

Interview with Johannah Gold.

JG: When Henry- No, When Sylvia McNeil migrated from St. Stephens down to Mount Pleasant that was after the Emancipation Proclamation. She brings Henry McNeil and Daniel McNeil, Helen, I mean, Ellen McNeil, Susan McNeil, and there's another one but I can't remember right now but that's my godmother down to Mount Pleasant. They migrated to Church Street. He had what was called then a delivery stable where the merchants come down from Georgetown, McLenen's Village, and St. Stephen and the surrounding area, they would leave their horse, buggy, or wagon there. He would unhitch them, feed the horses, curry them, groom them, rather and get them straight until they- while they take the ferry to pick up- I mean, pick up merchandise from Charleston. They would let him know whether they- whether they wanted him to bring the merch- the wagon down to the ferry on Hibben Street. And if they didn't, they would take the trolley car from Hibben Street to Church Street and unload their merchandise, put it on the wagon and go on back up into the country.

Interviewer: Okay. So during that time there was no automotives-

JG: No automotives. Nothing.

Interviewer: Just trolleys and buggies?

JG: Trolleys and buggies and jitneys.

Interviewer: How- How do you spell your name again?

JG: Johannah. It's Hannah with a Jo on it. J-O-H-A-N-N-A-H. G-O-L-D. Now, He was the first one- I will say- I read it in the paper that a black- the whites all had it- but he had a telephone in his office on Church Street where you had to crank it to make a call into Charleston.

Interviewer: Can you sign this for a moment. It's just so we can release your information. Just the photographer wants to take a picture or something.

Interviewer: Okay, great.

Interviewer: We have a questionnaire- Have some questions that we would like to ask you.

JG: You don't want me to finish telling you?

Interviewer: Sure!

JG: Okay, well let me finish telling you this and then you can ask the questions. He had this telephone where you had to crank it up and make a call into Charleston. He also had what you call a jitney that was bringing the white children from around the surrounding

area to Alhambra Hall to go to school. He used to charge them 5 cents, round trip.

Interviewer: What'd you say the school was?

JG: The school was Alhambra Hall.

Interviewer: He would give them a ride to school for 5 cents?

JG: Yea, in his jitney. We would just call it a jitney bus but it was drawn by horses. He also ran a wood yard where he would deliver wood, you know, to the people.

Interviewer: That was his type of occupation?

JG: Huh?

Interviewer: That was his type of occupation?

JG: Uh-huh. But you would- then you would call it a delivery stable, you know. And it was located on Church Street. I don't remember- Somebody is living there, now. I think it was 412 Church Street.

Interviewer: About what time would you say all of this was?

JG: That was around 1845. No, 1860 something. But I do know that he came here directly behind Francis Coleman's family.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. Coleman?

JG: Uh-huh. Now what else? He and my grandfather run the place together.

Interviewer: And-and he was your-your father?

JG: He was my grand-uncle. Henry McNiel. My grandfathers name was Daniel. His mother was Syliva McNiel but um, don't ask me about her husband 'cause I don't know.

Interviewer: McNiel? That's M-C-N?

JG: M-C-N-I-E-L.

Interviewer: Alright.

JG: Okay, now I'll answer the questions.

Interviewer: Okay. Do you have your own sheet?

JG: No.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewer: What are your- that's your earliest- what are your earliest memories of Mount Pleasant? You know, that you can remember?

JG: My earliest memory of Mount Pleasant? Let's see. I was, about 1924, I was about 6 years old, my earliest memory of Mount Pleasant. And I do remember we used to come over here to Charleston, I mean, I was little in Mount Pleasant. We used to come over from Charleston to Mount Pleasant and the ferry name was the Sapool.

Interviewer: So you to-Okay the ferry?

JG: Take the ferry.

Interviewer: And you lived downtown?

JG: No, I lived on Smith Street. Next to Ashley Hall Girls School. And the girls used to jump the fence in our yard to go on dates.

JG: Don't believe that, huh?

Interviewer: So what-

JG: I'm 76 years old!

Interviewer: So, let's see, your date of birth would be-?

JG: 6-23-14

Interviewer: And you were born in Charleston?

JG: James Island.

Interviewer: James Island.

JG: In the Soligree Section.

Interviewer: Soligree. I know where that is. How about your current address? You still live in James Island?

JG: No. 1145 Venning Road.

Interviewer: And that's in Mount Pleasant?

JG: Mount Pleasant. 44056.

Interviewer: 44056. How many years have you lived in Mount Pleasant?

JG: From 1937 up till now.

Interviewer: Okay. 1937. 54 years. And you're married?

JG: A widow.

Interviewer: Number of children?

JG: 2. I raised 4. Put 4 down.

Interviewer: Okay.

JG: Because if I say I raised 2 and I don't include them, they'll be very angry.

Interviewer: They'd get mad at ya?

JG: They already told me: I am your son and I am your daughter.

Interviewer: How bout their ages?

JG: Lee is 30- Wait a minute, I'll let you figure it out. '55 August, '47 November, '45 December, and '29 January- February, I mean! So now you- you know their age.

Interviewer: How about your educational background?

JG: I had 4 years high school, 4 years of nursing, and 5 years taking care of the children, see. That was a personal thing.

Interviewer: So your occupation- you were a nurse?

JG: No- Yes. Now?

Interviewer: Or- you were.

JG: Was.

Interviewer: You are retired.

JG: No! I'm not retired. I'm still working every day.

Interviewer: Great! Okay, Bobby?

Interviewer: Talking about your childhood home. Did you have electricity or indoor plumbing or anything?

JG: No.

Interviewer: No? Neither one?

JG: We had outdoor toilet. Where you go outside and take care of your wants and come back in. If you were fortunate. But I happened to be fortunate enough that we were able to have an out-of-the-house. Some people didn't. They go in the bushes. You find the truth in the light, right?

Interviewer: Yea. That's what we like! So when you were growing up how big was the people that was living- How big was your family-?

JG: My family was 9. 6 girls and 3 boys. Plus my grandfather lived up on James Island. He didn't live over here all the time.

Interviewer: How did your parents make a living?

JG: Farming. And my father used to work for the [Inaudible], you know. You know he would come over from the James Island to Charleston and then he would come back home on Saturday. Well, Friday or Saturday according to how his work. And then he would come over, he would come over to James Island. And bring the [Inaudible] or whatnot. Then on Saturday I would ride with my mother back to take him to work.

Interviewer: How would you describe your class? Struggling, poor, wealthy?

JG: At that particular time, I think we lived well.

Interviewer: Comfortable? You would say?

JG: Hm?

Interviewer: You would say you were comfortable?

JG: Yea, very comfortable. Because my grandfather, when he moved to James Island, he would sell to milk to the neighbors. 2 cents a quart.

Interviewer: 2 cents. That's a quart?

JG: Yea.

Interviewer: What school did you attend?

JG: I attended Buist School in Charleston. Then I went to- then we moved to New York and I attend Piers 146, Piers 164, and Striven Miller High School.

Interviewer: So down here it was Buist?

JG: Buist.

Interviewer: Do you know how to- how to spell that, by chance?

Interviewer: B-U-I-S-T.

JG: B-R-U-I-S-T, I think. I not too sure. But I attended that from the 1st grade to the 3rd.

Interviewer: How far was school from your home?

JG: Hm?

Interviewer: How far was the school from your home?

JG: Let's see. We had- I had to go across Marion Square, that would be 1 block. And King to St. Phillip, that's 2. From St. Phillip to Coming, that's 3. And from Coming to Smith, that's 4. And from Smith to- No, Smith, that's 4. 4 and a half.

Interviewer: How did you get there? Did you walk or-?

JG: Walked! And that was learning to be on time. [Laughter] Wanna know? My mother wake me up early in the morning. And I would you know, go back to sleep. And being the youngest, I tried to get away with things. So when I passed my brothers room, I saw him with his shoes- you know, he was in the bed laying down but he had his shoes on the floor, hitting it you know, like he was walking around. So she went to call me I done the same thing. So she'd always say "Young lady, I called you. Get up and go to school." We had to be in school a quarter to 9. We didn't- we didn't go there at 9 o'clock and say- you had to be there. The gate is locked a quarter to 9. So she called me again and I did the same thing. So imagine the coldest morning of the year, like when the temperature's in the 20s, she called me and I didn't get up. And when she called me again it was a quarter to 9. And I cried and done everything except stand on my head. She said "Young lady, you're going to school." Well my 2 sisters was in Buist School, but they were 9th grade and they told me- they were saying that if you got on at the end of the line, the principal is so tired, he always passed the last 3. Because he was about 4 feet tall, the principal was, his name was Mr. Hills and the other boys they tower over him, you know. He had to tip toes and they would hold them way up, like this, and by the time he tip toed to reach them he was really tired. And I got on the end of the line and that's the very end he started from. So he told me to hold my hand out and I never got a whipping in school. I held my hand like this and he came right across this thumb. My hand swole up like this and I went on up to class. And my teacher, she let me stand by the window, you know, by the radiator and put my hand in cold water- warm water, rather, and try to help me. Well I just knew that when I got home my mother was going make me be at school the next day so I didn't tell her what happened. And she just looked at me and said "That will learn you to be on time." And it never left me. If I'm supposed to have an appointment at 1

o'clock and it's 1:15, I get very nervous. You will learn- if you didn't learn anything in school, you'll learn to be on time. And I- even today- if I can't be a place at a certain hour, and I can't get in touch with you, I will go.

Interviewer: Is that your worst memories of school?

JG: That's the worst memory.

Interviewer: Do you have any fondest memories of school?

JG: Oh, I have a fond memory of my teacher, Mrs. Saunders. And she wanted me to- she wanted to- to keep me with her but my mother wouldn't let her.

Interviewer: Oh really?

JG: Uh-huh. But I really enjoyed school, I enjoyed playing with the children, I enjoyed being in my family because we were always loving and my mother taught all of us to dance. And those days, if you teach your children to dance, you get into trouble with the church. But she taught us. She taught the boys as well as the girls. So that's that.

Interviewer: So- How old were you when you got your first job?

JG: Hm. I was about 20- about twent-. No! My first job; when I was 14. And it wasn't out of the home, it was in the home because my mother was a diabetic and then I had to give her the insulin. So the others you know, joined together and said "That if you go out and work, we will pay you to stay home and take care of mother."

Interviewer: What kind of salary did you make?

JG: Hm?

Interviewer: What kind of salary?

JG: It wasn't much. Was about 5 or 6 dollars or something. [Inaudible]

Interviewer: 5 or 6 dollars?

JG: If you get that!

Interviewer: A day? Or a week?

JG: Uh huh.

Interviewer: A day.

JG: But um-

Interviewer: How- how bout your first job outside?

JG: Outside the home?

Interviewer: How old are you?

JG: I was about 27.

Interviewer: 27?

JG: No! 24.

Interviewer: 24? And what type of work was that? Nursing?

JG: Nursing.

Interviewer: And how much did you make with that?

JG: I made about- about 35 dollars.

Interviewer: And that's a month?

JG: A week.

Interviewer: A week.

JG: And my first job that I remember when I came out of nursing- I always worried about whether I could make it on my own. That was my most worry is- Can I stand on my own feet, you could put it like that. And after graduation, with the presents that I got and the money, all that I had left was 50 percent. After I paid 2 months rents, all I had to eat- to live on was 50 cents. So I got 2 loaves of bread, no, 1 loaf of bread and 2 cans of tomato soup. It's not that I couldn't get it- my mother wanted to give me- she said " You don't have any money." And I said "Yes I do!" But I was laying cause I didn't want her help. I wanted to stand on my own feet. So I lived on 50 cents for a whole week. And that was in the 40s. So if I could live on 50 cents the whole week I knew I could make it.

Interviewer: Earlier you were talking about ya'll jumped over fences and stuff at your home to go out on dates or whatever. Could you go into more detail about how dating was back then?

JG: Well, we used to live on Smith Street. I don't remember the number now. But I- I could- I could go to the house. And when the girls wanted to go on dates, I was around 6 or 7 years old then, but this way when the girls wanted to go on dates- they would- the lady that lived in the back of us- it was this house, then another house, and another house- which was called an alley. But when the girls in Ashley Hall want to go on a date- they're

not allowed to go out. They would jump the fence and go through our yard, and meet their date, and go out, and then they come back in the night and go jump the fence to go back.

Interviewer: So they had to sneak out to go out on a date?

JG: But I don't know whether they was sneaking out. I knew they were sneaking out but I didn't know exactly-

Interviewer: Besides dating, what other recreation did ya'll do?

JG: Ashley Hall?

Interviewer: Ma'am?

JG: Ashley Hall?

Interviewer: No, in your childhood besides- what other?

JG: We used to go for boat rides.

Interviewer: Boat rides?

JG: Mmhhh. And my grandfather used to watch us. And he didn't allow the girls to go in the water because he had 3 grands that drowned one time. [Whistle] So he didn't- he didn't allow the girls. But he could sit on the porch, on our- our porch, and our porch faced the water just like this. And he could look say about to that boon like thing in the river and could tell exactly who went in the water and who didn't. And of course if I was along with them, and they- and the girls go in the water, he would let them get by because he wouldn't like to yell at us. The he would go out in to the fields and pick blackberries and that was of my fondest memories and I don't eat that today. Cooking dumplings. My mother could make blackberry dumplings. And she would roll and make the dough, just like cake, and roll it out and then she would put the blackberry in with butter and sugar and whatnot and then she would roll it up like a jelly roll. And then she'd put it in a gauze and put it in a pot and boil it. And every time she does it, I would start crying. Cause I didn't like- I did nothing- I didn't like the dumpling. I couldn't understand why she had to boil the flour. So my grandfather- I would go out and start crying and he would say "Go and call you mother." So then I call her- he would say- his pet name for me was Menchie, "Give Menchie her berries in a cup with sugar on it." And she could kill me. But she'd give it to me because then, you know, the mothers never go back, you know, never disrespect their fathers. Whatever their fathers say to do, they'll do it. And not like now, it's like "Mother, I'm not going to-" And she would make blackberry dumplings and then when it's done, she would cut it and she'd make a buttered sauce and put it on it. My sisters ate it and enjoyed it. And then the other memory I have of myself, when we were playing, we had to walk to church, too. Very seldomly we had a ride and to go to Sunday School we had to go maybe 4 or 6 miles, to Sunday School. And we had a boy, which he

was very mean, and this Easter they decided to get even with him. So they tell all the young children to run. You know, it had rained that night. So then they decided that- you know, this grape vine was hanging down over this puddle. And they knew where the puddle was so they take all the little ones and swing them across the puddle so that they could run to the church. So then, the last one, he could run faster than the rest. He stood there and he starts arguing over this- this branch and while he was arguing, you know "I don't want you to swing me." So he decided to swing on over but they had pulled the branch to the weeds so that when he got on it, he would land in the water. So when he- they- they- they let him swing across and he got on this branch to swing across, the branch came down and he went right in the water. And then my uncle, he used to plant Palmetto Ropes and pipe for the College so he would practice rope, and then tie it on a tree and give it to us to swing from. [Inaudible] When he gets to the back. We were swinging on it this Sunday morning and I ran across with my sister to swing and she had already swing back and stopped. And that was the time I went running and her feet caught me on the side of my head and knocked me out there from 'bout 10:30 to about 3 o'clock in the afternoon. And when I came to, I had a knot on my head and my aunt had the smoothing iron, it's an iron that you put in front of the fire to iron the clothes, and she was putting that on my head to cool it and get this bump off. Well, that was alright. Then, what happened? The next memory I have of being knocked out was my sister, she was jumping over the wagon and she told me to move and I didn't. When she jumped her knee caught me and knocked me out again.

Interviewer: You were just beaten up!

JG: I was, I was. But I really enjoyed myself.

Interviewer: What role did religion play in your life? Was it very important?

JG: What?

Interviewer: Religion.

JG: Oh yes it was. You couldn't- if you mother say to go to church you couldn't say "I'm not going" or "I don't feel like going." You have to go. That's a must.

Interviewer: What denomination were ya'll?

JG: That was Baptist. Mmhmm. Then after I married I went to the AME.

Interviewer: What church did your family belong to? Do you remember?

JG: First Baptist Church, James Island.

Interviewer: Okay. What sort of church activities did you join in?

JG: Well we had Children's Day where you get- the teacher would give you a-a piece and you had to get up and say it and they'd clap, you know. And then you had Easter, where you'd dress up in your finery. And Christmas, those were, you know, the most important activities. But Children's Day was the- was the- I think it was the best because all the little ones would do a reading.

Interviewer: How would you compare religious practices from then to religious practice now?

JG: It's very different.

Interviewer: Really? It was more serious back then?

JG: It was most serious back then.

Interviewer: Where did your family do their shopping at?

JG: You mean like what my family do now? Well, they-my boy is in business, and the other one he is in business but he is not here, and the other one, he is working for himself. My girl, she is working, you know, in a company. She is a computer programmer.

Interviewer: Back in the early times, how did they do their shopping? Or ya'll do-?

JG: When you go shopping, you have to go to the store, you had to have a wagon, or a gig, or horse, a mule. And then you would go to the store. Other than that you walked. Some people walked to put the food on the table.

Interviewer: But where did ya'll go? Downtown is where you did your shopping or at the Market or?

JG: You mean in Charleston? Oh I thought- I thought about- In Charleston we-we used to go to the store. They had a store right on the corner: Smith and Vanderhorst.

Interviewer: Okay. Were you born in a hospital or a home or?

JG: Was born at home.

Interviewer: Was it a doctor or a midwife?

JG: Midwife.

Interviewer: Did your family visit a doctor regularly or? Did ya'll ever see a doctor when you were young?

JG: Yes, my mother and father would visit the doctor. And the doctor's name on James Island was Doctor Ellis.

Interviewer: Doctor Ellis. What sort of illnesses would have been treated at home?

JG: We didn't have any.

Interviewer: What kind of illnesses? You know, at home-at-at home?

JG: Maybe a stomach ache or something like that.

Interviewer: How would ya'll- Where there certain remedies that ya'll had back then?

JG: Oh they had remedies. I use remedies, now.

Interviewer: Really? Like what?

JG: Like garlic.

Interviewer: Garlic? For what?

JG: High blood pressure.

Interviewer: High blood pressure? Okay.

JG: You wouldn't believe it- You going to laugh just like when I tell my doctor what I do. Now, I'm using garlic. I'm using it now because I'm going to my doctor on the 7th. So every other day I pinch off a piece of garlic out of the yard and pop it in with some cold water or milk. Now when I get to him, he puts me on a scale, the nurse puts me on a scale when I get in, and he'll say to me "You gained weight but your pressure was the same!" And I would laugh. Then after he does that, for about maybe for the whole time, then I'll say "Doc, you may think I'm- but you know what, I'm just popping garlic." And he say "Oh, that's good." But one of them told me that the scientists are beginning this study now that garlic does have something to do with your pressure.

Interviewer: Oh really?

Interviewer: You- you put it in water?

JG: I just take a garlic- go out in the yard, pull up a garlic, take the, and then get down to that soft part and then I just take off a little piece like that and then I put it in my mouth and swallow it whole.

Interviewer: Nice.

Interviewer: Were these doctors' offices or hospitals segregated at the time?

JG: Yes, it was. That is- that is one of the things I remember. It was segregated. Roper Hospital was segregated. But you could go to the clinic there. But when time to go in and they would remember. But most people were afraid to go into the hospital because when they get there, they're so sick they dies. So then they blame it on the hospital.

Interviewer: So what diseases were most common?

JG: Typhoid Fever. Malaria Fever! Malaria Fever! 'Cause I remember when my mother had it. The first time she caught that sickness, I was about 2 years old, and she said I couldn't remember that. But I do remember! I even remember what we had for dinner that day. And where I was and where my mother was and how I called my father and my grandfather to come and see what's wrong with her because she started throwing up. And they take her in the house and they lay her down on a cot by the chimney. But that's all I remember- the fire was- it was in the summer but she had just got through cooking and it was hot in there. And I remember promising myself that when I grew up that I would take care of all the sick people. I even remember the sun was going down and there was just a big rainbow when I made that promise.

Interviewer: So that's why you became a nurse?

JG: That's why I became a nurse.

Interviewer: What diseases took the most lives?

JG: Let's see, what did he say?

Interviewer: Did malaria take a lot of lives?

JG: No, no, no, no. I can't remember but it was after the second World War. The flu. The flu.

Interviewer: Flu?

JG: The flu took more lives than anything else.

Interviewer: What ceremonies and customs were associated with death and dying?

JG: What ceremonies? Well people would come in and sit with you and counsel with you and they would pray for you.

Interviewer: Much like today? The same?

JG: Same thing like today. But not as- not as- not as personal as a while back.

Interviewer: Now going on to the political part of the early days. Were you able to vote back then?

JG: My grandfather was. But then when I got in to it was in the 40s. The 40s and early 50s.

Interviewer: So you were at least 30 years- 30?

JG: I didn't go into it because I always said that I held out- one politician in the family was enough. And I knew that if I was- I always belonged to the Democratic Party and I was thinking my husband was a Democrat, too, and we had difference of opinion as to what candidate was what. I also let them know, let him know, that once a politician comes in and gives you 10, or 15, or 20 dollars, you can't ask them for anything. Because if you do, the first thing that come out of their mouth was "What do you want from me? I already paid you for my vote." So I didn't go- I wouldn't go- So I always pushed him ahead but stayed in the background.

Interviewer: Back in the early times what was needed- what was required of you to vote? To be able to vote?

JG: You had to- I'm not so sure about that. But I think you had to have have-had to own property.

Interviewer: Had to own property?

JG: I'm not so sure. But I'm thinking it was you had to own property to vote. And then you had to pay a poll tax.

Interviewer: That's the next question. So you had to pay a poll tax?

JG: We had to pay a poll tax. And if you didn't pay the poll tax and they caught up with you, then they make you go rows.

Interviewer: Oh really?

JG: You had to go and spend a certain amount of time on the-

Interviewer: Was there a literacy test?

JG: It was a literacy test after. When I was a child, I could have gone but there was, you know, a literacy test after that.

Interviewer: So the political parties and everything paid money to get votes?

JG: No, no. They didn't pay money. They just pay- you know, they came by and asked you to vote for them and then they would say "I'm going to give you something." But they didn't pay you to vote. Now don't quote me saying that they paid for the vote. They didn't. But then this is how I look at it because I learned politics in school. Just like we

have politics in school, now, where they're head of the student body. We didn't have that. We had, if you were going to run for the student body, you had to get to hold an assembly and tell what you were going to do to include the school. So I learned that in school and I was instilling that into my husband when he was- was running. But just like they would say "I will give you something" not like they were buying the vote. You understand? But then when they get into office and you go and ask them for something, they could come back on you with it. You understand what I'm saying? They didn't- they didn't- they didn't come by and pay nobody, now. Don't misquote me.

Interviewer: So it was very personal?

JG: No, it wasn't personal. That was just on the whole.

Interviewer: Did you ever go listen to any of the campaigns they had in Mount Pleasant?

JG: I would listen to them. But what I didn't understand- why would you tell the faithful few what you were going to do? Now my vote can get you into office or put you- take you out, keep you out, rather. But if I vote for you, say maybe I feel like if I vote for you, you're going to fix my roads or you're going fix something. Now when I get to voting for you, you never told me you were going to fix my roads. You said vote for me but you didn't tell me what you- what you were going to do. So I voted for you. So now I want my road fixed, you are in office, I go by, I say "Look I want my road fixed." And you say "I didn't tell you I was going to fix your road." So I couldn't understand why they tell the faithful few what they're going to do and then the majority they don't say anything. I feel like a politician should get in and say "I'm going to do thus-and-so" and don't tell who knows what they're going to do. Then you could, you know, vote for them.

Interviewer: What were the greatest changes you saw in politics in Mount Pleasant?

JG: The greatest change I saw in politics was getting the black into office again. That's the greatest change.

Interviewer: About what year- what years was that associated with? When'd you see that?

JG: In the 60s. I think so, now, I can't do math!

Interviewer: That's fine. Now going on to the community of Mount Pleasant. How large was the Town of Mount Pleasant when you were growing up?

JG: The Town of Mount Pleasant was from Simmons Street to the River. I mean when I first came to Mount Pleasant in the 30s, the late 30s, but it was been a- a tremendous change.

Interviewer: What kind of Public Services were there? Were there Fire Department? Police? No Fire?

JG: I don't remember the F- the Fire Department just came in lately, I mean since Mount Pleasant started developing.

Interviewer: How bout any Police?

JG: They had Police and they had a little jail house someplace around here. Just a little building. But you'll have to ask the town about that.

Interviewer: Garbage? Trash or anything?

JG: Hm?

Interviewer: Garbage or trash pick ups?

JG: They had it in the town but my husband started on the outskirts.

Interviewer: Okay.

JG: And he used to go around and pick up garbage and stuff.

Interviewer: Did ya'll have mail delivery?

JG: Hm?

Interviewer: Did ya'll have mail delivery back then?

JG: Yes, we had mail delivery. And you could, you know, rent a box in the post office. The post office- the post office was on Pitt Street. Then it moved across the street and then it- it moved some place else, onto Fairmont Avenue.

Interviewer: You remember when you first received electricity and have plumbing?

JG: No, but my husband said they received it in the 30s. That was when Berkley Electric Corp started getting the people to sign up.

Interviewer: What about indoor plumbing? Was it about the same time?

JG: No, that came much later. Now I can't say- I can say I'm talking about the- the indoor plumbing came around the 40s.

Interviewer: So they got electricity in the 30s and indoor plumbing in the 40s. The people without electricity- how did they keep food fresh?

JG: Without elect- how did they?

Interviewer: Yea, before refrigerators were around.

JG: Oh! My aunt Susan, as hard as it is now, she could cook a pot. And you could eat out of that maybe Friday and it's still fresh. Now you say it's impossible. It is possible! She had a little box about this big and she would buy ice and put it in. When she'd get through cooking, she would let that pot come to a boil, then she doesn't open it to get anything, to see anything about it until the next day when she's going to eat. Because we always had a fight about that "When did you cook this? Today or yesterday?" But she could keep her food preserved without using ice or anything.

Interviewer: Talking about transportation again. So remember ya'll had a ferry right? Ya'll had- you were?

JG: The ferry. You could take a street car from the ferry. And I think it goes all the way to the Isle of Palms. I'm not so sure, now. But I know it came up past my uncles house.

Interviewer: Do you know when ya'll first had automobiles around here?

JG: Hm?

Interviewer: Automobiles?

JG: Around 1917. My cousin bought one and he said it was a Studebaker.

Interviewer: Studebaker. Do you remember the trolley?

JG: Yea, it was- it was something like the trolley in Los Angeles. You know?

Interviewer: What type of people used the trolley? All people?

JG: Oh, all people! Whites as well as the blacks!

Interviewer: What about the ferry?

JG: White as well as blacks used it. And then you- when I start coming over they used to bring the- the cars over on it from Charleston.

Interviewer: Do you remember when they first built the Cooper River Bridge?

JG: No, I wasn't living here, then.

Interviewer: Oh, Okay.

JG: I think it was like 1934 but I'm not so sure. When it was open, something like that.

Interviewer: When you moved over here there was only one bridge at the time?

JG: There was no bridge at all when I s- When I move over here, it was the Cooper River Bridge. When I move over here and that was in '38.

Interviewer: How many families had automobiles back then?

JG: I really don't know. I only know that my cousin- what he told me and then he died 'round in the 60s. He was 80. So he knew what he was talking about.

Interviewer: When did cars replace the public transportation?

JG: What did-?

Interviewer: When did cars really, really become popular? Took like- people started using cars more.

JG: I really don't know. I guess if you could afford it you-

Interviewer: Okay, talking about the historical events of your childhood. What were some holidays that were celebrated in your youth?

JG: 4th of July, Christmas, Labor Day back when they- everybody would get together and they would have a march in Charleston with bands and guitars. You name it- they had it.

Interviewer: But ya'll had a good time.

JG: Oh yes we did!

Interviewer: Easter, right?

JG: Uh huh. Easter, Children's Day.

Interviewer: How 'bout Emancipation Day?

JG: They still celebrate it but I never bothered with it.

Interviewer: Okay.

JG: They still do that, now.

Interviewer: Who organized these celebrations? Was it ya'lls church?

JG: They had a committee that organized it. But who, I don't know.

Interviewer: Do you remember-

[Inaudible]

JG: Very odd. The families could just barely get by. Sometimes when you go- when the black goes to get food, they were deprived of it.

Interviewer: So it was real rough back then, huh?

JG: It was rough.

Interviewer: How did that effect the employment and businesses in Mount Pleasant?

JG: I really don't know nothing 'bout Mount Pleasant, now.

Interviewer: Okay.

JG: Not when it comes to the Depression. But I'm talking about where I was raised at and in New York it was very hard there. But I did hear some of the- the elders, like myself, say how hard it was here. They were deprived of the food and they wouldn't even give it to them!

Interviewer: Do you remember any of the New Deals that were developed at this time?

JG: Huh?

Interviewer: Any New Deals? Like the WPA or the CCC?

JG: They had- they had that. The WPA and the CCC and whatever, you know, to help.

Interviewer: Okay. Do you remember World War II?

JG: Oh yea, I remember that.

Interviewer: What was that like?

JG: Well, I think I pushed that in the back of my memory because I didn't- but I know it was very hard to get things. And if you had a new baby you couldn't get milk for them. But I was fortunate because I would go to my doctor and my baby had to drink a special kind so I could get mine from the drug store.

Interviewer: Do you have any family members that served in any of the wars?

JG: Any what?

Interviewer: Any family members that served in the war?

JG: My nephew.

Interviewer: What branch is he in? Do you remember?

JG: Army.

Interviewer: Army.

JG: And the Korean War, my nephew. Vietnam, my son.

Interviewer: Do you remember where your nephew was stationed in World War II?

JG: In Germany.

Interviewer: Germany.

Interviewer: What was your impressions outside- of the outside life after World War II? Outside of Mount Pleasant?

JG: What? I didn't understand the question.

Interviewer: How did you view the world and the nation after the war? Was it better or worse? Depressed? Happy?

JG: I couldn't-

Interviewer: Okay, That's fine.

JG: I'm going to tell you about myself.

Interviewer: Okay.

JG: We were starting a business, then. And it was very- I feel this way, if I was working for myself, if I was working for somebody else, I supposed to be on that job at a certain time, I would be there. And I felt in a sense that I was working for myself, that I should treat myself the same way. And I worked, you know, with my husband in a small grocery store. And we did pretty good with that. Enough to put our children through college.

Interviewer: Did any area military installations have an impact on Mount Pleasant? What changes did World War II bring to the Town of Mount Pleasant?

JG: Well, they bring a- With me, now, they bring a air of- They treat you like how you treat yourself. You know? You know what I mean? If you treat yourself, then they treat you the same way. And they see that you know, wouldn't stand for that kind of treatment and you do treat yourself better.

Interviewer: Do you remember the Civil Rights protests in 1950s, 60s?

JG: Well that was pretty hard. Because they would put pressure on you. You know, for intimately speaking, after the war. But we were in business, they didn't, you know, they didn't pressure us as much. Because my husband was collecting the trash and whatnot, you know, and they were feeling if you do anything, he might stop and didn't have the means of- so.

Interviewer: Were you involved in any of the Civil Rights Movements or anything?

JG: I would go to the meetings.

Interviewer: You would go to the meetings?

JG: Sure. And one meeting we had Dr. King here, and he was well guarded. He spoke to the Palace, what they named the Palace, now. They had a sharp shooter up on the roof and everything for his protection.

Interviewer: Do you remember when public services became desegregated? Like buses and schools and hotels?

JG: I don't remember the year. I can't remember the year. But I know how it was.

Interviewer: Could you tell us what it was like?

JG: Well, for instance, sometimes we get on the bus and you have that 4 seats in the back or those 2 seats in the back and if those seats were full, you still had to squeeze in the back. And then after segregation, came a law and we could sit any place on the bus. I think in the 40s. Yea, this lady she was sitting on the bus, she was a darker white and this driver told her to move- told this man to move and she told him, "You don't move." And the driver said "I am stopping this bus and I wouldn't drive another inch until you get out." So she says "You sit right there, don't move." He knew who she was but the bus driver didn't. So finally, the bus driver insist on this man move. So then she spoke up and said "April Fool's comes once a year, but it seems like you a fool all the time." And so, he didn't know whether- so his remark back to her was "It gets so you don't know the white from the black." Because she really was black but she was just so fair.

Interviewer: Do you remember when the schools in Mount Pleasant were integrated?

JG: Round in the 60s?

Interviewer: 60s.

JG: 60s or 70s something like that. I can't remember. I'd have to look up my daughters graduation. Because she went to Moultrie the next year. No, she went to Wando. And she was rather smart, I tell you the truth, she was a smart cookie. And she came in contact with one teacher at Wando and the majority of the children said you had to stay in her

class for 2 or 3 years. You get her for math and she had never come in contact with a black child, that I gathered, that was smart in math so she wouldn't call on her every time she would raise her hand. So then she came home and every day she came home and would start telling me "Miss So-and-so this, and Miss So-and-so that." And I got very tired with it so when they had school conference, I went to check on her. So then she told - then I got there, all her teachers had good things to say about her. And one of them said- she was a little rebellious but then I told the whole class that if she- that if they didn't behave the whole class didn't behave that they would be punished. So I knew she'd behave herself because she'd have to be punished with the class for doing something that was bad. And then this particular teacher, I went to her, and she started giving me a glowing review. And I asked her, "Well it's the funniest thing, I mean, she comes home every day, she has such a complaint against you." "I want to know what it is that she's done." And I said "She said you never call on her. She said sometimes you call up and down the aisle and call but you never call on her." So she said "Well, I caught her looking out the window." Now the window was just one straight window and she couldn't see much else. So I said "You are not going to have any more trouble with this one." So at the end of the school year she came and said "Mother I know you had to go on like that. Hold on, let me sit down. Miss So-and-so said that I was one of the children that could take Algebra 2 in the 9th grade." So- So I just take it for granted that she had never come into contact with a smart black child. But other than that, I didn't have any more problems with the school.

Interviewer: Do you remember what churches played- what role they played in the Civil Rights Movement?

Interviewer: Well for the Civil Rights Movement?

JG: Well, yea, they were for the Civil Rights Movement.

Interviewer: What were the most prominent Civil Rights leaders in Mount Pleasant? Do you remember their names?

JG: There were quite a few but I can't say, you know, exactly who it is. I know my husband did attend the meetings and he knew who they were. But, some people from up- but it was best to not call their names.

Interviewer: Did the integration efforts result in any violence in Mount Pleasant? Was there a lot of violence?

JG: Mmhmm.

Interviewer: There was? How would you describe racial relations in Mount Pleasant?

JG: I think it's very cordial. They're getting to- they're beginning to accept us more, you know?

Interviewer: Do you remember the Vietnam War?

JG: No, I know my son was over there and that's all. And he said mother "One of these days I will tell you about it, but as it is now, don't ask me. So-

Interviewer: So your son was in it?

JG: Hm?

Interviewer: So your son was in the Vietnam War?

JG: Mmhmm.

Interviewer: Do you remember any of the protests that were against the Vietnam War?

Interviewer: Were there any in Mount Pleasant?

JG: Not that I know- not that I know of. There may have been some in Charleston but I don't know.

Interviewer: Did a separate youth culture develop in Mount Pleasant? That's like the- like the hippies and everything?

Interviewer: Were there a lot of hippies?

JG: I don't remember. I don't remember any of that.

Interviewer: What about drugs and alcohol?

JG: I really don't know.

Interviewer: What do you see as the most signif- significant economic change which have occurred in Mount Pleasant since your youth?

JG: Well, people are beginning to build better and more comfortable homes. They are having better jobs, you know.

Interviewer: So the Town of Mount Pleasant has changed a lot since the 70s?

JG: I think so, I think so. But they still haven't, you know, the idea is, I'm sitting here talking to you. All I see that's here are 2-3 human beings, intelligent beings, talking together and the reason for that is we have never come in contact and those who have never come in contact with a black, they don't know what it's all about. Just for instance, I know more about you than you know about me because I've worked in your home. But you have never socialized or come to find me and see what I'm doing. But if we could sit down and talk and visit around with each other, I'm not saying come and spend the night

or run up to your table every time you put food on it, but just talk as an intelligent being. Mount Pleasant is a small community but they haven't even started touching their resources yet. But it's a small community but they haven't even started touching. And if the white and black could get together, Mount Pleasant could be the leading southern town in South Carolina. And South Carolina could start touching all their resources. We haven't even touched from the Civil War. We should start using our resources from the Civil War, now.

Interviewer: What impact do you think air conditioning had on the lives of everybody?

JG: It doesn't bother me. I'm so fat, I'm insulated. It really- it's a nice thing to have. But when I put on my apron, I have to get under a blanket cause it's too cold.

Interviewer: Do you think people have become more- what am I saying?

JG: Accustomed to it?

Interviewer: Right. And not able to stand the heat any more? Like back the olden days?

JG: They seems to- What happened, they fail to remember where they came from. See? If you remember where you come from, you can accept what it is, now.

Interviewer: If you could choose one thing to let future generations know about your youth in Charleston and Mount Pleasant what would you tell them?

JG: I would tell them, learn to accept things as they are.

Interviewer: Okay.

JG: Because once you learn to accept things as they are, you will become more healthier. And I learned that from my doctor. He told me in '54 to learn to accept things as they are and from then I have never been sick, you know. But aches and pains- that's why I try- well, I do have aches and pains, now, because I have arthritis but other than that-

Interviewer: If you could tell future generations anything about your memories of Mount Pleasant, what would you tell them?

JG: That Mount Pleasant is beautiful place to live. And Mount Pleasant is just starting to use their resources, now, because if they would think and use their resources, Mount Pleasant would be the richest little town in the southeast.

Interviewer: Okay. Great. That's all they questions we had but is there anything else that you would like to tell us?

JG: No, I don't think there's anything else. I guess I gave ya'll some interesting things.

Interviewer: Great!

Interviewer: If there's anything else-

[End of tape]