

TAPE TRANSCRIPT
Durham Civil Rights Heritage Project
Durham, NC
DRAFT

Interviewee: Panel Presentation
Eddie Davis
Reverend Douglas Moore
Virginia Williams
R. Kelly Bryant

Recorder: Barbara Lau
2211 Strebtor Street
Durham, NC 27705

Place: Durham County Library
300 N. Roxboro
Durham, NC 27701
Main Auditorium

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Date: September 15, 2007

Circumstances of the Program: This event was held to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Royal Ice Cream Sitdown in Durham North Carolina. Organized by Eddie Davis, it featured two of the sitdown strikers, Reverend Douglas Moore and Ms. Virginia Williams. R. Kelly Bryant, an important African American historian in Durham was also asked to be a part of the panel discussion. Several public officials also attended all or part of the event including Councilman Howard Clement and Mayor William V. (Bill) Bell. There were also family members of others of the sitdown strikers who have passed away present. In all, about 50 people attended the event held in the main auditorium of the Durham County Library.

Transcript:

Eddie Davis (ED): Listen, [at] 5 o'clock we'd like to be out on the, as folks like to say in the South, out on the front porch of the Durham County Library to lift up our voices so I'd like to see if we can't go ahead and get started here so that we might be able to do that and since the library does not close until 6, and I don't think that our singing will last more than about 15 minutes, but it will be an important 15 minutes, we can then come back to this location for many of you all who would like to have the opportunity to meet, personally meet Reverend Moore, and Miss Virginia Williams. I would like, if you all don't mind, for us to ask Mr. Bryant and Miss Williams and Reverend Moore to come to the platform here.

ED: Well good afternoon to all of you all and thank you all for having a wonderful interest in the whole idea of celebrating the 50th anniversary – the 50th anniversary of a very, very vital and important activity that took place just about 2 blocks down the street right on North Roxboro Street at the Royal Ice Cream Parlor. It was on an afternoon of June the 23rd that this event took place, and we thought that we did not want this anniversary to go by without having some way that we could say thank you to the people who were involved in that activity, and perhaps a good way of beginning today's program is just to have a moment of silence in honor of all of the people, including the ones who were here on the platform, but particularly for those folks who have passed on, but made courageous stands by sitting down on that day. So could we pause for just a moment.

Thank you.
Amen.

ED: We have some exciting people to talk about things, and I'll try not to be in the way, by the way my name is Eddie Davis, many of you may know that I taught for many years at Hillside High School and now work in Raleigh with the North Carolina Association of Educators. We have much more importantly, beside me, Mr. R Kelly Bryant, who is a historian of great renown, who knows lots about lots of things. We often talk in the Alumni Association of Hampton University where he went to school when it was called Hampton Institute, and my wife also attended Hampton Institute, and sometimes Mr. Bryant will tell the story of how he held General Armstrong's horse back in the 1800s, when...? A bit of an exaggeration, but certainly Mr. Bryant has been around quite a while, and is about to move into his 9th decade. Whenever there's any question about civil rights history I always call Mr. Bryant first, and if he doesn't know, he certainly does know who might be the person to ask the question. Also, beside Mr. Bryant is a person whose face you see in this handout that you have someone who has toiled long in the vineyard, who journeyed from the small county of North Hampton and came to the county of Durham back in the 50s. And did not just come and soak up the big city, although I'm sure she absorbed lots of the life and other things along the way but also wanted to do some meaningful work while she was here, and she got involved in lots of different activities and we'll talk about that in just a moment. And beside Virginia L Williams, is the man that many of us have been wanting to have an opportunity to interact with here in Durham for a long time. Many of us know of the exploits of Reverend Douglas Elaine Moore. And we will start... and he of course at that time, 50 years ago, was the pastor of Asbury Temple United Methodist Church, which at that point was located on Lawson Street, right there at the heart of McDougald Terrace. Asbury Temple is in another location now, on the corner of Alston and Angiers, and by the way, Reverend Moore is going to worship at that church on tomorrow; we have had a wonderful invitation extended by Reverend Shane Benjamin who has gracefully wanted to have the former pastor there. We also have with us Mr. Howard Clement and Mr. Thomas Stiff, who's also a member of the city council, but Mr. Clement I think has a special presentation and perhaps Mr. Clement this would be the appropriate time for you to come forward and to read that proclamation, or to offer the proclamation, whichever way you want to do it.

Mr. Howard Clement (HC): Thank you so much. It's indeed a privilege and a pleasure for me to be a part of this very significant occasion. I want to thank Eddie Davis, as being the primary catalyst in moving this program to where we are today. Thank you Eddie. There are other people to thank and I could get in trouble because I won't call all the names, but those of you who need to be thanked personally would you please stand and let me know, so I won't exclude anybody. I certainly want to again acknowledge the presence of my city councilor colleague Thomas Stiff who helped authorize this resolution that I'm about to read. Reverend Moore, welcome back to Durham. Before media became a big technological instrument 1957, see if he had in 1957 what the folks in Greensboro had in 1960, it would have been a much bigger event, and I blame you Reverend Moore for picking the wrong time. It was all a matter of time and timing. But you did what you had to do and we are grateful that you seized the moment and to Miss Virginia Williams, who accompanied me to the march to Washington back in August 1963. Then we went back to Washington,

Miss Virginia Williams: NAACP Silent March

HC: Silent March – this was in connection with affirmative action if my memory serves me correct. So Miss Williams, I'm just glad you're still here. All of us who are not here, but we will remember them, and if I may read this proclamation: This proclamation recognizing the 50th anniversary of the June 23rd 1957 sit-in at Durham's Royal Ice Cream Parlor. Whereas communities across North Carolina acted to destroy segregation and to ensure inclusion and equal opportunity for all citizens during the civil rights movement, and whereas this year marks the 50th anniversary, when Asbury Methodist minister Douglas E Moore led a small group of African-Americans, young people to challenge segregation at Durham's Royal Ice Cream Parlor located at 1000 North Roxboro Street on June 23rd 1957. And whereas we must remember the participants of the sit-in demonstration, it made civil rights history and their role in removing the stain of discrimination and prejudice, those individuals were Mary E Clyburn, Reverend Moore, Claude E Glenn, Jesse W Gray, Vivian E Jones, Melvin Willis, and of course Virginia L Reeves. And whereas the Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlaws discrimination and segregation in public places such as theaters, restaurants and hotels, it also requires employers to provide equal employment opportunities regardless of race, in addition it outlines that projects involving public funds are subject to being cut off if there is evidence of discrimination based on color, race or national origin. Therefore I Howard Clement acting for William 'V' Bill Bell, Mayor of the city of Durham North Carolina, do hereby recognize the 50th anniversary of the June 23rd 1957 sit-in at Durham's Royal Ice Cream Parlor, and thereby encourage all citizens to continue to work together to make the dream of equal opportunity a reality for all. Witness his hand the corporate seal of the city of Durham North Carolina this the 15th day of September 2007, William 'V' Bill Bell, the mayor. I am delighted, Reverend Moore, to present this proclamation to you. I wanted to present it to the group, but thank you for your courageous leadership. It's easy now to do a sit-in. In 1957 it wasn't that easy...and I'm just proud and delighted to have this honor to present this proclamation to you on behalf of the city of Durham. God bless you.

Well, quickly but we need to get into the meat of the program.

Mayor William V. (Bill) Bell: Thank you very much and thank you very much for all you who have come out today.

ED: Well thank you so much to the Durham city council, also we have had some not inquiries, but some certainly some gratitude expressed by members of the Durham County Commission so we're real pleased that in 2007 there is a gracious welcoming embrace of the movement by these courageous young people. I'd like to, if we can now, to talk a little bit about how Reverend Moore got here, and then to maybe use this as if it may be a television show, or Oprah's show, or something like that, although I certainly do not profess to be anywhere near as competent at this as Oprah and all the other people, but hopefully I can play the role as a referee, so that we can get as much meat flowing during this session that we have, and then to try and come back and have people to ask individual questions. So Reverend Moore, it's my understanding from talking to you that you grew up in the city of Hickory, and came to North Carolina Central somewhat of as a protest because so many other people in your family went to that school in Greensboro.

Reverend Douglas Moore (RDM): Amen, A&T [North Carolina A & T University]. My daddy, my cousins – all of them went there. I decided to come to [North Carolina Central University] Central because I didn't think anyone knew me. Not even professors.

ED: Indeed. Now, you also told me the name of the college at that point was not North Carolina Central. What was the name of it then?

RDM: North Carolina College for Negroes.

ED: And you got here and wanted to escape but found that there was a professor here who actually did know some of your folks. Could you relate that story with us a little bit?

RDM: Well I was busy with the NAACP and doing things like that on campus, and I took this course on Dr John Hope Franklin, and I was sitting there with a very pretty young lady named Mildred Thornton. And I was more interested in NAACP than doing history, so Dr Franklin said one day: "Douglas Moore, I'm going to Greensboro Saturday, and I'm going to tell your father I'm going to flunk you." And I got to be out of the course, because I thought by not going to ANT where all my cousins and everybody went to ANT, but I decided to go to Central so that nobody would know me. Shock of shock. John Hope Franklin knew my daddy, and that was the end of my trifle in this.

ED: And you did matriculate through that university and went on up to an institution that was sort of a magnet for lots of people – Boston University. And it's my understanding that you were there at the very same time and were friends with a gentleman who had come up from Atlanta – can you tell us who that is?

RDM: That was Dr Martin Luther King, and he was in a group called the Dialectical Society; he went into Theology and this sort of stuff, but I went into Social Ethics to figure out how to analyze society etc etc. And according to Taylor Brash, Dr King avoided me, and I just kept on doing what I was doing, but he was there and he was a good student, but I often relate to the fact that Malcolm X was at Charleston prison, and Martin Luther King and I were in Boston University – who was imprisoned? I probably think we were in prison for a long time, but Dr King was a great man. He was in Theology, and that's more philosophical, and I was in Social Ethics, always analyzing data, and that was the only difference. And then after I got out of Seminary, Dr King started on government and we hooked up and I became very active with many of his projects. In fact, when the sit-ins got started in – what was that? – in 1960, the ANT students sat down and they never stood up again and they sat there for two weeks, and there was white guy named Ralph Johns who had been pushing these young people to do something, but I had, after we had done the sit-ins in Durham I went to a conference in Athens, Ohio with college students, and Duke students were there, and UNC students were there, and Jim Lawson was there and Dr King was there, but it was Jim Lawson that attracted the students, not Dr King, because he'd laid out a plan for non-violent action. So as the things began to move in the city, I decided after this courageous young lady, and she is a great keeper of history, I'm glad to God they had you come – I don't keep nothin' but Virginia and all the young people with us, we really got the wrath of the community. And we selected Royal Ice Cream because it was surrounded by black people. I thought: "Well, surely we can win on this" – dead wrong. And I remember the Baptist preacher his church was right across, he had a – y'all don't know this – but he produced a resolution: "Henceforth and forevermore we will never talk about Royal Ice Cream". And I was a nice guy and I told him I said "Well history will see." But that was the beginning so I said well next time what we have to do, we have to create a group that's outside the control of the black church and the black committee on what do you call it... we have to do something. And so I began working with the kids on McDougald Terrace and also the students at A&T.

ED: NCCU. I mean...

RDM: Huh?

ED: Not A&T, you mean NCCU...

RDM: Uh at Central. And what happened was that when I went to add to the house to a student, I met Jim Lawson, he said he had a group in Nashville and I said well I have a group in Durham that we're working on to try and prepare them for the discipline of what was to come at the next trial, and what happened the Greensboro students set out for 2 weeks, because I said about them – I can say this – they sat down and never stood up for anything else for the rest of their lives. In other words, if you're not a militant before you're 12 years old, you ain't gonna do it. So I've been doing it since I was 12. I'm not gonna tell y'all that – you have to read that in a book one of these days. But I knew that Jim Lawson had a discipline group and when the ANT students sat in there for all these days, I said, well, either we move now – I talked with the young people here and I talked

with Jim Lawson, he said: "Well, meet me in Greensboro, and I will tell you if the students are going to move." Now what happened – I'm a little ahead with the story everybody but I'm gonna go this way – what happened was that when Greensboro started moving, I told Lacey Streeter and the kids at North Carolina Central I said I know that we were waiting for March, but if we let the momentum go down, when we do it in March, they'll say: "Ho-hum". But what most people don't know that from Central, the students all got organized. They sent people over to Raleigh, and Raleigh to St Aug [Augustine], and St Aug [Augustine] to Elizabeth City, and Elizabeth City went down to Fayetteville State, and they went from Greensboro over to St Augustine College, from there up to Livingston College in Nova Scotia, to – what's the Presbyterian school? – Johnson C Smith, and the final person to contact was in Avery, and he was a crippled man in South Carolina. Now this is ahead of the story but that's the sequences. What happened, so Jim told me at the rally at the Winston airport, he said look, I will tell you – because I had to speak at women's colleges, because they loved what he said in Athens, Ohio, so he spoke and he told me he said: "Tomorrow morning, at 10 o' clock, Nashville will move." Now I told everybody that black folks are very spontaneous -except Methodists – they like to pray and jump up! And everybody accepted that, so I did not dispel that myth. But when Jim Lawson moved in Nashville, then that was on the news, and it hit the whole country. Now until now I haven't told anybody except for ? and some of the people here, but that's how the momentum got, and if we had not moved, the second time around, then we may have gone back and said oh well just another ? Now I did more than you said...?

ED: Yeah now because I think that you're talking about the movement that continued even after Greensboro there were still things that were - some picketing and some other things that were going on – at the Royal Ice Cream Company at Woolworth's here in Durham, in addition to other places. Some people may even remember the big Howard Johnson's rally that was held. But going back to 1957 which was that impetus, let's bring us back to how you got to Durham the second time around because you left here, went to Boston and then you got on the Methodist pastorate, as many people know, Methodists are assigned to churches by a bishop, so tell us the stops that you had before you got back to Durham.

RDM: Well first I was gonna say that when I came back from Boston I had refused to obey segregated seating on buses, so I put myself at risk, ? But my first church was a little place called Ramseur, North Carolina in the middle of nowhere. But it was a wonderful church so they kept me there a year, and then they moved me to a little church up in Leesville that's had more changes than a dog changes fleas, it was called Leesville Spray and Draper and it was called Tricity, and there I worked and I worked and tried to organize laundry workers, and I would go and drink water out of white fountains, you know while the police was there – was kind of silly – but I said: "Oh this is good white water." And then I was sent to Asbury Temple and I lived in the public housing project and today I went to a bookstore and I was amazed at the number of young people who came out of that place where I was a pastor. And - what's the guy?

ED: Bruce Bridges

RDM: No, what's the guy who the guy from up in Winston Salem, who has the gallery?

VW: Q

ED: Oh Carter Q who is here.

RDM: Where is Carter Q? Yay! There's Carter Q! But – from Winston Salem – but what happened was that I worked with the young people in the church and I started getting a Martin Luther King group, and then I got hooked up with Vivian and her group...

ED: Virginia.

RDM: You got those books too?

VW: Um. I don't think...

RDM: Those comic books? No, ok – you've got other things. But anyway, so that's how I got to Asbury, and I had picked out the Royal Ice Cream because it was right in the heart of a black community. And I kind of figured out, here's an easier thing than picking berries off of a tree. And yet, it was just the opposite. DNC said we were terrible, and Reverend ? – and y'all don't know this, but I was active when the Minister was alive, and he sat up and said: "I hope henceforth and forevermore that no one will ever speak about Royal Ice Cream ?". And that's how final they were, and they wiped us off. But I said: "Ok, next time I come back, I'm gonna have students and you can't control them." And it wasn't a matter about what the black establishment saw and all this kind of stuff... so that's how I as a chaplain at Central I began working with the students on Central. And the late Floyd McKissick was instrumental, Mr. Wheeler was instrumental.. Once the kids started off, ? called Lacey Streeter called down Durham and I asked him: "I said was it 7 or 5 minutes?" He said: "5 minutes". He said there were a thousand students from Central – boom! And there were kids from Duke! I would have nothing to do with it – they just met the kids at the church. And they were all together, and there were kids from the University of North Carolina, and because those kids had been together on a trip to Athens, Ohio, and heard Jim Lawson – you haven't heard this before – they were coherent. And in fact the Howard Johnson place it was owned by Governor Hodges – did you know that?

ED: No, I did not know that. Hodges owned the...

RDM: Yes, he owned it.

ED: the Howard Johnson's that was here in Durham?

RDM: Yeah, the one over on...on Chapel Hill Road. Yeah, I do my research – that's what I was taught at Boston University, so I found out who the owner was, but to make a long story short, is that that was the basis of all of the activity that started, and then Martin said: "I'd like to come to Durham to see a sit-in." Now, Carter – what's his name?

ED: Carter Q

RDM: Where is Carter Q? Man I can't see you out there, but you're a great guy! But also what we found out was that there were people who just didn't want to do that, and Martin was hesitant, because he was afraid he did not have the resources to get all these kids that obviously were gonna be sent off to jail, so he was rather hesitant. But, he did come to Durham, and the picture you see all around the country now of four people, there's one guy we don't know who he was, he was a student, but there's Ralph, Martin and myself – that's a historic picture. And a guy from the Observer named Thornton...

ED: No, it was the Herald...

RDM: Whatever it was...

ED: Jim Thornton, I think his name was...

RDM: Yeah, his name was Thornton, and he took the picture, and they tried to catch him. That's the fastest 100 yard dash I've ever seen in my life.

ED: Here is the photograph.

RDM: This is the photo. Now, the reason Dr King called me – he said: "Look, we don't have any pictures of the sit-in." And I said: "Oh I can arrange that." So that's how Dr King got there. And then the rest is history because then we had the Raleigh conference later on that came in...

ED: That's right – that organized the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. Now, before we go further, let's go down to... so stay on 1957 and the... that you all went in, and let's hear some of the thoughts and remembrances from Virginia Williams.

VW: Amen

ED: What was it like? What did you feel? Did you feel that you were making history? Tell us about that day.

VW: Well Eddie, you're talking about the actual Sunday we went? Well, the month before we went was the first time I had heard of this group. The three of us, the three females, two of us lived at the Y, and they were meeting at the Y, so we were on our way out, I guess nowhere in particular, because if we had, we would have kept going! But they invited us to come to this meeting and I said: "What kind of meeting?" and he said: "A political meeting." So we went in and listened to the meeting, and it was clear, as soon as the meeting opened, David Stiff was the president of that organization. Thomas' father. And it was clear from Jump Street that they had organized for the purpose of testing one of the establishments. Isn't that right?

RDM: Yes.

VW: Yeah, so everything they were saying sounded good to us; we sat there – and I know I didn't say anything – I don't think any of us, the females, said anything, but we sat there taking it in and I'm thinking: "If they're going, I'm going with them." That was the month before – that would have been May of 57. So we decided that we would meet again in June of 57 and this time we will pick a place. Well, you could pick anyplace – all of them were segregated, so when we went back to the meeting it was decided that we would pick the Royal Ice Cream Parlor, because as he said, it was located in the heart of what was then the colored community. And when we got there we decided we were going. I was excited, I was not afraid – I just wanted to see just what would happen. Because we would have made history either way. If he'd served us we still would have made history. But he decided not to serve us, and got caught up in the middle of history anyhow. So we went there, and as I recall, we knew the set-up, we knew we was gonna have to go in the back door. We knew all of that. But we also knew that there was a partition a little bit higher than this, and there was a swingin door, that the waiters and the waitresses went through to serve the white folks. We knew that once we got in there, somebody was gonna push that door, and I don't know if Reverend Moore pushed that door or not, I don't know. But I know one thing..

RDM: I don't remember. I don't remember.

VW: I don't either, but I know the idea was, whoever pushed that door open we were gonna all go through there and take seats and that is exactly what we did. We took the booth over which was right beside the window. I don't remember whether they had anymore customers in there or not, but if they did they weren't sittin in the booth because we had the booth covered. And the waiter came out and started askin them to leave, and they refused to leave. And the mana- they even went back to the manager Mr. Collata I think that was his name. Mr. Collata came out and looked, but he didn't come over there and they kept asking them to leave, and finally they worked their way down to our booth, and we were talking, and he asked us to leave, and I ordered an ice cream and he asked me to leave and I ordered more ice cream and finally he said well.. Finally they decided to call the police. There were 8 of us – you remember one left? There were 8 of us, at that time you had 2 officers riding together, 4 cars came you had 8 officers, and 8 of us, so each one had an officer a piece. One of them left, that left 7 of us, so the police officers came and they worked the booth, and one said to me:

If you leave now, there will be no charge, the manager won't press charges, there won't be anything, you can just go home and.. "But we want ice cream!" So the police saw they weren't gonna get anywhere, so it was finally decided that they were going to have to take us to jail. And when they said go to jail that is what we... we got up and went peacefully. They did ask that the 3 females, Vivian and Mary and I be allowed to ride in the car. Oh yeah, no problem yeah they can do that. So we went on down to the Courthouse as I remember there's the bailman down there, and after we did the paperwork he bailed us out. There was a man at that time – as I say I'm using 'Colored' because that's what we were – he was standing there out there mumbling to himself and I didn't know who he was, and I guess somebody said: "Who is that?" They said: "That's

Mr. Louis Alston.” Mr. Alston had rushed down there hoping he would be able to bail us out but before he got there somebody had already done it, and that’s what he was mumbling about: “Wish I could have been here.. I wish I could have the one...”

ED: And for the audience, Louis Alston was the editor and publisher of the Carolina Times.

VW: Right, yeah. So after, I guess we were in and out in a few hours maybe, and David Stiff owned South Eastern Business College, it was located upstairs over in one of the buildings on Pettigrew Street so went there and he...huh? Is that where it was? Ok I know there’s upstairs somewhere. He opened the drink machine, and that machine and that was Sunday’s dinner. So we stayed there until we heard from the attorneys. Do you want to add anything?

RDM: No go ahead, you done good – I’m learnin!

VW: We were told that we would hear from the attorney, so we stayed there and stayed there, and attorney Marsh, William A Marsh Jr., was contacting somebody, I don’t know who..

RDM: Conrad Pearson.

VW: No, Conrad was out of town. So that, and attorney Marsh was gonna try and have the case put off until Conrad got back. And he thought he was successful, he said: “Go into work, go to work and we will have them formally notify you.” So we went home, I went to work, I was workin at Duke, remember I’d just been here about a year, so I had a job at Duke, and it came out in the paper that Monday morning, I went to work and I didn’t say a thing to nobody. But I know that they had read it. About 9.30 they came and told me they said: “Attorney Marsh says you’ve got to come, the judge won’t put it off, the judge said I’m callin this case today.” So, I went to my supervisor and told her: “Something has happened and I got to leave.” That’s all I said to her. She says: “Ok, well if you can’t come tomorrow, call us.” And I’m, thinking: “There won’t be no need, but I’ll call you.” So, I rushed home and got dressed and we went to the Courthouse. We got there, it was a packed Courthouse. You remember ‘Standing Room Only’. And in front was the whole line of white police officers. No seats for us at all. So Attorney Marsh walked in there and he looked and he said: “I was hoping that some of our courteous officers would at least give my clients a seat.” Man, you’re talking about an attitude. They got up with an attitude, now they just filed out and we sat there. So the judge called the case, Attorney Marsh pleaded for us ‘not guilty’, the judge found us guilty, \$25 in costs. Attorney Marsh appealed. About a year later we were in Superior Court tried by a jury, all white jury, found us guilty, \$25 in costs; appealed. By this time see, Attorney Conrad Thomson had come in, ? Thomson was there, W G Pearson was there?? So, they ‘lawyered’ us up! You hear the expression ‘lawyered up’! They might not have done nothing else, but they lawyered us up, and they worked hard keeping our feet on the floor. So we went to Raleigh, North Carolina State Supreme Court; guilty, and as I recall, they sent it to the United States Supreme Court and they refused to hear the case because

they said our rights had not been violated. I guess to them we didn't have any anyhow, so they couldn't violate them.

ED: Now this is after the 1954 Supreme Court decision.

VW: Yeah, because this is 1957.

ED: OK.

VW: So, it came back the law court and of course their decision was upheld, and the fine stood I think if I recall the attorney William A Marsh Jr. paid the fine – I think the NAACP paid the fine before the deadline. So that's the story of us being out of jail and me not having to make little rocks out of big rocks, but that is about what I can remember. Attorney William A Marsh Jr.'s son is here, and his son – that's the judge, the new judge in town. Drew? Drew, stand up. And his son – that attorney Marsh's son and grandson. He is now one of our judges. So he is now making decisions. If he had been a judge then, we wouldn't have had to go through all of this..

RDM: Don't you forget it!

ED: Now Mr. Bryant here has a copy of the... I guess of the Herald or the Sun?

R. Kelly Bryant (RKB): This is the... uh I don't know...

ED: Now this is from June the 25th 1957...

RKB: And has the recorder court's decision to fine each one separately \$10 in costs, and when it was appealed, the bond was set at \$200. That's what they...

VW: I have to get a copy of this.

RKB: And this is the copy here, of the case at the Superior Court, and it was the state versus C? She was the first one named. And the defendants were convicted on the statute of imposing criminal penalties for interfering with the position or rights of positions of realty privacy. The Superior Court of Durham County Clinton F Moore Jr. in a judgment of the defendant's appeal, the Supreme Court, Rodney J Judge – I guess that's judge - held the refusal of the property of the ice cream company and sandwich shop to serve negroes in a portion of the shop reserved for white clientele impaired no rights of the negroes under the 4th Amendment of the Federal Constitution.

VW: No rights.

RKB: No rights at all. And those named in this were Clyburn, Williams, Moore, Jones, Gray, Glenn and Willis. And incidentally, Melvin H Willis died in the last six months.

VW: Yeah, last year.

RKB: And he lived on...

VW: Cecil Street.

RKB: On Cecil Street. And I have a program somewhere at home, I couldn't find it today.

ED: And Mr. Bryant, that was at the Superior Court and it was appealed and those of you who get a chance, there is an exhibit up on the 2nd floor of the library that actually has the actual Supreme Court decision that was there that basically said that the rights had not been abridged, and that there was no obligation for these black people to be served in a segregated situation, and I found that real appealing. And the language is really really blunt. And if you get a chance to read that up in that display case it will be good. Reverend Moore.. well first of all Mr. Bryant – let's go back – and all of you can chime in on this. What was the reaction of the – we know what maybe the white community, and when we say the white community we want to really be assured that every white person in Durham did not necessarily feel that way, or else the students from Duke wouldn't have been involved...

VW: Absolutely.

ED: And other good thinking people, no matter what their skin colors, had different kinds of attitudes about it but may have felt just as helpless as the black people did. But what about within the African-American community at that time Mr. Bryant? Was there ambiguity about whether this was the thing to do, these 7, 8 brash young people who were following this charismatic leader. Was this something that was accepted generally by most people?

RKB: Well from my view, it appeared that this was something that was just audacious as far as we were concerned. Now there may have been some in the community who felt that we had no business there to start with, but the most of us felt like Louis Alston felt, that this was a violation of our rights, and that something... this was a grand thing to have been done. And the news went across the state very rapidly, and here's an item from a newspaper in Kannapolis.. Kannapolis North Carolina. I got these Wal-Mart teeth in!

VW: (laughing) Oh lord have mercy!

RKB: But anyway, this is from the daily independent in Kannapolis, North Carolina – 'Durham sit-in helps change racial patterns.' And it tells the complete story – and I have the original copy – this happens to be a copy of it – but this was really interesting to see how it was effective across the state, that people were really interested in what was happening here in Durham. And Durham has always had a reputation of being different, this was a situation that strengthened that feeling that Durham had something that some other places did not have. And I was really surprised when I learned 3 years later that this same thing was happening in Greensboro. But to see it happen here, not only that, we had

sit-ins here in Greensboro, and we had marches, we had all sorts of things, including later on the Black Solidarity for Community Improvement. And which of several persons in here were participants of that, including Howard Clement, who was the Chairman of it, of course you all knew Ben Ruffin who was the Executive Director, I was the Secretary Treasurer and here is Sylvia, and.. by the way there were other people too who were involved in this sit-in, that are not listed in these.

VW: Amen.

RKB: Now there is Ben Taylor there, who was an active member. Ben will you stand up so we can see you? Ben was a member in it. Charles Dunham who owned the building, afterwards who sold the building in recent months was an active person in it, but he was called to the military, in the service, and he was not able to participate in the sit-ins. Then there was another person...? Levi Johnson, who was active in it. I had a Liston Pearson that I knew of. I have a list of names...

VW: Bill Thor?

RKB: What you saying?

VW: Bill Thor.

RKB: Yeah, Bill Thor. And I have a list of names I'd like to check with these persons here who there, to find out whether or not they were active participants in this. But it was really something different, and it was important to us to the extent that we supported their efforts to do this thing.

ED: Now when, so obviously the protests in front of the Royal Ice Cream Company continued while the court cases were winding their way up through the Supreme Court of North Carolina, so these are some of the people that kept that momentum going. And what year - what was the date on that Kannapolis story that you had?

RKB: Let's see what is the... this was later – this was December the 16th 1979.

ED: Ok so that's going back...

RKB: But I do have I have the newspaper in Durham. I have the items here in Durham.

ED: Ok, so clearly though – and not that we're trying to compete with Greensboro, but clearly, this was going on, and it did happen before February the 1st 1960.

RKB: Here is the morning Herald, this is June the 24th 1957. 'Integration bid is made at soda-bar.' And this is the entire, front and back. And I have some others here too.

ED: Now, it's interesting, now I want to make sure that we deal with it – one of the best versions that I've read about this came from a book about women and their involvement,

Christine Green's book called 'Our Separate Ways'. And that book has a picture of - actually the same picture that you see in the News and Observer article here - about you all having Communion, not before you approached the Royal Ice Cream company, but it was the picture of you all having Communion before one of the trials.

VW: Before the trial.

RKB: Good methods of procedure.

VW: Yeah, and in this picture Jessie Gray was not in this picture...

RKB: He was from New York City.

VW: But he just had not arrived at the time we had the picture made.

RKB: Is that right?

ED: He was a little tardy huh?

VW: Yeah, well we were good and ready to go to court, so he was here, but he just wasn't here when the photographer was.

ED: But well, anyway, Christine Green's book does focus mainly on the women's participation because in many cases, the men have been the ones who have been held up, and they are the ones that often have been interviewed, and so it's really good that, not only in the sense that this was ahead of its time in terms of African-American sit-in tactics, but also it was a gender-integrated group. Virginia?

VW: And I just want to say too, when you asked about the reaction of the colored community. Some of them told me that they just didn't... actually it caught them by surprise. They didn't expect it. They were just as shocked as the white community was to see this when it came over the news. So the only thing they said they knew to do was to get lawyers for us, they didn't know us. I'd just gotten here from the little city of Seaboard, North Carolina, population like 600 or something. Hadn't been here but a year. I didn't know anybody hardly then. They knew Reverend Moore, but most of us were out of towners, so we were the outsiders who came in here kicking up dust and stuff. But they just said well we've got to get lawyers for them. But as far as putting together more demonstrations or something like that - they didn't know anything - they just didn't know what to do about it.

ED: So, much like Reverend King in Montgomery, who also had basically just arrived there, Reverend Moore and the rest of you all were...

VW: Out of town.

ED: Out of towners, or just new arrivals to the city of Durham. So that is understandable. But it sounds like people did rally behind you, and indeed they helped you to lawyer up.

VW: Yeah, they lawyered..

ED: And this is something that has gone down in history. Reverend Moore, quickly, from that point on you went on to, ended up going to Africa, and spending time there?

RDM: Yes, but one thing before we get there. What happened when we started planning, and Jim Lawson started planning for a massive thing where a small group whether white or black could not say whether it would exist. There was a young man, he'd been in the Air Force, named Lacey Streeter, and he was President of the student body, and I'd been working with those young people for a whole year, and when Greensboro went by ?, I think they stayed about a week or two to get some attraction. And I said Lacey, I said now if we let Greensboro die, when we get ready to move they're gonna say 'Hey, just another panic raised'. So on the basis on that, Lacey Streeter, and the students at North Carolina Central, and with the students at Duke University, and with the students at UC... What is it?

ED: UNC.

RKB: University of North Carolina. They plotted to close down all... and this picture that you see of me with Dr King at the lunch counter. Well, Martin Luther King had been ducking me at BU and he said that I was kind of radical: true. But he did have access to this, so he calls me and he says: "Doug I understand you've got some young people who will sit" I said "That's right" He said "Well do you think you could get them to come to Durham so I could talk to them?" So this is the famous White Rock meeting. So he came, and this young man here – we don't know who this is – maybe we ought to ask the CIA – maybe they can find him, but we couldn't find him – or the FBI. But Dr King realized, because Shuttlesworth said we gotta get ahead of this.

ED: This is Fred Shuttlesworth? From...

RKB: Alabama. Because I had written a 4 page letter that's in the papers of Martin Luther King on volume 3, laying this out as to what we can do in this direct action. Well anyway, he came, and then he spoke at White Rock Baptist Church, and that's where he gave his speech to fill up the jails. So Martin was brought dragging into this move because of his colleague from Boston and this heroic young lady here. So that's how this picture came out. It was just a photo opportunity, but that was the basis, and from there kids were getting in... I told you about how the students organized the campuses- one go this place, this place, every state place. And then did I talk about Jim Lawson? I called him?

ED: You did.

RKB: Alright. So, we were on the way. We were like a broken field runner. We had put the segregationists and the conservatives into dust, and we were going for the Promised Land. And that's how it happened.

ED: Now, before you go to Africa, and then get back to Washington and other things, I want to make sure we go over to Shaw University; in April of 1960 there was a gathering of all of the student leaders from the south, including Marion Barry, who at that time was in Nashville, I understand. He was at that uh – Marion Barry, the former mayor of the District of Columbia, and now city council member again. And by the way, Reverend Moore became a city council member in Washington D.C. and was on the first fully elected council in Washington after the citizens of Washington D.C. got what they call 'Home Rule'. So that gathering at Shaw was very important. You went on then to...

RKB: Let me tell you how that happened...

ED: Ok, I've got my eye on the 5 o' clock time though.

RBK: That's alright. There has been a myth that Miss Ella Baker was the person who would call me to tell me to organize, but that is not the truth. I take orders from the bishop, that's it. So, she had nothing to do with this, and she was on the out with Dr King – in fact when we had to run a meeting she had failed to pick up Dr King's brother, and that's the only time I've ever seen Dr King angry, when he was angry at Miss Ella Baker. And the Snickers and feminists – right-wing feminists – not the positive feminists, have tried to elevate her against everything else. Well, the truth of the matter is that Dr King didn't know about it, the Snickers didn't know about it, she knew about it, I knew about it, and we knew that we had done something here and we needed to export it. So it was because of here in Durham – of course my wife is always telling me – she says: "You have been denied a place in history." The wife says The Post don't like me. They did a story while I was running for election – they gave burlesque dancers two full pages, and gave me 4 lines – they said how do you like us now? That's the Washington Post, so what happened is that Dr King did not want this, but then he asked me to organize the meeting – Miss Baker had nothing to do with it. I knew all the people in Durham, and this is why I want to bring this up about Durham. When Lacey Streeter moved with the students at the number 2 group – ANT had been left to go down the drain, they'd been sitting there for 2 weeks and nothing had happened. If Lacey Streeter and the students from NCC had not moved, there's no telling how far we would have been delayed. And because of that, he told me how the Mutual, and what's the bank, the other thing?

ED: Mechanics and Farmers.

RKB: Mechanics and Farmers Bank, that as soon as kids went to jail they'd bail them out. Now that's another part – I never had this warfare as some Snickers, as some other people I could name too...

ED: And the Snickers are of course the people who were involved with the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee.

VW: Snickers.

RKB: I never felt that I had a warfare with those who were in business. I felt the black community was a unified community and I was not gonna participate in saying this. And although I didn't agree with them not having supported them the first time, but the next time around – I want you to understand this – Mr. Stewart and Lacey tells me they sat there and wrote out checks. Checks, and then asked us how many students? So that's very critical. Sometimes people want to say that was a war between the students and the black bourgeoisie – on one level, yes, but after they saw what we were doing, they stood up. And we didn't have no money.

VW: Right!

RKB: And the Mutual and the bank – they got those young people out of jail.

ED: And the Stewart you are talking about is Mr. Jack Stewart.

RKB: Jack Stewart that's right. John Wheeler.

ED: John Wheeler, and many other people who were involved in the Durham Committee, the bank, the savings and loans, and many other organizations...

VW: The powers that be.

ED: The powers that be, Virginia says. What I think would be great now, is for us – now see Dr Walter Brown, you know we were trying to get up with him – and there he is right over there.

RKB: Hey! My famous ?

ED: I would like to ask you for us to shift gears for just a minute. There is another sheet that you have in front of you that talks about that anthem that was sung during the civil rights struggle, not just here in Durham, but all over the south – this song has become the anthem not only for the racial civil rights movement, but the civil rights movement of lots of other people who have been oppressed, and who have not been able to have full rights. What we also want to do is to look at the participation. In 1957 we would not have had the kind of collective action that we have, collective groupings of people who come from different hues, from different cultures, different backgrounds, so what I would like to ask you to do, is to take a stand right now, and to be as courageous as Virginia Williams, and Douglas Moore, and Kelly Bryant, and many other people in this room, Howard Clement, and let's all of us go to the front porch of the Durham County Library, and let us sing the song. And there are people here – don't be upset – because there are people here who know the song well, but there are some new verses that perhaps ought to be sung that would deal with where Durham needs to go from here. And you see that we want to sing this 25 times – now don't think that this is a long long song – it can be sing very very

quickly, and I think it would mean a great deal if we all could raise our voices, and to let the people at Centerfest know that we are here and to sing this song. Could we do that now please? And then we'll come back here and before we... and we'll have more dialogue and I'll shut up and let you all deal with it. But before we do that I want to thank the people at the Durham County Library, the press, and the bloggers and all the other people, members of the city council who are here, other people who were involved in the activities, all of the people who have helped to make this a wonderful wonderful gathering. Let's go to the porch!

ED: Reverend Moore, thank you. It gets to be more and more like this as I get older. I can't remember my own name half the time. But you know it's interesting that Reverend Moore was at the Know Book Store and he was talking to Bruce Bridges who many of you all know, about things that related to MacDougall Terrace, because Bruce grew up in that community, and they were remembering things and he would name somebody and Reverend Moore would tick off the names of the children who came out of families there. So it's amazing how sometimes we can't remember what happened yesterday, what we had for lunch, but we can remember some things that went on a long time ago. We've got Virginia Williams here, who is – if there are any specific questions that you all would like to ask of her, we've got a living history over here with Mr. Bryant, and if you all have specific questions or experiences that you had during those times, or if there is something that you would like to ask, this is the time to do it.

ED: Yeah, cause you all gonna kick us out of here in a half hour...

VW: Right, and Len make sure you tell him that.

ED: I'd like for him to be here, because I have a good friend who's in this audience who remembers Reverend Moore baptizing her, so I want him to know that, that all kinds of memories come into play.

Barbara Lau (BL): There's a question in the back.

ED: Yes, let's start with the youth back here, yes.

BL: Maybe you could come up and use a mic so we can put you on the tape and tell us who you are, if you don't mind.

ED: Alright, this looks like a young brother who, yes if this were 1957 he would be right in line, marching with other people.

Steven Smith: My actual question was, how do you guys feel about having the Royal Ice Cream Parlor knocked down?

BL: What's your name?

SS: My name is Steven Smith.

BL: Thank you.

VW: Oh well I don't mind considering the fact that it was bought by a Union Baptists church, and they plan to build a school there, and somewhere in the school they are going to have some kind of commemoration of the Royal Ice Cream case, so they plan to include it somehow or another in the school when the school is built. I don't think it has been started yet, but I have no problem with it, because at least now we know what's gonna happen. If a developer had bought that land, heaven only knows what was gonna happen there. So I'm glad Union Baptist – is it Union – yeah Union Baptist bought it because they will remember the Royal Ice Cream sit-in. It's kind of like having a say in it.

ED: That's an excellent question because it has been asked by lots of people, particularly since the parking lot that has been paved did not pave the area where the actual ice cream shop was. Mr. Bryant, you I think in the article that we have a copy of, mentioned something about the fact that you had some unsuccessful attempts to try to get the state archives, or some other agency to try to put some marker up?

RKB: Yes, I have here with me, and I don't need to get into all the details, but I do have a letter here that I had written Howard Clement, in 2000. I had been working on having a historical marker placed at that building since 1999, and I was asking Howard if he could give us some assistance in making the request. I filled out the application, got the information from the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, and filled out an application and filed it with them, and of course they turned it down. And – that was in 2000 – in 2002 I did it again and they turned it down, in 2003 I did it again, and so the last time it was done they wrote this letter: "I regret to inform you that the members of the North Carolina Highway Historical Marker Advisory Committee at their meeting on December the 13th unanimously voted not to approve a state marker dedicated to the 1957 Royal Ice Cream sit-ins in Durham. Rest assured that our staff made the best possible case on behalf of your proposal. A researcher spent over a week combing the newspapers and the court records regarding this event and its impact. The charge of the committee is to identify subjects of state-wide historical significance, and erect markers at sites related to those subjects as the members deem appropriate. Of the 21 new proposals before the Committee, the members approved 4 new signs. In this case they determined that the historical impact of the event did not match that of the February 1960 sit-ins in Greensboro and elsewhere. In the end, they determined that the event did not rise to the requisite level of state-wide historical significance [to them]. The Committee reached a similar conclusion in 1997 regarding a lunch counter sit-in protest in Winston-Salem they followed the Greensboro Woolworths sit-ins by a few days. We can advise you and other interested parties on the possible placement of a private local marker. Anyone is welcome to deal with the same foundry and the same state, but a private marker cannot bear the state seal, it has to be erected outside of the state highway right of way, and should differ from the state sign in color. A typical free-standing cast aluminum marker ordered from the state's supplier will cost about \$1600. Another option would be a modest and less

expensive bronze plaque. Let us know if you wish to learn more. “And this was signed by Michael Hill, Research Supervisor.

ED: What’s the date on that, Mr. Bryant?

RKB: That’s January the 2nd 2003.

ED: Well, I don’t know about the rest of you all, but I think that we ought to pursue that again, and that we ought to use this program as the impetus for that kind of activity, and to have the weight of, not just Mr. Bryant, and the wonderful historical push that he’s done, but to use that too as the kind of inspiration that would allow for a marker from the state, because you’re right, we could pay for a marker ourselves, we could just come up with something, but it wouldn’t have the state of North Carolina’s seal on it, and I think this activity, as you have heard today – I mean I don’t know, maybe we need to take Virginia Williams over there, and let her talk – maybe we need to have Douglas Moore to be there. I don’t know about you all, but if something like this were to go forward, is it possible that some of the rest of you might want to be a party to that?

?

ED: Well, I don’t know that they, it always, it may be that that’s private property now, so I don’t know how that would fit into the plans of the union Baptists. I’ve seen many signs up that are not necessarily right in front of the place – they say ‘three blocks south east’ or something like that, so I don’t know that it has to be, but I just think that it’s important to have some symbolism of that activity and not that it would take away one single iota of the significance of Greensboro February 1 1960. But I think this needs to be done here. We will see what may happen. Reverend Moore? Andre Vann? And then we’re gonna come to John’s question over here.

RDM: I went up to Boone somewhere to a place where the Indians were and they had a thing called ‘Trail of Tears’ is that it?

ED: That’s right.

RDM: And I talked with a great friend here, Mr. Davis, that what we ought to do is have a ‘Trail of Freedom’. And you start here, and you hit every one of those schools where we went, including Duke University and UNC, because those students took the real beating. So we would have a Trail of Freedom, so people they’d go to different places and say “Oh this is one of the ‘Trails of Freedom’” – give them something new to think about. And then let’s do the political game, about how they’re appointed, who appoints them, and what happens.

ED: Andre, do you want to come to the mic so your comments will be on the tape that we...

Andre: My only point was that Durham does in fact have a representative on the North Carolina Historical Commission. One of my former professors and now colleague, Dr Freddie Parkers, who is a professor of History at North Carolina Central University. I strongly urge you to write him, call him, talk to him, and believe me he is certainly one who I would call an advocate, although, he would tell you also, as he looks around that table, looking at a bunch of persons with hair a little bit greyer than his, sometimes it takes him a while to remind them of these great significant moments, but I urge you to advocate, advocate, agitate, then do what you need to do. Dr Freddie Lee Parker.

ED: And of course being older does not mean that Mr. Bryant held General Armstrong's horse.

RKB: He died in 1898.

ED: Miss Williams, can you describe the protest that took place in front of the ice cream shop during the appeals? How often did they take place, who was there, what was the goal – give us a sense of what was going on.

VW: During the appeals, it was not that many students, that that much participated, but it was constantly somebody there, which let Mr. Collata to make statement that "Those little few picketers can't hurt me". That is why he got the impression that he was on safe ground and nothing was ever gonna happen. And it was after the Greensboro thing that all of the students came together and almost surrounded the store, because then we were picketing, we weren't goin in, the white folk weren't gonna come in and stand up and get their stuff and leave – they weren't going in either, so he had no customers. But during the appeal there were just a few every once in a while out there.

ED: Now the seats were taken out at some point, right, so that no one could sit.

VW: Yeah, everybody was gonna have to come in and get yours and leave. They were being treated just like we were being treated.

Charmaine McKissick-Melton: I was just gonna add something to that comment...

ED: You were one of them.

CMM: Well, I was a very little one at the time. Good evening my name is Charmaine McKissick-Milton, I'm the youngest of Floyd McKissick's children. I was just gonna say that my brother & I on the way home from church almost every Sunday we'd go in the white side, because we figured they'd be less hostile to young people, and we actually got served on a number of occasions. We also were refused on a number of occasions. But actually one of my first memories of being called the n-word was when I was 3, picketing outside of Royal when we were waiting for the appeal to be heard.

ED: And your father was one of the lawyers who was dealing with it. Yes – Henry Teller? Come on sir.

John Schwade: Hi my name is John Schwade, I write a column occasionally for the Durham news section of the News & Observer. As far as a historical marker is by the way, Durham still has a plaque dedicated to the millions of people who smoked Chesterfields, and so I think we can make room for something else! Its downtown. When my family comes down from New Jersey we always drive by that & I say there it is. But here's my serious question, and the context I want to put it in, is that these days somebody who spends an hour in jail wrongly thinks they're entitled to \$10 million, and when I talk to my father in law, who is 75 years old and African-American, one of the things that I always marvel at is his total absence of bitterness or prejudice. You know, he's got me for a son in law. And I could say the same thing about the panelists here today, and hundreds of other people I've met in my 23 years in North Carolina. So my question is, to what do you attribute that? For a lot of other people, the smallest grievance turns into a lifetime of anger and bitterness – I know that because I'm a psychologist – and I would really be interested in hearing what you have to say about why you're not bitter.

VW: Well, I for one think bitterness wouldn't hurt nobody but me. I can be bitter, I can be mad at you, you don't know it and you don't care so it's not hurting you it's just killing me. So I'm not gonna waste my time and kill myself being bitter about something – I'll just continue to try to change it. Ritella?

John Schelp (JS): While she's coming may I just make a comment on some of what he has said. I got from the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources a directory of all the signs they have in the state of North Carolina, and there are gillions of them that have no significance, and they also said to me that they only place them on highways, on a street that is a highway, and I told them that Roxboro is on 15 501. But that still didn't change their minds.

Jim Wise: Do you think that would make a good topic for one of my columns?

:Yes!

Ritella Jones (RJ): Reverend Moore, you baptized me when I was in 2nd grade. So every time you come to Durham I try to follow you. The last time you were here and you spoke at Asbury I came over, and one of the things that I can say about Reverend Moore is that we were excited to go to church because he challenged us to take risks. Things were different – it was not where you would go and just sit and listen to this preacher, and then they'd start you know how they do that whooping and everything and people are jumping around. He had us engaged and we had fun. We laughed – we really enjoyed church. And our church, Asbury at the time did not have a pool, so we walked to Fayetteville Street to White Rock and used their pool one afternoon about 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

RDM: Were you one of the babies I baptized?

RJ: Yeah, I was one of those babies.

VW: And she's still living to tell about it! He didn't drown her!

RDM: I'm glad you came because I'd often wonder: "What happened to that young lady I baptized?". Because I remember said, Miles Fisher? said "Well I'm telling you something, these children are gonna have much more religion right now than they're gonna have the rest of their lives" – that's all I remember. So you are the missing child I've been wondering: "Who was that?".

RJ: I'm that missing child.

ED: And for the record...

RJ: Ritella Jones.

RDM: Lord, have mercy. Bless you.

RJ: But you really instilled a love for learning, doing things, being adventurous in me and I still remember that and I just wanted to thank you.

RDM: Well you know I have a small church up in the mountains; the Methodist church gave me the church they gave nobody else. And I got this church because one guy had ran off with somebody's wife and another guy had stole money. So the bishop said: "I want an old elder like you". I said "Oh really?" But I've done the same thing with the young people up there that I did with the young people at McDougald Terrace. And they're coming on nicely. I went to a basketball game of one of the guys who was getting ready to go to the University of Pennsylvania, and when I came to that game he said: "Daddy, the pastor's here! The pastor's here!" So I try to be with the young people of the church, and try to make it relevant to them.

RJ: He walked around in the community – I lived right across the street – 33C Lawson, so he would be in the community all the time. We remember that.

RDM: I need to talk to you, because I've been wondering who you were. I remember the baptizing...

ED: Dr Brown, uh, Reverend Moore, a lot of people probably are wondering, and you are very youthful, just like Mr. Bryant is very youthful, can you tell us if you don't mind which decade you're in?

ED: I'm talking about you Dr Moore, Reverend Moore.

RDM: What was the question?

ED: How old are you?

RDM: Oh! Well the ladies at the church ask me this all the time. I think I'm 70... oh no I'll be 80 next year I believe. July 3rd 1928. Y'all count – my math doesn't go that high. I was born July 3rd 1928. So somebody tell me how old I will be next year.

BL: You're 79 now.

RDM: So I'll be 80. So we're gonna raise hell. I mean we're gonna have a good time if the Lord lets me see 80 years. Yeah, we're gonna celebrate.

Walter Matthew Brown (WMB): I want to preface my remarks by asking what year did you come to Durham? To be pastor at Asbury Methodist Church? It was in the 50s, I know.

RDM: It was about 51 or 52.

WMB: Reverend Moore, without question, has a permanent place in history and the hearts of the people of Durham for his activism. What I almost never hear, and I want to underscore the comments of the lady who was baptized by Reverend Moore, what I almost never hear is that he was an excellent preacher. And I'd for that to be part of the record. Now let me tell you very quickly how I know. It was in the early 50s, my wife and I had become disenchanted with the organized church. Doug Moore, my wife and I were students at North Carolina College for Negroes, so we knew him. I think I was a year ahead of him at what is North Carolina Central. He had just a handful of people to call a membership. He was recruiting subtly; again my wife and my daughter were not in the church. Doug visited us, and didn't say anything about coming to church, but that was just Doug Moore, we just had fun. But he said: "I'd like for you to come and just sing with us – you don't have to join, just sing with us in the choir. Miss Gillem has agreed to be our organist to play – she's not a member." Ruth Gillem – the late Ruth Gillem - had taught us music at North Carolina Central. North Carolina College. And so, I went, my wife and I joined as members to sing – we were not members, we were singing with the choir. And I know why Miss Gillem did not recruit Doug Moore to sing. I heard him up there trying to sing and I remembered that he was not in the choir. I am the only surviving male member of that choir. The late Norman Johnson, the late Dr Ross Towns, the late Dr Grandy. All gone, so you can see why this is a nostalgic moment for me. We had sung with the choir for some time, and then one morning my wife and I walked down to the altar, and that's when we became Methodists. Today I am a member of the United Methodist Church and it's because of him.

RDM: God bless Trinity!

WMB: I have talked too long, but Doug I have a surprise I want to spring this on you.

RDM: Oh Lord.

WMB: In 1995, I attended the birthday party at Michigan State of one Milton Muelder. M-U-E-L-D-E-R. He was then 95. That was his 95th birthday, and the surprise was that

his brother was there, and his brother was a year older. I talked with him at some length, his brother. He asked if I'd known a number of persons in Durham. He told me that he was on the Doctoral Committee for Martin Luther King. This was Walter Muelter. Internationally prominent theologian. He was Doctoral Advisor for Lincoln. And he was an advisor to one Douglas E Moore. You didn't know that.

RDM: No, I didn't know that.

WMB: And when you said a few minutes ago that Martin Luther King regarded you as a radical, he said: "Those were the words that Walter Muelter told me". But I'm flooded with fond memories, and I just wanted to make, I've talked too long, but I wanted to make these...

ED: Before you stop would you give us your name and tell us the distinction that you had as a graduate, a terminal graduate of North Carolina Central.

WMB: I'm Walter Matthew Brown. Matthew was my father. I graduated from North Carolina College – I entered North Carolina College for Negroes under the founder Dr James E Shepherd. I graduated in 1948, the year that my wife, my then girlfriend graduated also and re-married 2 years later. And I took a Master's degree in New York University, but entered the Doctoral program at North Carolina College at Durham. By that time it had changed from College for Negroes to College at Durham. And in 1955, I was honored with the conferment of the first PHD awarded by North Carolina College at Durham. That was one of the highlights of my life.

ED: One of many. Now we have to go because you can't hear the announcements that are being said around here, but I don't want to leave without a young person like you to come to the microphone and say something.

VW: Yeah, you've got a young one back there at the back that needs to come.

ED: Well both of you come. Both. But make the questions quick, and we'll deal with it. And we'll get in trouble with Len, but we'll... Alright, you first, and then this lady, and that will be the last one.

Tullana Smith sp? (TS): My name is Tullana Smith, and what advice do you have about racism from today?

VW: It's alive and well today. Racism is still alive and well and we've come a long way and we've still got a battle to fight. I think the Jenna Louisiana is one of the main topics if you followed that. And it's just different states that you have to watch and read and it's still going on. There is a lot of prejudice going on, and I want to remind you of what Etta said – not all white folk feel the same way. Actually not all black folk feel the same way because you've got people who had that not been true, we would never been able to do the demonstrations that we did because we had then happenings. There was a time when I was on the picket line and I was the only black person on the picket line, the rest of them

were white students from somewhere else. So not all of them feel that way, but we've got some that we've got to deal with.

TS: Thank you.

RDM: You're welcome. The future belongs to you.

ED: Thank you for having the courage to come up here.

RDM: Amen.

ED: My sister you have the last word.

Yasmine Fosard(sp?): Well actually that young lady addressed the problem that we have for the future. My name is Yasmine Fosard, and I just want to say that it's a really good thing that we came to commemorate the sit-in, and all of the good work that you've done. I think it can be a little bit confusing today for people such as this young that just spoke about our future and is the Civil Rights movement over? That's the one thing. Is it over, and is there another movement that we should be coming together to address? And some of the things that we might do? Because we can't march, I mean we can go out and picket and things such as sit-ins are not things that we do today, but if you have any advice to give us on some of the things that we can do today and some of the issues that we should be addressing today, other than global warming, that would really help a lot. Thank you.

RKB: Well I think different people are called to do different kinds of witnesses. You may be a person who decides to make sure that this story is told, and do the research, and a lot of my performance is dependent upon the excellent research other people have done. I say that each person has to bear witness where he is, and then you measure not by what I've done or somebody else has done – you measure by what you can do, because you may be in a situation that's entirely different from what we faced, and you have to figure out a way that you can witness. Be a witness, ? said – be a witness – however it is, be a witness. If it's just a smile, be a witness. If it's just a know, be a witness.

ED: Final word, Virginia, and then final word Mr. Bryant.

VW: I'd just like to take this opportunity to thank each of you for coming, because everybody in here could have been somewhere else. But you decided to come and help us commemorate the Royal Ice Cream Parlor, and I am grateful, and Reverend Moore is grateful, and on behalf of the entire Royal Ice Cream 7, those who, the two of us who are here, and those who cannot be here, and those who are deceased. We're thankful. That's all I have to say, but I know everybody's time is important, but I see the mayor is hiding under his cap, and he might want to at least just stand and...

ED: Mayor Bell, would you at least stand, with your cap on...

Mayor Bell: I was here earlier and I came back, it was important that I came back. I appreciate what you've done.

ED: We want to thank Mayor Bell, Councilor Clement, Councilor Stiff for the proclamation that came, Mr. Bryant, our local historian, you have the last word.

RKB: Well time nor patience will allow us all that you need to know about what the situation is today. But let me invite you to the reunion of the civil rights workers of the city and county of Durham, on Martin Luther King's birthday, at St Joseph Church; it starts about 10 o'clock in the morning, and we have the workers there to tell you what we have done, and tell you also about what we need to do. So you are automatically invited to attend, on Martin Luther King's birthday, around 10 o'clock in the morning, you'll hear more about it, thank you.

ED: Thank you Mr. Bryant, thank all of you all. Thank the Center for Documentary Studies, thank the Durham County Library, and let me ask that you take your conversations out into the parking lot, at least into the area, so that the Durham folks can...

