

Ted Stone  
Tape 1, Side 1

BG: This is January 20, 2001 and this is Bob Gilgor interviewing Ted Stone at his home at 312 McDade Street.  
Good Afternoon Ted.

TS: Good afternoon Bob.

BG: First I want to thank you for taking the time for me to interview you. I'm going to start with a very broad question and you can take it and go with it and keep on talking until you get tired, and that is, What was it like growing up here in Chapel Hill?

TS: As I remember as a small child this neighborhood was my complete world, that was all I knew, the neighbors, the people who grew up here, the kids, and I remember if you got in trouble down at one end you would get a whipping from anybody up there. You grew up to be a better person. There was a lot of love in this area. We didn't have very much but who did at that time?

BG: So if your neighbor saw you misbehaving you would get it from your neighbor?

TS: I would get a whooping from my neighbor and at home. Oh yeah. Well, you know the other thing you have to realize is my mother's sister lives right up the street, my dad's parents live two doors down, my family live three doors down, so you got relatives all in there, so you may get a spanking from anybody.

BG: Even the people who live across the street who aren't relatives?

TS: Anybody in the neighborhood, I guess that's why they start it takes a community to raise a child, I believe in that.

BG: Did you have brothers and sisters?

TS: One younger sister?

BG: How much difference in age?

TS: Four years.

BG: Is she still in the area?

TS: She's in Greensboro, she's an Assistant Professor up at UNC-G.

BG: Tell me about your mother and father. What we they like?

TS: My mom, who's still living, they were very hard working people who make sure that we lived right. My dad, he was a bit of an alcoholic, but he went to work everyday. It was just on the weekends, he would come in and he'd been drinking and that would start arguments with my Mom. That didn't stop the love between them, but it did cause friction between them.

BG: Who was the head of the house?

TS: My mom

BG: And who disciplined you?

TS: My dad.

BG: Who ran the finances in the house?

TS: My mom.

BG: What did your mother do?

TS: She was a domestic, a maid, down in a household around Wilson for a 20 years.

BG: And your father?

TS: He worked up at Kappa Alpha house on campus, also a domestic worker.

BG: What did he do at the fraternity house?

TS: He cleaned rooms, made up beds, odd jobs around there.

BG: Did they talk about their work when they came home?

TS: Very seldom

BG: Did they ever involve you in it?

TS: At times, my Mom would go down there and help my Dad at the Kappa Alpha house, like when they had a party, my Mom would go sit with the girls, park their purses and stuff like that, and help out there as my father he would be like the bartender downstairs, and of course times like that my sister and me would tag along, we would be down stairs in the little dance room and that's where we would spend most of our time, dancing for dollars we used to say.

BG: Did they pay you, to see you dance.

TS: Oh yeah they did.

BG: Was your father rewarded at times by the fraternity with alcohol as a gift?

TS: You know I really don't remember where dad got all his alcohol cause he never drank in front of us, it was always he came and you could tell he'd been drinking cause you could smell it.

BG: Were there bootleg houses?

TS: Yeah, all of them.

BG: Can you tell me about them?

TS: Well, what I can tell you about them is from the kids that were there and going in and visiting those kids. They [bootleg houses] were like just about on every corner. I know the neighborhood had at least, 2, 3, 4, 5 of them within 300 yards of each other. They were there for places for people to drink, you know liquor by the drink, and you couldn't find that. From what I remember, the ABC stores, the closest ABC stores were in Durham?

BG: Were the bootleg stores stocked with bonded liquor or white lightning?

TS: Both.

BG: Tell me something about the children you played with, were they black and white, or were they all black.

TS: All black.

BG: So you stayed pretty much right around here?

TS: Yeah, you have to remember that the atmosphere at that time, pretty much everything was segregated. I didn't see the first white person until I was 7 years old. I didn't know there was anything besides the kids that I grew up with, like I said this was my world. And as we start venturing off more and more my world started expanding, and I could see the difference, but my Mom and Dad said, "Stay away, you have to be back here." I learned growing up that you had to stay in your own place.

BG: Was church a part of your life?

TS: Yes, a big part of it. My mom was, she was, and still is, very religious, and I grew up in the church, and I have a lot of fond memories of the church. Most of my memories are not a part of the church but a part of the neighborhood.

BG: Do you remember what kind of a house you grew up in, like what it looked like physically?

TS: Oh yeah

BG: Can you describe it for me?

TS: Well, it was a four room house, had a living room, kitchen, my mom and my sister slept in one room, my dad and me in another room. I remember winters you could almost feel the air coming through the walls. My parents did the best they could with oil heat, wood heat, whatever kind of heat we could afford.

BG: What heated the place?

TS: Pot-bellied stove.

BG: Did the roof leak?

TS: I don't remember the roof leaking.

BG: Did you have plastic on the windows?

TS: Oh yeah, to keep the air out.

BG: And what about the cracks in the walls, I assume it was a wood-frame house.

TS: Wood-frame house, and the walls were pretty much plaster, there weren't any big cracks in the walls, nothing that you could actually see through.

BG: So it sounds like you didn't grow up with a lot of money.

TS: No, not a lot of money. Back in the those days if you had a quarter, you had a bunch, you know. But at that time, I didn't know what poor meant. There was always food on the table, there was always love. I remember at times the lights being turned out, but I didn't think about it cause those things didn't matter to me.

BG: The lights were turned out cause an electric bill wasn't paid.

TS: Yeah. I remember one incident when the lights were turned out and they stayed out for quite a while, I can't remember if there were out because of lack of payment or because of a snow storm or something like that, but I remember everything revolved around the living room where the pot-bellied stove was. Mom cooked there, she ironed there, she heated there, everything was done right there. I can't remember why the lights were out, cause the lights went out so many times as a kid, when it snowed, when Hazel came through, but I can't remember the actual sequence of when things happened.

BG: That's a long time ago. Did you feel that growing up was happy time for you.

TS: Oh yeah, I would trade nothing for my childhood. The worst thing that happened to me was when, I think I was in the 8th grade, and my father came and got me out of school cause my grandmother had passed, and my grandmother was a big part of my life. When she died, it seemed like for the longest time my world had just come apart.

BG: What role did she play in your life?

TS: Well, like I remember going to visit Grandma, she lived down in Chatham County, we would have to catch a bus down, or go with Ma, seemed like there was nobody as special to her as I was cause she would shower me with so much love, kisses, anything I wanted she would give to me. But you know, I didn't want much I just wanted to be the apple of her eye. I guess she showed that to all of us, all the grandkids, there was 25 of us!

BG: Oh wow!

TS: Those the type things I remember as a child.

BG: What about the school? When did you start school?

TS: Let's see, started in 1954, first grade at Northside elementary school.

BG: So you were born in 48, and you went to Northside in /54?

TS: 1948.

BG: That's what 4, 5 years before they changed the name?

TS: No, it was Northside at the time.

BG: And Northside was originally Orange county Training School. Why did they change the name from Orange Training School?

TS: Well, I think it was the connotation, growing up, when you heard the words "training school," you thought of young people in prison, going to some kind of training school, reformatory school.

BG: So what do you remember about going to Northside?

TS: Always being late to school [laugh]. And growing up here, Northside was what, maybe 500 yards from my doorstep, but it wasn't cause I didn't get out of the house on time, it was that I saw so much to do on my way there, I'd always be about the last one in there?

BG: What did you find to do on the way there?

TS: I'd stop and pick up rocks, throw them, move sticks from one side of the street to the other, anything to delay going to school.

BG: Oh. was this street paved down here?

TS: Back when I was 5 or 6, this one was, it was paved down to the next corner, not greatly paved, but everything else in the neighborhood was dirt streets.

BG: There were a number of areas here that were not paved. Did most of the houses down here have running water?

TS: Most of the houses that I went into did.

BG: Did they have sewer, did they have toilets in the houses, or did they have outhouses?

TS: Some of them had outhouses, I remember at least 3.

BG: What about electricity, did most or all of the houses have electricity?

TS: That one I have to think about. It seems like there were at least one or two that didn't have electricity, things were done by candle, cooked on the stove.

BG: So you had pockets here in the black community where things were pretty basic.

TS: Uh-huh.

BG: Was there a social level or a socio-economic level where some people were upper class and some were lower class, did you see any of that?

TS: Well, now that I look back on it, in this particular neighborhood, everybody with the exception of a bout 3 or 4 people were considered about the same level once you passed over, once you got up about church street. Now this is things as I viewed them, may not have been the way it was.

BG: And what made the level different?

TS: Well, to see it when we went to school, that's when I first noticed it, how they separated certain people, cause the way I see it, I look back on it they always had some people in this class that they considered smarter, but there was never any testing to do that, and there was this other section where, there was a lot of people that was coming from rural areas to the school, then the people in my neighborhood would be in another, and the people from outside in another.

BG: So they separated them according to neighborhoods in the classroom?

TS: Yeah.

BG: Did you feel that there was any difference in the way people were treated according to the lightness or darkness of their skin?

TS: Uh, not at that time, I didn't notice, but as I grew older, the older I grew I saw that some people looked at lighter skinned people with a different attitude, cause I guess one reason it didn't bother me was cause my mother was lighter. My Mom was light, my father was dark.

BG: Was that a common thing to see a light mother and dark father?

TS: Yeah.

BG: How were you treated differently if you were lighter skinned? Were lighter people treated better?

TS: Treated better, at least that's the way it seemed, I can't really say because I consider myself in between. I'm not as light as some people, not as dark as some. But I have spoken to some people that say "I'm a lot lighter than you are, I can get away with a lot more," you know, not pertaining to me, but I got that, but maybe one or two people did say that to me.

BG: What about hairstyle, did that have anything to do with how you were treated? If you had long hair, nappy hair?

TS: Well, I don't think it had much to do with -- the people I saw as a I grew older, they didn't care if black people had straight hair, nappy hair, whatever, you were just black. but then other people, it didn't bother them at all, it really didn't bother them at all.

BG: Let's go back to Northside school. Tell me what you remember about Northside.

TS: I just about remember the first day to the last, from different teachers, Mrs. Jeryl, Mrs. Lapley, cause in those days you had the same teach from the first to the third and the fourth to the sixth, same teacher year after year. Remember playing football, pulling little girls pigtails, we did it all, did it all.

BG: Did you know your teacher outside of school?

TS: Well, Miss Lamply I knew, basically through my father, cause her husband cut my hair, the person who cut my hair basically until he passed away. And Miss Gerald, Miss Gerald lived up in the house on the corner.

BG: So they lived in the neighborhood.

TS: Well, Miss Gerald was like renting a room up here cause she was from out of town, and Miss Lampley, she lived up on Rosemary street, on the corner of Rosemary and North Graham. I guess you could say you were in the neighborhood, but not in the cluster right in the middle of it.

BG: Did they know your parents?

TS: Both of them knew my parents. There again, my Mom's sister, she was the cook, she was the head cook at Lincoln High school. And then everybody knew my Dad cause he grew up right here. Matter of fact, the house we're in right now is the house where he grew up.

BG: Was that a good thing, that the teachers knew your parents?

TS: In a way. In a way, some things you thought you could get away with cause they did know your parents, some things you couldn't get away with cause they did know your parents. They could contact them in a hurry.

BG: So if you misbehaved?

TS: If you misbehaved, that was it, cause back in those days you could get punished in school.

BG: So you'd get punished in school and then they tell your parents

TS: And they you go home and get another spanking at home for being bad in school.

BG: Double trouble, huh?

TS: Double trouble.

BG: It sounds as though the rules were pretty much set for you. Your life was regulated.

TS: Oh yes.

BG: But you didn't find it, or did you find it unpleasant?

TS: Well, I look back, and sometimes I think, what kind of person would I be if those things didn't happened to me? The neighborhood molded my character, it molded who I am. And I think that would be better for a lot of kids today.

BG: Where did you think you learned your values?

TS: Most of my values, I learned from my Mom, and my Aunts and Uncles. Like I said, I was molded right here.

BG: The church?

TS: That was part of it, even school, the teachers, the principal, see that was another thing, the principal of Northside and my father grew up together.

BG: Mr. Peace?

TS: Mr. Peace, uh-huh.

BG: So did your teachers teach values besides academics?

TS: They taught them in a way, but they taught them so that you just kind of absorbed them without really knowing that you were learning. It was pretty cool.

BG: Did you look forward to going to school every day?

TS: Most of the time, until we could get a snow day. I loved a snow day. I'd go outside and play in the snow, play until your hands and feet get so cold you couldn't even feel them.

BG: What kind of games did you play at Northside?

TS: Well, mainly I played with the boys, and we would play before school and after school, we play football, when it was warm enough. And then in the spring, we'd play baseball, kickball, volleyball, mostly stuff like tat.

BG: Lot of sports.

TS: Lot of sports.

BG: Was the street in front of the school paved?

TS: No.

BG: So you had a mud road there ?

TS: Wasn't much of a road, close as you could get, cause remember I'm walking over the hill here and the only road that's coming in is the road over on the side there, is Caldwell street, came into a small parking lot, and then the buses came around in the back, and that was part was paved, around the back of the school.

BG: In your home, were you encouraged by relatives or your parents regarding school?



TS: From the time I can remember, my Dad would always say, I want you to do more than just graduate from High School, I want you to go on to college. And that came from my Mom too.

BG: What about your grandparents, did they encourage you that way?

TS: Well, from my Grandmom. Grandma wanted everyone to go to school, as far as they could.

BG: Do you remember when you were at Northside whether you had an encyclopedia at home.

TS: Nope.

BG: Did you have a dictionary?

TS: Nope.

BG: Did you subscribe to the newspaper?

TS: Nope.

BG: What about books?

TS: Only books we had were the ones we had at school, which was very few, and the ones that my dad brought down from the Kappa Alpha house.

BG: So he brought some old books home?

TS: Old, old used textbooks that was most of the time, it was too much for an elementary child to understand, but we played with them anyway.

BG: Now, what about the books that had been at the elementary school, were they new books?

TS: No, my entire time at elementary school I don't remember not having one new book.

BG: So they were all used?

TS: All used.

BG: Where did they come from?

TS: Now that I couldn't tell you, cause I remember when we got our books we were always told to put our name and the school year in it, by the times we put our names in it there was at least 7-8 kinds' names above ours, so the books were quite old when we got them.

BG: Were your parents involved with the school at all?

TS: Well, I think my Mom was involved with the PTA. But my Dad was working so much he very seldom had time to do anything other than to work.

BG: Did you ever go to a PTA meeting with your Mom?

TS: Yeah, I went to one or two.

BG: What were they like?

TS: You know, the few that I went to, what I remember from them, is playing with other kids. Cause during that time, when your parents had to go somewhere, you went with them, cause you were too small to stay at home alone.

BG: Did your Mom go to almost all the PTA meetings or just a few?

TS: I think she just went to a few. But it was not uncommon for her to show up at school just at any time and try to help the teacher do things, do things around, like I remember several times throwing parties, it could've been from notes the teachers sent home, cause we were always bringing notes home, them coming to help serve or just kind of help around the school.

BG: Are there any other memories that you have of Northside you'd like to share?

TS: Well, I think my most vivid memory of Northside was the day that Hurricane Hazel came through. They dismissed school early, and out of all the kids in the school I was the last one to get home, and I remember, well I hadn't even got home yet, I was down the street, limbs falling all around me, and that didn't even bother me, and my Mom came out the house and she grabbed me, she beat me all the way home, I do remember that.

BG: She was upset?

TS: Well, she didn't know where I was, for one thing, and my safety, that was the main reason, but I knew from then on that if the weather was bad and you out of school, then you go home. That was a vivid lesson.

BG: It sounds like it. so you stated at Northside from 1954 to 1960?

TS: Yes.

BG: and then where did you go?

TS: Lincoln High School.

BG: And that was 7th grade?

TS: Yes, at that time Lincoln was 7th through 12th grade.

BG: What was Lincoln High School like?

TS: That was a big change for me, it seemed like that was when I really started growing up, starting with walking, we had to walk all the way to school, and from here to Lincoln High School is what, a mile and a half and we had to walk each day, to and from, but learning how to change classes and knowing that, and that's when I really started seeing the separation of classes, as we call them now, separation of classes. The way they described them then, in seventh grade the top echelon was 7-1, then 7-2, then 7-3, they were the slower learners. I was in the middle and I always felt like, at the time, I didn't feel like a dummy, felt like I could learn as well as anybody, but that's what I

remember from Lincoln. And being able to participate in going to Lincoln High School football games, and basketball games, and being a part of the student body.

BG: Were you into any of those activities, did you play ball?

TS: Well, in 7th grade you were more, you couldn't play the high school sports, you had to be in the 9th grade to start in the high school sports, so that was my first year of learning anything musical, so we played mostly sandlot stuff, mostly intramural.

BG: What were your teachers like at Lincoln?:

TS: Well, I remember the 2 teachers there, Miss Barnes and Miss King. Miss King was from Chapel Hill, so I knew her. I should say she knew me, through my Aunt, and Miss Barnes she knew me through my Aunt, but she was from Durham. But I thought those were two of the neatest people you could ever meet. They took time with me, to help me with problems I was having, in subjects like science and literature, those were my two toughest subjects.

BG: So they gave extra time to you?

TS: I felt like they did. They didn't have to, but they did.

BG: Did others do that as well?

TS: Well those were the only two teachers I had.

BG: Oh really? How long did you stay at Lincoln.

TS: One year.

BG: Do you remember the principal?

TS: Mr. McDougle?

BG: Does he stand out in your mind?

TS: Well, what stands out in my mind with Mr. McDougle is that he was a very fair principal, but he was very strict too. And I remember his walk, and the way he walked, and his little songs he would sing.

BG: What was his walk and what were his songs?

TS: He had this little swagger about him, with his hand grasped together in the back behind him and he would sing like "do-do-do-do" all up and down the hall.

BG: Was he at the door in the morning to greet the students?

TS: I don't remember him being there, but I always remember him being down the hall because the High School students from the 9th to the 12th grades came in one side and the 7th and 8th graders had to walk completely around the school and come in another way, so we didn't get to walk in the same way.

BG: I see. So he was at the high school and you didn't get to see him. Would he get on the loudspeaker system?

TS: Every morning.

BG: What would he say?

TS: He would make announcements about what was happening during, the events of the day, telling us how to prepare for things later in the week, it was more like a schedule, this is how it's gonna be and then whenever you heard him call people to the office, you knew somebody was in trouble.

BG: Did they always go to the office?

TS: Always had to go to the office.

BG: They didn't hide?

TS: No. If you hid one day, you knew you had to come back.

BG: So how would you characterize your memories of Lincoln? You had two teachers you really liked, a principal who sounds like he was a strict disciplinarian.

TS: Right. Overall, If I had to characterize that one year at Lincoln, I would give it a high mark, well above good but not quite excellent because it was very educational for me, it kind of set the tone for the latter part of my high school education.

BG: Do you think you learned more at Lincoln than at Northside?

TS: Yes, because there was a higher standard. Well, I wouldn't say I learned more, it was what I had to learn during that period of time. Uh, another thing I just thought about, that I started noticing during that time at Lincoln, that was when the civil rights struggle first started. Or I became aware of, I should say, and I saw the older kids at the high school starting to do demonstrations, sit-ins.

BG: That was at colonial drug, the first demonstration of 1960?

TS: Yes. I remember particularly one night being at church, and the Lincoln High School chorus, they used to sing there, they left the church and went straight down to colonial drug and did a sit-in right there. So, I do remember that day, and from that point on, I started getting myself more involved in sit-ins and marches and things like that.

BG: How did your parents feel about that?

TS: Well I think, I don't know how my Mom and Dad really felt about it, they wanted to shelter me from it, but they knew that it was something that had to be done, because they were the ones to start me on this track to get integration started in the school system so I must say, I think it was the time.

BG: So your parents wanted you to go to an integrated school?

TS: It was their idea, not mine.

BG: Did you want to go to the integrated school or if you had a choice would you rather have stayed at Lincoln?

TS: Looking back on it, I think it's great I did it the way I did it, but if I'd had my choice I think I'd preferred to stay at Lincoln where all my friends were.

BG: So you stayed at Lincoln for the seventh grade, 1960-61, and in 1961 where did you go?

TS: Chapel Hill Junior High School.

BG: The one down on Franklin Street, where University Square is today?

TS: Uh-huh.

BG: And were you the only African-American to go to that school?

TS: I was the first African-American admitted into the Chapel Hill-Carrboro School System, and there was three others, and we all went there together the first year. There was three of us in the 8th grade and one in the 9th.

BG: Did your minister have any influence on where you went to school?

TS: Not the minister at my church, but Reverend Manley did, he was the minister at my father's church. And he was, at that time he was on the school board and he was one the key reasons that, I remember him coming to talk to my Mom and Dad and telling them how important it would be for me to apply, because the reason they wouldn't admit the kid who was the first to actually apply was cause of where he lived, he'd be going out of his school district, and by me being within 3 blocks of the school I guess that's what got me in.

BG: And what was it like?

TS: It was a whole new world, going in, being called names, being spit on, hit. I remember one time I was standing in the hall, confused on which way I was supposed to go and this kid walked by and punched me in the stomach, for no reason. But I can't say everybody who was like that, because there were several kids who treated me as if I'd always been there, and one of them is still a very good friend of mine, we speak several times a year, you may know him, Robert Humphreys, he was a very good friend of mine, he helped me out quite a bit.

BG: Did you see any difference in the teaching at the Junior High?

TS: Oh, it was a world of difference. Like I said, at Lincoln High I only had 2 teachers, at Chapel Hill Junior High I had a different teacher for every class. And you had a homeroom teacher, you know at Lincoln your homeroom teacher, she was the homeroom teacher and taught 3 or 4 other subjects. And then the teaching style, some things I caught on very quickly, like math, math has always been a subject I had no trouble with, and English, but then Literature, and Science, and then when I finally got so bad, my Mom called down to Lincoln and Miss King and Miss Barnes and I would actually go from one school to the other for them to help me out.

BG: So you didn't get the help at the Junior High, you went back to Lincoln?

TS: Well, I wouldn't say that I didn't get it, it was just that I felt more comfortable getting the extra help from teachers that I already knew.

BG: Did you feel that, I assume all the teachers were white, did you feel that you got the same treatment from the teachers that the white students did?

TS: I feel like most of the teachers treated me very fairly, and at that time for me being, the majority of the classes I was in I was the only black, I felt myself toning myself back cause I didn't want to seem like I was stupid, you know I felt like I was not as smart as some of the kids in the class. But gradually that grew off, I guess it was cause I wasn't familiar with the people I was around.

BG: Are there any particular teachers that you remember, years later, who were influential in your life, or who you remember that really cared for you as a person?

TS: The teachers who really jump out at me came along when I went along to Chapel Hill High School, one being a Miss Bernard, Miss Simpson, and the principal, for the sake of me I can't think of her name . . .

BG: Miss Marshbanks?

TS: Miss Marshbanks. Miss Marshbanks was, I think, one of the coolest women I'd ever met.

BG: Now, the problems that you just described about being called names and spit on and being pushed around, how long did that last?

TS: Well, that lasted most of the first year, my 8th grade year, because my 9th grade year, the following year, I remember about 16 other black students came and I was starting to be more accepted with those people, people that was already there, I started being more comfortable, but then too it seemed like those other people who were showing their hatred for black people started being pushed back by other whites. That's the way I remember it.

BG: So the ones that were the bad seeds were being pushed back by the good people?

TS: The people that accepted me. That's the way I remember it.

BG: Are there any other memories you have in your mind, Ted?

TS: Well, the only things I really remember about those time was that my father, the fraternity house he worked at was directly behind the senior High School and we didn't have a lot of money, and I started noticing that about that time I couldn't even afford to buy my lunch everyday. I would have to go across the playground to meet him at a



hole in the fence for him to give me lunch. It was always a good hot meal, and some of the other kids would look at me like "where'd you get that from?" Those are the types of things I remember.

BG: So you remember the economics of the students?

TS: Yeah, even when I was Lincoln for that year you could see some economic difference between some people but when I came to a predominately white school it was a great big jump to the other. And I felt so inferior in that regard, cause I'd never had any money or anything.

BG: What about the students who were the children of professors at the University, their experiences versus your experiences?

TS: Well, like I said the first year, at Chapel Hill Junior High school I didn't socialize with a lot of kids, cause you know I'm coming from unfamiliar people. I would go to school, participated in class, go home. When I got to when my friends coming in from Lincoln and then everything else, it didn't matter, it was just we got to play together.

BG: Did you mother go to the PTA meetings?

TS: No.

BG: Can you remember why, was there any discussion of this, do you have any thought about it now?

TS: Thinking back on it, my Mom she came up in a totally different generation, I think the main reason, you know, she stayed away, she didn't feel comfortable in that situation and also I had a younger sister that was still at Northside and she participated there. I don't think it was that she loved my sister more, it was just that she felt more comfortable there.

BG: So you spent one year at the junior high school?

TS: Two years, 8th and 9th.

BG: And then you went . . .

TS: Then I went next door, to Chapel Hill High school.

BG: Was that any different for you, the Chapel Hill High School out on Franklin Street?

TS: Well, it was a little bit different, like I said, the more I went the more relaxed I got, the more I got into everything, the social life, different social activities, I got on the football, team, went out for the basketball team. As I recall, everything started loosening up, plus there were more and more of my friends coming in. And it seemed like every year there was more, more, and more.

BG: And, correct me if I'm wrong, I don't want to put words in your mouth, but you felt that as more African Americans came there was less of this bumping in the hallway, less name-calling.

TS: Well there was the occasional name-calling but I don't remember any physical violence towards me, maybe a couple of other kids had said something about it, but I don't remember anything happening where I could actually see it. But my being more relaxed was a combination of things I guess, cause my being there, the white students were getting more comfortable with me, and with more of my friends coming in that I'd gone to elementary school with, and one year at Lincoln.

BG: When you got to the high school, were there very many blacks that were at Chapel Hill high School on Franklin Street

TS: When I got there, in the 9th and the 10th grade, there was about 11 or 12 of us, and in the 11th grade, that's the class with Sheila, there was about 8 to 10 of them, but nobody in the senior class.

BG: And you say you played sports there. How did that work out?

TS: For me, I guess it worked out fine my first two years, I played JV, but the JV schedule you only played one other High School, and that was Jordan, and when you played on Thursday night, a bunch of my friends from Lincoln found out that I was playing, they started coming out to watch me play, and to look over there see your friends rooting you on, that really meant a lot. AT that time there was 5 of us on the JV team and then the next year we all moved up to varsity. And uh, still a lot of bench time, and my senior year I felt like I was being looked over, but now that I look back on it I really didn't apply myself so it was nobody's fault for me not getting more playing time but my own. But that's as I see it now, but I didn't see it then, that's why I quit the team.

BG: Did you feel you were treated any differently by whites who were athletes versus those whites in the classroom  
TS: I think the athletes accepted me a lot easier, and I don't think that was just me, that was everybody, they saw we were just equal to them athletically and so they just pulled us right in.

BG: There wasn't any racial strife on the team?

TS: but I don't remember seeing any I'm fairly sure there was some there, it came out when you played other teams.

BG: How so?

TS: At that time the schedule that Chapel Hill High School had, all the other teams had no black athletes except maybe one.

BG: So when you were playing on the varsity, or riding the bench on the varsity, you had a full schedule?

TS: Yeah, played throughout the conference and a couple of games outside the conference. I remember going down to Wilmington, to West Hanover High School, and there were no blacks to be found, but the guys that were on our team said, don't worry about it, you're with us.



BG: So the white athletes protected you?

TS: I would say so.

BG: But the white students at the other schools would say things?

TS: Oh yeah, and then that took me back to my first year at Chapel Hill Jr. High, being called names, stuff being thrown at you, being spit at, never being spit on, but spit at. Those were all the away games. It didn't happen at games at home.

BG: How did you handle that?

TS: Well, coach kind of expected that and he had gotten us together and told us what to expect, plus there was one other kid, one other black kid, that had already been on the varsity ahead of us the year before by himself and his first year playing with them, he made all-state, so I guess that helped ease myself and the four others in a lot easier.

BG: How did you handle the first year of junior high school when you saw this physical intimidation and verbal abuse?

TS: Well, then that time, the very first time it happened, I was on the verge of just turning around and going home and telling Mom I wasn't gonna do it, but then I said well I'll stick out the first day. So I stayed the first day and then I come home and told Mom [tape flips over]

BG: So your mom said just keep doing it.

TS: Yeah, because if this is gonna work somebody has to be the strong one, and it's gonna have to be you, cause we've struggled too hard to get you into this position and then listening to speeches from Dr. King about how to survive it without violence, I just sucked I up and kept right on doing it, I said you might hit me but you can't kill me, and that's how I got through it.

BG: So you were really a big believer in Dr. Martin Luther King?

TS: Oh yes, oh yes.

BG: Before you started at the junior high school did you have any preparation, did you family, friends, minister, tell you anything about what to expect and how to handle it?

TS: From what I remember, no, it was just you had to go and do it, because nobody knew what to expect. We knew there was some people gonna be standing out front saying this is not gonna happen, but I remember walking up there the first day, Dad walked with me, and in front of the where the Exxon station is now, and I was getting ready to cross the street and I saw a few parents out there, but for some reason I kept thinking in the back of my mind that there was gonna be a lot of people there, and the media was gonna be there, people be throwing stuff at me, cause this is what I had seen on TV, going on in Mississippi and places like that, and I was terrified walking up there, but then when I got there and seen it, I said well, Dad, I think I can handle it. And then you get inside and it's a little bit different, and you got the kids in there and they started doing the things I had expected outside, but Dad wasn't with me at that time, Dad had already gone on.

BG: Did you feel any of the hatred that the students expressed to you from the teachers?

TS: No, I didn't feel any of that from the teachers. If they had any of that, they hid it very well.

BG: So if you raised your hand in class you felt you had just a good a chance of getting called on?

TS: Uh-huh.

BG: And were the teachers as likely to discipline you as they were a white student?

TS: Well, I guess so, because, but the discipline at Chapel Hill Jr. High School and the discipline at Lincoln was totally different because it was, at Lincoln High School, if you did something wrong, I remember Miss Barnes had this thing she called a "bun warmer" you had to bend over and grab your ankles and she would wail your behind out. From what I remember, from what I saw, because in class I was being very submissive, pretty much sitting back in a corner trying to avoid anything, and they would, if a student got out of hand, the student would be sent to the office for the principal to handle, but I do remember one, one of the black kids that year did get in some trouble and he was handled the same way all the other kids were, he was sent to the office. What happened at the office I had no idea.

BG: Before you started junior high school did you have an orientation program during the summer?

TS: Nope.

BG: So you just showed up at the school without anyone telling you what the school was going to be like, no orientation?

TS: Nothing at all. But I do remember when I did get inside the school there was, I don't remember if it was a secretary or a teacher, standing there at the top of the stairs when you walked up, walked up into the door, there was this big glass board where they had you names up, whose homeroom you were in, and I didn't know what was going on because that was not the way it happened at Lincoln, we didn't do anything like that. So she came to me and said, you name is? And I told her and she said you in Miss so-and-so's class and you go this way, up the stairs and turn right. That was the first day.

BG: Are there any other memories that you have that stand out in your mind about the two years you spent at the junior high school?

TS: No, not really. The main things I remember are differences in the way kids there did things, like they played horseshoes, they played totally different from the way we played them, like if you got a ringer, that was five, you put a ring on top of that, you got ten, if the next threw a ringer on top of yours, that was fifteen for him. But when I got there, they played it totally different, a ringer's only three, and if you threw on top of his ringer that was only five, and it took a while, but gradually I learned, and I started taking some of them back and I remember my friends said damn, what's that about, that's not the way you do anything. So I had to do it two ways, I had to do it that way and then come home and do it another way.

BG: Did you feel, I don't know else to put this, did you feel inferior as a black student going to a white school?

TS: The first year I did, it seemed like all the other kids were so well versed on so much more stuff, cause I hadn't been exposed to it, like at Lincoln I was only exposed to a foreign language the last semester of school, 7th grade. And they expected me to come up here and jump right in to a foreign language, but I didn't know anything, I really didn't learn anything at the other school, at Lincoln, because it bored me and I didn't try to learn anything. So, going into Chapel Hill Jr. High it was a totally different thing, especially in things like foreign language, but in math, the subjects that I was strong in, I had no problem. I was equal to or better, and that's the way the teacher taught, she expressed herself to me like I was just like anybody else, but I guess it was the way I presented myself to the teachers at the time, cause if you sit back and don't say anything, they think you're learning and you're not. But in the math class my hand was always up cause I felt like I knew the answer. The same thing was happening in English, except when we got into the literature part, but then as I caught on more and more I started catching up and then I had to go back and give my thanks to Miss King and Miss Barnes because they helped me with that transition.

BG: So you spent two years here in the junior high?

TS: Two years in the junior high and four years in the high school.

BG: So you started 9th grade in the high school?

TS: No, 10th grade. See, what happened was I was supposed to be in the last class to graduate from Chapel Hill High on Franklin Street, but I failed my senior year, so I ended up going to the new high school out on Homestead Road. So I graduated out there.

BG: Let's talk about the first year, your last year of school at the old Chapel Hill high. When did you know you were going to go there?

TS: To the new high school? It was the day my buddies graduated and I couldn't go with them. I had participated in the Baccalaureate services on Sunday but then I found out that I had failed the English Exam, therefore I couldn't, I didn't pass English, but the teacher Miss Bernard came back and said I'll give you another chance. So I took the test again and I passed it, just barely, but then I looked back and found that I had failed World History, so there was no way I could graduate. It took a while for it to sink in, and I kind of stayed away from all my buddies that had just graduated, but it wasn't their fault, and it wasn't the teacher's fault it was just, there again, I didn't apply myself like I should have.

BG: So because you didn't graduate on time from Chapel Hill High School on Franklin Street, you knew you were going to come back for another year, did you know that was going to be at the new schools?

TS: Yes.

BG: So you already knew that the new Chapel Hill High School was going to be integrated?

TS: Correct. At that time, both schools knew, that Lincoln was going to be closed down and Chapel Hill was being moved out there because that was the only way they could accommodate that everybody at the same school.

BG: It's interesting because I heard some stories that the students at Chapel Hill High School voted as to where they wanted to go to class the next year, and they voted to keep Lincoln High School open, and they wanted to stay at Lincoln High School, and a couple of people said they didn't know they were going to the new High school until a couple of months before school started. But that's not the case with you?

TS: That's not the way I remember it.

BG: I'm not challenging you, I just think there are honest differences of experience that I wanted to share with you.

TS: Well, see, what came to me, was even though I didn't graduate, I went to graduation and what was being said at graduation was that this was the last class to graduate from this high school, so I knew that that school was going to be demolished.

BG: Can you tell me what I was like your first year at the new high school?

TS: Oh, the first year at the new Chapel Hill High School, first of all I didn't want to be there, but I knew I had to be to take those two classes, and then I had to take a few other classes to be considered a full-time student, and then I knew a lot of the kids that were in the classes behind me, because the majority of them had already been at Chapel Hill High, but even the ones that had been at Lincoln, I knew them too, because I was going to school at Chapel Hill High School, the majority of my social life was still in the black community, so I pretty much knew everybody, and they didn't view me as being different, it was just like, hey, you here, let's do it.

BG: Did you see the same kind of physical abuse or verbal abuse towards the black student at the new high school the first year?

TS: No, none of it. Well, let me back up and put it this way. The first year, there wasn't a lot of blacks and the white students, they traveled together, the ones that was doing the hitting and spitting and name-calling, they were always in groups, and the four of us, we were always going separate ways, but the next year there were more of us you would see two or three of us together, and the following year there was even more, and by the time I got to Chapel Hill High School, you never saw one without seeing two or three. It had gotten to the place where if anybody was going to start anything, it was going to be the black students starting, they were like we out here, they had the attitude that they were going to dominate the school because we are here, because you've taken our school from us. That's the impression, the feeling I got, nobody actually physically said that, but that's the feeling I got.

BG: What was the school mascot and what were the school colors when it opened?

TS: Well, when the new Chapel Hill school, it opened it just carried over from the old one--

BG:--the wildcats, black and gold--

TS:--black and gold, and Lincoln High School, they were the Tigers, and black and orange. And then, when I finally got out of school, I went to a year of college and then I said, I'm going into the military. And when I got out of the military, I come back and they're not the wildcats anymore, they're the tigers.

BG: How long were you in the military?

TS: Five years.

BG: So you came back after the uprising at the high school?

TS: Yeah, but my sister never, see she was, my sister was four years behind me, she graduated three years behind me at Chapel Hill High School, because of the year that I didn't advance, but she graduated as a Wildcat, so the change came right after her.

BG: Where does she live?

TS: She lives in Greensboro, she's an Assistant Professor at UNC-G.

BG: Does she ever come and visit you?

TS: She's home every other weekend.

BG: I'd love to talk to her, cause she was there when the school opened, and then graduated, she was there what, 10th, 11th, and 12th, grade, so she there during the riot and after the riot.

TS: I don't remember her saying anything about it, but that you would have to ask her.

BG: What's her name?

TS: Charlsena.

BG: Charlsena . . .

TS: Stone. Well, she married and divorced, and her husband passed away, she reverted to her maiden name.

BG: Did you think when you started at the new Chapel Hill High School that you were treated by the teachers just the same as the whites?

TS: Yes. At Chapel Hill High School, yes.

BG: So if you raised your hand you got called on just as much as the whites?

TS: Just as much if I raised my hand as I didn't.

BG: So did you feel prejudice from the teachers.

TS: No, no I didn't.

BG: Did it bother you that most, in fact all of the teachers, who were teaching the core curriculum classes were white?

TS: Well, the first black teacher that I was exposed to, after I left Lincoln, was at the new Chapel Hill High School. Because they absorbed some of the teachers from Lincoln High School. From the time that I integrated Chapel Hill Junior High School all the way through Chapel Hill High School on Franklin Street there was no black teachers at Chapel Hill High.

BG: And then you had the same teacher from Lincoln High School at Chapel Hill High School?

TS: No.

BG: I misunderstood you.

TS: No, the teachers I had out on Homestead Road were, I had Coach Cultin [sp?] for P.E., Miss Bernard for English, Miss Wilkins, Miss Wilkins for World History. The two teachers I had on Franklin Street for the two subjects I failed, I had them again.

BG: I see. What about the principal, C.A. McDougale? Coach Peerman?

TS: Well, I only knew Coach Peerman because I had a cousin who played football, and by my hanging around a lot of the guys who played, that's the only way I new Coach Peerman, and plus Coach Pierman was a member of our church. As far as any action because, we only had interaction at church, and then he would see me down at Lincoln in the cafeteria with my aunt and he's ask me was I having any problems and was there anything she could do to help me, and if there was, he would. And as far as Mr. McDougale, Mr. McDougale, his son, was one of my, one of the guys we hung out together when he came to Chapel Hill High School, so as far as Mr. McDougale, and Miss McDougale, we interfaced quite a bit cause we would come over and hang out with his son Charles, and he always



had a funny story to tell us, and always, "Be sure you stay on your books, get your education," so he was always a positive role model for us.

BG: Did you think the fact that he was now an assistant principal rather than the principal of the school bothered him?

TS: Well, now I think back on it, remember how I told you he would walk down the hall and always have a song, a smile, for you? He didn't have that at Chapel Hill High School. You didn't see that, but you know, other than that, that was the only way you could tell he wasn't happy in his role there, he felt like it was demotion for him.

BG: Looking back on what you did being one of the first African-Americans to integrate the school system here in Chapel Hill, how do you feel about that?

TS: Sometimes I have mixed feelings about it, I feel myself proud of what I accomplished, but then I look back on some of the, by me working in the school systems now, I see so many kids with so much promise and then they squander it, they don't care, and then I wonder, did I do the right thing? Would we have been better off if we still had our own? That's always crossed my mind. But until you actually sit down and see it, people might not see it the same way I do. That's the way I feel.

BG: So after you graduated from Chapel Hill High, you went to college for one year and then you went into the military for five years. What did you do after that?

TS: I came back home, got a job, while I was in the military I got married, had my first child, a little girl who's now twenty-eight, and then my wife and I, we had our second child and right after my second child I decided to go back to school, started at Durham Tech and after Durham Tech I went to NCCU, graduated from NCCU Magna Cum Laude. So it proves I'm not a dumb person, I did get a lot from education.

BG: And what do you do now.

TS: I'm the Assistant Transportation Foreman for Chapel Hill-Carrboro Schools. It's my responsibility to get the kids to school and from school safely.

BG: What happened to the generation of students who graduated from Lincoln High School and went on to get college degrees, right around the time of or shortly after desegregation? Did they disappear from this area?

TS: Well, it's a few still in the area, but the majority of the kids that they graduated at the time that I did, that went on to college, whether they went on to college or not, there's maybe about 6 of us left in Chapel Hill.

BG: 6 out of?

TS: 6 out of about 30. And then you have to account for the ones that are no longer here, I mean that have passed on. That would be myself, Katrina William, Curtis Cotton, Leon Bumpins . . . they all gone.

BG: Do you think they left because of, for what reason?

TS: Well, I think they left for, a lot of different reasons, most of them growing up, they wanted to leave Chapel Hill. Before they graduated from the High School, they wanted to move on to other places, to better things, they wanted to have more options. There wasn't a lot of options--

BG:--economically?

TS: -- economic options here in Chapel Hill.

BG: Is there anything else you would like to share with me? Something I didn't ask you?

TS: Well, I would like to say that I appreciate your coming by and bringing up these old memories, it's not just bringing them up, I would say this is a good thing, letting the future generations know what has gone on in their past, to teach them their heritage, what Chapel Hill is all about.

BG: Well I appreciate your sharing.

TS: No problem.

BG: That's great.