

The Buckhall Oral History Project

Prince William County, Virginia

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Prepared by

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Themes and Major Findings

Buckhall is a small community located about 10 minutes east of the city of Manassas. Like many regions in Virginia, and across the nation, Buckhall started as a primarily agricultural community whose population has grown and whose land has developed extensively, particularly since the 1960s as Manassas has expanded. The center of this community consists of the Buckhall United Methodist Church (UMC), the Buckhall General Store, and the Buckhall School building. This report looks at these buildings and the agricultural history of Buckhall to give a sense of how the community has changed and to capture what Buckhall once was.

This report is compiled by Meaghan Brennan, based on her archival research at the Ruth E. Lloyd Information Center (RELIC) at the Manassas Central Library, a set of oral history interviews, and unrecorded conversations with Buckhall residents. Most of the interviews were conducted in the Buckhall United Methodist Church, in the old 1905 sanctuary, where almost all of the narrators had spent time in their youth and as young adults. These interviews were with Merry Christebell (Chris) Korzendorfer, Frank Moore, Kathryn Sessler, Kathy Clark, and Betty Busby. Another interview was conducted with Fritz Korzendorfer Jr. at the Williams Ordinary in Dumfries. The participants were selected based on a list curated by Kathy Clark, the secretary at the Buckhall UMC, as well as community members who had previous contact with Lauren Maloy, the Prince William County Historic Communities Coordinator, through a community tour led in Buckhall in the spring of 2023. This report will focus on the major themes seen in the oral history interviews including the role of agriculture and the rural nature of the community, the Buckhall UMC, the Buckhall General Store, the sense of community and Buckhall pride, and how the community has changed and faced controversies.



Buckhall Church building where interviews were conducted. Built 1905.

History

The history of Buckhall before the Civil War is not entirely clear. One newspaper article references comments made by Manassas historian R.J. Ratcliffe who said that the community dates back to 1717 when it was called “Buckhele” and was dominated by the Mayfield estate owned by the Hooe family until the mid 1800s.¹ The individuals interviewed for this project knew very little about Buckhall before the arrival of Captain Thomas J. Moore after the Civil War. His descendant, Eddie Moore, said there was no community in the area before his family arrived. There were structures, some now demolished, that pre-date the Civil War including the I. Thomasson house which is dated c.1825, the Kemper House which is dated c.1850 and was occupied by Capt. Moore’s brother Elijah W. Moore starting around 1870, and the Buckhall Schoolhouse which was built c.1865. The schoolhouse was built before the 1869 act that created the Virginia public school system and likely served members of the community.² While the Buckhall area was not entirely unoccupied before the Civil War, the community as it exists today, at least in the minds of most of the interviewees, began with the arrival of Captain Thomas J. Moore and his brother Elijah W. Moore from Pennsylvania around 1870. While it does not seem like they passed through Manassas during the Civil War, Moore family tradition holds that Captain Moore saw Buckhall during the war and liked it, and thought it would be a good place to build and run a business. As to the origin of the name “Buckhall,” beyond Ratcliffe’s information about “Buckhele” the interviewees stated they did not know where the name comes from though there is speculation about a Buck family, or a deer buck running through a house.³

Agriculture and Rural Living

In the 1940s, most people living in Buckhall had enough acreage to participate in agriculture. Frank Moore recalls many people having 50 or 100 acre tracts where they would raise a few cattle, pigs, and chickens. Most people did not have large agricultural operations, rather the farm was often an addition to other jobs. There were two large dairy farms that hired help: the Kline farm and the Henson farm, though most families relied upon their own labor.⁴ The oral histories describe Buckhall as the “country.” For Frank Moore, “you either lived in the town of Manassas or you lived in the country, there was no in between.”⁵ When Chris Korzendorfer described her move to Buckhall from Washington D.C. she said, “I was a country girl then. From a city girl to a country girl.” This transition was seen especially in her family’s new house which was built by her stepfather, Alfred Payne, on land from his father and with a loan from Hallie and Charlie Cornwell to get lumber. He built a four room house that they moved into once the shell was up and Chris recalls how she would have to walk to the spring and bring back buckets of water since they did not have running water.⁶ Chris’s son, Fritz, defined Buckhall as “living then, in a rural area where there was a lot of farmland around.”⁷ When Betty

¹ Byrne, Gregory. “A Violated Cemetery Disturbs Community.” *The Washington Star*. March 21, 1979.

² *Prince William: A Past to Preserve* (Prince William County, VA: Prince William County Historical Commission, 1982), 69, 82, 85, 125, 130, 136.

³ Kathryn Sessler, interview by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall, Virginia, July 13, 2023.

⁴ Frank Moore, interview by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall, Virginia, July 6, 2023.

⁵ Frank Moore, interview by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall, Virginia, July 6, 2023.

⁶ Chris Korzendorfer, interview by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall, Virginia, June 29, 2023.

⁷ Fritz Korzendorfer, interview by Meaghan Brennan, Dumfries, Virginia, July 11, 2023.

Busby's father, who was the rural mail carrier, had his car get stuck in the snow while delivering the mail, he was able to find a farm with a horse to pull him out of it.⁸ A deeper look at the experiences of Frank Moore as a child in the 1940s-50s and Kathy Clark as a young adult in the 1970s-80s show what a rural Buckhall looked like.



Cleat Wheel tractor driven by Frank Moore

Frank Moore's mother died while giving birth to his younger sister when Frank was four years old. He then moved in with his paternal grandparents T.C and Bessie Moore. His grandparents owned 100 acres behind the Buckhall store. Like many in the area the farm was not their main source of income. T.C. Moore's primary work was operating a slaughterhouse in Manassas where farmers could walk their cows in, then a few weeks later pick up a package of frozen meat to take home. Frank describes the equipment on his paternal grandparents' farm as being very old, a lot of it being horse drawn until one of the horses touched its nose to an electric fence and died, forcing his grandfather to switch to equipment pulled by a tractor. This was in sharp contrast to a large dairy operation in Burke run by Frank's maternal grandfather, Stuart Kindrick, which had more modern equipment. As a child, Frank helped his paternal grandfather out on the farm. He tells the story of driving a 1939 Farmall F-12 cleat wheel tractor (pictured above) at the age of six adding, "but I had to sit on the floor, to push the clutch in, because my legs weren't long enough to push the clutch in. So I sat on the floor of the tractor, looked around the side to see where I was, see where I was going." He also had other jobs on the farm, such as making hay, threshing wheat, and filling silo. For his assistance, Frank's grandfather would pay him by pointing out a calf whose price at market would become his spending money.⁹

A few decades later, in the late 1970s, Kathy Clark moved to Buckhall. There were now townhouses in the Manassas area, a contrast to when Frank was growing up, and Kathy lived in the Georgetown South neighborhood for a few years. She first became acquainted with Buckhall while dating her future husband and coming to church with him. After their first child was born, the Clarks moved into a tenant farmhouse that had been moved from Lake Jackson Drive to the property of William and Thelma (Moore) Hensley. While the Clarks were not involved in farming, they still were surrounded by features of Buckhall's rural character. This included

⁸ Betty Busby, interview by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall, Virginia, August 14, 2023.

⁹ Frank Moore, interview by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall, Virginia, July 6, 2023.

horses that lived across the street that Kathy and her sons would bring carrots and apples to, and the Hensley's huge garden where the Clarks were welcome to pick corn and peas for their supper. Kathy also shared two stories about encounters with farm animals that seem to encapsulate how Buckhall continued to be rural even as the area became more developed. She first described a Sunday morning when her husband ushered her and their sons into the house because he saw a bull walking down the street. Kathy went to call animal control who seemed quite confused about her dilemma and where Buckhall was, though they soon sent officers who eventually got the bull home. A few years after the bull incident, Kathy's sons had gone down to play in the creek behind their new house when three cows came walking down the creek, seeming to have broken down the fence on their property. The cows also made it home safely after her sons walked behind them saying, "Go home, go home."¹⁰

Though Buckhall was largely agricultural, most people worked in other sectors, most notably mechanics and carpentry. Others worked for the government and would commute to Washington D.C. or Fort Belvoir, some sharing a carpool. The children who helped out on their family's farms also went to school, most went to Baldwin Elementary and Bennett School which was later used by the Prince William County Police. The older interviewees went to Osbourn High School, while Fritz Korzendorfer Jr. went to Osbourn Park High School when it opened in 1976.

Family Centered Community

Many of the oral histories describe Buckhall as a family-oriented space. Most of the interviewees had grown up surrounded by their extended family, many who still live near one another. Frank Moore, Kathryn Sessler, and Betty Busby described the value that they put on living on family land near their relatives. Kathryn's family has owned land on Lake Jackson drive since the 1790s, her own property being previously owned by her great-aunt Addie Davis. The 100 acre tract owned by Frank's grandfather has largely been sold off, but he and his son were recently able to purchase 13.5 acres of it back, which they, and Frank's grandson, now own. Betty Busby, who is related to Frank Moore and tells a story about his father, spent many evenings at her grandmother's house when she was growing up, and was able to live there for a time as a young adult. She also tells stories about her family going camping, her father and uncles carrying her and her sister on their shoulders in order to ford a river to get to their camping site. Her house sits on part of her father's land.¹¹

This trend of a family centered community is well encapsulated by the Korzendorfer family and how they built their homes. Chris Korzendorfer described how in her husband's family, each of the sons would be given an acre of land. The young men would then go down to the woods, chop down the trees, and take them to the sawmill. Chris said that she and her sister-in-law Madeline would help by pushing the logs onto the truck, and making sure they "had three hot meals a day." Based on conversations with Chris and then her son, Fritz Jr, it seems that all eight of the siblings lived on that same road for some time, and later many of their children built or moved into houses on that road as well.¹² For Fritz, having family nearby was an integral part to his childhood. When asked what first came to mind when he thought of Buckhall, Fritz told a story about his Uncle Charlie and Aunt Janet, who briefly operated the Buckhall Store in the

¹⁰ Kathy Clark, interview by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall, Virginia, July 10, 2023.

¹¹ Betty Busby, interview by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall, Virginia, August 14, 2023.

¹² Chris Korzendorfer, interview by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall, Virginia, June 29, 2023.

1960s, and how they would give their nieces and nephews treats like, “penny candy, cupcakes, that kind of stuff” to put in their lunchboxes on their way to school. While Fritz was not alive when his dad and uncles were building the family homes, he heard stories about the teamwork that went into the endeavor and how they moved from house to house. In the house he grew up in there was no drywall on the walls; instead, they showcased the knotted pine wood the family used. Fritz recalls spending lots of time with his cousins and grandparents, going on trips, hunting, fishing, and playing softball with his family on weekends and in the evenings.

Buckhall United Methodist Church

While not everyone in Buckhall is Methodist, the Buckhall United Methodist Church does seem to be the church that was most centered around the Buckhall community. There was the Oak Hill (Buckhall) Methodist Episcopal Church that was built in 1845 in what is now the Buckhall Cemetery and is commemorated by a stone, the membership of which was transferred to Grace Methodist Church in Manassas in 1936. But the Buckhall Church was built in 1905 as a United Brethren Church on land donated by Joseph and Lydia Hensley with wood and nails provided by Captain T.J. Moore. It was part of the Prince William Charge which also included Midland and Hazelwood churches.¹³ Buckhall had a minister come about once a month and began to grow. According to Kathryn Sessler who wrote a history of the church in 1980, the 1940s had a strong focus on local and American missions that members could rally around and still maintain their farms.¹⁴ In the late 1960s, the Evangelical United Brethren church merged with the Methodist church to create the United Methodist Church. Buckhall was still part of a charge and the pastor was more focused on the Manassas United Methodist Church and eventually they made the decision to separate the churches. Gary Hulme became the first full-time pastor in 1979, soon after he had graduated college. Gary Hulme remained at the church until 1988, after the red brick church was built, around the first wave of subdivisions in the area, and was followed by John Hull until 2011. During his time, John Hull oversaw the building of the most recent church building in 2007. He was followed by Linda Monroe until 2020 and then Sean Gundry who is still the pastor today.¹⁵

¹³ “Buckhall United Methodist Church.” *Potomac News*. October 10, 1980.

¹⁴ Kathryn Sessler, interview by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall, Virginia, July 13, 2023.

¹⁵ Kathryn Sessler, interview by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall, Virginia, July 13, 2023.



Newest portion of the Buckhall UMC, built 2007.

The church is an active part of the community and the people interviewed for this project often spoke about how they were involved with the church. Kathryn Sessler has run the nursery at Buckhall church since September 2001, and commented on the familial, homey feel of the church, and her desire for more young people to participate. Her wish is that “it would stay small and relevant” as it had throughout her own life. Chris Korzendorfer, who often referred to her faith, described how she would bring her sons to the church on Saturdays and they would clean the sanctuary before Sunday’s services.¹⁶ Kathy Clark remarked on the life of one of her role models, Dorthy Kline, who was called “custodian” of the church for all the little tasks she would do each week. The roses in front of the old sanctuary came from Dorthy Kline’s house after she passed away. The church’s role in the community extended beyond church members. Kathy Clark used to host Cub Scout meetings in the church and was surprised at how willingly the pastor, John Hull, gave her a key to which he replied, “Everybody in Manassas has a key!”¹⁷ The old building is now used by a Latinx congregation and continues to try to be a part of the community even as it has changed over the years.

¹⁶ Chris Korzendorfer, interview by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall, Virginia, June 29, 2023.

¹⁷ Kathy Clark, interviewed by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall Virginia, July 10, 2023.



Buckhall Store, photographed 1980 by Frances Jones, photos found at RELIC.

Buckhall Store

The history of the Buckhall Store is murky, and newspaper articles place the start of its operations anywhere from 1905 to 1940. It is known that Hallie and Charlie Cornwell inherited the store from Hallie's father, William Davis, and then ran the store from 1932 to 1964.¹⁸ The Cornwells loom large in the minds of Buckhall residents, as most interviews included a story or two about them. Frank Moore described Hallie as a walking cash register who ran the show, while Charlie was there to help if someone needed manpower and would make weekly deliveries to customers. The store was a place to gas up, buy bait, and get to know your neighbors.¹⁹

After the Cornwells, the Buckhall Store went through a number of owners and proprietors, Kathryn Sessler described how every few years a sign would say "Under New Management." Tom and Robbie DeLavello operated the store from 1977 to 1984.²⁰ They were the ones who popularized the slogan "You can see it all at Buckhall Mall" which graced 1,500 to 2,000 bumper stickers as well as t-shirts and hats which could be seen across the county and as far as Japan.²¹ This joke advertising created quite a stir, and although the store did have an impressive variety of merchandise - from sandwiches to color TVs - many customers coming in from out of town were disappointed by the small general store, and they made their discontent well known with some choice words.²² The store continued to run under many different owners though it was severely impacted by the building of the Prince William Parkway which diverted

¹⁸ Philip Hanyok, "Buckhall purrs with country flavor," *Potomac News*, January 29, 1986.

¹⁹ Frank Moore, interview by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall, Virginia, July 6, 2023.

²⁰ Walker, Stephanie. "New Owners at Buckhall Store." *The Journal Messenger*. May 1, 1984.

²¹ Green, Frank and H. Bradford Fish. "Ticklin the Public Rib: Or How a Little Wit Lures a Lot of Customers." *Washington Post*. January 17, 1980.

²² Kathy Clark, interviewed by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall, Virginia, July 10, 2023.

most traffic away from the store. The building then had a fire in August 2007. Although it was fixed up after the fire, the building now holds a countertop business.²³

Buckhall as a Community and as Home

A constant refrain throughout the oral history interviews was that in Buckhall “everybody knew everybody.”²⁴ This sense of community was seen in the church, at the store, and in people’s neighborhoods. For those who stayed, Buckhall was a place that was known and full of people who supported them. When Frank Moore left Buckhall for military training, there was a time he was at the Mexican border in El Paso, Texas. When he crossed the border, he and his friends had to announce their citizenship. While his friends shouted “United States” Frank called out “Buckhall!” While it was something to make the other guys laugh, it also speaks to a depth of identity associated with Buckhall.

But where is Buckhall? It does not seem to have an exact boundary line, but it is centered around the corner of Moore Drive that holds the church, cemetery, school, and store. It runs into the city of Manassas on one side and then extends towards Fred’s Auto Parts, and includes the Kline Farm. Traffic patterns have also impacted this definition, as the Prince William Parkway split off some of the area from the rest of the community, and there is no longer a road connecting Lake Jackson Drive to Buckhall.

From the 1960s through 1980s much of the community’s life was seen through the workings of the Buckhall Civic Association. They met in the old Buckhall Schoolhouse, owned by Hallie and Charlie Cornwell, which they restored for its 100th anniversary in 1965. People could discuss road conditions, the need for police patrols, and the fire department. The Buckhall Fire Department was established in 1981 and got its own building in 1985, before that they also used the schoolhouse as a meeting place. The fire department was largely encouraged by the support of Joe Kemper, the Prince William chief forest warden for the Virginia Division of Forestry.²⁵ Frank Moore went to some of the Civic Association’s meetings which he describes as the forerunner to the fire department and as always having desserts, “the old timers would fix up pies and cakes and stuff like that.” He said it ended as many of its members died and the younger generation did not keep it up.²⁶

Outside of these community gathering spaces there were a number of community events in Buckhall. Betty Busby described ice cream socials that would happen each year in the church basement while she was growing up. She also talked about Halloween parties that took place in the Buckhall School, with big corn shucks in the corners and ghosts all around, and all the children dressed up.²⁷ Kathy Clark describes a yard sale that would be hosted at the church and would allow community members to come in and set up a table for a small fee. The church also hosted a Christmas craft fair each year, though it has mostly ceased as of 2023. Kathy Clark and Kathryn Sessler both talked about the Christmas ornaments created by Raymond Padgett who would use telephone wire to create colorful patterns on toilet paper tubes. Today, the Buckhall Fire Department still hosts a barbecue chicken event for the community, where everyone comes out to show their support for the fire department.

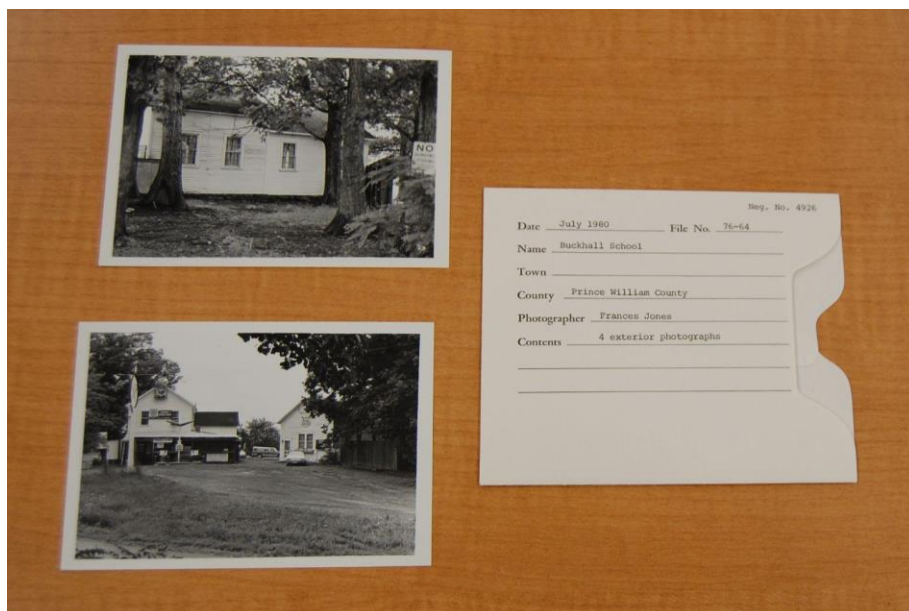
²³ Glushefski, Elisa. “Fire closes general store.” *Potomac News*. August 23, 2007.

²⁴ Chris Korzendorfer, interview by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall, Virginia, June 29, 2023.

²⁵ Philip Hanyok, “Buckhall purrs with country flavor,” *Potomac News*, January 29, 1986.

²⁶ Frank Moore, interview by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall, Virginia, July 6, 2023.

²⁷ Betty Busby, interview by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall, Virginia, August 14, 2023.



Buckhall School, photographed 1980 by Frances Jones, photos found at RELIC. In the bottom photo, Buckhall School is on the right and the store is on the left.

Changes and Controversies

When asked to reflect on how Buckhall has changed over the years, Frank Moore described it as a growth that is hard to see when you're living in it. When he was growing up Buckhall was made up of a few houses with a lot of land, most of which have been bought up by developers like Harry Ghadban so that now it is hard to find a vacant piece of land.²⁸ Kathy Clark attributed this growth to the arrival of IBM in Manassas in 1968 because the "IBM people wanted to have a short commute...and they built the community Westgate, and Sudley Manor came a little bit later." When Kathryn Sessler moved to Lake Jackson in 1972, this part of Prince William County was "the armpit...a stinky place" and not culturally part of Northern Virginia which changed as the land continued to develop and more people moved to the area. The other major impact on the Buckhall area was the building of the Prince William Parkway in the 1990s which drastically reduced the traffic that passed through Buckhall. Many believe this was the final straw for the Buckhall Store as they no longer had passers-through stopping for a sandwich and coffee.

Buckhall has also experienced demographic changes since the 1940s. Most of the interviewees stated that the community had been almost entirely White when they were growing up. Frank Moore could only recall one Black man who lived in the area, Clarence Jackson, who had about three acres of land on Moore Drive towards Signal Hill Road. Frank remembers Clarence Jackson as a strong and kind man who did odd jobs around the neighborhood, including cleaning the graveyard. When Kathy Clark reflected on how Buckhall has changed, one of her main answers was the increase in racial diversity, particularly with African-American and Latino residents. The Buckhall church is now used weekly by a Latino congregation.

Not all of the changes in Buckhall have been welcome. As companies have tried to develop land for residential and commercial purposes, they have received a lot of pushback from the community because of concerns about the wells and traffic. Kathy Clark recounted a long

²⁸ Frank Moore, interview by Meaghan Brennan, Buckhall, Virginia, July 6, 2023.

controversy between the community and a small private school on Pineview Road and the community organizing that she did with her neighbors to research water usage and the impact a school could have on their wells.

Another community controversy came in March 1979 when a group of juveniles desecrated the Buckhall cemetery by kicking down and displacing headstones. The estimated damage cost \$1,500 and the cemetery was restored by community volunteers and Kline Memorials. At the time of the arrests the names of the juveniles were not released, but Buckhall residents became fearful of other violence. This was compounded by rumors that one of the suspects told police, “The devil made me do it.” Anger among residents swelled because they thought the perpetrators would not receive just punishment, and some residents suggested the stocks. This event also points to the changes happening in Buckhall at the time, after the arrests Tom DeLavello told a journalist “The people who did this weren’t from among us, they were outsiders.” This shows how the close-knit community began to think about and experience the influx of residents.²⁹

Conclusion

As Prince William County works to document historical communities through projects including oral history research, we can see how economic and demographic shifts have an impact on many aspects of a community’s life. Buckhall is primarily a post-Civil War community where many engaged in agriculture, while not being fully reliant upon the land. Most of the community's activities centered around family, the church and the store. Buckhall, like many areas in Northern Virginia, has seen a great deal of population growth in recent years which has changed how the fabric of the Buckhall community. While many Buckhall families have remained in the area, some have decreased their proximity to one another as the geography of Buckhall has shifted. The oral histories that accompany this report are full of stories and reflections about the Buckhall community that capture what Buckhall once was, is now, and what community members hope for its future.

²⁹ Byrne, Gregory. “A Violated Cemetery Disturbs Community.” *The Washington Star*. March 21, 1979.

Chris Korzendorfer Biography

Merry Christebell (Chris) Mandley Korzendorder was born December 25, 1939 in Washington D.C. After her mother's marriage did not work out when Chris was an infant, she moved with her mother and brother between the homes of extended family members. Her mother, Irene, later married Alfred Payne, and she and Chris moved to Prince William County, then Buckhall, when Chris was a preteen. Chris describes this move as a transformation of herself as she went from being "a city girl to a country girl."

In her preteen and early adolescent years, Chris lived with her parents and her younger sister Shelia, in a house shared with another family and a tin roof. She attended Bennett School and Osbourn High School and worked at the Buckhall General Store. Chris married Fritz Korzendorfer Sr., whom she met through her step-father, in 1956 when she was 16 years old. They had three children: Fritz Jr., Benny, and Lisa. They continued to live near Chris' family and most of her in-laws lived on the same street. Chris describes how her husband and his brothers built all of their homes, using trees from their own plot of land, and taking them to a local sawmill. Later in life, Chris worked in food service at the hospital, having the opportunity to take classes on various diets, and where she took on some supervisory responsibilities.

After she left food service, Chris became a caretaker for her husband until his death in 2007, then becoming a caretaker for other family members up until the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Throughout her interview, Chris often describes her Christian faith, and how the Lord has gotten her and her family through difficult situations. When asked what she wants people to know about Buckhall, Chris offers her prayers that people will love the little Buckhall church as much as she did.



Oral History with Merry Christebell (Chris) Korzendorfer

Interviewer: Meaghan Brennan

Interviewee: Merry Christebell (Chris) Korzendorfer

Location: Buckhall United Methodist Church (10251 Moore Drive, Manassas, VA 20111)

Date: June 29, 2023

Meaghan Brennan = MB; Chris Korzendorfer = CK

Transcribed by Meaghan Brennan

MB: Okay, here we go. Um, alright, today is June 29th, 2023. My name is Meaghan Brennan, I am an intern with the Office, the Prince William County Office of Historic Preservation, um, and I am here today with Chris Korzendorfer. We are sitting in the Buckhall United Methodist Church, and... yeah, okay, awesome, uh yeah, so thank you Chris for being here with me today.

CK: Thank you for having me.

MB: So, my first question for you is, we're just gonna start with just kinda basic information about who you are, and yeah, so can you state for me your name, and can you also spell it for me?

CK: Merry, M-E-R-R-Y, Christebell, C-H-R-I-S-T-E-B-E-L-L

MB: Okay

CK: Mandley, M-A-N-D-L-E-Y, Korzendorfer, K-O-R-Z-E-N-D-O-R-F-E-R.

MB: Awesome.

CK: When I went to church here, I was Christebell Mandley, Chris Mandley, Chris.

MB: Awesome, thank you! Um, yeah, and when were you born?

CK: 1939, December the 25th.

MB: Oh, that is a great birthday to have!

CK: Yeah, and nine years later, my sister was born on Christmas Day, uh, nine years later, and uh, I forgot what year she was.

MB: Yeah, what's your sister's name?

CK: Shelia May Payne. So uh..

MB: Um, that is so cool, ah, to get to share a birthday.

CK: Yeah she was a little girl there at Buckhall, too, so.

MB: Um, and where were you born?

CK: I was born in Washington, DC, at Sibley Hospital, at that time, I was told, yeah.

MB: Yeah, um, and did you know your grandparents?

CK: Uh, I knew, my dad's father, and my mom, my uh, I saw him a few times. George Mandley, Henry Mandley. I never knew my grandmother, the Mandleys, because she had passed away. And my mother, uh, her mother passed away from a stroke years ago, when she was a teenager, so I never saw her, but I did see her uh, father, Grandad, and, just a few times though. Mother was uh, (pause) Mother's marriage didn't work out, we'll put it that way. And Mother and I lived in the suitcase, I would go to one aunt, one uncle, one aunt, one uncle. And while she worked, so uh. Then I had a brother, that was, uh, James Mandley, on the farm up in Bristersburg. So uh, when he was a little boy, Grandaddy knew some friends up there, so he grew on the farm, and I was a little city girl.

MB: So, you were born in Washington DC, how long did you live in DC?

CK: I don't know.

MB: Okay.

CK: All I remember is that, my aunt and uncle on, uh, North Payne Street, in Alexandria, Virginia. They had the boy's club on one end, and down the middle of the block, they lived there. And Uncle Bill said, he looked out the door, and here come Mom, she had me in her arms, and the suitcase, and had the hand, my little brother was holding her hand, with the suitcase, so, she had left my father, so the family helped us.

MB: That's awesome, um, what was your brother's name?

CK: James Mandley.

MB: That's right, you had said that.

CK: James Edward, and he joined the, uh, church up there at Gainesville, was also one of the churches that would belong to the three churches that was ministered to, here in the Buckhall area. And he also got baptized.

MB: Ah, that's awesome. Um, when did you move to Buckhall?

CK: Oh my goodness, I think I was, uh, 10 or 11 years old, something like that. 11, 11, 12, uh, so I, let's see, this (looking at her Bible) was in '53, 1953. And I got married in 1956, at the age of 16 years old.

MB: Okay.

CK: When you travel around in a suitcase, you sort of grow up. You get more mature than some children that don't.

MB: Yeah, yeah. How did you meet your husband?

CK: Buckhall Store.

MB: Can you tell me more about that?

CK: Umm, I knew him because he, my stepfather, and granddad, used to work at Fort Belvoir. My husband was a friend with them, and he had a job there, so they had to carpool. So they would take turns, every week, driving, so when it came to Granddaddy's time, he would tell Fritz, he says "You go on, drive, boy, you take my turn this week." So he was familiar with my parents, and also with my, uh, stepgrandfather. And, uh, I was only, about 13 years old, and uh, you don't date, little girls don't date then. But as it was, I was a little bit older, in ways, and uh, I would work a little bit there at Buckhall Store, and then got my pigtails cut off. So, uh, I was young. But uh, and then my chore was to, after I met him, and uh, we were going to a movie, my first date, there was a church supper, here, in the church basement. So, oh we had wonderful cooks back there then, and I was so excited cause I had never been on a date with a boy with his own car. So, anyway, he, uh Granddad, said I've got a ticket for you, you're going with me, so when, uh, we came, I was excited, not eating much or any. He said, "You go on, have fun, I'll walk on back home." So anyway, we went, and we got to see the movie, Bonzo Went to College at the drive-in, at, in the Manassas area, out there off, what, 28? I think it is.

MB: That's so awesome.

CK: Yep.

MB: Um, and then, backtracking a little bit (CK: Okay), when you moved to Buckhall um, what, yeah, what got you guys to move to Buckhall?

CK: We used to live, uh, in, uh, on Telegraph Road, across from the Coast Guard Station. And, Dad worked at, uh, that's Alfred Payne, he worked at the boathouse, I think, in Fort Belvoir. And I guess, he, um, decided that after my sister was born, uh, that, uh, maybe he, we, would drive up to his dad's place up here. It's on Davis Ford Road, that was over on the hill that he owned some land, and he gave Dad some land, and then Mr. Cornwell, Charlie and Hallie, and then, them, talked him into taking a loan from them and getting some lumber, and build a four-room little house to start with. So then, when they, when he just got the shell up, we moved in.

MB: Oh, wow.

CK: We didn't have studs, you propped a couch pillow against it, you'd fall through. But anyway, it was quite an experience. We didn't have any water, any bath, we walked to the spring, and we brought back two buckets of water, very sparingly. And if you had to go to the bathroom, you had to go to the outhouse. So, it was, I was a country girl then. From a city girl, to a country girl. And then, too, while we were up here, even my husband's brothers and all helped put the roof on and stuff like that there. And, um, my husband, before we were married, he helped dig the well, and he built the johnny house. So, he was, my mother adored him, he was jack of all trades, eventually he put in running water and a bathroom and everything. Smiled all over, he could do no wrong. And then, too, our boys were a lot of help, when they grew up from knowledge from their father. And eventually, when he came down with emphysema, uh, my daughter would go to the doctors with him because I worked from 6 to 2:30 in food service, so uh,

and I also went to, um, where is it? Annandale, I think it was. That some of us were sent to the college to learn more about the workings of the different diets and things. But to be honest, I learned more there on the job than I did there at the college. So, uh, but anyway, they paid for it because I must have passed, how I passed, I don't know, but anyway, the good Lord was with me, I do know. But anyway, I went to, uh, working there, and while he was home with the boys and all, uh, but before he got emphysema he was a painter over at Dulles airport. Yeah, the runways with the airplanes and all, and needing the painting and all, he was in that committee of doing that. Pushing snow and all that stuff, anything to do with the traffic and, runways, and snow, they had to push the snow for the airplanes, so that was his thing, and he was a painter. He worked himself up as a painter, and then while I was working, uh, lifting two five-gallon buckets of paint, he messed his back up. And then he had to retire, he was on, like, disability for so long he said "Well, you're going to have to go a full retirement until.." He went out on 40%, so if he got better, he could find another job. But as it was, with the, me working, and he getting the, Lisa, kindergarten just started that year, and she got to go to kindergarten, which Fritzzy and Benny didn't. Benny and Fritzzy learned from their father, jack of all trades. So, uh, while I was working, I went to school and they said, you know, work your way up as a supervisor. So I went to the college and, uh, I did become assistant supervisor, but on weekends, when they wanted to vacation or something. Then, when my husband got sick, I knew I had my time at the hospital was building up, and it was 25 years, I retired. I came out at the age of 60 and became a caregiver. And I took care of my husband, he lived longer than they had thought, but I, we had exercises in the basement: treadmill, and the rowing, and the bicycles, and all that, so we did that, and I had a chart for him, and checked his pulse and different things. And, uh, then when he was getting worse, uh, I knew it was time but, anyway, I had retired, and I was home with him. And after he passed away, they even, my daughter even took pictures of all of that. But anyway, he used to do old trucks, antique trucks. He drove a Ford, but he did the Chevrolets, and you know, the gearshifts, and all that there. Stripped them down and all, with mask on, he'd spray them, being a painter. And he restored old trucks, so the back garage, Ed (?) had wanted the old trucks and all moved in, so anyway, each one of the boys, Lisa's got one, his truck, and each one of the boys got a truck. And Benny sold his because he didn't have a garage to put it in. But then I went to caregive for my sister-in-law next door, only family. She had Parkinson's. And as she got to the point where she kept falling, well as she fell, it was getting worse, so that she needed somebody. So, she had two boys there, and Johnny was there with her, the youngest, and he liked his little schnapps. So anyway, Joey was the oldest boy and he, he was a great, him and Fritzzy were like brothers, even now. So anyway, I helped her as long as I could and then, as she, when she fell, and they had to put her to the nursing home. Well, when they took that hip bone out, well when they put her in, they wasn't careful. They pitched her in the bed, and it popped out. She cried all night long, and they didn't know what was wrong, they just thought she was just mental, hateful. But anyway, they found out, took her back to surgery, the doctor says "I can't put that back in, I don't have another one." Took it out, sewed her back up, she couldn't walk anymore. (MB: Oh man.) So we took care of it, and they would lift her to the bathroom and they even helped me bathe her. She got to the point that she was shaking so that, "Hurry up, hurry up." And I said, "I just got you soaped down," hair and everything. So, uh, we three, as a team, Johnny helped with doing the water, Joey was helping her with her feet and stuff, and then I was trying to wash her back, and I told her, "You wash your privates." So anyway, we got her all dried off and then she was comfortable. But she was hallucinating, so bad, that she said "All these people, the room's full of people." Well, I didn't see anybody. So anyway, I would talk to her, I would say, "Ellen, take your mind off of it." And I would read the Bible to her. Cause she was, went

to church, I don't think it's Pentecostal. It was the one up on, oh, like you go to Manassas, uh, they keep their hair long and they wear dresses all the time, no pants.

MB: Is that the Mennonites?

CK: Not the Mennonites, I can't think what it is. But, uh, Assembly of God, I think, something like that there. But anyway, it's the, their hairstyle and, uh, they don't wear pants, or jeans, or stuff like that there. But anyway, they're good Christian people, I've been to their camp meetings and she would, uh, take her mind off of the people, she says "They're leaving." I said, "Good." Then I'd read a little bit more, and uh, finally, uh, I would say, "Well let's have a prayer." And Johnny looks surprised, he said "Mommy never prayed in front of us." And they went to church three times a week, up there at that little church. Monday, Wednesday. Sunday, and uh, three times a week I think it was. Sunday, Wednesday, and, I don't know, Friday, or somewhere along there. But anyway, he, they were very familiar with church, brought up from babies up, and uh, I didn't get to Buckhall all the time. Cause there for a while, I couldn't drive. So after I got married, I drove. And when I got married and I could drive, I was a, like, little kindergarten teacher at one time. So with the little kids, we would come up the steps here, and they would come up and we had little pinwheels made (blows like you would on a pinwheel) and they'd spin around and all. So, and then I was in the choir. But as my life took on, I didn't spend as much time in church, with being a teenager and then be getting married, and raising a family at a young age. And, thank God, they are all grown (laughs). So, but then after she passed away, Ellen Korzendorfer, then I went down and helped with my sister-in-law, here (shows a picture to MB), she's the one that had seizures, and she would fall backwards. And I took care of her, until she passed away, so it was about, I think she's been gone about three or four years now. And then it seemed like after, I didn't have anybody to care for, then the COVID started coming around, and the next thing you know, I started getting headaches, and someone said "You need somebody to take care of." So, that's my story.

MB: Yeah, thank you for sharing that with me. Um, so yeah, I mean, it sounds like you've done a lot of incredible things in your life.

CK: Well, it's, it just seemed like everyday life, something goes on, but to somebody else, when you sit and say hey. I don't know, one thing is, I haven't been walking as much because of the headaches.

MB: Yeah, that makes sense. Um, so we talked a little bit about your early life, of living in DC and then moving around with your mother and your brother.

CK: I don't remember, I was nine months old at that time, so I don't remember a whole lot. But my Aunt Daisy, on North Payne Street in Alexandria, they, she had three children. Oh gosh, they were beautiful. Do you ever remember the actor that was called Van Johnson? (MB: I think so) He was a movie star. I have a cousin that looks just like him, he is so handsome. But anyway, now my Aunt Daisy eventually had dementia, her brother had dementia, and now, my mom died in an accident. Car accident. Benny was in the car with Mom and Dad, they went to the hospital to visit a relative that was, that had cancer, and it wasn't good. But anyway, going over the Liberia bridge, Dad wasn't a fast driver, but he was driving the speed limit. The man was on the other side of the bridge, going over, he hit him head on. Killed Mom and Dad. Benny was in the car, and he [the driver] also killed himself. So that was back in 1975, I think it was. So that's a long time ago, so. When the minister announced at the funeral home that the church would, welcome, to have a meal. Well, I came up and the minister came up to me, and he says "There's

so many people,” he says, “I thought we were gonna run out of food.” But anyway, I went to the hospital, and Benny’s the only one that lived. So, uh, that they were so mangled up that we couldn’t, closed casket. Dad’s throat was slit, Mom, her face and all was crushed, was drove to the middle of, the back of the trunk. So we just, I don’t know, my brother-in-law went to identify the bodies and he got sick, so they said, “No, just close them.” So, I’d just come home from work and we went, took Benny down to Mom and Dad’s. She’d say “Why don’t you keep him home this weekend,” and Daddy would say “Come on boy, pack your bags, you’re coming home with me.” And he wanted the little boy down there.

MB: Thank you for sharing that with me.

CK: Oh, our life is full of stories.

MB: Yeah.

CK: And then, too, Fritzy got married here, him and Chris. And they’ve been married 30 years, this year. And, Lisa is, Benny’s married. He’s been, I think he’s, about 34 years, I think. And Lisa, she’s no longer this husband (gestures to a photograph), but she has another one, and they own Turner Heating and Air Company. So, uh, they are very busy and they travel and all. And I’ve been, since my husband’s death and all, I’ve been doing some traveling with them. Mexico, and they wanted to go to Mexico for Christmas. No, I’m not going, uh uh, nothing to do with Mexico, uh uh. And the doctor said, “No way, tell them to go somewhere else.” So anyway, they took a trip to Dubai, and the tallest buildings. Anyways they took the grandchildren. And her son passed away, as a matter of fact, Steven. On Fritzy’s picture here, (finds a picture where Steven was young), this one here, he passed away, and he left four little children. So, now that I’m not a caregiver, I go down there now. Well they can, they’ve got a swimming pool, they can swim, I can’t, they’re just like fish. So I go and watch.

MB: So those are your great-grandchildren?

CK: Yes, uh huh, the two oldest ones lived with me, they weren’t married. Mommy was another culture, uh, Black. But she wasn’t a black Black, she was a tan. So anyway, he grew up and teenagers are rebellious. So he moved in with me, and then he had Steven, had Jamarious, cutest little thing when he got to walking after they moved away. He came back and he said “What’s up Granny?” (laughs) I’ll never forget that. But anyway, he has passed away. And the mom, he signed his children over to his mother. He had some issues with drugs, fentanyl took him away.

MB: I’m sorry.

CK: So anyway, she fixed him an apartment, and he just got out of jail, for three guys were standing there, and there was a bag of drugs and the police says, “Who’s that belong to?” “I don’t know, it ain’t mine” “Ain’t mine” “Ain’t mine.” So they all had to go to jail, so before they went before the judge and all, and they got him all cleaned out, and they fixed up a little apartment for him and the children. And then, it wasn’t long that, I think he got overwhelmed, or whether somebody contacted. And you know, if you had drugs, it’s hard to say no, it’s like somebody smoking, and “Have a smoke” “Uh, no, yep, alright.” But anyway, I never smoked or drank, and drugs to boot, uh uh, no. But anyway, with all the children there, we’ve had a good time. They’re growing up. Steven, the middle child, he is autistic. He’s doing great. He’s not stupid, but he’s learning great. And he’ll come to the house and he says when it’s time to go home, he says it, “Wanna go home?” or “Wanna go see Granny?” And then, Lisa said, “Mom,

he's ready." And when he comes, I always make sure I have two or three little apples in the refrigerator door, where he can go in and help himself. So when he comes to Granny, go get an apple. But, the others, Caliyonna's five and she's gonna be going to kindergarten. The children, the two girls will be going to a private Christian school, and Jamarious, he didn't get to go to the Christian school, so, we've been, I've been very concerned of this wokeness with school. So, anyway, we're helping to get them up and every chance I get, I buy books, and give them a library there, at home. Where they can, you know, go through and I try to get the different workbooks for them, and all, Christian ones. Coloring books and stuff.

MB: Yeah, that's really cool. Um, so kinda going off of your, when you were discussing school, it was reminding me of when earlier you said that Lisa got to go to kindergarten. Did you ever get to go to school? And if you did, what did that look like?

CK: Uh, I went to school. I, when we lived on Telegraph Road, I, well when I was in Washington, no, Alexandria, I had one aunt. We were living in a one bedroom apartment, and my aunt would walk me across Washington street to the little school there. And my first schoolteacher's name was Miss Noble. So, anyway, and I remember, one snowy day, I must have been over at my Aunt Daisy's, and my Uncle Bill put me on a sled, and he pulled me all the way to school from Payne street to across, somewhere or another, I can't remember the school there in Alexandria, at that time, but pulled me on the sled.

MB: That is so fun!

CK: I did remember that.

MB: Did you ever go to school while you were living in Buckhall?

CK: I went to Osbourn High School.

MB: Okay.

CK: Uh, I went to, let's see what was it? Bennett at one time, where it was the police station. It used to be a school, and I think I was in the seventh grade there. Uh, yeah, it was seventh. Bennett School, I think it was. And then we went to Osbourn School, it was the new school there. But before, when we went to the new school, Osbourn High School, um, there was a college there, where the museum is now. That used to be a college, and we had classes there, before the new school was built. But we could walk from the college schools over to the gymnastics and play around there.

MB: Cool!

CK: And uh, you know, while it was new there. So anyway, and then too we got moved over there. And believe it or not, when my sister graduated, there was a Black boy that walked her down the aisle. That was the first Black person that I'd seen in the school.

MB: Interesting.

CK: And that was at her graduation.

MB: Yeah, so when you went to school, was the whole school white?

CK: All white, mm hmm.

MB: Okay, um, who else did you go to school with? Did you have neighbors that you went to school with? Or spent time with?

CK: Mrs. Orndoff, uh, she was one of my, (rustling while looking for a photo), where you at Shirley? Where you at? You're here, here you go. This here, he was in the Marines (pointing to Mr. Orndoff), anyway, Shirley was in high school. And then I was starting, like, the eighth grade, so she was there. And she would, we had, we liked to read books, and we were in the library club. So, with the library club there, you know, you put books back on the shelf and different things. Of course, you was only there for an hour, or whatever it is with classes. So anyway, after I married and all, and she went to Hawaii and all, and she learned cake decorating. Well, while I was working, and when she came back, they were over in Manassas Park, until they built the house. Do you know where Buckhall's new farm house is?

MB: Mm mm (to indicate no).

CK: Alright, it's off like Davis Ford Road there, no, Yates Ford Road, they built the house. A brick house, had it built, right across the street from there. So we've been coming to Buckhall for years. She got married here, I got married here. And my daughter's got my wedding book, or I would have showed you the three weddings. I was married in a purple suit, he was a brown suit. But when we got married on our 25th wedding, here, I was in a gown, my husband was in a tuxedo, Fritzzy was in a tuxedo, Benny was, and Lisa was my matron of honor. And we repeated our vows with lit candles and all. But she had those at her house, so I didn't go get them. But anyway, you've got enough to write a book (laughs).

MB: Yeah, no, that's awesome.

CK: And this here (looking at another photograph of the Orndoff family), their children, and they're all in fire and rescue. Gary is the, let's see, Nancy is the oldest, no Eddie Ann's the oldest one, she went into the military, her dad was in Quantico. And then, Nancy, she's going into nursing, right now she's also, all of them, the mom and dad are gone now, but she is like a paramedic on the helicopter for the injured, so she can do that. And they've been with, Rick came home and made a new career, mail, he was in mail, and he was at Lowe's for a while, then went to the mail carrier until he retired. And then Eddie went into the military, then got out, she had her little girl, and she was into when you're calling for help, 911 dispatcher, she was a dispatcher. Now she has two little girls, they're gone. And Nancy, she's still working at Fort Belvoir, transporting patients to the federal hospital there. And Gary, I think he's a fire chief. And this is Bernice Evans that went to this church also. And when I retired, these two ladies told me I had to learn how to quilt. So I've been trying do quilting before the caregiving came along.

MB: Yeah, that's really cool. Um, yeah, let's see, um. So when you were, do you have any, um, stories about people around Buckhall from when you were growing up? Like, any interesting stories or interesting people that you met?

CK: Um, Mr. Kemper. He was a fire chief.

MB: Was that Joe Kemper?

CK: He was with the forestry, forestry. And after Charlie died, and Mrs. Kemper died, Mr. Kemper and Hallie got married. And I assume that it was at this church, I don't know, I didn't come to the wedding. And they had a chivalry form. So that might come up, some of your stories. It was somebody else. But

anyway, Shirley went to the chivalries. But they went down there, cause Shirley used to live right next to Hallie, go down that road, right down here by the store, go down to the end and Hallie lived in one house, and they rented Shirley's father there in that house. So it's, everybody knew everybody.

MB: Yeah, can you tell me a bit more about Hallie and both of her husbands? I keep on reading about them but I don't know much about them.

CK: Charlie, let's see, this house across the road was Mr. Davis. I think a Raymond Davis, I think his name, was Hallie's nephew, and I think he went to this church, and I think he went into ministry. And that was before my time. Because, his mom used to sit there and talk with my boys like on the Sunday or something. So, uh, Margaret Davis was her name. And then, Hallie, I don't know, I think, and there's family history that I know the historian here for the church, it was the Hensleys and the Moores that got the money for there. And Thelma Hensley was, she worked at the courthouse, and the Moore, Mrs. Moore, I understood, I think she taught, whether it was she, or her mother, that taught at that little Buckhall School. I don't know, but there was a teacher there, because Shelia's, my sister's, father, he went to the third grade there. One through three, but I don't know dates, and I don't know, but I think he went there. He could read a little bit and write, but he wasn't, he didn't get a lot of book learning.

MB: Yeah, and that's your step-father? And did you say earlier that his name was Alfred?

CK: Alfred Payne, uh huh, Mother's name was Irene.

MB: That's your mother's name?

CK: Uh huh, Irene Payne. And we lived across the street, at the store, in the back.

MB: Can you tell me more about that? Or just, even what it looked like?

CK: Well, the big house up front, it had a man and wife, let's see, they had three children and him and her. Two girls and a boy. And they were young, more so my sister's age, a little bit more in between, where I was the teenager. But I would hang out with Shirley, and go down to their house because Shirley, the pink, Shirley, was a cousin to my step-father.

MB: Oh, cool.

CK: (laughs) Crazy world. But anyway, at the store, when I helped in there, I filled up the soda box and I swept the floor a little bit and there was a potbelly stove. When you go in that old store now, it looks nothing like it did before. The potbelly stove was there, the soda pop's there, people come in and talk. And I can't think much was on that side, back in the back, was the shelves. Uh, there was a, they didn't have a cash register up, until years later. But anyway, she'd pull a drawer out. She would. And everybody, most everybody that came there, would buy their groceries and she'd put it on their tab. And then, when they got paid, they'd come in and pay their store bill.

MB: Okay.

CK: So I wasn't involved in that, I was cleaning, sweeping things up a little bit, tidying up. And, uh, then I said, that was my first job, other than babysitting.

MB: Yeah, so was this when the store was being run by Hallie and Charlie Cornwell?

CK: Yes, they owned it, yes. And historically, Thelma Hensley, was very, I think they put the Buckhall name up there wrong. And she said "You're gonna have to take that letter out." I think it had two separate words, Buckhall was all one word. She told them, "Cut it up, and take that out." So anyway, she got that straight. And then, the little school, they used to have meetings in there, but they couldn't have weddings and things because there was no bathroom, no running water.

MB: Yeah, is that when it was owned by the Civic Association?

CK: I don't know whether they run the store, or just the buildings, I don't know. But when Shirley and Rick got married, they had an apartment over top the store. And then there was another building, back, and there was another family that had an apartment. I don't know whether it's a warehouse or whether it's a garage or what, but they lived upstairs over there. So those were Fairfaxes, and then they moved from there, down to where it used to be the old road come in. Where now you have to come all the way up. So they used to live in the house there. It was Shirley, Hallie, and I think the Fairfaxes, and then Hallie, when she remarried, I think her and Mr. Kemper built the house there. And they were married in that house, oh married here, but married, down, I think her niece got the house.

MB: Okay, so when you lived behind the store, was it a house that was attached to the store? Or was it..?

CK: No, my house was across the street from the store.

MB: I see. Okay.

CK: And it was a family of five, lived in the front, and you could hear the kids going up and down the steps. But ours was that little part added on. And it was just a tin roof, oh when the hail, you knew it. But, then I think there was a little step that Mother tripped on one time, and she fell, and they had to take her to the hospital. She says, "I can't lose this blood!" I remember that. But, it was, happy times. (MB: Yeah.) I mean, we didn't know we were poor. (MB: Yeah.) We just, I wore hand me downs, and they were new to me. So, I had to, no divorce in my family. No, no, no, no, no, no. That's a no. I wouldn't put my children through a divorce, they don't make that men, and then we were married three times, but we were very lucky.

MB: Yeah, how did you guys celebrate holidays? Both with your family, and then how did the church and Buckhall generally celebrate?

CK: I didn't come back to the church that much anymore, because the others were (clears throat). I have, I'm a dyslexia. I can't read the way that other people did, so I backed off, I sang in the choir. But they went on with the singing. But when I became a diabetic, oh well, sometimes, I didn't have the money for the church dinners, so while I was working, my husband would pick up spaghetti dinner, and bring it home or something. But, I, we only had one person working. When he was working, I was home. When I was working, he was home. So at all times, we only had one income. But he had a retirement, but it's not a full paycheck, so. And the boys, and Lisa, and them all, knew that if they wanted something, they were going to have to get up and work for it. So once they got there, their dad helped them get a car, most of them were a Mustang. And, I think all three of them drove Mustang at one time. But when Fritz graduated, he bought him a new truck. And, uh, Lisa when she graduated, she was going to buy another

car cause she had a job at the bank. And when she did, I think a teacher hit her, messed her car up, oh she was so mad. So, anyway, she wound up, her daddy patched her car up, and she got another vehicle.

MB: Where did your kids go to school?

CK: Osbourn.

MB: Osbourn? Okay.

CK: Yeah, I guess they call it Osbourn Park now, but it used to be Osbourn, the old Osbourn moved over there and they put in the Park because its in another location. And they all graduated from there. We're very proud of all of them. So I didn't finish school so when Fritzzy came home after graduation, he said "Alright, Mom, it's your turn." So I did go back to school. I worked and then I went to night school, and of course the dyslexia, oh boy. And then the reading there, I did, it took me three times to pass that test. So, but the best part of it was, you only had to take the test of the one that you failed.

MB: Oh cool.

CK: You didn't have to take the whole test over, oh, I was sweating it. So I had to ask somebody to work for me that particular weekend. One lady says, "Well you better pass this time, cause I'm not helping you anymore." (laughs) But I did, God was with me, so, and I come to choir practice on Thursday nights, and then when we were at choir practice, over in the new church, we had a member that was working in DC, Bill, I can't think of his name, Bill, his wife, a wonderful lady, and there was a random shooter. And he was in the choir, and John got a call that we were going to, he wasn't going to be able to carry on choir practice because he had to go to the hospital. And, uh, I've got his book at home, and I can't think of his name. He's passed now, but his wife's moved. And, uh, the church pitched in and did wonderful with him, and they would go to the bingos for the old folks people and all. And they would go, and I think the guys, I think Jim, he was piano, he played. But anyway, the sang, and went over there to visit the elderly, and it was a group. They were tight-knit. Anyway, we loved having John here, we hate to see him move on. We were lucky we had him here as long as it was, John Hull. He was the one who married us, no, it was Gary that married us here. I can't remember the other minister. Then John, we repeated our vows, um, up here at the Buckhall Fire house, where we had a meal and the whole DJ, all that.

MB: Yeah.

CK: It was so loud, you couldn't even hear what anybody's saying. (laughs) But it was, those are our good times and sad times.

MB: Yeah, yeah.

CK: Now I'm waiting, everything's prepared for me, I've even made my own arrangements. My husband and I did that so that the children wouldn't have to do that. And all they have to do is call the funeral director and say, "Okay!" And we'll be put out there where my parents are, right next to them, my husband's out there, Lisa'll be there, and we have a family cemetery up in Gainesville on my mom's side of the family that Fritzzy and his family can be put up there. Or it's called the Payne cemetery. So, uh, it's up to them, they can either buy property or be put up there. Unless, well I think most of them are going cremation. So, uh, I don't like cremation, but anyway.

MB: Yeah, so your mom and dad, are they buried here at the Buckhall cemetery?

CK: No, no, they're up at Stonewall.

MB: At Stonewall? Okay.

CK: And my sister, the lots that Mom and Dad have, her and her husband are going to be sent back from California and be put there, so we'll probably have a graveside service for them. But she's nine years younger than I am. And one year older than her husband (laughs).

MB: Wow.

CK: I said, "You hit the jackpot." But it took three marriages for her, my three were the same man (laughs).

MB: Yeah, wow, um, yeah, so speaking of your sister going to California. Do you know why she left Buckhall?

CK: Uh, yes. The young man that she married, uh, I think she was, their marriage was shaky. Anyway, they had one daughter. And my sister, when she graduated from school and all, she got a job at, over at Dulles, it was a telephone company. Um, I can't think what it is. Right across the street from it I think. But anyway, she worked there. And after my sister's divorce and all, she met somebody else, and he was being transferred to California. And they went, and they were prepared, they did get married, cause he wanted to have a little boy, and uh, he died before they had a little boy. And, uh, after he was, she put him to rest, she had two funerals for him, ooh. One in California, one in Leesburg, where his family was. So anyway, she went. It was the hardest thing we had to do, put her and her little girl back on that there airplane to go back home. But she did good, she's in real estate, and she'll be 74 this Christmas. And I told her, when she runs out of money, after California drains her of all of her money, she can come home and be here with me (laughs). So they were all nice, they come out about once a year to visit with her grandchildren.

MB: Cool. And why did you decide to stay in Buckhall?

CK: Well, uh, my, when we got married, we lived with my husband's parents for four years. Well, he was in the military and then, when each boy got ready to marry, they gave them an acre of ground. And then, down in the woods, they all, the boys would go down to the woods and they'd chop the trees down, and brought the logs up, and then would take them to the saw mill. And Madeline and I, would help, where you at Madeline? Put some of the logs, on top of the truck, because we had one brother that was in a hurry. Anyway, Madeline's with Conny [Conrad] here (pointing to a photo). But anyway, he would, one he would say "I wanna get these to the sawmill." So we'd go out there and help push the logs up, and he would fasten and chain them all down there, and he couldn't wait for the other guys to get home from work. But we did, we would go down and help the guys, oh, not in their way when they were cutting the trees, but anyway, whenever it was needed, we made sure they had three hot meals a day, and each boy, they helped each other build their homes, put in the basement and of course, the Mennonites put in the septic systems, back there then, and uh, we had a, they said, "They should have named this Korzendorfer Street." But, right now, it was Evans, our niece's father was, had a farm down there. So anyway, all of them died off, except for that one brother now, and he went to the hospital yesterday, so he's starting to

have, he'll be 98 years old the end of this month, the 30th. And he, uh, he's having these little mini strokes, and he's getting weak. He lives with his daughter. So, uh, but anyway, then I'll be the only one on the street.

MB: Yeah.

CK: But we do have nieces and nephews.

MB: Yeah, sorry, who's Madeline?

CK: Madeline is my husband's sister.

MB: Okay. Um, how many siblings did your husband have?

CK: Oh my, I should have brought that book with me, I have another book at home there. Um, (clears throat), let's see there was Madeline and Margaret, I think there was 8. Let's see, Margaret, Conny, Madeline, Charlie, Joe, and Fritz. Fritz was three years old when his father died, over here on Rockhill and Centreville. And then, that's another story on that. But anyway, uh, and then, she had. Let's see, Margaret, I had Margaret and all them, that was six, so she had two other boys by her second husband, Mr. Humphreys.

MB: Okay.

CK: So that was about eight children.

MB: Wow, and did everyone stay in the Buckhall area? Like you all lived near one another?

CK: Uh, they did at that time. Conny was over on 234, he had the little house there when he got married. And Margaret, when she got married, her and Glen was over at Brentsville, where Fritz works a lot over there. So over in that section over there. And then, when the, those children all grew up, they all ventured after. Margaret Ann was a nurse, she went to Maryland, Bubby, not, you know, Bubby's gone to Myrtle Beach, and Junie's down in North Carolina, he worked for IBM, but they just went in all directions. Can't remember all their kids.

MB: Okay, yeah. That's okay. No, this is great. Um, yeah.

CK: If you interview everybody, and get lucky, then you'll have quite a story.

MB: Yeah, I mean, these are incredible already.

CK: But you don't have to put all that in there.

MB: No, I mean, this, yeah, we'll kinda compile it down, and then, just all the things that people are bringing in will become just a couple of paragraphs. It's really the transcripts of your interviews that will be.

CK: But I do appreciate you, that, I love telling the old stories, of how the houses were built, and the newcomers that's bought it. Well now, one of them's been gutted out and everything. I said "Oh my goodness, Charlie's turning over in his grave, a; his hard work."

MB: Yeah, so, you, you said that your husband and his brothers would build all of their houses together?

CK: Yeah, they did.

MB: Where was the sawmill?

CK: On Evans Ford Road.

MB: Okay.

CK: 9821 Evans Ford Road. There was a, the first one was Charlie's house. He got married as soon as [Janet] Sue got graduated from high school. We would have graduated in '58 I think it was. But I had gotten married in '56. So, she graduated, got married. And then Conny was already married, built he built the house. And then Joe built the house next door to us, and then later my husband built his house when he came out of the army. And then, when Conny's children grew up, they each built a house. And uh, then Margaret had built the house. Aunt Maddy had come from Baltimore, that was Mom's step-, un, sister-in-laws when her husband died. So there was Fritz, Joe, Aunt Maddy, and Margaret. And then Bob, one of the younger boys, built his house. And then there was the home place. Let's see, Charlie, Conny, uh Connie Sue, his daughter, and Mary Ann. And then the home place, and then Madeline's two girls built the house. And uh, that was on the road, both sides of the road.

MB: Wow.

CK: So, then they, most of them's died off. And they, and the one, Madeline's oldest daughter, she moved to North Carolina after her husband, Calabash, her husband died. This past year or so, we're just wondering, who's next? I mean, there's one right after the other.

MB: Yeah, yeah. Um.

CK: Honey, I'm about to have to go to the bathroom.

MB: I'm so sorry, yes, we can take a, yeah, we can either, if you want to wrap up the interview now we can, or we can just hit pause.

CK: I think we're, I'm storied out.

MB: Okay, um, can I ask you one more question?

CK: Yeah.

MB: My final question, is, um, what would you want the people who are moving into Buckhall now, you were saying, you know, you wanted to show the stories about how the houses have been built, but for people moving in, what would you want them to know about the area?

CK: When we were going through, the COVID and everything was shut down and everything, well of course, a lot of people didn't come back to church. And I was sorta one of them, because I haven't recovered over whatever, I still blame it on that third shot. I got sicker and sicker all the time, and then even my throat is still not right, and I've been through a lot of doctors and all. But, I been praying that the door would stay open and I've been praying that my little offering, I don't get much of a retirement, but

my little offering that I give every month, is to help pay the electric bill, buy Sunday School literature, whatever the money is needed for, just so that even the minister's salary, retirement, we've got John's retirement and all that we have to pay for, but uh, I just pray for the leaders. That, and those that's coming in, and let them, the Lord touch their heart, and uh, hopefully that they'll love the little church as much as we did over the years. And we've tried to take care of it, but uh, I used to clean the church here too, at one time. Fritzzy and Benny was running around while I was cleaning and different things. So, we didn't have the cushions, we just had the benches. So, and the carpet, all that came later. But uh, it's been a, I've always, this is home. And that's like my sister, I told her, I said, "Wherever you go," and I told the kids, "Wherever you go," and I told my daughter as they keep talking about moving to Mexico. I said, "I won't be here long. God's going to take me somewhere," and I said, "you can move to Mexico, Dubai, to wherever you want to go, but I'm not going, I'm staying here, because it isn't gonna be long. The rapture's gonna come, and I'm out of here." (laughs). I got to go to the bathroom.

MB: Yes, yes.

CK: You be careful of these steps.

END OF RECORDING

Frank Moore Biography

Frank Moore was born in July of 1941 to Garland Moore and Helen Kendrick and delivered by Manassas midwife, Senie Cockrell, in his grandparent's farmhouse. Frank's mother died in childbirth when Frank was four years old. After that he moved in with his grandparents T.C and Bessie Moore who owned a farm in Buckhall and a slaughterhouse in Manassas. Many of his stories in his interview revolve around his time on the farm where he learned to drive a tractor at age six, and a Chevrolet truck at ten. Frank compares his paternal grandparents' farm in Buckhall, which relied mostly on older farm equipment, with the farm his maternal grandfather managed in Burke which was much larger and had newer equipment.

After he left high school, Frank joined the military and went to basic training for six months but quickly came back to Buckhall, where he was able to drive to work for the military and later go into real estate. He married his wife, Mary, in 1960 at the age of nineteen, and they soon had a son and a daughter.

Much of Frank's interview describes how farms in Buckhall worked, how neighbors shared farm equipment and mostly relied on their own families for labor. Frank describes how Buckhall has grown as he has gotten older, with land holding shrinking as developments increase and how his family has worked to regain some of his family's land that was previously sold by his father.



Oral History with Frank Moore

Interviewer: Meaghan Brennan

Interviewee: Frank Moore

Location: Buckhall United Methodist Church (10251 Moore Drive, Manassas, VA 20111)

Date: July 6, 2023

Meaghan Brennan = MB; Frank Moore = FM

Transcribed by Meaghan Brennan

MB: Today is July 6th 2023, um, my name is Meaghan Brennan, I am the summer intern with the Prince William County Office of Historic Preservation, and I'm here with Frank Moore, and we're currently recording in the Buckhall United Methodist Church. Um, yeah, so thank you Frank for being here. Um, so we're just going to start with kinda basic information, just to lay the groundwork. Um, can you tell us your name, and then can you spell it for me?

FM: Frank Moore. F-R-A-N-K M-O-O-R-E. Two Os.

MB: Um, and when were you born?

FM: Uh, July 1941.

MB: Okay, and where were you born?

FM: Uh, actually I was born on Route 28, back then they didn't have hospitals here in the area. So, Route 28 runs like from Manassas to Nokesville. About halfway out on the right. There's a, there's a shopping center there now. And there's a Chik-fil-a. I was born in the Chik-fil-a parking lot.

MB: So were you just born on the side of the road, or was there a house or?

FM: No, yeah, yeah. Back then there was a farmhouse there. My, the story behind that is my grandparents worked for that farm. And um, I was born at home so to speak, not in a hospital. You could go, I think back then, maybe they had a hospital in Warrenton, and then, the next maybe Alexandria, they had, but a lot of people. Miss Senie Cockrell was a midwife. And she delivered back in the 40s and 50s. She probably delivered half of the kids in, in, in Prince William County. And there's a street in the city of Manassas, Cockrell Drive, that's named after, after Miss Senie Cockrell.

MB: That is really cool. Um, yeah, so, you were talking about your grandparents, did you know your grandparents throughout your life?

FM: Oh absolutely, both sets. I have a set of grandparents here in Buckhall, and then I had another set over in, well they, they were in Annandale at one time, but then moved to Burke. So I had, had both worlds. I had Buckhall, and then I had Burke. And we'll talk about that a little bit, 'cause totally two different worlds. Especially for a small child.

MB: Yeah, actually, do you mind telling me more about that now?

FM: Okay, my grandfather on my father's side, he was, they called him T.C. Moore. Uh, his name is probably Ted, Theodore probably, but I'm not, I'm not sure. They called him either Ted Moore or T.C. Moore. Uh, he had a farm right behind Buckhall Store. He had a 100 acres there. And then in the city of Manassas, where Metz School is now, across the street from that school, he had a house there also, with a slaughterhouse, and a processing plant. In other words, back then, most of the farmers raised their own cattle, and they would take them and have them butchered, or they would butcher them themselves. But he had a lucrative business 'cause a lot of people wanted their, you could take a cow in on foot, and then a few weeks later, it would be all frozen, packaged up, and you'd put it in your car and take it home. So he did the whole, the whole 9 yards. And that was, right across the street from Metz School. They still own, my relatives still own that property. Two different, there's a couple houses there now. The slaughterhouse has been, since, it's been, it's been torn down. The farm my grandfather had, about 100 acres of it, it was about 100 acres. About 50 of it was cleared, 50 of it was farmland, but nothing fancy. He had old, old equipment. When I went to live with my grandparents when I was four years old. Cause my dad, my dad at that time was somewhere around 21 years old. Already had bought a house in the city of Manassas, had me, and then, when I was four years old, my mother passed away of childbirth. My sister lived, she still, she's living here in the Buckhall area. But, back then, a lot of, a lot of women passed away of childbirth. And she did, and when I was four years old. So my dad sold the house, and moved back on the farm with me, and so I've been in that area behind Buckhall Store since I was four years old. And um, the um, and later years my dad got married and built a house, but I stayed with my grandparents. I stayed, I stayed on the farm. And, but my granddaddy had old, old equipment. He had, back in the day, a lot of stuff was horse drawn. He had two horses: Dan and Beauty. And I don't remember which one, but one of them touched his nose on the electric fence, died of a heart attack. So if you have a team of horses, and one dies, then all you have is a pet. So we had one pet horse, and uh, he converted all of his equipment, farm equipment, from horse drawn, to pull behind a tractor. And we had, we had quite a bit, good bit, of equipment but uh, old, old equipment. The uh, the tractor now, sits right straight across the street. It's a 1939 Farmall F-12, cleat wheel, no rubber tires. Cleat wheel tractor, sits right across the street. And then, we talked about my other set of grandparents. Uh, they had a, it was probably a couple hundred acres. On my grandfather's farm, we had maybe, as many as 6 cattle. It wasn't a dairy farm or anything like it. We used the milk for ourselves, we had some chickens, and we had some pigs. But it was, his profession was the slaughterhouse, butchering. The farm's, more or less, a, like a hobby to him. Loved coon hunting. He'd work all day long, and then walk those woods all night long. And, and sometimes, I'm maybe 5, 6 years old, I'm out there, walking with him. And uh, he'd, the dogs would tree something and he'd say "That's not a coon." And I'd say "How do you know, Granddaddy?" He said, "I know the sound," he said, "it's not a coon." And then they'd tree something else, and "Yeah, that's a coon. That's a coon." So he knew, he knew his coon hunting. Uh, but the other farm, over in Burke, all that was a multimillion dollar operation. My grandfather didn't own that. But he managed it. He was the farm manager. And they, that was a milking operation. They had a hundred or so cattle. And uh, when I'd go visit him, it was like two different worlds. I was going to a farm that was, was ancient, the tractor was ancient, no rubber tires. Went to the other farm, brand new tractors, all rubber tires, brand-new trucks. Anything they needed to run that farm. All my grandfather had said, "I need this. I need a new tractor, I need this." And that's, so I was back and forth. And at the age of 12, I ended up with a 1947 Cushman motor scooter. Um, I think my dad, between my dad and my grandfather, they got it for me. And I would ride that Cushman motor

scooter, roughly 12 years old, back and forth from, from Buckhall to Burke. Now when you, when you went down the road here about 3 miles to cross over into Fairfax County, all that was gravel road. It wasn't hard surface road. But when I got over to Fairfax County, it was a hard surface road. But, and they allowed me to, to run my motorcycle, my motor scooter.

MB: Would you go by yourself?

FM: Oh yeah, yeah. But I mean, it wasn't like, uh, it wasn't tight reins on me. But they know, and I would, I would abide, I would go to the farm, I wouldn't stray off and be gone for days, you know (laughs). So that's the uh, that's my growing up and as far as the tractor. People don't believe this. But when I was, you didn't go to kindergarten back then. You, you started off in the first grade. Well I was born in July, so I reckon, so long, September you started the school. So I was just a couple months six years old. But that summer, that, when I was six years old, I started driving that tractor. Um, but I had to sit on the floor, to push the clutch in, because my legs weren't long enough to push the clutch in. So I sat on the floor of the tractor, looked around the side to see where I was, see where I was going. So I started driving farm equipment at the age of six. And around 10, I was driving my grandfather's '41 Chevrolet pickup truck. So uh, I had no, what you say, childhood playing with toys and stuff like that. My toys were the big boys' toys (laughs).

MB: Wow, that is really cool.

FM: Yeah.

MB: Um, and then you talked about both of your grandfathers. Oh, sorry, what was your mom's father's name?

FM: My mom's, my mom's father's name, his, his name was, the last name was Kindrick. Stuart, Stuart Kindrick. And then uh, they were, they were actually originally from, uh, Tennessee-Virginia, they were Bristol. So some of the Kindrick's were on the Virginia side, some were on the Tennessee side. But my grandfather, he didn't uh, he didn't want to work in the coal mines. So they moved, they moved to Manassas, in uh, probably in the early to mid '30s. And uh, so my, my uh, my mother grew up here as a, as a teenager, but she was born in Tennessee, Tennessee area. But then they lived in and around Manassas for a few years, worked at several different farms, then ended up at the, the Lynch farm. He was a, Mr. Lynch was in commercial real estate. Um, and that's, he could, he could afford a farm. Well actually, they had, it was, it was a working business, it was profitable business. It had a lot of, a lot of cows. The latest works, they had automated milkers would milk them and the milk would flow right to the, to the cooler, and then they had big trucks come in, take it away. This was a big, big, big operation, which was totally different from what my grandfather here in uh, but here in this Buckhall area, back in the day, back in the 40s, there was a lot of, lot of people with acreage. The average was, not many had more than 100 acres, but there was a lot of 100 acre tracts and a lot of 50 acre tracts. And uh, but there was only two major farms that were considered dairy farms, and one of them is still in existence, well it isn't existent as a dairy farm, but they're trying to sell it, for years now, it's the Kline farm. And uh, right across the street from it is the, what they call Henson Knolls, but that was the Henson farm. Both of those farms, back in the 40s and 50s were actually dairy, dairy farms, I don't know how many cattle they had. But they were, they were dairy farms, all the other farmers would have, you know, just a few cattle, few pigs, few chickens. And um, but there was a lot of, a lot of land that was, hard to say, 50 to 100 acres. There are a

few tracts still left in the Buckhall area, but very few, very few. Now out of my grandfather's hundred acres, somehow or another we've managed, I think there's only about 20, 20 acres or so out of the farm. And uh, it got developed some 25 or 30 years ago, my dad sold 13.5 acres off. And then uh, my uncle had 20 some acres which gave, he gave to his oldest son. He sold it off. They cut a road in off of Lake Jackson Drive and developed that. My father's property, it got rezoned but it never got developed. And believe it or not, we got it back in the family, I got 3.5 acres back in the family. Uh, maybe somewhere around 10 years ago. And then there was a ten acre tract that has been sold numerous times. My grandson now owns it, he's owned it for almost two years. So that 13.5 acres which my dad sold almost 30 years ago is back in the family. But the other's gone, and there's a development there and it'll never, never come back, so.

MB: That's really cool that the land is now back with your family, that's really cool.

FM: Yeah, yeah it was, it was a miracle, it was uh, well it was God's will, that's all I can say about it, 'cause it was a miracle how it came back to us. Well the 3.5 acres, I've got it, cause they were selling it, and I went to the developer that was selling it and I said, uh, cause the County would not approve it, they were gonna approve it for eight houses, and uh, the county wanted, it had a 50 foot strip, to get back into the 13.5 acres. The county wanted a 60 foot. Well, I owned a rental house on one side of it, and my owned a house on the other side of it. So they either needed 10 foot from me, or him, or 5 and 5. This went on for years, and my son didn't want any houses behind him. I said, "Well, don't sign anything." So this, finally I went to the developer and said, "You can see my son is not going to sign, and I'm with him. Whatever he wants, you know, that's, that's fine with me, I can along with it." I said, "But uh, I'll tell you what I'll do." I said, "We'll sell the property, restricted to one house, on the," And I said, "I won't take a commission, but for that, I want the 3.5 acres because that's the lower part, creek runs through it, that'll be a buffer between this ten acre tract and some of my land and some of my son's land." So I took 3.5, so I got 3.5 acres back then. And I thought "That's all I'll ever get." And then, lo and behold, the opportunity came up here, two years ago where uh, where we were able to buy the ten acres back. It never got developed, no house. It's just vacant land, but there's been a road put in back there so that's an improvement. Uh, but uh, to put a house back there.

MB: Yeah, cool. Um, and then, so we talked a bit about your parents, can you tell me more about, or your grandparents, can you tell me more about your parents?

FM: Uh, well like I said, my mother passed away when I was four years old, so. But my dad, I've always, my dad's deceased now. He's, he's buried right next door, here in this, in this graveyard. But uh, he pretty much lived right here in the Buckhall area all his life. And um, uh he remarried, I don't know, maybe 6, 7, years after my mother passed away. So I have a, I have a half brother. I have a sister. A sister who was, was, lived, and my mother passed away. And then I have, have a half brother, but uh, my dad was uh, cause he grew up here on the farm, too. But uh, at a very early age, he was more interested in mechanics, so he was uh, he was a mechanic. Worked, well at one time, he worked at Fort Belvoir, but it was in the mechanic field, an automobile mechanic and trucks and stuff like that. But they also owned, him and my uncle, owned a garage in the, oh, late, let's see, early, I reckon mid 50s to late 50s. They had a, they had a garage, in the, on the edge of town. Did automobile work and all. And a lot of the vehicles that were inoperative ended up being pulled down on the farm and uh, the, the newest, the newest vehicle that was there, and at one time we probably had, it was like a junkyard but we had, you know, they couldn't keep

so many there in the town limits, and they'd bring them out on the 100 acre farm, and so at one time we had probably had 40 or 50 cars and trucks. But the newest would have been 19, 1941.

MB: Okay.

FM: And uh, when the land that my father sold, all of those vehicles was on that piece of land, and uh, when he sold it, the developers started cleaning, cleaning it up and he had a big, big berm of dirt and they got all the vehicles out of there except two. And the reason they didn't get them, they didn't see them because the berm of dirt. So those two vehicles are still there and both of those are in the, somewhere in the mid 30s. And uh we're, we're not moving them, we're just leaving them there for historical purposes.

MB: Yeah, that's so cool. And sorry, can you tell me your parents' names and your siblings' names?

FM: Yeah, my dad's name was Garland. G-A-R-L-A-N-D. Garland Moore. They called him G sometimes. Or Garland. And then my mother was Helen, and she was a Kendrick. That was her maiden name, Helen. She also is buried in the graveyard, right here, right next door here. And my grandparents. And uh, on my, on my grandparents' side, my grandfather grew up in this area, too. I'm not exactly sure where. But his, his wife was a Whitmer and uh, she grew up here in Buckhall.

MB: And what was her first name?

FM: Uh, Bessie. Ted and Bessie Moore. That was, that was my grandparents.

MB: Cool, uh, so now that we've kinda done your family history. Um, moving a little bit more into Buckhall, kinda as you're growing up, um, what first comes to mind when you think of Buckhall?

FM: What first comes to mind. Well, that's all I knew at the time. I'm going to tell you, I'm going to tell you an interesting story though. Uh, I was in uh, I grew up fast. When I say I grew up fast, at the age of 19, well, well at the age of 15, from 15 on, I never remember having one job. I pretty much had at least two jobs, course you couldn't work them both at the same time. But I mean I may work one job in the morning, another job in the afternoon. I mean, I was, I kept, I kept busy. And uh, at the age of, you could get your driver's license, back then, you could get your driver's license when you were 15. So the very day that I turned 15, I had my driver's. I'd been driving for four or five years, on the road, by myself, but didn't have a driver's license. But at the age of 15, I got my driver's license, well at the age of 16, you could actually get a school bus driver's license, at the age of 16. And so, soon as that come along, I got my bus driver's license. And uh, so I was, I was driving a bus, at the, at the age of 16. And it wasn't a small bus either, it was a 66 capacity. Uh big, international, uh, big international bus. But uh, when I was 19, I was a senior in high school, and uh, I lost my, well I really didn't lose it, they took it from me, my driver's license. And I was working at a service station, working on the farm, working at a service station, driving the school bus, well all that abruptly came to a halt cause I didn't have a driver's license. I was scared to drive, because I thought they were watching me. Well I, I went in the military at the age of 19. So, uh, I left to go at a, at an early age, but just for a short while. I did all my training, my basic training and all in Fort Knox, Kentucky. And when you first go in, basic, they watch you closely for about a week to size you up, to see, you know, who you are and what you're gonna, what they can make of you. And uh, so, within a week or so, I became a squad leader. I had men under me, and the men I had under me, a lot of them were college graduates. I was a high school dropout. But uh, a lot of them asked me about that. You know, "How, how could this be? Hiring you over us." You know, cause, I can take orders and I

can give orders (laughs). And I said, these, the first sergeant, he would get right within three inches of your face and just holler at you like you were a hundred yards away. And they said, "Don't that bother you?" I said, "No," I said, "my grandfather, he can outdo them any day." (laughs). So that's, that's how I started my adult life. And also, at 19 I was, I was married, and uh one of, to our anniversary, one year to the day, we had a daughter. A year and four days later, we had a son. So, when I'm 21 years old I'm already married and have two children. Just like my dad, course my dad was, actually, younger than I when he got married. I, I grew up, I grew up fast. But back to the Buckhall. Um, I was in, El Paso, Texas. And that's a border town, uh border to Juarez, Mexico. And when you walk, in the military, when you walked across from, from El Paso, into Mexico, you had to announce your citizenship. And uh I'd never go over there, this was back in the 60s, I wouldn't go by myself. You'd always go with a group of at least 5 or 6 guys. So uh, we walked across, and they'd say, "United States," "USA," came to me and I said "Buckhall!" And when I did that, everybody busted out laughing, but the Mexican border guards, they didn't, they didn't think that was funny (laughs). They pulled me aside, (still laughing), so I never done that again. You know, "What is this Buckhall?" (laughs).

MB: So how long were you gone from Buckhall for?

FM: Well, only, only six months which is what I did. I took my basic training and then I came back. We had, back in the uh, back in the early 60s we had several Nike sites, missile sites, in and around the Washington D.C. area to protect the area. And uh, I worked, there was one down at Lorton, and I worked at that Army Nike site for probably about 6 years. And then, after that, I went, went to work for the Army Corp of Engineers. And then worked, two different places I worked, one initially was over around Glen Echo, there was a, there was a, facility there, and then I moved to Fort Belvoir, and I was uh, I still worked double. I think at Fort Belvoir, when I was there, for three years, I, I got my, I got my real estate license so I was selling real estate on the side but also working for the federal government. I think I did that for three years and then I finally made a choice, and just going full time realtor. And that's, that's it.

MB: Yeah, and so you were living in Buckhall while you were working?

FM: Oh yeah, yeah. Well, okay, let's go back to, uh, I lived in the old farmhouse. Uh, matter of fact, my grandmother, um, let's see how that was, uh. My grandparents had moved to the little house, where the lady [Kathy Clark] was just telling you that she lived. And so, my, the, my grandparents over the years rented the old farmhouse out. And so when I first got married, uh, we had, it was vacant, we had the opportunity to live there for a while. But in, in so doing, um, my grandmother actually evicted me. From the, from the house. And it was all over um, one of my uncles, that was living there at the farm at the time. Uh, he and I didn't see eye to eye on a few things. And it got pretty, pretty heated and there, there was, (laughs) there was no gun play, but there was, he did pull, he pulled a gun on me, and uh, so at that point, I, I agreed with whatever he wanted me to agree to (laughs). But my grandma could see, you know, this is not gonna work, so she kindly asked me to move (laughs). Well, I was in the process of building a house, this was, this was in 1965. I was in the process of building a house which I eventually got it built, and I'm living in it today. Uh, but I had to make a temporary move into another house, but right here in Buckhall till I got the, till I got my house, my house built. And like you say, back in the, back in the day, uh, we, we just stepped out and did things. I did go to the health department and get a permit to get a septic tank put in, I knew, I knew I had where that was gonna go. That's, that's the most, in the country, if you don't have sewer and water, you have to have a well and septic. And if you've got, if you can locate

those two, then you can build a house. And I literally went to the center of the street and pulled back 50 some feet on one side and then the house was something like 50 feet wide, pulled on the other side, didn't get a survey or anything, just I started building the house. And um, the house uh, I got a, hired a bulldozer to come in, dig the basement, and uh, had somebody else, lay the, lay the cinderblock. I'm, I'm the, I'm the general contractor, I had about six months experience as a carpenter's helper. That's, that was about the extent of it. And uh, oh, I drew my own plans. The plans for it, and I still have them in my drafting table at the house. And they're pretty good plans I think (laughs). And uh, so I, so I drew my own plans up, and um, so I had the basement in, I had the, had the subfloor in on the house, and then I, I'd run out of money. So uh, I go uptown, Mr. Powell, I think the bank was People's National Bank. And Mr. Powell always told me, he knew I was an old Buckhall boy, and my parents and grandparents had land and all these, figured I'd eventually build a house. He always said, you know, "When you get ready, you come on up, we'll loan you the money." Well, I went up, I said, "I'd like to speak to Mr. Powell." "Well son, Mr. Powell has passed away." Said, "Oh my gracious," I said, "I come to see about getting some money to build a house." He said, "Well who's your contractor." I said, "I am." He said, "Well, do you, are you a licensed builder?" I said, "No." "Well, I don't know whether we'll be able to loan you any money." Well the end of it, the long and the short of it, they would not loan me any money. So I got, I got the subflooring down and that's it. So it happened to be that my wife worked for a, a Dr. Cook at Fairfax hospital, and he was on the board of directors of a bank in Centreville. So, it's sometimes it's who you know (laughs). And that's how we got our money to, to, to, to build a house. So it all got built, and in '66 we moved in, and we had a, the first, thrilling, new house in Buckhall back, back then there wasn't. I probably built one of the first, well no, my cousin built. Cause he built in '55, so he built first, then I built. So we just started, started the building business. But down behind Buckhall store, there back in the 50s, when I was growing up, there was maybe 5 or 6 houses on Moore Drive, and 2 maybe 3 houses on Pineview which is off of Moore. So there was, there wasn't even a dozen houses back there, back in the 50s. But um, so that's my, that's my story on the house-building. And I built, I built and remodeled several others. But don't claim to be a builder. But um.

MB: Yeah, wow. That's really cool.

FM: And my dad, like you say, my dad was the same way. He built, in his lifetime I think he built 5, 5 houses. And he's an automobile mechanic by trade. So you did, you know, you did, you did stuff like that. Um, my dad was a lot more talented than I am, as far as building. He could lay cinder block, he could do plumbing, he could do electrical. A lot of this stuff, I hired out, cause I wasn't that experienced with it, but uh, I knew the basics. But uh, he actually, he actually built. I ended up buying my dad's house two years ago, I think. He built a house here in the community. Back in the, well he started it back in the early 50s, and it was too monumental for him, and then he built a little house, and then went back to building the bigger house years later, and finished it up. But the house that he built, uh, he didn't get the materials from a lumber company, he pulled them as logs out of the woods, took them to the sawmill, had them sawed up, cured, and that lumber's in that house. You can't hardly get a nail in the lumber, it's so, it's so hard.

MB: Wow. Was that the sawmill that was on Evans Ford Road? Or?

FM: No, actually there was a, there was a sawmill, there was a sawmill down at the end of Pineview. Fellow by the name of George Farquaher (*transcriber note: unsure of spelling, based on a lumber man*)

living in Manassas in 1930), how you spell Farquaher, I do not know. But George Farquaher came out the state of Washington, how he ended up in Manassas, I don't know, but he came. And he was a builder, he, he built a lot of houses, in old town, old town Manassas. And I believe he was the main builder on the uh, on 28, where, what is that winery there now? Um, it, it used to be a big dairy barn, he built that back there in the Depression. And um, I think they have wine testing there now, or something, I don't know. It's, it's near where the IBM plant used to be. Around 28.

MB: Yeah, um, and then you've been talking, you, you've mentioned a lot of family members who have been living around. What relatives were living near you as you were growing up or in your young adulthood?

FM: Okay, well, my grandfather had the hundred acres in behind Buckhall store. Right straight across the street here, from where the church is, it was, I believe, the Marsh property. Um, that name rings a bell, but my uncle, my oldest uncle, bought that property probably back in the late 30s, and that's 40 some acres. And they still have that, that's, that's still, still in the family.

MB: And what's that uncle's name?

FM: Uh, that was Vernon, Vernon Moore. And I think it was about 40 acres there, don't quote me, cause it could be more, could be less. But it was a substantial amount. And um, so he and his wife, now I've been told, my sister told me this, and several other people I think. I think his wife was Myrtle, and she was a Hensley. Grew up down, down Davis Ford road, here about 5, 6, 7 miles. So, south of Buckhall. But that's where the Hensley's, they had a 100 acres or so. And uh, I believe she taught, towards the end of the life of this one room schoolhouse here. She taught there, at that schoolhouse. That schoolhouse, they probably shut that down sometime in the 30s. And the same way with the post office. That I believe was shut down sometime in the 30s. But the Buckhall store, that was owned for the longest time by Hallie and Charlie Cornwell. They uh, oh gracious, probably back in the 30s, and the, and I'm not sure because when they stopped running the store, they rented it for years. So, I'm not sure when that store sold. But I think the next tenant after Hallie and Charlie was a fellow by the name Ernie, Ernie Reed, I believe it was. He's the one that named it Buckhall Mall. Nothing changed, but it, just a little old store, but he called it a mall. And we get the biggest kick out of that because we tell strangers, "Well, yeah, go down to the Buckhall Mall, you can get it there!" And some people say later on, "Well we never did find the mall." (laughs). But that, that store was the, pretty much the hub of the community, and uh, course, the schoolhouse and the post office was before my time. Like I said, I was born in '41 and they were out of existence by a few years, I believe. But the road from Manassas to Occoquan, there was a town, well it is, still is a town of Occoquan. Um, cause back in the early 40s when you say Woodbridge, I don't even know, I don't even know when the name Woodbridge came into existence. Cause I don't know, well even to this day, what is Woodbridge? I know it's, there's a conglomeration of houses, but there's no town of Woodbridge. There's just, it's called Woodbridge and Cecil D. Hylton was down there in the, probably the, I don't know, mid 50s and started building houses. He built, uh, he built houses here in Westgate, in Manassas, but most of his building was in that Woodbridge - Dale City area. And built hundreds and hundreds. CD Hylton was a sod farmer. That's, that's what he initially, that's, that's what he did. He had sod trucks, um matter of fact, I ran into one of them back in uh probably the 80s or 90s. I sold uh ten acres over in Centreville, and there was two trucks in the back part of the lot. One of them was a Studebaker truck. Big truck, and you could barely see, it, it said "C.D. Hylton Landscaping" you could see it on the

door of the truck. But that's, that's so from somewhere, he switched over from, from being a sod farmer to being a builder, built hundreds and hundreds, probably the biggest builder here in the area. I mean, I don't know anybody any bigger, that built more houses than he.

MB: Yeah, that's really interesting. Cause I know his name, I think from the high school (FM: Oh yeah) but I hadn't realized all the history.

FM: Oh he, he donated a lot, a lot of money to this county. Yes he did. And then in Manassas, a fellow by the name of I.J. Breeden donated a lot of money. I.J. Breeden is the one that has the Manassas shopping center. And we just lost last Friday, we just lost an anchor there. Um, J.E. Rice hardware. Uh, they closed their doors, course Pitkins is, is reopening. It'll be a, it'll still be a hardware store. But uh, J.E. Rice started a store, right in the heart of Manassas in the, probably early to mid 30s. And it was Western Auto, and then he went, in later years he went from Western Auto to True Value. And now the store that he has at the shopping center's gonna be Ace. But uh, where City Hall is in downtown Manassas. Well that used to be a, there was a fire department there, and then they used it later on for City Hall and then they moved somewhere else now, or they got a bigger building, not sure. But anyway, right straight across from that fire department was a, was a framed, white framed building. And that was, that was Western Auto, but the Manassas shopping center was built in the early 60s. And they were one of the first ones to move into that shopping center. And the same place has been there renting that space since the early 60s. And uh, they, they rented that from I.J. Breeden. Now, I.J. Breeden would, what is now the city of Manassas Park, he owned most of that, that was raw, raw land. Cause like you say, back when I was, back in the early 40s, when I was growing up, there was, you either lived in the town of Manassas or you lived in the country, there was no, there was no in between. There was no Manassas Park. There was no townhouses. You either lived in a single family home in the city, in the town of Manassas or a single family home in the country. Some had bathrooms, some didn't. Uh, we were fortunate, we had a bath and a half. We had a full bath in the house and a half bath in the backyard. So we were, we were uptown. But I can't, truthfully say, uh, I slept, I went to my grandparents when I was four years old. My early, early age, I was upstairs in a bedroom, but then when I got a little older, I was downstairs, had one bedroom downstairs and had two doors. You could go into the living room from the bedroom or you could go into the kitchen from the bedroom and I would go in the early early mornings, in the winter, I would go into the kitchen first thing and get dressed because there was a big potbelly, well it wasn't potbelly, it was a big cook stove. The wood, we fed it with wood, a wood cookstove. My grandmother had that going, so I'd get in behind the stove and get dressed cause we had no heat in that bedroom and uh, there's been many a morning in the wintertime when we'd get a big, big snow. And a drift of snow. I'd actually have snow on the quilt at the foot of my bed. There would, there would be snow that had drifted through the window (laughs).

MB: Oh my goodness.

FM: They were the good old days. But I, I never minded it. And we'd always, in my early early years of growing up in that farm house, we'd always, we had two different men, one of them was Mr. Kingston. And uh, Mr. Kingston owned a farm over here on uh, Signal Hill Road, where there's a lot of warehouses now. Now I don't know how much land. He may have had as, maybe 20 acres, I'm not sure. And as far as I know, he never was married, it was just Mr. Kingston, and I don't know what his first name was (*Transcriber Note: His first name seems to be Joseph, based on the 1950 Census*). But when I went there at four years old, he was living with my grandparents because he was of an age where he was too old to

work the farm, sold the farm, my grandparents took him in until he died. And uh, he uh, he's buried in Haymarket in a graveyard in Haymarket. But he was, so I'm four, five years old, he's at that time, I don't know, in his 80s I reckon. But he taught me a few things about life. Very, very, very kind. Stern but kind man. And then uh, and then there was another, another gentleman. Nelson Bennett, uh, my, my grandparents seemed to cater to helping people out. They uh, he lived there, and I'm not sure how long, but both of those, both of those men died at a, you know, late age, and they were living with my grandparents at the time. And we'd always have uh people coming in, and staying the weekend and this cause uh, my, my grandmother and my grandfather had relatives different places and people would travel to come see you, and there was no hotels or anything, so they, they stayed with you. Back, back in the day.

MB: Yeah, wow, that's really cool. Um, I want to go back to when you were talking about the Buckhall Store and how it was a community, like everyone in the community would come together there. (FM: Mm hmm). Can you tell me more about that? (FM: Yeah) Either what it looked like or?

FM: Yeah, yeah. It was a, a wooden floor, I think they just oiled it down every few months or something. It was, you, you could, it had that smell to it. When you went in the store, you could smell it. Plus they had a, had a potbelly stove right in the middle of the store. And in the winter time, that was always, always going. And um, like I said, it was Hallie and Charlie Cornwell. Uh, Hallie pretty much ran the show. And everybody, everybody knew it. Course if they needed manpower or something, Charlie would, and Charlie had a, he had about a one ton Dodge truck, and uh, they would take, through the week, they would take orders. And uh, I don't know what day, maybe it was Saturday, but Charlie would deliver groceries to people in the, in the, in the community. I think it was just one, one, one day a week that they, they had that service. And Hallie could take a paper bag, you went in there and got groceries, she'd have the paper bag and she'd write the prices down and when she got to the bottom, already she had it added up. She was, she was a walking cash register. It was amazing how, how she was. And um, but yeah, people would, course like you say, if you were in Manassas and you were going down towards what is now Woodbridge, that was the only way, you went past that store. If you need to gas up, you gassed up. If you needed to go in there and, now they, as far as I know, Hallie and Charlie never sold beer. At that, at that store, now in later years other people that took it over, they did. But they would sell, they would sell bait. A lot of people would want to buy bait to go fishing and stuff like that. But um, they had a little bit of everything in there. When, uh, when one, one Sunday, um, kids were probably, my kids were a year apart, I think they were maybe 6, 7 years old, I'm not really sure. But coming home from church, they wanted to stop at the store and get a pie. Okay, so I give them the money, I don't even go in, my wife and I stay in the car. And they go in and get the pie and we bring it home. And all of a sudden, I'm in the other room, and one of them, whether that's a boy or a girl, walked in and just saw me and said, "Daddy, Daddy! That pie has FUZZ on it!" (laughs). So, and it was mold but I took it back up, we exchanged it for another, no big deal. But they were so excited. "Oh, Daddy, the pie's got fuzz on it." (laughs). But yeah they had, they had a horseshoe pit out between the store and the schoolhouse. And uh, it wasn't nothing, they, they put little lights up, so I'm living in an old farmhouse behind the store, a couple hundred yards away but there was nothing. 10, 11 o'clock at night you hear the horseshoe hitting the, hitting the peg. When I was, when I was real small, my grandmother would send me to the store to get stuff, but I was instructed to come right back. I wasn't to hang around the store. And uh, which I, which I didn't. And it was probably, probably a good thing, but there was a lot of people that would, you know, that's where you got to know people in the, in the community. But like I said, it wasn't a very big community at that

time, so pretty much everybody knew everybody. And back to what you mentioned sometime or another when we were talking, about what we did for excitement as kids. Uh, we'd set up along the road, which was called, well I don't know if it even had a name then, it was later on they started calling it Davis Ford Road. But I don't know whether it had a name. But we would uh, we would listen to cars coming from Manassas to Buckhall and we would guess what it was, whether it was a Ford or a Chevrolet, or a Plymouth. Cause most, in most cases it was one of the three. A Dodge or Plymouth or Ford or Chevrolet, every now and then there was an oddball, would sneak into the picture. But we'd guess, and then, and then when they got into view, 50% of the time we could tell you who it was. Cause we just knew who had what car. And um, there's a, there was, till they rerouted the road, a sharp curve. I mean, like an "L" curve down here at the junkyard, Fred's Auto Parts. And uh, my grandfather, of course he lived here in Buckhall but his, his place of business was, was in Manassas. And if I was with him, normally I'd be driving. He had a '41 Chevrolet pickup. And I, at that time, was probably around 12 years old. But, Granddaddy's riding, I'm driving. We go around this curve and this '39 Pontiac Coupe is on my side of the road. But I had, I was a, experienced enough even back then to know, get out of his way. I just run the truck up the bank and then come back down in the road, and then everything is fine. Granddaddy said, "Who in the world was that crazy fool?!" I said, "That was Uncle Riley." And that was my grandmother's uncle, and he had a, and at that time he was probably in his 80s, he had a '39 Pontiac Coupe, gray, I knew who it was all along. But no big deal, just get out of his way! You know, and my, so Granddaddy didn't recognize who it was, but I did (laughs).

MB: Who are some of the other people you would sit with and listen for the cars?

FM: Um, I had a cousin, he's deceased now, he was two years older than I am, Ronny, Ronny Moore. And um, he and I mostly, cause there wasn't, there wasn't that many, back in the 40s and 50s, right here in this immediate area. Now, once you started going to school, you met a lot of people, but right here in this area, there was. My uncle had three boys, two of them were within a couple years of one another. One of them was a year or so older than me, the other was a year or so younger than me, so those two boys. Then the other one was oh, ten years younger than me, so you don't hang out with them, the ten year younger one, you know, cause they're babies. And then there was, uh, over the hill from the farm was Joe Kemper. Have you heard that name?

MB: Yes.

FM: Okay, well a lot of people think Kemper lived here longer than he had. I remember when Kemper bought that house. He um, he lived over on Signal Hill Road somewhere or another, but he bought, and it was about 50 acres, old, old farmhouse and about 50 acres. Kemper had four girls. Four girls. Now, the three girls were all older than me, the closest girl to me was probably two years older than I. And probably at the age of, I may have been 6, 7 years old, I'd go up and play with her, play with the doll babies, no big deal. Cause I didn't have anybody else to play with. But she was, she was older, about two years older than I. But real nice people, the old farmhouse that they lived in, they never had running water in the house, they never had an inside, inside toilet. And uh, but Joe Kemper, he bought that, they bought that place somewhere in around the mid 40s and then, Joe started working for my grandfather, probably not full time, and I don't know that Granddad had any full time employees at the slaughterhouse, working at the slaughterhouse. And um, for years, and then um, of course in the summertime we had different jobs on the farm: making hay, or threshing wheat, or whatever. And we were filling silo one year, and uh I

don't remember what year that would have been. It would have been probably late 40s, early 50s. But anyway, we're filling silo and these three men came down in black suits and ties. And they pulled Mr. Kemper aside to talk to him. And uh, I kinda thought maybe they were FBI agents or something. I had no idea what was going on. But what it was, they were interviewing him for the job of Chief Fire Warden of Prince William County. And eventually did hire him as, as the fire warden, and that's probably the beginning of how they named that the Kemper House. Because before that fire department was there, it was at the, when you go down Moore Drive, and it split off to Pineview, right there in that corner, and Mr. Kemper may have done that out of his pocket, I don't know what the county chipped in, but they put a building there, that and they had one fire truck. This was, I don't know, back in the, back in the late 50s maybe, I'm not really sure. But Buckhall fire department started there, but then they bought a piece of land, and then actually built the fire department where it is, where it is now.

MB: Cool, um, let me just, we're done with this page of questions. Um, do you have any other, like, interesting stories or people that you want to talk about from, kinda your earlier years before we get more into your, like, later adulthood?

FM: I don't know, there was a, there was some interesting people that lived here in Buckhall. Some of them were large families, I mean 10, 12 kids in a family. And somebody was asking me when they had this meeting, a month or so ago at the church, about the farming, did, did we hire, well she specific said, did we hire any, any Black people? I said, "In most cases, we didn't hire anybody, you got a father and a mother, and four or five children, the children worked the farm." I mean, very rarely, unless you've got a big farm, like the Kline farm, or the Henson farm, where, you know, dairy cattle and all, where you, where you needed a lot of help. And then what they would do also, they would share. In other words, we didn't have a threshing machine, there was one, one fellow in the whole neighborhood, um, I can't even think of his name right now. It'll, it'll come to me. But anyways, he had a threshing machine, so come threshing season, he would thresh his wheat but he'd go to all the other farmers and they'd all pitch in and help each other thresh their wheat. And we had uh, Buckhall from, let's see, '41 all the way up, we had, we had one Black person living in Buckhall. And if you go across the street here, on Moore Drive, you go about halfway between the parkway and Signal Hill road, on the left, and there was about three acres there. And um, he had a, it really, it really wasn't a house, it was kinda like a shack, um, I don't think he had electricity or running water or anything, but that's, that's where he lived. Clarence Jackson. And I always thought that Clarence was a single man, never married, in later years I found out different. Because I ended up selling that property, selling that piece of land. A lady contacted me from, I think Kansas City, she was a relative. And it seems as if Clarence had lived in D.C. in earlier years and had a wife and children, and uh, but he never, he never, he never had a will or anything like that. It took an attorney and myself over a year to just do the paperwork where we legally could sell it. And then, you had to advertise so many weeks in the paper and all to have relatives come forth, and I don't know how many did come forth. But the lady in Kansas City, she was the main person. But you know, then some way or another, they split it up amongst the relatives that they knew of, but it took them so many months, they had to advertise for some many months to do that. And then, um, it actually, I sold it to a builder, he built a house there, and a Black family bought the house and they still live there. So that was the only, in my lifetime, course now there are a few more Blacks in the, not many, but a few more, but it's kinda interesting that that place stayed in. And I don't know how long he owned it or I don't know anything about it. I just know it was about four acres, three, four acres of ground. And uh, he did, back then, he did odd jobs around, around the neighborhood. He did, he did all the work in the graveyard here, cleaning

honeysuckle and stuff. I never would forget. It would be a day like a July day, I mean, really hot, always wore long-sleeve shirt. It was always soaking, soaking wet. And I thought to myself, "How in the world can he stand it?" But strong man, he was strong, but very kind man. Very, very kind man. But I never knew, never knew he had a family. I mean, 'cause he never talked about them. So he came out of Washington D.C. to here, and uh, that was it.

MB: Cool, yeah, um. Also we can take a break if you would like to?

FM: Alright.

MB: Yeah, do you want to take a break for a few?

FM: Yeah, let's take a break.

MB: Okay, let me... pause that.

FIRST PART OF RECORDING ENDS FOR A FIVE MINUTE BREAK FOR WATER

MB: Okay, um yeah so coming back into it. Um, I guess one question I do have is where, how would you define Buckhall? Like where are the boundaries of it?

FM: You know, I honestly don't know. I don't know how far out you would stretch it, maybe half a mile each way from where we are here. But if you start going, uh towards Manassas, you know, you're gonna, you're gonna run into Manassas, so uh, I don't know where'd you'd end it. But definitely, like Fred's Auto Parts would be a part of Buckhall (phone chime) um, once you get. Course, Manassas expanded itself to this, this, the, the limits. I don't know whether the town or the city, but they, they've expanded out this way some, somewhat too. But uh, to me, always the hub was the store. There, here. But then I, I think the old timers, uh, they go back, some of them would say that over around Signal Hill Road was more of the Buckhall area. There was another road, if you, if you go up to the parkway and go towards Manassas, go about a half a mile, there was a road that turned off to the right and would go across to Signal Hill Road. Now it was, I don't think it ever was a hard surface road. But there was a road through there, maybe up until in the 30s. Um, they may have called them wagon trails. Matter of fact, there was another. My grandparents told me about a road, if you go down Pineview, there was a road that went across to Lake Jackson. But it never was a road in my time. And it was, more or less, like a logging trail I believe, but people would go through there horse and buggy. Whether they ever went through there in cars or not, I'm not sure. That's the same way with Moore Drive. If you go down to the end of Moore Drive, you can actually cross the river and go up a very, very steep hill and come out on Cornwell Drive which comes out on, uh, Hoadly Road, Hoadly Road area. Um, I've actually done it in a, in an army Jeep, uh, but that was, you know, back in the mid, mid, probably mid 50s.

MB: Yeah.

FM: But it's, it's, it is a very, very steep hill. And there's actually been vehicles that have started up that hill and flipped over backwards. But now that's all houses down in there. (MB: Yeah) So it's, it's all built up. So the Buckhall area like, like I said at the beginning is, is raw land that's been developed. And probably the biggest owner, uh, of the land here in the Buckhall area, uh, there was a lumber company in Manassas called Brown and Hooff and I believe they were related. I believe that, that uh, they were

brother-in-laws, I'm, I'm not sure about that at this point. But uh, they, they had uh, they had most of the land, Joe Brown had a lot of land. Here in this, this Buck, Buckhall area. Especially down, down Moore Drive. And then, then later, years, a fellow by the name of Lynn Weston bought up a bunch of land down, down around the river, and uh, started, started to fell and that. And uh, but all these tracts of land, 50 acres, 100 acres, but Brown had more than 100 acres, he had several hundred, hundred acres. But all of its, most of its been sold off and, and has developed. And most, most of your houses out here, they're, they're one acre minimum. They have to have, cause there's no sewer water, there's uh, you've got to get closer to the city of Manassas to get sewer and water. That's out here, you have to have enough land to put a well in, put a septic system in, and uh, and then put a street, depending on how big the development was, they have to put streets in and all this. But it's, it's uh, back when I was a kid, like I said, there was no, very, very few houses. Far and few between. And uh, in town, course there was houses, but uh, there was no townhouses, no, no development. The first, the first really official townhouse development in Manassas was Georgetown South. And that was, uh, I imagine last 50s, early 60s, they started, started building those. That was the first.

MB: Okay, yeah. Um, and then another kinda general Buckhall question is, where do you, where does the name Buckhall come from? Do you..?

FM: I do not, I do not have the foggiest. Now it was called something else, and maybe you have it in your records somewhere or another. Now, I can't remember what it was called. There was another name for Buckhall, prior to Buckhall, and I've heard it, but it can't come to mind right now. I don't, I didn't, don't know how that came into, came into existence.

MB: Yeah.

FM: But uh, I imagine, course this is even before my time, but some of my relatives back when they were little, they can remember, practically being here in Buckhall and seeing all the way up the Bull Run Mountain, cause there was not that many large trees. Uh, the uh, so it, over the years, I mean it's taking on a different, a different look. But how it got the name Buckhall, or what the other name was, I don't, I don't have the, I don't have the foggiest.

MB: That's okay, yeah.

FM: But I imagine it, the community got established with the post office and one room schoolhouse and the, and the store. And uh, a lot of these one room schoolhouses have gone by the wayside. There was one down on Hoadly Road that you don't even know it's there now. And it just, it's just gone. But this, this building is still here.

MB: Yeah, um, talking about the schoolhouse a little bit, I've read how, um, the Buckhall Civic Association had bought it. Were you ever a part of the Buckhall Civic Association?

FM: Well, yes. But I don't know whether it was official. You didn't have to sign up for anything. You just showed up at the meetings. But I don't think they met there. They never owned it. Uh, it was probably still owned by Hallie and Charlie Cornwell, but they allowed them to, to meet there. Um, and yeah, I imagine once a month, they would have a, they would, they would have a meeting, and yes I did, I did go, I did go to those.

MB: What type of things would they do at the meetings?

FM: Well, they would discuss what was going on at the time. Sometimes they would have a speaker come in that was uh, you know, doing development or something, they would give them a heads up as to, as to what farms had been sold or things like that. Um, and then maybe, maybe that was the forerunner for them deciding to get a, get a fire department too, I'm not, I'm not really, I'm not really sure. And uh, I, when I said I'd go to the meetings, I wasn't faithful, so I went to some of the meetings, and uh, but they would always have, I remember the dessert, they would always have some dessert there, the old timers would fix up pies and cakes and stuff like that. And, and bring them.

MB: That's so cool! Um, and do you know anything about why the Civic Association ended, or when it ended?

FM: Don't know why it ended, don't know when it ended. But, but most of the, most of the members were old. And, and kinda, more or less died, died off.

MB: Yeah, that makes sense.

FM: Us, younger generation didn't, didn't keep it up.

MB: Yeah, yeah, okay, that makes sense. Um, and then, who were some of the community leaders, like who, who did people look to for, um, I don't know, whether that's help or if decisions were being made?

FM: Well, I really, I really don't know. Um, most of the, most of the people that lived in the area were responsible people that had, they were definitely homeownership. Um, but as far as getting together and making decisions as a community, Buckhall community, I don't, I don't really, I don't really know that. The closest thing we had, like you say was that Association, and uh I can kinda remember when that started and when it ended. It, you know maybe, it was within a span of 20, 15, 20 years maybe. But uh, but as far as having any say-so in the county itself, you know. We just, I don't, I don't remember, I don't remember anything like that.

MB: Yeah. Um, and then, why have you decided to stay in Buckhall for almost your entire life?

FM: Well, it's like you say, I've been places. But there's no place like home, and uh. I had, I had decent jobs here and then when I got into real estate, that I started buying and selling and I like to, I like to be close to what I own. So uh, that was, I reckon that's my excuse for not, for not leaving. I have numerous properties in Buckhall as we speak. And uh, I've got a, I've got a, like, a utility golf cart with a dump bed on the back. So I can go to most of what I own in my golf cart (laughs). I do own other places but not, not as much as, like I said, just about two years I bought, bought my dad, my dad's house. That was the last house I bought. And uh, I really uh, all the other properties, I mainly, mainly was the instigator, and I dragged my wife along. Actually on this house of my dad's, she dragged me along! I didn't want to get involved in another property but uh, glad I did.

MB: Yeah. Um, and did other people that you grew up with leave Buckhall? Or did most people stay?

FM: Hmmm, a little bit of both, a little bit of both. But there's still a lot of people that grew up here that are in the county, maybe not in Buckhall. But uh, in Prince William County per se. Um, but uh, back in the 40s and 50s, there, there really wasn't a whole lot of us.

MB: Right.

FM: But I remember one incident that uh, my kids in the 70s I think, sometime, somewhere in the 70s. They were, they came complaining to me about, they uh, they were having to wait for the bus in the rain. And uh, so where we are is behind Buckhall Store, is where we live. But never in my time or in my kids time, never did school buses go down that road. The closest they could come to you is Buckhall Store. And uh, even when I was, back in the 40s, when I was riding the school bus the bus would come in the store parking lot and, and pick you up. You had to walk from, and some of them, if you go down Moore Drive, I mean, some of those kids down there were walking almost a mile. But no complaints, you did what you had to do. But anyway, the bus would pick you up there at the store. If it was raining you, the store always had a porch, big front porch, and it was before the store opened when you, when you catch a bus. Kids told me, I said, I said, "Well why are you standing out in the rain? Why don't you get under the porch?" "Well we have to catch the bus on the, over at the graveyard." Well see, that's where that sharp curve is. And one year, I reckon, some bus driver thought it. Because see there was no parkway then, you, and it was just the old road. You went around by the store then on back down towards Woodbridge. So uh, the driver took it upon himself, it was easier for him to just pull up on that curve and load them up. Not go up into the school, into the church parking lot. Well it so happened that the, the, the head of the bus garage who was in charge of all the buses, he grew up here in Buckhall. He's the one that walked almost a mile to Buckhall Store. So he knew exactly when I called him and says, "Hey Jimmy, do you know that they're picking kids up in the graveyard now, not at the, not in the store parking lot." He said, "You've got to be kidding!" I said, "I'm not kidding." Well that was the last day that happened (laughs).

MB: Wow, and where did you go to school?

FM: Uh, I went to, well the high school was, was Osbourn but Osbourn at that time was a county and a town school. And then the grade schools was Baldwin and Bennett. Baldwin is no longer in existence, that's where the Manassas museum is.

MB: Okay.

FM: And before the museum, there was, there was three or four buildings kinda in a circle there, and that's where, I think I went to school there from first grade to about fifth grade or so. But prior to it being just a regular school, it was a vocational school. And uh, a lot of kids from down around Occoquan and all would go there and they would learn trades. So bricklaying, carpentry, electrical, and uh. I don't know whether they had automotive at that time. But anyway, they would, and they would ride our bus because it would be one bus that would come down there and all the way. So you had, you didn't have uh, two different buses: little kids and big kids. They were all, I mean, they were from 6 years olds to 19 years old. (MB: Wow!) And course, when I first started, I mean, I was scared to death cause they, the bigger ones would get in fights, and I had to get over to the corner and get out of the way (laughs).

MB: Oh man, and um, did your children also go to Bennett, Baldwin, and Osbourn?

FM: No, see over the years it kinda switched around. It, back when, back when I was in school, there was um, they called it Jennie Dean. And Jennie Dean was strictly a, a Black school. Black children went there. And then, but when my children came along, um, they, they went a couple of years at that grade school. But uh, and there's so many schools around now, I couldn't begin to tell you. But back in the day, as far

as high schools, they had, they had one in Woodbridge, they had one in Nokesville, and they had one in Manassas. And that was the three, three high schools. And then later on, the Osbourn became a city school and then they built Osbourn Park and so my children went to Osbourn Park. And uh, which was, was a county school. And it's, it still is today. And then they've got a third one in there now, Manassas Park. Manassas Park is its own city. I've gone, in my lifetime, I've gone from the Manassas Park area being literally a pasture field to a town, to a city.

MB: Wow.

FM: You could buy, you could buy a brand new house for, I think it was, it was either \$4,700 or \$7,400. I don't remember but, you know, cheap. (MB: Yeah.) And your payment, your payment would be something like \$50 dollars a month. And uh, an awful lot of veterans bought those houses with the, with VA loans. And then uh there was, uh, a couple investors that, that uh, a veteran would buy a house and live there for 3 or 4 years and just turn it over to an investor, just kinda walk away, they would take, take over the payments.

MB: That makes sense, um.

FM: But then they got more expensive, then they got more expensive. I own one right now in Manassas Park that I bought in uh, '08. I bought it in '08. The market had just crashed and I bought it for, right at 100,000 and today it's worth over 400,000. So uh, it is what it is.

MB: Yeah.

FM: And back to my house, I built my house in 1966, and I got a pretty good size. It's a ranch house, it's not a colonial. Back then, you didn't build colonials. Everybody's building ranch. So it's all on one level but a full basement. And I've got a car port but I've got a detached two-car, two car garage. But I built my house, the construction loan I got was \$15,000, and I had about 5,000 of my own money. So for \$20,000 in the early, in the mid 60s, you could, you could build a house. And my payments, my payments were little over \$50 a month. And uh, I was scared I wouldn't be able to make it (laughs).

MB: Yeah, yeah, wow. Um, what are some of the ways that Buckhall has changed over your lifetime? Cause I know we were just talking about Manassas Park a little bit.

FM: Well it's changed simply by uh increasing in houses and uh you know, more people. I mean, there was, there was a handful around here in the, in the 40s, like if you went down, if you went down Moore Drive probably five, six houses. That was it. And then on Pineview, maybe four, four houses. But they all had land. They all had. And matter of fact, Hallie and Charlie that owned the store, they had a farm down Moore Drive. Um, they might have had close to 100 acres. I'm not, I'm not really sure, they owned on both sides of Moore Drive at one, at one time. And uh, the first local builder here in the Buckhall area lived over off Signal Hill Road. Was, people by the name of Ghadban, and they had uh, they had two, two boys and a girl. And uh, they started, they started in the building business and done, done rather well. Uh, but they bought, they bought part of that farm that Hallie and Charlie Cornwell, and built, built houses down there. And uh, that uh, there was, there was several builders that bought up, well everything here now. There's, there's hard to find a piece of vacant land in the Buckhall area now. Very, very hard.

MB: Yeah. Um, I've just got, like, two more questions for today. Um, one, is there anything else that you wished I had asked about? Is there anything else that you want to talk about? Um.

FM: Well, like I said, I'm almost 82 so I'm, my, my thoughts are limited (laughs). I'm sure, I'm sure when we get finished I'll think of other things. But I, but, but for the moment, and course this has all been, not rehearsed (laughs) so.

MB: Yeah, no, I mean.

FM: But I'm, I do, I do a lot of things off the cuff (laughs).

MB: Your, it's been awesome, the amount that you've, you've been able to remember. Um, and is there anything that you wish either a future historian or the people who are moving into Buckhall knew about it?

FM: Hmm, can't rightly say, can't rightly say. Uh, I can say, that just, it just uh. Over the years, it's growth, and you don't, especially if you've lived here all your life, or most of your life, you don't. An outsider sometimes can see more than you. That's like my grandfather told me years ago, he said, well matter of fact he would uh, he gave me more beef cattle than he did money. I didn't, I didn't earn a lot of money on the farm. But he would have a herd and he'd say, "That calf there is your calf. When it comes time to take him to market, that's your money." And I think the first, the first money like that was something like \$200, but back in the, back in the 40s \$200 was a lot of money. But uh, and I would take most of it and put it in the bank. And uh, that's how I, on the farm, he uh, I had three meals a day and I had a place to sleep, and I had a calf every now and then. And when I'd sell that calf, my money would go in the bank. That was, that was my start of, of, of earning.

MB: Yeah, wow. Cool. Yeah, I think those are all of my questions. Um, yeah, if you have anything else that you think of, you can always give me a call. But thank you!

FM: Alright, thank you.

MB: And, okay.

END OF RECORDING

Kathy Clark Biography

Kathryn (Kathy) MacNevin Clark was born in 1952 in the old Alexandria hospital to William Henry MacNevin and Elizabeth Reed. Both of her parents were raised in Massachusetts and later came to live in Northern Virginia.

Kathy moved to Manassas in 1975 after graduating from the University of Virginia. She came to teach students with special needs in Prince William County Schools around the time that public schools became required to educate students with disabilities. She first lived in Georgetown South, but started to come to the Buckhall Church after meeting her future husband, Rick. Kathy describes her young adult life of teaching, living in Manassas, and becoming friends with the young adults in Buckhall. Her group of friends rode motorcycles together and went on camping trips. Before her second son was born, Kathy and Rick moved into a tenant farmhouse on the land of William and Thelma Hensley, though the family later outgrew it and moved into her current house.

Throughout her interview, Kathy describes many of the older Buckhall residents, including the Hensleys and the Klines, as family. Many of her other stories include her sons as they grew up in the country and her interactions with wildlife and farm animals. These stories include a bull wandering the streets of Buckhall, cows wading in the creek, and a faun in her backyard. Kathy also tells about a controversy in the community, involving a small private school on Pineview Road and the community organizing that Buckhall residents undertook to talk with them about water usage due to the wells and septic fields. Kathy ends her interview by thinking about the historical legacy of Buckhall, and sharing her desire that more people told stories about the past.



Oral History with Kathy Clark

Interviewer: Meaghan Brennan

Interviewee: Kathy Clark

Location: Buckhall United Methodist Church (10251 Moore Drive, Manassas, VA 20111)

Date: July 10, 2023

Meaghan Brennan = MB; Kathy Clark = KC

Transcribed by Meaghan Brennan

MB: Alright, um, today's date is July 10th, it is a Monday in 2023. Um, it is currently 10:42 am, my name is Meaghan Brennan, and I am an intern with the Prince William County Office of Historic Preservation, um, working on an oral history project of the Buckhall area. I'm sitting here with Kathy Clark today, um, and we're sitting in the Buckhall United Methodist Church, and, yeah. Oh and, in the old sanctuary. Um, so yeah, thank you Kathy for being here. Um, we're just gonna start with basic information about you. Um, can you tell us your name and how you spell it?

KC: Okay, um, just my first and last or the whole thing?

MB: Whichever you prefer.

KC: Well, I, my, my full name is Kathryn, K-A-T-H-R-Y-N, MacNevin, M-A-C upper case N-E-V-I-N, and when I got married I became Clark. And I go by Kathy.

MB: Perfect. Um, and can you, when were you born?

KC: 1952.

MB: And where were you born?

KC: In the old Alexandria hospital, it got replaced many, many years ago, and now there's a different old hospital (laughs).

MB: Yeah, awesome, um, and did you know your grandparents?

KC: Yes, I knew my, I knew my mom's parents, and I knew my dad's grandmother, and I didn't know his grand, his, his father or his step-father, but I knew his, his grandfather and, cause his grandfather lived to be almost 100 years old, and so I have memories of him.

MB: Wow, um, and what were their names?

KC: My mother's parents were, she was Julia Condon Reed, and it's a C-O-N-D-O-N, and his name was Edward, and I know I should, I just think, I can't remember, but he, Edward Reed. They were very, very different. Um, my grandfather really carried my mother, even in her childhood, even carried the weight of running the household and working and my mother doesn't know for sure, but she believes that maybe

her mother was, had periods of depression. She would get in her bed and not get out of bed, and her dad would clean, mend the clothes, do the laundry, get them, you know, just active in all kind of things in his community. While she laid in bed and complained.

MB: Yeah.

KC: So that, they, um, they lived up in Massachusetts, that was up in Massachusetts, and my dad was also from Massachusetts so that's where I got to know my great-grandfather.

MB: Cool. Um, and then, what were your parents names?

KC: My mother's name was Elizabeth, well she was, she didn't have a middle name, so she was Elizabeth Reed, R-E-E-D, MacNevin when she got married. And my dad was William Henry MacNevin.

MB: Cool, um, and do you know when and where they were born?

KC: My mother was born, I think, in the home, in their home in, um, I think it was at that point, now their names have sort of switched around or things, it was in Abington, Massachusetts.

MB: Okay.

KC: It's next to Rockland.

MB: Yeah.

KC: And, um, my dad, I don't know if he was born in Brock-, I, maybe he was born in Brockton, I don't know. His, his family, a lot of his family were in Brockton, and then, but would go to the Cape in the summer. Or go down to Buzzards Bay in Onset and they weren't across but they, that's where they spent their summers. And he, so I don't know if he was born in the home or in the hospital, I'm not sure. That's one thing I don't know, I'll have to ask my brother (laughs).

MB: Yeah, that was my next question, um, how many siblings do you have?

KC: I have one brother.

MB: And what's his name?

KC: Kenneth, Ken.

MB: And where does he live?

KC: He lives now in Kansas City, Missouri.

MB: Okay, cool. Um, yeah, so kind of transitioning then from, like, family background. Um, when did you move to Buckhall and why?

KC: I moved into the Buckhall community, I, I came to Manassas in 1975, I'd graduated from college, and that summer I got a job lined up for fall, teaching special needs kids in Prince William County Schools. So I found a roommate at a teacher meeting and lived in Georgetown South, and actually what was probably once a gorgeous, it had, my dad when he saw it said, "This is expensive wallpaper, these are

expensive carpets, they're ancient and they're not, now out of style. But the, the original house had looked like." So I lived in that townhouse for a year and then I moved to a different townhouse, and um, I had a friend who lived with me. Um, and everyone thought we were, you know, seeing each other but we weren't. He had his room, I had my room. But it saved on rent. And he, one night, got a phone call, and I answered it and it was before cell phones and this guy wanted to talk to him and I said, "Well, he's in the shower." And he, and I said, "Randy! You have a phone call!" And he said, "Tell them to meet us at," whatever the place we went to, I can't remember the name of it. I'd never been there before, and I never went again. It was a, it's a rollerskating rink down near Warrenton. Down off of 28 and Route 17, I think. And it's a dance hall at night. So I had a friend visiting that I'd gone to college with, so we, we went and he, he kind of ignored me, because he thought that I was Randy's date (laughs). But we figured out, I told him I wasn't (laughs) and we just, hit it off and, um, I mean that, we both, one of the things that came up was, he said, we just went through our things. And everyone I had been meeting didn't seem to know what books were, and I went to the University of Virginia, I knew what books were. And if I hadn't been a special ed teacher, I would have made, I would have become an English teacher, because I love literature. And this guy loved literature, and he was, had been an English major! And he had a college degree, and he had a real job, and I was like, wow, and he wanted to go to church on Sundays. He'd always gone to church growing up and he just felt funny going alone. And I said the same thing. And so, two weeks later, that's where, I guess I went to Buckhall before then. But he, he was living with a friend, I don't know how they met, where they met. They didn't go to the same high school. He was living with a friend who lived in one of the, the old Hensley-Moore, old farmhouse. And so he had a little room with living there. And he was dating somebody, and then we started dating, and two, I mean two weeks into seeing each other everyday, I sat in that row, two rows up (pointing to the bench on the right side of the sanctuary facing the front, two up from the back) with him on a Sunday morning, never been to church here. And they said, "Do you have any joys or concerns?" and he stood up and he said, "I've just met the woman I'm going to marry." And Ted's mother and father, they jumped and turned around, jumped up and started. Thelma was crying, Dorothy was crying, these two ladies, they met, they loved Ted and, they, they'd gotten to know Rick through Ted, and they were so excited. So that's when I came to Buckhall, and um, we moved fairly quickly. Um, we got, I think we got married 9 months after we met. And we moved to Buckhall, a year, let me think, probably, maybe two years later, we moved into the tenant farmhouse on the farm.

MB: Okay.

KC: With our first child.

MB: Yeah, where were you living when you first got married?

KC: I was living in Georgetown South, which is a, was, when it was built years ago in Manassas, it was, it was a nice, it was a beautiful. The house, the houses were beautiful, everybody had landscaped yards, it had nice playgrounds, it was a very well thought of, at the time when I moved in, there were people that said, "You shouldn't live there." And it was very diverse, now it is way more diverse, but there were also, like, on the block of houses on the first street I was on, I don't remember any trouble except for there was two people, one house, where they drove their cars really fast going up and down the road. When I moved to the other house, block of houses, we had one house which was a drug house. We had one where there was obvious alcoholism, and issues related to violence from that. And then there were some nice people.

But if I took my neighbor's son, I would on Saturdays sometimes take him so she and her husband could just hang out for a while, cause he was a handful, and I would take him out on the playground. But before I took him out, I always went out with gloves on and a bag to clean up after the folks that had been out there on the night before, partying on the playground.

MB: Yikes, yeah, so, and then, so when you first got married, you stayed in Georgetown South?

KC: Yeah, we stayed in Georgetown South.

MB: Okay.

KC: And then, we'd had our first child and I, I wasn't, I actually, I, we had not, I didn't think we had gotten pregnant again. But soon after we moved into the house and did all this painting and all this work, and I was always so tired, and I just thought that I was so tired, and then I figured out that I was pregnant (laughs).

MB: Oh my goodness, and did you husband grow up, that's Rick, right?

KC: Yeah, he, he actually was born at Fort Belvoir, his dad was in the army and so, he and all of his siblings, I think, were all born at Fort Belvoir. And they lived in Germany part of their childhood, um, his dad would be deployed, um, then they, they lived in Arlington. And then, when IBM came to Manassas, that was a big change for Manassas. Because IBM people wanted to have a short commute. But we didn't even talk about commutes then. Commutes weren't such a horror. And they built the community Westgate, and Sudley Manor came a little bit later. And his parents bought a house in the Westgate community, big, you know, it's a three-floor house, not three floors but it's got bedrooms in the basement, bedrooms upstairs, and they bought a house there. And uh, they lived in that until they, they also built a house down in Fluvanna County, but after their kids were all grown up. And uh, then all of the siblings, Rick was the oldest of four, and all of the siblings took years, some of them, all lived together, you know, some of them were going to college, some were working. Then they, then my sister-in-law and her husband moved in and had their family there, and eventually the house did get sold out of the family. But it was a long, it was pretty, pretty interesting community. Because on their street, my, my husband's two best friends were from large, Catholic families. And one of them, that, the father, um, became a state, he was a state senator to the state for many, many years. He could, he could have gone further in his career, but he liked doing things for Virginia, and didn't want to have all the other hassles.

MB: Yeah, that's really interesting.

KC: So they, they lived there for a long time.

MB: Yeah, and then he moved then to Buckhall, and was living with, was it Ted Hensley?

KC: Yeah.

MB: Okay.

KC: Yeah, he moved in with Ted and uh then, and Ted and they all, all the guys, his, his closest friends, they all rode motorcycles. And it was a big, it was a big joke when they met me because Deb's a little taller than me, Andi, she's about, she's like my size, and they (laughs), Andi's and his, they hadn't gotten

married yet, cause I came to the wedding here for them. Neither of those couples were married, but they were in the midst of planning. And I, the guy looks at me and says, "Well! I know why he dates you, you fit really good on the back of a motorcycle!" (laughs) That was just, and they, we used to do crazy trips, we did some crazy trips.

MB: Yeah, so what was, who, who was a part of that group of young adults?

KC: That, that was Ted Hensley, and his mom was a Moore, and the Hensleys have been around here a long time too. And so, he and then our, well, people call him Bob, I still call him R.D., R.D. Frappier, um was the, um, other neighbor of Rick's. He was a neighbor of Rick's and um, so that's how they got to know each other and I think that's how he met up with, and he went to the same high school as Rick. But, but Ted went to Osbourn High School, I'm assuming. And they went to Stonewall, what was called Stonewall Jackson High School, which is what is now a middle school near that feeds into, but both of those schools have gotten their names changed from, just out of: we're not going to call our school Stonewall Jackson anymore (laughs).

MB: Right, right. Um.

KC: So they, those were, and there was another friend, and now I would have to think Sandy, and Sandy actually, Ted and Deb eventually built a house up on the, they decided it was time to have a more modern house, without entrances for snakes and mice and they were having a child, so they built a contemporary house up at the top of the field so you could see it. Well it's down the hill a little bit, you can see it from the road. And Ted got married to his wife, Deb, Ted and Deb, and uh, they, but they, then when they decided to move to Maine when their daughter was almost college age, or college age. They moved to Maine, but they kept the old farmhouse which helped their daughter, and her, I think maybe she went to UVA, I'm not sure. And um, they had told Sandy and Phyllis to get out of the house they were living in to buy their house. And, so they live there now. So it's kinda funny how this property is, had these different lives and it, and they're all, but they've been connected.

MB: Yeah, um, and then, Sandy and Phyllis, what is their last name?

KC: Fenner. F-E-N-N-E-R.

MB: Great, um, and so was that who you spent most of your time with?

KC: That's who we, we, we would go, you know, go on day trips or go on camping trips, um, some of which were interesting (laughs) more interesting than others. And um, and then we, we, we often got together, we all liked to sing. Sandy was a good musician, Ted was a good musician, and we'd just hang out and sing, and just be wild young adults before we had kids (laughs).

MB: That's so fun! And where would you guys spend time?

KC: A lot of time at Ted and Deb's, it was just the, a comfortable, we were at the old farm.

MB: Yeah. That is really cool. Um, (movement noises). Sorry, I had to flip my page, um, what are some interesting people or stories, um, from when you were a young adult? Either when your kids were really young or before you even had kids?

KC: Um, well, let me think. I worked in the early childhood field, and I worked at a school that was a brand new school. This is when the special education, the US government said you must, public schools must provide education to children with disabilities. So Prince William County did something really smart. They, they bought up Ann Ludwig School which was down in Woodbridge and they bought up the Didlake School here in Manassas. And they, they bought the equipment, you know, if it was something they thought they would want to have in their school, that equipment moved with, and anyone that was taught in those schools were offered positions and they built identical buildings. The Ann Ludwig school was built in Woodbridge, right near the Potomac Library. The school I taught at, which now, I have to think of the right name for it. What was it called (laughs)? It will come to me. It was right by Osbourn Park High School. And just a little one floor school, but it was all carpet, you know carpeted, um, there was an area with the bathroom, and kitchen, and laundry, and a little living room so you could do things with the children in there, and do cooking or if somebody needed a bath, then we had a full bath in one of the preschool rooms for when you had a need for bathing a child. And that was just really an, the most wonderful experience with me. I met such great educators and we had such a great experience, and from that. The principal was a little bossy and she told me that she wanted me to go attend a meeting for the, um, now I think I can remember things, the group that was an advocacy group for special needs, and it will come to me later. So I, she, she said, "And they need a secretary, so I volunteered you." So I went and did that, and I, out of that, I got a part time job doing, I had really planned to work with older kids with severe needs. And so we started a rec program and um, and this was before, actually before I met my husband. I was doing that. And, I was dating somebody that was a really good driver, so if the county, if the Didlake organization couldn't offer a driver, he would get a, he would drive. And we would pick people up and we would take them to another, to a church and they would have a social event, or one year at my class, school, we had a school dance and we hired a high school band, a band from the high school, a bunch of kids that played at sock hops and all, and we just, it, it, it made my life as a teacher even, it just introduced me. I met a lot of great people who were advocates for people with disabilities. And just, just did the recreation part of it that I always loved doing when I was working summers and, so that was a real good experience. And when I met my husband-to-be, he also, he was very comfortable in that setting. And, um, if we had a school field trip, and he could take off from his work, he might take off from his work if he knew that I had two kids that, you know, even if the parents came, we needed, we needed somebody with a long arm that could just hold a hand, and keep a kid moving along, the right direction. And so he would help out, and so it was, um, it was pretty neat. And our, our neighbors, we enjoyed our neighbors. And when we moved into the farm, the farmhouse, we were immediately, I mean we'd already been adopted by Ted's mom and dad, and Dorthy and her husband. And they just did this huge garden and they told us, you know, pick anything you want, anytime you want. And we enjoyed that garden. I thought, I thought I could find a picture of the garden but I didn't find, do you want to see the picture now?

MB: I would love to.

(Photo she showed):



KC: Um, this is the back of the house that we lived in and when it would, it had been, some people say it was at Lake Jackson, it was somewhere. And it got moved here and it was, this was probably not on it, it was a really tiny house but then they put it on a basement, or they built a basement from, it was a little bit of a hill, and um, but the door didn't really, or I guess the door over there, what is that? That's the other thing. Oh that's, so this is the porch, that's from a camper, but the door to go in that basement is over there. And big snakes could get under the door (laughed). And if it rained, you know, we found some old carpet somewhere, and we put this carpeting in, and I thought it was going to be a playroom. But when it rained, the carpet would get soaking wet. We had a big huge freezer down there. Um, it even got to the point that there was, at the last part of our life there, we had some extra problems with water, and I actually would, I had um, cinder blocks I would walk to get to the washing machine, to run the washing machine, because I did not want to walk in the water.

MB: Yeah.

KC: But it was, this whole field, from over past this house all the way from (pointing to the end of the house), like right, right here a long distance, I mean, longer than a football field, I don't know how long it was, all the way up to about there, was a huge vegetable garden. And then, that wasn't the tomatoes. Tomatoes had their own garden, and I swear their garden was this big, down at the end of it and it was just, it was the most fun place. And uh, but anyway.

MB: So having a tomato garden like the size of this church, wow.

KC: Yeah, they did a lot of canning and freezing, and they always, they always offered if I wanted to come and learn. And my sister-in-law does canning. And I did, I did can, made um pickles one year with my sister-in-law and my brother-in-law, and I said, "Okay, this is a whole lot of work. And they're delicious, but this is not my kind of job." I like to bake, I like to cook, but no, I like to freeze. Give me something that I can just *shoop* and put it in a bag and it's frozen.

MB: Yeah.

KC: But it was, with that garden, I guess, I taught my children, you know. I would, oh, the corn would be ready to be picked, you know, and I'd say, "I'm putting the pot on, go get me four ears of corn." And they'd go out and they'd pick, bring back, and shuck them, and oh I think it was, Abe, that would eat the peas. He would take the peas and shell the peas and eat those. Would never, he still doesn't eat peas today, but he ate those. And it was just, it was interesting because one summer, my husband's boss went fishing every weekend. And every weekend he came back with trash cans full of blue fish and my husband would bring home blue, we would have bluefish three or four times a week.

MB: Wow.

KC: And vegetables from the garden. I hardly bought anything at the grocery store. Milk, there was no cow, I had to get milk.

MB: And so, the garden and was your house also owned by, was it Dorothy Hensley?

KC: This, this house, the land, I don't know if the land still belonged to William and, William Hensley and Thelma Moore, to them. And they lived in the house that was quote "in the city" and actually that's being sold out of the house's family right now, Tom, they've got it up on the market. Because they're, they're getting to the point where they want to be close to one of their daughters, so their, they have a daughter that's actually built an addition for them to come, to come live when they're not traveling. They have a camper and they like to travel when they're healthy. But anyway, they, the house at that point, I guess it belonged, it became, that property became Ted's property. One of, um, his, his older, his oldest brother, I think he was in the military, they traveled a lot and they ended up settling in Louisiana. Um, and then, and then Tom, they, they, they came back to the area. They'd been out, out West and they came back and they lived for a while after, they lived in the house after Ted and Deb moved for a while.

MB: And this is Tom Moore? Hensley?

KC: Tom Hensley.

MB: Okay. Are he and Ted brothers?

KC: Yeah, he and Ted, and William who lives down South are brothers.

MB: Okay.

KC: And, but they, so then when, when Tom would or their mom, their dad died, I forget when it was. I knew him but, um. And when he died, then their mom started, was having health problems, so Tom and his wife, his wife's a nurse, they moved in. And so they, and they I think the house was left to them, that city house. And um, I don't know exactly how they divided things. But Ted and Deb, it must have been

after Bill died, but I don't, because Bill, it was when my boys were little and they loved watching him on the tractor. And my mom made a pillow, she did a pillow with a man, an older man on a tractor and that was her way of, so that, cause they, cause they just thought, they didn't, they'd never had anybody die that they know, other than bugs and things (laughs).

MB: Right.

KS: And so, they, but then when that happened, around, I think it was around that time that Ted and Deb decided to build. And they were also, they had their first child, so they wanted a bigger house. And so they built that, the redwood house, or whatever it's made out of. And then, so then Tom and his family stayed for a little while. And then, when they moved in with, with Tom's mom and she was, she and her friend, Dorthy, which is funny, it's D-O-R-T-H-Y is how I've always seen it spelled. Dorthy, the two of them, and they, they were, they became even stronger friends because Dorthy's daughter married Bill Hensley. They, they both went to church here and they got married. And, so those two couples did that farm, and then, Clayton who, Dorthy's husband was Clayton, and they lived actually a little bit outside of Buckhall, but they, this was their, the heart of their life. But they lived, we used to have a Manassas, a race track, and they lived, their property backed up to the racetrack. So it was always loud at their house, and then the county built a school right across the street, an elementary school, so it was all traffic for an elementary school. But Dorthy lived there until she died, and actually, all the plants that got, the roses that got transplanted out here (in front of the old sanctuary) um, last spring, I think, a year ago maybe. They, they finally sold Dorthy's house and it was gonna be all just, you know, (smacking sound, to show demolishing of the property) and they contacted people in the church and said, "You want anything from her gardens, they're still beautiful, come dig it up." And Tom Hensley and a couple members of our church went and, and they came up from out of town and they dug, and dug, and dug and the door, they planted these roses and they're huge when they open up. They're the most beautiful roses and we know that, that the two little gardens by that front door, Dorthy planted those when her husband died and put a marker. And then when she died, the women of the church made a marker for her, so, it was, um, they, they both were really, I mean Dorthy, until close to her death, for a while, for a long time, she was quote "the custodian" and then we realized, they made, somebody made a list of all the things she did, and then we divided it up among a whole bunch of people. So for years, my husband and I came on Saturday and fixed this huge coffee pot on a timer. Now we have a better system, but, oh my gosh, it was. But they, it was, this, this church just had the, everybody knew everybody. And like I said, we, we, one year, when I looked at the directory, there's like, 8 listings for different Moores. And uh, a lot of them, some of them died, some have moved away, some just don't come to church anymore or go to church somewhere else. But it's kinda interesting. It was kinda like being a part of a big family.

MB: Yeah, um, sorry I have on clarifying question, and then I want to come back to that idea. Um, what is Tom's and Ted's parent's names?

KC: Their mother is Thelma Hensley, it's T-H-E-L-M-A.

MB: And she was a Moore?

KC: Oh, no, yeah, she was Thelma Moore. Yes, she was Thelma Moore, and their dad was William Hensley, and he was called Bill.

MB: Okay, perfect, I had that written down, I just.

KC: Well he was called William, well no, yeah, he was called William. And then, I still know Ted always called Dorthy, Dorth or something, and he, I think, is the one who started calling Clayton, K.K., so that's what we did, and then, um, my kids called William, Wilma. But I think, somebody else before them did that, but anyway, they called William Wilma, it was Thelma and Wilma. And they um, they traditionally on Christmas Eve, after the Christmas Eve service, people were invited over to their home. Now I don't know that the whole church got invited, I just know that we got invited because we were a part of the family.

MB: Yeah!

KC: And um, they, he was, he was a great cook. I, I still have some of, two of his recipes that I sometimes make for church events and not everybody knows that, there's not as many people who remember the significance of where those came from. But I usually put on it, who the recipe came from.

MB: What, do you know which recipes those are?

KC: One is a Japanese fruit pie.

MB: Okay.

KC: That's what it's called, and it's raisins, it's golden raisins, and I don't know, I can't remember all the other ingredients, I'll find the recipe for you. And the other is, some people call it, oh it's, well, I know another, not our current pastor, but I know a pastor who called it "crack candy." Because once you eat a bit, you have to keep eating it. And it's made, it's a variation on a candy bar, but it, you put saltine crackers in a pan, on foil, and then you, you melt butter and sugar, a whole lot of butter and sugar (MB: Yeah.) and you spread it over it, and then you put it in the oven, and it all sort of caramelizes, and when it comes out you dump chocolate chips on top of it. And I started doing sometimes mixed dark chocolate and Hershey's chocolate and I never tried other chips, and you let sit for a while, and then you spread it (MB: Oh yum.) and then you refrigerate it, and then you break it all up, and it's really good.

MB: That sounds really good.

KC: Every one of my grandchildren's teachers got bags of it at Christmas time, albeit they were small bags because we were eating as much as we put in the bags (both laugh). But that's a William Hensley specialty.

MB: Oh that's really cool. Um, but, yeah, going back to the idea of just coming into this big family, um, who were some of the main, like leaders of that, who did you look up to the most as a young adult?

KC: I really, um, both the Hensleys and Dorthy and her husband were so, they reminded me of my parents who lived, you know, up in Massachusetts, and they had always, the church had been a big part of our life, you know. My dad was, I can remember as a little girl, we'd drive into Washington to pick up my dad. He would have ridden in his carpool to work, walked to the church for a meeting, and then my mother and I would drive into Washington. My mother was always really nervous driving into the city at night. And our church at that time was not in the best neighborhood. The neighborhood has changed greatly, um, and but she would like, we'd sit in the car, with the windows rolled up. When it was hot, I'd

be like, “Mom, we have to put the windows down,” I just wanted a little, but she was like, she didn’t wait for my dad to come out the door, you know, and open the doors (laughs). But they, so they reminded me because they were, I guess, maybe a little, well now I’m thinking how old, they were from the same era as my parents. So I imagine they were all, I’m trying to think when Dorthy died, they might have been a little bit older than my parents, just a little bit older. Um, cause they had, their, their older son was older than my brother, so, um, but then there were other folks that I didn’t know as well, but I sort of knew of them, or, there was, I would come, they would have a craft fair every Christmas. And this was when it was just this [old sanctuary] church building. And there would be down in the basement, they would have all these tables and I still remember buying these beautiful bells that were made from cardboard with paper around them. And then they had this colored wire, which I had never seen, and somebody said, “Oh that’s telephone wire.” I’d never seen it, and I guess this person, actually maybe even worked in that industry, I don’t know for sure. But he used that to make stuff, and we, I still have that ornament, though it’s been chewed on by a cat because it dangles. Or two different cats have chewed on it. But it’s um, they, they always had neat things. They sometimes had dinners, and they had like, a little kitchen down there. But it was all brought in. And um, it was an interesting, interesting place. And I knew that, that prior to the building of that fire department or that in the old days that this was also the house, that this was where the fire department met, and I thought that was so cool. That they had a home and I didn’t ever, I don’t think I, I don’t know Joe Kemper, what year he died. I mean, I heard tales about him. And I saw a house be burned by the fire department as a, you know, a learning lesson, but it was. And I thought it was a house of the Moores, but Frank Moore, when I saw him, said it was Joe Kemper’s house. But it was old, big, old house. Well, I still remember seeing big, red, maybe there was a wall or something, and I had, we have pictures somewhere, but I have no idea where those pictures are. Um, at that fire, I mean, my children and I, we went up and watched it, it was just amazing. It was a little scary looking but, it was amazing.

MB: Yeah. Yeah, when you were talking about the Christmas craft fair, how did the community celebrate, or how did they and maybe still do celebrate other holidays?

KC: Um, there were, the period, this property because of the amount of land, sometimes the church did their own little yard sale. But often it, if we would have a yard sale here, we would open it up to the community, and yeah they paid a small, a very small fee, and they could set up their stuff, and so we had some interesting yard sales. It, it, it varied. I mean, I can remember my boys um, gave up some of their action figures and let me sell them, they didn’t want to be there and watch people buy them (laughs). They stayed for a while, and I had all the um, Ghostbusters characters, and they gave those up, they kept all their Turtle characters and Batman and all that kind of stuff that they’d graduated into. And a man and a woman came along, very young looking. The man had a carrier on front of him, and here’s this little baby boy, and he gets to my table, and he sees all these, we had a bunch of them. And he said, “Oh, I’ve got to get those! How much for the whole bunch?” And his wife is saying, “Why do you want to get those?” And he said, “One day, we’re going to sit and watch the movie together!”

MB: Ooooh!

KC: And that was, I, I almost gave them to him, I gave him a reduced price for being such a, a nice daddy (laughs). To keep his wife happy. So it was, so things like that would happen. Um, we, the church has always had, at least as far as I know, has always had a Christmas Eve service. And, um, that was certainly

open to the community, and when, when my, my husband and I decided. We couldn't decide where to go to church. We had four churches we enjoyed. So for a while, every Sunday we went to a different church. And this was like, going down to Fluvanna County one weekend to be with his mom and dad, and then going to Washington D.C. to be at my church, and then two churches in Prince William County. One was in Manassas. And, then we finally, um, decided we were going to go to my church in Washington, D.C. and so, that, um, so at Christmas Eve they actually, for some years, didn't have a Christmas Eve service. They did something special the week before Christmas, and just, it was partly shifts in the aging, shifts in families. You know, for a while they had tons and tons of families and it was just, coming into the city at night for folks, in winter was not always everyone's favorite thing. So we would come up here and go to church. And the pastor knew our name, and knew that "Oh, you live down the road and you come at Christmas Eve," he says, "I know you have another church, but someday maybe you won't want to drive that far." And so eventually, that's what happened. But, so we would come for Christmas Eve, and um, then prior to us joining this church, I was a Cub Scout leader for my son's Cub Scout troop. Or I was first, whatever they call it, something, Tiger Cubs. And then, I, my, both my boys, but Kevin, I guess I had the younger, I guess I started when Abe, when Kevin got into Scout age. So Ricky had his little Scout group and they met here at that point, I guess they met in this building. I don't think that church [red brick church] had been built yet. And I'm trying to think, I guess I met in here first, yeah, we, so I when, when, when Ricky, when Kevin was ready to move into the next level of Scouts, I came in and asked Pastor John if I could have a meeting, a Den meeting here after school one day a week. And my purpose was, I didn't want to have to clean my house and have ladies come traipsing in, you know, and make me feel like I had to get them a cup of coffee, I just wanted to do the thing. And here there was a basketball court, there was, we could get out and do outside things, and it wasn't messing up things for me. So, John says, "Well you're going to need a key." And he hands me a key. Well the church I went to, very few people got keys in Washington D.C. and it had so many doors that, you know, you only got a certain key if you got a key. I'm like, "Do I need to sign something? Do I need to sign something that, you know, authorizing building use or something?" and he's like, "No, everybody in Manassas has a key!" That's the difference in his way of doing things (laughs). Now, you know, now we have a code, and we do give out the code to the different groups, but we ask them to not distribute it widely, to use it themselves, if they can't be there, they can either call me, cause I'll come up and unlock the building or whatever, or Sean [Gundry - current pastor] unlocks it from far away. Yesterday he was on his way to South Carolina, and we finished up with an event and realized none of the doors were locking. And so a friend told him, and he said, "Oh yeah, I'll do that in just a minute, and then, it'll be done." And I guess, I don't know if he had his wife do it, but he pulled up his thing on the computer, and locked the doors.

MB: That's so funny.

KC: But, but it was um, it's built, it just was a great community and, and if you went to, when the fire department, and I don't know how long they've been doing that. They barbecue chicken, and you come, and you get your box, and they have tables set up so people can stay and eat. And um, most people take it home, and most of the regulars go in the morning and get it, even though you hate to, you know, put it in the fridge and reheat it again, but, or you just eat it for lunch or breakfast (laughs). And that, that um, I'd always, we'd always see Buckhall people, Buckhall church people and the Buckhall neighborhood always supported, supported the fire department. It's always been very supportive and they do a good job taking care of our neighborhood. So.

MB: Yeah, how big is the Buckhall neighborhood? Where would you put the boundaries of it?

KC: Well, and you know people say, "Where's Buckhall?" There's that little Buckhall Road, up there, so Buckhall kinda, and I don't know in the days when the Klines had their dairy farm, I don't know whether they considered themselves as being in Buckhall, at that location. Um, you know, they, they, their family had farms all over, that was, had numerous farms and when the traffic got so bad on, and it was before they changed it to the parkway. But when it was Davis Ford, two lanes, and the traffic was getting so bad because now they're building neighborhoods down the road in Buckhall, they're building neighborhoods over on that side of the road, and they, the cows wouldn't give milk as well, is what I heard. So they moved their cows to another farm and then they just used the farm for growing feed that would get taken to the cows, and eventually then they also started having, um, you could keep your horse there, stable. And there still are horses up there I think. But that little road actually used to go through and now it's closed. And I, I know um, I met one of the Sikhs who, the Sikhs have a church there now and he said when they closed that road because of where he lives, he would get on to Lake Jackson, turn on that road, and be at church! He says now he has to go all the way up, get on the other road, come down, you know, he says, it's so much longer and it's not as pretty.

MB: Yeah.

KC: But, um, that's, so that, but I would say, this community, I have to ask my friend who lives, she lives across the street off of Ellis and I would think these people, the people that are old-timers that live across the street here, would probably if you asked them, they would say they lived in Buckhall, Buckhall area, Buckhall community. And the Buckhall, I don't know if you've driven all the way down to the end because it, it goes a long ways and it actually goes to where it gets to some houses who have property, I think, well it might be an offshoot of the little river there. The, the thing. But it's, there's no, been houses built in recent years. There's, I don't think there's any more places to build other than in my neighborhood. We may see because some of the acres, some of the yards have pretty good acreage. And um, it's the kind of neighborhood that, like my own house, I, I get phone calls all the time, "Do you want to sell your house? We can get you out of your house in three days and give you cash." You know, and it's just going to come in and gut it and build something big and fancy. And, they don't understand that my three acres, you can't build very far out on my three acres because it drops like this (shows a sharp decline with arm) to a creek. I have woods, most of my three acres is woods, and I love it.

MB: Right.

KC: It's like being, it just, it's, it's more like, it gave my children a childhood more like my childhood. Both from being at the farm and then, because we had horses across the street. And we would go out and feed, we'd go out and feed them, we would take treats to them. We didn't know who's horses they were, we would take an apple, you know, or a carrot. And we'd pet them, and they'd come up and see us and um, and then when we moved into that house, they loved the woods. They loved the woods. And they thought they would find a place to swim in those woods, that creek, it wasn't quite deep enough, but they tried.

MB: Yeah.

KC: So it was, um, so I think, you know, and then course there are the folks like this lady, and I'm so sorry I didn't take her phone number, and her thing, and I, I. Maybe she'll call me up again. I still think her last name was Richardson, something Richardson. She'd, she lived not quite in here, but she came to this church, and her family owned the Fairview Market, which is a little old market that sells a lot of beer and um scratch off cards, and it's across from the former police station I think, I think the police still use it in Manassas. But just a little farmer's market, a little old-fashioned market. But my kids, they, they loved their childhood here. They really did. Let me show you, (shows a picture of her kids playing in a pool) that, that was their spacious swimming pool, which they even found out that they could swim naked in it.



MB: Oh! (laughs)

KC: And I, I love hanging clothes, I don't, I hardly ever use my dryer, I love, this was the, I forget what you call it, but it has the two across it, and that was just, it was just wonderful to be out there hanging clothes. I'd, even in the winter, and in the winter, we had a, our heat was propane heat and we had this thing, it looked like a big metal box in our living room to put out the heat for the house. And that put out a lot of heat so I just had a little wooden hanger and oh, the clothes are dry in the morning. But um, let me see what the other ones were. Oh this is our cat playing with Ted and Deb's dog, letting the dog know,

“You touch me and I’m going to claw your eyes out.”



MB: Yeah.

KC: And then, um, but this is, when they were a little bit older. This was before Kevin, Kevin, or yeah Kevin was my grandchildren’s dad. That must have been when he was in preschool, his last year of preschool, and Rick was like, in kindergarten then, I think. And it’s a small bus, and I have to take it to my neighbor, because I think that’s her. She used to drive the school buses and she drove in the neighborhood.



MB: Yeah.

KC: And that's, that's me and that's Ted and Deb's little girl. So we went up to get Ricky at the bus, and then we would sometimes head over to see the horses in the field.

MB: Oh that's so fun!



KC: We had these wonderful horses, and I can't tell you where, there was no barn visible, there was just this field with woods behind it. And I guess there's something right there (pointing to white buildings behind the horses) maybe that was part of it, I have no memory of seeing that, isn't that weird. I just remember seeing the horses and so, this is maybe where they, and this I think was where the bull came from. That's the place the bull came from.

MB: Yeah, and do you mind retelling me the story about the bull, that way, I really want to have it recorded.

KC: It, you know, people, nobody knew where Buckhall was. And so it was kinda a, a little funny place, and um, there had been a lot of farms in that area. I mean it, it developed because somebody from the Civil War said, "I'm going to go back and have a farm there." And then other people, and then, see Manassas the city became big, the town then, you know, became having more things and attracted people. So we're, we came home from church one Sunday and we usually would sit out and sit at the picnic table and read the Sunday paper, and have, the kids would have their, we'd have a lunch. And just hang out and sit and enjoy being outside. And we're sitting out there, and my husband says, "Take the kids and go in the house, don't, don't look back. Don't, no talking, everybody be quiet. There's a bull coming this way, so just go into the house, shut the door, stay quiet in the house, call the police and see if they can get animal control." And I don't think we had a 792, I think it was, all you did was call 911. So I get them in, I look and here's you know, our house, and I guess, well this is the front of our, this is the tree at the end of that driveway (puddle photo) that you would go around this little circle, and this was, this always got

water in it, and my kids always wanted to play in it. And a couple times, I let them play. One time it was actually raining, another time, I let them put on clothes and go out and play in the mud puddle. The clothes never, the red Virginia clay never, I, I had Kevin was in diapers from the diaper service. I had to send back diapers that were rusty red (laughs). I'm sure they got them clean.



KC: But anyway, here's this driveway, and we're sitting right here, you know, at the picnic table, just a little ways in our yard, and Ted and Deb's farmhouse is over here, and along between the farmhouse and some woods is this big, huge bull. And he was big. And he had horns, and he had blood dripping, he looked like he had put his leg through, must have torn out a, a fence with the stuff and got cut by the fence. And he's just walking along and, so, my, I didn't know that my husband had actually picked up a stick. Just something so that if he had to make distance, maybe that would distract it, and they started, they, it's going up the hill. So I go in the bedroom and I call the phone number, and I said, "Um, is animal control working today? We have a bull in my yard." And she said, "A what?" "Well, we have a bull, B-U-L-L, large male cow. And he's got a little injury, and he's walking through my yard." She said, "Where do you live?" I said, "Buckhall, it's over there, on the edge of Manassas, it's in Prince William County, it's off of Davis Ford." Because by then Davis Ford was, was, had a few more lanes. And oh, no, no, it was still Davis Ford. And um, so, she just said, "Well, I'll, I'll see if I can send someone out." (laughs) I wish I could have seen her face. And I kept the kids in, well then we, I guess we came outside and a little bit later um, my husband comes down the hill by himself. And I said, "What happened?" He says, "Well, it cut across Sandy's yard, and it cut across those other, those are all Moore people, and it cut across that yard," and he says, "and it got up by the country store, and while as it was going around in front of the store I thought 'I've got to get between it. If it goes out on Davis Ford Road.'" Plus there was not good visibility to turn to go out on Davis Ford Road, or if a, or there's a little hill, somebody comes speeding up the hill, if it was standing in the middle of the road, it would have been a disaster! So and he was like, trying to get it to come. Police officers came. They left one car there I guess, and the other officer walked with Rick and then they had the other guy, he was on his radio, working out, you know, where things were, and then he was driving really slow coming behind them, just in case he had to make a quick getaway I guess. And when they got up to our driveway, they said, "We're gonna, up here we're gonna turn." He says, "I think there's a way, I think we can find his home back in here." And so, they kinda had guessed who it belonged to. So maybe it had happened before, I don't know. But um, that, that was, that was the bull. Another time, when we moved, when my kids, our little house was getting to be too little for us. Cause they didn't even have really a real bedroom. And it was just a very tiny house, and it didn't have air conditioning, and it was really hot when, without air conditioning. And it was just, having old age problems so, my son Kevin had become best friends with a boy who lived down at the end of Pineview Road. But before I first, or and I, I didn't even know. When Kevin was born my aunt came from um, down in Portsmouth to see the new baby and visit with her brother, my dad, and my mom and she said, "I made a wrong turn, I just kept driving on that, that road and then it was a gravel road, and I just stayed on it, and there's a beautiful little neighborhood back there." I said, "What road? What gravel road?" She said, "Well, just up at your driveway, I just kept, I went down that road and then it became a gravel, a gravel road." I said, "There's no neighborhood down there!" And I, I had always thought the gravel road was a driveway to somebody's farm

MB: Right.

KC: I had never gone past the gravel road. So I, I literally handed the baby and said, "I'm taking a ride." I went and got in the car and I drove down the gravel road into this wonderful neighborhood. Now this was when Kevin was a baby. So later when Kevin got to kindergarten I met, a woman said hello to me. "Do you need after school childcare?" She stood at the door and greeted everybody as they were leaving from open house. And John became his best friend, so we learned about that neighborhood and we kept saying we were going to buy a house. I had worked for a church camp and they were gonna build a, and I was

still working for the church camp in the summer, and they were planning, they had the plans developed to build a caretakers house. And we had given serious consideration of my husband volunteering, you know, maybe you know, he would still stay with his job but he would become the caretaker, and then the camp director could go sleep in a regular house instead of in a tent with all the kids. And, so we um, we had thought about that and, I lost my train of thought. It had to do with, oh so we really were ready for a new house but we thought that was going to develop. Well it took more years, it was a slow process, so by then I was ready to not do camp anymore, and the boys just needed a different summer. They went to camp all summer, lived at the camp, and so, we got ready and um, we, well Carole had told me there was a house on her street that was for sale. It had been for sale for a long time, and she said I should, I should come by it. And she said, she told, she prayed every night that we would come by the house. So we woke up one morning, it was probably a Saturday morning, if we weren't going anywhere. And I said, "Well, let's go and look at that house." We knew that, it appeared that our septic system was not going to keep functioning properly. And, it was time for us to get a bigger house. So that, but that kinda pushed us a little. So we drive down there, and I wonder where the boys were, they must have been with friends or. And there's a truck in the driveway, so we get out and the kitchen door's open. So we hear water running at the kitchen sink, and we call out and say, "Hi, are you the, are you the realtor?" He says, "No, I'm just doing the water test for them." And they, it, so we just said, "Any chance we could walk through this house? We live up the road and we think, we're thinking we want to buy it." He said, "Oh go ahead." So we walked all through that house, we didn't go up into the attic. But we went into the basement, we looked at the equipment. Now my husband thought he knew, he didn't really know a whole lot about construction. But he, he's been around people that do. So he's thinking it looks really good and it's got three bedrooms, and two bath, and three bedrooms and two bathrooms upstairs. And it's a cute little, tiny kitchen, but it's an eat-in kitchen on the front of the house. And it had a car port, and it had a big yard that was already fenced and a deck. So it looked good, and then we, we didn't know how much the acreage, how much acreage there was, we just thought, "Oh our yard probably ends right there." And we go back and we call the realtor and that, that house had been vacant for four years. And the eventually the, it, um, it had um, was going into the hands, not IBM, but the other big company that comes, that came after IBM. They were going to buy it as a relocation package for the guy who was moving to Baltimore, to work for them in Baltimore, and so they, it was, it, moving into their hands. But they hadn't quite, they hadn't finished the deal exactly. But, all of the work that they said had to be done, it had gotten a new roof, a new heating system, um, the, a new um, a radon system, and the well was now being checked out and um, water treatment and all this stuff. So, we got my brother-in-law to come, who's a contractor and a really good carpenter, and an electrician and plumber, he can do all of that. He came with us while we toured the house with the realtor. And he's, like, looking at things I'm not looking at. He's down there, and you know [undecipherable few word phrase]. And looking up at underneath there and he's like, all over the house. He said, "This is a great house, and you can build an addition on this house." And so, we bought it, and um, now it's kinda, a bit in disrepair, I'm not kept up with everything. But I'm working on it, I'm working on it. But it's the woods, oh my gosh, my kids just loved, and having John down the street. For a while we had a dog that would run, he'd just, he'd been adopted, we adopted him as a puppy. And he was a coonhound mix, and he would just take off and run and you didn't know when you'd see him again. And, but we got a system going. If he got out the door, I would call John's mother and say, "Open the kitchen door!" And she would stand at the kitchen door and he'd come racing up the road and she'd say, "Here we are! Come on! Come on!" And he'd come running into her house and John would put a leash on him and bring him back down (laughs). They just, they loved, you know, the creek, oh my gosh, they

thought that was the greatest thing. They were down there all the time. They once met up with cows in the creek. They had gotten out of where the gravel road was, was, everybody always called it the VonLoesch farm, but I don't know who's farm it was. But it had an old, old building. Which I never went inside, I know people that went, took the risk and went inside. There was a gentleman who had some cows on the property, and then across the road, I guess he grew corn and other stuff. And um, and it was all gravel. And, and it was a skinny, it was a little bit skinnier probably than what the road is now. And it's still not a big, big road. And the first, that first experience that we had with the cows was my boys were down playing in the creek and they came upstairs, and came up the hill, and came up to the house and said, "The cows are in the creek." In our yard, our creek, our part of the creek. I said, "Oh, if they keep going that direction, they're going to end up in the river. In the river, I mean, they're going to get into a bigger creek." And so, I said, "Gee, I don't have a phone number." But I knew somebody that would have the phone number so I'm getting ready to call them. And they go back down, so I, I couldn't get ready hold of that person. And so I thought, "Well let me go down and." And, and again, one had a little bit of blood because it had been the one that pulled down the fence, the, the fence actually ran into, into the creek, actually, so they could go in it. But they had pushed, done something to the fence so they were, came, "Oh let's go exploring." Three, three of them. I get down there, they're gone and the kids said, "Yeah, we just went, we went and kinda walked, we stayed a way back of them but we went and just kept telling them, 'Go home, go home.' And they turned around and walked home." (laughs) Another time, I came at nighttime and there's a fire truck stopped, and it's not, no sirens or anything, but it's got, they've got lights and I can see that the guys have got heavy duty lights. And traffic is kinda being held up on the other side and I can't, they don't want me to go around them yet. Well, there was a bend and it's, that's not there anymore with the way they changed the property, but there was a slope, that this little old house was up on a mound, and there was like a pond, some little pond behind it. And then you could get down to the creek and they, that, a calf was in the road. And they all, somebody has some animal knowledge and, and he said that they were pretty sure the calf maybe had gotten trampled by a cow and then it fell off the hill. Because the, the head injury was such that they didn't, they said something else happened before it landed on this road. And nobody had hit it with a vehicle or they would have been there with their car all smashed up. So they were trying to, they had to, they were hoisting it, it was still alive but just barely. And they, they actually were able to get, knew who owned the land and they had called and said, "We've got an animal, you've got to come take care of."

MB: Yeah.

KC: Because it was, it was, even though it was just a calf, it was a calf but it was a big calf. I mean, and it was, you know, it was the road, you couldn't get past it. So that was our other time with a cow. But um, it just, it's, was a nice neighborhood. People are always kind to each other. We love the country store. When we lived two, three buildings down, three houses I guess you could say, down, that was our thing. My, my husband worked evenings, so we would eat our dinner and every, you know, except in winter weather, we'd walk up to the country store and I'd let them buy, they could only, I gave them the choices of the cheapest ice cream bars. And then I'd buy myself whatever I wanted. Um, and they liked looking at the bait, cause they sold live bait. And there was a cat there, when I first, I don't think the cat was there all, they don't remember the cat. But I remember the cat. And they called the cat the mayor. And the cat would sit on the stool, and the cat was the mayor of the store. And it was just a, a nice little store and it, you know it changed hands, and I know you've met some of the people who know a whole lot more about the store, but it was, it was cool. We tried to, I tried to get my sons a job to earn some little summer

money because we had a catalpa tree on our, on the property we were living on. And there's a catalpa worm, they're really striking. I think they're, I can't remember what they looked like, but they're huge! And they only live on that tree, they come out and they eat all the leaves and then they turn into, I guess, a catalpa butterfly or something, I'll have to research that. Get my grandson to research it. So I told, so somebody told them, and I think it was, was when William was alive maybe, told them, or maybe Ted told them, "You know, people buy those for bait. You could, might see if the store wants them." So they captured some in a jar with holes in the top, and Kevin doesn't remember it. They were so little, we went up to the store, and they didn't accept, said no, they weren't going to be selling them. And it did, it stripped, but then the leaves come right back, the leaves come back out again. And it's just amazing. The other thing, we had a huge forsythia bush which, I don't like forsythia when it's all trimmed like a hedge. And so, it didn't bother me a bit. It was huge. It was, oh gosh, it maybe a, across it maybe was a little smaller maybe to here to here. But it was like, this big round, it looked like a tent!

MB: So like, what is that, six feet across? Wow.

KC: It was a [indistinguishable] of forsythia, and the branches are going out really big, down to the ground. And my sons said, "Oh cool, let's build a fort." And they go in there and you know, you're going to get bitten by spiders, you know, and they were afraid of spiders, Kevin doesn't like spiders even now. Maybe it's from those experiences, and he and his friend John were playing in it and I think John's mom, maybe she was at my house, or I think I called her. They were playing inside it. And they would go in there and have a fort. They could, you could climb up in it, it was so old, it was sturdy branches. And Kevin went to come down and his shoe got caught and he ended up upside down, hanging from his one, in his shoe, in there, and he yells for me to come and get him. And maybe Carole, Carole maybe was there. I go in, and I told Carole, "I'm little, I can get in there." I get in there and he's up and his shoe's up there, and he's up where I can't, I can't, I can't get his body weight up. I just can't get him up so he'll come loose.

MB: Right.

KC: And I knew I couldn't catch him and take him out of his shoe. It was just (laughs) so Carole says, "I'm coming in." And she got in there, and she's taller, bigger than me. She, we worked together and we got him out. But he was upside down. We also had a tulip poplar tree that he would climb. I don't know how he would get in it, he is part monkey. And one day there was a knock at the screen door, and he's, he's crying, and I come out and he's laying, and he's like very dramatic looking, and he's laying there. And I'm like, "What happened?" "I fell out of the tree, I was almost to the top." I said, "You didn't fall out of the tree, you'd be, how'd you?" "Mom, I think I broke my back. I broke my back." And I'm like, "No, you didn't break your back. You're talking. You're alright." So then he told me, we had, we'd rinsed out a cooler, he says, "I hit the cooler before I hit the ground." So he had come right, he swears he was near the top of the tree. I actually, and now I don't even know where I, and I saw that picture in something. I have a picture where he is way up in the tree. His father used to do stuff like that, scared me to death. We went hiking in the woods in Fluvanna County, and next thing I know, he's gone. I said, "Where are you?" He says, "Look up." He'd gone way up this tree and I'm like, "You know, I don't even know how to get back to your dad's house from here, so," and we don't, this is before cell phones, you know. But Kevin, he laid there and I said, "Don't move, let me look at you." I couldn't find a mark on him, everything looked fine. I said, "So, you fell?" "Yeah, and then I landed, when I fell I hit that and

then I fell on the ground.” And I said, “Well, let me go get a cold cloth.” And so I got, wet two towels and put it on. Said, “How’s it feel? Do you think you can stand up?” I really didn’t think he’d hurt himself. And as far as I know, he didn’t. I did not take him to get it checked out. He went to school fine the next day. And then my father tells me, “Well you know, it might be.” Or was this my mom told me the story from her, from my father, my father was deceased then. She said, “Don’t you remember your dad telling you how Aunt Anna Mae pushed his brother out the third story window? They were looking out the window, seeing who could spit on people. The three siblings.” And which their Swedish grandfather would not have liked, and Aunt Anna Mae, the oldest of the kids pushed my Uncle Bob, and he landed in bushes three stories down. And he seemed fine, in his 40s he started having back problems, and he went to have an MRI, or they might have had those then, X-ray. And they said to him, “When did you break your back?” He said to them, “I never broke my back.” He said, “No, you broke your back, when did you break your back?” He says, “It was probably in your childhood from the way it healed.” (laughs) Well Aunt Anna Mae says, “I didn’t push him!” He said, “Yes you did!” And it broke his back. So I’m thinking, one day, Kevin is going to have an X-ray and they’re gonna say, “When did you break your back?”

MB: Oh my gosh, that is so.

KC: But it, it was a great, it still is a great neighborhood and a great place. The neighborhood that I’m in used to have a ton of kids. And that, and they’ve all grown up. Some of them have come back and, and moved into their parent’s houses and um, it, it wasn’t. It was not racially diverse. Everybody all kinda looked the same. Um, but different viewpoints of the world. And I was so excited when a Latino family moved into our neighborhood. And I actually, I, I baked a pie and I went up there, and when I went in the house, I, I realized I knew the family. Cause they had lived in, I had taught my, my last years teaching for Prince William County was at Westgate School which is over, um, in the Irongate near Manassas Mall, and it’s a very, it’s a very diverse school. And particularly lots of, there was a very strong Latin, Latino, community. And I had not taught the boy that just graduated from high school, but I knew him when he was little. And the mother recognized me, she had not been one of my students but some of her friends came. I did a, a class for adult learners after school, um, and she had participated, her friends had participated, and she remembered me. And that was just, it was like, oh my gosh! And they, I’m, and they have lived, and she said, “We, we had lived in a townhouse with two other families in a little townhouse. My husband has his own business, he’s making money, now we have our own house.”

MB: Wow, yeah, that leads into one of my questions, is, how has Buckhall changed in the, like, time that you’ve been here?

KC: Yeah, well definitely there’s more diversity, there are African-Americans living in the, in the neighborhoods. Um, I, but I think it’s still, it’s the people that come are attracted to, it’s not a cookie cutter community. I mean there’s some wonderful, beautiful new communities but they, my grandchildren, we cut through on to get to where we were going and um, they have a friend that lives there. So they’re pointing out what street he lives on and then my, my granddaughter’s saying, “Oh I like that one, that one’s almost the same but look it’s a little different.” And I said, I said, “I think I’d have trouble finding my house if I came in here.” She said, “Well you’d have to put your name on the mailbox, Grammy!” I said, “Oh, that would work!” But I, I think, and that’s, and because we’re like, the neighborhood I moved in, the lots were made bigger, and actually there was. Now I don’t know that that’s

still, I doubt because there's no HOA, the back edges of your lot, and maybe between lots, was a, could be a horse trail for anybody that wanted to ride it. Now I've never seen anybody, now somebody up the road used to ride a horse around the neighborhood. And the folks that keep their horses over here, they don't come out and ride around, but there was a guy that, he must, he must, maybe something happened to his horse or maybe he's just not riding horses anymore. But he used to ride his horse around the neighborhood. He came up sometimes when there was a church activity, he'd ride up and let all the kids pet his horse. But um, we have a lot of, we still have, we have so much, um, and the animals and um, we have the woods, the protection it gives. Because the deer, I had a baby deer, I got up one day and I went out on my deck and I looked down and I saw, sort of brownish-red color in my backyard, I said, "What is that?" And I went, and it was a baby faun, and my fence, is fenced. Of course the deer can jump over the fence, the mommies, and there's actually a raised place where they can come around the side of the house where there's a brick wall, and they can just get on the wall and jump right in. So I, I brought my grandchildren, and let them see it but didn't touch, we didn't touch it, we stayed away from it. And then I thought, but the mom gets in there, how is she going to get the baby out. So I opened my back fence, and thought, "I hope no other animals come in." And um, the next day the kids had spent the night with me, the next day we got up and there were two deer, three deer outside the fence, outside the gate. And the mother had come in and she was walking over to the baby, and then it was almost like, it almost looked like they were all saying, "Come on, time to go home!" And then we had, this year, I came out from church, and I, I walked in at work time and I kinda, sometimes you think something was different, and I came out and I realized the plants that are right on the corner, coming out from the door, seemed pressed down. And I walk over, and there's a baby deer. And it was, and I, and it was really, it was, it was had to be, had to be really new. And so the kids wanted to see it. So I said, "But we're not going to talk, we're not going to make a sound. We can't get near it. We don't, we want the mommy to come get it and take it home." And um, Addy was worried because she wanted me to bring a blanket, "It's going to be cold tonight, and we should feed it." I said, "No, the mommy's going to come and get it." And the next day, the baby deer was gone and the following day, a doe had been hit on the parkway. And we, but we saw no sign of the baby deer, so we don't know if that was, we hope it wasn't her mommy, we hope. But there's a, sometimes my friend, and she has woods behind her house and then she has a big, big garden, a flower garden. And she fights with the deer over things. She sometimes has seen seven deer in her backyard. And a couple weeks ago, maybe two weeks ago, I was driving down and where there is woods, but there's a lush green grass that the owner of that piece of land has put. And there was mama turkey with, I thought, I only saw four turkeys, baby turkeys, but I, my friend she tagged, she put on Facebook that there were six babies in her yard. And I said, "Well, then they went from your yard, into the woods, and now the mother's letting them." And there's, she was like, between them and the fence. It was like she wasn't going to let them come and fall down in the road.

MB: Right.

KC: But I couldn't get a good decent picture of it because of the trees and, I didn't want to open my car window, and so, but it's nice to have animals as well as, I do have a large black rat snake again. This is the biggest one I've seen in my yard. But he's, he came on my deck, while I was standing on my deck, talking to the guy who fixed my things. And he said, "Ah, don't walk, back up." I almost stepped on it. It was coming up from going up the brick posts.

MB: Yeah, um, so, switching gears just a little bit. I was thinking back to earlier you were, um, talking about how Buckhall was established. What do you know about the history of Buckhall?

KC: What I always heard was, of course this is a Civil War town and um, you know, there are lots of people that get out with their metal detectors. We've, one time years ago I saw somebody with a metal detector on the church property, and that was before I went to church here. And um, anyways but, but my understanding was there was a gentleman in the Union Army, I don't know what rank, division, I think he was a captain, but I don't know, but if you've heard something else. And his name was Captain Moore and he came here, ended up during the war, and he just thought it was a great place. And he thought, I don't know, maybe he was here at the time, and thought, "Oh they have milder winters." I don't know what. I don't know where he was from. But he thought this is where he wanted to, to come and make his home. And so, he's one of the people that, I mean, when you look at how many people are named "Moore" and why was it called, named Moore Drive, you know. Um, cause it's just, literally, from Ken Moore's property here, now the store and the, and the little school house and that building, do not, I don't think belong to any of the Moores unless somebody's managing it or something. And then, one, two, those houses, three houses there, Sandy and Phyllis aren't Moores, but they know about them (laughs). And then the next, almost, I guess almost every house from there to Cheryl Hancock's house are part of the Moore family. And um, it's, it uh, and, and I, I just, I know that um, eventually know there were, must have been, I mean, things got moved, it, it amazes me that they would move a little house. A little tiny house. How do they do that? Back, when did, I guess it got moved during the 20s. That's when this [old sanctuary] got built, and they built it flat on the ground. And I can't imagine how in the 20s, how sophisticated was construction, that you could lift it up and put a basement under it.

MB: Right.

KC: But they did. And um, and so this was, this was, I guess if the community had a problem where people could come, the church welcomed everyone, and um, did, you know, did always, you know, reached out into the community and uh, it just, even. And this, it's interesting. Even like the, in this, this neighborhood, because we don't have sidewalks. Um, Halloween and buses. Buses would stop at houses. Now in my little part of the neighborhood they have designated bus stops, but they, and but otherwise, going down Moore Drive, they have to stop in front of your house. They can't have a kid walking, and the first time I, the first time, oh we did, the Cub Scouts do this thing. Scouts right before Thanksgiving they knock on doors and collect food and, so we got, we were given, our troop was given two different neighborhoods. So one was down in Bear Creek, which is gorgeous, big houses. They don't have sidewalks, but they have wide roads, and it's mowed and you know, so we walked around there, and um, gathered food. And the funny thing was, we got food like, maybe you got for Christmas a Christmas basket with pearl onions and spicy this, and all these gourmet things, you know, from the cabinet. Then we did Moore Drive and my neighborhood, oh my goodness, my neighborhood was okay walking around it. Moore Drive, I couldn't, I had to pull into driveways and then back out. Oh, I had a station wagon full of kids and I'm like, you know, I did not like doing that. The backing out part on that road is just, even though it's a little road and people that live there should know, it was just tricky. But um, then trick or treating went, so we said to John, "Well where do you go trick or treating?" Because we would trick or treat, we just went to all our neighbor's houses. And they gave, they always prepared something big, you know, and that's what we did. We did a little trick or treat, and we went trick or treating at a party at the school or something. And um, but we tried trick or treating, driving around, and again I said, "I'm not

doing that again.” And so they found out, they talked with the kids at school, and somebody told them, “Come to my neighborhood. Because we’ve got sidewalks, and we’ve got all kinds of decorations.” So all the kids that lived over here, took their (laughs), got dropped off at that neighborhood, and wandered around that neighborhood and did their trick or treating and came home with more candy than they needed (laughs). But it, um, it just, it’s been, it’s a neat, neat neighborhood. I know you’ve heard about the um, the logo for the store.

MB: I’ve heard a little bit about it, but can you tell me more?

KC: Well, yes. It, when I met Rick he told me, “Oh, going to take you to Buckhall Mall.” And I’m like, “Buckhall Mall?” And he says, “Right up here.” I said, “That’s not a mall! That’s a country store!” (laughs) And it looked like a country store. I mean, you could buy the emergency grocery, but it had fishing stuff, and it had other stuff, I don’t know, you could get beer, I don’t know, it just, it was just a nice little store. And you’re, I think at that point, when I was first there, they made sandwiches. I think they made sandwiches there. I can just vaguely see that. But then that must have changed, if, I don’t remember doing that when my boys were there. But they loved the bait pool, and, and just, it was, a place to run and get something. And um, they had, they had made bumper stickers, and they also had T-shirts: “You can get it all at Buckhall Mall.” And I, if I had one, I, it’s not, I have some ancient t-shirts from my younger life, but I don’t have one of those. But I should ask my ex if he still has his, he probably does. He had one, and we went, we went to Cape Cod, and we’re on a beach in Brewster. We’re there, having a good day and he’s got his Buckhall Mall on him. He’s got a Buckhall Mall hat, you know, keeping sun out and this lady walks up to us, and she said, “I just have to stop, are you from Buckhall? Buckhall, Virginia?” I said, “Yeah.” And she said, “Oh, I’ll never forget when we learned about the Buckhall Mall.” And I said, “Yeah?” And she said, “We just moved to, to Northern Virginia and our, our big truck was coming in the next day and we were trying, we were going to stay in a motel. Because we just, but we were already into the house and we were trying to, you know, get some supplies, things we hadn’t brought, that wasn’t coming in the truck. And the kids needed a break and, you know, we were in the car a long time.” And I, I forget where she said they were from. And she said, “We thought, let’s just go, there’s got to be a mall somewhere, and you know, maybe there’s an arcade, and there’s probably cheap food. We can all, if they have a food court we can all get something else to eat, you know. And who knows, maybe there’s a movie and we can just put the girls in the movie and you and I can sit in the back row and sleep.” Cause they were so tired. They go in there, they pull up to it. I said, “Well did you go in?” I said, “They’ve got good sodas, they’ve got good sodas and they’ve got candy and ice cream.” (laughs) She said, “My husband, when we pulled into the parking lot, my husband said words I had told him that he was never to say in front of our children.” (laughs) And I guess they turned around and went back to their house, but they finally found some places they could go get some things.

MB: Oh my goodness.

KC: So it was, yeah, the Buckhall Mall. The mayor, the mayor of Buckhall, was a cat.

MB: Yeah, that’s so, that’s so funny. Um, do you remember any important events or, or big controversies or things that just happened, at any point in your time in Buckhall?

KC: Yeah, I know, I don’t think, I didn’t go to any of the planning meetings for building this. Cause I, when we joined, they had already built this building. And we were here for that and I don’t remember any

controversy. I know that they were disappointed when they built that building [newest church], they wanted to do a commercial kitchen. They wanted to have the big dishwasher, you know, and all that stuff. And the county wouldn't let them do it because we're on the septic, we have a septic field. And we had to do something else special because we're, you know, and there's, they kept saying, "It's not changing how many people come." "Oh no, if you're going to build a bigger church, more people are going to come." So we had to deal with questions about that. And I know we had to put in a drain pond and different things for the county, but nobody ever, um, nobody ever, ever complained, that I know of. Um, now we have a private school down here on, um, on Pineview. And that was where the farm was, that was, the guy still grew crops. But he no longer had cattle on it. And then, then he sold some of the land, and um, a man who lived further up towards here, up at the intersection of Moore and, and Pineview, he bought seven acres of the land. And then, some, two houses, somebody bought a section of it, and they were going to build a house. And they just built, like a, they had lost their land to widening of roads, they lost their house. And so they were going to build, but they ended up building, like a shed kind of thing. But they hadn't gotten all of their, they were still fighting over the money with, with the department of transportation, or whoever gives that money. And um, a house behind, that's way back in the woods, on the same driveway that got to their land, or one of the driveways went up on the market. So they bought that. And so they lived there, but they still have this other piece of property. And then the next part of the property, somebody built a big house, and they've actually just finished, completing. They built a um, addition to it, they have a large family. But in the meantime, there's this piece of land between a driveway to a property that goes way back in. And some more farmland, and we see signs going up, and it's a private school. And, we're all saying, "How can you have a private school back here? How are you going to transport?" You know, this is just, this is a little road with a stop sign, and then we come out here. And this was before the parkway had been built, I think. Maybe the parkway had been built, but um, I guess it had been built. Um, yeah, it'd been built. So we go to um, some of the people in the community went to the Planning Commission meetings and a flier got posted, put on everybody's doorstep saying, "If you're concerned, we need to talk." And, it is, it's a Catholic private, it is not part of the diocese, it is a private, Catholic school. And it was going to be, I don't know, all ages. And um, they were building this one, it was just going to be one building and we, our, our issues were the wells. The water, the source for something like that, five days a week, and if you have sports events.

MB: Right.

KC: And because, like I said, they really and, Russell Hancock, who is deceased, he lived across the street, catty corner from the property. And he was very concerned because he said, that, that a school, something, that many people on that piece of land, that could drain our wells. That could drain our wells. And he's, used to be the head of construction for NOVEC, for the electric company, he knows something about wells and water, too. He was, you know, jack of all trades. And he spoke very strongly against it. And so we, we had a group that we got together, I can't remember where we met, I don't think we met here. Maybe we met at somebody's house, and people started talking to each other. And people started getting information, and I just could envision, you know, pickup and dismissal. How were they going to do that? That was my concern. Um, the more I got to know, it was like, we don't need this in our neighborhood. We all, we just don't need this in our neighborhood. Well our neighborhood, there has been some change because some of the families who, um, participate in that school, bought homes and there were people that, when they put their house up on the market, other people in the neighborhood went to them and said, "Please do not sell, please do not sell to them, please do not sell to them." They're

extremely large families, they're very, very, very conservative, very conservative. And it was just, it was just a strange thing because they invited the community, oh they, when you go through a process to build in Prince William County, before you can bring it before the, the board, the Commission, whatever that board is. You have to have shown that you have talked with the people that live next door to the property kind of thing.

MB: Right.

KC: They called on Polly Robinson who was in her 80s at that time, and lived in the little house down the long driveway in back of her. Russell Hancock was so furious when he heard, because he has always helped out Polly since she lost her husband. And they came and she said it was okay, but what she remembers saying is that, what we heard the reality was going to be, it was just going to be a nice little school for children and in a nice community. And she did not understand, she, she didn't have, as Russell said, her mind was such that she didn't even get what this would mean.

MB: Right.

KC: So if she's coming out of her driveway, even though she didn't drive, but her family's coming out of her driveway, they're coming out of that school they might just run right into you. That's what he predicted. Other people, and then there was one other old person. She only spoke to two, they went to two old people. Let me tell you, the supervisor, the Board of Supervisors, some of their eyes were (made a face). When we went, when we spoke, we spoke at the Commission, the Board of Commission, but then we, oh so they were told, because of our complaints that they were getting that they needed to have a meeting and invite the community in. So we go to this meeting, in their building, and they're talking about it, and I'm just like, "Okay, you know, we have a really good Catholic school in Manassas, city of Manassas, there's a high school in the city of Manassas. There's a great Catholic high school down in the other end of the county. Do we need this school? What is this going to be like on the road?" And um, so we questioned them a lot about the traffic, and how many cars, and they said, "Well, we'll be." And I said, "Oh are you going to have a bus?" "No, we don't have buses." Well they all have big, big vans. Bigger than mine. And some of them do have, kind of, buses, and it was just, it really, and it wasn't the religion and the conservative thing. I mean, it, it, I, no one I knew was looking for a school like that. No, none of the people that I hung out with. But you know, it's fine, but, really is this? It just was weird. So when we had, we went to that meeting. And once somebody in our group had done all this research, research and knows all this stuff about toilets and how much water they use. And partway through the meeting, and they had gotten, they had asked them for the information. And they had given them this information that they use this really low-flow toilet, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. And oh, you know, they're gonna, they're gonna wash their hands at lunch time, they don't, they bring their own lunch so, but they still have to wash their hands, if they go out on the playground they've got to wash hands. So how much, how many kids are you going to have? And he was figuring out there was going to be a lot of water used. And I said, "I've worked in a school, let me tell you, water gets used a lot." It, it, it. He goes and says, "I've got to go to the bathroom." And he leaves and he goes to the boy's bathroom, and he comes back in and he says, "Mmm, wait until we get to the water issue, I've got a surprise for you all." And we go back to the water issue, and he said, "I'm a licensed da-da-da-uh-la," I guess something, and he says, "I know all the, I know all the toilets that are available, and I'm going to tell you that that urinal is not a low-flow. And I'm going to tell you that if you look at urinals and boys, boys, the urinal gets a lot

of use, over and over again. And sometimes playing goes on in urinals and you might say you're on top of that, but unless you have an adult in there, you're not. Do you, do you send in an adult when the boys go to the bathroom? When, when they're going to go to the bathroom?" He says, "That's not low-water usage. That's way high water usage. Now if you're going to drink the water, you probably gotta have a treatment plant, center, treatment job done. For a big building like this, the water usage, well you're going to have a lot of work to do." And he was so nice about how he said it, but then he ended and said, "So, did you know you were lying to me when you gave me that report on your water use?" And he sat down, it was, oh my gosh, it was, the room it. Oh they had baked cookies and invited us, "Well, let's take a little break. We have refreshments." I kept, somebody turned to somebody else and said, "It's probably got poison in it, I don't think I want to eat their cookies. I don't want to, you know, think the way they think. I don't want my mind to be changed." (laughs) None of us, none of us, we didn't feel real hospitable, we were polite, but we were definitely against it. And we had good reason. And their answers were, well, you know, somebody said, "What you could do, if you had, you know, a, a fifteen passenger van, why not have parents park up at the grocery, at the shopping center? At the time school is starting, it's not very busy. You could have a bus pick them up there." (MB: Right.) And so it would be just one thing, back and forth. And I'm thinking to myself, "And don't ask to use our parking lot because we have other uses, we let the historic commission use our parking lot." We let anybody use it, but anyway, it, it was, it was kinda nasty. People, people didn't like each other. And, and, so then they, they held out, this is their little gift, they're going to, they say to us, "Well, when we get, we're going to have a playground and you know, and we, we will have space if, if a community has a meeting need, or there's something. They're having an event, you're welcome to come and use our building. Your children are welcome to, to play, play on the playground. You know, we want to be part of the community." Okay, that happened at that meeting. My son, my younger son who now is, he was a miracle kid, he's done very, his story is amazing. He was skateboarding then, avid skateboarder. And in our yard they had built, in my front yard, a, it's called a box. And it's on wheels so you can move it and you jump on it, and fly off of it and all. And um, I, I told him, I said, "I don't know." He said, "We could go skateboard up there!" I said, "I'm not so sure." "Well, you said they said people can use the playground, why can't we skateboard in their parking lot?" I said, "Well, I don't know." So I'm coming home from work, 2:30 in the afternoon or 4:00 in the afternoon, I guess, and they had gotten home from school. And he and five other guys had pushed the box past four houses. Now they've come up past four more houses. And they're almost up to the turn in, I mean, they're still, they're halfway on this part of the road, and I'm like, "What are you doing?" "We're going skateboarding." Said, "O-kay." Now at that point in time, I was pretty sure my son was smoking pot and smoking cigarettes even though he always said he wasn't. And my friend, Carole, she would, I mean we, you know, when they somehow kept fooling us, except that I was no longer really believing him. And um, they go and then they come, and he didn't say anybody came and told them to leave. And they bring it back home. Two days later there is a sign put at the entrance to their, their driveway, into the entrance, um, "Private: no trespassing allowed." I said, "Well, thanks a lot. Now I can't go swing on their swing." And, and he's just like, "Sorry!" (laughs). But the funny thing is, is I did catch them smoking, that they still went up there sometimes. And I went up one time because I thought they might be there, and they were behind the school smoking cigarettes. And I said, "So you two have been lying to your mothers? You know, do you not listen to what they say cigarettes do to you? Do you not listen to your grandmother cough? My mother, you hear her coughing? That's cause from cigarettes."

MB: Yeah, so did the school?

KC: So the school got built.

MB: Okay.

KC: Alright, and they just built, with classes, um they took us on a tour and I, I always get, I mean, I enjoy, I enjoy seeing different schools. Because every school has their, public schools might all be the same public schools, same system, they have the same curriculum but rooms tell a story about the teacher. And I thought, "Okay, so the math problems were counting the Saints," or all the different things that they do a little bit differently. And then there was a very small, that first year, they had a very small group of high school students. And I thought, and I, I really think, I think a lot, I think, and just sorta came out to, just that, these, most of these people had been homeschooling their kids. And now they want to share it with somebody else. I don't know if their teachers are certified in anything, you know, I'm not sure. But they, um, the traffic, they, they claim that they would have people carpool. And that, that it wouldn't be a problem. Well let me tell you, there are certain times a day, I will be driving along that road, and I will go. I will make myself, when the school's in session, I'm really good about going the speed limit. Sometimes when it isn't I might go a little bit faster on the part of the road where it's not really in anybody's houses are right there. And they come sometimes, they come flying around the corner, and when they get to that school somebody, the people that are coming out, they have to come up a hill and then they're kinda like at this angle, and they can't see me until I'm right up there because of the trees. Now they had to plant a whole bunch of trees that now are so big, they're almost in the road. And VDOT has trimmed some of them back because they're under the power lines. I mean, not VDOT, um, NOVEC has, has done that. Um, but they then decided they had another hearing and this time, they were going to build. Now it's funny, their architect kept calling it a church, "We're building a church." And I said, I said, "Well, so you're, you're, you have to have different paperwork. A church is different than a school." And "Oh no, it's not the church, it's not a church, it's a chapel." So they said they needed a chapel, and they need a gym, because the school's getting bigger and so they need a place to, for PE in the winter and all. And I'm sitting there thinking, "Where's your septic field going to be? You know, you got to have a big septic field when you have a big." And they only have, and then I'm thinking, "Oh my gosh, please Mr. VonLoesch don't sell your property to them." And we all, when, when the lady died that lived behind there, the family hung on to it. And there's family living in there. Now they've sold part of their land, but not the land that joins the school part. It's a little bit of other land. But um it, we went for a meeting for that. And at, with them and um, and people did go from the community and express concern, that this, you know, where are they going to park? And they've been told they cannot park on the street, there's no street parking on that section of the street because it's, it's a narrow part of the street. And um, so, um, once, well I, once or twice they've had overflow up there. And um, I know someone who drove home, walked back up and said, "Those three cars have got to move. We have to have, there's only one way to get a firetruck into our neighborhood. There has be, to have, room." Now with all of the trees, it makes it even harder. But they, um, they built and it's, it's so funny. The school is very plain, and they said they were gonna, their architecture was going to reflect, you know, the country look, you know, and the church looks like a little mini cathedral. And they use it for various different things. And they do some kind of drama production every year. And they park, they fill up the parking lot, and they fill up but they have, so far, but now they're doing something. And I've been tempted, I've been tempted to call the county and ask if a private school is constructing bleachers. I think that's what all that metal is. They're doing something and I still think, where is their septic tank? You don't tear up the land over your septic, I mean, your septic field.

MB: Right.

KC: So I'm not quite sure, and I haven't talked to any of my neighbors that usually are up on that. I guess I could call Carl and ask him what he knows. Because, it looks like they're not doing construction. But they've cleared off, and it's all, it looks like to me, like maybe they're making a playing field, maybe a soccer field, a good soccer field. And they're going to have stuff and maybe that way they can invite schools to play, and there is not going to be. That will be a problem parking (laughs).

MB: Yeah, yeah.

KC: It's just kinda, so that's, that's the only thing we, we, or, we're a funny neighborhood, we're a mix of, we don't all vote for the same people. We have people, some people who are very active in one party, some who are active in another. So you know, when you go to vote, you kinda wave to everybody and, but it's, I think, I think it's still a good neighborhood to, to live in, and for families to live in.

MB: Yeah, yeah. Um, so I'll kind of give us, like, one wrap up question, cause, or, I'll actually have two wrap up questions. First, is there anything else that you wished I had asked about, or any other stories that are lingering?

KC: Well, I wish I, I wish I knew more of, more of the Moore and the Hensley history so that I could say it correctly. Cause I don't want to say it wrong, I mean, I've heard some stories but, and I'm still going to call Tom to see if he's feeling good enough that, if he could come and could talk with you. Cause he's a storyteller. Definitely, he would tell some stories. And um, but, I, I think um, yeah it just, it's been a good place. I, I get these phone calls all the time, everybody wants me to sell my house and I'm just like, I told my son it's, it's, I said, "You know, if I get some of these repairs done, then at the point where you're thinking, 'I need a, we need a bigger house.' Then you can move to my house, you can have my house, I'll leave it to you. I'll move out, somewhere else. I'll move to Buckhall Cemetery."

MB: Yeah, um, and then, is there anything that you would want future historians, people who are researching Buckhall, or people who move into Buckhall, to know about the area?

KC: Well, I think it's, and I, so great, you know that I, I was doing an activity, I actually three, at the same place for three things at the one time, so I had to pick and choose. I went to the retreat and listened to a person talk about practicing self-care and that was what I needed to hear. But um, I think, I think just the sharing, the sharing of stories and things, and even whether something. I mean, they did that little tour thing and if they're doing it in all the areas, maybe doing something where, I don't know. They could do it, do it in here, or Sean I'm sure would say we could do it in the fellowship hall or sanctuary or just invite, come learn about, you know, and if there are people that have videos or have things. I don't know, it's, it's fascinating how. I've always loved storytelling. And I, and I think there's so much power in stories, and when you talk about communities and about. You know, my, my kids have not heard all the stories that I heard as a child. Because my parents' generation, those siblings got together at least once a year, and we might have been spread from South Carolina to Massachusetts but we, they got together and we listened to them tell stories. And, and so I know a lot of the stories. And then we know the stories that people are telling lies about in the family, because we have proof from someone else who was there. And you know all of that, my kids don't have all the stories. But Kevin, he was just at a retreat this weekend for Healthy Family Systems. And they asked them to bring things related to your, who are you descended

from, who is in your background? What do you know about your history? Because they, they thought, Healthy Family Systems looks at your life history and what's happening and all. So he asked me to find some stuff. He asked me for sea shells from my mother's beach, that we call "Grammy's beach" and um, the beach nearest to her house. And I brought those, and I found um, a couple pictures. He said, "Well, I really want pictures, I don't want pictures of me doing stuff. I want pictures of Grammy." And what was sad was when I showed him his dad's mother's picture, he just has very little memory of her. And he said, "No, this one of Grammy." And one of my great-aunt Kit, cause he remembers, vaguely remembers going to her house. And he went to her house after she died and saw all the amazing stuff in her house from her ability as an artist. And, it was, you know, but I don't know how it went at the thing. I mean, I'm looking forward, he got back at 3:30 in the morning last night. There was a little traffic, or weather in the United States that took a little while to get back from Chicago.

MB: Yeah.

KC: But yeah, I think that um, and that's where, when those two buildings [meaning the store and the school] were there. All I could think about was, what a great historic site, you know, you bring the school bus in, you go to the little school, you go to that. And you know, you know you don't teach, talk religion, but you're at the little neighborhood church and you think about how those all worked together, how that was a community. That was the heart of Buckhall, I guess. I never thought of it that way, that was a good expression, "heart of Buckhall." And there are other places and I, and I know you go past and you see a little old church, and you go by and it's gone. And not everybody saves them, but.

MB: Yeah.

KC: But I know, I love the fire department. They tell stories, they just take the guys through and it's pretty neat.

MB: Yeah.

KC: So I'm sorry I missed that walk, were you here for that?

MB: No, I wasn't here for it, but I've heard about it which is very cool. But, yeah.

KC: But when you get this project done, if you want, I know Sean said. I talked with Sean and I said, "When the project's complete, I think we should have a, Celebrate Buckhall, and," and maybe on our, we do a Thursday night dinner. It could be the Thursday night dinner, it could just be something after church. He says, "It could even be in the service, I wouldn't mind." He said. It just, because other things, you know, life is so different now. And I think, in some way or, some things are better in terms of yes, your grandchildren can send you a picture of it happening, or videos. But at the same time, people aren't sitting around the table telling stories the way they used to.

MB: Yeah, yeah. That's definitely true. But, awesome, thank you so much for all of your stories today, they were amazing. Um, so I'm going to end the recordings here.

KC: But I know.

END OF RECORDING

Fritz Korzendorfer Biography

Fritz Korzendorfer Jr. was born November 12th, 1960 at the Manassas Medical Center to Fritz Korzendorfer and Merry Christebell Mandley. He describes his childhood in Buckhall, surrounded by his family, where he would spend weekends with his maternal grandparents, and a lot of his time with aunt, uncles and cousins. Many of his hobbies originated in childhood when he would go hunting, fishing, and riding motorcycles on his grandparents' land. Fritz graduated from Osborn Park High School after staying in school at his mother's insistence, while many of his classmates left around the ninth grade.

In his early teens Fritz began working on farms, later going into carpentry where he built houses and did home improvements. He now works for the county doing historic preservation. In his interview, Fritz tells stories about the Buckhall Store, including its branding and their BLT sandwiches. He compares it to the other Mom and Pop shops in many rural places that have gone out of business, while Buckhall's buildings are no longer in their original use, they still look unchanged.



Oral History with Fritz Korzendorfer

Interviewer: Meaghan Brennan

Interviewee: Fritz Korzendorfer

Location: Williams Ordinary (17674 Main Street, Dumfries, VA 22026)

Date: July 11, 2023

Meaghan Brennan = MB; Fritz Korzendorfer = FK

Transcribed by Meaghan Brennan

MB: Alright, um, so today is July 11th 2023, my name is Meaghan Brennan. I am the summer intern for the Prince William County of Historic Preservation working on an oral history project of the Buckhall area. Um, I'm sitting with Fritz Korzendorfer and we are in the Williams Ordinary, um, in Prince William County, Virginia. Um, so thank you Fritz for talking with me today.

FK: Sure!

MB: Um, we'll just start with some basic, basic information about yourself. Um, what's your name and can you spell it for me?

FK: My name is Fritz Korzendorfer, F-R-I-T-Z K-O-R-Z-E-N-D-O-R-F-E-R Junior!

MB: Perfect. Um, have you ever gone by any nicknames?

FK: Yes.

MB: What are they?

FK: Um, my grandfather used to call me Cotton, cause I had blonde hair (laughs). And uh, well, let's see, uh, there, and then whatever my wife calls me when she gets mad. Other than that, that's pretty much the one that sticks the most. And my cousin's the only one that calls me that.

MB: Yeah, that's so fun. Um, when were you born?

FK: Uh, November 12th, 1960.

MB: And where were you born?

FK: In Manassas at, um, Manassas Medical Center when it used to exist.

MB: Very cool.

FK: And Dr. Conner was my doctor that delivered me.

MB: That is very good memory, I don't think I could tell who delivered me. Um, and did you know your grandparents?

FK: I did.

MB: Can you tell me more about them?

FK: Uh, what side?

MB: Both sides.

FK: Um, well my dad's side, my grandmother, she was born in 1919 I believe, and she lived in Hamburg Germany. And uh, when World War II was kicking in she caught the boat and came over at Ellis Island and they got off there, and then moved and bought a farm. I believe it was called Rock Creek, Maryland and during the Depression, they lost their farm and then they had moved into Manassas. And then they had gotten, um, 90 acres there and then everybody basically was given a piece of ground and we all lived on the same street. My dad's brothers, all my cousins and everything. And uh, I didn't stay there, I moved away.

MB: Yeah, um, and then what about your mom's parents?

FK: My grandparents on my mom's side was, his name was Alfred Payne and um, I don't really know a whole lot about, um, the history or too much of them. I just know that they were really good grandparents and they used to come by and pick us up and my dad had bought a cabin in Criders, Virginia. And they used to pick us up at school and take us up there. And then we used to go down there when we was little kids. Uh, they had a house that had a crawl space in underneath of it. And when it would rain, I'd have to go down in underneath of it and dip it out. So, she's the, always come down to get me, just about every weekend. And we'd go down there and hang out. And we would collect pop bottles alongside the road, when they were 2 cent a piece, take them home, there, our grandparent's house, wash them out, take them to the store and cash them in. That's how we got our pocket money (laughs).

MB: That's so cool! Which store did you take them to?

FK: Then it was IGA, or, and then there was another one, I think of, IGA and then Grand Union. That was the ones that existed then.

MB: Okay, yeah. That's so cool. Um, and, on your dad's side. Um, was, did your grandparents live together in Maryland, or did your grandmother meet your grandfather when she moved to Manassas?

FK: Um, she met my grandfather in Germany. And he was in the navy, and then, um, him being in the navy, knowing that the world, the world war was getting ready to get started, and he turned around and that's when he said, "Come on, you're coming with me." So it was my grandmother and her two sisters, they came over here and then my one uncle, which he's still alive now, he's 99 years old, and um, Conny [Conrad] Korzendorfer. And uh, he was the, and then my other brothers, they were born over into the States. And basically um, lived over here in Virginia. But uh, they were always farmers.

MB: Yeah. Um, yeah, and do you know why they ended up in Buckhall as opposed to other places in Virginia?

FK: Um, like I said, the first place that they settled at was in Rock Point, or Point of Rock, I think it was called. It still exists there. But like I said, they had that there, they lost it in the Depression and then that's when they moved into Manassas and settled here.

MB: Okay, cool. Um, and how many siblings do you have?

FK: Do I have?

MB: Mmm hmm.

FK: Three.

MB: Three? And what are their names?

FK: Jennifer, Ryan, and Devon.

MB: Okay, cool. Um.

FK: Want puppy dogs and kitty cats?

MB: Awww.

FK: (laughs)

MB: We do love animals, yeah, and then when you were growing up, did you just live with your parents? Or who else did you live with?

FK: I lived with my parents, uh, I graduated from high school and then I, when I graduated I went to California and stayed out there for four months, you know, just to see what it would be like on the other side of the States. And then, when I came back, um, I built my house. I was 19 when I built my house, so I've been there, where I live at now, all my life.

MB: Wow. And how close were you, when you built your house, to the rest of your family?

FK: Uh, two and $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile (laughs).

MB: Awesome. Um, so going back to growing up a little bit. Um, what first comes to mind when you think of Buckhall when you were growing up?

FK: Mmm, well we, when I first, when I was in first grade, which that made me probably about 7 or 8 years old, my dad's third brother, him and his wife had purchased Buckhall Store. And they owned it, and then instead of us catching the school bus there on the road, cause we had to walk to the school bus, go to the corner and catch it, cause they wouldn't come down to that one road. So, uh, they basically took us up to the store and we caught the school bus up there. And every morning Janet, she would let us go into the store and pick out whatever it was that we needed and to put it in our lunchbox. Penny candy, cupcakes, that kind of stuff like that. So that was a real treat.

MB: Yeah!

FK: So that only lasted, I think they kept it for maybe 2 years and then they decided that wasn't their thing, and then they turned around and sold it.

MB: Yeah, so that's your Aunt Janet and what was your uncle's name?

FK: Charlie.

MB: Okay, cool.

FK: Charlie Korzendorfer.

MB: Um, can you describe for me the house that you lived in when you were growing up?

FK: It was, um, basically a, um, one level house, um, it, all of their lumber was cut from off of the property of where my grandparents were, so all of my dad's brothers, they all got a tractor and a truck and they all teamwork-ed effort cutting all of the, uh, logs to take to the sawmill. Um, they would all get, I think it was three cent a foot when they cut the wood and everything. So they basically would do one house, frame it, get it under roof. Go to the next one, frame it, get it under roof. Frame it, get it under roof. Frame it, get it under roof (moving his hands to show each house going down the line). Then they made the complete circle again to where they would, they made all of their cabinets, all of the flooring was hard wood flooring with knotted pine walls to it. Which was really cool looking. And it's just such a unique of building a house. I guess cause drywall, well they had drywall for the ceiling, that's it. They liked the wood look.

MB: That is really cool. Did you ever see them building any of the houses or was that all before you were born?

FK: That was before my time. When my dad and mother had gotten their house finished it was in '58, '59, and then along come me (laughs).

MB: Yeah, um, and who did you spend your time with growing up?

FK: A lot of, with my grandparents on my mom's side. Course, all I had to do was go off to the end of the road and I could see my dad's mother there. Which was probably, almost every day. And um, her property borderlined Bull Run Marina. So we always had a place to go hunting, or fishing, or riding minibikes. Motorcycles and stuff, it was a great place to grow up at as a kid. And we had our own ball field, and all of my cousins and stuff like that, every Sunday, would play softball there. So it was, that lasted for a long, long time. We'd play after school or on Saturdays and Sundays like that. So there wasn't a whole lot of other stuff to do. Other than hunt, fish, ride motorcycles (laughs).

MB: Yeah, how many cousins did you grow up with?

FK: Mmmm, let's see, two, four, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, about thirteen.

MB: Wow, that's so fun. Um, and where was the softball field?

FK: It's right across the street from my, uh, mom's house.

MB: Okay, cool. Um, and what was your grandmother's name?

FK: Anna Marie Humphreys.

MB: Okay. That's so fun.

FK: She was married twice. Korzendorfer was the first one, and then he had passed away and then she married Humphreys. So my dad had two step-brothers: Earl and Robert Humphreys.

MB: Yeah. Um, yeah. And then where did you go to school?

FK: I went to Baldwin Elementary from first to fourth grade and then, my fifth grade I went to Old Bennett School, the old building right up here next to the courthouse. The one that's shut down right now? That's where I went to school at.

MB: Wow.

FK: So uh, then from there I went to Jennie Dean Middle School, and from there to Osbourn Park High School. Which, it was a brand new school, we were the first ones in, I think it opened in 1976.

MB: Yeah, cool! Um, and do you remember anything from when you were in school? Like, what did a typical school day look like?

FK: Mmmm, well the typical school day consists of everybody getting into the parking lot deciding whether they wanted to go to skip school or, there was one place up here and they called it the Cliffs, but it's out here where, what's the mill out that way? Uh, Beverley Mill. It's right on the borderline of Front Royal and still in Prince William County there, you could probably look it up, and it still exists, it's like a hiking trail type stuff. And in the ninth grade there, just nobody seemed to want to go to school, they was all rebellious so, that's where they would go. Up there, and hang out until the school bus came back (laughs).

MB: Yeah, wow. And did your neighbors and friends go to any other schools or were you all in the same schools?

FK: Mmm, most everybody that, there was only a couple people there that would actually participate, I think most everybody, when they hit the ninth grade, they quit. I, my mom said, "There is no way that you will quit." So I didn't, and uh, I said, "Well, you have to help me with my homework." And uh, she was the one that, she was my memento to help me get through school.

MB: Yeah. Um, and then, do you have any, just, interesting people or stories from when you were growing up that you want to talk about?

FK: Um, there was several people in my lifetime that I met. Um, when I was probably twelve years old there was a guy that come around and he was looking for some help to run his farm, which is up here at Valley View. Where Valley View Fleet is, is where the farm and everything was there. And I farmed in that area there, on that farm for probably about seven or eight years on to it. And then, um, that guy there, he really treated me good. He would come by every evening and pick me up. And uh, we used to ride out there and he would give me ten dollars an evening, uh for helping feeding and water the cows and stuff like that. And then, um, he had a son that was in the dealership of selling used cars. And he asked me, he said, "You're about ready to start driving, aren't you?" I said, "Yeah." Cause I was like, 15 and a couple

months. And he said, "I've got the perfect car for you." So he got me a '66 Mustang and uh, I brought it home and my dad and his step-brother helped me bring it to life, and it was like a brand-new car. So that's what I had drove when I went to school to get around into there. But back to the farming guy there. He basically, he got cancer and then he kinda just didn't show up anymore and then eventually he passed away. Then I rode to another guy's place and got a job as a carpenter. Well, I started off with raking yards by hand. And he was into building houses into the area. So I was working with him for probably 20 years, building houses. Then after that, I just kinda went on my own and started doing home improvements and I stayed with that for 18-20 years with that, and then I turned around and came to the county here. (MB: Yeah.) This historic part, and I've been here 20 years, I'm getting ready to retire soon, I hope.

MB: Yeah! Yeah, that's really cool. Um, so going back to, since you've lived in Buckhall area, it sounds like almost all of your life except for when you, the four months in California, um, what has Buckhall looked like over the course, how, sorry, how would you define Buckhall?

FK: To define Buckhall is like living then, in a rural area where there was a lot of farmland around. Um, there was the Kline farm which still exists, and the one across the street used to be the Johnson farm which they all had dairy cows and stuff through there, and me and my one cousin, we would ride our bikes up there and go up there and help the guy feed his cows and stuff up there back there in the day. And then, as production went on and all, um, I guess he couldn't compete with progress and everything, and he basically sold his farm and went, I don't know. I never knew where he went. He just disappeared.

MB: Yeah. Interesting. Um, and how far does Buckhall go? I, where, where would be the boundaries of it?

FK: Uh, well, have you been out there?

MB: Mmm hmm.

FK: So the boundaries of what I know there is basically from where the back of the store is, over to where the school is. And you know Kenny Moore, right? Where his fence is there.

MB: Okay.

FK: Basically, that's the only property line boundaries that I know of that place on there. Um, Frank Moore, he would probably give you the pinpoints of it.

MB: Yeah, it's been interesting, different people have had, have said slightly different things.

FK: Well what did Frank say?

MB: (sighs) I think.

FK: Because he, he was there before I was, he probably knows more and bigger, wider spread areas.

MB: Yeah. I think he put out towards the Kline Farm and back towards the school.

FK: So..

MB: Maybe having Prince William Parkway be one side and I don't remember exactly what he said.

FK: Oh, now, the Kline farm, you have to pass through Chandler. And, have you met him yet?

MB: I haven't met Fred Chandler yet, but I've called him, briefly.

FK: Have you?

MB: Yeah.

FK: You should go in there and talk with him.

MB: Okay.

FK: He's usually there, I think in the mornings and everything. He's lived there pretty much all his life. Um, I think he had two brothers there. Like I said, don't hold me to it, and that's why you need to go talk to him. Cause he's got a lot of stories there too that he could tell you. Cause he's lived here all his life.

MB: Yeah, yeah.

FK: Cause he borderlines Kenny Moore's property, on the same side there.

MB: Okay.

FK: Kenny Moore's farm's here and Fred Chandler's is right here. He actually, I think it's 30-some acres, he's got a really nice lake in the back to go fishing. He's got it set up there. He actually is, is a, had a junkyard there. And um, he had all kinds of old cars and stuff like that, that's why he made his living, selling car parts.

MB: Yeah. Very cool! Um, yeah, who are some of the other people that either, I guess, community leaders or role models that you've had who have lived in the area?

FK: Hmmm, other than like, the ones, I didn't get out much. Like I said, I had my grandparents and uh, those two other fellows that I mentioned. Fred Lester and Harold Lyle, which both of those, they are gone now. They really took me under their wing and showed me the right path, you know, helping me out, getting me somewhere in life. Showing me the way, and I commend them for that. Cause I was young and dumb and somewhat hard headed so, uh yeah. They were good fellows.

MB: Yeah, that's awesome. Um, when we talked previously, you had some stories about the Buckhall Store, can you tell me more about that?

FK: Hmm, we used to, every chance that we'd get, spend a lot of time riding our bicycles up there. And um, we would um, go up there and get the, that's when penny candy was available. And inside the stores, Hallie Cornwell, which I'm sure you've heard that name. She was, she worked in there, and she had several candy jars that you could go in there and pick out all kinds of whatever it is that you wanted. I used to like the Fireballs myself. And uh, they actually, if they knew you, you could buy stuff on credit. So they had a little notebook pad there, that'd you come in there and you could get certain things, items, and stuff. And then if you didn't have the money, you could say, put it on your tab. So then you got, I think she said every two weeks, you had to go in there and pay your tab. Which I thought that was kinda neat. On to it, and then we used to buy our ammunition for squirrels, shoot, shotgun shells and 22 shells and all because, um, it was just so convenient going to it.

MB: Yeah, yeah! And I know the store was owned by different people over the years, um, how did, who else owned the store, and how did it change?

FK: Um, let's see if I can go back. Now see, I think, God I can't remember all of the names and the people that did it. I think after Hallie Cornwell and Joe Kemper had the store, she was getting up into age that's where she couldn't take care of it anymore. And then, I think that's when my dad's brother had purchased it. And then, from then on it just kept snowballing down through different people and everything with it. But there was one particular guy and his wife had bought it and purchased it. And uh, he was really looking to make a great name for Buckhall Store there, that was before the, no that was after the Parkway had come on to it there. So once the parkway had come shut through, passing through Buckhall Store there, the business was kinda slow. So uh, that's when he had turned around and put a big advertising sign up as a, "See it all at Buckhall Mall." And uh, so I think when he put the, the billboard up, that Kenny Moore said, "Well I don't remember giving you permission to put this up." And uh, he tore it down. So he'd go back up there and put it back up. And so finally he says, "Look, I don't want this on my property." And so that's when the guy said, "Well, how 'bout you come by here if and I give you free coffee every morning if you let me hang my sign up at the side of the road." (laughs)

MB: Yeah.

FK: So that's how they kinda got along then. But he had tore the old cooler out and put a new one in there, and advertised on it, "The Coldest Beer in the County." And then they had, uh, they would do soft-served ice cream on Saturdays and Sundays there. When his wife wasn't in her day job, she used to come into the store there and help him do ice cream.

MB: Yeah.

FK: Which was neat, it was really good. And he made the best BLT sandwiches in there. Cause I used to go get one every morning. It was just that real thick bacon on to it, and the lettuce and the tomatoes, to die for (laughs).

MB: That is so much fun, oh! Were there any other businesses in Buckhall when you were growing up?

FK: Uh, Fairview Market, and that still exists too. They were sorta kinda like, um, Buckhall. They did their own deli meats and stuff like there into that. Um, but it's then, like I say, all of that stuff kinda just faded away when all the supermarkets started popping up everywhere. The Mom and Pop's just basically got run off, or a lot of the reason, when the EPA had come in and started testing the ground for leaks of their gas stuff. So if they had found, if your tank had a leak. They would shut you down, and you couldn't get gas there no more. And that was one of, one of the number one big sellers there. You know, get your gas and a loaf of bread, and a six pack of beer to go home on to. But uh, once the uh, all the EPA stuff, it just wiped out all the Mom and Pop's, and to this day you can ride around several other places that see old stores, that have just, they've shut down. I, uh, took a trip out to Bergton and Criders, Virginia, which is like 2 and a half hours away from here. And you see a lot of Mom and Pop stores out through there that's just been wiped out because of that. As kids, we used to go into there all the time. So it was, it's sad to see, you know, stuff like that go away, onto it. Um, but what do you do? It's progress.

MB: Yeah, no that makes sense. Um, yeah, what are some other ways that Buckhall has changed, um, over the course of your lifetime?

FK: Uh, it hasn't really, well the store is no longer in, exist anymore, it's kinda more of a rental place now, I think. Um, there's a guy that's, does kitchen countertops in there. Stone, granite, marble kitchen countertops onto it. I think he's using the school as the storage unit, onto it. Course I haven't been in there, I don't, you know, go onto their property and go nosing around or anything.

MB: Right.

FK; But uh, I, like I said, it's, it's all rented out. I don't even know who owns it anymore. You probably know more than me!

MB: I'm not sure who owns it, that's been one thing I've been trying to figure out.

FK: So have you figured out, uh, when was the store built?

MB: I don't know!

FK: I have been digging and digging and digging, and trying to find out what year that store was built. And who built it. I, I know the owner, Hallie Cornwell, but I still don't know the year and when the store was built.

MB: Yeah.

FK: And was the store built the same time as the school?

MB: Yeah...

FK: Or the church?

MB: I'm not sure if I've found it. If I have, I'll send you the information. But I think I read that Hallie Cornwell's father bought the building, which would have been, I think in the 1930s. So it at least existed then, but I think it might have been built before that.

FK: Probably so because if it was already built and he purchased it, there again it could have been built in the 20s, something like that. If you can nail that one down, that would be a real good thing.

MB: Yeah, I'll try to see what else I can find on it. Um, yeah. Um, you mentioned the church, um, a, can you tell me more about what the church community looked like as you were growing up, or?

FK: Basically the, well the community area there, when you turn on to Moore Drive there, that whole corner right there has basically not changed at all. Other than where the new church was being built. It used to be the little white church, that cemetery, the Moore farm, and the other house there was Hensley. Have you had any encounters with her? Thelma Hensley?

MB: I've heard her name a lot.

FK: You have. Cause she's been there forever, too. I, I'm assuming that she's still around.

MB: Yeah, I'm not sure.

FK: If she is, she's probably in her 80s, going on 90s now. Um, you should probably, if you could, get in to talk to her.

MB: Yeah, yeah.

FK: Um, because I'm sure that her living there all her life too, pretty much. Um, she could probably tell you some real good stories too. But as far as, like I said, the church, the cemetery, and then the uh, store, schoolhouse, and then the white house that was right across the road there. Um, my mother and grandmother had lived in that store for a little bit. Did Mom [Chris Korzendorfer, interviewed June 29, 2023] tell you about, she used to work in the store?

MB: Yeah, she was telling me a little bit about it. But do you have any other memories of her stories about it?

FK: Well, I hadn't been thought of yet.

MB: Right.

FK: Onto that part of it, so I was just gonna see what kind of stories she told you.

MB: Yeah, um, she told a story about her pigtails getting cut off.

FK: Oh, yep.

MB: But I didn't get the full story. Do you know any more of it?

FK: Um, no. I just think that, uh, my grandmother, she just didn't like them, and uh she just, uh, cut them off. And I don't know whether she did it for a punishment thing to her or not.

MB: Right.

FK: But my mom never had pigtails after that.

MB: Yeah, that's so interesting. Yeah, I wasn't quite sure what had happened there. Um, yeah, and then, she was telling a similar story that you were of Hallie with the credit and being able to go back and have your tab, which was really, really neat to hear about. Um, yeah. Um.

FK: It was so, it's so, you know, neat way of living then, you know. Everything was plain and simple. Everybody knew everybody. Um, it's, you know, when you get into a community like that, um, people try to help one another and everything. My dad and my, his brothers, they all were like, the A-team. When somebody needed something done onto their house and everything, they would all go there, carry in their tool bag, kinda like the Amish, and everything. And they would build it in a day. But you had to feed them and make sure that they had water. They didn't ask for anything at the end of the day, you know, as in payment or anything like that. They would just go on about their business again, which was really neat.

MB: Yeah.

FK: Um, they helped me do my house and, um, I dropped a lumber package off and it was up in two days. It was that quick.

MB: Yeah.

FK: So uh, I was thankful that then they were all in good health and were able to help me to get that.

MB: Yeah.

FK: Like I said, teamwork effort means a lot. And manpower (laughs).

MB: Yeah, that's really cool.

FK: But um, now did Mom tell you that she used to go participate in the cleaning of the church and that kind of stuff like that?

MB: She told me a little bit about that, but what did it, what was it like from your perspective?

FK: Well, it was, it wasn't really bad. Uh, but my mother, she was very religious, and still is onto that. Um, she would clean the church, I think we cleaned it on Saturday, and then we had to go to church on Sunday, and then she made us participate in going to Bible school there on that. And then uh, I myself wanted to stay home with my dad, because he was into working on cars. And uh, Mom would say, "Alright, it's time to go to church, get in the car, let's go." I said, "Dad," I said, "can't, can't I just stay here with you?" And he said, "Son," he said, "it's only for an hour." He said, "Go up there with your mama and then come on back and then we can stay out here all day." I said, "But," I said, "alright." But uh, she was uh, always making us go there to participate into the church.

MB: Yeah.

FK: Which I have no regrets on to it.

MB: Yeah.

FK: It was, you know, wasn't a whole lot of other things to do.

MB: Yeah, who else was active in the church when you were growing up?

FK: Mmm, basically it was just me and my brother that would go help her. We had to carry the bucket and the vacuum cleaner, that kind of stuff.

MB: Yeah.

FK: She made us wipe all the pews down and everything. And got it ready for Sunday service.

MB: Yeah! That's really, that's, yeah. Um, so looking at, I know we talked a little bit about, um, the jobs that you did as an adult, or, or both as an adolescent through today. Um, what else have you been involved in? Were you ever a part of any clubs or other groups like that?

FK: Mmm, not of clubs or anything like that. Like I said, my, we did a lot of hunting and fishing, onto it, so I was very lucky to have grandparents plus my dad having the land to be able to go hunt on. And as a club thing, I guess you might, could say. Me and my brother used to go hunting for arrowheads onto it.

Um, we'd spend a lot of time, time with our nose on the ground, and I've got some pictures I can show you of what I've found.

MB: Yeah.

FK: And uh, the one place that we used to go, well I still go there now, in Criders, Virginia, there, I was just up there on Saturday, and we were looking over Indian graveyards up there. As a kid and everything we often wondered, why are, all the way up on the top of the mountain, there would be this stone pile, another stone pile, another stone pile, and another stone pile. And it was somebody trying to build a fence? And it didn't make sense because it didn't, it was piled up in a pile, so as time went on and everything, we figured it out. That Indians lived up there.

MB: Mmm, yeah.

FK: And they were basically up there and buried up on to that. But anyway, yeah, no clubs or nothing like it. Just hunting and fishing.

MB: Yeah! Um, does your brother still live in the area?

FK: Mmm hmm, he lives out here off of Aden road.

MB: Okay cool.

FK: So uh, he is a very, um, history buff onto Civil War, stuff like that. He, in his younger years, would go around reading books and travel and find where all of these guys here, turn around and was going and where they crossed. And uh, he's always been, as a youngster, always digging in the dirt and everything. And uh, he's been very successful and rewarded on some of the stuff that he has dug out of the ground. Uh, he was a mechanic and uh, he worked for Koons Pontiac and GM and then he turned around and uh, got a job with the school board. And he just recently retired, two weeks ago. So he's in heaven.

MB: Yeah.

FK: Right now, but he, like I said, got into metal detecting with my dad and stuff like that. And they used to go out every single weekend and they were, they had found a lot of stuff. Very neat stuff.

MB: That's so cool, um, yeah, what else did your dad do for, either for fun or for work?

FK: Well, my dad, he worked as, when he was in the army for a little bit. And then he came back out of the army and then he went to Dulles International Airport, and he stayed over into there for, shoot, twenty-five years, and then um, he kinda lost his health and his back onto it, so he had to retire from that. And um, that's when he had gotten the, um, well I take that back, rewind a little bit. He bought the place and then he retired from Dulles there and then we were back and forth just going up that, into the country out there.

MB: Yeah.

FK: And so, and he was very talented in doing body work and welding. He didn't like wood, because he said if you cut it wrong, you have to throw it away. And he was a perfectionist. And I asked him, I said, "Well, why don't you like wood?" He said, "Well, if I make a mistake with metal, I can weld it back

together and I'll be right back to where I started from." So, that was his philosophy. Great painter, he used to work on cars, and he painted over at Dulles, that's what his specialty was, as a painter. Um, he cleared the runways, uh, anything over there at the time, he was, that's what he did.

MB: Yeah, very cool.

FK: When we'd have big snowstorms or something like that, I wouldn't see him for a couple or three days or so. He'd stay over there and push snow until it was over with.

MB: Yeah.

FK: Then, we used to get some pretty deep snows.

MB: Yeah, yeah, what did snowdays look like when you were a kid?

FK: Snow.

MB: Snow, just if you had snowdays, or what would you guys do when it snowed?

FK: Oh, well one, do some of the, depending on how deep it was, everybody, we had a sleigh riding track. Which, where our ball field was, uh, right over the hill, it would go as far as. Do you see the hill out here that they're doing? [a large and very steep hill from construction behind the Williams Ordinary]

MB: Yes.

FK: That's kinda like what we used to go sleigh riding on.

MB: Oh wow, that's a very steep hill (laughs).

FK: Maybe not quite like that, but just a little bit down, a little lower. But it was about that long, and just build bonfires and, you know, sleigh ride all night long, have a good time

MB: Yeah, that's so fun! Um, and then going, moving more into your adulthood, um, who have you lived with as an adult?

FK: Nobody.

MB: Nobody?

FK: The house, I lived on my own since I was nineteen (laughs).

MB: Yeah, um, and then, um, so how do you spend most of your time?

FK: Now?

MB: Yeah.

FK: Um, coming to work every day. Taking care of old buildings and then uh, go home and uh, play in the garden, and uh, mow grass and weed and stuff. And then uh, you know, the chore-y stuff that you do at home. And then I have acquired these two little, um, babies, I'm going to show you here in a second if I

can find it (pulls up a photo on his phone of baby foxes). These are like my pride and joy right now, I'm taking care of them, let's see if I can get that. Okay.

MB: (FK shows MB the photos) Awww, they're so cute!

FK: That's just..

MB: Are they foxes?

FK: Mmm hmm.

MB: Oooh.

FK: See now, maybe the sound, it's supposed to talk to you (fox barking sound).

MB: Aww. (bark from the video) How did you acquire the foxes?

FK: There was a job that uh, a house that I was working onto (bark from the video) and they uh, momma had three of them underneath this business, and uh, his staff didn't think it was a good idea to have foxes right out.

MB: Right.

FK: So he said he had to get rid of them and uh, they uh, there they are, up in the rafters (picture shown of the foxes gazing down from rafters).

MB: Aww, very cute.

FK: I've got one more I'll show you from when I first got them, and then I will get back onto your.

MB: That's okay.

FK: Oh, those are the arrowheads that I was talking about (shows a picture with a lot of arrowheads lined up)

MB: Oh those are very cool. And you said you found those in both, like, Buckhall area and..

FK: In the Buckhall area too! Because there's, believe it or not, Indians and everything. A lot of them were down here off of the Bull Run area. Um, because we used to plant gardens through there, and when we did the plowing and stuff after a rain, you could really go and see and find the arrowheads popping up out of the ground on to. There's, like I said, a, which the Buckhall area there, it's probably where we were finding them, was probably about 8 miles away from the store.

MB: Okay, okay cool, yeah, um. (FK shows another photo of the foxes) Oh, they're so cute! Ooh, that's so fun. I just have a couple more questions. There's been one event that I've read about, and I haven't been able to learn much about, is in the 1970s um, it sounds like a group of teenagers had gone into the cemetery and kinda messed around with people's headstones. Do you remember anything about that?

FK: I heard about it.

MB: Yeah.

FK: I don't know who had done it or anything like that. Uh, but it's a sad thing for a person to go in there and be destructive like that.

MB: Yeah.

FK: I don't like that kind of stuff.

MB: Yeah, do you remember how people responded to it?

FK: There was a lot of um, I don't know really if I should say hate over it. Um, a lot of them said they should be, laid across a stone and had their butts beat. That kind of stuff.

MB: Yeah, yeah.

FK: For doing stuff something like, it's totally disrespectful, I think.

MB: I agree, I agree. That's kinda why I've been trying to learn more about it. Um, it just seems like such a horrible and weird thing to do.

FK: Yes, it is.

MB: Yeah, um, have there been any other important events in Buckhall over the course of your life?

FK: Hmmm, no. Uh, other than in childhood memories and everything, when they used to have the annual Easter egg hunt.

MB: Yeah!

FK: That was pretty cool. Cause, uh, just behind the store, there, the Kemper farm there, Mr. Joe Kemper and Hallie, they would, uh, sponsor out and do the church and let everybody know when the Easter egg hunt was going to go down on to it. And uh, if you found the golden egg, you got a chocolate bunny (laughs)!

MB: That is.

FK: And I found it one time! I was so happy!

MB: Wow, that's awesome. Um, and why did you decide to stay in Buckhall?

FK: Uh, well. As a young lad, I turned around and built my house and then I turned around and, I have been around a lot in through other parts of the country. The Dominican Republic, South American, California, New Mexico, Texas, China. I've been out all into the West. I've been as far as Florida, the Bahamas, all in down through there. But around here, it's just, you know, you've got the four seasons and everything. And uh, it's kinda neat to be able to have spring, summer, fall, and winter on to it. A lot of the places that you go to, around into the world and everything, it is nothing like that.

MB: Yeah.

FK: And so, I just call this place home and that's where I stayed.

MB: Yeah. Um, is there anything else that you wished I had asked about, about Buckhall?

FK: Mmm, no. The only thing that I would like to see you find, is when that building was built.

MB: I will definitely keep looking.

FK: That, that is a real find right there if you can pinpoint that down. Um, I was trying to think. When they did the remodeling in there, they used to, they found, I think there was like an old pair of shoes and a lot of receipts there, and what they did with them, I don't know. But I know they were, when the store was up and running, then, so it wouldn't give you still a date or anything like that, on to it.

MB: Yeah, hmm. That's interesting though.

FK: Mmm hmm. See, um, they used to have, like, a little display case there, or that one guy did, you know, like the displays that you've got in here. And all, he kinda made a little picture frame and showed, well this is what I found when I re-renovated the store. Like I said, it's all gone. And that's the sad part about it, you know. Um, in a building like these. If a developer comes in and pushes them down and they get gone, that's it. I think it's really neat that you can hang on to something like this. And look what you got, a museum.

MB: Yeah.

FK: That everybody can enjoy and come and see.

MB: Yeah.

FK: That's what makes my job so interesting here. Is putting the old stuff back together.

MB: Yeah.

FK: For everybody to see.

MB: That's a really cool job.

FK: Mmm hmm. It has been!

MB: Yeah, wow. Um.

FK: And it's still, you know, stuff still comes up. I went to a, depending on how long you work here and stuff like that, you'll see, uh, different things that will change, you know, well look at the change that you're getting ready to do here.

MB: Yeah.

FK: On to, you're on to 250th.

MB: Uhhh, I think that's next year, yeah, the 250th anniversary [of the Prince William Resolves]. Um, yeah, yeah, that will be next year, um.

FK: Which will be neat.

MB: Yeah, um, and then I think my final question, for you, unless there is anything else that you have thought of that you want to talk about. Is, what would want either the people who are moving into Buckhall now, um, or a future historian to know about the area?

FK: Mmmm, there again, to, you would have to be, this is where you're doing your job here to present this to the public and everything. I admire you for doing this and everything. See, you're saving history, by going around and talking to all of these old-timers, and uh, like I said, keep digging onto them, and getting interviews and stuff onto it. Cause once they get gone, nobody else will ever know. You might even, like Thelma Hensley for instance, go to that woman. She might even have pictures of stuff in an old scrapbook that, you know, she'd been buried. Plant a seed in that woman's brain and turn around and see what you come up with. It's kinda like what you're doing now, between me and everybody else, onto it, um, I'm sure you'll have a book that thick by the time that you're done. Have you gotten, or accumulated any pictures from anybody?

MB: Um, I got a couple of pictures from, Kathy Clark, when she was living in the tenant house on, I think it was Ted Hensley's property then, so I have a few pictures from that. Um, I think that's it so far. But, I'm, I continue to ask people for pictures but I don't think very many people have pictures around, so.

FK: Yeah, see, and pictures are worth a, I uh, a thousand words according to it. I don't really know anybody else, uh, that would even have any pictures of anything of that. So I wished I could be more help to you onto it.

MB: That's okay! This interview itself has been very helpful, so, yeah. I mean, this has been incredible.

FK: I know we got sidetracked, and talking about other things, you know.

MB: That's okay! They all add to,

FK: You can weed it out as you go along.

MB: They'll add both to the story of Prince William County, but also your story um, and so, even if we're preserving it for, to tell the story of Fritz, that's, that works for me too.

FK: I've been interviewed on a lot of stuff here.

MB: Yeah, yeah, So, awesome. Well, I will end the recordings.

FK: Alrighty.

MB: But, thank you!

FK: You're very welcome!

END OF RECORDING

Kathryn Sessler Biography

Kathryn Sessler was born on December 21st, 1957 in Topeka, Kansas, the older identical twin of her sister Karen, to William Robert Simmons and Mildred Lorraine Cornwell. Her father was in the military when Kathryn was growing up and they moved around frequently then settled on Lake Jackson Drive in 1972. Kathryn's mother's family has been living on Lake Jackson Drive for generations, as far back as the 1790s. Since her high school years, Kathryn has lived surrounded by her extended family. Even the land she now lives on was previously owned by her great-aunt Addie. Kathryn went to William and Mary for college where she studied history.

When she moved back to Lake Jackson after college, Kathryn befriended the new full-time pastor, Gary Hulme and his wife, who were close to her age. She then wrote a history of the Buckhall church in celebration of its 75th anniversary. Much of her adult life has been spent participating in the Buckhall Church community. In her interview, she describes how the Buckhall Church became United Methodist, how each of the later church buildings came to be built and her participation on both building committees. She has worked in the nursery at the Buckhall Church since September 2001, and is active in decision making at the church.

Kathryn's interview tells a lot about her family's history, and the impacts of community and living near extended family. She also highlights much of the development that has occurred in her time in the area, including numerous attempts to put in commercial and residential areas where they could not be supported due to traffic patterns or the wells. She also describes how the Buckhall Church has changed since its foundation, using her archival research and her own life experience to showcase ways it has grown and suffered. The interview ends with her desire for the church to remain small but relevant in the community.



Oral History with Kathryn Sessler

Interviewer: Meaghan Brennan

Interviewee: Kathryn Sessler

Location: Buckhall United Methodist Church (10251 Moore Drive, Manassas, VA 20111)

Date: July 13, 2023

Meaghan Brennan = MB; Kathryn Sessler = KS

Transcribed by Meaghan Brennan

MB: Okay, um, today is July 13th 2023, my name is Meaghan Brennan, I am the intern for the Prince William County Office of Historic Preservation doing an oral history project of Buckhall. I am here today with Kathryn Sessler and we are talking at the Buckhall United Methodist Church, um, in Prince William County, in the old sanctuary. So, thank you Kathryn for talking with me today. Um, we'll just start off with just basic information about yourself. Um, what's your name and can you spell it for me?

KS: Sure, it's Kathryn, K-A-T-H-R-Y-N, Sessler, S-E-S-S-L-E-R.

MB: Great, um, and have you ever gone by any nicknames?

KS: Nope.

MB: Nice, um, and when and where were you born?

KS: I was born December the 21st 1957 in Topeka, Kansas, three minutes before my identical twin sister, so I am the oldest.

MB: (laughs) That is really cool! And what's your sister's name?

KS: Karen.

MB: Okay cool, what were your parent's names and can you tell me a little bit about them?

KS: Uh, sure, my dad was William Robert Simmons, he was born and raised in West Virginia, Cass, West Virginia. Where the railroad is. He was named after an uncle that worked on the, the scenic railroad. Um, he and his mother and brothers relocated to Washington, D.C. in the late 30s. And then World War II came about and Dad enlisted in the Navy. Uh, he says his mother said she was moving back to West Virginia, and Dad said, "I am not going with you." Uh, cause he didn't want to go back to West Virginia, so he was in the Navy, he was over in Europe, uh, on a supply ship that was coming back from France after D-Day. No, anyhow. Um, and it was blown up. He was on a, a ship in the English Channel that blew up, sank in 20 minutes. He, and the survivors swam to other boats, uh he had a fractured pelvis and other things but he recovered, came back home. He had met Mom through mutual friends in Washington, D.C. and they married in November of 1946. A week after he was 21, cause his mother didn't like my mother and wouldn't sign for him. (sighs and laughs) Yeah, petty, petty. Anyway, uh Mom's name is Mildred

Lorraine Cornwell. She was born in the house beside the Buckhall store. The one right across the street, I think I heard somebody say it was originally a post office and all sorts of stuff. She was born in that house. At the time, her grandparents lived over on, uh, Lake Jackson Drive. And they also had a place up in, in Old Town Manassas. That was their business, and this was their, I guess, weekend home. Their farm. Um, her mother was born and raised over on Lake Jackson Drive as well. Uh, let's see. They moved around, Remington was where her father was from. He had tuberculosis, yeah and so when she was 13, he died at the hospital in Charlottesville, cause that's where they took the TB patients. So, um, and then, uh, my grandmother stayed in this area, single mother with five kids, and, um, worked and, I mean, she did have family around. Her brother, Charlie Cornwell, no. Mom's dad's brother, Charlie Cornwell ran the Buckhall Store for years and years and years and years. (MB: Yeah.) And his wife, Hallie Davis, was at his side, giving children glares if they tried to get an extra piece of penny candy, but Charlie would slip it to them. Mom said that they always hoped Uncle Charlie would be at the store and not Aunt Hallie, cause he would give them the extra candy (laughs).

MB: That's so fun.

KS: It is, it is. So, um, Dad left the Navy and then joined the Air Force when it was established in 1947, so Mom and Dad lived all over the place. We were born in Kansas, he did a tour overseas in Saudi Arabia, and then we moved to Alabama, and that's where he retired, we moved back to the area and then back to Manassas in 1972. Karen and I were in high school. So we'd heard the stories, we'd, we'd visited, but now we actually lived here, so. (MB: Yeah.) And we, we started at Grace United Methodist, and then about a year after that, so about 1973 is when we started coming to Buckhall. It was a two point charge before then. The minister served two churches. So you would have a, like, a 9 o'clock service one place and then a 11 o'clock, or uh, some places if it was farther away, you would have, like, the minister would be at your church once a month. (MB: Yeah.) And the rest of the time it was supplied by a, a lay leader. And that's why that's the, the custom now, that Methodists have communion once a month, it's because that's usually the only time the ordained pastor, who could give communion, was at your church, so they just kept that up as a tradition.

MB: That's interesting. Um, a quick question, do you know what the other church was in the charge at that point?

KS: It was Manassas United Methodist. (MB: Okay.) The one up there on Grant Avenue. Oh those minutes were really interesting. Um, the minister was very young, and he was quite evangelical. Which was a, you know, growing movement at the time. And you could see in the minutes, he was becoming more and more enchanted with the younger, larger congregation in Manassas. And much, much less willing to listen to the quieter, older, smaller congregation at Buckhall. So 1972 is when they, they separated. Manassas paid us for our portion of the parsonage, (MB: Mmmm) and that was, some of that was the seed money we eventually used to build the red brick church in 1988.

MB: Wow.

KS: Yeah, yeah, so then we started getting part time pastors. And we had a couple of them, and then Gary Hulme, in 1979, he had just graduated from, from college. Uh, he was our first full time pastor.

MB: Cool!

KS: Yep.

MB: Um, and then going back to when you visited Buckhall as children, what was, what were your memories from it?

KS: We didn't, we didn't actually visit Buckhall.

MB: Okay.

KS: We would go on Lake Jackson Drive where the family was, cause Aunt Flora, Aunt Hazel, they, they lived over on Lake Jackson Drive. Or um, Uncle John lived up in town. I could, I could drive you by and show you all their places, they're still there. Do you know where the old, um, well I guess it's old now, the police station is?

MB: I've heard about it.

KS: On Fairview Avenue?

MB: Yep.

KS: The house right beside it, it's, I think still painted white, that was where Uncle Bob and Aunt Kennie lived and I think it probably was in the 20s. She sold license plates off of the porch, cause that would have been a cottage industry, they didn't have the DMV and then, on the other side of the street from that, where Fairview Market is, where Signal Hill Road comes in. (MB: Yep.) Fairview Market's on one side of the intersection and the other side has a little brick house, and that was where my great-grandfather had his, his brick plant. He made bricks and mostly cement blocks. (MB: Okay.) And uh, he built, there's a primitive Baptist church in Manassas, he built that. He did the cement blocks, which you can't see, for the um, Black Sheep restaurant, the two silos, that great big barn, he did the cement block for those.

MB: That's so cool!

KS: Uh huh, and we have his old journals somewhere, he got paid, like, for 250 feet of sidewalk in front of the old courthouse, the, the red stone one in Manassas, so yeah.

MB: Yeah. Cool!

KS: When my, when my husband and I married in '81, he said something about, he knew a lot of people in town. I said, "Well you married me, now you're *related* to half them (laughs)." Yep.

MB: Yeah, um is your husband from the area?

KS: No, no, well his parents were both, well his mother was born in Connecticut, and his father was born in Massachusetts, and they came down here right at the beginning of World War II, (MB: Okay.) and um, they didn't know each other up there, but here's where they, you know, got to know each other better and got married. Bill was born in Washington D.C. His brother was born in Alexandria, and then they moved to Manassas when he was 3 years old. They lived out in Bradley Forest.

MB: Okay, cool.

KS: So, yeah, he thinks he knows everybody. Excuse me, he thinks he's an old-timer.

MB: Yeah, that's yeah.

KS: Well, and, and Manassas Museum put out a book years ago, Voices of... whatever, it's one of those stock books.

MB: Yeah.

KS: And, and there's a picture on the front of it of a family, it's a family portrait with, you know the old ones, the little kids sitting on the ground, and the, the two really old people sitting in the middle. And on the edge, just as the, the picture curves around to the spine, there's a dapper looking fellow with a mustache and that's my great-grandfather.

MB: That is really cool! What was his name?

KS: Uh, that, he was Will Hottle, um, Joseph William Hottle. Will was his, William was his middle name. He's buried over in Hixson cemetery which is one road down, on Buckhall Road.

MB: Okay, cool! Um, and then, why did you guys move into Manassas when, after your dad retired?

KS: Because, because, I think he had always told Mom that they would move back, (MB: Yeah.) when they could. So Uncle Tom built the house, Aunt Flora and Tom, Flora was my, my mother's aunt. Um, my grandmother's younger sister. Um, her husband built the l-, built the house on land that, that they had gotten from my great-grandparents. Uh, Aunt Flora's parents, and so, they were already living there, I'm sure he built that house too. Cousin Johnny had a house beside them, and then there's a, uh, stone, no it's an old brick house. It's painted white, can't really tell what it is. Um, and that was where my great-grandparents lived, that was their, like I said, their weekend place. And then Mom and Dad's house was on the other side of it, that Uncle Tom and Uncle Jimmy built. And then there was a driveway down to Cousin Mary's down there, and then there was a little, bitty, oh the house was not as big as this room [the old church sanctuary] I don't think. And that's where my great-grandmother's sister lived. Her husband died and she had to raise three young girls alone. And uh, she was in New Jersey, and she moved back here and she had life rights to that house.

MB: Mmmm.

KS: And typical for the family, she only lived to be 98 and a half, yeah (laughs). Well my mom will be 96 on Monday. (MB: Wow.) she's in a nursing home, and she's getting weaker but she takes no medicine, takes no medicine.

MB: That's incredible.

KS: It is! It is.

MB: Wow.

KS: We are very, very blessed to still have her. She's not happy, she wants to be with Dad, he died 8 years ago. But um, we're so glad we have her.

MB: Yeah.

KS: And um, then when, well when we moved, um, my grand, my grandparents relocated when they retired. To next to Mom and Dad's, still over on Lake Jackson. Honestly, it's like, okay, that's cousin Karen's house, cousin Johnny, Aunt Flora, my great-grandparent's house, my parent's house, my house, cousin Mary's driveway, and Aunt Addie's house, it's all right there. And across the street is cousin Philip's house and Aunt Hazel's house. So, um, when we went to buy the land, uh, and the house from my grandfather, when he was down-sizing, cause my grandmother was gone, it was '89. The um, they didn't, apparently there wasn't a problem when he bought it in the 70s, or they didn't say anything. The title search came back with, "Well, it's, the deed's, you know, it's got an encumbrance. There's somebody with life, life rights. Uh, uh, Addie, Addie Davis." I said, "Well yeah, Aunt Addie, she's up been in Annaburg Manor," I said, "No problem, she'll sign." So I went up with the paper and they said, "Well, she's having a little heart trouble today so we sent her to the emergency room." She died that night. So, well, then there so I took it back to the lawyer and said, "No problem. (laughs) Aunt Addie, Aunt Addie conveniently took care of it for us." But, uh.

MB: Wow.

KS: Yes, sorry I'm talking about my family, not what you want.

MB: No! That's okay! This is, I mean, it's adding, um.

KS: Well yeah, this whole, this whole area, I mean it's, um, cause I know when Mom visited her grandparents over on Lake Jackson, they would walk over here. Course Buckhall Road was cut through. (MB: Mmm, yeah.) Um, they would walk over here cause Uncle Charlie and Aunt Hallie were, were there. And I think my great-grandmother, if I remember what my mom said correctly, my great-grandmother played the organ, and she loved music, loved poetry, which is why she knew about Anne, Anne Bradstreet. Um, she would come over to the Methodist church that was in the cemetery. (MB: Yep.) The original one, and uh, she would come there for singing. Like on a Sunday night.

MB: Yeah, that's so cool. Um, yeah, and then, what were kinda your first impressions of when you started coming to Buckhall? Um, like for church and stuff.

KS: Oh, I was a teenager.

MB: Yeah.

KS: So it was church (dragged out/grumbling), um but let's see. Then I was away at college for a few years, and then when I came back, of course, the minister was my age. Gary graduated 1979, just like I did! So they became, he and his wife, became very good friends, they would come over to our house on Friday night and we would watch the old TV shows, "Dallas" and "Falcon Crest." That was our big thing, had a big bowl of popcorn. And uh, we always accused Gary of having visions cause he could guess the plot twists (laughs)! And um, so it was, it, they were friends! And the people were so nice, and that, even after, you know, 40 years, 45 years that hasn't changed. Buckhall still feels like, even though we've gone from, this church. I was on the building committee when we built the red brick church, and we were terrified, because that was a HUGE expense and the area wasn't that built up yet, it was just on that first wave of, you know, subdivisions.

MB: Right.

KS: And we were so afraid that we wouldn't be able to make the mortgage payment. But we did, we did. And that's what we, we said we have to have faith and it, it all worked. So we got that paid off early. And then I was on the building committee for the, I'm the only one that's been on both building committees I think! Um, we did this one [the newest church] and it was the same thing. You know, it's a huge nut to crack. What, what if, well, it, it hasn't been as easy a path this time because of COVID, but um, I, I'm hopeful that our prayers will be answered and that we will be able to keep going, keep moving forward. We cannot build on this land anymore. Our civil engineer made sure that the exact number of square feet that can be covered are (laughs), so, thanks John! He goes to the church, too. Um, there used to be a little, see I keep forgetting how close we are, this one, I guess really just beyond where this building [newest church] is now, there was a little tiny white house. So, when you came down Davis Ford, was a winding two lane road. And Moore Drive was barely paved. And there was this church, Irene Thomasson's house, she's buried over in the cemetery now, Irene Thomasson's house, the couple houses across the street, of course no, no traffic light, and then, nothing. It just kept winding its way down towards Yates Ford and the other end of the county.

MB: Yeah, yeah.

KS: Past Bacon Race, all of that stuff.

MB: Yeah.

KS: So, did you ever, has anyone ever mentioned the name Bill Olson to you, William Olson?

MB: Yes!

KS: Yeah, you just missed him, that's too bad. He died, what, last month?

MB: I think so.

KS: He was incredible!

MB: Yeah.

KS: He was incredible. I, I talked with him briefly, we were looking at the cemetery, and I think he's the one that put the plaque up there about the Methodist church.

MB: Yes, yep.

KS: Um, cause I, Mom had told me stuff about it. I was kinda like, the only one that people knew that might know something.

MB: Right.

KS: So, yeah, yeah. And he, he really was everywhere, and he always had, he always had knowledge. Not just something to say, we know people like that, he always had knowledge to, to share. That's really something. A lot of, a lot of energy.

MB: Yeah, I missed him, I think, by only by a couple of weeks. Because he..

KS: I think he must have gone down hill pretty quick.

MB: Yeah, I had been about to reach out to him, um, when I was at a meeting, and people were like, “Oh, he’s taken really poorly, he’s,” I think had just been hospitalized and so.

KS: Oooh.

MB: I was like, “Oh, okay.” Um.

KS: Kinda like Aunt Addie in my life, rights paper, oops (laughs).

MB: (laughs) Um, but yeah, and based on the things I’ve heard about him, he sounds really incredible.

KS: Yeah, yeah, and it’s a small community, I just realized that. It’s a small community of people that, that study history, or understand it, or appreciate. Especially church, church or local history. You know, and I, I digress, but, I think that Buckhall still has a family feel.

MB: Yeah, in what ways? Can you tell me a bit more?

KS: Um, they’re very welcoming, yes, at one time we had a committee, greeters, you know, that’s. The, the Methodist church is big on, like, rules, and guidelines, and, you know, plans, and patterns, and programs. And so, that was one of the things at the time, “Oh yeah, you’ve got to make sure people are greeted within three minutes,” and da, da-da, da-da, da-da. Well we kinda do that anyhow.

MB: Yeah.

KS: We kinda do that anyhow, we did have greeters for a while. People signed up for it and, but I think that’s fallen by the wayside, but there’s usually somebody standing by the front door or somebody’s at the kitchen, and they see someone and it’s like, “Are you new here? Hi, you know, I’m Kathryn,” or “I’m Cheryl,” or “I’m, you know, Dave,” whatever. And uh, they just, they just do that.

MB: Yeah,

KS: And, and I like that.

MB: Yeah.

KS: And I try to be very welcoming if someone brings me a new child (laughs). Cause I figure, if, if their kids are happy then they can go in the sanctuary with peace of mind, and focus on that, and they’ll be back. And that’s what we need, we need children. At one point, somebody at one of the meetings says, “Well, why we don’t just, just go on and focus on what we have. The older people, and we take care of the older people, not worry so much about the youth programs.” Okay, take a minute and just roll that out ten or fifteen years. If you haven’t brought new children in, new, young families in, and the caretakers are now being taken care of, what do you see? (laughs) A big gap! It’s like, “Oh, yeah, right.” So, but with the, the statistics, church attendance, COVID, it’s just gonna be really, really hard to keep it, to keep it moving forward. And I think, at this point, moving forward’s going to be a good thing. Not even trying to, you know, expound, expand. So I’ll, I’ll take moving forward for right now.

MB: Yeah, yeah. Um, hmm, oh I, sorry, this is going back a little while. Did your mother ever talk about, kinda, growing up in the Lake Jackson - Buckhall area? Um did she have any stories about what Buckhall was like when she was younger?

KS: It was nothing!

MB: Yeah.

KS: It was, it was nothing! There really wasn't any story to tell, cause it was the store. And the church. I mean, sorry, and the school, not the church, it was the school. It was the store, the school, the house she was born in, and um, gosh down the road there were a few old farms. Like the Kempers and uh, probably a couple of others, the, the Moores were here, the Klins were, were one over on, beyond Buckhall Road. And you have to, and the Chandlers. There just wasn't anything.

MB: Yeah.

KS: Um, there's probably a Davis farm, like Davis Ford, and then of course Hallie and Gladys and Raymond Davis. I mean, they lived, if you go down here and go to the left, around like the cemetery. I think going back down in there is how you would have gotten to what would have been the Davis home, homestead, or the homes, houses. But yep, there was nothing, there was nothing to talk about. See that's the hard thing for us to, to realize. There was nothing.

MB: Yeah, yeah. Did she go to the Buckhall School?

KS: Mmm mm.

MB: Okay.

KS: No, and I don't believe my grandmother did, either.

MB: Okay.

KS: My grandmother was born in 1906, so what, 1915 maybe she would have been school-age.

MB: Yeah.

KS: But um, I, you know, I don't remember asking.

MB: That's okay.

KS: Yeah, I don't remember asking, I'll talk to my sister and see if she remembers hearing that. But I don't, I don't remember that.

MB: Yeah, yeah. It doesn't seem, well, I, I don't think there's really anyone left who had gone to the school.

KS: Only, only people like me who had heard about it. You're right, you're right. Um, because since this was their weekend place, I'm not sure she would've (MB: Yeah, that makes sense.) gone here. Cause when, when we moved in '72, when we relocated to Lake Jackson Drive, beside my great-grandparents

house, but they originally had a farm house down in the field. But that's, that was demolished. They moved the boxwood plants that were around it, giant boxwoods were actually taken to the Thomas Jefferson Memorial when it was new. Cause they didn't want, you know, hot-house plants waiting eighty years for them to get big enough to be impressive. They scouted around and found big boxwoods from old homeplaces, and relocated the big ones there (laughs).

MB: That makes a lot of sense!

KS: It makes a lot of sense.

MB: But that's really cool!

KS: It is!

MB: I never would have thought of that.

KS: It is, it is. But that's what I remember hearing. Um, but um, so I don't even know when. Yeah, I think that the house that's right on the road probably was built about the time that my great, that my grandmother was born, 1906. So uh, when we moved there, there was actually still a few apple trees back. Because my great-grandfather had an orchard, that was his farm. But he was up in town making bricks and blocks, I guess for, you know, four or five days out of the week.

MB: Yeah, yeah, that makes sense. Um, yeah, and...

KS: Yeah, and Mom's, Mom's family. The Cornwells, they were from Remington. So I am not sure, I thought about that when I was thinking about talking to you, I don't know how my mom, how my mother, my grandmother, my grandfather met. Um, cause I don't know that Nana ever lived in Remington. Oh, wait a minute! No, no, that, that was the Cornwells. Yeah, I don't know how they ever met. Um, I know that my grandfather Harvey's brother, Charlie, was here running the store, probably not 1906 cause he would have been a little kid too. But, how?

MB: Yeah. So, how many siblings, do you know? Did Charlie have?

KS: Mmm, I'd have to count. And I can find that out for you, no problem. Um, it's kinda cool, I think the oldest was Herbert, and he was born, I believe on his parents first wedding anniversary.

MB: That's cool, that's cool.

KS: It was Herbert, uh, Aunt Janet, there was one they called Aunt Eatley, I think her name was Louise. Oh, there was Aunt Ruth, she was a seamstress and she worked in the, the dry goods store in Warrenton, I believe. Cause she was a seamstress so she worked where they sold, you know, the bolts of, used to call it dry goods. Um, I'd have to look it up, cause there was more than that. There was, like, seven or eight of them.

MB: Yeah, and then, sorry, I just making sure I'm tracking. And Charlie is also your grandmother's brother?

KS: My grandfather's brother, mmm hmm, yep my grandfather's brother, cause they were Cornwells.

MB: Grandfather's brother. Okay, okay.

KS: And Mom and, Mom was, her maiden name was Cornwell.

MB: Yes, okay. And what was your grandfather's name?

KS: Uh, Harvey! Harvey Lee.

MB: Perfect.

KS: I have a picture of him, it's a lot like Mom, except of course with a short haircut, and his ears stuck out, Mom's ears don't stick out. But otherwise, it looks a lot like her.

MB: Yeah, that's so cool!

KS: But then, Mom also looks like her mother. (MB: Yeah.) It would be the Hottles. They came over from the Valley, um, after the Civil War. The Robinsons were already here, they came down to Brentsville after the Revolutionary War. (MB: Okay.) They were from New Jersey, but everything was torn up from all the fighting in New Jersey, so they came to Virginia. The Hottles were in the Shenandoah Valley, everything was torn up, you know, the breadbasket of the South, everything was torn up there. So they called it "going East." So he relocated here, um and he did brick and, and block work. His brother was a stonemason I think, they're buried out, some of them are buried out at Cannon Branch. They're, where is it, where Wellington Road comes out onto 28.

MB: Okay.

KS: Cannon Branch. That's where my great-great-grandparents are buried, and a couple of other people.

MB: Very cool.

KS: Milton Hottle, oh! The Kline Memorials, the, the, the headstone place, used to be Hottle-Kline, and they, they bought him out, Klines bought the Hottles out. That was Milton Hottle, I think. And there was a Noah Hottle, but they came, I think they were all born in, like, Toms Brook, around that area, Edinburg, and they all relocated to Manassas.

MB: Okay, and is the Kline's Memorial the same as Clayton Kline? Or a different Kline?

KS: No, no. Dorothy, Dorothy and Clayton, I think, are a different Kline. Or if they are, they are not closely related. Dorothy and Clayton lived on Old Dominion Drive, over where the, used to be a race track. Old Dominion Speedway, now it's a bunch of townhouses. That's where she lived, so they may have been, somewhat related. And there's also Klines at the end of Buckhall Road, where it used to cut through. They're from Pennsylvania.

MB: Interesting!

KS: Yeah, yeah. The Johnson, John, well you didn't know any of them, where the Grace United Methodist Church is now, on Wellington Road. That was the Johnson Farm, Clover Hill.

MB: Okay.

KS: The Johnsons came down from New Jersey about the same time that the Robinsons did. Was it the Robinsons? No, the Hixsons. Oh gosh, I'm getting confused, cause there were Hixsons too. No, well I guess the Robinsons were here and the Hixsons married in, whatever, anyway.

MB: Okay, cool. Um

KS: So we've been here a long time (laughs).

MB: Yeah, um, what did, kind of, people do? Were, were most people farmers, when both your mom was growing up, or even when you moved in?

KS: Um, well by the time I moved in, things were changing, but yeah. Mom's, um, Mom's grandfather did the brick and block.

MB: Right.

KS: Her other, Cornwell, grandfather was in Remington. He was a farmer.

MB: Okay.

KS: That was, um, Robert Martin Cornwell. He was a farmer. Um, Uncle Charlie was at the store. Um, my grandfather, the one with TB worked on, believe it or not, cars. He did brakes. So I always, I always wondered if they called it TB but since he worked on brakes which at the time had asbestos in it. I'm wondering if that's isn't what he had. But they had tests for TB, so if they said he had TB, I'm gonna, I'm gonna put that doubt away, just assume that they were correct. Because Mom said his, his assistant also had TB, they both died. (MB: Mmm, yeah.) So that's what made me think, "Wait a minute." Like that mesothelioma or whatever the ad is for, I always kinda wondered, but that was TB. Cause he wasn't even 40, I don't think, when he died.

MB: Wow.

KS: Yeah, yeah. Well let's see, Aunt Janet was born in 1900, and he, he was her younger brother, so yeah he was probably born in 1903 or 1905.

MB: Yeah.

KS: Yeah, Mom said she was 13, she was born in '27, so he died in '39 or '40, something like that. Maybe '41. So, we counted, I counted the other day, my grandmother had five children, in 7 years! Strong woman.

MB: Very much so, wow.

KS: Cause Mom's birthday is July of 1927 and the youngest one's birthday is January of 1934. (laughs)

MB: Wow, that's incredible that she was.

KS: Yep, just, just kept going and then, well let's see if Uncle Carl was born in thirty-um-four, cause he'll, he'll be 90 next year, he was born in '34, and then his father died in, let's say 1940.

MB: Right.

KS: She had, you know, children from 12 to 6 to raise on her own, (MB: Yeah.) and she did not remarry until, I think Uncle Carl was in his late teens. (MB: Wow.) It was probably 15 years, she did remarry but Mom was already married by then, and all the others were grown and on their own. Let's see who else did stuff. Um, my grand, my grandmother's brother who would have also been raised in, in this area of Manassas, he was a mechanic. He, uh, worked at Dudley Martin Chevrolet. And his son did the same thing. Um, what did Uncle Jimmy do? I know he, I know he carved wood, but that was his hobby, I don't know if he worked for the government or what Uncle Jimmy did. Aunt Flora was a government worker, cause she was talking about driving out, the only way into D.C. at the time was 29, that was it!

MB: Wow.

KS: Carpooled. Um, I'm not sure what Aunt Hazel did, she died young, she died in her, in her early 40s my cousin Philip was probably about 6 when she died. And Aunt Eleanor moved over to, Aunt Eleanor might have been a nurse, but she relocated to Maryland. Who did I forget? Uncle Bob was here, I'm not sure what Uncle Bob did, he was old by the time I got. You know, by the time we moved here, he was already retired, and he just pattered. I can't remember what he did. And my grandmother, worked in retail. I mean, whatever she could do after she was the, the sole breadwinner. Cause she went to the Red Cross for help, and they said, "Well, you own your own home, we can't help you. Sell your house and we can help you." So. My family is not a big fan of the Red Cross. Because then later on my grandmother met somebody from the Red Cross, and they had a good salaried job, and said, "Well what do you actually do?" And he couldn't tell her. He didn't have a good description, so that's when we decided we'd find more worthy organizations for our charity. I don't want that in print. (laughs) I guess those are the things that people say that they regret. Anyway, and then there was, yeah, then Uncle John, mechanic, Uncle Jimmy did something. And then, Eleanor and Flora and Hazel, yeah. And then they had two that died, well, one died when he was in his 20s, and the other one, Philip died when he was four, supposedly he ate too many green apples. And got sick and died, that's what I always heard. But I don't, I don't know if that was actually it. And uh, the other one, what was his name? Paul, supposedly his girlfriend dumped him and he didn't want to live after that. Again, family stories, I just know he died in his early 20s, and Philip was 4 when he died. And, and, Aunt Hazel named her son Philip after the one that died, even though he was gone before she was born. And um, Aunt Eleanor named her son after Paul, the one, the one that died in his 20s.

MB: Very cool, yeah, it's always cool to see the way that different families, will, like, move names around. Um, yeah.

KS: Where did "Meaghan" come from?

MB: A book, (laughs), my mom read a book and liked that the character's name was Meg. Um, and..

KS: It wasn't *Little Women* was it?

MB: No, I wish it was though, that would have been better.

KS: I think her name was Margaret though, wasn't it.

MB: It was, yeah. Um, I think the name character in the book she read, her name was also Margaret, but she went by Meggie and my mom wanted to call me Meggie, and, and never did. So, my middle name is my great-grandmother's maiden name though, so that's how it.

KS: What was it?

MB: Connolly.

KS: Connolly?

MB: Mmm hmm

KS: Oh cool! Irish?

MB: Yes (laughs). So, yeah.

KS: I, I knew a lady, her mother saw a movie when she was pregnant.

MB: Yeah.

KS: And this had to have been the 30s, early 40s, I can't remember how old, and she decided right then she was going to make her, her child, if her child was a girl, after the main character. The Indian princess, Neicha, N-E-I-C-H-A. But it's okay, cause her middle name was Unife, U-N-I-F-E. Neicha Unife. That woman was crazy, she was so much fun!

MB: That's a very interesting..

KS: Yeah, Neicha Unife. Yes, yeah. That's just. Now, I'm named after my grandmother Catherine (*Transcriber note: spelling here based on 1930 and 1940 Census*), technically. But the spelling, K-A-T-H-R-Y-N is after the movie star Kathryn Grayson. Because Mom liked, liked her. She was pretty and she sang so beautifully. I do not sing. I have two year olds in the nursery saying, "Stop, stop."

MB: Yeah, it's hard when you have a child tell you to stop singing (both laugh), I had a 5 year old once, I was singing while I was driving him home from school and he goes, "Yeah, you need to, please don't." Okay, yeah, it's totally fine (both laughing).

KS: My kids would listen to their last, their last lullaby, with their bottles in their mouth like this (covering her ears and imitating a baby drinking a bottle, both laugh).

MB: But, yeah, okay. Um, let's see, what else did I want to talk about? Um, who were some of the, kinda, community leaders, or people that you think of, both from when, I know Hallie and Charlie seem to be the main ones that I've heard.

KS: Yeah, and Joe Kemper too. Joe was big, but he was a big person.

MB: Yeah.

KS: And he was a forest ranger, I think, yeah, yeah. He was married, they had one daughter, she was disabled. So, um, I guess, Mrs. Kemper maybe stayed home with her all the time, I don't ever remember hearing much about Mrs. Kemper.

MB: Yeah.

KS: But everybody knew Mr. Kemper, everybody knew Mr. Kemper. Well, the Moores would be big, and the Hensleys, I guess around here. Um, probably the Davises. Uh, there was a big farm, cause um, when I talk to Betty Busby she was talking about, no, it was Mrs. Clark that was telling me, when they moved in, something about, I think it was cows, it was VonLoesch, there was a, a the VonLoeschs around here. I do not know how it's spelled. I think it's something weird like L-O-E-S-C-H, I'm not sure. Um, because when, when, well this would have been in the mid-90s, I wasn't working, I had a 4 year old. And I would meet with Mom and Dad out at the mall and we'd go mall-walking with the old people. Helen loved that, all the old people loved Helen. Um, but there was one man that walked, and Mom said, "Oh that's Gene VonLoesch," and he was from here. So, but I'm sure he's gone by now, cause he was no spring chicken and that was, you know, twenty-five years ago. So, although, hey, same thing could be said about my mother and look!

MB: That's true, that's true.

KS: Yeah, cause she would have been sixty-, she would have been in her mid-60s and she's still kicking, so. Well, not kicking, but.

MB: Yeah, um

KS: I'm trying to think who else, um, Chandlers. (MB: Mm hmm) That apparently has been there a long time, cause it started out, I guess it started out as a farm and then they turned it into a, is it called a junk yard? Salvage yard? I'm not sure. And oh, and Merchant, William Merchant's got property, now they were there. Cause I remember Mom talking about her brothers played with Woody Merchant. So that would have been in the 40s.

MB: Okay.

KS: Um his, his name is not Woody, it's Wid, or something, he's buried over in, that's funny, he's buried over in Hixson Cemetery (*transcriber note: this is Wilmer "Woody" Thornton Merchant Jr*). If you go down, have you been down Buckhall Road?

MB: Um, I've gone down a little bit of it, but I haven't gotten down to Hixson Cemetery yet.

KS: Okay, well before you get to Hixson, there's, I think it's called Deer Park, there's a fancy driveway in, Woody's place is back in there. I think, the first house that's built there is his son's house, one of them. He owned Battlefield Ford, which just changed hands to Ourisman, cause Woody died two years ago? A year and a half ago? And, and they sold it, cause his sons weren't going to do anything with it. That's fine.

MB: Yeah.

KS: Um, he's buried in the family cemetery because, uh, the cemetery used to be, you know, fence, one road in, one road out. And they decided to change it, move things around, and have a circular drive, so they redid the fence, put the driveway in, and then somebody remeasured. And they had taken 10 feet of Woody's property (laughs). They put the fence in the wrong place! So the agreement was, cause I think they did have trustees for the cemetery at the time, there's nothing now. It's dreadful. I don't know what we're gonna do. Ooh, you can help me maybe, we'll talk. Um, they said, well you can have that strip of land and bury your family there.

MB: Very cool!

KS: Yeah, yeah, so, but of course they did their side nice. They've got, it's, I think it's 30 places, there's already 5 or 6 people there. Um, Gary and Chris, Gary the first full-time minister here, they're real, they were real good friends with Woody, um so there's two places for Gary and Chris, which is good cause we'll all be there together. And, I'll be on the other side of the driveway, but that's fine. And then, Woody's there, and I think he's had a sister and a brother, or two sisters and a brother, and then there's other people related to his family that, that he gave places to. So there's like, somebody's mother buried there. (MB: Right) So, yeah. Um, and then the Jehovah's Witness, well see that's it, there's a, a Sikh Center that started out as a Jehovah's Witnesses church.

MB: Okay, interesting.

KS: In the mid to late 70s, it was a Jehovah's Witnesses church, and then I guess it just wasn't a good place for it so they closed down, and I think it was something else, and then the, the Sikh Center got it, and it's very active now.

MB: Yeah.

KS: And they're looking to expand, which I think is a problem for our cemetery, but we'll talk. Cause that's why I need to try to find a way. That cemetery, I swear, especially on the far end. If you're facing it. The Lutheran cemetery's across the street, not related. Although if you look at the tax records, it says the Lutheran church owns the Hixson cemetery.

MB: Okay.

KS: I gotta figure out how to fix that.

MB: Yeah.

KS: Yeah (sighs), um but on the left hand side of the fence, if you follow the fence all the way back, there's a big white stone. And I'm pretty sure that's an original marker. And I think if you go to the end closest to the Sikhs, where there's another, wooden, fence I think there's one there too. Now Woody's family has cut a hole in the fence, because they're the ones taking care of it right now. Woody told Mom he would take care of it. So, his family's still doing that.

MB: Nice, wow.

KS: Yep. Well, they're there too, but they could just do their side and forget about it, but they haven't done that yet. So, I'm grateful.

MB: Yeah, mmm, and I do have a cemetery contact for you so we can do that later.

KS: Oh, okay, okay! Or by email later, it's fine, it's, it's a cemetery, there's no rush (laughs).

MB: Um, yeah, so by the time that you were living in Buckhall, was the Buckhall Store still running?

KS: Um, Uncle Charlie was gone, I think he had died by then. So he wasn't, he, he and Aunt Hallie weren't there, but um, yeah. It's, it's been fits and starts I think, really ever since. Probably somebody ran it for a while, semi-successfully, but then after that it just was just up and down. Every couple years you'd see signs that said "Under New Management." I personally wasn't interested, because it said, "Cold Sandwiches and Fresh Bait." I wondered if they were in the same refrigerated unit, ahh (laughs).

MB: Yeah, that makes sense.

KS: I don't think it's a bad question. Yeah.

MB: Um, did Hallie and Charlie ever have any children?

KS: Mm mm, no they did not, they did not.

MB: Okay, and then you said Joe Kemper has...

KS: He had one daughter, she's, she's gone now too. And Uncle Joe Kemper is buried with his first wife and daughter.

MB: Yes, okay.

KS: And Aunt Hallie is buried over with Uncle Charlie.

MB: Yes, I did see that! I was um, I've been searching for all three of their graves.

KS: Oh you found them?

MB: Yeah, I did.

KS: Okay!

MB: Which was cool.

KS: I wanna, I wanna go over there, it's gonna be forever. I want to do it for Buckhall, but I also am interested in that, we do Wreaths Across America. One of the ladies at the church, um, organizes it, but they get so many wreaths. I, I, order some, and take them to my family cemetery. Cause I know who was in the service. But over here, they're like, "We're just going to put it at a grave." And I don't, I don't like that.

MB: Yeah.

KS: So, I wanna do research and find out who actually served and, what they did, and we do the same thing here, like for Veterans Day, they'll put up pictures or um, they'll put somebody in the bulletin. Well I looked at one of them and yeah, he was in the. Oh Memorial Day, he was in the military, but he died in

his 80s at home, Woodbridge, it was a family friend of somebody, so that's why they put him on a list. That's not really Memorial Day, not really Memorial Day. So that's what I want to kinda. But I would love to get pictures of them and put them down the hall, with their dates of service. We do have some big um, the tri-fold science fair boards that, that they pull out when we have military events, and it's got a lot of the people on it, and there's some people even, we got a few women. That you just, it's surprising, yeah.

MB: Yeah. That's really cool.

KS: Yeah, you'll have to come visit us sometime!

MB: I've been really enjoying all of the time that I've been getting to learn about Buckhall and getting to, like, know the different families and stuff has been really cool.

KS: Good, good!

MB: But, um, yeah, um, what was the role of religion in the community?

KS: Well, gosh, see, see, my problem is I'm going to say it from a historical, sociological perspective.

MB: That's okay!

KS: In this area, there wasn't much else. Everybody has big farms so the store was where you, was where you gathered to find out information, school was where you went to learn, and the church, I guess, would be where you would go to support each other, strengthen each other, console each other. Depending on how judgmental you were, castigate each other. Uh, every congregation's got some of that, so. Um, and I, I, I don't know if politics would have been discussed here as opposed to at the, at the store, probably both places. But I know we had one, well Vernon Moore, every time there was a meeting coming up for the Electric Co-op, he would be in church.

MB: Interesting.

KS: And people would say, "Oh Vernon's here, must be a co-op meeting coming up." Because he would announce it.

MB: Yeah.

KS: Which is not politics but kinda is. It's on the political side of community service, so yeah, and I think that, that probably would have been here. Although, most of what this church, the EUB church, um, in the 40s was focused on missions.

MB: I remember reading that in the history that you wrote, can you tell me more about that?

KS: I can't remember it, um, and I don't think it was even world-wide missions so much as local, or American, American. They would, um, I'm sure they were making sure people had Bibles, um, the missionaries, there was, um, women's societies, and, and see the Methodists still do that. They have newborn kits that are delivered worldwide, with, you know, a blanket, a hat, whatever it is, and diapers, something. Um, I haven't paid attention to the, to the Methodist church's global outreach in a while, my bad. Um, I would have to, I would try to have to go back and refresh my memory. But yeah, a lot of it

was, that's what they were always talking about. Was, was, not always, but a good bit of the time. And then, um, they were focused on what they needed to do to keep this going. But I don't remember a lot of, you know, like, joining with other churches to do something. It was, we keep ourselves, we keep our house in order, and we help where we can. So that, that would be a good thing for a community that is separated and certainly, if you've never been on a farm, that becomes your world. So it would take you out of that for a little bit, so that you could, could think about other people, and their needs, and then remember that you had to go back and milk your 40 cows and make sure that, you know, that the hay was in, and the gates were closed, and go back to that.

MB: Yeah, that makes sense.

KS: It does, doesn't it! I'm not normally profound (laughs), we'll just call it a different perspective.

MB: I think that was very well laid out, um, yeah.

KS: I'm old, I've had a lot of time to think of stuff (laughs).

MB: Um, and how have you seen the role of the church change over the years?

KS: Um, people don't leave space in their lives for church. And I think that's probably the biggest thing. We can still be here, we are. We can still be holding community events, we do. Not many people come. So, we can't, you know, the old, you can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink. Well we can open up our doors, we can make it look great, we can have a good time, but it doesn't make anybody, we can't force people to pull in, park, and walk over and join us, we can't. And I think that's the biggest thing, is we are still trying. But people don't look to a local, physical spot for community anymore. They don't. (MB: Yeah.) They have their Facebook friends, they've got you know, chats and yeah, I, I know, I sound really old. But it, it, in some respects I'm not wrong, I'm, I'm not wrong.

MB: No, you're not wrong.

KS: It's just the way that, it's just the way that, that they are and I mean, certainly, at one point, this church was everything (MB: Yeah) and by the 40s, it wasn't. People moved away, people did other things, um, there were other points of view. I'm sure when they changed from, well no, from UB to EUB it probably wasn't that big of a deal. Because their, their theologies were very similar. And honestly, when they changed to Methodist from, from EUB to United Methodist, that's where the United in Methodist comes from, (MB: Right.) the Evangelical United Brethren. Um, it's kinda like taking a name from each of them, um, there wasn't a huge change. But I know this church probably suffered a little bit with that last minister, the strife, just the tension, the constant pressure to, but they were established here. They just put up with him, and honestly, the Methodists, if you say, "Hey, you know, he's here for now." And that's still true. There's still some places where the minister never serves more than 2 or 3 years, ever. Churches go through ministers every couple of years. My sister's church out in Nokesville did that for a while. Um, and that's like good and bad. We, we lately have not done that. Gary was here from '79 to probably '89. Because we were building that church, and they don't move a minister during a big campaign. (MB: Right.) So once that church was done, then they could bring in, John Hull was here from '89 or '90 until, oh gosh, when did he leave? Was it (long pause to think, some murmuring)? I remember coming back for his last Sunday. We were in Colonial Beach, I had all three kids by then, so it was after '99. So maybe around, 2002 or 2003. Maybe even a little bit longer than that, he was here a long time.

(MB: Wow.) And, um, then we had Linda Monroe for several years and she just left in 2020. I think Linda maybe came in 2013, gosh, was John here that long? It might have been! 1990 to 2013? Because, and then when Linda, no, yes, because, I can't remember. I don't remember when that church was built, I can't remember. I'll walk over and look at the stone. Cause John was here and that was why he ended up staying so long, because we started it and then got sidetracked, and started and got sidetracked, and then finally got on track and built that church, and that's when John left, after that. And Sean's been here since, um, 2020. Because we said good-bye to Linda in the parking lot. And Sean did not hold a service in the church. He came in June, that's the usual time to change for Virginia. He came in June, first part of July, and he didn't hold a service with people in the building until September, so that was 2020, that's easy to remember. So yeah, Linda probably came around 2013, 2015? So yeah, we're not, we're not a every two years kinda church, and I'm not sure why. Except for the timing on the, on the projects.

MB: Mmm, that's interesting. Yeah.

KS: So, and not all, not all Methodist churches do, they, they, some, some of them do keep them. But anyway, but with that, um, and we've had people, but there's one particular person, I don't think she was alive to not come back for that one. But when we, no she might not have, no she might have been. When we were here, and starting to build that [red brick] church. Day one of our fund drive, she quit coming to church. Didn't give a penny. First service in the new church, there she was. And I believe when we started fund driving for that [newest] one, I think she was pretty old, you didn't see her (laughs).

MB: Interesting.

KS: Yes, it is, it is, yep. (MB: Yeah.) And I can't think of anybody else doing that but her, maybe they weren't as vocal, I'm not sure.

MB: Yeah, hmmm, that's interesting, yeah. Um, hmm, let's see. Since I know you both studied history in college and have like, done a lot of history of the church, um, what do you know about the history of, like, Buckhall beyond the church?

KS: Not much, cause there wasn't that much here. And I think, what was history, probably like you said, the people are all gone. The stories weren't told, or they've been forgotten. Um, I don't think they even know how it got its name. Somebody said it's the Buck family. And somebody said, a buck ran through a house, a buck, the buck hall. I don't know.

MB: I was just about to ask you if you knew where the name came from?

KS: Nope, nope. And Irene's house, the one that was right here, Irene Thomasson, oh gosh, that house was built in the, I actually did a paper in college, I took a history of religion class. And on our break, he made us come home and study churches and historic houses, and my sister and I, we were taking the same class. We talked to Irene, um, that house was built, I don't think it was before the Civil War, but I don't think it was too long after, (MB: Yeah.) so it was old. Cause we were doing the interviewing in, like, 1974, (MB: Right.) no, 1976. So it was old then, it might have been before the Civil War. Um, so that house would have been there, um, the Moores probably had something along here. The, the church would have been down there [in the cemetery], after 1905 this one would have been here.

MB: Right.

KS: You had the post office building, I still don't know why my mother was born there, unless the doctor had an office in it or something, just weird. And the store, and the, and the school. We used to vote in the school. I've actually voted in the school a couple of times. It was after they restored it, I think, which is what we would call now, an older renovation, cause it's probably kinda run down now. Um, the road curved around, I think there used to be an old house down there, maybe like, the Davises? That would be it, it would be open.

MB: Yeah.

KS: Buckhall road was probably cut through, without a name. Cause I, was that the one that Mom said they used to call Lovers Lane? I don't know, I think any abandoned road, or any, you know, slightly traveled road would be called that. When they, when they put the parkway through and cut it off. If you ever go all the way down and make that circle. Oh, I think they've torn Pauline's house down, Pauline's house was, Pauline Smith, she was a teacher at, uh, Osbourn high school. Double major in chemistry and math, graduated 1929, William and Mary. Um, yeah, yeah.

MB: Wow!

KS: We were in, was it 1929? Something like that, we were actually in her same dorm room in 1975, when my sister and I went. Barrett Hall 109, Room 109! Yep, she was so excited, we went and told her our, our room assignments. She says, "I was in 109!" But of course, it was brand spanking new building when she was in it. It was not new when we were there, maybe it's air-conditioned now. But the, the road went through, but then they cut it off, and they put a little bit of a guardrail. Well Aunt Flora just took that as a challenge. So now there is a guardrail around, completely around it. Yeah there was, there for several months she would still cut through. Cause you could kinda still see the road, they didn't tear the road up.

MB: Right.

KS: Yeah, but Aunt Flora was also the reason that they had a sign up for a while in the courthouse that said, "You cannot pay your traffic fine in pennies." Aunt Flora was a great one for civil protest.

MB: That's so funny.

KS: She was also one of those crazy people that would say, "Oh, there's a train, I can beat it."

MB: That's, that's scary (laughs).

KS: It is! And we moved, when we moved to Manassas in '72, um, they didn't have, there were a couple of them that may have had the, the gates, most of them just had the flashing, whatever that fancy, I know it's got a fancy name. Stanchion, whatever it's called. Anyhow, but that's all it had. You were on your own to look and not go across when they were flashing, but they eventually put them down. Had to put those there cause there were people, well there are still people killed in Manassas, every so often. Or near Manassas. So, yeah Manassas was, when we moved here, they didn't even call Manassas Northern Virginia. Prince William County wasn't Northern Virginia.

MB: Yeah.

KS: It was, like, the armpit of Northern Virginia, stinky place, nobody really wants to go there. It's close but no. So, yeah. But that's, that's sorta changed now.

MB: Yeah.

KS: Sorta, lot of rednecks. I know that is a politically incorrect statement, but there were a lot of rednecks. But this was all farm!

MB: Yeah.

KS: So all farming.

MB: Yeah. I think definitely now Prince William County is considered, like, "NOVA" but.

KS: Well I think, I think that nobody corrects us, yeah, now Stafford County is the armpit (laughs).

MB: That's where I grew up, or well, that's where I still live.

KS: Oh, okay. Oh, okay. Where do you live in Stafford County?

MB: I'm in North Stafford, um, towards, I'm like off 610.

KS: Oh okay, okay. Can tell you're country when you give the street number. It's good, I know where 610 is, yep.

MB: Yeah, so country-ish, except, the, the county isn't, or my part of the county isn't anymore, but there are parts of it that are, so.

KS: Yeah, yeah.

MB: We don't qualify as Northern Virginia.

KS: Yeah.

MB: But, I've had many arguments about this at school (both laugh), from people who are not from Virginia, but anyways, um, I digress.

KS: And you, you kinda, in some respects, I mean you've got two sides. You either want to be Northern Virginia or you're proud that you're not.

MB: It's a little bit of both, yeah, yeah.

KS: Yeah, yeah, you'd like the benefits, but at the same time, you don't want the reputation.

MB: Right, right, um. (laughs) yeah, let's see. Um, why did you decide, I know, I know we talked about this a little bit more, but um, why did you decide to stay in the Buckhall area?

KS: Cause, cause my family's here.

MB: Yeah.

KS: My family's here, we were the seventh generation living on the land at Lake Jackson Drive.

MB: That is really cool.

KS: Yep, yep, I think it's all been sold off now. Yeah, my daughters, my family, my, my daughters were devastated when we sold my mom's house, cause that was the last piece that had not ever been out of the family. No, I take that back, Philip still has, he's got an easement beside, but he sold Aunt Flora's house which is right on the road, but he's got a little spit down to, he's got, I think, about 4 or 5 acres back there. (MB: Wow.) So that's the only piece that's left of, probably a couple hundred acres. (MB: Yeah.) That they bought or married into in the 1790s.

MB: Wow, that's really cool.

KS: Yeah.

MB: So that's, and that's coming from when they came down after the Revolution, or around the Revolution.

KS: Yep, after the Revolution from New Jersey.

MB: Okay, wow, that's really impressive. Um, and what have you been involved in in your adult life? Um, I know you were talking about Vernon Moore with the electrical co-op, what are other organizations that are like that?

KS: Oh yeah. Um, the church, been coming here, I, I won't say off and on, I was not here when I was in college, but after I graduated, I, I stayed here. So I've been, like I said, on two building committees, (clears throat) um, I've been in the nursery for the last 23 years. It was the Sunday after 9/11. Um, I, I had a friend who lost her husband in the Pentagon. And I sat in the sanctuary, that would have been like, September the 15th or something, 16th. And the minister at the time was a great one for not touching on current events. His, his sermons were always what he wanted to talk about. And I, and I remember thinking, "I know my husband, my, my friend's husband is, you know, in the still steaming rubble. And this is not what I need." So, uh, the next Sunday, I went with my 2 year old son to the nursery and have been there ever since.

MB: Wow.

KS: And he turned 25 last month (laughs)! My 6 foot 2 baby. Um, but I like kids, I like kids. Um, I do remember going to a, a few meetings about the development, the Kline farm. Brouhaha. Which is currently still brouhahaing. Uh, I've been to a couple meetings for that. Cause people are just crazy, I'm sorry, they're just crazy.

MB: Can you tell me a little bit more, I mean, whatever.

KS: I'll try, cause I don't keep up with it a whole lot. They've, they've, they've changed over the years, but this has been going on, I want to say 5 years, maybe it's only 4. But it's a long time, and they had horses there. I mean, the, that's the, that's the, well that is they call it, yeah that is the Kline farm. It butts onto, to Buckhall Road. Between Buckhall and I guess what's the parkway now. Um, the one that the, at the, right there where the light is, I think that was a little bit of a different farm. I don't think they owned

everything. They used to have horses, I had, I knew people went there, riding there, cause they were friends with them. Um, of course the horses have been gone for a long time, and then it was bought with the intention to develop, and they started out with a strip mall along the road, in fact they owned both sides, like behind the Harris Teeter, they owned that too. They were gonna put commercial there. All the way up to Lake Jackson Drive.

MB: Okay.

KS: And then they had townhouses and then they had single family homes that would come out, almost to Buckhall Road. And they were leaving a park area, or a baseball or something, and then people fussed because it's so many cars on the road. Because of course they've got their studies and statistics that show how many car trips there will be. And then they were, they downsized, I think the commercial, they reworked the density on the townhouses, and something else. Well then after a couple of years, they got tired, I think, of messing with us. So they left, and one of the things they want to have in the commercial, at least last I heard, was a drive-thru pharmacy at that intersection. Okay, and a self-storage unit. None of those are small.

MB: No (laughs).

KS: And they, instead of townhouses, I don't know if it's called a 2 by 2 or a 4 by 4, they stack them, so it's four stories. So you have two stories at the bottom and two stories at the top, which doesn't decrease the density. So they had, they had that and then I think they had fewer houses or they were on larger lots, and they had proffered, again I don't remember if it was a, a ballfield or, or something. And I would go to the meetings, because literally they were building up to Buckhall Road, and my family's cemetery is there.

MB: Mmmm, yeah.

KS: Well I know how respectful people are of other people's property. Not! And I also know how people don't teach their children how to behave and I know that people, young and old, see that and say, "Well nobody owns that." Yeah, everybody owns, every piece of land is owned by someone or something. So there's no, and so I'm concerned about the family cemetery, and that's why I said I wanted to talk to you about finding some way to get some help with, I don't know, fencing, security, upkeep, anything.

MB: Right.

KS: So, um I mean I could get a GoFundMe page but I kinda think that won't do much. So, um, so I think that, and, and at one point the, the developers had said, "We're done. We're done, this is it."

MB: Yeah.

KS: And I know the, the county, I guess it wasn't the supervisors, it was probably the zoning board, said, "You got to talk to them. And we will see you in three months." So they did actually force the, the developer to interface with the citizen committees. But they still haven't been anywhere with it. And before that, are you familiar with the parkway that goes down to 234? The big water tower on the right.

MB: I think so.

KS: Okay, well there's houses, it's all houses. After you cross Lake Jackson Drive, it's all houses on the left. At least part of that was my family's, (MB: Okay.) the first part of it was, was my family's stuff. And I remember, gosh, Helen was a baby, so that would have been back in the mid 90s, I remember going to meetings about that, because they wanted to put townhouses in there. Well, the parkway wasn't built through, 234 was still two lanes, and you're going to put how many houses? How many car trips? And uh, they wanted, up at Lake Jackson, they wanted to put a commercial area. And they said, bank, daycare center, ooh that'd be great. I don't care about the bank, but I said, "Daycare center? No." "Why not? That'd be wonderful!" Cause we had a staff member, one of the zoning board staff members sitting there, and I said, "I work in a daycare center, when are they busy? Morning with people coming in to drop off and in the evening with people coming in to pick up. When's the traffic the heaviest in this place? Morning and evening." "Ooh." Staff member said, "Yeah, she's right." (laughs). You don't want a, you don't want a, they wanted to put a gas station there, we're all on wells! Mmmm, no, no. So none of that ever came to fruition, it's all houses now.

MB: Yeah, mmm.

KS: There was a giant tree there at Lake Jackson and the parkway. There was a giant holly tree. I, I, there was a two story house beside it, and it dwarfed the two story house. And I went by one morning and it was down. That's cousin Marion, cousin Marion lived in that house, it had never been finished, it was, it looked abandoned, um, but it wasn't, well, till she died. She just lived in one room. You'd see the lights through the slats in the other rooms. Yeah, her husband died young and she kinda went loopy. But um, but the family took care of her. (MB: Yeah.) So, um. But it was a giant holly tree, and I kept saying that I should contact, you know, the state and see if maybe it's something special, and maybe we preserve it. Nope, procrastination hit once more. It was gone, so, yep. Now this is, I'm sorry, I digress, what time is it? Tell me what time it is.

MB: It is, 11, 11:30, 11:30.

KS: Oh geez, one thing and then I'm not going to talk anymore about anything except what you ask, I promise.

MB: Okay (laughs).

KS: If you, there at Lake Jackson Drive, where the, where the light is now, in that, in that corner there was this old dilapidated two story house. And that was, well, Aunt Grace, I'm not sure what the relationship is, Aunt Grace, well she came down with the Robinsons. Um, and they were from, they were from New Hampshire, they came down later, they came down like in the 1870s I think. Um, Aunt Grace lived there. And cousin Marion was her daughter. But when, when Aunt Grace was there, I guess cousin Marion was probably a kid, there weren't any other houses between that house and my great-grandparents house, you know, several hundred yards down the road. Well, there were these guys, down at the end of Lake Jackson, almost to 234. They were from New Zealand, they were the Libeau brothers and they actually built houses in Manassas, they're really cool, um, they don't look like anything else, I can tell you that about another time. Unless you've heard about them, well you don't care about the city of Manassas! But they would come up to court Aunt Nan. Aunt Nan was, I think she was born in the 1870s, so this would have been, you know, mid 1880s, maybe 1890. Um, so they'd send Aunt Nan to Aunt Grace's when the LiBeau brothers were coming. They would, I guess stay for a little while and when they

left, my great-grandmother would go hang, or great-great-grandmother, no, it was great-grandmother, she would hang out a checkered tablecloth on the clothesline, and they could see it from Aunt Grace's house and then Aunt Nan would know it would be safe to come home (laughs). Isn't that crazy?

MB: That's so funny!

KS: It is, it is. My great-grandmother from that house would, um, listen to the trains, cause of course there was none of this noise, (MB: Right.) she'd listen to the trains and say, "Oh, it's gonna rain." Because, I guess the air's different. (MB: Yeah.) I mean that's, that's a scientific fact, the air changes and the sound carries differently. (MB: Yeah.) She said she could tell it was gonna rain just from listening to the train whistles.

MB: Wow, that's really cool.

KS: Yep, okay, now no more.

MB: That's okay, I only have a couple more questions.

KS: Okay, good.

MB: Um, yeah, I think we've talked about most of this. Um, is there anything else that you wished I had asked you about?

KS: Oh, Lord, no. I talked about everything, honey. Um, no, I mean, I like talking about the people I knew, like in fact, I could walk through the cemetery with you, I could tell you about different people, that would be fun, but that's not really what you need (laughs).

MB: I mean we're just here, in part, to hear about the people and the places.

KS: Yeah, well, um, Raymond Padgett, but that wasn't, well he came to Buckhall Church. He walked to Buckhall Church, from Davis Ford Road, um, in his 90s. He was still walking on Davis Ford Road. Cause he would walk into Manassas, but he came here. And he was in World War I, I don't think he was born around here, but he, he lived here as an adult. And he, he made all sorts of little things, he was always working on something. He would take, and then we would sell his Christmas ornaments at our, you know, craft fair for a fundraiser. He would take a toilet paper tube and cover it with foil, and then, like, glue beads to it, and then we used to be able to get just scraps of, like, telephone wire. And you take the casing off and each one was a different color, but it was soft enough that you could, like, twirl it, or twist it or something. And he would put something around, like each one of those beads and then, of course it weighed a ton. But um, and then he would put a piece of wire across the top of the toilet paper tube, then you could put a hook in it, hang it on your Christmas tree. He was in World War I, he was in one of the really bad battles, and I cannot remember, I think it was Ardennes Forest, if that was World War I, his arm was badly injured. The doctors said, "You will not use it again." And he sat, course, by the time he was telling us this story he was in his late 80s, um he said, "I made myself stand in front of a wall everyday with a piece of chalk in my hand. And each day, I made a mark, a little higher up." And then he would say, "See what I can do now!" In his 80s and he's doing his arm all around, yep, yeah (KS doing windmills with her arm). So, but, I mean, that was kinda cool. He liked little, little word plays, and little riddles, um but yeah, he walked here. And we always had characters like that. Um, Betty Busby's father,

Ted Ritter was a character. He was a mailman, oh, something that's it, he was the mailman, she can tell you all about it. He was, he was a very large character. He was, oh he was just great. And her mother Sally was a little bird, little birdy woman. I mean, Ted was a large person, but he was a big personality, too. He was a letter, he was a mailman. I think he did this area, um, Betty lives off of Grant Avenue, over in, towards Old Town. Right across, right near where the Wellington Giant is, in that general vicinity, very general. Um, and she had a sister, Helen, uh, yeah he was, and, and they were, well her, her grandfather would have been Ted's father was a minister here, back when it was a UB church, that's how they ended up down here. Um, so, she, uh, I remember sitting in meetings, in the basement downstairs about that, building that [red brick] church. And, the district superintendent was here, cause Methodists are big on hierarchy. Everybody's got to have a title and somebody to answer to. The district superintendent was here and uh, a lot, a lot of people, cause it was a big deal, you know, first time building a church in, you know, 80 years. Um, and he sat, he sat back and says, "Well, the survey shows that on all this five acres, the best place for a church building, for any building, is right here. Right here." And he sat back and said, "Well if that's the best place to build it, then that's where you should put it." And everybody, older people, look Ted was no spring chicken, were horrified that one of the older members of the church would say, "Well if you've got to tear the old one down to put the new one up, so be it!" They did not, they found the second best spot. But yeah, yeah, he was, he was very wise, and very entertaining, very entertaining, so. What else?

MB: And then, kinda just my last question is, um, since you have yourself been a historian of Buckhall, um, but also what would you want future historians or future people who are moving into Buckhall to know about it?

KS: Huh, I would like to think that it would still keep that same, um, homey feel. Family feel. That that's something we could impart to new people that stay, that's our big problem. Is we get new people and then they leave. And uh, it's not like we've invested in them and I think they owe us, it's just that we come to, we come to love them, we know their children. Um, we, we would love to, you know, keep walking with them, but things happen and they, and they leave. Either they need more than, than they can get from us. Because when you don't have children's programs... Well you can't have children's program without children, (MB: Right.) so we have no children's programs. So people with children don't stay, but it's like a loop. If they don't stay so we can create them, then we won't have them. At one time we had a very active youth group that went annually on mission trips. One year, I think it was before we had this church, the World's Fair was in Kentucky, you can look that up, I don't know when it was. We had our own World's Fair here. Um, people learned how to cook other things, or if they had family traditions that were somewhere, I had a puppet show, I had a puppet show. And um, it was, we would charge admission, that was our World's Fair and it was a fundraiser for our youth group, our, a group of our youth, to go to the World's Fair in Kentucky.

MB: That's so cool!

KS: Yeah! Can't do that anymore, there's no, there's no youth, um, there's no interest. We have a, uh, craft bazaar, I think it's every two years now, cause we don't, we don't have enough people coming to, but again, with, is it Etsy?

MB: Mm hmm.

KS: With Etsy, they, they buy stuff offline, they don't have to come here and look and see what we've made by hand, so. And we have talented artists! But, nobody wants to come. So I would, I would like that. We're small, we're never going to be big. I mean, that [the new church] looks big. We have plans, we can actually eventually, if we get enough people and funds, we can build a balcony. It's roughed in. Um, there's a full basement under that. But it's not finished. It's just a gravel floor. In fact, I think you have to have a ladder to get down to it, because the county was so afraid that we would try to use it without having an occupancy permit, they wanted to make it as hard as possible. So you could dig it, because it's economical to do it when you're building. But you can't use it. Until we get our money for permits and inspections and stuff. So, I mean, eventually it could be bigger. But in the grand scheme of things, that's never going to be a big church.

MB: Right.

KS: So, not like the one, I went to Bible study last night at Park Valley over in Haymarket. I don't, I don't think I could go to a church that big, I like it when it's small-er. So, that would, that would be my, my hope. That it would, that it would stay small and relevant. And that, that people would want to come to it, and want to keep it going. But I think that's probably what everybody says about a church, isn't it?

MB: Yeah, at least I think that's most people's hope.

KS: Yeah, the ones, the ones who have a history. Yeah. So.

MB: Awesome, yeah, I think that's all my questions, so...

KS: Thank you.

MB: Thank you! Alright.

KS: Now is this something you pitched to... (led to a conversation about how the project works)

END OF RECORDING

Betty Busby Biography

Betty Ritter Busby was born April 12th, 1930 to Theodore Robert Ritter and Anna Louise (Sally) Melcher in her grandmother's house on Fairview Avenue. Betty's grandfather, Hallie Brown Ritter, had been the minister at the Buckhall Church in the early 1900s. He later moved back to Pennsylvania while Betty's grandmother and her children remained in Manassas. Betty grew up with a lot of her extended family around her and recounts stories of interactions with her cousins when they were young and later as adults. Betty's father was the rural mail carrier and the Sunday School superintendent at Buckhall Church, and she speaks fondly of him throughout the interview. Betty describes some of the community's traditions when she was growing up, including ice cream socials and Halloween parties, then reflected on how she now celebrates holidays with her grandsons. In her younger years, Betty spent a lot of time with the boarders at her aunt and uncle's farm, and she tells a story about working on the farm and learning how to milk a cow in order to buy a raincoat.

Betty went to Bennett School and Osbourn High School. She graduated after taking a typing class that secured her a government job where she was a card punch operator. Betty and her younger sister Helen both stayed in the Manassas area for their whole lives. When asked why she stayed, Betty pointed out how her whole life was in Buckhall: her home, the church, and the people that she loved. At the end of the interview, Betty describes her disappointment in some of the ways the world is changing, including the arrival of some new companies in Prince William County.

Oral History with Betty Busby

Interviewer: Meaghan Brennan

Interviewee: Betty Busby

Location: Buckhall United Methodist Church (10251 Moore Drive, Manassas, VA 20111)

Date: August 14, 2023

Meaghan Brennan = MB; Betty Busby = BB

Transcribed by Meaghan Brennan

MB: Okay, um, today is August 14th 2023. My name is Meaghan Brennan, I am the summer intern working with the Prince William County Office of Historic Preservation, um, and I am sitting here today with Betty Busby and we are in the Buckhall United Methodist Church, in the newest, in one of the newer buildings um, for recording. So thank you Betty for talking with me today.

BB: You're very welcome.

MB: Um, so yeah, we'll just start with some basic information about yourself. Um, can you tell us your name and how to spell it?

BB: Betty, B-E-T-T-Y, Busby, well I, Ritter, Betty Ritter Busby, R-I-T-T-E-R, Busby, B-U-S-B-Y.

MB: Perfect, awesome. And have you ever gone by any nicknames?

BB: Yes, when my sister and I were growing up, we had one neighbor and they, they had a couple of children that we played with, it was the Gregorys. Um, that lived next door to us, and Helen and I, Helen is my, was my sister, she died. But um, we had got in this mind one time, because my dad had told us, had, had said that when we get older, because he would take, he would take his gun down there and shoot at a target in the, in the back of our property. And he says, and we always wanted to shoot that gun. He says, "Well, when you get older, I'll teach you how to shoot that gun." He did, but from then on we thought we were better than anything. So we decided that we didn't want to be Betty and Helen anymore, we wanted to be Frankie and Johnny. So we, I was Frankie, and she was Johnny, so then she, my parents started calling me Frankie but they called her Johnny-Buck. So, yes I have gone by another name (laughs).

MB: Very fun! Wow! That's such a cool story.

BB: And we did learn to shoot his rifle.

MB: Wow. How long did that phase stick around for?

BB: Just one summer.

MB: Okay, yeah, that's so fun. Um, and then, when were you born?

BB: 1930, April the 12th 1930.

MB: And then, where were you born?

BB: I was born in my grandmother's house on Fairview Avenue in Manassas.

MB: Very cool! Yeah, that was my next question, did you know your grandparents?

BB: Oh yes, yes. My grandmother lived there until she passed away, on Fairview Avenue, until she passed away. I believe it was 1967. And my grandfather had, well he had been a minister here but he had moved back to Pennsylvania after he left, you know, wasn't a minister here, and he was a minister up there for a while I think. And then when he got kinda old he moved, he came down and he lived with my mom and dad. And so he died in, also in 1967. My grandmother in April and my grandfather in September.

MB: Wow, that's an intense year.

BB: Yeah.

MB: What was your grandmother's name?

BB: Ida May, Ida May Moore Ritter.

MB: Yeah, can you tell me more about her?

BB: Well, she had five children. Three boys and two girls. Um, it was, my father was the oldest, Theodore was the oldest, and the next one was Allan, and then Hervin, and then Dorothy, and then Jessie.

MB: Okay, um.

BB: And she and my grandfather, I, I don't know, I don't really know the whole story but I know that he did not live with them. He was in Pennsylvania and they were, continued to live in Manassas. And she worked as one of the first telephone operators in Manassas. She worked from 6 AM at night, I mean, 6 PM at night until 6 am in the morning. And she had to walk from where she lived on Fairview Avenue, up to the phone office on Center Street in Manassas. And she had to leave, she got the kids dinner and everything before she went to work at night, and then she left the oldest ones to take care of the smaller ones until she got home the next morning to get them ready to go to school.

MB: Wow.

BB: That went on for a long time.

MB: Yeah.

BB: But she still lived there until she died.

MB: That's incredible. And what was your grandfather's name?

BB: Hallie Brown Ritter, H-A-L-L-I-E Brown Ritter.

MB: Okay, and you said that he was the minister of this church? And was that when it was United Brethren Church?

BB: Yeah, I, I believe it was, well I'm pretty sure it was 1905. I believe that was the year that he was here. But I'm not sure exactly the length of when, how long he was here.

MB: Okay, yeah.

BB: Kathryn Sessler may know more about that than I do.

MB: Yeah, she mentioned him a little bit, um, but yeah, do you remember anything else about him? Any stories or?

BB: He was cantankerous.

MB: Oh! Well.

BB: (laughs) That was in later life, but I remember when my sister got married and had her first child, a girl, Julia, and they were always, well, my sister Helen. She never moved out of Manassas, and neither did I. And she married a guy from Manassas and uh, so but her daughter Julia, they would bring her out to see Mom and Dad, you know, her grandparents pretty often. And lots of times they would be there for a meal or something. And uh, one time I think uh, Julia was probably about three years old, I think Helen told me, and they were up at Mom and Dad's house. And H.B., everybody called him H.B., and H.B. had this um, it's some kind of a cream something or other and I think Julia wanted a bite of it, and she just went to take her, put her finger in it. And he (imitates a smack) "That's mine, you do not eat it." He was very, and Helen, Helen says, "What is wrong with you?" He says, "Well, it's mine, it's not hers." So, but, that was, that was in his older years. But I think, but he was cantankerous. But he loved cats. And he, my parents didn't have room in their house to have him in the house, so they bought him a very small trailer and put it in the backyard. And uh, he lived in there um, all the time, with his cat. And he, it's so funny, he was so strange. He always wore long underwear. All year long, he never took it, and I mean he changed it, but he never took the long underwear off. And he always wore a coat and a vest buttoned up. And we would say, "H.B. aren't you so hot? What, it's" I mean, it wasn't hot like it has been now, and we had, I mean we have had hot. Cause my mother said it was the hottest it's ever been the day I was born, but anyway, he was just so strange. And but he wrote, he wrote so much, he would write, and write, and write, and write, and write. And I don't, I don't even know what he was writing about. And I don't think my father ever knew either. But uh, he helped my father build my house, they built my house for me and uh, I thanked him for that (laughs). So, but no he was, he was fun. And my grandmother was fun too, she was, she would always, she would make doll babies for us, you know, I still have one. So she would, she would do that, and they were rag dolls and uh, we had a lot of fun. We would go over to her house every evening and my sister and me would fall asleep before time to go home and my father would have to carry us out to the car, dump us in, go home, carry us in the house (laughs). Oh, I had a good life.

MB: Yeah, mmm, that's amazing. Yeah, and what was your dad's name?

BB: Theodore.

MB: Theodore Ritter, right?

BB: Theodore Robert Ritter.

MB: And would, where was he from? Where did he grow up?

BB: Right in Manassas.

MB: Okay, cool.

BB: He was Grandma's first child.

MB: Yeah, mmm, what was he like? What did, yeah, what did he do?

BB: Oh he was wonderful, he was the kindest person and he would do anything for anybody. And he was a big leader in the church back then, you know, you heard me say he was the superintendent of the Sunday School. And um, I mean he was never noisy or you know, threatening to any, but the kids would just mob, you know, they would just flood around him, you know, and well he was big on giving candy, cause they, my mom and him made for Christmas every year, they got these little bags and they brought candy for them and they put candy on them and gave each child in church candy for Christmas. So that, so I guess that made him very popular (laughs). Um, but he would, he was a rural mail carrier, and he carried mail all around in Buckhall and every place around, Brentsville, every place, he went every place. And uh, he had one time, he went out on 28 out towards um, where the, the new Target is out there. And there was a drive, there was a road that went off to the right. And he had this old Chevrolet that he was driving then, and it had snowed so bad and so he says, "I've got to get this mail through there," you know, so he got as far as he could and then, the car just wouldn't go through the snow anymore, it had piled up, you know. So he had to get out of the car and walk to the nearest farm, find a farm that had a horse on it, get the man with the horse, bring the horse back to the car and have the horse pull the car out of the snow.

MB: Wow!

BB: So, but no, he worked uh, he, he didn't retire until he was 67, from that. He worked from 19, I think he started carrying the mail in 1929 and he worked until it was just after my son was born in 1963.

MB: Wow!

BB: Yeah, so he worked a long time as a mail carrier.

MB: Yeah, so he drove his truck around to deliver mail across?

BB: Well, it wasn't a truck it was just a car back then. Yeah.

MB: Oh, okay.

BB: Nobody had trucks, everybody had their own car. It was their car, not the post office. They did not supply cars, nor did they supply gas. And then, the most he ever made in a year when he was doing that was \$6,700. That was a whole year's salary. Now people make that in one day. But he got by, and oh, he loved to camp. We did, we went on so many camping trips. And I have pictures at home of, we would go down to the river that goes, whatever, Bull Run River I guess it is. And you went down to Moore Drive and turned off at, down there, and uh, you could, you could ford the river down there, and course you can't anymore, but uh, I remember one time everybody: Grandma, all of the boys, and me, of course Dad

was married and had both of us at that time, and but, neither, well neither of the girls ever married but both of the boys did. But everybody went on this camping trip. And when we got down there and they had to ford the river. Mom says, "What are you going to do with Betty and Helen? They, the water would be over their heads!" And they said, he says, "Don't worry about it Sally!" He says, "We will put them on our shoulders and they will get across the river," and that's what happened. So he was, he was big on doing bean hole beans. Do you know what bean hole beans are?

MB: No.

BB: You get a big oil can, well oil used to come in big cans, get a big oil can and wash it out real good, save the top on it. And when you get to the camping place you dig this big hole and you fill it with nice big rocks, and then you make fire in this hole, and you let it go overnight, till it gets the, the rocks get real hot and then you put the beans and all the stuff that's going in the bean stuff, in the pot, put the lid on it, put it in the hole, cover it up with dirt and leave it in there for 24 hours. And when it comes out, you've got baked beans!

MB: Yeah! Were they good?

BB: Excellent! Excellent. Wish I could try that again, I might do, try that, get somebody to try that. No, but he was big on that. We, we've camped all over the United States, he took us all over the United States. One time he took us on a six week camping trip. It was me and my son was 18 months old at the time, my sister and her two children who were seven and three at the time, and Mom and Dad went in a pop-up camper. We went, we went south to Louisiana and then we went across through Texas and up through Arizona, we got up to where you had to cross the desert to get into California. And we, he says, "We can't cross the desert in the daytime, it's too hot." Cause he had gotten, bought this car from his sister for \$250, it was an old Chevrolet and uh, it had a big thing in the back, you know, so the kids, they put blankets back there, so the kids could all, you know, have their toys and stuff back there. So he says, we can't go during the day because it's just too hot. We don't have any air conditioning in the car. So we, we got down to the river, where we could start to pass and we got, he set out the, got the camper all undone and got us in for the night, we got up early next morning and we started out and drove across the uh, the desert there. And we got into um, I guess it was into Los Angeles we got, I don't know, it was either that or San Francisco, I'm not sure which one. Wherever Disneyworld is, is that San Francisco or, I don't remember exactly where it is. Sacramento? I don't know where it is anyway. Anyway, we went into there and we spent a few days in there, we didn't go to Disneyworld, we went to someplace else, and then we went up the West Coast to Washington and um, there was, a couple there from our church that lived there because he was in the service, and we spent a day with them, and then we went back across the Wyoming, and across, all the way across to Chicago and then we started back down, and, but we were gone for six weeks, camping every night. We stayed, I'm sorry, one night we stayed in a motel because, or hotel, or whatever it was, because it was raining so hard. But all of us slept in that little pop-up tent.

MB: Wow! That's very impressive!

BB: It's nothing about the church, but it's my life, so.

MB: Yeah, oh I value those type of stories. Um, and then, when we had spoken on the phone a couple weeks ago, you said your father was a rural mail carrier and then also did cow testing, I think? Can you tell me more about that?

BB: Yes, yes. He was also a cow tester, and he was also a chicken person. That, there's something within a female chicken, if you feel the back of it, you'll know whether they're primed to lay eggs.

MB: Interesting.

BB: And if not, then you eat them. But um, yes, he tested cows in Prince William and Fairfax County. And that's where he met my mother. My mother was born in Southwest Virginia, and um, her mother died when she was three, and her father died when she was 10. And so she had to come and live with different people. She lived for a while with some, an aunt in Norfolk, no Suffolk, Virginia. And uh, but then finally she ended up with um, our aunt and uncle. And they lived in Fauquier County and they owned a farm there, part of which is now Dulles Airport. And so, um, when Uncle Cecil got too tired, too old, I think to really farm, because they, they had dairy cows and everything, and then Dad went there to test their cows. So he met my mother when she lived there. And uh, she was um, let's see, how old was she, I can't remember, isn't that awful? She was, I mean, she wasn't very old. She was either 19 or 20, something like that, you know. But, he must, she must have lit his fire because a couple of years later, um, they got married. And uh, so then she, they moved over here. And they lived with my grandmother, uh, cause her house was kinda partitioned off, one side was kinda one place to live and the other place was another place to live. And so they lived in there, and that's where I was born. Uh, they got married in 1929, April the 20th 1929 and I was born April the 30th 1930.

MB: Wow.

BB: And my mother said it was the hottest day on earth, there's ever been. Well, I don't know that that's true, but she said it. So, but, no, and she says, she says, I said, "Well, what did you do with me?" And she says, "I put a quilt on the floor and you lived on the floor until you were able to crawl and then you was, was no telling where you were going to go."

MB: Wow, yeah.

BB: But, it was fun. You remember, you remember talking to, now I can't think of his, Eddie Moore. His grandfather, well my grandfather and Eddie's parents, Eddie's grandparents are related.

MB: Yeah.

BB: And uh, so, Eddie's grandfather, Garland, lived next door with his mother and father. And so he would come over to see me. Now he was a bit older than me, and Mom said that he would come over and play with me, you know, and I thought, you know, he was probably 7 or 8, I don't know how much older Garland was than me. But he, and she says he taught me to talk. And I, she says, "He taught you to talk." And I said, "How did he teach me to talk?" And she said, "He kept saying, 'I'm Garland, I'm Garland.'" She says, but all I ever got out of him was, "When's Darling coming?" And I called, she said I called him Darling all the time, cause I guess I couldn't say Garland, but. So one day when he was, they were still coming to church here and I was old and, not real old but, I, I said, "Hi Darling!" And his wife looked at

me (laughs)! And Garland laughed and he, he says, I said, “Don’t you remember, I called you Darling when I was a little tiny girl?” He says, “I don’t remember that!” (Laughs)

MB: Oh my goodness.

BB: But, no we had a great, it was, the Moore family and the Ritter family were very, very close. We were always doing things together and we had our own family reunions, you know, and it was, it was great. I had a great life.

MB: Yeah. Um, I had two quick questions.

BB: Okay.

MB: And I want to come back to your family living near each other.

BB: Okay.

MB: Um, first, what’s your mother’s name?

BB: Her, well her name was Anna Louise, and it’s Melcher, M-E-L-C-H-E-R.

MB: Okay, cool. Um, and did you say she went by Sally?

BB: My father nicknamed her Sally. Sally Ann Matilda Jane, was her name. And she got any of those.

MB: And was that just of his own invention?

BB: Oh yeah, yeah.

MB: That’s amazing. I think Kathryn Sessler might have, when she was telling a story about your mother, called her Sally and I was like, “Wait, I thought her name was different?”

BB: Yeah, yeah, no, no. There was no, I don’t ever recall my father calling her Louise.

MB: That is very...

BB: He always called her Sally. And everybody called her Sally.

MB: Yeah.

BB: I mean, even at church, you know. She played the piano for Sunday School. Yeah.

MB: Okay, that’s super cool. And then, when your dad was doing cow testing, what was he testing for?

BB: Um, I tell you the truth, I don’t know.

MB: That’s okay, yeah.

BB: It’s, it’s, I should know and I probably did know at one time, but I really don’t know, but I’m quite sure that that is available someplace, because I’m sure they, that cows are still tested now to make sure they’re not, have any kind of a disease. But I don’t know what kind of disease it was.

MB: Yeah, I was wondering, I was thinking if maybe it was tuberculosis or something like that.

BB: I have no idea, oh I wouldn't think there was any word like that in our vocabulary then.

MB: That's fair, that's fair, yeah. Um, but yeah, so you were talking about having all, like your family growing up near you. Um, who did you spend time with when you were growing up?

BB: Well after I started school, I still didn't, I mean we had friends in school, and um, but it wasn't. Until I was a teenager, I'll put it that way, I just played with the people at home, around me, you know. There've been a couple of families move in, um, one next door to me, and um, but there really wasn't any other people, because my, my aunt and uncle, the ones that lived, my mother lived with in Fairfax County, they actually bought the farm across from where I live now. And so, we would have people from there. My aunt, she was, she ran, it wasn't, it wasn't a boarding house, but it was. But she didn't call it that. It was people that just came to stay, but every year she would have young, not teenagers, young teenagers and maybe up to 19 and 20, even that, she would have probably six or seven of them come out and live on the farm all summer.

MB: Wow.

BB: And I, I guess, I'm sure she got paid for it, but I spent a lot of my time on the farm, and uh, and we had so much fun, and there was one guy there. And my sister was three years younger than me, you know, and I probably was 7 or 8, you know, and they would say. Helen was a pest and he would say, "You better stop that right now, or you know what's going to happen?" And she said, "What?" "I'm going to take you down there and feed you to that horse." And boy she was running, she was afraid of that guy forever, it was so funny. But um, no, I even, I even milked cows over there. One year, one time I saw this raincoat. My mother worked at a dress shop in Manassas one time, for Mrs Gregory, our neighbor, opened this dress, or ladies, it wasn't just dresses. Coats and everything. I saw this raincoat in there and I called it a fishtail raincoat, cause it had kind of pleat in the back, you know, and it reminded me of a fish tail. It was \$17. And I said, "Mom, I want that!" And she says, "Betty, I don't have \$17 to buy you a fishtail raincoat." (laughs) And I said, thinking to myself, "I've got to figure out some way to get \$17!" So I asked my Aunt Ollie, I said, "Do you have anything I can do on the farm to make money?" And she said, "Of course, yes," she says, "do you know how to milk a cow?" I said, "No, I don't." She says, "Do you think you could learn?" I said, "Well, I'll try." So she had a, a boy, a man, he was a boy then. He was about four years older than I was. His name was Shreve, Shreve Brent. And he, she says, "Well, Shreve will take you down to the, where the cows come in to be milked and he will show you what to do." So I said, "Okay, I'll try that." And I said, "How much will you pay me?" She said, "I, if you come morning and night, I will pay you \$5 a week." And I said, "Man, that'll be good! Only take me three or four weeks to get my \$17." So I did, I learned how to milk, I went over there, was over there by 7 o'clock in the morning to milk two cows, Molly and Spot. And I went back in the afternoon and milked them again and I couldn't carry the milk in the house, but Shreve carried the milk in for me. So I did that, and I, I stayed on after that. I made my fishtail coat and I got money besides.

MB: Wow!

BB: I kept going.

MB: That's amazing.

BB: I loved it! I would like to milk a cow today if I can find one (laughs)! Oh dear, so but, no, I had a really good life. But Shreve, Shreve, now I don't know whether Shreve's mother was so busy she couldn't take care of him, but, her, Shreve's grandfather also lived part time out at Aunt Ollie's and Uncle Cecil's place. And uh, but Shreve lived there the whole time, and uh, he, he was such a good person to them. And he went to Williamsburg College and got a degree, and he teach, he taught school here and he died just, I think he died about 5 or 6 years ago. He was such, he was a good friend.

MB: Yeah.

BB: So, but, it's bringing back so many memories that I haven't had in such a long time, this is great.

MB: Oh, I'm so glad! That's amazing! Yeah, can you describe for me the house that you grew up in?

BB: It had two bedrooms. And um, it had a big front porch that was facing the road, had a nice big swing on it. But it was, the, the slope for the house um, was maybe like this (makes an angle with her phone, about 20°) the house was up here and the road, the swing would go out over the back of the porch. And they would always say, "Do not swing in that and get out over there, you're going to fall over the back, over the back of the porch."

MB: Right.

BB: We never did fall or anything, we didn't, we didn't try to do that. But, we had um, it was, we didn't have a bathroom. I didn't have, we didn't have a bathroom in my house until I was 18 years old.

MB: Wow.

BB: And uh, so, but there was a large room that my dad put, took four boards and made a thing to set a mattress on and that was Helen's and my room. And there was a smaller room and my parents lived in there. And then there was another section of the house, on this, well let's see. This was the house (sets up her phone and MB's phone to create a square), so let's see, this is the house, there was, let's see, this is the back, the back of the house, this faced the Gregory's. And the kitchen was right back in here, and then there was a, a living room kind of thing. Whoops! I touched your phone! (MB's screen lit up)

MB: That's okay!

BB: It's moving!

MB: That's okay, it's just the recording, so.

BB: Oh, I'm sorry.

MB: Nope, nope, you're good! You can.

BB: No, I'll just (slides MB's phone back).

MB: Sorry.

BB: Anyway, anyway, I'll use this in half (her own phone). There was a kitchen, a small kitchen, and there was a little porch off of it. And my mother had, she had to cook out on this little, it was not even, it was a screened in porch and she had to cook out there on a kerosene stove.

MB: Wow.

BB: And there was no, we had, there was no, we didn't have a refrigerator, we had an ice box, and so she had, they had to get ice all the time. But then in here there was a dining room kind of thing, and then there was a living room. And then back here was the bedroom area.

MB: Okay.

BB: And so, then it was a small room of their room. And then, when we got a little bit older, my dad said, "I think we need to find a place in here to put a bathroom." So he took some off of this bedroom and while there was no room to take off of that, he took some anyway. And he made a hall out here and he put a bathtub and a, a toilet, and a little tiny sink. And you had to go in and get behind, almost on the toilet to close the door, it was so small. But the tub was nice! Cause we'd never had anything except a basin and a bar of soap and a, you know, washcloth and a towel. And we had a great big stove in the middle of the living room and it burned coal, and so my mom, and my sister would have in our bedroom. And we would, she would say, "Get your clothes together and come on out here and get your bath." So nobody was, just, just me was gonna be on that side of the big stove. And so the, there was a table there and she put the basin down, and the water and the soap, and everything there. And we bathed ourselves there by the stove. And uh, so when we didn't, when we got that, the bathtub, the bathroom, like I said, I was 18 years old. And uh, so, but before that, we had a shed out back and my dad had built a, like a walk out, he'd cut a door frame thing out of the side of the garage, with a door on it of course. And he put like a slatted floor in it and he put walls around it, and he put a great big, what is it, a big tub, one of the barrels, a great big barrel on the roof of the shed, and he put, he used a hose and ran a hose up to it and kept it filled, full of water and he made a, um, a shower head that came down out of that, and we could go out there and, in that and take a shower. You, it had to stay over a sunny day, but the water stayed, you know, pretty warm, pretty hot all summer. You couldn't use it in the winter time of course, but that was a good thing too. And we even had our friends from Manassas come out there and "Can we get a shower in your shower?" And they thought it was fun to do it! And I mean, it was fun to do.

MB: Yeah, that is so cool!

BB: Yeah, so, but, yeah, but. And then I, I didn't graduate at the end of my four years of high school. They offered a fifth year, and I, and I said, "Well, why?" And they said, "Well you might want to take something that, you know, will prepare you for a job or something." I said, "A job?" And so I did stay that last year and I took a typing and shorthand which, I'm short a hand now but I never learned shorthand. But the typing was very good for me. And so I graduated after five years in the, in high school. And I was 18 at the time, and so I went home, and one day my mother says, "Betty, have you ever thought anything about what you would like to do in the future?" I said, "No, why?" (laughs) She says, "Well," she says, "Mrs Gregory," that was the lady next door and well, she had a daughter the same age I was, Mariam, and uh, she says, "Well, Mrs. Gregory's sister works for the government and she has made arrangement for you and Mariam to go down and have an interview for a job." And I said, "Um, why?" She says, "Betty, you can't live here all of your life. You've got to work." And I said, "Okay," but I said,

“I don’t have anything to wear. I never, I don’t have a dress.” You know, I didn’t have a dress. I mean, except what we made from sacks, feed sacks.

MB: Right.

BB: And she says, “Well, I’ll get you a sack, a sack, I’ll get you a dress.” So we, we, there was nothing to, you couldn’t buy anything in Manassas, so we went to Fredericksburg to get me a dress and she says, “Do you think you might need a new pair of shoes?” And I looked at my shoes and I said, “I think I might need a new pair of shoes.” So she bought me a dress and a new petticoat, and a pair of shoes. And I went, she made arrangements with Mrs. Gregory’s sister, to get us down there. It was, there was a man that lived down below me. And he worked in D.C., around in Chevy Chase, I think he worked at some kind of a paper company. And she said, “We made arrangements for him to pick you and Mariam up and take you down there.” Well, we went down there. I’m not going to tell you where I worked, because I don’t want it in this.

MB: Okay.

BB: Um, but we went down there and we had our interviews. I went in this office and there was this, it looked like a gorilla bear sitting in there. His name was Mr. Wolfe. And I, right then I almost froze. And I thought, “Oh my Lord.” And I, I just sat there and he says, asked me what my name was, and I told him, and he says, “Do you have any, can you do anything? Do you know?” I said, “Well, I took typing, you know, in school.” And he says, “And do you have anything else that you know of?” I said, “Well, I tried to learn shorthand, but I couldn’t do that.” And he says, “Okay,” and so within 10 minutes the, that was over. And he didn’t ask me anything else, and I didn’t have anything else to tell him. So he says, “Well, you can go now Betty.” He actually called me Betty. And he says, I said, “Where am I going?” He says, “Well you can just go out there and wait for somebody to tell you where to go.” And so, wasn’t long before Mariam came back and she says, “What are we supposed to do?” I said, “I don’t know!” And so then, somebody came up and asked us what we were doing, we said, “Well we came for interviews and um, her aunt is supposed to, you know, tell us what to do.” So she went and got Mariam’s aunt, and she says, “I’ll tell you what,” she says, “We can’t go home until work is over for me.” So we just kinda had to, we went outside and walked up and down the sidewalk and stuff like that. But we got home and they, the man had said they would be in touch with us. So this was in August and uh, so it was about, I guess it was about a month later that I got a letter saying that I had been hired as a key punch operator. Card punch operator. Now, do you know what that is?

MB: I think I’ve heard of it, but can you tell me more about it?

BB: Well, it’s a key that looks, I mean a machine that looks like a typewriter, I mean, it has a typewriter type thing on it. But it, it, it, the cards are about this long and about this tall.

MB: Okay, so like, 8 inches wide, and like 3 inches.

BB: Maybe, well let’s see, it’s not that. Let’s seem, maybe, I’d say, maybe this tall and probably about this wide. (showing MB on her paper how wide/tall - about 8x3 inches)

MB: Okay, okay, yeah, that makes sense.

BB: So you put those in and they had lines, lines at the top. There was three lines. One of them was A through L, I think, and the next one was M through something, I don't, I don't know exactly what they were. And, but there were three lines. And depending on what key you hit, like, you, you were typing as if you were on a typewriter, you, you were doing words. And if you hit a W it would, it would pick up and catch whatever was on row 3, I guess, and it would punch a hole in the card. And um, I mean it, the, the card had holes all along the bottom of it. And then they would go through another machine, which was called a, what did they call that? It did the same exact thing to verify that you had put that in correctly from what the things were supposed to be saying. And if it wasn't, it would kick it out and then you would have to be redone. So, but anyway, I did that, um, I was in card punch, gosh, I worked there for 37 and a half years. I was in card punch, and it was a long, long time. They would take them to another machine and they would run them through and it would, it would print out what was supposed to be said, with this card. And it wasn't until, I think it was somewhere around the late 50s, or early 60s that we even got a computer, that we even had computers.

MB: Right, wow.

BB: And, but, the computer room was bigger than this (the fellowship hall in the red brick portion of the Buckhall UMC). And the computers took up the whole wall. They were huge! Huge! And the things that they were on, with this big round (drew a circle in the air about 3 feet in diameter), it was oh so strange. But um, anyway, I stayed with that and then we moved um, from D.C. out to Langley. And um, the new headquarters, and but then I left the key punch. But I, I had actually gotten up to where I was supervisor of the key punch section and there was about 25 women in there doing it.

MB: Yeah.

BB: And so, but I got where I got into something else. I was, got, I don't know what it was called, but I did desk work then, I didn't do that. But I retired in '85, so but, I had a, I loved my job, I really loved my job. And uh, met a lot of good people, still friends with some of them.

MB: Wow.

BB: Yeah, one of the ladies I worked with, she was several years younger than I was, we still exchange Christmas cards. So she lives in Centreville, but no, it, it was good.

MB: Yeah. Mmm, sorry, going back a little bit.

BB: Okay.

MB: Um, where did you go to school?

BB: Where did I go to school?

MB: Yeah.

BB: I went to Bennett School which was, it's the old, if you know, do you know where the courthouse is now?

MB: Yep.

BB: Do you know the big building right next to?

MB: Yep.

BB: That was Bennett School.

MB: Okay, yeah.

BB: Yeah, I went there um, first through sixth grades and then Osbourn High School was where the courthouse is, and I went to, it, at that time, it was Manassas High School.

MB: Okay.

BB: And then it got changed to Osbourn for the, one of the teachers there.

MB: Oh, cool!

BB: Yeah.

MB: Okay.

BB: And she and her sister both worked there. Her, the sister's name, she was married, she was McManaway, Elizabeth um, what was the first name I told you?

MB: Osbourn? Or?

BB: Yeah, no.

MB: Or McManaway?

BB: No, Osbourn. Yeah, Osbourn, yeah. Anyway, my father graduated from Osbourn also, and my grandmother went to school but she didn't go to high school. But she did go to the first school in Manassas.

MB: Where was that?

BB: I can't remember the name of it. I did it, I knew it at one time. But for the life of me, it just, it was just a one woman had this little school and she also went to school some at the Buckhall Church, I mean Buckhall School, so, but yeah my dad graduated. He graduated really early, I think he was only like 17 when he graduated. He was, my dad was a smart man. Gosh he is smart. Brilliant man, wrote so many good books and he just really, even, even some of my kin know that he was brilliant. He was.

MB: Yeah, what did he write books about?

BB: Well I, I don't know a lot about what they were about. Um, he, not, not, they weren't bad books. They were just, I don't know, just stories of people and, you know, whether they were, there was never any bad things about them that I can remember. But he was wonderful. He could draw, he could draw housing, he drew, made my plans for my house.

MB: Yeah.

BB: And made the blueprints for them. I mean, he was just very talented with them. Yeah, very smart man. Wish I took after him (laughs).

MB: Mmm, do you have any, like, thinking, going back towards Buckhall, the area.

BB: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah.

MB: A little bit. Do you have any interesting people or stories from when you were growing up?

BB: Well we always had ice cream socials, every year, we had ice cream socials in the basement of the old church. And we had, it was wonderful. People, you know, would crank up their machines, you know, and, and bring their ice cream, and everybody had a great time. And it was, it was kind of a money maker you know, a little bit. They didn't, I mean, charged a nickel for, you know, ice cream and stuff like that. But the women would bring pies or cakes or something, you know, to go along with it. And somebody would bring a gallon of tea or something like that, you know, but uh. And we had big crowds, big crowds, we had lots of people that would come. And most of them from right, were from right around this area, you know. Not many "foreigners," I called them (laughs). But uh, I guess I was the most foreign cause I lived way up, way up the road there. But uh, and uh, what else? Oh we had. Well Bible School was always something that we did, course, you know, this is, this is Bible School on the, on this (photograph), and uh, but I mean, I can remember coming to Bible School when I was, you know, nine or ten and more than that. And uh, but I don't know, it just seemed like we did so many things and we had so many sales, you know, people would make things and bring them in and, but they, I don't think they do that much anymore.



MB: Yeah.

BB: I wish they did. But, you know, aside from Kathryn Sessler, I don't know how many people can even crochet or knit or do anything anymore.

MB: Yeah.

BB: You know. But I used to, well I have knitted for my whole life, every since I knew how to hold the needles! But I made a lot of afghans and things like that, and then I got into where I wanted to embroidery. And I did a lot of embroidery work. And we would put them in, you know, and we would, you know, if we made jelly or something like that, or canned tomatoes. And I made, my dad had this recipe for tomato sauce and I made it one time and sold it down here, well the people flocked around me the next time they saw me. "I've got to have that recipe! I've got to have that recipe!" (laughs) So I don't know how many people have it now but I know there was a lot of them. But uh, it was really good, so. But uh, it seemed like there was always something going on here at the church, you know. And of course, the choir, I loved the choir, I sang in the choir until I couldn't sing anymore. And uh, we had a good choir and that was always fun. Lots of good people in the choir. We had, um, my dad and well, when I, this is when I was young. One of the ministers, oh what was his name, first name was Dan. I can't remember. But anyway, he and his wife were, became great friends with my mom and dad. And um, they would go, just do things together a lot, you know, outside of the church and inside of the church of course. And then, when he left the church, they moved to West Virginia, and I can't tell you how many times we went over to West Virginia to visit them, and they would come back over here, you know. But it seemed like it was always really church, you know, just something to do with the church. And uh, I, I miss it. But I just, it's just such an effort for me to, to get up and get ready and I think I probably, well I think I told you that I hadn't had my car for a year, but I finally got it fixed. And I know, somebody told me that they now only have one service and that's at 10 o'clock in the morning. So I, I think I might try to come one Sunday or something, but Kathryn [Sessler] says I won't know anybody in church anymore. And so, I think so many people left the church during COVID and didn't come back. But she said that there's a lot of new people coming. So I don't mind meeting new people. They're fun to know. They might know something I don't (laughs)!

MB: Yeah, mmm, that's a great perspective to have.

BB: I think there's lots of people that know something I don't, so, like, what's your birthday?

MB: My birthday?

BB: Mmhmm

MB: April 21st.

BB: You're an April girl too!

MB: I am!

BB: How 'bout that! How old are you?

MB: I am 22 years old.

BB: Oh, you don't look it.

MB: (laughs) Do I look younger or older?

BB: Younger.

MB: Okay, I can, I'll accept that, that will be helpful when I'm older (laughs).

BB: Are your parents here now? I mean, around?

MB: Yeah, so I grew up in Stafford County.

BB: Okay.

MB: Um and so, yeah, I've been living back with them which has been a real treat.

BB: Oh that's good.

MB: Yeah, so.

BB: Now who is Brennan?

MB: My family comes from Ireland.

BB: Okay, oh you are a Brennan.

MB: Yes, I'm a Brennan.

BB: Okay, cause I, it kind of threw me when I saw the name Brennan there on my phone, I had no idea who it was.

MB: Oh, yes, it might also come up as John Brennan, and that's my dad. Yeah, sometimes um, that will be the name that calls through. I've called friends before and they're like, "Who is John Brennan?" And I'm like, "That's my dad."

BB: Okay, yeah, I think I might have not answered a lot of those phone calls (laughs).

MB: That makes sense, yeah, I forget that it does that. Um, but yeah, my family's from Massachusetts and then Ireland before that.

BB: We're part Irish also. My grandmother was born on St. Patrick's Day. So we always thought we were Irish.

MB: Yeah.

BB: Cause we had a huge celebration every Thanksgiving, every Hallow, whatever, and um, cause they wanted to celebrate her birthday. And, I mean, there'd be cake and ice cream and all kinds of stuff, games, all the kids, they had games for the kids. And I mean, I honestly thought I was Irish! But I think we are a little bit. Irish, Scottish, but mostly English and German. Or I don't know if it's German, um, Pennsylvania Dutch.

MB: Okay, yeah, I was just about to ask if it was maybe Pennsylvania Dutch. Yeah, so you celebrated St. Patrick's Day really big for your grandmother's birthday.

BB: Huge! Oh yeah, yes.

MB: How else, oh sorry.

BB: No, go ahead.

MB: I was going to ask, how did you celebrate other holidays?

BB: Oh every, well everybody went to, most of the time before our children got big we would all go to my mother's house. My sister and her husband and the two kids would. And me and my husband, and if I, I didn't have Tim until I was 31. So I'd been married thirteen years by then, so, but we would all go to Mom and Dad's house and we would exchange, everybody would bring all their gifts and we would exchange gifts there. And then when it got to be, everybody was just so far apart, you know, then sometimes we would go to, all go up to my sister's house who lived in, she lived in Manassas and uh, but then it got so, some of them moved to Maryland, some of them moved to someplace else. And it got so, it just didn't work anymore. So we just kinda, I have everybody come, for my family, everybody comes to my house. And last year's the first year that I never had a Christmas tree except for a little one.

MB: Yeah.

BB: I felt so bad, cause I wanted it so bad. And my grandson Matthew lives with me and uh, he says, "Grandma, I can put the tree up." Well he put it up last year and I can decorate it, like as high as I can reach, but it was so tall, I said, "Matthew you're going to have to decorate the top." But he did, and he did a pretty good job of it so, but this past year I said, "Matthew, don't even bother, I can't even, I don't even know if I can do the four foot one or not." But I did, cause I used to have a big one in my living room, and then when, when. I have two grandsons: Matthew and Michael. And when they were born I started buying them a Christmas ornament, not to put on a tree, but to keep. I wanted, I kept a separate thing for each one of them, and I still, they, I still have them. And Michael has his now. But I bought them every year, and no, I did put them on a tree, and I bought two little four-foot trees and everything, every time, every year we would put a new one on the tree, and it started, gradually started getting bigger. And then they would have some kind of, like a Boy Scout pin or something from school, and so we started putting all that on the tree. So I've got boxes now, of ornaments, Matthew's is still at my house, Michael took his, cause he moved, lives by himself now. So uh, but uh, they, I think about it a lot and they said, "I don't want to put all that stuff on the tree." I said, "You mean all these years I've gone to the trouble to save all of these for you and you're not gonna put them on a tree." "Okay Grandma." (laughs)

MB: Oh my goodness, yeah.

BB: Oh, dear. But um, we always have, we go to somebody's house for Thanksgiving, it depends, where circle around. Not me anymore, cause I don't cook, I don't do that anymore. But we could, we go to, and my sister passed away five years ago, four years ago, and um, she was younger than I was. But she's, she was really sick. Just, to say that you're glad that somebody died, I would have to say, I'm glad that she passed away. Because she was so sick, and in so much pain. And uh, but um, my, her daughter Julia, they live, she and her husband bought a 43 acre farm up in Fauquier County and uh, and it's a beautiful house,

and we've gone up there for Thanksgiving several times now. And uh, her son, Jeff, he still lives here. But they've never had us to eat. So.

MB: Mmm, um.

BB: We don't do Halloween anymore (laughs), when the kids were little we did. Oh, when the kids were, when I, when me, my age was little, that, the school, that was the Halloween place. I mean, there was kids dressed up like, I don't know what. And my grandmother would root through trunks and everything to find some funny thing to put on us, you know. And they would make costumes for us, and there must have been 100 people down there for Thanksgiving, for Halloween at the store, school.

MB: Wow.

BB: Oh, they had so much fun. Big corn, corn shucks, you know, in the corners, and ghosts all around and oh it was so much fun! Wow!

MB: That is so cool, wow.

BB: Yeah, the school was, the, that and the store, Hallie and Charles's school, store. That was the mainstay of Buckhall. That and the church.

MB: Did you ever go to the store?

BB: Did I ever go? Oh, of course!

MB: What are your memories of the store?

BB: Well, I, I knew, I went in there but I never could buy anything, I mean I was in there with somebody, excuse me, somebody else. But it was, it was a nice store and they kept it nice and clean and everything was properly, you know, was in its place, and they sold a lot of different things. But you know, I guess I was young enough to not really pay that much attention and since I wasn't shopping. But, uh, no but Hallie. Now Charles, Charlie, Charlie wasn't a church person I don't believe. I don't know if he, I don't know that, if he ever came to church. But Hallie was one of the people that made this church. She, she was so good. And uh, even when Charlie died, and then later, I don't know, years later, she married Mr. Kemper. And uh, we had a great big shower for her, you know, the Ladies Aid group did. That was a big, the Ladies Aid had a big group then. And we would meet every month, you know, and, and have a program and somebody would want to talk about something, you know, but mostly it was just to gab. But uh, when Hallie said she was going to marry Mr., what did I say his name was?

MB: Mr. Kemper.

BB: Mr. Kemper, we were so happy, because, his wife had passed away too, and so we had this big shower, and we had a lot of fun (laughs). I enjoyed that. Yeah, but she, she was always there to make a pie or to make a cake or do something for somebody, you know, she was just really there. And there's a couple that lives down there, and I can't remember, she did sewing for me and I can't for the life of me remember what their name is, they live right across the street from the store. It's not the big long house, it's the one next to it, on kind of a little hill. And he was in charge of the cemetery for a long time. And I think she sang in the choir for a while, too, can't remember the names at all.

MB: That's okay, yeah. Um, yeah, what did you know about Joe Kemper?

BB: Um, (laughs) this is funny. He, he had three girls, well I guess two, well he had three girls but one of them was, I don't know exactly what was wrong with her, but they would never let anybody see her. I don't know if she was autistic and nobody knew what it was back then or whether she just, whether she, I don't think she had an ailment, but I know, I think nobody was ever allowed to go inside the house to see her.

MB: Mmm, interesting.

BB: But he was a, he was a warden of some type, I can't remember, um, was it the game warden?

MB: I think, like the forest.

BB: Forest Warden! Yeah, yeah, I remember that. But Mrs. Kemper had the most gorgeous flower gardens. Oh! You'd go down there and it was, you'd think you were in heaven. She would have all kinds of, and she made the beds of the flowers and they were just so vibrant and you would go in there and see them, and it was like walking in heaven. I remember that so about her. But I didn't, she didn't come to church either. Um, I think actually they went to a church in Manassas, and I don't know whether she went, or if she had to stay home with the daughter. But uh, I remember um, that he would come up when I, I was at my grandmother's house. After I got married we lived there, on the side where I was born for a while, and uh, one of the Kemper girls, actually maybe both of them worked where I did. But anyway, he would bring them up to catch the carpool. And I would see him, and his daughters would tell us once in a while, he says, I said, "Your father always looks so nice when he comes up to go to church." I think he went to the Presbyterian Church, but I'm not sure, I believe. And uh, she says, "I'll tell you a secret," she says, "You know what my father does? He washes his shirts but," she says, "you know, he irons the collar, he irons the cuffs, and he irons that place down the middle where it buttons. And then he puts it on and closes his coat, but he doesn't iron the rest of it!" (laughs)

MB: That's pretty clever!

BB: Isn't it? Yeah, it's hilarious, and I said, "I would have never dreamed it." He was the neatest looking man I ever saw, I hope I'm not on there.

MB: I think, I think everyone will appreciate good stories about Mr. Kemper. I mean, that's pretty clever to do.

BB: It is!

MB: Um.

BB: I was kept in touch with one of them. She lived, moved to Georgia and I used to hear from her once in a while, but I've lost touch with her now, I don't know whether she's still alive or not either.

MB: Yeah, I've been, um.

BB: Um, Lucy I think, Lucy and Catherine were two, were the two daughters. Is that their names?

MB: I think so. I was trying to get in contact with them, but I think both of them passed away in April.

BB: Oh, really.

MB: Like, very, very close to one another.

BB: Very close together?

MB: Yeah.

BB: I think Lucy was the youngest one. Lucy was the younger one, I don't know if she was the youngest, cause I think maybe the other one, the other one passed away a long time ago, I know that.

MB: Yeah, yeah.

BB: But people in this area probably know more about it than I would know.

MB: Yeah, yeah, um.

BB: Alright, what else on your list?

MB: Yeah, sorry, um, do you know much about the history of Buckhall? Like how it kind of came to be, or?

BB: No.

MB: No? That's okay. Um, and, oh, how did you meet your husband?

BB: He was a cousin of my brother-in-law, and he had just come back from Korea.

SKIP IN THE RECORDING AT REQUEST IT BE CUT ON AGREEMENT

MB: Yeah, I just have, I think, one or two more questions.

BB: Okay, sure!

MB: Yeah, why did you decide to stay in the Buckhall area?

BB: Because it's my home.

MB: Yeah.

BB: I mean, cause that's where I lived, this was where my life was, you know, except work. It was home, work, and here. So, yeah, I never, I never thought of moving anyplace else. I didn't like living anyplace else, cause I tried it. Didn't like it, so, didn't have any reason to move.

MB: That makes sense.

BB: My family was here, the people I loved were here, why go?

MB: Yeah, yeah, that makes sense. And how do you think the area has changed over your lifetime?

BB: I couldn't, I, I don't know how to express that really. I'm not, I won't say what I want to say, or why I think, cause I'm, it's not nice to say. I don't think this community has changed down here.

MB: Yeah.

BB: But, the, our whole world has changed. Not for the good. I don't approve of the people coming into our country that aren't supposed to be here. I don't approve of that. I don't approve of not being able to have our own, the way to drill oil and have our own way to make food. I don't like them selling acres of farmland in the West to the Chinese. It is, it's not helping our world at all. I just, I'm, just don't like any of that. And I try to keep myself out of it, but sometimes you can't, you just can't avoid it. You get into places, I try to be. I mean, I'm, I have a man that worked for me from El Salvador, the nicest person I've ever met. But he came here legally. And there's a couple that, from, I don't know, I mean they're, they're not from here, but moved into a house down the road from me. And they are as polite and nice and they keep their house and their yard wonderful. They have two boys and I, you know, I have nothing against people like that. But I don't like the people that come in and tear up our country, and I don't have any, I don't think it's affecting Manassas and this surrounding area as much as it is the more urban places. Well, I think, I think Prince William County is, is being wrong to allow so many data places to be built in our county. Or in your county, or you don't live in Prince William either, you don't live in Prince William, well neither do I. But there, there are 3 or 4 new data processing companies that are being put here that are not going to be helpful to our communities. They're tearing, they're, I told my brother-in-law yesterday when we were going up to, when we were going up to the reunion, we were going down 66 and it's so green and the foliage is so pretty. And I said, "Jack, you know if I was a teenager now, and thought about what was it going to be like when I was my age," I said, "there won't be a green piece of grass around here." Every place I looked yesterday they were digging up fields to put data processing companies in. And it's, it's, it's harmful. I don't like it. But this community, I can't see that, and as far as Manassas is concerned, they need to keep their taxes a little lower, it'd be helpful. But I don't, I don't have anything other than that.

MB: Yeah.

BB: That, we have no control over.

MB: Yeah, do you have anything for, like that you want, like, the children who are growing up in Manassas now, or the people who are, you know, future historians who might be looking at this to know about what the Manassas area was like when you were growing up.

BB: I wish you could, well I don't know how to get that out to anybody, other than you. And it's not going to be put out anyplace for people to read, so.

MB: Yeah, I mean, we'll have it stored so in the future people will be able to use it.

BB: I hope so, I hope so. And um, I would tell them, you know, go to the museum, have you ever been to the museum in Manassas?

MB: I haven't been yet.

BB: It just, it just opened again, they, they put a, they did a whole new thing. My cousin donated a whole lot of stuff from the Civil War to it, but I was, Helen and I was in there a couple of years ago and so was Eddie [Moore] and um, we didn't see anything that we had, that she had donated in there. And uh, but I know it's going, I know that it's going to be nice now. I want to see if I can get up there again and get in there while I can still walk. But uh, I don't know, I just wish that the schools, I wish the schools would change back to where people are taught reading, and writing, and arithmetic, instead of all this other stuff. I'm so glad that both of my grandchildren, one of them is 29, the other one is 34, if they could, they got out of school and between them, between the school and me they better be good, better behave themselves. And do what's right.

MB: Right, yeah, well, awesome. Well thank you so much.

BB: You're very welcome. And you want to do this thing? (MB sent photo to self from BB's phone)

MB: Yes, um, let me.

END OF RECORDING