

Norma and Patrick Price

Side 1:

The Prices moved to Asheville in 1962. Patrick served on the School Board from 1975 to 1985. By this time many issues regarding integration were solved. There was concern on the part of black parents because their children had not had adequate preparation. (He followed John Q. Schell, see tape).

[30] In 1977 or 1978 the "Latch Key Program," which originated in Miami was started. Volunteers phoned children whose parents worked to be sure they were OK.

[48] The ROTC Program was instigated (under leadership of Col. Alfred Thomas) to teach leadership and boost self-esteem. It has been in existence for 18 years and, while it struggled the first year, it has since been rated one of the best in the country. (Boy and Girl Scout activities are not that strong in Asheville). Students are now enrolled down to the 9th grade. The students work with traffic, clean trash, etc. and attend Boot Camp 2 weeks every year.

[88] Bussing was never a big issue here because the system is not that large (about 5,550 students) Randolph and Jones are "sister schools" (pairing) and elementary schools, where special areas along with basics are emphasized are called "magnet" schools.

[146] A city-county merger won't take place unless it is mandated by the General Assembly [for financial reasons - to eliminate duplicate expenses]. County people don't want whites going with blacks and are also concerned about bussing long distances.

[175] City parents pay a special tax for schools and county residents would have to pay an additional supplement.

[187] An Asheville High School Latin teacher has taught enthusiastic students in the Jr. Classical League and every year the students win first or second place in the contest in Chapel Hill (see enclosure). [Claudia Edmiston]

[205] Although teacher's pay is low, one person went from a job in industry to teaching computers.

[220] The lack of self-discipline among the students is high. The normal family lacks a father and the mother works.

[237] Guns are not uncommon on school grounds.

[264] Norma: Her husband changed jobs from Atomic Energy to American Enka

[270] Her first involvement with the city was when she went to City Council about the need for sidewalks in her area. She got a petition and was successful. She joined the Federation of Women's Clubs and has been a professional volunteer.

[292] Cal recommended that she serve on the Planning and Zoning Board. She was the first woman in that position and other women were not supportive, making comments about her being "with all those men." She served for 4 years. [Cal Marshall]

[307] The local government study group in 1976 determined that Enka and Swannanoa could not become municipalities because this would further fragment this area - Woodfin and Biltmore Forest were already separate.

[318] The Sullivan Act of 1933, which stated that the water system could not charge more for water outside the city than inside, had been a constant sore spot until it was addressed in 1981. (The county reasoned that it had put in some of the lines.)

[338] Water has been, until recently, in bountiful supply. When she came on the council there was a moratorium on annexation. Areas wanted to join the city so they could serve liquor by the drink, which they could not do in the county. As part of the city they were free to put in water lines and fire hydrants. It was agreed that the county would pay for the maintenance of a full-fledged treatment plant.

[376] There was opposition to fluoride in the water. [Benny McCay]

[386] The city said it was going to get rid of the Sullivan Act, the county opposed but in 1981 a water agreement was signed - more like a tax equity. The county agreed to pay a percentage of the city patrol and Parks and Recreation Expenses.

[407] When she went on the council she studied at the Institute of Government in Raleigh. There are more special bills and laws here than the rest of the state combined. The county has a larger voting population than the city but the interests are not coordinated.

[447] She was hung in effigy in the Haw Creek Fire Station because of her stand on annexation.

[477] She always gave people a fair hearing - she didn't want to be called a "manipulator" or "politician." Because she was not working she had a chance to go to the sites under discussion and able to be on many committees.

[518] The Montford area was one of the first to be on the list for Preservation. She doesn't like the extra layer of regulations but saw Montford St. was going to be a thoroughfare and, when she was serving on the Transportation Advisory Commission, persuaded the members to save the center of the area.

[530] Broadway widening is controversial now but it is necessary to keep cars moving (see enclosed).

[575] In order to determine whether an area should be annexed it is necessary to study the tax base and tax rate. It takes time for study and great dedication on the part of council members. [Luke Atkinson]

Side 2:

[2/2] In 1977 she feels she was naïve in not knowing she should follow the custom of going to Weir to get his support. There was a group that wanted to "beat the boss" referring to Weir, and money came to her from the county hoping to reduce Weir's power. He believed in a "control type" of government and was not comfortable having women in politics. He was surprised when Barbara Keleher was elected. Norma was willing to run on her record for her second term. While others have had more years with the government, she has been the oldest long-term elected member on council - 17 years. [Weldon Weir, Barbara Keleher, Jeanne Swilling, Chris Peterson, Billy Wolcott]

[2/86] She supported the downtown development. Private and governmental money went in to the revitalization and now, through the tax dollar, it is paying its own way. Properties have been improved, people are living in town, the Grove Arcade will be used again and she is proud of what is being done. Pack Plaza is now 80-90% filled.

[2/136] East Riverside was never a major project like the French Broad area where there was major evacuation. The people worked with HUD and were compensated for their moves.

[2/157] The housing was substandard and had to be redone. There are still some bad conditions.

[2/172] The city was still paying off Depression debts during the 1950's and 60's. The world passed Asheville by. Through the Preservation Society and Federal Government tax benefits the city could keep what is important and unique - such as the Art Deco buildings.

[2/198] The city has always been blessed with outside people whose cosmopolitan tastes have encouraged the arts. Retirees brought in money, vision and insight. "People who haven't been away are not aware of what we have here." [Vanderbilts, Groves]

[2/220] It is not easy to get around in mountain cities. The necessary loops and bridges make road building expensive.

[2/251] The problem facing the area now is the I-26 corridor. There has to be some way to get around the city - small or large loops. There will be an aesthetic impact.

[2/280] Traffic in Biltmore area is a continuing problem. Money for major expensive roads - or an overpass will not come from the State now. We are pushing our resources to the maximum.

[2/314] Many activities are calling for funds at this point - the river front, symphony, Grove Arcade. We must continue to strive to get people to work together.

[2/330] She was sent as the mayor's representative to the Land-of-Sky Regional Council. She was an alternate for one meeting and chairman for two terms. It is important to work together. The economy is forcing cooperation. There are 18 regional councils in NC - 9 are county and 9 are municipal representations.

[2/410] Patrick: Railroad engine #722 was built in the early 20's by Baldwin for Southern Pacific for \$25-30,000. It is a freight engine, painted black and silver, and spent its time in Asheville. In the 1950's, when trains were converted to diesel fuel, a number of steam engines were sold. Hobbes, whose father was one of the original founders of the Eastern Tennessee Railroad, bought #722, numbered it #103, painted in green (the color it is today) and used it until that line also converted to diesel. In the early 1960's, MGM Studios needed, for its movies, an engine and swapped two diesels for it. It was then sold to Southern Railroad and loaned to the local Railroad chapter here, on Meadow and Short McDowell. Excursion expenses paid for the office and canopy for the train. It is a static engine but could be put in operating condition again. (see Lucius "Craggy" Ingle tape and photos) [Jim Hobbes]

[2/537] Norma: chaired the 2010 Plan which is updated every year. [Mike Moser]

[2/555] Their children are: Janet Price Ferril (b. 1961), married Marvin Ferril, son Rush Thompson Ferril, Kathy Price Carroll (b.1963), son Mason Patrick Carroll