

NARRATORS: Randy Chandler  
Fay Chandler Honeycutt

INTERVIEW DATE: 9/28/2011

WHERE CONDUCTED: Page-Walker Hotel in Cary

INTERVIEWER: Kris Carmichael and Peggy Van Scoyoc

PURPOSE OF THE INTERVIEW:

The purpose of this interview was to capture local history of North Carolina, with focus on the first movie theater in Cary, by recording the knowledge, memories and impressions of the narrator.

SPECIFIC FOCUS OF THE INTERVIEW:

Randy and Fay's father, Paul Thomas Chandler, built the first movie theater in Cary in 1946. It was primarily a movie theater for about ten years, then became a venue for country/western performers, including Patsy Cline and Ernest Tubbs. It was also used for local talent nights. The Chandlers recalled many details about the theater. It was segregated and had an outside staircase for the black audience to exit the building from the balcony. The Town of Cary has recently purchased the building and plans to restore it to a theater once again.

NOTES ABOUT THE INTERVIEW TAPE:

The interview was recorded on a Zoom H2 digital recorder. The Interview Index lists subjects in the order they were given in each of the WAV files.

## DIGITAL RECORDING

9/28/11

Peggy Van Scoyoc (PV): Today is Wednesday, September 28, 2011. This is Peggy Van Scoyoc and I am here with Kris Carmichael who is the supervisor at the Page-Walker History Center. We are at the Page-Walker. And with us today are Randy Chandler and Fay Chandler Honeycutt. They are here to talk about their lives in Cary, and also the theater that their parents built.

Kris Carmichael (KC): So, I think you and I chatted about this. The year built – I've got access to actually Tom Byrd who interviewed you, I think, back in 1991, gave us all of his original research papers for *Around and About Cary*. So in that, he had several references, not only in his notes from his conversation with you, but also a bunch of records that show when property transferred from one person to another. He did a lot. One of those shows that your father, who was...

Fay Chandler Honeycutt (FCH): Paul Thomas Chandler.

KC: ... bought the property in 1946. So does that jibe with what your recollections?

Randy Chandler (RC): Yes. Do you know who he bought it from?

KC: No.

RC: It was a Cooper. It was W.T.'s daddy, their father.

KC: The son was the principal at Cary High?

RC: No, this is, of Cooper's Furniture.

KC: Oh, Cooper's Furniture. What do you recall, if anything, about those early days of building the theater? When did it open? What time of year it was? Any of that.

FCH: That we do not know. Randy does know the first movie that was shown: *The Voice of the Turtle*. And he actually has a video of it.

RC: No, I could never find it.

KC: Well, maybe I can. *The Voice of the Turtle* was the first movie.

PV: Was that a major motion picture release? I've never heard of it. Don't know of it.

RC: Well, they were still black and white then. Technicolor came out around '48, wasn't it?

KC: Well, there were a few that came.

PV: *Gone with the Wind* and the *Wizard of Oz* were in color, in 1939.

KC: But those were rare.

FCH: But I do remember that in order to get the films from the company that Dad ordered from Charlotte, he had to make sure his building was at least five miles from the closest movie theater. So we got in the car and drove to the Varsity Theater which was right across from State College on Hillsborough. It clicked off right at five miles. So I do remember riding with Dad to do that.

RC: There was one in Apex too.

KC: It was interesting, in preparations for this, I went over to the State Archives and the state library and looked through the News and Observer advertising from 1946 and 1947 to see if I could find anything, like a little ad or anything like that. Could not find a thing, but did find that there were all kinds of little theaters around in the communities. In fact, Fuquay and Varina had two different theaters – Fuquay, and Varina. So this was the only theater in Cary.

FCH: I made the statement once that Dad had the first theater in Cary, and I was corrected by Gerald, what's his name at the service station?

RC: Spencer.

FCH: He said no, no. We used to bring our chairs and sit down and watch movies shown against Roger's Restaurant. They used to show, somebody would bring films to town and show them that way. But it was the first house inside theater in Cary.

KC: And I understand there was also a drive-in at some point in time, called the Car-Ral, or something like that?

RC: That was McSwain's Motor Court. That was the drive-in movie, McSwain's Drive-in, which was up there in front of the Circus, that corner.

PV: Where the mobile home part is now?

RC: Yes, on this side.

PV: Oh, where that little strip mall is, up across.

RC: Yes, behind the strip mall, that was where...

FCH: and hurt our business quite a bit.

KC: Now, that came later then? I would think so.

FCH: Yes, because McSwain managed the theater for Dad for quite awhile, and then went out and built his own drive-in theater.

PV: and competed directly against your dad.

FCH: And then television came in, so people could stay at home and not get out to go to the movies.

KC: So, based on the research I've found so far, it sounds like it was actually only a movie theater for about ten years. Does that jive with what you recall?

RC: Yes. I think from '46 to about '53 to '55, because I did not have my driver's license.

KC: And then I've got that then in 1960 was when you... the clothing store.

RC: The clothing store. My father and I and another guy opened the clothing.

FCH: That's when he went in and renovated.

PV: So it was the same building. You just changed it?

RC: Right, converted it.

KC: And I think I've actually got a picture of the clothing store, somewhere. I'll have to go through this. After this front was put on, and again I think it's a shot like of Band Day or something like that. It's not of it, but it includes it. Now, what I also heard, and the Mitchells I think were sharing this with me, was that for a period of time sometime from the mid-fifties to 1960, live theater was in there.

RC: On Saturdays they had live shows. Patsy Kline sang there. Yes, she did there, because Charles Pendergrath that owned the service station down there, he saw her.

FCH: There was Lash LaRue too. Remember, he was?

PV: The actual actor, Lash LaRue?

RC: Don't quote this one, though. He said when Patsy sang, she was coming across, and there was a filling station across the street, and she had these white boots on, and she stepped in the mud. And he said she swore and swore. He said he had never heard a woman curse like that. Don't write that one down.

KC: So it was sometime after '55, '56, but before '60 that she would have sang there?

RC: Yes.

PV: Didn't she die in the late fifties? Fifty-eight or something?

RC: It would have probably been the middle fifties that they had those shows there. Yes, because I don't think we went to them. We didn't go to them.

FCH: I don't remember going to them.

RC: I remember them having them, but we didn't go to them.

FCH: I went away in '54. I went to college, so...

PV: And who was the other actor they were saying? Tubbs?

KC: Ernest Tubbs.

PV: Ernest Tubbs. Did he perform there?

RC: I don't know. It was a lot of western stars.

KC: Yes. Ernest Tubbs was one, and Patsy Kline. The Mitchells remember both of those too. And then someone else was saying that it was used...and the Seegers were saying Lash LaRue as well. Someone else was saying that it was used for talent shows on Saturday nights as well.

PV: Local talent shows.

RC: I guess that was it. I don't know.

FCH: Now that I wouldn't remember.

KC: Billy Rogers mentioned that.

FCH: Isn't he the one that...

RC: Roger's Restaurant. Bill? You said Bill, didn't you?

KC: Billy or Bill.

FCH: Is he the one that said he actually ran the projectors?

KC: Yes, he ran, what did he say? "A lot of children worked concessions there. She would give us a dollar or two and we'd go around on Saturday mornings and put up advertisements on telephone poles." That's what I'd love to get my hands on. "And that she was open seven days a week. So, it was employment for a lot of us." He's referring to Mrs. Young, and you were saying from Tom's notes here that her name was Netha? Netha Young?

FCH: N-E-T-H-A.

RC: And her son did the projector some too. Did you have that? Alvin. Yes. And Jack Gore ran the projector too, because that's Mrs. Gilfilman's brother.

FCH: I just remember when the films would come in at night, the truck would come from Charlotte, and you'd hear an awful racket. This truck would stop in front of the building. We'd be in the movie and we'll hear this SLAM, BAM noise. And it was them dropping off the films. The films were in huge reels in large containers, metal. And they would throw them down on the sidewalk and it sounded like there was a truck coming through. I figured back, and it seemed like the movie changed four times a week. They did a movie Monday and Tuesday.

RC: Monday, Tuesday. Separate one Wednesday.

FCH: Separate one Wednesday. Thursday and Friday was a new one. And then Saturdays: westerns. They usually did westerns and comedies. The Three Stooges...

RC: Was it open on Sunday?

FCH: No. Well, it was when I was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, because Mrs. Rutley got very upset about that.

PV: It was between the church services. Am I remembering that right?

KC: Yes. There was mention, and not only in here, but in the N&O there was a whole article I read, not about this theatre, but about showing movies on Sundays. And that it was quite taboo, and that they relented and only did them in the evenings, I think. This again, was about the same time that this was just getting started, so I was curious about that. Now, it wasn't just one film that they would show, though. Wouldn't they also show the serials?

FCH: Especially on Saturday there was a serial, and you'd have to come back next Saturday to get the next episode. Sort of like your TV soap operas now. You get that shot today, and then next Saturday another.

PV: Was it a double feature? So you'd have, like on Saturdays, a cowboy and then a comedy to a double feature with cartoons or something in between?

RC: Once in a while they did.

FCH: Right, a mixture.

KC: What about newsreels? Did they have newsreels?

FCH: Oh yes. Walter Winchell. Do you remember Walter Winchell?

RC: They did a little newsreel before the regular movie.

FCH: "Walter Winchell reports." I've forgotten what it was called. It's 'The News of the World.'

PV: Right. Do you have any memories of how long they continued to have newsreels in the theatres? Certainly, I would think through the forties.

FCH: Well, the television I think, probably when television started giving news reports. That's probably when...

KC: I think through the fifties and even as late as 1960, because I remember going to movies and seeing newsreels. I was really young at the time, and there were always cartoons before the feature or something that I'd go see. But again I was a little one. That would have been in southern Indiana, not here. But, newsreels were certainly still out there and being circulated, I think in the 1950s for sure.

PV: Well, 'cause TV was just coming in and most people didn't have them. So, all people had was the radio for news.

KC: So, let's see. We talked about it being managed, was it actually leased by Netha Young?

RC: Just managed.

FCH: And I think she managed the one in Apex at the same time.

KC: Right. And I've got Apex. And according to Billy Rogers and the Seegers and a couple of other folks, this was a wonderful place apparently for young people to get their first job, was working at the movie theatre.

FCH: It would be interesting to see how many people did actually work at the concession stand. That's how I got to know a lot of the people of Cary, because, actually we lived out in Carpenter. Dad had a lumber plant there, and we went to Apex for school. But, it was through the theatre that we got to know a lot of the people that were still natives here. Like Bee Smith said, her first job was popping popcorn at the concession stand. And she met her husband her. She said, "We used to sit on the back row, or the back two rows."

KC: The Seegers said it was a place for male and female companionship. In fact, it was the first place that they had a date was at the Cary theatre.

RC: Charles would come in the store, when I had the clothing store, he'd come in the store, and he said "Jean and I", his wife, "we used to sit right here and watch a movie."

FCH: Now, there also was no air conditioning. Wasn't there a huge attic fan that he used to cool the building?



RC: Yeah.

FCH: But, the building was cinderblock and brick, and it was cool inside. So a lot of people came in the summer. You see what our summers are. Well, they were like that back then too. And people would come to cool in the evenings. I told you about the lady who brought her garden crop with her.

KC: That's wonderful. I've already repeated that story once or twice.

PV: Let's get that on the recording.

FCH: "No air conditioning, but inside was cooled with a large ceiling fan. One customer sat on the front row and shelled peas and butterbeans from her garden. She came almost every time the movie changed. And the next day, when it was my time to clean up, I was responsible for sweeping up the pea hulls and the bean ends and so forth that Ms. Irene Smith had left the day before. We could always tell what was in season by Ms. Irene Smith's shells. But, by sitting on the front row, she had plenty of light that she could actually see."

KC: To pop her beans and shell her beans.

PV: That's a great story. Now, was she trying to take away the shells and things and she missed a few, or she just threw them all on the ground?

FCH: No, no!

KC: Do you recall how much it cost to buy a ticket?

RC: Nine cents. It was nine cents I think.

FCH: It was nine for children, and was it something like 13, it seemed like it was an odd amount. But I found this one [a ticket stub,] which actually says 40 cents. So that must have been an adult. Maybe it was 9 or 13. But I had jotted down here that there are several natives that could probably... I put down that "Romance blossomed on the back two rows. Many natives of Cary can

remember the night at the movies for a 25 cent ticket, a ten cent box of popcorn, a 5 cent Coke, a 5 cent candy bar, and a stolen kiss or two.”

KC: That’s perfect.

PV: Do you remember what all you sold in the concession stands?

FCH: Now that really rings a bell. The Necco Wafers. They still make those things. My son loves them. He gets them every year for Christmas. Milk Duds.

RC: Junior Mints.

FCH: Junior Mints. Hershey bar. ZagNut, it was a nut, peanut, Zagnut. And then Lance peanuts. And bottled Cokes, which mother hated because she was so afraid of breaking glass, when they would drop the bottles and they would roll down. Raisinets. Goobers.

PV: What were those, Snowcaps? The little chocolate disks with the white sprinkles on them?

RC: No, we didn’t have those. I know what you’re talking about.

KC: And of course, popcorn.

FCH: Oh yes. My brother decided once, since I loved popcorn so much, that for my birthday he was going to fill me up with popcorn. So he bought me ten boxes of popcorn and tied them up with a red ribbon and presented them to me. Made me sit down and eat. Needless to say, some came back. But it did not kill my desire for popcorn. I still love popcorn.

PV: I think it brings back the memories with the flavors.

KC: And Esther Ivey said, “Yes, we did have a theatre. We would go to the theatre on Saturday afternoons. Alberta would fix us some popcorn and apples and we would go down there and enjoy the show. We had shows before they were shown in Raleigh.” That’s what, at least, Ms. Ivey remembered.

PV: So she brought her own popcorn.

FCH: That was allowed. We just wanted them to come.

PV: No sneaking it in in a purse like we do today.

KC: And Billy was saying, this is about the films. "They were distributed by a company out of Charlotte." Which is exactly what you said. "And a big truck would come through town every time it was time for a movie change, they would bring in the big reels. And back then they were on big reels. I don't know how they are now, but it was big like the size of an automobile tire, the reels would come in."

RC: They had two projectors. They would have one on this one. They were lit by carbon, these carbon sticks. And then, when that one would get to a certain point, then they would kick in this projector. Usually, it was two for a movie.

FCH: A reel ran for 45 minutes. I remember that. And then a little symbol would flash in the upper-right corner, and that's when he knew to switch to the other one.

RC: Switch to the other projector.

FCH: And occasionally the film would get overheated by those carbon arcs that you were talking about. It was the light, from a lighted strip of carbon, and it would burn the film in two. And that's when everything would go black, and the audience would go berserk. And the projectionist would be up there struggling with having to splice that thing. That's probably what that little piece was. [She held up a strip with three images on it from an old movie.]

KC: I bet it was. Yep. That's it.

PV: Look at that. It looks like film with the little tracker holes in the sides. This might be a piece of a film that got burned.

KC: It is.

FCH: I'm going to take it to a video artist in Fuquay to see if he can get anything out of it. To maybe get a print of it or do something with it.

PV: There's 3 frames.

FCH: It looks like a cowboy kneeling down behind a....with a gun.

PV: It might be Lash LaRue, who knows?

FCH: Do you know, he became quite a Christian. And he actually, they found him when he was in his eighties I think, still going through the slums of Los Angeles and winning hobos to Christ with his acts and so forth, with his roping. I think that is exceptional. Now, did Dad get the projectors from Camp Butner, or did he sell them to Camp Butner?

RC: He got them from Camp Butner. Because I sold them to somebody in Charlotte. I kept them up until we got ready to sell that building.

PV: And then you sold them to someone in Charlotte?

RC: Yes. Then sold all those theatre seats. I had all those theatre seats in the top for a long time. I sold those too.

KC: I don't think they'll be putting that kind back, anyway.

RC: No. I heard it was going to be really nice. I heard the plans are really nice.

PV: Are you excited about the restoration?

RC: Yes. Lisa Frantz. I know her real well. You know, her husband's on the town council. Don. You know, she used to own the home place? Anyway, I love her to death. She was telling me it was really pretty.

KC: Well, they've got a first rate company to do the work, and of course all of this information will be wonderful for us to be able to share with them. And you know, because they were desperate to find any pictures at all.

FCH: I especially wanted them to see what the marquee looked like, because Randy actually donated that to...

RC: These letters up here, they went out to Cary High School for a long time, up at the ball field. They used them on top of the scoreboard.

PV: I wonder what happened to them.

RC: I don't know.

FCH: I bet Guy Mendenhall would know.

PV: He knows everything about Cary High School, especially if it was on the athletic field.

FCH: And he also loves old movies too. He collects a lot of memorabilia. Let's put him on the lookout. What did they call those? The cardboards that had on it the coming attractions? What did we call them?

KC: They weren't posters so much as they were show bills. Show bills? Is that the right word?

PV: Yes. Previews. Coming attractions.

FCH: There was always one posted in the front of Carpenter's store. Pat Watson said her mother always had one in the flower shop, in her window. So, you had to have special permission to put it in different places, but people knew where to look for them.

KC: Now, other than, and you both were probably maybe too young to know this, but are you aware of how they would have, other than these show bills or whatever they were called that were posted in stores and on telephone poles. Was there any advertising they would have done in newspapers or anything like that?

FCH: No. No. The newspaper, that was considered extremely expensive back in those days, and not everybody subscribed to the newspaper, especially out in our area, the rural areas. Not that many people read the newspaper.

KC: I can tell from going through the State Archives, there was nothing much. It wasn't as though Cary even existed. I'm telling you. There was nothing.

FCH: I know! We were the step-child. There were two theatres in Raleigh. There was the Ambassador and the State. Those were the two that we were in competition with, and they had unlimited funds for advertising.

PV: Were they air conditioned?

RC: Yes. They were city.

PV: Right. So that was more competition for you.

KC: So you say you got your films out of Charlotte. And again, they required you to be 5 miles away from another theatre. Do you know what chain or what organization, it wasn't like Lowe's Theatres, or it wasn't...

FCH: It was something like that.

PV: Was it Warner Bros., or one of the big studios?

FCH: We showed all the different ones.

RC: We showed different brands. It was a broker. It was something like Carolina Broker. I don't know. We went there one time to pick up film, but I got to go to the movie. They took me and left me at the movie in Charlotte and then came back by and picked me up. Because I didn't want to go.

FCH: He was only 6 years old. And I was 10 or 11.

RC: Yeah, I was little.

PV: When the films caught fire and broke, did y'all have to pay the film company because the film was broken?

FCH: No. And you could tell a lot of times that it had done it before in other theatres, because it was ...

RC: They spliced it. You could splice it. They had a splicer up here.

PV: Splicing it together right there?

RC: Yes. It was on that table.

FCH: I know it was, but is it still there?

RC: No. I got rid of that.

PV: Well, darn. What do you remember about the outside staircase and the balcony for the black community?

RC: It's still there.

PV: And hopefully we'll get a picture of it.

FCH: It's a studio upstairs now isn't it? A recording studio?

RC: That's where they came out. They went in the front door. Where's that?

PV: On the ground floor?

RC: There was a door here [has a floor plan.] The ticket window was here. She did the whites here, and she did the black ones here. There was a window here, a window here. And it had the little hole in it, you know?

FCH: And if you look at the building as it is now, there is a double door still there and it has a different number. It was a recording studio. Once Dad floored the top, he went straight out with the balcony and made an upper floor.

RC: But there was a little door that if they wanted to come and buy some candy they could...

FCH: They could come to that door and knock on it.

RC: And they had their own bathroom upstairs.

PV: And right inside there was an inside stairway? To go up?

FCH: Yes, right inside that door, the door from the outside. There was a double door like this, and as they stepped in the little alcove, they could turn to the window and sell them a ticket. Then they could go up the steps and the balcony was up here. The projection booth was behind the balcony.

RC: Right here, they had these glass cases, where you opened up and you could put the bill, Tuesday and Wednesday, playbills. There was two here and then the inset was in...

FCH: The glass brick.

RC: Yes. I hate it. You see a lot in Florida, those glass bricks.

FCH: And on one side of it was the men's restroom.

RC: On the other side was the men's restroom and the ladies' was right here.

FCH: That lobby that you went into, the lobby, the concession stand was in the center. Then there was curtains on either side, you went down the aisles. To the left was the ladies' restroom and then if you turn back the men's room was back in that little alcove.

PV: So it was on the east side of the building. So, now, I'm a little confused. When the black people went on their side and bought a ticket and they walked inside....

FCH: They never even saw us. They never came into the lobby.

RC: See, we went right here. We went in this door.

PV: Oh, they went to the outside staircase and went up.

FCH: No. They came in.

RC: See, this door right here? I changed it. But it was a door there and they had brown doors here. We went in here. The ticket woman sat in here. She had a window this way and a window that way. They came in here, and went up the steps and they came out this way.

PV: To the exterior.

RC: But, Bill Bell, he used to work for the town hall, you remember him? He went every time the movie changed.

FCH: Is he still living?

RC: I don't think so. I don't know. He worked, as long as I was still in town, he worked for the town.

FCH: Well, I just remember all of the musicals and Technicolor, and Crosby and Como, Ginger Rogers, Fred Astaire, Mitsy Gainer, Esther Williams, Susan Hayward, Gregory Peck.



RC: Do you remember Waldo Rood? The name Waldo Rood? Where the theater was, was a part of his mother's farm originally. All that was the Rood farm, and this was the Wilkinson farm over here. And he married a Wilkinson the first time. He told me, He was the mayor for years. He told me a lot of the history, and I wish I had written it down. I'd go have lunch with him. He lived up there at the pink house.

KC: Right, the Ogle House.

RC: Yes. I'd go have lunch with him. We were Rotary Club together, and he'd tell me the history of the town.

KC: See, that's why they call this street back here Wilkinson.

RC: Because that's where the other farm was. You remember her? Mrs. Rood? The first Mrs. Rood?

FCH: She was a teacher, taught at the high school, didn't she?

PV: Yes. Were you both born in Carpenter?

FCH: No, I was born in South Carolina. Dad brought his father's sawmill. Dad, let's go back to the beginning. Dad went to Guilford. And, one quarter before he was to graduate, he decided he didn't need college anymore. So, Grandpa pulled him out and set him up in a sawmill business in South Carolina, and that's where he met Mother. That's where the two older children, my brother and I were born. Then, Papa decided that coming up to the Carpenter area, there was a lot of pine forest up here that they could benefit from. So, he built the home place there on the railway, the Southern railway through Carpenter. And that's Randy and Beth...

RC: I was born in Raleigh and she was born in Durham.

FCH: So, those two. And then he was, the lumber business was thriving there until, he said, during the Second World War, they put a ceiling price on what the government would pay for lumber.

And he just could not operate for that. He brought a lot of black families up with him. And they established.

RC: Before OSHA came in.

FCH: But we grew up in an integrated community. I mean, the women, the children intermingled with us. So, we never gave it a thought until we came to town and they started doing the segregation business.

RC: It was sort of like, "separate but equal." You respected them. They respected us.

FCH: Have you seen *The Help*?

PV: Fabulous.

FCH: That is it. That was the era that we grew up in.

RC: When we first opened the clothing store, I used to get stuff by rail. It was right here, and they had the two separate waiting rooms at the train station.

PV: Oh, so it was segregated?

FCH: Yes, and that was in '60.

RC: '63. Yes. But I used to come over and get merchandise.

PV: Now, where was your homestead? Was it on 55?

FCH: No, it's on Carpenter Upchurch Road.

RC: Down from Green Hope School.

FCH: It's now on Green Hope School Road.

RC: Right beside Heritage Pines, up this way.

FCH: He still lives there. He's in Dad's old office.

RC: Where they joined 55 with Morrisville Parkway. There's a nursery now, a plant nursery. That was our home place.

FCH: Cardinal Landscaping.

RC: And Lisa and her first husband, they bought that and they fixed it up.

PV: What kind of clothing was in your store?

RC: Just men's, because a ladies' dress shop opened at the same time.

KC: Oh, did it? And where was that one located?

RC: In that brick building up on the left past Ashworth's. In front of where Denning's used to be. But there is a trophy place, grey building across the street. The brick building there.

PV: Oh, okay. Mrs. Scott's store?

RC: I don't know. The Dickeys owned it, but I don't remember the name of it.

PV: So, you sold men's suits?

RC: Just men's suits, yes.

FCH: When the Research Triangle opened, IBM came to town. And the IBMers had to wear suits and shirts and ties. That was when Dad changed it to the clothing store.

RC: White and blue. They were good. They supported us too, IBM did.

PV: How long was your store open?

RC: Twenty years. Ten with Dad and ten by myself.

KC: So, from '60 to '80. Wow.

RC: And then the mall came, and it killed my business.

FCH: One stop shopping.

RC: So I closed up and went to work at the mall.

FCH: Tell them about when Belk's came to get you. When they asked you for a list of your preferred customers.

RC: He wanted a mailing list. So, I went through the telephone book, and I was writing down everybody that I knew. I could call them by name, because I knew them.

FCH: Because he'd been the only men's clothing store here for years.

RC: Because I was the only one for a long time.

PV: So you did give it to him? And that pretty much put you out of business.

RC: They sent a letter out when I went to Belk.

FCH: That was Belk trying to lure him from Ivy's.

RC: He wanted me to write down everybody's name and address I knew to send a letter out.

PV: So, when you closed the store, did you go to work for Belk?

RC: Not right away. I went with Ivy's first, and then...

FCH: Then Belk lured him from Ivy's. Everyone knows Randy. He's been here since he was born.

RC: I've been at that mall since the year after it opened. I'm at Joseph Bank now. I retired from Belk to go work at Joseph Bank.

KC: That's basically been your work, as a haberdasher?

RC: Yes. This is my last section. I think I'll just go home.

KC: Well, what else do you have? Anything else in your notes that you wanted to go over?

FCH: When they start going in and taking down what Dad put in for the clothing store, they're going to find the elevated stage, and then there were two sides that went out. Exits, the back door.

RC: It is still I-beamed, where the balcony was.

FCH: And that's where he stored his clothing when he had it as a clothing store.

KC: When they start working on it, which I imagine it won't be long.

RC: Well, if you need to know anything else, we can think of something.

KC: yes, I was going to say, would you be willing to even meet them over there?

FCH: I would love to actually see what's underneath.

RC: Yes. I haven't been back there since I left.

FCH: We were not allowed to go anywhere near any of the building. We could never go to the mill to see what he did at the mill. It wasn't safe.

RC: Well, it was too dangerous.

FCH: So, we were never allowed to go when it was being developed. But, I'd like to see what he did leave underneath.

RC: We would have been in everything.

FCH: I know. We sneaked to the sawmill one time.

RC: He knew what he was doing.

KC: It was probably just as well that he kept you away from that. That's fantastic. Well, Peggy, can you think of anything else? I know I'm going to be calling you up.

RC: Well you can.

PVS: Are there any pictures you want to talk about?

FCH: This is the only picture we have of Dad. It was in the Green Hope Church directory.

RC: See if you can get up with Chris Ashworth and see if you can get that picture, because it shows more of the front of the building.

KC: I will. Okay.

FCH: And this is that little Shell station that is still here.

RC: That's ...Center's.

KC: Excellent. Well, we'll go downstairs and I'll scan all of these.

RC: Do you remember, there used to be that tin building when we opened the theatre that the companions used to live in, that used to reupholster furniture? Then there was a filling station.

KC: Paul Thomas Chandler. And your momma's name was?

FCH: Blanche Harris Chandler.

KC: I actually found that in part of the deed stuff, again, that Tom Byrd had.

FCH: And she worked as Randy's alteration lady. She sat in the back. And everyone says I look exactly like her. As a matter of fact, one of the women that she worked with many many years ago walked in one day when I was sitting back there at the sewing machine and almost fainted. She said, "I thought Mrs. Chandler done come back."

KC: Oh my goodness. Well, Peggy is writing a release form so we can use your words.

PV: Thank you so very much. Is there anything else?

KC: Oh my gosh, this has been a mother load. This is fantastic. You have answered all of my questions and more at this point. But, believe me there will be others that will come up.

FCH: I really wish that some way we could mention Dad's name as being the one who brought entertainment to Cary.

PV: Definitely. I'd love to see his picture in the lobby when it opens.

FCH: Oh, I would love that.

KC: Well, there are two artists that have been hired to work with the architects. You've seen, or maybe you haven't, the way they've done the Cary Art Center, the old elementary school?

RC: Oh, I've got to go in. It looks great from the outside.

KC: Oh, please do. The inside will blow your mind.

RC: Cause, I go by there every day. I watched them build it.

KC: Right. And they've got all these glass panels. What we did was, and they won't do the same thing because it's a different artist and a different architect. But what they did in that was, they wanted to incorporate something in there that reminded folks that it had always been a place of education. So, I collected photographs going way back of Cary Academy, Cary High School, Cary Elementary School. And they've incorporated them into the glass itself. And so you've got this great big stairway that goes up, and one whole wall goes all the way from the basement on up to the third

floor. And it's just full of images from the old school days. And then we also have glass sliding doors that has a wonderful image of girls...

PV: Teachers. I think they're teachers.

KC: Were they teachers? From about 1890, I'm guessing.

RC: That was the girls' school wasn't it?

FCH: No. Our sister's mother-in-law actually came by train to the Academy when she was 13 years old.

RC: It was a boarding school.

PV: for both boys and girls.

KC: It was a boarding school and it was quite the large campus. You can see right here in this picture that it had vocational training. It had dormitories. It had a gymnasium. It had a special building that was for the elementary and for the older. So, once when you went to school there you started there in first grade and you went all the way up to eleventh grade.

PV: Until 1947, and then the state schools went to the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. So, anyway is it the same architect that's doing...

KC: No, I think it's a different one. But, nonetheless I will make sure that these images, once we get them scanned in...

RC: Because we can sketch out an old picture. Well, we've pretty well told her how it was.

KC: If you could actually do a little sketch of what the inside looked like. You know, that this was this door, and this was that door, and it inset here. And that's where the concession stand was. I'm sure they won't put it back exactly the way it was, but it would be lovely to be able to give them that information for them to consider anyway.

RC: Okay.

END OF THE INTERVIEW

