

Unified Committee for Afro-American Contributions
Oral History Documentation Project

George Gaither Forrest

Interviewed by Carol Locke-Endy

June 6, 2003

at his office (county administrator's office in the Governmental Center

Logged by Tania Jordon on August 7, 2005

A verbatim transcript is available

Original format is two cassette tapes

1 hour, 12 minutes, 51 seconds

Audio CD 1 of 2

Track 01

0:00 Introduction

0:28 Vitals/ Family life

2:21 Schools: Banneker, Jarboesville and Cardinal Gibbons/ Richard Ryan (PhD and Phi Beta Kappa)/ attention seeking activities/ need to move away from Leonardtown (St. Mary's Co.)

Track 02

5:06 African-American Revolution: Morgan State College experiences; sit-ins at Reed's Drug Store & threat of being expelled/ Law School and Army ROTC/ Work history

Track 03

8:10 Appreciation for father whom he had considered an 'Uncle Tom', survival mechanisms and working riot control for the March on Washington

Track 04

14:10 Early racial issues: no direct discrimination; going to side door at the movie theatre.

Track 05

17:44 Religion: Catholic Church failed Black community/ Newman Club at Morgan/
Symbolism in the church

Track 06

24:22 Race- relations changes in Leonardtown (St Mary's Co.) / Race conscientiousness
in mother/ Underlining fear – elimination of the races

29:50 Harry Truman & the military fighting force

Track 07

31:12 Socialization: Salt & Pepper Organization

33:00 Ignoring older citizen – housing accommodations

Track 08

34:44 Black county government workforce

36:26 Job turnovers/ High School principle/ Benevolent Dictator

37:55 Being flexible vs. revolutionary

Track 09

41:00 Changes in Leonardtown (St. Mary's Co.); none really, still hesitation to accept
people as who they really are.

43:08 Race related military experience

45:32 Revolution needs proper preparation

Track 10

48:03 Teenagers' one-dimensional approach to life

Track 11

53:07 Family importance - teaching the boys the importance of not having children until
they are grown and ready.

54:00 Gains are null & void if there is no money to buy the gains

55:00 “Keeping on” when there is no apparent attitude change (racial) / Combat experience/ refugees- parents, Ernie Bell & Sam Walker / “Have to be twice as good, twice as smart, lucky as hell, and pray an awful lot.”

Track 12

58:52 County’s low expectation of him during his tenure as acting land use and growth management director, and as deputy county administration.

1:00:30 No one wants to hear complaints about ethnicity, about how much you suffer as an African American. Small things matter in making the bigger picture and working through bias and low expectations. Bosses amazed that he succeeded – even excelled at his work.

Audio CD 2 of 2

Track 01

0:00 Part of his responsibility is to change the black stereotype.

1:35 A Jewish friend- many things in common/ Community raising the young

Track 02

4:24 If you have a firm base of behavior and set of standards, you will not get lost

7:05 Regrets: Not spending enough time with his immediate family and not having his boys spend more time with their grandfather.

Track 03

8:51 Military involvement in the highest ranks of government – Iraq War