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Ahmad Hall Interview

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History 4425- Oral History Project**Ahmad Hall Interview conducted by Sara Jammal and Mary Baldwin****Videotaped by James Newberry at Sans Souci Women's Club, Adairsville, Georgia****October 12, 2016****Transcribed by Mary Baldwin (Tape One) and Sara Jammal (Tape Two)****Interviewer:** Mary Baldwin**Interviewer 2:** Sara Jammal**Interviewer 3:** James Newberry

TAPE ONE:

Interviewer 2: This is Sara Jammal and Mary Baldwin from Kennesaw State University, here with Ahmad Hall at Sans Souci Women's Club in Adairsville, Georgia, October 12, 2016. We will be speaking with Ahmad about his family genealogy, its legacy to the city of Adairsville, and Ahmad's role in the community today.

Interviewer: This is Mary Baldwin speaking, Hello Ahmad.

Hall: Hello, Mary.

Interviewer: Thank you for being with us today. Just to begin with, will you introduce yourself and tell us when and where you were born?

Hall: Yes, my name is -. For the record my *government* name is Hershel Ahmad Hall, I don't tell it to everyone but this is something that I'm very adamant about so I want everyone to know everything about it. But, um, I go by Ahmad, and I was born on May 4, 1986 in the county of Floyd, and city of Rome, because Adairsville doesn't have any hospitals here. We still don't – its 2016 - so you have to go to either Rome, Cartersville, Calhoun, for birth - hospital, period, anything that's dealing with any kind of illnesses. We have urgent care here, but it's not – you know -. For something serious you have to go to another city. 01:15

Interviewer: Okay, well, what school did you attend? And tell us some of the activities you participated in when you were in school.

Hall: Okay, I, um, all twelve years of grade school was Adairsville: so Adairsville Elementary, Adairsville Middle, Adairsville High School. Preschool was a place called "Just Kids," right down the street from here - where the building is. Its not, it's no longer in business. And also I spent a little time in Jacksonville State University in Jacksonville, Alabama. [Pauses, then makes salute] Gamecocks! 01:50

Interviewer: Alright! So you grew up in Adairsville. Can you share a favorite memory of growing up in Adairsville?

Hall: Hmmm... you asked me about, um, activities. So, drama club, of course, band – I was first chair, that means I was sorta good. Uh, chorus, anything chor(us) -. It was so funny, even with chorus class, we had several different chorus teachers over the course of time I was in high school, it was just -. I don't know what was going on with the art department in the school, but there were times even when I taught the chorus class, so that was fun. And the chorus teacher – I'm not gonna say a thing – but he used to stay in his office and I would do his job and he'd get paid for it. But, uh, yeah, so then marching band, and memories about Adairsville: I think anyone from Adairsville, one of their greatest memories is – what they remember as a child is – the Great Locomotive Chase Festival, which you kind of had a -. That's big here, that's the thing, and this year, actually, I saw a difference as far as the organization of it, and I was very well pleased with the direction that it was going and I think that it's something we're going to be able to look forward to for years to come. 03:07

Interviewer: Okay. And then somewhere along the line, you became interested in family genealogy, can you tell us how that happened?

Hall: Well its my grandfather, Thomas Howell Pullam, Jr., he really started me with my interest in family his(tory) -. He kind of, kind of, snuck it in there on me, 'cause we would go -. He had throat cancer one time so if I – if you see me do this [puts finger on throat] and if I start sounding like a robot, that's because I do that all the time when I talk about him 'cause he had a servox, he had throat cancer, and so in order that he have surgery, where they removed all the cancer, they gave him what they called a servox, you know. It simulates the vibration of the vocal cords when you don't have any. So, um, he would - we'd ride down the road and he'd say, [speaking in robotic voice] "Oh, you know, uh, such-and-such lived here and we used to live over there," and I'd be like, "Grandaddy, nobody cares, nobody wants to hear about that." But what happened is, now I can - I understand that he was teaching me stuff and I didn't even know it. So now I can say, "this is where such-and-such used to live, and this is what happened here." And that's what he was teaching me, and I didn't have any idea he was doing that. So he really sparked my interest in genealogy. 04:19

And he had an aunt who lived to be 98, Aunt Emma. Her name was Emma Butler Dozier, and she lived to be about 98 and she lived by herself for her entire life. So I mean she was still, she was still -. Well she was married one time, but what I'm saying is the latter part of her life, she still lived by herself, she was able to do for herself, cook a lot and everything, but she'd call us like three times a week to go get what she called it "Kentucky Chicken," but it was KFC. She loved the fried chicken, so all these health fanatics – I don't know – she ate greasy food all her life and she lived to be like a hundred, so I don't know... But she knew most everything. She was actually a twin, she had a sister named Ada, so it was Emma and Ada, they were twins – they were like identical twins. And she taught me a whole lot about the family history – sitting with her and talking with her. 05:12

Interviewer: Okay, well tell us about, um, William Arthur Butler?

Hall: Yes.

Interviewer: and his significance in Adairsville.

Hall: Okay, well, William Arthur Butler was my great-great-grandfather – that’s on my Mom’s side of the family – and Thomas Howell Pullam, that we just spoke of, it was his grandfather. And he was born on November 7, 1872, in a little place called Easley, South Carolina, and at the time he was born it wasn’t incorporated to be Easley, but it was Pickens County, and that’s right outside of Clemson and not too far from Greenville, South Carolina. And so, in the late 1870s, he, his family – mother, father, and siblings – they moved to Adairsville, and they weren’t the only family, there were several families; there’s a story I can have you read later in the different documents I brought about the different families that came from that one place and settled here in Adairsville. And when they got here, he started to work on the Western and Atlantic Railroads which was a big business here at the time – as you see there’s a railroad right out here and like that’s what Adairsville, in itself, incorporated around the railroad – that’s why it became to be what it was. And so one day he was working on the train, and one late night he fell off the train and one of the wheels, he fell up under it, and crushed his leg, and he was fitted with a peg leg, and from that point he’s kind of like - I guess, I don’t know, in my mind I’m saying, he’s like – “Okay, I have eight girls to take care of.” Can you imagine living in the -. Seven daughters and then a wife, he was the only dude in there. No offense, ladies, I’m just saying... But he was like, “hey I gotta do something to provide for my family.” And I’m not sure if he knew the trade of shoemaking beforehand, but after this time he became a shoemaker. 07:11

And also, the other story recorded that he was also a stableman in South Carolina with his father, and as a little boy he used to work with horses, and so he became a shoemaker after that incident/accident that he had on the railroad track here. And the shoe shop was not too far from where we are right now, downtown, its off Gilmer Street, it’s a vacant building, but uh, that building we hope to one day turn into a Black History Museum – there’s some talk about it, and we’re trying to work on that, but, uh, that’s who William Arthur Butler is. He became one of the first black business owners in this area, he was very well respected. 07:49

Interviewer: Now how do you feel about his story being shared at the train depot with the new exhibit – or the exhibit that’s there now?

Hall: Yeah, yeah, I’m very appreciative of the Sans Souci Women’s Club, they heard about the story -. I gave a presentation about my great-great-grandfather a couple of years ago, and from that they approached me, they said, “we would like to display something to honor your great-great-grandfather William Arthur Butler in

our depot.” And of course they’re the ones who oversee, and the caretakers of the depot. And they had a part-time artist is a business we have here, Skip McNutt², and he took a picture of my grandfather, and the story about him, and matted it and framed it, and it’s really, really nice and we were very, very proud to have that as a part of the depot here in Adairsville. (08:35)

Interviewer: That’s great! Um, so just so we can know where we’re at with your line of descent, so this is your mother’s line of descent?

Hall: Yeah

Interviewer: Can you kind of give us like a quick, brief overview of how that descent goes?

Hall: Okay, so...if you’re into genealogy you know this: a death certificate is like a gold mine. It has when they died, when they were born, who their mother was, who their father was, where they were born, what they died of, what funeral home buried them, what cemetery. I mean it’s like a gold mine. And so, I was fortunate enough to find his death certificate – William Arthur Butler’s death certificate. And I was able to find who his father and mother was – that’s really big for African-Americans because prior to 1870, we were just property as far as on the census, we weren’t listed as – our names weren’t even listed, just the number of slaves you had that were male, female, children, that type of thing. But I was able to find William Arthur Butler’s death certificate, he died on Christmas Day 1930 of influenza – the flu – and um, so from that death certificate, I found that his father was named Humphrey Butler, and his mother was named Mary Agnes Brockman Butler. And so, with that being said, it goes: Humphrey Butler, William Arthur Butler, Sallie Butler Pullum, Thomas Howard Pullum, Phyllis Darece Pullum, and then me, Ahmad Hall – or Hershel Ahmad Hall. Uncle Sam. (10:13)

Interviewer: Okay. And, um, you mentioned some other ancestors you had that contributed to the community. Can you tell us who those are – Dr. Harris, for example?

Hall: Well yeah, I definitely wanted to mention Dr. Harris – Dr. J.B. Harris. He was born about 1900, here in Adairsville. And you heard me mention William Arthur Butler - we’re talking my great-great-grandfather - his wife, Sallie Harris Butler, had a brother named Samuel Harris. And Samuel Harris had a son named James Buchanan Harris, that’s Dr. J.B. Harris. So that’s my great-great-grandfather’s nephew. And he became one of the first known reported “black doctors” [makes air quotes] that we know – there may be have been some before then in this area, even in Bartow County as a whole, but that’s one we know came from Adairsville, from this area of Bartow County. And he went on to be what they call one of the of the inaugural fathers of the Morehouse School of Medicine. And I have several documents that confirm that, and actually got to spend a lot of time with his daughter. He actually, I think he had -. His daughter was born when he was about forty, maybe in his forties, almost fifty, so she was still alive when I was coming up and so I got a great chance to have talks with her and have some

documents and pictures that she gave me that were his. And he gave the first ten thousand dollars to start Morehouse School of Medicine. That was a lot of money in th(ose) -. I think it was the 70s when they really incorporated the school, but that was a lot of money, I'm sure, and that's still a lot of money now. (11:56)

Interviewer: Do you know where his office was in Adairsville?

Hall: Well his office wasn't actually in Adairsville. He was born in Adairsville, but he practiced in Atlanta. He lived, um, he lived in -. He had a farm actually, a huge farm in Palmetto, Georgia – have you ever heard of Palmetto? - Its um, there's Washington Road right off of 285, going south, in Atlanta, and if you go out Washington Road it'll take you right into the Palmetto area. And so that's where he was.

Interviewer: Oh, okay.

Hall: He was also - really quick - I just found this right before we met a few weeks ago. He was actually on the Board of Direct(ors) - well, he was on the Board of Directors for a for a long time – but I found that in the early 1980s, when President Bush was still a vice-president, his wife Barbara Bush served on the board with my cousin, Dr. J.B. Harris from Morehouse School of Medicine, they were on the board together: First Lady Bush. (12:54)

Interviewer: Oh, interesting! And you had mentioned, um, I think it was your grandfather, who told you stories about the Jim Crow era in Adairsville, and also a cousin who had some stories about the KKK. Can you tell us about those stories?

Hall: Well yeah, um, I'll tell you to the extent that I know them. There are so many more stories that I would have to, like, jot...there's just a whole lot. I have a cousin named June Hill who will hopefully be interviewed at a later date. June was born in the late 30s, if I'm not mistaken. And she once told me of a story she remembers that had happened like mid-40s that she recollected – mid-40s, late-40s – that her mother and aunt told her to get under the bed, and she was like “Why? Why do I gotta get under the bed?” So they got under the bed and her mother told her that the KKK is outside, so they were like hooded and everything, and the whole cross-burning, all that type of thing happened. And that was a memory she had concerning the KKK. And Jim Crow, I remember my grandfather saying that if you were walking on the sidewalk, and a white man, woman, boy, or girl approached you – whether it was raining, or what – you had to get down in the gutter with your head down and not look them in the face and keep walking. So that one thing I remember him telling me about as well. And he said that one of the craziest things was, you would have these people, dressed in these KKK garments, I guess, run around your house and your community the night before – and then the next day you'd go to the store and you'd buy something from people who were wearing these hoods and garments the night before. It's like – he said that you had nowhere else to go, that's the only place

you could buy stuff from. But these were the same people that were running around your house and burning crosses, that type of thing, so... (15:04)

Interviewer: And what about the -. Over at the depot, we understand there was the different waiting room, the segregated waiting rooms, do you know anything about that?

Hall: Yes, and I think that was more so probably mid-twentieth century, I don't think that they -. After, you know, integration and all I don't they had too much of a problem, especially in Adairsville. But, I can even remember my mother telling me, in the 70s, that the KKK was still – they had like a rally here. (15:35)

Interviewer: In the 70s?

Hall: Yes. I mean, it... it's yeah, it's a lot.. yeah, so even in the 1970s there was still -. So my mother remembers that -. Just speaking of racism in that manner, I can remember just a few years ago, I was at a red light in Rockmart, Georgia, at the Triangle Ga(s)...no, Triangle Grocery store there. I was just sitting at a red light there and the guy pulls up next to me and says the “n” word several times. And if his dog could actually speak words, he would have probably said the same thing because he was barking. So I mean, it's prevalent and its relevant and I think that it's something that we need to learn how to openly discuss. And I think that when we do that, we'll be able to move on from that. But it's something that, um, that we've faced for a very long time, but I think that it can be something that can be resolved and if not resolved, then come to an understanding about. And I think that's what's gonna need to be done. Especially nowadays, I think we kinda talked about this, a few weeks ago, even with our Muslim brothers and sisters, I don't like the way that they're being treated. I-I'm Christian, but I believe that this country was founded on freedom of religion and we should have the right to practice whatever religion we want to – in a safe way, you know, as long as you're not harming anyone else. And I hate to hear when they confuse great Muslim people – people of the Muslim faith, great people of the Muslim faith – with radical Islamic, those are two different things. [pause] Put my little political point in there. (17:14)

Interviewer: When you mentioned you encountered this incident, I guess not too long ago – the one you mentioned -. And you're fairly young but can you like tell us ways that racial relations have changed in the Adairsville area just since you were a child?

Hall: We -. I have to honestly say, I don't think that maybe in the moment I didn't notice but now I can kind of look back there was sometimes it seemed that there were some things that were not right and could have been because I was a black man, and um -. But I must say that now, Adairsville has come a long way...and I'll be honest, I don't think it's ever been as bad for me as it's been other places. That's just my take on it. But I do think that we have a diverse community, we have a great diverse city council. Our mayor is a black man, the first black mayor ever, so that's a big step, huh? [gives thumbs up] and so I will say, Adairsville is really on the move when it comes to that. We don't -. I don't think we see – my

take for the most part, I'm sure there's always a few – but we don't see color here, yeah. And I like the small town feel and all that, it feels like family, everybody knows everybody. So there's a -. There's times when I'll be like, "who was that?" So they had to have moved here, they can't be -. So everybody knows everybody, so... (18:44)

Interviewer: So changing direction a little bit, um, we were interested in the Veach family. What do you know about them and their role in your family history?

Hall: Really quickly, the Veach family, from research and seeing how they intertwined with my family, they were – even in the late 1800s – they were like *the* family: owned everything, they were -. They had a mill here, they had all kinds of stuff, so like if you were buying land, you bought it from the Veaches. If you were getting groceries, you got it from the Veaches. Everything, like, worked through the Veaches. That how [inaudible] they were, a big family here in Adairsville. And my family -. My great-great-grandfather, William Arthur Butler, had an older sister, Viola Butler. She actually married a man named George Green who was one of the people in the family that came down from Easley – the Green family came from Easley as well. And they married - Viola Butler and George Green. She actually worked for the Veach family and we were going through some documents – and I have so much stuff I don't get to read it a lot – and you were reading when we discovered that she actually bought –. Well I knew she worked for the Veaches, but she actually bought land from the Veaches back in the 1890s, I think it was, for like \$275. We have the document, we have to read it, but that was a lot of money at that time. And she later sold it to my great-great-grandfather, William Arthur Butler, her brother. And it was passed down to generation to generation, and Aunt Emma Butler Dozier, who I spoke of earlier, was the last person who lived on that land. (20:38)

Interviewer: You said that Viola worked for Mr. Veach, or the Veaches. Do you know what she did, what was her job?

Hall: Yeah, and most of the time, you don't even have to think about it – domestic work.

Interviewer: Okay

Hall: That's what -. The movie we talked, kind of, the movie *The Help*, was -. I will say this, especially with Hollywood, I'm so glad that we can make movies now that talk about real life, because I've heard so many people who have watched that movie who said, "hey, that's my mama," or "hey, that's my grandmother," and that's what it really was. And I have several pictures – and even some of the best pictures I have of my family – are with them holding babies that they took care of, and that type of thing. So that was very much a part of the life of African-Americans in Adairsville as well. I remember my grandfather's first cousin, who's named Jacqueline McConnell Sellars, her mother, Aunt Ezel⁴ was sister to Emma Butler Dozier - I'm trying to connect the lines for everybody –

anyway, she, Aunt Jacqueline, she told me, she said, “I can remember a time when my mother came home and her payment would be a few dollars and old dresses.” So she did domestic work, and that was her payment for doing it. So that type of lifestyle, of the domestic worker, was very much a part of the life of African-Americans in Adairsville. (22:00)

Interviewer: And you had mentioned, when we talked earlier, your family’s kind of impression of the Veaches...

Hall: Well, I had a cousin who told a story – Terry Carson, I wish I could really get him here, he’s a great story teller, one way or the other – but, um, he was telling a story about his grandfather, who I’m no relation to but it was still in that area of Adairsville, but Mr. Jim Clemons he worked for the Veaches and he had promised his wife, I think it was, that he would go to church with her or would celebrate a birthday, something like that, and he wanted a day off, he had promised her, and one of the Veaches – Mr. Veach said – “No, you’re not.” He said, “Well, Mr. Veach, I promised my wife,” and he was adamant about it because he had made a promise to his wife and he didn’t want to break it. So Mr. Veach told him, he said, “you take off if you want to, but I promise you, you will never work for anybody else in this town.” And that’s the type -. For him to open the mouth and say that, that’s the type of power the Veach family had here. And so, needless to say, Mr. Clemons had enough courage not to go to work, and honor the request that his wife had made, and he [inaudible] was fired, so yeah, he lost his job on account of that. (23:27)

Interviewer: Wow. Well, back to, you know, the downtown Adairsville, like physically - physical changes...

Hall: [inaudible comments, laughter]

Interviewer: Can you describe things that have changed in Adairsville just since you have lived here, during your life?

Hall: I tell you, one of the things I’m most proud of is the way that the city as a whole – the downtown development authorities - the way we worked together, to make sure Adairsville never loses its soul -. (24:02) [END TAPE ONE]

TAPE TWO:

Hall: I feel that the downtown area is the soul of Adairsville and it is almost exactly the way it was when these buildings were built. There some buildings were built

later, later 20th century, you can tell, but they've tried their best to weave in Adairsville, we've tried our best to keep that same look. One of the great things about it is, real quick story; the Bank of Adairsville used to be downtown Adairsville. There was a story that was made out of marble, the façade was marble and all those types of things. As years have progressed they had bricked it, they created the city hall building and made it to the building. When I came up of course it was bricked. I heard the story about there being marble there and those types of things. Nobody knew if they moved it and bricked it or just bricked over it. As luck would have it, there was some damage done to the roof of the city hall. They had to move the city hall to a couple trailers down the street here and they were there for maybe a couple of years, I think.

Interviewer: Do you remember what year it was?

Hall: Within the last 3-4 years, 3-4 years. Now I'm thinking it might be longer that. What they had to do is, they had to go take the bricks down and wouldn't you know it. The marble façade from the late 1800's was still up. This is the sad thing though. They decided they want to vote. If they were going to go more modern, or if they were going to keep it. Like what's the vote going like. "No, we're not doing that." Unanimously, it was voted to, well not unanimously there was one guy. I'm not going to say his name. We still have that marble façade on the front of the city hall now. It still says made in Bank, people really come and enjoy that as well, it's amazing. Really to answer your question, coming back to that. I like the fact that we've made sure to keep as much of the soul of Adairsville as we can, and we want to continue to do that.

Interviewer: We see that you love Adairsville.

Hall: I think I do.

Interviewer: I think you answered our next question which is why you choose to stay here, I know you love it. Can you expand on what opportunities it would offer to someone in your age group?

Hall: I tell people this all the time if you ever seen the movie Diaz family reunion. They have the big cookout on the lawn and we lived that. My grandfather and uncles listened to the temptation songs we would definitely be out there doing the steps and everything. I mean we lived that and I think that's one of the things I was fortunate to experience through my lifetime being brought up in a small town. I hear from people who live even in Cartersville in one city over they didn't experience that type of family unit like I did. We, my grandfather and grandmother, Thomas Howard Pullum and Hattie Pullum, they had 8 children together. A big family. Whenever anybody's in need or there is a need we all come together and make sure it's met. There's no, "That's not going to happen." You ought to be left out in the cold or by yourself. We always come together and I always had that family unit. The more I live and the more I meet people I understand how blessed I am to have that and still do.

That's one of the things that keeps me here, my family is here, my roots are here, my life is here I don't care. I travel all different places singing and doing it, I will always call Adairsville home. I don't care if I become a millionaire. I will build my little cabin on the side of the railroad and I'm going to come back here and I love Adairsville. There is no place on the face of earth like Adairsville.

Interviewer: Are there other people like your age who've may have left Adairsville because they felt there weren't any opportunities for them? Have you seen that?

Hall: I've seen some people do that, but more so than not, I've seen people stay here and create what other people may go outside to try to obtain. I know a lot of people that I went to school with who have business here. My best friend Kyle, we haven't met, and we've been best friends since we were in diapers, literally. He stays here, still in Adairsville and he just became the assistant principal at a school in Rome. He stayed here, but still saw too it that he got his education. He is now married with children, and he built his family here in Adairsville, but made sure that no ends were left out. He still makes the money he needs to to take care of his family, so a lot of them stayed here and made a way for themselves in Adairsville. Now, some did go abroad and study, and some did go and make homes other places, but a lot of my friends stayed here and made a way for themselves in Adairsville because they love it so much.

Interviewer: If you were welcoming a visitor to Adairsville, what two or three highlights would you want to show them?

Hall: I think number one would definitely be downtown. I mean it's so much history and that's what I'm most proud of in the history I love history that's my thing. I would do that professionally. If I didn't do music, I'd be a history teacher which is pretty boring to a lot of people, but not to me I love history. Right right, not to you, not to the people here. Probably to the great-great-grandkids watching this like history? Anyway. Especially downtown as a whole and secondly the depot because it's been here for such a long time and it houses a lot of the history here. Then the next place I would probably take them to is what we call St. Elmo. St. Elmo is the community that was designated as the black community. How they always put the Martin Luther King Jr drive in the black community and not the white on, that's another story in its self.

The road that used to be called Metro Road is now MLK Road. My street Oakdale is adjacent from it. I call Oakdale Mayberry, like our street is like Mayberry, it's quiet and it's clean. It also helps to express, the across the railroad track mentality, I don't know if you've ever heard of that. This side of the railroad tracks that were on now is what I think little Anglo-Saxon and then on the other side of the railroad is where we live. I think those are some highlights and I think to help understand that were not so ... Maya Angelo will put it this way, we are much more alike then we are not alike. I think that will help to reiterate as well.

Downtown as a whole, the depot and then the area across St. Elmo. I think that really speaks to what Adairsville was. What it is and what it will be in the future. This crazy thing is, the cemetery is still segregated in Adairsville. We have a black cemetery and a white cemetery, it's not a stigma behind it now, it just, that's what it is what it is. I know I'm going.

Interviewer 3: We want to ask about the Martin Luther King Street, Drive. Can you tell us that story?

Hall: How it got changed?

Interviewer 3: Yeah.

Hall: Well, maybe the late 90's early 2000's maybe. There was a big, I don't know if you remember, there was this big whole "Every town in America has to have an MLK." I don't know who got on that. During that time I think there was a little backlash about it, as far as I can remember, because it was Metro Road and a lot of people didn't like it because you had to change your address. You had to go back to people and say this isn't my address anymore. A lot of people had lived in these houses for a very long time and you'd think they would be welcoming of the MLK Drive, and they were like, "Uh-uh. I don't want to do that! We've been living on Metro Road for such a long time." Finally they went along with it and it was changed. Like I said I think it happened late 90's or early 2000's, because I can remember it when it was Metro Road I still remember that. One thing I would like to add, growing up in Adairsville in the 90's was like growing up everywhere else in the 60's.

I didn't know it. I grew up in the 60's, like we had a washer, but we had no dryer, so we went out and we had like three palm trees and some wire. I took the wire across and that's where we went to hang our clothes for them to dry. We would have to beat the life back into them because if you keep them clothes out there for a very long time it's like this, you cannot put the shirt on. You have to beat the shirt to wear your actually able to wear it. I remember that, and I remember going to my grandfather's sister's house in the 90's. We had a bucket of water by the toilet, the plumbing was so bad that you had to pour water into the toilet to make it flush. I can remember going to my grandfather's brother's house, and they didn't have furniture. You had to sit on pillows on the floor. Even the doors they had like curtains, they didn't have doors in the house. This is the 90's okay.

The amazing thing is my grandfather was blessed to build a house in 1970 for he, his wife and eight kids. Like a house, like nobody had ever lived in it, but them. Here you are in the 90's and a couple of his siblings are living in a situation that are by far not even touching what he had for his family 20 something years before. That's amazing to me, that God allowed him, and I

want to say God allowed him because I believe there is a God, hallelujah praise you Jesus. I was very, very blessed in that fact to have a house that I grew up in. I grew up in the same house that my grandfather had worked towards. It's amazing to be able to say that, because I know there was a lot of people who weren't able to do that. A black man in 1970, eight kids, you weren't having that, it was like public housing or not.

Interviewer 2: Was your family in close proximity to each other, like could you all walk to your houses and stuff?

Hall: Let me tell you that's the funny thing, I'm let you all in on the family. Those sisters my grandfather had, his mother was named Sally, she has sisters named Emma and Ada – who were twins - and Ezell and Aunt Alene, Aunt Lois and Aunt Annie. Now these people lived like, there was like, Aunt Annie lived here, Aunt Emma lived over there, Aunt Ada lived like there, Aunt Lois lived here and Ezell lived there. They were like in walking distance and my cousin June she said she remembers their mothers, those sister's mother, my grandfather's sister mother. Sally Harris remembers her and her sister, Lula Harris they were walking across the park there, little playground area that was really a church yard and school at that time.

They lived so close, they walk and meet each other in the middle and depending on which house they would go to they would hold each others hand and just walk to the house. Just like little girls, and they all lived in close proximity, and the house I live in now, was actually built by my grandfather's brother. My grandfather, I grew up across the street and there was another brother on the left of him, and that brother actually moved to Cartersville and he just recently within the last few weeks moved back to Adairsville. You can't stay away from Adairsville, he about 70 years old and uncle Robbie just moved back to Adairsville. They were in close proximity. Everybody is, they right here.

Interviewer: You're very active in the community now, can you tell us some of the ways that you're in the community?

Hall: Yeah, I sure can, and the crazy thing, just to segue into that is sometimes, you're not doing things to be seen, you're doing because you think it's needed and you think that what you have to offer will help in some way. The mayor approached me about, maybe a year and a half ago, about being apart of the downtown development authority in Adairsville and we had a meeting and I came out and attended. We were selecting officers, and when they came to the part to elect a chairman, everyone said that I should be chairman. Without knowing it, I accepted it, and I later found out that I'm the first African-American to ever be the chairman of the downtown development authority. Excuse me, and also I'm the youngest to ever be the chairman of the downtown development authority.

Here we are again, the same thing making history it's in the blood, we just do it. We never did it before it just happens. Also I was honored to be one of the

grand marshals for the parade this past Great Locomotive Chase festival that we had just a few weeks ago. What the mayor decided to do is, people who were the chairmans of the Downtown Development Authority and Adairsville Development Authority which covers the whole city. There's the planning commission I think that's what it's called, and there's a couple others and we were all the grand marshals. I found out after that that I was the first African American grand marshal, so we just making history.

Interviewer: What about the future? You've shared earlier some of your future plans about the museum, where your grandfather's shoe shop is, can you tell us about that?

Hall: Yes, for a few years since I really dug into the family history and got into an interest about the building here. I had always said I would love to you know put a museum out there it'd be great, we'd get a lot of tourists that way, just add to downtown and it would help to keep the building the way it is. I've heard a little talk about the free council discussing a black history museum, I was actually out of town for about 8 days back in September. When I got back, they had had a building meeting with the whole city and had talked about it again. There is some interest there and I think I might be helpful in pushing it and getting it actually done. I'm excited about that, the prospect of having a black history museum here in Adairsville, and that would be a great place to showcase some of the things we've offered to the city.

Interviewer: Especially with all the firsts.

Hall: Right, right, right, right.

Interviewer: The first business, the first doctor, the first chairman.

Hall: Yeah, yeah, definitely.

Interviewer: Just wrap it up by telling us what you consider your family's legacy in Adairsville and how you're hoping to continue it.

Hall: I tell this story often, my grandfather Thomas Howard Pullum died in August of 2010, and he always told me that a legacy is not houses and land or what you own. Yeah, that's nice to have and pass down he said, but your legacy is your name. I can remember, maybe this was a year or a year and a half after he died. I had a flat tire in the yard, in the driveway. I was like, "Oh, goodness, who am I going to find to change this tire." Because I don't do that kind of work, I got insurance, I call state farm and say, "Look, I need somebody to change the tire and I just write it off." I called a wrecker company to come and check the tire out and that type of thing. It took them two hours to get there, but when the guy got there he said, "Wait, aren't you Mr. Pullum's grandson?" I said, "Yes." He said, "If I would have known that, I would have come right when you called me."

What I'm saying is even after my grandfather had died, his name still held weight. I think that's something that we can all carry with us, and I think that the Pullum name, the Harris name, the Butler name they still carry weight within the city and they've made many contributions to the city. Even the bible says the greatest new king was a servant, and we've served so many families of the Veaches and others and made so many contributions to the town. I think that legacy is going to relive it even by the name. The name of he's going to be remembered him, the contributions to the city and the things they've done to help make the community to be a better community. I'm going to live the rest of my life to ensure that.

Interviewer: Well, thank you.

Interviewer 2: Thank you so much.

Interviewer: We've enjoyed talking to you and you've taught us so much about Adairsville.

Hall: Thank you, thank you.