

Charlene Smith

2/21/01

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RG: This is February 21 in the year 2001, and this is Bob Gilgor interviewing Charlene Smith at her mother's house at 222 North Graham Street. Good afternoon, Charlene.

CS: Good afternoon.

RG: I'm very happy to have the chance to talk with you. You are the daughter of Lucille MacDougal and C.A. MacDougal, and both of your parents played a significant role in the educational system here in Chapel Hill and in Carrboro. And it's really interesting to know that you followed in their footsteps and you're a vice principal now. That speaks very well for your parents.

CS: It does, it does.

RG: So let's begin the interview with just a broad question, and that is what was it like growing up in Chapel Hill?

CS: It was a time when there were expectations of what you needed to be about, or to do, given that both my parents were educators. And there was a sense that you wanted to do well, and all of your friends equally wanted to do well, and did succeed in many endeavors. I can look back at the experiences and see the pride that we had, the self-confidence that each person had, because there was always something that each person could participate in and be successful. Also, Lincoln High School, whether it was the band, whether it was our May Day performances, whether it was sports, football, basketball, and I think track, we always were very competitive with other schools in the state. And we were always at the top or near the top in all the endeavors. So there was a natural pride that we were able to do, and we were very important, and that kept everyone knowing that they had to do what was right and go on to the next step, whatever that next step would be.

RG: Let's talk, before we get into the schools, about the community. How did you see the community?

CS: It was a community of people knowing each other, people caring for one another. Also that businesses were provided by your own, so that whether it was a beautician or whether it was a small store, that people had ownership. And by having ownership, you knew who those people were, you supported them, whether it was the black church, everywhere you went, you knew someone, and someone knew you. And there was always a feeling of caring about one another.

RG: Did you play out in the street, or did you go to the playground to play?

CS: Probably played out in the street or in the back yard. I didn't go to the playgrounds that much. But I played outside, and I still have my friends on this street; this street in particular was a very close-knit street.

RG: Is this where you grew up, in this house?

CS: The same house, yes.

RG: On North Graham.

CS: On North Graham. This is home.

RG: When you would be playing out on the street, did you feel as though you were being watched? The neighbors were watching you?

CS: Yes. They were watching because that's what everyone did. Everyone watched out for each other. Because everybody wanted to make sure that everyone was taken care of, everyone was safe.

RG: Did you have relatives around? Grandparents, aunts, uncles?

CS: Not in Chapel Hill, no. Our family is a small family, so the one maternal aunt that I had lived in Winston-Salem. And we visited them often. And then my dad's mother and two brothers lived in Henderson and Oxford. So that we didn't have local families.

RG: Did your neighbors have local families? Was that a common thing?

CS: Yes, yes. We were probably the different, of not having a lot of extended family, where our neighbors had aunts and uncles and grandparents right in this area.

RG: Did you look at the community as a poor community or a wealthy community, or how did you see – or maybe you didn't give it any thought, and years later you looked back on it. From either perspective, what were your thoughts about that?

CS: I never looked at this community as being anything but my community, and that we were all the same. That there were some families, of course, who were poorer, but we were basically the same. Wanting the same kinds of things, and we, because we attended everything the same. Now that I can look at it I can see that although it was a black community, income-wise there was diversity. However, everyone expected to succeed to another level, and to be more than "what their parents were." So people worked on the next level, whatever that next level was, and they expected to be successful in whatever they decided on doing, and they were. They were successful.

RG: How were you disciplined when you were growing up?

CS: I didn't cause a lot of problems. (laughs) That's a given. I would get spankings, as the other kids on the street or in Chapel Hill. But most of the time, I kind of knew right from wrong, and I didn't get in trouble a lot.

RG: You couldn't get in trouble.

CS: No. Because there was always someone watching. (laughter)

RG: I was just thinking more in terms of the fact that your father and mother were both teachers.

CS: Right.

RG: That wouldn't fit in.

CS: No. No, it wouldn't.

RG: The fact that your father was a principal and your mother was a teacher, did you feel as though that put any extra pressure on you?

CS: Yes, I did. I think I, it was pressure because you knew that you wanted to do your best, and it was enough pressures that initially, thinking about my own career, I always had stated I wasn't interested in education, because it can put additional pressures on a child if they're in the same environment, etc. However, ironically or not, I'm doing the exact thing that I said that I would not be involved in. So I guess it's in the blood. What can I say?

RG: Your father, when he is described to me by the people I've interviewed, they always begin by saying "He was a strong disciplinarian."

CS: Correct.

RG: Is that how you saw him?

CS: He knew exactly what, you knew exactly what was expected of you.

RG: As a child?

CS: As a child.

RG: I'm not talking about student, now, I'm talking about your relation with him at home.

CS: Right. But you still knew what was expected. And routines, consistency, follow-through, that was a given. However, when I also think of the concern to make sure

that you experienced other kinds of things, whether it was my piano lessons, it had to be a sacrifice that on Saturday mornings we would get up and go to Durham to my music teacher there, and my dad would wait in the car until I had my lesson, and then we would come home. So it was a given that you wanted to try to do your best, to try different kinds of things, and to be successful in whatever you attempted to do.

RG: Besides this wonderful work ethic, and his expectations and his discipline, was your father a loving father? Did you feel that there was that aspect to him as well?

CS: Yes, I know he, I always knew that he cared a lot for me and that he loved me a lot. And over the years, he showed the sacrifices that he was making for our well-being, our shelter, our security, etc.

RG: How did he show that?

CS: Well, I think about the many, many years that my mom did not drive, and so he had to take her to go get groceries. He had to make sure that, as I said, with my lessons, whether it was a dance lesson or whether it was my music lessons, that he transported me there, he waited for me, he made sure that he was there to pick me up, to bring me back. That he was willing to do those extra things that I needed to be successful.

RG: That's quite a commitment.

CS: Given the strains that he was under, running a school and running a school where everybody could be safe, everybody could be respected, but also that your academic skills were also ascertained. A tough job.

RG: Was church part of your life?

CS: Oh yes, very much so. I participated in Sunday School, and I participated in, I was an usher, and I was an organist for one of the choirs. And I introduced visitors, and so I was very, very active in the church. I married in my church. But was not a member. I was not baptized until I was an adult in Syracuse. But very involved in my church.

RG: Was that –

CS: First Baptist, yeah. Reverend Manley.

RG: So he was there –

CS: A long time. A long time. (laughter) Correct. And he married me.

RG: Oh, how wonderful, to have your childhood minister marry you.

CS: Yeah.

RG: Are there any other memories of your childhood that stand out in your mind?

CS: No, I think you just kind of accept things as they are, and you don't question them or really see the value until you move on to another stage. Then you can see the importance of what you did have, and what we had, students don't get now as easily. And there's something missing for many of the kids in schools now, compared to when I was growing up. When I attended Lincoln, there were black role models around me everywhere. And you don't look upon that until you get older, and you don't have that. Whether it was always having a black teacher, having a black custodian, having a black principal who directed the way the school was going. Black cafeteria workers. It was black people around you, which you always had a sense of family, and a sense of community. A sense of safety, and a sense of security. Which our students don't have at the present time.

RG: What was it like going to Orange County Training School?

CS: I didn't go to Orange County Training School.

RG: You went to Northside.

CS: I went to Northside, in elementary school.

RG: Oh, I don't want to make you that old, but – excuse me. (laughter)

CS: I mean, I'm old, but no, but I went to Northside.

RG: OK. I promise I won't ask what you weigh.

CS: Promise? Good.

RG: OK, so you went to Northside. Tell me what it was like at Northside.

CS: It was my school. Again, I was with peers that I knew, neighbors that I knew. Again, the same type of thing when I think back. I had black teachers, so that I was very comfortable in my school setting. One of the things I do remember as mom had mentioned, when he did have the operettas or our musical program, you worked hard at being good at whatever you did, and you were always really good at it, and the teachers were very clear in what they expected of you. They expected you to give your best, and to be your best. And they worked at it until you did do that. I had excellent teachers, very caring teachers.

RG: When you say they were very caring, what is it that makes you say that? What memories do you have that tell you that your teachers were caring?

- CS: I think it was the time that they were willing to give. Whether it was helping you with your penmanship or whether it was helping you on a concept, or whether it was a special project that you had to have. They appeared to be there, giving more than just the regular time. That they encouraged you to keep trying to do something until you were successful. They really cared about you.
- RG: What if you were a slow learner?
- CS: They would still work with you until you mastered a particular thing.
- RG: Did you see a difference in the way they treated those who were intellectually outstanding and those who were slower?
- CS: No. Everybody was expected to succeed, so if you needed additional time, they made sure that you put in that extra time. But there was not a difference between the children who were maybe less challenged than the others. Everybody was expected to succeed, and if you didn't, that was ok, people still worked with you until you were able to do that.
- RG: Where did the teachers come from?
- CS: I don't know. They were just here.
- RG: They lived in the neighborhood?
- CS: Yes. But all of them were not born here, of course, in Chapel Hill. Many of them came from other cities within the state, but most of them lived here in Chapel Hill.
- RG: Do you know if most of them were married or single?
- CS: I think the majority were married.
- RG: Did they go to church with you?
- CS: Some did, but when I think of my high school experiences, there also were teachers who commuted here. From Durham. Some had home bases in Raleigh. So some would go to our church, while others would probably leave here on the weekends to go back to their homes, or whatever.
- RG: So they lived here, but went home, a lot of them went home on weekends, to visit with family.
- CS: Correct. Or they lived close by and could commute here. They lived in Durham, or Hillsborough or whatever.



- RG: Did they walk on the streets here, where you could see them? Or socialize with people who lived in the community?
- CS: My high school experiences, those who lived here, maybe yes. But you still have to remember that many of those still commuted. So, but they lived in Durham. That I remember in particular.
- RG: During the lunch hour, were there particular activities that were going on that you can remember, when you were at Orange County Training School?
- CS: I wasn't at Orange County Training School.
- RG: I mean Northside, excuse me. (laughs) See, I consider them almost one.
- CS: One and the same, I know, I know. But those of us who went to Lincoln, it was Lincoln. Lincoln is Lincoln, ok? (laughter) I can't remember.
- RG: What about the rock pile that was there? Was that there when you were at Northside, or had the rock pile been taken down?
- CS: My brother always reminds me that I can't remember certain things. I don't even remember a rock pile.
- RG: Did you play sports at Northside? I got it right that time.
- CS: Correct. And that was elementary. So, we really didn't have the sport games that you would have in high school. But we had our recess, and you played amongst each other, etc. But I was never very, very athletic. So I might have observed more than I really played.
- RG: Did they have a band or drama or singing group that you belonged to at Northside?
- CS: We had our operettas, where the third grade had its own operetta, or the fifth grade had its own performance. We specialized more once we were in high school. And in high school, of course I was in the band, and in the chorus. And I participated as an onlooker, a statistician for basketball, boys' basketball. But I did not participate in those sports myself.
- RG: What about the operettas that were performed at Northside. Do you remember any of them.
- CS: Yes, I remember mostly the third grade ones, with Mrs. Robinson, who, again, was a teacher with wonderful expectations of students, and high expectations. And so that when we performed, and if we were dancing or we were singing, we'd practice until we had it perfect. And we performed, and we had it perfect.

RG: What was the operetta?

CS: I can't remember. I just remember us performing. I don't remember the name or anything like that.

RG: Did most of the parents turn out?

CS: Oh, yes.

RG: Did you perform it at night or did you do it at assembly or PTA meeting?

CS: We had night performances, which was a special performance, and then we also had day performances.

RG: And the day performances were for other students?

CS: Right, for other students. And mostly the evening ones would be for the parents. Because during the day, parents were working.

RG: Do you remember anything in particular where some students' parents couldn't attend, and how that was handled?

CS: It just always appeared to me that when students performed, parents or grandparents, there was some family member was always there.

RG: It seems that repeatedly people keep coming back to singing, assembly programs, operettas, the band, the sports. And in many ways, it sounds as though performance was stressed and performance was important. And I'd like you to address that from a couple of different viewpoints. First of all, was that true? And secondly, why was it important, and what did everyone get out of it? So I'm giving you a tripartite question.

CS: Correct.

RG: First, was it true? Was performance important at the school?

CS: Yes. It wasn't the only thing, but it was important because it gave way for all students to be able to participate and be successful in various arenas. And that's what students don't get today. I see it all the time. So that everyone could always feel important, because there was always something that they could do, that they could be better at than someone else. Coupled with academics, that was a given, but when you were able to participate and present a musical programs that communities enjoyed, that was important. When you could participate in an award-winning band, and that everyone knew how good that band was, and you practiced to make sure that you had high quality, that was important. When you could compete with other



schools in sports, and do well, that was important. And students don't get a chance to feel that sense in the integrated kind of program as much.

RG: Well, let's graduate from Northside – not Orange County Training School – and go on to Lincoln. I may repeat some of the same kinds of questions, but I want to understand what you remember about the characteristics of the teachers at Lincoln.

CS: The characteristics that I remember of - the majority of those teachers were teachers with high expectations of students. And making sure that students had information, new information. There was always a sense of respect, that the teachers gave to students, and in turn students returned that to the teachers. The teachers had a business, and you felt that their business was education, and educating students. That was their business. As in every building there was the teachers that some students would always want to have, who went that extra mile, did interesting things in the classroom, and then of course, as in any building, there would be one or two teachers who would not be as strong. But there was always a feeling that whatever the teacher taught, they were really giving it their best. And they knew their subject area or their specialty.

RG: Did the teachers get further education? Do you know anything about their credentials, and their continuing education?

CS: My assumption would be that all of the teachers, or the majority of the teachers had masters', because that was an important requirement for persons in education, and for blacks in education at that time. So all of them would have had some kind of advanced training.

RG: Did they keep up along the way? Did they have other classes or summer updates that they had to attend? That's tough because you were a student then.

CS: Right, I was a student, and I don't really know how their summers were and all that. My assumption is that it was just a given that teachers had masters;, that was just a given. And it would probably be very few who did not have that.

RG: What about counseling at the school? Who did the counseling? If you had a personal problem –

CS: The teachers.

RG: They didn't have a counselor for counseling; the teachers were the counselors.

CS: From what I can remember, yes.

RG: Were there particular teachers who were known to be sensitive to counseling, and that the students went to?

CS: I don't know if there were certain ones that students went to. However, in a particular class, most of the time you were, you related to the teacher, whichever grade that might have been. So the teacher would just take care of the students in that particular grade. If there was a problem or an issue that a student would have. But no guidance counselors or special to us that way. The teachers were there for the students.

RG: On the school grounds, did you ever see smoking?

CS: No.

RG: Hand-holding?

CS: Yeah, hand-holding.

RG: Kissing?

CS: Well, I can't remember that, no.

RG: Were there fights on the school grounds, that you can remember?

CS: I can't remember any. That doesn't stand out in my mind at all.

RG: Would you say that it was a disciplined environment?

CS: Very much so.

RG: In the hallways, was there a lot of noise?

CS: No.

RG: Did you have rules about which side you walked on, or anything like that?

CS: I can't remember that. But chaos and disruption, that never comes to mind at all.

RG: How about wearing a hat in school?

CS: I'm sure we probably didn't.

RG: Jeans?

CS: You have to remember the times. Jeans? Jeans may not have been as popular then as it is now.

RG: What about slacks for women?

CS: I think the ladies generally wore dresses, skirts. I don't remember them wearing a lot of jeans or being casual. They came to work, they were very professional about their work, and they looked it. That was one of the things my dad, also was, carried out himself. A very professional look at all times.

RG: Gum-chewing?

CS: Can't remember. I can't remember. I would think that we did not chew gum, but I can't remember.

RG: Are there other things about the teachers or the academics that you recall?

CS: No. It was just a place that, now that I look upon it, was a good place to be. It was a nurturing environment, but also it was an environment that helped everyone, including myself, to be as successful as you could be.

RG: How many students would you say dropped out along the way?

CS: Very few. Very few.

RG: when you graduated, do you have any recollection of the percentage of students in your class who went on for a college degree or some kind of further education?

CS: I would think that at least 50% of us went on to some type of higher ed. And then there was still a larger percentage that, in my opinion, still were successful. They went on to either the armed services or they started their employment. But everyone went on to do something.

RG: Let's get into some of the extra-curricular things that you had mentioned. You had said that you sang, and you played in the band. Let's start with the singing. Tell me what you remember about, was it a glee club or an a cappella choir?

CS: It was a glee club. A mixed chorus. That doesn't stand out in my mind as much as the band. The band stands out more, because we had to practice. And we were very very good. And I always think about when we were marching. I'm an asthmatic, so I couldn't blow a lot and walk the long distances. So many times, for me to at least continue, I would not be able to blow as many performances, as many of the songs, so that my asthma would not kick up. But it was a band that we just enjoyed. And we participated in other state competitions, and I participated in something kind of like a city-wide or state-wide band, and I was still one of the first clarinetists. So you had an opportunity to participate with others, that would be equal or better than you. But you could always find a way to do that.

RG: How did the band do in the competitions?

CS: We were always number one or number two, so we were right up there with the other schools. Hillside in particular.

RG: When did you do your practicing?

CS: We practiced after school hours.

RG: Did you ever come in early to practice?

CS: Most of it after school.

RG: Did you spend your lunch hour sometimes practicing?

CS: We might have. I can just remember that when it was time for a parade that we did practice. And we practiced after school and we practiced for a long time, every day.

RG: When did you learn to play the clarinet?

CS: I must have learned in elementary school.

RG: So you took lessons in school?

CS: Right, in school.

RG: Mr. Pickard? Mr. Bell?

CS: Might have been Mr. Bell. And there was another band director.

RG: Goldston? Mr. Goldston?

CS: Yes, Goldston, that's who. Goldston is who I had.

RG: And they gave lessons in school, teaching students how to play different instruments?

CS: Right. Correct. I'm trying to think, though, how did – but I know we had to do a lot of practicing after, I mean, on your own also. But I was taught to play the clarinet in school.

RG: What kind of performances did marching band put on? You had mentioned Homecoming and Christmas parade, but what other – the Christmas parade here in Chapel Hill. Did you go to other Christmas parades?

CS: Yes, we performed for other cities. We would go to Durham and we would perform for certain activities that they had. So we were also a traveling band.

RG: Did you go to Pittsboro or Hillsboro or Raleigh?

CS: Yes. I can remember Durham better, but I know we went to other cities to perform. Whether it was in a parade or etc, but we were invited places.

RG: Did you ever get invited to any of the ball games, or New York or Los Angeles or places like that?

CS: No. Not while I was at Lincoln. We didn't get a chance to travel that far. (laughs)

RG: Did you go to the Beat Duke, did you perform in the Beat Duke parade? Or the Homecoming for UNC, or ever go to Kenan Stadium to perform?

CS: I can't remember us doing that. That would have been college level, and again, we would have been performing for other, generally black schools, or black performances, etc.

RG: Did you go to the away games, football games?

CS: Sometimes, for some of the championships, yes.

RG: And how would you get there?

CS: I think I would go with my dad.

RG: Did the rest of the band go with their parents, or did they go with a –

CS: Oh, no, we did have a bus.

RG: Was that the orange bus with the tiger on the side?

CS: Yes, yes, yes.

RG: And so you went with the football team.

CS: Right, but we – ah, did we go of all of those games, or was it the championship? We didn't go to all of the away games that they had. We played at all of the home games, and then we would have traveled for championship games.

RG: For Homecoming, what was that like?

CS: I can't remember well. (laughs)

RG: You marched at that, right?

CS: Yes, yes. I can't remember that that well. It's kind of maybe blurry. I can't remember the specifics that happened during Homecoming.

RG: What about your uniforms?

CS: For the band, we had uniforms and we had caps too.

RG: You had caps, uniforms.

CS: Yes, they had gold buttons on them.

RG: Who made the uniforms?

CS: They were bought.

RG: Who bought them?

CS: The school bought them. Whether it was through fundraisers or whatever, but we had band uniforms with caps and certain kinds of shoes. So you had a very polished look.

RG: Did you buy the shoes?

CS: Yeah. We bought the shoes.

RG: And how about your instruments?

CS: I owned mine. I'm assuming others owned theirs.

RG: What was the football game like?

CS: It was enjoyable. You had a lot of pride because many times you won, and you were happy when you won. It was a nice feeling, nice feeling.

RG: Big turnout?

CS: Yes. The families came to support it. The people in the community came out to support it.

RG: How about basketball, was it the same for basketball as it was for football? Did you have the same success as football?

CS: Yes, we had the same success. But football, I think, was more prominent. But basketball was equally important and we were successful, and we were among the champions in that also.



RG: Tell me about the operettas. In the high school, did you continue with the operettas in the high school?

CS: What stands out more in the high school was not necessarily the operettas but May Day. That was something that happened every May, and all classes participated, every grade participated, and that was maybe a combination of performances for the high school that we would have had in elementary. And then there was the Maypole, and that was just a fun time where everybody performed. And you were very proud of your performance, and you enjoyed your performances. And we had costumes. And so it was something very, very big, each May, the May Day.

RG: Do you remember your prom?

CS: Oh yeah, yeah.

RG: Can you tell me about it?

CS: To me, it was very pretty. And again, that pride was still there, and it was fun, and you enjoyed seeing your friends there. It was just very nice.

RG: Could you invite people from out of the school to the prom?

CS: If we did, I didn't. I can remember that it was still something that was for us, and it was a special time, and you dressed, and it was just a very nice thing. I don't remember inviting a lot of people from the outside.

RG: It was held in the gym?

CS: Yes. And it was decorated. There was a band.

RG: Did you have a band, or did you have records?

End of side 1.

Side 2

CS: We had decoration, and there was a special look that the gym had, because it was a special night for us.

RG: Formal?

CS: Formal, yes.

RG: What time did it close down?

CS: I would think 11 or 12, I would think.

RG: Where did the students go after the prom was over?

CS: We had – you might go to Durham for an after, like for dinner, I mean, after-prom dinner food. But also, I remember our parents had arranged with some other parents for us to have after-party breakfast, and so parents arranged for that and they provided the food, and I think, I've forgotten where it was, but we had a place to go after the prom that was supervised and that was safe. And we also went to Durham to a couple of places that were in Durham. So you didn't venture too far.

RG: Late night?

CS: Not that late. Not compared with what the students do now. No way. (laughs) We were in probably by one o'clock.

RG: Did parents go to the prom with you?

CS: No. No, there was, faculty was there, but your parents didn't come to the prom.

RG: Was there school after the prom, or was the prom at the very end of the school year?

CS: I think there was school after the prom. I don't think it was the very last day. There was school afterwards. It was probably on a Friday, and we went to school that following Monday.

RG: How about graduation? What was the importance of graduation?

CS: We had a ceremony. It was in the gym. We had speakers.

RG: Were you one of the speakers?

CS: Yes, I was. I was the, either val or salutatory.

RG: Number one or two in the class gave speeches?

CS: Right, yes. And family was invited, and again, that was a time for - juniors also participated as –

RG: Marshals?

CS: Marshals, that was the word I was trying to think of.

RG: The best of the junior class?

CS: Yes.

RG: Number one and number two. Or number one boy and number one girl.

CS: Right, right. Yeah, because they were the ushers. So it was a time that was very sacred and a time that was special in that people were very pleased with their accomplishments. They had graduated, but then they were always thinking and talking about what the next step was gonna be. That was just like the beginning stepping stone for all of us.

RG: Were there other activities that you were involved in, aside from those that we discussed?

CS: I remember in my French class there was a special topic that we worked on, I worked on, it was about the U.N., and I remember the French teacher, Mrs. Turner, helping me with that. And I did go to New York, I remember that. I think visiting the U.N. or something related to the U.N. And that was related to this, to the essay I had written, the essay I had worked on, that kind of stands out in my mind.

RG: Was it difficult for you at the high school, with your dad as principal?

CS: Probably, yeah. (laughter) Eyes always on me.

RG: Eyes always on you.

CS: Yeah.

RG: Did you think you got special treatment, or tougher treatment, or the same as everybody else?

CS: I didn't get special treatment. And I don't see it being any tougher, but nothing was given to me, put it that way.

RG: You feel you earned it.

CS: Yeah. Yeah.

RG: There's a statement about your father that everybody has said: You got to school and you were late, he said "Too late for today, and too early for tomorrow."

CS: True.

RG: That's true.

CS: That's very true. That's true. And he was one that was not a tardy person, so most of the time you did arrive on time. Wherever you went you were on time. You were

not late. So we grew up with that. We were not late for events or activities. We were on time.

RG: Did he bring home any of his work? His concerns for the school, for the teachers? Did he discuss it at home, that you recall?

CS: No. I just know that Lincoln was important to him, and students succeeding was very important, and making sure that Lincoln provided to the students the very, very best, that was important to him.

RG: Was there much of a turnover in teachers?

CS: No. I can remember the same teachers at Lincoln from when I started till when I finished. So there wasn't a lot of movement.

RG: Did your dad choose the teachers?

CS: Oh I'm sure he did. I'm sure he had to interview most of them, and bring most of them aboard. And then once they were there, they stayed. They didn't leave.

RG: Some people have said that your dad had eyes in the back of his head. Is that true?

CS: He probably did. (laughter) He knew what people were doing, and I think that's probably true, yes.

RG: That he walked the hallways.

CS: Yes.

RG: You didn't mess around in the hallways.

CS: No. No. Again, it was serious business, school. And that's what he expected of students, that's what students knew they had to be about. That's the same kind of thing teachers – it was serious business there. Yes, you had a good time and it was fun and we had other areas that we enjoyed doing, but when you came to school, serious business. No goofin' around. You were respectful to each other and you were respectful to the adults.

RG: Did he stand at the door most mornings to greet students?

CS: Yes. Yes. I think he did, yes.

RG: And did he know their names?

CS: Oh, yes, everybody's name.

RG: Knew everybody's name.

CS: Uh huh, you knew their parents names. So it wasn't like you were coming to a strange place. People knew who you were, and they knew who your parents were, and maybe your parents would be called or contacted. So there was really that partnership that you talk about it in today's schools, between the school and the family and the child.

RG: Did teachers make visits to the homes of the students?

CS: I would think that, if there was a need, yes.

RG: But you don't remember specific policy –

CS: No.

RG: With your father saying that teachers are going to visit each student's home.

CS: I don't remember that. But that doesn't mean it didn't happen. I don't know.

RG: Are there other memories that you have of your father as principal?

CS: I think the biggest one is that he had high expectations for students. And wanted students to be successful, and to be successful in the world of work, which also meant having appropriate behaviors that would make them successful whenever they left Lincoln. And in turn, students had that, and that did give them a level of success, whether it was in the academic arena or whether it was in the world of work or whether it was in sports or whatever, that you carried yourself in a certain way, because it was reflected on who you were and the school and you wanted to do well. That was a given, it was a given.

RG: Did your father follow any of the students after they left Lincoln.

CS: The students followed him. They would come back to see him and let him know what they were doing, and he would always be very proud of their accomplishments.

RG: That's quite a tribute to someone who is described as a strong disciplinarian. I mean, it sounds as though there was not just discipline but there was respect or even love for him, would you say?

CS: I would definitely say. Because if that weren't the case, I don't think that past students would have been as responsive as they have been in making sure that there was a school named after him, coming to see him – they would always stop by, whether he was on the porch or whatever, and talk about what they were doing. He would be proud of whatever they were doing. Most of them were successful, in

some kind of – and when I'm saying successful, they were able to take care of themselves financially.

RG: Now I don't want to give your mother short shrift; she's got a school named after her too.

CS: They – it's both. The Lucille and Charles Elementary and Middle School.

RG: What is it that, what are the contributions that your mother made that allowed a school to be named after her?

CS: Just the longevity of teaching in this community as long she did.

RG: 1932 till –

CS: What was it, I know they had taught over 60-some years in this particular community together, when you look at their years together. So you're talking 30-plus years on both parts. That's a lot of years to give to one community.

RG: You bet. Now if she was teaching during integration, which was '66, so she had to teach for at least 34 years.

CS: Right.

RG: That's a nice track record.

CS: Right. It is, a very long time. In the same place. So, and most of the students had gone to her at one time in elementary school, whether it would have been fourth grade, sixth grade, or fifth grade, so those same students would have had some kind of experience with her prior to them getting into high school.

RG: Do you remember – I know you were off to college when your father left Lincoln and went to the integrated Chapel Hill High School. But you must have come home for breaks and then summertime. Can you recall discussions or observations about your father at that time?

CS: I just know my feeling was that when it had to occur, I didn't think it was fair, I didn't like it. I'm sure he had to have felt some adjustment, and some sadness, where he had been the boss for years and years and years, and making do with being that other schools might not have had to make to. And then when there's an opportunity to be in a new facility, and he had more experience than his female counterpart, for that decision to be made, it had to be a hurtful one. There's no way it could not be.

RG: Did he voice that to you or to your mother?



CS: Not really, but I think you would just know that it was something he wished had not happened.

RG: I hear comments from other people I've interviewed, like they watched Mr. MacDougal, Principal MacDougal wither away.

CS: Uh huh. Well, I don't know if he was withering away, but he clearly was in an adjustment. And it wasn't a pleasant adjustment. It was a sad adjustment. Because it was not fair. It really should not have been, but it was.

RG: Who made that decision? Do you know?

CS: I guess the Board. The board of Education.

RG: Did he have a chance to argue it?

CS: I don't know. I don't remember that happening.

RG: Now, at the high school, the core curriculum teachers were all white. And there were a few black teachers there who were teaching shop, typing; Miss Battle taught French, Miss Pope taught Home Economics –

CS: Home Ec, right.

RG: And did your father or mother ever discuss that aspect of the integration?

CS: I don't know if they would discuss it, but clearly we all were aware that it was a difference from being at Lincoln and being at Chapel Hill High. And the people who were at Chapel Hill High were the people who had been at Lincoln. There was a difference. But now like I say, I didn't experience a lot of that, because I didn't attend Chapel Hill High. So I don't really know how that was. I would think that it would have to have been a difficult thing, not only for my dad, but for the teachers who did move into that facility, and for the students who moved in also. Because they didn't have their own place any more.

RG: Do you remember any of the history of that time?

CS: Well I know there was, I mean, integration was a struggle for everybody, everywhere you went. Again, I did not have to deal with that aspect, because I also went to a black school. Hampton University. So again, I did not have to deal with that element as much, until later.

RG: So your dad stayed on at the new high school for just a couple of years?

CS: And then - yes, and then transferred to being the director of adult education.

RG: Was he happier in that role?

CS: He was happiest at being principal of Lincoln. OK? (laughs) Nothing else could match, you know. Chapel Hill High was a new building, whatever, that could not match being the principal of Lincoln. Being a director of adult education, that could not match being the principal of Lincoln. And the effects that he had and the students that he was involved with.

RG: Are there other memories that you have that I haven't asked you about, that stand out or that you want to talk about?

CS: No, I don't think so. I think we've covered it. (laughs)

RG: Well, we've tried to.

CS: Yeah. I can say that I am, I have been very appreciative of all the effort that past students have had for both my parents, and how they have worked to make sure that MacDougal Middle and Elementary School was named in their honor. And that happened strictly from this community. My brother and I did not have anything to do with that. And we will always be appreciative that people acknowledged them.

RG: So the naming of those two schools is based on recommendations from the Northside community.

CS: Northside, Lincoln, and the OCLS community.

RG: OCLS being?

CS: Orange County, it was the name for Lincoln prior to it.

RG: OK.

CS: OC whatever that is. But clearly the people in *this* community did that. That wasn't anything that this family did, the community did it.

RG: That's quite an honor.

CS: It's very much an honor. And we're very appreciative, very very appreciative.

RG: Well let me say that I'm appreciative also that you took the time to talk with me, and I'm honored that I had the opportunity to meet you and your mother.

CS: And we thank you for what you're doing, getting history written down, verbalized, photocized, whatever you're doing to make sure that people are aware. So we thank you, too.

RG: Thank you. Thank you very much.

End of tape.