

Marjorie Maxwell and Elizabeth Jackson

Side 1:

[1] Marjorie was born here, takes pride in her city and worked as a receptionist at the Housing Authority until she retired. [Larry Holt]

[14] There have been many changes in her 67 years. The Depression, the change in the community which was close knit, the black schools and black businesses (see enclosure). She misses the closeness and relationship between all ages.

[24] Before the urban renewal the houses were close together in Southside. She was born on McDowell Street - the whole community constituted a "community watch." No one locked their house - there were no robberies, killing or abuse.

[34] She describes the stores near Nasty Branch (stream) (see enclosure), the restaurants, shoe shop, beauty shop, pool hall, 2 undertaker's establishments, churches, bootleggers, numbers game, Charlie's Market, grocery store (Paul C. Cox: 222 Southside Ave.), distributor for wine and beer, the Jewish family, which had a store (Hyman Rubin: 169 Valley St.), the Booker T. [Washington] Hotel (409 Southside Ave.) and the theater where a show cost 5 cents (Eagle Theatre: 51 Eagle St.). Liquor was made in Madison County, Black Mountain and Arden. "White Liquor" cost 10 cents a shot - a water glass cost 25 cents. There was pride in making "good stuff." Everyone was affiliated with a church and children were brought up in a Christian atmosphere. [Blind Walt, Paul Cox, Ted Lynn, Hyman R. Rubin]

[92] Streets were paved with sand which was put down in the summer. During the 1950's a little black top was added.

[99] Houses were owned by slum landlords and, if a repair was made, the rent was increased. Most people, even with rundown houses, took pride in keeping them clean.

[109] With the urban renewal a lot of nice houses were destroyed to make place for Erskine and Lee Walker Heights. She didn't have to move but got a loan to bring her house up to standard.

[119] The churches "came out like bandits." They sold their property to the city which tore the buildings down - then they bought the land back. This happened to the Brown Temple Church and St. John's Church. Allen Funeral Home was sold and relocated in a beautiful new building. [Osborne Hart]

[131] During the Depression many women stayed at home - those who did work were domestics. Black men worked on the railroads as porters or worked in hotels. A lot had no jobs and stood in Pack Square hoping for work. There was very little money.

[146] Marjorie's mother, Elizabeth, said children were taught to respect older people. Everyone took a part in teaching them not to talk back and keep them in line.

[157] Marjorie went to elementary school in the Livingston Street School (now called Reid Memorial Center). Her teachers knew the student's parents and brought out the best in their pupils. [Mrs. Rachel S. Battle (principal), Mrs. Gladys C. Kennedy]

[171] She was ill in the 4th grade and put into a Catholic school. The Franciscans had a chapel, St. Anthony's, in the home on Walton Street - later a chapel and school were built (photo). Four nuns and a priest, who lived next to the church, gave the children good grounding in education. She now attends the Basilica of St. Lawrence (see enclosure).

[197] In the 1970's the students wanted sports and other activities the school could not afford. They combined with St. Lawrence. Bishop Howze, who was a pastor at St. Lawrence, visited the church for Black History Month (see enclosure). Her son went to school there. He is now 50 and has 2 children and a grandchild. [Father Joseph Howze (later Bishop), Franklin Whiteside]

[225] Elizabeth said that her son wanted to be an altar boy. She decided to take instructions and join the Catholic Church also.

[238] In 1942, when men were going into the army, the S&W started hiring women. The army took over the hotels, business was booming, everyone wanted to go to the S&W.

[256] People would go downtown just to be with the crowds - they visited Kress', Newberry's, Woolworth's, dress shops, doctors offices. She misses this now that the malls have taken so many shoppers.

[259] Blacks couldn't eat in the S&W cafeteria, but the chef was black. [Gus Williams]

[279] The S&W closed because there aren't any people in town to support it. There isn't easy parking and, even if there were parking in the back, the people wouldn't go there at night.

[296] She names stores that have gone out of business: Enid's, Fields, the Man's Store, M.V. Moore (burned), Kress', Montgomery Ward.

[309] She went from the S&W to Bailey's in Westgate. Bailey owned the restaurant and had been a partner with Sherrill (the S in S&W). After making money, Bailey sold to Hall who was a good accountant but not a good manager. Piccadilly Cafeteria is now in that space. [Bailey, Sherrill, Hall]

[342] People from all walks of life met at the S&W. They had a special table and people joined by invitation, Mullins made jelly all summer. The big cry was "Where's the jelly?" and she was keeper of the treasure! [Jesse James Bailey, George Coggins, Frank Keener (from bank), Jim Robinson (railroad man)]

[380] [There are 3 men's groups in the city that I know of - at McDonalds (Merrimon), Stone Soup (center of town), and the "Liars" of Eckerds (Merrimon) [this is where I met Ingle (see his tape re R.R.) and hoped to meet Dermid so I could interview him about early police and Weir-- he is writing a book so wouldn't be interviewed.] [Lucius "Craggy" Ingle, Charles Dermid]

[407] She describes Weir and his wife. He was 'gorgeous,' had dark hair and was soft spoken. He did a lot of maneuvering, was the city 'godfather' and was still running things even when he was out of office. However, he did a lot for the city and was a "Gentleman" (see tapes). [Weldon Weir, Gregory Peck, P. Greer Johnson, James "Red" Hoyle]

[463] Another group of men came for lunch--the editor of the Citizen and a bank owner. [Frank Keener]

[498] The waitresses did not pool their tips. She had many loyal customers and lived off her tips as her salary was \$10 a week.

[537] She didn't work for minimum wages. For the IRS she had to sign that she was making a certain amount. "If you didn't make it, it was your hard luck."

[557] She later worked for herself selling Stanley Products (house cleaning material).

[597] She was offered a job with the Housing Authority to handle the phone and stayed for 15 years. [Cleatus Tate, David Jones]

Side 2:

[2/4] She waited on Bailey at the S&W and went with a group to his house in Weaverville to see his scrap book after he retired [a real treasure if we could trace his daughter who lives in the eastern part of the state]. He sat around telling stories of his "still busting" (see enclosed). He told of "going to bust Rachel up for selling liquor." He dressed like a woman but, because he was over 6 feet tall and weighed about 250 lbs. he couldn't fit into women's shoes. One of the prostitutes was going to answer the door when Rachel looked out of the window and said "Can't you see them big feet" and wouldn't open up. (See Sluder) [Jesse James Bailey]

[2/59] The Sky Club was a white honky-tonk run by Emma who later went to the Altamont to live. [Emma]

[2/67] Blacks went to "Dolls, the Hidden Paradise." People dressed up, drinking, dancing, eating steaks - no fighting or shooting or racial problems.

[2/87] In the 1950-60's there weren't many places to go in the evening. Now the young people travel all over - they listen to music and stand in the corner. When she was young she and her dance partner gave demonstrations.

[2/118] She sang at Club 54 on Lexington and the Casa Loma (over what is now Pack Place - the theatre was downstairs). She and her husband, guitarist Johnny Moon, traveled all over the east - NY., Canada, Philadelphia, Washington. Her son was 11 and stayed with her mother and grandmother. She describes the clothes, makeup and songs. [Dee Thomas, Johnny Moon, Ella Fitzgerald, Dinah Washington]

[2/197] Elizabeth said that when the lady she worked for in Beaver Dam died she was given green slippers with glass heels for Marjorie.

[2/211] Marjorie said she was sorry that gloves and hats went out of style. Men were neat and polished. "Our kids now could never imagine."

[2/226] Elizabeth said that when she got off the bus on the South Side, men, without a dime between them, would be laughing - "The thing we had during the Depression was lost."

[2/239] Marjorie said that the teachers won't stand up to the boys. She bowls with a girl who wants to be a mortician [so some have motivation to plan for an occupation].

[2/257] This used to be the "ugliest neighborhood." She points out the window and said that people used to come from all over to throw things in the river. The area has been cleaned up. The Bartlett Arms (housing for people over 65) was constructed. [Larry Holt]

[2/286] She discusses churches and her second grade teacher and the organist from the New Bethel Baptist Church. [Mrs. Gladys Kennedy, Cassie McDonald]

[2/312] Elizabeth and Marjorie discuss the Depression - for 5 cents one could buy soles to glue on worn-out shoes. Children were trained to go to the store and return with the correct change. At one time they had a victory garden but mostly they bought from the wagons that went through the neighborhood. There were always fresh vegetables and beans, homemade bread and biscuits. Two or three families came every day with produce to sell. People canned all summer, dried fruit and wrapped apples to keep in the cellar for Christmas.

[2/448] Men brought coal up from the tracks with 200 lbs. canvas bags which they sold for \$1 (It would cost \$15-\$20 from Carolina Coal Co.) They came up at night and it "looked like a caravan of camels."

[2/475] "There were houses all over the area, like a maze" - by the railroad, Fair St., Fagg St., Livingston, Scott, Lewis. With the urban development people went all over - Montford, Kenilworth, Merrimon. They could choose where they wanted to go. The homeowners had a better chance of choosing than the renters.

[2/503] Elizabeth was brought up with a foster family. She had 4 children and has a sister living across the street. She came to live with her daughter 38 years ago.

[2/544] Marjorie said that 'Nasty Branch' (see enclosure) was a roaring mess. It came up to the houses and washed away the little bridges between them. Elizabeth didn't fish in the river. She tried it once but it rained.

[2/567] Marjorie is working with the River Link and is encouraging the construction of facilities for handicapped on the docks. [Jean Webb]