

Interview with Phoebe Bailey.

PB: I worked away for a couple years. That was the year I visited Europe.

Interviewer: Europe?

PB: Europe. I've been around, but I've never lived away from here a whole year. Not ever. Because of school.

Interviewer: We're very excited about doing this. Learning some things. You can take your time answering the questions, I mean like, that's fine.

PB: Oh Lord, [Inaudible] Course, after each of these. I think I'd better read them.

Interviewer: Okay.

PB: There was a poll tax, but only men paid that. But women didn't.

Interviewer: Hm.

PB: Yea.

Interviewer: Yea.

PB: As I remember because I voted in '21 and I don't ever remember paying a poll tax.

Interviewer: Really?

PB: You mean approximately or a year?

Interviewer: Approximately. Approximately. That would be fine.

PB: Yea, I mean, if I had had this, I would have researched...

Interviewer: Yea, I can understand that

PB: She insisted that I needed it, I kept calling. I called Mr. Ambrave in his office. To hound him.

Interviewer: Yea, they get messed up sometimes.

PB: Yea.

Interviewer: You can just tell us.

PB: You mean that, I don't have one here? I wish I had one. Okay.

Interviewer: Darlene's doesn't have one, yet?

PB: No, I meant as you ask them, for me to answer.

Interviewer: Oh.

PB: There isn't another one.

Interviewer: Let me go, Let me go check and see. Yea, I can just film. Okay, what are your earliest memories of Mount Pleasant? When you were small?

PB: Little girl going to kindergarten, well, not really kindergarten. Laing School. And uh, Sunday School within my community.

Interviewer: Describe your childhood home. Did it have electricity or indoor plumbing?

PB: When I grew up, it didn't.

Interviewer: It didn't.

PB: In a little time we got electricity and indoor plumbing, but as a child we had an outdoor privy.

Interviewer: You had an outhouse?

PB: Had an outdoor privy, yes.

Interviewer: How large was your family? Did you have anybody besides your parents living there?

PB: I was the youngest of seven.

Interviewer: Oh wow.

PB: And, uh, my brothers... I had four brothers and two sisters. And um, they were working, you know. My mother was widowed. My father was a ship builder. He was a good builder. And he and one of my brothers were drowned when I was nine months old. So I grew up with a widowed Mama and these brothers and sisters.

Interviewer: Wow. So did you have any grandparents living with you?

PB: Nobody. I don't even know a grandparent, uh, in my family. They barley spoke of them. See, I was the last one, they were all gone.

Interviewer: So what did your mother do to?

PB: My mother was a consciences worker. She um was not educated. But she could read and write exceptionally well. She did laundry and home for several families in the area. We had a plot where she planted vegetables for the family and so that kind of tided us over. Along with the help of the older brothers.

Interviewer: How old was your older brother?

PB: Oldest brother was about 17 years older than I am. He worked as a shipwright at the landing in Charleston. Holmes landing. And later, he uh, with a friend of his from Charleston, established a boat yard and marine railway at North Adgers Wharf. Where they built fishing boats to um be reckoned and sold them.

Interviewer: So he was. He was the oldest one you knew?

PB: Yes, he was the one I thought was my father for a while because he was the only thing...

Interviewer: Seventeen, yea.

Interviewer: He was seventeen years older than you.

Interviewer: The one that drowned with your father, he was older than this one?

PB: Younger.

Interviewer: Younger than this one?

PB: Fathers take their favorite son with them and so he was about the um third one in the, you know.

Interviewer: Okay you said earlier that you. How would you describe your family? Rich? Poor?

PB: Struggling.

Interviewer: Struggling?

PB: Struggling. But we did not really realize that we were really poor. Because I told you.

Interviewer: Till you looked back?

PB: Because she worked. Because she invested all of her income in her family. And she did without most for herself. And we had the garden for vegetables. We had all foods and fish and whatnot. From shrimps and stuff that you can't buy now because my brother

would go fishing in his boats and whatnot. We were well fed, and not perhaps well dressed because um, there was a. I went to Laing School, did I tell you? And Laing school was uh this was one of my main focus. Because um and my church. The AME church. I lived on the same street, about a block. Within the block. I would uh at a very early age, because children weren't as threatened then as now. You know, you could let a five year old get out. And so um, there was a place established by the Friends Society of Philadelphia that they called the Dorcus where clothes and shoes were sent from the people of Philadelphia and other, you know, big brands. And they were sold for a little of the price. And we could get some of them were absolutely new.

[Male voice] Hey Ms. Bailey, how're you doing?

PB: Fine.

[Male voice] Is it alright if I take your picture?

PB: Oh.

[Male voice] Is that Okay?

PB: If your camera can hold my photo!

[Male voice] I think it can handle it. You're beautiful!

Interviewer: Okay, so you said you attended Laing high sch- grammar school. What about high school?

PB: There was no high school for what they then called negroes- blacks. So I took the ferry boat and we went to Charleston to Avery Institute. That's where I did my high school. And

Interviewer: We learned about that.

Interviewer: Yea, we did, we learned about that. Aw.

Interviewer: Great. The next question is 'How far from was your school from your home?' You said Laing was pretty close.

PB: Within the same block. Within the block. We lived on the same.

Interviewer: The Avery Institution was-

PB: Now, Avery you had to take the ferry across the river.

Interviewer: How far was it when you got across?

PB: When I got across we had to walk from one river to the next. Uh, the Cooper River was where we uh docked and we had to walk to the Ashley because you know Avery was right there on Bull Street next to the Ashley River.

Interviewer: Goodness.

PB: There was very little money for lunch. I had a friend who would walk with me all the time and we would pool our lunch money and get a. We were taught to use food for lunch and whatnot. We would buy bananas or bring something together.

Interviewer: What were your fondest or worst memories from school?

PB: My worst memory?

Interviewer: Probably walking?

Interviewer: Yea.

PB: Well, did you know, I enjoyed it?

Interviewer: Did you?

PB: Yes. I don't know my worst memory. I loved it. I love school. Always. I tell you, when I retired I tried to get a literature after retirement. But I got used to being at home.

Interviewer: What was your best memory?

PB: Well. When I graduated from the normal school, at Avery Institute. My mother worked all her life and she was so

Interviewer: Wow.

PB: She was, ill. And we didn't expect her to live. But she always prayed that she would see me on my feet during my high school ceremony. And when I stood up at my graduation, all the dreams and whatnot. She was so proud. And do you know she lived only a few months after the graduation.

Interviewer: Really?

Interviewer: Aw!

PB: Yea, so I was very pleased that I'd finished.

Interviewer: How old were you when you first got your job- first job outside of the home?

PB: Well my only job outside of the home was when I went to teach in Jasper County. I was what? We finished Avery at 17. Must have been 18.

Interviewer: And taught?

PB: In one of the rural schools there. Yes.

Interviewer: What was your salary?

PB: \$47.50! Big money, Lord!

Interviewer: For?

PB: A month!

Interviewer: A month?

Interviewer: Oh goodness.

PB: A whole month! I know you thought it was a day!

Interviewer: At our school that's not- I mean, that's Okay!

PB: That was terrible when I think of it, now. But do you know my board was \$9. The lady kept us, 2 women, 2 girls in a room, and she fed us and all for that! Well, that was I guess, what you'd call depression. Things were low, then.

Interviewer: The school you taught at, was it, was it all white?

PB: No, all black. All black. Well, except for teachers, Avery was all black. And uh, I suppose, except for teachers, Laing was all black. We had teachers from Philadelphia, Friend's Society. Abolitionists. And so teachers came to work there.

Interviewer: Were the grades all combined?

PB: No, when I went- Oh, When I taught?

Interviewer: When you taught.

PB: No, they were perhaps, um sometimes, 1st and 2nd or 4th and 5th or something like that. 6th grade, sometimes. And so, if the classes were small we could combine them. Other than that, we can't. 2 teacher schools, 3 teachers schools. Small schools. Rosenwelb [Rosenwald] Schools, I think they called them. R-O-S-E-N-W-E-L-B. Rosenwelb was a philanthropist that gave money towards building schools.

Interviewer: What was dating like?

PB: Well, the teacher was special in the community. Most of the eligible young men would try to get me.

Interviewer: Would? Or wouldn't?

PB: Would! Take you to church, or if you cared for that type of thing. But I tell you, then was just trying to seek it. I'd give my mother every nickel I could make and she died within a few months. And uh, well and after that, I stayed and any of the fellas that wanted to see me didn't have no problems.

Interviewer: Good!

Interviewer: What did you do for recreation?

PB: Well, we had picnics, we had boat rides. Around Mount Pleasant, there was moonlight sailing. And uh, then it was segregated, but they had moonlight sails. We had picnics here at Alhambra, as a child. And uh, the church, the school, and sometimes the town gave 4th of July picnics. Games and races and things like that.

Interviewer: How bout religion? What role did that play in your life?

PB: The very beginning, they had uh. We went to church even as infants. They had a section that they called the cradle section. And they had you were registered on the cradle role as an infant. You know, going to church. I grew up in it. My whole life centered around the church, and school, family.

Interviewer: Which church did your family belong to?

PB: Friendship A.M.E.

Interviewer: What was it?

PB: Friendship A.M.E. Church. Episcopal support.

Interviewer: We had that, we know that to. We learned about that.

Interviewer: What sort of church activities did you participate in?

PB: Picnics, programs, concerts. We played some sour notes on the piano.

Interviewer: Did you sing? Did people-

PB: Well, I sang.

Interviewer: Did they have a choir or anything?

PB: Yes, and I played the piano for my Sunday School chorale. I'd dream up some silent notes for concerts. Even at Avery when we had concerts, music students would give concerts at intervals. We had the music department who would give concerts. I took a year to produce or star or sometimes hit a silent note on the piano.

Interviewer: How would you compare religious activities today with those when you were younger? You said you belonged to the same church...

PB: It's bigger and it is less close. We don't have the closeness is what I'm saying. Now I would walk down my block, going to the next block, going to a grocery store. And all the way the ladies on the block "Does your mother know you're out here?" and uh, or. "Where you going?" "I'm going to get a loaf of bread!" "Well, Okay, I'll go write it down." Because I'd take it right on the block. "See if you can bring this for me when you come back." Because you know we wouldn't be old enough to remember and all that stuff. So we did a little shopping for neighbors and you weren't allowed to accept any kind of paying or like "Here's a nickel" or you couldn't accept that. But I remember some ladies in my neighborhood made some nice sandwiches or cookies or something that we could always have.

Interviewer: You said-

PB: So we were close, more family like. The church is so big now! You don't- I don't even know everybody in the church!

Interviewer: Really?

PB: Yea. You know.

Interviewer: You said you did your grocery shopping at the grocer down the street?

PB: Yea.

Interviewer: Like the market?

Interviewer: Any other kind of like your clothes and stuff? Where did they get those?

PB: Well, I'm saying from this place that I called the Dorcus. It was the Dorcus club. That was for little things.

Interviewer: Oh, right. Philadelphia.

PB: And we would go to Charleston for things at Condies, Fresh Scotch, Carousels, old stores, I mean, when you wanted coats or something special. But I mean, little things like a blouse or skirt or something a pair of tennis something or shoes you can get from the Dorcus. Small things.

Interviewer: Were you born at home- or?

PB: At home.

Interviewer: At home? Did a doctor deliver you or did a midwife?

PB: I don't know, but I believe it was a midwife.

Interviewer: Midwife.

PB: But we didn't have doctors in the town.

Interviewer: So you didn't visit the doctor? You didn't go to the doctor?

PB: Oh we went to the doctor.

Interviewer: Regularly? Or just when if you were real sick?

PB: When we were sick. Yea. And there were doctors from the Friends Society who came down every year to check the whole school for I don't know what. I guess to check your eyes, throat, whatnot. The were sent. By mainly the Friends Society. Because when I grew up they took a big role in Laing Elementary School. And uh, I know they weren't sent in to check for tuberculosis or something. To check the- That was done maybe once a year. Twice a year. Something.

Interviewer: Would you, um, did you have any cures that you would like, anything you would do at home. Like your mom would do at home to cure you? Like home remedies?

PB: Oh, well.

Interviewer: What kind of things would she?

Interviewer: Oh yea!

PB: Yea, I mean, if you had some kind of, uh, if you feel hot with a fever or something they'd bathe me with cool water or vinegar or something like that to cool you off. But um no medicine or Aspirin or if we something like that, no body took it. I can't believe I took it.

Interviewer: Yea, right. Were doctors offices and hospitals segregated when you were young?

PB: Yes, yes.

Interviewer: Of course.

PB: We had a Doctor Bowen and a Doctor Frampton.

Interviewer: Doctor Bowen?

PB: Yes. Now I'll tell you, living in a town, I said a small town, there is a closeness. We had a feeling, a closeness, with Bowen. And even though the patients were segregated, I guess we didn't know any better. Than, I mean, cause right now, Doctor Pucket even for the past maybe 10-12 years his wasn't segregated. But his was, in the beginning. And I loved him dearly. Because well, he was always, even though things were segregated, we had this kind of feeling. Between a doctor/patient relationship.

Interviewer: What diseases were most common?

PB: Well, colds. Fever. One of my, one of group. My age group.

Interviewer: Oh Does he go to your church?

PB: He is a minister, now. He has the same type church. But he's not at my church. He did go to my church as boy. We grew up in the same group.

Interviewer: Oh um. Going back to that question- Which took the most lives? Which disease. Do you remember?

PB: I would think fever or pneumonia. Because when you hear of that, that was very serious.

Interviewer: Fever, do you mean yellow fever?

PB: I mean malaria.

Interviewer: Malaria. Okay. Complete switch! Now we're going to political.

PB: Okay.

Interviewer: Are you registered to vote?

PB: Yes. Registered as a democrat. Where am I?

Interviewer: Right, at the bottom. We skipped a question, I'm sorry.

PB: Okay! That's all right.

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

Interviewer: Say what?

Interviewer: Ceremonies.

PB: And dying?

Interviewer: What would you do if somebody died?

PB: There is a thing called a wake. That they'd set up at night with the family of the deceased. And they uh-

Interviewer: Is it kind of like going to the funeral home now the like night before?

PB: Yes.

Interviewer: Kind of?

PB: Yes, yes. And even so there were no, there were not many funeral homes and such. But even at home if somebody died they were kind of laid out in the living room. And the family and friends would sit with them all night till the funeral the next day.

Interviewer: Okay, now we can move on. We're right, here. Okay, are you registered to vote?

PB: Yes.

Interviewer: How old were you when you?

PB: 21.

Interviewer: That's right, you said that. And you said there wasn't a poll tax.

PB: No, not for women. But you can check that to make sure. I- I know I-

Interviewer: But you know that you didn't have to pay one?

PB: Yes, yes.

Interviewer: When did you qualify to vote when you were young? When was the first time-?

Interviewer: What did you need?

PB: What did I have to do? They gave you a passage to read. And I then owned land. Owned property. \$300. You know, record property. So that was- I had 2 things to qualify.

Interviewer: So you said the passage to read. Was that a literacy test?

PB: Yes.

Interviewer: So there was one?

PB: There was a literacy test.

Interviewer: Do you consider yourself Republican, Democrat, or Independent?

PB: Well, I am Democrat. Because I have been voting Democrat my whole life. Registered as that.

Interviewer: What were political campaigns like when you were young?

PB: Do you know they came to ask to speak at our churches?

Interviewer: Oh gosh.

PB: Yes they did! And not so very long ago. I remember when what is- Mr. Kong- excuse me, he's a judge. Well Mr. Kong is a judge now. But he ran for something before he was a judge. And I definitely know he came to our church because I spoke to him. And, uh, he wasn't married, then. He and his girlfriend came and they asked for our support and what not. And several others. They came to our churches, they came to our parks, whatnot.

Interviewer: What do you see the greatest change in politics since your youth?

PB: Well, well, we have more blacks registered. We have them running for office. There really wasn't many running- in my- at the beginning.

Interviewer: Okay. Now we're switching to the community. How large was the Town of Mount Pleasant when you were growing up?

PB: Do you know 12 hundred?

Interviewer: Really?

Interviewer: 12 hundred?

PB: Would you believe? Now I tell you what, you want, you asked me for a boundary somewhere in here-

Interviewer: Yes ma'am. That's the next- the boarders of the town.

PB: Okay. Alright. Well, we stopped at where the Pitt Street Bridge is in Mount Pleasant and we went through Rifle Range Road about 2 miles on the other side.

Interviewer: Everything else was woods? Or-

PB: Well, not necessarily woods. Farms. Whatnot.

Interviewer: Farms.

PB: But the town was incorporated into these- that small area. And uh, now we've got so many parcels. So many big sections. So now we've all the way up to- what? We've moved all the way through Snowden and whatnot. Even Remy's Point was not in the town.

Interviewer: Really?

PB: No. Because I had- one of my brothers ran a grocery store up in Remy's Point. I told you my brothers worked- they helped us. He ran that store 50 odd years in Remy's Point and he died and they had not been in the town.

Interviewer: Hm. Did you have any public services like Fire? Police?

PB: Yes. Police.

Interviewer: Garbage?

PB: Fire department. No garbage.

Interviewer: How about mail?

PB: Mail at the post office.

Interviewer: Had to get it at the post office? When did most of the homes around here get electricity and indoor plumbing?

PB: I'd give it maybe, say 40 or 50 years that they had it. When I grew up it didn't. I'd give it-Because I know that my brothers and sisters didn't. So I'll say 50 and make it sure.

Interviewer: How did homes without electricity keep food fresh?

PB: Iceboxes.

Interviewer: Iceboxes.

PB: We call them treasure chest now. But they were iceboxes. We had to put ice in the bottom.

Interviewer: Did- How many- You said you had an outhouse. Did almost all the houses around-?

PB: Had their own. In Mount Pleasant, that I know. And you kept them as clean as you could.

Interviewer: How far were they from the house?

PB: About 50- 60 feet. If you- well I mean, there things that we had to use indoors you know, at night. We did the emptying and washing. But in the day you took the long walk.

Interviewer: That is a long walk!

Interviewer: I know! Every time!

PB: Not but a few feet. But for you! My daughters think one bathroom in the house is really rude.

Interviewer: What sort of transportation did you use?

PB: We had automobiles. Even wagons for picking vegetables.

Interviewer: Wagons. As in?

PB: Horses.

Interviewer: Horses?

PB: Yea.

Interviewer: Oh. Wait- when did ya'll get automobiles? There were a lot?

PB: There were not many. But there were automobiles. And people shared. I tell you, we lived closer.

Interviewer: What year are you talking?

Interviewer: Wow.

PB: I'm sorry, I don't have the speakers now, and my hearing is not as-

Interviewer: How many years ago?

PB: Hm. I'm trying to think. Oh it's gotta be 60. Because, uh, I mean, we had ours, our first one about 50. My husband and I. And so many people, before then, had them.

Interviewer: What does your husband do?

PB: He was a principal.

Interviewer: Principal?

PB: He's retired.

Interviewer: Is that how you met him?

PB: I met him in high school. He was my high school tutor. At Avery.

Interviewer: At Avery, Okay.

Interviewer: That's cute.

PB: He drove a bicycle for Ellison's department store. Parcel carrier. They were- back then they had to come from one river to the next river and then walk back home. We walked.

Interviewer: Do you remember trolley? Trolley cars?

PB: I remember a trolley in my town. But I had no reason to ride that trolley. I don't ever remember ever riding it and whatnot.

Interviewer: What kind of people rode it?

PB: People who wanted to work on Sullivan's Island or had to go to the ferry.

Interviewer: So there were some over here? It says: Describe the people who rode it most often and the routes they took. So-

PB: Well they came from Mount Pleasant, Sullivan's Island. There was Fort Moultrie. Fort Moultrie was a military post over there, you know.

Interviewer: Right.

PB: Had a brother who was a butcher at the Fort Moultrie meat market. And I was looking at some things wondering- I saw a citation he got as a civilian at the Fort Moultrie, market over there. They served the soldiers. Officers and their wives and what not. They had officers quarters and all that on Sullivan's Island. That's where some people got their laundry. And they went on the trolley to get- to deliver their clothes, the laundry. There were not Laundromats of laundries and such in the beginning.

Interviewer: Okay. You said you rode the ferry, right?

PB: I rode the ferry. Especially tickets. To buy tickets. Because we had to go to school every day.

Interviewer: How much would that cost?

PB: They cost about 5 something. They cost a lot for a poor widow. But she saw to it that we had shoes, a small amount for lunch, well I could take the lunch. But you didn't want to be carrying bread.

Interviewer: Do you remember when there was only one Cooper River Bridge?

PB: Yes. I remember when it was built.

Interviewer: So you remember when there was none?

PB: I remember when there was none. I told you I went on the boat. And when the bridge came we took the bus and, you know, went to Charleston. I remember when the big accident happened on that Cooper River Bridge and some people went over.

Interviewer: Yea a ship ran into it or something and knocked some people over. My dad was telling me about it.

PB: Your dad was from this area?

Interviewer: Well, I have uh- he was from Charleston.

PB: Yes, That's what I meant. This area.

Interviewer: I have a lot of family that lives over here now. I don't know if you'd know any of them. My last name is Pullnot?

PB: Oh yes, I know them. He was once a sheriff. We had a sheriff. And we wasn't no small name! We was one of the always. But you know. They said let's build the town and my father said alright. And they put him in charge. Oh if he was here. Oh lawd. But he didn't mind.

Interviewer: Ya'll are at historical, next. What you said about the families and stuff.

Interviewer: Do you want to take a break or do you want to keep going?

PB: It doesn't matter.

Interviewer: Okay, go to historical events, now. Right at the bottom. Right here.

Interviewer: What holidays were celebrated in your youth?

PB: We did the- we called it Declaration Day. And they'd celebrate it by putting flowers on the graves and what not. And now I won't fool with the graveyard to this day. And there was an Emancipation Day parade in Charleston and we'd go see that.

Interviewer: Why don't you fool with graveyards?

PB: I just don't-

Interviewer: Don't like em?

PB: It makes me sad! I don't want to see where I-

Interviewer: That's understandable.

Interviewer: How were these holidays celebrated?

PB: Well. I tell you we had picnics here. They had parades in Charleston. Emancipation Day.

Interviewer: Who organized the celebrations?

PB: Now that I didn't know for Charleston. I just went and looked. But here, these picnics at Alhambra- Our Sunday School. And they were groups calling themselves things like "The Concerned Young Man" and stuff like that in our church. They did a lot of nice things for the children.

Interviewer: Do you remember World War I?

PB: No!

Okay then! We get to skip a ways!

Interviewer: Do you remember-

PB: Now let me tell you about World War I.

Interviewer: Okay.

PB: My first music teacher had been in World War I. The person living on my block that taught me music and he talked about it. A lot. About things that happened in France and what not. But that was, you know. Talking to me about it as a child and I really didn't know anything about it except hearing about it. Personal experiences.

Interviewer: How bout the prohibition?

Interviewer: I know that. But um, Moonshine. Yea. There were people that had-

Blind tigers? Is that what they-?

PB: No, they called em moonshine.

Interviewer: Moonshine?

PB: Yea, as I know. There were stills in outer areas, you know. You'd hear about them being caught by the um sheriff and what not. They'd go out there and break them up. But as I said, I was the youngest. My brothers. If they did, no body knew about the drinking. Because we had a matriarch. Our mother, she countermanded this way. She didn't- we didn't- She tried to keep us away- keep them away.

Interviewer: How much liquor do you think was consumed in Mount Pleasant during this time?

PB: Like I said, They didn't- I know people drank. You hear about it. "He's drinking" or "He's drunk" When you were eavesdropping. But it's not to say I saw.

Interviewer: Do you remember the Depression?

PB: Oh yes. I was talking about being poor with the 10 cents or a nickel for the lunch. That was Depression, sure enough. Buying the extra shoes from the Dorcus. Extra sweaters.

Interviewer: How about the businesses? Did it effect the businesses?

PB: Being poor? Being-?

Interviewer: The Depression.

Interviewer: The Wall Street crash.

PB: Well, I'd assume so. Because if the people don't have the money, naturally-

Interviewer: They can't go and spend it.

Interviewer: Were there any New Deal projects in the area? What is- I don't even know what that means.

PB: Well, yes.

Interviewer: It says WPA or CCP- I don't know what that means.

PB: Well, I know you don't-

Interviewer: It means work something.

PB: Well, yes. There were people given jobs by the federal government. The local economy was just so down they had to have help. There were people cleaning the highways and roads, things like that.

Interviewer: Do you remember World War II?

PB: Yes. Because some of my classmates went through that.

Interviewer: What do you remember about it?

PB: I remember when the- I think must've been at State College and some of our nice young men- I remember one young man who went in the, with, who was in the flying squadron. The Tuskegee group. A black air group. And he got killed in a plane crash. That is vivid.

Interviewer: So was he in the Air Force?

PB: Yes.

Interviewer: What about family? Did any of your brothers go?

PB: My brothers didn't go. I think World War I, my family would keep my oldest brother out. And then the others were um younger.

Interviewer: What were your impressions of life outside Mount Pleasant?

PB: What was out there?

Interviewer: MmHm.

PB: I thought New York would be wonderful! But I never got a chance to go to New York. I was so disappointed.

Interviewer: Really?

Interviewer: I can see. Even now.

PB: Yea.

Interviewer: I don't want to live anywhere but Charleston!

Interviewer: I've never been. I want to go though!

PB: Well, You would really be disappointed. Maybe you aren't building it up in your mind. But I thought it would be a beautiful place.

Interviewer: But it's dirty, isn't it?

PB: Oh, it's terrible!

Interviewer: Real dirty.

PB: Nothing like what you see in the Crosby Shows and stuff like that.

Interviewer: Did um- Did area military installations have much impact on life in Mount Pleasant?

PB: Yes. That's exactly what I was telling you about. My brother worked in the meat market. He was the butcher in the post exchange. He got a civilian citation for being there over ten years or something. I try to keep stuff- old things- I'm a pack rat. Now you talk about Mount Pleasant. Do you know our courthouse was in Berkley County? That old stone house on King Street. Oh yea! My mother got her marriage certificate and was married in the old courthouse in Berkley County. 1888, September 16th. So I have that marriage certificate. Old, yellow. I don't let anybody touch it! She had it and I got it.

Interviewer: What changes did World War II bring to the town of Mount Pleasant?

PB: Well. I came back. Went to the Navy Yard to work. So that meant that the work area was wide. It went from one on building- a landing to the ship building in Charleston Navy Yard.

Interviewer: Do you remember the Civil War protest in the 1950s- 1960s?

PB: Civil- Civil?

Interviewer: Civil Rights!

Interviewer: Civil Rights! I'm sorry!

Interviewer: Civil War! That would really be something!

PB: Yea, I remember them. I remember fasting food things and what not. We were- sit ins and what not. I remember.

Interviewer: Were you involved in any?

PB: Um No, I did not take- Well, in the 50s, I had a daughter then. I did not take part in things. But I did boycott the stores, what not, that did not you know, help the blacks with importing. When my good ole friends the Collins wouldn't like us or buy us stuff or anything because I wasn't- I didn't boycott as protest.

Interviewer: When were these places desegregated and how?

PB: Well a good bit- a good bit of it came because of these-

Interviewer: Sit ins?

PB: Sit ins and protests. After that they opened up.

Interviewer: How and when were the schools in Mount Pleasant integrated?

PB: Wow. I left elementary school and I went to Avery. And it was a private school. So we didn't have any problems with that. Uh, I'm not uh, I do know that they had the integration of schools but I didn't teach here. And when I taught in Charleston it was no problem. I worked at St. Simons and I know that I had 2 or 3 little children in my 5th grade. [Inaudible]

Interviewer: What were the most prominent Civil Rights leaders in Mount Pleasant?

PB: Well. There was a, you know, people would take spite or retribution for- against folks who had jobs and what not. So they would had to be somewhat independent. So I remember Altheus Johnson wanted to start the voting and start the what not. And people who had ownership, or personal ownership of stores.

Interviewer: Did integration efforts result in any violence or arrest in the town?

PB: Yea. Some people. I remember. I was so close- HA! I know of a woman who was arrested for sitting in a seat that wasn't the back seat of the bus. And I was really disgusted with that. And I knew that person. And I imagine others happened. But I tell you, I was chicken. I had a sister that could kinda keep herself together. But I just knew that I would go to into jail or something for doing something violent! So I just tried to keep her-

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

PB: Now, I'll tell you this about Mount Pleasant. Like if you knew the Pullnot's and they knew you, they were colorblind for most things. But I guess it's human nature that if you don't know somebody, you know, then you treat them differently. But we had some very good relationships with whites living here. But I've heard of some difficulties, with others, too. But I think you drum up personal feelings about these things.

Interviewer: Do you remember the Vietnam War?

PB: Yes.

Interviewer: What do you remember about that?

PB: Well there were people saying you shouldn't go because the war wasn't declared and all this kind of stuff. Some people going to Canada and what not to keep from going to the war.

Interviewer: How about protests?

[Male voice] Hi! How are you doing?

PB: Fine! How are you?

[Male voice] I'm good!

Interviewer: Were there any protests?

PB: He was a Mount Pleasant boy, too. He was vice principal of Laing.

Interviewer: Oh.

PB: Yea.

Interviewer: He was vice principal at Laing.

Interviewer: Oh!

PB: Yea. High school. Not when I was there. He was younger. He's younger. He and his wife. Well now you asked me about-?

Interviewer: The protests.

PB: Well, no. Except what we heard in Charleston. See, I was kinda out of the youth group.

Interviewer: You stayed clear?

PB: No, I was out of the youth group, then. You know. I taught and what not.

Interviewer: So none of your- all your family-?

PB: I had 2 daughters. My older daughter was a bit more for that Civil Rights sit in and stuff than that other kind of thing.

Interviewer: Did a separate youth group culture develop in Mount Pleasant in the 60s? And yes, would you consider these youth "hippies?"

PB: Hippies, or what? Yea, we would see them. Every boy who had long hair was a hippy.

Interviewer: Of course!

PB: It didn't take that much effect on me, it didn't register as something important enough to even put a dent. But I do know when you see the long hair that he was a "hippy."

Interviewer: What about drugs and alcohol during the 60s?

PB: Oh that was- Yea. And I'm sick over that to this day. I mean, it had come to us in a one horse town. Now that is really a difference. Because I told you once that we were like a family, you could talk and chastise and what not. You'd better not now because there are people who would come after you for talking about their drinking and drugs. It's bad!

Interviewer: It is bad!

Interviewer: I know, it's everywhere. What do you see as the most significant economic change- changes which have occurred in Mount Pleasant since you were young?

PB: Well we have grown. We have really grown. I think we've grown fast, fast, fast, too fast! But we didn't have work here [Inaudible] Shops or well, I say factories, because they do have t-shirt factories. So we do have work. The population has grown. Grown, grown, grown. There are people I don't know in Mount Pleasant. And I don't mean different colored people. I just don't know people in Mount Pleasant.

Interviewer: I went to Isle of Palms just the other day and I was just shocked! Cause ever- Isle-Isle of Palms has just grown! Cause I hadn't been out there in like a year. And it was just big hotels and all these-

PB: Yea we have big hotels now in Mount Pleasant, too.

Interviewer: How would you explain this expansion? I mean, what would you say's causing it?

PB: Well, people have moved. Change in population. People have been having children, I guess. Just- just growth and procreating.

Interviewer: Yea, that's true.

Interviewer: How about air conditioning? Which we're lacking right now!

Interviewer: Yea, um.

Interviewer: How would you- What impact do you think air conditioning had?

PB: I think it's wonderful!

Interviewer: I bet you wished we had it right now!

Interviewer: It's cool!

PB: Possibly, it keeps some people from the beaches because I'd rather stay in side than fool with the ants and flies out there!

Interviewer: If you could choose one thing you would like future generations to know about Mount-Mount Pleasant and your youth, what would it be?

PB: Well, I'd like the closeness. If we could get together like that. I'd like that. Caring for neighbors and their children. Being able to speak to these children. I taught these kids. I used to go crazy if I see them on the street I'd think "Oh my gosh I got to stop to talking to these people's children." And do you know I park in the parking lots in Charleston now, children are out there hanging around in the street and they're surrounding your car. I'm like "Do you parents know what you're doing?" You know, you talk to them. We had a closeness that we don't, now.

Interviewer: Where else did you teach? Besides- you said Roseville and Jasper.

PB: Yes, that was before I received my Bachelor's Degree.

Interviewer: Where did you receive your Bachelor's Degree?

PB: State College.

Interviewer: State College.

PB: And I used to teach there, also.

Interviewer: And then where did you teach?

PB: Charleston City System. Simonton, Sanders Clyde, Columbus Street. I retired from Columbus Street. Those were my treasures.

Interviewer: Oh. Okay.

Interviewer: Well that looks like that's it.

PB: Oh, very good.

Interviewer: Well we appreciate- Is there anything else you would like to say? To add to?

PB: No.

Interviewer: No?

PB: I wouldn't have had all this, you know, I think of it- to think of it.

Interviewer: Oh that's fine!

Interviewer: You've given us a lot.

Interviewer: Oh yea, you sure did!

Interviewer: I apprecia-

[End of tape]