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Sandra Marrow Interview

Lenora Costa: OK, so we are starting and it’s the 17th of November and its ten to one. and its Miss Sandra Marrow and she is going to give us a lovely walking tour. And we are at the end of Ray Street

Sandra Marrow: well, actually the middle of Ray St

LC: the middle of Ray St

SM: Yeah, we already past Groves

LC: do you think it would be easier for you to hold this (the tape recorder) or for me to hold this its up to you

SM: I don’t know because I move my hands

LC: Well I can hold it as long as we walk beside each other

SM: Where do I start

LC: Just say whatever comes to mind

SM: Ok, we already talked about Mr. Bundies (sp?) house. Which Inky built, Mr. Inky or you can call him. George Wilson

LC: OK

SM: There use to be homes right here in this area, which is blank now. And the university bought all these homes up

LC: Oh yes, that’s a question I have are the structures the same? It is the same line of houses? Were they all built together?

SM: Mostly, mostly the same structure, now he probably added onto his. I don’t know in the eighteen years I was gone but most of them were, they were more like ranch homes that were sitting here. All along on either side. Now we are going back, because there used to be Mr. Davies, he used to live on this street too. And he had, the house was on one level and then he had a little area where teenagers could go. Where you could buy food and you know drinks, have a juke box. You know just sit around and lounge so there was some place for the teenager, the black teenagers, to hang out. And that was Mr. Davies’s house, was on this side, on the right side of the road going down. Left coming up. My aunt, she used to have a farm, just vegetables, hers was about, I don’t know if it was here or in that parking lot area somewhere in this area before that building and it went all the way to those trees there now. And her name was Josephine Ricks, and that my grandmothers sister, and she used have a little house and actually we could go down
the hill to my grandmothers. Back and forth, we didn’t have to go all the way down the block and she used to have, corn mostly that she grew, and onions, and tomatoes too. And me and my aunts, the one you know, we would be playing in there, getting our tomatoes and

LC: Oh real tomatoes

SM: Yeah that’s right, real tomatoes off the vine

LC: oh how good

SM: One time, my aunt got us caught, caught us. so my grandmothers down there her house hollering up to us, “Come on back down here and get out” you know because she can hear her sister fussing about us getting into the tomatoes. But they did see me because I’m little, yeah and I’m hiding. So my aunt Josephine says “Well Sandra doesn’t have to go” and my grandmother says “Oh yes she does just bring her back down here” So I was there, I was in on it, but because she didn’t see me she thought I could hang out at her house. Yeah my grand mother Carrie knew better. And that another thing to me it was an affectionate way. My mom and my aunt they never had to call their parents by Mom and Dad. So you know they would hear. There were a whole bunch of people in a house, there was my grandmother and my grandfather Herb James, and their sister liver there to, they called her Nanny, her name was Lillian, what was her last name? I think it was Walker, Lillian Walker, she had one child, so they was all living in the same house, because that was what their mother and father left them, the house down in the Hollow. So of course just hearing peoples names and no one really saying call me mommy, call me daddy. That when they stated talk they just started calling them by their first names. Which is Herb and Carrie. So I did the same thing, but well when the grandchildren were just calling them Carrie and Herb and then when the grandchildren started having children they said “well wait a minute, we have to do this better.” And so we had to start calling them Grandmom Carrie and Grandpa Herb. But I was, you know, I was the first grandchild, and I just never changed that, even thought I loved them and I knew they were my grand parents. There was still the respect, but I got a chance to call them Herb and Carrie like their children did. There used to be a house right here

LC: Where the low wall is

SM: Where this wall is and it used to belong to Miss Vi Pettiejohn and they do have an interview from here. And her house was here, which was also brown. And I would say right about, we would walk around, I never used to go behind anyone’s yard except for my aunt when I was being bad, yeah my great aunt to get to those tomatoes. Now its so much different but I would say right about here in this dirt area used to be the pump that my grandfather would tell me used to. He would take me, and I would think I’m pumping the water in the bucket but, you know, really it was him. Yeah I was too little but I thought I was doing good at the time. Now you see this section here, that what I’m thinking really Miss Violet’s house was really more over here and then our little road was here but because its so changed, because it never was open like this before. Now just
going back there was dirt here and there would be a few little wooden bricks. Not bricks but just like this, like a something you could step on in the dirt.

LC: for traction?

SM: That’s right for some traction and then we went straight down a dirt road to the hollow. Now I’ve never been down this way

LC: Which way you want to go? Bike path or steps?

SM: I’ll go the steps because that’s what we’re used to. And we went straight down, probably not much steeper, no, not much steeper. But you see some of the woods are still there, so they did maintain that, a little bit. Now I’m going to see by my moms if we can get pictures of the area of the hollow. I was hoping that someone could find a picture of me by the tree that we used to swing at, because of course I would like to say that’s the tree but I doubt it. So now we done walk down those steps so I would say that the house was probably right about here because

LC: It was before the little stream

SM: yeah because I asked my mom what, did the boogie run behind us, and she said no that is was just a little stream. And we got fresh water out of there at times or we would do the pump. Now, (It’s a mess) its trashy. Now, I don’t know if this is the stream or if this is Boogie Run, I don’t know. We will say this is our stream that we had, because there was a stream that went through there.

LC: So the house would be between the stream and the steps somewhere

SM: Right it was, because if you come down the steps all this area, I’m going to show that picture to you, all this our land, was the grass, there was trees on either side, apple trees and I would say the house was right about here. So now the description of the house. I remember it being brown, with no color on it but there was a porch, you walk up onto the porch and go into the house. You walked right up into the living room and you went two steps down, and there was the kitchen area, because it wasn’t very big. But just before the kitchen area, you could make a left turn and there would be winding steps to the bedroom area. There was three bedrooms, now mom and Thirst would say there were a whole lot of window panes but I don’t all the window panes. The one bedroom that I used to stay in a lot with my aunts it looked more like an attic bedroom. There was no window in that room as I could remember. No it came down, the wall was like slanted and it came down and the bed was there and then dressers, but I don’t remember a window in that bedroom. And then they had my grandparents had one. And I think it was just three, three bedrooms, but I can remember. But there might have been four because there were a lot of people that stayed there at one time. My experience in that house was using the slinky that they, they had the metal slinky, not them plastic one, and I would play down the stairs. But you go back off of the kitchen, there was another porch that wasn’t closed in, and it was just like a back door to the house. And my grandmother
had, I would say ducks, they might, but I say ducks. I know she had a little chicken coop. Remember I said they had a whole lot of land to the left there was a little a chicken coop there I don’t remember what mom said about they would always get baby chicks around Easter time and then that would be their dinner as they grew up, as the chicken grew up. There is a great big tree, something like that one, and it had a branch hanging out and where they made the homemade the homemade swing for me.

LC: Is that the same story where the snake came and everyone left you?

SM: Yes, that’s the same one, they did. But I was only five and I didn’t know to be frightened, I was just said, “I see a snake in the tree” and then they took off but like I said they came back and got me but I didn’t know to be afraid and run. But I looked at it coming down the tree till I could actually see the eyes

LC: What direction do you want to go now? This way?

SM: Yeah. We were on Ray St and now we are already on. I call this creek road but I guess this is south college? Or North college?

LC: Its technically North college now, but it’s the road I take to go to the park which is White Clay Creek

SM: Well we always called it creek road, as far as I can remember. There used to be a place that everyone would go swim if they were so brave. But because there was a lot of big rocks down there and it was part of an old dam.

LC: That doesn’t seem safe

SM: No but if its hot. And kids don’t see the danger but most of the time we would just go and pick berries. But I know that most of the braver ones and the guys, they would go down there. But to ask me how to get there now, I wouldn’t even have a clue. You know because we used to walk it and someone would always have a wagon. It seemed like every year some child would get a wagon and then the whole neighborhood could share it.

LC: until it fell apart

SM: right until it fell apart and then someone else would have one. We were fortunate enough, we didn’t have to have nursery schools, I would say in most of the 50’s and the 60’s I guess maybe up until the middle 60s. Because there was always somebody in the neighborhood that could baby-sit. Now this house I’m sure, the Smoots (sp?) used to live here

LC: in this yellow one?
SM: yeas in the yellow one, the Smoots and these three I mean all four of these, I just don’t remember exactly, I don’t know the peoples names. One of them Mr. Bias’s (sp?) is supposed to be in now. And I haven’t gotten a chance to talk to Mr. Net to find out exactly which one. And he might be in that small yellow house there. That’s the eighty year old man, that my aunt remember used to teach them dancing, where she had the tutu. Might be in that yellow one but I’m still not certain. But all up and down was part of the community that lived here. And now you can see the road hasn’t gotten any wider, so 10 – 15 kids were headed down this road at any given time.

LC: Hopefully with not a lot of cars

SM: right, there wasn’t very many because we could you know spread out and then we would go to either side if any cars came by.

LC: So people lived, how far until before you get to the actual creek area?

SM: It’s a pretty good ways, and I’m not going to even walk because I don’t know how far, there is suppose to be a turn off. And that was so many years ago, yeah it could be a ways off. As you are a child it doesn’t look like its very far but, when you grow up and you say “Oh my god, we walk this?” (laugh). Now I don’t know that looks like it was a train track and I think that track, my aunt remembers this track and it use to be a short cut to the Paper Mill. You know on Paper Mill road, that’s why it’s called Paper Mill road. And I think its still there, not the mill itself but the building. And that was the shortcut

LC: just along the railroad tracks

SM: Yeah, I never did but my aunt and them was brave enough to do it. But its back there and I don’t know how far back so I’m going to turn around. Because I don’t think there are any lions, and tigers, and bears Oh My.

LC: No but there are lamps in the trees, because that makes sense

(sad lamp Ikea commercial comments)

LC: So white clay drive is all new?

SM: Yeah there was no street there so they opened this up. I’m pretty sure it was across that little bridge and see that is the creek, because remember I told you about the little stream. But this is still part of Boogie run I’m sure. That was the water run off and the old dam where we use to play at. So that is our stream, where I was telling you. but I don’t think we took a picture of that. You see that was part of where we used to go

LC: that makes sense

SM: Yeah, that wasn’t that far, the area that they used to jump off of, I don’t know what area that is. but I want to say that is was right here. Because it looks lie there may have
been a house right here, there are some bricks . . . we younger kids used to . . . because this is where boogie run used to run off to and come out of/to. See? That looks like a little dam area. You know it was years; years ago, it used to be better. But I would say that it was right about, right about here. (hard to hear, crunch of leaves) Because it was a lot of water and there were always too many rocks, so people, they told them not to dive

LC: it’s not safe; you don’t want to hit your head

SM: you see there is something right there that is stopping the water. Through all the years, I guess the trees fell but even though this may not be where we stopped at, this is where we used to go swimming off of creek road. But I don’t know the name of it, my Momma then (?) might know that. And my momma is always afraid of the snakes. Well you see we lived in the Hollow and so they were there with us and she was scared to death. All of her siblings are scared because at any given time one might be in the house. And one time my mom was coming from the stream with a pail of water and she was almost to the back steps and a snake jumped out or fell out of a tree right in front of her. And it didn’t get on her but it could have and so that experience she would never forget. And she is scared of them, and her heart will start beating fast and everything. When I see them, I just go the opposite way of them. I don’t get frightened and freeze in my tracks because what good is freezing in your tracks? Because if you do and they are after you, then it will get you but if it is a harmless snake then it will just go on about its business. Because that stream used to house water moccasins. Me and a girl, Joyce Bias, we were visiting my grandmother again down in that little stream, not in it but on its banks, and we seen this snakes, because they have to breathe a little bit. And you can see them, see the bubbling. Now I don’t know what kind it was, they say we don’t have any poisonous snakes around here but my mom says she seen two in her days and she will be 70 in December. But I haven’t seen any, they used to have the black snakes, the green snakes, they call them garden snakes, and the one time I saw that water moccasin. I don’t know if they are still here in Delaware but we were kids when we saw that.

(in and out about a dream, traffic sounds)

SM: Yeah I would say there used to be families all up and down here until that creek. And if there were any others, farther up, we didn’t know them. I don’t know, I guess that is city property see down there that is the creek. So it’s somewhere, so we won’t get flooded out. That was really quite good, there was an area that the water would flow so it wouldn’t get into the houses even thought some of the houses were really close by. I know we mentioned that the Hubbard’s lived on Ray St and they had like 16 kids. And there were the Jackson’s and they we were related to us but not because of Thurstina (sp?) Jackson because she married into that Jackson family. But Sammy Jackson, Pie, they are related to us on our grandfathers side, I do believe on the James side of the family. We used to go there to Angie’s Sub Shop, its some other name now

LC: Is it still a restaurant?

SM: We want to go that way?
LC: you’re giving the tour whichever way you want

SM: Now this is starting the black community, but we still have to go the other way. Now when we would go out of our community we would go to Angie’s Sub Shop. Now Mr. Winston said, cause you see I was little then, when they had the sit-ins that Angie’s shop was going to integrate, and black people were going to be able to come into her sub shop and eat, they shut that side of their restaurant down.

LC: and so what did they have open? Just a take out window?

SM: Just the take out window for the subs. Now of course I don’t know all this because I was little, and by the time I was old enough to go down there by myself and to me for years Angie’s sub shop was the best place to get a sub. They were Italian, and they knew their business. And I was surprised when Mr. Winston was telling the history, that they used to have the sit in shop. Now I never knew about the sit in shop because they never had that by the time I came around. So the prejudice was all around us. But to me and of course my grandmother never taught us that, so we learned, as we got older of the prejudice. But our grandparents never told us to be mean to people. Just to treat people as you want to be treated.

LC: the golden rule

SM: the golden rule, you are no better than the next person and they are no better than you. so that’s how most of the community lived as. Now of course when we started to go to school, I guess we can make a short cut. See its called Paradise Pizza now. Well that used to be Angie’s sub shop to my knowledge but I’m going to ask them because they could have torn it down and built this parking lot. Because a lot of places seem to have done that.

LC: it does seem to happen a lot

SM: Happens more often than people realize. Because that’s a side door. That used to be our little hand out. Did this used to be Angie’s Sub Shop?

Mans Voice: Yes m’am

SM: The original

Mans Voice: Yes m'am, but come on in and see how it is, how it has changed

LC: see what has changed

SM: Yeas because when we first came it was just a counter here. Yeah . . . this is the part they had closed down. But I didn’t know that until Mr. Winston
Man’s Voice: I heard that it was good over here

SM: Yeah, Yeah we used to like coming to Angie’s sub shop, it was the best place around. I’m just giving here a tour of how Newark used to be fifty years ago.

Man’s Voice: Main street was not like that, not like that

SM: No, it wasn’t either So have you been in the area long?

Man’s Voice: No just about two or three months ago, with all these changes, know what I mean. I want to make it Angelo’s here

SM: yeah so you have to get some advertisement up

Man’s Voice: yes, I want people to come, I have take out but I want them to come here

SM: do you have a little jukebox? (laughing) is that the post?

LC: No that’s the school paper

Man’s Voice: So you tell people, come back

LC: thank you, (walking away) there you go

SM: OK so that was Angie’s. now that house, I know that has been there all this time but I don’t know who lived there and of course that wasn’t part of our community. do you want to go back this way? Because it’s shorter. I don’t know when people started to go to Herman’s meet market, I don’t know how long that has been there. But this would be as far as we would go by ourselves, you know, three or four kids

LC: down to Wilber

SM: yeah, if we went down main street most time we would be with a crowd, 15, a lot of kids, or our parents. I don’t think it was that we were afraid to go out of our knit community it was just that it was safer in numbers

LC: right

SM: that way if you encounter any slurs or anything then your not out there by-yourself and vulnerable. Because it seems if you are by- yourself they would pick on you more. If there were some prejudice people that wanted to raise their ugly head. Now my uncle, he came back here in 62 I believe from Germany with his wife. They had their baby with them, 1961. my, every last one of my grandmother’s children, which is seven, had a child. My uncle, who was the only male, had is daughter in 1961 January. And my mother bad the last grandchild that year in December of 61. so my uncle came back from Germany in like ’62 and it may have been in the summer of ’61 or something like that.
And he was riding down Main St, or it might have been Elkton road, I don’t know which. And he had this white lady in the car, so the police decided to pull him over. Yeah, because it was unheard of having interracial couples. Even thought my his grandmother, my uncle’s, my mom’s grandmother was Caucasian, but that was far back no one
LC: no one remembers

SM: Right, the police don’t know nothing about it. So they got him out of the car and asked him who’s this lady and what is he doing with her, and all this kind of stuff. Because in Newark you just don’t do that, you stay in your section of town and we stay in our section and this is in ’61 mind you. but and then I mean thank god they asked questions before they got to beating on him. But they just wanted to know that he wasn’t kidnapping her or rapping her, have here against here will. So that was a prejudice experience. Boy the kids were really booming then, I mean Ray St was still going on. And My grandparents, my grandfather and his, he had two sisters and a brother, the other three, they had sold the land that his mother had. And that was the hollow, and then they moved to Church St. where they had an old house to Mr. Inky Wilson, or Mr. George Wilson, and he had sold it to my grandfather so that’s on Church street, that’s where he lived while he was building up the homes on this side

LC: On Ray St?

SM: yeah, on Ray St, so again this was just the road that would take us down to Main street, because once we crossed or the street this was white man’s land

LC: over on Prospect

SM: Right over here, just across the street, now these people right here, its been here all along, they had a dog, I think it was a retriever. Not a golden but with red hair, and I remember coming up out of the hollow and seeing that dog up on the porch. Now it looks like someone added on because it doesn’t look like a place that a dog could be. And then all the way except where I showed you on Creek Road this was all white. And these were the people that they would clean their houses, take care of the children because there was a lot of domestic workers in our community and that was helping the spouses with making the ends meet. And there seemed to be some house wife that was home, that wasn’t working at the time to take care of the children that the parents did go out and work. Up until we started going to Junior High, and High school. Now the daycare has been there for forty years or so, and my nice and my nephew I know they went there but they are only in their 30s. and I don’t remember any of my brothers, like Troy or Danny, happen to go there because there was always someone at home to watch them until they were going to school. But I would say the third or rather the forth generation, like my grandmothers great-grandchildren did start going to the nursery.

LC: OK, now what about these houses that we just pasted, were they always?
SM: Caucasian?

LC: I don’t know, I don’t even know what they are now
SM: Yeah, there used to be a house here, and they used to be trees, and they were all occupied by Caucasians, so I didn’t know them

LC: So even thought Ray St was right there this was a completely neighborhood right here?

SM: Completely different, completely, because you see these steps go to right there but I don’t know who lived there. Hello, hi

(cell phone ring/tape pause for conversation)

SM: The traffic! We are going to go here now this parking lot here, it used to be a field. And that, they built that new, it used to sit right here, a brick building, and then grass. One of my grandmothers, she used to have a lot of dogs down in the Hollow. And one of my fond memories, when I was visiting her in the summer, and I would be sleeping on the floor, she would open the door and let all the dogs come in and wake me up, all the puppies because she loved her animals, two of them came with her in ’61. One of the “Mister” he, all he knew was the Hollow, so he went back to the Hollow and died there I guess. But “Fatty” stayed, and then when Fatty died we buried him out here because, you know it was just field then. And that would be our little short cut to the railroad tracks, that fence wasn’t there, and sometime we would cross over sooner. Now this is church street and this is where my grandmother moved to. Not lets cross over and I’ll tell you a little bit more about Church Street. My great grandmother . . . that’s a shame I can’t remember her name, she lived in a house there

LC: in that house or just in that place?

SM: no that’s the house, I want to say they refurbished it but its still there. I want to say Waller (sp?) but I don’t think that was it, her last name. Yeah I guess that was, but what was her first name, I tell you . . . Let me show you, this first house right here

LC: the white one?

SM: Yeah, its Curtis Tucker’s house right now but it was his grandmother that lived there, and her name, she’s a Word. Because the Tuckers, the Words, the Hubbard’s they are all related some kind of way. Like they were sisters that married into the family, and Miss . . . Word, or what was her name, she was Bea Word’s mother and her name was. See when you don’t get a chance to say their first names, out of respect, well that will have to be edited

*Tape Flip*

SM: Now that is their house right there, they re did it some but that’s the same one. Now this is the Jackson home, that’s the home that Inky, or George Wilson sold to my grandfather
LC: this brick one?

SM: that brick one. 1961 they moved, so some of them hadn’t had all their kids yet, but they were all pregnant. So for my grandparents I would say, that was a beautiful year because they got a new home, they got out of the Hollow they didn’t have to use the out house anymore, each one of their children gave them another grandchild. And they had a big enough house to house them all. You know because they had a basement in that

LC: that’s a good year

SM: it was a very good year. Now this is where my great grandmother used to live. Now they refurbished it but this is the area. Now this is Miss Sadie Roy’s home and that’s original. She is now in a nursing home but I remember days when we used to sit on that step. You know the kids, and would sit and talk and stuff. And right here used to be a filed

LC: Where these two houses are?

SM: Yeah, it used to be a total field, except where this house is, back a little further my cousin Bobby Ann used to live in that house and we used to have a little piece of a shack that used to be somebody’s. And we would have Sunday-go-to-meeting and somebody would grab you and kiss you and stuff like that but my grandmother’s house was right there so it wasn’t like we were really going to be getting in a lot of trouble letting the guys do their thing. And this used to be Mr., well students live here now, but it used to be Ricky Barber, Mr. Barber’s home this is the original, now that one might not have gone up until the ‘60s but he finished raising Ricky, who is his nephew, or grandchild. But Ricky Barber but he went through the service and I don’t know if he retired, my cousin told me, I don’t know if he retired as a general, but something high ranking. And he played football too, while we were in school. Now this home is the Words’ home, one of the Word’s because that house back there is a word too. Nicey (sp?), Niecy that was it

LC: there you go, you knew it would come to you eventually

SM: Yeah, now this it is Flossy and Charlie Words home, this is the original, they finished raising their children here and the son still lives here. I don’t think, I don’t remember if this used to be a house or if it used to be just a yard. I can’t remember but see there is brick there, so there probably was another house there. This is an original, its been here for years, this is the Roy’s home and that, that white house that’s Miss Sadie Roy, and then Mr. Puddie (sp?) Roy and they were siblings and this is their house. Of course you can see they added on a little deck but they raised their children there. And when I was talking about going to Atlantic City, Wildwood, the skating rink, Mr. Puddie Roy was the gentleman who usually drive the buses

LC: the organizer?
SM: Well no, not so much the organizer but he was definately the transportation. And we would love, we would just know we would have a good time when, each one of the churches would have something to keep the children doing something, to keep them occupied, safe, and still allow us to have fun.

(unclear voice – in the distance)

SM: Hi Clara Bell (sp?). How you doing . . . you thought you knew it huh. Well look you don’t have that dog any more do you? . . . well a rabbit isn’t going to bite me unless I stick my finger at it . . . I don’t know . . . well as long as you just have one rabbit, you know two will make a hundred

Clara Bell: Well I have one little rabbit, and they call her Oreo, I don’t have too many, I don’t like to many pets anymore

SM: It sure is, I haven’t gotten me a dog yet

CB: I’m going to get me a dog but I’m going to be seventy – seventy when I don’t go out of the house anymore

SM: Did you go to the funeral yesterday?

CB: didn’t have a ride, my car is broken as well

SM: is that your car right there?

CB: yeah, it rides around Newark OK and I do drive it to Smerna but only if I have to. So I thought Perla (sp?) was going to come and get me but she called and said she wasn’t going and by then it was too late. Did you go?

SM: No I had to take Jordie (sp?) it a basketball practice, so that had already been planned

CB: So what are you doing?

SM: Well I’m giving this young lady, (Hi) who is a college student whose name is?

LC: Lenora, its nice to meet you

CB: Nice to meet you too

SM: their doing a project to kinda honor the community of Newark that used to be

CB: I about to say there is no more community the University of Delaware ruined it. Well I’m not going to say that the University because they could only do what the
government allowed them to do. They let them, and as far as I’m concerned this is a historic community, and they let people come in and ruin it

SM: and they destroy it

CB: we have no community

LC: We are trying to at least record what’s still here before it goes away completely

CB: there’s nothing

SM: because grandmom house, . . . be sure to get a picture of that one before it got torn down

CB: . . . there, we have no community left. A few people are still hanging on, but you are coming here late. And I’m sure I sound pessimistic but that is just the way it is. they ruined it, they let money ruin it. All these houses were inhabited by citizens of Newark that had roots (SM: here) that went back generations. My family, my mom, we’re from Virginia so I don’t consider myself, I’m not a Delawarean, I’m a Virginian. But Miss Roy all this was so beautiful when I was a kid and it

SM: Miss Roy, Miss Homes

CB: Miss Homes, all those houses the Atacolms (sp?) house they built these houses

(discussion continues with voices in and out)

SM: I mean the house is original but they added on and stuccoed it. Yeah Reverend Homes, this used to be his church for many years. Probably because you see the Baptist people, they don’t have a conference where they change people every so often, so they can stay there as long as they like, until they retire. And he was a beautiful man, he was a pillar of the community. and we can go down here a little bit even thought stuff is probably not there, Thurst, I thought that was Mr. Eston’s house, but she said (car driving by) Miss. Anna May Harry yeah that house was occupied by black, see I wonder who did that there, broke glass. Now see this was the Homes house. The house in this back area, now he was the reverend of the Baptist church I would say for at least 20 years. And there used to be some houses there until a man built that be I won’t even go there. But remember they said about the steps

LC: anything else there?

SM: no, yeah, that’s what I was looking

LC: Just that little piece
SM: That’s all, but there was a house that sit back there, and he happen to be our cousin too but I was all the way, see this is what she is talking about (sound of drill) and its oblong this way. I think his name was Mr. Stichy, but I’ll ask my mom again, a real little short man, he used to live with his momma. Of course this was pulled back because it used to be closer to the road. Because you see this is a new one and a different type of house. And he was really a little short one, maybe 4’5” but he was a member of the Elk’s (walking) and he lived back there. And then I think Thurst was talking about the lady that used to have a hair dresser because my grandmother used to have. See there are some steps too and before they put these trees, she was right there?

LC: the hairdresser?

SM: The hairdresser because my grandmother used to do my hair all the time, so we didn’t have to go all the time . . . and they were talking about, I don’t remember it, I don’t think to was Earl Sha’s (sp?) or someone but there was a car dealership was across the tracks. but you see in our little quilt that once you go across these railroad tracks that would be staring the black community.

LC: On this side

SM: Yeah on this side, my aunt said there used to be a car dealership, of course I was probably too young to remember that. I wonder if that is the building, I wonder if that’s it . . . I thought it went right off the road so I guess that is one of the University places that they don’t use anymore. And of course they tore down my grandmothers, its that vacant lot down by the church. She had three, that was a Miss Alma Patrick, now this was the last house she lived in because of course she lived in this corner house that I’ll show you as we go up hill because its still standing. Now she had her home and she had three, two other houses on her property. So eventually one of her children lived in one of them. but the center home was for people in transit, that was moving up, up form Virginia, that was looking for a better life

LC: Right

SM: and they would stay there until they got a job, and steady on their feet. And then she would help them get into another house you know, in to another home. Yeah but where this lot is . . . Now of course they did away with these steps too, here, because they just leveled it. Because this part was the house, and she had a closed in porch like this and then you would go into the main house. And she had a basement that she would keep all her canned food. She most defiantly canned, and fried apples is like the best.

LC: where this grass is, is where

SM: yeah because you would come up in the driveway and you would come up to the side porch, which was also closed in. and she had her washer and dryer and then the rows of her canned goods, tomatoes, greens, preaches, pares, preserves, you know for the lovely biscuits, the home-made biscuits
LC: You’re making me hungry

SM: and she had loads of canned apples downstairs, she just loved to can. So you walk back about here and there was a little space and this was one house here that set a little bit back, and all of this was driveway, and like I said that was the main house. And then this one was where people from Virginia came up and that is how the population of the community grew, she would help them get jobs at the University and then once they got established in the community then they would branch off on their own. Some of them were cousins, some of them were in-laws, because she married into the Pat tricks, and some of them were just friends that had heard about a better place in Newark and its booming, and we can get a job, and right here. Because the house was elongated this way, was her son and his wife and their three children were mostly raised. It did burn down before they were mature adults so they did have to move but this was their place. And once this one got torn down, there was a little shed, and the other was torn down, they used to get . . . Because they always were farmers and they used to get, and they would farm out in Maryland, somewhere I’m not sure, and they had pigs. And ever year they would get the pigs and they would put them up there where that sign is and they would line them up, be all cut up, you know down the center, and they would sell them to the community and all that. Because I never ate that, the chit lens, and the head, and all that

LC: Oh my father eats all that, chit lens

SM: Well I never ate all that, I just wanted the ham and the pork chop and that was it

LC: well hogs’ head cheese is pretty good

SM: well look I didn’t know anything about that, it wasn’t until I got to California, and you could get it at the grocery store and this one girl said well this is hog-head cheeses. And I said, I never heard of no hogs-head cheese before but scrapple, we were raised on that and _______, and molasses, and home-made biscuits, that is something to wake a kid up. Well when I was gone, the 18 years, well my grandparents used to bring up turkeys, now that they have all this land. And Mr. Bernie says he used to remember hearing them

LC: well he’s over there in the brick one, I think

SM: he says he remembers them, (turkey sound), and closer and closer to thanksgiving they were dying down, you know you didn’t hear the noise and we know what was going on then

LC: I think he said he had a picture of them taking this house down, I’m not sure

SM: Oh I hope so
LC: he said he had pictures of some house that was taken down behind his, so this is the only thing behind the house

SM: that would be nice, none of use wanted her to sell it but she didn’t want to live there by herself anymore. my brother, we can take this off

LC: You want me to stop it? (tape deck turned off)

SM: These homes were part of the community, and if we take a picture of it then maybe someone can tell who lived there then.

LC: OK, who did you say lived on that side?

SM: Wilma Jones, that one

LC: 55

SM: yeah, I don’t remember . . . now this house Clara Bell, that’s the Scott home that she said I guess I’m still here because of my family

LC: the green one

SM: yeah the green one, 52, and my grandmother and her mother were sisters, so you can see it was defiantly community based. And I think Miss Violet Pettiejohn used to live here but I know all these houses were occupied by black people. Now I never heard of any black people over on West Main, but like I said, my Mom, she’s 70 and she didn’t think so. So this one 54 is also, all of these, and its closer to the original

LC: 54?

SM: yeah you see it doesn’t have the porch filled in. now there used to be one that __ and them lived in but I don’t remember that one so we can forget about it. Did you turn it back on?

LC: I turned it back on after, when you mentioned 55

SM: I’m pretty sure someone lived there, but I’m sure its not the original, like they fixed it up but . . . seemed like there might have been . . . now this is the Watson’s and they have been here for years and this is the original now at one point if might have been two houses

LC: a double

SM: yeah, a double, but I don’t know who lived on the other side of it, but that’s the Watson’s right there. And they are still here and they are a pillar of the community, Mr.
Fatts, when Mr. Bernie’s mentions him this is his home. Now I know black people lived in all of these but I don’t remember who

LC: well those are the steps to the barber shop I was told

SM: they got pictures of that,

LC: You remember where that corner was that I took a picture of? Well its right there

SM: Oh yeah, yeah, I couldn’t place it. And this house used to be here for a while, ’63 too.

LC: well I’ll take a picture with the address, in case someone else asks I can tell them

SM: I know someone here, now this is my cousins house, now they did re-do it, it used to be a double house, Pedro’s, Pedro’s mother but also Peppers mother. It used to be a double house and she lived in one side, and another family lived on the other. and see the Patrick’s lived in that one. And this is also a Watson home, her name is Sandra, Bennie, that’s her nickname, that’s in 72. its an original although they all have siding on them. and I’m 62 is too. Because that is two different steps, something had to be there but different and I don’t remember. But those steps went to another section that is why I thought the barber shop was right there, but he also had an ice cream parlor and I remember being around the corner. And he might have had one over here too, Mr. Bobby. And this house right here, this yellow house, the Hubbard’s lived there for a long time, and they raised most of their kids from that house. Dan Hubbard, and he’s in his 80’s but he has since passed, he and his wife. They had a son named Herbert Hubbard, that was going to go into the pro-basketball, I mean baseball but he died in a carbon-monoxide accident. And y’all might be able to find that in the News Journal, back in the day, because that would be the early ’60s and early ’50s because they had just signed him. And he and his girlfriend, it was in the wintertime, you know they were cold, they had the radio on and they had the car on and the carbon monoxide killed him, but Jennifer, she was saved, so she didn’t die during that time. But that was probably one of our first people that was going to go pro out of our community. and his name was Herbert, I mean Herman Hubbard. So that was in ’63, if you look in that area, ’62. Now this was Mr. Bobby’s home

LC: So he worked over there and lived over here?

SM: Yep this was his home, and it is still the original home. And then my aunt lived right next-door to him but then they opened up the road and they pushed her house back but its not there anymore either. But this is the man we are all talking about all the time

LC: so he didn’t have to go far for work, its right there
SM: No, no. He was like a pillar of the community. the barber shop was not his only means of lifestyle but now of course my great-great-aunt’s home used to be on this road, but you see this used to be closed off, for years, but

LC: New London?

SM: No New London was always here but Hillside wasn’t, it used to stop right here. You know Cleveland, and New London and there was no more. And then there were the churches, I’m sure there was some little sidewalk or something to get across, but Hillside was not here. They opened that up in I guess the 60s also. But that is where Miss Wilma Jones lived now, that yellow house, and see that big lot there across from the ___, it used to be a row of green or brown homes there, and each one was contributing to the community, they were working, you know, and families, raising the children. And this intersection is what I really hate because there is no way really for you to cross

LC: I know you are at the mercy of the driver

SM: We can go . . . and there is nothing that can stop the traffic like they have on Main St, and we are still here, and they act like we are not here and we have been asking for a light down by the blinker

LC: well the cross to Corbit is really scary sometimes

SM: Yeah, I tell them that but the city is not listening, for years its been like that, so for years they are going to keep doing that. Did he wave? It looked like he waved

LC: Sure

SM: (laughter) but again the students don’t notice either, because they were suppose to look but they weren’t paying attention either

LC: People will run you over at home so I look everywhere

SM: Now that’s St. John’s church, this is, I think Bernie interview her too. It used to be Miss Sara Saunders, she used to live there, no not Sara, the mother, yeah Sara. And its her son’s house now who is named Pete Saunders, that’s the Watson’s home right there, Miss Myrtle Watson. And not necessarily, they might have the same name but I don’t think they related to Miss Watson, Annette, I don’t think so. That lot right there used to be my great-grandmother’s home and her name, all we knew her by was Maw and Paw but we do have a picture of them that maybe we could include. But that was their lot right there but one of the people they sold it for back taxes, yeah that wasn’t good. This house right here was the 100 year old lady I was telling you about, Miss Elsie Badson (sp?) that was her home, it used to be yellow, but they refurbished it a little bit, put the stucco on it, but that is an original its always been there. And this house has always been there too I think that Dawson Green lives there now, but I can’t remember the original people. But my mother would be able to put some names to it, and they are number 91
SM: When she get – sold that house to her daughter or her son, that first house I was telling you right next to St John’s. They built this for her. So this is not very old, I would say

LC: 107

SM: 20 years old but there were houses. You know because our church was right there and there

LC: Where the yellow house is, right?

SM: No right . . .

LC: Oh, were the cream house is?

SM: Where the cream house is, because the yellow house is still an original. They put that different siding on it but its still that house and it was yellow. And they used to have – Now this has always been our property, the church property. But this tree down there used to be several homes. Three or four sections of screened in porches that the community used to live in. I know because I used to baby-sit for Calhoun and Genie Woods and they lived in one of theses. The Greens lived in another one while they were raising their children. The McNair’s lived in one and I think some relative to the Corsey’s, David Corsey now lived there, in this area here. Now on the very end was my great aunt’s home, which was Liz Haymen and that is my grandfather’s sister, oldest sister. She just died last year and she was ninety something but I can’t remember exactly, ninety-one, ninety-two, and her house was right here

LC: On the corner

SM: Right on the corner, and then they did keep the driveway part because her driveway did curve up. And then from this street all the way up to Rose Street would be blocked off and she would have block parties for the kids. And that would be a fundraiser to take the kids on picnic trips, as well as keeping the kids safe. We had many block parties there, many. This is Mrs. Florence Batson, who was originally a Lane but she married a Batson, that is there home there, that green, 123. I don’t remember if there was something there, I mean a lot there or not. Of course this is not the original, there used to be a house there, but its no where near the, I mean its not it, not the house that was there. They took all that and tried to beatify it, but that is university property right there, a piece of property that they bought from the black community. A lot of times when they wanted something, they’ll say we’ll give you this amount of money, and you’ll say well I don’t want to sell. Well if they want it bad enough they will come back a couple of years later and say its condemned so we will give you this amount, and then you have to take what is given to you, and then you’ve got to go, then you have to move on. These homes are
originals, especially this one right here, this is Miss, now I know that lady’s name . . . Well Mr. Oswell, he you know how we was saying that a lot of people was property owners. He owned I don’t know how many of the homes he still owns but he owned some of them and he would rent them out. But the lady on the corner is Miss Dolores, I can’t think of her last name, that’s because I’m talking so much.

LC: well its 2:30, we have been going for an hour and a half

SM: That’s no time at all. What was her name? Dolores, Dolores, that’s a shame I can’t remember that lady’s name.

LC: Oh lord, we are never going to cross this street

SM: Now that’s what I’m saying, we tried to get them and tried to get them to have a light down here but we got to take your chance and run but it’s not safe. But the city is not paying attention to that not being safe. Now my little picture starts right here, Mr. Wilson, he built this too. It was just rentals for the community, it wasn’t necessarily for the college kids, but now I think it’s strictly for the college kids. And Mr. Wilson built that home too because it was just a vacant lot there and its two apartments, four, four apartments. And I know that Mr. Puddy Roy’s daughters lived in one of them, but like I said that was when it was open to the community. Now I drew on my little picture these houses here in this community, this is Terry Manor, this is where I was raised at. So this is an extension off of Ray Street

LC: going up Corbit

SM: Right because there are a few houses on New London too, but we can go up here and then go there. So these houses, there still is, like Clara Bell said, some black people holding on. Now St. John’s church bought this one for their preacher, because the Methodist, they usually revolve their preachers, while the Baptist will just stay until they are retired. So the Methodist, they wanted them, so in case they come and if they don’t have any place to stay, so this is still St. John’s parish. And then my mom still has her house, this lady, she’s black, they came in through Chrysler, and staid and are still here. There has been several people that own this home, but they have been here probably over twenty years now. Hers is kind of an original, I would say its more. That one down there in the center is what the most of them looked like but some of them were white, some where blue, some where green for the kind of shingles they had. So they had a porch, an open car port, and three bedrooms, these houses were built but a one Mr. George Wilson. So he afforded all these people to have their own and to have their own land, so that’s my Mom’s house right there in the yellow. She is still there and that first green one, that one down at the bottom is Myrtle Bond, she is also a Lane.

LC: So most of them looked like this white one at first and then

SM: Yeah, this one is still the original right there. Now her, she goes into her shed from the car port but most of us have a backyard where we open the door from the outside. Hi,
years ago people came around and did some upgrading so most people did close in their porches so they could have an extra room. How’s it going Mr. Jim? (mans voice in the background) Good. And this lady, she was able to do her house over, that was Miss Tempe (sp?) Lane. She did hers all over in brick, now I don’t know if its just attached to the foundation or what, I know they didn’t tear it all down, hers is really nice because hers is extended back to the yard. Hers is really nice, be she was the only one who could afford to do it in brick.

LC: whoa, something is going on here

SM: well they have had trouble with flooding, and not from the Boogie Run area but up there, at the West Main area, and it keeps creeping into their house. So the city, and that house has been there as long as its been built but they have had so much trouble with the drainage backup you see, and they have a major job because this lady’s house keeps getting destroyed. And the city has to do it because the piping was clogged from up yonder, and through the years of not doing maintenance, its all settling in their home. They have to foot the bill, so they are putting a wall up. So the first people who lived here were the Montgomery’s and they used to have a fence but after someone knocked the fence down with their car they just took the fence down. Now, right there, there used to be a house but they put that up there. That’s new. The Saunders’s, I think that is the Saunders house right there, Lindsey Saunders and this I think was Humpty and Judy, what was their last name? Now see I can’t think of last names around here that was their house there. Of course they refurbished them and make them more modernized, but this section where the blue house is and that second yellow house there used to be another set of row homes, Beulah Saunders and the _____ lived in that house. All of this was full of kids and their parents. The only original on this side of the street, beside the two down there, is that double home there.

LC: With the porch

SM: Its actually still in the same family, she was another prominate figure in our community, . . . she owned a lot of property . . . sorry about that its on the tip of my tongue, I can see her little small structure. Now this is Mr. Brdaley’s home, he’s been at some of the meetings and he is in my great aunt Liz’s home now, but in the middle is student homes.

LC: Now what about the other side of the street are these houses

SM: No these are originals, this one was the Hacket home, remember I was telling you about Jennifer, the girl that almost died with the carbon monoxide, that is her family there. And this is the Claws(sp?) that live right there and now it looks different, but cause it wasn’t all that bright, but they stuccoed over it. These two I’m not sure about, I think its four apartments now, see but I can’t remember in full detail about them. because I was only twenty-one when I moved out, when I left here. Even though I was only twenty-one I remember a lot, from the time I was about five till I left. Now this one is an original, its two apartments, the lady that owns it, her last name is Smoots now, Peggy.
But its her grandmother, now I can’t remember her grandmothers name right now, but hopefully I can remember and bring that all around. How are you doing Buddy pretty good? Now this home is Mr. Oswell he also worked in the barbershop, now he’s still living there now. You might do his picture. It was called something but I don’t know what it was called back then. This is Wilson Street, it was also part of the black community, one of the Lanes again, Darleen, she owns this home. But I don’t its only been here more than fifteen years but I could be mistaken because I, its only been like thirteen years since I’ve been back. Where these homes are used to be a vacant lot, probably something was there but I’m not sure what it was. It used to be vacant and then bought that property from somebody, now where this tan one is used to be open parking lot. But over here where 36 is there was two homes, double like a duplex, turned, instead of being on the road they were like this facing each other. now we would go down a dirt road, mind you, because they never paved it like it is now. And the houses started maybe right here and there was one here that would go all the way out to ----- and then mine was here

LC: So you lived in this area

SM: Yeah I rented it, I had a little back porch, and trees and a bench area where we had a little family reunion one May. We try and do a little something every May you know for the mothers and it was all the siblings altogether. I had it here because the house wasn’t very big, it only had two bedrooms. And then the next house, the far house there was the Rights, Mrs. Right. And this wasn’t that long ago I came back in ’92 and I might have moved in ’95 till ’97. this is all new since ’97 thought those two houses were put in before I moved. I moved in June or July, they finally condemned that lady’s house and then they put up thee four here. And the house here is an original

LC: The yellow?

SM: No the green one on this side, that’s the Wood’s, Tyrone Wood’s grandmother, she passed on now but they still have their property. You can count it on your fingers how many still have their property, and the original. Because like I said my great aunt she moved their but she used to be on the corner of New London. Because like I said when they come around and decided that they want it and you don’t take the money at the time they just wait a little while longer, condemn it, and then you couldn’t fight a condemned place. I can’t remember who lived their

LC: I like this little green one here its cute

SM: Yeah that’s an original, people live in there now, but I don’t know who. I can’t remember who was there at first but if you take a picture maybe someone will be able to tell you. now this is far as Corbit street went. I’m not sure about this house here, I mean I left when I was twenty-one. And we really stopped at Wilson St. it was either fields or occupied by others than our community. ------ now this lady was a Lane –Hacket, and that is how we are all intertwined you know someone marries another person and we all end up being cousins or something. Now this is where her mom, the man you took care
of her. Because you know if you have fifteen kids two people can’t take care of that many so they farmed them out to the community and her mother was one of the ones that was farmed out, Mr. Dave Louis, that’s who raised her mother to help out her mother, I mean grandmother because fifteen children is a lot of people to feed. And I believe he willed this home to Robin’s mother and she was a Hackett. But now Robin’s mother is gone and she has it. But that is where our cut off is and then it become another world, its not so bad now but then you could cut it with a knife. You could smell it, you could feel it, it was there and even though it was there my grandmother. I don’t know about any other people, but we was always taught to be never be hateful, or dislike them because of their color or anything like that. Now I do remember in school when they started integrating us into the other surrounding schools, when desegregation started. The girls would be doing their hair right, and me I used to always have long hair and if it was straight because I had pressed it, you know that is what we would do a press and curl you know. And my mom used to always tell me, You can swing yours too you know, but other than that we were never taught to be mean to people. And I’m not saying that we never were, because kids would be kids, and they would follow the leader, or the crowd. And there was times that I wasn’t very nice you know and I remember sometime parents would, I mean. Think about if some guy or girl was bulling someone and my Mom would literally take me or one of my siblings, who ever got bullied, and take them to the other parents home to inform them that their child has done such and such. You know, that was the community that we were raised in, that we were comfortable enough that we would do that and not get cussed out, like now. You know, I don’t know how many people would be brave enough to do that now.

LC: Law suits

SM: Yeah that’s right. Well I was making fun of the girl that lived next door, and she had just moved in and her mother was married to a Chinese man and I don’t know if I physically hurt her but I know verbally. and I threw things on the car port but my Mom said, now just last week I took you over to Miss. Green’s house because they were harassing you and now being rude to somebody, and that came home to my heart. And after that I tried not be that rude person, and just follow the crowd. And she did, she took me over there, to the Green’s and was standing up for me and now I was doing the same thing and you know, now I knew how it felt when they were doing that.

LC: Now is this Boogie Run or is that it up there?

SM: What?

LC: Where is Boogie Run?

SM: Oh that’s right, you didn’t have a picture of that

LC: No, it’s the one thing I didn’t have a picture of

SM: Did you take a picture of the, all that open area when we got to it?
LC: Yes

SM: Well this is it, I don’t know if this is the same one with out walking it all, if it’s the same one as by the Hollow, remember. Now mom said its wasn’t Boogie Run that went past the Hollow, that was just a stream. And when its low like that we could take little nature trails, you know because kids aren’t that tall. And one day we told my mom that was what we were doing and she said well put on your boots because she was afraid of the snakes. And this is an original house that used to be green and I don’t know why green comes out of my mind so often but it does.

LC: Maybe you just like the color green a lot

SM: I must more than I imagine, it was either green or brown, because there wasn’t very many colors. Now remember what I said from this point, from Boogie Run up that was Greenie’s Field.

LC: All this lovely Marriott

SM: Yeah, all that, now there was still a few black homes that was put up in the ‘60s that the Parker’s lived in and the Hackett’s. but the University moved them to because that is what they do. Now this is a lot of different of apartments (traffic sounds obscure words) I don’t remember but some people do say that there was a pond right there (traffic) it wasn’t there when we were little, little but (traffic) Choppy Saunders built that. (traffic) and his family owned that for a while until recently but they foreclosed because they were not keeping it up. (leaves crunching, traffic) see there is the home, that’s the back yard of it, there used to be little steps that go down to here (leaves) and all this area they had cleared out and they had steps right there and we had another little safe haven to play in, the kids in the community. but none of that is there now, not the steps or nothing (leaves) Now you have to remember I am 53 so what is going to stay the same

LC: You never know

SM: We can go this way (leaves) yeah that was the _____ house, they were also a part of the community. They were the only ones that had a little extra place for picnics and stuff. The parents had put out lawn chairs and stuff, we just had a safe place if we didn’t go up to School Hill. This is School Hill up here on New London. And this gentleman’s name, Mr. Morgan and he was a teacher, and I think a principle at some point, that was when the school was still only for blacks. But this is his house here and so that’s an original if you want a picture of that. (traffic) its either a Clause(sp?) or Tollsen(sp?) one or the other I can’t remember which (traffic) I think this is the Tollsen’s up there and this is the Jennings. (leaves) The steps here, that was the Old Bell Funeral Home, and just until recently when a grandchild tore it down. And we used to, Ardella (sp?), which is a great-grandchild, we used to come here and play a lot because there was all that land in the back, and she was considered one of the rich in the group, just like Mr. Wilson’s daughter. And this is like I said the Tollsen’s, its an original too. (traffic) the
euntrapanuers, they were considered rich, anytime the family had their own business (traffic). So they call this the George Wilson community center and park, I don’t know why because he didn’t build it, it was here for him to go to school to and I want to go and look to see if they have the date on it to look. And all that parking lot area was the big baseball field and they just kinda made a little one over there, with softball. And we used to come all the time, even when there was not school and we had counselors, black counselors, in the summertime and we had a little baseball team. And a merry-go-round, the kind you would hold on to and it would swing you in the air, like a mulberry (leaves) and I don’t know why. Of course we didn’t think to take any pictures then, but I’m hoping that there is something somewhere about the year – you know . . .

LC: On the building

SM: Right, now we went downstairs to school, now my mom went here, and she is seventy. It had just till eighth grade and then they were bused out to (leaves) and they would finish out 8 t–12 there. Now this is an original but no one has any pictures to my knowledge when it was up and running as a school.

LC: One of the other girls, Allison, is doing the New London School and I know she has found at least one or two pictures, but I’m not sure how much of it shows the building, but I know it shows the class outside.

SM: Well that would be good, but you have to find out which class it is

LC: You would have to ask her, I’m not sure

SM: I don’t see a single place that has the date, but she could probably find that out if she is doing her project on that. And I know some of the community is like, we know they have a project so they are involving us in this project but even if that is true

LC: The point is not, its not for the school so much is we are trying to make something for the community

SM: Yeah, I’ve been saying that, and even if that is true you can’t not help the people if you know the information. Nope I can’t find any date, maybe it can be found. You know this is not part of the community anymore, we have to pay to be able to use the area and I don’t think any of the other parts are being used, like the classrooms downstairs. But it used to be, my mom sent me a picture or my brother when he was working up here, so of course so far I can’t find it but I would love to find it to show that it was thriving at one point.

LC: Right

SM: So I will keep looking for it. Now its one more street, and then that is our cut off. But after ’61 Mr. Wilson moved up their, they had some land they bought from the Taylor’s and he moved up their and Miss (traffic) that lady, I can’t think of her name –
who also had a lot of property, who afforded a lot of black people at least have a rental place, if not buying it. Like the houses, the ones across from the Elk’s they were owned by one of the women in the community and she would rent them out. But her name can’t come to me at the moment for the life of me. And then when they burnt down, the university bought the land. But that’s people not thinking about the community. You know it wasn’t our to say because it was her property. Now, this house, I think (traffic) the Jackson’s finished raising their siblings here, the parents died while on Ray Street and the oldest sister moved here, or up in this area, and finished raising the rest of them that were still young. I remember it being here but not that far set back so maybe it wasn’t just here. But these three are originals because the Perkins lived here, 31__

_Tape flip_

LC: so is this the last bit on Grave’s Ave?

SM: Yeah but you remember I was saying that (traffic) right there where Pencader is, there were two duplexes, that went up three floors. But with the expansion of the university they were moved out, but I would say they were there at least the last twenty years. I don’t know if it was any more than that, but they were still very enriched in the community before the university decided to build up here. It was a home to them, they were raising their children. And this is Graves, now my aunt wants to stop it here but like I said in ’61 Mr. Inky moved up their so I does go farther. Now this here is an original but I see the man’s face but I can’t remember his name. Maybe my aunt or Mom could tell you who used to live there. There was this man, Mr. Woods, who had I say cows, had had a little, mini farm here before they built this circle. Now the browns, Miss Jackie Brown owns this home here, she owns two of these homes one across the street form each other. well she used to, there are all sorts of people up and down this road. Now this is the Newark county club that we would never go to, maybe now but back in the day we were never allowed to join. Now I don’t know where the pond is that a child fell into, and the country club doesn’t want to pay damages to the mother. Now I always heard that Miss. Jackie owned tow houses down here but I’m not sure which ones they are now. She must have sold that one, maybe after her son passed. And this area is where the farm was. That is the country club see how they keep it so nice and clean, but they should have a fence. This street was mainly black, at least on this side because that other was mainly woods. You see that is Mr. Inky’s up there

LC: Which one?

SM: He actually bought two, I mean he had one and his son had the other. Oh my they must be able to talk to China, if that not a big satellite dish. Now Mr. Dickey Wilson died, he used to be a professor at the university. Do you all know that?

LC: I didn’t know that but that doesn’t mean that someone else isn’t aware of that

SM: OK, so he was a professor and an counselor and the university, I would say that was the 60’s and into the 70’s probably because I was in high school for part of it. I
remember the lady’s name! Miss Chambers, owned the homes down there. Now this is an original, it doesn’t look like anyone is living in that now but you can take a picture of it, maybe my Mom will know. Miss. Chambers was the one that owned land in Newark, the ones across from the Elk’s, and when they burned them down, or caught on fire, I don’t know. I think she had died by then. (traffic) So that is our community – but that used to be all woods where those homes are now. Now he [George Wilson] used to have a swimming pool, and I don’t see it now but it was good for us kids, I mean his daughter was only two years younger than me so every year she would have a birthday party. Some of us wanted to go as far as Fairfax but my aunt was saying to stop at Graves but Miss Chambers has always been up there. (cell phone ring)

Tape stop

SM: So that is Miss. Chambers home that is why some of the women wanted to extend it all the way to Fairfax because there was a home there that contributed to the community. But that was it, we’ve been down New London, we went on Church Street, we did Corbit Street, we did Wilson Street, Ray Street, Creek Road and New London. And that is everything, and it wasn’t a lot but it was full packed of love and understanding. People watching out for their own and somebody else’s kids. Like Clara Bell said we didn’t know about welfare, we would go out to the vegetable fields in Maryland and pick because it was cheaper that way. So that kinda helped them out, plus people had their own little land, like my grandmother, the squash, collard greens. And it wasn’t until, I was probably like twelve when he would go get the vouchers, not the money from welfare but the vouchers for milk or cheese. Now I don’t know if that was from her cousin, because she would always share, from Wilmington, because I don’t know if there was a place here specifically for Newark. (traffic) the Lord blessed you with what you had and it was a blessing, both parents with jobs, and a home, and food on the table. That was a big deal for black people in the ’50s and ’60s, especially here in Newark. And we due owe a lot of that to George Wilson because he was a contractor and they allowed him to build homes for his community. and that was a miracle within itself. But it just kept flourishing and as the children would grow up, me included, we would go to college and sometime we wouldn’t come back. Go to the army, or the service, and wouldn’t come back get married (traffic) even before the early 70’s (leaves)

LC: Well I think we should stop the tape before it ends because I don’t have anymore with me.

SM: Ok, (laughter)

LC: Thank you so for what you have told me so far, I can only imagine what we can do later on if need be

SM: Your welcome

Tape cut off