

TAPE TRANSCRIPT  
Durham Civil Rights Heritage Project  
CDS, Durham, NC

**Interviewee:** Phyllis Nuchurch  
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**Interviewer:** Melissa Johnson and David Cecelski  
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**Place:** Durham Public Library  
300 N. Roxboro Street  
Durham, NC 27701

**Equipment:** SONY MZ-R700 Minidisk  
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**Description of Interviewee:**

**Circumstances of the Interview:**

Melissa Johnson (**MJ**): This is Melissa Johnson, and I'm here at the Durham Public Library documenting stories from the community in Durham on their involvement in the civil rights movement. And I'm with Phyllis Nuchurch.

Phyllis Nuchurch (**PN**): Are you hearing alright?

**MJ**: Yes, I am. Okay. So, thank you for coming, Phyllis. You brought in these materials? Let's start with this picture here. And who's this picture of?

**PN**: That's a picture of my father, and he was an activist in Durham for a long, long time. He just made sure that everybody got out to vote, and he made sure that the precincts were set up. He worked at one of the precincts – several of the precincts – in Durham, and that kind of thing. He also was instrumental in seeing to it that neighborhood people got lighting in their areas, street lights, was instrumental in seeing to it that they had mailboxes in their neighborhoods, and that kind of thing. So, even from childhood, I remember those kinds of things that he used to do in the community.

David Cecelski (**DC**): What was his name?

**PN**: Fred Hines. William Frederick Hines, Sr.

**MJ**: And was he originally from this community, or did he move here?

**PN**: He was originally born in Goldsboro, but he moved to Durham soon after he got married.

**MJ**: And is this –

**PN**: That's my mother.

**MJ**: And when did he marry her, and what was her name?

**PN**: Her name was Ethelene Jordan Hines, and he married her in Goldsboro, and they moved to Durham. And she only lived until I was six years old, and then she passed away. So she was not as active in his life, you know, later on, after that time. You know, he was pretty much alone raising three children.

**MJ**: So they had three children?

**PN**: Yeah.

**MJ**: Okay. And was she originally from –

**PN**: Goldsboro.

**MJ**: Goldsboro? And did they grow up together?

**PN**: You know, I'm not really sure.

**MJ**: Don't know how they met.

**PN:** No.

**MJ:** Okay, so they came here to Durham, and then he became involved in the community?

**PN:** That's right.

**MJ:** And do you know what led him to become involved in the community?

**PN:** That's just the kind of person he was. Outgoing, community-minded, interested in people around the community, and interested in what their needs were. I mean, the community just sort of looked after each other. And so if they had needs, they would always come to him, and he would see to it that they got it! So he would attend all the City Council meetings, and that kind of stuff.

**DC:** That must have been unusual in that day. That would have been the 19—

**PN:** It was the early '30s.

**DC:** Wow. So way before anything we would call the civil rights movement.

**PN:** Exactly. Exactly. So he was interested even then in seeing to it that people got what they needed to get in the community – paved streets, sidewalks, that kind of stuff.

**MJ:** And were you aware of his involvement in the community, and was that something that –

**PN:** Yes, because when time came to vote, we had to get out the flyers to encourage people to come to the polls and vote, and that kind of stuff. Also sign people up for rides to go to the polls. That kind of stuff. So we had to help. (Laughs) We had to help put out flyers.

**MJ:** And is that something he encouraged, then, amongst his children, that you become involved in your community as well?

**PN:** We did it because we did it with him. So, you know, it just became a part of us.

**MJ:** And so you tried to get out the vote. What other kinds of community activities was he involved in?

**PN:** He was vice-president of the AFL-CIO when they came to unionize the American Tobacco Factory and the Liggett and Myers Tobacco Factory. So he became vice-president, in years to come, of that. And he also belonged to the Durham Committee on Negro Affairs, he belonged to the NAACP, and those types of organizations. Very active in his church, St. Mark AME Zion Church. Did all sorts of things.

One of these pictures that she took – I don't see – oh, this will outline some of the activities.

**MJ:** Okay, and his obituary?

**PN:** Yes. Some of the activities that he was interested in, and worked in very diligently.

**MJ:** So labor was definitely a concern?

**PN:** That's right.

**MJ:** What kind of issues were labor facing at that time, do you know?

**PN:** Low pay. And of course holidays, and those kinds of things. People were not making what they should have been making for doing what they were doing. So after the union came in, they began to get better pay, better holidays, and things like that, for the people who were working – I mean, unions sort of demanded that they got what was due them.

**MJ:** Was the labor, was it primarily African Americans who were affected by the labor concerns?

**PN:** No. It was really everybody who was affected by it.

**MJ:** So he was sort of representing all sides of the community at the same time.

**PN:** Yes, mm-hmm.

**MJ:** And did he, with his work with the voting and other issues, did he encounter any kind of threats, or –

**PN:** If so, I never heard of any. Everybody knew who he was, and they just, you know, they knew that if he said something was going to happen, that it would probably happen. Because a lot of people at that time were not attending the Council meetings, so they had no knowledge of what was going on in the Council, and he did. So they just sort of listened to him.

**MJ:** So he didn't feel any danger for his family.

**PN:** I don't think he ever thought about it. I don't think he ever thought about it.

**MJ:** Okay. But he was very well-known, then, in the community –

**PN:** Oh, yes.

**MJ:** -- and his word was respected.

**PN:** Yeah.

**DC:** You probably said this while I was gone. How did he make a living?

**PN:** He worked at the Liggett and Myers Tobacco Factory. He eventually became vice-President of the AFL-CIO, when they initially went to unions in Durham for the factory workers.

**DC:** Because they had a strong union there.

**PN:** (Laughs) Ah, yes! Yes.

**DC:** I mean, in my class we would call that part of the civil rights movement.

**PN:** Yes! It really was.

**DC:** I mean, that was such a powerful –

**PN:** What really happened, he was working at the American Tobacco Company, and when he started talking to the union people, he was fired from American. That's when he got a job at Liggett and Myers.

**DC:** And I guess he didn't learn his lesson, because he goes and –

**PN:** (Laughs) He went right on.

**DC:** -- and gets involved in the union there.

**PN:** Yeah.

**DC:** And that would have been, what, just after World War II, sort of?

**PN:** No, it wasn't after.

**DC:** Even before?

**PN:** (Pause) It was before, because – yeah, that was before. Because he was already in the union, and working with the union, when I got married. And I got married in (pause) '43, I think.

**DC:** Do you remember when they organized the union?

**PN:** I don't remember the date, specifically, but I know that he worked very closely with it.

**MJ:** Is it true that his education was only to the fourth-grade level?

**PN:** Exactly.

**MJ:** And then he later went back and took classes?

**PN:** Yeah.

**MJ:** During World War II. So education was important to him?

**PN:** Yeah, very.

**MJ:** And were you aware at the time that he was going back to classes?

**PN:** Yes.

**MJ:** And did you talk about that?

**PN:** Oh, we did homework together. (Laughs) He talked about how important education was, and always insisted that we get a proper education, and that kind of stuff.

**MJ:** Did he serve in either of the world wars

**PN:** No, neither. He was too young for the first one, and a bit old for the second one. So he sort of missed that.

**MJ:** And when his activities in the community, how did they change during the war, as the community's concerns changed?

**PN:** Well, there were a lot of changes in the community after the, you know, the soldiers were stationed right there at Fort Bragg – ah, not Fort Bragg, um – (pause) Hmm. Camp Butner.

**DC:** The one (?).

**PN:** Butner. I think they since tore Butner down. But anyway, that's over there where the hospital stuff is now.

**DC:** Still a lot of federal and state land over there.

**PN:** Camp Butner. So that's where the camp was, and the soldiers used to always come to Durham for relaxation and stuff. So, you know, this was the closest place. So it made a lot of changes in Durham for the soldiers to just sort of invade this town, you know.

**DC:** Were there black soldiers?

**PN:** Black and white soldiers, yes.

**DC:** So how did Durham take having –

**PN:** They had to take it – what else could they do? (Laughing) They had buses running from here to the camp. A lot of people from Durham sought employment at the camp, so, you know, it was like a lot of people who could not get jobs at the factory worked at the camps. So, you know, it was a two-way thing. So it had to be accepted.

**DC:** There must have been some conflict over it at times, though.

**PN:** There were conflicts. There was a riot in Durham, over on Federal Street. And they sent buses, got all the soldiers back to the camp, and shut, you know – they started refusing passes and things. And I don't know what started the riot, but it was something that happened between a civilian and a soldier.

**DC:** Was that the time that Booker Spicely was shot?

**PN:** I really don't know.

**DC:** Do you remember that story?

**PN:** I don't remember. I don't remember that.

**DC:** The way I heard it was that a black veteran, or one of the guys from Butner, had said something about a bus incident, where the white bus driver was drunk or something, and he made the army guy, the black army guys go to the back of the bus.

**PN:** I don't know. I didn't hear that story, I don't know.

**DC:** But there was a riot up there.

**PN:** Oh, there was a riot. Definitely. Because I was going with a soldier at the time, and they just – you know, all the guys had to go back to the base, and they were not allowed to come in from several days, until they got the bus straightened out. So it was – they shut them down for a while.

**MJ:** And so you talked about your father's work trying to help African Americans go to the polls and vote. Did you notice any difference when the soldiers started to come in, in terms of increased interest in voting?

**PN:** I (sighs), I really don't know, because at that time I wasn't old enough to vote, so (laughs) I don't know about that.

**MJ:** How successful was your father in getting people to vote?

**PN:** (Promptly) They listened to him. Very successful.

**MJ:** Did they have concerns about voting in terms of –

**PN:** I think a lot of people did, but then I think he sort of convinced them that it was in their best interests to vote. And you know, people who did not have a way to go to the polls, he would see to it that they signed up so that they could get a ride to the polling places. And I think once they started voting, you know, they found out that maybe it was something that they should do. I think that a lot of them did.

**DC:** You must have been very proud of him.

**PN:** Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. He was the apple of my eye. (Laughs)

**DC:** I can still tell. I can still tell.

**PN:** Yeah.

**DC:** Was he part of an organization at that time, I mean, that was doing the voting (?), or was it just him out there by himself?

**PN:** No, he wasn't by himself. He would work with the NAACP. He worked with the Committee on Black Affairs here in the city. That's – he, you know, he was one of the ones that helped to organize that committee.

**DC:** I was wondering how far back it went.

**PN:** Yeah. It went back a ways. Ever since I can remember, it's been a committee.

**DC:** So he knew Louis Austin and all that crowd.

**PN:** Louis Austin and he were running buddies.

**DC:** I bet they were.

**PN:** They were running buddies.

**DC:** Wow.

**PN:** Yep.

**MJ:** He remarried?

**PN:** Yes. Two times after my mother passed.

**DC:** I'm going to leave you two ladies alone, if that's alright.

**PN:** Alright, that's okay. My first step-mother worked for Dr. Warren, Dr. S. L. Warren that the library was named for, Stanford Warren. So she worked for that family, in their home, helping to look after Mrs. Warren and Dr. Warren, because, by that time, they had gotten all – really needed some assistance, so she had worked with them. And that marriage relationship lasted for a while. And then it broke up. And then he married again after that.

**MJ:** And how old were you when he remarried the first time?

**PN:** Um – (pause) – I must have been about ten.

**MJ:** So you were still pretty young.

**PN:** Yeah.

**MJ:** And did she have any children (?) --?

**PN:** No. No children. No children. Then he didn't get married again until after I had married. So.

**MJ:** (Looking at pictures) This is your father too?

**PN:** Mm-hmm.

**MJ:** Now, what about this article here that you brought in? Can you tell me why you brought this in?

**PN:** When my husband came out of the service in 1945 – latter part of '45, early '46 – his father was ill in New Orleans, so we had to go and see about her. So I moved from Durham to New Orleans. And a lot of my children were born in New Orleans. I have seven. And so my baby girl was one of the girls who helped to integrate the schools in New Orleans.

**MJ:** Oh, really?

**PN:** Mm-hmm. And that's a picture of her. And in –

**MJ:** That's your daughter?

**PN:** Mm-hmm.



**MJ:** And what is her name?

**PN:** Sylvia Branch. Sylvia Nuchurch Branch. She works for the school board now.

**MJ:** How old was she at the time?

**PN:** Six? So that was in '61, when they first integrated the schools there, when she integrated that school there. That school was only about four blocks from the house. And the other school that she would have been designated to go to, as a black child, was across St. Charles Avenue, which was about fourteen blocks. Had to go (?), about fourteen blocks, in order to get there. And I just did not see the reason for sending her that far, as small as she was, with some other children, when there was a school right around the corner from me – four blocks, four or five blocks. And so the people who were in leadership in New Orleans in the NAACP and the Parent Teachers Association worked with me, and she was selected to go into the school on a trial basis. She and one of our neighbors. And their pictures, the picture (?), this one. That's a picture of me taken in the school.

**MJ:** And did you encounter any resistance from the white community?

**PN:** Oh, honey. They were out there. I mean, on both sides of the streets. It was the ugliest mob you have ever seen. But we were protected by the city police, the NAACP. They provided rides for us every morning, to go take the children to school, until all of that stuff quieted down.

**MJ:** So you took her every day?

**PN:** Yeah. At first.

**MJ:** Were you really concerned for her well-being?

**PN:** I wasn't concerned about her well-being. The teachers inside were very warm, they were very welcoming. There was one other little girl who had attempted to integrate the school system in New Orleans the year before, and there was a movie out about her. And I can't think of that little girl's name now. But that turned into something really bad for the child, and for the school system. It put a blot on the school system. It put a blot on the school system. So when we talked about integrating (Sylvia?), the teachers as a whole had made up their minds that it was going to be a pleasant experience for the children. They did not want to see what happened to the other child happen to the children. And they made it a really pleasant experience. So the problem was not going into the school. The problem was getting to the school without incident.

**MJ:** With the protests and the resistance that you were facing?

**PN:** Right. And after that happened, just before I left New Orleans, our garage mysteriously got set on fire. Nobody – got set on fire. We never did find out the cause.

**MJ:** But you think it was linked?

**PN:** It might have been linked.

**MJ:** Did you receive any other kinds of threats? Did people call you?

**PN:** No. We did not receive threats.

**MJ:** So she then did not really experience any kind of racism or discrimination by the other children inside the school?

**PN:** She may have, but I – you know, children are very resilient, and they play with who will play with them, and then they just – you know, ignore the rest. So, you know, I don't think the experience for her was traumatizing at all. Because the people who did not want to bother her didn't, and the people who – you know. Some people kept their children home from school for weeks or so, and then eventually they drifted on back to school, because their children were the ones being deprived of an education.

**MJ:** So your daughter and her neighbor opened the doorway, then –

**PN:** Yes.

**MJ:** And how soon after they started did more and more children start to –

**PN:** Oh, each year, more children. Each year after that more children came into the schools.

**MJ:** You must be pretty proud of your daughter, as well as your father, then.

**PN:** Oh, yeah. Oh yeah.

**MJ:** And do you attribute some of your willingness, maybe when other people wouldn't send their children at that time, do you maybe attribute it to your father and his influence on you?

**PN:** I'm sure it came from my background. I just knew it was something that needed to be done.

**MJ:** It was the right thing to do at the time.

**PN:** Um, about '61 – let's see, 2001, the school that she integrated invited us back to the Lusher School where she integrated, and had a reunion. And it was so wonderful. This picture here – the one that was on the back of the – yeah, this one – shows her talking to the children in the classrooms. She and Toni, the other little girl's name was Toni, went to each one of the classrooms and talked to the children about how it was for them when they integrated the schools. And this little girl, that's hugging her right now, is the little girl that said – she thought

the little girl had a question, and the little girl said, “I don’t have a question, I just want to tell you how sorry I am that they treated you mean when you came to school.” And that just brought tears to my daughter’s eyes. Here’s one child that’s just taking the blame for all of the hurt that’s been caused for her. And that’s the child that’s reaching out to her in that picture.

**MJ:** (Reading) “Olivia Houston, five years old.”

**PN:** Yeah.

**MJ:** That’s such a good story!

**PN:** Isn’t that amazing?

**MJ:** It is. What does your daughter do now, you were saying?

**PN:** She is secretary at the school board over here, at the – what’s the name of the school board over here? Fuller School? Fuller?

**MJ:** I’m not sure. I live in Chapel Hill.

**PN:** Oh, okay. Well, the school board building is right here in downtown Durham. It’s right over a couple of blocks. She works there. She’s getting ready to retire!

**MJ:** So education has continued to play an important role in your family’s life?

**PN:** Oh, yes. Oh, yeah.

**MJ:** Which can probably be traced back to your father too.

**PN:** (Laughs) That’s right.

**MJ:** So his influence continues.

**PN:** Oh, yeah.

**MJ:** (?) So this was some forty years later, then, right? This was 1961?

**PN:** Mm-hmm.

**MJ:** And it was at Lusher Elementary School.

**PN:** Exactly.

**MJ:** So you were living in New Orleans then. How was New Orleans different than Durham? Were there comparable differences in terms of maybe the racial climate at the time, tension?

**PN:** I think the racial tensions in the entire South were horrible at that time. Everywhere you go, blacks had to ride on the back of the bus, or they would ask you to get up and give your seat to somebody who was another color, that kind of stuff. So I don’t think it was any different in the Deep South than it was here in Durham. It was still a murky mess. (Laughs)

**MJ:** Was it different, though, in terms of like, your father had been a prominent, well-known figure within your community in Durham, and now you'd moved to New Orleans – did you feel sort of a difference in that respect?

**PN:** Ah, what I did was affiliated myself with the Parent Teacher group, and with the NAACP, and the activist groups that were working to promote a healthy atmosphere wherever I lived. So you know, working in those confines, I worked with everybody. So it wasn't like I was ostracized into a black community and didn't have any contact with anybody else.

**MJ:** So you continued to be, then, a community activist in your own right?

**PN:** Yes.

**MJ:** And what kinds of problems did you encounter in New Orleans? Or what kind of issues, I guess, were you primarily concerned with?

**PN:** Oh, like, if you go into a store and you might have to stand around a while before you get waited on. Or there was, of course, the division of where you could eat in the restaurants, and that kind of stuff. Hotels, that kind of stuff. And of course the schools.

**MJ:** And how did you explain that to your own children? I mean, did they ask questions about why this was, and –

**PN:** When Sylvia entered Lusher, there was a psychologist who worked with the children who had just entered the schools, and he was very good about coming to the house and working with the family as a whole, and getting some ideas about – he was doing a book about the integration of schools. So I think that he and his wife helped us to work through some of the issues that, you know, were confronting us, as far as being able to deal with what was going on with us. So I think that was a great help to us.

**MJ:** And was there support amongst the white community for integration?

**PN:** Oh, yeah. The board of the school, PTA, was integrated, and you know, the black parents had to work with the other parents there. So I worked right along with them, and was able to – we were able to work together, see eye to eye, form friendships, and that kind of thing.

**MJ:** So would you say then that the resistance that was outside, the protests and things, were people who were perhaps not associated with the school, then, who maybe --?

**PN:** It may have been. It may have been. And maybe, it may have also been some of the people who were within the school. I didn't know them very well, so I couldn't say, "Well, you're not from this school."

**MJ:** So there wasn't a lot of interaction amongst you and the white parents?

**PN:** Ah, just in PTA meetings.

**MJ:** And how many children did you say that you had?

**PN:** Seven.

**MJ:** Seven kids. Was she the oldest of the seven?

**PN:** The baby.

**MJ:** Oh, she was the youngest. So then your other children hadn't had this experience with integration.

**PN:** No.

**MJ:** Did they at any point enter integrated schools, or did they continue to be primarily in African American schools?

**PN:** I think by the time they got out of school, schools were just beginning to be integrated. Because she was six years younger than the next child. So they were like coming out of school while she was just going in.

**MJ:** And so her experience, then, was significantly different than the other children's.

**PN:** Exactly. Exactly.

**MJ:** I know that you may not be able to answer this question – but then, she wouldn't have people who – her siblings wouldn't have understood the experience that she was going through at the time, then. But was she still able to talk to them?

**PN:** They understood, because they had to pick her up and, you know, like if she had an appointment or something, some of the older kids had to get her and get her to her appointment, because I was working. So they understood what was going on, but it just worked out.

**MJ:** Okay. So then you came back. Did you come back to Durham now?

**PN:** Oh, yes. I've been in Durham now since '69. My father got ill, and my mother got ill – my step-mother was ill – so, you know, running up and down the road trying to take care of them wasn't an easy job. So I just moved back home.

**MJ:** Had Durham changed from when you had left, significantly (?)?

**PN:** I think. I think that Durham had changed.

**MJ:** In what ways?

**PN:** Um, I think that after the lunch-counter incidents here in Durham, I think Durham began to change, after those. I kept up with it through newspapers and stuff.

**MJ:** So they had changed for the better, then?

**PN:** I would think so. I would think so.

**MJ:** And do you feel like – does it continue to improve, or – what do you feel like the climate is right now?

**PN:** Um, I feel like the climate is better now than it used to be. I really do. I think a lot of people here really understand what the South has been through, and I think that it's done a lot to change a lot of people's mind. You know, changing people's mind is one thing. You have to have a change in the heart. That's where it really stems from.

**MJ:** And do you feel like maybe that's happened, or is happening?

**PN:** I think it might have happened to some, but there are others (laughs) where it may not have happened.

**MJ:** And do you continue to experience any racism or discrimination here in the community?

**PN:** Personally I have not, because I work with a lot of – I work with the Duke University Retirement Organization, and other activist groups where, you know, I got some very dear friends.

**MJ:** So you're still continuing to be involved in the community, then.

**PN:** Oh yes. Oh yes.

**MJ:** So you should be proud of yourself too.

**PN:** I hobble in there when I'm able! Physically able.

**MJ:** Okay. Is there anything that I've missed about you, that you think are important, that you want to add to, or add to your experiences with the civil rights movement?

**PN:** No, I think that that pretty much –

**MJ:** You think that that's covered it?

**PN:** I think that that pretty much covered it.

**MJ:** Oh, and what led you to come in today? How did you hear about this event?

**PN:** The newspaper article. I read the article in the newspaper, and I just thought that it would be interesting, knowing how hard my daddy fought to get things going in Durham like they should be, that some input from him would be good.

**MJ:** What do you think he would think about Durham today?

**PN:** I think he would be amazed. (Laughs) I think he would be amazed. But I think that he would also say, "I knew it was going to happen."

**MJ:** He felt really strongly about that?

**PN:** Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

**MJ:** So he would be pleased.

**PN:** I would think so. I would think so.

**MJ:** And do you see others carrying on his memory, or his legacy? Is he still remembered in the community, do you know?

**PN:** Oh, there might be a very few. Someone said that Kelly Bryant was working with you all. Kelly Bryant.

**MJ:** Could be.

**PN:** Kelly Bryant. Anyway, Kelly Bryant knew my father.

**MJ:** Oh! Okay.

**PN:** And I don't know if I would know him, if I were to see him, but my sister said, "Did you see Kelly Bryant?" I said, "No." She said, "Well, he knew Dad." (Laughs) So I, you know, I would not know Kelly Bryant if I saw him, but I think he was very instrumental in helping to see that this all got to be – that's what the newspaper article said, anyway. Did you see the article in the newspaper?

**MJ:** I didn't.

**PN:** I brought it.

**MJ:** The gentleman who was here is actually my professor.

**PN:** Oh, okay.

**MJ:** He (encourages?) us to come down and help.

**PN:** (Rustling through papers) I cut the article out of the paper so I could remember to do this.

**MJ:** Well, obviously you saved these – are these just among the articles that you've saved regarding your daughter's, her involvement with the integration movement?

**PN:** I have some color pictures that were made when I went back to the reunion. When she went back to the reunion I went with her, and we have some color pictures, and we have some other mementos and other things that were given to us at that time.

**MJ:** So you went back and had that experience too?

**PN:** Yes.

**MJ:** How was that for you, to see your daughter back there?

**PN:** (Gasps) Oh, it was amazing! It was so amazing. And the exhibits and all the things that they had put together. And they were trying to teach the children, you know, how hard it was for integration and all of that to take place.

**MJ:** Do you think that they understood?

**PN:** I really do. I really do. I think talking one-on-one with these kids who had been through that sort of gave them some insight into how hard it must have been at that time for them. Especially for a little five-year-old to get up and apologize like she did. That was heartbreaking. But they had cultural activities, dances, and singing, and they put on skits. And it was a marvelous affair. And I think that one of the originators told my daughter that they were going to do it again in ten years. So that would be 2011.

**MJ:** Could you tell by the makeup of the school if things had really changed, how far integration had come in that community?

**PN:** Um, yeah. Yeah. Because they did not have any black teachers at that time. Would you believe the lady who was principal came back for the reunion? (Pause) She really did. And it was just so nice to see her. She –

**MJ:** So this was obviously an event that had affected all kinds of people, this integration in the school that your daughter was such a part of.

**PN:** Yeah. Right.

**MJ:** Did your daughter talk to you about how she felt about going back?

**PN:** Oh, she was excited to go back. She was really excited to go back.

**MJ:** Do you think that at the time, when she was going through the experience, that she felt it was really, I guess, barrier-breaking?

**PN:** I don't think that she understood then that it was barrier-breaking. (Laughs) It was just – you know, first place, she was excited because this was her first year of school. (Laughs) I mean, you know! And so.

**MJ:** But she understands it now.

**PN:** Oh, she definitely (laughs) understands it now.

**MJ:** And how does she feel about having been involved in that so significantly?

**PN:** Ah, she has a lot of feelings about it. Right now she is in her last year of ministerial school, and so she thinks a lot about it, and she understands a lot of things. What was really eye-opening for her was that she saw the other side of the same thing, because when we moved from



New Orleans, we moved to Washington, DC. And they were beginning to integrate the schools there, and she was able to minister to a little white girl who felt ostracized in the black schools there. So she was able to really understand what that little girl was going through, and she took her to be her friend. And she became accepted because she was Sylvia's friend. So, yeah, you know, what goes around comes around.

**MJ:** Absolutely.

**PN:** Yeah.

**MJ:** (?) But then your father had been involved in church activities as well. Was the church a significant sort of – play a significant role in his community activities?

**PN:** Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

**MJ:** In what ways?

**PN:** Very significant. Well, when we were growing up, there wasn't much else to do except to go to church. All of our activities revolved around the church.

**MJ:** What church did your father attend?

**PN:** St. Mark AME Zion Church.

**MJ:** Did they do a lot of work with poverty, or – what kind of activities were they primarily concerned with, if you can remember?

**PN:** Ah, the church was just a community place where, you know, if the NAACP needed a place for meetings, they could meet at our church. If the Committee on Black Affairs needed a meeting place, they could meet at our church. The other thing is that when politicians are running for office, they usually come to our church. Looking for votes, of course. And those kinds of things. So the church was sort of the center of everything that went on around us. So.

**MJ:** It was the foundation –

**PN:** Yeah.

**MJ:** Okay. Was there specific significance to this particular article amongst the ones that you brought in, with your daughter? That perhaps this – I don't know, if you had other articles, why you'd pick this one in particular?

**PN:** Those were the major ones that I could put my hands on. We have some other pictures of her in groups of children, and some of the activities that went on at the reunion that we had.

**MJ:** I'll give this back to you too.

**PN:** Okay.

**MJ:** We'll need to give you this, and this is a release for this interview, so that they can use it, put it in – research, or – and also on the Web, because they're also, I guess, putting things on the Web for people to access, to get greater information about the civil rights movement.

**PN:** (Pause) Okay. Where do I sign?

**MJ:** (Indicates) So that your father's story, his involvement, can continue to be learned by others. Do we have your address and information on the other form? Did you fill out that other one?

**PN:** I'll fill it out right now.

**MJ:** Thank you for coming. Was there anything else that you thought was important about your experiences that you wanted to share, or do you think we covered?

**PN:** I think we pretty much covered it.

**MJ:** Well, I thank you for coming in today.

**PN:** Not at all. (rustling, talk about forms) Did I get all my pictures back?

**MJ:** These are the scans. Let me go find out about –

**PN:** That's what I need. I need to get –

**MJ:** Okay. I will get that for you. I'll be right back. So if you don't want to get up and walk around, I can get that for you. Okay? Thank you. (Tape runs for a while, library noises, MJ shows DC how to turn off tape recorder. End of recording.)