would come from everywhere and all the alumnus and everybody who'd gone through the doors of Summerhill would come back and it would be cars lined up the hill and just parked for miles away and everybody, the bleachers would be just jam packed with people, you could smell the popcorn popping, the hot dogs you know being roasted or boiled, and the little hamburgers, and everybody even individuals that didn't have cars, they would share their vehicles so somebody else could get a ride to the game and it would be just wonderful. The parade, everybody would get involved in the parade and the church would have a float, and say they lodge would have afloat, everybody, it would just be the parade of the year, oh, all of the black and the whites and everybody would come out and we would do the same with Cartersville High you know had their homecoming parade we would go out and support them as well, but we our parade we would come out and oh it was jus the moment for us to strut our stuff and it was just SHA, Summerhill High School and off we would leave the campus, marching all the way from Summerhill all the way up Jones St., Carters St., down Main St., Cartersville, across the railroad and around and back up and marching all the way back up to the field to the school and never missed a beat and never jumped out of line to get a sip of water, oh, it was just so much fun, so much fun.

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

L.H: Of course! Of course, of course, and I thank them today that we did have all of that homework, of course some of us did not understand at the time and some of us, because you know we were children, we were young at heart and we still wanted to play and you know have other little fun to, we didn't understand the necessity of having all of that homework, but it was much needed because our teachers, our instructors they were trying to prepare us for a world that was yet waiting for us, they wanted us to be able to live, to be able to reside or be able to just comprehend beyond what we were, the boundaries that we were in at that time. Yes, so we had a lot of homework, we went home and we got with our peers, or we got with other students, and we got our homework. Oh you didn't go back to school without your homework, you make some kind of effort and when you got back and if it wasn't right, our teachers took time and explained to us what we did not do right, how you know so we would know how to do it right the next time, you know you just were not pushed in a corner. If you did not know, quite understand, there was no such thing as, you know, as if I can't learn it oh no that concept was dismissed, you can learn it because you have a mind that is learnable, you were taken one on one and your teacher would sit down and show you the procedures and once you left there it was just embedded and you knew.

M.M: Now, what kinds of sports did kids participate in?

L.H: Football, at the school we had our football program, we had our basketball program, and we were very blessed and very fortunate that we had a coach, Reverend Hill, Reverenced Coach Matthew Hill, he had gone Bethune-Cookman College and he had been exposed, because you know Mary McCloud, Bethune-Cookman, let me get it right now, Bethune-Cookman, so Bethune, I believe her name

was Bethune, she had been exposed to the White House so she was able to get a, she was out there something sort of like Mrs. Rice with president bush now, she was out there and so Reverend Hill, the school that he attended he was exposed to a lot of cultural events and so he was able to bring that back to Summerhill, so when he, at Summerhill he taught us racquetball, you know, we didn't have the facilities but we went there and hit the ball against the wall of the bleachers.

M.M: Was this P.E. class?

L.H: P.E. class, yes! We had football, we had basketball, softball, baseball, racquetball, he taught us some tennis, and we didn't even have a tennis court, well we was out there on the dirt and had the little net, but he taught us that, badminton he taught us racquet, roulette the little racquet stuff, the little things you hit the little balls and we learned all kinds of sportsmanship games, he taught us that and he taught us formal dancing, ball room dancing, you know because we had to be prepared to meet another generation, they wanted us ready to go, like I said when we left from there our parents had already instilled in us at home , at home and around the dinner table that we were able to sit with kings and queens and when we went to school they better prepared us and polished us even more that we were about to go and then if we went and something of this nature would come up we wouldn't stand there and look amiss as if we didn't know what was going on, we would know 'oh yes, that's racquetball oh yes, that's tennis, oh yes.' Even though we didn't have the money but some kind of way Reverend Hill and the churches and somebody would get those badminton things for us they would get....

(Tape 2, Side A)

M.M: Now what year did you graduate from Summerhill?

L.H: 1967

M.M: Sixty-Seven

L.H: Yes.

M.M: And what did you do after you graduated?

L.H: After I graduated I went on to Crystal Valley College, and I received my associates degree in accounting from there, and I furthered my education by going to the University of Georgia doing some continuing education classes in the area of auxiliary secretarial science, in the area of guidance and special education, then after that of course you know I got married along the way and I went to Dalton College and took computer science. While I was living in the Dalton area I continued, I went back to the University of Georgia and I went through the institute of management program and I completed four years of a five year degree program in business administration. Okay, and of course I went to Dalton college and took computer science, and then Chattanooga State and took computer science there and business administration and of course right now I am enrolled in the Gordon County Hospital Chaplain

program and I'm enrolled, in fact this is my last year going through the African Methodist Episcopal Church school, ministerial preparation school and hopefully I'll be coming out this June out of that and this has been a five year program, you have to go one year just to be admitted through these, through the course to get into the course and so I will be graduated this June coming out of there and along the way I just, still continuing my education of course like I said I write, I love to write and I've written for several entities. I tutor, I worked as a secretary, an accountant, administrative assistant, I've worked as a customer service specialist, a motor vehicle specialist, of course I'm a preacher, I've taught school, I've done some mentoring and some tutoring and I've done some volunteer work.

M.M: Now how would you say education has effected your life?

L.H: Education has affected my life very beautifully, education has been most essential in my life from the cradle because my father and my mother stressed education as essential and then going on from there and through school and then out of school and just stressing that to my children too, education has been the gearing point of where I am today, yes It has been most essential in my life and I love, I love learning. I love learning.

M.M: Now do you feel that you received an equal education to that of white students, were there any differences that you were aware of at the time?

L.H: I don't feel, I feel like I received the better education because I was with caring teachers, teachers that loved me, they didn't just teach me because they had to teach me, or they were there to earn a salary, they taught me because they loved me for who I was and who they were, they loved me. I feel like I received a better education, no I don't feel like the white students received a better education than I did. Of course opportunities were presented to them first that I was not able to receive at that time and I wont even say that I was not able to receive, I would put it this way, I was not able to receive at it's fullest because if there was a way and there was a will our instructors made sure that we were exposed to everything that would enlighten us and have us in position to make it in this world.

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

L.H: I don't think so, because times have changed and you can't go back it's just as if you spill water, you can't go back and get that, it's gone you know it's taken on a different (unintelligible), no I don't think so. There of course you, you're always going to have like home settings and stuff of that nature but in terms of segregated schools no I don't think so, I think that we will be together because god intended for us to be together and we're living in this world and our government, we're all working together so we must stay together in order for us to succeed as a nation.

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

L.H: Oh, my heart crushed, it was as if a piece of me had been laid to rest, It just felt that heart sickening when it came tumbling down, because I loved it and each time when I return to the area and I

would go by Summerhill, I found my self going up (unintelligible) Street, going by Summerhill to see my old school and each time you know I would see it as it would begin to cry out in it's ruins, you know with the debris and everything I saw it crying you know for help and mercy and I knew it would be only a matter of time that it would come down, and when it did come down it was as if a piece of me was laid to rest but, old dear Summerhill never went to the grave, and praise be unto God it's up again. We always had that instilled in us, even before Maya came on the scene and recited our rhyme, somewhere way back then when we were in school that was instilled in us that you know, that you can reach beyond the sky and it was as if Summerhill was lying there saying 'I'll rise,' and she has.

M.M: She sure has.

L.H: Now tell me about the years of the civil rights movement, were you ever involved?

M.M: Actually, I was not. Actually, I was not, because like I said in the area that we lived in, we didn't go through all of that. You know we saw on the TV, we saw where in Alabama and different places where people, the dogs, people would turn the dogs on blacks and we saw where they were being drug from the counters trying to eat, we saw all of these things happening but in the area where we lived it didn't happen, because you know we all got along well and like I said if it did happen I didn't see it. If it did, I don't remember, you know nothing like that and when it came time for you know integration, when Summerhill, you know when we did close the doors of Summerhill and the students went to Cartersville High School, and the county children went to Cass High. Well you know we already knew those kids, because we lived in the cities where they lived and we would be standing out there together catching the bus. Even though they caught in Kingston for instance, even though the Malone kids and all of us and the Pratt kids were, we all stood there to catch the bud together, the white and the black kids we stood there to catch the bus together, and sometimes their bus would come first and sometimes our bus would come first. Sometimes it would be raining and we would all get on Mr. JT Morris porch, and he was a white man, we would stand on his porch to catch the bus there and sometimes like I said their bus would come first or our bus would come first and they would get on their bus, 'Bye,' you know and they'd go to Cass, we'd get on our bus, 'bye,' and we'd go to Summerhill. We'd all be coming back in the same time, we'd get off our bus and you know we'd play and we'd pick up pecans together and sit there and talk and go home and you know, then Paulie and Nancy or some of them, later on we'd hear them hollering 'Shirley, Louise, Can you come play?,' you know they could go play before we could because we had homework and they didn't have as much homework as we had. You know and they'd be yelling for us to come you know meet them play, and they'd come to our house, or we'd walk over and go play with them, or we were on our way to downtown Kingston to go skating, so we never did see that, we never did, and you know, but we looked and we saw it on TV and it was like something foreign to us, it was as if something, as if, even though that was in the United States and you know if I need, If I have to put in a scenario of today's time, it was as if we were looking at a place somewhere like Iraq or something. We were like, 'You know we were like what in the world, they were doing that in Alabama, they're blowing churches up?,' you know we going to church and we just could not believe that.

M.M: Now you graduated in '67, you were the second to last class to graduate. Were there any children that chose to, wasn't this during the freedom of choice time, they could choose to go, do you remember anyone choosing to go ahead and be integrated?

L.H: Yes, we had several, several students went ahead and I had that opportunity to choose to go to Cass High myself, it was there on the plate for us to make that choice, yes we had several students that went ahead and made that choice, some went to Cartersville High and some went to Cass High, yes indeed and of course when Homecoming time came, they came back you know they went to they church, I mean their school, they got in the bands and stuff there, but they came back to Summerhill and was a part of us as well, but I chose to remain there at Summerhill because I loved Summerhill and that was my last year of high school and I wanted to graduate from high school from Summerhill High School because I had such a love for Summerhill and I loved my teachers and you know they had been with me, and pushed me so, and were working with me so, and so I really wanted to stay there but I had several friends that went ahead and went to Cass and to Cartersville High School, and they did quite well, they graduated that year, they were not set back or nothing of the kind, they were received very well and they went right ahead and of course the next year class of 1968, that was the final class year of Summerhill High School and some of their students went to Cartersville High and Cass as well and then after the schools you know were integrated, (unintelligible) hear all of that, no, no.

M.M: Now you said you had the opportunity to go to Cass or Cartersville and some of your friends did, was everyone in the school given the opportunity or..

L.H: Everyone was given the opportunity, no..

M.M: SO it wasn't just like a select...

L.H: No, No, everyone in the school was given the opportunity, you had that freedom you along with your parents had that freedom if you chose to, the parent of course the student could not, you know the parent and the child if that was the decision of the child and the parent for the student to go to Cass or to Cartersville High that you know was made available, no there was no criteria that you must stay here, or you're going over here to be like a guinea pig. No, no, no, that was not, that was not the case.

M.M: Now how did global events like the Great Depression, WWII, civil rights, Vietnam, affect your life, and the community's life?

L.H: Well actually WWII and all of that, I was a child coming up during that time, and so I really don't have any remembrance of that you know it's very vaguely, I just don't have, I don't have a lingo of that, you could talk to my parents and they could tell you about that, that era. But of course during the civil rights like I said we saw so little of it, what we saw was on the TV that you know we learned about the harshness of it, we didn't, it did not affect us we just reaped the benefits of it, we reaped the benefits and yet during the whole era of it we lived in peace. The Vietnam war that was a very crying and a very touching time for us and of course president John F. Kennedy when he was assassinated when we were

in school and that was a very heartbreaking time for us, you know and I remember that, and crying then too because we loved him as a president, but the Vietnam war that was a very touching situation in our lives because we had so many of our friends and loved ones to go to that war and lives were lost in that war, and some were taken as prisoners of war in that war, so that war, that is the war that really took a hunk out of our heart, the Vietnam War.

M.M: Now what can you tell me about Slab Stadium, do you remember hearing about slab stadium?

L.H: No, I don't remember hearing about Slab Stadium. That must have appeared on the scene before my time.

M.M: Right, it did, I was just wondering if you had heard.

L.H: When I came along, Summerhill High School and the football field which is now Matthew Hill complex. When we come along the stadium was already embellished with the bleachers, the concrete bleachers, the little, the risers, the little wood risen off of it, it was very polished, it was a well articulated place it was nice.

M.M: So you don't remember the trash pile, or hearing about the trash pile?

L.H: No, none of that was on the scene when I come along.

M.M: Do you remember, you mentioned the old school on the hill, had been turned into a Recreation center.

L.H: Yes, right.

M.M: Do you remember when it was destroyed, do you remember when it came down?

L.H: Actually, I don't the old building was there, and I think I had moved away when it, they took it down and then they rebuilt the new structure that's on the site at this time, I really don't remember when that was taken down, because you know my fondest memories are the bottom, the Summerhill High School, the one where I walked the halls, the one at the top of the hill is where the old, the upperclassmen's, I won't say the older ones, the upperclassmen's that walked the halls before we were there was at that site there.

M.M: Now are you aware of any place where drinking was known to take place in the community?

L.H: Not really, because my parents were so strict, I had very strict parents, and they sought every means to protect us and of course when we came to school our teachers took on the role of our mothers and our dad's and then took on the roles of protecting and keeping us from episodes as of that and if there were houses of that nature, you know they weren't spoken of, the weren't spoken of, and if

children came from houses like that, that wasn't spoken of as well, everybody was treated equal and there was another thing, we did not never see any of our instructors take a drink, intoxicated, no kind of form or fashion they were always in an upright position and walking in integrity. You would have thought they were preachers.

M.M: Now the name Summerhill, do you know where it comes from?

L.H: Well I really don't know where it comes from, but I was told that the community was called Summerhill, just that little area and that group of people that lived in that area, they just called that little area the Summerhill, and so then the name was tacked on you know to the school, and I don't know where, I, you know, I have not researched that to this day as to why the name Summerhill was given to the school, so I don't have that information.

M.M: Now, you don't live in Kingston now, correct?

L.H: No, I live in Adairsville now.

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

L.H: Well are talking, you talking from the school standpoint, or just in general?

M.M: Life in general.

L.H: Well life in general number one and two are my parents, Sara Louis Young my mother and the late James William Young Sr. my father, they are the heroes of my life, and of course God is number one in my life, of course God is number, but my parents they are the heroes in my life, and as we slide on out of the family entity I would have to say the next person that made a great impact on my life would be coming through the doors of Bartow Elementary School would be Mrs. Mary Ellen Beavers, the late Mary Ellen Beavers. She was my Grammar school teacher, and Mrs. Margaret Johnson in grammar in elementary school, and then Mrs. Nancy R. Beasley, Mrs. June Hill, but Mrs. Beasley, Nancy R. Beasley is the person out of the teachers that made a very positive impact on my life.

M.M: Ok that's it.