

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

***HISTORY OF THE COBB COUNTY BRANCH OF THE NAACP AND CIVIL RIGHTS
ACTIVITIES IN COBB COUNTY, GEORGIA***

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INTERVIEW WITH CHARLIE WEBB, JR.

COBB NAACP/CIVIL RIGHTS SERIES, NO. 21

CONDUCTED BY STEPHEN M. BRIGGS

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Kennesaw State University Oral History Project
Cobb NAACP/Civil Rights Series, No. 21
Interview with Charlie Webb, Jr.
Conducted by Stephen M. Briggs
Monday, 16 November 2009
Location: CETL House, Kennesaw State University

SB: Today is the 16th of November 2009 and I am the interviewer, Stephen Briggs, interviewing Charlie Webb. First of all, we're going to ask some questions about your background, Mr. Webb. Could you please tell us about your background? Were you born in Cobb County?

CW: No, I was born in Cherokee County, which is Woodstock, Georgia.

SB: How long have you been here in Cobb County?

CW: Well, I really don't live in Cobb County. I still live in Cherokee County, just all of my work has been in Cobb County, but I still live in Cherokee County, in Woodstock.

SB: How long have you been in Cherokee County?

CW: I guess about seventy years. I was born and still live there.

SB: Okay, you were born and raised there. Where did you go to school?

CW: I went to school in Canton called Cherokee County Training School. It was in Canton, Georgia.

SB: Who are your parents and teachers?

CW: Well, my parents were Charlie Webb and my mother was named Cassie Webb. My mother, she was from Coweta County around Newnan, but my daddy was born and raised in Woodstock where I live. You said you wanted to know about some of my teachers? Mrs. Childress, Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Howard, Mrs. Dobbs, Mrs. Bennett.

SB: Yes. And who had a strong influence on you was it your parents, teachers, or who would you consider to be some of the strong influences in your life growing up?

CW: Well, I guess it was mostly my parents. They tried to teach and raise me the best they could at that time. I guess it would be them.

SB: Parents?

CW: Yes.

SB: Was religion important to you?

CW: Oh, yes, it sure was. They were real religious; they were in church about every week and so yes, they were.

SB: It was strongly enforced, religion?

CW: Oh, yes, it was something that every Sunday, unless sometimes if it was raining. See, back in those days when I was growing up, we didn't have cars or trucks or anything, so we had to walk. If it was just real bad, pouring down rain, or just really so cold, snowing and stuff, we stayed at home. But if it was pretty and just sprinkling rain a little bit, we would be in Sunday school and church every Sunday. Now through the years, after they started getting some transportation, we didn't have an excuse then unless you were sick, so you were in church and Sunday school.

SB: So it was quite a walk?

CW: Well, yes we had quite a walk to get to church and Sunday school.

SB: In the time—this question is about the school—were the schools segregated when you went to school?

CW: Yes, at the time I went to school it was.

SB: Could you tell us anything about that? What was it like; did you see the differences between black and white schools and discrimination?

CW: Well, back in those days, it seems like we got along just fine even though some of my friends that I grew up with, they went to the white school, and, well, I went to the black school. But when school was out in the summer, we played together. If these guys weren't at my house where I lived, I was at their house, so I really grew up with white just like I did black. I think some of the whites were more my friends than the blacks were. It wasn't that bad.

SB: Did you see, as far as the school goes, discrimination with funding of the schools, you know, textbooks and things like that? Did you see that you were not being funded as strongly as some of these white schools? Did you ever see those differences? Do you have any examples?

CW: Well, I think so. I think some of the white schools may have had a little bit more than what we had in our school. I think so.

SB: I'm a history student, of course, with Dr. Scott, so some of the questions I ask have to do with landmark decisions, and what I'm going to talk about is the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* which was supposed to give equal treatment to black schools, overturning the 1896 decision of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, which was separate but it was supposed to be equal. What was realized was that it was separate and it was unequal in the years leading up to

Brown v. Board of Education in 1954. Did you see the changes instantly or did it take longer like it did for most until the 1960s before you saw equality in the schools? I know that's kind of a long question.

CW: Well, it might have taken a little longer, I think, if I can remember, it might have taken a little bit longer if I'm answering your question right.

SB: It's okay, if you have any examples. Do you remember anything as far as examples of seeing this, not necessarily yourself but maybe some of your classmates or friends?

CW: Well, I had some friends of mine. Like I said, we got along all right. Yes, sometimes we would, it happened on both sides that you may get in a little misunderstanding, and you started wanting to try to fight or something like that, but it happened with the blacks and not only the white people that some of the guys that I was around that we had some misunderstandings. But in another day or two we were all back friends again. I remember, I had some live up the street from us, and they said they couldn't understand—even though it was way back—they couldn't understand why we couldn't all go to school together. Well, I was a little bit that way myself. We couldn't understand. Well, our parents told us what reason we couldn't go to school together. We went to their house and ate, but we couldn't go to school together. There were a lot of things we couldn't do together.

SB: Nothing out of the ordinary, that's great. Could you describe race relations growing up here? What did you notice? Was it different for African-Americans? You didn't notice that much difference because you got along with everybody and you played, just everybody was equal.

CW: Well, yes sir. I don't know if this is going to answer your question, but I remember we came down from Woodstock on the bus. We were walking, and it was real hot in the summer time, and we were walking around up on Atlanta Street. I never will forget that. And my cousin wanted a drink of water. So he saw the water fountain out there, and he just started drinking water. That man—he was a white man—he jumped up out of his chair, and he ran out there. He just, I don't know, it was like my cousin had committed a crime or something. He told him he couldn't drink water. He'd have to come inside and get a cup. By that time my cousin was already finished drinking water, and he said, "He didn't want any more water." So it made us mad. We wanted a drink, but we didn't drink any.

SB: When was this, around what time?

CW: It must have been somewhere in the middle 1950s, I guess, or early 1950s. I think that's when it was. It was the early 1950s.

SB: So you did see some examples, but you were lucky that it didn't affect you. Did you see the opportunities differ for blacks over whites?

CW: You mean later on or along in that time period?

SB: Yes.

CW: Well, in a way, but I can tell you something else too. I probably was about eight or ten years old or something like that—it might have been ten or twelve—that my grandmother carried me with her down around Newnan. We got on the bus, and, you know, we had to go all the way to the back of the bus to sit. That’s something I never did. I didn’t like that too much, and the bus wasn’t full. She had a hearing problem. She couldn’t hear good. So we got on the bus in Atlanta, and we were going down to Newnan. She asked the bus driver, “I can’t hear good. This is my grandson. Could we stay up front where I can tell you where I want to get off the bus at?” He said, “No, you got to go to the back of the bus. I might pick up some whites on down the road.” By me being that young, I still remember that as if it were today. I think she didn’t like it either. I didn’t know what to say, being that age. So we went on to the back of the bus and sat down, and she told me, “Son, help me to find it because we don’t want to pass where we’re going.” It was out in the country. But, anyway, the bus driver said he knew where we wanted to get off at, so he stopped and let us off.

SB: Wow. That’s an example there, a very strong example. Did you ever take part in any kind of demonstrations or sit-ins, anything like that?

CW: No, I didn’t. I never did do that. That’s something I never did do. I never did take any part of that. I didn’t have anything to do with that. I wasn’t in that and so I didn’t.

SB: Why do you think African-Americans chose Cherokee or Cobb County to live, as over the last couple of decades there’s been a large influx of African-Americans into this area? Why do you believe that they chose this area?

CW: Well, I think the reason they chose this area, well, up in Cherokee County where I live, it wasn’t that much work up that way. I think they had the cotton mills, and maybe a few places where they raised chickens in that time period. But now we’ve got more work up there. I think they chose Cobb County because there was work down here. One thing, they had Lockheed Martin down here, which was a good place where I worked at, but there were jobs like that. Also Cobb County offered more than what Cherokee had. I couldn’t—when I got ready to go to work—really find anywhere to work unless I worked at a place where they had chickens and things like that. I wanted something else better. Somewhere that I could work for a long time and then maybe retire from, and those jobs didn’t have anything like that. So I can just about speak for a lot of people that the reason they came to Cobb County to work on that reason because they had more to offer down here.

SB: That’s the effect up until today.

CW: Yes, sir.

SB: You mentioned Lockheed. My next question is that you worked at Lockheed from 1963 to 2003, forty years. What inspired you to work at Lockheed and how did the opportunity arise?

CW: You mean how did I get a job there?

SB: Yes.

CW: Well, just like I said before, I wanted to work. I went in '62 and put an application in. Nothing happened, so I kept checking back. They kept telling me they were going to call me, but they didn't. So I went back to the employment office in '63, along about January of '63, and they said, "Well, we've still got everything on file." So I talked to the man, and he said, "It's looking good because they're going to start hiring. I don't know when, but it's looking good, so they might be calling you to hire you pretty soon." Oh, I couldn't wait. In 1963, the 25th of February, that's when I got called, and that's when I got hired.

SB: What kinds of positions did you hold throughout the years?

CW: Well, my first job I got was in the paint shop and the wash rack. I was just trying to get in the door, and I was going to take anything. I would have taken janitorial; I would have taken anything just to get a job. That's how bad I wanted to work. So that was my first job. Then I stayed on that job for quite a few years, and I went over in the B-1 building. I got a job over there building small parts for the C-130, well, just all the aircraft that we made, C-130, 141 and I think JetStars, too. I was making parts for all the airplanes. I worked on that job awhile, and then things went down. So I got another job, still at Lockheed and still in the B-1 building. It had something to do with the paint shop where we processed parts. They had to be dipped in different chemicals and stuff like that. I got a job, and I stayed down there. I worked down there for quite awhile. So things went down a little bit, and I was getting a little seniority, and then they called me back to where I first started. They called me back out there in the paint shop. I've got a picture I want to show you. They called me back out there. So I went out there and stayed. Then I moved around. They called me back in B-1 in that machine shop. So I went back over there.

Well, I had a job. It was a job. But I wanted to get into transportation. That's what I wanted to get into was transportation. I retired out of transportation. At that time all these computers weren't here, so you had to fill cards and things. I had cards and things for different jobs, but transportation was what I wanted to get into. Anyway, they finally called me in transportation. So I went out and went in transportation. I started driving tows and forklifts out there in transportation. Also, they were sending parts and things to feeder plants: Charleston, Meridian, stuff like that. So I worked loading trucks and unloading trucks on the dock. Okay, they had another job come up, which was a chauffer job. So I started driving cars, vans, buses and all that stuff. Well, I had a job where I hauled the president of Lockheed, not the President of the United States, president of Lockheed. I always tell people to make myself clear. I carried him around different

places, airports and wherever he had to go to meetings and things, sometimes some of these hotels around Marietta, I drove him, and sometimes his wife went too. So then I stayed in transportation. Then that job went down, and I had to go back to driving a forklift and a tow, which was a good job. I went back to it, and that's where I stayed until I retired in '03.

SB: You liked getting out and driving?

CW: I like to be out. I had a job. When I was telling you I was working in the paint shop on that wash rack, it was, once you get to work you stayed there eight hours, and you came home. You didn't go out of your area. But when I was in transportation, I used to travel around a lot on the base because Lockheed Martin is a big place. After those forty years, I never did go all over the place. Some people can't believe it because I would go to work—I had a neighbor worked there too—I would go to work in the morning time, and once we got to work, we didn't see each other until we left. And we were riding together. That's just how big the place was. I like traveling around, going different places. They put a bus system on because some of it starts up there on South Cobb Drive, and it goes all the way down to Smyrna. People had business that they had to take care of down in what we called the flight line, and it was too far to walk. So they had a bus, and I drove the bus and carried them down there, and I'd just go back and forth. Then when they were ready to come back, they'd come out and meet the bus, get on the bus, and come on back to the big, white building. It was a good job, I loved that job.

SB: Seeing different things every day.

CW: That's right. Sometimes you see the same people, but I still loved it.

SB: That's the way to go. Lockheed being a California company it was more advanced when it came to integration in the work place. In 1963 did you still face opposition due to skin color from management or co-workers even though 1963 was a fairly advanced and California seemed to be ahead of the game? Did you ever witness that or other employees?

CW: The only thing, like I said, when I went there in the early part of '63, and I think just what you said, things were beginning to change. The only thing, I saw something, like the restroom and some of the cafeteria, they still had "colored" on some of the restrooms and "white" on some of them, but that didn't last but just a short time, and all that was gone.

SB: You entered Lockheed one year prior to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, so race relations at this time—could you give me an example?

CW: Well, a little bit, but it wasn't that much because I was working with white and black. Well, like I said, sometimes you'd go in a restroom or something like that, and there would be some whites in there, and they wanted to say, "Why are you in here?" We didn't have no other place to go. We had to go, just like they did. There were no separate restrooms, but none of them, nobody said anything to me like, "You get out of

here,” or we’d get in a fight or something over being in the restroom or in the cafeteria line or something. Well, it’s another thing I noticed too that when they changed everything, the water fountains and everything, they first had cups that everybody could drink from. If they wanted a drink of water they could get a cup and drink out of it. Well, later on, I don’t know particularly the month or the year but it was probably the same year, they changed the water fountains, and also they just did away with the cups so everybody would drink water the same. And then I don’t know who was doing it, but somebody started messing with the water fountains and trying to make them so dirty. I don’t know why they once said the blacks were doing it or who. I never did see anybody doing it, but I noticed some of them would be real dirty.

SB: So it was just a few?

CW: Just a very few. I got along real good with my bosses and my supervisors and department managers. Not all of them now, but some of them, we got along pretty good, and some I didn’t. I guess that’s anywhere you work.

SB: That’s for sure. Did you have a picture you wanted to show me?

CW: Yes, sir. This picture right here, that’s when I was working out on the paint shop and the wash rack. This C-130 just had come off of the paint line, and it was going to the flight line, and it got all of our names.

SB: Excuse me, Mr. Webb, we’re referring to an article, January 26, 1967, and it’s from a magazine . . .

CW: Yes, it was a paper that comes out. I’m not out there now, but I think they still get this same paper. It was the *Southern Star*, but it may have a different name. I think it still comes out, but I’m not sure. Now, I can remove some of this stuff. You want to read some more?

SB: The pilot looking out from the cockpit is Charlie Webb.

CW: That was me, yes. [Laughter] See, I think it took seven people to move that airplane. You had to have two people to watch it because those airplanes are big. You had one on one wing watching, and then you had one person walking at the landing gear. That made four. Then you had one in the cockpit. If something went wrong, he would have to put the brakes on. That’s what I was doing. That’s the reason I was up in the cockpit, but I didn’t ever have to use the brakes. That’s five and then, if I’m right, I think it took six people to move the airplane, a C-130.

SB: Below here we have a pay stub.

CW: That was my first pay stub that I got in 1963. Of course, anytime when you get money you’re happy, but I was so happy over that. That was the most money I ever made in a week. See, when I first went to work at Lockheed in ’63, I was going to quit, and I went

home and I told my mom. I had never gotten my paycheck. I told my mother. She asked me how did I like it, and I told her I didn't like it. I wanted to quit. She told me, "Son, I never worked there, but you have wanted to work there for a long time. You got a job, so it can't be that bad. You got a job, so you try to stay there. But you're grown; you do what you want to." So I thought about it. Okay, you had to work two weeks before you got paid, and this was my first check. You see, I was making \$2.27 an hour which that was a lot of money. You see what I made, and you see what I brought home.

SM: That's for two weeks? Oh, that's for forty hours.

CW: Yes, that was just forty hours. We got paid every week forty hours. It was \$96.80, and then when they got through taking everything out, I brought home \$79.31, and that was so much money that I had at one time. I went home and I told my mother, I was working on the nightshift and I told her, I said, "Mother, I am not ever going to leave that place." She said, "Why?" I said, "I got my first check. I brought home almost \$80.00." "Ohh!" She said, "Son that is a lot of money. I never brought home that much money in a week's time. It'd probably take me two or three months to make that much money." That's what kept me. Somebody asked me, when I retired, "How did you stay in one place forty years?" I said, "The money." Not only the money, but the benefits too.

SB: And stability?

CW: Yes, and all that. It wasn't only the money; it was benefits. They had pretty good benefits, and that's what kept me there. I just didn't really see for me to keep swapping jobs, and I already had good job. Like I said, when I got in transportation—all my jobs weren't good that I had out there, but when I got in transportation, I loved that job, and I could have still been working, but I chose forty years. That's long enough to stay in one place.

SB: That's great. That's quite a feat. In 1961, which is two years prior to your employment with Lockheed, they implemented the C-141 Starlifter program which was responsible for hiring a lot of African-Americans, a large majority of African-Americans. How instrumental do you think that program was to Lockheed, and how did it affect you if it did at all?

CW: On the 141?

SB: Yes.

CW: Oh, it did great things for me, yes, it sure did because I probably wouldn't have ever made my time if it hadn't been for the 141. The rest of the airplanes played a part too, like the C-130. It played a part too because they were building that when I went there. Then they started hiring a lot of black people along on that program because it was a good program, oh, yes.

SB: You feel that at this time Lockheed was a leader in employment equality, you know, compared to the other businesses in Cobb County?

CW: Yes, I do, I really do.

SB: On the outside of Lockheed, you seem to be very happy with Lockheed; did you know anybody who was discouraged from employment in Cobb County due to discrimination, like friends or associates?

CW: Well, really, I don't because there probably were some, but they didn't seem to tell me anything about it. They seemed to like Cobb County. It seems to have been all right with most of the people. I guess somebody did, but I don't think so because if they did they didn't tell me.

SB: Did they say you were lucky that you were employed with Lockheed?

CW: Well, some of them told me. They said they had tried and tried to get a job and they weren't hiring; they'd never get a job. Well, maybe so, but I said, "Well, I can't really answer that question." But I said, "They're hiring a lot of people. Maybe something wasn't your time or something like that." That's about the only thing I could tell them. I think they got a little disgusted with the company because they never did hire, but for me it was a good place to work. Really, that's about the only place I ever worked. I had some little jobs, but I loved that company myself, and I still like it even though I'm not out there now, but I still love it. I just hope the people that are working there now will stay as long as they want to. I'm not going to say they stay forty years, but some of them may want to stay longer and stay long as they want to and then retire. That's what I think, yes, and I'm happy with my retirement.

SB: You seem to have determination, and you were able to get the positions you wanted.

CW: Yes, I did. It took awhile. I didn't just walk right into them, but I finally got the position I wanted, and I stayed. I had chances to go up higher in a higher grade level, but I wouldn't go because I loved transportation.

SB: That's great that you got to do what you wanted to do. As far as today the general manager at Lockheed, Lee Rhyant, is an African American. What are your feelings about that? Do you think we've come to a point where race in the work place is unnoticed and that discrimination is a thing of the past? That it's unnoticed that he's an African American, and it just depends on the skill of the person; it's not due to skin color?

CW: I think it's really not noticed now by him. It might have been there a little bit when he first came. He came about the time I was thinking about leaving, but I can't remember the year that he came. I talked with him just a little bit. He was at my retirement. But I think everybody pretty well adjusted to it all right.

END OF TAPE 1, SIDE A

START OF TAPE 1, SIDE B

SB: You knew Reginald Kemp.

CW: Yes, I know him.

SB: Do you know other employees from Lockheed? Did you know Hugh Gordon who was responsible for the Plans for Progress?

CW: I may have heard that name, but I don't think I know him.

SB: What's your relationship with Reginald Kemp? Did you have any influence on him or each other?

CW: Well, not really. He was just a friend of mine, somebody I had known for a long time. I think he worked there quite a few years too. I never did have a chance to work with him, but I just knew him.

SB: He started in '51, I believe.

CW: That's what I'm saying; he started a lot earlier than I did; but I came to know him down through the years.

SB: Did he give you any word of advice or anything or you were just friends?

CW: Just friends. Yes, sir, just friends. The only thing he told me, before I retired, he said, "Stay till you get ready to go." Because once you started getting a few years, something like thirty years or thirty-five years people, the people you work with tell you to go ahead and retire, but he told me, "Don't do that unless you're ready to go. You stay till you get ready." That's what I did. So I guess that's the reason I'm happy with my retirement.

SB: That was some advice you took to heart. These are kind of broad questions outside of Lockheed. What do you think had the largest effect on integration, various acts, the *Brown v. Board of Education*, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, or certain individuals like Martin Luther King, what do you think had the largest effect; or do you think the government had a lot to do with it; or do you think it was the individuals, like yourself?

CW: I think that the government had quite a bit to do with it. I do. But it could have been—Dr. King who played a lot with it too. I think it was those two that had the most to do with it. The government—that would be President Kennedy too, I guess, wouldn't it? I believe I said that, yes.

SB: One of the questions that I ask as far as to do with the class and what we've learned in class so far and some of the individuals we've spoken to felt like they lost a sense of community due to integration. Do you feel that integration damaged a sense of

community in the African American community in Cobb County or Cherokee County as far as taking away from those areas where they felt they belonged and they had a sense of togetherness?

CW: Well, I don't.

SB: It didn't affect you?

CW: No.

SB: Now you're a trolley driver in the city of Marietta.

CW: Yes.

SB: How long have you been doing that?

CW: Well, I started in April of last year, so that would be fifteen or sixteen months, somewhere along in there. Just a little over a year I've been with the Marietta Trolley Company. I was the first employee.

SB: This is in your retirement from Lockheed, you're doing this part-time?

CW: Yes, part-time.

SB: Obviously you really enjoy it.

CW: Oh, yes, I love it too. I love it. It's a man and his wife who own the company. It's a privately owned company. Right now, I've been working for them a little over a year, and they are good people to work for. I haven't known them that long. They hadn't known me either. They didn't know me, and I didn't know them, but after we met, getting to know each other, they're some good employers. They treat me good and I try to treat them good.

SB: And they saw your qualifications as well, right?

CW: Oh, yes. You know, they've got to have all that kind of stuff. See, when she was interviewing me and talking to me about the job, when I filled out the application, I said—you know most of them have several places to put on there where you worked—I said, "I'm not going to be able to do it." She said, "Why?" I said, "I worked at Lockheed for forty years. I didn't have a lot of jobs. I can put on there the jobs I did, but it was still for the same company." She said, "That's okay." So we just went from right here, and quite naturally they checked behind me anything I told them, and it was true. I didn't tell any lies. My last employer was Lockheed Martin, so they called my supervisor and my manager, and he told them the same thing I had talked about that was on my paper. So it was the truth, so I wasn't lying; my supervisor wasn't lying. She told me, "Charlie, if

you want a job, we're going to hire you because you've got a lot of experience." Which, you know, I have because I've been driving a long time.

SB: And now you're doing what you wanted to do initially at Lockheed. You're driving around and getting to do something every day and meet different people every day.

CW: Yes, sir. It's probably a little late now, but I didn't tell you, I worked for the city of Canton for a few months up there before I came to the Marietta Trolley Company. I did put that on the application when I was filling it out for the history that I had worked for the City of Canton. They had a bus system up there, and I drove for them, but it went away, so they laid all us off. I wasn't off long, just a few months, and this Marietta Trolley Job came up, so I applied for it and got it. And I love it.

SB: So you're starting to learn quite a bit of the history of Cobb County.

CW: I sure am. I told you that I have worked around Cobb County. I think about all my jobs I had, what I call a job. But there were some things that I really didn't know which the tour guide talks about and I hear the days I'm working. It was really most of the same things, but I hear it. Now it was some of the things that I knew about around Marietta, but I have learned a whole lot of stuff, the history stuff, some of the older stuff, you know, that went on way back in the 1800s when neither one of us was here then, but I hear about that.

SB: About the founding of Zion and Lemon Street School?

CW: Yes, yes. Well, they've got a sign out there, but I really didn't know that was the oldest church. It might be the oldest, well, now I did hear this, I think I'm right, that the oldest church African American church in Cobb County is in Acworth [Bethel AME Church] that I think is older than Zion. I did hear that much last year while we were doing the tour. There are some more churches; the First Presbyterian Church upon on Church Street is an old church too.

SB: All right, Mr. Webb, is there anything else you'd like to say to conclude today's interview?

CW: Well, no, when you turn all this off I'll ask you something, but I think that just about covers everything. I would just want you to see this old picture of when I first started right here doing these airplanes. This was my first paycheck I got when I was working in the paint shop. This check came from there. So my mother kept that check. She is deceased now, but she kept it, and then after she passed away, I had to go through a lot of stuff to find it, but I finally got it, and I've had it ever since.

SB: It's in perfect condition. You've got it in a frame.

CW: It sure is. Yes, I put it in a frame, so it would stay for a long time. I guess that's about all I've got to say.

SB: Well, thank you Mr. Webb. I appreciate it. We're going back to the 1950s and Mr. Webb is going to talk about some of the things in the 1950s as far as growing up and his childhood to conclude the interview and to just add a few things.

CW: Okay, when I grew up, it was back in the 1950s when everything was segregated in those days. I had a lot of white friends as well as black. We were all about the same age. We all, during the summertime when school was out, and not only when school was out, but when we got out of school, we would play together. We would go to each other's house, and I was the only black most of the time. We would go in some of their houses, and it was a white house, and his mother would sit down and fix us something to eat. Now I didn't have to run around to the back and eat mine. I sat down at the table. She'd fix us some Kool-Aid or some milk or whatever we wanted to drink. We'd sit there and eat it together and laugh and just cut up. Well, they didn't think anything of it, and I sure didn't think anything of it. His mother and daddy, I don't guess they thought nothing of it either. It would do the same way when they came to my house where I lived with my mother and daddy. The same thing would happen. My mother would fix something for us to eat, and then she would go on about her business, and we would eat and drink and start back playing. So, I guess, the only thing was we just couldn't go to school together. They couldn't understand why we couldn't go to school; we couldn't go to church together; nothing like that. But for some reason we got over it, and every chance we got we would be together. Now, I had a lot of white friends, and I've still got some of them. We just don't see each other as regularly as we did because they are married, and they've got their things to do, and I've got my things to do, but every so often we get a chance to see each other, and we start talking about these old time things that went on. When all this stuff came about, this mixing up stuff like that, you know, it really wasn't a surprise to me, but I was already used to it because I was raised up with some of the same things I'm doing now. I guess it worked out. Like I said, where I lived, we all got along fine. It was a small place, living in Woodstock, Georgia, but we all got along together, and my parents got along with their parents all right too. It was a pretty good life that I came through back in the early years. It's not that way now; but it's better. I like it better this way than it was back in those days.

SB: So you were aware of everything that was going on, but it didn't affect you that much, and you saw right through it.

CW: Yes sir. I knew a lot of it wasn't right. We had to go to the back of the bus when we rode on a Greyhound bus or something, and that's something I didn't like, but there wasn't anything I could do about it.

SB: Well, thank you again.

CW: Yes sir.

END OF INTERVIEW

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