

Unified Committee for Afro-American Contributions
Oral History Documentation Project

LAURICE CHASE WHITE

Interviewed by Merideth Taylor
March 8, 2001

At her home in Lexington Park Maryland
Logged by Tania Jordon on January 13, 2008

A verbatim transcript is available
Original format is two cassette tapes
1 hour, 16 minutes, 58 seconds

CD 1 of 1 (Tape 1, side 1)

Track 01

0:00 Introduction

0:58 Childhood: Born 8/20/38 in Lexington Park, MD. Oldest of 11 children. Lived on family land currently owned by Hampton Inn and Extended Stay. Grew up on farm, raised animals, tobacco, corn and vegetables. Moved to Washington DC with Aunt during the 6th grade. All food from garden and meat house except sugar, flour, etc.. Family used wood stoves and lamps for cooking and light. Was a sharp shooter and helped hunt for game. Did most of the outdoors work because there were six girls before any boys were born. Worked with other family members within walking distance. All related to mother. Property was on Thomas land.

Track 02

7:20 Earliest memory: Hated school because of the long bus ride and helping to get the other children ready for school. Big family meals on Sundays. Played cards and checkers until sun went down. Got electricity when based opened.

10:20 Went to St. Peters in Ridge for elementary. Left to go to school in Washington, DC in 1952. Attending Langley Junior High and Martha Washington Vocational High School.

Track 03

10:49 Times: Times were harder but better. Everybody worked together and there wasn't a class system. Nobody had anything. No competition. Mother sewed, some clothes and shoes were ordered from catalog. Would walk to store on two lane highway to get flour and things they didn't grow or raise on farm.

Track 04

14:29 Father served in Navy for three years. He was a waterman and farmer. Mother took in laundry from military and cleaned houses. Attended St. Francis Catholic Church (during segregation). A lady donated church for blacks which became the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

17:36 Trips Outside of County: Washington, DC to visit family on bus

Track 05

18:31 Health: Dr. Bean and home remedies. Home remedies such a sugar and kerosene for colds; quinine, green plant and fatback from a hog to draw out poison from rusty nail injuries; mustard roll for toothaches and Epsom salt for constipation.

Track 06

23:17 Relationship with Siblings: Never wanted any kids because she had to take care of so many babies. She is very close to her brothers and sisters.

25:54 Favorite things to do as a child: Work outside, fixing yard and drying flowers.

Track 07

29:03 Chores: Babysitting for family.

32:13 Discipline: Spanking

Track 08

33:33 Social Hours: At bars after they were 18.

34:16 Parents prepared them well for life.

Track 09

35:18 School: Classrooms were small and tuition costs were based on a per family basis. Largest class to graduate was 12 to 15 children. Least favorite

subject was math. Favorite teacher was Ms. Geraldine Finchback. She taught home economics and sewing in DC school. There were black nuns in St. Peters Catholic School.

Track 10

- 40:17 Aspirations: To be a nurse for older people.**
- 41:30 First job was a live in nurse for a couple with small children.**
- 43:22 Left county for educational opportunities.**
- 44:06 Worked as a nurse for 10 years and became a librarian (1972) because of the nursing system in the county.**

CD 2 of 1 (Tape 1, side 2)

Track 01

- 45:21 First black librarian in Lexington Park. Some patrons were prejudice. Dealt with more overt racism at the library then in nursing.**

Track 02

- 53:48 Race relations: Started changing when the base opened. Still a lot of racism in Ridge, 7th district and stores in old town Leonardtown.**

Track 03

- 1:03:09 Has been divorced for 22 years and raised children by herself.**
- 1:03:59 Doesn't like all the growth in county. Probably will be another 301 in Waldorf. Loss of trees and beauty. Biggest change was when family sold property on 235. Property was converted to commercial very quickly. Hampton Inn, Chrysler Dealership and other commercial buildings. More commercial development brings in more crime.**

Track 04

- 1:08:19 NAACP: Joined in 1958 in Washington, DC. Started in the county in the 1980's. Has been president four times. Branch was the most activity during the 1960's.**

