

START OF TAPE 1, SIDE A

CLEMENTINE SELF
FEBRUARY 10, 2001

ROBERT GILGOR: This is February the 10th in the year 2001 and this is Bob Gilgore interviewing Clem or Clementine Self at her home at 210 Broad Street.

Good morning Clem.

CLEMENTINE SELF: Good morning Bob.

RG: How are you this morning?

CS: Great.

RG: Good. You look great. I'll begin this morning with a very broad question and that is, what was it like growing up in Chapel Hill?

CS: I guess, some people would say that I've probably lived a very sheltered life growing up in Chapel Hill because the things that I experienced with my family were not necessarily very negative things. I lived, and you said earlier that we were poor—well, we never knew we were poor. I lived across the street from the principal of the high school.

RG: Mr. McDougale?

CS: Yeah, Mr. McDougale. Mr. and Mrs. McDougale. I had two teachers living on my street—Lillian Cannon, at that time she was Lillian Robinson. Mrs. Lampley lived at the top of the hill. So, we lived on the street with who we thought were the best and the richest in Chapel Hill. So I never knew I was poor. Both of my parents worked and so there were only two of us so I always had—I never felt like I was in need of anything. So whatever I received, you know, I always had everything I needed. So I never knew that I was poor. We were a sense of community on North Graham Street. Everybody's mother

looked after each other. Our neighbors were like our sisters and brothers and we just had a big sense of family. So some of the experiences that other people have experienced, I never have experienced.

I became involved in the civil rights movement when it came through Chapel Hill with James Farmer and some other people who—I think his name was Quilton Baker—when they came to Chapel Hill and I really got involved with that. I was never arrested because my father thought that if I got arrested he would lose his job at the Carolina Inn. So I never—I'd do all the sit-ins, I'd go to all of the meetings, all of the church meetings, but I never would—but when the police came to arrest us, I would always move so that I wouldn't actually go to jail. One night we just did a sit-in at the jail and so I did do that. But I was never actually arrested.

The thing that I remember about Chapel Hill in terms of segregation was at Belk when it was on Franklin Street. They had a white water fountain and a black water fountain and a white rest room and a black restroom. Well, I've always been rather nervy and I would always go in the white restroom. People would look at me strange and I'd speak and use the restroom that said white. I never did the colored water fountain or the colored bathroom. I was kind of brazen, I guess. So those things didn't bother me.

My parents—we didn't do the movie scene. I don't ever remember going to the movies. So even when we were sitting in at the Carolina Theatre, I had not actually experienced going to the movies. So I didn't have the experience of sitting upstairs in the balcony. So I don't—I can't relate to those kinds of activities because we never did them—you know, I was never allowed to do that. And that's why I said earlier I think I lived rather a sheltered life because I didn't do some of the things that many people in

Chapel Hill probably did. Through the Civil rights movement I felt encouraged when it was time to integrate the schools that I would be one of the ones that would do that. As I said earlier, there were eight of us and the eight of us that made a decision—and many of them were my neighbors--.

RG: Who influenced you to make that decision?

CS: Well, some of the people who were involved in the civil rights movement. When we found out that the school board was encouraging—you know saying you could go to school of choice—then some of the people who were actually involved in the civil rights movement at the time were asking if they could get volunteers who'd be willing to do that.

RG: Who were the people involved?

CS: Clinton Baker, I remember Reverend Laverte Taylor, and just—James Farmer came through two or three times—those were just the people that I basically remember.

RG: So these were black leaders—

CS: Right.

RG: Some of whom were local?

CS: No, they weren't local.

RG: They weren't local. They were from the outside.

CS: They were all outside.

RG: What about your minister? Did your minister try to influence you?

CS: Reverend Manley at that time was my minister and he did mention from the pulpit that the school board had agreed that people could have school of choice. And it

was more my friends—we more or less got to together as a group—Gene Hines, Deborah Foushee, myself, LaVerla Peace,—we or more or less talked to each other. Because we more or less lived in the neighborhood around each other and we just got together and said, “Let’s do it!”

RG: Let’s move from that back to your childhood. I’m interested in knowing what your parents were like?

CS: Well, my parents were very caring and loving and hardworking parents. My mom—my father was at one time a carpenter. He had his own business, he and his father and brother. And then in later years, because carpenters can’t work very much during the winter time, he decided to become a bellhop at the Carolina Inn and so he worked up at the Carolina Inn. We always had fun as a family. We did all our things as a family type thing. We would be at my grandparents—as I said my grandfather was an independent carpenter and my grandmother was always at home. Same thing with my mother’s parents—my grandfather worked and my grandmother was at home and then in later years she went out to work. But my father’s mother never worked except at home and we raised our own produce and we had our own milk and butter that we sold every Saturday.

RG: How did you manage to raise your own produce and have your own milk and butter?

CS: Well, we just—that’s what we did.

RG: You had a large area?

CS: We had a large tract of land and that’s what we did. I mean, that’s the life that I knew—getting the crops in.

RG: Was that your grandparents who had the crops?

CS: My grandparents and my father helped them. But we did most of the farming on their land.

RG: They lived out in the country.

CS: Right, out off of Damascus Church Road. That's where they lived. And so they had their cows and so we churned the milk and made the butter and on Saturday we came to town to sell it. And we had eggs and vegetables, too. That's the life that I lived and it was always around family.

RG: So all of these chores were done with other people working at the same time?

CS: Right, at the same time.

RG: You were just copying them, in a way.

CS: Right, right. We all worked together and we raised our own pigs and had our own pork. We just—that's what we did.

RG: Did your mother work?

CS: My mother worked. She worked at the university laundry. And then in later years she became an employee of the Chapel Hill/Carrboro city school system as a home school coordinator. She worked for a while as a teaching assistant at Sule Elementary when it first opened and then when she left Sule, she became the home school coordinator. And that role was to—sort of like the social worker of today—the family specialist that we have in the school system, where they work with the families to get children to school and get their glasses, get their dental work done, make sure parents come to parent conferences and that type of thing.

RG: Did your mother and father graduate from high school?

CS: My mother graduated from high school. She graduated from Orange County Training School. My father did not. And he and his father and brother went in to business together and so, you know, he was a self-made man.

RG: Who was the boss of the family? Now, don't tell me you were.

CS: No. I would say they worked together. I wouldn't say that my dad was more of a authority figure than my mom. It was more or less togetherness. My dad was the one—you know, I never rode the school bus to school. My father always drove me to school if I had to ride to school. Or I walked. I either walked—you know, I could walk to Northside and I could walk to Lincoln. But if it was cold or rainy, my daddy carried me. I never rode the school bus.

RG: Who disciplined you?

CS: My mother.

RG: And who paid the bills?

CS: Both of them.

RG: So it really was not a matriarchal household or any other kind of household.

CS: No, it really wasn't. And it never has been. They more or less did things together. My dad, I guess, it could be considered in a broad sense, the provider, because he brought the food. We've always lived in the same house. When they married they built that house.

RG: On Graham Street?

CS: On Graham Street. So that's the only house I've ever known as a child growing up. And when I went off to college they remodeled the house, so it's the same house. My mom, I guess, was in charge of the groceries and the furniture. If she wanted

to buy furniture she went and bought furniture. And daddy made sure that the house note was paid and that the lights were on and that we had plenty of oil and whatever.

RG: So you had central heat?

CS: Yeah. And we had a television and those kinds of things. I can remember when the first television came out and we all went over to Sears together and daddy bought us a TV.

RG: Now, you're describing something that is different from what I've heard from many of the other people.

CS: My life might have been a little bit different than what some other people may have experienced.

RG: What about your friends? Were your friends in the same economic class that you were in? I mean, many of them didn't have cars and they lived in houses that had a wood burning stove and they didn't have heat in their bedrooms and they had six kids with two bedrooms kind of thing. Were your friends like this? Did you have friends like that?

CS: Probably some. Most of my friends were right there on Graham Street. At one point, now, we had a stove that was in the dining room but we were always warm. I would say—I was born in '47 and I would say, probably by '53—by the time my brother was born in '53 or '54, we had central heat.

RG: Did you have air conditioning?

CS: No, we didn't have air conditioning.

RG: Windows fans?

CS: Yeah we had window fans. My dad was a bellhop—I can remember the window fans so well, because my dad would sleep during the day and he'd cut the window fan on so that he wouldn't hear the noise in the house because he always worked at night. Because he did the carpentry work during the daytime and he did the bellhop job in the night. So when he'd go to sleep the fan would be on and that would drown out the noise in the house.

RG: Remind me, I'll tell you a funny story about that. So your father had two jobs?

CS: Right. And my mom worked at the laundry. And by my dad being a carpenter, he could do that. And then, he's always loved farming also. So there would be several little things going on at the same time. I can remember when I got ready to go off to college, my mom had savings bonds coming out of her paycheck. And so they cashed in those savings bonds and they put moneys together. And that's how—I never had a loan, they didn't take out a loan for me to go to college. They just paid my tuition as it came up.

RG: You had a younger brother.

CS: I had a younger brother.

RG: Did he go to...

CS: He went to Guy B. Phillips. And he went to...I guess he went—he probably had a little bit of Estes Hills. I'm six years older than he is and I don't remember a whole lot about him. I don't mean at all—I mean in terms of school and things. I know he went to Phillips because when he went to Phillips is when all the riots started. He was in that group that turned Phillips out. So his story probably would be totally different than mine.

He had a different experience. It's almost like we were two different children growing up in two different households. Because he was so much younger than I was.

RG: Did he go to college also?

CS: No, he didn't. He moved away and then he started with different jobs and now he's working for Glaxo Wellcome.

RG: Are there other things that stand out in your mind about growing up here? Like playmates, and where you played and the games that you played?

CS: We basically played—on our street there were so many children that we were all playmates. We were all like, in a sense, family. Now, there was a family, the Jones family. They had more children probably than anyone else. So with all of those brothers and sisters—then I had a first cousin who lived across the street, she was the only child—then, the McDougle children lived across the street also and they only had two children also so with all of us together, we made up our own group. I had cousins who lived on the same side of the street and I played with him, and I had other cousins who lived over on Craig Street who would come up and we just all played. It was like a neighborhood of kids growing up. We played various games—hopscotch, old red devil, we'd catch fireflies at night, we'd say—something we used to kind of do, we'd say, "in door bears out the night, daddy done killed them all last night" something we used to do. But we basically played like that over there on Graham Street. We did go to—I did go to Holmes Daycare, after a while. I went there for maybe one or two years. I don't remember exactly. But I went there, at Hargraves Center.

RG: You said Holmes Daycare was in Hargraves?

CS: It was at—right where it is now, when I went. The exact same location. They gave it a new name. I mean it may have been Holmes Daycare then, but Hargraves was not named Hargraves at that time. It was just called the community center. And we'd go to the community center for dances and parties and we'd just—whenever we'd have a sock hop or something on Friday night and we'd pay a little fee and go. And those were basically the things that we did. But because there were so many of us on that street, although there were several houses, but there were kids in all of those houses. On our street, we just played and had a sense of family. It was like one big family. We were in one house and out the other one all the time.

RG: So you knew all the parents.

CS: We knew all the parents, all the kids.

RG: And they knew you?

CS: And they knew me. One household had a piano and we'd go over there and bang on their piano. And that's sort of what we did.

RG: What if someone in the group was misbehaving? How would that be handled?

CS: It depends on if the parents were home—those parents would deal with it and then they'd tell your parents when they got home and then you'd be dealt with again.

RG: Did they discipline you physically?

CS: Sometimes.

RG: Not your parents, but...

CS: I mean the other parents. Sometimes.

RG: They'd sometimes discipline you if they thought you deserved it?

CS: If they thought I deserved it.

RG: And then you'd get it again when...

CS: And I got it again when I came home. I can even remember getting a spanking at school. In the third grade, my last spanking I got at school and it was because the substitute teacher said that I did something—said I was sassy. And so when the teacher came back to school, the teacher spanked me, and then my mom spanked me when I got home.

RG: What was a spanking like? I've heard people say, "Well, today it would be considered physical abuse, child abuse." And then I've heard other people say, "Oh, it was a couple of licks with a stick on my leg."

CS: It could be—it was mostly a switch on your legs. At school it was a ruler on your hand. And any form of physical touching of a child today is considered physical abuse, but we didn't think it was physical abuse at the time. We just thought it was a way of life. And it worked. We ended up doing what we were supposed to do. And we didn't do it again! And we didn't keep repeating the same thing over and over and over.

RG: So it wasn't like a ten-minute beating?

CS: Oh, no. No.

RG: So it was like, what? A few licks?

CS: A few licks. Sometimes, it was one lick. It wouldn't take but one lick. Because you would have to go out to the switch tree and break your own switch and bring it back in and that's what they would use. And that long switch, it was always keen on the ends so when it came across your legs the first time, you didn't want it to come back the second time so you did what you had to do and when on about your business.

And you didn't talk back. You didn't give your opinion. It's whatever the parent said, is what you did. Or whatever Ms. Jones on the street said is what you did.

RG: So you got disciplined, it sounds like, from many people in the community. Did you get love from those people?

CS: Uhuh.

RG: How was that manifest?

CS: The love came that when you would go into their homes, you always felt welcome. You felt like you were at home. You didn't have a problem if you wanted something to eat, you could say "Aunt Lois, I'm hungry," or "Ms. Jones, I'm hungry," or "Ms. McDougle, I'm hungry," or whatever you wanted—or "Cousin Emma, I would like something to eat. May I have a glass of milk?" and it was never questioned. It was just like being at home. And if everybody else was sitting down eating, you got to sit down and eat. Same thing at your house. Everybody would come to your house and if it was time to eat, food was being cooked, everybody ate out of that pot of food. Everybody was always kind to one another. You didn't have a lot of—I didn't see a lot of anger, a lot of arguing, a lot of, you know, people yelling at one another. I didn't see that. I didn't have that experience. When I was around, it always pleasant, always loving. We'd go upstairs and sit in the middle of people's beds and talk and laugh and play games. We'd play jack rocks, and as I said earlier, hopscotch. Or bat-ball. Probably jack rocks and hopscotch was one of the things we enjoyed most. I mean, we could play jack rocks and hopscotch for hours.

RG: Did you skip rope?

CS: Yeah, we did a little of that. We did more jumping rope at school, probably. Peas, pears—we did that, and you'd jump to see how fast you could jump. Because usually when you'd do that you would try to make the rope get hot—

RG: It looks like you're doing it right now!

CS: And then we'd roller-skate. We did a lot of roller-skating, especially when I got in, probably fourth or fifth grade. We roller-skated all the time. We'd ride our bikes. One of the worst injuries I had was riding that bicycle down Roberson Street. Because at that time there was a big dip in the road and I didn't hit it just right and the handle bar hit me in the face. But I was all right. I got over it.

RG: Did you see much alcohol abuses in the community?

CS: I would see some people who had been drinking. And it wasn't—I'd know the people by name, but it wasn't like the actual people on my street. I can only think of maybe one household on my street where people, where I'd actually see them drunk, you know. And you'd see it in the neighborhood. Up on the corners and various people standing around and that kind of thing, but I didn't get the same picture that I get today of the drug addicts and people dealing drugs on the street. It was not that same picture to me.

RG: So you saw some alcohol abuse, but it sounds like it wasn't a lot?

CS: It wasn't to—to me, what I see today on the streets, and what we've had to deal with up on Broad Street with the drugs, and what I saw on Graham Street today, it wasn't in that—it wasn't magnified like that to me. I could probably—you could almost go through and name the people who I saw who were abusing alcohol. It just was not the

same picture to me as what I see today with the drugs. It existed, but it didn't magnify like it did with the drugs to me.

RG: Did you see much physical abuse?

CS: I can only think of one situation where I saw physical abuse. And that same person was the same person I can visualize abusing alcohol. I really didn't see very much physical abuse. And in this case, it wasn't that the man beat up the lady, it was that the lady beat up the man. It was the man who always ended up injured in this particular case that I'm thinking about. I never saw, if I think back, I can't ever recall seeing a man hit a woman.

RG: Was there much separation, single families, single-parent families, going on when you were growing up?

CS: Not that I know of. Like I said, the neighborhoods that I grew up in, we were all a family. You know, you had your parents and that kind of thing. But as I would go to school, there might be families that weren't. But I was rarely around those people except when I was at school.

RG: Did your parents or family, grandparents, aunts, uncles, talk to you about education?

CS: Yes, it was a key thing. You didn't have a choice. Your role as a child was to study, do your best, and if you didn't understand something it was your role to try to find out what you didn't understand. And they had a designated time that you did your homework. You got your homework done. My parents were very active in the PTA. If the teacher said that I did not do an assignment, to put it bluntly, I had hell to pay. Even though they did not go to college, they expected nothing but the best from me. It was just

understood. You didn't have a choice. You didn't get into "the teacher said" or "the teacher didn't say" or "the teacher didn't do." It was your responsibility. I must say, my parents taught me responsibility. I remember my dad telling me, when I was in about the fourth grade, because by him being flexible during the day because he worked at night, he would say, "it's time for you to learn how to cook. It's time for you to learn. When Momma comes home you need to have this on the stove already cooking." And so, I learned how to get in the kitchen. And we would go eat, say pinto beans at night. Those dried beans were on the stove cooking so when momma came in all she had to do was finish them up. If we were going to have fried chicken that night, then I cut that chicken up and had it salted so that when momma came home all she had to do was fry it.

RG: How old were you?

CS: Probably nine. I started cooking when I was about nine.

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RG: So my question was, did your grandparents give you the same feeling about education that your parents did?

CS: Yes, they did. My grandfather and my father were the greatest mathematicians, I thought, in the world. And I don't care what my math was that I didn't understand, either my grandfather or my father could sit me down and show me how to do it. And we laugh today because my grandfather would always say, "Well you know ought times ought." People would say, "what do they mean when they say 'ought times ought'" and, you know, it was zero, is what it meant. My grandfather actually taught himself to read by reading the bible. And he's probably read the bible many many many times because he could take that bible and quote scripture and tell you where to find it—

verse and line. If you had questions, he was always the one that everyone in the family would go to. "Let's ask Uncle Rufus, he can tell us what it says." They were all—I mean, that's just the way it was. They expected us to do it. Two of my father's sisters actually went to college. One went to business and one went to a four-year college. So, yes.

Education was very important.

RG: Did you have an encyclopedia at home?

CS: Yes.

RG: And a dictionary?

CS: Uhuh.

RG: Books around?

CS: Uhuh.

RG: Did your neighbors have the same things in their homes?

CS: Many of them did. Remember, I told you I lived across the street from the principal.

RG: Oh yeah.

CS: I had two or three teachers down the street. I had a cousin who was a Rhodes scholar who grew up two doors from me.

RG: Who was that?

CS: His name was Ernest Mason. We call him Douglas; his name was Ernest Douglas Mason. He died...

RG: Wasn't he one of the four people who sat down in front of Colonial Drug—or was that a different Mason?

CS: That may have been a different Mason. He died about three years ago. He was a professor at North Carolina Central. But you were talking about people from Chapel Hill growing up and what they became and you know, he actually, you know, did it. He had his PhD. But he had a rare disease—he had it as a child, he was born with it. And that's why he died before he turned fifty.

RG: What was school like? You went to Northside.

CS: I went to Northside. It was always called Northside and it was from the first through the sixth grade. School was fun. I enjoyed Northside. I learned to play the clarinet. Mr. Edgerton, Clark Edgerton, was my band instructor. And my parents bought me a clarinet.

RG: In what grade were you playing the clarinet?

CS: Fourth.

RG: Was that the usual year that you got taught an instrument?

CS: Uhuh.

RG: And did Mr. Edgerton teach you the clarinet?

CS: Uhuh.

RG: And did he do all the teaching for all the instruments?

CS: Most. You see he was a high school band director. And so when I was in the fourth grade I got my own clarinet and I learned to play the clarinet. I was in the choir. We had a choir. We had French in fourth grade. They started teaching us French. I can't speak a word of it now. School was fun. Then when we went to seventh, eighth and ninth grade at Lincoln High—that was fun. I had excellent teachers. And the teachers, I guess—I don't know whether we were grouped by certain things when we were in

school, but the teachers and classes that I had were always good classes, always very supportive. I enjoyed my teachers. They always gave me a sense of responsibility and had high expectations for me. They did not just let me do what I wanted to do. They had goals for us and we had to meet those goals. We didn't have a choice. And the teachers lived in my neighborhood. So it was always good.

And so, like I said, when I went on to Lincoln, that was an excellent experience. I enjoyed the plays and the operettas and those types of things that we always did at the elementary level. And at Lincoln we had always had what we called May Day and that was fun. I enjoyed the parades. I learned to play my instrument, the clarinet, when I was in elementary school, so when I went on to Lincoln, of course, I was in the marching band. And I just thought that was the greatest thing since apple pie. People often asked me if I've ever been a cheerleader. It never interested me to be a cheerleader, no.

And you were talking about how the sense of family and people loving each other—my father never had a son to play sports. My brother never played sports. But there's not one of my mother's nephews or my father's first cousins or any family member that my parent's didn't go to every single football game. Home or away. They supported those guys just like they had a son out there playing. And my mother had two nephews who lived out in the country, out on 54, so rather than go home when they had a game on Friday night, they would always come to my house for dinner. And not only did they eat at my house, anybody else on the football team that wanted to eat at my house, ate at my house. So it was just always a sense of family.

RG: Was this support for the young people who were involved in sports, was this a common kind of thing, or was your family just a little more attentive to that?

CS: Well, it was the only life I knew, so I mean...

RG: So you don't really know.

CS: I don't really know. I just thought that's what everybody did.

RG: Were the stands crowded?

CS: The stands were always crowded. The people of Chapel Hill really supported the sports program. We played at what they call now Lion's Park for a long time. And then finally, we were able to play other places. It was very supportive. And when you'd have a parade, the band—the people would line the streets to see the parade. The floats—I can even remember—we had a '57 Chevrolet—our '57 Chevrolet was in the parade one year. It was red and white. And to make those little tissue paper flowers to put on there and the floats, and all of that.

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RG: You had mentioned about the PTA. Just to change the subject, from football to PTA. You mentioned your mother supported the PTA and I wonder if you would talk about the PTA or PTA meetings, what they were like, if you ever went, if your father ever went, and so forth.

CS: The PTA meetings were business meetings. They discussed things that they would do for the school. They discussed budget items. But the parents were very involved. I can remember at Northside—that's where I really remember the PTA—I mean, the auditorium would be full. Parents were actively involved. And today, people talk about—and you see it, that African-American parents aren't involved in the PTA. But I think, today, sometimes, parents feel that—feel rather intimidated. Because it looks like there's a certain little group of parents who are running everything and in charge of

everything and the African-American parents who don't feel like they're in that same social-economic class, don't want to be a part of that group. They don't feel comfortable in that group and they don't feel welcome. And it may or may not be the thing that the other parents are doing to them, it's just a sense of feeling that they have.

RG: When you would have an issue come up for a vote at the PTA meetings from Northside, would this be something decided by committee and presented to the group or would it be decided by the group from the get-go?

CS: From what I can remember, it would be a group decision. It would be brought—Mr. Peace was the principal—and if there were issues that were brought forward, then the total body would vote—"let's put this into motion," the motion would be voted on, and depending upon whether or not it passed would be the decision of the total group. It wasn't this little group presenting something and then expecting everybody else to go along with it. Everybody that was there was totally involved. And I think that might be why you had good participation. Because it didn't seem like that one little group of people running everything.

RG: Is that what you perceive in the integrated schools? A group running everything?

CS: Yes.

RG: Did they have a group vote or do they have committee decisions?

CS: There's a lot of committees. You know, the committees meet, the committees discuss. It's almost like, when it's brought to the total group, the decision has already been made. One will present it, the other one will second it, and then by then the vote is done.

RG: Do you think that at the time of integration, the socio-economic status and the education background of the people involved in the PTA had an effect on the African-Americans who went to attend these meetings? Or maybe you already said that—were they intimidated?

CS: I don't know if—there could have been some intimidation. And it could have been just not feeling comfortable, that they didn't feel that they measured up to the whites that were in charge. Because many African-Americans, probably, at that point, still had those stereotype thoughts—that "I'm not where these people are. I can't compete with these people." So there was some stereotype thinking, probably, going on, as well as some intimidation. And for many years—I know myself, you can be in meetings for many years, after integration—I could make a statement. Mary could make a statement. My statement would be ignored. Mary would come back and say the exact thing that I just finished saying and "Oh! That's a wonderful idea!" and you're sitting there going, "Well, what is it about what I just said that you didn't understand? That's the same thing that I just finished saying!"

RG: They weren't listening.

CS: Right. That went on for many years. Many years of that, people get to the point, "Well, why am I doing this? I don't want to do this." And so they start pulling away. And so, over the years, more and more people just start pulling away because you're not made to feel that your ideas are valuable.

RG: Let's go back to Northside, unless there's more you want to say or share about the PTA—are there other things about the PTA?

CS: Some of the PTA meetings had operettas or plays or singing, or things that the kids were involved in. Parents participated and were involved because their children were involved. They got the children there to get them to do what they wanted them to do. It's very interesting today that we spend a lot of time talking about not making kids feel comfortable, well so and so might not be able to afford—and so on. I found whatever children are participating in, most parents are able to find whatever it is those children need to make them look good in that performance. Because sometimes at schools you have trouble—you know, you want kids to wear a certain outfit maybe dark pants and a white shirt. People would say, "Well so and so might not be able to afford it." You tend to assume stuff about families before you really know what they can do. Most families if they can't do it, they'll let you know. You don't need to make a whole judgment about everybody not being able to afford something before you do it. When we performed, we were all in uniform. We all had certain outfits—and, I mean, we did dynamite performances. They were very colorful and excellent.

RG: I hear that theme—performance was very—whether it be in sports, operetta, band—is this something that's a real observation on my part?

CS: It's real. I mean, we enjoy doing things. We don't just enjoy going, sitting, and looking at each other. You know, you need a purpose for going. You can have your PTA meeting, but have a purpose other than going to talk and sit and discuss the budget. Performances brought parents out.

RG: And now, at the PTA meetings today, do they have performances by children?

CS: Rarely.

RG: Would you say it was common for the PTA meetings at Northside and Lincoln?

CS: Oh, it was very common, very common.

RG: Over half the time?

CS: Over half the time. Either the band, the choir—or at the elementary level, the classes—I mean, it was a part of the curriculum, that every class had to do something, some kind of performance during that school year. So you just had to decide which Friday, or which PTA meeting you were going to do it at. Because every class was expected to do something.

RG: Did you have an assembly every week?

CS: Every week. Or almost every week.

RG: Were there performances at assemblies?

CS: Uhuh.

RG: Always students, or was it a mixed bag?

CS: Most of the time it was students.

RG: So every week some class had to do something for the whole school year?

CS: For the whole school year. The whole entire school year.

RG: What did you do?

CS: I don't know. I was in plays, I would sing. And today, I like doing that kind of stuff. I do it at church. And if there's a play, you know, I'm willing to participate and be a part of that. I just kind of like performing. I don't know why, it's just what I like.

RG: Let's go to Lincoln, since after all this is what we're focusing on—tell me your memories. You were there for three years—seventh, eighth and ninth grade—what

were the things that were positive, that stand out? And what were the negative things? I don't think I've asked that question of anyone—do you remember any negative things about Lincoln? But I'd like to hear the positive first.

CS: The positive things were that I felt that everyone there cared. All of the teachers cared about the students. I thought that they wanted to make sure that the students were successful, that they expected the students to their best at all times. I always thought we had excellent teachers. And they were encouraging teachers. And you could go to them and talk to them if you had problems. And they would be willing to assist you with personal problems as well as academic problems. They would take the time to re-explain things to you and to work with you.

Ms. Pope was a home economics teacher when I was there. I hated sewing, but—and I still don't like to sew—but she kept encouraging me and motivating me to finish this dress that I had to finish in order to pass the course. And she also encouraged the girls to become debutantes and several of us went to Raleigh and participated in the Alpha Kappa Alpha sororities' debutante ball.

RG: Is that Shaw? What is that?

CS: It's a social sorority.

RG: Uhuh, from what school?

CS: It was an alumni chapter, so it wasn't from any particular school. They were known really as AKA's, really is what they were called. And it was an alumni chapter so it was a mixed group of schools. So it wasn't just from Shaw. Just like it is today. Today they still give debutante balls and give scholarships and things. But because we didn't have a group in Chapel Hill, she took us to Raleigh so that we could get the same

experience. I mean, we had our long flowing white dresses and everything just like a real debutant ball. So, I mean, I had those experiences. I told you my life was sheltered from a lot of different people. My interview is probably different.

RG: A little bit. But there are also some people who had very similar experiences. It's not the first time I've heard about the debutante ball. I just didn't know about Alpha Kappa Alpha.

CS: Well, their short names was AKA's.

RG: You also mentioned that they gave financial support?

CS: They did. They gave a scholarship.

RG: To black students? To go to college?

CS: Uhuh. Well, it's a black sorority. When I got ready to go to college I received a scholarship from them to go. It was, I don't know, I think it was about \$500 at that time.

RG: Was it just for women?

CS: Just for women. It's a female sorority. The brother sorority to that is called the Kappa's.

RG: And do they do the same sort of thing with the financial support, scholarships?

CS: I don't know if they did it then, but they do now. Because both of my sons have participated in their cotillion and both of my sons received sizable scholarships from them when they got ready to go to college.

RG: So the teachers you say were supportive. And even the subjects that you couldn't do well, they still supported you.

CS: I hated sewing.

RG: You mentioned also that you could take personal problems to your teachers. So in a way, you're saying they were counselors.

CS: Yeah, they were. Some of them were. Especially Ms. Pope, who was the home economics teacher. I know several people who, when they had problems, would go to her and talk. And she would help them in whatever way she could and they felt comfortable going to her to talk.

RG: Were there other teachers who were sort of earmarked as good people to talk to?

CS: Ms. King was one of them

RG: Betty King?

CS: Betty King. She was one of those people you could go to with your problems and talk. That's sort of what we did.

RG: What about male teachers?

CS: Herman Berchette. Mr. Huntley—I can't think of his first name. You could talk to them. Lincoln had several male teachers when I was there.

RG: How was discipline accomplished at Lincoln?

CS: Well. Since I never got into trouble, I really don't know. I'm trying to think—basically they went to Mr. McDougle. But I really can't recall what happened after that. The thing that I thought—if I could come up with something that today that I think is negative and I probably thought so at that time too, when girls became pregnant, that the boys and the girls were put out of school during that time. I had a few classmates who

didn't graduate when we graduated because of that. They did graduate but they lost a year of school because they were fathers.

RG: Sort of see no evil, hear no evil sort of thing?

CS: Yeah, yeah. I thought that was not good.

RG: Did you have a demerit system?

CS: If we did, I don't remember it. I was never caught up in the bad scenes. I mean, I just don't remember it.

RG: Did you ever see smoking in the yard, in the schoolyard? Did you ever see drinking?

CS: I never saw drinking, I know. I'm trying to remember—there were so many woods. I do remember seeing kids going to the woods and they may have been smoking when they went. But I never saw any drinking.

RG: You didn't see any smoking in the schoolyard, even surreptitiously—but maybe the woods, some people might have?

CS: Might have gone to the woods. I know I'd see guys go out to the woods and come back and I sort of suspected that that's what they were doing, but I didn't know that's what they were doing.

RG: Did many of the girls get pregnant?

CS: Not a lot. When I think back—out of my class, maybe four.

RG: Four out of...?

CS: Out of fifty. Well, maybe not fifty. The whole class was fifty. Maybe four out of 35 or something. I never thought it was a large number, not even then.

RG: What about dress code, chewing gum, wearing hats—things like this at school? Were there rules about things like that?

CS: Those weren't issues then. Your parents governed your dress code. Men knew you didn't wear hats inside the building.

RG: Do they wear them today?

CS: Yes, depending on the school. I mean, those were just things we knew we didn't do. At that time, we weren't in to halter tops and baggy pants and those kinds of things so those things weren't really issues. Like, when I went to college I can remember, you couldn't wear pants. Girls couldn't wear pants. You knew what you were supposed to wear so you wore it and you never made an issue out of it. The biggest issue they had, probably, when we were going to school, was kids slipping off going to the store. There was a store back up Merritt Mill Road on the corner.

RG: Kelly's?

CS: That doesn't sound familiar. Callie's—yeah, I think it was Callie's. The kids would slip off to go to the store and that was more of an issue than anything else. Many of us walked to school, right down Merritt Mill Road, we just walked. My street, we would all walk together and come back together so I didn't a lot of slipping off and getting into mischief.

RG: Sounds like you were a goody-goody! Miss goody two-shoes!

CS: I probably would be thought of as that! Because I have heard other people tell stories and I don't even know what they're talking about. I never experienced that. I can't even relate to that because I never did it. I say "Ya'll really did all that?" and they'll say

“Girl, where were you? You were from the city so you didn’t know what was going on!”
and I didn’t.

RG: So there were a lot of different experiences.

CS: Yeah.

RG: Did Mr. McDougle have an influence on your school?

CS: Oh, yeah. He had a big influence. The people that I was associated with had lots of respect for Mr. McDougle. We knew that he was our principal; we were to do whatever he said...

END TAPE ONE, SIDE B

RG: We were talking about Mr. McDougle...

CS: Yeah, I think some people may have thought we was a little strict, but, you know, he kept us in line. We did what we had to do. In contrast to Mr. McDougle’s, what people would call strictness, when I went to Chapel Hill High I thought the people had lost their minds. I saw things that were just appalling to me.

RG: What kind of things did you find appalling?

CS: There was lots of intimacy between the students—between the lockers, they would spread blankets on the ground and lay together. I had never seen anything like that. Boys and girls holding hands and that kind of stuff. We just didn’t do that kind of stuff at Lincoln. I mean, it was an experience that I had never seen—much less experienced. School was not a place where those kind of behaviors took place.

RG: What about smoking at school? Did you see..?

CS: Oh, yes. They’d sit on that rock wall and smoke till the cows come home. I mean, the kinds of things that were going on there were just totally—that’s what was

appalling to me. The looseness of the behaviors. And we just didn't have those. I didn't experience that at Lincoln. I would sit on the grass, but we didn't bring a blanket to lay down on the grass. You might have your books and you might put your books down on the ground at Lincoln and sit on top of them but you weren't sprawled out sunning with a female or a male counterpart.

RG: Did they have halter-tops? You mentioned that you weren't allowed to wear halter-tops at Lincoln.

CS: They did.

RG: Did the men take their shirts off and sun?

CS: They did.

RG: Right on campus?

CS: Right on campus. Now see, we would never have thought about doing that.

RG: So it's a very different society.

CS: It was like a whole new world. I said, "What is wrong with these people?" I just wasn't used to that. I had not seen it, I had not experienced it. I just thought, it was just—there was a lot of physical contact.

RG: Hugging and kissing?

CS: Uhuh. Lots of physical contact. I mean, to even see them rolled up together in a blanket out on the front lawn and stuff.

RG: That's not part of your scene.

CS: That's not part of my scene. I had just not seen such looseness.

RG: Did you see alcohol?

CS: No, I can't say I saw alcohol. I mean, I don't recall seeing alcohol.

RG: So the dress code was different.

CS: The dress code was different. The people were more promiscuous.

RG: Openly promiscuous.

CS: Yes, openly.

RG: Did you see pregnancy there, at Chapel Hill High School?

CS: You didn't see pregnancy but you knew the girls would disappear for about six months and then you'd hear, "well, so and so had a baby and went to a home and had a baby." And then the next year they'd come on back to school.

RG: Were there other differences that you saw between Lincoln and Chapel Hill that surprised you? That were different, maybe didn't surprise you?

CS: Just, probably just the looseness. I just felt there was more loose behavior—I don't know a better way to put it—at Chapel Hill High than at Lincoln. There were more rules at Lincoln than at Chapel Hill High. That's what I really saw that I thought was different.

RG: So, discipline—is that what I'm hearing you say? That discipline was more lax at Chapel Hill High than at Lincoln? The dress code was different...

CS: All of that.

RG: Chewing gum?

CS: Everything.

RG: Could you chew gum at Chapel Hill High?

CS: Yeah, you could chew gum and eat potato chips and do anything else you wanted to.

RG: You couldn't eat potato chips at Lincoln?

CS: I mean, you know, like openly sitting up in some classes and doing that. You could there but you couldn't at Lincoln. I mean, we didn't even think about doing it. It was so much a relaxed environment. It was just a totally different environment.

RG: Did you find that relaxed environment uncomfortable?

CS: At first I did.

RG: And then, what happened after at first?

CS: Well, after you see it for a while you just say, "Oh, well, this is the way it's going to be."

RG: What did you feel about it?

CS: Nothing—I don't recall feeling anything. I more or less wondered why it was this way in one setting and different in another setting. But inside I don't think I really felt anything particularly. Because, see, I still more or less was with my friends that I went there with. We desegregated but we did not become integrated and that was the difference. I felt that the male counterparts who went there probably became more integrated than the females. Gene Hines, who played football, I think his setting became more integrated I think. The females like Caroline, Sheila, Deborah, and Gene Hine's sister and myself, we more or less stuck together as a group.

RG: What about after school, did you go back to the Hargraves center and hang out or did you do activities at school?

CS: I went home. The only after school—and that wasn't after school—the only extracurricular thing that I participated in at Chapel Hill High was the chorus. I did participate in the chorus. But other than that I didn't. I was no longer in the band.

RG: Why did you drop out of the band?

CS: I just never joined the band at Chapel Hill high.

RG: Why did you not join the band?

CS: I don't really know—I don't know if I didn't want to be the only one or what.

But I never joined the band.

RG: Were you the only one in the chorus?

CS: No.

RG: So there were a number of other African American students who were in the chorus.

CS: And the chorus director was African American.

RG: Oh, at a white school? How did that happen?

CS: I don't know. Mage Harry was our chorus director so I was in the chorus.

RG: Was that a stimulus for you to join the choral group?

CS: Yeah, it was.

RG: Someone you could identify with.

CS: I could identify with, I felt comfortable with. We more or less did things as a group. We sort of decided we were going to do this and did it. Now there was Laverla Peace who also went with us and I think she became more integrated into the group. She tended to become more involved with the white community than many of us did. Just depends on the people.

RG: What about the difference in teachers? You described a very distinct set of characteristics about the teachers at Lincoln High School—very supportive, very encouraging, parental, counseling. What did you find at Chapel Hill High on Franklin Street?

CS: A little mixed. There were a couple of teachers who I felt were caring, supportive and sensitive. Then I found others who were rather racist. And I don't know if they thought they were racist but...An example: in social studies I can recall the teacher going around the room and saying, "Mike, your descendents are where? Tom, you're Scottish and you're German and..." Two of us sitting up in that class and she never asked us. It was just like we were knots on a log sitting there and from a teacher's perspective that was probably the most insulting thing that I experienced. The other classes were pretty good, but that particular class bothered me then and it bothers me to today. That's what stands out in my mind. As far as student-wise, I thought that there were not many Chapel Hill native—I'm sure with all these interviews you've heard this—but there's a distinct difference between being from Chapel Hill and being from Carrboro.

RG: Tell me.

CS: Chapel Hill whites really had, at that time, nothing to do with Carrboro whites. They did not want to be associated with Carrboro in any way. Carrboro was viewed as poor and redneck. On the rock wall, which is still there—it was very distinct. Chapel Hill would be on this end, we would be in the middle, and Carrboro would be over there on the end. And actually, one of my classmates—we had a reunion this year. I didn't go because I couldn't—it was the same weekend as my father's birthday so I just didn't even try to do all of that. But she was saying that a certain classmate actually talked to her during this reunion. And she said, "You know he wouldn't have talked to me thirty years ago." And it was because she was from Carrboro and he was from Chapel Hill. And that's why he wouldn't have taken the time of day to talk to her.

RG: So you had a lower socio-economic white group—rednecks from Carrboro, working class families. And then you had another group from Chapel Hill—were these mostly professors' children?

CS: Professors, business owners, you know, that kind of thing. I actually went to school when Alexander Julian was in school. He was in our age group. They were the Franklin Street business people—you had restaurant owners, whatever, you know.

RG: Did these two groups relate to the African American students differently?

CS: Oh yes, very differently. We were not welcome by the Carrboro group at all. They were blatantly abusive and negative—making constant comments, all the time.

RG: What kind of abuse besides the verbal?

CS: It was mostly—it was all verbal.

RG: It wasn't physical intimidation.

CS: No, no. It was all verbal.

RG: You didn't see fights?

CS: I didn't. I'm sure there was some taking place, but I can't recall actually seeing a fight.

RG: What kind of...

CS: And the Chapel Hill side—if they didn't want us there, they didn't openly let us know it. But the Carrboro side—they didn't cover up anything. And you got it more from the men than from the females. And I don't know why, but the males were just—they were just nasty. I don't know a better word for it.

RG: Now, I've heard all of the racial slang and I don't need to hear them again.

CS: Good—you hear I'm avoiding them!

RG: Aside from that, were there other things that they said that you can remember?

CS: Not...

RG: Did they question why you were there? Did they tell you to go home or...

CS: Yeah—they told us to go home. And they'd say things like, "Look at that. I wonder what they think they're doing here." You know, that kind of stuff. And when they walked past us and they would draw up, like, you know "Don't get near me" or "Some of that might rub off on me" you know, that kind of behavior.

RG: The made you feel real welcome.

CS: Right. Now what they did at Chapel Hill High—we were all assigned—I know the females were all assigned big sisters. And so we all had a big sister that would work with us.

RG: A white...

CS: Uhuh. And if we had concerns or anything they were there for us—which I thought was a positive.

RG: I hadn't heard that before.

CS: Yeah, we had big sisters.

RG: Did they really make an impact or was it very perfunctory?

CS: It was—it depended on who you had. Because the two people that I was involved with were very good. So, where someone may have not had the same experience. And I don't know whether it's because in one person's case her mother knew me before I went to Chapel Hill High, so therefore she even went more out of her way to befriend me.

RG: Did you socialize with her?

CS: At school, but not outside of school. I didn't do any of that socialization outside of school. I just didn't put myself in that position. I didn't want to feel uncomfortable so I didn't do it.

RG: So are you saying, you really felt uncomfortable with whites?

CS: At that time and in certain social settings. I did not want to put myself to be in a position to be the only one there. I didn't feel the need to be a part of the in-crowd. I was going for my education, I was really going to make a statement that I've integrated this school—or desegregated—it was never integrated—desegregated the school. That was my goal. I didn't need to go home with them, I didn't need to spend the night with them. I didn't even need to go out to dinner with them. That wasn't something I was looking for. I was happy in my own community. I didn't need that to be fulfilled. Now there were other people who were in my class who I know did do that and apparently they felt quite comfortable with it. That's what they wanted to do. But that was not something that I personally wanted to do. I did not have a need for that.

RG: Were you the first class in '63, to integrate the high school? Or were there others there before you?

CS: Now that's what I'm not really sure of. Either, because there were a couple of people who went a little bit early, but I don't know exactly what year they went, and in terms of our years, you know, we really need to double check that. That's the part that's a little fuzzy with me.

RG: How did you feel you stacked up academically? Was that a problem for you—your feelings about your ability to compete?

CS: In some courses, but not in all courses. It just depended on the course. In French class, I think I felt that way.

RG: That you stacked up ok, or that you needed some help?

CS: I needed some help. In math I felt like I needed some help. And actually I ended up—I think I actually got a tutor. My parents got me a tutor in math, but everything else I didn't feel that.

RG: Did your grades change between Lincoln and Chapel Hill High?

CS: In math and French.

RG: But the other classes stayed about the same. So you didn't feel fearful of raising your hand in class and offering an answer to a question?

CS: Not really. The class that was more intimidating was that social studies class and it was how that particular teacher made me feel. You know, I always felt like I was being ignored by her. And sometimes I would raise my hand just to see if she'd call on me. Sometimes—rarely did she.

RG: Did the teachers—most of the teachers, some of the teachers, none of the teachers—have eye contact with you?

CS: Hard to remember.

RG: It's not something that sticks out in your mind?

CS: No. My English classes and my math classes, I felt like my teachers were very involved, very open. Those are the classes—and even in my business class, I felt that they were.

RG: In '63 when you went to Chapel Hill High on Franklin Street for the first time, how many African American do you think went to school there?

CS: No more than five. You mean that were there before me?

RG: That went with you.

CS: Oh, that went with me?

RG: Yes.

CS: I don't know—there were several that went with me.

RG: I know you said there was a group of eight or nine?

CS: Our eight went out of my class, but there were a lot of kids behind me that went—I don't have a clue as to how many that was.

RG: So the year before, they were already there.

CS: No, we all went the same year.

RG: So '63 you think...

CS: A big group went in '63. A huge group—because there were a lot of younger—there were more younger people that went than with the eight of us.

RG: They went to the junior high, though, if they were younger than you.

CS: Well, they were in the ninth grade, that's right. You're right. So there wouldn't have been any in the high school part. We were the only ones in the high school part—the eight of us. I keep forgetting that they weren't together. I keep putting ninth grade with the high school. That had changed.

RG: Are there other things that stand out in your mind about the differences between Chapel Hill High and Lincoln?

CS: The kids at Chapel Hill High drove cars and at Lincoln I don't think anybody had a car. I mean, this thing with cars has always been their thing. And probably, if the

truth were told, there's probably not a whole lot of differences between the present Chapel Hill High and the Chapel Hill High of the 60s.

RG: You think they're still desegregated but not integrated.

CS: Right. If the real truth were told.

RG: Well, that's what we're trying to tell.

CS: Because there will be a few kids where there's a mix, you know, a real integration. And my own children went to Chapel Hill High and they've never been—well, my only son was in a semi-segregated—because he went to elementary school mostly in Durham—but most of their school career has been totally integrated or desegregated. But neither one of them ever—they had friends that they played sports with, but they never really got into being involved with the white community. Neither one of them. And by them playing sports you would think they did. But they never did. They would always come back home. Their main friends were other African American guys. They just never really got into that.

RG: I've had someone describe to me that over a period of several years—between '66 and '69—that the new high school, the integrated high school—that a wall went up between the two cultures.

CS: It may have. See by then, I was away in college and I didn't come back to Chapel Hill—although I was right in Durham—but I was not involved in anything in Chapel Hill until the late 70s, so that very well could be.

RG: Did you perceive when your sons went to Chapel Hill High that this wall was still there?

CS: Not really, no.

RG: There's a lot of anger at a lot of different things in the 60s.

CS: Yeah, but see in my kids—my older son, it was in the 80s by the time he went.

RG: And he didn't feel that anger.

CS: No, I never thought he did. I mean, he was always in the accelerated classes. He was the only one in the jazz band and that kind of stuff. But he was the kind of kid who was cocky and that nobody could do better than he could, so it didn't matter to him. It's just the way he was.

RG: Where did he get that from? [laughter]

CS: I don't know. [laughter]

RG: Are there other things that stand out that you want to share? Anything about Lincoln or Chapel Hill High School?

CS: I really enjoyed Lincoln High and, like I said, the only reason I chose to leave was because I wanted to carry this integration thing as far as it could be carried. I thought that, as a citizen of the United States, I had a right to make a choice as to where I wanted to go to school so therefore I had marched, I had been in sit-ins, and everything and I felt like I had a right to go. I was actually closer to Chapel Hill High, in terms of distance from my house. So why could I not walk? I walked to Lincoln, but the mileage from my walk to Lincoln was much further than the mileage from my house to Chapel Hill High.

RG: I'd like to take a trip back to Lincoln again. I haven't asked you about their sports program, which from my reading, seemed to be legendary. What was it like going to a football game from Lincoln?

CS: It was the best Friday night you could ever spend. It was just magnifying. I couldn't wait to get on the field to do the band performances that Mr. Edgerton had taught us. It was just the highlight of the week—you couldn't wait till Friday night for the football game. Even when the games were away, the guys would come to sing to Mr. McDougle when they got back from a football game, especially if they won. They'd come back and sing "Mighty Tigers."

RG: In front of his house?

CS: In front of his house.

RG: I thought he went to those away games.

CS: He did. He went to some of them, but when that team would come back at night. The team would always be the last ones to get back. They'd come and stand in front of his door and sing "Mighty Tigers." It went

[Self sings this]

Might tigers, mighty tigers

Late at night while you're sleeping,

Might tigers come a-creeping

Around.

La-la-da-dee-da

The reason I know this is, remember—that was Mr. McDougle's house is across the street from my house and my bedroom was right on the front.

RG: You had a good view.

CS: I had to listen to that every Friday night and I had a good view.

RG: When the team came out on the field when you were at the junior high school—or Lincoln—I guess it would be considered Lincoln Middle School—

CS: They just called it Lincoln. There was no distinction between middle school and high school.

RG: Did the team run around the field and then go to the center and sing? Someone had told me that and I'm trying to validate whether that happened or not.

CS: Hmm.

RG: Or if it did happen, what era?

CS: That I don't remember.

RG: Do you remember anything..?

CS: And I was there during Coach Bradshaw and Coach Peerman's time and I honestly don't...

END TAPE 2, SIDE A

CS: It would probably take someone who—an actual player. For example I have cousins who played for Peerman—no for Bradshaw, and other cousins who played for Peerman. So it would probably take talking to each one of them, you know, to see if that happened. I honestly don't know.

RG: Do you remember anything about the uniforms that they wore? Was there anything special about them?

CS: They were black and gold. That's all I remember. No, nothing stands out.

RG: What about the band uniforms?

CS: They were the traditional band uniforms. The majorettes had full suits. They were not in those leotard, skimpy things that they have today. It was really just like the pictures you see at Lincoln Center. Those were the band uniforms.

RG: So the band...

CS: We'd play during the game and then we'd do a half time show when the team was off the field.

RG: And what about marching to the stadium? Did you do that to Lion park every game or just for homecoming?

CS: We were at every game.

RG: No, I mean the march.

CS: Oh, the march. That was just at homecoming. Yeah. But the band was at every game. Because I can recall my dad actually driving me because I had to be at Lion's park at a certain time and he would get us there.

RG: Someone told me there were visitors from Pittsboro, Raleigh, Durham, who would come to the game. Is that so?

CS: That's probably true. Lincoln High was feared.

RG: What made them fearsome?

CS: Because they were bad. They were awesome. When I said bad, I mean bad in a good way. They were awesome. They were a powerhouse in terms of football. I hear guys talk today, still, "If we could beat Lincoln we know we had done something." Or "I knew there wasn't nobody who'd be able to stop me, but I ran up against Fred Baldwin and he just put me in my place." Or against Percy Watson. You know, it just didn't matter. The Lincoln High School football team was a "Powerhouse." The band was a

“Powerhouse.” We competed—we were, I guess, considered a 2-A school. We competed against 3-A and 4-A schools. We didn’t have no fear. Mr. Edgerton would take us anywhere. We participated in every parade within 100 miles of Chapel Hill. The Christmas parades—we went all over. We went to North Carolina Central, Shaw, and Saint Augustine Homecoming. We participated in their parades. We would go to Greensboro...

RG: A&T?

CS: A&T State University. But what I was thinking about was not A&T’s homecoming but Dudley and Hillside and (), they were all much bigger schools. Greensboro is where they would hold the state band competition. We would go and we’d make the same grade they’d make. We were just a little 2-A school. The marching band was no different than the concert band. So if you were in one, you were in both. We just competed. We could play that symphony music just like we could play that marching music. Mr. Edgerton always made sure the females could not wear earrings. We didn’t do a whole lot of lipstick. We had a dress code. That’s what I was saying—being at Chapel Hill High and being at Lincoln, it was just what it was. You didn’t have to worry about dress code. You were told from day one what it was going to be. You either decided then if you were going to participate or not. It was up to you.

RG: The rules were there.

CS: The rules were there and you followed them. If you missed rehearsal you didn’t play. And you followed the rules. And nobody’s momma or daddy was running over there trying to run interference and talk them into letting them do it. These are the rules. You follow the rules.

RG: Or you don't play.

CS: Or you don't play. No excuses. And you just showed true respect. That was the thing—true respect.

RG: You were in the chorus also?

CS: At Chapel Hill High, but not at Lincoln.

RG: Any other memories of Lincoln that you can share?

CS: I just enjoyed the homecoming activities, the May Days, and just being part of a group. Today, since there are only eight of us we joined the Lincoln High class of '65. When they do activities, the eight of us—well not all eight of us—at least five of us out of the group, because some of them don't participate at all, but at least five of us out of the group will participate with the Lincoln group to do what we do. I still participate. I plan to participate when we have this thing in July.

RG: Well I'm glad. Why don't we end here. This is a great place to end. Thank you so much.

END OF INTERVIEW