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

Interview with:	**Nancy Beasley**
Interviewed by:	**Melissa Massey**
Location:	**Nancy Beasley's home at 304 N. Bartow Street, Cartersville, GA**
Date:	**May 11, 2003**
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Biography: Nancy Beasley was born in Cartersville on Carter Street in 1928. She has one sibling, Helen Robinson Banks. Her mother was Ellen Price Robinson, and her father was Ishmael Singleton Robinson. Mrs. Beasley attended Ft. Valley State College upon graduating from Summer Hill, and she received her Master's from Atlanta University. Starting at the age of fifteen, during the summers she worked for Guarantee Life Insurance Company for three years. After finishing college, Mrs. Beasley became a teacher.

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MM: This is Melissa Massey interviewing Nancy Beasley on March 11, 2003 at 304 Bartow Street in Cartersville, Georgia. Can you state your name for me?

NB: Nancy R. Beasley.

MM: And when were you born?

NB: I was born in Cartersville on Carter Street in 1928.

MM: Did you have any siblings?

NB: Yes, one.

MM: One. And what was his or her name?

NB: Helen Robinson Banks.

MM: Okay. And who else did your household consist of?

NB: My mother and my father. My mother was Ellen Price Robinson and my father was Ishmael Singleton Robinson.

MM: What did your family do for a living?

NB: My mother was just really a housewife and my father worked at Lads. This was the line mine that was located here in Bartow County and he loaded the keel. Yes. And he worked there until, I believe about 1951 or '52; no, it was 1941 or '42 and all of a sudden they just went out of business. He had no pension from them. And then he began to work at the city hall, he worked for the city. And I was always very frightened when I saw my dad on the fire truck because my dad was forty-eight when I was born, forty-nine, and my mother was forty-eight but forty-nine the next month so my sister and I were very late children. My sister was born when my mother was forty-five. When I got ready to go to college they were in their late sixties. But we had a very good life. We lived on Carter Street and we had a big house; I didn't realize that we were fortunate to

have that size house until I was a little older because we had three bedrooms, a living room, dining room, a kitchen, a front hall and a back hall, a front porch and a back porch and a little room on the back. And then, of course, in the yard there was the cold house and the chicken house and the pit for the ferns. In the wintertime the ferns were put into a pit and I remember that many times the pit would fill up with water and they would have to drain it out. My dad would always have to suck the hose, you know, and I think, "Oh, that water is going to get in his mouth." But I never had the experience of having outdoor toilets nor lamplights, we always had electricity. And we had running water. I didn't realize that this was an advantage until we had grown older but most people on the hill had outdoor toilets. But I don't think I was aware of that until I was older. We were sort of sheltered being born with older parents. I had, one of my mother's sisters was a schoolteacher, she taught in the Pine Log area. Pine Grove area, I need to get that right. She was Celina Price Kay and she had lots of books so we were blessed to have lots of books and I had a cousin who was, well, he knew Latin and was a very good English speaking person. We learned a lot from him, Hivarus Smith, and he was a chauffeur for the Dillingers. Each year--this was not Ray Dillinger who's here now who is one of the wealthiest men in this town—he worked for his father. He would go to St. Simon to enjoy the winter. I can always think of how I did not particularly like him because when he came back he would bring my sister a doll that had shoes on and my doll would always have painted shoes and I just did not like him for that and I thought, "He doesn't like me." [chuckle] And I really, you know, and I always have not liked dolls whose shoes were painted on. [chuckle]

MM: That's funny. Now, were your parents from Cartersville?

NB: Yes, now my father was born in the Mission community. His father came from Eufaula, Alabama; he and Uncle Green Robinson came and they bought 100 acres of land or either 200 acres of land—it's in the history of Bartow County—and somehow they have the name spelled R-o-b-e-r-s-o-n., R-o-b-i-s, but they don't have it quite right. But it's 'Robinson'. They gave an acre of land to the school and an acre to the church and somehow my grandfather and Uncle Wade had a dispute, I don't know exactly what it was, but they never—we were aware that this had existed and my grandfather farmed. The reason that my dad worked at the lime mine, he started there when he was twelve because one winter or one fall the boll weevil had eaten up the crop and his mother cried so he decided that he never did want his mother to be without money so he worked there. My grandfather farmed and, of course, the Robinson's are just one of the few families that still have some farm land in the Mission community. My grandmother had twenty-four acres of land. She came from Hilton Head, South Carolina.

MM: I love Hilton Head!

NB: Yes. And when we did our research on it we found that Grandmamma Nancy was sent to Savannah because she was a mulatto; all the other children were dark, you know, and it said that she was away in school. We're not sure how she, that she came to Cartersville to the Mission with somebody named Ishmael Singleton and this was an uncle of hers as far as we know and then the A.E. Williams was with her and it was always very humorous to them as to where they got money to purchase the land that they did out there. But she had her twenty-four acres and it was not very common at that time for black people to have that much land but they did have that land. The Mission was just sort of there; it's very well populated now. She deeded each of her sons—there were four

of them—six of the acres before she died. And she was a midwife. Very tall and stately and we just regret so much that the home house burned. It burned on the same day that it was being placed on the national register. So my grandfather was a successful farmer and he had cotton and corn and when some of the other blacks were losing their property he bought it up. He had a horse and buggy, a surrey as they called it, and for some reason he fell out with the church there in the Mission and he came to town to Mt. Olive Baptist Church. At that time Mt. Olive was located on Gilmer Street but it's now in Mechanicsville. So that was my dad's church for a long time and somehow he got angry with that church. [chuckle] It's just a history of that. And of course, my mother was at Mt. Zion, that's the church on the top of the hill that's where the ladies or the earliest that I can remember going to church and it was when I was three. The reason that I say three because I remember so many things that at three that I remember. The minister, the Reverend Woodson who was there seemed to me to be such a giant, you know, and we had to sit very straight in church and you didn't look back and you were just quiet and if you needed to go to the toilet you had to hold it. You didn't get up and run around. [laughter] And it looked like the sermons were so long and there sat this big giant and my mother used to say, "Well, I don't see how you can remember that, you were just three years old, but I do remember it. And I remembered when the lady next door passed away and she says I was three at that time so I just remember a lot of things . . . I remember somebody taking me next door to see her when she was dead and they didn't pick me up; all I saw was this cloth around the bear and I said to my mother, "Mother, they've made Ms. Mary into cloth." And then she realized that Elnora had not picked me up to let me see her. So somebody came back and I remember she was smiling and we

could see her gold tooth. [chuckle] And my mother said, "Well, you were just three when that happened."

MM: Now, how was your relationship with your neighbors?

NB: Fine. We had a great neighborhood, you know. We played together—at four o'clock if we were playing we had to come in because my mother always took a nap at four and then we'd get up at five and get our face and hands washed so that my dad would be coming from Lad's so he could come in and get his bath and we had dinner. He was a very, very serious person about taking a bath. He didn't mind telling anybody, "You need to go bathe! You need to wash your sweats off!" [Laughter] But our next door neighbor was Luther Sidney and he was a mulatto but his wife was not, she was very much black and he worked at Tetter's Shoe Shop downtown and he was a very skilled person. Many times people came in and he would laugh because they thought he was Mr. Tetter. [chuckle] But I understand that he made shoes at one time for Franklin Delano Roosevelt. And there was a Mr. C.O. Collins in this town who was at the courthouse and I guess he was the clerk and he had to have a raised shoe and I understand that Mr. Sidney did this shoe. And of course, I remember when people got refrigerators and electric stoves, they were one of the first families that. . . . We finally got a refrigerator but it was a long time before we got that stove because--I think we did get it before I went to college but with my dad not at Lad's anymore and working, you know, where he could at that time, because I was in college or getting ready to go to college and my sister elected to go to cosmetology school, she was a beautician, so, but I insisted, I really wanted to attend Spelman College but the tuition was much too expensive. So Ft. Valley's State College was the least expensive and I tucked my head and said, "Oh, yes,

why I will go to Ft. Valley." I remember the room and board my first year was $21.00 per month and I worked at the library at school and made $7.00 a month. And that made my tuition be $15.00, I mean my room and board. During that summer prior to my going to college I worked for I guess a week and a half for a lady on Cherokee Street named Mrs.—well, her mother and she were there—Mrs. Harrison and Mrs. Fendley. I had not really been one who worked a whole lot at home because my sister would wash the dishes and she would let me go play! So anyway, I worked and I said, "I want to work to save some money." I got tired that morning, one morning and I sat in this, went in the den and sat down on the sofa and sort of nodded and Mrs. Fendley said, "Get up from there! You don't have any time to sit!" I said, "Well, I want to have all the time that I want after today." So I wrote, I don't know what gave me the idea or somebody, but I wrote the insurance companies in Atlanta, I told them that if they had any position open for a person for the summer I had a gift of gab and I could talk to people if they would allow me to do any kind of work I'd appreciate it. So Guarantee Life Insurance Company hired me as a special writer. So I wrote insurance—you know, people would let me write them a nickel, you know, and I had a lot of little nickel and dime policies but every increase was important to the company. So I worked for Guarantee for three summers and by that fourth summer I had written out, you know, and could not find anybody so I just worked for them for three summers. But that was very rewarding to me and the thing that I remember most about that was that I would stop in Rome there, after you would go in to make your report--the district office was in Rome--so I'd have to catch a bus and go to Rome and make my report and then I'd go to downtown Rome and I would buy one piece out of the money that I had made and then I would give the other

to my mother to save for me. And boy I had a little nice collection of skirts and sweaters and so forth.

MM: Down on Broad Street?

NB: Yes, down on Broad Street and let's see, Miller's and oh, I've forgotten the names of the stores, that's been oh, fifty years ago now but Rome was a very, very flourishing place on Broad Street at that time. And there was Higgin's Shoe Store, yes, I would get shoes at Higgins. I don't know whether it's still there or not. I don't know whether Higgin's is but it was . . .

MM: I don't think it is.

NB: And then . . .

MM: But it was there for a while.

NB: Hm-hm. But the new look came. And that's when dresses dropped from here to middle leg, you know, and I had bought all these clothes and there were children who came to school with, who were able after the first few weeks to get the new look. I remember that I got this one black dress in the new look and some shoes because I was in the choir, I sang in the school chorus and it was awful. Some of the skirts I tried to put a piece between them to drop. I can remember how sad I was that all these clothes that I had looked out of date. But there were a number of us, but you know, you wanted to be within the "in" crowd. But college was very delightful for me. And I did make the dean's list that first quarter.

MM: Wonderful.

NB: Yes.

MM: Now, you said your sister washed the dishes and helped out around the house. What was your role in the household? Did you have any certain chores?

NB: I think I sort of aggravated everybody so they were sort of glad to send me outside. And I remember that—oh, my mother did, she washed for Mr. Talbert who lived at the Braban Hotel at that time and she would do his shirts and his socks because I can remember how she used to make us turn the socks to the right side and then put them in the water to soak and we just thought, "Oh, I don't like to do this." And then after you do that then you had to turn them back up so they could be put on the line to dry. There was a big wash pot, you know, and the tubs, we had to help fill up the tubs, the big washtubs, you know, and we had the rub board. But we would have to turn those socks. Now I did have to do that. But my sister would just sort of let me play. [chuckle]

MM: Let you play. [Chuckle] Now, was dinner a special time for your family, when your dad came home from work? Did you all sit down together?

NB: Oh yes. And my mother always made pork. For breakfast she had this big hoecake for my dad and then she'd have this other pan full of biscuits and then another pan. There were three pans. The pan with the hoecake and I guess maybe six biscuits in that one and then the other one with maybe twelve. And we had this big white bowl on the table that she would put the biscuits in and she made jellies and jams and canned the foods out of the garden and we had hogs right here at this place, the Patton's lived here and we shared their hog pen. So when the hogs were killed then the meat was put in the little smokehouse next to the coal house and salted down—Haddie can you get that?—But anyway, we would have hams and then we had the chickens and the eggs and we would share the eggs in the community. And Bradshaw brought our milk. It was a dairy and in

the mornings we would have the buttermilk and the sweet milk and once a week we'd get a pint of cream. But at that time we had an icebox and the iceman would come around.

MM: Iceman, that's neat. Now was Sunday dinner any special time?

NB: Oh yes, Sunday dinner was always a good dinner. Now, on Sunday mornings we would have, sometimes we'd have fried chicken for breakfast and grits and my mother didn't like cheese but we'd have cheese biscuits and the jellies or the jam and coffee. And then we'd have our big dinner after church, you know, and then you could have snacks if you wanted to at night. But during the week we had the breakfast, always breakfast and then we could have lunch from the big bowl and there was gingerbread teacakes. All the kids liked to come by our house for the teacakes. And then we would have our dinner when our dad got from home from work, yes. And we always sat down to dinner. We said our blessing, a Bible verse and, yes.

MM: What about holidays? What holidays did you all celebrate?

NB: Oh, mother always made special—everybody had a cake at their birthday and then Christmas was always so much fun. We would have—mother didn't want the lights on the tree, she was afraid that they would catch fire. I had given my niece those big bulbs that we had on the tree because I wanted them to be kept within the family. So on Christmas Eve we'd get to light the tree for a while, you know, and we would be so excited and go to bed real early. Sometimes my dad would tell us what we were going to get for Christmas! [chuckle] "Tell us daddy, are we going to get. . . ?" And you see, I knew that there was no Santa but I pretended for a long time because I said, "Boy, I believe if you stop, you know. . . ." I said, "Santa can't come all the way from the North Pole and ride . . ."—that was just not a realistic thing for me. And we would always put

out the box for our candy and nuts, you know. You'd have your own candy and your own nuts. My sister would pretend sometimes that she had eaten up her candy so she could have—and she had not! [laughter] During the time that we would have to come in at four o'clock, mother would say now, "You have to be quiet, you cannot go back outdoors." And we would get into fights and we would fight silently. She said, "Don't you holler, don't you holler." And she would pinch me so hard. I can just remember those things. And mother had, we've still got the quilting brims; sometimes she and Aunt Molly would quilt and they would put up the quilting racks and we just loved that. We'd crawl under there and sit when they were up. And my sister always would pinch me. I remember one time we would get ready to go to town with mother and my sister would put my cap over my face, my tam and she would say, "I'm going to push you off the porch." And it would just frighten me so. Finally mother caught her doing that. Well, one day she succeeded in pushing me off and I remember I could hear them talking, I really think I could, because I was unconscious or semi-conscious for about three days. But I got all right. But I don't know whether I had a concussion or not but I do remember that.

NM: What about Easter?

MM: Oh, at Easter we'd always get a pretty dress and we would go to, we'd have a play or something at the church and then on the Monday following Easter the church always had the Easter egg hunt and that has continued at our church except for the last three years we have not done that. But that was great fun.

NM: Now, you said you didn't believe in Santa or your parents thought you did but . . . what about the Easter bunny?

MM: I don't believe that—I think mother told us about the Easter bunny. But we thought the tooth fairy came. And I've got a tooth here that was filled by Dr. McElroy. He was that dentist who did not deaden your tooth. Your parents held you in the chair and said, "Open your mouth." I had such an horrible fear of the dentist. But he did four teeth that lasted and this one I still have because I wear a partial. I just don't have any this morning because I ate peanuts when I played bridge yesterday and they kind of make the partial rub. But my mother took very good care of our teeth because I still have my teeth. When this tooth that Dr. McElroy had filled, when it had to come out I remember that they had to use a diamond disk to get it out. And I had a bridge right there where this one came out where I have the partial. But my dad insisted that my mother purchase her groceries at May's and Moss. This was the exclusive store. And see my sister and I didn't like this because we wanted to go to town like everybody else and help bring the grocery bag but May's and Moss delivered our groceries and we were ashamed. Here comes that grocery truck. [chuckle] But that was uptown, you know. But when mother went to May's and Moss they would cut her roast and her steak and that big old hoop cheese, you know, she could get that because my daddy was very, very independent, you know, and he would say, "Don't be beholding to anybody." And he would use the term "eat knit from a knit needle first—eat knit with a knit needle." We used to think daddy was just awful to say that but he would, he would not mince the words that he said at times. Everybody sort of respected our daddy; he was a very tall person with broad shoulders and I guess he weighed about 310 and we just thought he could do anything. There was a store on this corner and he said, "I don't want you all to go in that store. Don't go into that store. I don't want to come home and hear you've been mistreated. I just don't want you to go in

that store." So we did not go to Shell Horses store or to the Meals store because my dad just did not allow that. I remember when the woodman would bring slabs and I think my daddy had gone to Lads and he'd forgotten to leave the two dollars for the load of slabs. And the woodman talked very ugly to my mother and I said, "Oh, you wait till my dad comes home. He will get you for talking bad to my mother because he is not beholding to anybody." And mother was trying to make me be quiet. She says, "Oh, don't do that, just don't do that." She told him that if he would come back tomorrow he could get his money. But he talked bad to my mother and I just did not like it because I knew my daddy did not like that. But I was waiting to tell him about that and he was late that day coming home and she said that she was so happy that I did not get to tell him how the woodman had talked to her. But I guess all in all we just had a good life. When I tell people I went to kindergarten in 1934 or '35 they think I'm lying but there on this street was the Brotherhood Hall. Where is that? It was maybe right along here. No, this was the Burial Hall. The Brotherhood Hall was on Bruce Street. Okay, now the Burial Hall came about and I'm not sure who did this one, but the Brotherhood Hall which was

END OF TAPE 1, SIDE A

NM: He was tired of black people always having to beg to be buried. So he established the Burial Hall. This is one on Bruce Street and people had to pay, I don't know how much they had to pay, but they paid into this organization and when they died they'd get $200 or $250 which was sufficient for a very decent burial at that time. And then the Brotherhood Hall, the Burial Hall which was on Bartow Street, was established and it had the same purpose. Ms. Bernice Conyers and her sister Selina Conyers had a kindergarten in there and of course, if it was something worthy my dad just wanted us to go so we

went to kindergarten. When my sister went I went too so I learned to read very early. I remember that they would put you in the closet when the bell rung [laughter] and would tell you not to pull the bell but I went for talking or not paying attention and I remember that I got put into the bell closet and I pulled the bell. [laughter] And when anybody would die who was a member of the Burial Hall, they would tone the bell. Have you ever heard a bell tone?

MM: No.

NB: And it was, it's sort of a gruesome sound. It didn't ring "ding-ding"; it would just say "dong---dong—dong", yeah, see, it would just do that and you would know that somebody had passed away who was a member of the Burial Hall or a member of the Brotherhood Hall. And I remember that I had to join the Brotherhood Hall's youth department. Now, I've forgotten what it was called but they said you had to ride the goat. And oh, I just thought, what is this. Of course, it turned out to be, you would be on the back of a chair—see this was an initiation process—and you were supposed to tell, so I told—I was just really devilish, I guess, I told, "Oh, that's just an old chair and they be bumping you on it, it's no goat." You had to learn a password to get into the meeting and I decided, "I don't like this so I'm not going to say the password." I'd say everything except the password. You don't think I'm a naughty individual. But I thought, "Well, I don't want to have to go in." But they soon discovered that I was faking it, you know, and you have to go to the meeting and you'd sing and recite all these by-laws and I just didn't really like that. I don't remember when I stopped going or what but it was not one of the favorite things that I liked. I liked the Bibles, summer vacation Bible school that we had at our church and I liked, we had a young girls circle at Mt. Zion and Ms. Bryant,

who was an accomplished organist, she used to play the organ—we had a pipe organ in our church and a little boy would always have to pump whatever was back there and of course, when the church was renovated it was torn down. And they took the steeple off of that church. I thought they—and I'm an adult now and I had odds with the pastor. I said, "I don't understand how you can afford to destroy the beauty of this church." It was a beautiful building. They took it down and now it looks like a Masonic hall. My present pastor says, "Sister Beasley, I'm going to put your steeple . . ." He says, "You always mention that." So I said, "Well, I'm not going to mention that anymore." But I was at odds with Reverend Mitchell about that steeple. I just said, "I don't think you're saved if you don't understand that a church needs a steeple." And we had two steeples and there were chimes in the one on the right, if I was facing it it would be on the left, and he even took those chimes out. Ms. Pearl Lake, one of the outstanding Sunday school teachers in our church had those chimes put in there and they were beautiful. But that's part of living, change.

MM: Now, you're first job was with the Guarantee Insurance Company?

NB: Yes. I was just fifteen.

MM: You were just fifteen. What did you do after college?

NB: After college I began to teach school, yes.

MM: Did you start out teaching here?

NB: No, I had one year in the county at Stilesboro. I had grades one through eight. [chuckle] And we had to make the fire in the stove every morning. Sometimes some of the parents would come, some of the children would come early but we had to fire up the big pot-bellied stove. Then I brought in a basketball and a baseball and a bat and then at

lunchtime I'd have, I had taken music so I taught a few kids to play what I knew inside of the church because the church was inside of the school. And then we'd have baseball and I sometimes wonder how did I successfully teach all eight grades in one day but I did do that. And sometimes I would have some of the older children helping with the other kids, you know, you moved them around, but you had less of them. And parents were very cooperative. And I still have a great job with these persons whom I taught that year. And the next year I went to Summer Hill and I taught English and was part-time librarian. I did my master's—my daddy was very much concerned with education. Had he had the opportunity, and my mother, to go to school, they would have been very outstanding persons in the educational field but my mother was able to help us until we got to geometry—algebra—that's where it ended. We always had newspapers. My daddy took the Atlanta Constitution and the Bartow Herald. It would only come on Thursdays and then he got the Farm Journal. He always got the Farm Journal and the Grit Magazine. So we always had reading materials. I said too Uncle Eath would bring us books, Uncle Eathal Williams, and then of course, my aunt who passed away had given us a lot of books so I read the Grimms Fairy Tales and all of those things real early and I just loved reading.

MM: Were did most people work in Summer Hill?

NB: Well, most people had jobs as maids. They worked in the homes of white people or they did washings and ironings. There were a lot of people who went to the trash pile everyday to find things to eat. And I remember that those little houses up there on the hill were owned by C.L. Collins and my daddy used to get so angry about the fact that on Sunday mornings he would call them out to pay their rent and he would say, "Out in the

street." He didn't go from door to door. He would just call to let them know he was up there; he was out in the street. Yes. And he would get them to pay.

MM: As a child—because you sound like you were pretty rambunctious--did you have any nicknames that you went by?

NB: Well, see my daddy's name was Ishmael so most people said, "Little Ish." And when everybody else, when the older children went to school, it was Mary and Elizabeth—see my sister was three years older than I was—and Elizabeth and all of them went to school, that practically left me and Andy Johnson on Carter Street as, you know, everybody else was in school and Rudolph! So, but then I couldn't go out to play. When they'd leave for school I'd have to sit in the swing but while my sister would be getting her lessons I would sort of get my lesson with her. I learned whatever she was learning in school and I think that added to my knowledge of things.

MM: What did you all do for fun?

NB: We played hide-and-seek and we had—after they cut the road down the hill there we had two, we didn't have an embankment before then, but this made us, and we had to pay for the paving of the street and there were enough people who lived on Carter Street who could pay for the paving because Ms. Ephie Harris worked at the post office as an aide and she got paid federally so she had plenty of money, they had a big house—it's the blue house down there that's still there, that's where they lived. And there was Laura and [unclear], there were two sides of the house and there were two relatives living in that same house but each had it's own portion. Willie Morgan worked at a laundry. And across from the street from us Mr. Wilfred Hill, he worked somewhere but I can't think now where he worked but he had a good income. Then Mr. Ben Allen and his father,

they had, they worked with the trainmen who got the luggage off the train and to deal with things around them in the town. When cousin Mable lived in the house that's right down there next to those two houses that are on the corner there where the church is now, that was her house and her husband Fred got killed in World War I so she got a pension so that meant she gave money. And next door to them was the Hudson's and Reverend Hudson, he was the sort of community preacher, when nobody else could be found he would be available and his wife was a midwife. So he had some sort of income. Then there was Mr. Sidney who worked at Tetter's Shoe Shop and then there we were. And when they cut the street down this made us have an embankment at our house and Mr. Sidney's house. We had an embankment so we had to have a set of concrete steps and see we already had steps up to the house so this was, we played rock school.

MM: Oh, I remember that. I used to play that!

NB: Yes, rock school was elementary school and you'd get promoted to the high school and go up the steps so that was a lot of playing rock school at our house. And we jumped rope. And of course, we weren't allowed to fight and fuss, you know. If you did, in fact, I think the limit, there was a limit because that's where we got the idea that when children came to see my niece, Teresa—this is my sister's daughter—that they could only stay an hour. So after a while you had to go home. You might could play a little after we got back up and had supper but you came in, you know, there was no staying out. And I remember that there was a ditch down there next to that blue house and it was open and the water used to come in and sometimes when it would rain it would flood the street so I remember that Ms. Fannie Lou and Ms. Marianne had said for them not to go up the big ditch so I would tell on them, tell that they had been up the big ditch. I remember Ralph

Walker told me, "Oh, I got something for you. I've got you a big jawbreaker." You know, he used to sell the little jawbreakers. They were larger than those little round ones, the jawbreaker was, so he said, "Close your eyes." I thought sure Ralph was giving me a jawbreaker and it was a big hot pepper. And I remember how it burned my mouth so and grandmamma Sidney put this butter all over my mouth to keep it from burning. Grandmamma Sidney was a mulatto also and I remember one time that Marianne mixed up this stuff and had us put all this on Grandmamma Sidney and Mr. Sidney caught us. He would come home from Tetter's Shoe Shop for lunch and did we get it. Oh, we couldn't play, we had to pick weeds out of the garden from the time we got up, after we had our breakfast till twelve and then—because the midmeal whistle, that was the easy meal—it would blow at five minutes to eight to let the workers know they were ready—and you could hear it all over town. Then it would blow at eight o'clock and then it was time to start for work. Then it would blow at noon--twelve o'clock--then it would blow again at one o'clock. Then it would blow again at five o'clock. I can remember how we were happy when that whistle would blow for five o'clock because we knew that dad was coming home and we had to have dinner. But we just never did that again. And then—have you ever heard of Rabbit or Ragged Tobacco that grows in the fields?

MM: No.

MB: We would get some—Marianne was a little older, and we'd wrap this up in brown paper and smoke the rabbit tobacco and these fumes would be blowing back up in the woods and we'd be sitting under the window. [laughter] And Grandma Sidney would tell us all that. And then this same Ralph Walker told me, said, "Would you like to see your mama's irons dance?"—you'd heat the irons on the charcoal buckets. Because, I said,

you know, she'd iron Ms. Tobbler's clothes and we'd take them back down to the Braban Hotel. And so he said, "Now, if you put this"—he gave me a big firecracker—and he said, "if you put this in your mama's fire coal iron"—charcoal bucket, that's what it was, a charcoal bucket, and it had a little opening down there where you'd rake the ashes out.-- So I did that and boy, that thing blew hot ashes all out on the floor and I got the worst whipping and I was trying to tell her that Ralph made me do it but she tore me up. She said, "You're going to burn this house down!" I can remember that. So after that I just didn't want to speak to Ralph and I'd tell on him every time they went up to the ditch. And I guess that was fun for them.

MM: Now, as far as favorite hang outs in the neighborhood, was the ditch one of them?

NB: Well, I guess so but most of the children came to our house to play. We had that big front yard and the big back yard and mother had the teacakes. [chuckle]

MM: Those teacakes. [chuckle] What about particular customs or celebrations that just the community of Summer Hill celebrated?

NB: Well, we celebrate Thanksgiving; there was always a church meeting before Thanksgiving to give thanks and then, of course, everybody had their Thanksgiving dinner at home with the turkey and the dressing and I remember my mother used to make oyster dressing with the turkey. I'm not sure how she made it but it was very good and she always made a coconut pudding. I have not succeeded in making the coconut pudding but I've done well with her coconut cake and chocolate cake. Then we'd have, as I said, the Easter dinner; we'd have Christmas dinner; we'd have regular hog jaws and peas and cornbread and collard greens on New Year's day; we'd go to church before the New Year's—watch night it was called—to watch the old night go away and the new

year come in—the old year go away and the new year . . . that was on the 31st of December. We'd have watch night. And watch night is observed still in some churches here in the area. It's gotten so that maybe one church will have it and all the churches will attend the service. Because there used to be a time when there were enough people to go to watch night at each church but people don't go—people have parties now rather than going to church. But we still go to watch night wherever it is.

MM: That's neat. How has the area changed economically?

NB: Well, E.Z. Mills hired some people. Now, at first it was just those people in janitorial positions at E.Z. Mills and Goodyear. I'm not sure about what they really did at Goodyear but when things began to get better then people worked inside the mill, both at Goodyear and at E.Z. But that was after integration. And then when Union Carbide came—the Glad bags—then people got jobs and you see, at one time, teaching was considered to be, you had the best job. And people thought teachers just made beaucoup money, which was not true! But people thought that. But then so much gossip with folks was about the teachers but when people began to work that sort of let them off the hook. Now, see, for a long time the powers that be who were in this town did not allow industry to come into this town.

MM: Who were the powers that be?

NB: That was the Wymans, the Hodges, the Baccus; the McNaudins; the Hogans; they didn't allow industry to come into the town because they controlled it. And I can remember when my daddy was working for the WPA, I don't know what—Workman's something . . .

MM: Works Progress?

NB: Yeah, whatever that was. Okay, see he read a lot so he had read that they were going to get $1.25 an hour so the straw boss was saying they were going to get—I mean $1.25 a day—so the straw boss said they were going to get fifty cents. I remember my daddy said, "I got it says here $1.25 and I want my money!" [she's banging hand on table for emphasis] So they gave daddy his $1.25.

MM: Good for him!

NB: And I remember that Mr. Clay Blotley and a man they called Big Buddy, Mr. Butch Whatley and Mr. Nathan Stokes, my daddy told them, "I'm getting my money." And they were saying, "Well, Ishmael, help us get ours." He said, "[unclear] going to get to that, you [unclear] you're going to get the money, you can get your own money. Now here it is in the paper, you can read it for yourself." Now I don't know whether they read it for themselves but anyway, I don't think they got that money. I think they were afraid to ask. But my daddy was not. But anyway, he did get that money. And people were having a very, very hard time but I remember that my mother was still doing Mr. Tobbler's clothes and a lot of people asked her, when he passed away, did he leave you anything in the will?" She said, "No! He paid me every week; I wasn't expecting for him to leave anything." I don't know whether he had anything or not, you know. But he paid her well for doing his clothes because if he went to New York, he mailed his clothes back. There was a mailer that you put them in. And he liked a very little starch in them and she would mail them back. And like I said, we had to turn those socks.

MM: Turn those socks! [chuckle]

NB: Hm-hm. And there would be so many socks, you know. I don't know why that just stuck with me. I had to turn those . . . and I said, "Mother you don't turn our socks, do

you?" She'd give me a spanking and say "go on." I was quite observant, you know, about a lot of things but . . . .[laughter] I don't remember our turning our socks but we had to do his. But basically what did you originally ask me about that I got off on this tangent?

MM: Oh, economically the area that you lived in.

NB: Oh, okay, so people began, as I said, to work. Now I remember they had the Sibley Reports and there was, you know, we had always thought that Reverend Kay was the Uncle Tom but he got on that television for the Sibley Report and he says, "You all got your televisions in your houses and so forth," and he said, "You've got all our people serving as maids and they just enjoy your house while you work." [laughter] I mean, that's our whole opinion of Reverend Kay just changed after he got up there and he said all those things because we didn't realize that he was that outspoken that he would feel that way. But the Sibley Reports I guess were to give an evaluation of what you thought about the educational process and the economic process that went on.

MM: This was in the '50s, right?

NB: Yes, that was very, very interesting. A lot of people say they don't remember that but I remember that very vividly. I think that that was part of my success at school was my memory. Like Ms. Maxwell, you know, who lived right behind us and she'd come down and one day I asked her what were Bell and Barbara doing and this was the time she told me, "Well, now, you're going to have to call them Ms. Bell and Ms. Barbara." And I said, "Oh, are they going to call me Ms. Nancy Louise?" And she said I was being rude. So then mother and I had the discussion about the difference because I don't think that I had realized before then that there was something; we were all children in the

community. My dad would cut the grass at the tennis court and I would go down there with him sometimes and sometimes they would be playing. I would say, "Let me hit the tennis ball," you know, and that's where my interest in tennis came and when we finished college—no, we weren't finished, we had just started—and we organized a club. First it was the Happy Bunch, that's what we called it. We just wanted something to do in the afternoons so we'd make lemonade and fix some hot dogs and played bid wits. And then Joe McKenzie, he was interviewed by Dr. Lands the other day, he drew up this constitution for Les Savants and one of the things that we decided we wanted to do was to play tennis. And we asked Professor Morgan if we could use the court down there and then we asked the city, since they had a tennis court down there, would they roll that off up there so we could play tennis. I think Professor Morgan was a little surprised that we did that and asked the city to buy us a net. So they did. So every summer we played tennis and it was just great fun. And of course, then we continued to help our children to play tennis and we called that little group the Les Petit Savants. But we had a lot of fun and we had a play that first year that we organized our club and we decided—and we made a lot of money off of that play—and we decided that instead of using all of this money for ourselves, let's give somebody a $25.00 scholarship and this is how our scholarship started for Les Savants. And that was in 1950. So we have already celebrated our fiftieth year anniversary. We did a great thing on that. And we have given at least $100,000.00 in scholarships. We're still in existence. It used to be, we had male and female and now it's just ladies, you know, the men finally, they said we were too catty, you know. [laughter] We used to have our meetings and we'd play cards but we don't play cards any more. I guess everybody just got old and tired but I still enjoy

bridge so I go up to the senior citizens building to play bridge. Sometimes there's another black person who substitutes but I'm the only black person. Dr. Waterburg asked me, "Would you like to learn to play bridge?" I said, "Yes." I didn't tell him I already knew because I had played for a long time. So he said, "Well, we meet every Monday at one o'clock. We're going to teach you to play bridge." Well, we got there and he was doing so-and-so. I said, "Let's just play, I think I understand." He said, "You understand? Oh, you pulled my leg, you can play already!" So I've enjoyed it immensely. So every Monday we do play bridge. But well, two of the people that played bridge with us, we used to have a little club other than Les Savants where we played bridge, but they're deceased. A lot of people thought we had to have an elaborate serving if you play bridge but sometimes I just like to fix some things. I would sometimes have a nice little lunch when it was my time and I guess that sort of killed it because some people didn't want to fix it, didn't want to spend their money. But I'm never going to have any money so. . . [laughter] you know? I'm just not money oriented as such. But I enjoy it, as I say, entertaining, I enjoy having my Sunday School class for dinner and my husband goes to church in Sugar Valley and Pleasant Grove; his daddy used to be a minister out there.

MM: Now, do you still go to Mt. Zion?

NB: Yes. My husband—he's retired army and retired sheriff's department—when he first came home he said, "I'm not doing anything that I

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NB: He might say, "Well, I'm going." But at first when he came home they would have Sunday service at three o'clock so I could go to my church and to his church. Then since he didn't half go so I said, "Well, I'm not going to go to church again because they're not as active and they don't do as many things." So he goes to his church and I go to mine and we attended each other's sometimes but I am, it's a small church. But I had his church for dinner this Christmas. They said they had the nicest thing and they gave me that candle holder there and I gave them, all the ladies a little sewing kit and all the men a pair of socks but there was just a total of thirty-something people who are at his church but they go regularly. I guess it's sort of a dying community, you know. They have a nice little church. But they just don't have a growing church any more. But we do share each other's church activities.

MM: What is your fondest memory of Summer Hill?

NB: Oh, it's just that we're just a unit, you know. We have great fun; we learned a lot; we had excellent teachers—we studied black history when we were there and it was not even thought of as a course in school—Ms. Morgan, the principal's wife, she had gone to school at Spelman but she went to the Boston Conservatory of Music so she was an accomplished pianist and had just great high school courses. The thing that I like most about Summer Hill is if you wanted to go to college when you left there you were prepared to go. Everybody had to learn to read; I think of even after I started teaching, there were several people that stayed there till they were twenty-three years before, we just didn't let them out. The social promotion idea was just not there. I especially think of the fellow that was William Harold Henderson, we called, his nickname was Shag. And, of course, I never called children by their nickname because you needed to know

who they were so that the record-keeping could be great. But Shag, he did snuff—[laughter]—but we kept him back till he learned to read and he went to cosmetology school and he read well enough to pass that state board and to get out of school. And of course, he would say he was going to kill all of us. [laughter] He would write a list every year and have everybody's name on there that was on his list and the kids said, "Shag, is my name on your list?" But the closeness of Summer Hill was of such that you knew all the children, you knew their parents, you didn't have to worry about spanking them—of course, I didn't spank, I pinched [laughter].

MM: Like your sister did to you!

NB: Yes. And then I think about the fact that at the beginning of each school year you'd say let me look over the crop that we have and let me see who I can have in the high school plays, you know. I did the drama and sometimes I had the cheerleaders and the "Y" — the Tri-Hi-Y, that was the girls—and my library club, you know. But you had to use the same people, so you had to so organize your time so that you could use them. And there were some classes that were just outstanding. And the class of '67 is one of the most outstanding classes that has come through Summer Hill and of course, I think my class. . . . Now, when I went to school I finished ninth grade, I finished tenth grade, I finished the eleventh grade. Because see, we had no high school here, so my sister had to go to high school in Marietta, she went to Perkinson High School which became Lemon Street High School, but my parents had to pay room and board for her to go to school because we couldn't go to Cartersville High School, or couldn't go to Cartersville Junior High. So parents petitioned for the addition of the ninth grade, then they found out after they had success for that, they petitioned for the tenth grade and the eleventh grade but it was not

until I started teaching, I believe it was ’51, that we had twelve grades. So see, I went to college from the eleventh grade and this is how I went to college, I was fifteen when I went but I was sixteen that October. See, you’re usually seventeen or eighteen when you get out of high school. And then I had my master’s by the time I was twenty-three. And by that time I really wanted to go further but my parents were sick and I had to see about that. And I did teach three summers for Southern Education Foundation at Albany State College where we had a workshop for elementary teachers to become librarians because they were interested in putting librarians into every school. It was just part-time. When I started teaching our children had to pay a library fee of $2.50 and that was the only way that we got any books. When you think about that, I’m not sure what happened to all that money but it was not used for books. I guess that they had their own prerogatives as to how they could use their money, but it was not used for books, now that I look back at it. But when Mr. Akree came here as superintendent and discovered that we were paying a library fee, he jumped the ceiling. He says, “Well, it’s already in the budget, you don’t have to pay a library fee.” See, that many people had to struggle to get that library fee and then they made them pay a home economics fee to get the materials for cooking and of course, you bought your own materials for the sewing classes. And I hated those sewing classes because you sewed a seam one day—there was only one machine—and then you’d have to put it up and then maybe the next, whenever we had sewing again, the next day you’d sew another seam, oh, it was just awful. So I decided that I don’t want to be in this class, I want to go to the shop. [laughter] I think the principal got mad because I protested about going to sewing so he finally let me come to the shop so I was the first girl to take shop at Summer Hill and then he made me make fly swatters. I always

wanted to swat him for making me do that! [laughter] But I can remember there were few people who had telephones in this town; there was Ms. Pauline Walker down Aubery Street; Ms. Francis Conyers over on Woffard Street; and the school had a telephone and Professor and Ms. Morgan had one in their house and maybe John Anderson. Okay, there was, then there was a little taxi stand right across here, Mr. Shorter McArthur had a taxi stand, so a trainload of sheep turned over.

MM: Oh no!

NB: Yes. And folk had sheep in and all around it. We just couldn't understand why our parents wouldn't go get us a sheep. And they said, "No, no, no. Police is coming; you just can't take things, they don't belong to us. We're not getting no sheep!" And Mr. McArthur had his little taxi house just full of sheep. [laughter] So when we would catch Professor Morgan out of his office, we'd say, "Go call 9136." And the operator would answer. So when Mr. McArthur would answer, "McArthur Taxi Service." We'd say "Baaaa!" and hang up and cut out of the office! We had fun with that for about a week! Now that was just hilarious! Now we'd have at school rock piles and that was to build the rock wall that was out in front of the old Rosenwald School and the persons who had the biggest rock pike each week would get an ice cream party, that class would, I remember the rock piles. Then during the War we had to bring in tin cans that were flattened and any—I remember those piles of things. And then we had good basketball teams. I tell you, our teams would win the basketball games in this area and you played—before we got the gym—did we ever get the gym in my time? I don't think so. We played on that clay court. And then Professor Morgan decided that we were going, he was going to establish a football team and allowed the trash pile to be dumped there

by the school. And when they would set that trash afire, whoo, that smoke that would come in the windows in the afternoon after lunch. I can remember that was one of the most horrible things. Now, I don't remember how long that trash pile stayed there but it stayed there long enough to fill in so that we could have a place to play football—where the present tennis court is now?—that used to be just big gulleys but the trash pile filled that up. And everybody just thought that was awful. And you'd see people down there digging in that trash hunting for things. Not only black people but white people, as they talk about, white trash [laughter] would be in the dumps, in there and I always thought that was so terrible. And I wondered, "Well, why don't they have chickens like we do?" And I didn't realize, as I say, that we were fortunate, but I just thought we were poor like everybody else. My mother sewed beautifully so whenever each season came we'd have new dresses but now I always got the hand-me-down Sunday dress that my sister had. And I remember when I was in the eighth grade and we had a play and I had to have a new dress for that play. I remember that pretty pink dress with the flowers around the tail and so forth. That was my first bought dress and it came from Shire [correct?] Store. Shire was a Jew who had a store downtown on the corner of Main and Erwin Street and I remember that he would "try them on and he would pull like this and he would say, "See the look in the mirror and it fits good to you". [she's affecting her voice to mimic an accent]. [laughter] But anyway, that was the first recollection of my having my first bought dress. But my mother would make pretty dresses and one of my favorite was a white dress with a sailor collar and it had the rick-rack around it, you know, and I just loved that, yes. But the kids loved Summer Hill and I don't know whether Dr. Lands has shared with you any of the things that we had, we've done that she took pictures, yes.

The class of ’67 has always had, you know, something every ten years and they’re just a class that still stays together. The deacon’s fellow who has his PhD now, he says—he still calls Ms. Robins—“Ms. Robins, the kids now don’t know what a legacy they’re missing not having had that Summer Hill experience.” There’s a close-knit feeling of Summer Hill people, you know. When we had our Les Savants, our club, we decided let’s have an all Summer Hill reunion and we decided we would not just invite graduates but people who had ever been to Summer Hill and we have four hundred and something people who came. And we had a chat and chew at old Carver Beach, yes. Now Carver Beach was selected during that time when they were trying to decide which area blacks would use and Carver Beach was used and there was a selection committee from the black community that selected Carver Beach and it was way farther than any of the other beaches, you know. You had as far down as Acworth. But we remembered Carver Beach and what good times we had over there.

MM: Now, you went to Carver Beach; did you go anywhere else outside of Cartersville for fun, like the movies?

NB: Now, we went downtown to the movies, the Grand Theater, but you had to go in the balcony. And the Legion Theater. We had two theaters here and then on Saturdays, I remember that we’d have to give that eleven cents to go because they had a cowboy picture and a picture that continued each week, you know, you’d go to the movie. And of course, I remember there was a fellow name John Rucker and Willie Winfrow who were the “gods” of the balcony. [chuckle] You know, you had to be quiet and you could—they had a place there where they sold hamburgers and popcorn and Mr. Frank Bell

worked in the—and oh, those were the best hamburgers. But we couldn't sit; we'd have to get our hamburger and leave out.

MM: Was there anywhere where you felt like you couldn't go?

NB: Well, we couldn't go to most places, you know, you could go to Bradshaw's Dairy and buy an ice cream cone but you couldn't sit in those chairs. And Champion's Drug Store and Young's Drug Store all had little soda fountains and you couldn't sit, you just couldn't sit there. And I remember when Penny came from California to visit and there was the drug store there by the Braban Hotel, it may have been Cochran's, but anyway, Penny was with us and we were going to look in the park there where, right across from, on Wall Street there was this park and it had swings and a little thing that had some Civil War relics in it and you could go in the park but you couldn't sit on the benches. But Penny saw this drug store and she went on in there and she sat down and the next thing we knew Penny, they were fixing to put her in jail. And my dad and Ann's dad, you know—my dad could get you out of jail—so he went to town and Penny got out. [chuckle] I remember they were saying, well, it's just best that Penny go back to California. But I remember this Bert Smith had a drug store over there where the Bank of America is, okay, and this was during the time that I was teaching, and Bert says, "Come on down." He would announce this on the radio. "Try me out! Come on down and try my out." And Jimmy Craig and somebody else went in there and said, "Mr. Bert, we came in here to try you out." And I think he served them.

MM: Did he?

NB: Yes he did. And that was the first time that somebody had sat down at his counter but he served them, I think. I think it just hurt his conscious so or he just felt that, here these

little boys are and they don't know that they couldn't come on down but they heard it on the radio. And I remember Jimmy was such a good student until we had Scotch Forceman to come and observe him reading. We just thought, "This is an unusual person". And Robert Benham who is Justice Benham, was in my English class and we had a little paper, we called it the Slag Line, this was—and we would have to run it off on that thing that you pull the blue stuff through—what was that a mimograph, whatever it was—yes, so somehow that thing, that gooey part just kept coming up and we couldn't run our paper off there so he disappeared. Now this must be late '50s and he disappeared—it was before we integrated—and he went to the superintendent's office. Now, when Robert came to school, he was just a little brilliant boy, you know. As a little one, you know, I can remember when he came to school, he came up and we had what we called "downstairs". People would talk about, "Are you going downstairs today?" Instead of saying "cafeteria". Are you going downstairs? But he was trying to get up those steps and he was so tiny so I picked him up and I said, "Are you old enough to be here at school?" "Yes ma'am." I said, "How old are you?" "[sniffle] My mother told me not to tell you." So I just picked him up and carried him on up the steps because he was having such a difficult time and I said, "Well, I'm not going to tell on you." Because his mother and I were, had been in the same class together. But he went out to the superintendent's office and said, "You all got a machine out here to run off our paper and I want to use it. It's as much ours as it is yours." Lord have mercy! And my principal called me and said that I put him up to do that. I said "Oh, no, I didn't know where he was. Now, he disappeared and I couldn't find him." And that's where he was. Now, he just couldn't understand how things just did not, were not right for us at that time and he

took a lot of chances. And it seems like to me, now, he went to work in Marietta at Kenensaw Hospital and he would not sit on that back row on the bus when he'd get ready to get on the bus. And the bus driver just bothered him a whole lot. That's been a long time ago but anyway, the other people who were going to work got angry with him about his attitude on the bus. But he's been really forward in a lot of his thinking. I failed to tell you that there was Long Scott and Robert Scott who were butchers downtown, they had a butcher shop; and Sara and Happy Young had a dry cleaning place downtown; and things right after the Civil War, according to my parents, were not so bad downtown because black people owned a grocery store down on Main Street, the Gassets; the Gassets owned a grocery store and they lived on the corner of Main and Fite Street and had a big house there. Some of them were mulattos and some of them went on up to New York and passed and they didn't know anybody from down here and they would pretend they didn't know you if they saw you. Then when Mr. Gasset left here—and I may not have it correctly—he went on to Atlanta and opened up a barber shop. But now there was a lady on Main Street and—she didn't live on Summer Hill though—but she owned a lot of houses, Angeline Peacock. Everything was going all right until Angeline Peacock bought that T-Model Ford, brand new, because she had enough money to buy it. And then things began to change. Then that policeman, Joe Ben Jenkins, somebody named John William Clark, black fellow, was accused of killing Joe Ben Jenkins, and he was either in the army or something and federal troops came here to protect him. But the powers that be assured him that he would not be harmed. But as soon as that federal troop left they went in to the jail and they hanged him. And they made him, they buried him, they made, the federal government made them dig him up and he had a proper burial

and was buried in Tennessee. And it seems like things began to change; negroes had to leave from downtown. But the late Dr. W.R. Moore, his office downtown in what was called Bull Neck, right behind the Irish dry cleaners, that was called Blue Front and they called it Blue Front because everybody had painted the front of their businesses blue. They had blue fronts. And they say now that it was called Bull Neck because some fellow sassed one of the whites and they hit him across his neck and said his neck swole up like a bull. So they said he's got a bull neck and they called the area in there Bull Neck. Now that may or may not be true. And then they say that Summer Hill got its name this way. Down at the depo people used to come by looking for black people to work and they'd say, "Some are on the hill". You go up there, "some are on the hill". Go up there and you can find some. And that's how Summer Hill—that's what we've heard. That's how it got to be Summer Hill. And the school, there was a school up this street, there was a funeral home at the top of this hill. Now this street, Carter Street used to go all the way through to Walker Street and it doesn't any more and there were people who lived on Carter Street all the way down and the school was over behind the funeral home. And of course, there's some history written about that school. And then in, I believe it was 1923 that the school moved to Summer Hill, to over here and the money was given by Julian Rosenwald Fund and they had, that's where the school was and it was a nice building. It had running water and it had toilets and Professor Morgan continued to build on to the school and the building behind the school was the shop where they did, built things, people could learn to build cabinets and so forth. And Professor Morgan was a cabinet maker himself. Now one of the cabinets down at the courthouse he built; one of them is over at the high school. And I recognized it, I said, "Oh, that used to be in our

school." But Professor Morgan did it, he was an excellent builder. So he taught shop, industrial arts as they called it at that time. But then we had home economics and they called it domestic science when I was in school. Yes, hm-hm. And you learned to sew up that seam. [laughter] And I remember that I got in trouble because I said, "I'm just not going to be in this class." And I got sent home. Oh, and I was telling mother, I said, "Well, mother, I didn't have you buy me any material because I didn't want to sew one seam at a time." She said, "Well, you didn't ask." And she marched me back up that hill and she put on her clothes and her hat—you know, they wore hats all the time—put on her clothing and her hat and she walked up that hill. And she—I was just embarrassed because I had done all my big talk and then had to go back. I remember her stating very specifically that she was not a pauper, that she could afford to get whatever material we needed for school. Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. So next day I had to tuck my head and she went to town and got this material and the thread and I had done something to the thimble so she had to get me another thimble, you know. So we had to get that. Now, for ten years my drama class was number one in the state, my drama group was number one in the state. Then we would get to present our play at the state teacher's meeting wherever it met, in Macon or Savannah and so forth. And, as I say, the basketball teams were very good. I remember Ms. Morgan used to clap and say, "Play ball, boys! Play ball! How lovely, how lovely!" And we were Lemon Street and Marietta was our rivals. And we had one fellow from Lemon Street and when she was saying, "How lovely, how lovely!" And he retorted, "How big and how black and how ugly!" [laughter] But we just—and then, like now when the kids were in the chorus all the children who could not buy their blouse, the teachers would get together and we would make sure they had their

blouse and we would make their skirts, you know. And then our first dance, first we had the rhythm band and we made their suits, they were cute as they could be. Then when we had the band, we had all kinds of fund raisers so what we could get the band and David Williams was our—first, no, Lewis Kinebrew was our first band director and boy, were we proud of our band. And Rosa Mae McCoy, she's still here, she was one of our first majorettes and we were just proud. And the thing that's different about the integration situation was that every child at Summer Hill could participate if he wanted to, you know. You could be in whatever you wanted to if you wanted to and that was good about it. If you didn't want to participate nobody

END OF TAPE 2, SIDE A

START OF TAPE 2, SIDE B

MN: Generally elected, I believe, after he finished and he co-authored a book in physics—I wish he could come for an interview but he's had back surgery and he can't walk. He was lamenting the fact that you know, he said that—everybody calls me by my middle name, Louise, because when I was growing up there was another Nancy in the family but my grandmother died, was buried on the day that I was born so my daddy insisted that I have her name too so I was Nancy Louise--so Will Harrels calls me Louise. He says, "Lou, you know, when I needed money was when I was in school." And he has all these nice 401K's and savings with GE and he says, "Now that I've got this money I don't use it." He says he and his wife had been to Aruba. Now his first wife was a nurse and she worked at Johns Hopkins and of course, Jessie died and of course, he's married again, but he said, "We went to Aruba after I retired and I've been sick ever since and she's had a

stroke." But she's overcome her stroke but Harrel can get by on the walker a little bit but it's a painful thing for him. He sends me an e-mail two or three times a day and sometimes I juts have to let them, delete them because I don't have time to read them. But he was very good student and he was always proud of Summer Hill. He says, "Summer Hill prepares you to go wherever you want to go." He said, "we didn't have the chemistry lab but we learned enough about it." And then of course we had Latin and Ms. Morgan, Sr. Taught Latin and of course, I was always appreciative for the root words and so forth that you learn from Latin. Hm-hm. And, as I say, we had a chorus and we had the band and we were outstanding as band people and we just had a great time.

MM: Now, you're mentioning the powers that be within the Cartersville community but who were the prominent individuals within Summer Hill?

MB: Okay, Ms. Annie McCoy and Aura McCoy. Annie McCoy worked for Sam Jones, she cooked for Sam Jones and she had a very nice house out there on the west end. People used to, she says, "Oh, they come here and they look at my bathtub and they laugh because it's up on those legs and they just don't know that, they don't know that I had one long before anybody else did. [chuckle] They don't know what they're laughing about." And she says—oh, and Anna Mae Anderson who was one of the teachers, lived across the street from her and she says, "Anna Mae says I always infringe on her time; I don't let her infringe on my time, honey, when I've got some cooking to do, I'll just tell them, I'm too busy, don't come here today.' And she'll let me come when she's busy and entertain me anyway." But now Annie and Anna McCoy. And as I say, The Gassets had money and the McKenzie's, Mr. Lige Henderson was a blacksmith a and he had a good bank account, I can remember. I can remember somebody saying he was "flim-

flammed" out of $3,000. One of those pigeon-drop things. And then, of course, the Milner's, they lived in Mechanicsville, but they had money and she was a teacher. But she went to Summer Hill and when she passed she had over $600,000 and something dollars. And she had money. And of course, the Morgans and Dr. and Mrs. Moore, Pauline Woffard, who lived on Auburn, Pauline and Charlie Woffard. Charlie worked at the depot. He worked for the train company and I'm not sure what his job was but he was always there when the train came in. I'm not sure exactly what he did. And Jim Woffard who lived down on Urban Street was a drayman. Tony Morrison, the author, was his granddaughter. Her father lived here in Cartersville. And he worked for the railroad but somehow he was very badly beaten or something so she had a great fear of coming to Cartersville. But three years ago she did come and her literary group that was responsible for her coming and she came out to the library and it was sort of, I never did understand why they decided to hush-hush her coming. It was very peculiar to me. At first they said she wasn't coming and then I had a friend who called me from Atlanta and said she is coming. And she's going to be at the library." So I got on the phone that morning and I called everybody that I knew and then I called the paper to say, "Why were they not going to cover it." And Mr. Hurley, I think they said he was out on the golf course. So anyway, we were just a bit disappointed that the coverage was not there. But Robert Benham introduced her and he told about the experiences that her father had had. And it was amazing. And then we had lunch up at Noble Hill and Vernon Jordan's brother, his mother, Vernon Jordan who's with the National Urban League, and Vernon was with Clinton.

MM: Right.

NB: Yes, okay. His mother had this very outstanding catering service in Atlanta so they came so I said to him, "You've put out these foods and I don't see a fly." He says, "Oh, you have to have the right thing to spray with." And there was not a bug, an ant or anything. I was just amazed that there was not a fly here. And she had a beautiful lunch and she was so impressed with Noble Hill—that was the Rosenwald school. And then, see, during the integration period, the children from the county came to Summer Hill for high school. It was a contractual agreement between the city and the county because see, they couldn't go to Cass High, they had to come to Summer Hill. And they bussed them to Summer Hill. But so that's why we had both county and city students who are alumni of Summer Hill. Yes. And see, now when I conducted my plays, see the bus would have gone, so if I had a child from Adairsville, I had to take that person home. So I used to go, we'd pile up in the car sometimes, more than passenger size, and I'd stop at Kingston and let those off, somebody else, you know, another teacher would take some to Caswell, but I would go Kingston, Adairsville and come back to the mission in that area, or Taylorsville, I remember I had a boy from Taylorsville so I had to take him home. And we spent very much of our own money to go to places. But we loved our children.

MM: That's wonderful.

NB: Yeah, we really did. And one of the most heart-warming things was that my niece gave me a birthday party for my seventieth party and I had said to her, "Teresa, you gave your mother a party when she was seventy but I'm not your mother, I'm just your aunt. But my sister's husband died when Teresa was a junior and I saw that she was going to let Teresa do whatever she wanted to do and I thought, well, we've invested too much into this child and she has so much ability until I just took over and decided that this is what

you're going to do. You're going to finish high school and you're going to college. And then of course, I had offered her to go to graduate school if she wanted to but she decided, her junior year before Perry went to Vietnam that she was going to get married because . . . so she got married. I said, "You're still going to finish school." And then of course, she got pregnant, you know. And I just decided, well, I'm just going to keep the baby and I kept that baby and I got so enamored of him until when it was time for him to go to his parents I just did not want Gavin to go. I thought, well, he was so fond of me and I was so fond of him too. So my sister kept him while I was at school, you know, but he would—because he knew when it was time for me to come home. I thoroughly enjoyed him. So I thought, this was God's gift to me because I had one pregnancy and never got pregnant again. But we did adopt a little fellow who was four years old when we adopted and I'm not going to talk about him because he's been an ordeal and endurance. [laughter] He's really been a challenge and I think that had I not known the Lord I could not have dealt with him. But anyway we still love him but he's still—I'm planning to write a book about the antics of Antonio. He was, he's been something else. But anyway, I saw to it that she went off to school and I was starting to tell you about this birthday party. So she says, "Well, I won't do anything special for your birthday. I'll just let you get your hair done by my beautician and get your nails done"--because I've got ugly nails—"and I'm going to let you stay in a hotel in Buckhead so you cannot hear the telephone and you can relax and take all the reading materials that you say you've been trying to catch up on ." Well, see, I fell for this. She says, "Unless you want mama to come with you." I said, "Well, with the way she snores it won't be much fun." Well, see, I'm falling all into this trap. So then, I decided well, "My husband's not coming?"

She says, “No, this is yours. He says he didn’t want anything to do with it.” Well, they had planned this birthday party for me. And there’s another youngster who was born on the same day I’m born on and we had said we were going to have dinner out with my family and his family and he says, “No, Vincent’s going to be playing football so we can’t have this dinner.” Then they sent me a printed invitation to his birthday party so it was, so I went and they picked me up in a limousine to go to the hotel in Buckhead and of course, a nephew owns the limousine service but they had to pay him too. But anyway, she had this birthday party and there were children from nearly every class that I had taught who had come from Michigan, Colorado, Maryland, Tennessee . . .

MM: How special.

NB: It really was. So when we got up there to, the limousine picked me back up. So when we got there I said, “Oh, aren’t there a lot of people at Larry’s party. But I guess with the Jones and the Robinson’s and all. . . . “ So when I walked in they said, Gotcha!” I was so outdone. I did not, so I just walked on passed everybody and went to the kitchen and there was Rose. I said, “Rose, were you in Cartersville when you called me?” She called me and I said, “Rose, Teresa isn’t here, she’s in Atlanta.” So see, Rose almost gave it away because they picked me up but I didn’t catch on to that. And the only thing was that when I got to Teresa’s house before we came to Cartersville there were a pair of tennis—sneakers, see, I shouldn’t say tennis’s but that’s all I’ve said all my life—on the couch and I said, “Those look like Kyle’s tennis’s; did he leave them here?” Teresa said, “Yes.” I said, “Why didn’t you send them? You know he has to have a new pair of shoes every month the way his feet grow. He’ll never get big to get into them again.”

She says, "Well, that's why I hadn't sent them." But see, they were already here. And from New Orleans. So it was just so . . .

MM: They got you.

NB: They really got me. And this group of boys, the hee-haw boys were there and they sang, donuts that we had won in Macon on one of the things that we had gone to, it was just amazing. I just could not believe it. So I told them when I'm deceased you won't have to come to my funeral, you've already done it. And I got oh, about $1,500 in money and flowers and gifts of all distinctions. Yes, I may have a program that I can show you before you leave of that marvelous occasion. Hm-hm.

MM: That's special.

NB: And one of my former teachers, Dalia, came from Chattanooga, and she brought me a pretty red cape and smoker. She had said I had been so nice to her and come to her when her mother was so sick and she said, "You're special." It was just most unusual. And I'm sure Teresa and them spent at least $3,000 or $4,000 on that party.

MM: Wow.

NB: When she was a junior. No, she came home once and she said she was going to Chattanooga with the girls. I said, "Teresa, I know you're grown and you're married but you're not going to Chattanooga tonight. You're husband has said that he's on his way from Vietnam and he's coming tonight and he's going to call for you to pick him up at the airport." She says, "Did he tell you that?" I said, "You got out and tell those girls in that car that you're not going to Chattanooga with them and it's better that you go tell them than I go tell them, do you understand?" And so she went out there and she told them and she sulked and she just fussed and she sat here in this living room and she just

ignored me. One o'clock in the morning he called for her to come to the airport. She said, "You're a witch. I guess you are just a witch." I said, "Teresa, why would you call me a witch? I'm just common sense." "No, no, no, you made me take math every summer when everybody else was having a good time . . " and she let it all out, all the things that . . . and "you just demanded that I read the book a month or so and you just demanded this and demanded that and you just did so-and-so." And then when she got a job as contract coordinator with MARTA she was about twenty-five and she told me she wanted to apologize at how strict I was on her but she did appreciate it. And to see this thing she wrote about, "Where were we?" We had to go to Sunday School, we had to go to church, we had to obey, if anybody came to see you they could not honk the horn for you to come out, you had to come into the house to be looked over and interviewed by old Nancy Louise, you know, she wrote down all these things. [chuckle] But there was some varied in all of this; none of us are in jail, none of us had to go to, you know, and she was—and this was what this generation now needs, she wrote that and I thought that was admirable. And that's the thing she presented to me at the birthday party.

MM: Remind me, I want to take a picture of that.

NB: Okay.

MM: Do you recall any areas just whites only, blacks only and were there signs that specifically said, "Whites only," "Blacks only?"

NB: Oh yes. White, you know the water—white, colored? Oh yes. The restrooms, white, colored, hm-hm. There were some stores who had had to make you put this thing over your head, but now Clyde Grace knew they were selling a lot of hats to black folk so they didn't make you. But then there was a store downtown—this is after I started teaching—

Davis Smart Shop, and of course they had nice clothing and we would buy clothing there on credit. So one day, Ethel Shell—she passed away in October and she was Dr. Moore's daughter—she said, "I believe that's a dressing room and we had to try on things behind a little old flimsy curtain. So she said, "Let's observe. That's a dressing room they're going in over there." There were some whites in there trying on a dress. So she said, "Let's be sure." So she went on back there and she opened that door and she says, "Oh, so you all have a dressing room and got us dressing out here in this little flimsy area." So then we came on back and we had a meeting and decided, "Let's stop going to this store. Let's pay up our bills the first of the month, no matter how high they are, let's pay them up and let them know that we're not coming back in this store." So we let Mr. Davis and Mrs. Davis know that we were just intimidated over the fact that you don't have . . . so she said, "Lou, don't you say anything because you would have blessed them out too much." So I decided I would not say anything. So anyway, we paid them up and they assured us that we could use that dressing room. But within two months Davis Smart Shop had to close their door. They did not have the money for that room because they had, most of their money was coming from us from those shoes and those dresses. But now Clyde Grace did not do us that way and there was a store next to Clyde Grace where the museum is now, the history museum but I can't think of the name of it and they were nice; they learned from that experience. And then of course, you could not go to the Four Way Café except in the back door. So we did not go there because, you know, dad said we could not go there. But they had those hamburgers that you could pick up. But now there was a hamburger store across the railroad track called "Hamburger Bill". He was black but many people—see, the white folk could go where

they wanted to but many people would go to Hamburger Bill because he made the best hamburgers. And now that I think of it I don't believe he ever washed that pot that stew was in . . .

MM: Oh no!

NB: You know, that pot was always there, when did he wash it because it seems like it was always there. But he may have.

MM: I hope so!

NB: Yes. Then he had a juke box in there. I remember we would get our pennies together and get a nickel so we could play "C. C. Rider". That was a song that was popular then. "See what you've done to me", that song. And, "Things ain't what they used to be". Oh yes, you just couldn't. . . . I can remember when people would say to you, "Get off of the sidewalk." And I would say, "I'm not going to get off the sidewalk. "I'm not getting in the road. I'm just not going to get in the road." And I said, "My daddy said I don't have to get in the road." And then I had some cousins that came out from the Mission, Brother Boy and Butcher—Willie Robertson and Emmanuel. Now I don't remember exactly what it was but they did tackle Grady Davis and whoever was there, a policeman, they rolled them out and that's when they left here and went to Detroit. But now they were kind of, you know, they were just bodacious. Now they were working at Amoco, Goodyear; I don't know exactly what they were doing but they had their car and if they didn't they rode a horse and buggy to town, because Grandpa Wade would say that that horse was, that was a paid for horse, yes sir. It wasn't bought on credit. Yeah, we had those discriminations. And now see down this street, down Bartow Street there was a man named Paul Thomas. Now Paul was a big bootlegger and he had the big house up

on the top. It was very well built and very beautiful and well furnished. Now, he married the lady who used to take me to the proms; you know, wherever you went, my mother was a little older so she would let Laura take us because she didn't want to stay up till we had gone to the prom. You had chaperones, you just didn't go. You had a chaperone. But now he married her at one time but he would still court and she just couldn't stand it but he continued to take care of her. Shela was one of the people who lived in that big house down there in that area. And they always had coca-colas and she had little skirts that she would put on those coca-colas, you know dress up those bottles. But Ms. [unclear] always bought coca-colas. They had coca-colas all the time. [chuckle] We liked to go out with her just to do things because she had pretty jewelry. We'd sit at her dresser and put on her jewelry and so forth. Just had all fun with her. But anyway, he had lots of girlfriends and Ann, who had come from Atlanta, when she would come, she was a "hi yeller". He would entertain her more than others. But anyway, he had that big house and he had the bootleg house. Then along that he had the store, a laundry mat, there was a little ice cream shop and he hired about fifty black people, he did. And he had a house somewhere out in the rural area where blacks and whites met and now I don't know whether it's true or not, they put the, whoever picked up Ms. So-and-so's keys, that's who would go with him that night. It was sort of a clandestine thing but it existed. And Ruby Renfroe who is here now, he moved to, his daddy used to run that house. And he said, "You know, do you know anything about my dad?" And I said, "Oh yes, I know what they say." But anyway, he had a baseball field called Slab Stadium because all those slabs were around it. That's who had that. And they had the Birmingham Black Barons came in to play, they would have very well attended baseball

games in that stadium and I used to get to go with Mr. Ben Allen who used to live down here. He was a real old man, he chewed that tobacco and spat you know, but anyway, I would go with him sometimes. And I had a cousin who was a lawyer who pitched well—he was a graduate of Summer Hill—and he was the first black that I know of to get a degree in law at Lincoln Law School, passed the bar on the first round, but anyway. . . . And then Roy Campanella was one of the players who came here who was with the Brooklyn Dodgers, the hind catcher. But that stadium just brought in beaucoup money and his store—he had a funeral home in there too—and he hired all these people, he had people that he paid a salary. Then he had a doorkeeper who kept the door and the police could never catch him bootlegging but they remembered when one of the houses caught fire that the doorkeeper ran out and one of the policemen observed that he ran out and left that door open when that fire was going. So they staged a thing as if a fire was coming and Ben ran out the door and that's when they went in. See, when they would go in at any other time, they kept Clorox there and they never brought up but a gallon of bootleg whiskey at a time. And I understand that that ditch that ran behind, right up there where those projects are, that stream there, that they kept the bootleg whiskey in that ditch because that stream was there and they had it well hidden. So when they staged that fire Ben ran out and he was not able to pour that gallon down the drain or down the commode and put the Clorox in it so they caught him with that whiskey. And finally Mr. Paul got into so much trouble and he got connected with Lawyer Pitman and Lawyer Pitman, when he passed the [unclear] just took all that over. And he lost that ballpark and that's when the city bought it. And he went up the wrong side of the highway, he and one of his girlfriends and they got killed.

MM: Oh. Now, tell me about the church, Mt. Zion. It's Methodist?

NB: It's Baptist, no, Baptist. It's the largest black church in North [stopped to answer phone]—we've had at least 500 people on roll and the church started in a bookshop. And it was very near where the church is now and a Mr. Howell gave the land for the church. Our first minister of our church, according to the history was Reverend Jeffrey Milner. We have a written history of our church. And it is said that during the slavery time he preached a sermon, "If the sun sets you free, you shall be free indeed." Which was taken from the book of John. And some of the people went and told the master that, "Mr. Milner said we going to be free". So they supposedly strang him up to hang him and asked him was there anything that he wanted to say or do and he started and preached a sermon and his sermon was so powerful that people began to cry and that the mayor of Cartersville said to cut him down and let him go back to continue to preach. So that's the story that was in the history. My uncle, Ether Williams, had been the clerk of the church for a long time and all of this information thing was part of the things that we found in the history of the church and then we have a list of all the pastors who have ever been pastors of the church and our present pastor is Dr. Ed Rhodes; he's a very learned person and his teaching of the Bible is very, very thorough and we certainly appreciate it.

MM: What do they usually preach about in general? What are the sermons about?

NB: He has usually a title to his sermon and it's Bible based.

MM: They're all Bible Based?

NB: Yes, they're all Bible based. It's not some of this flowery stuff. He really preaches the word and he's not afraid to preach . . .

END OF TAPE 2, SIDE B

START OF TAPE 3, SIDE A

NB: There was one other preacher who stressed tithing and that was Reverend Bryant, Reverend S.M. Bryant and he's the preacher who had the wife who played the organ so well. But we strictly survive on tithes. We can't sell anything, we can't have any, just nothing, we can't charge anything because anybody who wants to come to anything, our pastor feels like they ought to be able to come whether they have the money or not. So we don't, we really tithe. So since he's been there these past six years tithing has become our way of life. They used to have, you agreed on who had paid what, that no longer exists. We thought, well, it'll dry up but it has made a difference because he really stresses that we are not to give just the ten percent but to give according to how God has blessed you. And of course, occasionally he'll preach a tithing sermon, you know, about would a man rob God. So it has become a real way of life. We have Sunday school; we have Bible study on Wednesdays, a noonday Bible study for the elderly or anybody who may be working at the hour of six o'clock for the other Bible study, which is held at six o'clock on Wednesdays. We only have Bible study for an hour because people have to go to work so it's really regarded. It's not that you go and stay, stay, stay. And of course, for a long time we held to the slavery idea that people went to church on Sunday and the longer they stayed on Sunday the less they would have to work. And so that's why black people went to church and stayed so long, because they got out of working because they had worked all week. But our church is Bible based. We baptize the first Sunday after anybody has committed himself to the way of Christ; we bring our Bibles to church—we had one pastor who didn't want you to bring your Bible because he was not

so well educated and he thought you were checking up on what he was saying. But just have a very wholesome congregation.

MM: What about political stances within the church? Do you think the church takes any?

NB: Well, now, you know, if you are running for an office and you want to come worship with us but you can't make a political statement. You know, all political things must be held at the time that they can have political things. But they cannot come to the church and get up and make political speeches. That's a no-no. Now we've basically done that throughout the time, and see, you know, I've been in the church since I was three years old so that's seventy-something years; I don't remember people making political speeches. They used to have, people used to have a barbeque or fish fry and invite you and ask you to vote for them and they couldn't tell whether you voted for them or not. But I'm not happy with the number of people who are registered to vote in the black community. Yeah. And I think that it's my business who I vote for. I don't have to tell anybody. And you don't have to, and if I don't like what you're doing, I'm very vocal about it. I say, "Well, I'm a Democrat and I'm not a Republican and I may not always agree with what Democrats are doing but I'm a Democrat and I'm a member of the Democratic Party." And I've just recently become that because I thought that we have not done a good job of promoting the Democratic Party in this area. I sometimes think, well, I should not have gotten into it because I'm too involved in too many things. I teach Sunday School and I go to church regularly and I support my church. I may not always agree with what they have said but I support it. My pastor talked about once going with the Southern Baptists and I said, "Well, I hope that during the lifetime of this church that we will not ever go with anybody except one of the groups that we can really

align ourselves with." Because I don't think that anybody ought to tell you how to run your church. It ought to be based on what "thus sayeth the Lord" and then we can establish our own rules and regulations about those things that may be a little secular.

MM: Let's go back to the school. What grade levels were served at Summer Hill?

NB: At first we just had grades one through eight. And then the ninth grade was added in '41 or '42. Then the tenth grade was added--well, maybe the ninth grade was not added until '42 or '43 and then the tenth grade was added which was '44 and the eleventh grade was added—that was my class was the first class that finished from the eleventh grade—and that was in 1945. In 1950 the twelfth grade was added. And then the contractual agreement with the county and the city I guess began somewhere there in the late '40's where they bused the children in to school.

MM: So the majority of the students came to Summer Hill School by bus?

NB: The majority of the students who lived in the rural areas; the city school kids did not. And I decided when I was doing insurance that, oh boy, if I lived in Richmond and came from Richmond every day for school and had to come up that hill at Aubry Street, I ought to get promoted, just for coming! [laughter] Judge Benham, his brothers went to school twelve years without missing a day, all three of them.

MM: My goodness.

NB: Yes.

MM: What were your favorite subjects?

NB : I taught English and well, I never got to teach English literature, I always had American literature but I would have loved to have taught English literature. But English literature was taught in twelfth grade so I had ninth, tenth and eleventh grade. And I really

enjoyed having the children learn how to conjugate so that they could use verbs properly. So that was a challenge.

MM: I wish they did that today. [chuckle]

NB: Yes. And I worked real hard to get them to write well. Now one time during my teaching experiences, at a faculty meeting, I said, "I am so tired of our very good students just helping teachers to grade papers; we need to establish a class whereby they can expand." So I got stuck with that class! So we called it an enrichment class, it's sort of like the gifted class and I had students from I guess, seventh through the twelfth grade who were a part of that class. And then, but we did some marvelous things. I remember we did a "how to do it" encyclopedia. "Is there something that you don't know how to do that you need to know how to do?"

MM: Oh, that's neat. What a great idea!

NB: I planned to get that "how to do it" encyclopedia out because it's either in this storehouse or that storehouse. I told Dr. Lands I was going to get that book out. And then each child did an anthology of poetry. They had to write poetry but I don't know whether Cheryl Smith might still have an anthology of poetry but some of them wrote some cute little poems and I just enjoyed that. And then we read as many great works as we could and we would do things like this—what is the history of the period that this particular novel is in—and this gave them an opportunity to research the historical time that matched the setting of their novels. And I think they had a lot of time to grow there. And I would say, "I'd like for you to make me, know that it's wet and it's sort of raining outside. Now would you develop a paragraph or two that would let me know it's raining outside without using the word rain." So we had a lot of writing experiences in that way. Then

we had word study, you know, that I never will forget that I told Bibby Morgan's class-he was principal of the high school at one time, but he's with the central office now, Bibby was a very excellent principal—but he had to spend so much time with foolishness that I was glad that he gave it up. But the children loved him in Cartersville High. And I think he was principal for about ten years. And he's with the central office and his salary is even greater. I guess he's, in a sense, an assistant superintendent but that's not the title given to him. But I remember that I said, "Well, you know, this is not a vase, it's a vas." That boy had more fun. He said "Oh, Ms. Beasley, I almost knocked my mother's vas off the chair." [laughter] And then like, the word corps, that's "core", you know, that's not . . . there were just things that I thought, well, we need to learn to pronounce and say and to identify them and we're going to learn by all the words when word goes to sleep that w in sword has gone to sleep, you know. But we had a good time. I tried to make my classes exciting.

MM: It sounds like you were a wonderful teacher.

NB: Yes, well, I think the children thought that and they have expressed that. And then when I had those children who went to Spelman, Dr. Jackson, I think I still have her letter somewhere, wrote me to say that, "What a marvelous teacher you've been that we've got all these children who have come from Summer Hill and they are so well prepared. They have done real well." And I think that it speaks well of us that we've got several people who graduated from Summer Hill who are PhD's; we've got several who are lawyers; and Joe who was here being interviewed by Dr. Lands, he was a hospital administrator out at El Soreto, California. It's a suburb of San Francisco. And Mamie Pritchett was our commercial dietician in Ft. Wayne, Indiana; and as I said, Harold was a physicist. He

went from here to Tuskegee and he worked with General Electric. And then we've had all of these people like Wings who was a colonel in the army; Paul Carter was a colonel; we've had several people who were lieutenants; this fellow who's in Washington now was a research analyst and he's done real well, Colston; Isaac Miller and oh, and then lots of people who are teachers and who've just done really well.

MM: Did you give a lot of homework?

NB: Oh yes.

MM: You did? [chuckle]

NB: Oh yes. And it was so funny, once I can remember some person had done some work on Edgar Allan Poe and you know, his middle name is not "Allen" it's "Allan" and then I said, "Oh, I've read this before. You've got so-and-so's paper from last year!" They were just so surprised at that! And I had one fellow who always chewed chewing gum and I said, "It's just against our rules, we don't chew chewing gum." "Ms. Arnold, I don't have any chewing gum in my mouth." And you know, I could just choke Albert for saying that so finally one day I was just talking and we were off the row I remember and I said, "Now listen, I want you people to find out how Thoreau chased that woman in Walden Pond. He chased all over Walden." And I had a large class of boys, maybe three girls and they were mostly boys in that class. So then the next day they said, "There wasn't no woman in that story!" I said, "But you read it looking for the woman." So they told the next class, "Don't let her fool you!" But I really enjoyed teaching and I always, I had one class that was fussy, they just fussed. That's the only class that hasn't had a reunion. All the other classes have had a reunion. But they had something—their parents were fussy and they just fussed all the time. So every morning when I'd go to

school before homeroom time I'd put a sort of a trivia question on the board and they had to work on that. This kept them from fussing. That was the class that was the worst and they'd fuss about anything. And sometimes, you know, when you'd say, you'd dismiss them I'd say, "Would you two go ahead to your next class? You three go now." So that they couldn't congregate. I don't think they—and they were smart children, you know, but they just had difficulties.

MM: When they weren't doing their homework what did most children do after school?

NB: Well, you see we had all these activities.

MM: You sponsored the drama club and you put on a play.

NB: Yes, and then I had Tri-High-Y and some years I'd have the cheerleaders, I didn't always have them, we'd alternate you know. But I always did the drama and I always did Tri-High-Y and the library club, the Slags, as we called them then. So you see they were busy doing the after school activities. And I never left school before 6:30 or 7:00 o'clock and sometimes I'd have work to finish up, papers to grade. I remember when I was courting my husband, I said, "Well, you can come over if you want to, you can plug up the TV but I've got to finish my work." And I'd put him out at ten o'clock. [laughter] But anyway, it was just a fun time. You really had . . . and then I sold tickets at the basketball game.

MM: Now, what sports was Summer Hill known for?

NB: We had basketball, football and track. And see, Mr. Hill, I taught Mr. Hill my first year, he was good with that shot putt and when he went to Bethune Cookman College and then he continued to do shot putt and he did the shot putt while he was in service. And he was also a pall bearer at Mrs. Bethune's funeral. She was still, Mary McLeod Bethune still

worked there when he went to Bethune Cookman, yes. And now that first year that I taught, there were the Freeman twins . . .

MM: What year was that?

NB: 1950. See there were some of those people who were either my age and I had two people who were older than I was and I had ridden my bicycle—oh, I love to ride my bicycle—and then I was so happy at the end of that, middle of that year they started calling people to service, for selected services for the armed services and Wade and the Freeman twins and several of them had to go to the service. And then you know, once somebody whistled at me and I said, "Well the more you whistle, the more I'll write." So then they told on who was whistling because "we are not going to have write all this stuff, blah, blah, blah, on account of you two." So they stopped that, you know. And I just, you know, you have to take charge; if you let them get the upper hand you have lost it. I always tell young people who are interested, you cannot—you can be their friend but not friendly so that, you know, like the dog here, will hit you in the mouth you have to be in charge. Basically I think that's very important. And then if you work you need to know what you're talking about. You need to be prepared.

MM: How long did you teach at Summer Hill?

NB: I was there for seventeen years and then we integrated. The first integrated summer school that we had I went over to Cartersville High and Mr. Glover who was the principal at that time said that that was the best summer school that they had had. There was a fellow in that class named Brook Briler, now he was a Caucasian and they said Brook always just ran everybody crazy but now I said, "You know, you are here this summer because you have to be here and I'm here because they asked me to teach and I would

like to make this money. So now you two have a purpose and I have a purpose and we're going to set the rules up today. Things that we are not going to do." So they made their own rules but they were what I wanted to hear. And I said, "You know, one of the school rules is that you must wear socks and you need to be clean shaven so I expect everybody to be clean shaven and to wear socks." You just didn't go to school without socks. So I noticed that when Brook stood up he would do sort of a little hand shake and then the others would stand up and he had an old ambulance that he called the sex wagon so Brook came to school one morning and he didn't have on socks. I looked down so I asked him would he step outside the door and I said, "Brook, you forgot something. Do you know what you forgot?" He says, "Checking you out." I said, "You don't have on your socks. You can't stay in class today. You know, you can only be absent twice. Do you want to go home right quick? Where do you live? That shouldn't take you but about five minutes if you act like you're on the track team to run there and come back." And he said, "I certainly appreciate your not embarrassing me in class." So he went on and he came back and after that Brook just changed completely, you know, he got that hair that was hanging down in his face; they didn't make you, they weren't required to do that but he settled down and we did some very positive things. And there was one fellow who had failed literature and he was not slow but he just couldn't understand some of the things he had in American Literature so I worked one on one with him. Then there was another fellow who was just confused about grammar and we got that straight. Then I taught them, I had a little time—"do you know how to write a check properly?" We did some very practical things and Mr. Glover said that the conduct in here is remarkable, that they had not had that kind of conduct in summer school before.

MM: Were there any differences before integration that you saw between white education and black education? Was there anything that you felt was lacking or maybe. . . ?

NB: Well, you know, there had been this myth that white folk were smarter than black folk and I thought, well one lady who was going to summer school came and asked me about "Less miserables". I said, "Are you talking about "Les Miserable"? And she was teaching high school English. [chuckle] And then there was this lady who had this sheet and it was really about the thermometer and the second sentence had a typographical error in it and it says, "What does athemeter . . ." she thought; but it was "what does a thermometer measure." Now she had spent all the weekend looking for athemeter and she could not find it. And so when I looked at it I said, "Oh, that's a typo. That's just saying what does a thermometer measure?" This whole thing is about thermometers. She was so embarrassed. She never did ask me any other thing.

MM: I bet she was.

NB: And there was another thing. Hmm. That was, you know, and I thought, "they're not all that smart." And I told the superintendent. I said, "You know, you all certainly did a good job in saying that white folk were smarter than black folk but I sure have come in contact with some people who do not know." I said in a meeting something about "each of you is responsible for your . . ." and I said--I noticed these two teachers punched each other and I'm pretty perceptive.--I said, "Do you think I've made a verbal error?" I said, "Each is. The subject of that is not you, it's each You need to learn some grammar." That sort of thing. And I was just amazed at some of the things. And then I used to wonder how do they keep these desks so neat. They didn't ever take anything down. I use materials and by the end of the day I'd have to put back up because I would have

pulled this down for this thing or for that thing or for the other. And then I taught library lessons in the black high school. I taught them how to use the ten basic areas of the Dewey Decimal system. I said, "Well, you need to know this because you need to find materials. The success of doing any research is being able to find materials." So when I taught doing that when we integrated, they were just so impressed and Juretta Scott and Smith just thought it was just marvelous. And then I would set up learning centers for each holiday; I called all of my holiday materials in because there were teachers who would pull them and keep them and I put them on reserve. I said, "No, we're going to put the Gift of the Magi is named Number One and we're going to decide what day you're going to use it and at what time and you'll have a note in there to pass it on to teacher Number So-and-So by one of the library assistants that you have in your class. They can do everything in a minute without interrupting your class. You're not going to horde the materials." And teachers just loved that. This is not Summer Hill now. And of course, I always had for the teachers at Summer Hill what was available, I had a booklet for them what's available. And I can remember when I did, I said, "Let's look at fish."—when I was teaching the children how to find fish—I said, "If it's fish that's just general that's in nature, that's in 500's. But now useful art, you say 'I want to cook some fish for dinner.' That fish is in useful arts. But now, 'I want to go fishing.' That's a hobby. So you have to learn where words are. And that's why we have subjects in the catalog so that you can find them. And so many of the teachers really appreciated that. And just like if they read Pompous Penguin in the third grade and I had audio-visuals for all that, well, I wouldn't let anybody use that but the third graders. But some people who are lazy just wanted a film to show and I said, "No, you can't have that. This is taught in the third

grade and we need to respect this." And then I had learning centers so that if it's St. Patrick's Day, all the materials that are available, I put them in the learning center and then you sign up for your class to come to the learning center.

MM: How wonderful.

NB: And I think that's why they selected me to do this workshop for Southern Education for teachers who wanted to become librarians because it's a teaching experience. It's not one of these things where you say, "I'm going to sit back and give out my books." That's lazy. And when you look up the day is gone, you know, when you're busy. So I always enjoyed what I did.

MM: That's wonderful. Now, how did you feel when the school was destroyed?

NB: What, when we integrated?

MM: Right.

NB: Well, now, you see, at first Summer Hill was used. It was used as a middle school. And I said to the superintendent, I said, "I don't see why you have to move me." He said, "That's part of the integration process. And I want you to know, and I'm not being mean, now you have to move or I'll have to let you go. We've got to integrate." So that meant I was not going to teach English anymore; I was going to be full-time media specialist—and I had done my master's in library science so I did not relish that at first.

MM: Did you get your master's from Ft. Valley?

NB: Master's from Atlanta University. And I went to the middle school. I did not like middle school children because they didn't know who they were, where they were going. And I remember Alice White, Alice is somebody else now, she works at the hospital, and she came over there and she says, "I want you to know we made Ms. Josie cry." I said,

"Honey, this is not Ms. Josie. I'm in charge of this library and you're not going to pass by here" -- the library was in a building by itself — "and go down to the PE building. You are to come in here, I call the role each day, and this is where you belong." "You must don't know who my daddy is." I said, "Honey, you're daddy can be . . .

END OF TAPE 3, SIDE A

START OF TAPE 3, SIDE B

NB: I got an opportunity to be librarian for her children and then . . . but she always thought that I didn't like her. And she told people, "I don't think she ever liked me." But I didn't dislike her but I was not going to let her disrespect me. And I told one of the teachers, I don't see how you allow your children to act this way. They're not going to come in here and act this way. Either they have to be busy and research, they did not come here to loaf and laugh and talk." So I cut that out. So then we had those holes in those big blocks across there so I heard the superintendent say to Ms. McCleary, she was saying, "I sure would like to have one of the library spots. I've gotten certified in library science." He said, "Well, you know, we're going to base this thing on, we're going to let Ms. Beasley decide which one she wants to do." So when I heard him say that I said, "Oh Lord, you are so kind to me and I want to thank you." I decided to go with the elementary people because I said, "They can be taught. But these middle school people. . . ." They were just so wild. They don't know, at that teenage level they're just wild and I thought my temperament would not survive with these children. And high school people are a little more ready to learn and to listen. And once at Summer Hill I discovered that there were some children who had come from the county and Reverend McCall and I really appreciated that. I said, "Now, this boy is not this dumb, he's just never been taught to

read." And I took eleven students and I said to Mr. Morgan, "these children just have not learned to read and I want to take them because they have ability, to teach them to read so that they can have some success." So I took that group of eleven and I charted their, I gave them beginner's tests as to where they were and by the end of that year I had most of them reading on tenth grade level. But see, they had already gotten to the ninth grade and were not reading. And that was a help. We had one other boy who is a Presbyterian minister now; well, I guess, I didn't know anything about dyslexia and I said, "I just don't know how to teach Rudolph." Because he'd ask you—I can't make out question number one." And you'd read it to him and he in his hieroglyphic way would answer the question. He had great ability and he could play piano, he could sing. You'd read him a part in the play and he would just remember it. You'd read him the second act the next day—read the play—and he would know everybody's part so we said we've got to do something for Rudolph. So the Presbyterian church here had some money and we just thought that Rudolph ought to be able to go to school somewhere so the Presbyterian church—we first took him to Atlanta University and had Dr. Zane, who was a specialist in reading, to teach him, to examine him, she could not find a group that he would go in and she said, "he has dyslexia". So we told the Presbyterian church this and and they sent him to Stillman College and he went from there to a special school in George Washington University and they unlocked that dyslexia and he came back to Stillman. One time his mother said, "What y'all doing with my boy? Everytime I look you've got him on the bus going somewhere." I kind of got a little insulted. I said, "Ms. Henderson, we're just trying to help him because he needs to have some exposure so he can read."

And he learned to read. So he's had an audience with three presidents and he's very outstanding in the Presbyterian service.

MM: How wonderful.

NB: So we feel really proud of Rudolph. Sometimes—we had a little box that we would send around when the superintendent was coming because sometimes we would have a little play in the room and charge the kids a penny when we were raising—so we'd have this, and the principal didn't know we were having it. So we'd have a little box and we'd put a piece of white crayon in it if the superintendent was coming around. If the two were coming we'd put a piece of white crayon and black crayon or vice versa for just a black one. Ain't nobody ever opened that box except Rudolph. So Rudolph opened the box and he walked out in the hall and I thought this must be fancier than the superintendent. [laughter] So we had to admit that this isn't fair, we can't send Rudolph anymore. That was fun. There were so many things that we had fun about. And our principal used to ask us did he talk too much? Professor Morgan. So he would always have a little ceremony when we would get our checks and we thought, well, he's not paying us, this is not his money, so he asked that day if faculty—it was time to get out for the Christmas holidays and people were fixing to go catch a train to go to Texas, Alabama and so forth and Ethel was going to New York—so she said that day, I don't know, I just got angry, she said, "Don't say anything, please." "Ms. Anderson do I talk too much?" "No sir, no sir." I had said the next time he asks that, so he asks, "Ms. Robertson, do I talk too much?" I said, "Yes sir." [laughter] He preached my funeral that day. And this made Ethel miss her train, she was so angry with me she didn't know what to do. But every Friday morning we'd have assembly and he would give, I guess his, it was not a religious

sermon but he would talk about doing little things, you know, you could be the rotten apple in the barrel and he would talk about Bulldog tenacity. "If you can't be the lead cow, gallop in the gang." You know, just all kind of little things. Then of course, we'd have children do little debates and so forth, but we would have these assemblies all the time and this was when he'd give his pep talk. And see somebody would miss a class for this and they would be delighted for this, you know, to miss a class. And then you would have recess and I can remember my niece Teresa—I told you, my daddy said ugly words so she didn't know who Professor Morgan was, she was just chattering over there and he got her out of there, he picked her up, you know, and she says, she looked at him and she said, "Put me down, you big, black, son-of-a-bitch". I just moved from my line and went on over there. I said, "Lord have Mercy, what has this child said." He said, "Ms. Robinson, did you hear what that little girl said?" I said, "No, I had gone over to see about something and what did she say?" He said, "I know you heard what she said!" I said, "No, I didn't." I just had to tell a lie. So I told my daddy, I said, "Daddy you're going to have stop saying anything in front of Teresa." He said, "Well, she told the truth." I said, "Daddy, you ought to be ashamed of yourself!" He said, "Well, what did he do to her?" "Nothing, nothing." He just loved her to death because you see, at this age for him to have a grandchild with our being born so late, he thought the sun rose and set in Teresa. She painted his nails when he was eighty years old and see, he didn't want us to paint our nails. And he had rheumatism but the first day that she went to school he walked her to Summer Hill to meet her. He could not stand the fact that she was gone, because my sister lived at Emerson but he wanted her to go to school in Cartersville, not Emerson. So he walked up that hill to meet her. Yes, he just loved her. Well, she

slipped off the first day that's what it was and it was that second day that he went to meet her. She went home with a girl on Watworth Street and he said to my sister, "Now, this is a time that you can spank her so she won't do that any more." Because he did not want you to touch her. She was one spoiled brat. We wonder how she ever got to be anything and my husband always said she had three mothers: her mother, my mother and me. She just loved him to death. He called her "bright eyes" and she called him "dimples". Now she has gray eyes; my grandfather, who was very brown-skinned, he was not dark, Indian-looking, had deep gray eyes and see my grandmother, who was mulatto had kind of bluish looking eyes. So I guess that's where the gray eyes come in our family. And they skip around; we've got several of the children with these gray eyes. Even the last two babies, the baby in our family does not have, but the last two have gray eyes.

MM: Do you think there's a place for an all black school in today's society?

NB: I don't think we can go back, I really don't. I don't think we can go back. But now we lost a lot, you know. Our children were always respectful and they learned to be disrespectful from white children. Some of them don't wear any hats on their heads when it rains. We don't have that kind of hair, so few do. My sister has nice hair, she could wash her hair every day. But if I got my hair washed every day I'd look like Don King. [chuckle] I have some terrible hair. I got it permmed and I have to oil my scalp almost every other day so it will dry out and I have to roll my hair. We have different textures. But most of us got kinky hair, we can't wash our hair every day. You wash your hair every day, don't you?

MM: Yeah.

NB: Now see, my sister can wash her hair every day because she has nice hair and some people do and some don't. And I have thin lips like my grandmother; I don't have black folks lips, you know, usually they're big and fat but now my daddy had very thin lips and he had a lot of Indian in him. He could not drink whiskey, if he did he was the biggest fool you ever saw but he believed at Christmas time and we would follow him around with the rocking chair because once he sat down he was there. And he would be so sick the next day and would say, "Ellen, why did you let me have it?" She said, "I couldn't do anything with him!"

MM: Tell me about the years of the Civil Rights movement? Were you ever actively involved?

NB: I belonged to the NAACP when I was in college and one time we had a meeting and M.L. was there, he was a student at Morehouse and when I lost my baby, his wife was in the hospital giving birth to Bernice when I was there. So we went up on the elevator together when I was going into the hospital, my husband and I, with him. But now I was a member of the NAACP and I put that on my application when I got ready to teach school. You had to have that loyalty oath and I put that down on there and my principal told me, "You shouldn't have put that on there." I said, "But I was a member of NAACP." And I'm still a member of the NAACP—they don't do as well as I think they should, but I was questioned about that. And I did not participate in any of the sit-ins because I am not non-violent; I can't be quiet, I just . . . [laughter]. You're not going to talk about cracking me over my head and I'm going to sit there and not retaliate. I was just not part of the non-violent movement but I supported it. Well, I just remember a lot of things. I was so sad with the Montgomery situation when the dogs were let loose on

people, you know, it was just so sad but I was supportive of those who integrated the restaurants here. And then I did go downtown . . .

MM: Were there any sit-ins here that you remember?

NB: Yeah, we had some people who went to the restaurants and integrated them. Robert Benham, Justice Benham was with that group, Walter Johnson and Arthur Carter and Albert Weems were all part of that. There's a group here called the New Frontiers and that's a group of young black men who got together to be responsive to anything that was not just and people listened to them too. And they had their own building and, of course, they have expanded that building and I think it's just marvelous how they got together and when New Frontiers spoke, the powers that be downtown listened. Hm-hm. Now, when we had this library here on the hill—we had a library on Guyton [correct?] Street, it was part of Summer Hill community and the powers that be said they were going to build us a new library on top of the hill there and they'd let us have that for urban renewal. And then they got a new mayor and he tried to pretend he didn't know it. Now I went down a lot to protest against that. And I can remember that one time we went down to city council, they ignored us and I said, "You know, we pay taxes here, and I've come down here and I'd rather be segregated than ignored. And you haven't listened, you haven't responded to our questions." They didn't know. But they never did build that library. They never did build that. But yet they made us give up the library that we had established on Guyton [correct?] Street. And they moved our books from one place to another. But we incorporated and we hung on and we're going to have that library in that building. And it's not in conflict with the public library but it's sort of a study area for children who live in this are who could not safely go to the public library and that's all it

really is. But we had quite a collection of books and the Atlanta University School of Library Science did that but now it was headed by the community [answered the phone].

MM: How do you think global events such as the Great Depression, World War I, World War II, Civil Rights, Vietnam, affected the community of Summer Hill?

NB: Well, the Great Depression had its effect because people were out of work, you know, and it was Roosevelt who was responsible for bringing about all of these work programs which helped, you know, and I think that I told you about my dad having worked on that program where he was able to get that $1.25 per hour. Things did grow and some things got better and some things didn't get better but the mere fact that in World War II you had a lot of people who went into the service but when they came back, even though they had been involved with fighting for their country, they were still discriminated against. But now, my husband's brother learned to be an electrician while he was in World War II and he was able to establish his own business and he worked at Goodyear as an electrician so he was one of those salaried persons. So things have gradually grown, you know, and even the black doctor who was here had some white patients. He was very good. They came by night. He couldn't advertise that he was a doctor then. And then we had some other few doctors who came in to establish their practice here and of course they would get demands from other larger places and move on. But I think that Cartersville, as a community, is much farther ahead than some places because we did a lot of things for ourselves. And there were a lot of people with a lot of know-how who did a lot of things for themselves. Like Bletha [correct?] Kindergarten; you know, it was there before maybe there was an established kindergarten in the white community but after the Conyers' left then there was not another kindergarten until these programs that

had come by here of late. There were a lot of people who had yard services and they did well; and there were a lot of people who cooked well who worked at the Braban Hotel and the Seal Hotel and whatever the other hotels were that were downtown; but the global affect of a lot of these things really, a lot of people left here to go North to do better because they felt that they needed it. Now that we've grown a lot of people have come back and they're surprised at how well we've done. There are a lot of black businesses here. My husband has a restaurant in the Wheeler Morris shopping center. That little shopping center up there was put up by Dan Wheeler and Ann Morris who is very wealthy black lady in this town so that's why it's called the Wheeler Morris shopping center. When Dan retired from Union Carbide he paid off the debt for that thing. Now my husband, I tried to get him not to build that shop but he built it anyway and I regret the money that he put into it, you know, that was a lot of money. And he has at least our money so it just—I just did not want him to do that because I did not think that he was going to be the person who was going to work in his business and you need to work in your business. And he made the statement, "Oh sweetheart, I'm going to get me two old nappy women to work in there." And I thought, "Well, I'm not going to be one of them." [chuckle] Because I've been retired now, this is my nineteenth year in retirement. Now, I've done adult education since then with the housing authority and I only did that because Johnny said they were going to get somebody else. But after I started I worked for two years but I had both my knees replaced . . .

MM: Oh.

NB: Yes, I had to really come out so that I could work. And then I stayed on the state board for the certification of librarians from 1980 until 2001. That was a very interesting

experience and I got to meet a lot of interesting people and a lot of well-trained librarians and it was in the process of reviewing the transcripts of people who wanted to be librarians. I was surprised that there were many people who applied for jobs who were not making the kind of money they were making in the North. Some had less, you know, $15,000 a year and I thought, well . . . and they could make more in the Georgia area than they could up there. So that was interesting. But this global affect its in right now is frightening. I'm just very much disturbed about what may eventually happen to us as a people, not only the entire nation—that germ warfare, it's just frightening.

MM: It is, it's very frightening.

NB: Extremely. And I don't know whether the President has the right—and I've not always understood why do we have to meddle in foreign people's business. We have not done enough to clear up our own. There are a lot of things that need a lot of attention; we don't have all the medical benefits that we need. Because you can't legislate human feelings, you know, you can't make me like you or somebody can't make you like me. It's just a matter of the heart, whether we understand each other. And I do think there has been a lot done in the way of civil rights. When I was getting my knees done there was a young man who had been in the school, he said, "What all is it that they didn't teach you when you were in school?" He was of the opinion that if you went to a black college you didn't learn as much. I said, "That's a myth. There are smart people in each group. There are people who want to learn and people who learn in spite of whether you teach them or not. If they've got enough initiative and enough listening skills they can learn." People who became great teachers had not always been to school. So I think that it's important that you get to know people and understand that all people are not mean, all

people do not think the way that you think; all people have not been taught the way that you think; there's nothing universal except the cry of a baby. They all cry the same! [chuckle] But there are some things that you've been taught that maybe I was not taught in the home. But then there are some things maybe that might be more common with us than with some people. My parents taught us that it was necessary to save, that my dad said, "Don't buy anything on credit that you can eat up or drink up because when it's gone, it's gone." If you've got a job, don't just give it a hundred percent, give it a 125%. If you're going somewhere dress up, don't ever leave out of the house without combing your hair. And for gosh sakes, wash yourself! He was a proponent of taking a bath! And he just could not stand for those who didn't smell right, he was just always adamant about this. Sometimes when my house gets all disheveled and I've got papers everywhere and I say, "Oh, if my daddy would see this he would jump up out of his grave!" But I think it's important to be taught good manners. The child that we adopted has very good manners; he's just a con artist. People who get to know him will say, "He's a very intelligent child but there's something missing somewhere. He can't tie up what's right and what's wrong and what's truth and not truth. He's just a con artist. And then he can be so sorry for what's he's done, and "Mama, you know, I love you so much." But there's just a difference. There's a difference, there's no difference in how we are made but certainly where you're taught and the morals you're taught, the religion you are exposed to, makes a difference as to how you act.

MM: Who are your heroes?

NB: Well, I really like Frederick Douglas and I like Mary McLeod Bethune; I like my mother, I like my father, I like the spirit that's in my family of working, that you don't get

anything unless you work for it. That you need to work and you need to provide for yourself; that you cannot love others unless you do love yourself and that comes with self-respect, and I like that. Well, now, I like the great poets and the authors, I think they have so much to say to us and I required my students to learn Thanatopsis, something from Ann Bradstreet, something from Lincoln. I've got one fellow who sees me who will say, "Oh, Ms. Beasley there's a time in every man's education and he arrives at the conviction that everything from Emerson is self-reliance." Now I thought that he made a great statement and especially when he said, "all are needed by each one, nothing is good or fair alone." I like to read. I know I've read a whole lot. I'm sorry I'm not able to read all the things that I want to read now but I'm so involved in so much until when I sit down to read I may go to sleep. And I like fiction and non-fiction, you know, but . . . and I like the attitude that Malcolm X had but I don't like all of the things that he did. But I thought he was thorough in wanting to achieve and those around him. I've got his picture there and certainly Martin Luther King was just such a great experience for all of us. I liked Ms. Bryant who was one of our pastor's wives. I can remember when a group of ladies didn't think that she dressed like she ought to and they sent her a bag of shoes and had a little note in there and her niece Constance would come every summer and she would visit with us and I would visit with her and we were there when she got that bag of shoes. She said, "Oh, look what the ladies have sent me. I guess they don't think I wear enough shoes but I can't wear these either. She says "Let's just stop right now and pray for them." She was always very prayerful and I think that has helped me a whole lot, just a tremendous impression came to me from her praying for those who would despitefully use her. And the times that I do just get away and realize that maybe I've done some

things or said some things that I ought not to have said that I can really pray and ask for forgiveness for those things and I think they do come. And I as I said with the adoption of this child, if my husband and I had not known the Lord I don't think we could have survived. But I have enjoyed my niece and her three children who are my nephews. And now we have three great-nephews that just really warm my heart. And this little one that's at Montessori school is just too, too cute and such an inspiration to note . . .

END OF TAPE