

Interview with Juanita Pope Bone - 12504 Lily Lane Berrytown, Kentucky -
October 18, 2000 - By Carridder M. Jones

I'm Juanita Bone, I was Juanita Pope Bone and I was born February 22, 1926 and I'm 74. I have a husband, Jimmy Bone. He's from Alabama, his original home. He came to Kentucky when he was young and through trials and tribulations we met and married. I have four children, Keith Bone, Stephen Bone, Jackie Bone and Stanley Bone. My girls are Jackie Fox and Stanley Johnson. Jackie has a daughter, Christie Patterson, that's my grand daughter. Stanley has a son, Troy Johnson, Jr. and Samantha Earin Johnson, those are Stanley's children.

I have lived in Berrytown all my life. My grandparents were Rodney Jones and Katie Frazier Jones. My parents were Viola Jones and James Copeland. My parents lived here all of their lives too. I don't remember when they were born, that's going a little bit far for me right now. My grandparents lived at Dorsey Lane, off of Shelbyville Road before they moved to Berrytown. Grandmother bought property from a man called Mr. Herschfield. She bought an acre and a half of land. When she first moved here, she cleaned off the land and installed a tent, big enough to hold her and her children. At that time she had my mother, Viola Jones, Clara Jones, John Earl Jones, Albert Jones, Coletta Jones, and a daughter named Olivia, that was sickly at the time and she didn't live. So she was deceased not long after they moved in.

I don't know the dates because they never did talk about that but she used to tell me it was years ago. She told how she used to walk to Anchorage to do laundry work. The people she worked for were Graytower is all I can remember. Catherine Conrad, she owned the Graytower and my grandmother worked there. She used to tell how she walked back and forth from Berrytown to Anchorage to work. It was a mile, and how she used to freeze. The bottom of her clothes froze in the winter time. So she would have to dry out, do her work get warm and everything before she came here, wrapped up good and walked all the way back. A lot of frostbite.

She did laundry at the Greyhouse. After she did the laundry, I think she did part of the cooking. They paid her very little. Back then it was like \$7- 8.00 a week. She worked every day, Saturday and Sunday. She still had to come home and cook and take care of her children. I don't know what grand pa did, mother never did get into that because it wasn't too long before he went his way and she

had to take care of the children.

She stayed in the tent until she finally got enough money together and build a four room house. It's not still standing. We sold that and they have built homes back there now. It wasn't but about five years ago that it was still there. It was on Haiwatha, I stayed with my grandmother all my life. She raised me. I have no brothers and sisters. I have a cousin Roletta Jones had three children, Calvin, Alberta and Edith. Roletta was one of the daughters, one of my grandmother's children. She was my Auntie. My grandmother raised and myself. We were always there. While my mother worked, Roletta worked. We were her children. She raised us, sent us to school did the whole ball of wax for us, the whole thing.

She cooked good stuff for us. Fried potatoes and onion, pork chops with gravy, liver and gravy and always hot bread, every day of my life, we had hot bread. On Sunday, she always had the old original cake. It was a lard cake. She took that lard, flour and eggs and things and made a cake. Best cake you ever tasted. I have no idea how many eggs she used because we had chickens, we raised chickens and she raised her own garden. She grew everything you can imagine, from cabbage, sweet potatoes, corn, green beans, even a row of potatoes, peas. She raised something called a parsnip. It was like a carrot but it was white. Its taste was between a turnip and a rhubarb and all of that. Best thing. You know I haven't had one since I've been grown. But she raised it. She always had a little patch of strawberries. I never knew how she managed that and she would make strawberry preserve and our neighbor had a grape harbor and we would have homemade grape jelly.

Mr. Will Frazier was our neighbor. We used to call him Mr. Davis. Will Davis was his name. Everybody called him papa or Mr. Frazier or Mr. Davis, or whatever, just grandpa is what he was. He was next door and he was kind of like a watchman for all the kids around. If somebody's child was out some where, playing way over there, he would whistle loud and the children from far and near would know it was time to go home. Wherever you lived, you would go home. It was like a community of older people taking care of the young.

Wash day was very complicated. Now it's complicated but then it was easy. Mother had a woodpile. We would go down to the woodpile, stack up the wood a certain way, my cousin Calvin and I. We'd put the tub on the fire and we had a well, a pump. We'd pump the water carry it and put it in the tub, heat it all day. Then we had to get it out of that one with a bucket and put it in the wash tub and mother scrubbed on the washing board. We had to always ring it out. I don't know where she managed to find one but we had a wringer that hooked onto the tub. I

enjoyed doing anything around there then because I that was entertainment. We didn't have too much to do. We helped to hang out the clothes. Washday was always Monday morning, bright and early. Tuesday was ironing day. Then you would go on down the week doing different things. Saturday was the bath time, hair doings and fixings, you're getting ready for Sunday. We got our bath water out of that same pump. Then you'd take it down there and heat it. We had a big wood stove too in the house that had that sink well in the side, the reservoir and we kept that full of water.

We had a coal stove in the house that we stayed warm with. It almost heated the whole house but then we had a little kerosine like, a four leg burner that stood tall. That heated the bedroom. We used to keep in the bedroom till we were taking a bath and my cousin Calvin sat on it one night. It got moved. That was a little dangerous so she moved it out of the room. After that, we just had to go for whatever heat we had.

Her children grew up, my mother and all of those grew up and got jobs. Then my uncle Albert Jones, he built the house in the front of the small cottage. He built a very nice house there. Had a high porch in front and a little terrace to walk down. You could sit up on that porch, they had rocking chairs on it and it was a lovely home. Children just played in the lane, it was a dirt road and there wasn't much traffic. He moved her from the small house into the big house. That's where grand mother passed. She lived there all the years. I think she was seventy-five. My mother lived to be seventy-two. My father was about seventy -four when he died. He died in California.

My grandmother and my mother are buried here in the cemetery at Berrytown. My grandfather never came back , not that I know of. He could have but by being young I just didn't know. Growing up in Berrytown was good. We had friends, we played. I have some literature somewhere in another book about my childhood. We had an old goat named Billy, and my uncle, my great uncle, one of my grandmother's brother, built me a two wheel cart. He showed me how to hook the goat to the wagon and I had pictures of all this but I don't know where they went to, they got destroyed or something. Billy used to carry me all up and down the road and all around the yard. We had a good relationship together. The goat didn't like anybody else. He would do everything he could to them but I could go out and hook him up and just ride all around the yard on my cart with old billy. He would only let other children ride if I was there. I was a big girl when we got rid of Billy. Billy got old, I guess when I was about thirteen. I went to Forest School, right down the street. There was the first grade top

the eighth, then I went to Lincoln Institute, up on Shelbyville Road. The bus carried us back and forth, we had buses. When I was at Forest there was a teacher named Smith, Mrs. Gorham, we didn't have a principal, we just had a head teacher, we had one teacher, she taught everybody. It was one to eight but there was just a very few kids. We had three rooms but our teacher would teach us like here, then she would leave you work then she would go over here to this one, and then she had one come in, maybe to relieve her, Mrs. Jackson. Mr. Jackson lived right in the community and she taught there. Some kind of way, they worked it around where she was there too. Forest school was always three rooms, just what it is now is the way it always was. I think it's going to be a historical place. It's part of the community they wouldn't tear it down.

We would bring our lunch with us. We'd bring peanut butter, the old faithful peanut butter sandwiches. Well we would bring ham sandwiches but mainly peanut butter, something like that. Then too, we were all in walking distance to home. If it got too bad, we would just walk home and eat and come back to school. School was in the same as it is now, hasn't changed. We played hopscotch and jump rope, baseball. We always played ball with the boys. The boys did most of the shooting marbles.

Then too, we had a teacher, her name was Mrs. Robinson. She taught Home Ec and she learned me how to sew. When I went to high school, I made my first apron, because I had the basic from Mrs. Robinson. She would tell you how to do and what to do with your material and all. We could sew on our hand and make it just all but perfect without the machine. We didn't do machines until I went to high school. You had to have good stitches with Mrs. Robinson. We helped quilt but we didn't do a lot.

My grandmother quilted all the time. The quilting she did kept us warm, cause she made the quilts to put on the bed. She got her material out of old clothes. If they were old, she would cut the patches out of pants, coats, whatever we had there. She would just cut them, make the squares, bag them up and one day when the weather was bad she'd just sit and start putting them together. She did tell me once when it snowed how the men had to dig trenches. The snow was so deep, they dug like a maze to get from house to house. To get to the neighbors to make sure the neighbors were alright. She didn't say what year that was. I hate going back to that. That was a long time, I wasn't born then.

I don't have any idea when my grandmother was born. You know the bibles and things that she had, I don't have any idea of what happened to them. They are all gone. Because she believed in scribbling things, keep on working, go back and

scribble then go back and do something else. I used to wonder, what is she writing? She was a member of this church, Bethel Baptist. Then too, she was also a member of Hobbs Chapel in Griffeytown but she came up here to this church because it was in the community. Hobbs Chapel is still there. She didn't change, she went to Hobbs Chapel, that's the church she belonged to but this church was closer to her. By her having to walk, she came to this church up here. She kept her membership at Hobbs. She took me to church and I wore very starched dresses. They had the little crinoline slips that scratched the back of your leg, little white socks that looked like they had never been worn. Whitest socks and there was no bleach in those days. Patent Leather shoes and then I graduated up to the white and brown ones. But always the white socks, you 'd keep that stuff nice.

Mostly we bought clothes but grandmother was a good seamstress. I don't know, she could have made some. My mother was too modern in those days. You know how that was, they were working and going and doing. They wouldn't have sewed nothing. Mommie probably couldn't have made a hem in a dress. She could cook good, that was a family trait there. That is a family trait up to now.

Berrytown has only changed in my opinion, the building up, more houses. Other than that Berrytown is still the same. I mean people move in, different people, breeds of people are different from wherever they come but the old Berrytown, everybody knew everybody and took care of everybody. They still do that for the ones they know cause some people around here, I don't even know. It's not that I don't want to but they just move in and you just don't get to meet them.

We got the Berrytown organization, called BGO and started working together trying to get together. This brought Griffeytown in too. We started working with the County Government. Some of the leaders were Lavern Davis, Loretta Trowles, G. R. Hughes, Alberta Thornton, Lula McCoy and Lewis J. Bald. He has been one of the older people of the community that always worked and seeing that things were going on. He lives in New Berg but he's a Berrytown person. Robert Gaskin too, James Jones, he's a cousin. I mention James Jones because John Earl Jones that I mentioned, my uncle is James Jones' father. He's a cousin.

For one thing, when we first started, around Berrytown didn't have any water, sewer, it was about 79 because my mom passed July 3, 79 and we was about ready to get into this house. I'll say about 68, we had already started building the house and she was going to move with us. The old home place over on Haiwatha what I was telling you about, we were going to move up here in this house in August and she died in July 3. She didn't make it. We moved in right after she passed.

I have always worked with the BGO. We got the water, gas, sewers and all

of that. None of that was in the community. Then we got street lights and things like that we didn't have at all and no access to. We got the TARK transportation that comes through. That makes a big difference. When I was a kid they had the streetcars to take us to Louisville. It came behind the railroad. I don't know what it was called. I guess it was the Inter Urban because it was a street car. You'd catch it up the road here, going towards Pee Wee Valley and you'd ride to Louisville on it and get off. I have no idea what it cost. I was always too young but I know I rode it a lot with my mother and uncle. It was a joy, didn't know no better, but Just to get to ride on something like that. I don't think it was segregated because we were all over the place. We never really paid too much attention that white and black thing out here. No, no, no, we are just people. The whites felt the same way.

It's true, we were left out of the Anchorage book. It's like they came so far and chopped it off. But that was understandable because some of the old people that lived in Anchorage weren't ready to break that barrier. They just fought it and fought it but it was a barrier that was going to break itself down eventually. Just this weekend past, people that I used to work for, my mother worked for the family and raised the boys, S. G. Tyler family. The old man was Sam Gwathney Tyler and he had four boys. My mother raised them up. The boys were Billy Tyler, Sam Gwathney II, Robin Tyler and Terry Tyler. My mother raised those boys and I went to work for Sam Gwathney II. When he got engaged and married, I had the house ready for he and his wife to move in when they came from the honeymoon. They got married and came back and I was with them and those three boys right there on the picture are the boys that I raised.

The boys are grown now. My family went down to the house, Sam Gwathney's wife died about two years ago. They were selling the home and he called and said, 'come whatever you want just come and get it. Let all of the kids, send them all, whatever. So they went down and had a good time in the house, picking what they wanted. This was the big house that they bought after they had been married and gotten better finances. Those three boys over there are the ones that I raised up and they are like my own. It was horrible raising three boys. They were bad boys but they were good boys, you know there's bad and there's bad.

Varina Tyler was the lady I worked for. I started working for her back in the 60's. She paid me very little when I first started, about \$2.00 or \$3.00 a day, something like that. Then she would give me a raise and the boys were growing up and everything. I cleaned and cooked. She had a shop of her own and he was in the insurance business. What I did was I prepared the dinner for her and I left. She would come in about 5:00 and dinner was fixed and everything and they would take

it from there. The next day I'd go and do the same thing over and over. Then she got another house, she moved in two houses and then she bought the big house. When she moved in the big house, it was a big, big house. It was on Maple Lane, I think, in Anchorage. Anyway, she lived in Anchorage in a big two-story home. When I retired from there, my salary was \$250.00 a week. I went from nothing to something. Even my time was shorter because the boys were able to take care of themselves. They were in school, one was in high school and the one in high school would get home in time to take care of the others and all like that. So my time was cut down but my salary, she never did cut it down. I would go like 9:00 in the morning until 1:00 I would leave. I would always have dinner prepared.

My bonus was every Christmas. It started out at \$100.00 and when I left her I was right at \$500.00. She didn't leave me anything in her will. I really wasn't looking for it because she took good care of me while she was living. I still see the family, just saw them Sunday. The youngest one of the boys takes my daughter and her children to the River Bats game because that's where he works. None of my family work for their family now.

My mother went to Forest School. I think my grandmother went to school down around Dorsey, down around where she lived, Dorsey Way. The Dorsey Way down there is named after the school and everything. I don't know what year that was but I can remember just as well my grandmother telling me about some of her family. She was from the Hobbs family, Fanny Hobbs. They had a funeral home in Louisville. She married into, there was a marriage there or something. The funeral home is still up and running, it's Rowan and Grevious (SP). That was a spin off of the Hobbs family some kind of way. I remember my great, great Aunt, Fanny Hobbs. Some kind of way, my grandmother's people, that was her cousin or something in there. The Hobbs Chapel was not part of this it was named after a white settler that lived in Anchorage and they donated that land and everything to the Griffeytown people.

Grandmother bought her land from Mr. Hershfield and back over there where the Berrytown apartments are now, all of that land was his. It was called Haefer, his land was called Hafer. And back where she bought was called Haefer Subdivision years ago but wasn't nothing on it but us. That's what he wanted it called. The whole thing back over in there, as far back as I can, you know where the fire station is? On around back where the apartments are to Lagrange road. All of that was his.

I don't know how they divided it up, I really don't. I don't know how they managed to do that.

Mr. Berry lived on Berrytown Road. His house is no longer there. They built new

homes on that land. The different people coming in doesn't affect the community so bad but in a way it does. You have to get the big picture of it you know. Most people take care of their property but the thing about it is that we are country people. Then you move your city people into us and the whole picture wants to change. When you are bound to earth where you have lived with your neighbors and all of this, then you have to just adjust to people moving in who are just not used to doing that. It makes it kind of hard.

Berrytown remaining predominantly black does not bother me. It's not that black. I don't know what percentage but I've got white neighbors too, to the left. Two to the right and it's just about equaled out, every street. We like that. I don't believe in that all black or all white. Either you're one or you're none. I mean there's no in between.

I don't attend any of the activities at the Senior's Center because I haven't had the time to go back there. I'm not quite sure of the plans for Berrytown right now because I don't know where we are heading. I know right now, we don't want this merger. We are not so good on that right now. Right now the situation on English Station road where someone was going to do some industrial building may be on a standstill. There was a meeting a while back, we went down to the courthouse about it. I haven't heard anything lately but they are trying to come all the way down English Station in the homes there. Now they are moving to the other end of it, up English Station and Lagrange Road. They are cleaning that off. I think they are building a grocery store, a drug store, a McDonald's and things like that. They tore the little whiskey store down. That used to be the place where you would tell people when you come off the expressway, look for the whiskey store. That store wasn't even up there when we were young. There was a home up there back then. The only place I remember we partied at was a place called Greens. Arthur Green used to be right across over there. There was a Mr. Berry Weatherbee and Mrs. Mamie who lived here. They were older people, they were here from the south.

They came up from Alabama I think. Once they moved here they stayed here. Berrytown is like one of the places that you go to and, I can't say it for myself but I have had friends that lived in Cincinnati, Indiana and all. They would always call me and say, 'hi, how are you doing, we are coming home'. This is my home but they would refer to 'I'm coming home' to coming here. I used to tell my husband, they say they are coming home but this is my home. But they referred to this as home. They would come, be content and happy. Loved coming to this town. They would stay with us when they came, these would be friends of ours. They would stay on weekends. They would call and say they would be here Friday afternoon

and they would leave late Sunday. Before my mother passed, they would have cookouts and all of the things, steak on the grills and else, she'd do the turkey in the stove with the stuffing. All the trimming to go with it and it was just nice. They would come every Derby, Thanksgiving they were here and some Christmases they would make it back. You could believe, every Derby, the Thursday before Derby, they would pull in the drive way, with or without a phone call. They would be here and it was nice.

I have lived here all of my life and I have never had a desire to move away. I've been content right in this community. Lots of friends and I am close to everything, I'm just a few minutes from the city, say twenty minutes and we're in the city. There are grocery stores, all kind of convenient drug stores, everything within five minutes away. It's comfortable here. We don't know what locking doors and things mean. Some of our windows stay open and this is good, real good. I have had a good life here in Berrytown and I wouldn't change it for nothing.

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
CARRIDDER M. JONES PROJECT DIRECTOR

In consideration of the recording and preservation of my oral history memoir, I hereby grant and assign them to the Filson Club in Louisville, Kentucky, and consent to the deposit of my oral history memoir in their permanent collection, to be used for whatever scholarly or educational purposes, including the right to duplicate, and distribute the recordings and/or transcription to any other libraries and educational institution. I grant Carridder M. Jones, all literary property rights, including transcription and publication rights to this material as an unrestricted gift.

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Interview with Ann S. Reynolds - Re. Lincoln Institute - May 1, 2001 - By
Carridder M. Jones

My Name is Ann Spencer Reynolds. I am 59 years old today, May 1, 2001. I'm a native of Lagrange and Oldham County, Kentucky. My mother was Mary Thompson Coleman Reynolds, a native of Harrodsburg, Kentucky. My father was Richard Spencer Reynolds, a native of Lagrange, Kentucky.

I went to Lincoln Institute of Kentucky, Lincoln Ridge, Kentucky. I stayed in a dormitory on the campus for four years. Before Lincoln Institute, I went to grade school in Lagrange. It was called Lagrange Training School. It was one of those training schools that we have all over the state and it was a Rosenwald School. They all had the tall, high painted windows across the front of the schools.

When I first started school in the first grade...lets back up. My mother used to teach in Lagrange before she married my father. And during that time period, there was two years of high school in Lagrange. The professor..two of the professors of the high school portion were good friends of my father. One was Melvin Strong. He and my father were like brothers. Melvin was the principal at Dunbar and Campbelsville, Kentucky for years. As a matter of Fact, Mr. Strong saw me the day I was born, before my father did. So Melvin was in Lagrange as the principal of Lagrange Training school. So I was born in 41, so it was probably a couple of years prior to that and a couple of years after that.

They had the two years of high school within Lagrange Training School. They had one through four in one room and five through eight in another room. Then you had the two years of high school in another room portion. That two years of high school was still going on when I went into the first grade. So my mother didn't return to teaching until I was in the third grade. But anyway, during that time period, if you went to Lincoln Institute, you had to stay on the campus. Or, you had to come to Louisville Central on the Interurban and a few people did that during that time period.

Later on, maybe by the time..I'm guessing, Because I know when I got into the fifth or sixth grade, the high school portion had ended. So, it probably ended, maybe when I went into the third grade. I really don't remembering it being there when my mother went back to teaching there.

My father was an electrician for General Electric. He was a Simmonite... Simmons University. My mother was Kentucky State College. There were two

children in our family. I have a younger brother, Richard. He's three years younger than I. He lives in Louisville. Going back to Lincoln Institute, when the County finally provided transportation to Lincoln, there were like tenant farmers out on Highway 42, Goshen Prospect Area, which part of those little towns are now part of Jefferson County. But, originally, all of Prospect and Goshen were in Oldham County.

The School bus would go out on Highway 42. It was just about five miles from the grade school but then they would have to go up and down 42 to get different farms. It brought those grade school children and the high school children to Lagrange. They would drop the grade school children off at Lagrange Training School. Then, a block from my house, which was a couple of blocks from my house. Maybe three or four blocks, they would pick up the high school students that lived right there in Lagrange. We're starting this journey, we have a long ways to go.

I just happen to think, there were children that lived in Pendleton, Kentucky which is about six to seven miles from Lagrange, right over the line in Henry County. Those children went to Lincoln Institute also. So a bus had to get those children and bring them to Lagrange. The same bus, after it dropped off the grade school kids and had picked up all of the high school students within the Lagrange area, motored on to Crestwood, Kentucky, out Brownsboro Road to Brownsboro, Kentucky. Picked up those high school students, including the grade school students, on through Pee Wee Valley, Kentucky, picking up high school students for Lincoln and grade school children. Would drop the grade school children off, you talking about bussing... Would drop the grade school children that lived in that end of the county. Would drop them off at the Pee Wee Valley Colored Grade School. Which I found out some years later, going through the files of the Oldham County School System, which I found probably about twenty years ago, stuck back up in somewhere where they keep our dusty records which haven't been touched in Lord knows how long. I found out that it wasn't until the mid 1950s that the Oldham County School System took over the Pewee Valley School System. It's just about ten miles between Pewee and Lagrange. Lagrange is the County seat. Goshen, Prospect, Pewee Valley, Crestwood, all of those are in Oldham County.

I found out that First Baptist Church, Pewee Valley, furnished their own teachers and they had been doing it for years. The black school, just in Pee Wee Valley, not the one in Lagrange, but the one in Pewee Valley. My grandfather...well, we'll go up to Sparta, Kentucky, Park Ridge. Like that's 42 area going towards Carrolton, and Warsaw and those areas. He preached in a place

called Park Ridge and it's near Sparta, Kentucky. So, he preached at Park Ridge Baptist Church. Then he came to Lagrange and he preached in Lagrange. He had a church built there. Not the first church but one of the churches, just prior to the present facilities that we have now. My grandfather was Reverend Richard Reynolds and my grandmother's name was Emma.

When he went to Pewee valley... OK, I'm on the school subject. So that church, First Baptist Church in Pewee Valley, furnished their own teachers and paid their teachers up until the early or mid fifties. They had two teachers, one for each of the two rooms. I remember one of the schools was next door to the church in Pewee Valley. The old church is still standing where my grandfather preached there. In the back of the church is a small cemetery where two infants passed during his pastorate there. Just recently, First Baptist of Pewee bought a big hunk of property that goes from where the church sets down to the road where they built a concrete block grade school. About seven or eight years ago, I'm guessing off the top of my head, Pewee built a new church right next door to the old church.

Anyway, the bus from Lincoln Institute...going to Lincoln Institute, when we got to the Pewee Valley area, we went to Brownsboro, KY which is right outside of Crestwood. Back to Crestwood, picked up the kids from Crestwood, picked up the kids from Pee Wee Valley that didn't live near the black grade school. Plus the grade school kids. We dropped the grade school off at the black grade school in Pewee Valley. The Grade school was just called, Pewee Valley Colored School.

Then, on our way to Lincoln Institute. I mean, we're not bussed across town, we're not bussed to another town in the county, we're bussed out of the county. Lincoln Institute of Kentucky, Lincoln Ridge, Kentucky. I get disturbed when I see not the whole name in print. When I just see Lincoln Institute. Now for some reason they have been putting the word 'the' in front of it. Like, The Lincoln Institute. It was originally, Lincoln Institute of Kentucky, Lincoln Ridge, Kentucky. We were our own town. Not Simpsonville, Kentucky, not Shelbyville, Kentucky. Back up, we're going from Oldham County, to Shelby County to high school.

We had our own post office in the school. The President's wife, Dr. Whitney Maurice Young, Sr's wife, Mrs. Laura Young was the first black Post Mistress in the United States. So when the train came by, which went right between Highway 60 and the campus, about half way was the rail road tracks. We had our little building out there where the mail was thrown off and on the train as it went through. The train would stop sometime but it wasn't necessary to throw mail off and on, just slow down a little bit.

Anyway, after we left Pewee Valley, then it was on to Lincoln Institute.

Have you heard of Long Run, Kentucky? From Long Run to Highway 60 and up 60 to Lincoln Institute, just before you got to Simpsonville, Kentucky. I'd have to think about the mileage we traveled but it would take a good two hours. I'd have to stop and figure that out. I can't compare it with today's traveling from point A to point B. Which you could do fairly easily. You were traveling country roads you weren't on the expressways. You had to go down little lanes and up through hills and valleys and sink holes and every thing else. Most of our people lived back...I can remember some roads like on Rolling Pen Road now in Pewee Valley. Those sink holes were still there not too many years ago. By the time the school bus stops here and stops there, lets off here and lets off there, it took from 6...it left a block from our house at 6:00 in the morning for us to get to Lincoln for 8:00 class.

OK, Griffeytown and Berrytown was another bus. I didn't ride the bus to Lincoln Institute, I stayed on the campus. But, if I needed to come home for the weekend and my parents usually came to pick me up. If they didn't I always had that option to jump on the bus and go home on Friday and jump on the bus on Monday morning and come back.

So that was the bus from Oldham County, now let's go to Jefferson County. Eastern Jefferson County, it was the same thing before buses were provided. If you went to Lincoln Institute, you had to live on the campus. If you lived like in Berrytown, which is a part of Anchorage, Kentucky, and Griffytown which is part of Middletown, Kentucky. These little hamlets were formed because some of the inhabitants worked for families that lived in Anchorage and Middletown. Ok, so Jefferson County, Kentucky provided a bus for those children. So they lived in Griffytown, which would be the farthest from Lincoln, which is just a couple of miles from Berrytown. I would pick up children in Berrytown, Children in Griffytown, pick up the children in Berrytown and then it would come up Highway 60 because Highway 60 runs through Middletown, Kentucky and go up Highway 60 to Lincoln Institute. Sometime I would catch that bus because I had good friends that lived in Berrytown. And when I went home with them on weekends, I would ride that bus.

Harrods Creek, Goshen, Skylight, that's Oldham County. Now, we're going to go to some more buses. OK, we're going to go to Shelbyville, we're going to go to Finchville, Mount Clair, Which is just a little hamlet right next door to Lincoln Institute. So, it was at least two busses full of high school students that came from Shelby County. Could have been three at one time. Because like, before they would pick up the kids in Shelbyville, they would pick up the kids like in Finchville and the other little towns around the county seat of Shelbyville. Then they would

pick up the kids in Simpsonville, coming down 60, and the kids in Mount Clair. Then into the blue gate, up to Lincoln Institute. We called it the blue gate because kids could be so sad that just went home on Christmas and they had to get off the Greyhound bus and walk from 60 all the way up to the campus.

How many children went to school there depends on what year you're talking about. When I was there, I'd say, approximately...I'm guessing off the top of my head, it's been a while since 1959. I didn't realize it till today. I'd say, three to four hundred or more. There was an average about...close to fifty, fifty. Plus, Lincoln Institute also had students from out of state, from foreign countries and a couple of white students. I wish every black child could have attended a Lincoln Institute because it was like one big happy family. As a matter of fact, we're having our re-union this year. We have it every three year, so all of the former students, all faculty and staff, the first weekend in August. It starts on Friday, we've been taking the bell up for years. They're going on one of those gambling boats or something like that this year. That's not my cup of tea. Anyway, on Saturday morning, we will either drive or take a bus and go from the Hyatt Regency or the Galt House, wherever the headquarters is and go on the campus and have a ...which is now the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Job Corps Center.

In the deed for the school, it always has to be educational institution. I'll have to go back where Lincoln came out of Berea College. My mother's father went to Berea. I have a nephew at Berea now. My mother's father and mother was Thomas Maurice Coleman and Mary Eliza Utley Coleman. John Fee, the founder of Berea, anyway, Berea College is another whole story in itself. Blacks and whites went to school together prior to the day law. That was around 1908-1909, around in there. It might be a couple of years sooner. I'm doing all of this off the top of my head so any research or writing down things that I remember correctly. Anyway, somebody in that time period decided it wasn't correct for black children and white children to go to school together, ok. So that ended that and black children were not able to go to Berea any longer. So that's when Lincoln Institute of Kentucky was founded.

At first, they looked at land in Eastern Jefferson County, but the white residents in Eastern Jefferson County didn't want a black school in their neighborhood. So, we went further up Highway 60 and found about, I'm still guessing. I'll have to go back and get definite things. I'd say about 300 acres or 400 in eastern Shelby County. Actually residents in Shelby County didn't want us there either but the buildings are there. So that's when Lincoln Institute was formed and it's either 1909 or 1911. The land was bought along with Berea and the state of

Kentucky. So the administration building is named after Berea. It's Berea Hall. You can see it from Highway 60. You can also see it from I-64.

During the years I was there, Dr. Whitney Maurice Young, Sr. was the president. Whitney Jr. was born on the campus. Mrs. Kathleen McClain Carroll was the principal, she's still living. Her husband just passed last year, Mr. Joseph Carroll from Warsaw, Kentucky, who was the biology teacher. As a matter of fact, they both went to Kentucky State and met on the campus of Lincoln when they both went there to teach. Eleanor, Whitney Jr.'s sister was the librarian when I went to Lincoln. Her sister, Anita was in Chicago during that time period. She's still there. The family pretty much ran the Institution. The father was the President, the mother was the postmistress and Eleanor at that time was the librarian. It was just like a big happy family and the Young family cared for each student just like he or she was their child. And, Lincolmites are still close knit. Even today we're 60 some years old plus now, but there's that little old ...the kids who rode the school bus, we called them the day students and we were the dorm students. And today some of those students will still say or think that the faculty or staff cared more about the dormitory students than they did the day students. But they didn't, it was just the same. The only difference is they were around us twenty-four hours a day and got to know us better.

Coming from Lagrange, let's stop off at Berrytown first because Berrytown is right off Lagrange Road. I guess the most important thing about Berrytown is, my father joined First Baptist Church of Anchorage, Kentucky which is the most appropriate name. One of his college friends from Simmons University was Aulie Offutt who was pasturing there when I was in grade school or early high school. The Offutts were a very prominent family out of Louisville. We would go to church there occasionally. Something else, when we were small, we would go riding on Sunday afternoon. We would always ride to Anchorage and visit my parent's friends. I can remember sitting on the front porches in swings and watching what few cars went by. During that time our car was a...I don't remember the year, maybe a 1952, whatever year it was, it was a brand new car, the Studebaker that looked like an airplane. We got one of those whatever year that car came out. And in 1956 when Studebaker put out the sports car, we had a Studebaker sports car in 1956 the year they came out. Boy you couldn't touch me with a ten foot pole.

Yes, I guess my family was prominent. When I went to Lincoln Institute, that's when I really got to know all of the kids from Berrytown and Griffytown. Berrytown school is still standing. They were talking about tearing it down but I hope they didn't. The grade school in Berrytown is right across the road from the

First Baptist Church of Anchorage. It had a lot of windows too. I can remember in high school, they didn't have any street lights. You couldn't even see the front of your hand going out like, Berrytown Road. Going up Hiwatha Road and back up behind the grade school there. Berrytown Road ran between Lagrange Road and English Station Road. There were black families on English Station Road from like the rail road crossing near the rock quarry that went on around to Lagrange Road. I can name some families like the Schafers. From I can recall and what has been told to me in the past, Mr. Berry worked for a family in Anchorage. This was back in the 1800's. I don't know the family's name that he worked for. Anyway, it is my understanding that this person gave Mr. Berry some land which evolved into Berrytown.

Time passes so fast at least, I'd say, five years ago, maybe more, the original Berry house was still standing and the descendants who owned the property weren't agreeable to selling it so it could be preserved by anyone. So, it was torn down. It was a two story white framed house with a porch, some outhouses in the back, even up till, I'd say, the middle sixties and it actually...there was a house across the street from First Baptist Anchorage Then there was the school, then there was the lane that went up to Hiawatha Avenue where the Jones family lived and other families. Then the next house would have been the Berry house on the right hand side going down Berrytown Road, between Lagrange Road and English Station Road.

There were a couple of families by the name of Johnson. There was a Johnson family on Berrytown Road. As you went to the end of Berrytown Road and made a right on English Station Road, my parents had some good friends. Dr. Johnson, I can't think of his first name, was a dentist here in Louisville and his wife, we called her Cathy, she was a registered nurse at Central State Hospital for years. Going the opposite direction on English Station Road, there were some good friends of ours. They met when my parents lived in California. Brooks, Frank and Irene Brooks. Their children Ferman and Ethel Mae. We were good friends with them because they had already met before I was born. Before they moved back to Kentucky. Going on around English Station Road, there's the Hayden family. The children were Jeffrey, Emma Jean, Kenneth, Lillian and Charlene. Lillian and I were good friends at Lincoln Institute and I used to go and stay with Lillian on weekends. That's how I got really familiar with Berrytown When I was in high school. During that time period, we were teenagers and you could care less about anything like history. There is a lady that wrote a brief history of Berrytown. This was about ten years ago. That's sketchy. I saw that and it doesn't reveal too much. Jefferson County Archives 810 Barrett Avenue. They used to have something out

there. It probably is still there and more in depth than that little booklet that was made eight or ten years ago.

Griffytown, Hobbs Chapel, if you're going down Lagrange road, past Berrytown you go on down to Harrods Creek Road and make a left there and make a right Anchorage School. As you go down that road that's between Lagrange Road and Highway 60 is Harrods Creek road. A short distance from the Anchorage white grade school is Hobbs Chapel. Which is an AME Church that sits up there. I don't know if it is still open or not because the congregation has dwindled so in the last couple of years or so. Anyway, after you pass Hobbs Chapel, you're in Griffytown. I think the church was named after Mr. Hobbs who probably gave them the land.

After you pass Hobbs Chapel, I can't remember the Baptist church, it escapes me right now. But it's still in existence, it's on the right hand side of the road. It's pretty old but not as old as Hobbs Chapel. I don't know the age but I just know that Hobbs Chapel has been around for a long, long, long time. As a matter of fact, a friend of mine, I think his name is Cole, Gordon Cole's grandfather, I haven't seen him in a little while. But his grandfather was still living a couple of years ago. He was up in his late 90's. He used to pastor at Hobbs Chapel sometime back.

There was a portion of Griffytown they called the 'baby farm'. That was because they said so many residents in this area had so many babies that they called it the baby farm. Anyway, I went to Lincoln Institute with those children too. Oh, I know something else. Berrytown and Griffytown each had their own little joints. You know we've got the schools, the churches and the joints. We just didn't have liquor stores on the corners in those days. The one in Berrytown was on Lagrange road. It was owned by some brothers by the name of Green. It was called Green's. So when I was old enough to go into Green's, it would be like, you know your daddy don't want you in here.

Anyway, those were good times, safe times back in those days. In Griffytown, it was a place called Village Inn and it was owned by a lady named Mrs. Clair who was also a friend of my parents. But Mrs. Clair's place, on one side you could buy ice cream, soft drinks and candy for the kids. There were some tables and chairs. The other side was for the grown folks and it was like a juke box and you could buy beer on that side. I don't know if there was a juke box for the kids. There probably was on the children side. Griffeytown wasn't too far from Rosedale. It was on Highway 60. That was another little joint and it leaned like this but they had live bands and you could hear them way before you got there. There was a guitarist from Louisville and he has been in Los Angeles a long time. I think somebody told me he was a minister now. But his name was Eggie Porter and

he played the guitar and it seems like you could hear that guitar way down Highway 60 before you got there. The man that owned it was Billy Limp. People from Louisville used to come up there just to get the chicken sandwiches because they were so good, that his wife fixed. Then when you left Billy Limp's you'd go through Moser Road to go to Jefferson Town. There was a joint over there called Norris' or Corn Field Inn. People would make the round of the different joints on the weekend. Actually, they would come from Shelby County, Henry County and Oldham County. Because once you got into Berrytown and Griffeytown, you were in Jefferson County. And mostly, Oldham County is still dry and Henry County is wet but it was probably dry during that time period too. I think Shelby County was wet.

Children from Henry County which is across the line from Oldham County, going towards Cincinnati, Oldham County, Henry County, Trimble County, Carroll County, on until you get near Cincinnati, the Newport, Covington area. After those kids were old enough. Some of them were not old enough but you know how we did things when we weren't old enough but when they got a certain age after they finished school or before they finished school, would go to these places. Like they would come down from Henry County, Oldham County and Shelby County to go to Greens and to the Village Inn and to Billy Lynch's, Rosedale and to Norris' Corn Field Inn.

They would pile into cars as long as you knew somebody lived past whatever county or town you were coming out of, would pile into cars and like, drop me off in Oldham County, Henry County or Shelby County. Those were the good old days and the good Lord was watching over us. I'm guessing and say maybe two or three hundred people lived in each little hamlet of Griffytown and Berrytown. When you start counting the parents, siblings, grand parents and grand kids. Some families were large. The Norris family lived near...back on the baby farm area we had the Thornton's, the Dow's... Jimmy Dow, Dede Dow and I were in the same class. Bobby Dow, Jimmy Dow and there were the Jones' that lived in Griffytown. Oh yes there was a teacher by the name of Jones. They were friends of my parents and her sister and I were good friends. Sister's name is Lydia Jones Johnson. That was the other Johnson family out on Berrytown Road. I didn't know until a couple of years ago when she passed that she was a sister to Sina B. Harris from Louisville who was one of my camp counselors at Camp Sky High at Otter Creek Park when I was a little girl She taught at Berrytown.

My father's first cousin's wife taught for a period at Griffytown. Her name was Lottie Long. And she later went to Newburg and taught. Before schools were

integrated, we didn't know any different. We didn't have anything to compare it with. I thought it was great myself and to a certain extent I wish some segment of our society was still segregated. We've lost so much, to be able to drink a coke at a fountain with a little white girl and a little white boy. We lost our neighborhoods, we lost the close knit even family relationships, not counting neighbors and the whole community. We lost our social identity, really. And in the larger cities, they still have a few now but like the debutante balls and the cotillions and the Greeks this, women had their own clubs and the men had their clubs and they'd have the big formal dances in the winter. All of that's gone because we were scattered, especially in cities like Louisville. When they destroyed Walnut Street, they just wiped out the black community period. That was during Urban Renewal and replaced it with places like Village West.

When they went down through Walnut Street, from sixth Street to probably eighteenth Street or somewhere in there. You not only taking out homes, you took out lawyers, you took out physicians, dentists and barber shops, insurance companies, picture shows and restaurants and dry cleaners and whatever you needed. We didn't have to go on fourth Street for anything. These people had to go and find another place for that establishment and some of them never did start up another business. So you know they couldn't find a big enough plot for everybody to go to and start another Walnut Street. In this time of year, everybody is all up to do about the Derby.

Last night a young man from Smoke Town, Steven Crump, he was the speaker for the Black Achievers back in February, 2001. He spoke at the main branch library last night and he's doing a documentary called, Forgotten at the Finish Line. We have three black jockeys that are in Louisville today. Two of them were there last night, Jillian St. James who was racing last year was at Turfway last night so he wasn't able to be here. But even last year and this year, I heard him on television yesterday and he don't have the slightest idea about black jockeys. No, I never heard of it. It's probably because it's been ignored and been passed over. Then if you're not a Kentuckian, you don't know about some of these things. He was just amazed to find out that one of the black jockeys live right here in Louisville. James Long is one black jockey that was there last night. Steve Crump was out to the track on the back side. What I read about his past was that he grew up going to the track with his family. It would be a big day and his mother and grandmother would fry chicken the night before and the kids couldn't touch it until the next day when they got to the park, to the track. So, he had that background as a child. The documentary will be tonight on KET at 10:00.

The Interurban had to come through, before it got to Lagrange, it had to stop in Anchorage and Pewee Valley and Lagrange and back. So those people...a lot of kids in Oldham and Eastern Jefferson County and Shelby County, in the earlier days, if your parents couldn't afford to pay for you to stay on campus at the Lincoln Institute, your education was finished. It wasn't necessary only prominent families whose kids went there because what happened was, OK, in Campbellsville, Kentucky, you had the Dunbar, you had Epps in Hopkinsville, you had a high school in Paducah but those counties that didn't have a high school, the county would pay your tuition and the family would pay the room and the board and the books. So, that's how some of the kids in the rural areas got to go to Lincoln. I'd say the fees were a couple of hundred dollars a year, give or take. It wasn't much, not a huge amount but it might have been out of reach for some families. You had families that couldn't afford that. I'm just guessing off the top of my head because I hadn't thought about these things in a long time.

I have a catalogue from Kentucky State from 1919. Students who wanted to go on to college after they left Lincoln Institute, usually went to one of our predominantly black colleges. From Kentucky State to Morgan State, Fisk, Atlanta Clark, Florida A&M, Spellman, Morehouse, Howard. I went on to Kentucky State because I couldn't make up my mind on where I wanted to go to school. Because it was something special about Clark, Something special about Fisk and Spellman and Florida A&M. I couldn't make up my mind until it was too late to be accepted so my father said, 'well you can always go up the road', and my momma just grinned because that was her Alma Mater, so that's how I ended up at Kentucky State.

It was nice because I went to Kentucky State with a lot of the same kids I went to Lincoln Institute with. So now it's like, when we run into each other and we haven't seen each other in years, it's like, did we go to Lincoln together, did we go Kentucky State together or was it both. I started out majoring in English and minoring in French and I switched to Sociology and Physiology. That's basically what I'm doing now.

I was trying to think of some more family names in Griffytown. The Huggins, the Weatherby's...this is Griffytown. The James Taylor subdivision in Harrods Creek, Jim Taylor, Old man James Taylor and his wife were friends of my parents. Talking about riding on Sunday afternoons, that's another place we used to go is out to Harrods Creek to see them. That was before they had anything called a subdivision. That's when they were living up in the "neck" that's right on the river. Then we had some more friends right there at Harrods Creek Road and 42 called Mrs. Ackes. That was a restaurant that had real good fried chicken. It was a white

building trimmed in red. It's still there. She had all of these white painted chairs and tables all out in the yard with a white fence around it and just before you got to her place, I don't remember the family but I remember when we used to go to visit, right near the road, which would have been River Road, as it runs into 42, there was an archway at the end of the walk full of roses with little benches on each side of the walk. My brother and I used to sit there and watch the cars go up and down River Road.

Then, down the road from Mrs. Ackes,, a club just closed out there recently. It was called Retired Sportsman or something like that. But years before that, it was something else and they used to have baseball games back there. That's something else we used to do a lot. All of these towns had baseball teams and they used to play each other. In Lagrange, the baseball diamond was on a farm of a black family on Jericho Road, called the Thomases. People from the surrounding areas like Eminence and Griffytown, Shelbyville would play baseball in the summertime, so that was always something biggie to do. Jericho Road starts in Lagrange, right as you cross the rail road track. It goes right out of Oldham County and goes on up to a little town called Jericho. Cause the Beard family lived there. Mrs. Beard was grandmother's niece's child.

There's no church. As a matter of fact, a white church has been built just here recently just in steps of Anthony's paternal Grandmother. Part of this property, she had been paying taxes on it for years. She thought it was hers. She had been paying on a large lot and come to find out, well part of this lot that was closer to her home, I don't know the exact footage.

I think my life has been pretty good. You have your ups and downs but on a whole it's been good but I still don't know what I want to do when I grow up.

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

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Interview with Sarah Jones - Berrytown - September 11, 2001 - By Carridder M. Jones

My Name is Sarah Francis Jones. I'm 86 and I was born in 1914. My Mother and father were Nelly Lilly and George Lilly. My Grandparents were Richard Lilly and Mary Lilly. My other grandparents were Charlotte Payne and Frank Payne.

I was raised in Berrytown, from Anchorage. They had property there. My grandfather built the home. He was 98, I think when he died. He lived there until he died. I don't remember him every talking about slavery. I don't know too much about the history of Berrytown. I think he bought from a family of Halls. It was the Berries, the Halls and my grandfather Lilly. His property was off of Lagrange road. Between Lagrange road...course they were dirt roads then. We came in from Lagrange road, I don't know when they put that other road in. Then, it was English Station Road. I can't recognize it when I go out there.

I was a dumb kid I guess, I don't remember my first day at school. I had a real good life growing up. We went to school, we went to our neighbor. I guess you would call it now, from our house to her house. We were about the same age, the Schaefer and we were grown up together. Of course she had children and I didn't. That's when we went our different ways. When I was nine I joined the First Baptist Church in Berrytown, Reverend Boyne.

Professor Bush was my teacher and we didn't like him because he was a man I guess. See, everybody was in the same room then. It was a one room school house, Forest School. We'd get to something that he didn't know and he'd say, well, we'll come back to that. He was the only teacher I had there, as I can remember. He didn't live in Berrytown, I guess he lived in Louisville. When I left Forest School, I went to Jackson Junior High, Mezeek I think they call it now. It was brand new. It was two of us in the eighth grade and we graduated from the eighth grade. Naomi Schaefer, the one I was telling you about and me. Two of us and I was the Valedictorian. I was a dumb kid. There was only two of us.

Then I went to Central. I went there for three years but I didn't finish. I liked it. The teachers were all OK, course all of them are dead now. Stella Shipley. Clark, I can see them but I can't think of the names. When we were at Forest School, we didn't know nothing about no lunch. We took our lunch. We'd take peanut butter, we didn't have no lunch room back then. I wasn't all that close, we

walked to School. I'll say, from our house to school, I would say from here (4th and Ormsby) to Market Street. Some come further than that. Now, these children right next door can't walk

There were two children in my family. My sister (Mary Ester Ashby) and I. Out of five children, only one of them, my daddy, had children. It was just two of us. We played. We were the only children. Of course the aunts and uncles showered us with gifts. We had all kinds of stuff. Then my mother worked at a boarding house and we had all kinds of toys and clothes. As I said, I don't remember being hungry. That's what frightens me because I imagine before I leave here I will be. I really had a good childhood as I said. It concerns me that I was brought up like that. You know they didn't talk in front of children then. I never listened, you are not even in the same room, you're over here. All right, we had a kitchen, we had a dining room and my grandmother fed the insurance men on Monday, cooked lunch for them There were about two or three insurance men. We had an upstairs. We had a back stairs and a front stairs. In the parlor, we didn't get in there until I had to practice. The day I had to practice, they'd make a fire and I'd practice and on Sunday. We had a front porch and a back porch. It was just four of us, my grand mother grandfather, my sister and I, unless we had company.

We lived with our grandmother and grandfather. My mother and father worked. They stayed on the place where they worked. Momma worked at a boarding house and they had all of these little houses for the help. I didn't have, I can't remember any bad days. My father worked at the, Hyde and Teller, I think. Mom and dad were close and on weekend they'd come and she'd come through the week. We had prayer meeting on Wednesday night at church and she'd come, and on Sunday. Nobody taught me how to cook. You stayed out of that kitchen. You didn't come in the kitchen. I don't remember peeling potatoes or anything. They just wouldn't let you in the kitchen. My grandmother did all of that. I can see that stove now of cooking beans, cabbage, fried chicken, aww. My aunts worked domestic and they all could cook.

At Christmas time they would make fruit cake and marble cake. One of my aunts, on my birthdays, she'd always make me a marble cake. I was thinking about that the other day and you don't see any marble cake now. I liked that, marble cake. I used to cook and make all of that stuff but now you can get it in a box, I guess like the rest of them. I've made pound cakes, that was my favorite. I made a date nut cake. That's the reason I'm in the shape now. I love sweets.

I didn't have children and my sister didn't have children. We didn't have any children. I had lots of boyfriends but my main one was Willie Lee Woods. I didn't

marry him. He went some other way and I went my way. Got out of school you know. I don't really know why I ever married. I guess my first husband, Harry Phillips, he was from Lychfield. He was out of a big family. They were a close family and they had a farm. They grew everything but had mostly cattle. Cows, cows.

Weekends in Berrytown, we didn't have nothing. Everybody had whatever they were having at home. They had some nightclubs, down in the hall, UBF Hall. That's where they had the dances. Oh, I forgot about that and the joints. I didn't go to the dances. We couldn't go to no dances, noo. We thought they were too rough, they'd fight. Oh, no, no, no. Before I moved here I lived next door to a joint. It was called, Village Inn, I think. Then we had Rosedale down there. I just never did stop, never did.

We had a garden and my grandmother grew everything. When I go to the grocery and look at all of this stuff so high and everything. And the fruit, we had all kinds of fruit trees, right there on the property. Pears, apples, cherries, plums and pears, oh my goodness, in the fall. I don't see them, I don't see them in the stores. We canned a whole lot. That's what I said, I don't know anything about hard times being hungry. I don't know, uh huh. I don't know how much land my grandfather had. We had hogs, chickens, cow, horse. I never did ride the horse because I was always afraid. I never could ride a bicycle. My sister would ride that bicycle to keep from helping to was the dishes. I had to was dishes. She rode the horse but I never did. I was a dumb kid.

I didn't know Mr. Berry, he had been gone a long time. His family, his daughter married a Roan but they are all gone. When the children passed, they'd give them a plot right next to them. Just like my aunt, they went to Chicago for better jobs. Every body'd come home for Christmas. They'd come on the train. We'd look out the door, they'd be coming down the lane. Train would stop out there and it always snowed on Christmas. I didn't go out and play in the snow. I tell you I was a dumb kid. My sister, she would do all of those things. I don't know why, but my grandmother thought I couldn't do all of those things because I was the baby. I hadn't been sick or anything. She just babied me. There was just three years in our age.

My grandmother was real good, she was a grandmother. Nobody could do us any wrong and she hugged us a lot. We were a loving family. My daddy was the only one that had children, we were the only grandchildren so everybody spoiled us. Then the people in the community, they didn't have children, like the Berries, they'd shower you at Christmas time with presents. They'd give us books. I'm hooked on

books. Don't think that I'm taking the Smithsonian. Every body knows that I like books and they bring me their books. Those books back then started me off. I love to read. I'd be sitting somewhere reading, as my sister got older, at sixteen I was thirteen. They don't have anything to do with you at that age. She'd be off with her friends. It was kind of amusing because after she passed, her friends took me on and they just bossed me around just like she did. We had so many friends. We were close. My sister passed in 68 and that was the last of my family. That was the last of my family. My father was 97 when he died. He died in 67 and my sister was 54, I bet. She was a diabetic and she didn't take care of herself. My mother passed in 54. So, that was the last of my family but I have lots of friends.

We sold the land that our grandparents had, my sister and I. My mother owned this place in Griffeytown. I had that and my sister sold the other place. She had built a new house on the place and sold the place off in lots. I lived in my mother's house in Griffeytown, that's where I moved from. I liked Griffeytown because it was close to Middletown and the buses. In Berrytown, we didn't have any buses. You had to have transportation in Berrytown. I used to ride the Interurban, I guess we payed a quarter or fifty cents. We had a streetcar, then we had the bus. We'd come to Louisville. There was an Interurban station at Liberty, third and Liberty. We'd go to fourth Street and shop, we had a big time.

We'd go to Bycks, Selmans, Levi's there were plenty of stores, I didn't have any trouble. It was before all of this stuff come up, it was before that. There were not any black owned shops down there. We'd come to town all of the time, we loved to shop, Will Sales. All of them, you could go in and try on and Bycks was a big store. Bycks, when you went in there, I've got a couple of things here that I'm still wearing from Bycks. There was a big hat store up there.

I didn't know any whites growing up. We had white friends. My Grandfather's. As I said, they didn't talk like the grownups do to children and let young people listen, you know. We were grown and I never heard him say anything about slavery. No complaints, you go to work and you do what you are asked to do. That's your job. I started to work, I guess when I was eighteen. I sat with children, babysitters and nannies they call them. I have taken care of babies. At first, I said, I can't do that, I can't do it. She said yes you can. All of those little cute things and the boys, I had more picking in my face and he would laugh. That child would laugh, oh my goodness. One of them committed suicide, father committed suicide. One of them is a doctor, Hennings. I didn't work for them too long. They all drank. You'd call them to supper and that's when they'd start drinking. There you have supper and they start drinking. You've got to serve 'em. I'd hate for them to have

asparagus because that big thing you had to cook it in then on the side, there's that little thing you put the dressing in ... When they had company it was finger bowls, oh boy. They used all of the silverware. You had help when they had company. This here asparagus, lamb and going to have mash potatoes and gravy. Everything's got to be cleaned off before you serve the dessert. Everything off that table before you served dessert. Then, they might go into the living room to have coffee or they might sit at the table.

Oh mercy. This woman, that alcoholic woman, she'd sit there at that table with that drink, oh ... Then the last one I had, she had arthritis so bad. See I just went there and cleaned, three days. Of course at Silas ... that was a couple, that was a good job and we're still friends. I cleaned and did the laundry. She did live on Tophill Road when I first started working for her. Then they moved to Dartmon parks. For twenty one years, we'd go to Huber's, ... Apple butter and biscuits, she'd eat a basket and I'd eat a basket and get the apples. For 21 years we did that. When I was 70, she had a birthday party for me out to the athletic club. We've been friends, I mean friends. I go to Crescent Hill three times a week. I have my own transportation but it only cost me three dollars a round trip. I have a TARK three service and they pick me up. I don't know what I would do without them.

Growing up, we didn't have any entertainment. These young people complain about no places to go but we had fun amongst ourselves, you know. Most of my family are buried in the cemetery in Berrytown, that's where they all are, out there. We contribute every year to it. I haven't been out there, I guess a good three years since I've been able to get out there. The neighbor that lives next to the cemetery, we would keep in touch with each other on whether they are taking care of it. And she'd say it's in good shape. Marilou Booker is one of the older members in the community. She was a Hall. Lavern Davis is a younger person. Marilou lives on Berrytown Road, two story. That's the original house. I don't know when it was built. She was there before the Lilly's. The Lilly family, that's my family and she was there before the Lilly's. I think my grandfather bought from them, the Halls.

My grandfather built his house. I don't think they were well to do. We worked, they all worked. But I don't remember my grandfather working. Just taking care of the property. You know a long time ago, the insurance men walked out in the country. They'd come to the house and collect. My grandmother would cook lunch for them on Monday's. It was that ten or fifteen cent insurance you paid. It was Kentucky Central. They had a building there in Anchorage years ago.

We had to wash dishes and my sister would fuss all the time about having to

wash dishes. My sister was so devilish. You know those stoves that had the warmers up on top? She'd stick those dirty dishes in there. MY grandmother would have a fit when she found them. I'd be scared to do that but she'd get by with that. It was a long time ago. I took piano lessons from the organist at our church. I'd go to her house. I played for Kenwood Baptist Church for fourteen years. I played the organ down in the chapel. My favorite hymn was, Jesus Paid It All, God So Loved the World, and Just As I Am ... I loved that. There were so many of them. I wanted to play Jazz, so you know I couldn't have it. You remember Herbert Cook? I'd taken Organ lessons from him. Where we got the organ, they'd give you lessons. I think Herbie Cook ... he was the instructor. You know he was good. But now my hands are so ... people used to say you are a musician or a thief when you've got them long fingers. But they are so stiff now. I tried to play the piano down in the lobby but I can't. You didn't know I had a hidden talent did you.

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**Interview with Diana L. Dow 500 Malcolm Avenue, Griffeytown, Kentucky
40223 - November 11, 2000 - By Carridder M. Jones**

My name is Diana Linette Dow, I'm fifty years old and I was born April 7, 1950. My mother's name is Cleoda Virginia Hall and my father's name, Robert Romanza Dow. My grandmother's name was Mary Ella Humble Ferguson and her husband was Howard Ferguson. My father's mother's name was America May Etta Dickerson and my grandfather's name was Robert Dow. My father was born February 2, 1912 and my mother was born October 16, 1918. I do not know my grandparent's birth dates.

In my research of family history, I was told that the Dows were always here. Obviously, we believe that they came from the plantation in Middletown. We can't be sure that was the original plantation but I have discovered that there was a Dow plantation owner named in Middletown and that he did have slaves. I do believe my family took his name. The original name for the plantation in Middletown on the Platt Map is D-o-w, which is the same spelling of my name. But, my name has evolved over the years and we also have the spelling Dowell and some have the name spelled Dowe. We do claim all three of those names. They are all my family names.

What it is, is a Platt map of plantations for the original settlers of Middletown. It's one of the original Platt Maps of Middletown. Middletown has all different kind of names that have the same on these Platt Maps of these plantation owners, that have a lot of names as the same people that live in Griffeytown. A lot of the Bullets like from the Oxmore area they were here. The Dickerson's and a lot of those names were on those maps are the same name of the people who lived in Griffeytown. It was quite interesting.

After the slaves became free, research from word of mouth history, the story goes that one of the originals settlers from Middletown was Minor White sold a log cabin to a free man named Dan Griffith. When the slaves were free, they had to have a place to set up. Griffeytown was set up by some developers in Middletown for their ex-slaves to locate so they would be accessible to come back to do domestic work for them in Middletown. Dan Griffith bought this log cabin from Minor White in Middletown and moved it here on Old Harrods Creek Road. That was the first settler. After he set up, they plotted the land. This section I live in which includes Plainview, Booker, Malcolm and Lincoln, roads were set up as Baby

Farms. Where you could buy a piece of property for a dollar down and a dollar a month and pay for this piece of property that was basically like 30 feet to 60 feet wide frontage, with long depth like 120 - 240 feet deep where you could use as a baby farm. You could put a small house on it, you could raise a family, you could have a garden and then you could raise your pigs and stuff too because you had enough depth to do all of these things.

So this section where I live now and was born and raised on was always referred to as the Baby Farm. Which we always thought it was because everybody back here had so many kids. We come from families of 6-8-10 and 12, every family so we figured that was the baby farm. I discovered that Rufus C. King, a famous realtor in Anchorage and Middletown sold the plots as, quote, baby farms and that's how we got our nick name.

I don't know the exact price he sold the farms for but I was told they were like three-four hundred dollars back in those days. I think it was the 40's - 50's for this section, 30's - 40's for this section. Then the original section out there which includes the streets of Old Harrods Creek, Robert, Bellwood, Church and Coxes roads were the original layouts until this section of land was opened up later because it started filling in. So this was opened up much later than the original settler, Dan Griffith, who supposedly put his house down around 1789 - 1779, I believe it was 1879, excuse me. Griffithtown was originally spelled Griffey, Griffeytown. It's never been incorporated and it's still not. It took that name, Dan Griffith, Griffey, you know. In the black community, we have a tendency to change names and slang names and cut off names. That was no exception here and to nickname at the same time. It was Mr. Griffith Town is the way it started. Since it was his town, he set it up. It was Mr. Griffith Town and from that to Griffeytown.

I understand the Dow's came from other plantations. We are also part of the Bald family, which is one of the original families here too. My mother, came from St. Matthews, that area. Ed Humble who was my grand mother's uncle help found the Beargrass Missionary Church on Payne and Drane Street which is like 1500 - 1800 years old. So how they wound up here is Howard Ferguson married my grandmother. And Howard Ferguson came from downtown, married my grandmother and they moved here.

According to Melvin Jones who is the current curator of Middletown cemetery, when the Middletown cemetery was originated and set up it was donated to the people of Middletown. The owner also set up a section to bury slaves. From what the history goes, which is to be interpreted by the individual, the slave owners treated their slaves like they were family. Since it was family, they needed a place

to bury them when they died, so they just included it. Middletown was one of the first, if not the first integrated cemeteries in Jefferson County, from what I understand. They buried the slaves there but they are buried in unmarked graves. Also, in my lifetime, every other person I know that is from the Griffeytown area is buried over there. Including my mother, my father, my grandfather, two uncles and me. God bless me, I was speaking with the curator last weekend. I hope to be buried there too. Because I talked with them about a plot.

So they buried the slaves there but they did not put names down for them. But the majority of the people that I know are buried over there too and I always thought that to be the Griffeytown section since we were right there, until I discovered it was originally named the Colored Section of Middletown Cemetery. According to Dr. Jones, the slaves were buried facing East. I said that's interesting, why is that? He said the three sections where the whites are buried, the original layout of Middletown was three sections where White people are buried and there's one section where colored's are buried. They were buried facing East because the slaves believed that when Jesus returned, he would be coming riding a cloud from the East. So they wanted to be facing East so that when he came they could easily see, arise and go with him. That is an interesting story and I thought it makes a lot of sense because from all I've ever heard coming down there is when he comes, he's going to be coming from the East and I want to be ready. So they wanted to be ready too.

The Whites are not buried that way. Then there is a new section where Blacks and Whites are buried in Middletown. It's just called the fourth section. It's all Middletown Cemetery. Things have changed a good bit.

We lived in a house where if you had children, you built another room. It started out as a three room house. I'm the eighth of eight children. Not all of us lived there because my oldest brother is sixteen years older than I am and he lived with Howard and Mary Ferguson, our grandparents. Then when he was eighteen, he got married so he moved out on his own. I was just about two or so years old. There was no plumbing so everyone had outhouses. Id you had an outhouse that had two holes in it, then you were high class. It was funny, not most of them had that, trust me. I don't know why they thought two people would want to be in the toilet at the same time but that was the case if you had a lot of kids.

Water, we carried it home in buckets. We didn't have in our yard a pump and a lot of people didn't so we had community pumps. Some people had pumps in their yards. I remember carrying it home from two or three neighbors houses. Mr. Roy Hughes had one, Mr. Dixon had one, my aunt right down here had one and

Clyde Moore had one. So we would go and get a bucket of water, which was the best, freshest, cold water you every wanted to taste and carry it home. On Saturday's when Momma washed clothes, we had a washer ringer. You know with the ringers and we'd pump the water and carry it home in a foot tub. In the back yard we'd put a car tire up under it and light the tire to heat the water. Then once the water got hot, we'd carry it into the house into the washing machine and wash the clothes that way. Then they would hang on the line all day long.

We took baths on Saturday nights. Now we used what they called a wash pan back then. Everybody washed up every day but the main bath was on Saturday. The girls bathed first in a metal tub and if you really had some money you had one of those long metal tub where you could stretch your legs in. You'd wash by the kerosene stove in the living room. So we'd heat the water the same way or in a tea kettle. We had a rain barrel outside. When it rained, we'd take that water and heat it and then take a bath in the water from the rain barrel in a metal tub by the kerosene stove.

I'm the eight of eight so there was seven of us at home. My oldest sister, Mary, we called her Dede got married. I guess I was about five or six so there were seven of us in the house. Momma was a domestic, she worked for some of the families in Middletown, including one of the doctors. Dr. Simon, Andrew Simon and she worked in his office. She worked in his home in the morning and a couple of other people's homes but in the evening she worked in his office as an assistant to the nurses and she cleaned it up in the evening. Daddy worked at the Anchorage Post Office as a janitor. I guess he received good pay for those times.

Griffeytown is big for canning and shopping. We shopped at Middletown grocery store but we were a very self contained community. We had people in the community that sold groceries out of their house. We had people who raised gardens and were some of the best farmers, best tomatoes and stuff I've ever seen. We had fruit trees and stuff in every other yard or all around the neighborhood. All around us was fields, it was Anchorage's fields and Middletown had plenty of fields and apples fell from the trees. We'd take wagons and bushel baskets and we'd go get these things. In the summer time, our job, the way we made money was to go in the fields and pick blackberries and we'd sell them a dollar and a half a gallon. We'd pick wild greens and sell them for a dollar a bunch. We ate what was around us. I knew every season, what time the trees would fruit. First there was the plums and we'd get the plums as they fell and momma would make jelly. Then in the summertime, we'd get blackberries and we'd can blackberries. All the farmers, daddy was not a farmer, he was a worker but there were lots of people here that had

gardens. I mean major gardens in their back yards. They canned all summer long, the women did. Most of the women were housewives and not workers. Every other family had pigs, chickens and I remember feeding a many a pigs in my day that belonged to other people in the neighborhood. Some people had cows so there was always something to do. We'd watch Mr. Bill Thornton kill his hogs right there in the yard and go through the process of scalding them and hanging them up to drip. Then going through the process of cutting the meat and stuff. Everybody in the neighborhood would get something.

The men were hunters. My brothers brought home rabbits in the wintertime. Up until just lately, we always had a rabbit for breakfast on Christmas. Even though my brother doesn't hunt any more, I think it's been within the last five or ten years that he stopped. We don't still have rabbit on Christmas morning. It wasn't good luck or anything, it was meat and hunting season was open. The men went hunting for rabbit and you had a different kind of meat. That's just what it was. It was a stable, that was stuff we ate. All around us are creeks and then they had fishing holes and they were avid fishermen. Sometime Mr. Russell would come home with so many fish that on Friday night was our Friday night's fish fries. We had that simple kind of lifestyle. Everybody fried fish on Friday night. Not because of any religion or anything, it was because they had been out fishing and the weekend before, they soaked it in salt water like they used to and then they'd fry it up and everybody would have something to do on Friday night. We'd go to this one persons house and have it on one Friday and the next Friday, somebody else would have it.

We shared everything in this neighborhood. If you didn't have a meal, and some people did not have one on Friday night. You just went to somebody's else's house and wait until they got ready to feed you. Some nights you only had baloney and fried potatoes, I had to set two extra plates because I knew two young men would show up around dinner time. They knew what time momma got home. They knew what time it took dinner to cook and be ready and I'd just set a plate. I knew eventually they would show up and they showed up. They didn't necessarily not have food at home. Some cases that was the case but other cases was that we just went from house to house eating. Everybody was semi-related or you were so close that you just did. I went to plenty of houses. I knew Mrs. Sarah Barker made home made biscuits on Thursday, so I knew to be there. I knew Mrs. Alberta Thornton made some of the best sweet potato pies, Mrs. Green made all kinds of stuff because Elinor Green cleaned out grocery stores. He had hogs and stuff so they always had all kinds of food. There were bakery's in Middletown that had day-old-

bread and pastries. Whoever cleaned those would bring all of that stuff home and distribute it throughout the neighborhood, so we always fed each other. So we always had food. Some people had more than others but everybody ate. I'll feed anybody because anybody would feed us.

The prominent people in the community. We called prominent, people with indoor bathrooms. If you had indoor plumbing, you had a cistern in the yard. I think Mr. Roy Hughes that lived next door to us was pretty prominent because they didn't really have any kids. I think he worked for the railroad. So they had the best cars, the most immaculate yard, the best kept house, no kids tearing stuff up. J.R. Hughes was pretty prominent. He was a government worker. Those that had the real government jobs were pretty prominent but everybody was basically in the same accord here when we were coming up. We didn't have one house that had so much that nobody would go in. Some people's houses I never went in, no far than the front door, you didn't go through their houses. We were a family of community that spent a lot of time sharing with each other.

My father lived out here when he was coming up. He had something like a fifth grade education because he had to work. My mother went to the eighth grade. We had Griffeytown Colored School, located on Old Harrods Creek Road, right in front of Roberts as you turn to come back here to my house, there is a big old house on the right hand side as you turn to my street. It is located right there where this big huge house is and the flagpole from the school is still in the yard. It was called Griffeytown Colored school and in this book is a story that I put together. It is a story written by John Huggins, Jr., who used to be the principal of Shawnee High School. He now works for the Board of Education. He wrote a story about it and when it was settled and that used to be our community center, our neighborhood center and grade school. I went there in the first, second and third grade but my brother went there to the eighth grade. One teacher, Lottie M. Long taught all eight classes in one building. There were first, second, third and fourth grades on one side, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth on the other side. In my time there was only two rows of kids. They might have been my age, there might have been eight of us that started grade school at the same time.

Mrs. White, her name was Eleanor White. She taught me, it was first, second, third and fourth grade. She would teach us, give us work to do, go to the second grade and give them work to do, third and fourth at the same time. While they were being taught, we were doing whatever work we were suppose to be doing. Then there was a folding door that separated the upper class men from us. Then Mrs. Long would teach those classes after Mrs. White came onboard, she

would teach those classes.

The school caught on fire in the 60's. The school became obsolete in 59, that's when our class integrated the Middletown school. That closed Griffeytown School. Then it became like a teenage neighborhood center because we had what we called at the school, when we were going there, Saturday night picture shows. They would come in and have the reel-to-reel and that's where we would go to the picture show. The school would sponsor a once a year picnics and trips. We used to go to Chickasaw Park and I thought that was going someplace. When I grew up and found it was just down in the West End, I thought, this is Chickasaw Park. You know we loved it, that was our summer vacation.

We wrapped the Maypole, do you remember that? We used to wrap the Maypole on Mayday and the school would close. That would be one of the days you could eat lunch at school because otherwise, we used to go home for lunch. They would have a chili supper where you brought your own bowl and spoon. This one lady would come in and make chili and everybody could stay at school that day and eat lunch. The neighborhood mothers and fathers paid for the food. Everybody donated here. We were not a selfish group, the School Board didn't do much for us. We read books that had CONDEMNED across them, from the White schools, yet that's the books we learned out of.

When we went to the White schools, we were very well taught and we were up with the White students in mathematics and reading. They were really surprised that we could even read and stuff, but we had rejected books that the Whites didn't want. That's what the County gave us. This was like in the 50's. When my sisters had gone to school in the 40's, it was even worse getting books. They didn't have a hard time learning because we were blessed to have teachers that were teachers and parents that participated in the school and neighbors that cared about us learning at the same time. It wasn't a hooky kind of thing, that you didn't go to school. If I was home and wasn't sick, Mrs. Alberta knew it, everybody in the neighborhood knew what was going on, so you know you had to be at school. We didn't have that kind of problem because everybody looked after everybody else. I don't know the people's names that live around me now, but you knew everybody in the neighborhood.

I'm not really sure of where the teachers got their education. As far as Mrs. Glenola Jones, she had a Bachelor's Degree, she had a Master's Degree. She went to Kentucky State. She graduated from Central, went to Kentucky State then went to Indiana University to study. So she was a qualified teacher. The majority of the kids, especially those who lived in Berrytown were taught by her. When the school

closed, she was the first Black teacher to integrate the school system. Most of them here, Mrs. White, Mrs. Lottie Long retired after that. Mrs. White, I know and Mrs. Etta, who was one of our teachers went to Newburg. Mrs. Glenola Jones went to Jane Hite Elementary School, here in Middletown. That was a white school and that stirred up some interesting conversations. I do remember there were some newspaper articles about it, the first Black teacher to integrate the school system. She was always a ground breaker in my eyes. I loved her. She was one of my mother's best friends. I did not know much of her as a child. I became her friend in her older age about in the last five or six years because I started attending Beargrass Missionary Baptist Church on Payne and Drain Street. Since I have been there, I discovered that my great, great, great, great uncle was one of the founding fathers of that church. I used to give her a ride home and we used to ride her home instead of her catching the bus. I used to go and pick her up and take her to church. We would talk about the history and stuff. I got to know her in the later part of her life. She died about two years ago at the age of eighty-six.

She talked about how much she loved Griffeytown. Her brothers, two of her brothers lived here for years. All of them lived here, she and my mother were friends as children and they used to play in the streets together. The families here always set up entertainment for us. We weren't allowed to, there wasn't anyplace to go but Berrytown. Berrytown is only about three miles away. If you wanted to go to Berrytown, you had to walk. We walked everywhere. There was nothing for us to do in Middletown except when we started going to White schools, then we went to teenage hops and stuff all of the time. The people here in Griffeytown saw to it that the children were always entertained. We celebrated every holiday and we still do in my family and we are real traditionalist. We had house parties. House parties were very, very popular in our time because you knew where the children were going to be, you knew who was having a house party and you knew what time they would be home. That's the story about the guys getting to walk the girls home in the olden days about how everybody grew up with the little dances and there was never any problems because you were just with your cousins and people you knew all of your life. Every age group had five, six or seven children the same age in their group. They would have a party and invite two years before and two years after. There were always house parties. I was always throwing a house party, I'm a party planner now. I love parties and I was always having one.

My grandmother are Howard Ferguson and May Ferguson, lived right at the end of the street, right down from us. Rob and America Dowe, which we called Murky, but her name was America, lived one block over. We couldn't go out of

town. You didn't have to go out of town to see any of your relatives. I had an Aunt that lived downtown and that was a big deal for us to go downtown. Then I had a cousin who lived in Eastwood. Once a year, we would go to her house and that would be on Labor Day Saturday. We would go to her house and she would make homemade peach ice cream and we would play croquet. I think they were one of the only families that had a croquet set and we would actually play croquet

I didn't know many of my cousins and stuff that lived down town or over in Newburg. We were all just kind of centrally located here in Griffeytown. You had extended families who were babysitters and who took care of each other. The older children were responsible and did take care of they younger kids. So the parents worked and did not have to worry about daycare which people worry about now a days. We didn't have to worry about that. We had a babysitter called Mrs. Mary B. who would babysit. There was always someone to fix your roof or whatever repairs you needed. We were really a self contained little community.

We were really acceptance of strangers but you accepted them, I guess you could say with a grain of salt. I guess my only real experience was when the Jeffersontown Government gave the Berrytown/Griffeytown Improvement Organization in 1976 a Block Grant. They got a Block Grant to re-hab the houses. Urban Renewal tried to come through here several times and because the mothers and fathers organized themselves and formed a neighborhood organization, we were able to keep Urban Renewal out. Urban Renewal wanted to come through several times and just bull doze everything down. But the Community Development Block Grant that they received allowed the community to stay as is, except there were houses that had to be demolished because they were beyond repair or too costly to repair. Anyone that wanted to have their house repaired qualified for a grant and they were able to have it repaired.

I think that's the thing that was the turnaround for Griffeytown to stay Griffeytown. Other than that, I think it would have been completely wiped out because it was always a struggle to try to hold onto this property in between these two communities, Middletown and Anchorage, prominent communities. Griffeytown has never been incorporated, it's not incorporated and they were always trying to move us out. Basically they were too afraid to come do it because we have kept it here for all of these hundred of years.

They were grants and they did not have to pay it back. Some people got loans that could qualify for them but most of it, they came in, and I was fortunate enough to work with the program. The problem with strangers coming in is when someone comes into your house and tell you that they are going to do this or they

are going to do that, and it's not going to cost you anything, people who are just plain and simple folk are leery of stuff like that. You have heard people tell you that they are going to do stuff for you before and they were having difficulty getting the program up and running. I was fortunate enough to be hired by the county government and Consumer Protection set up an office in Berrytown at the Bethel Baptist Church, so if they had any problems they trusted me. They knew I wasn't going to do anything wrong and I still won't tell them anything wrong. This allowed them to sit down and I explained to them. I noticed that when some of the county representatives would explaining what they wanted to do, the people would not look at them, they looked straight at me. I just let them look at me and I said, listen to what he has to say. Then we would go over it later and I would tell them, this is what you need to do or this is what you can get out of this program. We are not leery of accepting but you know we were close enough that we were all our own, so we listened to our own.

I was like the spokesperson for them just during that time because they knew me and they knew we were raised in the church. We were raised with great spiritual backgrounds. They know I am not going to do or say anything wrong because it doesn't make any sense. People that know me, know that if Diana says that she is going to do it, I will make my sacrifices to do it, whatever I have committed to do. That's the way we were taught. Our word is our bond. You can almost go to any household now of any of our children and it will be the same way, even though we are all over the world.

I lived in New York City for a while and had some young people call me and I did not know who this young lady was. She told me the names of who gave her the phone number and they say they are kin to you. Everybody around here, they say we are kin too, so I'm here in New York and I was wondering if you could help us out and let me and my friends stay with you. That's all they needed to say, I said yes and opened my house to them.

I came back to Griffeytown because the rhythm of the city changed in New York for me when crack and stuff came in. It seemed to get hostile and I got home sick after that. My girlfriend there, children were robbing them and my brother Barry came to visit me one day and I just realized after being away for thirteen years away from my family, I was homesick. He said come home and so I did.

This house that I live in now is my deceased aunt's home. This is the house that was built in replace of the three room shotgun house that she had during the Community Development Program that came through. She lived on this property, right up against the fence here, because actually this house is across three lots. So

she lived in one of the small lots, thirty foot lot, the house was a long shotgun house. When the county came through and put improvements in the road, my uncle bought these other lots. This is the results of this Community Development Grant that they had. They took out a loan to get this house and they are both deceased.

When I was coming up, the community was loaded with children. We were avid sports enthusiasts. We would play softball with three people. We played a game called Peggy. We were very involved in each others lives. When a citizen passed away in the community, me as a child and some of the others would collect money to put wreaths on their graves, to get flowers. Most of them were eulogized in Pilgrim or Hobbs Chapel which is in Anchorage, it's a Methodist Church. We had social affairs at the church that involved the whole community because we went to school together, we went to church together and we played together in this neighborhood. You were always involved in these hundreds of children. Baby Farm was a good name. Now as I live here in this decade, I don't really know my neighbors, I kind of stay to myself because I'm finding that people are not interested in being friendly as being nosey. And there is a difference. That's is the difference that I see and I know this community was not like that.

I saw it go through its changes from the 50's to the 60's when we were teenagers, when people, actually for the first time started going to the White Schools and we got the opportunity to go to college. My oldest brothers, the two of them and my oldest sister, once they completed their education at Griffeytown, which is the eighth grade, they went to Lincoln Institute. They were the first bussed kids. We were bussed to Lincoln Institute. They talk about bussing from your neighborhood, well that's in Shelby County. That's bussing all the way to another county. They went to school every day there. Mrs. Nanny Hughes was the bus driver. She lived on Old Harrods Creek Road. She was the bus driver that took them there every day. Then in the early 60's, 61-62, is when they started going from Griffeytown School to Eastern High School. Then in 59 is when they closed Griffeytown School and we started going to Middletown School. Then from Middletown to Eastern. The kids are still going to Eastern or wherever they are going to school, being bussed all around. People thought bussing is was something big but it was not. I'm not sure if the county provided the bus or paid the driver. The might have, I could ask my sister since she is one of the people who rode it.

We had the first Griffeytown homecoming in 1991. I returned back to the Louisville area in 89. When I got back, I was kind of wondering where everybody was and I wanted to see people. Even though there was the Berrytown/Griffeytown Summer Festival that is 31 years old and they have that the first Saturday in August,

I wanted something just for Griffeytown. Griffeytown's children were close to each other and we used to party together all the time. So, I wanted something, so I said let's see if I can throw around the idea of having a home coming for Griffeytown. So I got different members from different families and invited them over to sit down and have a meeting and everybody thought it was a good idea. We had our first Griffeytown Homecoming ever and people came back from across the country. Was just so pleased at the reception. We had a wonderful time. At that event, I wanted to acknowledge the accomplishments of the people that came from this little community because the first African American, the first Black person to graduate from the University School of Medicine graduated with honors was from Griffeytown. His name was Joseph L. Alexander. I'll come back to that because I do have that listed too. We have John C. Thornton who is an entrepreneur, a millionaire that lives in Chicago and owns several McDonald's in Chicago. We have Elsworth "Butch" Powers, III who is an electrician and owns Powers's Electrical, who is a self made millionaire that is from this area. We have the first African American Women to be inducted into the Louisville-area Chapter of the American Softball Association Hall of Fame is from Griffeytown. Her name is Mary Dow Jones, my sister. Felton Spencer, basketball player lived in Griffeytown. We had, and he's deceased, may he rest in peace, first professional Bass Fisherman. He was a bass fisherman, won trophies, competed with all these White bass fishermen on the circuit, Alexander Bernard Russell, Jr.

We were always taught to excel. We were always taught to speak up, we were always taught to be individuals and not be group thinkers. Just from this little area which is six or eight streets of kids from very accomplished individuals. There were probably 400 families who lived in Griffeytown at that time. A lot of people has come from here and we have been able to travel all over the world. The Airforce, the Thunderbirds, which is their elite flying Administration Squadron, we had a young man from Griffeytown in that Administration Squadron. When they came here two, three years ago or so, he came with them. Fortunately for me, he's my nephew. The whole Air Force Squadron, Lt. Colonel and all of the pilots who fly those million dollar jet planes were out here in my yard having dinner one day. His name is Jeffrey Scott Jones. I'm very proud of him, you know not to have the degree that all the white men had that are in that squadron, they went to all the military schools, he graduated from high school, pushed his way up through the rank and file and became one of the chief mechanics for the Air Force and the Thunderbirds.

You know for a minute my heart was sinking from like 95 until now.

Probably from 91 from the first home coming that we had. The News Media asked me why now, after all of these years did we decide to have a homecoming for Griffeytown. One I said because the demographics were changing so quickly from what we knew it in our hearts to be to what it was coming. We could see the change over coming. Two, because there moved in a lot of Whites in the neighborhood that did not have the same frame of mind that we had, a sense of community. They moved in with individual ways and not necessarily openly friendly ways. Three, the community is probably right now in a reverse cycle and I do believe it is going to stay because a lot of the young people that are the third and fourth generations of us are moving back. I am so pleased. I have pushed and shoved. Now that the Whites have come in and built these houses, now they stay in them four or five years. I know that just on the next street up, Plainview alone, there's been two extra members of my family that I did not know until this Griffeytown Homecoming. Jeri Ellis who is a prominent attorney that ran for Alderman downtown. I didn't meet her as a cousin until my name was in the newspaper in 1991. She called me on the telephone and said, 'Diana Dow,' I said yes. She said, 'My name is Jeri Ellis. Are you Romanza's niece?' I said, nobody called my daddy Romanza but people in his family. And I said, no, I'm his daughter. She said, 'I'm your cousin Jeri Elli. I saw your name in the paper and I'd like to meet you.' So we met and she now lives on the street above me and just this year, her uncle, who is also a cousin that we did not meet until just this year, bought his house there. He wants to come home too. One of the Thornton, young Thornton men who was a child running the street has bought a home. A couple of them have built homes and one of the daughters built a home on a property on Old Harrods Creek Road and they had to put in a side street. That is the first time in 100 years that Griffeytown has added a street and it's named after one of its citizens, Thornton Way. A wonderful experience.

They are buying the homes from Whites and it is making me feel good. Not that I'm not open to the community being a diverse community, but you know, like I tried to tell the bank that runs this house and all the White people that I talk to, we have strong emotional ties to the land. We went through a cycle period where we couldn't wait to get out of here because we were trapped in here for so long. Best experience in the world. Well, we have experienced the world and we found out we had the world where we started. And they are coming back to it.

I was in one of the grocery stores and one of the young Thornton's men that was a child here had just moved in and I was talking with him. He was talking to a lady behind the counter and he introduced to this young lady and told me that she

was Mr. Lipson's grandchild. Well they lived right on Plainview for years and I knew his daughters as a child. I said, whose daughter are you? And she told me she was Otha's. I haven't seen Otha in twenty years but I remember this child and she now lives up there. I have a third cousin whose children were raised and they are up there. So now the young people are reversing what I thought maybe we might lose it but we're not going to lose it. Because they feel tied to the land like we do. It's an emotional time for us to talk about growing up in Griffeytown. Anybody you talk to will tell you that we are very fortunate to have been raised with and around the people that we were raised with. It made us diverse. We have always had Whites in our lives so we don't have any problems in socialization. We don't have problems in the communication because they taught us to complete sentences and to be all that we could be. They exposed us to things that we wouldn't have thought that helped me in my society today.

I was trying to fit in when I came back and I was having problems fitting in. Then somebody told me, you should quit trying to fit in because you fit in everywhere. So quit trying to fit in one block because people here were so diverse that we got a touch of everybody, not just our family ways but the Thornton family ways, the Jones family ways, we got the Hughes family ways. We've got all of these family ways in all of us. That just makes us well rounded individuals.

There is a young man that lives on Plainview Avenue that I would really like for you to talk to. Because he has lived in that house up there all his life. I think he's about 65 years old. Robert Gaskin can tell you history that I couldn't think of because he's my brother's age and that's twenty years my senior. He told me when told him about Middletown being interested, Middletown finally conceding the fact that you cannot uncover their history without uncovering Griffeytown's at the same time. When they finally made that statement to me it was quite a revelation to me and I was thinking finally, they are not trying to ignore that we existed because we did. We found that a lot of the people from general Middletown area they came from Downstreet. Then there are people who came from Springfield. As I read the obituaries, they came from Springfield, you know Berrytown was semi-founded by transients coming from the South to Anchorage on the rail road cars. Because I even know people that are my age that when their families came through here, they settled and worked at the rock quarry in Anchorage and they lived in box cars before they were able to get property and build houses in Berrytown. So some of us came up from the South on these railroad cars and stopped here because they heard there were colored neighborhoods set up here. Some of them like my relatives came from Saint Matthews. I'm not really sure of the location but like Lula Payne who

lived right down the street here came from Ormsby. You know there's a street over here in Anchorage called Ormsby where there's a big plantation. She was a direct half sister of the white settlers that ran this big old farm over here, Ormsby. The family name was Ormsby but what their first names were, I would have to research that. There are streets named after them. You will find that all of the streets that are named in Griffeytown were named from White settlers in Middletown. I found that in a book. Roberts, Cox, Malcolm, all of these are also named for settlers in Middletown. We came from all around.

In my introduction to this homecoming book, I asked that question. How did such a diverse group of people wind up in this little area? Mr. Hubert Payne who Mrs. Lula Payne was married to, we always called him Mr. Cubie. I thought that was his name but come to find out, his name was Herbert Payne but he was from Cuba. I thought, well nobody ever told me that because you grow up with these people already being here. I did, so you just accepted names for what they were called but you never asked them. You just assumed that was their name.

Everybody assumed that my father's name was Mr. Skinny. They called him Skinny Dow. The children called him Mr. Skinny. He was tall, he was very thin and they called him Skinny Dow as they did when he was coming up. So, when he was eulogized down at Porter's we had on the marque, Robert R. Dow. People came through there and they said, 'I thought Skinny Dow's body was down here.' I said he is down here. 'The board says Robert Dow.' I said well, his name wasn't Skinny. So we didn't ask those questions. It was always, Hi Mr. Skinny, or hi Mr. Slim, Hi Mr. Buck. We didn't know, we just took things for granted. Momma Frank, Daddy Frank, they didn't have but one child but everybody called them Momma and Daddy Frank. Hi Momma Frank, Hi Daddy Frank.

Aunt Hattie, Hattie Todd was the midwife in the community and she helped birth the children because the majority of the children that were born here were born at home. Six of my seven brothers and sisters were born on our property, which is on the total opposite end of the street where I grew up and my brother lives on that piece of property now. Six of them were born there with the aid of Mrs. Hattie Todd and of course Dr. Simon because my mother worked for Dr. Simon. We always had access to a doctor where everybody did not have access to one. Then the county health trailer would come through every so often and you would take your child to the trailer. It would park up to the school It would come to the school and give us our shots, immunization shots. Then it would come up to the church and park and you could take the babies in there and have them weighed, give them their shots. The nurse would come and check them over and stuff like that. So

everybody didn't have access to healthcare as we did because my mother worked for the White doctor. That's just the way it was.

If we were sick, we would go to the White doctor's office and be taken care of but not everybody would because we had a lot of home remedies. We have deep roots here and they concocted stuff from the back yard. You know they would go out back and get some herbs and they'd blend it up or if you stepped on a nail they were subject to pour coal oil on there, which is Kerosine. We called it coal oil. It would sanitize it. When I first got grown, I said, it's a wonder we are not dead with some of the things they used to do.

Home remedies, I believe it's in that book. If not, it's in the first one I did. I wrote a story about home remedies and how they used to make their own cough syrup. You would go and dig, you know dandelions are very municipal for making stuff. You can go into an herbal store and buy dandelions to make a tea. Well, they used to do the same thing. They used to go outside and if you needed to be cleaned out, you would eat poke or wild greens. If you had a cold, sometime they would boil onions and water and put a little Karo syrup in it and that would open you up. On the stove cooking all day might be chitlings or something that we made from our own sources to help us. If it didn't, you could always go to General Hospital, which is down town, or doctor Simon or doctor Sledge. We always went to Dr. Simon because my mother worked for him. We always had our shots and when we had colds, he would give us medicine and stuff. He even made house calls to our house. He might have made them to other homes, I do not know but that was in the days when doctors made house calls, or you had your own home remedies that somebody would give you and give you a good clean out and boy, man, going out those outhouses at night in the cold was not a pleasant experience, trust me. We had pea pots, where you didn't have to go out but had to carry out the next day.

It was a good life because it was the only one we knew and we may not have had everything because we had second hand clothes and second hand shoes. There was not money to spend but there was plenty of love to go around. So we weren't quite aware that we were poor. It's strange to me, we had houses that had holes in the roofs where some of them you could look up through and see the light shining. When it rained, you just put buckets up on the furniture and moved all of the clothes out. You hauled coal in bushel baskets from Knott Dickerson or some of the men that drove trucks for the White man like Clyde Moore. He would just dump coal in his back yard because he had a coal stove. If you were cold, you could go up there and say, Clyde, could we have a couple of pieces of coal. A dollar would buy a bushel basket of coal. Kerosene stoves, you just went into the service station and

bought some coal oil and put it in the stove. We are lucky our house didn't burn down because they didn't have insulation in them. The roofs leaked, the windows you put plastic up in the winter.

Having that background has helped me save my life more times than not. As I talk to people of this younger generation, the thing that we remember the most is that we had a whole lot of love from everybody from the moment you were born and even to the time you die. Because I find even now, when there is a funeral and its somebody that lived in the community here, you can go to the wake and there will be hundreds of people that you have not seen in years. It's not a sad occasion but we always are so excited just to see each other that we can glorify in the death of our seniors or our children or whoever it is and have a good time in that celebration. From family to family, to family and you cannot buy that nowhere.

It was just a good experience for me and that's why it is so heartfelt for me to try to keep this preserved because one of the things that really motivated me into this jump start of preserving this history was Mrs. Alberta Thornton who lives right down the street, that has been there for probably 50 years, when the White lady moved in next to her, she told me that this lady had the audacity to tell her that she was going to try to get as many White people because she was trying to buy up property left and right, left and right. She was going to people's houses and trying to outbid others because she didn't want to live in a neighborhood with a slave name attached to it and she wanted to change the name. I said, I'll be damned. You might move in, you might do what you want to but there is history, seven generations of my family's history and everybody's else who owned this property and you cannot erase it because you have arrived to live on this property now. That has become the jump start of me into this preservation. Thank you for the interest.

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
CARRIDDER M. JONES - PROJECT DIRECTOR

In consideration of the recording and preservation of my oral history memoir, and/or documents and pictures, I hereby grant and assign them to the Filson Club in Louisville, Kentucky, and consent to the deposit of my oral history memoir, and/or documents and pictures in their permanent collection, to be used for whatever scholarly or educational purposes, including the right to duplicate, and distribute the recordings and/or transcript, documents and pictures to any other libraries and educational institution. I grant Carridder M. Jones, all literary property rights, including transcription and publication rights to my oral history memoir, and/or documents and pictures as an unrestricted gift.

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Interview with Lula Bald McCoy - 401 Old Harrods Creek Road - Griffeytown,
Kentucky - August 17, 2000 - By Carridder M. Jones

My name is Lula Bald McCoy, and I live in Griffeytown. I was born and raised right here in Berrytown, on Berrytown Road. I was Born June 13, 1930. My parents are Mary Bell Thornton and David Bald and they are both deceased. It was twelve of us in the family and now we are down to one brother and four sisters still living.

My parents lived on Berrytown Road. My grandparents lived on Berrytown Road. All my brothers and sisters were raised right here on Berrytown Road. My grandfather worked on the farm for Doctor Dudley Mason in Middletown and my grandmother was a housewife and she did laundry, took in laundry from Anchorage and over in Middletown for all of the white families over there. I remember when we carried the water and put it in big iron pots and heated it. She did the ironing with coal irons, coal wood stoves. We raised our own chickens and raised our hogs and killed them and had our meat and stuff. My grandparents were Pete Thornton and Helen Thornton.

We lived right across from Mr. Berry, the Berry house. I was fortunate, I knew Mr. Berry, this was the son. Mrs. Henrietta Roan was the sister and Mrs. Mattie McElroy was the sister. They lived side by side, right across from our house. I really don't know about Mr. Berry's father by him being so much older than I am. They lived on Berrytown road. It was just one brother and two sisters in the family. The gravestones in the cemetery is the son that I knew. They all lived in Berrytown until they died, all three of them. They passed away right there.

My grandmother was sort of a homebody. My mother passed away when I was seven (7) and it was two younger and then there was nine, stair steps, two years apart. We all lived with my grandmother. So it left her to raise us. We kept busy all of the time because my grandmother was always working. We did the yard work and carrying the water and stuff while she was doing the laundry to take care of all of us after my mother passed. Then my father passed and we were all left there with my grandmother.

Then in 1941, when the war came along, my oldest brother went to the Air Force, my second brother went to the Army, the third one went to the Marines and the fourth one went to the Navy. My grandmother lived six weeks. She grieved herself to death in six weeks time after my brothers left. We had never been

separated and she just couldn't take it. Then, we were sort of just raised by Lavern Davis' mom. My brothers, when they got in the service and got married, they just sort of paid people out of their little checks to take care of us smaller ones until they got out.

It was four small ones still left at home and we were fortunate that we were kinda raised from one member of the family to the other. It worked out. I always say, it should make people better when they have been passed around like I have. It should make you a better person. When people say, "I was raised without a mother or a father," that's not true, that isn't true. Cause you can make it, you can be a good person if you want to. Lavern's mother took care of us. My brother was still in the Navy. I lived with them, then I would go over to my sister. My oldest sister still lives up on the corner in the old Brittle house and she's eighty (80) years old and I'd stay with her a while and my youngest sister would stay there then my oldest brother would stay with my sister in Anchorage. They lived on the place and worked there. It was just kind of a passing around thing.

They split their allotment that they got every month. I can remember, they sent money to help us. A little money went a long ways then. When my brothers got out of the military they came back here to live. My oldest brother is eighty-four (84) years old and he lives in Newburg on Reflection Drive. His name is Lewis James Bald. He's over there right now trying to get ready for a ball tournament. He's pretty weak. He goes on dialysis three days a week and cancer has hit just about most of my family. Me, my sisters, three of my sisters and two of my brothers. I kept them until they passed away. There's just the one brother now and four sisters living.

I guess I just didn't know any where else to go other than Berrytown. I wanted to be around friends and family. Berrytown is a close knit place. Berrytown and Griffeytown are just like sisters and brothers. Everybody that used to be here are related to the ones over there. I used to know everybody but not any more. In Berrytown, we've got these apartments and things. We've got two sets of apartments and we have people that we don't know, that are not bonding with us. We can't get them to come out to our meetings and things. We try and we just can't get close to them you know. But, we don't have any problem with them but it is just the thing that we can't get them.

Over in Griffeytown where I live now, we have, I'll say, more white people now because they bought out the property of people who sold out and left. Now they want to come back and the property is so high, they can't afford it now with a family, you just can't get it. I used to be the only house, I was the very first house

from Middletown ball diamond. I can't exactly remember how many years ago. We cleared the lot where I live. I live at 401 Old Harrods Creek Road. I was the very first house on that street. We built that house in 1962. We moved in like December 21 in 62. We cleared the lot and had the house built. It was one house on the right hand side of me. An elderly couple and Thomas Saintclair was another house on the corner there. It was quite a few house on up but there wasn't any down where I was. Then Middletown took me in. I have to pay Middletown and County taxes. Middletown took me in when they bought the lodge. They bought the property from some friends of ours. The person that I bought my property from. They bought the lodge so that meant going straight up the line and just separating me. I'm the only black over there down in that bottom.

Its made a change in our streets, we have street lights now. We didn't have running water and all of that stuff and we have all of that now. We have all of the modern conveniences. It's been good for us.

(Reading from a chart) - A little bit of Black History from Berrytown and Griffeytown I have decided to save: Did you know, Berrytown was named from Alfred Berry. Griffeytown was named from Dan Griffith. Mr. Jesseman Garr was a guard at the old jail; Mr. Lawrence Duff owned and operated a Dry Cleaners in his home; Mrs. Agnes Mack was a midwife; a blind man named Mr. George Williams, we called him Buck, was a community babysitter and would do all of your laundry on the wash board; Mrs. Hattie Taylor made homemade ice cream and was a great entertainer; Mrs. Neanie Graves cooked and was a maid for wealthy Indian Hills family; Mrs. Hattie Webster recited Paul Lawrence Dunbar poems and acted them out; Mrs. Vivian Robinson taught sewing at the 4H Club; Mr. Hubert Robinson was a well known carpenter; Mrs. Lillian Schaefer was a pianist and seamstress; Mr. Rudolph Schaefer was a builder and a contractor; Mrs. Catherine Couch Thrasher was a soloist; Mr. Charlie Williams was a brick mason; Bethel Baptist Church has lots of history beginning with Mother Hamilton; Mrs. Harriet Berry, Mrs. Parks, and Mrs. Shears. Mother Davis was a minister - First Baptist Church 1875-1904; Forest School Teachers, Mrs. Sunshine, Mrs. Mary Taylor, Mrs. Theresa Jackson, Mrs. Serena Hurd, and Mrs. Glenola Jones; Mr. Hundley Goodall, Mrs. Lizzie B. Watson and Mrs. Roberta Bailey was a cross guard; Reverend Wilson was an architect; Mrs. Maude Wilson and Mrs. Ella Crawford both had used clothing stores. Mr. Berry Weatherby made tombstones; Mr. R.G. May was the owner of the funeral home; Mr. Peter Bald, Jack of all trades (Plumber, gas, water lines, etc) Wife Alberta Bald, collected for funeral design worked at K.M.I.; Mrs. Talitha Johnson was a registered nurse; Mr. Jesse Johnson

was a dentist, had an office in downtown; The Bald family had a baseball diamond on Berrytown Road; Mr. Al Dyer and his sister Ms. Alice ran a grocery store on Berrytown Road; Knox (Orvelle) Dickerson sold coal by the bushels- ton and had a trucking business; Mr. Charles Kelly was both communities iceman. He sold block ice for iceboxes; Mr. Nathaniel Howell had a nightclub on Lagrange Road. In later years, Mr. Allie Jones took it over; Green Brothers was another hot spot in Berrytown owned by Marlee Green and his dad; Mrs. Stephanie Young and Tom raised cows, hogs and owned a grocery store in Berrytown; Mrs. Henrietta Graves was our big fish fry and yard sale person; Mrs. Mary Eliza Goodall was historian and poet; Mr. Steve and Richard Taylor hauled coal and coal cars in Anchorage to Berrytown residents on a horse and wagon; Mr. Henry Smith was a barber; Mr. Ed Powell a plumber; Mrs. Lucy Powell a pianist; Mrs. Hattie Hughes a seamstress; Mr. Henry St. Clair a deputy sheriff; Mr. Henry St. Clair chauffeured governor Weatherby and never recovered from the accident with the governor being killed; Mr. Wilbert Kelly owned his own septic cleaning business; Mr. Louis Coatley lived on Berrytown Road and was a member of the Berrytown community along with his family and wife Bessie Coatley, daughters Roberta, Margaret, Juanita Violet, tow half sisters, Ethel and Flora, three sons, Louis Jr., James and Joseph.

Two log cabins were in Griffeytown, one on Malcolm Avenue owned by E.B. Jones and the other one on Old Harrods Creek Road. Mr. Baker and Mrs. Louise Hardix made and sold homemade ice-cream out of their homes and out of their cars in the neighborhood; Mr. John Taylor, known by our children as J.T. Tried to start a small community center. After Griffeytown school closed, he would buy candy, chips and pop and sell on weekends. After this he would allow games and dancing; Mrs. Mary Sloan Ferguson was a minister; Mr. James Barton, bus driver to the Lincoln Institute in Simpsonville, Kentucky; Mrs. Nannie Hughs was a bus coordinator and a bus driver; Mr. Harry Parrish was a concrete worker, mason; Mrs. Julia Stewart was a cross guard on Shelbyville Road for Dorsey School; Mr. J.R Hughes was a distributor for Kaiser Liquor; Mr. Roy Hughes was a well known community activist; Mr. John Miller was a well known community activist; Mrs. Nancy Dixon was a favorite babysitter and housekeeper; Mrs. Mary Bald was a cross guard for Forest School; Mrs. Clair Hines was a janitor for Forest School; Mr. Virginia Elder, Mrs. Virginia Jones and Mrs. Alidia Johnson were beauticians; Mrs. Stephanie and Tom Young raised cows hogs and owned a grocery store in Berrytown, Mr. Henry Smith was a barber, Mr. Emmet Green was the Sheriff, Mrs. Harvenia Green James attended Municipal College, Mr. Rod Munford on Lagrange Road was a barber and gave haircuts for twenty-five cents (.25) with manual

clippers, Mr. Jimmy Goodall was a musician and organist at First Baptist Church, Mr. Alonso Sattler was the Berrytown Cemetery keeper, Mrs. Ossie Sadler, Berrytown Cemetery keeper, Mr. Rupert and Matilda Smith owned and operated an eat shop on Lagrange road called Forest Eat Shop, Billy Limp and William Curry was owner and operated the liquor store, now know as ...station Liquors, on highway 60,

Griffeytown school teachers, Mrs. Pat White, Mrs. Lottie Long, Village Inn owned by Mrs. Clara Payne and Mrs. Jenny Todd, Later became 506 Club, sold to Arvell Dixon, Mrs. Sarah Jane Sanders was a seamstress, Mrs. Lizzie Sanders was a laundress, babysitter and janitor for Griffeytown school, Mr. William Waller had a grocery store, vegetable route and rental apartments, Mr. Harry Gaskin and Chester Harris had a slaughter house for pigs and other animals, Mrs. Marie and Albert Moore were caterers, Mrs. Clair Jones, and Viola Jones were cooks and catered around Anchorage, Mr. Lewis Berry, Mrs. Mattie McElroy, Mrs. Henrietta Rowan, all relatives of Alfred Berry lived in the home place on Berrytown Road,Station near Lagrange Road was the home of the lodge hall, Mrs. Lucy Dixon worked for Mrs. Maude Harmon, The Needlepoint, Mrs. Emma Gufred sold popsicles and ice cream. Griffeytown has two churches, Pilgrim Baptist Church 1905, Hobbs Chapel United Methodist Church 1885, Mr. Milton McCoy worked at the Baptist Book Store.

I went to Forest School for eight (8) years and then I went to Lincoln Institute. We had to go up to Simpsonville. We had a three room school on Berrytown Road, Forest School which is still there but the First Baptist Church owns it now. It was all black, three teachers. Mrs. Hattie Daniels, Mrs. Theresa Jackson, Mrs. Lavetta Smith were the teachers. They were really like families to us. Cause we just walked to school, it was right in running distance. I'd run right across the street, they had a little lunch, we played, had outside toilets and a stove in each room that were big potbelly stoves and had a stage and a piano. Mrs. Hyatt was the music teacher. She'd come out and give me lessons on one or two days and crack your hands with the ruler if you missed a note. We had our little school closing on our stage. Then when you graduated, you'd go over to First Baptist Church and have your graduation from eighth grade. Then from eighth grade, we always were bussed, always. We had to ride a bus from Berrytown to Simpsonville to high school. We went to high school up at Simpsonville.

We went there every day and came back. There were some people who lived on the campus and it was four years there. I didn't finish my twelfth (12) year there. I went to my twelfth year and I quit and worked cause things were bad and we

didn't have much money. I got a job and worked and got married. Lincoln Institute was supported by the state. It's the Whitney Young Job Corps now. It was good being there. I remember some of my teachers. Mr. Pinknie never taught me but he was a favorite. He'd stand around and say little comical things to us all the time like, "don't cry little elephants you'll be a big one by and by." He was a great big guy and he was always trying to say something to cheer you up. His wife was there and Mr. Carol was there that just passed away a couple of weeks ago and Mr. Whitney Young Senior was the Principal there. Mrs. Johnnie Steel was the dietician and I remember Mrs. Pope and Mrs. Williams. They had lunch and they had dormitories and they had students, I can't remember how many. There was the boys dormitory, the girls dormitory, they came from all around in the neighboring counties. They paid to stay in the dormitories. \$6.00 a month. I saw a lot of my school members at a picnic week before last, they came down. We used to have a boat and we would go up every year. We haven't been up for a couple of years. The Lincoln Foundation still goes on and gives scholarships and stuff and have things at the waterfront. They still have the Lincoln Foundation that does a lot for black people.

I got married about two years after I left school. I worked a couple of years and then I got married. I have seven children. Their names are Milton Jr., Elsie, Michael, George, Denice, Anthony and Robert. I have seven grand children and two great grand children. My oldest son is right here. He's been in Los Angeles. He's the only one that has been away from me and now he's here. He lives at home with me because he's had subdual hemotibia and in January he had Bell's Palsy and he has a little nervous condition and he's here. They are all here. This is the home body, they can go to anybody's house in the family and know that they can just go by and get a sandwich if they need it. They just drop by unexpectedly. They love it because everybody here in the houses just about are relatives. We are all related. The Apartments and things are the newest part but we know everybody in the surrounding houses. It's a comfortable feeling and I love my home. Somebody is always at my house and everybody's got a key, I think. I lock my door but everybody's got a key and know how to get in.

We have come a long way and we are still reaching out, looking forward to Berrytown Center that's coming up. We've been promised the money and Lavern worked hard for it. She's been here for us and we're proud to have a niece like her. We should be getting that to help keep our kids off the street corners and things. We are lucky we don't have killing and robbing and stuff like that. We're trying to help them before it gets to that point. Lavern Davis is my niece and Marietta

Trowel is my niece, my brother's two children, the one who helped raise me when I was coming along. I'm just thankful and if the Lord lets me live through this, I'd like for more of our children to know that just because they were raised without their mother and fathers, they can still do good and live a good long life and do something for somebody else.

The Filson Historical Society

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
CARRIDDER M. JONES PROJECT DIRECTOR

In consideration of the recording and preservation of my oral history memoir, I hereby grant and assign them to the Filson Club in Louisville, Kentucky, and consent to the deposit of my oral history memoir in their permanent collection, to be used for whatever scholarly or educational purposes, including the right to duplicate, and distribute the recordings and/or transcription to any other libraries and educational institution. I grant Carridder M. Jones, all literary property rights, including transcription and publication rights to this material as an unrestricted gift.

Signature of donor

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Interview with Robert L. Gaskin, Jr. - Griffeytown - December 2, 2000 - By
Carriдер M. Jones

I am Robert L. Gaskin, Jr, I was born 6-27-1933 in Griffeytown, Kentucky. My mother was Anna Bell Gaskin and my father was Robert L. Gaskin, Sr. My mother's Birthday would be April 21, 1906. My fathers birthday would be September 18, 1908. My grant parents were Alice and Henry Gaskin and I don't know their birth date. My grandparents were out of Henry County, a little town called Cambelsburg, Kentucky. My grandmother lived here in Griffeytown but my grandfather didn't. Work brought her here to Jefferson County.

Years ago, there was an orphan home for handicapped children and my grand mother worked there for a number of years before she went out to do domestic work in Anchorage. I don't remember the name of that orphan home. She did work for Doctor Barnett, Dr. Joseph Barnett. He and his father both were physicians and she worked for them. She mostly babysat for the son, Joseph, Jr. and she cooked for the father and his wife.

My mother and father lived here in Griffeytown and my mother did domestic work and my father worked for a number of years back in the thirties for Self Hardware in Middletown. He was there for a number of years before the war then he went to the Quarter Master. I believe it was Dupont during the war. In latter years, he worked at Olin Matherson's up until he retired.

I had one sister, her name was Agnes Gaskin. She is deceased now. She left Griffeytown in 46 and moved to Dayton, Ohio. Growing up in Griffeytown was good. We had no violence or nothing like that. Older people or your neighbors could correct you and was nothing said. I appreciate that, I wish it was like that today where older people could correct your children, whip them and send them home and they might get another one when they got home.

I went to Griffeytown elementary school for eight years before leaving going to Lincoln Institute for high school. During my time at Griffeytown, I only had one teacher and that was Lottie M. Long. She taught mostly regular curriculum subjects. By being in a one room school, if you went there the first year then for eight years, you could hear everything repeated over and over. We had a lot of used books that the county sent us out where other schools had used them. We always got, most of the time, old books from the white schools. Some were raggedly and written in but we learned from those books.

The teachers were excellent as far as I am concerned. A lot of things they

taught me, once you learn something you don't forget it. We got a basic education. In the spring of the year, mostly boys, we played marbles and baseball, that was it. We had a small team. There were about forty children in school during my time, most of those eight years. We were able to go to school every day because there was no farming in this area and kids were glad to go to school. We didn't exactly have a lunch program. Back in WWII, I don't know if it was the federal government who gave us lunch at school once a week. One thing they served and I do not like now was this pitted grapefruit and these red kidney beans. There was something else they would send out and we had this about once a week in school. Now I don't eat no grapefruit and no red kidney beans. The government was sending those things to Jefferson County Public Schools because we didn't have no lunch room. We just had a little room used for a kitchen and the older girls would prepare it and we'd sit at our desk and eat. From eight until about three in the afternoon, that was about all that we had at school. Once a year we'd have some kind of PT or some kind of raffle and that would be it in school.

The only association we had with Middletown and Anchorage was work. Back in those days people were more concerned and friendly. One day we used to have bible school. A lady named Ms. Wood Jones from Middletown was in the Methodist Church and her and Mrs. White, which was Afro-American and they joined together in recreation. We had this summer bible school and that was the connection we had with Middletown but not with Anchorage church or anything like that.

As far as I can recall, people who did domestic work when I was coming up was getting around fifty-cents an hour. When I was a kid, I always worked. I'd cut grass and get fifty-cents an hour. That was along in about 46 and 47 during the war and wages went up. I heard a lot of people say they got a dollar a day to go to Anchorage and work. Some of them walked and some time the employer would pick the help up. A lot of the men, to survive and make a living, worked for some people who had large yards and gardens. Back in those days people walking was common and you were used to it. I can recall the women walking to work in the morning and coming back at dark, coming back home, a many of them.

As I said, I was born in 1933 and coming up as a kid, I guess things may have been a little tough but as a child, you don't realize it. My uncle came here in about 1929 and he had a grocery store for about fifty years and most of his clientele back in those days were white. He had this grocery store and he would kill hogs. He made his money, especially during WWII from fresh hog meat. He was known to make country sausage. A lot of his clientele were from Anchorage and Middletown.

Then he would take some downtown and sell. His store was called Mr. Gaskin's Grocery Store. It was located on Bellwood Road. He operated that store about fifty years. After the war, big stores was kinda taking over and he was losing money so he leased it out to some guys. They kept it about six months then they gave it up. Finally he went on and sold the building and they tell me that back in the late 30's, my daddy he owned a taxi cab, about the only taxi cab around and he ran that for years until he finally got a job in the Self Hardware store in Middletown. He was their delivery man for years. After WWI, the man sold the store then he went, I think to Dupont during that time to work.

My dad specialized the importance of education, I remember that first year, in my primer book. He would mark two or three words and I had to set in his lap at night and spell those words for him. Although my father had only about a sixth grade education, cause he could read and write, he was on me to learn how to spell and read. I sat in his lap every night and spelled those words for him. Then I was punished if I couldn't spell them.

When I was a kid, I wanted to be a doctor but after I got older things changed. I think it was in 1962 that I was approached by Dr. Winston Block at the hospital. I had my aunt in there and he talked with me. He told my aunt, 'this young man has potential to be a doctor'. But, I was about 22 years old, just come out of service and bought a new car so I wasn't interested in going to no school. When I was a kid, they used to call me Doc because I wanted to be a doctor.

I was in the Army. I served from 1953 until 1955. Most of my time was at Fort Knox. I had went to a year of business college and so I did primarily office work then I went into the Military Police. There I did administrative work for my two years. The time I went in 53, things were all right. I have no complaints. I came out of the military and stayed two weeks and I applied for a job at International Harvest, which I got but when they showed me I was going to be working in the foundry and I had been working in the office two years, I couldn't stand the heat. So I worked for a lady in Middletown when I was a kid, Mrs Thromellon, she was a nurse at Jewish Hospital. I went and told her I wanted a job at General Electric and she asked whose in charge and I told her. So we sat down and drank some tea, I got the man on the phone and happen she knew him and he said, 'send him back on out here to my office'. I went directly out there in 55, went on in and he hired me on the spot. Though I applied for administrative in the office, they were not hiring Negro's in that capacity at the time. I took a job on the line and I stayed there and retired after thirty three years.

All Mrs. Thromellon asked me to do was to go to work and do a good job.

She just passed about three years ago. She was 100 years old. My mother had worked for her for years and I worked for her. Actually, we had become family is what it was. She and her sister who passed a few years before she did, we had become as one family.

Most of the people who came here that I recalled when I was coming up seemed to come from a place called Todd's Point up in Shelby County. A lot of the older people came from Todd's Point looking for work in Jefferson County. Like my Uncle, they came from Henry County and scattered around. When they came here but back in WWII, say the early 40's, there's a man named Applegate that had a rock quarry over out from Berrytown. He would go down south and he would bring a many Afro Americans up here to work in the rock quarry. So they sort of formed their own little city over in the rock quarry. They had their own stores, the police and everything. After while, everything began to break and the people who migrated here got settled in Griffeytown and Berrytown. Then jobs got better then they started taking these jobs going north. Quite a few of them stayed here but the younger bunch, when the war came, they went to Cincinnati, primarily to Detroit but a few of them stayed here. They settled in and didn't leave.

When I was a kid, we just called that place the Quarry. We're going over to the Quarry, the L&N Quarry. This man would bring these people up here and put them in boxcars. They would take a box car, four or five families would take a boxcar and make a home out of it. But, they were all there and they were happy. When the war came then they started reaching out. The younger bunch started going north. I didn't go over there because it was too far for me to go on the bicycle.

The men drilled rock all day. They women they started taking jobs in Middletown, Anchorage and surrounding areas doing domestic work. When the war came, that enlightened everybody up to move up just a little bit further.

Freed slaves were the people who first started Griffeytown. I've been talking to ld people and I can't get the gist of Todd Point because there were a many Negro's came from Todd's Point. I have asked the older ones about Todd Point, I don't know if it was some kind of plantation or what it was. Some of the older ones I talked with up in their 80's an 90's that came from Todd's Point just scattered.

There were no plantations around Middletown. The biggest thing we had here was RC Way farm, which is Plainview subdivision now. Then across the street was Hurstbourne farm. My grandfather on my mother's side, he came down from BARDSTOWN, Kentucky back in the early 1900's. His name was Harry Bean. And he and his wife and my mother came down from BARDSTOWN, we had some

relatives from BARDSTOWN living in Louisville. He went out there and got a job as a gardener and he must have stayed out there 65 years. During that time, they hired a whole lots of people, white and black. I said, they don't call it plantation but a farm. There was over a thousand acre and all of these people living on the place working. My grandfather and one auntie, she was the cook at the big house and her husband was the butler. My granddaddy was the gardener for Mrs. Hurt. In latter years when all of them were old, she and her brother and my grand father would go to church together, down to Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Saint Matthews. They just become family and he just lived with them down there. Then he just stayed there until they passed. Meanwhile, her niece was living there so he just stayed there and gardened for her niece until he passed. He must have passed in the late 60's.

He never lived in Griffeytown, he lived down on Hurstbourne farm. That's where my mother was raised up. We spent a lot of time as kids down there in the summertime. We'd go down there in the summertime and spend some time with them. My mother and father lived in Griffeytown after they got married. They got married must have been back in the 20's about 1927. What brought my daddy to Griffeytown was because his brother got out of WWI and he heard about Griffeytown and he migrated down this way and was working. Finally he got to Berrytown and then he moved to Griffeytown and decided to open up a grocery store. It was a way to make a living besides working for someone else. They started a one room grocery store and they started working. He raised my father and then he brought my father down with him. My father come here and stayed, then he met my mother and they got married so this was home.

Dan Griffith was one of the first settlers in Griffeytown. I lived in that log cabin he brought here. We moved in that log cabin, I must have been about nine years old. It was up on Old Harrods Creek Road. There was three rooms, two down and one up and I lived in that log cabin house until 1948. How dumb we were, we didn't even know it was a historical house. As a kid, I could remember a little boy, one of the older families around here which is the Bald family. The man I know we called him uncle Dick Ball. His niece was an old maid, Maggie McThenia. They lived in the house and we lived across the road from them. It must have been, we must have moved in that house I guess about 44 or 43. We moved in the log cabin house. We didn't know then it was a historical house. We always thought Mr. Dick Bald built this house. Other people got to talking, that's the log cabin. Then we started getting some history on it but we really didn't know nothing about it.

Really didn't find out too much about it other than it was a man from Middletown that moved here, moved the house over here. We were in that thing and paid about \$2.00 a month rent, my dad did. There were no lights, no water or nothing like that. No indoor plumbing, just a plain house. Four of us lived there, me and my sister, mother and father. I never did any research on Dan Griffith. I don't know if Diane did any or not. That little book is all of the history we have on Dan Griffith. Some of the older settlers were the Bald family, the Hughes family moved here back in the 20's. The Washington family come out of Hikes Point here. There was the White family and Hardest family. Those were some of the older families here as I recall. All of them are deceased now.

I would say there were about 400 people in Griffytown at it's peak. Everybody survived. I'm 67 years old and I can't recall a day being cold or being hungry. We were equal because everybody had the same thing. We may have had a few in the neighborhood who had a little bit better jobs and a little bit more money. They used to call that high class. About three or four families of high class people, when you narrowed it down, they had no more than no one else. The high class were like the Hardest family, the Garden family, the Shelburne family. They had jobs worked for the state and some worked for Central State. They had better home and they were called high class people. They were doing the same thing, domestic work, cooking that was it. But I guess they set themselves with a better homes and they got over.

Just like my father could have been better off. He was telling me before he died, he worked for this man, Self and back during this time in Griffytown there were a lot of vacant lots and the man used to beg my father. You buy the lots, I've got the material and build you some houses and get up on your feet. My dad said he was young and had no sense of what the man was telling him. The man was crazy about him. He said I could have perhaps owned half of Griffytown if I had listen to what the man told me. He was going to furnish all the material and get some laborers to help build the houses for him. My father said, 'I was just dumb and couldn't see it'.

I came through here back in the 60's before we go the streets and sidewalks. I had one uncle to get on me. He said, 'you're working, buy some of them lots up'. When I started to buying them up, that's when the streets and sidewalks come up. Then the people started raising the price up. Because I was getting some lots for \$600.00 and buy some at the court house door. Soon as I started buying the streets and side walks come. People had bought lots that had never lived here before and I was buying them up. Then they put the price on me and I had to stop. I kept em'

all until I retired. After I retired, After I retired, I was too old to keep em' up, cut grass and so I sold them and made a profit off of them. There was one, two, three, four.....there was eight, eight pieces of property. I got in at the right time cause I fought for them to get the streets and sidewalks. It was rough.

Back in my days, they had one white family that lived here. They were as poor as we were, had nothing. Had a three room house, no running water was around here unless it rained. They lived here and they finally moved and until we got the streets and sidewalks, the settlers came in and started taking over. The white neighbors are the settlers. They said this is Middletown. No, we have a historical sign, this is Griffytown. Don't say Middletown. If you want to be in Middletown you go across the highway, but you're in Griffytown.

One lady moved here, she was in the real estate business. She was a young girl and she got started and bough up some property then she wanted to change the name and a lady Ms. Daugherty said,' no, no. I came from Alabama and I've been here over 60 years. This is Griffytown. We've got a historical sign down on Old Harrods Creek Road, it was dedicated. This is griffytown, not Middletown. If you want to be in Middletown, you take your house and go to Middletown'.

It's been some hectic days for some people. When we had this Urban Renewal, we had a chance to leave but I said no. I'm borned here and I'm going to stay here and tough it out until the roads get in and I don't intend to go until I die. I really enjoy it and anybody who come in the neighborhood on my block, I make them welcome and explain to them what is what. I tell my white friends, you people did not even come into the neighborhood. Actually you couldn't get in because the roads were so bad. That was hard on me but I have enjoyed living here. I feel safe and secure. I had a burglar alarm on my house I've taken off because when I go out of town, my doors are unlocked and that's how safe I feel. I tell everybody this is a good neighborhood. Everybody gets along really good out here.

I'm more close to the people on my block. They call me the Mayor on my block. I walk and when they come in, I make them welcome and say if it's anything I can help you do, just let me know. I'm home all day. If you've got children playing out there, I watch your children just like they belong to me. So I get along fine with everybody.

There were some hard times for some people. Two or three families, the fathers were much older than the mothers and had a bunch of children. They farmed around and did work . It was hard for those people but they all worked and did survive and made it. There were about two or three families that had it rougher than others. Otherwise everybody was about equal. Everybody had a garden and raised

some hogs in the back yard. All of them went to church together. Most people went to the Pilgrim Baptist Church and Hobbs Chapel Methodist Church. But primarily, most of them were Baptist out here. With the exception, on my side of the family, we were Catholic. We would go to our church then we'd go with my grandma to the Baptist Church.

We were Catholics because my mother's people were from BARDSTOWN and that's considered the Holy Land. So when you come down from Nelson County, you're Catholic. Years ago, father came from Holy Trinity to give us instructions, me and my sister. He'd pick us up and take us down to Hurstbourne farm with about seven cousins down there then we would take our instructions in the yard in the summer time. Then somebody would have a car and we would go to mass at Holy Trinity. They finally changed Holy Trinity and converted it into Saint Margaret and Mary. Then we went there. In Griffytown, we were the only.... me my momma and sister were the only Catholics out here. My father never converted. After he got older, he said he wished he had when he was younger. We were the only Catholics in Griffytown and we caught hell too, ridicule and called cross backs, me and my sister. That didn't stop us though.

We had a couple of bootleggers in town. There was a lady who did have a ...back in them days they called it a joint. She bootlegged. She did have a beer license sell sandwiches and had a long room where they could go on Saturdays and Sundays, drink beer and dance. By that moonshine as they call it. The lady that owned the restaurant had a brother and he was a bootlegger. He would go in the country and he would make it. She would go somewhere and buy it but then she got busted a couple of times when I was a little kid. I lived right next door to it. Her name was Maud Dixon Conner and she had a restaurant for years.

Before she got that restaurant, a man that had it called it the Lonely Pine Inn. This man bootlegged but they say it was a first class place. They had two pine trees in the yard, a nice white house and his clientele was the whites from Middletown. It was located up on Harrods Creek Road, The Lonely Pine Inn. His clientele was white back in them days cause I guess it was prohibition and he had this place and he kept it beautiful. Trees were white washed and the rocks were white washed. That was his clientele and people from Middletown back in them days drinkers would come there and he'd entertain them. Blacks got theirs and went on out the door, wasn't no sit down for them. Finally he left and went to Detroit. After he left, his wife taken over and they got a beer license, juke box and slot machines. Cause I went in and danced a many a days. I guess it was there where I learned how to dance and learned how to cuss, I think. All in the same spot and I lived next door to

a restaurant for years. Then I moved across the street.

Back here, we call this the baby farm. The man sold this ground was Greybomd or something. This was a big farm back here years ago, an older man told me before he passed. Then they went out of the farm business and he had a nursery and there was a greenhouse. This man sold it to a guy named Ruff and Ruff subdivided it off to thirty foot lots. The man said he would pay a dollar down and every Monday he would come out here and collect his dollar for his lots. Some of the lots back here he bought back in the 20s and 30s. He was selling the lots off to the black people. A dollar down and a man said he would come at you on Monday morning. Had a black man with him and they would collect his dollar and they paid a dollar a week for their lots. A \$150.00 back in the late 30s or early 20s was rough. But people managed to buy a lot and called it the baby farm because then you could raise some chickens and hogs in the back yard and survive. They just called it the baby farm cause they were small. They used to have two big signs when you entered Griffytown from Middletown, Baby Farm Lots for Sale. Back in them days they was still talking that stuff. They was going to put water and all of that and couldn't spell water. They had two signs at the entrance so people bought the lots like my dad.

R.G. Mays was the black undertaker. He would bill you and if you didn't have any money, he would take your property. So my dad was able to buy...he was smart, when he bought, he bought two lots. Which made a 60 foot lot by 120. My auntie just bought a 30 foot lot. Then you could build on a 30 foot lot, until about four years then they talked about suing me cause I sold a man a 30 foot lot. The man sneaked down there and got a permit to put a house on there and they're talking about suing me. I told the lady, how can you sue me. I did not build. I sold the lot.

When the Urban developers got through out here, I worked with them, I was a coordinator back and forth. They called me one day and said, Bob, there is a lot behind you, a 30 foot lot. There's nothing we can do with that lot. Why don't you buy it. Well, I don't have no money. We know better than that. Buy the lot, give me a price. I said \$300.00. It's your lot. I'll draw it up, send you the papers and you sign it and it will be your lot. So I bought the lot and I had cleared it off. I was going to plant some raspberries on it. I was just sitting here one day and a man knocked on my door from Paul Semonin. You own the lot behind you? Yes. Do you want to sell it. Ain't no for sale sign on it. He said, oh. Then I looked at this young man and he was black. I said Paul Semonin don't have too many black representatives, you're a token. So they got out here. Did you bring Paul

Semonin's pocketbook with you? The young man started laughing and so we sat and talked and talked and he was telling what he was going to give me. No, it's no for sale sign. No, no \$4,000, I'm not taking the \$4,000. I don't want to really sell it. He talked and talked. I said you go back and tell Paul Semonin to send me about \$7,000 dollars out here and he can have the lot.

He come back and said, no they won't go that high. Well, the guy that wanted to buy the lot went through Paul Semonin. So, I held out. I said tell you what you do, don't you or Paul Semonin come to my house and worry the hell out of me no more. If you can't give me \$7,000 don't come out here. When I bought the lot, I figured people on the other side had a lot and one on the side, they were trying to make their lots bigger. I said I'll just hold it. I kept the lot for a year and I paid \$300 and got \$7,000 out of it. They call me a black Jew anyway, cause I will argue with you all day long.

Just like I acquired the lot next door, I was young. When you're young, you're crazy. I was sitting on the porch, just come out of service, sitting there drinking scotch. Old man was cleaned the lot off. Son, let me sell you this lot for \$600.00. Mr. All I want is a 4X6. Six feet long, four feet wide is all of the ground I need. He said, all right son. It didn't dawn on me until about two years later. My uncle and another old man. Bob, you're making pretty good money. Buy something. I understand that man went home that night and he died. Three years later I met his Niece. I tried to buy the lot. She said it's me and my Nephew and he don't want to sell. I said all right. I cut the trees down and I kept cleaning and cleaning it off, for forty years. And, a young white boy moved out here and he was in the mind property out here and he found out that I kept the lot cleaned off. He came out and talked with me and said, you kept that lot cleaned off for forty years. I said, yeah. What do you think it's worth cleaned off? I said oh, about 3500 dollars. He said, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll get a lawyer and get it cleared out and we'll get it.

I'm taking this all in because he don't know my eyes been on that. I've done talked with the lawyer before. My next door neighbor is a lawyer. She come in and I said, Jerri, Jarvin come down and told me all them heirs are dead on that property. I said I've been after it. She said, you can get it at ...possession. I said how much's that going to cost me. She said \$700.00. I'll get started on it. So we got started on it. So I know this man had relatives in Evansville. So went to Evansville archives and checked and checked, there was noting in Evansville. We did find papers back here. The man had bought the lot, he and his wife had bought it years ago, she deeded her part to her husband and they had no children and he never did deed it

over to his nephew. They were just heirs but they were all dead. So I got it through possession. All I got to do is tell the man, he did pay \$500.00 taxes on it. He thought he was going to get the lot and I smiled in his face for a whole year. Yeah, we're gonna get it. And I was working the whole time. See my buddy next door is a lawyer. He gave us some problems but I worked on those problems and went back to court and I got it. I got it and sold it.

Like I said, I'm old and I don't need no more land. I have enough around here to keep cut. \$700.00 was just the lawyers fee. They are in court right now about this \$500.00, this young man paid the taxes on it. He went to the title insurance company and said he didn't get a fair hearing on it the property. He had no interest in the property because he had not been here but two years. So the lawyer and the guy at the commissioner's office, she's getting it for a lawyers fees because I had to go back to court two times with him. So I got the lot and sold the lot for \$25,000.00 and put the money in my pocket.

I don't have to advertise. Somebody know I've got something, they come direct to me. My uncle said, if you do a good business you don't have to advertise. You don't have to advertise because I had the lot. I could have got more because I signed a contract with a guy. Another guy builder come in. He said, Bob I ain't know you was going to sell it. I said yes, I sold everything off except what I'm living in and if you want to buy that, I'll sell that to you. Me and my dad built this house. We started building back in 48. He didn't care about nothing. I was home and so we built a house. I knew my mother was going to die so me and my sister said, we know you daddy. We didn't work and kept the house up and momma died and he'd be mad and put you out doors. I said I don't care nothing about some matches and a gallon of gasoline and baby burn, baby.

She said no, I've got a house because I helped my sister get her house. She said no, while momma is living, I'm going to get it deeded. I said no, I'll wait until it's willed to me. My sister said, no you know your daddy. I'm going to get the house in your name while momma's living. So that's what they did, got it in my name. Cause that's what built the house, I 'm saving money to help them on it. Do a little bit at a time on it when I come out of service. I guess I was just raised different.

I come out of service back in 55. Food wasn't that high and I'm working and my daddy is in the streets. Like he was still a young man. I thought, it's \$25.00 a week and I paid half the bills. I kept the house up and when my mother started getting sick, I said I won't marry, I'll stay home and take care of you and dad, which I did. So I just stayed here. He's crazy as hell. Crazy as hell my daddy. My

uncle said I raised your daddy but he's crazy. He didn't want to put out no money for nothing. Now he'd good time that money but I made a promise and when he got sick I took care of him. I retired early to take care of him. I had to put him in a nursing home then I got high praises and glory, my son, my son.

Like I told him one day, I said see, you wasn't the father you were suppose to be. My Uncle and my momma, they're the ones that raised me, not you. You got the glory of getting me and that's it. I said, but you have been unfaithful. My uncle said, you should have been the father and he should have been the son. But I got all praise and glory in that nursing home. My son this and my son that. I took care of my auntie, my uncle, then my momma, then my daddy and then my sister. I drove to Dayton every week for one year. I'd go up there and I'd cut grass, clean up and cook, until I got my niece from Florida back to Dayton. So I had it. I guess that's why I had that heart attack about four years ago. All of that pressure that was on me but I went through it.

I never married. When I found somebody I wanted to marry, they were divorcees and I wouldn't have married them at church. Now I'm too old to get married now. If I married now it would be to a nurse who owns an undertaker, ha ha, ha. My momma was having a problem since 62. She came home one day just tired and sick. I said, no you stay home and I'll take care of you, and that's what I did. I had to bathe my mother just like a baby when she got sick. My father, he'd get her up since she couldn't walk. I'd come here in the afternoon I'd change her like a baby. I'd cook soft food for her, then I would cook for he and I. Then wash up, put her in the bed then I'd get in the couch at 8:30 at night and I'd sleep until 12:00, time to go to work.

I was about this size. I was going down, down, down. I told my sister, I'll call you when I need you. So I toughed it out for three months and finally had to get her in a nursing home. She stayed in the nursing home, I guess from October till December and passed. Well we got this house too and we've got my father, no momma you're going into a nursing home. You ain't got no insurance and you've got to pay that bill. Eyes got big. She did have a little insurance and she had medicare but I was paying a thousand dollars a year for a mutual on Bankers and Life I carried on momma.

I had her in a nursing home called Jefferson Manor. When you walked in, you thought you were going to the museum or somewhere, it was just that nice. My sister said we can't afford to be here. When you go in you see all this grass. We had the car cleaned up and we was dressed decent and went in. We got to talking and they showed us around the place like a paradise. My sister said oh, hell, we

can't afford to be here. I said, well we're in here now. People started telling me, what kind of insurance do you have. I said medicare and I've got Mutual of Omaha, Bankers Life. You qualify. That made me feel good and I said, I feel good. I said use one with, medicare and when that breaks down let me know then we can tough it out. Like I told my momma, I said...she had about \$200.00 and some odd dollars. I told her, you save your money and live off of my money and that's what we did.

Luckily the insurance took care of the bill. When my mother died and everything, I had some money left. After my brother-in-law died, my sister got cancer so I had to get her disability straightened out and I had money left. I just give it to my sister. I said, Take this little \$5,000. I'm working everyday, you take it. No, you'll need it, it's your money.

My Daddy, he was hot at me. See momma had them two little insurance policies paid fifty cents when you died. The undertaker would shoot you for coming out saying that's all you got is fifty cents to bury you with. I cashed them insurance in and put it in a savings account. I just saved her check every month and used my money. My daddy didn't have nothing. He come in and he cussed me to high heavens. The undertaker told him, said, you take these papers and get the death certificate and go toand get you \$250.00. The lord works out in mysterious ways.

When the check come, course I figured it in. Me and Kevin Williams are good friends. So he figured this 250.00 in having the check come in on Friday. He was out when I come in cause we were going to Dayton the next day. That check come, it come in to Robert L. Gaskin. I taken and deposited the check and on Monday write a complete check and pay the funeral bill off. He said, that check of momma's ain't come in yet? Naw, it ain't come yet. One day I said, here's the receipt on your wife's burial, paid in full. Paid in full? I said, yes, paid in full. His eyes got all big. Did you get that \$250.00? I said, oh, It's included in the bill. He could have shot me. I told my sister, she was living at the time, I said naw, he sat there and figured it in that night. My daddy was a riff-raff.

See Griffytown used to be rough. We had some riff raff come through here and my daddy was one of em'. He was a riff-raff in the butt. It was a fight, shoot and when Saturday night come, it was like Dodge City. We lived up on that main Road, Harrods Creek Road. We had one guy, he come from Alabama, that boy was half way crazy. On Sunday afternoon, people would line the road and he would fight everybody that would come up. He was a young man. Drink that moonshine and fight all Sunday. The last time they had a fight up on the road, we had a house and beside the house was an old thorn bush and when the police come, when the

sucker run up in there, he got in this rosebush and thought he couldn't get out because the fence was up and my daddy threw salt in the guy's eye.

It was rough coming up when I was a little boy. These old people were rough. I look at them now and they sit back in church, a lot of em', see I talk to them. I talk to them and say, remember, I was a little boy and I can remember so and so. They drop their head and change their conversation. The generation is no different, I say, just a little bit wiser than you all were. You all were doing the same thing, now you are too old to run in the race, now you want to sit and criticize. Gone back to the grandstand. I shut them up. See I'm that last generation I guess that was born in the 30s that's around here. My mind go back. I can remember every incident in this town except one, is when a lady back here, I must have been in service and her child got burned up in the house. I can't remember that and it happened along about the 50s and I told somebody, I must have been in service when we get to talking. They say oh, that's the only thing you can't remember. I must have been in service.

A child got burned up in a house about three years ago. The husband, his mind got kind'a bad and he went in there and put something in the fireplace and caught the house. When she got back from the doctor, the house was burnt in there where he was at. She said this has been a bad luck house. Had a child get burned up, had my husband almost get burned up. Happens a man was in the yard and seen the smoke and went in there and got him out and got the fire department to put the fire out. Their names were Thornton's, Alberta Thornton, lives down the street from Diane. I told her a child got burned up back in the 50s and I just can't remember it. That's the only thing in Griffytown I can't remember, cause I can walk you down the street vacant lots or house and I can tell you who lived there, how many was in the family.

I was born here and my memory is that good. Diane is younger than I am and there are a lot of things they can't remember. I can tell you house for house, who lived in that house, how many children they had and almost time when they passed. Back here there were quite a few houses they're tore up now cause there are new houses they built up in here but my memory goes back to Griffytown. I said, it's such a good location and I ain't going no where till the undertaker get me, or a nursing home. Whichever get me first can have me. But it's a nice neighborhood and it's peaceful. Down on the other end, moving in down there are some younger people. But this end back here, everybody gets along fine. We have no problems.

I can see the community changing. For one things is the improvements, streets sewers, and water. Here we are poor people and over in Anchorage, the rich

neighborhood don't even have sewage over in Anchorage. They raising sand now and they've got four and five hundred thousand dollar homes. They do not have sewage. We've got it here. They have septic tanks in Anchorage. It's been in the paper. This guy that owns Papa John's Pizza. He's from out of Indiana. He's trying to buy the little section in downtown Anchorage. He's buying most of Anchorage up. He's going to run some sewage down there. They've got two, three, four hundred thousand dollar homes, they do not have sewage. We got sewage here. They don't want to merge with us cause we're black and poor. We couldn't afford it anyway and Middletown just now, the newer section, the old section didn't have it but the newer section, they got sewers. You'd be surprised, Indiana Hills out there didn't have sewers out there on septic tanks and these people have money, don't have nothing. We've got sewage but those homes over there in Anchorage do not have no sewage.

We got ours through the federal government, neighborhood development. Urban Renewal they were tearing everything down. You go in and you rehab. I guess I got gray hairs from that. I was one of the coordinators. I got in there and worked. I got cussed out but we went in there, I tried to make my daddy see. I said you older people, you all can get grants. Then you can get some loans. I put a new roof on my house and put up new gutters. We had bootleg plumbing in here, now we can get some legal plumbing. I said, you are old enough, you and momma. You all qualify, you're old enough and you all qualify for about an \$8,000 grant. Stay in the house five or ten years. He was telling the government, he was up and down the road like Paul Revere, telling people, the Government is going to take your property.

I'd go to people's house at night and talk with these old people. That was the idea, the government's going to take your property. Government's not going to take your property. So when I got it for my mom and dad. I said, it's good at my house, the government's not going to take your property, I've got more sense than that. I go to meetings, I'd take off from work and I had to confidence and confidence these old people. Well it was a hectic thing the year they worked here really dug the streets up to put the sewage in. The worst snow we had in years came and that snow stayed here forever. I had to park my car on the road, put on old shoes to go out and go to work. Couldn't get back in here for a while.

It was hard and people called and cussed me. Dammit, we listen at you and the roads are a mess. You ain't had no road from the get go. They gave me sand. I said, it's going to be alright, it's going to be alright. When they got it in, they was all happy except for about five people. The man in charge would come out here at

night time and go down there and talk to them. He was a black guy and they would cuss him out. You people 65 and older, you all can get grants pay for your sewage. We already had water, gas in the street. You all get a grant it ain't going to cost you nothing, stay in the house for ten years. When it's all over, they had to go down there and get loans. Then they called me up, Bob can we get some money? Yeah, if you sign your name on the dotted line. I said, we sat there and begged you all.

Had a poor lady that owned this property next door and they had a house over there and a lady had bought the house on the other side back in the 60's. We used to have a coal furnace. I said at first you're cold for 20 years, come up and go in the basement and get all the coal you want. Anything she needed, I looked out for her. I said I've got a shack over there but mine's little bit up to date than your shack. You're going to have to go. You don't want to go down town so you better come on and take a grip. I can get you a house in the neighborhood. Naw, naw, naw. Her daughters called me up, can't you drill something in momma's ear, about eighty years old. Until the bitter end, I wiped my hand and said, I'm through aunt Georgia. I said your butt,' going downtown in the project so forget about it, I'm through.

One day she called me up, Robert, can you get me that house? I said houses are about all gone. Just lucky, I got her a house out here. 80 years old and never had running water in a house. She had electricity over there and I finally got a house. She said, I thought you were against me. I said, I was for you Aunt Georgia, all these years, I called her Aunt Georgia. A friend of mine was going to move to Shelby County had a five room house with about an acre of ground, had just remodeled the house. I was able to get the house for her so I go downtown to a meeting and took her down there. They said, the sewage ain't come through yet, you trust Robert. We're going to give Robert this \$600.00 and when the time comes, he's going to get your sewage in for you, do you trust him? Yasser, Yasser, yasser.

Before she died, I got her set up in a decent house. Judge Hollenback was the County Judge and he came out and talked to her. Mrs. Hughes you like to have a nice little four room cottage, running water in it. Yasser, yasser. When he left, she called him all kind'a blue eyed bastard. But bless her heart, I finally got her in a decent house before she died. Then she got sick. She kept telling me, I want a will. I said when you make your mind up, I'll get it together for you. So I went to the hospital to see her. Her granddaughter was staying with her. I went to the hospital and wrote down what she wanted and said, I'll get it together for you. So I got her will for her, then the last time she got sick it happened.

I checked on all of my old neighbors. I get out and walk in the afternoon. I checked on her and I said, you're going back in the hospital Aunt Georgia. I'm going to get you in the hospital. I told her granddaughter, you call 911 and I'll call your momma and meet you at the hospital. She didn't make it back home but I did get her will made out for her. Her name was Georgia Hughes. But I looked after ... We had a lot of old people out here and I just looked out for them. Cause I'd get out and walk. Whatever they'd need, I'd take it out of my pocket and get for them. I carried a lot of... I give them respect and I got a lot of respect.

Griffytown has never been incorporated. We had this strong civic club. Lavern Davis was president. We formed that civic club and got a hold... Lavern is a good talker. I was very active in the civic club till couple of them made me mad. I was an officer and I was treasurer for 16 years. I had two old fellows, they talked about the money in the bank, three bank accounts, you got two bank accounts. I was going out of town quite a bit. When we need some money, you're out of town. Your president and secretary has got the books. Them two can sign for it. So I kept getting this feedback, this feedback so I made my mind up. I said, I'm going to give this job up. When they die, I'll go back into it. So I gave them the books and I said, if you find one penny short, you call me. Don't put it in the street and I'll give you your penny. I give them the books and I never heard no more out of them. Cause I could go back 16 years and get you a receipt or a cancel check.

Mrs. Jones had been the principal of school for years out here in the Middletown area and she was the president. I Said, here's all of your books. There's three boxes of canceled checks and receipts. There's your book and ya'll find one penny short call me up. Every organization I got in Everybody wanted to make me treasurer. I don't know why, I guess I'm just a honest person with a honest face. I never heard no complaint, no complaint.

Some of the people out here are buried in the Middletown cemetery and Berrytown's got a cemetery in Berrytown. So we've got that civic club and one guy got it fired up and they've got it cleaned up now. A lot of people who live in Berrytown are buried in Berrytown Cemetery. They say there was a lodge cemetery years ago but all of the writing they could find...one man was sitting there collecting money for graves lots for years until they looked into it and went to Frankford and everything. So that was eliminated. They got an association over there. The majority of the people over here are buried in Middletown cemetery. It's always been a mixed cemetery over the years since I was a kid.

I can't think of nothing else.

In consideration of the recording and preservation of my oral history memoir, and/or documents and pictures, I hereby grant and assign them to the Filson Club in Louisville, Kentucky, and consent to the deposit of my oral history memoir, and/or documents and pictures in their permanent collection, to be used for whatever scholarly or educational purposes, including the right to duplicate, and distribute the recordings and/or transcript, documents and pictures to any other libraries and educational institution. I grant Carridder M. Jones, all literary property rights, including transcription and publication rights to my oral history memoir, and/or documents and pictures as an unrestricted gift.

Signature of Donor K. S. Lakshmi Date 12-2-2000

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