



COME BACK TO THE LAND

AN EXPLORATION OF JAMES AND JOHNS ISLANDS AFRICAN AMERICAN SETTLEMENT COMMUNITIES



Aerial View of Coastal Forest and Marsh along South Carolina (Dreamstime)



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Report submitted to:

CDM Smith

Report prepared by:

New South Associates
6150 East Ponce de Leon Avenue
Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

Jackie Tyson

Principal Investigator

Reneé Donnell

Historian and Co-Author

Sean Stucker

Architectural Historian and Co-Author

Anna Wiman

Videographer

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(Above) Sara Sally
Chavis Geddis (Right)
Geddis Family Bible
(Wiman 2022)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The project team wishes to thank the team at CDM Smith, who assisted in the history gathering events on James and Johns islands and provided guidance and assistance with these efforts. This project would not have been possible without the invaluable assistance of two community members. Councilwoman Anna Johnson of James Island graciously provided her time and contacts, making it possible to interview several James Islanders. Dr. Elaine Jenkins of Johns Island assisted in the outreach efforts for interviewing Johns Islanders and arranged for the project team to visit the hallowed Moving Star Lodge. We are indebted to both Councilwoman Johnson and Dr. Jenkins for making these interviews possible. Mr. Cubby Wilder of Sol Legare and the Seashore Farmer's Lodge members gave several hours of their time, and the warm hospitality they showed us will long be remembered. A special thank you also goes out to the wonderful staff at the Baxter-Patrick James Island Library and the Johns Island Library. The spaces they made available to the project team during the history gathering events and their assistance was much appreciated.

A very special thank you goes to each person who volunteered their time and knowledge to be interviewed. From James Island, these individuals are Josephine Brown, William Brown, Ercella Chillis, Eugene Frazier, Ernest Parks, Joshua Parks, Ned Roper, Amelia Washington, and William "Cubby" Wilder. From Johns Island, the interviewees are Ethlemae Boyd, Audrey Deas, Antwoine Geddis, Sandra Green, Sandra Hutchinson, Bill Jenkins, Carol McClue, and Gerald Mackey.

The stories, memories, and love for their communities they shared will thankfully be preserved in these oral history interviews. Without their firsthand accounts, this study would not have been possible. We hope the spirit of the special people and places we encountered during this project comes through in this study.

"I AM A NATIVE OF JOHNS ISLAND... I HAVE BEEN TRYING
TO OBLITERATE IGNORANCE, TO PROMOTE HEALTH AND
SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL AND CIVIC WELFARE AND TO COMBAT
JUVENILE DELINQUENCY – TO SECURE A MORE RICH AND
ABUNDANT LIFE FOR OURSELVES AND FOR POSTERITY..."

Esau Jenkins

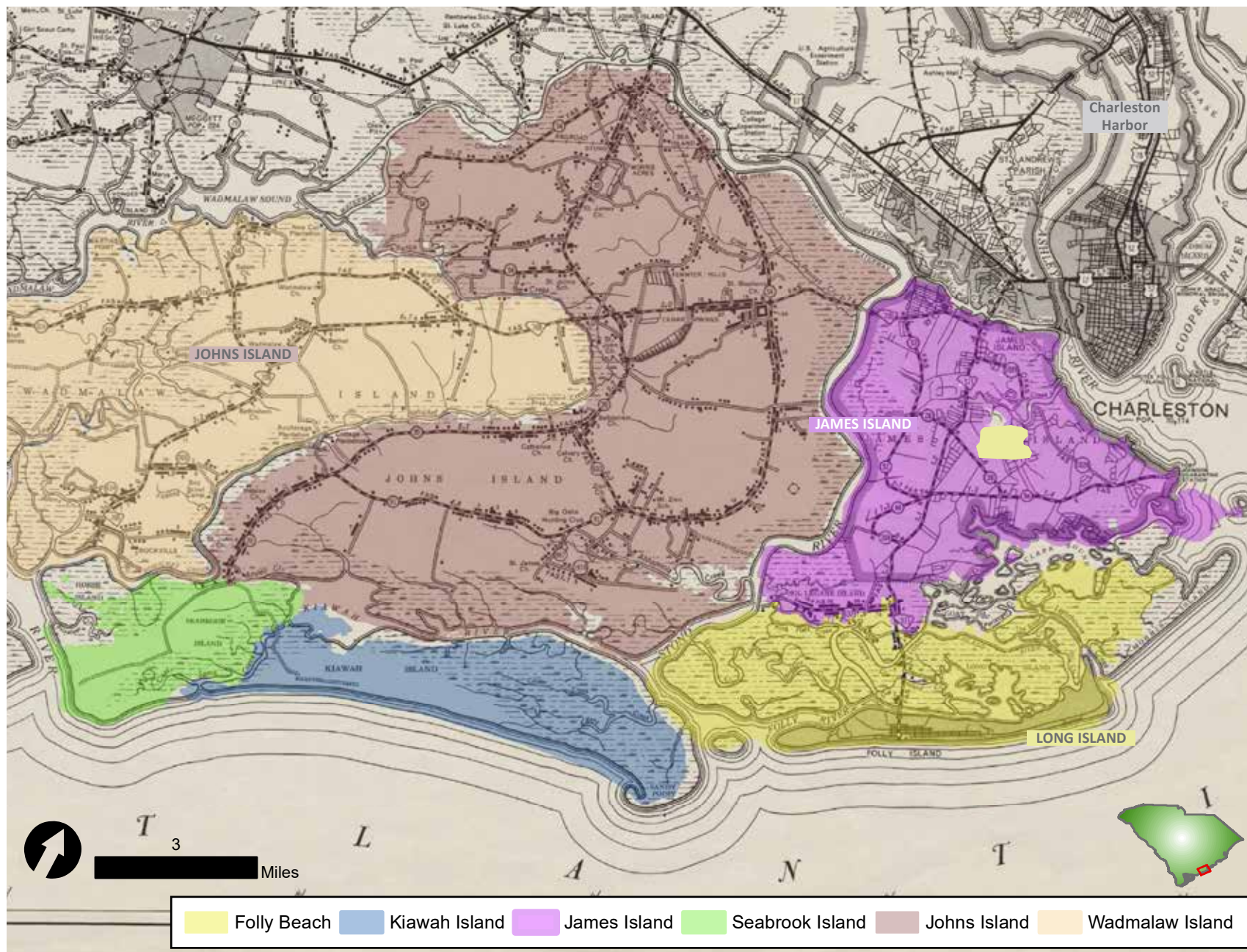


TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. HISTORIC CONTEXT	5
III. JAMES ISLAND IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.....	28
IV. LEARNING ABOUT JAMES ISLAND'S SETTLEMENT COMMUNITIES THROUGH ORAL HISTORY	35
V. JOHNS ISLAND IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY	48
VI. LEARNING ABOUT JOHNS ISLAND'S SETTLEMENT COMMUNITIES THROUGH ORAL HISTORY	55
VII. A CULTURAL ATLAS OF THE ISLANDS.....	71
VIII. CONCLUSION	127
REFERENCES	128
APPENDIX: ORAL HISTORY TRANSCRIPTS.....	135
JAMES ISLAND ORAL HISTORY PARTICIPANT TRANSCRIPTS.....	137
JOHNS ISLAND ORAL HISTORY PARTICIPANT TRANSCRIPTS	258



(Opposite) The Seashore Farmer's Lodge on James Island, Interior of the Second Floor (NSA 2022). (Right) Victrola Inside the Seashore Farmer's Lodge, James Island (NSA 2022)



Overview of Study Area Showing Settlements

I. INTRODUCTION

New South Associates (NSA) has completed a research study of multiple African American Settlement Communities on both James and Johns islands in Charleston County, South Carolina for the South Carolina Department of Transportation's (SCDOT) Mark Clark Expressway Expansion Project. This investigation sought to compile and create a "cultural atlas" of the identified communities that the respective communities can use for future cultural heritage preservation.

Oral history interviews were gathered from May through June of 2022, and Historian Renéé Donnell conducted the interviews, while Videographer Anna Wiman provided audio and visual expertise. Architectural Historian Sean Stucker conducted historical research at repositories in both Columbia and Charleston, South Carolina, during that same period, and Senior Architectural Historian Jackie Tyson served as Project Manager. This report brings collected narratives and archival information together with historic images and maps to present a historic context for James and Johns islands. Specific examinations of each settlement community for which information was gathered follow that broader historic context. The report also includes an atlas, both visual and narrative, of identified sites and areas across both islands that are associated with the various settlement communities, as well as a bibliography.

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS

Residents of both James and Johns islands attended the public interview sessions, with some signing up to be interviewed and some recommending others to be interviewed. Community member and Charleston County

Councilwoman Anna Johnson was of great assistance in arranging James Island resident interviews, while community member Elaine Jenkins provided a similar service on Johns Island. Some community members also shared historic photographs and items that were pertinent to the interview information provided.

The project aimed to conduct five to 10 individual interviews and one group interview in each community in the spring/early summer of 2022. On May 18 and 19, interviews were held at the Baxter-Patrick Public Library on James Island. The Johns Island Regional Public Library served as the interview site on May 20 and again on June 21 and 22. Interviews were also conducted at

James Island Residents Participate in History Collection Event in May 2022 (NSA 2022)



the Seashore Farmers Lodge (Sol Legare), the Moving Star Hall (Johns Island), and at the homes of several interviewees (including Ercella Chillis and Eugene Frazier). In total, 11 individual and two group interviews were completed.

All interviews were audio and video recorded then transcribed and edited. Photographs or scans of memorabilia and documents associated with the interviews were digitally documented. Potential repositories for collected audio/video files, materials, transcripts, and reports include the Avery Research Center at the College of Charleston; the South Carolina Department of Archives and History (SCDAH) in Columbia, with approval from Charleston County and the NPS; and the International African American Museum in Charleston. Each interviewee received a copy of their interview and transcription.

ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

Historical research was conducted to provide context for the oral history interviews and to identify illustrations and photographs to include in the report. Architectural Historian Sean Stucker visited the Avery Research Center, Charleston; the South Carolina Historical Society (SCHS) at the College of Charleston Addlestone Library; the Charleston County Public Library's South Carolina History Room; the University of South Carolina's Caroliniana Library in Columbia; and SCDAH, Columbia. Collections consulted at Avery and SCHS included several biographical and some themed collections, such as personal papers pertaining to African Americans on James and Johns islands (Esther K. Pivnick Collection of Johns Island and Elizabeth H. Stringfellow Research Papers), maps (McCrady and Gaillard Plat Collections), and collections on the Mosquito Beach Community at both repositories. The South Carolina History Room at the Charleston County Public Library contains numerous maps of the county and James Island. City directories for Charleston at the Caroliniana Library were also reviewed.

The project benefited from books by scholars who have contributed to the body of research about the history of African American life on James and Johns islands. The list includes Eugene Frazier's *A History of James Island Slave Descendants and Plantation Owners*, Emory S. Campbell's *Gullah Cultural Legacies: A Synopsis of Gullah Traditions*, Douglas W. Bostick's *A Brief History of James Island: Jewel of the Sea Islands*, Arcadia Publishing's *James Island and John's Island* books from the *Images of America* collection, and *A Place Called St. Johns: The Story of Johns, Edisto, Wadmalaw, Kiawah, and Seabrook Islands of South Carolina* by Jordan and Stringfellow (Bonstelle & Buxton 2008; Bostick 2008; E. Campbell 2008; E. Frazier 2010; Haynie 2007; Jordan & Stringfellow 1998).

Please note that this report uses the word *plantation*, as both a proper and a common noun. Nikole Hannah-Jones of *The 1619 Project* fame argues that language matters, "because it can either clarify or obscure, it can either justify or explicate." Hanna-Jones explains that

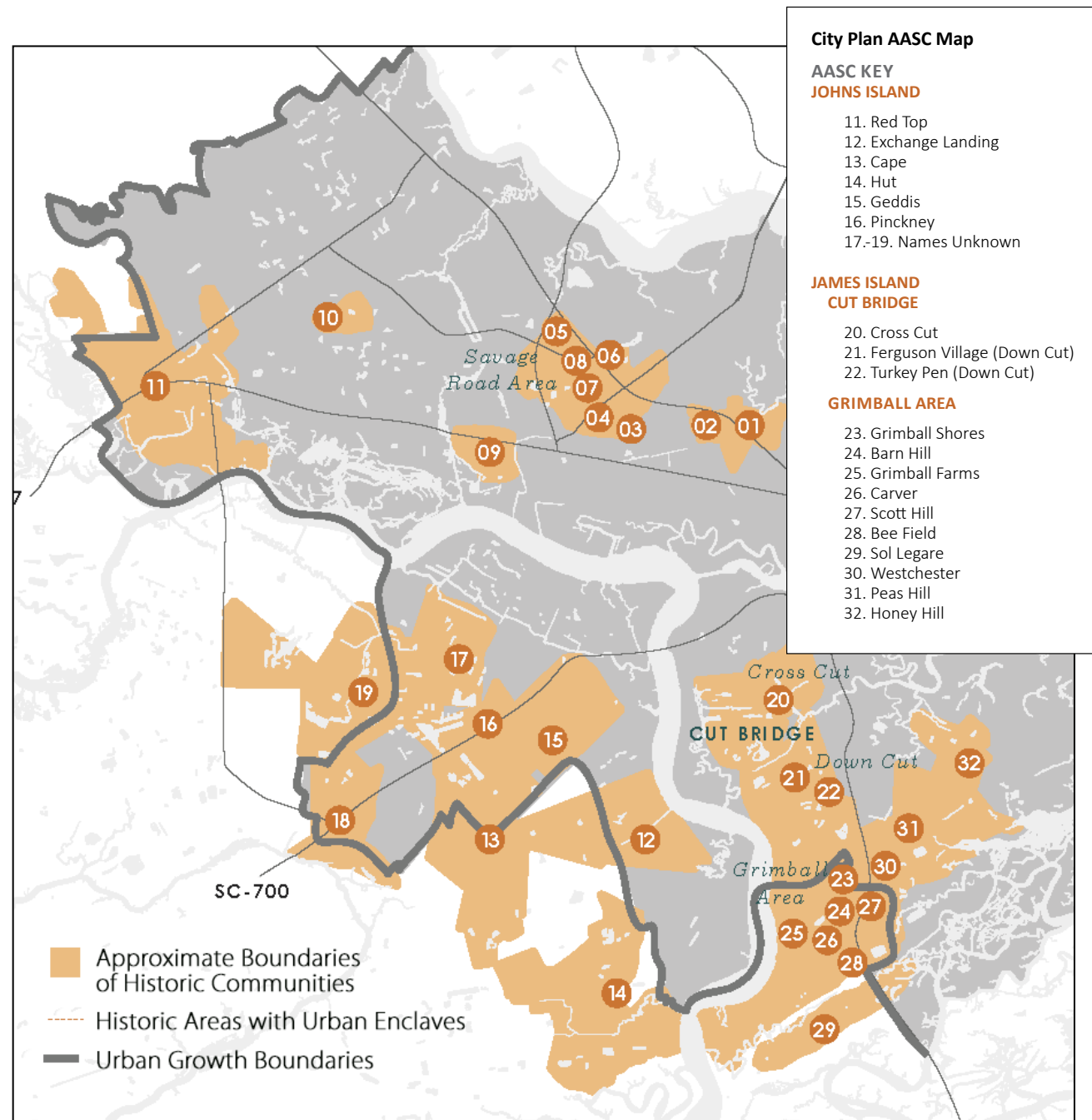
the use of the word "plantation" is why we have weddings on the sites of torture, on the sites of forced labor, on the sites of places where human beings through extreme violence, or the threat of violence, or coercion were forced to labor for life for no pay, where their children were bought and sold away from them...that we can have these kind of bucolic images of *Gone With the Wind* in a way that you would never see on a concentration camp in Germany (Throughline n.d.).

Language, indeed, matters, and life on a plantation was both brutal and far from romanticized portrayals of southern gentility. However, the interviewees for this project use the word *plantation* rather than *neighborhood* or the academically charged *settlement community* to describe particular areas on

the islands, both in the past and today. As a proper noun, the word also still appears in place names, such as McLeod Plantation, an antebellum plantation on James Island, and Grand Oaks Plantation, a subdivision in West Ashley. While the word's appropriateness is hotly contested, New South uses the interviewees' own language.

Finally, the Charleston City Plan of 2020 served as an important starting point for this study. The city plan attempted to identify, as much as possible, boundaries of Historic African American Settlement Communities throughout the city. Without this previous acknowledgement of these communities, this effort would not have been possible.

This study is organized into four sections, in addition to this Introduction: Chapter II is the Historic Context, followed by Chapters IV and V, which provide overviews of the settlement communities of the two islands. Chapter VII is a cultural atlas of the two islands. All oral history interview transcripts are included as an appendix.





Angel Oak (Dreamstime)

II. HISTORIC CONTEXT

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CHARLESTON

South Carolina's historic period began in 1670 with the region's first permanent settlement, Charles Towne, at Albemarle Point. King Charles II awarded several of his noble supporters, known as the Lords Proprietors, a grant to establish Charles Towne. Some of the Lords Proprietors were already involved in colonial affairs in Virginia and in the Caribbean. After the

Detail of Charleston Harbor on Henry Popple's 1733 "A Map of the British Empire in America with the French and Spanish Settlements Adjacent Thereto." (Popple 1733)



Revolutionary War, the name was changed to Charleston, to distance the town from its British past.

Proprietary Carolina was a commercial export trader from its very inception. The colony was created mostly to supply the sugar plantations of Barbados and neighboring islands with foodstuffs and resources, such as beef and lumber (Rosen 1997). Its merchants' success and location on the southern Atlantic coast encouraged Charleston's rapid rise, and the city came to dominate regional politics, religion, and society.

Settlers in early Charleston came from Europe, the northern colonies, and the Caribbean islands. A large population of enslaved Africans came from Barbados and the West Indies. Others came from Britain, Ireland, the Netherlands, New York, and New England. In the first year of settlement, people planted corn, cotton, and indigo, and they harvested timber, tar, and resin from the pine forests (Morrison 1952). Diverse agriculture and commerce quickly transformed Charleston into the South's leading port and trading center, and early colonists used the capital gained from exports to establish plantations throughout the Lowcountry.

Many who received land grants for their Sea Island plantations also built homes on the Charleston peninsula, establishing a "Town and Country" community. Close familial and business relationships kept the city and the island plantations tightly linked (Gregorie 1925; Stucker & Stewart 2021). One reason for this dual residency was their fear of "country fever," or malaria and other water- and insect-borne diseases. They also wanted access to the town's social and cultural amenities (Preservation Consultants, Inc. 1989).

For their plantations, planters had laborers drain swamps, clear fields, plant seeds, weed crops, and harvest mature stock. The late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century labor pool included indentured European servants as well as enslaved Native Americans and Africans (Coclanis 1989; Gallay 2010).

However, Native Americans were susceptible to mosquito-borne diseases like malaria, and they were more likely to successfully escape, because of their knowledge of the land. European servants were not accustomed to the climate and were also susceptible to disease. Most had little to no knowledge of rice cultivation or tidal agriculture. Enslaved Africans, by contrast, were more accustomed to the subtropical climate and its associated dangers.

Enslaved Africans also brought agricultural knowledge with them. They knew about cattle herding and cultivating crops in hot, swampy environments like the Sea Islands. Rice cultivation and field preparation required extensive engineering knowledge as well as labor, and many enslaved West Africans had the knowledge and expertise needed to establish and maintain rice plantations (Gallay 2003). They sculpted the land to make it suitable for farming. They cleared fields and dug canals, known as cuts, to allow controlled amounts of fresh water into fields as needed. All of this had to be done before the first seed was planted.

Most enslaved persons were agricultural workers, but many had knowledge of other crafts and skills too, such as basketry, pottery-making, leatherworking, herbal medicine, fishing, and hunting. A select few worked domestically in the plantation house or elsewhere. Other specialized jobs included carpenter, bricklayer, boat maker, and blacksmith (Preservation Consultants, Inc. 1989). Work on the plantation often lasted from sunup to sundown, or “kin to kant” – when one can and cannot see by daylight. For most enslaved people, the work week was six days long. Only Sundays were set aside for rest and attending church (MacDougal 1989: 1-D).

JAMES ISLAND ORIGINS

In December 1671, the Council of the Province decreed that a town be established on James Island, “in a Creeke Southward from Stonoe Creek,”

now known as Wappoo Creek. The exact site proposed for James Town is not known, and no plat of it has survived. The town was located along James Island Creek, some sections of which were known as New Town Creek (or Cut) and Ellis Creek (Preservation Consultants, Inc. 1989).

James Town was designated as a “colony” of 12,000 acres. Settlers were granted half-acre town parcels and then drew lots for ten-acre “planting parcels” adjacent to the town. Some received grants for larger plantation tracts on New Town Creek. Among those who received plantation grants were Peter Herne, John Foster, James Jones, Thomas Fluellin, and Thomas Williams. Michael Smith, John Maverick, and Richard Chapman were identified as merchants of James Town in 1672. By the mid-1670s, James and Johns islands had scattered settlements, mostly along navigable waterways. James Town existed for only a short time. The town was last mentioned in records from 1686 (Preservation Consultants, Inc. 1989).

On some early maps, James Island is called Boone’s Island. The name is believed to have come from John Boone, who received a grant for land on the island on August 17, 1682. Boone was a member of the Council of the Province. but the Lords Proprietors expelled him from the council in 1691. He was alleged to have consorted with and helped pirates, who were seen as a primary threat to the young colony. The name James Island was used in public documents as early as 1693 (Preservation Consultants, Inc. 1989). A map from 1695 identifies both islands, and another dated 1711 depicts plantations and property owners along the banks of the Stono River on both islands (Crisp 1711).

Other settlers had acquired land on James Island by the end of the seventeenth century. These included the wealthy Barbadian immigrant Bernard Schenckinckh as well as John Chaplain, John Croskeys, Jonathan Drake, John Ellis, Jr., Paul Grimball, Benjamin Lamboll, Cassique John Monck,



"A Compleat Description of the Province of South Carolina" Edward Crisp's 1711 Map Showing James (Boone's) Island (Crisp 1711)

James Island's Rural Landscape in the Early Nineteenth Century, as seen on an 1820s map of "Charleston Harbour and the adjacent Coast and Country." (Bache 1825)



and William Rivers. In 1697, Thomas Drayton had a hundred acres "on the North Side of the Head of New Towne Creeke" (Preservation Consultants, Inc. 1989: 8). Plantations on the island then included the circa-1696 Lamboll's Plantation, the Cuthbert-Heyward House (ca. 1740), the Stiles-Hinson House, and McLeod Plantation. In the early twentieth century, the Cuthbert-Heyward House was called Lawton Bluff and considered part of the Lawton Plantation. The original Stiles-Hinson House was built around 1747 and replaced by the current Victorian structure in the late nineteenth century. At one point, it was called Mikell Plantation. The property's land was actively cultivated into the 1960s (*Historic Sites of James Island* 2020).

The McLeod family purchased the Perronneau/Lightwood/Parker plantation at the north end of James Island in 1851 and changed its name to McLeod. It continued agricultural operations until around 1940. Willis Ellis McLeod, the last person to own McLeod Plantation, and many descendants of the enslaved people who worked the plantation lived on the property into the 1990s (Charleston County Parks and Recreation Commission 2022). Other plantations on James Island included the Dill (Stono), Grimbball, Seabrook, Sol Legare, and Clark plantations (E. Frazier 2010). Despite the number of plantations spread across the island, its character remained rural throughout the nineteenth and well into the twentieth century. While the population clustered in some areas, most of the land remained as farms or fallow land.

JOHNS ISLAND ORIGINS

Johns Island (also spelled *John's*) was settled a little later than James Island. Some early records called it St. John's Island. Beginning around 1675, land grants were given to wealthy colonists, including some with names that persist on the island today, such as Gibbes, Stanyarne, and Blake. One of the earliest land grants recorded went to Captain William Davis in 1680. The initial grant was for 500 acres near what later became Legareville and Sol Legare's

Hanscome Point Plantation. Another grant, for 600 additional acres, followed in 1703. At least three Stanyarnes (Thomas, Sr., James, and John) were granted land between 1693 and 1703, and the family became prominent, influential residents of the island (Jordan & Stringfellow 1998: 234–235).

By the late 1690s, Thomas Stanyarne, Sr. established the Brick House Plantation near present-day Bryan Dairy Road. In 1757, John Stanyarne, Sr. was known for one of the finest indigo crops ever shipped abroad (Haynie 2007). All that remains of Brick House Plantation is the Stanyarne family cemetery near Hamilton Road. Other early grantees include the Honorable Lt. Joseph Blake and Elizabeth Godfrey. In 1695, Joseph Blake received all 2,220 acres of the future Seabrook Island. Elizabeth Godfrey received a grant on April 14, 1710, for 610 acres. This land would become Bohicket Ridge Plantation (Jordan & Stringfellow 1998: 234–235; Preservation Consultants, Inc. 1989).

Other large land grantees and plantation owners included John Fenwick, Kinsey Burden, George Saxby, the Legares, the Whaleys, and the Ropers. In 1721, Fenwick acquired the property on the Stono River through his wife, Elizabeth Gibbes. By 1730, he had replaced the log home there with the two-story brick Fenwick Hall, which still stands on the property today (Wheaton et al. 1995). Fenwick Hall is the only existing example of high-style Georgian architecture on Johns Island. Edward Fenwick, John's son, was a horse breeder and took ownership of Fenwick Hall in the 1750s. He helped establish the first South Carolina jockey club in 1758, and he established the "Johns Island Stud" horse farm at Fenwick Hall. One of the finest American horse farms, Fenwick Hall was famous for producing championship racers (Fick et al. 1989). At the horse farm, Fenwick built two large brick barns, enclosed 1,000 acres of grassy savannah for grazing, and created a racetrack along part of the present-day Maybank Highway. During both the Revolutionary and Civil wars, troops on both sides occupied the hall (Baluha & Hendrix 2002).



Fenwick Hall Prior to Restoration in the 1930s (Above) and Following that Restoration (Below) (Schuette 1972)



Kinsey Burden established Oakvale Plantation. It later passed to Robert Gibbes, who established Peaceful Retreat Plantation and Burden's Place on the site, both on the Stono River. At Oakvale, Burden "perfected the process of seed selection to produce one of the finest quality Sea Island long-staple cotton fibers ever grown" (Haynie 2007: 18).

By 1741, George Saxby owned the Saxby Plantation off River Road. The Saxby Plantation bordered the Stono River. Along with Bosomworth Plantation, it was the site of Fort Trenholm and other small batteries during the Civil War (Haynie 2007).

The population of enslaved people varied each year and for each plantation, but the number and percentage of enslaved people steadily increased during America's early decades. The first census, in 1790, counted 2,546 enslaved people on James Island. By 1810, that number had grown to 3,179 (James Island History Commission 2021). By the 1860 census, the enslaved population on the island had dropped to 1,533 (Bostik 2013). It is not known how many enslaved people worked the land at each plantation at the start of the Civil War, but their labor created and sustained Charleston's booming economy.

The creeks, rivers, and other waterways surrounding James and Johns islands were important transportation arteries for island residents well into the



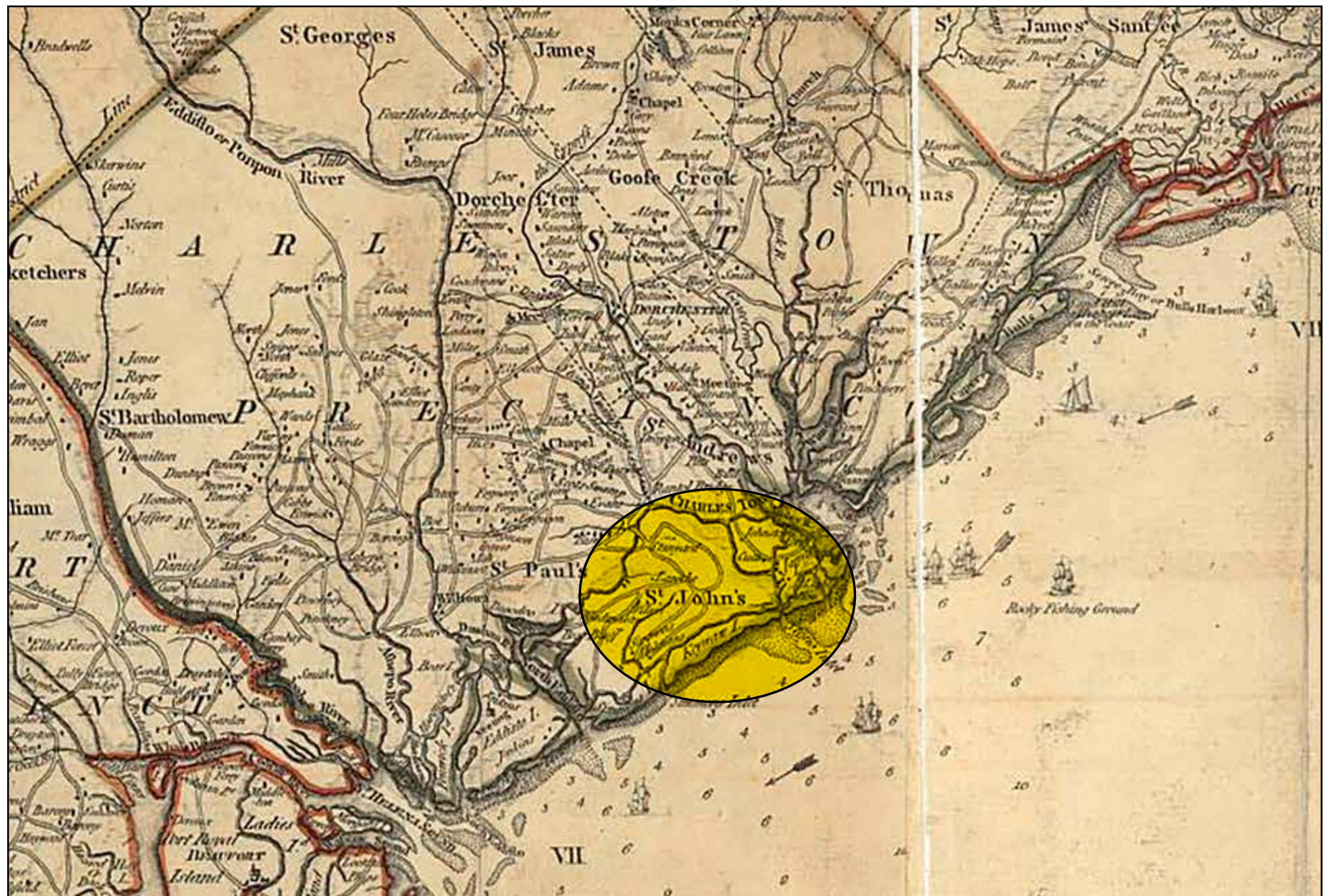
Slaves and Quarters, Charleston, South Carolina, 1860.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

twentieth century. They used them to get from one island to another, into downtown Charleston, or even from one side of an island to another. Yet the islands, especially Johns, are quite large, and roads are needed to get to the interior portions. On July 19, 1707, an act for building highways was ratified. It designated groups of commissioners to create main roads both James and Johns islands. These early roads have not been identified, but a 1775 map of Carolina shows the foundation of the road system that exists on the island today. On the map, the antecedent to River Road tracks the Stono River, and the intersection of Main and Bohicket roads is taking shape.

ENSLAVEMENT AND ANTEBELLUM ERA

In the eighteenth century, Indigo and rice were South Carolina's main cash crops. Rice cultivation began as soon as land was granted and plantations were established on the islands, but its heyday came when Carolina Gold was introduced, around 1787. Between 1846 and 1860, it was "the highest priced rice on the Parisian world market" (Carolina Gold Rice Foundation 2011). While indigo had been grown experimentally since the earliest years of colonial settlement in South Carolina, it became a thriving cash crop by the mid-1700s. Eliza Lucas Pinckney, of the Wappoo Plantation on James Island, began experimenting with indigo around 1740. By 1744, her plantation and

Detail of Charleston and Johns Island on Mouzon's 1775 "Accurate Map of North and South Carolina with Their Indian Frontiers." (Mouzon 1775)



GANG OF 25 SEA ISLAND COTTON AND RICE NEGROES,

By LOUIS D. DE SAUSSURE.

On *THURSDAY* the 25th Sept., 1852, at 11 o'clock, A.M., will be sold at RYAN'S MART, in Chalmers Street, in the City of Charleston,

A prime gang of 25 Negroes, accustomed to the culture of Sea Island Cotton and Rice.

CONDITIONS.—One-half Cash, balance by Bond, bearing interest from day of sale, payable in one and two years, to be secured by a mortgage of the negroes and approved personal security. Purchasers to pay for papers.

No.	Age	Capacity	No.	Age	Capacity
1 Aleck,	33	Carpenter.	16 Hannah,	60	Cook.
2 Mary Ann,	31	Field hand, prime.	17 Cudjoe,	22	Prime field hand.
3—3 Louisa,	10		18 Nancy,	20	Prime field hand, sister of Cudjoe.
4 Abram,	25	Prime field hand.	19 Hannah,	34	Prime field hand.
5 Judy,	24	Prime field hand.	20 James,	13	Slight defect in knee Lam's broken leg.
6 Carolina,	5		21 Richard,	9	
7 Simon,	1½		22 Thomas,	6	
5—8 Daphne, infant.			5—23 John,	3	
9 Daniel,	45	Field hand, not prime.	1—24 Squash,	40	Prime field hand.
10 Phillis,	32	Field hand.	1—25 Thomas,	28	Prime field hand.
11 Will,	9				
12 Daniel,	6				
13 Margaret,	4				
14 Della,	2				
7—15 Hannah,	2 months.				

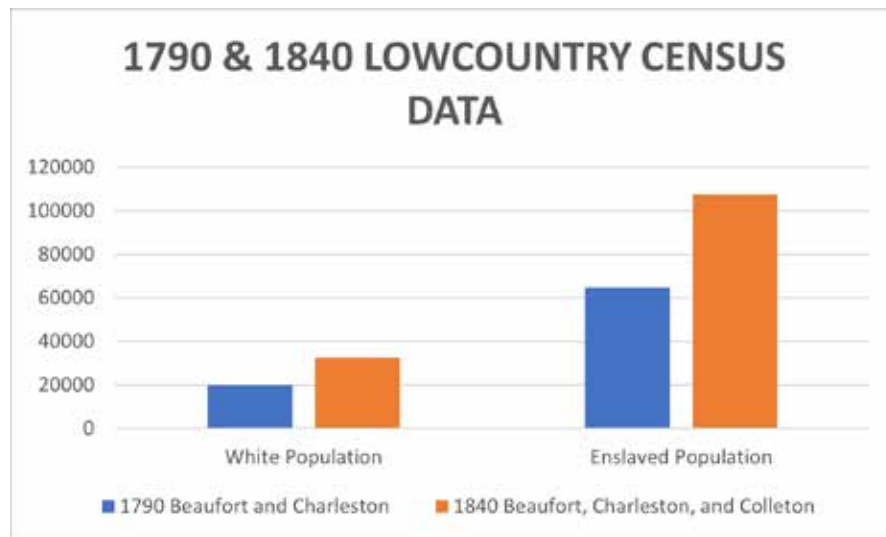
1852 Charleston Flyer Advertising the Sale of Enslaved Workers Specialized in Cotton and Rice Agriculture. (DeSaussure 1852)

enslaved work force produced a large enough crop to begin dye production (NPS 2021).

Because of constant demand and the six-pence-per-pound British bounty, indigo was a very profitable crop for the colonists. However, it is a labor-intensive crop, to produce it requires many people. This led to the first influx of enslaved Africans into the South Carolina Lowcountry (Prince 2019). Indigo also proved to be an ideal complement to rice. A single group of enslaved workers could cultivate both crops in alternating seasons (Butler 2019). Economic disruptions leading up to and during the Revolutionary War ended the American indigo industry. After that, rice dominated until Sea Island or long-staple cotton arrived around 1790 (Baluha & Hendrix 2002).

Cotton and rice agriculture created an even greater demand for enslaved people, as these labor-intensive crops could not have been produced at such a scale for large profits without slave labor. So many laborers were needed that enslaved Africans consistently outnumbered whites in the Lowcountry. By the early 1700s, the Carolina colony had a Black majority. Between 1790 and 1840, the white population in the Lowcountry – that is, Beaufort and Charleston and, by 1840, Colleton – had grown from 19,766 to 32,445. During the same period, the enslaved population grew from 64,869 to 107,467 (Manson et al. 2021). The local economy and the Carolina economy as a whole were built on the efforts of enslaved Africans and depended on slavery being legal. The African population increased so much that a 1737 visitor remarked, “Carolina looks more like a negro country than a country settled by white people” (Wood 1974: 132–133). This exponential growth ended when a prohibitive duty on the import of newly enslaved Africans was levied in 1741, after the Stono Rebellion (Wood 1974).

By the nineteenth century, cotton emerged as South Carolina’s main cash. Sea Island cotton dominated in the Lowcountry. The Sea Islands were well-



1790 and 1840 Lowcountry Census Data Showing White and Enslaved Population Increase Over 50 Years. (Manson 2021)

suited to growing this long-staple cotton. Before this type of cotton could be processed into fibers, the seeds and chaff had to be removed by hand. The cotton gin, introduced in the 1790s, sped that process up. It made a short-staple cotton variety economically viable, and many coastal plantations began growing the crop. Plantation owners profited from the enslaved people working these farms by selling cotton to New England and British mills (Stucker & Stewart 2021).

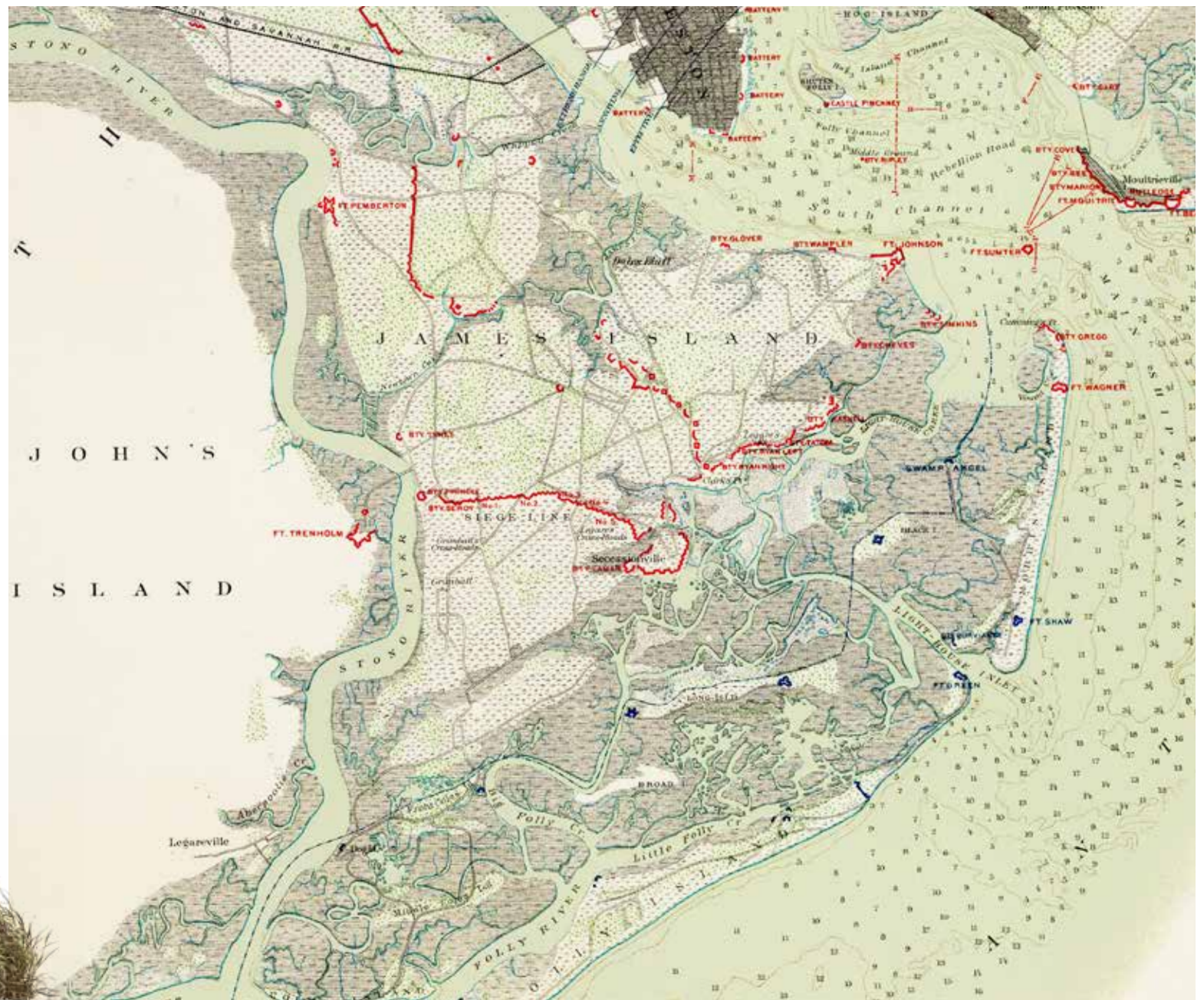
CIVIL WAR ERA

The election of President Abraham Lincoln in 1860 spelled the end of the Southern plantation lifestyle and economy. Civil war appeared increasingly likely, until finally, Confederate soldiers from Fort Johnson on James Island fired on Union soldiers at Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, on April 12, 1861. The battle lasted two days. Although no one was killed, the battle started the

Civil War (National Geographic Society 2022). The Lowcountry experienced extensive fighting throughout the war, and, as in the Revolutionary War, James Island was strategically important for the control of Charleston. When Union forces captured Fort Sumter and then Port Royal and Beaufort in 1861, the Confederate Army evacuated the enslavers and most of the people they held in slavery from the James Island plantations (Fick et al. 1989).

While there were minor skirmishes elsewhere in the area, most of the fortifications were on James Island. The island bore the brunt of the fighting, including notable battles like the engagement at Secessionville in 1862 (U.S. War Department et al. 1895). Defensive lines extended northwest from Battery Pringle to Fort Lamar and Battery Tynes, all built to deny Federal gunboats access to the upper Stono River (Baluha & Hendrix 2002).

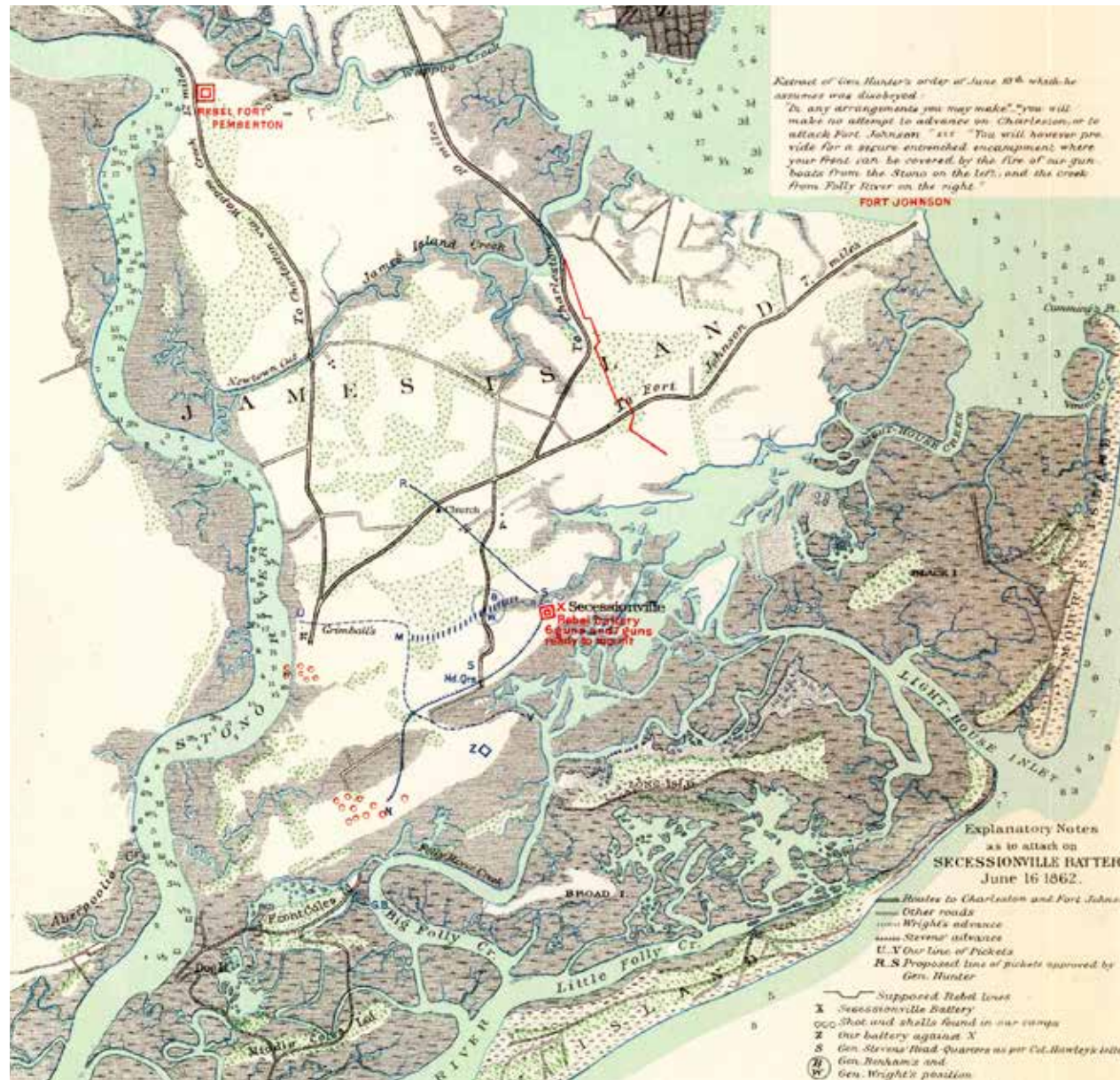
The war arrived on Sol Legare in 1862 or 1863. The historical marker at the Seaside Farmers Lodge purports that a battle involving the Massachusetts 54th Regiment took place on July 16, 1863. However, other documentation states that “at least two, possibly three, skirmishes took place on Sol Legare Island before the Battle of Secessionville” on June 16, 1862. On June 2, “a federal gunboat in the Folly River shelled Legare’s Point and Secessionville, then on June 3, there was a land skirmish at Sol Legare’s place below Secessionville.” Additionally, “the 1863 map shows a skirmish in the central part of the island on June 6” (Trinkley 1984: 9, 11). No mention, however, is made of a Battle of Sol Legare in 1863. Moreover, other sources indicate the Battle of Grimball’s Landing took place on James Island on July 16, 1863, the same day as the supposed Sol Legare battle (Ohio State University N.D.). Meanwhile, two days after the Massachusetts 54th’s supposed defeat on Sol Legare was the Battle of Battery Wagner, depicted in the 1989 movie *Glory*, at Fort Wagner on Morris Island. The Massachusetts 54th was decimated in the Battle of Battery Wagner. One interviewee for this project described their sacrifice as “a slaughter that we had to endure because we, at that time, were looking



Detail of James Island "Plate IV: Map of the Defenses of Charleston City and Harbor, showing also the Works Erected by the U.S. Forces in 1863 and 1864." (Arms 1895)



Detail of Inset Map of Secessionville on "Plate XXIII: 1st Corps Army of Virginia; Secessionville; Grand Lake Region." (Abbot 1895)



at the future, and we knew we had to do that for the future, for our future" (E. Parks, personal communication, May 20, 2022). Therefore, the Massachusetts 54th was not likely at Sol Legare on July 16, 1863, as they would probably not have marched to Fort Wagner for another battle in under two days, given the geography (American Battlefield Trust 2021).

The Civil War impacted Johns Island when, in February 1863, James and Johns Island residents were ordered to evacuate. A map dated November 1863 shows the names of many evacuees near their landholdings and shows the road system in detail. As a preemptive measure, Fort Trenholm was built along the Stono River, on the central eastern side of Johns Island. According to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), Fort Trenholm is the "largest earthen fort in the Charleston Theatre of Operations." Hundreds of enslaved people and Confederate troops built the triangular fort in just six months (Haynie 2007: 22). Both sides again used Fenwick Hall as temporary headquarters and potentially as a field hospital (Bean 2009).

Most battles on Johns Island happened near the Stono River (Preservation Consultants,



(Opposite) Detail of James and Johns Islands on 1863 Map (Chamber of Commerce 1863)

Inc. 1989). After an unnamed skirmish on July 5, 1864, the Battle of Bloody Bridge was fought July 7–9, 1864. The greatest number of Civil War casualties on Johns Island happened during this battle. After the battle, in the face of 4,000 Union troops led by General John P. Hatch, the Confederate Stono Scouts burned the village of Legareville. Many Johns Island planters had summer retreats in Legareville. The Confederates wanted to keep Union troops, camped on Kiawah Island, from occupying these homes and using any resources there (Haynie 2007: 26). When the Works Progress Administration (WPA) interviewed Johns Island resident Mrs. Susan Quall in 1932, she said, “When the Yanks came through that night, and looked for us and see the fire, then the father then said, ‘We have to move from this place because we might got shot.’ And he picked me up on his back and he run with me. And I said to him, ‘Pa, papa put me down because then he must catch me’” (Quall 1932).

EMANCIPATION TO RECONSTRUCTION

On January 1st, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. It stated that “all persons held as slaves, within the rebellious states are, and henceforward shall be free,” but the freedom it promised depended on a Union victory (National Archives 2022). In January 1865, the 13th Amendment was added to the constitution, and the end of institutionalized slavery was one step closer. “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction,” it stated, and “Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation” (Constitution of the United States 1788). When the Confederacy fell and the Civil War

ended, on April 9, 1865, freedom was finally secured for the Southern enslaved population.

With the war’s end, a new era in the United States began – one in which a now united nation endeavored to protect a group of people only recently granted legal rights and recognition. In Charleston, where Black people outnumbered the white population by more than 4,000 in 1870, emancipation brought significant change for everyone. Some African Americans had themselves been enslavers. They lost property and standing along with their white counterparts. Some more affluent African Americans, many of them free Blacks before Emancipation, applied their skills and education to serve the newly freed Blacks in Charleston. The Avery Institute, for instance, Charleston’s first free secondary school for African Americans, was established in 1867 (Stucker & Stewart 2021).

The Reconstruction era brought some advancements for the newly freed people, including the 14th and 15th amendments. In 1869, the 14th amendment recognized Black people as United States citizens. It also guaranteed that a citizen’s right “to vote shall not be denied or abridged...on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude” (Constitution of the United States 1788). Many Black registered voters joined the Republican party, because Lincoln was seen as a liberator. Known Republican party meetings were held on James and Johns islands, and many Black people were elected to state office and the United States Congress across the country (History.com 2022).

In South Carolina, one celebrated African American who reaped the benefits of suffrage was Robert Smalls. Smalls was best known for leading the mutiny of the Confederate sidewheel the *Planter* in Charleston, in May 1862 (Lineberry 2017). Following the war, Smalls served in the South Carolina militia and, from 1868 to 1874, represented the Beaufort area in the South

Carolina State Assembly and Senate. Smalls then served five nonconsecutive terms in the U.S. House of Representatives (1874–1886). However, South Carolina began rolling back Reconstruction-era progress. Eventually, in 1895, the state constitution was revised to strip Black people of their voting rights (Gates & Root 2013).

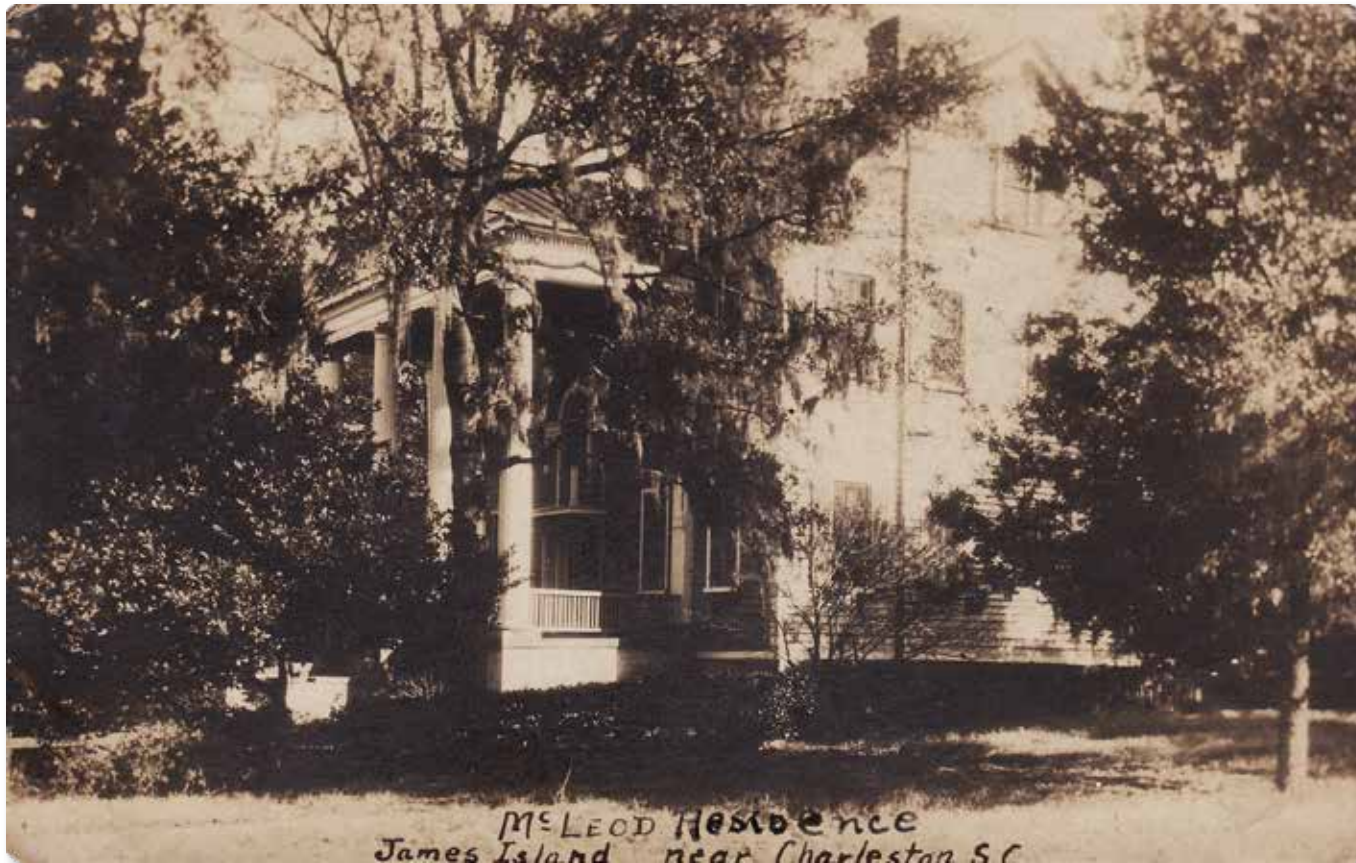
In addition to the African Americans already living in Charleston and the neighboring islands, newly emancipated people arrived in Charleston from other parts of the country, for various reasons. Current James Island resident Mrs. Ercella Chillis tells the story of her grandmother *walking* from Alabama to Charleston with her seven sons, in hopes of catching a boat to Africa. They “never got a boat...back to Africa.” Instead, they settled in St. Andrews, in the southeastern area of West Ashley, around 1877 (E. Chillis 2022). Mrs. Chillis’s father soon moved to King Plantation on James Island (in the Grimball Area), where he was able to work and eventually purchase land that his descendants still live on today. In another oral history interview, Mr. Ernest Parks spoke of his great-grandfather, Mr. Harrison Wilder, who arrived on Sol Legare in 1865. After serving with the 104th US CT from Beaufort, Mr. H. Wilder purchased land on Sol Legare, where many of his descendants still live today (E. Parks 2022).

Purchasing land was a priority for freed people after the Civil War. Free Blacks possessed the many skills required of them during slavery, such as farming, masonry, and carpentry. As new property owners, they used these skills to improve their land holdings and their communities. Newly freed Blacks often lived and worked on the plantations where they had been enslaved. While some were able to get land after the war, others had to rely on white landowners and former enslavers (E. Parks 2022).

The Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, also known as the Freedmen’s Bureau, was established in the War Department by an

act of Congress on March 3, 1865. Its purpose was to manage all affairs regarding the newly freed population and lands seized or abandoned during the war. The Freedmen’s Bureau’s duties included, but were not limited to, allocating clothing and rations, supervising labor contracts between planters and freed people, and assisting benevolent societies in establishing schools (Freedmen’s Bureau 2021). On James Island, McLeod Plantation was the Freedmen’s Bureau’s local headquarters. At first, the Bureau helped negotiate contracts between white employers and Black workers, but the strategy was never fully implemented, because many plantations were returned to their former owners (Bostick 2008). Moreover, many freedmen disliked the group contract system the Bureau used. Arguing that it would result in slavery-like working conditions, they advocated working for individual wages instead (Preservation Consultants, Inc. 1989).

In 1870, the tenant and sharecropper farm systems were established as alternatives to the contract system. Through these systems, landowners rented out plots of land where farmers tended the land, grew crops, sold the crops, and then paid their rent in either cash or a percentage of their yield. Unlike in the rest of the South, these farming systems were rare amongst the Sea Islands. The exception is James Island, where agriculture was a focus through the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. On James Island, many enslaved laborers became free holders and sharecroppers who rented land from landowners (Bostick 2008). By the 1880s, wages averaged \$10 a month with an additional \$5 in rations (Preservation Consultants, Inc. 1989). These farming systems eventually led to the division of large plantations into smaller farms. In 1860, there were 61 plantations on Johns Island, and, by 1870, there were around 400 farms. The numbers for James Island are comparable (Preservation Consultants, Inc. 1989). Black owners held nearly 10 percent of the land owned on the various Sea Islands in the 1880s (Preservation Consultants, Inc. 1989).



1931 Postcard Image of McLeod Plantation (Historic Charleston Foundation)

Despite the freedoms and legal rights accrued by African Americans during Reconstruction, racial fears persisted, eventually leading to the formation of both Black and white militias in the Charleston area and elsewhere. African Americans sought to protect their families and lands from whites who might decide to take it by force. On the other hand, whites were afraid of being overrun and attacked by the more numerous Black residents of the island. In 1877, an African American militia called the Hunter's Volunteers was assembled on James Island as a branch of the South Carolina National Guard. About 35

men were responsible for helping keep order on the island as part of the militia. The organization was dissolved in 1891, after it tried to stop the arrest of a Black man in Charleston. By 1892, they were able to regain their status as an organization (Breedon 2021). Captain Isaac Ferguson was a commander of the Hunter Volunteers, and the militia reportedly had an armory at the fork of Grimball Road and Riverland Drive. These military units also acted as social organizations. They hosted dances, turkey shoots, and dinners (Preservation Consultants, Inc. 1989). There is a historic marker for the Hunter's Volunteers on the site of the historic armory. There is no evidence of an African American militia group having existed on Johns Island.

GULLAH GEECHEE HISTORY AND CULTURE

The enslaved people on James and Johns islands did not have the same experiences as other enslaved people around the Southeast. During spring and summer months, white owners would leave their plantations to avoid exposure to malaria and yellow fever and would appoint their overseers to manage the plantation operations and enslaved laborers in their absence (Cross 2008). While these individuals were left alone and did not interact with whites or other outside cultures and influences, they were able to



**Member of Hunter's Volunteer Militia
Alongside His Mount on James Island
(Bostick 2008)**

to have come from Angola. Enslaved Africans regularly arrived at various coastal ports from Angola. They were referred to as "Gola Negroes." Gola was later pronounced as Gullah (E.S. Campbell 2002).

Geechee is often seen as interchangeable with Gullah, but the terms are also widely considered to be location based. *Gullah* generally refers to people in coastal South Carolina, and *Geechee* usually refers to descendants of enslaved Africans living from Georgia into Florida. "Geechee people in Georgia refer to themselves as Freshwater Geechee if they live on the mainland and Saltwater Geechee if they live on the Sea Islands" (National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior 2005:

maintain their African cultures. This culture is now recognized as the Gullah or Geechee.

Gullah-Geechee culture is a system of beliefs, customs, art forms, foodways, and language practices among descendants of West Africans who settled along coastal North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida from slavery to the present (E.S. Campbell 2002). The word *Gullah* is believed

13). It is commonly accepted that enslaved West Africans were smuggled into Georgia waterways and settled along the Ogeechee River. Hence, the term *Geechee* is mainly used in coastal Georgia (E.S. Campbell 2002).

Until the mid-1900s, the coastal areas of South Carolina and Georgia were populated almost entirely by Black people. The humidity, heat, and mosquito-borne diseases discouraged white occupancy on the islands. This

**Gullah Geechee Woman Weaving a Sweetgrass Basket,
Hunting Island State Park, South Carolina (SCPRT N.D.)**



allowed the Gullah and Geechee people to continue speaking their own English Creole language, preparing food, and even continuing some of the religious and social practices of their African ancestors. Enslaved Africans originated from multiple regions. These disparate cultures melded on Lowcountry plantations to form a “new culture, African in origin but unlike any particular African culture” (National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior 2005: 13).

The West Africans brought a form of voodoo with them. Depending on where those Africans landed, it took on different names. In South Carolina, in Humbert Wood, they called voodoo the “root.” In the Miller Hill area of Johns Island, they called it “hag” (M.G. Fields 1983). While there were many witch doctors, two root/witch doctors were named during the research. “Cyrus” was a root doctor on James Island. He lived and worked on Grimball Plantation and serviced people on Dill plantations in the early 1900s. Dr. Buzzard was perhaps the most famous witch doctor in South Carolina, and he lived in Beaufort in the early 1900s as well (M.G. Fields 1983). Voodoo, root, hag, and other forms of witchcraft stopped being practiced in the 1940s and 50s due to education and lack of belief in the practice (E. Frazier 2010).

AFRICAN AMERICAN SETTLEMENT COMMUNITIES

The history of African American Settlement Communities in Charleston County is directly related to the aftermath of the Civil War as free Blacks faced a new political and economic existence. Gullah families throughout the Lowcountry maintained strong connections to the land on which their enslaved ancestors had lived and worked for generations. During Reconstruction and the decades that followed, African Americans had the opportunity to purchase and cultivate their own land, a possibility that was

open to very few Black people before Emancipation (Brabec and Richardson 2007).

Many of these communities are in unincorporated areas of Charleston County, which includes much of Johns Island. Demolition, redevelopment, or destruction from hurricanes, flooding, or other natural disasters have considerably changed their built environments. Much of their late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century historic fabric has been replaced, including houses, businesses, churches, institutional buildings such as schoolhouses and lodges, agricultural outbuildings, and other structures and objects. While some of these communities have informal origins, their parcels' linear shape, size, and patterns can be visually distinctive. In some cases, they may be a district's most significant character-defining feature. For those historic African American communities in the county that are no longer extant, the spatial patterning of land parcels may be the only observable indicator of the sites.

Examination of tax parcel data indicates three patterns of historic division patterns and development identified in Charleston County's African American communities: Remnant Freedmen, Land Commission Platted, and Planned Land Cooperative. Despite their differing development histories, all three types point to how freedmen families in the Reconstruction Era and late nineteenth century acquired and settled their land. The communities examined in this study, however, seem mostly to fall into the first two categories.

The spatial arrangement of the parcels and lot sizes vary with each type. All three, however include traditional burying grounds; have traditional community access to nearby waterways and wooded areas; and rely on heirs' property. Access to waterways and wooded areas supports fishing and the use of non-timber forest products, such as sweetgrass for basket

making. Under heir's property, the original deed owner's descendants hold or convey the land "in common" (Brabec & Richardson 2007; The Center for Heirs Property Preservation 2016). These elements are all considered "critical elements of Gullah landownership" (Brabec & Richardson 2007; The Center for Heirs Property Preservation 2016). Many of these land holdings may lack formal deeds of conveyance, or they have been lost over time, so the property is now owned and transferred as heirs' property (Graves 2010). In this instance, conveyance may be managed verbally through "word of mouth," or sometimes a quitclaim deed may be used to transfer property interest between family members (Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission 2020).

The most numerous of the identified community types, Remnant Freedmen Communities originated from the vestiges of former slave villages or early freedmen settlements. Often located on or near former plantations where African American families accumulated parcels of land over time, some retain the names of the parent plantation or plantation owner. Grimball Farms and Sol Legare are examples of these naming conventions, respectively (Trinkley 1984). A property map of Charleston compiled in the early 1930s depicting tracts with owner names shows many antebellum plantation names persisted, becoming seeds for the names adopted by the postbellum settlement communities.

Remnant Freedmen Settlement communities are notable for their use of long-lot farm parcels, also known as ribbon farms and strip farms. They are simple, informal subdivisions of long, thin, deep lots that maximize frontage to a road or waterway (or both). Houses tend to be placed at the ends of the lots, near the roads, which promotes socialization in the community and reduces the distance needed between farmsteads (Barnes 1935). The

(Opposite) J.T. Kollock's 1932 Property Map of Charleston County (Kollock 1932)



JAMES ISLAND

long-lot settlement and farming pattern is common throughout the world, including parts of tropical West Africa, Central Europe, Japan, and South America. Most long-lot surveys in North America are in French- and Spanish-colonized areas of Canada and the United States (Jordon 2005).

Sol Legare is an example of long-lot parcel patterning on James Island. Tax data for Johns Island shows long-lot parcels in the Stevens and Whaley areas as well as other clusters across the island. The pattern is relatively well preserved in these spots, but modern development and subdivision of the long parcels have obscured the patterns elsewhere, including along much of Bohicket Road on Johns Island. Character-defining features of community development patterns include

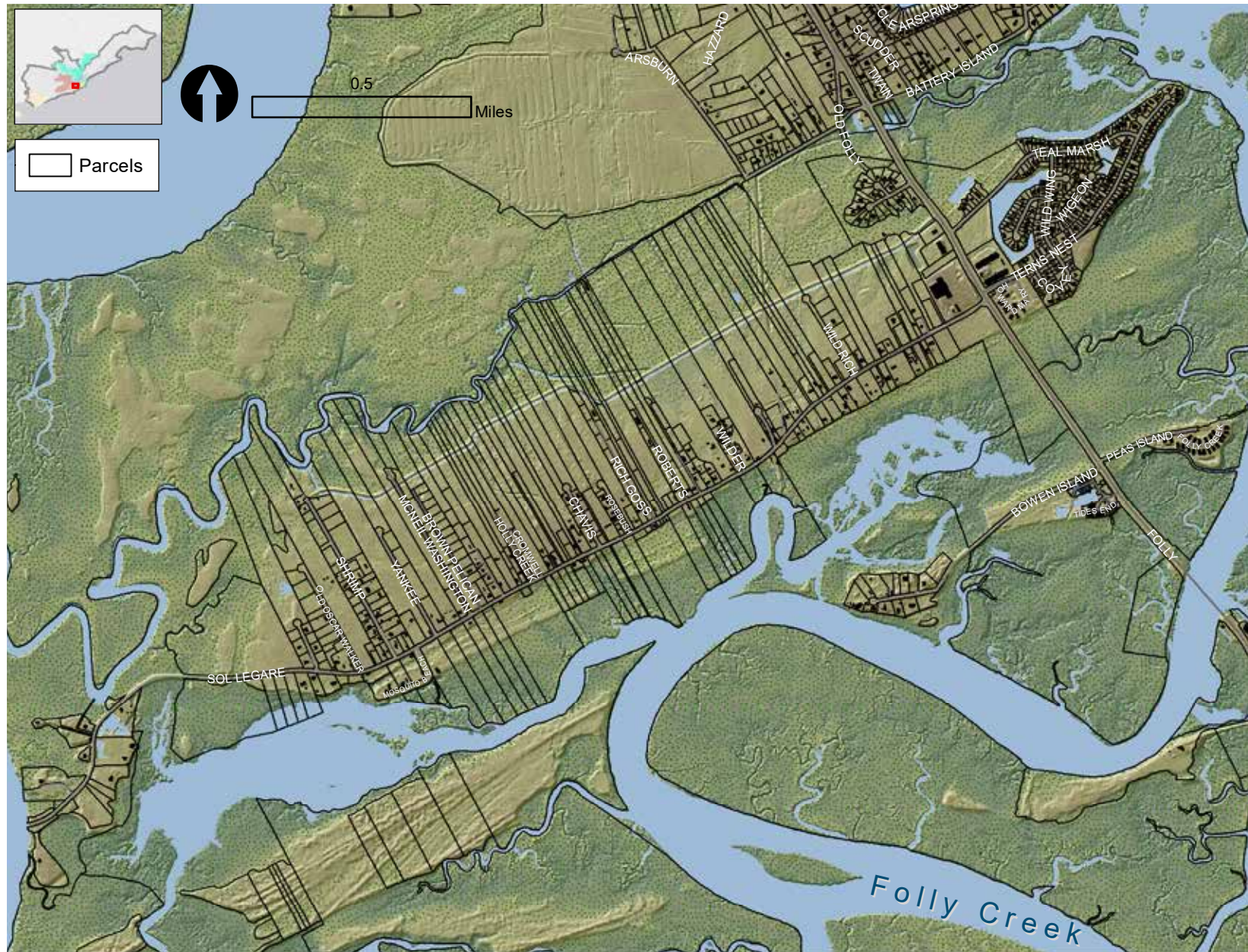
- Long, thin, deep lots that maximize frontage to the road, waterway, or both. Long-lot parcels are usually 10 times as deep as they are wide.
- Parcel strips of inconsistent size, ranging from 1 to 40 acres. Most lots have been subdivided for heirs many times by being split in half, segmented along their length, or both. This adds to the organic quality of clusters of these lots.
- Lots may be either landlocked or adjacent to water. Communities near water, such as Sol Legare, typically have lots with access to both water channels/coastline and an inland roadway.
- Businesses, residences, and institutional buildings are usually clustered near main roads and have deep setbacks. Buildings do not usually have frontage on waterways in these communities, except in late twentieth-century tourism and recreational areas, such as Mosquito Beach in Sol Legare.
- Some lots may feature one or more dwellings.

- While historic maps and photographs from the early to mid-twentieth century show that most lots were originally cleared for agriculture. However, most interior lots have been overgrown and reforested in the past few decades.
- Fence enclosures are rare.

The origin of Land Commission Platted communities in Charleston County are tied to the plantation tract sales overseen by the South Carolina Land Commission between 1869 and about 1890. The agency, established in 1868, was tasked with purchasing former plantation tracts from owners or their brokers, surveying and subdividing the property, and selling the smaller parcels to landless Black and white farmers and tradesmen. The presence historically of such large numbers of plantations on both James and Johns islands suggests the presence of Land Commission Platted communities.

The Cut Bridge community on James Island was associated with the Dill landholdings (primarily the Stono Plantation). The Geddis community on Johns Island would have once been part of the Seven Oaks Plantation. An examination of the tax parcels in these communities reveals some of the common character-defining features of Land Commission Platted communities (Jordan & Stringfellow 1998: 241–250). This type of community shares some characteristics with the Remnant Freedmen Settlement communities. However, the lots are polygonal, irregular in size and shape, while Planned Land Cooperative lots are mostly rectangular and of standard sizes. Orientation to the road only, instead of to both road and waterway, is also more common. Some may still have access to both, and Land Commission Platted communities may also contain a mix of long-lot and polygonal parcels.

Sol Legare Community Map Showing Charleston County Tax Parcels - Remnant Freedmen Settlement Community



Geddis, Stevens, Whaley, and Pinckney Communities Map Showing Charleston County Tax Parcels - Land Commission Platted Settlement Communities



SUMMARY

The history of James Island' and Johns Island's African American Settlement Communities is rooted in a plantation-based economy and the enslavement of African Americans. Once freed, the African Americans purchased land once tied to the plantations and established their own communities. The

emergence of Gullah culture on James Island and Johns Island evolved over time, but Black land ownership of long lots has been preserved to a degree despite the encroaching development.

The following chapters will cover more specifically the history of each of the islands and their settlement communities throughout the twentieth century.

"...COMING FROM A PLACE WHERE IT WAS FARMLAND TO A PLACE TO WHERE IT IS RIGHT NOW, IT'S DEPRESSING ALMOST. AND, IT SEEMS AS IF THERE'S NO STOPPING, BECAUSE I HAVE HEARD, WE'VE BEEN TO MEETINGS AND STUFF, EVEN SINCE THE BRIDGE AND QUOTING ONE OF THE PEOPLE THERE THAT SAYS EVERY GREEN AREA THAT WE SEE VACANT OVER HERE IS GOING TO BE BUILT UP WITH SOMETHING, AND THAT WAS SAID TO ME ALMOST 10 YEARS AGO, AND YOU COULD SEE IT COMING AND IT'S VERY DEPRESSING BECAUSE YOU DON'T EVEN RECOGNIZE THIS PLACE ANYMORE."

Amelia Washington





James Island (Dreamstime)

III. JAMES ISLAND IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Communities across James Island following Reconstruction had both similarities and differences. Into the mid-twentieth century, Folly Road was one of the only paved streets on James Island, the rest being dirt roads or trails. Additionally, there were no bridges connecting James Island to mainland Charleston until the first wooden bridge was built at the end of the nineteenth century. The first non-wooden bridge wasn't built until the 1920s. High school students seeking to get to Burke High School or farmers trying to sell their produce and goods in Charleston were required to travel by boat or ferry. There were at least two boat landings residents used. Dill Bluff was at the end of Dill Bluff Road. There was also a ferry at Wappoo Cut Bridge near McLeod Plantation.

Agriculture was the main occupation for residents of James Island. Jobs were limited in the 1930s, and many individuals were tenant farmers. Some farms focused on specialty crops, while others grew some of everything. Grimball Plantation grew potatoes, corn, tomatoes, and other produce, while Hinson Plantation was known for their turkeys (E. Frazier, personal communication, May 20, 2022). Produce was sold at the market in Charleston or at roadside markets on the island. Children were not excused from farm work. Working age for children in the early twentieth century was around six or seven years old. For a child of working age, a typical day might include waking up, going to work, going to school, and returning to work in the fields later in the day. Children and adults both usually worked six days a week, with Sundays as the

day to attend church and rest (E. Chillis, personal communication, May 20, 2022).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, African Americans across the Southeast, including James Island, moved north and west in pursuit of better education, better jobs, and better treatment. Known as the Great Migration, this exodus took place from the 1910s to 1970s, and many individuals from James Island chose to move to New York or New Jersey. People established networks to bring their family and friends over time. Earnest Parks and Cubby Wilder both described a family member in Harlem that was a superintendent of an apartment complex who would, as apartments became available, invite Sol Legare residents to come stay. Many would then find another place to live and stay living in the New York area. Both men attended school in New York but came back to James Island for their high school education in the 1950s. Mrs. Chillis mentioned that her father found a place to live in New Jersey and would send for family members to move there one by one. She moved to New Jersey in 1930 at the age of 16 and did not move back to James Island until 1983 (E. Chillis, personal communication, May 20, 2022).

There was no form of public recreation on James Island in the early twentieth century. Lodges were created as places for gathering and socialization. They acted as social aid networks and venues for recreation, like dances or May Day events. Some doubled as prayer houses, and Masonic orders often conducted meetings in the lodges. Lodge halls were also used as places for viewing bodies and hosting wakes before funerals (E. Frazier, 2010). Each area had their own Lodge Hall, and descriptions of those mentioned by interviewees are included in the Cultural Atlas in Chapter VII.

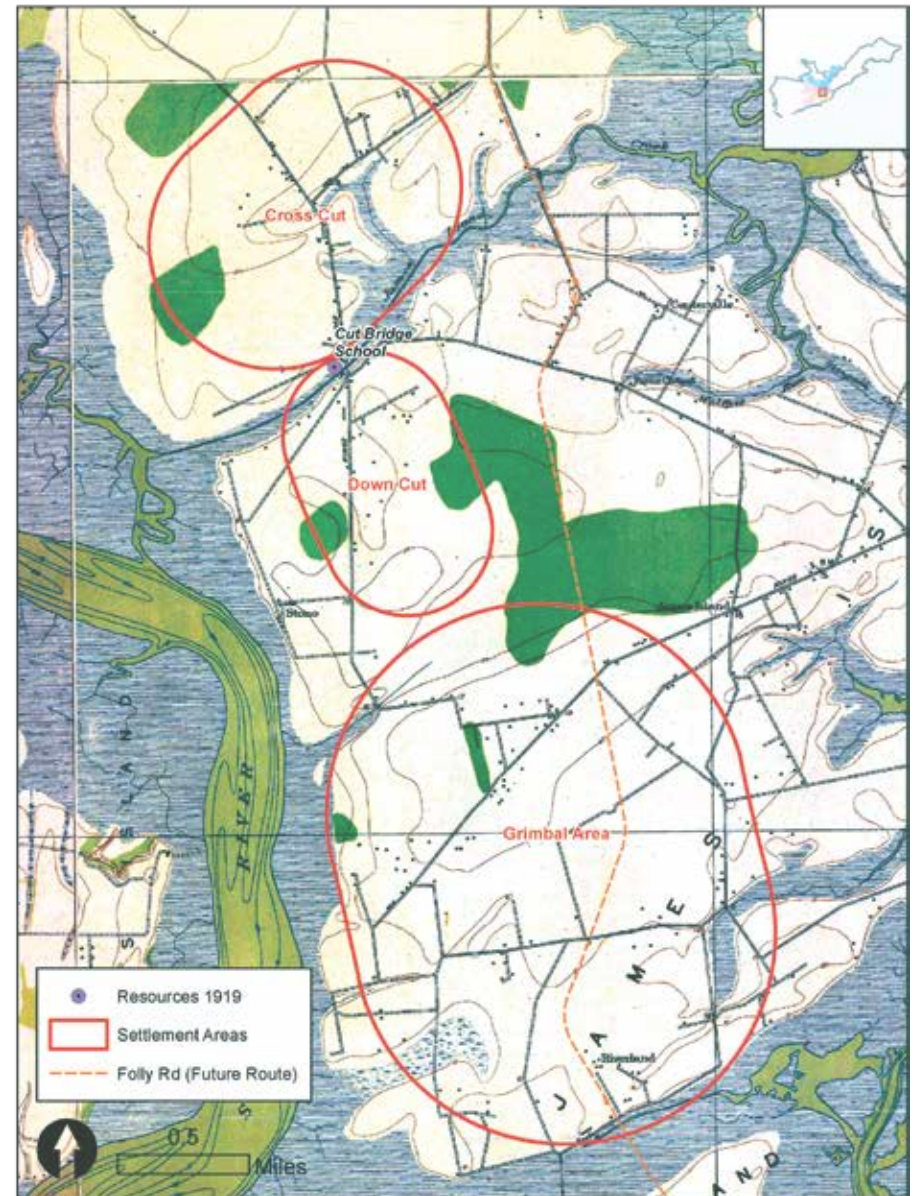
Electricity was making its way to James Island in the 1940s, though many households continued using Kerosene lanterns into the 1950s. Although most of the island was electrified by 1953, indoor plumbing was slower

JAMES ISLAND TOPOGRAPHIC SERIES



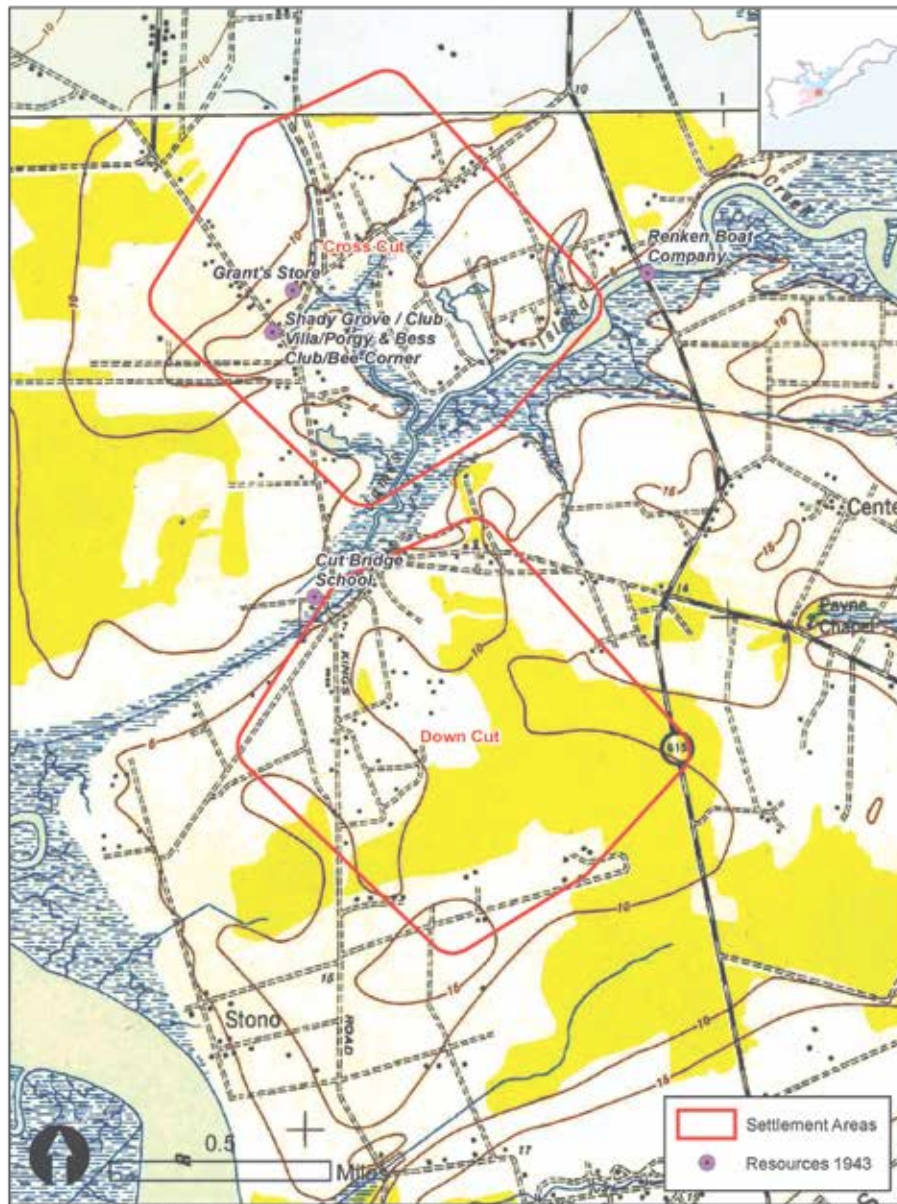
to arrive. James Island saw its first wave of change around the 1950s when developers moved in and started building roads, houses, and more bridges. The bridges connected James Island to mainland Charleston and to smaller surrounding islands and generally replaced boats and ferries as methods for travel. As Black residents moved up north, some sold their land. Developers were buying this land to build new houses. The new houses were being purchased by whites starting a change in demographics.

Like most places in South Carolina, James Island is hot in the summer. To escape the heat and humidity Black James Islanders enjoyed going to the beach. During segregation, they were only granted access to certain beaches. The nearest beach to James Island, Folly Beach, was not an option, as Black people were not allowed there. Atlantic Beach was a black beach near Myrtle Beach that the Islanders would travel to for vacations, and Deacon Josiah Watson at First Baptist Church owned a bus that he would use to transport people. Islanders also enjoyed Riverside Beach in Mount Pleasant, Mosquito Beach on James Island, Frazier Beach on Johns Island, and Seaside Beach on Edisto Island (A.A. Washington, personal communication, May 19, 2022). These beaches were not oceanfront but were more so marsh areas with a creek or river running through.



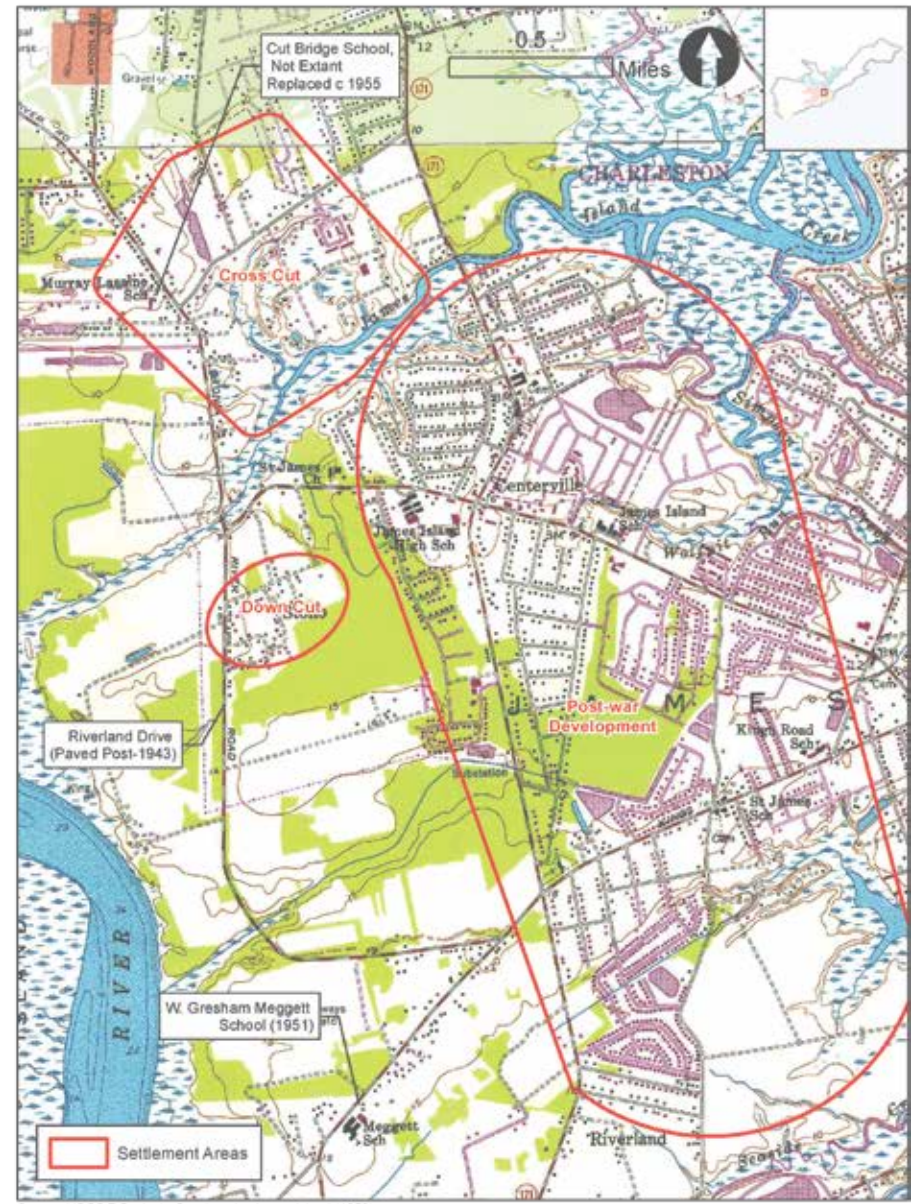
Source: USGS Topographic Map, James Island (1919)

1919 USGS Topographical Map Showing James Island's Early Twentieth-Century Rural Character (TopoView)



Source: USGS Topographic Map, James Island (1919)

1943 USGS Topographical Map Showing James Island's Folly Road After Straightening and Paving Improvements (TopoView)



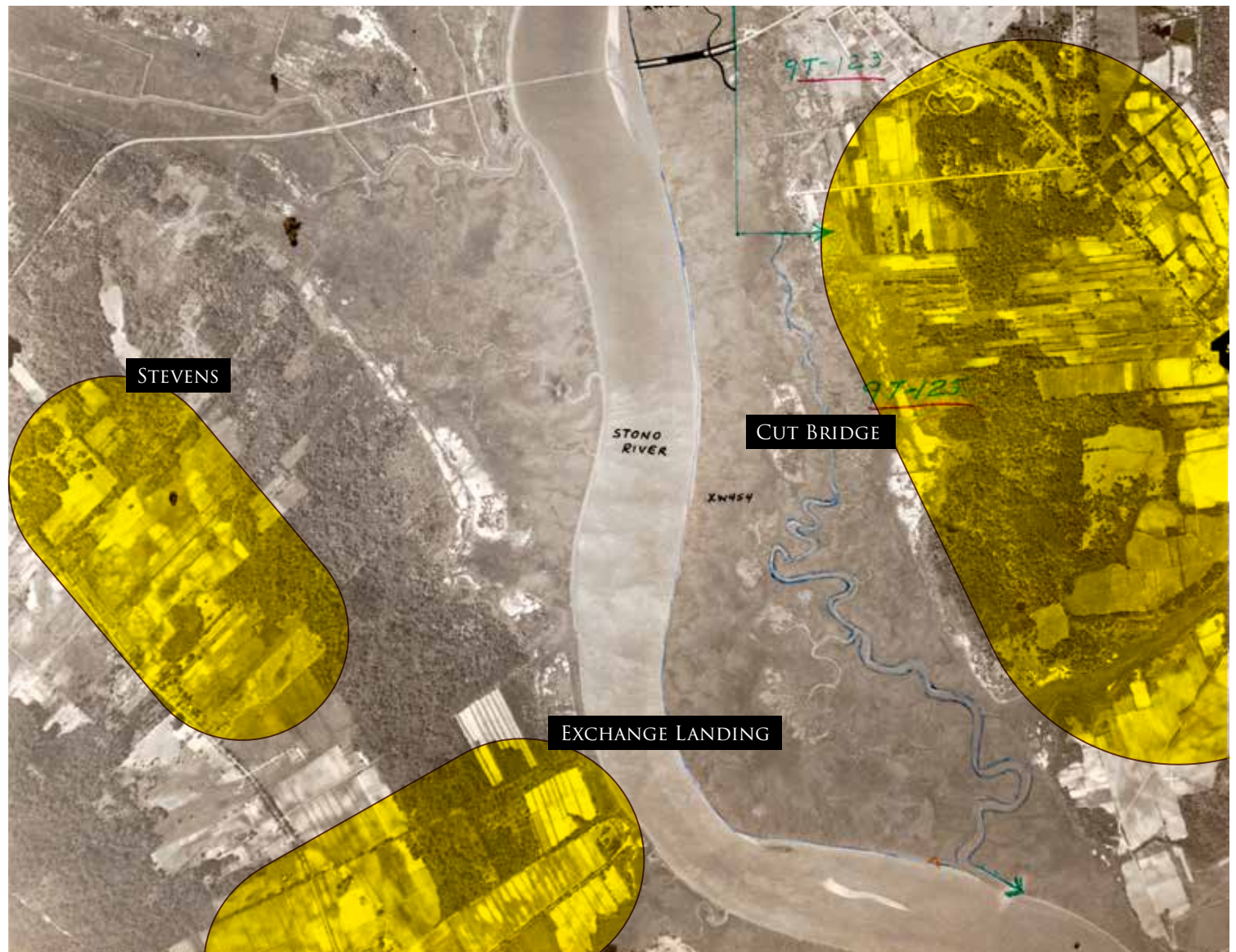
Source: USGS 7.5-minute Quadrangle, James Island (1959)

1959 USGS Topographical Map Showing James Island and the Significant Development of Subdivisions Since 1943 (TopoView)

JAMES ISLAND HISTORIC AERIALS



1949 USGS Aerial Imagery of James Island and a Portion of Johns Island (EarthExplorer)



1977 USGS Aerial Imagery of James Island and a Portion of Johns Island (EarthExplorer)



Some individuals who moved north during the Great Migration began returning home in the late 1970s and 1980s and continue to do so today. They returned south to be with family, to be able to afford to buy a house, and to live life at a “slower” pace again. For those who returned in the 1970s, they noticed increased development transitioning the area from rural to suburban. Most roads were paved, and subdivisions were replacing farm fields. Lastly, there were more stores to choose from for shopping on James Island now. Residents that returned in the 1980s could see that life on the island – and the island itself – had changed in many ways. Farming had declined significantly, with most James Island residents employed in office jobs or a nonagricultural trade. The farmland that defined James Island for hundreds of years was rapidly disappearing, and it continues to do so today.

JAMES ISLAND ORAL HISTORY PARTICIPANTS



(Top Row, Left to Right) Eccella Chillis, Eugene Frazier and Earnest Parks (Middle Row, Left to Right) Joshua Parks, Ned Roper and Amelia Ann Washington (Bottom Row, Left to Right) William Cubby Wilder, William Brown, Josephine Brown and James Washington (Wiman 2022)

IV. LEARNING ABOUT JAMES ISLAND'S SETTLEMENT COMMUNITIES THROUGH ORAL HISTORY

INTRODUCTION

The oral history interviews completed for this study serve as invaluable insights into how community members see their own communities. The interviewees were asked about their history and their family's history on James Island, and about special places in their memories, as well as how they define their community. What are the geographic bounds of your community? What do you call your community?

Much of what is known about the historic African American Settlement Communities on James Island is based on the information gathered for the 2020 Charleston City Plan. The plan provided initial names and bounds for each settlement community both inside and just outside the city boundary. The plan did not seek to define what a settlement community is, but acknowledged that these communities share certain characteristics. These include historic late nineteenth- to early twentieth-century concentrations of African American households, a history of community autonomy with a

City Plan AASC Map

AASC KEY

JOHNS ISLAND

- 11. Red Top
- 12. Exchange Landing
- 13. Cape
- 14. Hut
- 15. Geddis
- 16. Pinckney
- 17-19. Names Unknown

JAMES ISLAND

CUT BRIDGE

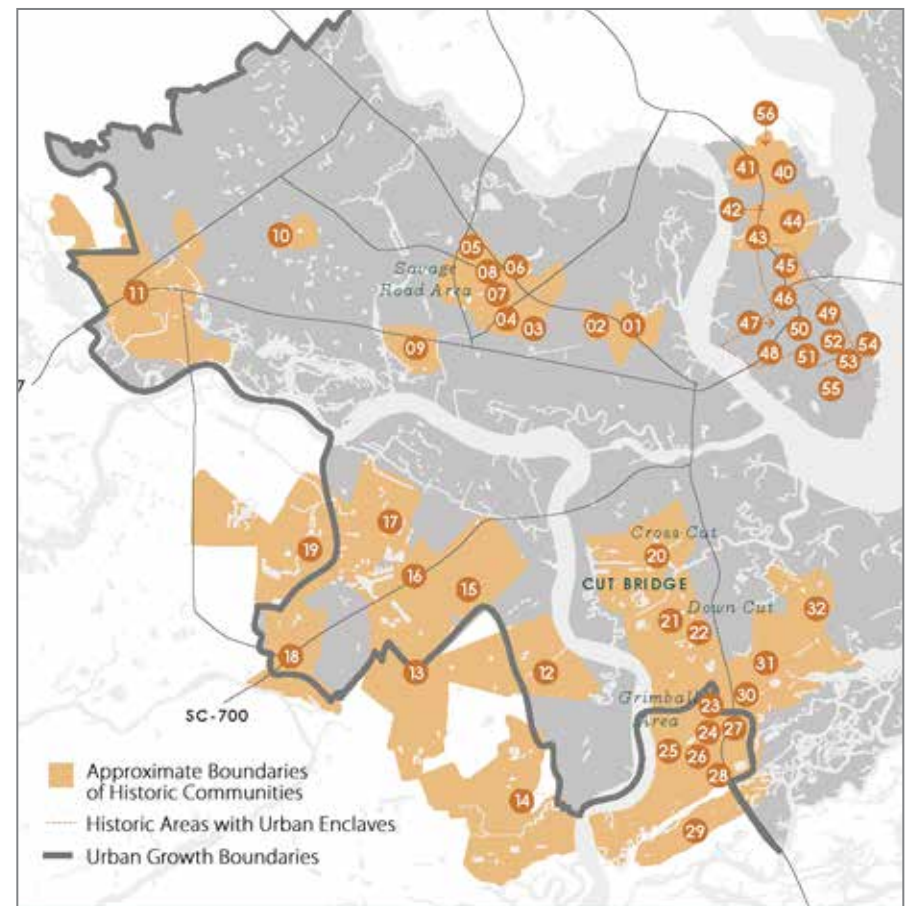
- 20. Cross Cut
- 21. Ferguson Village (Down Cut)
- 22. Turkey Pen (Down Cut)

Grimball AREA

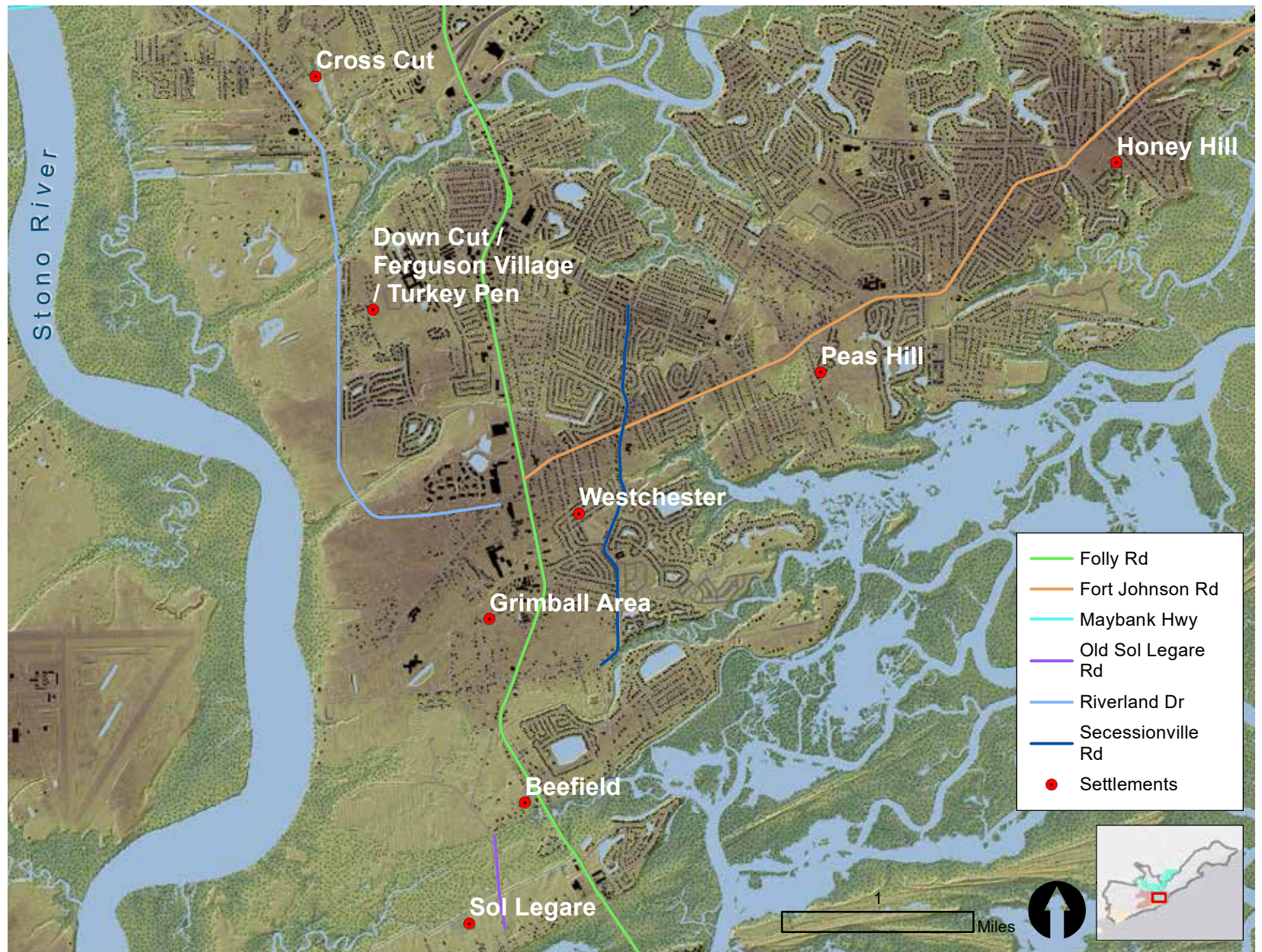
- 23. Grimball Shores
- 24. Barn Hill

25. Grimball Farms

- 26. Carver
- 27. Scott Hill
- 28. Bee Field
- 29. Sol Legare
- 30. Westchester
- 31. Peas Hill
- 32. Honey Hill



Overall Map with James Island Communities Identified



hyper-local economy and shared civic institutions, and concentrations of family property passed down through generations, often including heirs' property.

The city plan's efforts to identify the historic African American Settlement Communities built on local community leaders' recent research efforts and resulted in the development of a GIS database to help define (with acknowledged limitations) community boundaries. This work by the City of Charleston formed the basis for this current study of the settlement communities of James and Johns islands. The NSA team organized history collection days on both James and Johns islands during May 2022. The public was invited to participate in oral history interviews, share photos and artifacts, and observe and comment on the various settlement community boundaries that were identified in the Charleston City Plan. The following chapter presents the communities of James Island, their locations, and their general histories which were informed by the interviewee participants. Chapter V provides the same information for Johns Island. Chapter VII is a cultural atlas of both islands, a glossary of important sites, landmarks, and other geographic points brought to light through the oral history interviews.

Communities of James Island

The Charleston City Plan identified 13 African American Settlement Communities on James Island: three in Cut Bridge, six in Grimball Area, and Sol Legare (AASC #29), Westchester (AASC #30), Peas Hill (AASC #31), and Honey Hill (AASC #32). Cut Bridge comprises Cross Cut (AASC #20), Ferguson Village/Down Cut (AASC #21), and Turkey Pen/Down Cut (AASC #22). Grimball Area comprises Grimball Shores (AASC #23), Barn Hill (AASC #24), Grimball Farms (AASC #25), Carver (AASC #26), Scotts Hill (AASC #27), and Beefield (AASC #28). These communities, apart from Carver, were mentioned during

interviews or appeared in some documentation. The absence of a mention of Carver, however, is not an indication that it does not exist. It simply did not come up in discussion or research. In addition to the previously identified communities, interviewees mentioned several other community or neighborhood names that were not identified in the Charleston City Plan nor corroborated through archival research. These additional communities include Elliot Cut, Newton Cut, Wappoo Cut, and Fort Johnson. Except for Fort Johnson, at the northeastern point of James Island, exact locations for these communities were not identified.

Cut Bridge

Cut Bridge is located in the northwestern portion of James Island and encompasses what the Charleston City Plan identified as multiple African American Settlement Communities. These include Cross Cut (AASC #20), Ferguson Village/Down Cut (AASC #21), and Turkey Pen/Down Cut (AASC #22). Several oral history interviewees, however, indicated that Cut Bridge was originally considered a unified community. Only after Cut Creek Bridge was built across James Island Creek/Newtown Cut in the 1940s or 1950s did the area to the north become Cross Cut and the area to the south become Down Cut. The area comprising Cut Bridge was once much of the antebellum Dill landholdings. These landholdings stretched from the area around Maybank Highway south to Grimball Road and from the Stono River east to present-day Folly Road. This included the Stono, Rose, and Turquette plantations. The Dill sisters inherited the land from their mother, Regina Dill, in 1916. They retained over a thousand acres of it, until the last sister died and willed it to the Charleston Museum in 1985 (Stewart 2021).

The Charleston City Plan identified Ferguson Village and Turkey Pen as separate settlement communities. However, Barbara Goss Brown, a James Island native and president of the Ferguson Village Neighborhood

Cut Bridge African American Settlement Community Map



Association, explained that residents of Ferguson Village and Turkey Pen consider themselves to be from Down Cut first and foremost. Moreover, she explained, people formerly enslaved on the Dill Plantation gave Down Cut the name, while the name Ferguson Village was applied after it became part of the Town of James Island. For that reason, the name Down Cut is considered important, and the community does not want that moniker to disappear (B.G. Brown, personal communication, May 19, 2022).

Recounting life growing up in Cut Bridge, most interviewees described a slow-paced, sheltered life that, while structured and strict, seemed safer as a result. Especially for children, walking was the main mode of transportation, whether one was going to school, to work, or to play. Neither high tides nor inclement weather were excuses to not get where you were going. Roads in the community and across James Island remained unpaved well into the twentieth century. Many interviewees recalled walking several miles to their destination or going to farther destinations, such as downtown Charleston, by boat.

Ercella Chillis recalled seeing her first car in the late 1920s on Secessionville Road and described running to catch it but being unable to keep up (E. Chillis, personal communication, May 20, 2022). James Washington said of James Islands' roads, as late as the 1950s, that "you might see a car every 15 to 20 minutes." He also said that one could still see a "horse and buggy on Folly Road," the only paved road on the island well into the twentieth century (J. Brown et al., personal communication, May 19, 2022). Washington and his cohort also described the self-sufficient nature of the community when it came to food in a back-and-forth exchange:

We didn't go to the store that much, the only thing we go to the store for is to buy grits—I mean, rice, sugar, and grits. That's the only thing we buy (James Washington). Everything

else we get out the field— (William Brown). Or out of the river (Josephine Brown). That's right (James Washington).

Sometimes, they said, their uncle would mill the corn and make his own grits.

The 1950s and 60s saw residents begin to turn away from farming to instead enter the modern job market. Labor that was less time-consuming allowed for more recreation. In the 1950s, Richard Smalls, Sr. and his nephew Harry Urie, a Cut Bridge resident and military veteran, built a six-hole golf course called the Little Rock Golf Club on land off Grimball Road, south of Down Cut and closer to Grimball Shores. The golf course provided opportunities for employment for Black James Islanders but was also a place where they were able to play golf themselves instead of just being caddies for white golfers (E. Frazier 2010). Frazier in his interview recalled a community center with a football team in the Westchester Subdivision and a baseball club named Washington in Ferguson Village (E. Frazier, personal communication, May 20, 2022).

In addition to sports, the community had places for young people to gather and dance. There was a succession of clubs near the intersection of Riverland Drive and Central Park Road over the years, including Club Villa, Porgy and Bess, and Bee Corner (A.A. Washington, personal communication, May 19, 2022). Nearby, on the site of the Murray-LaSaine school, was a baseball field where adults would gather to socialize and to play ball on the weekends. Cut Bridge had general stores, ice cream parlors, and beauty parlors. Several interviewees recounted that, during segregation, while Black people were allowed to shop at the local white-owned stores, they could only purchase Pepsi Cola. Coca-Cola was reserved strictly for white customers (J. Brown et al., personal communication, May 19, 2022).

Several interviewees stated that one or more of their family members, including Goss Brown's grandmother, hailed from Grimball Plantation, located

to the south of Cut Bridge and closer to Sol Legare. Goss Brown recounted working at Dill Plantation picking tomatoes, cucumbers, soybeans, and other produce in the summers. Her family leased and farmed what is now a wooded area at the south end of Down Cut (near Turkey Pen Road) from the Dill Sisters (Stewart 2021). Nearby McIntyre Road, which today is an orphaned section of roadway sandwiched between subdivisions that have sprouted mostly in the last decade, originally connected Riverland Drive to Camp Road running through the heart of Down Cut. This connection was discontinued, however, and the Bishop Gadsden Episcopal Retirement Community and other developments displaced a large portion of the neighborhood (B.G. Brown, personal communication, May 19, 2022).

Sol Legare

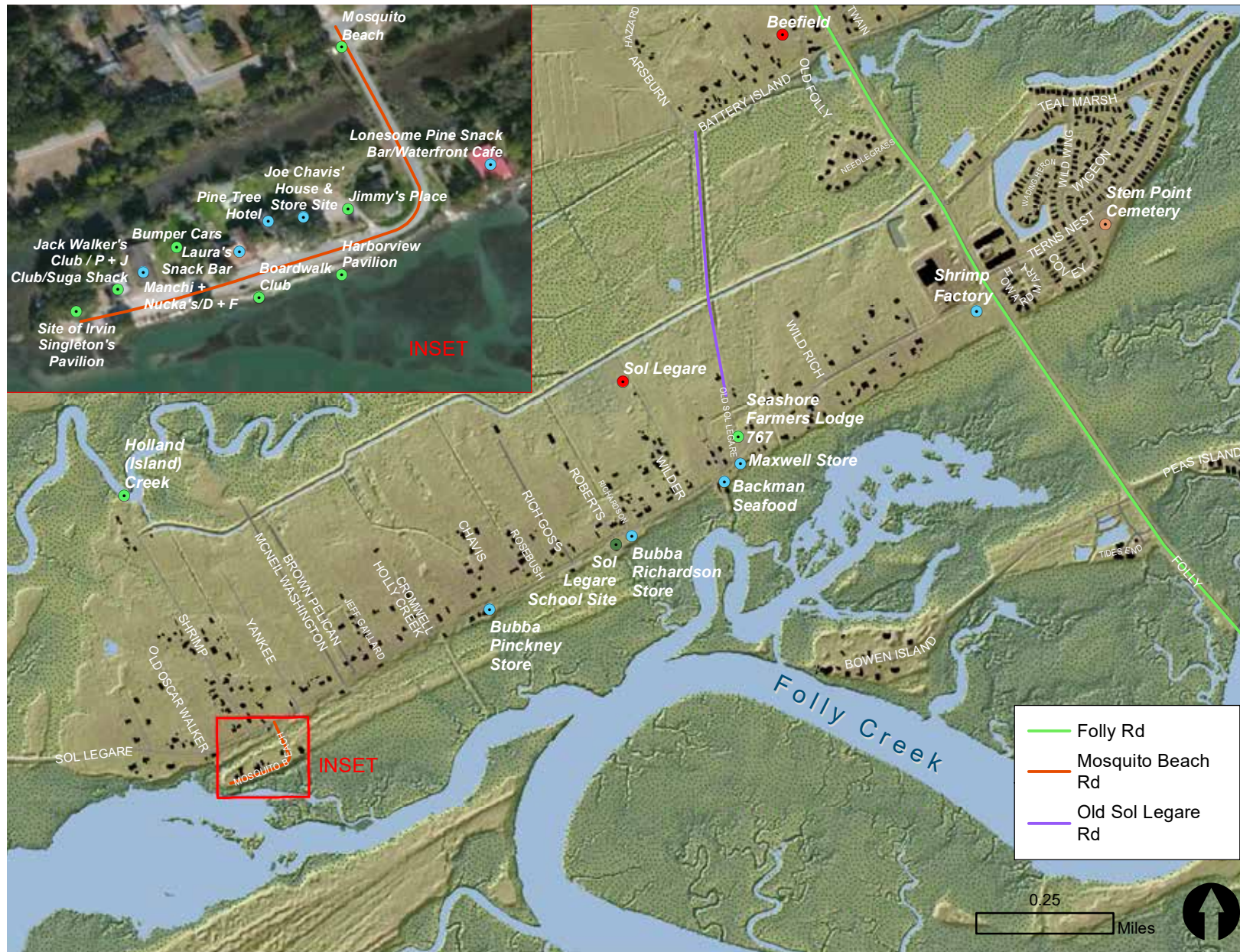
Located in the southeastern portion of James Island, Sol Legare (identified in the Charleston City Plan as AASC #29) is considered one of the most significant and intact settlement communities in the Charleston area. Settled by freedmen at the end of the American Civil War, its geographic isolation likely contributed to it becoming one of the most self-sufficient of the communities. Sol Legare had a school, general stores, a union lodge, and a community cemetery, all along a single road. Over time, rerouted roads and other development, especially the Folly Road extension, negatively affected Sol Legare, even dividing the east end and Stem Point Cemetery from the rest of the community. These changes and reclamation of land associated with the roads eventually resulted in Sol Legare Island being connected to James Island, such that the once island is now geographically a peninsula.

The Sol Legare community is located on the former lands of Sol Legare Plantation. Solomon Legare was a French Huguenot exile that immigrated to Charleston in 1686. He quickly became a successful landowner and

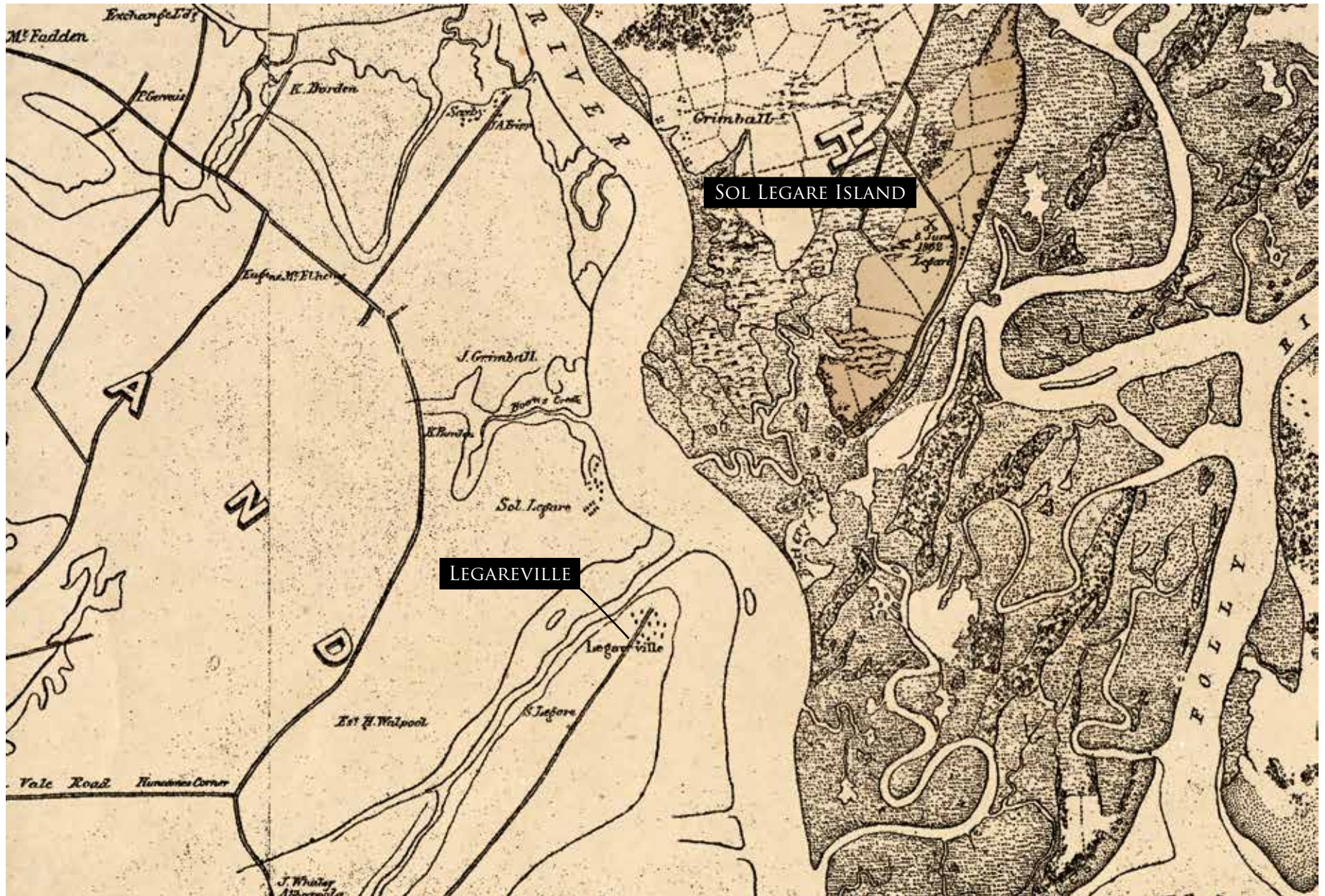
businessman, and “he and his numerous descendants were important planters on John’s and Wadmalaw islands” (Jordan & Stringfellow 1998: 40). He also established the Sol Legare Plantation across the Stono River from Johns Island. In addition to Sol Legare Plantation, the extended Legare family established or acquired vast landholdings and plantations across the Sea Islands. This included holdings on Edisto and Seabrook, directly across the Stono River from Sol Legare Plantation, as well as Mullet Hall, Exchange Landing, and Hanscome Point (Jordan & Stringfellow 1998: 241–250). Legare, moreover, created the antebellum summer retreat known as Legareville. It was located on the southeastern corner of Johns Island, one of several “high-ground” areas in the Lowcountry where planters would move “their families from the plantations to summer villages from mid-May to mid-October to avoid malaria and yellow fever” (Bonstelle & Buxton 2008: 66).

Harrison Wilder was one of the earliest residents of Sol Legare Island. Formerly enslaved near Sumter, South Carolina, and a veteran of the Union Army, he was one of several freedmen given an opportunity to purchase land on Sol Legare after the war. Seven generations of this family have now called this community home, including family returning to heirs’ property land after living outside Sol Legare for a generation or more (E. Parks, personal communication, May 20, 2022). In discussing Sol Legare’s origins and early growth, Parks and other interviewees described a community that embodied that word – one in which everyone pitched in, whether to build a house or care for a sick neighbor. On Sol Legare, “we would farm the sea, and we would farm the land, and then we would” collectively sell those goods in the Charleston markets (E. Parks, personal communication, May 20, 2022). The early generations were described as exclusively entrepreneurs who ran their own businesses and built their own buildings and whose main responsibilities and allegiances were towards the community.

Sol Legare African American Settlement Community Map



Detail of Sol Legare Island and of Legareville on Johns Island on 1863 Map (Chamber of Commerce 1863)



As Earnest Parks related, growing up on Sol Legare:

was very protected, because we were kind of not a part of the outside world. Literally we didn't know that we were segregated. Once you turned down Sol Legare Road off of Old Folly Road, you entered a community where you basically had everything that you needed. Even though it was all Black, we had everything that we needed, because we had stores, we had entertainment centers, we had churches, we had schools.

This echoes a sentiment expressed by 107-year-old James Island native Ercella Chillis who, when asked whether the ferry to Charleston that departed from Dills Bluff in the 1920s was segregated, could not remember. "Well, you know what? I never even noticed, that any other, you know, color was in there," because she simply was less aware of segregation on James Island.

Throughout the 1920s, before Mosquito Beach became an official social scene, an oyster factory, known locally as The Factory, operated on this stretch of the island. Sol Legare residents would gather at The Factory and the Joe Chavis House and Store, which sold food and beer and offered music and billiards. The oyster factory closed in the 1930s, though people continued to gather to socialize at the location. Mosquito Beach only began to grow in the 1950s, with establishments like the Harborview Pavilion (1953) and Jimmy's Place (1954). There were family attractions, too, like the bumper cars ride that lasted from 1955 to 1959, when it was badly damaged by Hurricane Gracie and never repaired (Historic Charleston Foundation 2019). While the older generations continued to partake in traditions at Seashore Farmers Lodge, the youth were no longer joining or attending events, and the lodge closed in 1954. Mosquito Beach remained a hot spot for nightlife through

the 1960s. Several establishments are still in operation there today, although others have been lost to storms (Harborview Pavilion in 1989) or fire (Pine Tree Hotel in 2022).

Not much had changed on Sol Legare during the 1940s. Mr. Parks shared that his grandfather used to trap mink and sell them in Charleston. Fishing for mullet and swimming in Holland Island Creek were popular pastimes for children – especially the boys. Another swimming spot was called "Sissy Hole," referring to a woman named Sissy who had drowned there years before. Despite the local lore that kept most people away, Cubby Wilder recalled swimming there too (W. "Cubby" Wilder, personal communication, May 21, 2022). One of the era's most notable changes, however, was the extension of Folly Road, which cut off Stem Point, the east side of Sol Legare, from the rest of the island. This isolated Stem Point Memorial Cemetery, the island's main burial ground, still in use today. It also spurred the change in the transportation pattern for accessing the island that would eventually lead to the closure of Old Sol Legare Road.

Despite an altered road map, the roads themselves remained mostly unpaved, and, while electricity arrived in the 1950s, Sol Legare residents would have to wait several decades more for indoor plumbing. The 1980s, though, brought significant change to Sol Legare. When William "Cubby" Wilder returned after years of service in the Air Force, he observed conditions on Sol Legare that were primitive compared to what he had encountered outside of his community. His advocacy galvanized the island's residents to petition for and eventually convince Charleston County government to provide sewerage and running water on Sol Legare. After securing this benefit for their community, Wilder and the Islanders successfully turned their advocacy efforts towards securing the same amenities for the rest of James Island as well (W. "Cubby" Wilder, personal communication, May 21, 2022).



Although many of the community landmarks are no longer present, pride in this still-tight-knit community certainly is. The Seashore Farmers Lodge 767, at the intersection of Sol Legare and Old Sol Legare roads, is a tangible example of this sentiment. It was salvaged from near collapse around 2008 and restored as a museum that is now in partnership with the International African American Museum. In keeping with the community traditions associated with the lodge, Parks described the rehab process as a team effort. Although initial estimates were in the half-million-dollar range, the final price was closer to \$150,000, because of donations and reduced fees. For one example, Michael Riffert, the general contractor, was seeking accreditation in historic rehabilitations and so agreed to head the restoration efforts for a fraction of what most contractors would have charged. This philanthropic thread carried over to the interpretive efforts, such that Parks said he eventually had to stop accepting donated items for the museum exhibits.

Mosquito Beach earned its name based on the insects that populate the marshy area, and it was these conditions, combined with its geographic isolation, that made Sol Legare less popular to whites in the first place. These factors have allowed Sol Legare to remain a relatively intact community, despite the loss of some of the businesses and institutions that defined it as a self-sufficient community in prior years. As farming and fishing faded as the main professions, the goal “for the next generation was to go out, become educated, get a job, a good job with benefits, take care of your family” (E. Parks, personal communication, May 20, 2022).

An interview with a seventh-generation Sol Legretian indicated that tidal dangers associated with drowning and wildlife, like snakes and alligators, made them more likely to drive four-wheelers than go swimming in the creeks. One tradition that continues in the twentieth century is the annual Mayday celebration, often observed through a church or lodge function, and Mosquito Beach still boasts a busy nightlife on the weekends. Going forward,

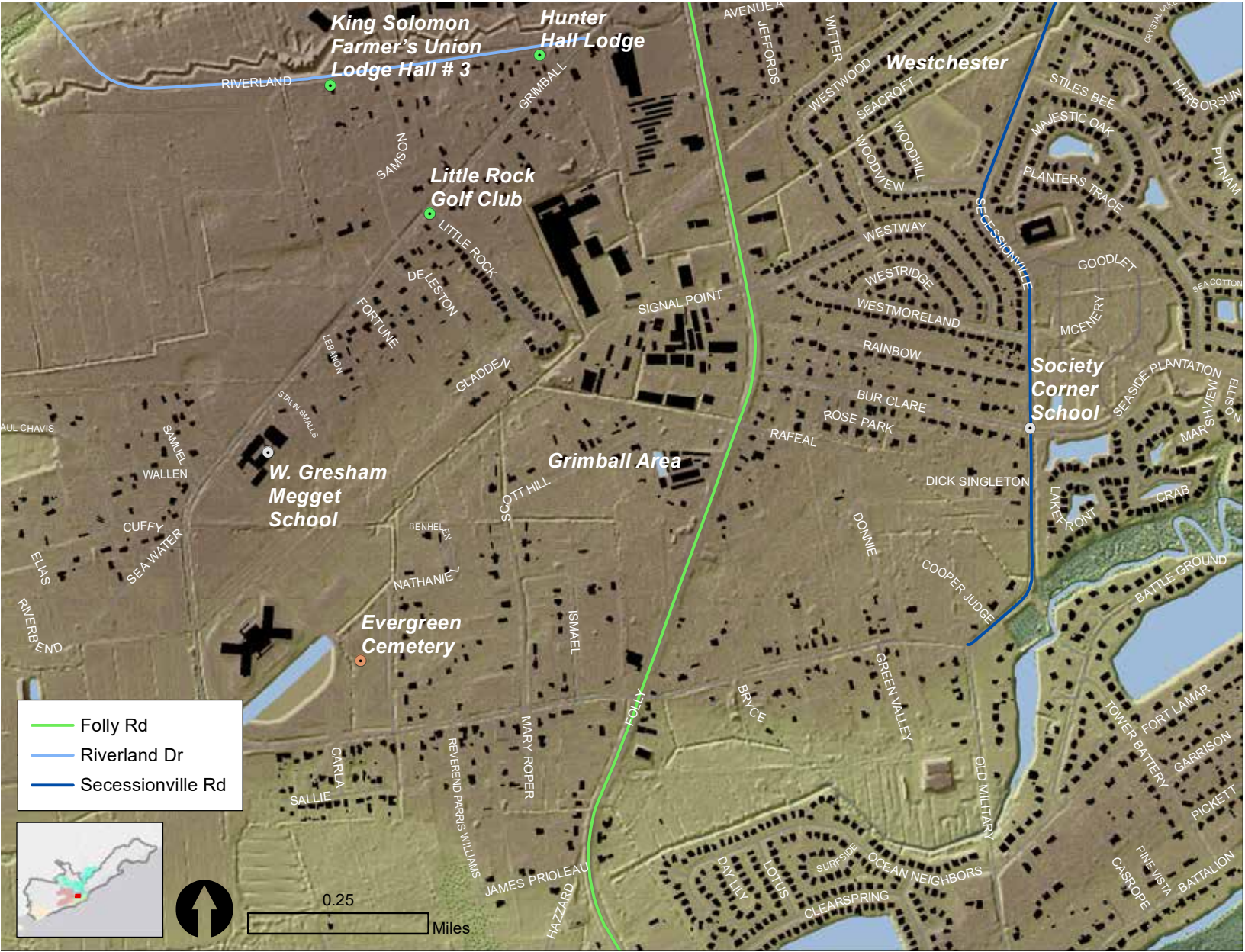
Sol Legare is likely to face the same increased development pressures as the rest of Charleston County. After 150 years as an exclusively African American community, a gated community arrived in Sol Legare in the 2010s. The lots near the Stono River boat landing, at the west end of Sol Legare Road, known as Battery Island, are now mostly home to multi-million-dollar mansions built in the twentieth century. These changes have increased the area’s property tax base, and that in turn affects the tax rates of the area’s smaller historically Black homes.

Grimball Area, Westchester, Honey Hill, and Peas Hill

These areas were identified in the Charleston City Plan and mentioned in several interviews, including with Ercella Chillis who lives off Grimball Road and grew up working with her family in the fields of the postbellum Grimball Plantation. The Grimball Area includes six settlement communities whose origins are tied to the Grimball Plantation. Within the Grimball Area, Grimball Farm (AASC #25) is an example of a Remnant Freedman Settlement community in which “modern development and subdividing the long parcels have obscured [long-lot parcel] patterns” (Ciomek et al. 2016).

Beefield (also sometimes spelled Bee Field) was identified in the Charleston City Plan as AASC #28 and as a Grimball Area settlement community. However, several interviewees from Sol Legare explained that, before Folly Road was extended and Sol Legare Road realigned, Old Sol Legare Road connected the two communities, which were more closely aligned with each other than with other area settlement communities (W. “Cubby” Wilder, personal communication, May 21, 2022). A recent account of this Remnant Freedman Settlement community echoes interviewee descriptions of “old” James Island: “Because when you start walking the dirt road...It’s almost like you’re in another world. And just beyond that, the Folly Road we’re all in traffic” (Rademaker 2022). A prime example of a community interested

Grimball Area and Adjacent African American Settlement Communities Map





Street Sign at the Intersection of Rainbow and Folly Roads

in self-preservation, Beefield initiated the process of seeking Charleston County Historical Designation in April 2022. With all of James Island facing constant and impactful development pressures, such a designation would provide “an extra layer of protection against inappropriate development” (Rademaker 2022).

The Honey Hill community (AASC #32) was previously part of the Fort Johnson community, named for the Civil War-era fort on the northeastern point of James Island. Honey Hill was named after Estell “Honey” Mikell, who owned land in Fort Johnson where she reportedly kept two of every kind of animal. Mikell was the first Black woman from that area to sew and sell quilts in Charleston markets. In her later years, when she could no longer keep up the market business, she cared for neighborhood children and sold medicine out of her house to both Blacks and whites. A house fire claimed Mikell’s life, during which fire trucks were unable to get to her house to rescue her and extinguish the fire due to the narrowness of the access drive. After her passing, her descendants and other people in the area named her land and the community around it Honey Hill (E. Frazier 2010). Both Honey Hill and the Peas Hill communities were associated with Society Corner School on Secessionville Road.

Other communities within Grimball where interviewees stated they had associations include Barn Hill (AASC #24) and Scott Hill (AASC #27). Rainbow Road, located in Westchester (AASC #30) and to the east of Grimball, was specifically mentioned during the James Island group interview as a place where friends and family lived (J. Brown et al., personal communication, May 19, 2022).



Angel Oak, Johns Island (Dreamstime)

V. JOHNS ISLAND IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Despite only being separated by a river, culture on Johns Island was and remains different than that of James Island. Although both began the twentieth century as agricultural communities, this character and economy began to disappear much sooner on James Island. For generations, Johns Island was relatively isolated from the outside world. The only way to get to the island was by boat (Carawan, 1989). Around 1917, the John's Island Bridge, a wooden swing bridge, was built across the Stono River on the north end of the island, connecting it to mainland Charleston and US Highway 17 via Main Road. Cars and trucks quickly replaced ferries and other boats (Haynie, 2007).

In the early 1900s, several Black Johns Islanders were landowners, many having purchased former plantation land or received land as part of the Freedman's Bureau efforts. The Blakes were one of the largest of the Black landowning families in the early 1900s. They owned almost 200 acres of land in an area sometimes called Blake Hill, off Old Pond Road south of the Stono River (C.B. McClue, personal communication, June 22, 2022). There were few opportunities for Black people on Johns Island other than farming. However, in the 1930s, there was a Spanish

Workers at the Spanish Moss Factory on Johns Island in the 1930s (Haynie 2007); Esau Jenkins Gathering with Kids (Below) (Source: Avery Institute)



Moss Factory created by the WPA. In this factory, Spanish Moss was collected and pulled apart to remove any debris. The moss was then steamed to kill any living organisms, then hung out to dry in the sun. Once cleaned, it was used to stuff mattresses, pillows, and for upholstery padding (Haynie, 2007).

Mr. Esau Jenkins, a Johns Island native, arrived on the scene with the creation of the Progressive Club in 1948. The Progressive Club was created to improve conditions and provide opportunities for Black residents of Johns Island (Progressive Club, 2021). The Progressive Club would later operate a grocery store, the only gym on Johns Island, and serve as a center for adult education and voter registration (Carawan, 1989).

The church was the cornerstone of life on Johns Island. Each main road had at least one church to serve the people that lived within walking distance from it. Some residents mentioned that they attended church several days a week. Mrs. McClue recounts "I used to go seven days a week with my parents. If they go into the church, they'll put the communion cloth on, cleaning the church out. I stayed in church" (C.B. McClue, personal communication, June 22, 2022).

Hard work was a way of life on the island. Mr. Gerald Mackey remembers his time working on farms, the "thing I didn't like about it when I grew up was working on the farm in the hot summers. I hated it. When I got to be 15 or 16 and I could stand up for myself, I told my mother I was not going back on the farm and I didn't" (G. Mackey, personal communication, June 23, 2022). When they were children, Mrs. Sandra Hutchison and Mrs. Sandra Green were lucky enough to be allowed to go play in the water after farming season. On the Fourth



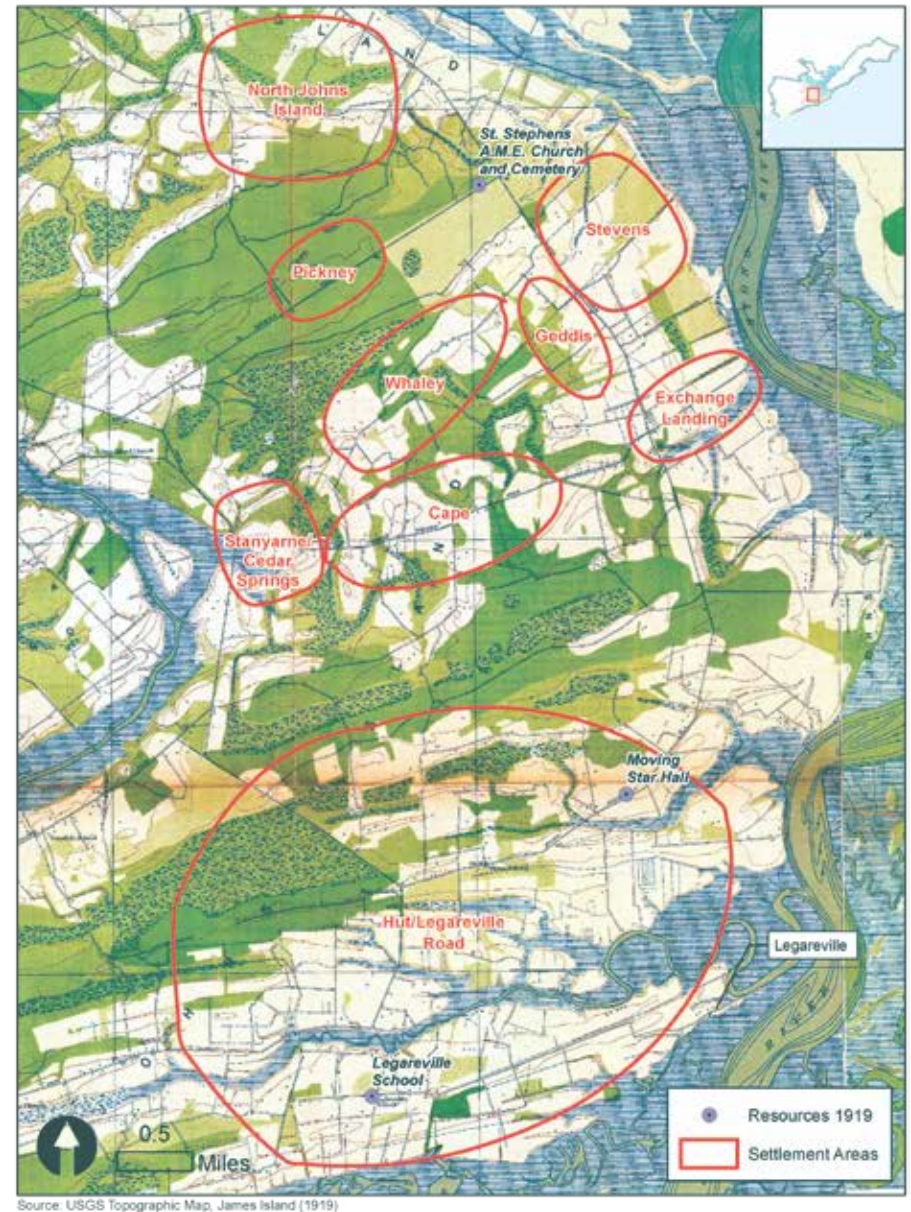
JOHNS ISLAND TOPOGRAPHIC SERIES

of July, they went to their family member, George Bellinger's, land and would swim on "Georgie's Beach" (S.J.B. Hutchinson et al., personal communication, June 22, 2022).

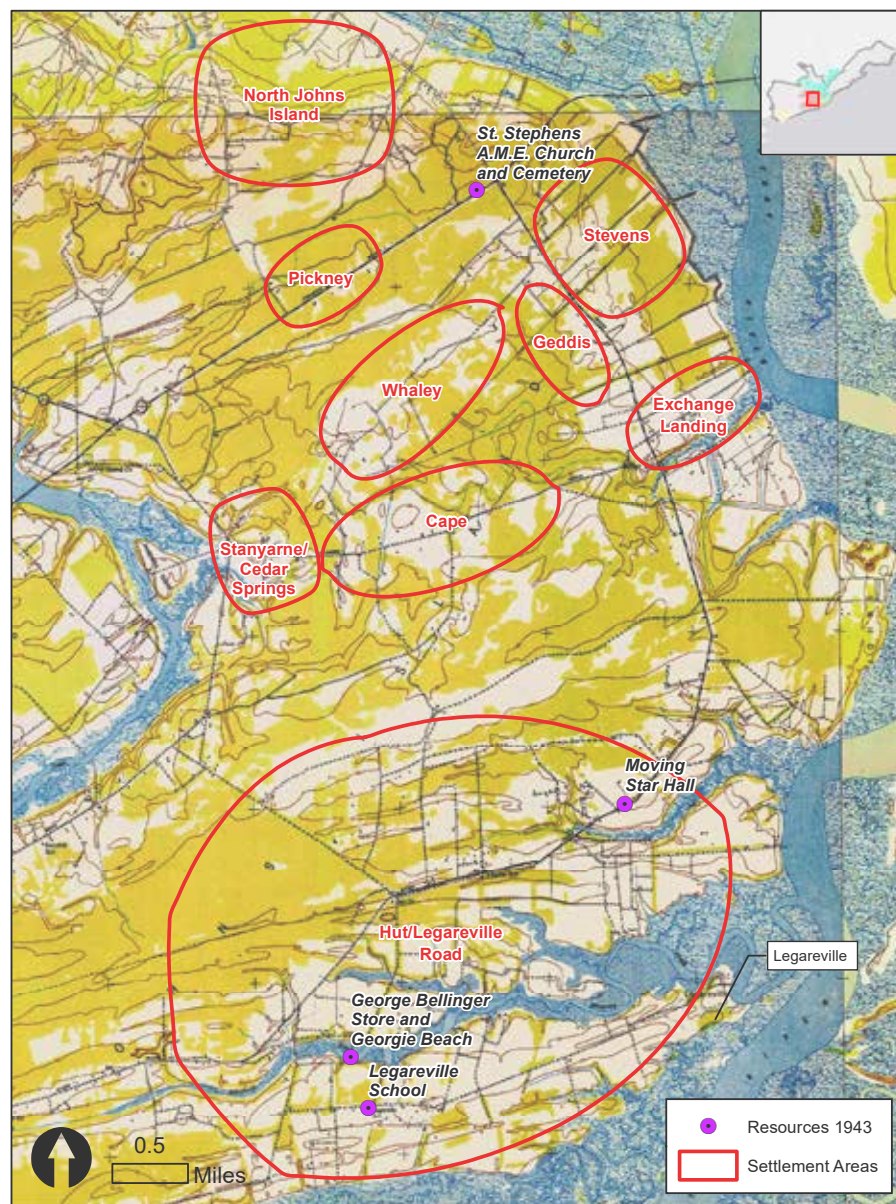
School and education were also important to Johns Islanders. Several interviewees remember they needed to work during the first week of school each year so they could earn money to rent their textbooks. There were several schools on Johns Island, mostly one room schools with one teacher. Mrs. Septima Clark, a Charleston native, taught on Johns Island for decades. Eventually, she and Mr. Esau Jenkins became partners in their efforts to make education more accessible for students. Mr. Jenkins purchased a school bus that would transport students to and from school before the county provided one for Black students. He also fought for having Black schools consolidated in the 1950s, as well as getting a new high school on the island, the Haut Gap Highschool (Haynie, 2007).

The 1950s brought electricity to the island and the roads were also beginning to be paved. Mr. Jenkins and Mrs. Clark started the Citizenship School Program which helped adults learn how to read. This program was created to help Black people register to vote during this period. The Citizenship School Program helped many exercise their right to vote.

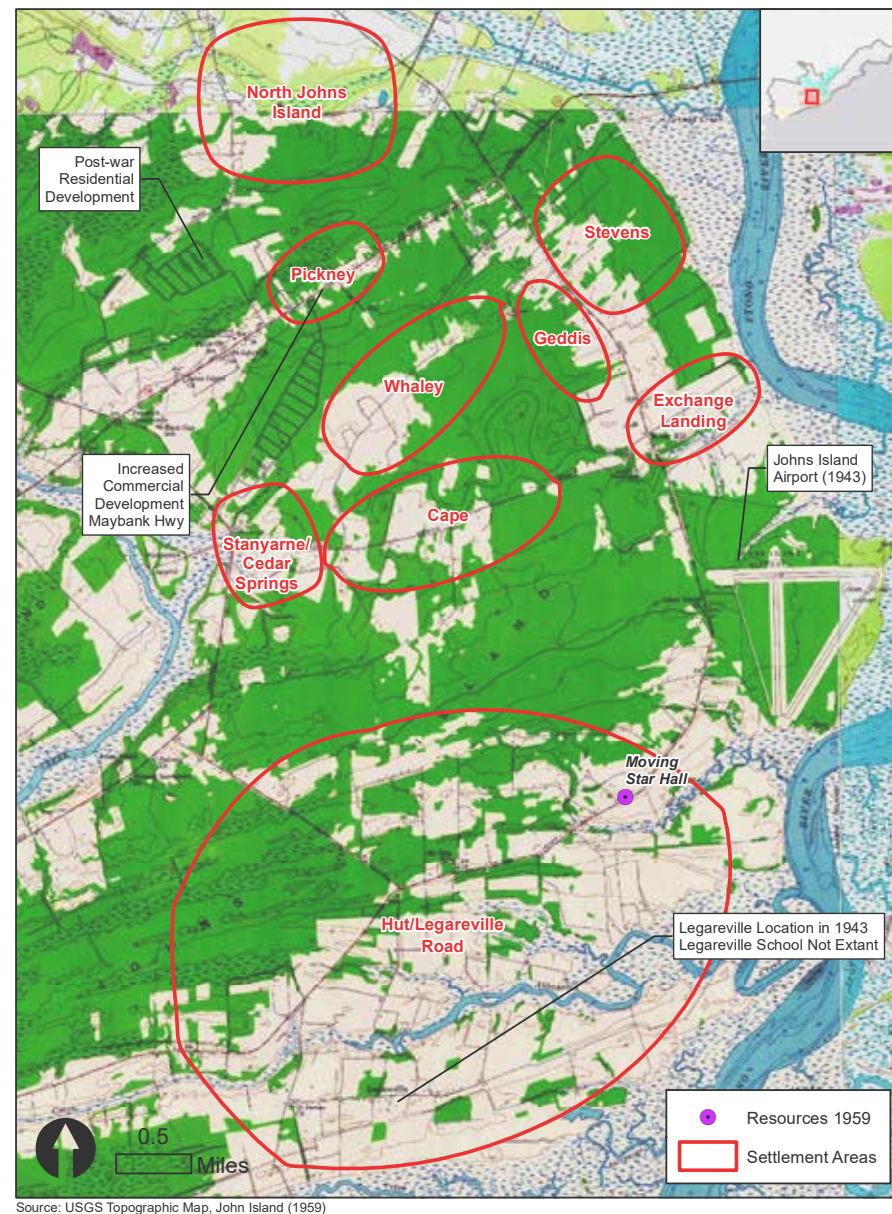
Schools and businesses were integrated starting in 1966 (C.B. McClue, personal communication, June 22, 2022). Indoor plumbing was making its way to each home around the same time (S.J.B. Hutchinson et al., personal communication, June 22, 2022). By the end of the 1970s, very few



1919 USGS Topographical Map Showing Johns Island and the Settlement Communities Scattered Across the Island (TopoView)



1943 USGS Topographical Map Showing Johns Island Preserved Rural Character (TopoView)



1959 USGS Topographical Map Showing Johns Island and the Increased Development on Maybank Highway Since 1943, as well as the First Subdivisions on the Island (TopoView)

JOHNS ISLAND HISTORIC AERIALS



residents were still working on farms, as migrant workers were being brought in to sustain the remaining farms on the island (Carawan, 1989). An exception is Joseph Fields, a third-generation farmer on Johns Island who inherited his 50-acre farm from his parents in 1973. Around 2010, Mr. Fields' farm became the first certified organic farm in South Carolina. The Joseph Fields Farm continues to be active on Johns Island today and is registered with the South Carolina Department of Agriculture's Farm to School Program (J. Fields, 2016).

Around this time, the Progressive Club also began outreach to other communities. Many young people had left the island as part of the Great Migration seeking a better life up north and out west. Job opportunities, however, had improved for African Americans on the island over time. Road and bridge improvements allowed islanders to easily work in Charleston and its surrounds (Carawan, 1989).

1949 USGS Aerial Imagery of Johns Island (EarthExplorer)



1957 USGS Aerial Imagery of Johns Island in 1957 (EarthExplorer)



The island remained rural into the early 1980s. The next wave of major change came after Hurricane Hugo in 1989. It destroyed many parts of the island leaving land vulnerable to new development (S.J.B. Hutchinson et al., personal communication, June 22, 2022). By the early 2000s, road expansions and new bridges increased traffic on the island (A. Geddis, personal communication, June 23, 2022). While development began to increase in the 1980s and 1990s, its pace has accelerated in the current century, with dozens of residential subdivisions in place by 2000. Though Johns Island may have seen less development than James Island, much about its way of life has changed over the years.

JOHNS ISLAND ORAL HISTORY PARTICIPANTS



(Top Row, Left to Right) Ethlemae Simmons Boyd, Antwoine Geddis and Abraham Bill Jenkins (Middle Row, Left to Right) Gerald Mackey and Carol Blake McClue (Bottom Row, Left to Right) Sandra Hutchinson, Sandra Green and Audrey Deas (Wiman 2022)

VI. LEARNING ABOUT JOHNS ISLAND'S SETTLEMENT COMMUNITIES THROUGH ORAL HISTORY

INTRODUCTION

The oral history interviews completed for this study serve as invaluable insights into how community members see their own communities. The interviewees were asked about their history and their family's history on Johns Island, and about special places in their memories, as well as how they define their community. What are the geographic bounds of your community? What do you call your community?

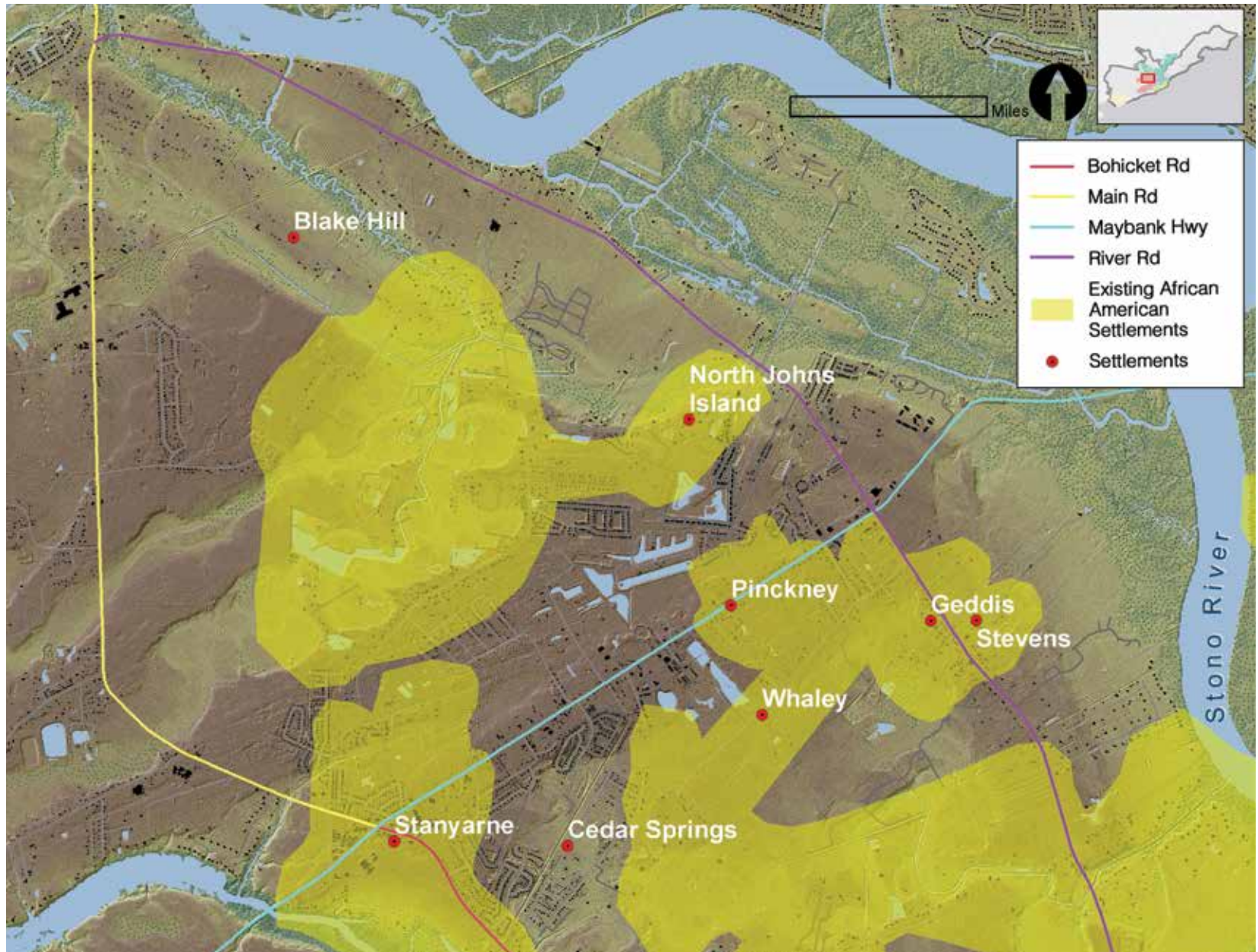
Much of what is known about the historic African American Settlement Communities on Johns Island is based on the information gathered for the 2020 Charleston City Plan. The plan provided initial names and bounds for each settlement community both in and just outside the city boundary. The plan did not seek to define what a settlement community is, but acknowledged that these communities share certain characteristics. These include late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century concentrations of African American households in a particular geographic area, a history

of community autonomy with a shared hyper-local economy and civic institutions, and concentrations of family property passed down through generations, often including heirs' property.

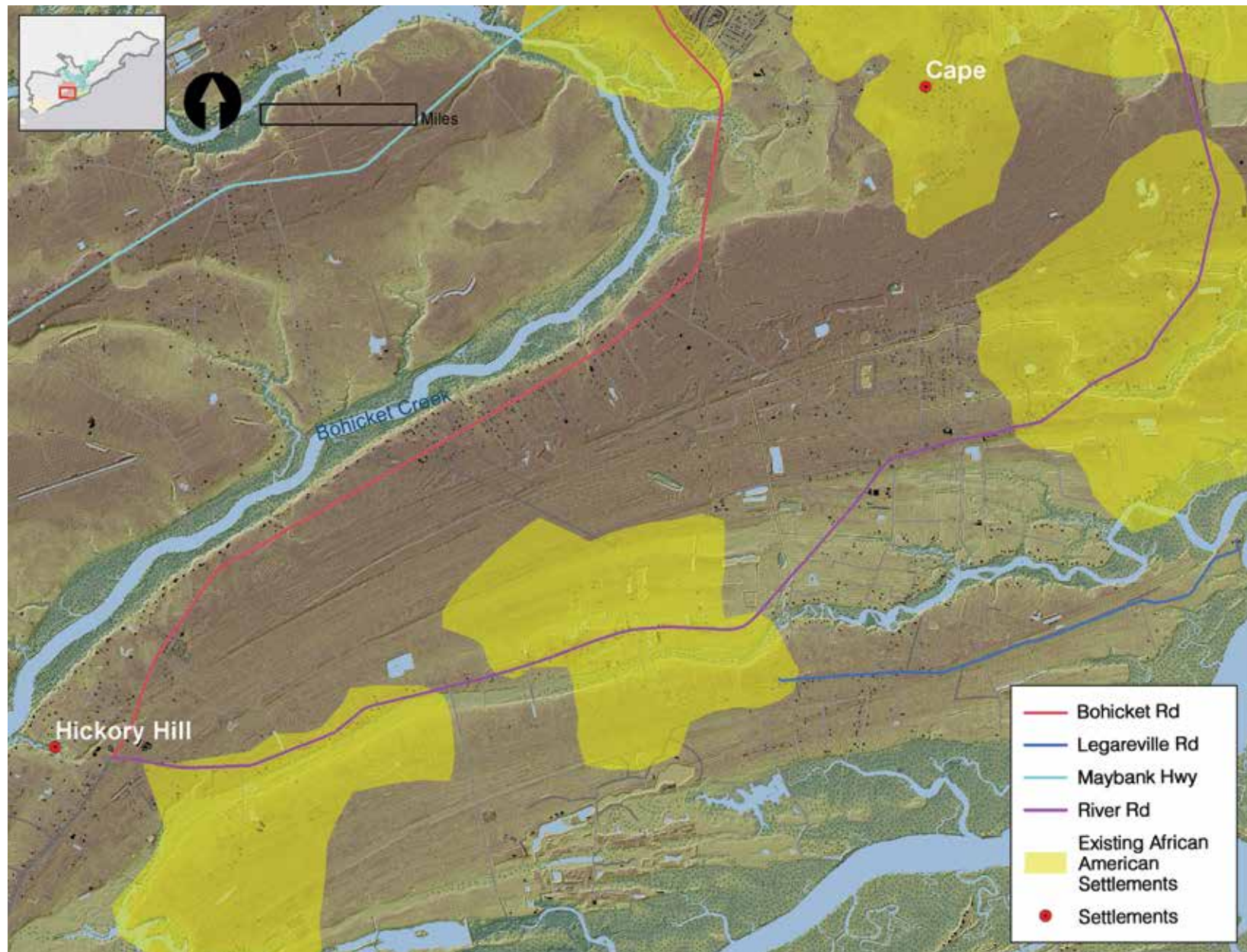
The city plan's efforts to identify historic African American Settlement Communities built on local community leaders' recent research efforts and resulted in the development of a GIS database to help define (with acknowledged limitations) community boundaries. This work by the City of Charleston formed the basis for this current study of the settlement communities of James and Johns islands. The NSA team organized history collection days on both James and Johns islands during May and June 2022. The public was invited to participate in oral history interviews, share photos and artifacts, and observe and comment on the various settlement community boundaries that were identified in the Charleston City Plan. The following chapter presents the communities of Johns Island, their locations, and their general histories which were informed by the interviewee participants. Chapter VII that follows is a cultural atlas of both islands, a glossary of important sites, landmarks, and other geographic points that were brought to light through the oral history interviews.

THE COMMUNITIES OF JOHNS ISLAND

The Charleston City Plan identified nine African American Settlement Communities on Johns Island: Red Top (AASC #11), Exchange Landing (AASC #12), Cape (AASC #13), Hut (AASC #14), Geddis (AASC #15), Pinckney (AASC #16), and three labeled as Unknown (AASC #17–19). These communities, including Red Top, which is off island along U.S. Highway 17, were mentioned during interviews, or appeared in uncovered documentation. However, they are not necessarily the primary monikers used for some "neighborhoods." Instead, many interviewees instead refer to their community by the main road that runs through it, such as Legareville Road (Hut) or Plow Ground Road (Cape).



(South Portion)



Interviews also identified names for two of the Unknown communities – North Johns Island (AASC #17) and Stanyarne (AASC #18) – and identified several communities the Charleston City Plan did not recognize, including Stevens, Whaley, Cedar Springs, Hickory Hill, and Blake Hill. Interviews also identified names for two of the Unknown communities – North Johns Island (AASC #17) and Stanyarne (AASC #18) – and identified several communities the Charleston City Plan did not recognize, including Stevens, Whaley, Cedar Springs, Hickory Hill, and Blake Hill.

North Johns Island

Identified in the Charleston City Plan as AASC #17 (Unknown) and as located in the northern portion of Johns Island, the Johns Island group interviewees indicated that the community is informally known as North Johns Island, although they did not suggest that this name is used in common parlance and although they themselves hail from a part of the island that is nearer Legareville Road (S.J.B. Hutchinson et al., personal communication, June 22, 2022). An 1860 plantation map of Johns Island shows that this area mostly encompassed tract 54 – identified as Lavinia Brown’s Brownswood Plantation – and part of tract 48, Dr. Daniel Jenkins Townsend’s Murray/Gibbes Plantation (Jordan & Stringfellow 1998: 241–250). Perhaps a combination of Brown’s and Townsend’s plantation names, Murraywood Road traverses the eastern half of the settlement polygon. The City Plan identified a related settlement community point, AASC #18 (Unknown), about a mile to the west. Both points are in the same settlement-community polygon, which is a similar shape to the Brownswood Plantation tract on the 1860 map. This suggests the area may be a contiguous community originating from the Brownswood and Murray/Gibbes plantations (Jordan & Stringfellow 1998: 241).

The only interviewee to hail from North Johns Island is Carol Blake McClue. Her cousins Jerry and Hannah Blake adopted her at the age of “two months

and two weeks.” They raised her on Johns Island near Old Pond Road (formerly Route 3 and Old Town Road; C.B. McClue, personal communication, June 22, 2022). Most of Old Pond Road is outside the settlement polygon for this community, so the North Johns Island community appears to have encompassed a greater area than identified in the Charleston City Plan. McClue maintained that the area along Old Pond Road was sometimes called Blake Hill.

Although McClue’s parents never had children of their own, they adopted many children over the years, resulting in what McClue described as an extended adopted family. Jerry Blake was the second Black mail carrier on Johns Island, and he was also a farmer. He owned land along Old Pond Road and leased farmland elsewhere on the island and employed a large local workforce. Hannah Blake is described as having been equally entrepreneurial. From her home, she offered sewing lessons and music instruction, and the Blake homestead was also a popular wedding venue. McClue described Jerry and Hannah Black as community leaders and organizers. The Jerry and Hannah Blake Memorial Bridge on Old Pond Road is named in their honor (C.B. McClue, personal communication, June 22, 2022).

McClue attended Haut Gap School and graduated in 1966. Through most of the 1960s and before integration, Haut Gap School served this part of Johns Island’s Black students, originally only through the sixth grade and later from first grade through high school. Other elementary schools in North Johns Island recalled by McClue include Rushland School off River Road and Wellington School (location unknown) (C.B. McClue, personal communication, June 22, 2022).

Perusal of an area map of North Johns Island (on, for example, Google Maps) shows several churches in the area, yet the only one mentioned by McClue was her family church, St. Stephens AME Church on Maybank Highway.

Stono River Bridge, Spanning Stono River between James and Johns Islands, Charleston, Charleston County (Library of Congress)



McClue remembered doing homework in the pews and attending events like ice cream socials, often organized by her mother. She also said the church was the Blakes' main advertising venue, showing that it was a spiritually, socially, and economically important institution in the community (C.B. McClue, personal communication, June 22, 2022).

Geddis

Antwoine Geddis indicated portions of Geddis (AASC #15) were part of both the Stevens community and the previously unidentified Whaley community (A. Geddis, personal communication, June 23, 2022). It was identified as the northeastern portion of Johns Island along River Road, south of its junction with Maybank Highway. None of the oral history interviews conducted with residents of Johns Island indicated this area was or is known locally as the Geddis community. Although in his interview Mr. Geddis referred to Geddis having origins in the Whaley community, none of the nineteenth century or earlier historic or plantation maps depict a Geddis Plantation or indicate anyone named Geddis owned land on Johns Island. The place name's actual origin is unknown.

Other than the Johns Island House of Prayer at 1986 River Road, private individuals own and reside at all the parcels in this area. This level of private ownership contrasts with much of the nearby property along Maybank Highway. An analysis of Charleston County tax records found that commercial and investment entities have acquired much of those properties, which would be considered part of the Whaley or Pinckney communities.

Stevens

While identified in the Charleston City Plan as associated with Cape (AASC #13) and located in the northeastern portion of Johns Island, Antwoine Geddis

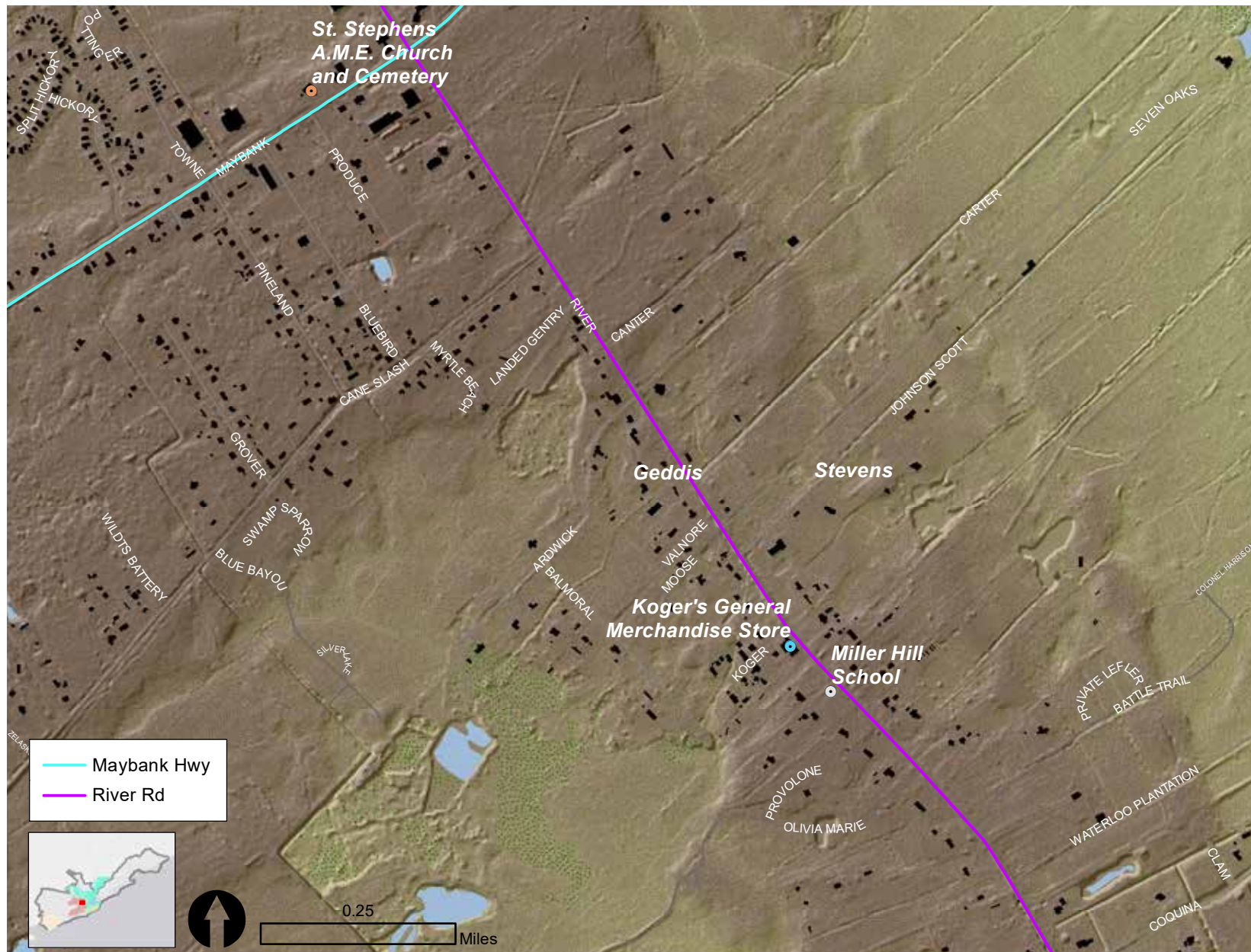
places Stevens closer to the Geddis community southeast of the intersection of Maybank Highway and River Road. He stated that the land surrounding 7 Oaks Lane, Johnson Scott Lane, and Roper Road was the antebellum landholdings of "Dr. Stevens," which likely refers to William Stevens.

An 1860 plantation map of Johns Island supports this claim and places tract 45 (Seven Oaks Plantation) – listed as owned by William L. Stevens – in the area south of Maybank Highway and straddling River Road, bordered on the north by Fenwick Hall and on the west by Cain Slash Plantation (Jordan & Stringfellow 1998: 241–250). An index of "Plantations on John's Island, circa 1880–1895" states that "Dr. William Smith Stevens" took refuge in Marion, South Carolina during the American Civil War but returned after the war. It also states that, in 1868, he was approved for aid from the Freedmen's Bureau to support the 34 adults and 20 children (formerly enslaved) living and working on his property. Stevens sold the property in 1886 and moved to Augusta, Georgia. After that, the land changed hands several times. It was reduced by several hundred acres before Quash Stevens and William F. Stevens purchased it in 1901, for \$3,000.

Mr. Geddis described that his great-grandmother, Christina Johnson Geddis, was "born on Stevens' place, and her father was Thomas Johnson, and her mother was Venus Daes Scott Johnson." These two surnames, comprise the name of a road at the center of the community – Johnson Scott Lane. He went on to relate that family records include a census "list that shows her brother and siblings while they were living on Dr. Stevens' place" and that, even when her memory was failing in her later years, she would express a desire "to go home to Stevens" (A. Geddis, personal communication, June 23, 2022).

Roper Road is adjacent to the east of Johnson Scott Lane, and it references another of the names in Mr. Geddis' extended family tree that is represented

Geddis and Stevens African American Settlement Community Map



in the Stevens community. His great-grandparents were Jackie and Diana Roper. The family story chronicles that Diana was a midwife who delivered dozens or even hundreds of Johns Islanders. Mr. Geddis explained that the Roper's daughter, Rebecca Roper Gibbes, held a direct connection to the tragic events surrounding the Emanuel Nine in Charleston in 2015. The eldest victim on that day in June, 87-year-old Sally Jackson, was the daughter of Mrs. Gibbes' first cousin (A. Geddis, personal communication, June 23, 2022).

Pinckney

Identified in the Charleston City Plan as AASC #16, testimonial from Antwoine Geddis indicates that a portion of the community is part of the previously unidentified Whaley community (A. Geddis, personal communication, June 23, 2022). Pinckney was identified as located in the north central portion of Johns Island, along Maybank Highway to southwest of its junction with River Road. However, none of the interviewees from Johns Island indicated the area was or is known locally as the Pinckney community. Although Mr. Geddis referred to Pinckney's having origins in the Whaley community, none of the nineteenth-century (or earlier) historic or plantation maps depict a Pinckney Plantation or indicate anyone named Pinckney owned land on Johns Island. Therefore, the origin of this place name is unknown.

Although the Charleston County tax assessor map indicates many long lots along this section of the highway, investment entities currently own more than half of them. Aerial imagery shows a significant amount and rapid pace of commercial and residential development along the corridor over the past decade, including at least three new subdivisions. This contrasts with the neighboring Whaley and Geddis communities that remain mostly residential (despite the establishment of twenty-first century subdivisions in parts of Whaley), according to an analysis of Charleston County tax records.

This information and the interviewees' lack of knowledge about a supposed Pinckney community suggest Pinckney is not an active community or one Johns Islanders recognize.

Whaley

Although not identified as a settlement community in the Charleston City Plan, testimonial from Antwoine Geddis indicates that the Whaley community is in the north central portion of Johns Island. It essentially encompasses the land along Cane Slash Road, which was named for Cain Slash Plantation, the antebellum landholdings of William Smith Whaley, Jr. This area is said to incorporate portions of what were identified as the Geddis and Pinckney communities, and Mr. Geddis' statement that the "neighborhood...still known as Whaley [is] where the Geddis and the Greens and the Pinckneys stay" seems to support this thesis (A. Geddis, personal communication, June 23, 2022).

An 1860 plantation map of Johns Island places this tract south of Maybank Highway and north of Plow Ground Road. It indicates the tract to the west was Cedar Springs Plantation, and the tract to the east was Seven Oaks – listed as owned by Dr. William R. Stevens (Jordan & Stringfellow 1998: 241–250). An 1863 map of James Island showing parts of the neighboring mainland and Sea Islands also places "Cane Slash W Whaley" south of Fenwick Road, west of River Road, and between the landholdings of "W.S. Stevens" and "Cedar Springs Dr J. Townsend" (Unknown 1863). Whaley "leased lands to freedmen" in the postbellum era, until the land was eventually subdivided in 1909 (Jordan & Stringfellow 1998: 257).

Mr. Geddis further noted that "even after Mr. Whaley passed away, his daughter inherited the land," and would employ locals to farm it. He spoke about his great-grandfather, named Caesar Geddis, and Caesar's uncle Cato as "two of the big-times of the Whaley Plantation." He related that Caesar's

Pinckney African American Settlement Community Map



Whaley African American Settlement Community Map



eventual wife, Sarah Sally Chavis Geddis, also worked for the Whaleys, but “in the house, ‘cause my great-grandmother was a high yellow, [and] most people that were high yellow usually can work in the house” (A. Geddis, personal communication, June 23, 2022).

Mr. Geddis described growing up in this community on family land that dates back several generations, depicting a landscape that in the 1990s was still quite rural. While Cane Slash Road itself can still feel quite rural at points, aerial imagery indicates that in the past decade, subdivision development has filled in nearly half the area Mr. Geddis identified as the Whaley community. The massive Oakfield development accounts for most of that development. Geddis’ family property is near the western edge of the Whaley community on Herman Road, which is one of the access roads for the Whaley Family Cemetery. The road is named for Herman Geddis, who was an adopted child of Mr. Geddis’ great-grandmother Sarah Sally Chavis Geddis (A. Geddis, personal communication, June 23, 2022).

Cape, Stanyarne, Cedar Springs, and Legareville Road

Located in central Johns Island, the Cape community was identified in the Charleston City Plan (AASC #13). Antwoine Geddis indicated that it is farther south, near present-day Plow Ground Road. This is consistent with the location of John Capes’ landholdings, as represented on both a Revolutionary War-era map of Johns Island and on an 1860 plantation map of Johns Island. The 1863 map of James Island and surrounding areas does not depict this part of Johns Island (Jordan & Stringfellow 1998: 236–237, 241, 244).

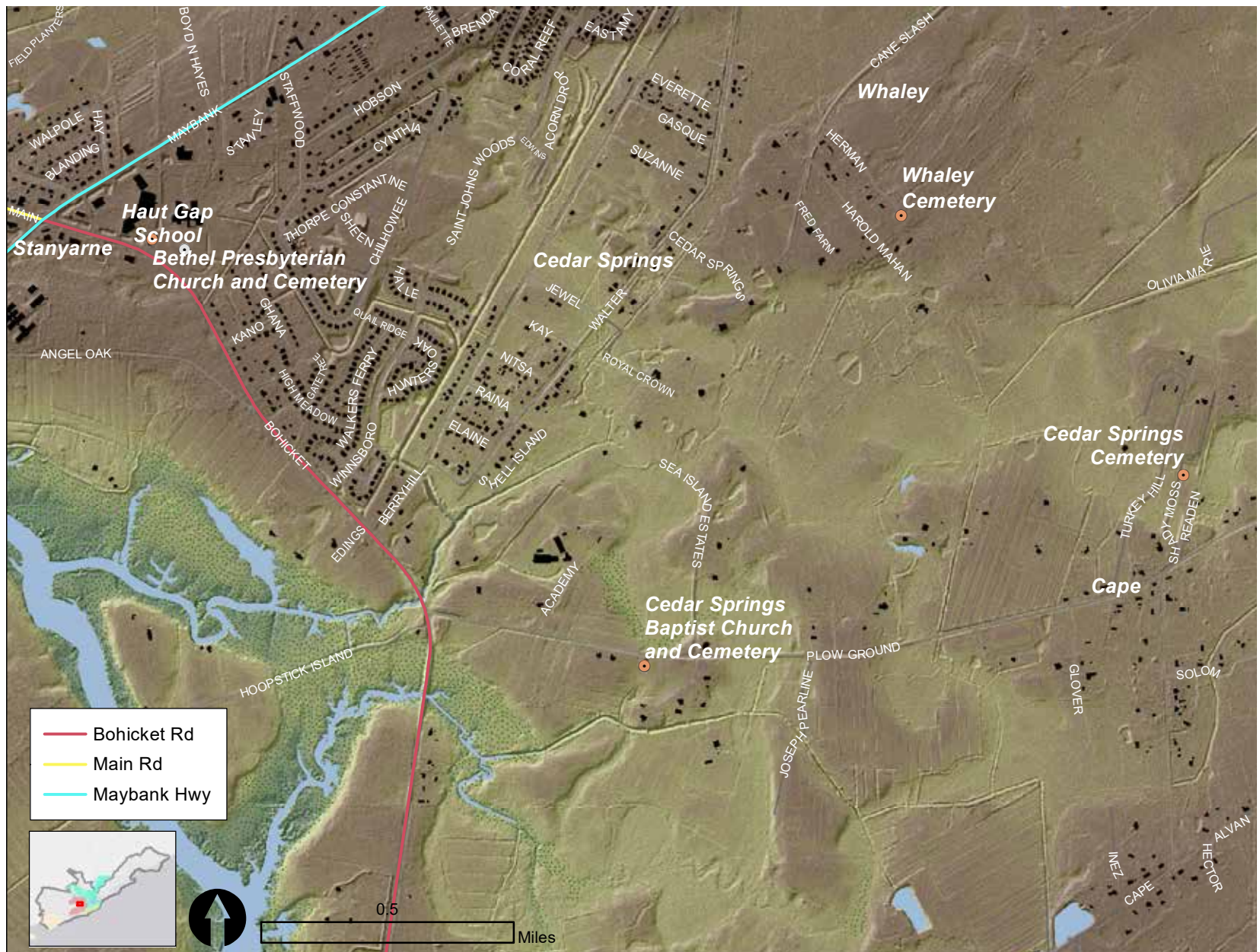
The Cape Plantation passed from Thomas Roper, son of Benjamin Dart Roper, Sr., to Daniel Jenkins Townsend by 1861. The Ropers also had other plantations on the island, including Briars (Benjamin) and Oakland (Thomas), while Townsend’s Johns Island landholdings in 1860 included Cedar Springs,

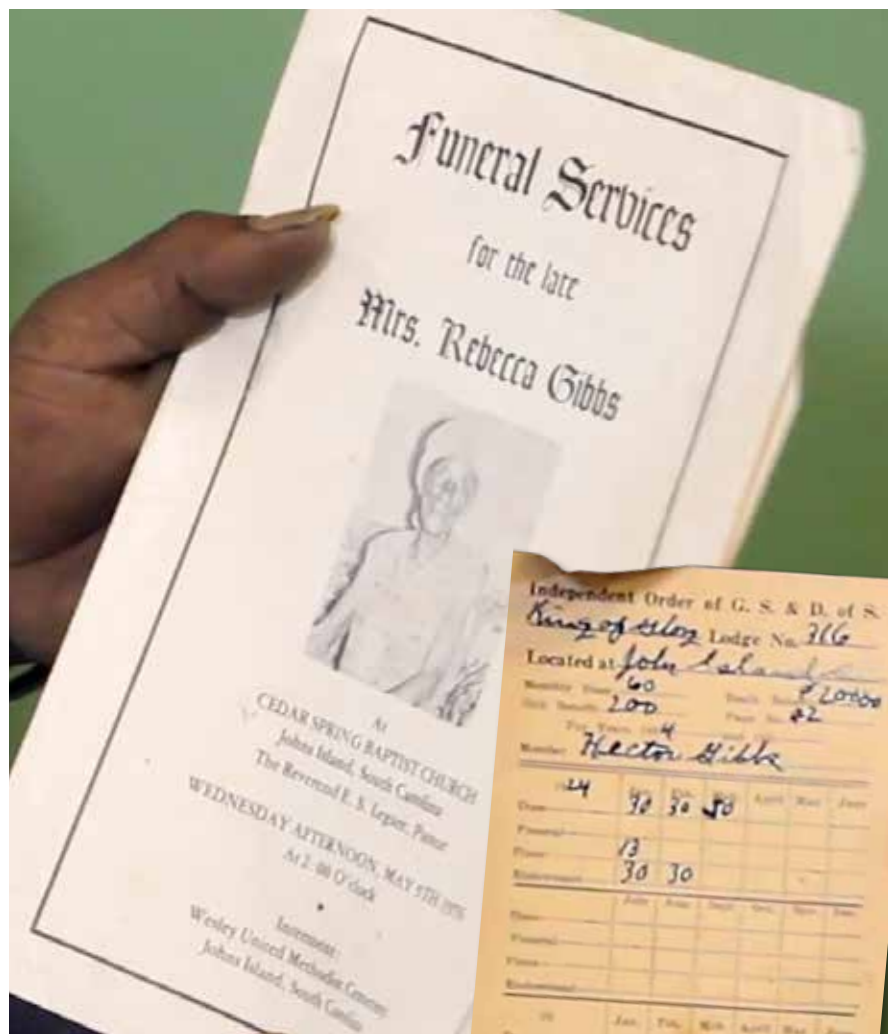
Fenwick Hall, and Murray/Gibbes plantations. Following Townsend’s death in October 1861, Cape Plantation passed to the Clement family, who retained ownership for the remainder of the nineteenth century. The land was subdivided around 1899 (Jordan & Stringfellow 1998: 241–257).

Mr. Geddis explained that his great-great-grandparents, Hector and Rebecca Gibbes, “came from Wadmalaw to Johns Island...and they settled in a place called Cape Plantation, and that’s the place that used to be called Cape” (A. Geddis, personal communication, June 23, 2022). Hector Gibbes was born in 1849. Geddis family records include an 1870 census schedule listing him as 21 years old and including “John Gibbes and Calvin Gibbes, Ben Frasier, some other people that I don’t hardly know too well,” as “household members he was living with.... Later on documents showed him living in a boarding house with some Geddis” (A. Geddis, personal communication, June 23, 2022). Hector Gibbes was a casket builder and is said to have been one of the first carpenters on Johns Island. He is credited with having built the Mount Zion Holiness Church on Exchange Landing Road. Born on January 1, 1880, Rebecca Gibbes lived to the age of 96. When she passed in 1976, she had 57 grandchildren, 158 great-grandchildren, and 54 great-great-grandchildren. This count does not even include Mr. Geddis, who was born in 1984! (A. Geddis, personal communication, June 23, 2022). Mr. Geddis also stated that Hector Road, in the southern portion of the Cape community, is named in honor of his great-great-grandfather.

Other interviewees, including Ethelmae Boyd, described living and owning land along Plow Ground Round but did not refer to it as the Cape community per se. In fact, Boyd always called the area by the road name and did not once refer to it as the Cape community. She did, however, state that the Geddis family lives “behind” her, in what was identified by Mr. Geddis as the Whaley community, and she went on to explain that her family was originally

Cape, Stanyarne, and Cedar Springs African American Settlement Communities Map





(Above) Rebecca Roper Gibbs
Funeral Program from 1976
(Right) Undated Receipt for
Hector Gibbs' Lodge Member
Dues on Johns Island (Antwoine
Geddis Family Collection)

from Whaley but that her father was given the opportunity to buy land along Plow Ground Road. He purchased nearly 200 acres in the 1920s, and Mrs. Boyd still resides on this land today and retains ownership of around 50 acres of it, based on an analysis of Charleston County tax records (E. S. Boyd, personal communication, June 22, 2022).

Mr. Geddis suggested that the community identified as “Unknown #18” may have been called Stanyarne, while also positing the presence of a previously unidentified community adjacent to the east called Cedar Springs (A. Geddis, personal communication, June 23, 2022). In contrast to the Whaley community, which was identified by several interviewees, Stanyarne and Cedar Springs were identified only by Mr. Geddis, who gave no information about them other than to hand draw the approximate locations on one of the large format maps created for the public interviews. Although no other interviewees offered more detailed (or any) information on these communities, their locations and names are corroborated on historic maps of the island.

There is no record of a Stanyarne Plantation. The family was prominent on the island, however. The family trees of many other recognized Johns Island families, including the Coles, the Freers, and the Legares, includes Stanyarnes (Jordan & Stringfellow 1998: 277–290). Stanyarnes are shown as owning lands on a colonial-era map near Fenwick Hall and on a Revolutionary War-era map on the northern edge of the island along Chisolm Road. The Kinsey Burden Plat (ca. 1825) places Miss A. Stanyarne, Sr. and her neighbor Justus Angel near the intersection of Stono Ferry (Bohicket) and Pine Barren Ridge (Plow Ground) roads. This is in line with the location Mr. Geddis identified for the community. The Stanyarne name no longer appears as a landholder by the 1860 plantation map, yet the neighborhood place name managed to persist to the present day. Stanyarne does not appear on the 1863 map of James Island and surrounding areas, either. The acreage was absorbed by Cedar Springs Plantation or by Angels/Hoopstick Plantation, better known as

Antebellum Stanyarne Landholdings as Depicted (Yellow Highlight) on Kinsey Burden's 1820s Map of Johns Island (Burden ca. 1825)



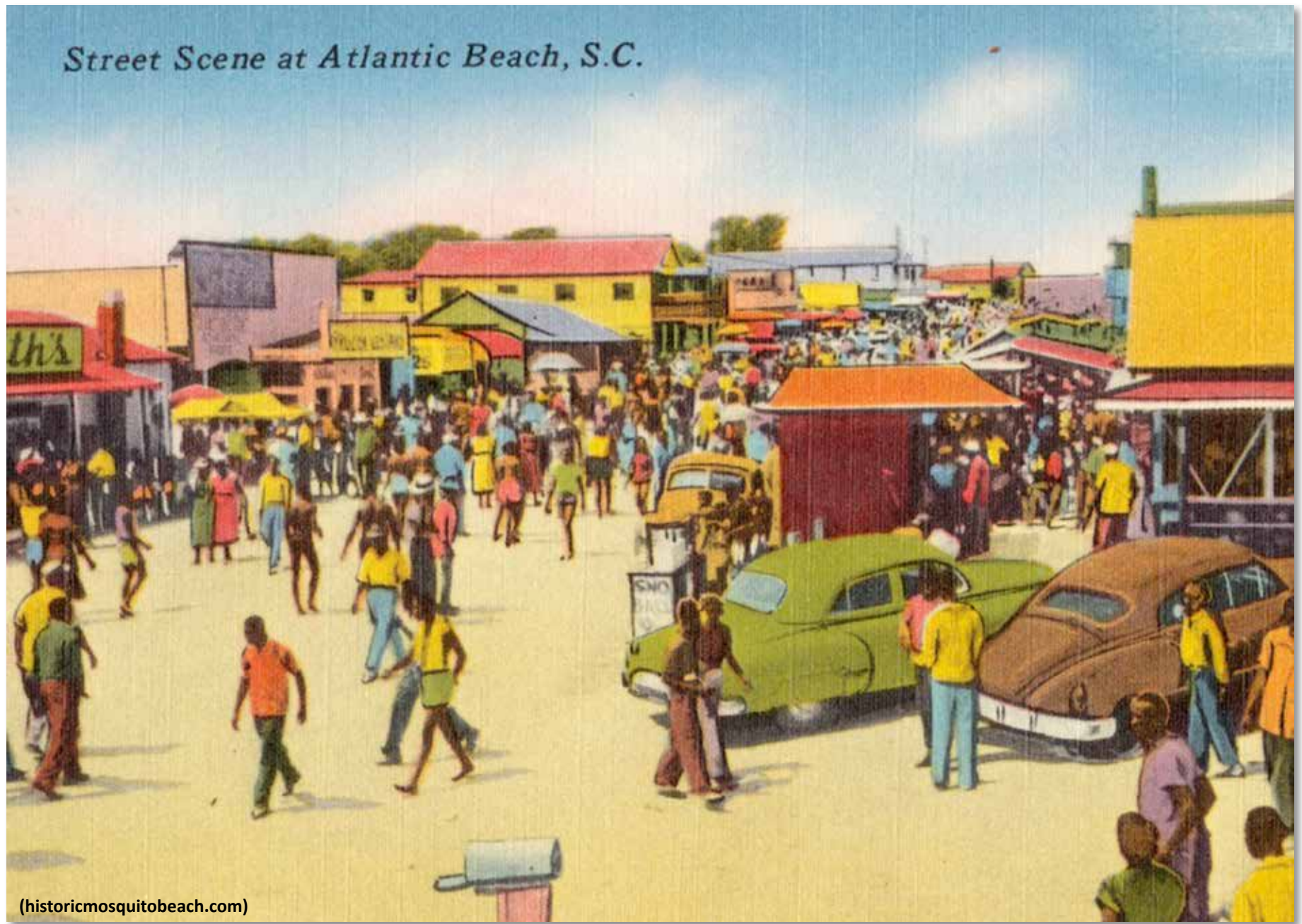
the site of the Angel Oak tree. Martha Angel and her son Isaac owned the Angels/Hoopstick Plantation, and their surname appears in this area on the 1863 map (Jordan & Stringfellow 1998: 234–253; Unknown, 1863).

Similarly, an 1860 Plantation Map shows Cedar Springs Plantation on the northeast corner of the intersection of “Plowground” and Bohicket roads, near the Cedar Springs community as identified by Mr. Geddis (Jordan & Stringfellow, 1998: 241, 244). An 1863 map of James Island that also shows portions of the neighboring mainland and Sea Islands similarly places “Cedar Springs Dr J. Townsend” in the same intersectional vicinity, to the southwest of “Cane Slash W Whaley” and east of the “Angels” (Unknown, 1863). As previously mentioned, Cedar Springs was owned in 1860 by Daniel Jenkins Townsend, who “leased lands to freedman, Jack Rivers and his foreman, Benjamin Myers” (Jordan & Stringfellow, 1998: 258). The property was sold to Paul T. Gervais in 1891, who is also listed in 1860 as the owner of Exchange [Landing] Plantation (Jordan & Stringfellow, 1998: 258, 245).

The Charleston City Plan did not identify it as a settlement community. However, interviewees made it quite clear that an African American community is associated with the area spanning Legareville Road south of the Hut community’s identified boundaries. The Charleston City Plan identified Hut as AASC #14, but none of the interviewees hailed from this community, nor did any discuss it by name. Instead, there were many mentions of Legareville Road – formerly known as Maddas Road – and sites such as Legareville School and Georgie Beach/George Bellinger’s Store. Located on the south side of Abbapoola Creek, Legareville Road was historically the access point to the antebellum community of Legareville and to Sol Legare’s Hanscome Point Plantation. After the Civil War, the area became an African American community. Several interviewees discussed visiting the community for events like Fourth of July celebrations at Georgie Beach and football games at Legareville School.

Finally, Exchange Landing (AASC #12) is another African American community on Johns Island noted by interviewees that is not identified as a settlement community in the Charleston City Plan (S.J.B. Hutchinson et al., personal communication, June 22, 2022; C.B. McClue, personal communication, June 22, 2022).

Street Scene at Atlantic Beach, S.C.



(historicmosquitobeach.com)

VII. CULTURAL ATLAS OF THE ISLANDS

Across both islands, significant sites and areas were identified through both the archival research and the oral history interviews. These important places have been compiled into a glossary that is broken into topical sections by island and that includes both narrative context and visual aids to illustrate the islands' histories through a cultural atlas. The opposing figure provides an overview of the Charleston area, including both James and Johns islands and areas beyond. Additional detail maps are provided at the beginning of each topical section.

JAMES ISLAND IDENTIFIED SITES

Important sites and places (extant and not extant) on James Island were identified and plotted across the island. Their locations (to the extent they are known) are shown on the detail maps, and descriptions and images of these sites and places are provided in the topical sections below.

EDUCATION

Before Emancipation, educating enslaved persons was illegal, although clandestine efforts were not uncommon. Following emancipation, St. James Presbyterian Church was the first place on the island to teach Black people how to read and write in 1866 (E. Parks, personal communication, May 20, 2022). The South Carolina Constitution of 1895 established the state's system of public education, creating "separate but equal" schools for white and Black children, even though African American schools were consistently

Interviewee Ned Roper Featured in a Newspaper Article from 1969. Courtesy, Ned Roper. (Singleton 1970)

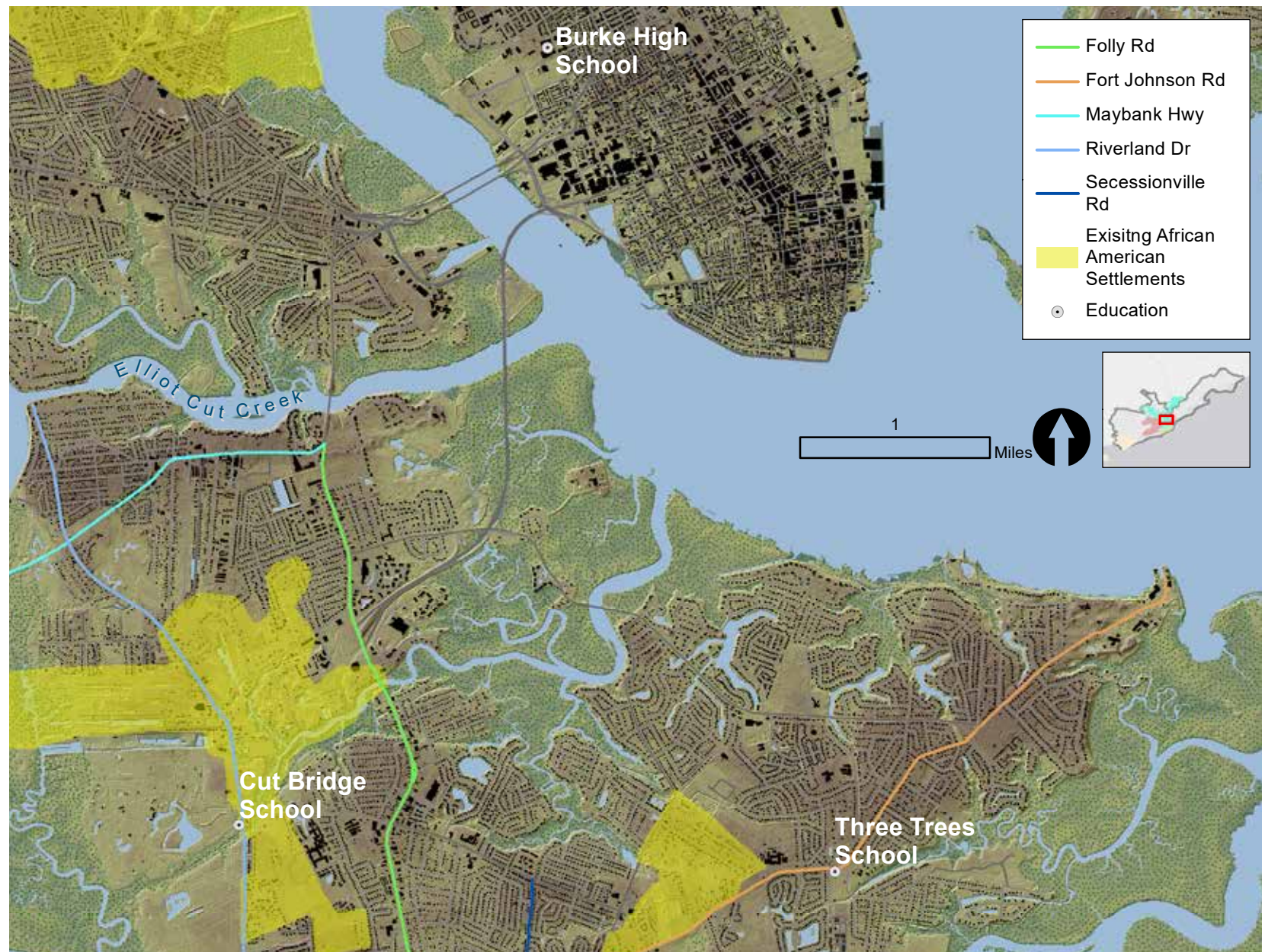
underfunded (*Historic Sites of James Island* 2020). The Black population on James Island was undeterred by the obstacles put before them. Generally, they saw education as a way to get off the farm and improve their living conditions. The school year was usually three to five months long, or whenever it was not farming season.

Schools on James Island were segregated until the late 1960s. Although secondary schools were available in Charleston, if one could get there, only grades one through six were available on the island until the 1950s. No public buses were provided, so students usually had to walk to school. Several elementary schools across the island served Black students, and, by the 1950s, at least one middle and high school served Black students until integration. Below are the schools mentioned by James Island interviewees, which is not a complete list of the schools that existed on the island.

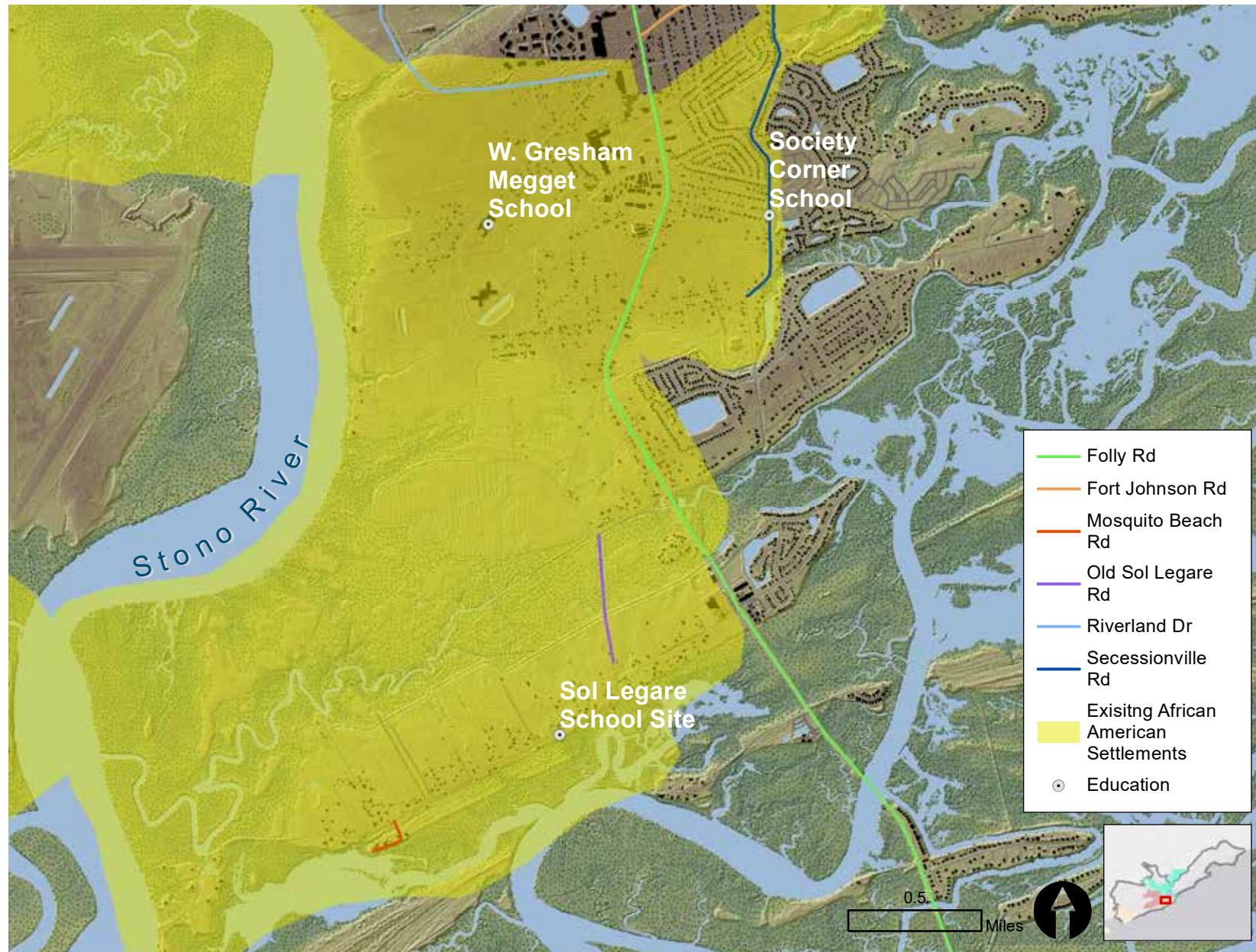
Cut Bridge Elementary – Cut Bridge Elementary is located on the central western side of James Island in the Cut Bridge neighborhood. The 1937/1938 South Carolina



Schools Located on Northern James Island



Schools Located on Southern James Island



1927 Map of Charleston County Showing Schools and School Districts. (Anderson 1927)



A detailed topographic map of Charleston, South Carolina, and James Island. The map shows the city of Charleston with its grid street pattern, the Charleston Harbor, and the Wappoo River. Key features include the Charleston Airfield, James Island, and the James Island Airport. The map is labeled with 'CHARLESTON POP. 62,265' and 'JAMES ISLAND'. It also shows the 'CASTLE PINCKNEY NATIONAL MONUMENT' and the 'AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF U.S.'.



highway map places the school just north of Newtown Creek and on the west side of Riverland Drive (SCDOT 1938). The school's actual opening date is unknown, but it was in operation by the 1920s. Built on a section of Stono Plantation (Dill property), it was a two-room schoolhouse painted black and surrounded by low-lying marshland. At high tide, students often had to wade through water to reach it (*Historic Sites of James Island* 2020). It was the Cut Bridge Community's elementary school for decades. Around 1955, it was replaced by Murray-LaSaine Elementary School, which was named after two prominent Cut Bridge principals.

Society Corner Elementary – The Julius Rosenwald Foundation Society established the Society Corner Elementary School in 1888 as a school for Black children on a section of Grimball Plantation (*Historic Sites of James Island* 2020). It is located at the intersection of Bur Clare Drive and Secessionville Road in central James Island, near the intersection of current-day Peas Hill and Secessionville roads. Associated with the Westchester and Peas Hill communities, it was considered a “high class” school, because teachers could live on the property in a small shed. In 1926 Mrs. Mamie Garvin Fields was hired as Society Corner's new teacher.

Cut Bridge Elementary Historic Images; (Left Top) Circa 1920 Photograph (James Island History Commission 2020) and (Left Bottom) (Charleston County School District 1956) (Right) Present Day Image of Site (Stucker 2022)





Society Corner Elementary (Left) Historic Image, Not Dated (James Island History Commission 2020) (Right) Present Day Image of Site (Stucker 2022)

She taught at the school until her retirement in 1953 then wrote her memoir *Lemon Swamp and Other Places* (Historic Sites of James Island 2020). The Baxter-Patrick Library on Grimball Road “is named after a principal of maybe Society Corner School, or else another former school on the Grimball area” (W. “Cubby” Wilder, personal communication, May

21, 2022). The school does not appear to be extant, with all four corner lots vacant as of 2022.

Sol Legare School – According to Earnest Parks, the school was located on Sol Legare Road on the Richardson property, adjacent to the general store. The

Sol Legare Elementary (Left) Historic Images (James Island History Commission 2020) (Right) Present Day Image of Site (Stucker 2022)



Sol Legare school was established in 1919 as a two-room schoolhouse along with two outhouses and a hand pump for water. A second schoolhouse, built in the 1940s, currently serves as a community center (*Historic Sites of James Island* 2020). Interviewees recalled schoolyard activities like hopscotch and marbles and described a game called lick that resembled tag but required one to hit their opponent, rather than just tag them, to make them “it.”

Some of the boys would also make small wooden boats to play with and race in the water (W. “Cubby” Wilder, personal communication, May 21, 2022). It was still extant, if dilapidated, when the Concerned Citizens group pushed to have it repurposed as a community center in the 1990s. That plan was never actualized, and the older schoolhouse was eventually demolished (Norman 1990; E. Parks, personal communication, May 20, 2022).



Three Trees Elementary School
Historic Photograph (James Island History Commission 2020)

Three Trees School – The 1919 topographical map of James Island locates the Three Trees School on the eastern side of the island, off Fort Johnson Road. The school was created as the only school for children who lived “down the island.” The first year of operation for Three Trees School is unknown, although records indicate that Mrs. Fannie Greenwood was hired as the principal to improve learning conditions in 1926 (*Historic Sites of James Island* 2020).

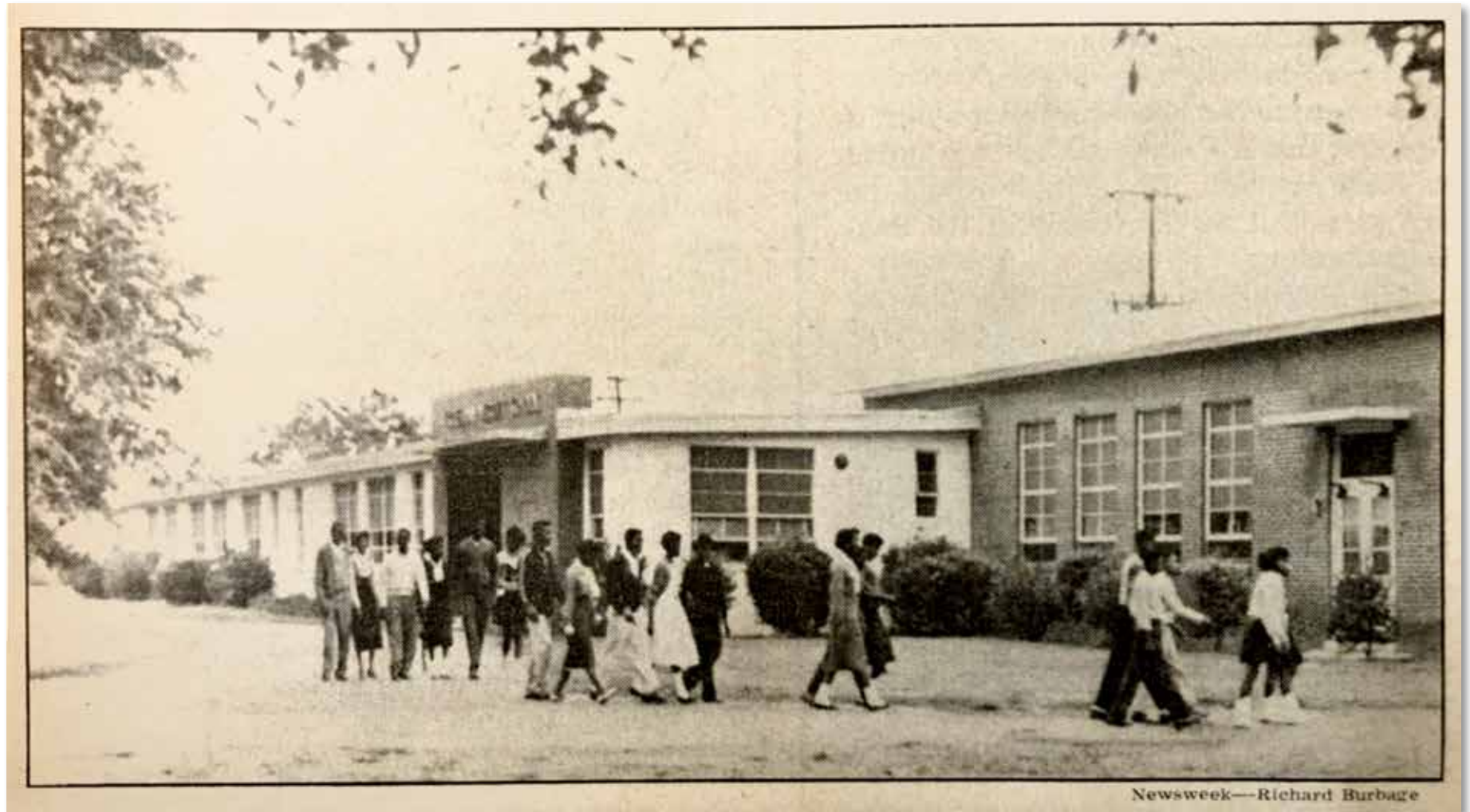
W. Gresham Meggett Elementary and High School – W. Gresham Meggett Elementary and High School was built in 1951 as part of South Carolina’s push to improve schools for African American children and avoid school integration. The school enabled secondary education for Black children on James Island for the first time. High school at that time went from seventh to twelfth grade, and the school also provided elementary education for at least a portion of time. Opened in 1953 and expanded in both 1956 and 1967, the new school had modern amenities and a wide-ranging curriculum that included vocational training for agriculture, brick masonry,

small engine repair, and more. In addition to the curriculum, sports were also part of the student experience. Although there was no basketball team, Mr. William “Cubby” Wilder recounted playing on “a good football team” (W. “Cubby” Wilder, personal communication, May 21, 2022).

The Supreme Court's 1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education* ruling ordered the desegregation of public schools, after which South Carolina tried to build new, separate schools for African American children to avoid the ruling. Despite these efforts, school integration began in 1963, and Gresham Meggett

eventually closed in 1969 (*Historic Sites of James Island* 2020). Students that attended Gresham Meggett were then sent to James Island High School, formerly the white high school on James Island. Referring to the merging of Gresham Meggett and James Island High School, Mr. Ernest Parks described

W. Gresham Meggett Elementary and High School was Featured in *Newsweek Magazine* in 1957 (*Charleston News and Courier* 1957)



that “the white guys didn’t go from their high school to ours, we went from our high school to theirs, and it was like, Wowee! We had to look at each other and figure out how we gonna do the thing, how we gonna intermingle, how we gonna mix, how we gonna gel” (E. Parks, personal communication, May 20, 2022). The school building, located on Grimball Road, today serves as the Septima P. Clark Corporate Academy.

Burke High School – Established in Charleston in 1894 by Reverend John L. Dart, it was originally called the Charleston Industrial Institute and later the Charleston Colored Industrial School before adopting the Burke Industrial School moniker in 1921. The original school building accommodated approximately 150 male and female students. As the student population grew, Reverend Dart organized the construction of additional buildings on the campus. Dart envisioned the mission of this free public school as an institution of vocational and moral education (Lowcountry Digital History Initiative 2022). In 1949, school buses brought James Island students to Burke for the first time. Before that, Black students who wanted to continue their education past sixth grade had to provide their own transportation (E. Parks, personal communication, May 20, 2022). Burke School is still in operation today and is located at the corner of President and Fishburne streets in downtown Charleston.

RELIGION

Church life was and still is a community touchstone for many James Island residents. For adults, it is a place of worship and fellowship. For children, it is a required activity in exchange for free time with friends later in the day or week. The praise house was another space for spiritual congregation where members of various churches met for interdenominational services and community meetings. Largely displaced by churches after emancipation, the praise house represented a plantation-era institution that continued

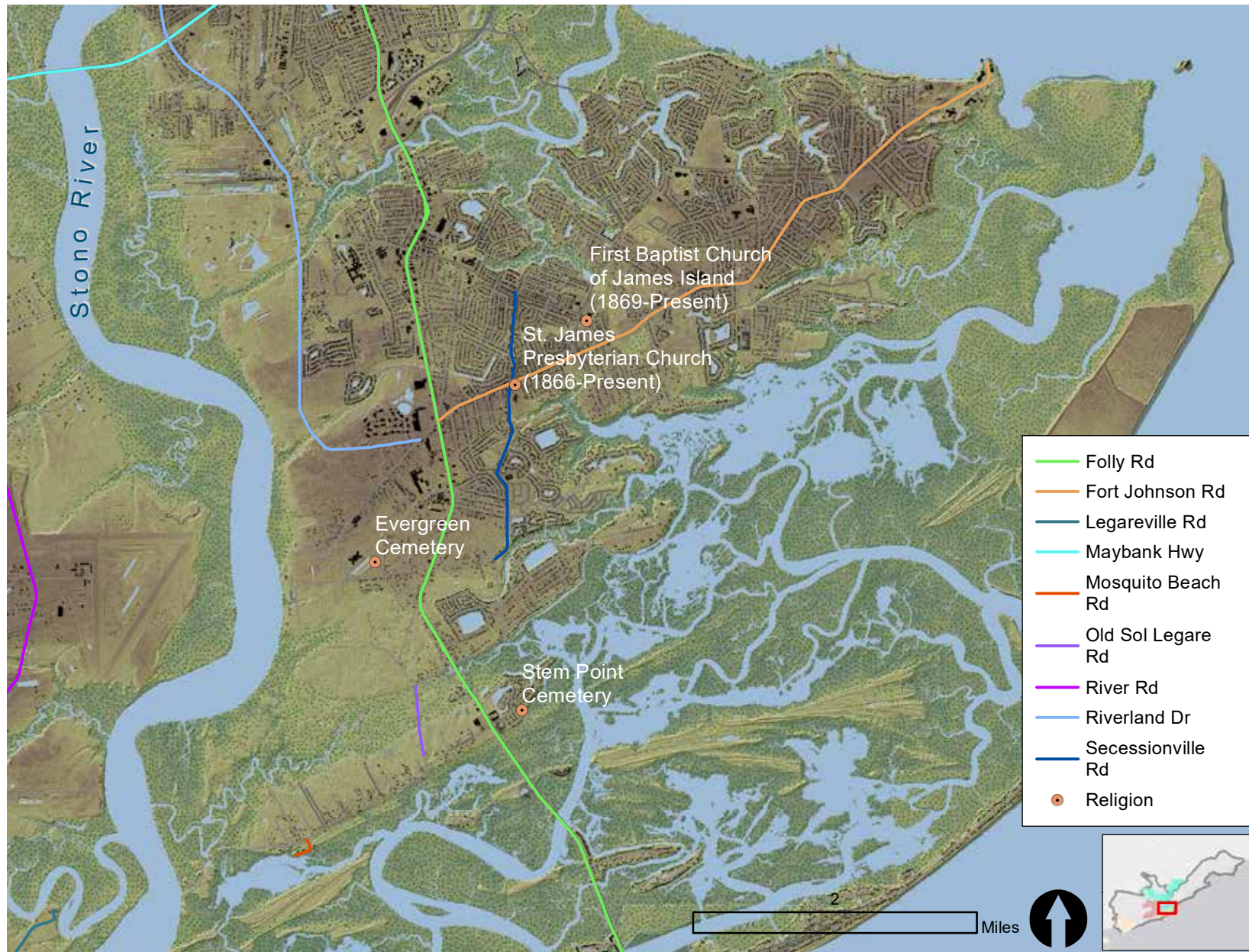
into the early twentieth century. There were many churches throughout the centuries across James Island, though two were mentioned repeatedly during interviews. A description and history of each is provided below.

St. James Presbyterian (1866–Present) – St. James Presbyterian is said to be the oldest church on James Island. Before emancipation, enslaved persons whose owners were members of James Island Presbyterian Church were allowed membership there also. When James Island Presbyterian Church was destroyed by fire, the Black members were left without a place to worship. They decided to congregate for worship services under a large oak tree at the intersection of Quarantine (Fort Johnson) and Old Savannah (Secessionville) roads, and this became the site of the first church. In 1866, the Colored Presbyterian Church, St. James, later St. James Presbyterian, was organized (St. James Presbyterian Church 2022).

The current church building was dedicated and opened to the congregation in 1977. Throughout the decades, St. James Presbyterian has continued to evolve. It has been the site of the Mission School and will be the future home of the Gullah Geechee Center (St. James Presbyterian Church 2022). It has hosted countless number of May Day celebrations, and it still does today. During May Day celebrations at the church, people plant and circle a May Pole, share food, bob for apples, and partake in “field-day” activities, like sack races (E. Frazier, personal communication, May 20, 2022).

First Baptist Church of James Island (1869–Present) – The church was organized in 1869, when the Ferguson family allowed the new congregation to hold worship services in their house at what is now the southeast corner of the intersection of Camp and Dills Bluff roads (First Baptist Church 2022). A church building was built in 1870 for the congregation, but this original house of worship was demolished around 1960 to make way for a newer and larger building (Preservation Consultants, Inc. 1989). As the

Religious Properties Located on James Island



congregation continued to grow, an even larger sanctuary was built on the other side of Camp Road about 2008. Today, the 1960 building is called the Landmark.

Evergreen Cemetery – A historic African American cemetery located off Grimball Road and behind the Baxter-Patrick Library where many James Islanders and Sol Legare residents are buried. Find a Grave has the earliest interment in 1902 with the most recent burial in 2003. Wayside signage at the cemetery, however, states that it was established on Grimball Plantation prior to the Civil War and that it contains many unmarked graves of enslaved

persons. The signage also states that the cemetery is no longer in use but has been adopted and maintained by the local community.

Stem Point Cemetery – Stem Point Cemetery is located on Terns Nest Road, at what was originally the eastern terminus of Sol Legare Road. The cemetery has been the final resting place for community residents for more than a century and is still in use today. The cemetery was threatened by development in the 1980s but ultimately spared. Now, it is now surrounded by the Riverfront PUD (Public Urban Development; Norman 1990). Oldest Marker: Daniel Brown, Birth 16 Aug 1834, Death 7 Mar 1919 (aged 84).

Stem Point Memorial Cemetery in 2022 (Stucker 2022)



COMMERCIAL

Backman Seafood – Thomas and Susie Backman founded Backman Seafood, Inc. on Sol Legare Island and bought their first trawler in 1952. The company operated six shrimping boats by the 1980s, but, over time and in the wake of

Backman's Seafood on Sol Legare Road in 2022 (Stucker 2022)

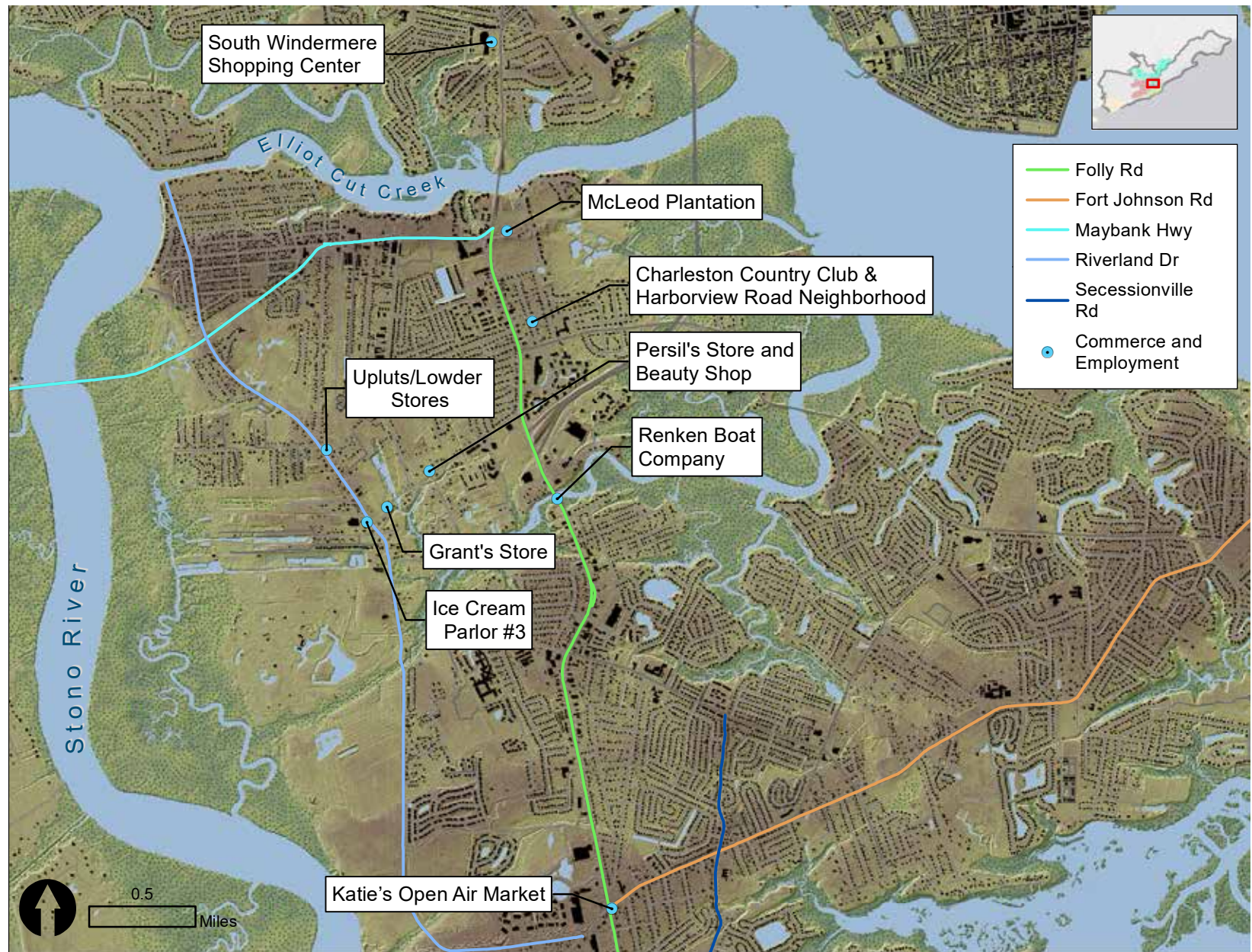


several damaging hurricanes, that number had dwindled to one (Bonstelle & Buxton 2008). As of June 2022, the facilities were being used by the Charleston Oyster Farm, which also serves as a caretaker of the grounds.

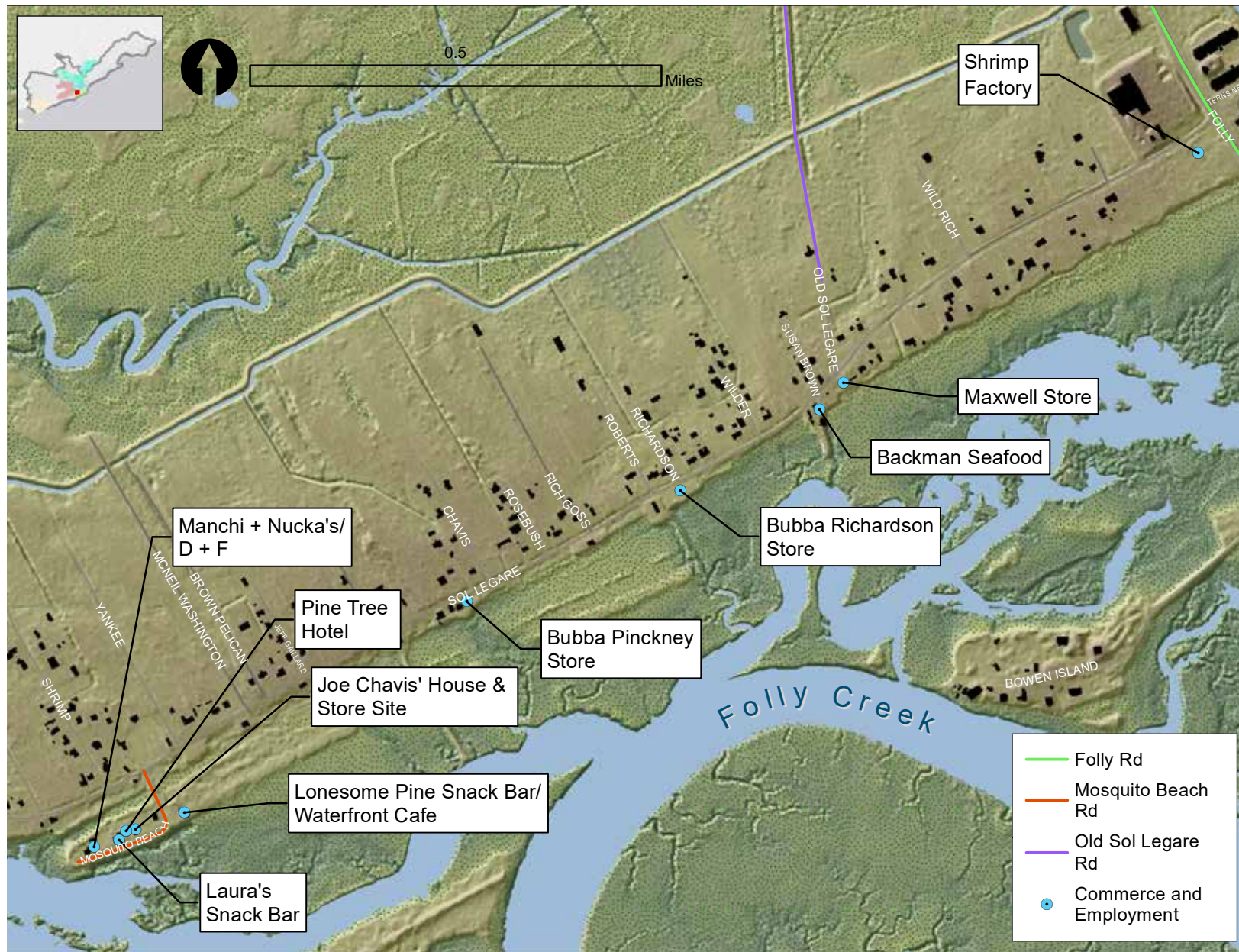
Bubba Pinckney Store – One of at least three general stores on Sol Legare in the 1900s, it is no longer in operation but is the only general store building that is still extant. It is a simple concrete block building with words and



Commercial Properties Located on Northern James Island



Commercial Properties Located on Southern James Island



Bubba Pinckney Store on Sol Legare Road in 2022 (Stucker 2022)



pictures advertising its offerings featured on its exterior. Earnest Parks recounted patronizing it as a child and in later years (E. Parks, personal communication, May 20, 2022).

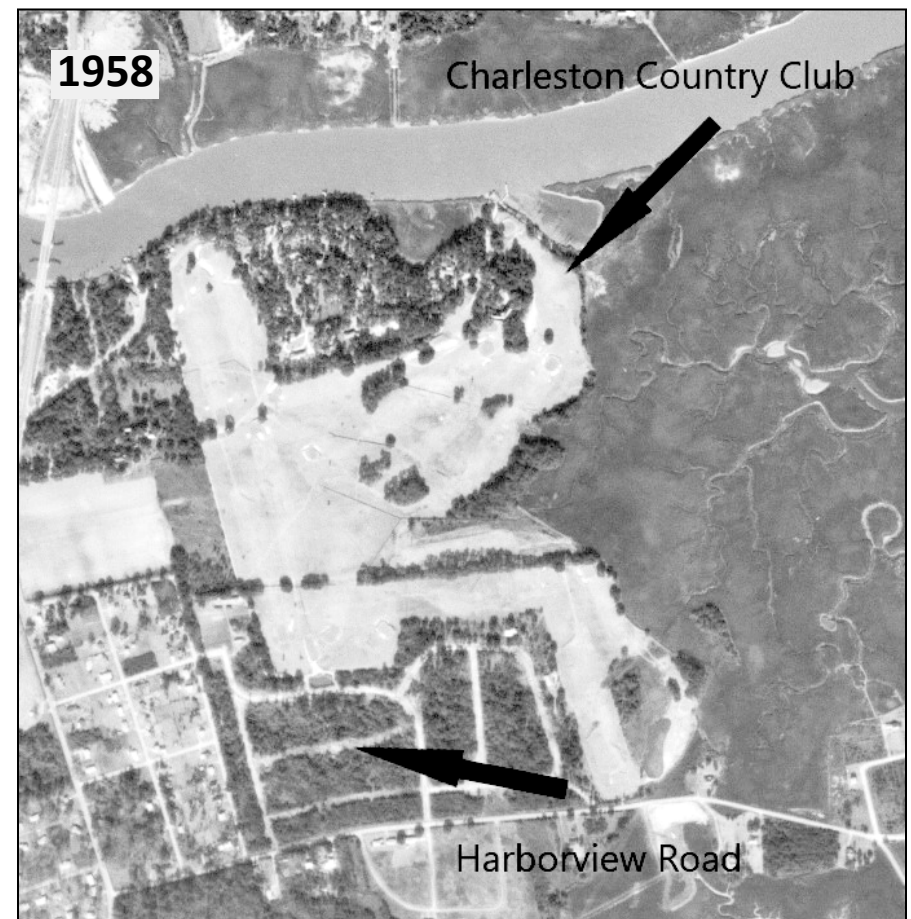
Bubba Richardson Store – Bubba Richardson Store was one of at least three general stores on Sol Legare operating in the 1900s. It was sited next to Sol Legare School, both of which were on land the Richardson family owned (E. Parks, personal communication, May 20, 2022). Neither building is extant.

Bubba Richardson Store Site on Sol Legare Road in 2022.
(Stucker 2022)



Charleston Country Club and Harborview Road neighborhood – This neighborhood is pictured in 1968 United States Geological Survey (USGS) aerial imagery. It was described in interviews as mainly a neighborhood for Black James Islanders who did farm work, landscaping, domestic work, and so on for white families (US Geological Survey 2021).

Charleston Country Club and Harborview Road
Neighborhood Development as Shown in Aerial Imagery Over the Decade from 1958 to 1968. (Earthexplorer 2021)



Charleston Country Club and Harborview Road (continued)

Neighborhood Development as Shown in Aerial Imagery Over the Decade from 1958 to 1968. (Earthexplorer 2021)



Grant's Store – Established by James and Rebecca Grant in the 1930s, the store originally operated out of their home until they erected the commercial building in the 1940s. It served the Cut Bridge Community for many decades

and for several generations until closing in the 1980s. Many interviewees recounted walking to the store, shopping there with family and friends, buying ice cream, and just hanging out.

Grant's Store Located on Central Park Road Grants General Store served the Cut Bridge Community for Decades in the Twentieth Century. (Stucker 2022)



Ice Cream Parlor #3 – Said to have been “across Riverland Drive” near the baseball field, this ice cream parlor was mentioned during the group interview (J. Brown et al., personal communication, May 19, 2022).

Joe Chavis’ House & Store Site – This was an original Mosquito Beach business run by purportedly the only actual resident of Mosquito Beach Road. Joe Chavis began selling beer and food out of his house in the 1920s. He was still called the “Kingpin” of Mosquito Beach in the 1980s and 90s (Norman 1991).

Katie’s Open Air Market – Owned and operated by Katie and Ned Roper, Sr. (parents of interviewee Ned Roper, Jr.), this market was located near the intersection of Folly and Grimball roads. It sold produce grown by local farmers

Katie’s Open Air Market was One of Many Roadside Markets in the Twentieth Century that Sold Produce Grown by Local Farmers (Ned Roper Personal Collection)

(including Ned Roper Farming’s crops) along with other general and agricultural goods (N. Roper, personal communication, June 22, 2022). These roadside stands selling produce, sweetgrass baskets, and other goods were common throughout the Lowcountry into the 1980s. As roads widened and big business replaced more and more mom-and-pop stores, they began to fade.

Typical Roadside Market on James Island, 1962 (Lowcountry Digital Library, SCDOT Collection, Route 171, Photo 26)



Maxwell Store – One of at least three general stores that operated on Sol Legare in the twentieth century, the ruins of the building are still visible as a pile of rubble adjacent to Backman Seafood (E. Parks, personal communication, May 20, 2022).

McLeod Plantation – This is one of the only extant antebellum plantation complexes on James Island, complete with preserved and restored slave cabins and extensive grounds. Many residents of Cut Bridge descend from



Maxwell Store Site on Sol Legare Road (Stucker 2022)



people enslaved on this plantation. They carry the legacy of agriculture on McLeod and other James Island plantations well into the twentieth century.

Ned Roper Farming – Owned and operated by Ned Roper, Sr., the business farm both owned and leased fallow fields across James Island and employed agricultural technologies that were uncommon amongst small, single-operator – and certainly Black – farmers in the Lowcountry. Mr. Roper stated that Roper, Sr. operated the business until his passing in 1978, after which Mr. Roper’s eldest brother took over operations until competition from large-scale agriculture forced them to shut down the business in 1985. During his interview, Mr. Roper showed off a kerosene lantern that he explained would have been used inside temporary greenhouse structures built to

Kerosene-fueled Lanterns Were Used in Early Spring Well into the Twentieth Century to Protect Seedlings from Frost. (Wiman 2022)

protect seedlings from early spring frosts. He recalled being punished as a child “because [he] didn’t put oil in it one time, and so [he] kept [it] as a memento of following through” (N. Roper, personal communication, June 22, 2022).



Persil's Store and Beauty Shop – Several Interviewees mentioned Mrs. Persil's store and said that it was a beauty parlor, a general store, and an ice cream parlor. The location was near the intersection of Central Park Road and Riley Road (J. Brown et al., personal communication, May 19, 2022).

Pine Tree Hotel – This was a historic hotel on Mosquito Beach Road that burned down in early 2022. Its owner, Cubby Wilder, salvaged reusable materials after the fire and efforts are underway to rebuild the structure as of June 2022.

The Pine Tree Hotel Burned Down in Spring 2022, Efforts to Salvage Materials and Rebuild Were Already Under Way in the Summer of 2022 (Stucker 2022)



Renken Boat Company

Located Near James Island Creek Employed African American Boat Builders (Renken 1962)



Renken Boat Company – This company was located on Folly Road near the James Island Creek bridge, and it employed people from the Cross Cut community (J. Brown et al., personal communication, May 19, 2022).

Shrimp Factory –The Shrimp Factory was located around the intersection of Folly Road and Sol Legare Road. Ercella Chillis recalled working here after school to earn her own spending money, separate from the money she earned for her family working in the fields before school (E. Chillis, personal communication, May 20, 2022).

South Windermere Shopping Center – South Windermere was established around 1953. James Washington said that, for shopping trips that went beyond the local general store, South Windermere was the destination (James Island Group Interview). Except for a few additions at the edges, the shopping center has remained much as it looks in 1958 aerial imagery (Google Earth 2021; US Geological Survey 2021).

South Windermere Shopping Center (Stucker 2022)





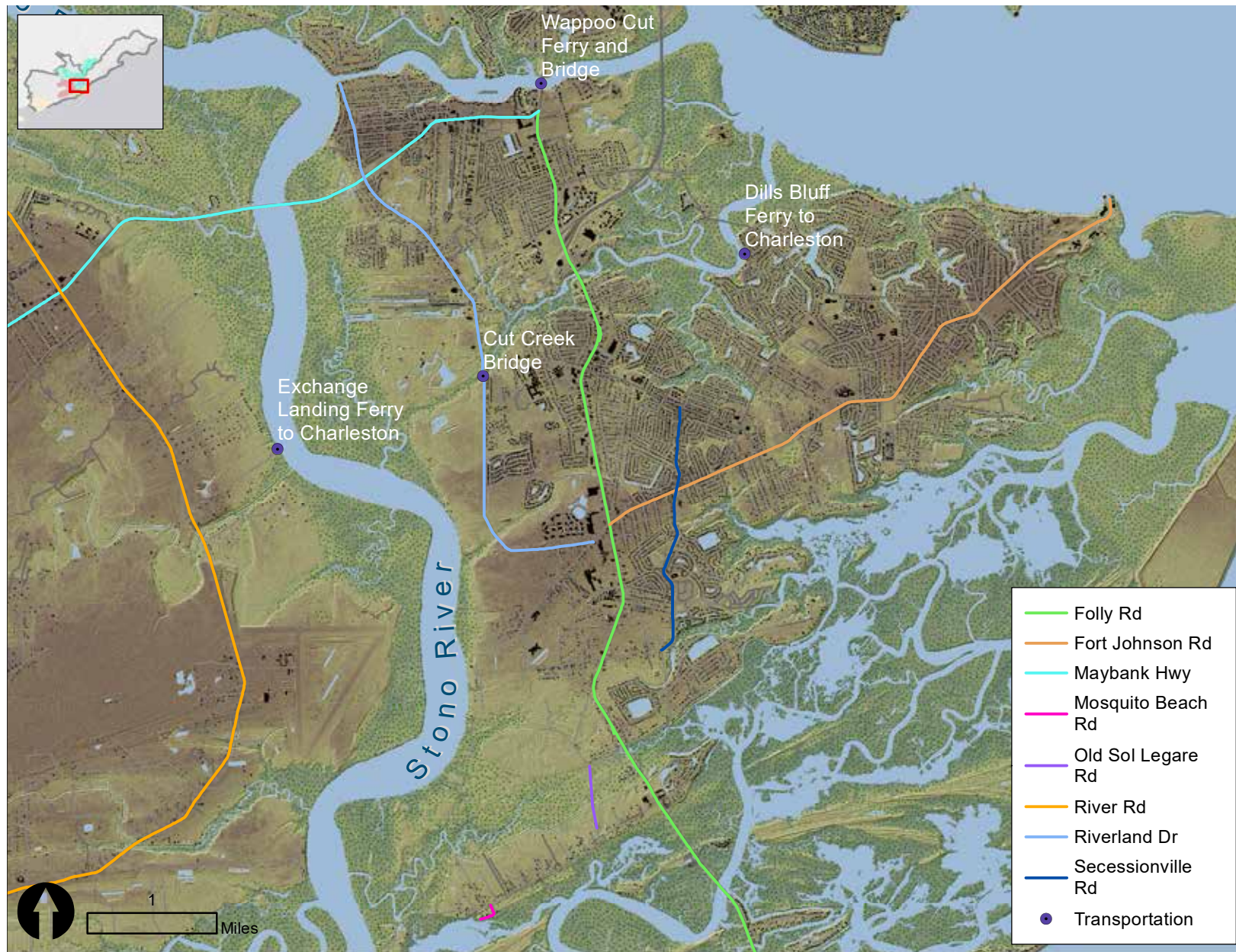
South Windermere Shopping Center (continued) was Established in the 1950s, and Aerial Imagery from 1958 and Present Day (Left) Show that it's Form has Changed Very Little Over Time (Earthexplorer 2021; Google Earth 2022; Stucker 2022)



Upluts/Lowder Stores – Several interviewees said this was a white-owned store near the intersection of Riverland Drive and Woodland Shores Road/ Hollings Road patronized by both whites and Blacks. No historic images were

found, and no obvious general store buildings are extant in this area, so the location is approximate.

Transportation Properties Located on James Island



TRANSPORTATION

Cut Creek Bridge – Originally built as a wooden bridge, it crosses James Island Creek. Interviewees said the bridge divided the unified Cut Bridge Community into the Cross Cut and Down Cut communities.

Present Day Image of **Cut Creek Bridge** (Stucker 2022)



Dills Bluff Ferry – Ercella Chillis stated that her father, sometimes with her in tow, would take his goods to market via a ferry to Charleston that departed from Dills Bluff crossing the Ashley River and harbor (E. Chillis, personal communication, May 20, 2022).

Folly Road (SC Highway 171) – Folly Road traverses the island (roughly) from north to south. It was historically shorter and less linear but has been extended and straightened over time. The 1919 topographical map shows the James Island road system terminating in the Beefield community, marked as Riverland, north of Sol Legare Island. By 1943, however, Folly Road was extended to Folly Island, and the 1959 topographical map shows it straightened in the Riverland area. This is the location where today one can see Old Folly Road branching off to the west side of Folly Road before it joins back with the highway a short distance later.

Fort Johnson Road – Labeled on historic maps alternately as Quarantine and Kings roads, Fort Johnson Road is the main access road for the communities considered to be “down the island.” This includes Westchester, Peas Hill, and Honey Hill.

Mosquito Beach Road – The Sol Legare resource map presents a complete list of the businesses that line this quarter-mile long road. The entrance to the area is marked by colorful hand painted signs, including a painted surfboard.

(Opposite) Present Day Image of
Mosquito Beach Road
and Sol Legare Road Intersection (Stucker 2022)

Old Sol Legare Road – Before the extension of Old Folly Road to Folly Beach, Old Sol Legare Road was the only access road to the island. A 1919 topographic map indicates that Folly Road terminated into what is now Battery Island Drive in the Beefield community, and Old Sol Legare Road extended from that point across the marsh to Sol Legare Island. It intersected with the island’s main east-west road, present-day Sol Legare Road, at the center point of the island. A 1943 topographic map shows an extended Folly Road and indicates that Old Sol Legare Road was still a functional thoroughfare. By 1959, the old road appeared



as an undefined causeway across the marsh. It was eventually subsumed by the tax parcels across which it ran (US Geological Survey 2021). Before Old Folly Road was extended to Folly Beach, the community east of the intersection was called Stem Point, while the community to the west was known as Lijah (E. Parks, personal communication, May 20, 2022). The extension of the road divided the community and isolated the Stem Point Memorial Cemetery.

**Topographic Maps from 1919, 1943, and 1959 Show
Transportation Route Changes and the Discontinuation of
Old Sol Legare Road
(TopoView 2021)**



Riverland Drive – Represented on maps as far back as the eighteenth century, this road runs roughly parallel to Folly Road tracking the Stono River on the west side of the island. It bisects the Cut Bridge community as well as several communities in the Grimball Area, terminating near the intersection of Folly and Fort Johnson roads.



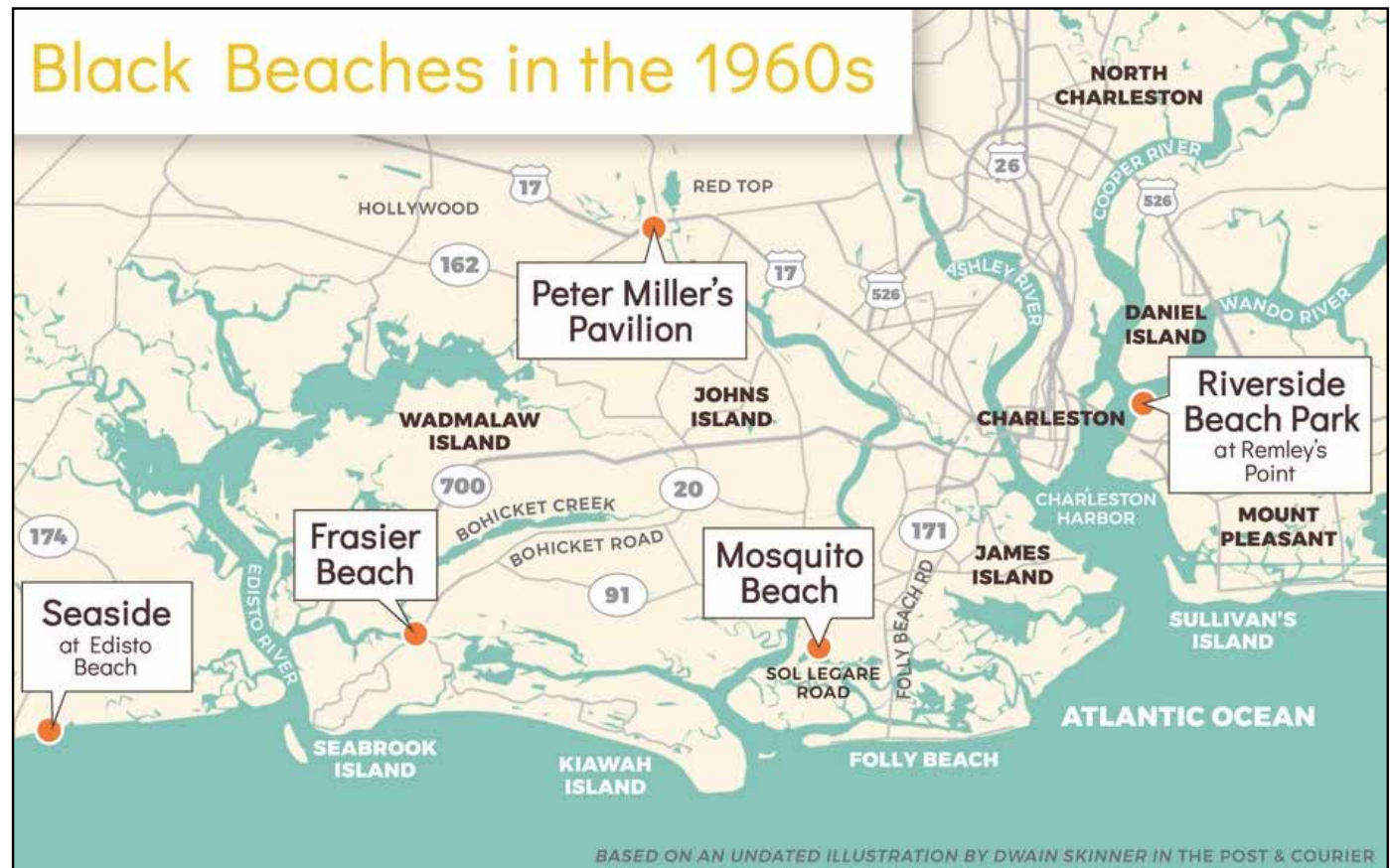
Wappoo Cut Ferry and Bridge – Before there was a bridge over Wappoo Cut, there was a ferry there. The first wooden toll bridge was built in the early 1900s and was replaced in 1926 by a concrete and metal swing bridge. The current Burnet R. Maybank (draw) Bridge was opened in 1956.

RECREATION AND SOCIAL

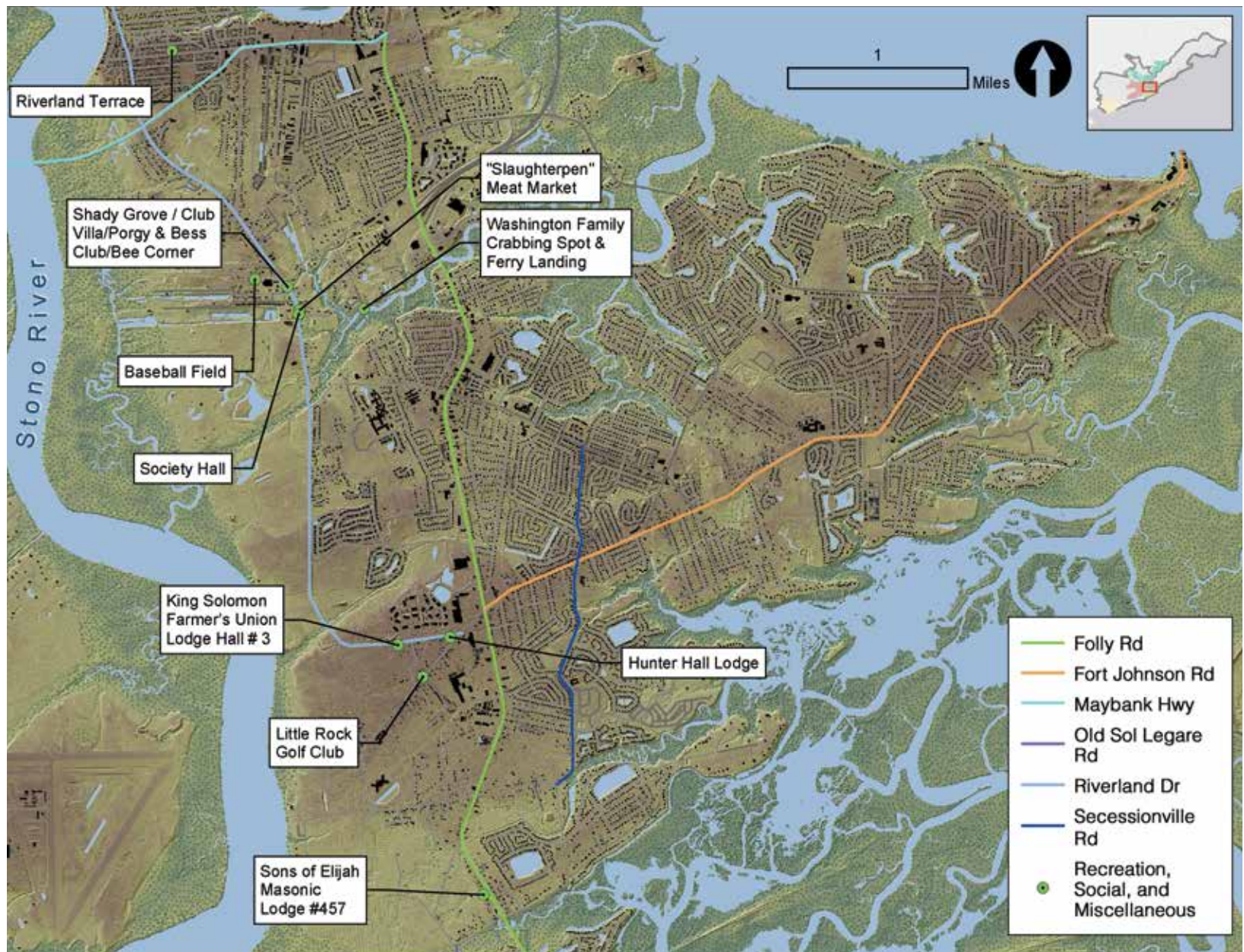
African American “Black Beaches” – Besides Mosquito Beach on Sol Legare, there were at least four other “Black beaches” in the Charleston area. These included Frasier Beach (on Johns Island off Bohicket Road), Peter Miller’s Pavilion (near Red Top on US 17), Riverside Beach Park (near Remley’s Point on Mount Pleasant), and Seaside (at Edisto Beach; H. Frazier 2001b). Of these, only Seaside qualified as a coastal beach. The others were all located inland along tidal rivers – nearly 15 miles inland in the case of Peter Miller’s Pavilion.

In *Edisto Island: The African American Journey*, Greg Estevez wrote that, from 1890 to 1950, Black residents went to Seaside Beach “to socialize, catch a cool breeze, relax by the water, or take a little dip” (2021: 117). Black families in the Charleston area were barred from local beaches like Folly and Sullivan’s Island. They had to travel more than a hundred miles to Atlantic Beach, near Myrtle Beach, to visit an actual beach community with a commercial corridor. Atlantic Beach was one of only a few beach towns open to Black people in the segregated South. Several interviewees recounted bus services, including one run by Deacon Josiah Watson at First

Baptist Church, that brought people from Charleston to Atlantic Beach (E. Frazier, personal communication, May 19, 2022). Carol Blake McClue stated that Peter Miller’s Pavilion was near the bridge (over Wallace or Rantowles Creek). She remembered it as a “nice” beach and recalled that Miller also had a hotel associated with the pavilion. A *Post and Courier* article from 2001 described Riverside Beach Park as “the premier summertime attraction for Black families in the Lowcountry from the early 1930s until it closed in the 1970s” (H. Frazier 2001b; C.B. McClue, personal communication, June 22, 2022).



Recreational Properties Located on James Island



This map of Folly Beach, South Carolina, illustrates the coastal area and its recreational and social sites. The map features a scale bar for 0.5 miles and an inset map showing the location of Folly Beach within the state of South Carolina. Key locations and roads are labeled:

- Holland (Island) Creek**
- Jack Walker's Club / P + J Club/Suga Shack**
- Seashore Farmers Lodge 767**
- Mosquito Beach**
- Jimmy's Place**
- Harborview Pavilion**
- Boardwalk Club**
- Bumper Cars**
- Site of Irvin Singleton's Pavilion**
- Folly Creek**
- Folly Rd** (green line)
- Mosquito Beach Rd** (orange line)
- Old Sol Legare Rd** (purple line)
- Recreation, Social, and Miscellaneous** (green dots)

The map also shows various other roads and landmarks, including Wild Rich, Bowen Island, and the Folly Creek area.

Baseball Field Site (Stucker 2022)



James Island Interviewees Mentioned **Fair Grounds** Near Burke School in Charleston Where Festivals Were Held for Easter and Other Occasions (Stucker 2022)



Baseball Field – Located where Murray-LaSaine school is now, this baseball field was where adults gathered and played ball on Saturdays and Sundays. As Josephine Brown quipped, *“if you ain’t going to church, you can’t go to the game”* (J. Brown et al., personal communication, May 19, 2022).

Fairgrounds near Burke School – Mentioned in the James Island Group Interview as a location for gatherings, including an Easter Festival (J. Brown et al., personal communication, May 19, 2022).

Harborview Pavilion – Built by Andrew Jackson Wilder, Jr. and opened on Easter Monday 1953, the pavilion became the center of entertainment at Mosquito Beach until Hurricane Gracie destroyed it in 1959. It was repaired and reopened in 1960 and remained in operation until Wilder’s passing in 1984, after which it sat unused for five years until being swept away by Hurricane Hugo. Plans to rebuild it have been proposed but never acted upon (H. Frazier 2001a).

Harborview Pavilion Opened on Mosquito Beach in 1953 and Was One of the First Main Attractions (*Historic Mosquito Beach* 2019)



Holland (Island) Creek – The point at the northern terminus of Shrimp Street, sometimes called Holling(s) Creek or Sissy Hole, after a woman named Sissy who drowned there. Cubby Wilder said it was a popular spot for swimming and fishing (W. “Cubby” Wilder, personal communication, May 21, 2022).

Holland Creek Was Mentioned by Interviewees as a Swimming Hole and Hang Out Spot on Sol Legare (Stucker 2022)



Hunter Hall Lodge – Established by enslaved people in the 1800s, it is purported to have been the first lodge on James Island. It served as a voting location in 1876 and was also used by the Black militia group called the Hunter Volunteers. Hunter Hall Lodge was renamed Riverside Lodge in the 1900s and officially closed in 2005 (E. Frazier 2010; Preservation Consultants, Inc. 1989).

King Solomon Farmer’s Union Lodge Hall # 3 – Located on Riverland Drive and established in 1909, this lodge operated for a century. It closed its doors around 2010 (E. Frazier 2010).

Little Rock Golf Club – Situated in Grimball Shores (AASC #23), the clubhouse and entrance to the golf course were once located at the intersection of Grimball Road and Little Rock Boulevard (E. Frazier 2006).

Mosquito Beach – From 1923 to 1930, the Oyster Factory was one of the early industrial businesses on the island. It operated near Mosquito Beach and drew people from outside the community with work, music, and entertainment. In the time of segregation, Mosquito Beach became a place to relax after work and enjoy food and libations sold out of Joe Chavis’s home. In 1953, the Wilder family, who owned much of the land around Mosquito Beach, opened the Harbor Pavilion. Other businesses serving food, drink, and entertainment followed, and the “beach” once again became a popular spot (Historic Charleston Foundation 2019). The heyday of Mosquito Beach lasted into the 1980s. In 1989, Hurricane Hugo badly damaged or destroyed many of its buildings and structures. However, several of its businesses are still active, and Mosquito Beach Road still buzzes with nightlife on the weekends.

Mosquito Beach Has Been a Social Hotspot Since the 1920s that saw its Heyday in the 1960s and 70s. It Continues to Serve Sol Legare Residents and Others to the Present Day (Stucker 2022)



Riverland Terrace — This large neighborhood contains approximately 800 homes and was developed for white residents by local real estate tycoon C. Bissell Jenkins beginning in 1926 on 75 acres of land formerly of the Wappoo Hall Plantation. Marketed as “Suburban Life with City Conveniences,” Jenkins’s vision of Riverland Terrace was to create an all-inclusive and engaging planned commuter community. Disruptions brought on by the Depression and World War II resulted in a

Aerial Imagery from
1968 Shows the
**Riverland
Terrace**
Neighborhood Footprint,
and Two Buildings in the
Two-Block Commercial
District on Wappoo Drive
as They Appear Today
(Earthexplorer 2021;
Stucker 2022)



neighborhood with smaller homes, mostly Minimal Traditional and Ranch styles, and fewer amenities. A small business district along Wappoo Drive still operates today (Ciomek et al. 2016). Aerial imagery from 1968 shows the extent of neighborhood development at that time, and the white residential area also stretched south down Woodland Shores Road to Upluts/Lowders Store.

Seashore Farmers Lodge 767 – Located at 1999 Old Sol Legare Road and built around 1915, the lodge group was formed in 1910. The Seashore Farmers Lodge 767 was entered in the national Lodge system on September 12, 1912.

Seashore Farmers Lodge Prior to Restoration (Inset, Circa 2007) and Present Day (Nickless 2007; Stucker 2022)



For generations, it served as both a mutual aid society and a cultural center for the Sol Legare community and beyond (E. Parks, personal communication, May 20, 2022). Originally, members paid dues that helped support one another during financial hardships, acting as a kind of community insurance policy. Members celebrated holidays at the lodge and the Masonic order held meetings on the second Monday of each month. By the 1950s, young people were searching for different forms of entertainment, and, when Mosquito Beach opened and began to grow in popularity, the lodge closed. Listed in the NRHP on October 3, 2007, a grassroots campaign helped restore the building in the late 2000s, and it is now a public cultural site in partnership with the International African American Museum.

Shady Grove/Club Villa/Porgy & Bess Club/Bee Corner – These were dance halls, juke joints, and gathering places from at least the 1940s through the 1960s. They all stood at or near the intersection of Riverland Drive and

This Building May Have Been the **Shady Grove Club or One of the Other Nearby Clubs at One Time (Stucker 2022)**



Central Park Road, but their exact locations are not known. One interviewee suggested Club Villa may have replaced Porgy & Bess (J. Brown et al., personal communication, May 19, 2022).

“Slaughterpen” Meat Market – Located north of Delaney Road off Riverland Drive, it was where cows, pigs, and other livestock were brought for slaughter, and then people came to buy fresh butchered meat. One interviewee recalled regularly “seeing a long line of people waiting to buy meat” (J. Brown et al. personal communication, May 19, 2022).

**This May Have Been the Location of the
“Slaughterpen” Meat Market
Mentioned by James Island Interviewees (Stucker 2022)**



Society Hall – This meeting place is located at the intersection of Delaney Drive and Riverland Drive (J. Brown et al., personal communication, May 19, 2022). This site was mentioned but preliminary research has not identified historic views or other data. More research is needed.

Sons of Elijah Masonic Lodge #457 – Located on Folly Road near the Beefield community, this lodge received its charter from the Prince Hall Lodge in Columbia, South Carolina in 1955 (E. Frazier 2010). Mr. Eugene Frazier, local historian and author was elected as lodge president in 2008 (E. Frazier, personal communication, May 19, 2022).

Street Sign at the Intersection of Delaney and Riverland Drives, Former Location of Society Hall (Stucker 2022)



Washington Family Crabbing Spot & Ferry Landing – James Washington stated that his family would go here to catch crabs. Ned Roper said it is near the location of a ferry for crossing for James Island Creek before the Cut Creek Bridge was built (J. Brown et al., personal communication, May 19, 2022).

Crabbing Location at the End of Riley Road Where the Washington Family Went to Catch Crabs (Stucker 2022)



1927 Map of Charleston County Showing Schools and School Districts (Anderson 1927)



Island interviewees, which is not a complete list of the schools that existed on the island.

Haut Gap School – Originally an elementary school located towards the west end of Plow Ground Road, according to the 1927 Map of Charleston County Showing Schools and School Districts. A school of the same name was built

at the current site of Haut Gap Middle School in 1953. Until integration in 1969, it served Black students in grades one through twelve. Most of the Johns Island interviewees attended this school at some point (C.B. McClue, personal communication, June 22, 2022). It was replaced with the current middle school building around 2010, based on aerial imagery on Google Earth.

(Right) The Original **Haut Gap School** Was a Wood-frame Building (Unknown). The Original School was Replaced in 1953 with a Brick Building Sited in the Athletic Fields for the Current School, Built Around 2010 (Below) (Stucker 2022)



Headstart Development Center (School)/UMC Community Center – Originally the Johns Island Rural Community Center, the building was later converted into a Headstart Development Center (School). Interviewee Antwoine Geddis attended the school in the 1990s.

Originally the Johns Island Rural Community Center, the Building Became the Headstart Development Center in the 1990s (Haynie 2007)



Legareville School – Legareville School is located on Legareville Road. The school is included on the 1919 and 1943 topographical maps, as well as the 1927 Map of Charleston County Showing Schools and School Districts, and the 1937/1938 South Carolina Highway Map. The building is not shown on the 1959 topographical map. It was presumably demolished after the Haut Gap school was built and school consolidation. Bill Jenkins recalled watching his first football game there in the seventh grade (ca. 1941), before later playing football himself at Burke School in Charleston (B. Jenkins, personal communication, June 21, 2022). Several interviewees reported having attended this elementary school.



Legareville School was Located on Legareville Road into the 1950s (Haynie 2007)

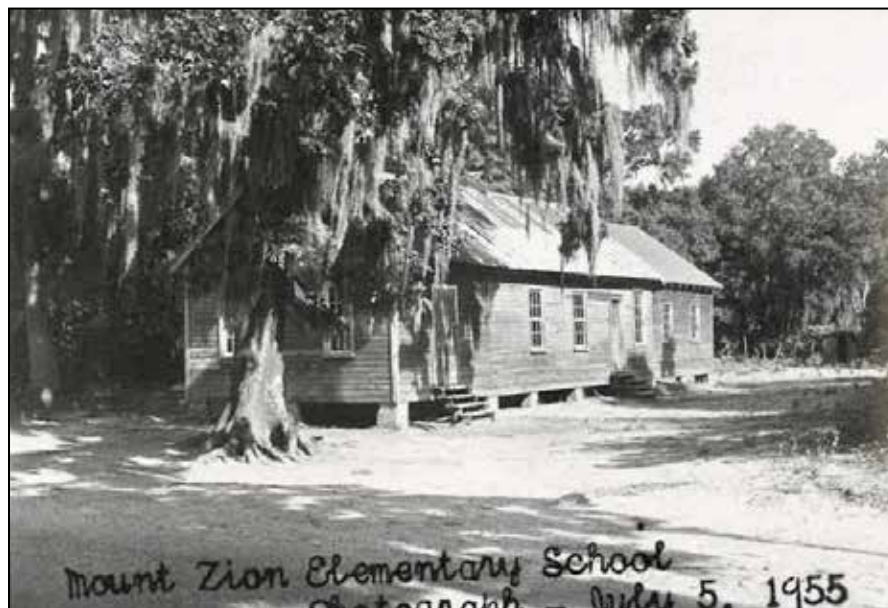
Miller Hill School – Located on River Road near the Geddis and Stevens communities, the school is shown on the 1927 Map of Charleston County Showing Schools and School Districts and on the 1937/8 South Carolina Highway Map. Several interviewees reported having attended this elementary school.

Miller Hill School Served Students in the Stevens and Geddis Communities into the 1950s (Haynie 2007)



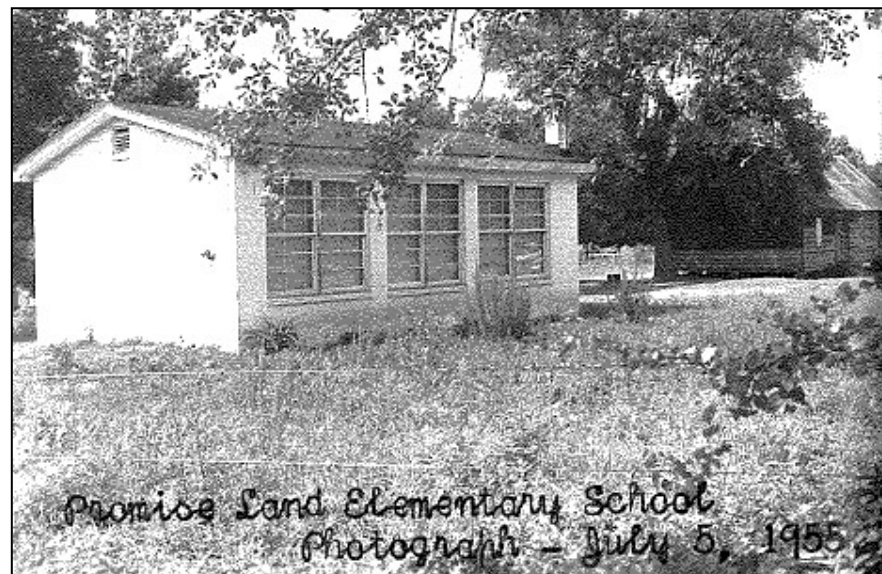
Mount Zion School – This school was located on River Road near Edenvale Road. Its location is shown on the 1927 Map of Charleston County Showing Schools and School Districts and the 1937/8 South Carolina Highway Map. Several interviewees reported having attended this elementary school.

Mount Zion School Served Students in the Cape Community into the 1950s (Haynie 2007)



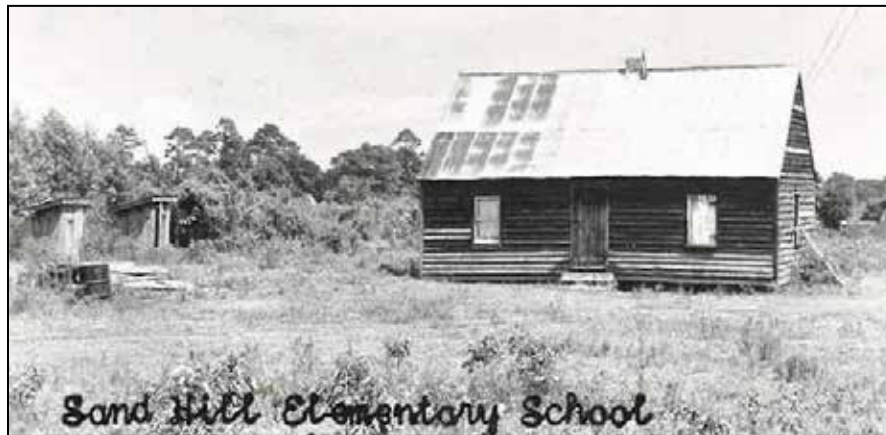
Promised Land School – Located on Betsy Kerrison Parkway (formerly Bohicket Road) near the intersection with River Road, Promised Land School is shown on the 1927 Map of Charleston County Showing Schools and School Districts and on the 1937/8 South Carolina Highway Map. Following her graduation from the Avery Institute in 1916, Septima Clark moved to Johns Island to teach at the school. She taught there for three years before moving back to Charleston to teach at the Avery Institute. After returning for a second stint on Johns Island from 1926 to 1929, she moved to Columbia (Finkelman 2009).

Promised Land School was Located on Bohicket Road, and the Concrete Block Building Added to the Campus in the 1950s is Still Extant (Haynie 2007; Stucker 2022)



Sand Hill School – Located on an isolated stretch of Bohicket Road near the center of the island, Sand Hill School is shown on the 1927 Map of Charleston County Showing Schools and School Districts and on the 1937/8 South Carolina Highway Map.

Sand Hill School was Located on Bohicket Road into the 1950s (Haynie 2007)



Wellington School – The school's approximate location on River Road near the North Johns Island community is derived from 1927 Map of Charleston County Showing Schools and School Districts. Carol Blake McClue mentioned it as the school she attended before Haut Gap was built (C.B. McClue, personal communication, June 22, 2022).

Wellington School Served Students in the North Johns Island and Nearby Communities into the 1950s (Haynie 2007)



RELIGION

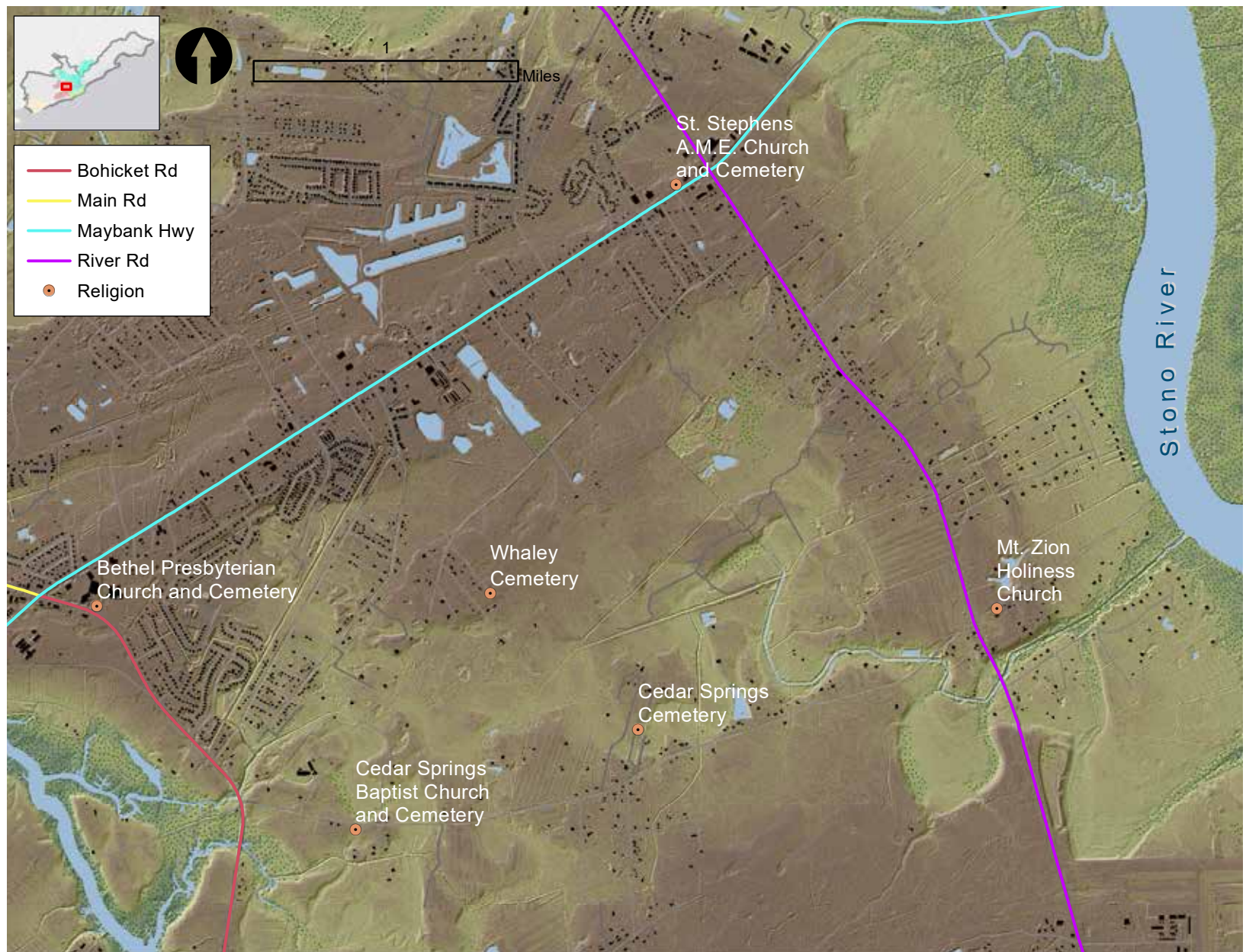
As on James Island, church was and still is particularly important to residents of Johns Island. Beyond its role as an outlet for spiritual practice, the church operates as a social, political, and economic entity. Many churches have come and gone throughout the centuries on Johns Island, but some were mentioned in multiple interviews, and a short description of each is provided below.



Bethel Presbyterian Church and Cemetery – Antwoine Geddis says his great grandparents (Geddis) and the Green family established this church. The church is located next to Haut Gap School, and Mr. Geddis' grandparents are buried in the cemetery.

Cedar Springs Baptist Church and Cemetery – Associated with the Cape community and attended by interviewee Antwoine Geddis, the church and cemetery are both on Plow Ground Road but are located about a mile apart.

Religious Properties Located on Johns Island



Mt. Zion Holiness Church – Located on Exchange Landing Road and listed under various names including Mt. Zion City of the Living God Church and Greater Mt. Zion Church, Antwoine Geddis purported that his great-great-grandfather Hector Gibbes is credited with having built the original church building (A. Geddis, personal communication, June 23, 2022). The current building appears to be a newer concrete-block structure.

St. Stephens A.M.E. Church and Cemetery – Located on Maybank Highway near the intersection with River Road, this church was mentioned by several interviewees, including Carol Blake McClue. She recalled her mother, Hannah Blake, organizing ice cream socials at the church. She also explained that the church was an informal venue for people to advertise their goods and services, such as Mrs. Blake’s sewing and music lessons.

Whaley Cemetery – Identified by Antwoine Geddis as located in the Whaley community, the cemetery dates to at least the 1860s. Find a Grave lists it as having 17 memorials, 2 of which are illegible. The Find a Grave record indicates that most or all people interred in the cemetery were Black. The

last listed burial took place in 1973 (Find A Grave 2016). Mr. Geddis stated that he is an unofficial caretaker of the cemetery, which is publicly accessible from Herman Road, as well as from Colson Lane in the Oakfield subdivision.

COMMERCIAL

George Bellinger Store – The George Bellinger Store was a Black-owned general store on property owned by George Bellinger on Legareville Road. Carol Blake McClue mentioned it as one of the general stores on the island (C.B. McClue, personal communication, June 22, 2022).

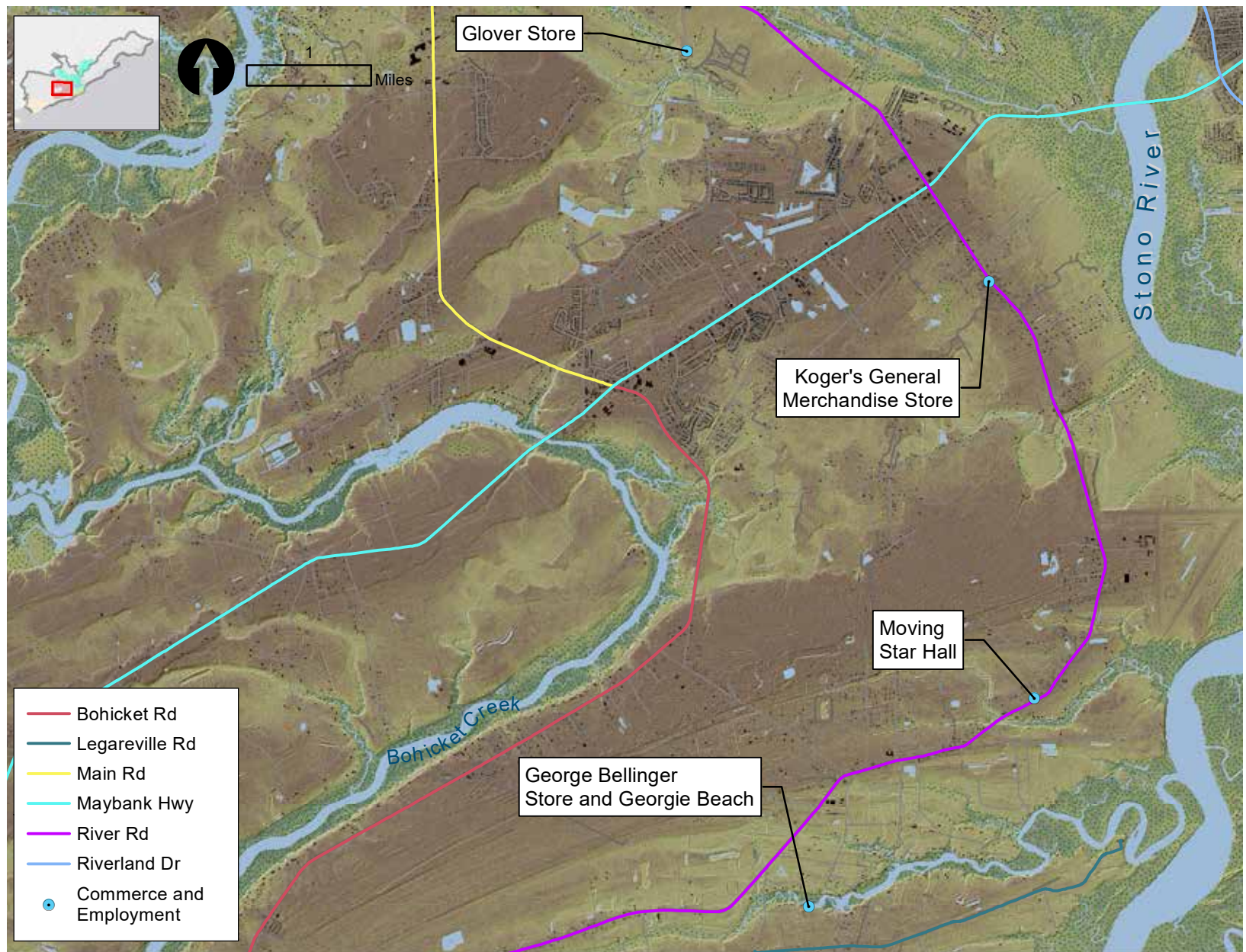
Glover Store – This white owned general store that catered toward Blacks was located near the intersection of Old Pond and Brownswood roads. Carol Blake McClue mentioned it briefly in her interview as one of the island’s general stores (C.B. McClue, personal communication, June 22, 2022).

Koger’s General Merchandise Store – This general goods and hardware store was opened circa 1947 by James Eddie Koger. His children took over

Koger's General Merchandise Store Served Johns Island Residents from the 1940s to the 1970s, and the Building is Still Extant (Stucker 2022)



Commercial Properties Located on Johns Island



the operation a decade later and ran the store until their retirement in the 1970s (Haynie 2007). The building is extant and is currently in use as a children's theater and physical therapy clinic, but it has been significantly remodeled since its original occupancy.

Tom Butler Store – Carol Blake McClue mentioned this store in passing as one of the island's general stores but did not provide a location (C.B. McClue, personal communication, June 22, 2022).

TRANSPORTATION

Bohicket /Main Road – This historic road connects the mainland to the island at its north end. It runs south as Main Road from the Stono River through the center of the island. There, it begins to parallel the Wadmalaw River until it changes names to Bohicket Road at the intersection with Maybank Highway. It continues to parallel the river all the way to Kiawah and Seabrook islands. The road dates to at least the seventeenth century when land grants were

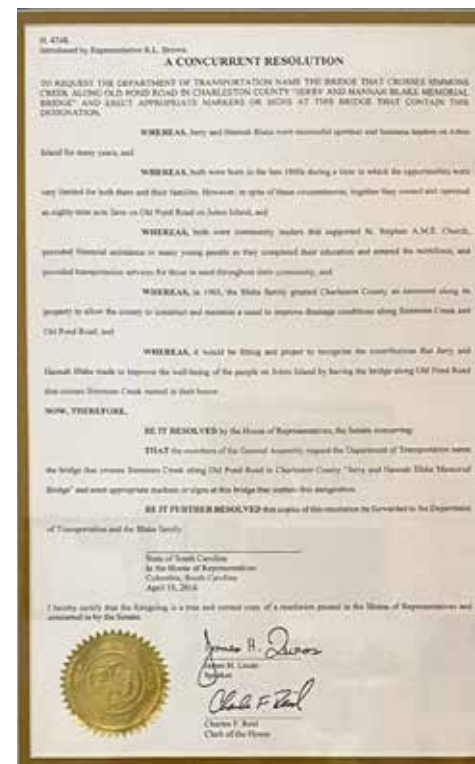
Bohicket Road is One of the Oldest Thoroughfares on Johns Island. Formerly Called Inland Road, it has Always Been Flanked by Live Oak Trees Hung with Spanish Moss (Wiman 2022)



established, and, as one of the island's main roads, was one of the earliest to be paved in the late 1960s.

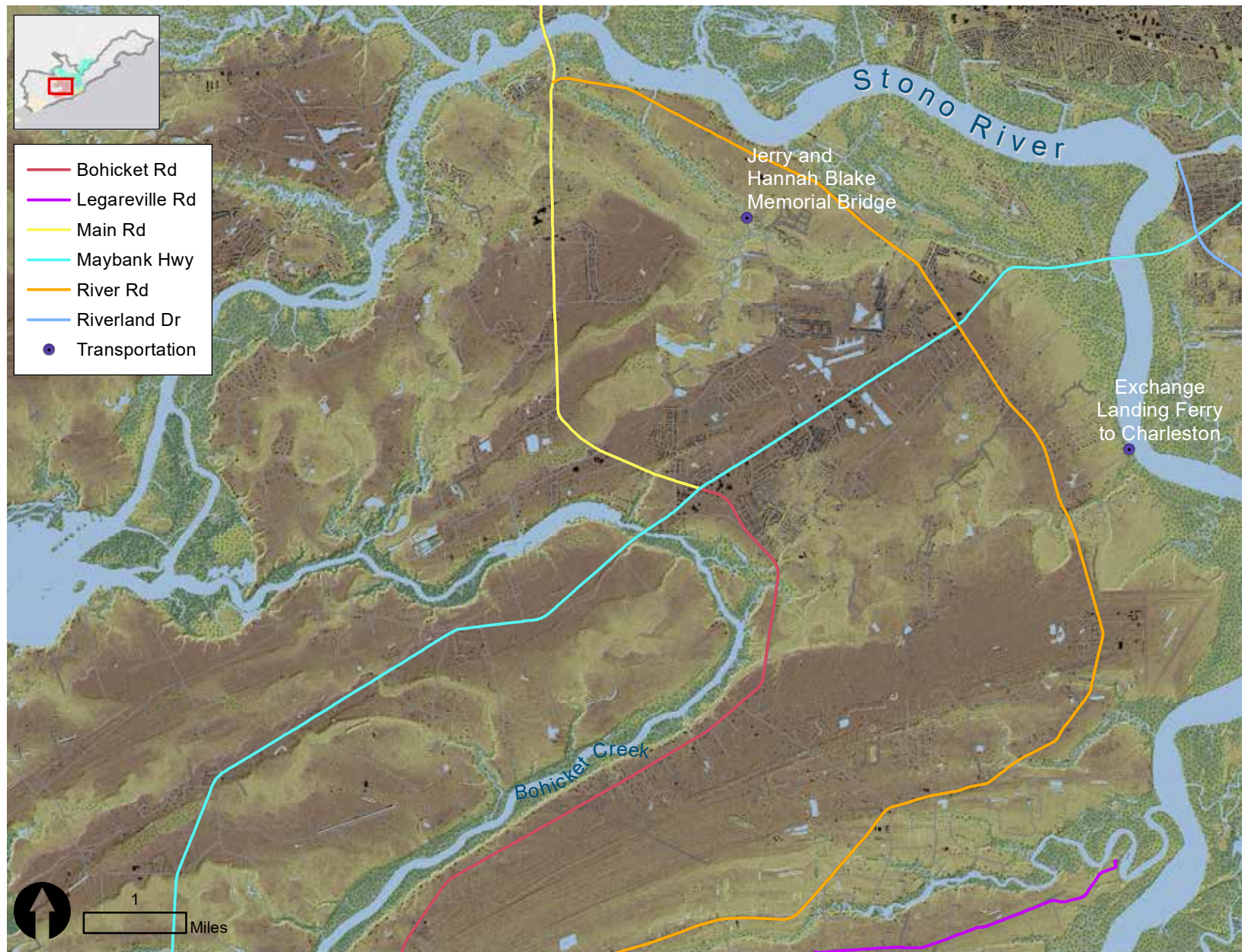
Exchange Landing Ferry to Charleston – Exchange Landing was identified as a settlement community in the Charleston City Plan (AASC #12), but none of the Johns Island residents that were interviewed hailed from this community. However, several interviewees recounted catching a ferry at Exchange Landing up the Stono River and through the Wappoo Cut to Charleston (E.S. Boyd, personal communication, June 22, 2022).

Jerry and Hannah Blake Memorial Bridge – Exchange Landing was identified as a settlement community in the Charleston City Plan (AASC #12), but none of the Johns Island residents that were interviewed hailed from this community. However, several interviewees recounted catching a ferry at Exchange Landing up the Stono River and through the Wappoo Cut to Charleston (E.S. Boyd, personal communication, June 22, 2022).



Resolution Naming the
**Jerry and Hannah
Blake Memorial
Bridge**
(Carol Blake McClue Collection)

Transportation Properties Located on Johns Island



Legareville Road – This road was formerly known as Maddas Road and identified in the CC study as the Hut community (AASC#14). It appears to have been an important commercial corridor in the Hut community. Miss Irene’s Store, also sometimes called Auntie Munn’s, was located somewhere along Legareville Road. It sold things like lunch meat, honey buns, and drinks, as well as cleaning and other household supplies. The store also served as a local spot for dancing and entertainment on Friday and Saturday nights during the 1960s and earlier. Mary’s Store was another important community spot around that same time. Bernard’s Store opened later, in the 1980s and 90s, after the others had closed.

Maybank Highway – This road, sometimes historically called Fenwick Road, connects Johns Island to James Island. It bisects the island from the northeast corner to the center, where it intersects with Bohicket /Main Road. It is the only road that connects to Wadmalaw Island. The road dates to the seventeenth century or earlier, when land grants were established. As one of the island’s main roads, it was one of the first to be paved in the late 1960s.

River Road – This historic road parallels the Stono River on the north and east sides of Johns Island and the Kiawah River on the south side. Along with Main Road and Bohicket Road/Maybank Highway, it is one of the main roads on the island. The 17-mile road dates to at least the seventeenth century, when land grants were established. As one of the island’s main roads, it was one of the earliest paved in the late 1960s.

RECREATION AND SOCIAL

Blake Hill –This African American community identified by Carol Blake McClue is located off Old Pond Road, northwest of the North Johns Island community. McClue’s father, Mr. Jerry Blake, operated an 89-acre farm in the Blake Hill area of Johns Island. For decades, this farm generated a wide

variety of produce, sold in Charleston. In addition to being a farmer, Mr. Blake was also the second Black mail carrier on Johns Island. Both he and his wife Hannah Blake were leaders and prominent community members.

Frasier Beach – Frasier Beach is located off Bohicket Road near Promised Land School. This river “beach” was one place where Black people, who were not allowed at beaches on Kiawah and Seabrook islands, could go for water recreation.

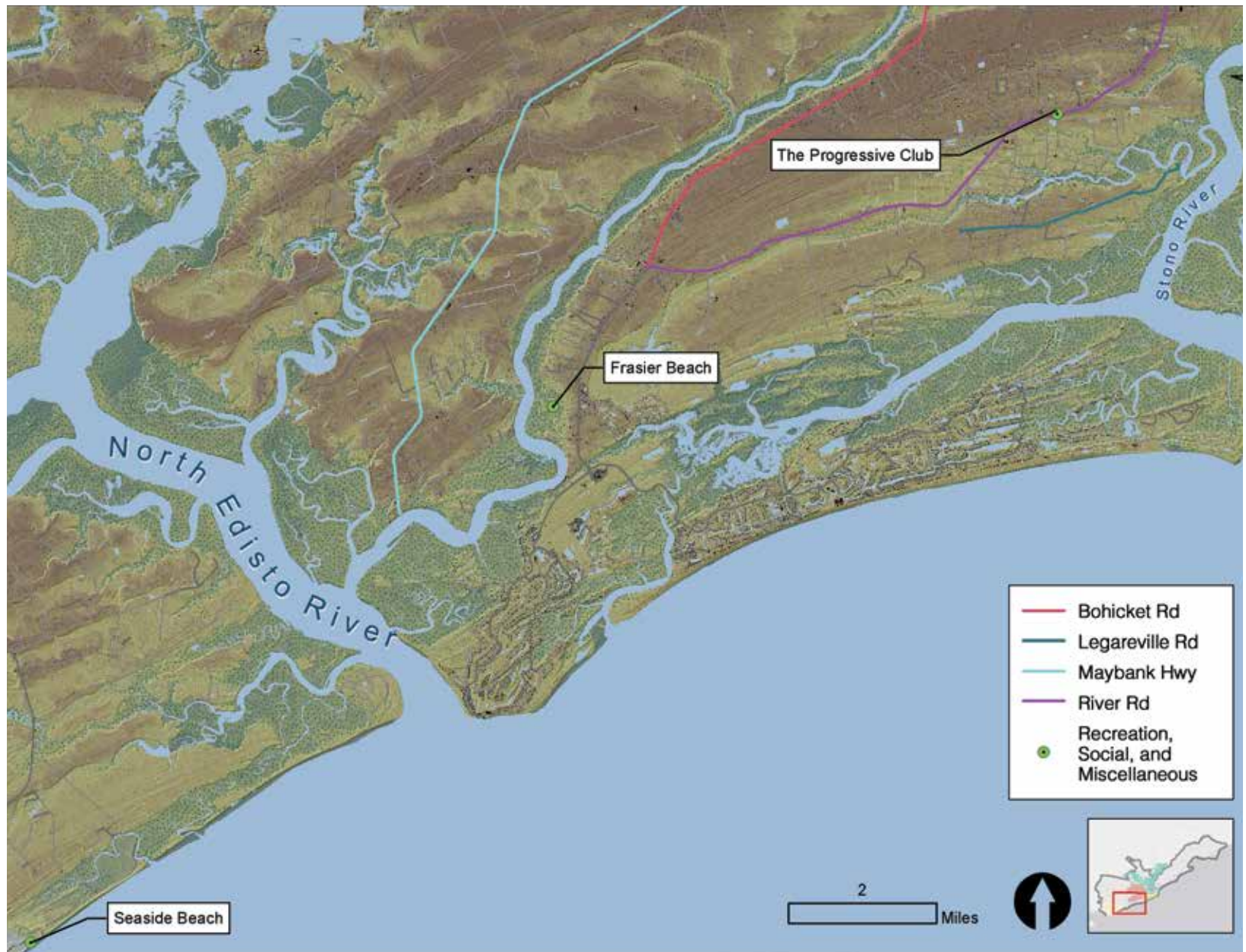
Georgie Beach – Georgie Beach, owned by George Bellinger, was on Legareville Road along Abbapoola Creek. The Johns Island Group Interviewees referred to it as “Georgie Beach”. There, Black families would gather on the Fourth of July and after the harvest season. These gatherings possessed a festival atmosphere and included music, food, and swimming, and people would arrive by bus (S.J.B. Hutchinson et al., personal communication, June 22, 2022).

Hickory Hill – This is an African American community identified during the Johns Island Group Interview but not identified in the Charleston County AASC study. It is located near the intersection of River and Bohicket roads, near the Promised Land School.

Moving Star Hall – Built around 1917, Moving Star Hall is significant as perhaps the only extant praise house of the South Carolina Sea Islands. It was the meeting place for the Moving Star Young Association – a religious, social, fraternal, and charitable community institution. It played a significant role in preserving Black musical, religious, and social/humanitarian traditions.

Largely displaced by churches after Emancipation, the praise house was a plantation-era institution that continued into the early twentieth century. The praise house functioned as a community meeting hall, a place of religious worship, and a center for spreading news (Starr 1982). In fact, one interviewee stated that it “was one of the first to start sending messages by

Recreational Properties Located on Johns Island



drum.” Because travel between islands was difficult before improved roads and bridges, each island had a drummer who sent audible messages to let people know that “something was happening” on that island (B. Jenkins, personal communication, June 21, 2022).

The Moving Star Hall Singers were known locally for their vocal talent. They gained national notoriety when they performed at the Newport Folk Festival in 1964, alongside acts like Bob Dylan, Odetta, and Joan Baez (*The News and Courier* 1964). Into the 1970s, the hall housed a secret fraternal order,

a “tend-the-sick” program, and a burial society. The roots that grew into the Progressive Club were planted in Moving Star Hall.

Original Johns Island Post Office – The original Johns Island Post Office stood where the Stono Market and Tomato Shed Café now stand on Main Road. Mail arrived at the depot on the north side of the Stono River by rail and was transported two miles down Main Road to the post office for distribution. The first Black postmaster was Adam Cecil Dayson, Sr., who served from 1892–1940 (Haynie 2007).

The Moving Star Hall Singers (Below) Performed at the Newport Folk Festival in 1964, Alongside Musicians Like Bob Dylan, Odetta, and Joan Baez (*The News and Courier* 1964)



Moving Star Hall As it Appeared in the 1980s (Top and Bottom Right) (Moving Star Hall 1982) (Below) Present Day Moving Star Hall (Stucker 2022)



The **Original Johns Island Post Office** Was
Converted to the Stono Market and Tomato Shed Café in 1989 (Stucker
2022)



The Progressive Club – The Progressive Club Sea Island Center began in 1948 at the Moving Star Hall. It is significant for its service as a Citizenship School and its association with important events and people in the Civil Rights Movement. It was established at the current site when Mt. Zion School moved to its current location. From 1963, when it was built, until founder Esau Jenkins died in 1972, the Club building had significant associations with continued adult education, social history, politics, ethnic heritage, recreation, and commerce for the African American community of the Sea Islands. The building provided a home for the Progressive Club’s legal and financial assistance program, adult education program, dormitory lodging, community recreational and childcare center, meeting hall, and general store.

Although extremely dilapidated, the building is the only extant structure built to house a “Citizenship School” in South Carolina during the Civil Rights era. These schools were modeled after the curriculum of the Highlander School in Tennessee, which taught adult education courses and workshops that enabled African American citizens to register, vote, and become aware of their communities’ political processes. The first classes at the Progressive Club were held in January 1957. After that, Citizenship Schools became a

The Progressive Club Was Originally Housed in a Wood-frame
Building that was Replaced in the Early 1960s with the Concrete-Block Structure
(Haynie 2007)




model for similar Civil Rights efforts throughout the South during the late 1950s and into the 1960s. The club hosted workshops, classes, and folk festivals attended or facilitated by people who were later catapulted to the national stage in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. These include Miles

Horton, Conrad Brown, Septima Clark, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Andrew Young, Rev. Ralph Abernathy, Kwame Ture (Stokely Carmichael), Cleveland Sellers, Hosea Williams and Fannie Lou Hamer. The site was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on October 24, 2007.

Ca. 1959, Septima Clark (center), Alice Wine, and Bernice Robinson (standing) at a Citizenship School at Progressive Club. (Civil Rights Teaching)

The Progressive Club
Currently Sits in Ruins, Listed to the
National Register of Historic Places in 2007
(Stucker 2022)





"IT WAS NICE. IT WAS
FRIENDLY. WE ALL
LOVE EACH OTHER.
WE WERE ALL ONE ON
JOHNS, IF ONE IS IN
NEED, AND THE OTHER
HAVE, YOU GET. IF
YOU NEED HELP,
SOMEONE IS ALWAYS
THERE."

Ethlemae Boyd

River Oats (Dreamstime)

VIII. CONCLUSION

This study of the African American Settlement Communities of James and Johns Islands was grounded in the voices of community residents. Their history, the history of the people and places that played important roles in everyday life on the islands, is the fabric of this study. The communities newly freed African Americans made after Emancipation were empowering, close-knit hamlets. They enabled families to grow and thrive, to become educated, to confidently test the waters in other, sometimes far-flung localities across the United States, and to build memories that would motivate many to return to long-held family land.

The oral history interviews recorded for this study revealed information about the African American Settlement Communities on James and Johns islands and expanded the findings of the Charleston City Plan. The Charleston City Plan identified 13 African American Settlement Communities on James Island: Cut Bridge (comprised of Cross Cut (AASC #20), Ferguson Village/Down Cut (AASC #21), and Turkey Pen/Down Cut (AASC #22), Grimball Area (comprised of Grimball Shores (AASC #23), Barn Hill (AASC #24), Grimball Farms (AASC #25), Carver (AASC #26), Scotts Hill (AASC #27), and Beefield (AASC #28), Sol Legare (AASC #29), Westchester (AASC #30), Peas Hill (AASC #31), Honey Hill (AASC #32). All these communities, except for Carver, were mentioned during interviews, or appeared in uncovered documentation. That Carver was not mentioned, however, does not indicate it does not exist. It simply did not come up in discussion or research. Interviewees also mentioned several other community or neighborhood names that the Charleston City Plan had not identified or archival research had not corroborated. These include Elliot Cut, Newton Cut, Wappoo Cut, and Fort Johnson. Except for Fort Johnson, located at the northeastern point of James Island, exact locations for these

communities were not identified. For Johns Island, the Charleston City Plan identified nine African American Settlement Communities: Red Top (AASC #11), Exchange Landing (AASC #12), Cape (AASC #13), Hut (AASC #14), Geddis (AASC #15), Pinckney (AASC #16), and three labeled as Unknown (AASC #17–19). All these communities, including Red Top, which is located off-island along U.S. Highway 17, were mentioned during interviews or discussed in uncovered documentation. However, they are not necessarily identified by their primary names. Many interviewees instead refer to their community by the main road that runs through it, such as Legareville Road (Hut) or Plow Ground Road (Cape). Interviewees also provided names for two of the City Plan's unknown communities – North Johns Island (AASC #17) and Stanyarne (AASC #18). In addition, they identified several communities not recognized in the Charleston City Plan: Stevens, Whaley, Cedar Springs, Hickory Hill, and Blake Hill. The cultural atlas created for this study should serve as a foundation for these communities' ongoing cultural preservation efforts. These efforts can ensure the important people and places that shaped these communities will remain alive in our collective history, whether through a trail marking each school in a web-based tour or brick-and-mortar rehabilitation efforts to preserve an important building, such as the Pine Tree Hotel. Given how quickly things can change in modern times, it is crucial that community-based and community-guided preservation efforts continue.

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APPENDIX A

ORAL HISTORY TRANSCRIPTS





JAMES ISLAND ORAL HISTORY PARTICIPANT TRANSCRIPTS

THE MASSACHUSETTS 54TH REGIMENT "FOUGHT AT BATTERY WAGNER. AND IF YOU EVER LOOK AT THE MOVIE GLORY, YOU'LL SEE THAT WAS THE BATTLE WHERE BASICALLY, WE GOT SLAUGHTERED. FULL FRONTAL ASSAULT. GUYS GOT THE GUNS POINTED DOWN ON US, SHOOTING DOWN ON US, BOMBS COMING OFF OF EVERYWHERE, BASICALLY IT WAS A SLAUGHTER. BUT IT WAS A SLAUGHTER THAT WE HAD TO ENDURE BECAUSE WE, AT THAT TIME, WERE LOOKING AT THE FUTURE. AND WE KNEW WE HAD TO DO THAT FOR THE FUTURE, FOR OUR FUTURE."

Ernest Parks

Marsh Grass on Island in the Charleston Harbor (Dreamstime)



ERSELLE CHILLIS

Anna Wiman: Whenever you are.

Reneé Donnell: All right. You ready?

Anna Wiman: All right, I'm rolling here.

Erselle Chillis: [inaudible 00:00:04].

Donna Payton: Can you hear her? (laughs) okay.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. All right, so, um...

Donna Payton: Wait a minute.

Reneé Donnell: Yes?

Donna Payton: I want you to sit up. Sit your... Put your rump back. Back. You- you always tend to look like you're sliding down in the seat. Can you push back?

Erselle Chillis: I look like I'm sliding.

Donna Payton: Okay.

Erselle Chillis: My daughter take good care of me.

Reneé Donnell: I see. I see. She has you a- a nice little outfit and everything.

Erselle Chillis: Thank you.

Reneé Donnell: All right.

Donna Payton: Actually, she didn't even dress for this. I didn't get to tell her last night, because she was going to bed.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: So she's known about two hours that you... That you were coming.

Erselle Chillis: She just told me.

Reneé Donnell: Oh, okay. Well, thank you for (laughs) agreeing to let us come over and spend this time with you.

Erselle Chillis: Donna, fix this.

Donna Payton: That's-

Erselle Chillis: I hate to get a picture to find that something's hanging.

Donna Payton: Nothing is hanging. That's not a... Button, so it's supposed to just be loose. Okay. Now relax it. Relax it. Relax it.

Reneé Donnell: All right. So, um, Ms. Chillis, will you be able to spell your name for me, please?

Erselle Chillis: I didn't get what she said.

Donna Payton: Will you be able to spell your name for her?

Erselle Chillis: My name?

Donna Payton: Yes.

Erselle Chillis: E-R-C-E-L-L-E

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And your last name?

Ercelle Chillis: C-H-I-L-L-I-S.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Awesome. Okay. Um, is this a better volume? Can you hear me? Yes? Would it be better if she could-

Ercelle Chillis: If you take that off, it'd be a better.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Um, sorry. Wanted to be as safe as possible. Okay. Okay, is this better? All right. Um... Okay, so Ms. Chillis, are you... From... You're from James Island?

Ercelle Chillis: Yes, I was born on James Island.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And... Is all of your family, or is your family also from James island?

Ercelle Chillis: What?

Reneé Donnell: Is your family also from James Island.

Ercelle Chillis: Well, my brothers and sisters, yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: But my father and my mother were...

Donna Payton: You tell her.

Ercelle Chillis: My father came from, um, Alabama.

Reneé Donnell: Oh, okay. And where's your mom from?

Ercelle Chillis: Well, I'm not sure.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: Tell her the Alabama story.

Ercelle Chillis: My grandmother had... Seven boys.

Reneé Donnell: That's a lot of boys.

Ercelle Chillis: And after slavery, she left Alabama to come to Charleston so she could get a boat to go back to Africa.

Reneé Donnell: Oh.

Ercelle Chillis: And, um, they... I don't know how long it takes them, but my father was trying to tell me the story. And they saw many things on their way from Alabama to Charleston. And they did make it to Charleston with the seven boys. And what else?

Donna Payton: How did they come?

Ercelle Chillis: Hmm?

Donna Payton: Transportation. How did they get here?

Ercelle Chillis: Hmm?

Donna Payton: How did they get here?

Ercelle Chillis: They walk.

Reneé Donnell: They walked? From Alabama? Well, that is dedication and commitment. Yeah, that is... That's a long walk. Do you know about how long it took them to get here?

Ercelle Chillis: I don't know how long it took. ..how long it took, but it must've took them a very long time.

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Ercelle Chillis: Many months.

Reneé Donnell: I can... I bet. Okay. And okay, so you grew up on James Island. Your dad decided to... Well, your grandmother decided to stay here in the Charleston area, although she never got her boat. What... Do you know what made her want to stay?

Ercelle Chillis: Well, she never got a boat back to... Back to Alabama... Back to Africa.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ercelle Chillis: Because that was her intention. And they settled in Charleston. And, um... Well, they was around the... Another, uh, uh, area, wasn't it, Donna?

Donna Payton: St. Andrews is what's listed on the Census, on the 1880 Census. Uh, they settled, well, in St. Andrews.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: Um... Our research says they got here about 1877. Um... Nobody knows specifically, but this was the breadbasket for Charleston. So this whole area was... Had been plantations and farms. And after the war, it continued to be farmland.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Donna Payton: And there were jobs because, um, the plantation owners and people that owned the land were- were trying to continue to make money to put out a crop. So it appears that the fact that there were... There was work available meant that they were able to find places to live. And I would imagine that some of the people who had been here, who had worked on the plantations historically, some folks stayed and some folks left.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Donna Payton: So there- there was, uh, space. I think that's how they got to James Island. Uh, I believe that the St. Andrews community was west of the...

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: So a lot of people... That's sort of the route through, if you think about it, from- from Georgia... Alabama through Georgia, up towards... Up to South Carolina, to the... Through to Charleston, which was one of the biggest, um, ship-

Reneé Donnell: Yes.

Donna Payton: ... Boarding areas.

Reneé Donnell: Yes. Uh-huh.

Donna Payton: So as far as we can tell, it was a matter of... You know, being able to feed your kids, finding- finding a way to live.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Okay. So you yourself grew up on James Island. Can you just, uh... Do you know what the name of your neighborhood or community was?

Ercelle Chillis: The farm.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: The farm that they settled on, the name was, uh, what did I say that was?

Donna Payton: King. King Plantation.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: King Plantation. That was the plantation that all of my brothers and sisters were born on. And it's right around the corner-

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: ... From here.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: And it was a big plantation. And they used to plant cotton. And, uh... They had a lot of people working for them.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: And then the boll weevil came. And they had to stop planting cotton. They... In fact, they used to get people- people come to, uh, work for them and build these little houses, two-room houses for the family to stay in. And, um, they would move in those- those houses with their family in order to work. And, um, when the boll weevil came, that was the end of the... Uh-

Reneé Donnell: Cotton-

Donna Payton: Cotton plantation.

Ercelle Chillis: Cotton.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: Because they would... They- they couldn't plant anymore cotton because, uh, they didn't have any... Then they didn't have any place, any... Uh... I- I picked... I picked cotton when I was a little girl. A bag...
A little big around my [inaudible 00:10:00] waist, picked cotton in the hot sun. And my father did work on the... On the farm like we did. He was a farmer. He... Rented some land from the owner and he had a- a farm that he used to take his vegetables into Charleston.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: To the market. And he would sell. They were the big market in Charleston. Right on Market Street, it's still there.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: And, uh... He had customers there. But his wife and his children worked on the farm. And, um, when the... When the cotton was the biggest thing. So when the cotton left, everything went downhill. And they- they sold the farm and they start bringing other kind of vegetable in. Spinach. That's the first time I've seen spinach in my life.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: (laughs). They started cutting spinach. We used to cut spinach, and put it in barrels and sell them. And, um, people would move... Had to find a place to go. In the meantime, my father was b- buying this land.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: While- while he was buying this land, because right around the corner from the... And, um, he was looking forwards to get... Getting out of there. And, uh, he... There were seven acres there from the road there all the way down.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: My father bought seven acres. And for him and his children. And, uh... When the cotton left and they didn't have any place else to plant. He built a little... What was it? A shack, huh?

Donna Payton: Whatever you call it.

Ercelle Chillis: (laughs) A little house, four rooms right- right here.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: Right here on this, uh, on this, um, seven acres. Go all the way back. And, um, when they had any place to go, he moved his family. My mother died before that happened. My mother died in 1926.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: And my father moved... We moved in 1927 in here. And that's why we still have this land.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: Mm-hmm (affirmative). It goes all the way around. And all that.

Reneé Donnell: Would this be considered a long lot, or... Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: And, uh, he... What'd he have, six children?

Donna Payton: Something like that.

Ercelle Chillis: Mm-hmm.

Donna Payton: He had five children, uh, biologically.

Ercelle Chillis: Mm-hmm.

Donna Payton: You were the baby, right?

Ercelle Chillis: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: This was part of the Grimball Plantation.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: Yeah. The Grimball Plantation's across the road, across Folly Road.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: And he was selling lands. This was his land from-

Donna Payton: Secessionville.

Ercelle Chillis: Secessionville back to Grimball. And he was selling these lands to the black people. And my father took advantage of it and he bought seven acres right here.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm

Ercelle Chillis: And other people were... Some people were already living on this land. And, um... We had a place to go, you know. And he... And there was only one building on this land, his little... House. And, uh... My sister that had 10 children, she, um... When I went... When I- I left here and went to New Jersey. She, um... She moved in my father's house.

My mother had died, my father had married again. And me- me and my sister, younger sister, the one I'm next to, we were the only ones left... We- we were the only ones that weren't grown. So my brother had gone to new Jersey, and my- my father had gone to New York and came and got my sister.

And then they came and got me. And I left my sister here. And she had 10 children right, and... All the children were not born on this land. Some of the... A couple were born across the road, but most of them were born right on this land. And you know, all of them are gone.

Reneé Donnell: So you said that you are the youngest of the five children and you said that your dad left to go to New York? And

then he came back for you. So who was watching over you while he was gone?

Ercelle Chillis: I... My sister... My sister that had the 10 children. Me and my... Me and my young... My other sister I'm next to, we just lived with my sister.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: So when they came, they got my sister first. Then they got me.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: And I went to New Jersey. My brother went to New Jersey.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: And, uh, that's where I stayed. That was 1930. And when I came back to live, it was 1943.

Donna Payton: Uh-uh. No ma'am.

Ercelle Chillis: What?

Donna Payton: What year did you come back to live? 1983.

Ercelle Chillis: 19- 1983.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: 1983. And when I left there, I said I was never coming back.

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Ercelle Chillis: Because I was tired of working on the farm. And it was such hard work. And, um...

Donna Payton: They want to know about... Your life before you left. What school did you go to?

Ercelle Chillis: I went to-

Donna Payton: Did you go to school? How did you live?

Ercelle Chillis: I lived with my sister.

Donna Payton: Before you lived with your sister. Before your mom died.

Ercelle Chillis: I... I went to Society Corner School. It was right on... What?

Donna Payton: Secessionville.

Ercelle Chillis: Secessionville Road. That's where the school was. And we walked to school every day and it was very good. And, um... We had different teachers. And... There was only two rooms.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And... What were the grades of this school? Like, what grade levels did it go to?

Ercelle Chillis: Well, I think there were- were... They were up until... What, they went to the sixth grade?

Donna Payton: I'm not sure if it was sixth or eighth.

Ercelle Chillis: I think it was... I don't... I'm not sure if it was sixth or eighth, but that's as far as it went. And after that, you had to go to the city and continue your education.

Reneé Donnell: What- what is the highest grade level you were able to get to?

Ercelle Chillis: Sixth grade.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And then... So Society Corner School. We haven't really heard much about that one. So that's good information to know. Um... And then... Okay, so when you weren't in school, what- what did you do for fun, if you had free time for fun?

Donna Payton: She needs to know about your schedule. What did you do before school? Did you not have to work before you went to school?

Ercelle Chillis: Sometimes, we had to go in the field and work before we went to school.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: And then we would come back, we had to go to [inaudible 00:18:59]. And then they used to have a truck to take you to John's Island and we... Even the children, like me, needs to go to John's Island and pick up the sweet potatoes... White potatoes and work so hard, you know. And I was really tired of it. And I was just a child. So...

Reneé Donnell: About how old were you when you started working in the fields?

Donna Payton: How old do you think you were when you started working in the field?

Ercelle Chillis: Oh, I don't know how old I was. I must've been about six or seven years old. You don't have to be old, you just have to be big enough to put a bag around you... And work.

Reneé Donnell: Kids today would not survive. They... Yeah.

Ercelle Chillis: They're so spoiled, it's terrible. They don't want to get up and turn the television on.

Reneé Donnell: (laughing)

Ercelle Chillis: And we had a lot of work to do. When I lived with my father, I would... It was... My job was to feed the chickens.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: My father had chickens and he had two cows. And he had, um, a couple of horses. And, uh... When he was on the farm. When he moved over here, he brought those things with him.

Donna Payton: Did he have that mule?

Ercelle Chillis: Yeah. Mm-hmm (affirmative). So-

Donna Payton: What about the times that you worked in the shrimp factory?

Ercelle Chillis: Well, you know, you could... That would be your own time. The shrimp factory was on Folly Road. And you would... You want a little extra money. So you just went and... Took the head off some shrimps.

Donna Payton: And that was up near Sol Legare.

Ercelle Chillis: Past Sol Legare.

Donna Payton: How'd you get there?

Ercelle Chillis: Almost... Walk. Are you kidding?

Reneé Donnell: (laughing)

Ercelle Chillis: How did you get there? You walk everywhere.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: We would-

Donna Payton: So that would be before school in the morning?

Ercelle Chillis: Before school in the morning. And then we would come home and I think we were smelling pretty bad. Smelling like fish (laughs).

Reneé Donnell: So-

Ercelle Chillis: Going to school. Like, we went and, um... That's the way it was. And then in the afternoon when we came home, we had to go in the field and help with the whatever they planted. They planted tomatoes, and okra, planted lima beans, all that stuff.

Reneé Donnell: So- so I can understand, your day from about first grade until I guess you moved, you woke up, you worked-

Ercelle Chillis: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: ... You went to school.

Ercelle Chillis: Oh, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: You came home, worked some more, and then you went to sleep?

Ercelle Chillis: You work until it gets dark. You'd work until dark.

Reneé Donnell: Sounds like a lot.

Ercelle Chillis: You'd get up in the morning, you'd work. But they didn't make you go to- to Folly and- and do the shrimp. You did that for the extra money. You want to buy a little something in your pocket. But, um, we used to have fun going, you know.

We'd go, and a bunch- bunch of us used to go from this area and, uh, we'd laugh, and play, and all the way... Almost to Folly Beach. And then we'd do that, and then we'd leave in time to get to school.

Reneé Donnell: What time does school start, do you know? Or what time were you waking up to go to the shrimp factory with your friends?

Ercelle Chillis: We didn't have a clock, believe it or not. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: We did not have a clock.

Reneé Donnell: And so were you, like, a- a young child working in the shrimp factory?

Ercelle Chillis: Mm-hmm (affirmative). They didn't care [inaudible 00:23:22]. If you could... They had a long table. And if you could-

Donna Payton: Take the head off.

Ercelle Chillis: Stand up... Stand up on a little box and... They let you do it.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Um, so when you were earning this money from your jobs, were you giving that money to your dad or did you get to actually keep?

Ercelle Chillis: It was... It was only five or 10 cents.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Well, I'm sure that was a lot back then.

Ercelle Chillis: We bought... We bought candy and cookies.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: That was for us.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: The morning.

Ercelle Chillis: Uh-huh.

Reneé Donnell: The morning job.

Donna Payton: The afternoon job, that money went to the household, right?

Ercelle Chillis: Yes. Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Okay. Um, and then... So I don't think you really had time to do anything fun, but did you guys attend a church or... Was your dad a part of any of the lodges that were set up here?

Ercelle Chillis: He be the... He was the deacon in First Baptist Church since I... Before I was born.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: And we went to church every Sunday, Sunday school church. And just where the church is today. Church was the same place.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And...

Donna Payton: Did you not have meetings at your house?

Ercelle Chillis: And then my father was the deacon, so he had prayer meetings at his house every Thursday night.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: At his house. He didn't have it at the church.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And-

Ercelle Chillis: We used to have a lot of fun. We played a lot in... On Sunday afternoon. But that's the only time we had to play. Because the other times, we were working.

Donna Payton: What did you play?

Reneé Donnell: Yeah, what did you play?

Ercelle Chillis: We made... We made up songs. London Bridge, all kinds of songs. And we made up stuff.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: And- and we played until it got dark.

Reneé Donnell: So... Okay, so Sundays, you went to church and then you had the rest of the day to just-

Ercelle Chillis: Oh yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Play and hang out? Did you guys only play, like, in the yard, or did you go out to the woods-

Ercelle Chillis: No, you... We've-

Reneé Donnell: ... Did you go to the water?

Ercelle Chillis: This- this place right here, this was the biggest... They had a big house right here. And, uh... This woman, she was so nice. My friends had a grandmother, and I never knew a grandmother. And we would always come over here to their house, and they had that fenced in. And we would play.

And while they were playing, she had all these beautiful flowering trees and everything. I would be talking to grandmother and asking her what the name of the flowers and all that stuff. I was always interested in flowers.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: And, um, even when I went away from here, I wanted flowers. I wanted flowers in my house. I wanted to go and buy a pot and bring it in. And, um... No, we'd walk

everywhere. All the way Down Cut Bridge all the way down there.

All the way across there. All the way in Sol Legare. And we thought it was nothing to walk because we had no other way. We didn't know any other way. Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: Did people not have, um, a horse and buggy? Or horses were too expensive, or?

Donna Payton: Do... Did people not have horses and buggies? What did they-

Ercelle Chillis: Well, the older people had... They ride in the buggies, in the... And in the wagons and the buggies.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: Mm-hmm (affirmative). But the-

Donna Payton: Your dad had- had a buggy that... A-

Ercelle Chillis: The children walk (laughs). The children walk.

Reneé Donnell: That's fair.

Ercelle Chillis: We used to have fun.

Donna Payton: My grandfather had a cart-

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: ... That he kept in Charleston.

Reneé Donnell: Oh.

Donna Payton: Because to get to Charleston, how did he have to get to Charleston?

Ercelle Chillis: Oh, he had a wagon that we'd... Dill Bluff was right down at the end of Dill Bluff Road. And we used to take him there. And he used to go into the market-

Donna Payton: Across the water.

Ercelle Chillis: Across the water.

Donna Payton: On a ferry.

Ercelle Chillis: On a ferry boat. And he had customers and everything. And he- he had something you call a push cart. And he'd push that thing. And... In that hot sun at 98 degrees, I don't know how he did it to buy-

Donna Payton: Over the cobblestones.

Ercelle Chillis: To- to buy this land.

Reneé Donnell: Well, I guess if-

Ercelle Chillis: And nobody seemed to appreciate it but me. I'm the only one took a piece of the land.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. You mentioned, um... And I want to get back to your dad and his... Ventures and you being the only one to get a piece of the land. You mentioned Dill Bluff. What is Dill Bluff.

Ercelle Chillis: Dill Bluff was a place where they have ferry boats-

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: ... Come and land there. And everybody that's... Whatever vegetable or anything you had, you had to take it to the market.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ercelle Chillis: You took it on the ferry from Dill Bluff. And there was quite a few boats there.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And was that a black-only... Was it like a marina kind of? Okay, was it a black-only ferry or was it an integrated ferry?

Ercelle Chillis: Well... You know what? I never even noticed that any other, you know, color was in there. But I just know that we would go to town until they built a-

Donna Payton: Bridge.

Ercelle Chillis: Bridges.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: Everybody had to have a car then, a truck or something, to go the other way. But we went on the ferry to get there.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: And very few- few people had cars and trucks initially.

Ercelle Chillis: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Donna Payton: It wasn't that it was integrated or segregated. It was the only way into Charleston.

Ercelle Chillis: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: So if you came to the island, you had to come on a ferry.

Ercelle Chillis: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: Now it might have been that there were some boats that they couldn't use.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Donna Payton: But as a child, my mother was not aware of that.

Ercelle Chillis: That's right.

Donna Payton: Uh, all she knew was if she went down there, papa came back on the boat, or got onto the boat with his produce and picked up his pushcart in Charleston, and loaded it up, and sold his produce.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: There were other uncles who did have- had boats. Some of his brothers. Which one of his brothers had boats?

Ercelle Chillis: No, that was his brother-in-law. Henry- Henry Heyward father had a ferry boat.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: There is one of our uncles that's in our... Book that had a boat named Belle. One of his brothers.

Ercelle Chillis: I don't remember that.

Donna Payton: Okay. I'd have to look it up.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: I don't remember that. But... It was very hard living. That's all we knew.

Reneé Donnell: So-

Ercelle Chillis: We worked hard in the fields.

Donna Payton: What about the first time you saw a car?

Ercelle Chillis: Oh, the first time we saw a car, it was a ford.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ercelle Chillis: It was on Secessionville Road. And we were trying to keep up with the car. The was... Had a motor in it and we were running behind that car trying (laughs). And of course, the horses were so afraid of the car, because, you know. They never seen anything like that before.

Reneé Donnell: And on the Secessionville Road when you saw this car, was that still a dirt road at the time, or had that been paved?

Ercelle Chillis: Hmm?

Donna Payton: Was it dirt or paved, Secessionville Road?

Ercelle Chillis: What?

Donna Payton: Was it dirt or had it been paved?

Ercelle Chillis: Oh my, honey. Dirt. Of course, everything was dirt road.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: Everything was dirt road. They had nothing paved.

Reneé Donnell: Um... When you... Before you went to New Jersey, were any roads paved here on James Island?

Ercelle Chillis: No.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: No, no, no. When I left here in 1930, no.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: Uh-uh. When I came back, it was 12 years later. It was completely different.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. How was it different when you came back?

Ercelle Chillis: Well, people had electric.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: Everybody had lamp lights right before I left, kerosene oil... And all that.

Donna Payton: Tell us about it. What else was different? Were the roads paved then?

Ercelle Chillis: Yes. They had the tar pavement on this road here. Even this road was, um... You know-

Donna Payton: Asphalt or something?

Ercelle Chillis: Yeah. Right.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: Mm-hmm, Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: And was it still... You came back in 1983?

Donna Payton: No, her first visit back was 1942.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: That's my first visit. I'd been away 12 years before I came back the first time.

Donna Payton: She didn't come back to live, but that was her first visit.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: That was my visit.

Reneé Donnell: Did... Was it hard to come back here, even if it was just for a visit? Because I'm sure New Jersey was very much so tall buildings, and streets, and lights, and...

Ercelle Chillis:	Oh, yeah. It was such a change. I couldn't believe it. It was such a change.	Ercelle Chillis:	In New Jersey... He was born in New Jersey. Of course, he died in New Jersey.
Donna Payton:	The change here or going to New Jersey?	Reneé Donnell:	Okay.
Ercelle Chillis:	Well, when I went to New Jersey, I, you know, they had come... A little different from Charleston. They still had oil lamps, some oil lamps and such. But they were changing, too.	Donna Payton:	He was eight years old.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay. And so why did you come back here in 19... In the 1940s. Why did you come back?	Reneé Donnell:	I'm sorry to hear that.
Ercelle Chillis:	Because my family was here.	Donna Payton:	And she was grieving. And so her brother thought it would be helpful for her to come back home where her dad was back at that time, and see if she could feel better.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Reneé Donnell:	How did that work? Did it help?
Ercelle Chillis:	Well, my sister was here.	Ercelle Chillis:	Yeah, it worked.
Donna Payton:	Well, you hadn't come back before. So you had a specific reason for coming back.	Reneé Donnell:	Um, so your dad was already back here?
Ercelle Chillis:	Well, I came back because I wanted to visit my sister, brother that was here.	Ercelle Chillis:	Yeah. He had left... He was... He was in the... Him and my step-mother was in New... In, uh...
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Donna Payton:	Long Island.
Ercelle Chillis:	And everybody that I left behind, I hadn't seen them.	Ercelle Chillis:	Long Island.
Donna Payton:	She came back because she was mourning the death of her oldest son.	Reneé Donnell:	Okay.
Reneé Donnell:	Oh.	Ercelle Chillis:	And their job had...
Ercelle Chillis:	And I had lost my old... My first-born son. My first son had died.	Donna Payton:	Terminated.
Reneé Donnell:	Did... Was he not in New Jersey with you?	Ercelle Chillis:	Terminated. And he was moving back home. So he was... He was already back home.
		Reneé Donnell:	So who were you in New Jersey with? Your brother?
		Ercelle Chillis:	My brother, I had cousins, I had uncles. I had two or three uncles, my father's brothers, that was in New Jersey.
		Reneé Donnell:	Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: And they were all in New Jersey. They didn't go to New York. They went to New Jersey.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And then when you came here in the 1940s-

Ercelle Chillis: '42.

Reneé Donnell: '42.

Ercelle Chillis: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: How long-

Ercelle Chillis: The war- war was over.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: No, it wasn't. '42?

Ercelle Chillis: It was... '42.

Donna Payton: The war was going on.

Ercelle Chillis: Yeah.

Donna Payton: Wasn't over until '45.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And so how long were you here in 1942? How long did you stay? Just-

Ercelle Chillis: Oh, I didn't stay very long. I stayed about a month. I stayed a long time. I didn't... I... Somehow, I didn't want to go back to New Jersey. But I was in my father's house, and my step-mother was there. And so I was... I had a husband.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Did he come with you to Charleston? Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: I brought the two children that I had living.

Reneé Donnell: Were you one of them?

Ercelle Chillis: Donna wasn't born yet.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: I had, um... Arnold and Connie, and I had them with me. And the other one had died. I had four children.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: And then... So when you came back here, things were starting to change here. Like, uh, people had something closer to electricity with the lamps and things?

Ercelle Chillis: They start having electric-

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: ... And different things they didn't have when I was here.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: And as time went on, they had everything. In fact, they were living better than we did.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: And that's when I want to come back home.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And that was in the '80s? All right. What was it like here in the '80s?

Ercelle Chillis: Oh, it was very... Much better than it was when I was there, because nobody was farming anymore.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm

Ercelle Chillis: Everybody had jobs. You know, Charleston and... They had different jobs and all that. And people weren't farming anymore. Completely different.

Donna Payton: People were building houses that were houses.

Ercelle Chillis: And they were building their nice houses, you know, and having electric and gas in their house.

Reneé Donnell: So... Okay, so in the 1980s, 1983, um, what were people doing for work? If they weren't farming anymore, what were they doing for work?

Ercelle Chillis: They- they had jobs. They- they got jobs in the city. The Navy yard was open, and different places. They had... They all had jobs. My nephews and them had jobs, you know.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: And it was... Completely different. They weren't here farming. And everybody was building their houses and living better. It's... I said, I want to go back home and, uh... When I left here, I said, "Never coming back."

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And she brought you with her? You stayed up there? Okay.

Donna Payton: When my mother left in '83-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm

Donna Payton: Certainly I was grown with my own family.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm

Donna Payton: Um... I had been born and raised in New Jersey, educated in New Jersey, went to college in New Jersey. Um... And didn't have any expectation of coming back to live, even though we came- came intermittently. Mom had been coming back and forth on a regular basis to see her family.

After '42, she started visiting. Before '42, she was... Her children were babies. Uh, it was, um, Depression-era. There was no visiting for her. But after that, she started visiting. People were visiting from here. Um... She saw the evolution of the south.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm

Donna Payton: Some of that time, it was still kind of depressed down here. When I... When I came in the '50s, um, you know, Charleston was kind of a poor city.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: To me. It was kind of a poor city. And it was still segregated.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm

Donna Payton: The way things happen was people had- here had children. When they finished high school, most kids moved. They needed a job. They wanted to do something better. They moved to New York or New Jersey. You went to family, uh, you got a job, you built your own family.

We're now on the opposite end of that, of the great migration, and people came-

Reneé Donnell: Coming back.

Donna Payton: ... Are coming back.

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Donna Payton: And they've been coming back for the last 20 years, at least, maybe even more. Um, some... We'd always lived in apartments. We rented apartments. Mom said, "You know, I'm going to retire and I want my own house. And I'll never

do it in New Jersey. I'll never have enough money. But I can go back. My dad's land is still more land. And I'm gonna try to cut off a piece and I want a little house, and I want roses." So that was her... And that- this was not her house.

Reneé Donnell: Oh, okay.

Donna Payton: The trailer there?

Reneé Donnell: Uh-huh.

Ercelle Chillis: I got the trailer.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: That was her house.

Ercelle Chillis: Me and my husband.

Donna Payton: Husband, mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: Okay. What made you build this one here? This house.

Ercelle Chillis: That's hers. This is her house.

Reneé Donnell: Oh, this is your house.

Ercelle Chillis: But that- that trailer was mine.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: But this is her house. That was years later that she- she built the house. And I moved... I was 90 years old when she built that house.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: 90 plus. Almost 100.

Ercelle Chillis: Almost 100.

Donna Payton: Because I didn't move here until 2012.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: So we started working on that... Worked on the house. Moved in-in December 2012. And she was the first one over here. Nobody thought she was gonna move out of her trailer. Because mother loved her trailer. And she kept it up, and people were... My cousins were saying, "You know auntie's not going to move in with you." But auntie fooled everybody and auntie moved in with me.

Reneé Donnell: Do you still go in there every once in a while?

Ercelle Chillis: Anybody come, they can always stay in there.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: Because we keep it up. We keep the electric going and everything going.

Reneé Donnell: Very nice. I think that's cool that you got to live beside, like-

Ercelle Chillis: As soon as she came and built this, I joined... I moved right in with her.

Reneé Donnell: (laughs). Okay.

Ercelle Chillis: Because it was time.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: Yeah. Well see, those last 10 years, she was really fretting, because, uh, she was living alone from the time my step-father died, which was '87.

Reneé Donnell: Oh, okay.

Donna Payton: So they came in '83. '87, he passed away. She lived alone until I came to start work on this house, which was about 2011.

Reneé Donnell: That's a long time.

Donna Payton: That's a long time. And, uh... I had retired and was able to, uh, talk about coming down. And it has been a blessing. It's been a great thing, um... To be on my grandfather's land. In the interim, when she left in '30, a lot of her family did live on the land.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: This land was... Not woods. It was farmland.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: And there were about, what, maybe five houses here between here and Aunt Mary?

Ercelle Chillis: There.

Donna Payton: Cousin Bunny, Mary, David-

Ercelle Chillis: Allen.

Donna Payton: Allen.

Ercelle Chillis: All of those people had their house up there.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: My cousin, my Aunt Mary, who had the 10 children, was the oldest girl, moved in- into my grandfather's house-

Reneé Donnell: With her 10 kids?

Donna Payton: She didn't have 10 kids at first.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: She... As she was having kids, we're talking about prior to 1930.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: By 1930 when mom left, she had the house, she and her husband, and the family was expanding. So when he came back from New York, when grandpa came back from New York, they built a little house up there-

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: For her and her kids. She built a house, she and her husband, and their kids lived there. And grandpa had his house that he had built in 1927 still here under that big oak tree. Not this one, but the other one.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: Um, and her children, as they grew up, many of them had their... Put little houses on... Put houses on the land. David, Allen, Leon. This strip here behind me is part of the seven acres.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: And Leon, my aunt Mary's... One of her older sons, got that piece from my grandfather.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: He was very close to my grandfather. He moved in with him when he came back. And so he sort of... Took care of... Was part of his grandfather, who had taken care of him.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton:	This land and the brick house up front. Then one of her youngest sons bought a little piece right in front.	Ercelle Chillis:	[crosstalk 00:50:20] all grew up like this. It's all woods.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Reneé Donnell:	So... Okay. I think... This is great information. Do you have anything else you would like to share? Anything you think we may not have asked the right questions about?
Donna Payton:	So it was a little L. The rest stayed intact. And though, um-	Ercelle Chillis:	Well, you know, I am glad I came back home.
Reneé Donnell:	I can get that for you.	Reneé Donnell:	Okay.
Donna Payton:	I got it.	Ercelle Chillis:	Because I think this is beautiful. And my... I have the best son-in-law in the world. And when he sees something, he'll buy it. And he make it very comfortable for me.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Reneé Donnell:	Okay.
Donna Payton:	They lived there, they did not cut it off legally.	Ercelle Chillis:	When they moved here and I was...
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Donna Payton:	98.
Ercelle Chillis:	They lived there and they did not take a piece. But I'm the only one that's took a piece. He said, each one of his... The children have an acre of land, because he had... He bought seven acres.	Ercelle Chillis:	98.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Donna Payton:	97, 98. Yeah.
Donna Payton:	And you see, he and his new wife, he married again, and that was the whole going back to New York. She lived... She worked in New York. They could... They could work in New York, save money, et cetera, adopted a little girl when they came back.	Ercelle Chillis:	I moved right in the house with them and left that trailer there.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Reneé Donnell:	Okay.
Donna Payton:	So that's the seventh child. Sixth child? It was the sixth. Um... And she stayed with him until he died.	Ercelle Chillis:	So anybody that come down to spend any time, they don't have to go to a hotel. They can stay in the trailer.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Reneé Donnell:	That's really nice. Yeah, this is a great piece of land. You're close to things. Like-
Ercelle Chillis:	So she's trying to get a piece down there.	Donna Payton:	Everything. Walmart, supermark-
Donna Payton:	Legally.	Reneé Donnell:	But it's quiet.
		Donna Payton:	... Supermarkets. Uh, as you see, things are moving up the road.

Reneé Donnell:	Mm-hmm	Reneé Donnell:	Are you excited about your birthday? What are you gonna do this year?
Donna Payton:	But it is peaceful and quiet.	Ercelle Chillis:	We had the big time. When I was 100 years old, we had a big thing in the hotel, and... All my family came from all over.
Ercelle Chillis:	And they're gonna pa- ... They're gonna pave this road this summer.	Reneé Donnell:	Do you want to take a trip this year?
Reneé Donnell:	Oh. How do you feel about that?	Ercelle Chillis:	No.
Ercelle Chillis:	Hmm?	Reneé Donnell:	Have you been on... Oh, okay. No trip. I don't wanna-
Reneé Donnell:	How do you feel about them paving the road?	Donna Payton:	She did a lot of traveling.
Ercelle Chillis:	Well, you know, you can't stop progress. So they're gonna take some of my land, but we can't help it.	Mr. Payton:	She been to Paris, London.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Reneé Donnell:	Okay.
Ercelle Chillis:	But... This, you'd come from there all the way around the Folly Road again.	Mr. Payton:	Mm-hmm
Reneé Donnell:	Okay. Well, thank you so much for speaking with us on a short notice to you.	Donna Payton:	She... Her 98th year, my grand... My niece turned 50, and she took her mom and her grandma to Paris and London.
Ercelle Chillis:	Yes.	Reneé Donnell:	Okay.
Reneé Donnell:	And thank you for setting all this up. She really did mention... Like, this, um...	Donna Payton:	And, uh... But mom always traveled. We used to call her Have Ticket, Will Travel. Just send her the ticket. She will come. She came to New Jersey by air every year for... Between, what?
Ercelle Chillis:	So my birthday...	Mr. Payton:	I don't know.
Reneé Donnell:	Dill Bluff.	Donna Payton:	I don't know.
Ercelle Chillis:	... Is September the 14th.	Mr. Payton:	At least 20 years, huh.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Donna Payton:	Something like that.
Ercelle Chillis:	And if I live that long, I'll be 108 years old.	Mr. Payton:	It's been like 20 years. Time goes by so fast.
Anne Wiman:	Wow.		
Ercelle Chillis:	Right now, I'm 107.		

Donna Payton: It seemed like 20 years almost.

Mr. Payton: Mm-hmm

Donna Payton: Um, she went to California to see that niece.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: She usually went every year. So she, um... you know, she would go. And she was very active. She was very active.

Mr. Payton: She stopped driving at 100.

Donna Payton: Yeah. 100, she gave me the keys.

Mr. Payton: She gave me the keys. License was good until 101, but she gave me the keys at 100.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: And she had some friends. I think, to me, one of the things that was most amazing was when we had her 90th birthday party-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm

Donna Payton: These people keep tapping me and saying, "I went to school with your mother." And I was like, I never saw so many 90-year-old people in my life.

Reneé Donnell: (laughs).

Donna Payton: And they were, unfortunately, all women.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm

Donna Payton: But there must've been about seven or eight of them. Her two good friends and her made a pact that year, her friends, that listen, let's make... Let's make 100. So mom's story is, she was like, are you out of your mind?

We'll never... 10 years? Well, mom made the 10 years. The person who made... Who wanted to make the pact made 100.

Reneé Donnell: Oh, wow.

Donna Payton: And the other person made 99.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Donna Payton: And, uh... They went to Society Corner School together.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. That's really impressive.

Ercelle Chillis: And I'm the only one left. The only one.

Donna Payton: So around that time, there was some 106-year-old people on the island. There were at least two or three.

Donna Payton: I thought, this is really something. And now she's almost 108.

Reneé Donnell: Quick question.

Donna Payton: Uh-huh.

Reneé Donnell: Last question. What's the secret?

Donna Payton: (laughs)

Ercelle Chillis: None.

Reneé Donnell: So if you start off working real young, did I get too late of a start working and so I might not-

Ercelle Chillis: No, just some day-to-day. Wake up in the morning and say, "Thank you, Lord. Another day."

Donna Payton: Well, she did work hard.

Ercelle Chillis: Nobody has lived as long as I have in my family.

Donna Payton: And she stayed active. And she had a little garden, and she planted her vegetables. She had her roses. And, uh... She mowed the lawn on a riding mower until she was 90.

Ercelle Chillis: My lunch.

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Ercelle Chillis: Yes, I did. I cut my own yard. I did all my hedges. I had a lot of hedges then. I did all my hedges, I did across the road, I did everything. I used to help him with his garden.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. So stay active.

Donna Payton: Stay active.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. This was-

Ercelle Chillis: And they're all gone.

Reneé Donnell: ... Great.

Ercelle Chillis: ... Gone. And my sister that had 10 children? All 10 of them are gone. All 10 of them.

Mr. Payton: [inaudible 00:57:19].

Donna Payton: That breaks her heart to see the nieces and nephews. But there are great nieces and great-great nieces-

Ercelle Chillis: You going? She's going.

Donna Payton: Okay, sweetie.

Mr. Payton: All right, I'll see y'all tomorrow.

Donna Payton: Did you leave something?

Anna Wiman: Should I-

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Mr. Payton: No, [inaudible 00:57:34].



EUGENE FRAZIER

Reneé Donnell: I am going here and I'm clicking here, so whenever you're ready. All right. So, um, Mr. Frazier, can you please, just to start off... Uh, can you please spell your name for us.

Eugene Frazier: First name, Eugene. E-U-G-E-N-E. Last name, Frazier. F-R-A-Z-I-E-R.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Thank you. And then, we're gonna just get into the questions. Um, start off a little bit about you, and then we'll get into the-

Eugene Frazier: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Broader context of James Island. So, I know that your family is from here. Can you tell us how long has your family been on James Island?

Eugene Frazier: Started from slavery. My, uh... My grandfather on the maternal side was born in 1853 on the Dill Plantation on James Island. He was actually born enslaved, during slavery. Uh, and some other family on the, uh... On that... Still on the pa- maternal side, uh, it's gonna be, if you had that book, it's gonna be on the, uh, Todd side, go back to 1819. Or 1719. Uh, so w- we go back to the... Whether- whether it's the maternal or pa-... Or paternal side, we go back before during the slavery- slavery era, but over this country in enslaved.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, tell us your general context, can you explain to us what life was like growing up here on James Island?

Eugene Frazier: Well, as a young, young boy, uh, understand as an African American, uh, during... My years growing up was in the '30s, the '40s, and up to the '50s right before I left James Island. Uh, it was... This area was actually really a rural area. It was, before the road was even paved. The only paved road on James Island was the one called Folly Road that was paved back in the '20s and the '30... Began to pave, the '20s and '30s, was a two lane highway. It run from p-... From the peninsula to Folly Beach. A rock road, they call it rocks. And those were the only paved road... The only one paved road that run clean to Folly Beach. All these other road was actually dirt and trail when I was a young boy, six, seven, years old. All these road, uh, was trail.

It was wooded area and there was farm land. These land was, You know, uh, was plowed and cultivated and the land was clear for... Actually for farming. And that's all we

had here on James Island. Uh, one... Two or three stores on the whole island. Uh, you could... Have to walk to 'em because... And the... All the community, I think it's, uh, every community on James Island we... I knew people on there. Because when you... We connected by... From the young age, we go to these different plantations. For example, you had 17 plantation slave plant... Enslaved people on James Island. And we knew where the... I knew where everyone was, because you would worked... When you were a young boy... We were young boy, young girls, men and women, worked on these farm.

And one farm was planting one thing, and then you'd help another. Well, the man who owns the farm, the farmers who own these farm, comes round to the local community and asks for help. And, uh, they worked these farms as a... And as a young boy, I know where every farm was, and I know where every commun-... The name of every community was. You asked a while back about... For example, the, uh... The Honey Hill, uh, plantation, that was, uh... That was the, uh... What we call the Clark... The Clark and the Lawton Plantation. That's where Honey Hill was in that area now.

Uh, then you got the Seabrook Plantation in, uh... That's on Secessionville Road on Battery Island. And you have the Dill Plantation, which my mother was born and raised. And all that area there, there's several different parts of the farm, and the only thing they did was, uh, harvest tomatoes, cucumber, corn, uh, potatoes and, uh... Even before my time really was cotton on there, but particular... Mostly, like, for example on the Dill Plantation, uh, there was...

They harvest the potato, corn, tomatoes. Uh, different plantation, uh, uh, harvest, for example, uh, the non-... The Hinson Plantation was... They raised turkey there. Turkey. Uh, on the plan they... On the Hinson Plantation. Someone and there was, uh, the modern in the... In... Was prior to the modern time, they use horse and mule to cultivate the property, the, all these plantations.

And what the people was doing, uh, African American were using... Men were using mule to plow the property and turning up the property. The women were using, horse and rake to, cultivate the bed to plant the... The seed. Uh, after they, was, grew and that... They pick and... Pick the, uh, beans, and picked, uh, potatoes. Then they would, The men would haul it off in cart before the truck days and put 'em in crates. And they would take... Then take that to the market in the city of Charleston. This was some kind of hard time for people. Especially African Americans. And as a young boy during the time when I was growing up, seven, eight, nine years old, I tend... I was [at]tending St. James Parochial School, which is a... Which is a predominantly Black, Black school controlled by the church.

The Board of National Mission in New York sent... Uh, was supporting the school prior to it... School being... Prior to African American be... Uh, being educated on the island. That school... That church that you talked about there is the first place that taught African Americans to read and write. As a matter of fact, that church was teaching Blacks to read and write, uh, it was built... The first church was built in 1868... '66, and completed in 1868. Began in '66 and complete in 1868, and they used that through the

week days to teach the kids to read and write, and on the weekend, then they held church. And I told you earlier that, uh, there were no high school on James Island during those times in the '20s, the '30s, the '40s, for African Americans.

And in 1949 was the first year that African American was allowed to ride school bus. Other words, we had to walk, I don't care where you live. If you live one mile, or eight mile from the school, you walked to school. You start off early enough in the morning... Uh, if it's rain, and was... The road was... The little trail was muddy, it was too bad, you had to walk and go to school. And that was the only school during that time, until the 19... Uh, early 1900. And that's in South Carolina, the Charleston County School Board decided to build a one-room board school for African Americans in each community. Matter of fact, if you look in this book, you'll see that the first school was built was the Cut Bridge School. The second school was the Secessionville School on Secessionville Road.

And all... Both of 'em... All of those were one- one room board-building schools. And the third one was on Sol Legare. Sol Legare there, what they call Mosquito Beach down there. One room board school, and then one on Fort Johnson Road on the other side of that place called Honey Hill. That was a school... The Three Tree School.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: Call that the Three Tree School. And those schools were one room... Matter of fact in the book I got a picture of the actual Cut Bridge School in the book already, you're probably seeing that.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Eugene Frazier: Uh, in African, uh, American had to... Pull together no matter where they live, unless they live on the Dill Plantation, they go to the Cut Bridge School. All that area, Riverland Drive, the whole Dill Plantation, you go to Cut Bridge School. If you was from the Grimball Plantation, mostly people on Grimball was attended the- the St. James Parochial School. Which was not connected with the county. But they, uh, had an option to walk... To walk to Secessionville Road and go to the school on the Secessionville Road. And then you got the one on Sol Legare for that plantation.

Reneé Donnell: So, I know in your... Okay, because you said Sol Legare, Cut Bridge School... Okay. So, I know in your book, especially the one on top, you had James Island broken down by the different plantations.

Eugene Frazier: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And then you... Or people would mention we left Dill Plantation and-

Eugene Frazier: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Moved to, I don't know, Grimball or-

Eugene Frazier: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Different things. What was happening...

Eugene Frazier: What would happen during those times... For example, if someone, uh... This is where- where it started. If a young man on the Dill Plantation got involved with a young lady doing the farm in the area, and liked a young lady on McLeod Plantation, that family married into that person

on the McLeod Plantation and they would move to ... The family would move to McLeod Plantation. Vice versa.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Eugene Frazier: Uh, so, that's why it started to have the interconnection between one plant-... They moved from one plantation, it was because of marriage, and building. Mm.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. That makes sense. So, you were telling me about some of the different historic neighborhoods on Johns... Oh, sorry, James Island. Would you be able to tell me what was the name of the neighborhood that you grew up in?

Eugene Frazier: Well-

Reneé Donnell: Or the community that you grew up in.

Eugene Frazier: Basically, I grew up, born and raised on the Grimball Plantation-

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: That's my father. That's where my father was from, the Grimball Plantation. But my mother was from the Dill Plantation. And so, I was familiar with the Dill... With the Dill Plantation. Because my mother would take us there, walking me... I walked with her there. And I spend the night over there to my grandmother's, which was... You have to... You think... You have to think about the '30, now, we're talking about '30 and the '40s again. So, I would walk with her over there, and then she would stay sometime overnight. Keep me overnight to my grandmother house on the Dill Plantation. And so, yeah... And so, between the Dill, I was actually born and raised and knew about those

h-... And the houses that you saw... See on the McLeod Plantation, each one of those plantation had houses built for African Americans following slavery.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Eugene Frazier: Mostly in the 1840s, '50s, built houses on them. And they were lined up just like you see in the one at McLeod. And so I'm familiar with those houses, I sleep in those type of house. Each plantation had several houses in a row, in a line, that you see like the McLeod. All of 'em. And, see, that's... That way they didn't have to pay to, uh... They didn't pay no rent... Have any money to pay the rent, because the white farmers only give them enough to survive.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Eugene Frazier: And then later on, that same era, the '40s and the '50s... The '30, '40, and the '50, they had what you call, "Sharecropping." Even when they get on the... Get enough where... After Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing the slave, they either had to get off the plantation. The one who would save enough money. And they're allowed the plant-... the property that they were living on. But, they had to split the property, split the profit, if they say they got, uh... Pick, uh, a field of tomato. And they had 10 basket of- of tomato. Three basket of corn. Well when the man... When they took it to downtown, to the to the market. Vegetable market. If they get, say, three dollars a basket for the... This basket of corn. The master took half, they would split it in half. Oh no they would. And there wasn't anymore... So you're in bondage, but there wasn't slavery, they still had to split it in half.

And they were told, "Either you do that, or find yourself another place to live." Ya know. And those were some trying times. Yeah. And so, I'd rotate from Grimball with my mother or father, to Dill Plantation, and then... More for the men, like my father during that time, were farm workers. And I had to... You see the little card in the... In the book where they have riding in the... In the mule.

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Eugene Frazier: Well, I rode with my father many time, go to the Dill P... The McLeod Plantation. The, uh, Hinson Plantation. And so we know where... I know where every one of those plantation are located, you know.

Reneé Donnell: So, were there any boundaries for... I know you mentioned in the Dill Plantation... So... Uh, that there was like, um... Excuse me, just different neighborhoods. After it was no longer a plantation and people started to move about more, then what were... What were kinda the boundaries for the Grimball areas? So I know that you have Grimball Shores, Barn Hill, Carver, Scotts Hill, Barn Hill, Grimball Farm-

Eugene Frazier: Well you see what happened was... For example, those plantation, they were owned... L- let me give you example.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: Becau... Uh, the- the Dill Plantation. Joseph Taylor Dill, the last owner of the Dill Plantation, born in 1822, died in 1900. That's the last man who owns the Dill Plantation. Now, that Dill Plantation was stretched from the Wappoo Creek Bridge, when you cross that Wappoo Creek. If

you're on the South side, the Stono River is in the South. It was stretched. His plantation was stretched from the Wappoo Bridge, all the way to the Riverland Drive. Excuse me. Stretched the Riverland Drive. And, uh... I have to get some water. Can I get some water?

Reneé Donnell: Yeah. I can get it.

Eugene Frazier: I think I have, uh, some water in a...

Reneé Donnell: Right here?

Eugene Frazier: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: [inaudible 00:19:15].

Eugene Frazier: Mm. Mm. Now, uh, you're talking the boundary.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Eugene Frazier: Excuse me. And that- that boundary... And it's still present today. That boundary... If you're talking about the Dill Plantation, when you come across that Wappoo Bridge on the South side... That Wappoo Bridge... If you come across the bridge... I wanna give you a location. For example, let's take the McLeod Plantation.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Eugene Frazier: As soon as you cross the McLeod Plan... That Wappoo Bridge, on your right... I don't know whether you've been to McLeod Plantation-

Reneé Donnell: Uh-huh.

Eugene Frazier: On the right, the McLeod Plantation goes toward the river.

Reneé Donnell: Yes.

Eugene Frazier: All the way to the other river. On the left, if you drive, if you turn right when you come off of the Wappoo Bridge and turn right, there's a road called Fleming Road.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: You turn right, and on the left side it's a road called Fleming Road. At Fleming Road, in the Wappoo Creek, all the way to that Stono Bridge, that's where the river... The Dill Plantation end. In other words, that whole... From Fleming Road all the way across Riverland Drive-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Eugene Frazier: All the way to the river, everything to the... To... Until you get to the Grimball Road and Riverland Drive, it's close together-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Eugene Frazier: Out there if you drive right out here now and go off of Folly Road and hit Riverland Drive, and Grimball Road and Riverland Drive come together, that's was the Dill Plantation all the way from that water, the bridge, Wappoo Bridge on the left side, the Folly Road, all the way up here.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: Okay? The Grimball Road then kick off from where Grimball Road start, and go all the way to, uh, Barn Hill. That whole area, the Barn Hill area-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Eugene Frazier: Was the Grimball Plantation. And it's still called the Grimball Plantation, all the area still called the Grimball

Plantation. Now, you say, "Well if you call it Grimball Plantation..." What it... What happened... Give you one example about the owners of it. In 18... Following slavery, in 1889... 'Cause that's where my wife family is from, the Piroleau. This gentleman by the name of James Piroleau, if you look in that book he had... He bought 100 acres of land over a period of time during the 1800. 100 acres he bought over a period of time from the Grimball. From the Grimball. And then, that whole area called Barn Hill-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Eugene Frazier: Matter fact, if you go into the record section you'll find out he owns the property and he start... Uh, will it to his, uh... His daughters and son. He had so many daughters, sons, and that's why most of those people living is through marriage. But they're... Still, they're owned by James Piroleau.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: And he, But he came here as a freedman. He wasn't... He wasn't... Uh, is that my s- grandson?

Reneé Donnell: No, it's a lady.

Eugene Frazier: A lady? Hello?

Reneé Donnell: Hi.

Eugene Frazier: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: I'm sorry about that. Continue.

Eugene Frazier: Well, anyway, and he came here as a freedman. And over a period of time, he was able to purchase 100 acres of

property. And all that property, where you see the libraries at, the cemetery, slave cemetery, a place called Barn Hill all that area, he purchased it. And I think he got a deed that's in his name and he left it for all his daughter.

Eugene Frazier: As a matter of fact, my wife's great-grandmother was one of his daughters. Uh, and he left all of that to the family, as a story behind how he, um, got that money to come here and purchase. But anyway, nevertheless, uh. And of course with Sol Legare, if you notice, all those people got named. If you look in the book's picture, I got a book coming out with every plantation owner's names and picture in the book. Picture, it's in that... it's on my computer right now, coming out. It's going to be a short book about the 17 owners, the 17 slave plantations.

Eugene Frazier: Because look, although I have those 17 slave plantations in the book. Nobody knows exactly where they are or the location. That book will tell you exactly where it's at, what you are asking me about now.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: Mm-hmm, It's coming. It's on my computer. Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: And then, of course, it's the same thing if you, uh... you asked me about a Honey Hill. Uh, that property was bought after, uh, the Civil... you know, after the Civil War. Those people were able to purchase property, put their money together and purchase property. Uh, and so all of the...

although the names have changed, private owner, if you ask people, "What plantation were you from?" The guy would say, "Well, I'm on Green Hill Road." Well, if you're not from James Island, you wouldn't know that Green Hill Road was the Lawton Plantation. See, that's where you...

Eugene F: And people are returning home. That's why one of those books, the statement I says that this is one of the few places that you can return people. Up North, you could ask anybody from James Island and they could tell you exactly that, if they have relative, because we keep a... kept a history of the plantation. And several people called me, uh, that from James Island and want to know what's still going on. They still come home and visit.

Reneé Donnell: So you mentioned Green Hill Road. Is... so that's a road and not, like, a.. a name of a place?

Eugene F: Oh, it's a... it's a... but see that's the way... that's the what... It's Green Hill Road.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Eugene F: But it's the Lawton Plantation. If you know what plan... from somebody says, "I'm from the Lawton Plantation." "And where you live?" "I live on Green Hill." That... the road is Green Hill Road, but that was the Lawton Plantation. If you says, "Uh, where you live?" "I'm living on Grimball Road and, uh, Barn Hill," that was the Grimball Plantation.

If somebody says, "Where do you live?" "Turkey Pen, Riverland Drive," that's the Dill... the Dill Plantation.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: Can you share the names of any other little-

Eugene Frazier: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: ... name them?

Eugene Frazier: Well, what happened, there were no social places for African-American... African-Americans during that time. And you says... you ask... Well, how do you, uh... how did you all socialize? First, it started, these lodge halls where we had a lodge hall right here. As a matter of fact, it's right in that... if you take Riverland Drive, and... and Grimball Road split together, that... that hall that you see people have, uh, turned it into a contracting place, but that was a lodge hall from slavery.

Eugene Frazier: It was during the time during the Civil War, and after the Civil War, we had, uh, constable, what we call, you know, people say, "Well, we need somebody to control unruly Blacks." Anyway, that was where the constable, the Black constable or- originated on James Island out of that. And from there... from there, they had president of these lodge halls... president of the lodge hall. And that was... that first lodge hall right there was, uh... slipped my mind

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm

Eugene Frazier: already. That first lodge hall was, uh... I'll skip that for the time being and you have another one on Sol Legare.

Eugene Frazier: We renovated. It's kept through. I don't know whether you are familiar with that one on Sol Legare?

Reneé Donnell: No. The Farmers-

Eugene Frazier: The Farmers Lodge, all of those lodges, we used to meet in there and... and the community had... they had people, your family take care if somebody is sick. And the people get sick in the community, then that farmer... they had one family decimated. They go around, and there was no air conditioning, if somebody is sick in the bed, during that time, they had these, you know, fan them with the cardboard and fan them. They're sick and take care of them.

Eugene Frazier: If, for example, and the person had money to get meat, we had guys, um, men that killed hogs and cure them. When I said cure them, hang them up, put salt on them, and in the community, they had that group of men. Then you had a group of men that, if you looked at these, uh... In my book right now, you will see men beating drums. Every, uh, we call Decoration Day comes up, that's where this guy is doing all that in that book decoration day, men, who beat drums in a city. That lodge is Sol Legare Lodge was called the Sol Legare Lodge Band.

Eugene Frazier: And information in the book already on it, but that's a group of men who, they would march down the city on a Spring Street, Cannon Street, and uh, going on several streets in the city and call themselves, wearing hats and, uh, just like the rest of that book. And, uh, each community

had a lodge hall. One on Fort Johnson Road, Sol Leagre, that's one on Grimball Road, and one on, uh, Riverland Drive for the Cut Bridge people. Every community had one. And that's where they meet on a... During the holidays, uh, they would have... these people would have us come out and, uh, give us, uh, rolls, I forgot the name of it, but roll...

Eugene Frazier: I was a little young boy. We used to... They made ice cream. Yeah, they made ice cream in these lodge halls and beat drums. That's the only thing, calling yourself dancing with the drum, like that stuff from Africa. That's where African-American... that's the only place, only way they had to enjoy themselves, you know, socializing. And they it took... it come up to a fact where, uh, in the... in the '50s, '40s and the '50s, they used to have... bring these roll movie around in the hall and pay five cents or 10 cents to see a little movie in those halls, lodge halls.

Eugene Frazier: And when they got old... they got old enough, most young ladies, when they graduated high school, the young lady leave and they go up, head up North, and men head up North. The one that didn't do that, that's why I say, there was no high school on James Island. When I left, uh, St. James Parochial School, that was the first year, 1949, that South Carolina allowed the Charleston County School Board for African-Americans to ride school buses.

Eugene Frazier: And when I left Burke High School, I shot straight into the army. Most of the guys who didn't go in the army, uh, they left the farm, went up North. That's the Great Migration

going on there. Because that's the only thing that you could do. You couldn't do anything else. All those... the only decent job that they had, that African-American men could do... handle was the Charleston Naval Ship Yard. And most of the guys who had been in the military during World War Two came back and got first preference.

Eugene Frazier: The girls, the young ladies, if they wanted to work, they performed kitchen duties in the white... and they white... they white women, cleaned their house and, they know, there was nothing for African-Americans to do. They built what we call cigar factory, they had a factory down there called the cigar factory. And that's in the book too. Uh, those were the only places that, uh, African-American women could have a good job, and then, until they open up the nursing situation. But they went off. As a matter of fact, some of my friends came from New York, that left when I was in the army, came back.

Eugene Frazier: And one of my friends just died. He stayed all his life and then he came back, built a home. Most of them that did good, they went up North, got jobs and came back and built their home on James Island.

Reneé Donnell: So a question-

Eugene Frazier: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. So around this time, when... before the Korean War, that was 1950s, okay.

Eugene Frazier: '53, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: So you came back after the Korean War?

Eugene Frazier: Yeah. I stayed six years in the army as a drill sergeant, training these guys for the Vietnam War.

Reneé Donnell: All right.

Eugene Frazier: And after the Vietnam War, Well, I got out in 1960. I was turn... Well, in the Vietnam War the boys started getting wiped out in the '65, '66, and I had got out. I finished training. My three guys right on James Island that I trained during the Vietnam War as a police officer, I escort their body.

Eugene Frazier: So I trained for six years. The last two years in my six years, I trained guys for the Vietnam War, got out, and then 1960, I got out. Then I, in '65, I joined the police department.

Reneé Donnell: When?

Eugene Frazier: And the first five years as a uniformed police officer, then next 14 years as a detective, homicide, murder and robbery and stuff like that. And then, seven years following that, as a uniformed lieutenant in charge of the uniformed division, and, uh, after that, then I joined the US Marshall Office, which is eight years, and then I gave it up and started doing private investigator work for Andy Savage and Gedney Howe, two prominent law offices.

Reneé Donnell: See. Okay, so that's very interesting. So when you were a police officer and a homicide detective, were you doing that in Charleston, in Charleston, or were you doing it here on James Island?

Eugene Frazier: No, no, I was a homicide... if somebody get killed or murdered on James Island, Johns Island, Wadmalaw, Mount Pleasant, North Charleston, they send me on it.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: Especially, I was in a team, me and a detective called Perry was specializing in homicide and robbery. And if 2:00 in the morning, even if I'm not working, and a murder happened, and there's no eye witness, as to who done it, they call me out. They called us out. I was in charge of that squad.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Nice.

Eugene Frazier: And, uh, I have, in 19... in the '70s, late-70s and '80s, I went as far as New York, Pennsylvania. I picked up guys who killed somebody and escaped. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: That's nice.

Eugene Frazier: Oh, and I had even, although I was a Charleston County Police in Charleston Sheriff Office, I even solved cases for the city. Because they called me in to help them out.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: I was specialized in that.

Reneé Donnell: So... okay, so you were working all over-

Eugene Frazier: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: ... the Charleston area. Okay, so when you... okay, so the best of the '50s and '60s, about '60s. So-

Eugene Frazier: No. In the '60s, yes. '60s, '70s, '80s.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: So you mentioned when you were growing up in the '30s and '40s-

Eugene Frazier: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Folly Road was the only paved street. Can you explain how you... you went from this rural area you speak of to how did we get to this now? What decade did all of these houses and neighborhoods and roads? Like, around when did these places start to form?

Eugene Frazier: Okay, uh, the transition took a while over a period of time. But when I came back out of the military, I told you I stayed there six years. When I came back in... in, uh... come from overseas and we came back on this island. It... it... that really, the change that you see actually really started, uh, taking shape in the late '50s, in the late '50s. Uh, people were moving in from different states. And there were these big builders purchasing property. For example, probably this place, like I said, I remember this vividly. Remember, uh, the way this... this area that I live in right now-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Eugene Frazier: ... the uh, as a battery used to run through a cross here. So a war battery, and uh, I moved... I had this house built here, uh... I moved in 1968. 1968, uh, move in this house in 1968. So over a period of time, the builders, people who had the money. The money people start moving in. Not necessarily here from South Carolina or Charleston, but from different places that moved into the community.

Eugene Frazier: And as... as time goes on, and they start building, naturally, the state acquired money from these organizations and they start building these roads. The departments started building roads and bridges. But they started... it's really started, uh, during the late-50s, '60s, '50s and '60s when, uh, James Island really become, uh, not a rural... not a rural area, but suburban area-like.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Um, okay. So I consider you, actually, to be one of the main individuals for James Island because your name comes up a lot when I'm doing research.

Eugene Frazier: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: Um, I consider you, Mr. Cubby Wilder, um, who were some other important individuals on James Island that you can remember from the different decades?

Eugene Frazier: Well, it's... it's several men and even women. So for example, uh, he's in... he's in one of those book, Mr. uh.... he belonged to my church and all of this. His name is

Richardson. William Richardson was an educator, school principal, uh, assistant principal out in Gresham Meggett.

Reneé Donnell: Yes.

Eugene Frazier: Gresham Meggett

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm

Eugene Frazier: His brother, Cornelius was a principal, was a leading man and knowledgeable about James Island. He was a principal out in McClellanville, that school down there in McClellanville. I forget the name of it. And on, also, Edisto Island. That's his brother, Cornelius. And you have, there's some men... all of these men, like, James Island's Harry Urie, for example. He built, like, there was no place to go.

Eugene Frazier: In the 1950s, I hadn't covered this with you yet, but in the 1950s, the place to go to socialize and Harry Urie built a club called Little Rock Golf Club for Richard Smalls on Grimball Road.

Reneé Donnell: I think I read about it.

Eugene Frazier: Yeah, you should.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: Yeah, Harry Urie, he was an influential man. Uh, as a matter of fact, he's... somebody that's called me and asked me about me. Or... and, uh, Jack White used to have Porgy and Bess Club on Riverland Drive. Even as a matter of fact, Joe

Fraser the Champion and, uh, those stars used to come down there. I used to guard them out there on, uh... on Riverland Drive, where Porgy and Bess Club used to be. That's when things picked up, you know.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: Yeah, in the '70s, the '80s, Marvin Gaye and those fellows used to come down there. Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: Solomon Burke, those people, yeah. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: Uh.

Reneé Donnell: I know that churches and... So now we're getting into different clubs and things. So now we have, like, golf courses-

Eugene Frazier: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: ... and this Porgy and Bess Club. Were there any important sports fields? Or, like, where I'm from, uh, we had our little

league team for the Negro league for baseball. So baseball was really big. Did you all have any-

Eugene Frazier: Yeah, we right over... well, we had Westchester Sub-division and that was sub-division over here. It's a baseball. Mr. Thomas Johnson, president of the John Thomas Johnson,

Community Center over here they had a young man had a base... uh, football team, uh. I don't remember... recall the name right now. He was, uh... We had it.

Eugene Frazier: And then we have a baseball game in a baseball club over there in, What's the name? over in Ferguson Village, over in Ferguson Village off of Riverland Drive, he had a big, a known baseball game, a guy named, um, uh, J.C. Delestin. And at one of them he had a one over there, Honey Hill... you talk about Honey Hill right there, it's a baseball game there, baseball club there with the name Washington. Uh, he was the manager of that, if you wanted to join. So he had... uh... did pretty good with those games, in the community.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And... so are these... is this Westchester... so this is a sub-division. Is there community a center and this baseball club, are they still active today?

Eugene Frazier: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: And last thing, I was reading in a different book... I've been doing a lot of reading.

Eugene Frazier: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: And, um, in a different book, they were talking about... and this might be before your time.

Eugene Frazier: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: But I'm going to ask anyway. So they were talking about, the root, uh, or the hag, and those things.

Eugene Frazier: (Laughs).

Reneé Donnell: So I guess my question is were there specific places you went to access these doctors, we'll say.

Eugene Frazier: Let me say to you this.

Reneé Donnell: uh-huh.

Eugene Frazier: Probably in every area, especially, like, James Island, John's Island, those places, you'll have people talk about hag and put a root on you-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Eugene Frazier: ... and hag. And that was a known thing back down there in the '30s and the '40s, and, uh, it branched out after the '50s, really, but in the '30s and '40s, you couldn't go into any African-American community and think that they didn't believe that... a group of people doesn't believe in Root, Hag, and, uh, I knew about that because I know people that have driven from here, Charleston, to go see a doctor. They call him Dr. Buzzard up in Beaufort.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: In Beaufort, and uh, if somebody gets sick, there were times when people got sick and they think that somebody put a

root on them, put a spell on them. And they... they, you know (laughs)... and they... really people were serious about that and they drove all the way to Beaufort just for this famous doctor. This... and there you'll find this on the internet. That guy, Dr. Buzzard lived in Beaufort, and, uh, people used to go and pay him to take the hex off them so to speak.

Eugene Frazier: Uh, people used to go in the graveyard and get graveyard dirt and throw it in front of people's houses. They believe in that. They would-

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Eugene Frazier: ... in those times, in the '30s and '40s, yeah. They would believe in that.

Reneé Donnell: What do you think changed? Why did people start to move away from this belief system?

Eugene Frazier: Education and knowledge, education and knowledge.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: They run to tell. Somebody says, "If you believe in that, you prove to me that's... that's what it is." And as a result, people, you know, get the knowledge and education, go to books and understand more from the doctors that what people thought maybe was a spell maybe was having a nervous breakdown or something.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Eugene Frazier: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Um, How are we doing for time?

Anna Wiman: [inaudible 00:24:56] six.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. I will ask you probably... maybe one more question.

Eugene Frazier: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: If you don't mind? You're very interesting to talk to. But I know you're a busy man. So are there any traditions, other than maybe the lodges... So I know that those are still up and running. Are there any traditions or any, like, annual events or things that you used to attend or participate in when you were growing up, or even from, like, the '50s and stuff, are there still events or places that are still visited on an annual basis? Or regularly to this day?

Eugene Frazier: Well, you... if you call this an event, uh, I got a book over there called, uh, Sons of Elijah Lodge #457 on Folly Road, but it was... we organized that lodge. That's a mason.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: And we organized that lodge, organized it, and we still have meetings and everything else there. It's a community thing. Uh, but, uh, I know what you're asking. But really, other than the lodge and the event that we have in reference to... it don't necessarily mean that it's in this area, but we sometimes, every year we go to Columbia South Carolina, uh, and all of the... I think it's 28 lodges in a different community. We all meet up in Columbia, as a mason, uh, because I used to be the president of the Sons

of Elijah in 2008 and 2009. But, uh, I understand where you're coming from, but, uh, not too many of those things that still exist today.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: You know? That's an organization, that, uh, masonic lodge.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Eugene Frazier: But any... any of those things that we used to, and you used to do, and, uh, but they're no longer... Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. One more question. So I know around the time when you were growing up, James Island was rural-

Eugene Frazier: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: ... and it was mostly Black here. Yeah?

Eugene Frazier: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: It is not anymore. How would you be able to explain when the demographic change happened? As well, is that also from the 19, uh, '50s and '60s, when the developers started coming in?

Eugene Frazier: Yeah. Because, uh, what happened, I could tell you right now, in the '20s, the '30s, and the '40s, uh, the... the most people that been on this... on James Island, white people, were those farmers and the white farmers who owned the property, and the overseer on those plantations because, uh... And they have family and immediate family and relatives, but it's not too many, uh, white people on... on James Island.

Eugene Frazier: I could remember when, if you started, uh, from Folly Beach on the... on the road.. on Folly Beach Road, and go all the way down there to where you see McLeod.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Eugene Frazier: I could remember when even 20 houses went on this road and mostly white people.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Eugene Frazier: But like I said, I can remember when there ain't 20 houses. And they, like I say, there were on the plantation is the farmers or either relative of farmers, very few. I knew most of the whites on the... on the Grimball plantation because the only people been there was the... on Grimball Point was the Grimballs.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: So yeah. Uh, it-

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Eugene Frazier: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: Thank you so much for your time.

Eugene Frazier: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: Thank you for fitting us into your schedule.

Eugene Frazier: Yeah. Well, I hope you, uh, get, you know, this is favorable for you. I hope with-

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Eugene Frazier: I hope I helped you.

Reneé Donnell: Yeah! I think you did. I think you helped with the timeline after the 1940s.

Eugene Frazier: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: So that, kind of-

Eugene Frazier: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: That actually helps to make a fuller picture of James Island.

Eugene Frazier: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Eugene Frazier: Okay.



ERNEST PARKS

Anna Wiman: So, I'm over here, and I'm rolling here. So

Reneé Donnell: All right, Mr. Parks can you please spell your first and last name for us?

Ernest Parks: My name is Ernest, first name is Ernest, E-R-N-E-S-T. Last name is Parks, P-A-R-K-S.

Reneé Donnell: Thank you. And are you or is your family from James or Johns Island?

Ernest Parks: My family's from James Island, South Carolina. Actually, Sol Legare Island, South Carolina, to be more specific.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And how long has your family been on Sol Legare?

Ernest Parks: Uh, since the end of the Civil War, which is 1865.

Reneé Donnell: And, okay, so if they got here at the end of the Civil War, are you a part of the Harrison Wilder-

Ernest Parks: Estates, yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Okay.

Ernest Parks: Harrison Wilder who fought, uh, in the 104th USCT out of Beaufort, South Carolina was my great-grandfather.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Very cool. And all right, so get to you. What, what was it like growing up here on Sol Legare?

Ernest Parks: It was a very protective because we were kind of not a part of the outside world. Little did we, we know, that we were segregated. Um, once you turned down on Sol Legare Road off of Old Folly Road, you...entered a community, where you basically had everything you needed. Years ago, it was all Black, it was everything we needed, because we had stores, we had, uh, entertainment centers, we had churches, we had schools. And the great part, some of the first schools, uh, here in the Charleston area was here on Sol Legare.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. So I know that Sol Legare was also a plantation.

Ernest Parks: Yes, it was. Uh, it was the, it was plantation of Solomon Legare. And Solomon Legare, um, his, his family, his property is still here, but it's on the other side of the Stono River off of Johns Island right now. So if you go down to the end of Sol Legare-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Ernest Parks: ... you would look over the other side of, of the Stono River, and that would be the Legare Farms.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: Owed by Solomon Legare-

Reneé Donnell: So-

Ernest Parks: ... and his descendants.

Reneé Donnell: ... if it was a plantation at one point in time, and then emancipation happened, and by the time you were growing up, had the whites all left Sol Legare or were they still, the few of them that were... were they still here? Or-

Ernest Parks: No, there were no whites in Sol Legare.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: Uh, a- a- and Sol Legare was sold to the African Americans, and, um, to a great degree, nobody wanted to live down here in Sol Legare because it was full of mosquitoes, there was a swamp, there was... But so, what we did as African Americans is we made it out of a business. We had, the sea became our farm. We would farm the sea, and we would farm the land, and then we would take those good collectively, ferry it down to Charleston, South Carolina, on the main the peninsula, ferry over to Charleston, go to the market area, and sell those goods. Some of the guys were really businessmen in and of themselves. So when we would ask them, "Well who did you work for?" "We don't work for nobody. We work for ourselves."

And they would take, literally, the nickles and all the dimes and all those pennies, and they built their own little homes by their own hands. So when we were restoring this lodge, this Seashore Farmers Lodge here that we're in now, when we were restoring it, I have to question to the older gentlemen, the oldest gentleman there at that particular time was about 95, and I asked him and he says he was a little boy when they were building this lodge. So

I said, I asked him a question, "So what did you guys do to, build a lodge after work?"

He gave me this weird look, like, "Work? We, we don't work for nobody else. No. Once we did all the harvesting in the sea and the land for that day, then we can at any time come and work on the old lodge," because they built it with their own hands because they were craftsmen as well. And then everybody else, if you were a craftsman, if you did electrical work, if you did plumbing work, if you did woodwork, any kind of work you did, penning, they would be the ones that built it. So they built it by their own hands. And then when it became a lodge, we actually got into the lodge system, uh, in 1912.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: I think officially, September 12th, 1912, officially into the lodge system. Be reminded, though, we were there prior to the 1912 date, it just took us that long to get officially noticed as a lodge. I think we were the mother of all the lodges that were birthed here on James Island, South Carolina.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, okay, so you said... So for your parents, they didn't work for anyone, they just-

Ernest Parks: My grandparents.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: My grandparents didn't work for anyone. My grandfather did. He was a boat maker and he was a fisherman and he was a, and he was a, uh... he would catch, uh, fur and make and sell it.

Reneé Donnell: Hmm. There's mink here?

Ernest Parks: Yeah, mink fur. Uh, yeah. He'd sell it. And, um, and so he didn't, no, he didn't work for anybody else. Now, the next generation was my mother because she's the Wilder. My dad is from Georgia, but my mother's a Wilder. And, uh, and, and they bought the land I have. But bear in mind that back in the day, post-Civil War, uh, everybody bartered. Nobody had no money, particularly us African Americans, we didn't have any money. So we bartered, well, I'll plow your field if you give me some fish. You know, so we bartered with one another.

But what happened, upon us, um, joining the war and becoming a fighting man for America and becoming a free man, we became warriors and they gave us money. So now we got the money, now we got money, so the first thing we, the African Americans did after the Civil War was to buy land, because land was freedom to us. And then we had the, what you call skilled hands, because prior to, we were slaves and we did the farm and we did the, we did the building and we did the brick masonry work and we did all the works. So, so our hands were the skilled hands so we knew how to do everything ourselves on our time and our own skills.

And because my grandfather who were the, uh, didn't work for, um, the white people, didn't work for anybody. They'd run their own businesses. And, you know, to a great degree, we missed out because they were, even if they were, uh, as we considered them not educated, they were far more smarter than we were because they were

their own businessmen. And now this job for the next generation was to go out, become educated, get a job, *a good job* with benefits, take care of your family.

But we add to that caveat, once you get a job and once you become sure, make sure you keep this land, this property that we've gotten, because we put all our properties into heirs estates. That mean everybody and the family has a piece of that pie. Okay, you can't just sell it unless everybody signed off on it. But they put that in there, and they always drilled, they drilled in all, all our lives, drilled in our heads, keep this property, keep this property, keep this property.

And similar to where it's located, we were out on the Atlantic Ocean. And when the breeze coming in the house, it's beautiful now and we have really seen people who've coming in now and they say, "Oh my God, look at what we got. Look at what you got here. I want a piece of this action." And we've seen in the last 10 years, the gentrification of Sol Legare, South Carolina. But everybody sees it, this beautiful spot to live.

Reneé Donnell: So, what can you tell me about what makes Sol Legare unique from other areas on even James Island?

Ernest Parks: Okay, well, let's look at, the larger picture.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: Uh, little did I know, 'cause I was never taught this in American history through all my high school, college, postgraduate you know education, I never learned this, but when you look at Sol Legare, when America decided that

the African American getting in a fight, for being fighting man, and we had to fight the fight, when they decided to let us become fighting man for America, well, we all know that the Civil War started in Charleston, South Carolina. But let's correct that a little bit. The Civil War started on James Island, South Carolina, when the Confederates fired from Fort Johnson on to Fort Sumter, thus starting the Civil War.

So how more appropriate is it when the African American finally get the first chance to fight for America, to fight here in Charleston, South Carolina? To be more specific, to fight here on Sol Legare. That's the Battle of Sol Legare Island, July 16th of 1863. There were African American troops of the 54th came down, and we thought we were allowed to fight up until June, we thought we were allowed to fight. But what happened? They burned down Georgia.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Ernest Parks: And when they burned down Georgia, then they said, "Oh, your men wanna fight, huh? Okay, well, let's... we gonna send y'all on down here to Charleston." They got us down here in Charleston, when we first, we saw our first skirmish here on Sol Legare Island. Now, to the, to the fighting soldier who was hard and had some big battles, that a skirmish was just a skirmish. Uh, but for me as an African American man who had never fought and then finally getting a chance to fight for America, that was a big deal. It was more than a skirmish.

So this is the fact that the first battle that the Massachusetts 54th fought was here on Sol Legare Island, that's historic in and of itself to the Americas at large. Okay? Now, two days

later, we ferry over to Morris Island and fought at, Battery Wagner. And if you ever look at the movie Glory, you'll see that was the battle where basically, we got slaughtered. Full frontal assault. Guys got the guns pointed down on us, shooting down on us, bombs coming off of everywhere, basically it was a slaughter. But it was a slaughter that we had to endure because we, at that time, were looking at the future. And we knew we had to do that for our future.

That's why I look at Sol Legare as a unique place. Edge of America, first of the Civil War, African men coming-- and I was blown away by just the fact that that happened. I was living in Atlanta, Georgia at the time and I was looking at the movie Glory, and it said James Island, South Carolina, July 16th of 1863. I was looking at this, James Island, South Carolina, wait a minute, that's where I'm from. And I studied it, and I got addicted to studying, and Robert Gould Sh- Robert Shaw, Robert Gould Shaw, who was the colonel of the 54th, because I'm a reenactor, Robert Gould Shaw, he has it in his writings, the Battle of Sol Legare Island, and his writings are at the Library at Harvard University.

So that confirms that this place is history to America. Little known black history fact, but all the same, um, important. You know, sometimes it's not, the loudest person that you hear. Sometimes you got to keep an eye on the quiet person because he's quiet for a reason. He's is adept. And Sol Legare is kind of a quiet fighter. Um, but when you come to it, we will be there fighting with you and standing with you. Yes, ma'am.

Reneé Donnell: That's a very unique perspective. I like that.

Ernest Parks: Well, thank you.

Reneé Donnell: Yes, that's, that's good. Um, okay. And so would you say that Sol Legare was a little bit more isolated than the rest of James Island?

Ernest Parks: Yeah, we were isolated and we well known, because we were well known because like I- like I mentioned earlier, once you turned down here on Sol Legare Road, you know you have to go up, to schools, churches, uh, Mosquito Beach was the entertainment center because Folly Beach is two minutes away by car, five minutes, 10 minutes away by walking. But we weren't allowed there because of segregation laws, we weren't allowed to go to Folly Beach. So we, we... Mosquito Beach became our entertainment center. They had clubs all the... They call them dirty low-down bars, they call them, uh, hooch spots, they call them, you know, uh, (laughs) the low-down bar, you know? They got, you know, holes in the walls, they call it all that.

But it was all that, and it got so well known, particularly in the '50s and the '60s, it got so well known that people from all around the Southeast started to ha- having bus excursions to come down to Mosquito Beach. And then, as we started going out in the world, uh, uh, military, college, we would spread the word too that, "Oh, man, you got to check out Mosquito Beach, man. It's a happening spot." And the moonshine, we make it... we make our own moonshine, we catch all the fish, we fry our own fish.

So, you know, come down there and, you know, you come down there and you all preppy, you come there, "I'm from New York City." No, let's back this up here. Where

are you really from? Let's check into the history books here, because eventually, they said that 80 to 90% of the African Americans that came into America came through the ports of Charleston, South Carolina. So when I went away to college, you know, I went to college in Nashville, Tennessee, and I and I would ask the guys that, you know, I mean, we've... Oh, I'm from Chicago, oh, I'm from LA, oh, I'm from New York. Oh, you from Charleston, South Carolina, well, ain't nothing down in Charleston.

I said, "Hold on, wait a minute now. Where are you from? Let's check our, let's check on your history, you see where you are really from." And if we get back into the roots of where you really from, I think you will find out that Charleston is your home as well. (laughs) And they were always ragging about it, but it was a true rag, you know what I'm saying? (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: So where did you go to school?

Ernest Parks: Well, I was educated here. Uh, I started school in 1961 at, Gresham Meggett, Elementary School. Well, the elementary school was both the elementary, the middle and the high school, because we were segregated.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Ernest Parks: So it was all. And then we... they built another elementary school, uh, Baxter-Patrick Elementary, and I went to Baxter-Patrick Elementary from the second grade to the seventh grade, still integrated [segregated?]. And then I went back to William Gresham Meggett, uh, because it was eight through 12 there, high school was eight through 12 there. I only went there one year from '67 to '68.

Well, in '68, integration came into play and then we had to integrate the schools. So two weeks prior to going to school in 1968, we get a card in the mailbox saying, "You will now be attending James Island High School." And that was the white high school on James Island.

So when the truth was known that [?] we had to change, and the white guys didn't go from their high school to ours, we went from our high school to theirs, and it was like, wowee. Now, the first day we go in there, we literally kind of first day of school, we kind of Blacks on the side, watching them. We had to, we had to check each other out. We had to look at each other and figure out how we gonna do the thing, how we gonna intermingle, how we gonna mix, how we gonna gel.

So that's James Island High School. I graduated 1973, then I left James Island High School and went to Tennessee State University in Nashville, Tennessee. Okay? I graduated from Tennessee State University, upon graduating Tennessee State- State University, I went to, the National Center for Paralegal Training. Okay? And then I did my postgraduate work in theater now, and that's how I got into theater and I got into film and I did... I got into, you know, the arts. Yeah. But I was all of a sudden a historian. I always wanted to be able to tell my history. I always wanted. I don't know why I didn't major in history 'cause I was coming with a public affairs major in TSU.

Uh, but, uh, life goes on. I married, had children, and, um, lived in Atlanta where I became a manager for the bus corporation for about 20 years. Then I had an opportunity

to come back home to Charleston, South Carolina, so I took a job as an investigator with the South Carolina Department of Transportation, to which I, retired a year ago. So now I'm finally free to do my thing, be it in the arts, be it in history, be it in curator, be it whatever.

When we got the opportunity to renovate this building, well, I can show you a photo where she was dilapidated to the point of almost falling in. And I came here and I was sitting out here in the front yard, and I wondered to myself, "Lord, have mercy, what are we going to do in order to save this building?" Because... And I came to find out later on, because they had the burials here. And people were being come here and would be... lie in state here before we buried them in the ground.

And be reminded, a white burial was different from a Black burial, because see, the guys that would go away to New York, Chicago, e- wherever they at, the bodies had to stay in the ground for a week or two till they figure out how they gonna get from where they're at to get here. But then funeral homes will come on, prepare the bodies, then the bodies would lie and stayed here at the Seashore Farmers Lodge Museum which is the Seashore Farmers Lodge, because they would the bodies would lie and stay there.

And a part of the tradition was for the families to stay with the bodies, all through the course of the time that the body is there, you know? They would go home in the evening, but, basically, when the, when the lodge opened up and the body was laying in state, somebody from the family was here, then people would come in and view the bodies and,

you know, pay respect to the bodies like that, uh, here at the Seashore Farmers. It's a very interesting, uh, part of, uh, of our tradition here on Sol Legare, very much so.

Reneé Donnell: Two things I wanna ask you about, you mentioned the... like, this was kind of a funeral home in a roundabout way?

Ernest Parks: Well, it was not the funeral home, but it was the body would lie in state at.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: Now, Fielding who is a old, funeral home here in Charleston, South Carolina, Fielding f- the Fielding Funeral, uh, did come out here and I got to give them all the credit in the world because everybody basically when they died, got... went through Fielding to get properly prepared to be died... buried. Then Fielding would come out here and bring the body down here and send it up to lie in state. And we have a tradition here, that the youngest child of every family, um, would be passed over the body. Lie in state, we'd pass it over and that's supposed to give that child wisdom and not be afraid of death.

And, you know, and I come to find out later on that I was that child in 1955 that was passed over my grandfather's body who lied in state here at Seashore Farmers Lodge, and I always wondered, why is this building keep calling me? I the question. Well, low and behold, when we got an opportunity to redo her, I was drooling at the bits 'cause I wanted to get in there and do what I can do, whatever I can do. Every artifact as it's in this building come from the families here on Sol- It's a unique museum because everything in here come from Sol Legare.

The people, we go... we went in their barn, we go in their yard, bricks in the yard. And one guy found a 1863 Confederate sword literally, he literally picked up off the ground. He would be the kind of person that would go to-

Reneé Donnell: Is that it?

Ernest Parks: No.

Reneé Donnell: Oh, okay. (laughs)

Ernest Parks: No. It's the other one we got downstairs. In matter fact, they curating it right now.

Reneé Donnell: Oh.

Ernest Parks: He literally, he would go around looking for, um, metal to sell. So one day, at the, at the, at the base of a tree, he picked up this metal piece that was sticking out of the ground. He picked it up, and it, and it just kept coming, and it kept coming, and it kept coming. When he got through, and it was a sword so we went and had it appraised. Come to find out it was an 1863 Confederate sword that further confirms that Sol Legare was the battle, battle place of America, the 54th. So those kind of things that I- we put out, uh, to America.

And, and, and at one point when we, uh, renovated the building, oh, that's the guy, okay, we need some artifact from y'all, come on over and give us some of your artifact. Well, it got to be so overwhelming, so I had to tell the people, "Hey, no, we, we don't need no more. We- let's stop." We- I can't... (laughs) We didn't have any room, you know? So it got like that. Yes, ma'am.

Reneé Donnell: And-

Ernest Parks: What an honor

Reneé Donnell: I think that's really cool. Um, where, where are the cemeteries on Sol Legare?

Ernest Parks: Oh, we have the Stempoint Graveyard which is at the top of Sol Legare.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: Now, if you go to the top of Sol Legare here, then you get to Folly, Road, you, you keep straight across Folly Road, and it's the cemetery about less than a quarter mile on the right side. All our ancestors are buried there. Or on Grimball Road at Evergreen, um, um, Graveyard. And we have another one, um, on Grimball Road as well. So we have about three burial grounds here.

Reneé Donnell: And what was the name of the one at the top of Sol Legare?

Ernest Parks: Stempoint.

Reneé Donnell: Stempoint?

Ernest Parks: S-T-E-M-P-O-I-N-T. Stempoint Graveyard. And that's where most Sol Legaretians are at.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Um, are people still being buried there today?

Ernest Parks: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. And it amazed me because people... it's right there on the water, and sometimes I get to worrying about because it's so close to the water, the water would

come in and rise in and then wash the bodies up. But it hasn't happened as of yet. And Sol Legare is a unique place in and of itself because we are kind of, we are kind of, the Barrier Islands that are, that are along Sol Legare with Folly Beach and some of the other, Barrier Island, Taylor Island, it kind of buffers us from the, from the tidal push. So a lot of times when people get flooded out, just would the Sol Legare flood? Uh, no. Sol- Sol Legare didn't, didn't flood out.

Now, Hugo hit us hard, but Hu- Hugo was not, not so much a sea push as it was wind and storm and stuff like that. But, uh, we, basically we're pretty protected over here. I don't know whether our forefathers were knowing that, or whether it was God that kind of protects us. Don't know, but I'm not arguing. I'll take what I can get. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Um, so you mentioned earlier in here that the... that Sol Legare was really isolated and it was mainly just Black people living here. And then, what was it like when you saw your first, I guess, white person?

Ernest Parks: Uh, well, you know, I mean, well, I mean, we saw white people on the island. As far as living was concerned, nobody would, no- no- no white person would come down here to live. They didn't wanna live down here because it was Black.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Ernest Parks: And because simply because we're in the state of South Carolina and South Carolina has these, these policies against intermingling, you know, I was fine with it. Now, we would see white people going through and come back, in and out, and all Sol Legare is, is Black, you know? So, but to answer

your question more specifically, uh, it's a good thing, it's a good thing that it... people are seeing the beauty of Sol Legare and what it-- and they're seeing now what we have for centuries. And they're loving it, they love the history of it, they love the history of Sol Legare, they love the s- the location that it is, and it's a beautiful thing.

And it's not only white, 'cause we got, uh, uh, a mixture of everybody kind of popping in on Sol Legare Island, buying properties up and, and, and, and living here and building here. And they're really building some beautiful palatial homes here on Sol Legare, uh, which begs-- to pull us in another direction, because you got a house that you built by your, or by your hand for \$4-500 by hand, you and the boys put the house together. Might take you 10 years to build it, but when you put that last nail in, it's yours, you don't owe no mortgage, you d- you don't owe nothing, you pay utilities. Okay.

Fast forward to now, that house compared right next to it now, is a house that's half a million dollar home. So our tax base goes up.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Ernest Parks: And that's where the struggle comes now, but... and we have the problem with that. Because y- my home is here and we're not a historical district, uh, official, we're not a historical district. Now, if we were, Sol Legare can't be, but on, on the flip side of us being a historical district, for the historical home, when you have to rebuild it then you got to go get that same kind of material, you got to go, everything has to be explicit to what you, what your house looks like.

And now it costs more money to build those materials 'cause they don't make some of the materials no more, so now it cost- so it costing you, as the person who builds that home for nothing, in order to get it restored, the next generation or two generations down, or three generations down, they're restoring the home now it costs them a lot of money now. to worry about.

But no, white people, they knew about Sol Legare 'cause a lot of white people used to come in here to buy the goods, they buy the oysters, they buy the crab, they buy the fish, you know? They come down and they go there back with seafood, go there back with seafood. We had Mosquito Beach, we had, we had, we had, uh, the Sol Legare Schoolhouse, we had, we had Bubba Pinckney Store, we had Bubba Richardson Store. We were self-contained. You know, so we didn't even have to go out. So when the white people would come in, then they, then they started learning about it. Then when we integrated, then of course, white kids, uh, became our friends and they came visiting us. So that kind of opened the doors a little bit to see what Sol Legare was kind of like about.

Reneé Donnell: What was the name of the store you said?

Ernest Parks: We had a couple stores. We had, uh, Bubba Pinckney Store. Why everybody around here name was Bubba, I wonder why? Bubba Pinckney Store, we had Bubba Richardson Store, okay? We had, um, we had, uh, Backman's Seafood. We had, uh, Mosquito Beach with all the stores down there, be it, the Pavilion.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Ernest Parks: Um, we had, Maxwell's Store, M-A-X-W-E-L-L Store, Mr. Maxwell's store. Um, and those guys had everything, they had... 'cause back in the day, we used the kerosene oil and they would have kerosene, the truck that would come with the kerosene and it would fill the store- the stores up and everything. And, and, uh, so like I said, we were pretty well contained down here on Sol Legare.

Reneé Donnell: Do you know where the Bubba Pinckney Store and the Bubba Richardson Stores were? So-

Ernest Parks: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: Yeah. Matter of fact, I lived right next door to the Bubba Pinckney Store right now.

Reneé Donnell: Oh, okay. (laughs)

Ernest Parks: Now it's just another house there because that store is gone.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: And, uh, and Bubba Richardson Store, he, uh, went... once he closed it down, he built a home there. Okay? And Mr. Maxwell's, um, um, store was right across the street here. There's a pink house right there, next to the pink house was a trailer that's torn down on the right.

Reneé Donnell: Uh-huh.

Ernest Parks: That was Bubba-- that was Mr. Maxwell's store.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: And so that, so that was Backman's Seafood right there, that building there.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: Yeah, that's, uh, Backman's Seafood right there.

Reneé Donnell: Sorry, I'm trying to...

Ernest Parks: Yeah. And then we used to make moonshine, our own liquor.

Reneé Donnell: Tell us about it.

Ernest Parks: Now, don't get it twisted, that was a big business for us. It was such a big, t- big, big, such a big business to the point where the government used to come and hunt us down and blow the, the, blow the stills up. We used to call them the federal, the fed, the fed's coming, the federal coming. And it was... actually sometimes when they would find the still, they would blow it up. I have some pictures on my phone, all the time with a phone in your hand, but anyway, uh, well, we went way back the field, um, surveying our property, and well I saw three stills that were still blown, like it was sitting there I had known since the '50s and the '60s.

Reneé Donnell: Hmm.

Ernest Parks: Still sitting there. And I took photos of it, but I do, eventually for the museum. I blew the pictures up, put the pictures on the wall and be able to tell a story about what is that? Well, that's the old still, we used to make moonshine. And then we would take those goods 'cause our route here in Charleston, particularly in Sol Legare, was when

we would leave Sol Legare, we would shoot up to New York, Harlem. That's the most, that's when, my brother left here, s- straight to Harlem. And, uh, lead way to Harlem was by our uncle because when he left here in Charleston, he went to Harlem, he had become the superintendent of a building, he became the super in the building.

So that mean when every time, somebody would leave that building, he would call down here to Charleston and said, "Hey man, got an apartment, you all wanna come to New York and need a place to stay?" And that's how most of the guys on Sol Legare got up to New York and Harlem. 12th and Lenox Avenue was just two blocks from the Palace Theatre at 125th, uh, uh, Lenox Avenue. And so that how we got, that's how I got... And then the family would go, and all of that was go to New York, work, find a job, save your money, and then come on back down here to Sol Legare and build your homes.

And that's still kind of the rhythm right now, that's still kind of the rhythm right now. They still kind of do it, and it's not, it's not necessarily New York anymore, Harlem anymore, it's, it's America.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Ernest Parks: Because we well, we are well-rounded, we are out in the world now. But that was kind of the route of how we got from here, via moonshine. And I might add, any other illegal product that we could make on our own and sell, and get some money from it.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And what were some of the festivals or what were some activities that you partook in?

Ernest Parks: Well, down here, particularly, uh, here in Sol Legare, Easter Sunday was a big Sunday because we had, uh, Beauty Chapel, Beauty Chapel was our church here. We called it Beauty Chapel 'cause Ms. Beauty ran it. And be reminded now that the women on Sol Legare are strong women, they really, (laughs) the women of Sol Legare ran the show, you know, because they were the ones that were the teachers, they were the ones that were the, the preachers wives, they were the ones that were taught the school, they're the one that, you know, h- h- set up the churches, you know? They ran the businesses. And so the women v- very, played a very big and strong part here in Sol Legare. We had May Day-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Ernest Parks: ... where we do the pole, make the pole. We would have Easter Sunday where we would come in here and we... everybody get sharp and then come for the times, and we'd go and have our little speeches and our little parts in the play. And the lodge would have, um, here at the lodge, we would have, uh, festivals. We would have, um, we called it a Tea where after church, you would put on your Sunday best and come out here and everybody would make pound cakes and fruits, and just have a s- just a jovial time, the community coming together putting on some of their fine wear, and just intermingling with one another, getting the news, happening, and talking community affairs, and eating. Kind of break and breading, um, so to speak.

Reneé Donnell: And that, you said, was kind of a every Sunday kind of thing?

Ernest Parks: No, it wasn't every Sunday. Uh, it was maybe once a month.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: Once every couple of months. Um, but, uh, now, the meetings at the lodge was, um, on the second Tuesday, second Sunday of every month, excuse me, second Sunday of every month. Until... Uh, and, uh, matter of fact, we're still doing them right now. Once we renovated the lodge and brought it back up to speed, we still held the meetings the second Sunday of every month. Still doing that to this day right here.

Reneé Donnell: Who uses, like... I know he was saying that there was a fraternal order here.

Ernest Parks: Yes. Yes, ma'am. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Is that still who's doing the meetings every-

Ernest Parks: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: Seashore Farmers Lodge 767, Fraternal Order.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: Yes, ma'am. We still do that. 1912, September, when we officially became a charter in September 1912. I know the fact that we could still, uh, give the, not only the children, but give the community at wide, uh, that history and we can actually tell them "Hey, it's still happening. Come on down to check it out," 'cause you can kind of touch history, uh, through that. And this room that we're sitting in right here was basically how the elders had it set up and had

their meetings with the people of Sol Legare. Now be reminded, if you weren't a part of the lodge, officially a member of the lodge, you couldn't come, but now, you could bring the money up there for the dues, they'd let you up here to bring the money to that door over there, but you couldn't come in.

To the point where we renovated and we were telling the people, "Okay come on, let me tell you, we'll show you what we did upstairs," they revered what the elders told them to do such that they would not come up there. They would actually... I had to really do a lot of wooing [?] for people to actually come up here because they were told all their lives, "You can't walk there unless you belong to the lodge." But we eventually drew them in there 'cause we wanted to show them all the work we had done, because all this was torn up, it was ragged, it was falling in.

And, you know, but God works in mysterious ways and I am just so glad that the community came in and the people came in, who came in at that particular moment in time and history, to redo this lodge, man. Because we started, initially we started the project, we were getting figures like 300,000, 400,000. Where am I gonna get a half a million dollars from to do this? But people started coming. Electricians came in, we had a contractor who wanted to sign off on being a historic builder. And I think to date, when we finally opened up and people can come in and we can walk on here again, I think to date, I think we only spent like \$150,000. That's a far cry from the half a million, 300,000, 400,000. That's a far cry.

And that's because, once again, people came together then, and that's the idea of Sol Legare. Togetherness makes it easier on everybody. You know what I'm saying? It really does.

Reneé Donnell: Um, are there any names that don't occur on maps or transportation, um, listings or roads that are... that people here still reference?

Ernest Parks: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: Yeah. We got, uh, Bee Field.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Ernest Parks: Oh, we got, um, Old Sol Legare here, they... Well, they got, you know Old Sol Legare Road, but Sol Legare is kind of a historical name down here. We got, um, Down Cut, Cross Cut, we got Down Lijah, which is part of Sol Legare now, Down Lijah. Sol Legare is separated in two parts, here goes one, but we got Stempoint, that's part there by Stempoint Grave which is on this part of the northern part of Sol Legare going up.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Ernest Parks: F- From here on down, it was called Stempoint. And from Backman's Seafood on down the end of Sol Legare is called Lijah, Down Lijah, L-I-J-A-H. It's like Elijah but take the E off.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: Down Lijah. So every... when somebody come in and, and they would say, "Oh, where you living?" I'd say, I would tell them, "I'm on Sol Legare," but I'd say, "I live Down Lijah." If

you from Sol Legare, you know where I live at because you have an idea of where I'm living at. But if I tell you that and you're not from here, "Where the hell is Down Lijah at?"

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Ernest Parks: What's Stempoint? You know? But yeah, there's a lot of names they still reference today people don't know. Uh, and people, we still at the next generation, two, three, four generations down the road, still reference those names and people who are in that generations don't know what we're talking about. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Awesome. And, um, when you said that, um, to get to Charleston, you had to take the ferry?

Ernest Parks: Yeah, to get from James Island onto Charleston Peninsula.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: Yeah, we had to take the f- we had to take the ferry and Wappoo, Wappoo Cut bridge.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ernest Parks: At the Wappoo Road, we h- had to cross over. Now, at the foot of the Wappoo, uh, Wappoo River is McLeod Plantation.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Ernest Parks: To which a great amount of, uh, a lot of the African Americans here on, on James Island came off that plantation. You had the Dill Bluff Plantation, they had, uh,

McLeod Plantation, and we had the Drake Plantation. We had all the plantations, but most of, a lot of the African Americans particularly come off of, uh, off of, um, Dill Bluff Plantation. And yes, we had to ferry over. So the name of the game was to load up the old mule, load up the old donkey, pack up the, pack up the wagon with all the goods that we had, be it fish, vegetables, whatever, make whatever, 'cause my grandfather made, he made boats-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Ernest Parks: ... to sell. And so they... and they would ferry it over to Charleston Harbor. And then from Charleston, from, um, Wappoo Cut River to the market area downtown, it's, by car now, it's relatively fast, five minutes, seven minutes, eight minutes. But then, you had a horse and buggy then. But it was still a relatively short ride taking probably an hour by horse and buggy. And then we would sell those goods in the market area.

Now, the market area where we were selling all our goods off, it was like a Black thing because, you know, for white people... for Black people, we used to, we used to draw them in to the market, with, "Oh, come and get your greens, got your teas, got your melon. Got your good cantaloupe, got that okra right here, got it right here." And they would be battling each other. That guy from Johns Island would be battling 'cause you got the same kind of products that normally get the people to pay attention to him. You'd be yelling, yodelling so he can come on and buy, buy these products from him.

That was like a no-no for white. That would be kind of like... But they would come and buy the goods. And they'd then kind of like get into the selling thing down at the market area. Now, some people are, are... think that the market area downtown right now are where the slaves were brought in and sold. But slaves basically were brought in there and sold right down there with the new soon to be open International African American Museum is being built at, now.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Ernest Parks: Around the cobble streets down there, the whole area, where we were sold at. We would quarantine over on Sullivan's Island, where if we came from Africa, we had to quarantine over there, they would put the on us, make sure that we clean that we're not bringing any kind of diseases into America. And then they would take us down to the market area where people from Americas, all around Americas, would then come to Charleston and buy the slave in there. That's how we spread out among the, among the country, particularly the Southeast, Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Florida, you know, Kentucky, you know, states like that.

Reneé Donnell: Um, okay. Is there anything else, this is my last question for you, is there-

Ernest Parks: Yes, ma'am.

Reneé Donnell: ... anything else you would like to share that you think I didn't ask the right questions about?

Ernest Parks: Well, I think you did a very good job at asking a lot of the questions I wanted to share, but I just wanted to share that an- u- it's such a touching moment for me and the people here on Sol Legare and Charleston at large, to see all the people from around the world coming to see our gift to America, you know? Like I said, the quiet person is the person you got to keep your eye on, 'cause he's quiet but he's doing the work. I remember my days, they always said, "Man, boy, shut your damn mouth and just do the work."

When they said... When we were doing our work over there, "Oh, I saw Ernest Parks over there." Now, Ernest Parks ain't said a word when he was working. But when you say who did it, "Oh, I seen Ernest Parks doing that work," "Shut your mouth and just get busy and do the work." And the work speak for itself. And I think that Sol Legare for the great degree is a quiet little neighborhood and a cultural neighborhood in the Gullah-Geechee corridor, and it kind of speaks for itself when you actually get into the history of what she's doing.

And this museum kind of speaks to that, independence, business ownership. We were, the lodge was the insurance policy, 'cause we can't, we can't get insurance policy from the white people. So we this was our insurance policy. You paying them dues, if you need taxes for you pay your land? Taxes, okay, well here. You paid your dues, here. You need money for your feed, your seeds? Okay, here. You done paid your dues here it us. So this became the, the center of the neighborhood, the heart of the community, and that's what Sol Legare, to me, represents to America at large. That's how I feel about it. Okay. Thank you, guys.

Reneé Donnell: Thank you.

Ernest Parks: Yeah.

Anna Wiman: Cut.

Reneé Donnell: It was fun-



JOSHUA PARKS

Reneé Donnell: All right. All right. thank you for interviewing with us today. Can you please fill out your name for us?

Joshua Parker: It's Joshua, J-O-S-H-U-A, Parks, P-A-R-K-S.

Reneé Donnell: Awesome. And, are you from here or is your family from here?

Joshua Parker: My family is from here. I want to say, uh, we are fifth or sixth generation, um, Sol Legare, but I was raised in Jacksonville, Florida. So, I'm going to guess ... Somebody's coming up. I guess I'm what you would call a Sol Legare Diasporan. First generation removed Sol Legarian. (Laughs). But, I've been coming here my whole life, so, um, it's not like it's new to me. It's just when I moved here for college, this was my first time living in Charleston or living in the Charleston area. So, I got to see Sol Legare in kind of a different way than I saw it growing up as a kid coming here for summers and visiting family.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, did you come here, like, every summer or was it several times through the year, or just every couple of years?

Joshua Parker: It was ... It was multiple times a year.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Joshua Parker: So, my dad would all ... Because we lived right ... Jacksonville is about three and a half hours away. So, it was ... My dad was always hopping on the road, come here for a weekend, we might come here for a week, you know. So, there was really no regular cadence. It was kind of just whenever he was missing home, we would hop on the road, come here.

Reneé Donnell: And, when you were coming here, I guess, as a child or even as a teenager, what, what was life like here? Has it changed already since when you were growing up?

Joshua Parker: It's changed since I've moved here in 2019. So, when I was coming here as a kid, that would have been the early 2000s. Late '90s, early 2000s, mid 2000s. It was still a very sleepy, slow community. Um, if you go all the way down to the end, there's a boat landing at the Stono River, and that boat landing was, like, very quiet and it was kind of an area that local people knew of. If you knew, you knew type of area. But now, there's cars coming up and down the street all day with boats. That's where they're dropping their boats at from that boat landing because now it's a popular boat landing. They've, like, renovated it. They've done all the ... They have, like, a gazebo out there now. So, they've kind of commercialized it a little bit, um, and that's just since I moved here.

But, growing up and coming here as a kid, you know, there really weren't any white people on Sol Legare. That's a relatively new phenomenon within, I would say, the last 15ish years, 15, 20 years. You know, if you go all the way to the end, there's, like, this demarcation of (laughs) where the Black people live and where the white people live because at the ... Way at the end, they have access to the river and those are where the big mansions are going up. Um, huge four, five, six, seven-bedroom houses. Um, and if you ... You know, on this end of Sol Legare, it's more so mostly Black still, but there are some white families that have moved in. There's a, a small neighborhood within Sol Legare, a gated community within Sol Legare, that was built, I would say, within the last 15ish years, um, and that was very controversial because it's a gated community within this community. Um, yeah. (Laughs).

Reneé Donnell: Um, what do you think is bringing other people here?

Joshua Parker: Well, it's kind of been discovered. For a long time, it was relatively ... I mean, unless you're from the area. Even if you're from the area, you know. Before, I would say, the turn of the ... Let me rewind. Actually, way back in the day, you couldn't even get here unless you had a boat. So, you had ... You had to get here by boat. It was very isolated. You only came here if you had family here. There was really no reason for you to come here. But, as of recent, you know, people are looking for beautiful places to live, and obviously, people want to live by the water. So, um, now you have people who have discovered this waterfront property that is easily accessible, that is mostly Black, and a lot ... To be honest, it's easy to purchase this land, you

know, if you have ... If you have money, of course, because a lot of it is either heirs property, which is a double-edged sword because heirs property is the reason why we were able to keep it so long because it was hard to sell. But now, they have new ways to get around that.

Um, and also, because a lot of the land has been "abandoned." Some of my elders said, you know, people moved away to New York City, moved to Philly, moved to wherever they moved to, and there was really no people to steward the land. It kind of just was up for grabs, you know. Sheriff sales and other way, other means, uh, and ways that people got the land, you know, because of it not being stewarded. So, you have that that's happening now, unfortunately.

Reneé Donnell: Can you explain what heirs properties are?

Joshua Parker: Yeah. So, heirs properties basically, um, when a person owns a property and they die and there is no clear, um, will left and since there's no will, that property is evenly distributed to their descendants. So, if you have 10 acres and you have 10 kids and you die and you didn't have a will, each kid would be ... Have an interest in that property. It would be divided evenly. Every kid would have an acre of interest in that property. And, now, um, since ... That's a very simplified way of putting it. But now, um, since, you know, there have been generations and generations of heirs property, then the people who received the property as the heirs property, they died and their property becomes heirs property. So, the triangle gets bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger, and now you're, like, five

generations in and you've got people living in L.A., living in Chicago, living in New York City, living at wherever who are entitled to the property, uh, legally who may not have any interest. Most of them don't know, even have an idea that they have property.

So, whenever you're in the process of doing what we call a quiet title, which is when you, um, basically try to distribute the property amongst the rightful heir so that each heir can have a title to that property, um, you have to notify every single person who has interest in that property. So, if you have 100 people that have interest in that property scattered across the United States, or the world, then you have to track them down, give them a notice, "Hey, we're trying to do this. You got a year to respond." Um, most of them probably won't respond or they might see dollar signs and they can actually force ... It only takes one person to do what we call a force of sale, um, on heirs property.

Reneé Donnell: Really?

Joshua Parker: Yeah. It's, it's so developers can weasel their way in and buy a family member's interest, yeah, and force a sale and, you know, at least bring it to the courts. And, you know, Black people, we're not ... We don't have the money or the means to really, or experience, like, in the courts to go up against a, a developer (laughs) or a corporation or, um, a Realtor, or a lawyer, or whatever, you know. So, they know those systems, so obviously they have an advantage whenever it get to the point where it's in the court's hands and then, you know. So, that's, that's what's been happening.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Um-

Joshua Parker: That was a lot. I'm sorry.

Reneé Donnell: No.

Joshua Parker: (Laughs).

Reneé Donnell: It was a really good answer because it, it helps to understand kind of the current condition-

Joshua Parker: Uh-huh.

Reneé Donnell: ... of Sol Legare and how it is changing.

Joshua Parker: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: So, even just people moving out.

Anna Wiman: Yeah, perspective is important.

Reneé Donnell: Yeah. Um, okay. So, when you used to come here as a younger person-

Joshua Parker: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: ... or even now, where do people hang out now?

Joshua Parker: Now? People hang out still on Mosquito Beach even though ... I don't know if you all have been there yet, but it's basically a few, what we call ... What would have been juke joints back in the day, lining the road is about four or five of them. They look trapped in time. If you go in there, some of the interior is still, like, circa 1950s the way it looks. It's trapped in time. But, um, they still hang out there. Um, that's where they go to hang out. Yeah. That's the spot. That's really the only spot to hang out here. (Laughs) um, Mosquito Beach on Sol Legare itself. You know, of course you have other areas once you get off of Sol Legare, but if

you're coming here, then you're usually going to Mosquito Beach. And, it doesn't even have to be, like, the st ... Like, the stores or the restaurants don't even have to be open, you know. People just go there because it's a space that people go to-

Reneé Donnell: Post up.

Joshua Parker: ... post up, exactly. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Um, are there any festivals or annual events that take place here now or even when you were coming?

Joshua Parker: When I was coming, I, I wasn't privy to those because I was here at such random times.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Joshua Parker: (Laughs). But, now ... And, I've been here pre-COVID for a bit. Maybe, when did COVID hit? 2020? I moved here in 2019. So, I never really got to experience that rhythm of festivals or, or things of that nature, but I know historically, there was large May Day celebrations that took place here at the lodge, 4th of Julys took place here at the lodge, um, Easter events took place here. Every, everything took place here that was a festive event. You know, it took place here. But, that was before the lodge became less significant and, like Cubby said, you know, during the 50s when Mosquito Beach ... When Mosquito Beach rose, the significance of the lodge kind of diminished because there was a generational gap.

You know, the old, old ... The elders, you know, who were still farmers and fishermen respected and, um, I guess still utilized the lodge, but that new generation, I think Cubby

... That was, what, the third? I think that was the third generation, the third or fourth generation of Sol Legarians, they really ... Agriculture began to be less significant here in the mid 20th century, and that's about the same time Mosquito Beach came about. So, agriculture became less significant, the lodge itself had a lesser purpose because people weren't farming. People wanted to ... You know, they were hustling. They were ... There was easier ways to make money than back breaking labor and for 12 hours or whatever, you know, to farm because it's hard work, and to fish. So ...

Reneé Donnell: Yeah. I think ... Uh, May Day celebrations.

Joshua Parker: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Can you explain what May Day is? Do you-

Joshua Parker: Yeah. So, May Day is basically a holiday and a celebration for workers around the world, and I think the first May Day was in the late 18,... I want to say the late 1800s. I want to say the 1890s. And, essentially, this lodge itself was originally a farmer's union. It was part of the International Liberty Union. International Liberty Justice Union, which was I think, according to my research, this is one of the first internationally chartered farmer's unions probably in this area, and they were chartered in 1906 is when they received a, um, their charter from that union. So, this was a union hall. That was its most, um, fundamental purpose is, um, it was a union hall. So, May Day being a celebration of workers, this hall was important and, and they recognized May Day because we were all workers. We were all farmers and fisherman. So, May Day was a big celebration here.

And, matter of fact, that photo right there, I want to say is ... They're downtown, but I want to say that's, either May Day or, or the 4th of July and that ... And that ... It's like a painting, but it's really a photo, but they, like, photoshopped it or whatever. But that's an actual photo of the 1930s and those people are from the Sol Legare community and we have their drums as artifacts. We have the flute that's being played. They belong to the community and we had a band, so the band would play here. Like, this is a place that people would come whenever ... Before Mosquito Beach was known to have festive activities.

Reneé Donnell: Is there a difference between Decoration Day and May Day?

Joshua Parker: Decoration, Decoration Day?

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Joshua Parker: I don't know. That's a good question. I don't ... I don't even know what Decoration Day is. (Laughs).

Reneé Donnell: That's fine. We've heard about Decoration Day on another-

Joshua Parker: Was it a South Carolina thing?

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Joshua Parker: Yeah. You should have asked Cubby that one (laughs).

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, um, can you explain what the goal of this lodge that we're in is? So, what are you guys doing here?

Joshua Parker: So, right now, the lodge has been ... So, to take it back, the lodge was a farmer's union, but it wasn't just a farmer's union. It was basically whatever it needed to be (laughs) at that time, it was. It was a bank. It was insurance, um,

institution. It served as, uh ... If say, for instance, you knew someone who was sick and Ms. Suzy was sick down the street, um, but Ms. Suzy's kids can't really take care of her because they have to work, so they would come to the lodge, and the lodge would send two women down there to take care ... To ... As a caretaker so that the family could work and function. Um, if it was a per ... If it was a male, they would send two men down there. Um, but, it served as whatever you would call that. I don't ... I wouldn't say a hospital. I wouldn't say a whatever. But, it was ... If you had a person who was sick and they needed care, you would come to the lodge, and they would do that for you.

Um, it was a secret society. So, um, it was a fraternal order. So, you couldn't just, um, like, come up in this space right here. I don't know if you all realize but there's a little hole in that door, a little window, and it's a little slot where you can, like, open it up and that's where people would, like, put their money to pay their dues because you just couldn't come up in here. It was a secret society.

Reneé Donnell: So, this was like a Mason's lodge?

Joshua Parker: Yeah, essentially. Same spirit. They had secret handshakes. They had the whole nine yards. Secret society. So, that's why whenever they were renovating this space, like, originally in I think that was 2009, 2010, some of the elder people who knew the lodge as a lodge, um, they wouldn't come to the ... In the upstairs space because they revered it because traditionally, you couldn't come up here unless you were a member of the lodge. Um, so, but I say all of that to say now, it's been restored. Hurricane Hugo,

basically in 1989, Hurricane Hugo almost flattened the lodge, so it was basically in disrepair for a lot, about 20 years, and, the community came together and they rallied around, you know, the lodge, and people who had skills, carpenters, brick masons, whatever, they would lend their skills. Everybody did what they could in addition to some funding and whatnot.

But, it got it to the point where it's at now which is basically a functioning building. And now, what we're doing currently is we're trying to, like, take it to another level. So, now it's a functioning building. The foundation has been built. We really didn't have an institutional foundation. It was just a building, really, with artifacts in it loosely interpreted. So, now we're trying to really, um, bring it up to the level of a museum and cultural center which takes a lot of interpreting and skill sets that, you know, that are being taught at these workshops that we're going to start having for the community so that they can be docents of their own ... Their own history instead of other people having to come in and do that.

Anna Wiman: [inaudible 00:17:28].

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, um, so when you were coming here before 2019, so at any age, um, what, what did you guys do? You just, like, hung out at your family's house? Did you all still do water activities?

Joshua Parker: It's funny because, like, my grandma stays ... If you ... If there were no trees right there, if you looked straight across, you would be able to see her house. So, she stays right on Folly Road, right before you got on Sol Legare Road. So,

we would spend time between my grandmother's house and all of my other family lives here, uncles, whatnot, so we would really ... It's funny because a lot of the kids that come here as, like, Sol Legare Diaspora kids who didn't grow up on Sol Legare but their family is from here, usually once you get on the island, you're usually stuck on the island. Like, you don't really go downtown much. You don't go anywhere. You just stay between families house. Go to your grandma's house, go to your uncle and auntie's house. You run around in the yard. You play with your other cousins, dirt bikes, um, random kid stuff.

We really didn't go in the water much because that's really, um, (laughs), the old time stuff, like, playing in the marsh and playing in the creek. My parents, you know, parents these days, they're not really going to let their kids play in the marsh or in the creek. A lot of people have drowned around here and that's, like ... There's a long history of people drowning and not even ... Not even just kids, but fishermen, you know, because the marsh, it's not like the ocean. It's, it's mud so (laughs), you at the mercy of the tide and, and you can get bogged down in the mud and, yeah. So, it's dangerous. Not to mention, wild animals, snakes, stuff. (Laughs). So, we really didn't ... We really weren't, you know, in the creek. Like, you see the photos. There are photos in here of kids playing in the creek. Um, there's a photo somewhere. But, yeah, uh, that really doesn't happen like that anymore.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Joshua Parker: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And, sorry, I had something specifically for you.

Joshua Parker: But, I can tell you the history of how our family got here. I know Cubby touched on it a little bit as well, but, um, so Harrison Wilder was, I guess you could say the original Wilder that settled here on, on Sol Legare, and they were enslaved in Sumter, South Carolina.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Joshua Parker: And, um, Harrison Wilder joined the Union Army. Uh, we don't know how. We don't know if the plantation got liberated by the Union forces or if he ran away and crossed Union lines. We don't really know that part. But, we do know that he was in the 104th Regiment out of Beaufort, in Beaufort, South Carolina. So, he made his way from Sumter to Beaufort, South Carolina. And, we know that, you know, he wasn't the only Wilder in that regiment, as well. There were other Wilders, so we're assuming that they all came from the same plantation, the same area, uh, which leads me to believe that the plantation itself was liberated, by the Union forces. But, we know that he went ... He spent time in Beaufort, South Carolina, um, and when he mustered out, in I believe 1866, that's how he got to Charleston.

And, family legend has it that, he had a sibling that was living here on Sol Legare. Again, I don't know if this family member was enslaved here on Sol Legare or ... And they reconnected, or we don't really know. But, they were actually ... The Wilder family was making their way to Florida, and that person who was here, um, legend has it he was blind, so he couldn't really ... He couldn't see and,

you know, back then, if you were blind, you needed ... They weren't, like, making things accessible to blind people or, you know, people with disabilities, so you really had to have, like, a caretaker or a community. And, that person begged them not to go or whatever. So, they ended up settling on Sol Legare.

Reneé Donnell: That's cool.

Joshua Parker: The Wilders, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Do you know the original plot you all had whereabouts?

Joshua Parker: Yeah. Cubby lives on it.

Reneé Donnell: Oh.

Joshua Parker: The person you just interviewed (laughs). He still lives on that plot.

Reneé Donnell: From the Harrison Wilder-

Joshua Parker: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: ... [inaudible 00:21:56]?

Joshua Parker: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Oh, okay.

Joshua Parker: That estate, he lives on it, and, um, Harrison Wilder married a woman named Mapatience Matthews Wilder. Mapatience, M, like Madea. Mapatience.

Reneé Donnell: (Laughs).

Joshua Parker: Um, Mapatience Wilder Matthews. I'm sorry, Mapatience Matthews Wilder, and she was from the West Ashley, but specifically Andrews. Saint Andrews community. And, um,

according to family, again family history, she was Black and Indigenous, and, um, she lived to be about 104-years-old. So, there are people who ... I guess my parent's, my grandparent's generation still remembered Mapatience because she was still alive during their lifetime. So, there was a direct link, like, from my grandparent's generation to the generation that was enslaved because they were being raised by people who (laughs) were enslaved, who were formerly enslaved because she was 104. Because she would have died in ... Yeah, she was 104 when she passed. So, she was like a link between those generations. Um, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Cool. Just us living past 100 momentarily.

Joshua Parker: (Laughs).

Reneé Donnell: Okay. That's awesome. Do you know how many acres this Harrison Wilder got and does ... Yeah.

Joshua Parker: So, it's kind of ... So, there are several Wilder estates. They're all kind of derived from Harrison. So, you have Harrison Wilder, and, um, that's about ... It's about on ... At least on this side, because you also have an island across the water which is called Taylor Island that is also Harrison Wilder estate. But, on the Sol Legare side, I would say it's about maybe 50ish acres.

Reneé Donnell: Is Taylor Island a part of Sol Legare?

Joshua Parker: Essentially. So, Taylor Island, if and when you all go to Mosquito Beach down the street, if you look straight into the marsh, there's an island, and that's Taylor Island, and that island is not populated by people. Well, I take that

back. There are, like, I would assume maybe squatters living over there possibly.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Joshua Parker: Yeah (laughs), because we see boats going in and out and it's not public. It's private property. They may not ... They might not know because they think it's an abandoned island but, um, we actually own ... Our family, the family owns property over there. But, um, so there might be, like, squatters over there. Um, white, white squatters, yes, to name it. Um, and that's about 60ish acres on Taylor Island, I want to say, roughly that is.

Reneé Donnell: Oh, so, it's, like, not small?

Joshua Parker: No. And, this is all collectively family owned, you know, so it's not like one individual owns it. It's just heirs property. It's just collectively owned by the family. And, um, yeah. So, that's a whole nother thing. That island used to be utilized by the older folks like my grandparent's generation and so on because they used to fish and they used that island as kind of like a stopping point. They would go to the creek, then go to Taylor Island. They would take livestock over there, cows, pigs, so that they could free roam. And, whenever they wanted a nice pot of okra soup, they would go kill a pig, hunt a pig (laugh) instead of having ... I mean, they had them here of course, but that's where they would kind of let them free roam over there and other things.

Reneé Donnell: That's interesting.

Joshua Parker: Yeah. So, they utilized it, but right now, it's really not being utilized. But, we're trying to figure that out.

Reneé Donnell: Last question about would the people on James Island consider themselves Gullah Geechee or Gullah people?

Joshua Parker: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Eh.

Joshua Parker: Yeah, it's funny. Um, that term has just become, like, acceptable, because if you ask somebody in my parent's generation or even Cubby's generation, you know, back in the day, that... Those were fighting words because Gullah ... Geechee is something that you would call somebody ... It's even used today as a slur or as just a ... If someone speaks a certain way where you can't understand them, they're Geechee, you know what I'm saying, because of the obviously Gullah Geechee language. That's where it denotes from. But, nowadays, it's been reclaimed as something. So, you see a lot of Gullah Geechee heritage pride. But, my parent's generation, they wouldn't identify as Gullah Geechee.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Joshua Parker: I mean, they do now, but if you asked them in 1980 what are ... No, they wouldn't.

Reneé Donnell: What did they consider themselves then?

Joshua Parker: Black.

Reneé Donnell: Oh.

Joshua Parker: There wasn't ... There really wasn't, like, a ... I mean, they knew ... Whenever they left this area, they knew they were slightly different, had a slightly different experience-

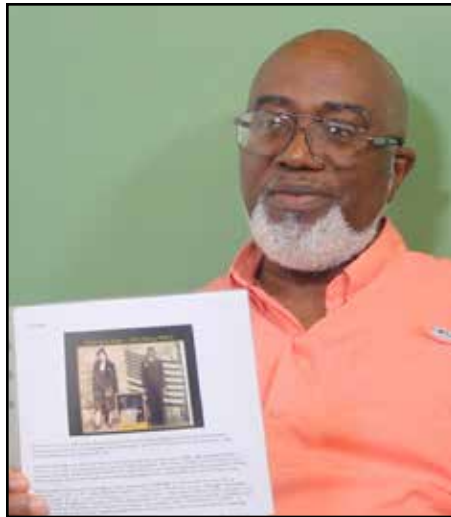
Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Joshua Parker: ... um, because people wouldn't let you not know, the way you spoke, what you ate, your customs. It was very old timey because we were isolated for so long. It was like being from the Caribbean. People would mistake you for being from Jamaica or being from Barbados or whatever whenever they moved off. So, that's where you get, like, kind of derogatory terms of, like, Geechee. You know, you're a Geechee. But now, it's not. Now, it's become more acceptable. It's become kind of a reclaim ... A reclamation that, um, that term, and you see it celebrated now as, as something that people identify with. More so our generation is kind of the ones that really reclaimed that, um, that term. Yeah. But, 1980 or maybe 1990, up until then, you wouldn't. It would be spite, fighting words. (Laughs). Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Um, I think that's good. I think that's good.

Joshua Parker: Okay.

Reneé Donnell: We did-



NED ROPER

Reneé Donnell: All right, good morning.

Ned Roper: Good morning.

Reneé Donnell: Um, as we are beginning, would you please state your name and then spell it for the camera, please?

Ned Roper: Sure. My name is Ned B. Roper Jr. Ned, N-E-D, B as in Bernard, but I go by B, Roper, R-O-P-E-R, Junior.

Reneé Donnell: Awesome. All right, and I'm gonna let you share.

Ned Roper: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: So I know that you said that you were, you have information regarding farm life here on James and Johns Islands, so let's...

Ned Roper: Yeah, the focus, for me, with our study and, and you all having, the need and desire to come and talk to us is beautiful. Thank you for doing that. Again, sometimes it's fearful for many, especially older folks who are concerned

from yesteryear with the ugliness of folks misrepresenting. And today, having worked with your organization previous, I've recognized the power and the strength and validity of what you all have been doing, and strength with W. Gresham Meggett High School and Baxter-Patrick. So for me, this is easy.

Ned Roper: Uh, however, comma, coming, I wanted to speak to the history of Black farmers, entrepreneurs, uh, which my father and mother, grandmother, grandfather, great-grandfather who were farmers. Uh, they were farmers who grew up here on the plantations on James Island. And again, their life stemmed from the Grimball Plantation and the Ellis Plantation on James Island. My father's family came from the Grimball family side, uh, plantation side, and, uh, my mother, her plantation family stemmed from Monk's Corner, with the Ball Plantation complex, and we'll talk a little bit more about that. But when you look at the power and strength and the love of God, they worked hard to do a lot. And with you all coming, this is an opportunity to, one, not so much validate my heart, it kept me strong through 71 years and my children's years. Uh, so my goal is to help others to realize from whence they came, and I hope that it makes a difference in their life. So I don't know if I went overboard, but that's where I'm coming from.

Reneé Donnell: Can I have, what is your mom's side of the family, what is their surname?

Ned Roper: Their what?

Reneé Donnell: Their last name?

Ned Roper: Oh, my mom's last name was Simmons, slash Heyward. And I will use her father's name, was Simmons, but again, her mother's side of the family was Heyward, and those names are key as we talk further. And you'll hear me talk about them as if they are here, because I heard about them throughout my childhood, and I got to meet them. But clearly, she's been strong in our lives with her history from that side of the family, from, again, Monk's Corner area. And of course, my dad was from James Island. So clearly, both were some hardworking people. My dad was farming, my mother had some knowledge, but she just was a hardworking kinda woman. And so she stepped right in with him after World War II, when they got married.

Reneé Donnell: Where is Monk's Corner, if you don't mind? I don't-

Ned Roper: Monk's Corner, uh, it's west, northwest of Charleston, up the Cooper River. It's the headwaters, up in that area. Uh, not far, but again, there's a lotta dirt in between there and there, and a lotta water, but again, a lotta farmland, and it's being built up now beyond... Uh, you know, Goose Creek and up in that area?

Reneé Donnell: Mmm.

Ned Roper: That's where it's at.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Thank you.

Ned Roper: Mm-hmm (affirmative). So for me, recognizing as a young boy, not knowing, one, who I was, per se, but I knew I loved my parents, and because my dad was a hardworking farmer, and again, he never left the island other than

World War II. Uh, he, different than his older brother, and was born in 1914, and his older brother was born in 1910. Uh, believe it or not, my mother was a little older than my dad; she was 1912. However, comma, both of them learned and knew how to work hard. And again, I use that term sometimes lightly with some folks, and they don't understand Jim Crow and how ugly and how painful those times were. Money was hard to get, the people needed to know how to work, and the majority of them, as I've learned and grew, were hardworking people. And now, having grown and understand, I took those tendencies with me, and, and it's helped me immensely on just being hardworking, not worrying about the work. Yeah, you wanna be smart about it, but get it done. And so I believe in enjoying my life, but I believe in getting stuff done, and that's what I was taught by those two individuals.

Ned Roper:

So with him coming back from World War II, his eyes were opened. And I wrote an article representing, him and her for the family reunion, and it talks about him being born, and we started a long time ago with a Roper reunion with my other family members, and we had to archive the history of our family. And I did that for my mom and dad, and this is a photo of them, World War II. And the article and the information covers that. But I'll just give that to you all accordingly. Uh, but that's a part of the capture of who they were at the time. But like I said, he went to World War II, and of course, WPA was a critical piece of him learning, he already knew how to work, but the WPA, Roosevelt, again, many of the folks that I know of that era, they recognize what he did to give people work, to

bring real money home. Because most of the folks were farmers, and if whoever they were working for, uh, at that period in time, after Civil War and that time, folks didn't have much money for anything, so they made ends meet. And for them, they were sharecroppers.

Ned Roper: He and his family, when they were sharecroppers, they got the opportunity to, again, acquire, not so much loans, but their, their effort's outlined in this Black Farmer's Almanac that highlights some of what they did with, again, having jobs for folks to make money. But the WPA was a different kinda breed of cat, I guess, giving folks new opportunities to use their ability to work. Building airports, roads, et cetera, et cetera, and he did that until World War II. And, uh, World War II opened his eyes, and this is his conversation with me: Um, "Working hard is important, but it'd be good if you knew what you really needed to know to build the skills in your mind. If you don't have a way of branching out from within your mind, you're sorta stuck on what someone else has a plan for you to do with your mind." And he learned that he wanted to come back to James Island because he had, his family had property, and he wanted to build his own little enterprise, and what he knew was farming. And of course, my mother, who grew up from, again, Monk's Corner, she knew when she left at 18, after her mom died, the big city was Charleston, and she had family here.

Ned Roper: So they met, he went to World War II... Oh, I'm sorry. I should that-

Reneé Donnell: I'll get it.

Ned Roper: Please. Uh, she knew she wanted something better... And I'm gonna shut that off. Forgive me.

Reneé Donnell: It's okay. It happens.

Ned Roper: Uh, so he knew he wanted something better. And they met, uh, prior to World War II, he went to the war, she stayed, she worked part time at different odd jobs. Uh, she was a midwife, she wanted to be a midwife, and she took midwifery training, and she birthed many children on the island and the city of Charleston. He came back, of course, and she did that a little while, but he established farming as his number one, and that's where he got started with farming on James Island. And she came, of course, with him, here on the island. The key part of that, for me, was watching and understanding as the world has changed, and I sat on the outskirts, learning what I needed to learn, how tough it was, Jim Crow, knowledge of what you could do from being in the Navy, and all he could do would be, was to be a, a cook. And he was stuck with that, but he knew he wanted to do more. And he had to, again, stick with his realities and use his understanding of hard work. So his farm business did fairly well, but again, monies and the broken natured of who could get the money when you needed, had issues with, uh, uh, storms and replenish money. Black farmers did not have that. And if you did get it, it was late, so it was hard for him.

Ned Roper: But what they did was, they came together with her skills with being a people person, she stopped being a midwife and became a farm wife, and they established a roadside stand. And I'm gonna give you photos of that.

Uh, back in those days, and of course, this is a photo of what some of the stands looked like on Folly Road back then. Those are long gone. And when they, uh, build the highway on Folly Road, they had to move these because they were encroaching on some of the properties. Some of these folks didn't have land rights, and so the some of them went away. Unfortunately for my dad, we had property on the island, on the roads, and they build another stand, and these, uh, years later, another photo, so we went from there to there, and that's, again, during my childhood, that was alive and well. And that's my mother, a photo there. And that was taken by, you know, again, some of the people who would, patrons who would come through. And that's always been one of those photos that I remember as a little boy.

Ned Roper: But again, farming was number one, and that's where they would sell some of their wares. He would go to Columbia and other states to bring things that we didn't have here on the island, but for the most part, all of the vegetables that was found in that, that market, we grew, and the property was very bountiful. And what he couldn't or didn't have, there were many small Black farmers, and there were many small Black farmers who would sell their wares to my mom. And again, on Folly Road, we had this one, and then there was another establishment, a white-owned, not nearby, but close in. And again, they were not the competition because sales were good, and so they did well.

Ned Roper: So the big thing that I would say is, besides doing that, they would also go to Charleston Farmers' Market. And if you go there now, you will not see any vegetables; you'll

see folks selling a little bit of everything, because there's a good location off of, I think that's Broad Street or whatever in, down there in Charleston. That was all farming and fish. So that, during my childhood, there was nothing what you see there. The building and the brick was there, but it was vegetables, people selling their wares, um, mmm, and it's fish, whatever else, but that was strictly it. So most Black folks were farmers, whether some today would believe that, but that's what it was; they had the property, they had the ability, and they did that. Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Your parents' stand, did it have a name? Did I miss the name of it?

Ned Roper: Yeah, the name of it is, it was named after my mom. There was Ned, Ned Roper Farming, but it was, it was actually her name, Kate's Open Air Market.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And then, I know you said it was off of Folly Road. Can you give us more specifics?

Ned Roper: Uh, not far from Grimball Road, uh, north and south, I guess, no, east, west, I'm not sure, but I, the distant end of Grimball Road. In fact, right where the library was? Grimball Road?

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm

Ned Roper: That's Grimball Road. So the market was not far from that, off of Folly Road.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Okay. Thank you.

Ned Roper: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. So the focus at that point was, again, survival, and he was very much determined to

build his little enterprise. So again, the critical part was knowing how to do the work. At that point in time, it was fairly, I wouldn't say basic, but again, the improvement of farming was happening, and of course, he had to keep up. And for me, as a young boy, I didn't realize the technology, not today, with computers, but the technologies were changing, and for me, being young enough and quick enough to keep up with whatever I needed to do to assist him at that time. And again, this is the '60s, so I'm in my young teens at that point in time. I was large enough and strong enough to do what needed to be done, but again, the world was changing, we had migrant workers at that time. And of course, on the islands, you had these locations where you could, again, sell in bulk with bulk carriers coming in the area, and they had different locations where they would sell or receive bulk vegetables such as tomatoes, um, beans, and those were bulk processing where they had manufacturers here, and they had everything in place.

Ned Roper: So again, the farmers would come with their wares in large quantities to, again, be shipped and bought. And of course, that prompted, again, more need for other Black individuals to now rally people in an organized fashion to get the people to come to work. That was the time, but as I saw, as a young man growing up and eventually leaving home, the world, desegregation had happened, opportunities became a little more open, so now you had to again acquire another means. So again, we, we had migrants coming from, again, uh, Puerto Rico, we had others coming in who were trying to, again, move

forward. And so we were involved, again, with, I wouldn't say migrant workers, we called them migrant workers, but now that's a different word from what happened back in the day. So we, again, had migrant workers coming in to work in the fields accordingly.

Ned Roper: So I'm not sure if I answered your question, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And so basically what you're saying, in the 1960s you had the migrant workers starting to come from different countries, and I guess you're saying big corporations were starting to bring in bulk items?

Ned Roper: Well, they had, again, on some of the locations where you had, again, like, for example, the Grimball Plantation area-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ned Roper: ... fa-, excuse me, farms, we rented some of their property-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Ned Roper: ... aside with what my dad has. But again, they were renting their property to larger corporations who could bring in different workers, again, to do the same thing with, again, different resources, okay, and different support. Because like I said, as a Black farmer, you had difficulty trying to acquire monies for loss from damages, from storms, and meanwhile, you're waiting, other farmers are getting that money and doing what they need to do and recover. Did I see it? Yes. How do you complain? You can complain all you want, but the clock is the key. The clock keeps going. So, so yeah, we did see some competition from that point, but for us, we had our vegetable stand, Kate's Open Air Market, so we had a way of still trying to recover and move forward. Okay?

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ned Roper: Mm-hmm. So the other thing, if I may, I add to, I wanted to show you, this is the uncle that I was showing you, Uncle Morris.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Ned Roper: He, again, left James Island, uh, he was born in 1910, and, he was born in February of 1910, [inaudible 0:18:12] 1911, and, uh, he went to New York, and he was an entrepreneur from that vantage point. And he-

Reneé Donnell: Mmm. This is Uncle Morris, the one who started his own hair-

Ned Roper: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: ... company, haircare company.

Ned Roper: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: And did he ever move back-

Ned Roper: No.

Reneé Donnell: ... to... Okay.

Ned Roper: He, as we all know, times change. And of course, products, produce, and those who have the wherewithal to learn and adjust, did. And the best I can say is he was trying to adjust, but he was a one man gang, if you will, trying to do it all, and it became overwhelming to him. And he had people from the family who would work with him, but again, the, the production and how he maintained his business, I didn't know and understand how he did it, but eventually it became too much for him, and he eventually, uh, passed away. Yes. Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ned Roper: Now, this, again, is a funeral service of my dad, who passed away in 1978. And with him dying, that was, if you will, the death's, death nail on, on, on Ned Roper farms, because, again, he was a one man gang. I had already left, going into the military, and it was just became, just becoming overwhelming for him. Uh, but again, the...

Reneé Donnell: Where was Ned Roper Farms located?

Ned Roper: Similarly, where we spoke of, where you were in the library.

Reneé Donnell: Yes, okay.

Ned Roper: Where the library, if you went up one side of that road, you could go to Grimball's, where the Grimball's Plantation was. There was much dirt further down, if you got off of the main road, all that property was Grimball's, but we rented some of that. And further up Grimball, on the side roads, there was, again, property that was owned by my family, and he would farm that. And further down, if you cross Folly Road, there are other properties where Black folks had, uh, property, uh, that was fallow, and he would farm that.

Reneé Donnell: So he sounds like he was a very busy man.

Ned Roper: Busy man.

Reneé Donnell: Um, do you know what neighborhood or area that is a part of? Was that a part of... Or was it just a Cross Cut, Down Cut, Turkey Pen?

Ned Roper: Yeah, those are, that's an area further west of where we were.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ned Roper: So in and around where we were, up and down Grimball Road and farther beyond, there were, again, fallow lands that we could, it would be rented to my dad-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm

Ned Roper: ... and so we were not lost, at that time, for property that could be farmed. There were other people who were farming, but my dad was mechanized and very organized, one man gang. And so he had a plan, so wherever he could get land, he, along with his oldest son and younger brother, and other people he hired, uh, we would have a way of, again, uh, preparing the soil, planting, and all that. So it was well planned out.

Reneé Donnell: Um, while we're paused-

Ned Roper: Mm-hmm?

Reneé Donnell: ... let's just get... We have about 30 minutes left.

Ned Roper: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: So I see you have a lot of pictures and things, and I'm excited about all of it. I think this is good information.

Anna Wiman: On your recording you have 22 minutes. Just, okay?

Reneé Donnell: Okay. So-

Anna Wiman: Trying to figure-

Reneé Donnell: Okay, so you said your dad was mechanized and getting different, um, people to do the work in the different, um-

Ned Roper: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: ... places where he... Okay.

Ned Roper: Mm-hmm. So, again, for him, uh, it was about the business, and he was fairly up with it. But for me who had already left, going to, again, uh, I've been in college, and I would come home in the summertime, and then at that point in time, I joined the Army. So once I left in '70, well, I left in '69 and then in, in '73, I went in the military, I could tell it was becoming overwhelming for him. And he had help, but it was just too much for him. And he died, again, with a massive heart attack, on his tractor. And luckily, oh yes, luckily, it hit a house, and the house stopped the tractor, and, and it and it shut off, and he died. He had a massive heart attack. So he died doing what he was accustomed to doing.

Reneé Donnell: I'm sorry to hear that.

Ned Roper: Mm-hmm (affirmative), mmm, yeah, yeah. But again, the business, uh, took a, a nose dive. My brother got outta the Air Force and began to run the farm, but the world was changing. James Island was changing. So the times of large farming, people were selling their property, and you could see the influx of new businesses, um, home sales.

Reneé Donnell: What decade was this? Was this in the '70s or still in the '60s?

Ned Roper: In the '70s.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ned Roper: This was '70s, late '70s. Because he died in '78, and then by '80, the world was changing. Whereas those folks on Johns Island, it hadn't caught them as much. And so with

the families that are here, the Fields family, they have a very large farm here. Very large. Uh, my five brothers and sisters here.

Reneé Donnell: Yeah. I think we passed the Fields Farm.

Ned Roper: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: ... yesterday, across-

Ned Roper: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: ... from Moving Star Hall.

Ned Roper: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ned Roper: And the Freeman family. So those are two viable farming families who were of the same generation as I. And their family, again, began just like mine, on the island, again, slaves by, initially, free men using their skills, and they, and their ability to save and do and work, they've done that, and they're still doing that to this day.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And so in about the late we'll say in the '70s-

Ned Roper: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: ... were there still many, um, roadside stands, or that was starting to fade away?

Ned Roper: It was fading away in what I saw, from traveling back and forth. Again, the people having new opportunities-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ned Roper: ... jobs, and the opportunity, in some cases, the sell their land. And again, for those who understood the importance of hard work, and I shouldn't say the importance, but that's very important; you must work, it's not gonna come easy. And again, the computer was, again, making its mark. And so people having an opportunity with new skills, new jobs, and move. And was there migration? I would say there was a migration. There were people like me going to college then. You know, I went to South Carolina State, and again, uh, there were many finding other opportunities. Again, desegregation had happened folks were now, um, blending in, new opportunities. So all that impacted in a good way, but it still made, meant change.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And you went away to South Carolina State, then you said you were in the military?

Ned Roper: Yeah, I was in the Army, um, for 25 years.

Reneé Donnell: Really?

Ned Roper: Oh yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And, okay. Were you always stationed in South Carolina?

Ned Roper: No, no, no.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ned Roper: When my brother came in, my dad died in '78, my brother was in the Air Force, and we had to make a decision, because he had already planted crops, put fertilizer in the ground, and either one of us sorta new what to do, but it had to be done.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ned Roper: So the choices for me, at the time, I was already selected to go to a position in NATO as a young officer, and, uh, the

pain for me trying to get out of that, there was sometimes ugly conversations. Uh, so it would, became easier, my brother, God bless him, he was a sergeant, and he felt more compelled he could make the transition. And he was in Florida, but I was getting ready to go Germany, and I had to get to Germany. So to come back, it wasn't gonna work. So he got outta the Air Force and I continued, and of course, I went on to Germany and then continued with my military. And he continued to work with the farm, but we could tell, over time, things were shifting and changing. So, um, gradually, uh, we shut the farm down in 19, no, two, no, 1985. It became too difficult, and people weren't working like that, migrant workers wasn't working like that. The bigger farms, they were even having a difficult time.

Ned Roper: Again, some of the bigger companies, farms, dealing with the supermarkets, they were dealing with goods coming from, shipped in from other companies. You know, the actual stores had, you know, shop-, they shopped elsewhere and brought it in, so local fares was, was not happening that much. So it was a shift; it was just shifting all the way around. And, like the farmers on John's Island, they still had some capabilities. And some of them became, the market was shifting into, what do they call it? Um, fresh vegetables that are, mmm, you don't use many pesticides. I forget the term.

Reneé Donnell: Organic?

Ned Roper: Organic. So that became a good word, a hard word, but it could be more productive, and folks wanted that. The

world was shifting; they became organic. So all of the farmers here, the majority of them now are organic. So there's shift in a good way; there's been a lot of change.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And when, what year did you move, or around what decade did you move back here?

Ned Roper: I got back, I stayed, uh, in the Army until 1999, and then I retired. And I worked at the Pentagon, working there, for about 15 years, and then I retired, retired in 2016, and then I came back home.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ned Roper: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: What were some of the major changes you noticed when you came back here in 2016?

Ned Roper: The big thing, of course, I saw were much of what was in farming land is no longer; they're shopping areas or businesses. And again, what I had thought that would be vibrant areas, of course, folks sold their property. And again, future moving. And so much of that has happened, and you're seeing that happen on Johns Island now, with, apartment complexes, houses. So it's, changing, uh, greatly. And again, I'm not gonna say good or bad, it's just a reality.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And in the '60s and '70s, and even in the '50s, when you were small, how was your dad... So you said he had his own, um, stand here on the island, but he also sold in Charleston. Were there, were there bridges connecting James Island to mainland Charleston at that time?

Ned Roper: Yes, yes. Uh, the island, back in the day, and I brought an article that highlights the fact that there was a time there was no bridges on the island, and Charleston was a place where folks from the North, wherever, South, even, would come to Charleston for its fairs. I mean, it was a grand place. And I have an article, I did research at the library, where folks came to have fun here in Charleston area, and they would speak to, uh, I forget the term they use, my grandfather was a huckster. And a huckster is that person out there, "Shrimp for sale," whatever, whatever, whatever, "Flowers," whatever, and they would be out there selling their wares, and that's what he did along with having, you know, farm, plants, and then bring it into the city and sell. There was a bridge built in, I can't remember, early 1900s, small bridge, and of course that's been replaced twice now. So before that, folks used boats to come from the island to get to the city.

Ned Roper: And again, I heard stories from my grandmother about, you know, taking the wares to that same market. So they would farm on the island, and James Island being one of the closer islands, when you consider you have Johns Island, Edisto and these other places was even more difficult for them to bring their wares into the city of Charleston, but that's what they did. And they would have hucksters who had places where they can put their foods so they could sell it fresh to the people who would be coming in to live and buy foods at the market. So that's how they did that.

Ned Roper: So the bridge was, initially, with my great-grandparents and my grandparents, there was a bridge. And then of course, after that, as in my father's time, we would travel

to the same market. And as a little boy, I would be there on the same markets, and that's where I met my, at the time didn't know she would be my in-laws, but my wife's family were there as, people selling their wares. And later on, once we dated, high school, they knew me from who I was as a little boy growing up on the market, 'cause they were there selling their wares.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, um, where did you go to elementary school?

Ned Roper: I went to William Gresham Meggett when it was an elementary school. That's when, of course, William Gresham Meggett, his, had been in existence, I think, fifth-, uh, a question, 12 years total on the island. That was the first Black high school. And, uh, I graduated there in '69. I was the last high school before the schools were integrated. And so I went to first grade at Gresham Meggett all the way through to my senior year. Um, but I also went part time when they built Baxter-Patrick. When they first opened it, I went there for a year in my late young age for a short time when they finally got it organized with a new elementary school, and then came right back to Gresham Meggett, so.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. All right. And can you tell us about the lantern?

Ned Roper: Well, the lantern is very key to me because, as a little boy, my dad had these, we had a, a nursery, where now you have folks who sell the, the small set, set outs for tomatoes, plants, well, then, you had to plant the seeds and grow the seeds to a height to then take them outta the ground and then set them out in a bigger field. This lantern, as a little boy, uh, I was punished because I didn't put oil in it one

time, and so I kept this (laughs) as a memento of following through. But he used these within the actual nursery, big, open area with a sheet over it, and these would keep the plants warm, and you put kerosene in it and light it. And, and that was used to keep the plants warm on those frost nights, because you would be planting early in the spring, and that's what this lantern was used for. And we had many of those, and, that was one of the surviving lanterns. So that, that's about maybe, uh, I think, maybe, I'm 70, so that was in existence when I was a little boy, so that's, easy, 70 or more years old. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: That's, uh, that's interesting, 'cause now, when you watch the news, they'll say, "Cover up your plants--"

Ned Roper: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: "... with, like, a sheet or something."

Ned Roper: Yep, yep, yep, yep, yep.

Reneé Donnell: But I guess, for farmers, even to this day, like, a, a sheet's not gonna cut it for-

Anna Wiman: Entire fields.

Reneé Donnell: Yeah. (laughs)

Ned Roper: Well, they have nurseries, I mean, and, and you can buy the stuff now with the big folks who develop nurseries, they have a way of planting seeds and protecting it. And, uh, and as we get further on, I will tell you that we no longer using farming from that vantage point. My nephew, using property that we have in Monk's Corner, he's going another way; he's planting hemp. And I'll talk another way, so.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And would you, that's, that's actually fascinating. 'Cause I guess, in my mind, lanterns were just used as lights-

Ned Roper: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: ... or, yeah, just lights.

Ned Roper: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Um, would you like to share your other photos with us?

Ned Roper: Well, there's one other thing. Since you've made me go in the big bag here, this was another piece on that Kate's Open Air Market and in the farm, as we would have plant many green beans, and that was a big year. We shipped them. We would pick them, and what we would need, once folks would pick the baskets, we would use this to, to weigh the actual weight of the basket. Uh, the unfortunate, that some folks would wanna cheat, and they would put leaves in the bottom and put, you know, the beans on top. It had to me- meet a certain weight. So it was 32 pounds, I can remember that, with a basket, using these. And so this was one of those pieces that I remember as a little boy, he had. And we kept this as a way of weighing a basket. It was just easy way to keep it moving.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ned Roper: To spot check your baskets on individuals coming through. So that's what this was used for. It was a key little piece, a tool that we used back then. And many of the farmers would use these as a way to, to spot check and see the weight of items, and going through, of the baskets with the beans, and going in. Because it was many baskets. I

mean, you can imagine, you talking thousands of crates of the stuff coming through, people picking. Um, and then the other item that's so heavy in here, this is actually a, and you won't believe what this is, one of the rounds that exploded from the Civil War. And so, as farmers, there are certain grounds that we would go, and if you look on James Island, there are certain spots, and I did spot check certain battles when they were, it was fought on the island.

Ned Roper: And right where we were going to certain spots, we would go with different blades of, uh, what do they call them? Harrowers, or whatever, to dig up the soil. And my dad bought one, and when we went down, this blade hit something heavy, and sure enough, this is what it was. And there was these, picked up and I got it out as a little boy, didn't know what it was, but I kept it over time, and I realized what it was. And I forget what round this, size round this was, but that's what this is.

Reneé Donnell: Like, a cannon?

Ned Roper: Well, this comes from one of the cannons that fires, you know, during the war. You shoot a cannonball out, and this was one of the balls that blew up. So from Civil War.

Reneé Donnell: Right?

Ned Roper: So again, that's why it was so heavy. And I see, yeah, it's heavy, so you can imagine. And if you go around town, Charleston, you have some of these balls stationary, they weld it together.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ned Roper: And you would see the sizes of these welded together, and you could see some bigger than these. So again, this was one shot. So you can see that the size of this thing was about like that.

Reneé Donnell: Did you ever use it before you figured out what it was for, just as, like, a tool, or, like, a doorstop or something?

Ned Roper: No, my mother, God bless her, she knew, as a little boy I would always be out there, and, uh, there were certain spots on James Island, when they would dig out canals, uh, for drainage, then there would be times, and I can't remember where, as kids, we would be out there and they would dig up places where either you found weapons that were all, you know, rusted in a hulk together, and of course we didn't know what that meant. And the folks who were digging up, they didn't know, they just wanted to get it done. And so she's always cautioned me, "Be careful what you pick up." (laughs) And so this was one that I got cautioned on, but I kept it over time. Yeah. (laughs) So there's spots on James Island, especially during the war, Civil War, they came through the Union troops came through, and of course Confederates were there, and they had battles on James Island, different spots.

Reneé Donnell: I know we learned about the Sol Legare battle-

Ned Roper: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: ... and there's another one, Morris Island, is it?

Ned Roper: Yeah, Morris is further down, near Sol Legare on the farther side.

Reneé Donnell: Uh-huh.

Ned Roper: And there was one, uh, coming on, uh, Riverland Drive, and where the Ellis Plantation is at, there's a berm on the side built up, and if you look at *Glory*, you'll see they have a place where the Union army and Confederates fought and, uh, like, a hill. They were representing that same spot that's still there now, and where they dug out the berm, and of course the horses would be galloping up, that's the location they're trying to describe. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Um, the scale-

Ned Roper: Mm-hmm (affirmative)?

Reneé Donnell: ... again, okay, so were there standardized baskets?

Ned Roper: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: And does... Okay.

Ned Roper: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: So-

Ned Roper: There was-

Reneé Donnell: ... all the baskets weighed the same?

Ned Roper: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: It was just the contents in them, right?

Ned Roper: The content, yes. So we know the, the weight without anything in it, yeah. It's just, when you would hold the baskets, we're talking, tall baskets, about that tall, tapered, and this little hook would go up under the lip-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ned Roper: ... and just pick it up. Now, if it's leaves or whatever else, just by picking it up, you could feel it, but you just wanna make sure. And again, sometimes people see you weighing it, it sends a signal that, "Oh, wow, they're gonna be checking." We, the point is, let's keep this thing moving, and we want folks not to cheat, but keep it moving, 'cause you gotta move.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ned Roper: So that, that was a way of keeping folks honest and going forward.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. All right. And, so what was life like growing up for you here? 'Cause you, you were definitely born in a transitional time, not only for James Island, but for the country as a whole.

Ned Roper: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Reneé Donnell: So what was life like growing up here in the '50s and '60s?

Ned Roper: Well, again, what I was taught, one, to be accountable, and my word is my bond. So as you would meet folks who, uh, broke in on what they believe they should expect from me, that would become, not so much a problem, and I've seen this, and spoken with my granddaughters and grandchildren before, because your word is your bond, and to lie is not normal. So to be honest in what you're doing, if it's your best or not, but someone already assumes that you're not gonna do your best, and they treat you like you're not doing your best, and it's, it's not good when you know you're doing your good. Now, if you have a better way, then show me the best. And back

in that era, you, who, who dare not ask questions. Of course, in my generation, I wanna know what could I do different. It became easier for me, but I recognized with my grandmother, that's a no go; you just except the fact that they said it was wrong. And they would keep doing it over and, and I'd be looking at them like, "This is crazy." But how do I question my gran-...

Ned Roper: And so, with my father, who had been in the service, military, I mean, Navy, he understood. Though frustrating, it was good for me to have him there to help explain, and some of it still didn't make sense to me, but you have to... Okay. Different time, yes. It's a different time. And so with, again, Civil Rights and desegregation, and of course I will tell you, for me, I mean, the last graduating class at Gresham Meggett, uh, you know, going to college was a fact. "I'm going to college." All of my friends couldn't do that, but my dad had a plan for me to go to college 'cause he wanted me to do a little bit better. But again, to make that transition, and with your friends and their households, each household dealt with it differently. I could see a transition from grandparents and a dad who was Navy, understood that, "We can do this better, let me try and explain it to you so you can make the adjustment in your time." 'Cause the times are different.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ned Roper: You don't have to accept it, but the times are different. Now, the question is, those folks who wanna try and take you back to the time, and for me, that's just not gonna happen. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ned Roper: It ain't gonna happen. We're going this way. I'm going this way. And if we have to slow it down, then slow it down, but we're going this way. For me to stop and go the other way... No, no, that's not gonna happen. So that's a transition. And so, with my children and those who I've come to know and understand, I'm trying to help them, "You do know it's your time?"

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ned Roper: "This, it's your time. Gotta go forward, can't go back."

Reneé Donnell: Is there anything else you would like to share with us as we close up?

Ned Roper: Well, the big thing is, again, change is happening. The key is being honest and truthful, and that's an ugly word for some folks. We know it's wrong, but we're gonna accept it. You are going to have an ugly end.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ned Roper: It's gonna happen if you refuse to accept the facts. So what I see going forward, having spent time in the government, spent time in the civilian populous, I've often pushed folks to lay things out. If if you're in a battle, there's not a whole lotta time to, "Let's explain." No, you gotta duck. (laughs) Stop. But when you got time, take the time, look at the facts. Look at the facts. "I don't wanna look at it." No, you gotta loo-... Well, you don't wanna look at it, then you gonna stay over there. Go over there, because the rest of us, those who are willing to look at the truth will... That's always been my mantra. A- and I'm not gonna get

upset if you don't, but stay the hell outta my way. Stay over there then. 'Cause you, you're waiting for a destru-, it's a destructive end.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ned Roper: It's just gonna happen. You know, "That's not a goldfish. No, that's a shark." Go ahead and pet it then. Pet it, go ahead, you pet it. You will see. (laughs) You will learn. Some folks gotta do that, not everyone. So no, it's been beautiful being back home, and understanding, and coming back a little smarter now, not all that, but enjoying, uh, from whence I came. And yeah, change is gonna happen. Let's go with open eyes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Anna Wiman: All good?

Reneé Donnell: Yep!

Anna Wiman: All right.



AMELIA ANN WASHINGTON

Reneé Donnell: Okay. So we'll start with some small talk first and then we'll get into the questions about basically different neighborhoods in the area or on James and John's Island, whichever one, you have more information about. Just for starters, can you please spell your name?

Amelia Washington: A-M-E-L-I A, Ann, A-N-N, Washington is W-A-S-H-I-N-G-T-O-N.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, if you don't mind, I'll also be taking notes, but also notes from my... Okay. And then, are you from James or Johns Island, or is your family from here? And if so, which one, or both?

Amelia Washington: James Island.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: We're doing research to find out if there's any. We heard the Wadmalaw Island, but we're still doing research to find out about that.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And then, how long has your family been in or on James Island?

Amelia Washington: My mother and father got married in the 30s, so they have been on the island prior to that.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: And, I am 77, so I was born in the house. So, I've never been any place else. I mean, travel, but not any, never lived any place else.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. So, you're from James island. This is where your parents were at least. What neighborhood did you grow up in?

Amelia Washington: I guess they call it the Cut Bridge area of the... Oh, off of Central Park Road.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, do you know about... Well, is the Cut Bridge area still there or is it more, so just something people know about, but there's not really?

Amelia Washington: I think, mostly people just know about it because now, with the bridge, the James Island County Park. Down Cutters one side and we, who've been there so long we just still take cut down, cut and cross cut.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And where are those cuts? What do, where do the cut name come from? Cause there's quite a few cuts?

Amelia Washington: And, I think, it came from where the bridge is.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: I don't know if you guys know about the Kenny Moore roundabout, and then there's a bridge there. That's what distinguished Down Cut from Cross Cut. Yeah. And the school was right next the Cut Bridge School was right there, that's what they call it.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And so, you're from the Cut Bridge Cross Cut. Do you know about when that neighborhood started?

Amelia Washington: No. I couldn't tell you that.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, do you know the names of any other historic neighborhoods on James Island that you would mind giving us the names for?

Amelia Washington: Historic I don't know any area, but they talked about Bradom Road and-

Reneé Donnell: And, how do you spell Bradom?

Amelia Washington: B-R-A-D-O-M, I think, Bradom Road. No, I don't know of any other area. The road that I live on used to be called Riley Road now, and it's an area down there, they call Haley Landing.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: And that's where the Ms. Haley live, and it's right next to the creek, where that Cut Bridge come straight through to go to Ellis Bridge and all that.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: That's the area where I live and it's a dead end down there.

Reneé Donnell: And you said, Haley?

Amelia Washington: Yeah. They call it Haley Landing.

Reneé Donnell: And, you said it's near a creek where that bridge meets?

Amelia Washington: Yeah, the creek down there where the old school, the Cut Bridge school, that creek goes straight through. And, when it goes straight through, it pass through by Haley Landing, then you pass the Ellis Bridge, then you go on to the Cooper River, and so forth.

Reneé Donnell: Awesome. Thank you. Because I haven't heard of Haley Landing, so that would be the new area that we can try and save. Okay. So, what made Cross Cut? So you grew up here, so what made Cross Cut or any part of the Cut Bridge area? What made that unique or what was it like growing up there?

Amelia Washington: Oh, if I remember correctly, it was, when I was going to school.

Reneé Donnell: Oh, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Sorry.

Amelia Washington: When we were going to school, we had to walk from that area that you call Haley Landing that road. We used to walk all from home, which was on Riley Road, off of Central Park. All the way down there by James

Island County Park, that's where our school was. So, we walked from there back and forth until our parents got us a bicycle years later to ride.

Reneé Donnell: Okay, and... Oh, sorry, go ahead.

Amelia Washington: And, it's just the idea of, hardly in any traffic and we used to just have fun. We could walk all, we may take a little bit longer than other, one day to the next day, because we used to stop and there's a lady named Ms. Ann. I don't know her last name and so forth, but she had pecan trees. So, all along that road, we used to just stop and pick up pecans and, so forth.

Reneé Donnell: That was along Riley Road.

Amelia Washington: That's along Riverland Drive, to go to Cut Bridge School.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Did she know that you guys were-

Amelia Washington: Well, what good about it is, her pecan tree hung over in the street.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: So, where we were walking at, we could pick up pecans because farther back is we would be getting on her property and we would really get in trouble if we go far beyond in her property space.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And then, so when you were growing up, because you're younger than the other person we interviewed and was Folly Rd, the only paved road when you were growing up or there were other who was starting to?

Amelia Washington.: I remember Folly Rd, being paved. I don't remember Central Park because my father was a farmer. And when we leave from home, we used to be on the back of the wagon.

Reneé Donnell: Oh, okay.

Amelia Washington: So, when we would get on Folly Road, because he had a farm over there by, I don't know if y'all know the area where McDonald's and Harris Teeters and all of them, those were farmland, and then was a golf course there.

Reneé Donnell: Mr. Urie's? No, I'm sorry. Yeah. Mr. Harry Urie and his golf course. Okay

Amelia Washington: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. All right. So, it was farmland, and what did you guys do for fun? Yeah. What did you do for fun?

Amelia Washington: Well, for fun, we just stayed in the neighborhood. We couldn't really go any place, and if our parents take us anywhere, we will take us to Atlantic Beach on the bus.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: That was one thing for fun. And, the only other thing we used to do is ride bicycle in the area.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: And Atlantic Beach, was that an integrated beach or-

Amelia Washington: No.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: Not at the time.

Reneé Donnell: Were there certain days that-

Amelia Washington: No, it was considered a minority beach, so that's where we used to go to out on the ocean and so forth, and so on, and that used to be a lot of fun because it'll be maybe a church will carry it or something like that nature.

Reneé Donnell: And where was this Atlantic Beach?

Amelia Washington: That's in near Myrtle Beach, somewhere around, up in that area.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: Because Mr. Josiah Watson, I don't know if you all talk with them. He had a bus. And, we used to catch his bus, he used to be the driver deacon, Josiah Watson.

Reneé Donnell: And, since you brought up Deacon Watson, who were some other movers and shakers, on James Island, throughout the different decades that you've been here?

Amelia Washington: Let me see. You're asking the 77 year old lady to remember all that stuff. Joseph Grant. My brother-in-law used to drive bus and take people to Atlantic Beach in Myrtle Beach, and that's Willie Pinckney.

Reneé Donnell: You know, there's an area called Pinckney, spelled P-I-N-C-K

Amelia Washington: N E Y.

Reneé Donnell: Uh-huh. Is that your maiden name?

Amelia Washington: No. My maiden name is Washington. I'm in Washington, Washington.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And-

Reneé Donnell: Um, Pinckney's not on James Island, it's on Johns Island. Is that true? I'm trying to go through my notes. I apologize.

Amelia Washington: Oh, no problem.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. So, Pinckney, is actually an area also on John's Island. Have you ever been there before as well? No. Okay. All right. So, your brother?

Amelia Washington: Yeah, my brother-in-law was a bus driver to take people to different areas.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: Myrtle Beach or Atlantic Beach, different things like that. Who else used to be? I can't remember. Lot of area. The people who used to do a lot of stuff. I can't remember right now. Maybe it'll come to me later and I'll mention it.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. That works. And, what were some of the main meeting places for James Island? So, this could be anything from a church to a club, a dance club to like a sports field, a pharmacy, a school. So, what were some of the main meeting places?

Amelia Washington: Meeting places like for anything?

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Amelia Washington: Well, I know a meeting place. We used to call it a hall where we have church meeting. And, that's what every Wednesday night, my mother Florence, Washington and Deacon Elliot, and Deacon Watson and we used to all go there. So, when we wanted to join out, like join the church and they'd say you seek your religion. We used to meet at a hall off of, on Riley Road. I don't think Riley Road was called Riley Road at the time it was called. Oh God, maybe somebody else could remember that.

Reneé Donnell: Was it like a lodge?

Amelia Washington: Yeah, like a lodge.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And then, so when you became a teen or a young adult, where did you go to have fun? So, were there any clubs or-

Amelia Washington: There was a club at the end of Central Park there. What's the name of that street? Riverland Drive. We used to call it Bee corner.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: And, we used to go there to have fun, but the issue with that is, we couldn't be there too long because our father, they were very strict.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: Yeah. And, when I guess graduate or just before graduation is a place called Club Villa that we could have gone to, and have fun.

Reneé Donnell: And Club Villa, can you spell that?

Amelia Washington: I guess, it's V-I-L-L-A a that's only Club Villa.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, around what decade, if you can, were Bee corner and Club Villa?

Amelia Washington: In the '60s.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, what were some of the big events or festivals that happened while you were growing up, if there were any?

Amelia Washington: The Fair.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: And, big events, like when the church has Mayday or something like that.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And what church did you attend?

Amelia Washington: First Baptist Church on.

Reneé Donnell: Is that the one that you grew up going to?

Amelia Washington: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, is still standing today?

Amelia Washington: Yes. The old church has been demolished, and it was built. Another church was built there and now, we consider that being the landmark center, because we

built a larger church across the street from it. And, that's where at the old church, we used to baptize outside in a pool.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: That's the second church that's on that part of the land now.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, so where did this fair take place?

Amelia Washington: It's what do you call that? It's a good ways up there. Sometime, it'll be in the city and it has elephants and stuff that'll come. They'll have an area, you can just see the elephants and all of other animals, then the other one is the large one is when we used to go to... Oh, God, what's the name of that place? It's the, I can't remember the fairground, but I can't remember what the name of it right now somebody else might can remember that.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: That we'd go to.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And then, just in case, of any, because you helped me with this Haley Landing and Atlantic Beach, Bee Corner, Club Villa. Do you know of any other places that may not occur on maps or different roads or things? Things that used to be here that were really important, but are no longer there?

Washington: I can't think of it. Okay.

Reneé Donnell: Even like roads. So, I know that you said you weren't sure if Riley Road, is what it was called.

Amelia Washington: Yeah. I know, Riley Road, was not called Riley Road. It used to go as Route 1 box, or route this. Yeah. And I think we were Route 5, box "XXX".

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, is there anything else you would like to share with us? Anything else about James Island that made it important or how it's changed over the years or?

Amelia Washington: James Island has really a-

Reneé Donnell: [inaudible 00:23:00]

Amelia Washington: ... changed over the years because of it's getting so congested and the younger people probably is exciting to them, but it is... I don't know how to describe it. It's coming from a place where it was farmland to a place to where it is right now, it's depressing almost. And, it seems as if there's no stopping, because I have heard, we've been to meetings and stuff, even since the bridge and quoting one of the people there that says every green area that we see vacant over here is going to be built up with something, and that was said to me almost 10 years ago, and you could see it coming and it's very depressing because you don't even recognize this place anymore.

Reneé Donnell: When do you think this transition from, or being a rural area to being more like Charleston sprawl? When do you think that started?

Amelia Washington: It started prior to Hurricane of Hugo long time before then.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: I would say, it started maybe in the-

Anna Wiman.: Change battery. Sorry.

Amelia Washington: ... early '70s or '70s. You start seeing things happening.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Amelia Washington: And, I'm not the only one that feels like... I guess people my age and older. And, I would say probably in the '60s, 65 and above, feels the same way I do because you wonder where they're going to go next.

Reneé Donnell: Okay, I think, that's a valid question. I grew up in a country area in and then around high school, they started building subdivisions. You didn't ask. So, I'm going to stick to my questions. Yes. Okay. Well, okay. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Amelia Washington: I can't think of it right now. No, I don't think it would. Well, did I answer all of your questions?

Reneé Donnell: Yes. I think, you gave me some good information. And, so I will take some of these things. I'm going to look into what some of these roads were called before their name changes. And, I would like to add, because no one has... Oh, we were told about a Porgy and Bess Club.

Amelia Washington: Oh, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Earlier.

Amelia Washington: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And so, I mean, I would like to add these different locations. We hear a lot about the Cut Bridge school.

Amelia Washington: Yeah. Porgy and Bess, I think, Porgy and Bess before the other one that Club Villa, I think, they were either next to each other or when one phased out the other one went in, something of that because, I think, it was in the same area. Just remember about Porgy and Bess.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, you said they used to do baptisms at your church and a pool outside?

Amelia Washington: Outside. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And then, along Riverland Drive, there were pecan trees. All right. And then, railroad Haley Landing. Okay. Okay. Yes. I think this is some really good information.

Amelia Washington: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: So, I think we're good.



WILLIAM "CUBBY" WILDER

Cubby Wilder: Mm-hmm.

Anne Wiman: Okay, I will [inaudible 00:00:02].

Reneé Donnell: All right. Would you be able to spell your name for us?

Cubby Wilder: Both names? William, W-I-L-D... W-I-L-L-I-A-M WILDER, W-I-L-D-E-R.

Reneé Donnell: All right, thank you. And, we're gonna go ahead and get into it. So, are you/is your family from James or Johns Island?

Cubby Wilder: My family is from James Island.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, how long has your family been on James Island?

Cubby Wilder: All their lives.

Reneé Donnell: All the way-

Cubby Wilder: From the early 1800- the late 1800, early 1900s.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: Yep. Right after the Civil War.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. So, they got here after the Civil War. Do you know-

Cubby Wilder: Well we looking at you or- or the camera?

Anne Wiman: At Reneé.

Cubby Wilder: Oh, okay. All right.

Reneé Donnell: Um, so, if your family got here in the late 1800s, like after the Civil War, where did they come from, and why did they choose to settle here?

Cubby Wilder: Well, my family were free Black mens, and they came- my family, from my- from the- what the old folks had told me, they migrated here from Sumter, South Carolina down to Charleston area, and they had funds. My great-great grandfather, Harrison Wilder, was a Civil War veteran, and he had money, and he purchased a lot of the property here on the James Island and Sol Legare.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Okay. And, so, the area you grew up on or in was the Sol Legare area?

Cubby Wilder: That's correct.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. So, can you tell me what was it like here on Sol Legare when you were growing up?

Cubby Wilder: It was beautiful. We didn't even know we were poor. Uh, we never went hungry, never went without a meal. Um, the only reason why I know that, uh, that life condition were of indigent status was because I lived in New York, Harlem, in my early years of my ch- from seven to- until I was 13. Came back down here. And, that's when I got exposed to outdoor toilets. Had no running water. And, the tail end of lamp light.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, so, what was the main road on Sol Legare when you were growing up?

Cubby Wilder: Sol Legare Old Road, which is still it's no longer Sol Legare Old Road. It's now, um, Sol Legare Road, but the old road run right in front of this lodge hall this road right here.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Cubby Wilder: It ran in front of this lodge hall and it went to- up to other community we call Bee Field. That another community that's been historical. District, historical district.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And- okay. And, um, so... I'm sorry, I'm trying to take notes. Okay, so do you know the boundaries for Sol Legare?

Cubby Wilder: Yes, I do.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Can you explain that to me?

Cubby Wilder: Sol Legare is bound by the Stono River by the west. By the east, if you want- you want the old Sol Legare-

Reneé Donnell: Yes.

Cubby Wilder: Or, you want the current Sol Legare?

Reneé Donnell: Both. Let's go with the old one first.

Cubby Wilder: Okay. The old one w- would be Clark Sound, which would encompass the nother community across from Sol Legare called River Front.

Reneé Donnell: Okay

Cubby Wilder: that used to be a part of Sol Legare, but Folly Road split Sol Legare into two entity, and now that River Front is a- is a PUD, is a Public, uh,

Reneé Donnell: Public Urban Development?

Cubby Wilder: Yeah. Urban development. So, um, and then, uh, Folly Road, was installed, and it split Sol Legare in half, so from Folly Road to, on the east, Folly Road, um, and then we have the creeks. We got Folly River or James Island Creek to the... I would say to the... That'd be to your, east, that'd be, uh, to your south. And then, to your west, it'd be the, um, Holly-Holling Creek.

Reneé Donnell: And, can you spell the Holland Creek for me?

Cubby Wilder: It's H-O-L... I think it got two Ls? Got two Ls? H-O-L-L-I-N... I-N-G.

Joshua Parks: Yeah, Holling Creek.

Cubby Wilder: Yep, Holling Creek.

Reneé Donnell: All right. All right, thank you so much. And so, you said Folly Road split Sol Legare in half.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah, Sol Legare was an island.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: Sol Legare is not- was an island.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Cubby Wilder: And now, uh, I guess you could say it's, um, more or less a peninsula.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Awesome. And, so you said also that Bee Fields was a neighboring, um, community?

Cubby Wilder: Yeah, Bee Field- the Old Sol Legare Road ran from Sol Legare to Bee Fields. Now, uh, when they decided to pave, um Sol Legare Road, the new Sol Legare Road, they ran the road straight. It ran from Folly Road straight on down to- we got a boat landing, then it end- that touch Stono River. And, right across from Stono River is John's Island.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah, it's right across the street, right across the river. So, what they did is, when they, developed the new Sol Legare Road, the Old Sol Legare Road closed, and, DOT they give the people their land- their property back.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah. They reclaimed their property. That was the old Sol Legare Road.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And then, so, do you know of any other neighboring communities, and then we're gonna come back to Sol-

Cubby Wilder: I know a bunch of neighboring...

Well, uh, you talking about Black Settlement?

Reneé Donnell: Yes.

Cubby Wilder: Okay. Well, we got Sol Legare, start with Sol Legare. Then, you got Bee Field.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Cubby Wilder: And then you got Grimball area.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Cubby Wilder: And then you got Cut Bridge.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Cubby Wilder: And then, you got Cross Cut Bridge. And then you got Honey Hill area and, uh, Scott Hill.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Perfect. Now, let's talk about Sol Legare while you were growing up, before you went to New York for school.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah. Before I went to New York, as a little kid, each one of the communities I just named to you had they had their- their own community schools.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Cubby Wilder: And, that was to prevent integration. Um, so, Sol Legare School is up the street here.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: And, it's still in existence. Um, the old school that my parents went to on Sol Legare, that's long gone.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: But, we have pictures of it.

Reneé Donnell: What was the name of that school?

Cubby Wilder: Sol Legare School.

Reneé Donnell: Sol Legare School? Okay.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And-

Cubby Wilder: And then, they had a school on, what we would call, in the Westchester area, which was all black community area, the school was called, Setty Corner. Setty- Setty Corner School.

Reneé Donnell: Can you spell that for me, please?

Cubby Wilder: Setty?

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Cubby Wilder: Uh, Setty Corner School. Setty, Setty Corner. Help me out.

Joshua Parks: [inaudible 00:08:55] I- I was [inaudible 00:08:56].

Cubby Wilder: Um-

Cubby Wilder: So- Society-

Cubby Wilder: Uh-

Anne Wiman: Uh, Society-

Joshua Parks: Oh, Society Corner.

Reneé Donnell: Oh, Society Corner.

Cubby Wilder: Yep. Yeah.

Joshua Parks: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah. Society Corner School. That's it, Society Corner School. Okay. So, then, um, that was one school that was in that area over there as, uh, I- the one community I left out, Down the Island. We used to call that area Down the Island. That- when you back up to those other community I named, we used to call it Down the Island. And the- the Honeyhill area is in the Down the Island area.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah. So, Society Corner School. Then there was Cut Bridge School.

Reneé Donnell: Yes.

Cubby Wilder: And then, um, after Cut Bridge School, uh, that the school that was- were further down- down the island, we call Three-Tree.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: Three-Tree School.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, that's awesome. So, can you tell me, I know that you [inaudible 00:09:54].

Cubby Wilder: And, these schools, um, these schools now, a lot of the schools that's the new schools are named after some of the principal, like Patrick- Baxter-Patrick School. Uh, that school has since disappeared when they- when they update the schools and try to consolidate it. So, the Baxter-Patrick School is now the library on James Island. They named that after Baxter-Patrick library.

The, uh, the schools Down Cut Bridge is called, Murray La-Saine. That was two- they were two of the principal, Murray, La-Saine was the two the principal at the school on Cut Bridge. And, Three-Tree School, I know they know they name, but I can't call 'em right now.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And then, can you tell me about where was the old Sol Legare School? Is it in the same location as the new one?

Cubby Wilder: Right down the street from it.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. All right.

Cubby Wilder: It was on them, um, Richardson property. Family last name Richardson. And, the old school, um, has long since been gone. There's a house there now.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, did you attend Sol Legare School before you went?

Cubby Wilder: The old Sol Legare School, I remember I went to that school before I went to New York. I didn't like school.

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Cubby Wilder: I remember I was cutting- I remember (laughs) I remember that I stayed by the road there. I didn't go, and the next thing I knew, they whisked me off to New York after my grandmother died.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, so, you came back at the age of 13,

Cubby Wilder: Thirteen, yes.

Reneé Donnell: When you came back, had Sol Legare changed much? 'Cause, now you're a teenager. Yeah.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: So, now, you have a different set of eyes.

Cubby Wilder: Not- well, when I came back, I touched, um, the tail end of- of- I remember lamp, like I remember we did that, get the kerosene lamp light in- in the house. When I was a little fellow, there, and then when I came back, they had electricity. But, no running water and still had the outdoor toilet.

Reneé Donnell: Um, what year was that?

Cubby Wilder: 1953. The same year Mosquito Beach opened up.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. All right. And, what did you guys do for fun? Mosquito Beach had just opened up, so I know that that was a-

Cubby Wilder: Yeah, but, um before Mosquito Beach opened up-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Cubby Wilder: And, I came back, there was a lot of- the kids normally played with each other. They had all kind- all sorts of game. We used, we did a lot of swimming. There was not a kid on Sol Legare back when I come up that didn't swim. So, we used to go swimming a lot. I guess you heard of Backman's seafood. We used to go swimming down there in Backman-on Backman dock.

And then, there was a creek, there's a creek, back Holling Creek, we used to call it Holly. And so, we used to go back in Holly Creek, 'cause it has something like, almost like beach sand back there, so we used to go swimming back there. The whole group of the boys, we would go swimming.

And then, when we used to swim in the front of the creek, we'd be waiting for the girls to come. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: (laughs) Okay.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, so, was the water just used for swimming and having fun? Did you guys go fishing for fun?

Cubby Wilder: Oh, yeah. Well, uh, Sol Legare was- is a- Sol Legare was a fishing community and a farming community. If you look at

Sol Legare map, the land are very long- longated. The land ran from creek to creek, from Sol Legare Creek, or James Island Creek, all the way to Holling Creek, and- and, the- the strip of land was pretty narrow for farming.

And, this was a farming community and fishing community, and that's how- and then, at the one end, the Charleston Market was in play, because I remember going, uh, when my dad would harvest his produce, he would put it in- get it in that little truck, and we would go down to the Charleston Market with our- our tomato and okra and corn and all that stuff, and the fish. He would go, they catch it.

They made- by the way, they made their own boat, and they own, um, fishing nets, and they would go and catch the fish, good fish, Plenty of it, and, uh, plenty of vegetable, and we'd go to the market early in the morning. either around four o'clock in the morning or five o'clock in the morning, and by six or seven, he's sold out. We come on back home.

And, some days, he would pick up other farmers. They call it truck farmers then.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: Uh, truck, they used to call it truck farming.

Reneé Donnell: Um, have you- did you ever go to this shrimp factory that was, um, a little bit past Sol Legare off of Folly Road?

Cubby Wilder: Shrimp factory?

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Cubby Wilder: We had a shrimp factory here. The Backmans.

Reneé Donnell: Okay, the Backmans. Okay, good.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah, the Backman had the shrimp, and then, before there was Mosquito Beach, there was the oyster factory down there.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Cubby Wilder: And, the oyster factory would, plant, contribute a lot of jobs for the people in the local community shucking oyster, putting oysters in, um, in cans and jars, and, that was a source of income. The oyster factory closed probably in the early- in the late '20, '30s, when the oyster factory, and so the older folks used to still hang out down there on- where the oyster factory was- well, that, and they used to call it the factory.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Okay.

Cubby Wilder: And, that's where they used to hang out at, 'cause it was always cool, there was always a cool breeze down there.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And then, so, what was, like, for you, so I know that you didn't like school.

Cubby Wilder: At first.

Reneé Donnell: At first.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And then, you went to Gresham Meggett.

Cubby Wilder: No, no, I went to-

Reneé Donnell: New York.

Cubby Wilder: In New York, I went to, um, PS 68 in Harlem. And school was- then schools was fun.

Reneé Donnell: Why did you go to New York for school?

Cubby Wilder: Well, back in those days, um, the- the older folks have so many kids, and then some people that didn't have any kids, they didn't mind sharing the kids. So, (laughs) I was one of 11, so, when I went to New York, you know, my parents, you know, my aunt, she didn't have any kids. I went and lived with my aunt. And she lived in Harlem.

Left- a lot of the- the, I would say... I'm a fourth generation, a lot of the third generation, they left this area for jobs. They were not getting no money, econm- well, the economic condition, so they went up to New York for jobs and a better way of life.

So, when I got to New York, um, school was not bad. I had to fight every day or run. (laughs) Yeah. The bullies... Oops. I said I said I wasn't gonna drop it.

Anne Wiman: [inaudible 00:17:50] It's okay. It's okay.

Reneé Donnell: You wanna put it on the table?

Cubby Wilder: Yeah, we can put it on the table.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: I got emotional for a minutute. (laughs) Talk about running or fighting. (laughs) Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: You can tell us more about that.

Cubby Wilder: Well, I had to run from the bullies and then, after a while, I got to beating up the bullies, then they start running from me. I was the bully. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Was it hard to go to New York? Like, because I'm assuming it was very different there.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah, going to New York, we rode the train, or they drove, and they didn't have a green book like- but the older guys knew the route to take to go to New York, and they stuck to that route, because they know that if they didn't stick to that route, they could get themselves in trouble, because, um, if they wound up in the wrong neighborhood, they could have got lynch.

So, the green book that was circulating now is more or less for the people that was traveling west. Somewhere along the I-40 corridor. It wasn't I-40 back then, but when they used to travel going to California, the people for inland they made sure they had a green book to make sure that they had the right route to take so they wouldn't wound up in the area where they could have got lynch.

So, the same way- the same thing apply, but my folks, who used to migrate back and forth in this area here to New York, they had a specific route that they took.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: And they know that what bathroom they could use and where to stop. Back in the day, I remember we used to fry up a bunch of chicken and stuff like that, and made a bunch of lunch meat sandwiches, 'cause we knew that we wasn't gonna stop. And then, sometimes, if you stop, if you couldn't in get the bathroom, you have to go in the bush, because they had the Black and the colored- and the colored and the Black in the colored places were- the Black places was indespicable, nasty, dirty, and, uh, so.

Uh, going back and forth was nice. On the train, it was pretty good. My first trip in New York, I rode the- I rode the train,

and I stayed up all night looking out the window to see what I could see. Couldn't see nothing. (laughs) I couldn't sleep. I was excited.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: Riding on the train.

Reneé Donnell: And, when you left Sol Legare, were there cars here yet?

Cubby Wilder: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: There were cars here.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, when you came back from New York, um, you said that there was electricity, but still no indoor plumbing, and, um, were you sad to leave New York, or were you happy to be back?

Cubby Wilder: Well, at first, I was sad to leave New York City and my friends. And, when I came back, it wasn't- the life change was this. In the South, you have to go to church. On Sunday, everybody pick- pack up in that little piece of truck, and you have to go to church. And, the church bench was hard. And, them old people did not play, 'cause you had to sit there no matter how hard the seats were, and you couldn't do too much frigering- fi- um-

Reneé Donnell: Fidgeting.

Cubby Wilder: Fidgeting. Yeah. You couldn't do too much of that. And, definitely don't- chewing gum was just coming in style, so you couldn't chew no gum, 'cause they catch you chewing gum, you's a smart- you one of them smart aleck, you chewing gum in church? No. They were very strict. And,

they couldn't keep mixing up. And, church would last from sometimes 10 to three. So, when you get out of church, you be happy to get home and get some of that good old okra soup and fried chicken. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Cubby Wilder: Or collard greens. But, um, when you got out of church, it was a pest to get out of church, because kids had to be seen and not heard. That's right. And, they didn't play. So, the structure was different.

Um, in New York, my folks up there, they were more partying. My folks used to go to the [inaudible 00:22:18] as a little boy, they'd talk about the Savoy, and I guess at that time, they knew Duke Ellington and all them boys appear in Harlem and all them band lead- that big band that Count Basie and all them. Just to talk with them guys. I was too little to remember. I hear 'em talking. But the- the Savoy. That's a big club in New York that they used to hang out to.

But, anyway, the lifestyle was different here. And, now you're telling little tales from the- learning from New York, and then I come down here, my Daddy be, "Hey." Looking right in my eye. "Don't lie to me, boy. I know you lying. Tell me the truth, or the belt will wail." So, I had to tell the truth. (laughs)

So, anyway, the lifestyle was different and, the, um I learned- made new friends down here and- or, my cousin and friends that I met, we would go swimming, go steal watermelons, go steal cantelope. (laughs) We used to play hide and go seek and they had a game they called Lick- if the- if the person catch you, they- they'd take a whack you and then

you were it when they, um, then you become it, then you can lick somebody.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: That was a game they used to play, and hopscotch and- with the girls. And that was just for style with the- when you were around the girls. You know, it was to try to impress the girls.

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Cubby Wilder: (laughs) And then, there was marble. Used to play marbles. And, then we used to make little boats, uh, little wooden boats and stuff like that and go in the water and walk on the marsh edge with our little boats and be catching shrimp. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, what were some of the main meeting places for Sol Legare?

Cubby Wilder: Right here.

Cubby Wilder: This was- the lodge was the hub of everything. They used to meet on Sunday and, anything that went on, like the Fourth of July, Labor Day, all- [inaudible 00:24:28] Day. Everybody be up here. And, the folks used to make the homemade ice cream. Used to make plenty of food. The little kids running around.

I 'member, 'member a couple times we used to come through that door, I was fascinated with running up that there and running back down the step. Come through that door, run back down the stairwell, come through that door, run back to the stairwell. I was fascinated with that.

So, and then, you got movie theater here. A guy from the city of Charleston used to come here with a projector and put a sheet up against the wall, and he'd charge us 25 cent to watch old shoot 'em up cowboy movies. (laughs) And, we had to save our little 25 cent. But, back then, a nickel was a nickel, and a dime was a dime, and a quarter was a quarter. It was hard to get a quarter back then, you know. Kids nowadays don't even pick up a penny. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: No.

Cubby Wilder: Do you know, um, when I was a little boy, one penny, you could buy, you get two crack- two cookies or two Mary Jane. You know about Mary Jane, but that was a candy back then. Get two Mary Jane and a Squirrel Nut for a penny.

Reneé Donnell: A Squirrel Nut?

Cubby Wilder: Yeah, that was a candy back then.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: You oughta look it up. Squirrel Nuts and Mary Janes. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: (laughs) Okay. Um, and can you explain where we are? Like, what is the name of this lodge when [inaudible 00:25:48]?

Cubby Wilder: Seashore Seashore Farmer Lodge number 767. Each community had one of these lodge in they community. When I say this community was the hub, Black people couldn't go to the bank, so they pooled their money and their resource together, and if they need seeds or resource to buy a horse or a cow, they would come here and they would get the money to get their horse or their cow. They would pay for whatever they want. And then, they would,

after they get the money back, they would reimburse the lodge. 'Cause, you couldn't go to the bank. So, they'd pool their little resource together.

And, they had the lodge to probably try to, when people got in trouble paying tax, you know, they help them out with their tax. Still, you have to reimburse the lodge back.

Then, like I told you, uh, when I said the hub, movies, church, Sunday School. There was Sunday School downstairs and everything like that. So, this lodge- this lodge here was the main attraction for the community. Anything took place here until 1953 or '54.

Reneé Donnell: And, you said this was built around what time?

Cubby Wilder: 1910.

Reneé Donnell: 1910?

Cubby Wilder: But there were- you know, it the structure here was built, but they were still meeting- they were meeting in the house then until they got enough money to build this.

Reneé Donnell: And, what happened in 1954?

Cubby Wilder: 1953, Mosquito Beach, that picture you see there, um, that pavilion was built, and everybody would- started going to... Well, it wasn't- it was called Harbor View at the time. No, no, no. Back up. It was called The Factory. I told you when the oyster factory moved, they used to call it- the Mosquito Beach The Factory.

So then, when that opened up, it was a huge- it was a pretty-back in those days, it was a pretty big structure over the water, and it was good music, good dance, and all that stuff,

and then other people start- other families start adding to what was down there, like, you said, juke joint or restaurant and stuff started being built all around the pavilion.

And, um, so the young people, they go- it was good dancing and good music, and everybody then it was a way, even the church was down there. They come down there to do their little rallies. Um, the, uh, and fundraisers for the church. Come to the, um, used to make homemade ice cream down there and cook dinners and stuff like that and sell their dinners and stuff.

So, this place was still meeting, but it wasn't with the young folks, it was- on Sunday afternoon or the weekend, the young folks would go to Mosquito Beach, 'cause you could hear the music blasting all the way- they had them, um, music on piccolo or jukebox. You could hear them thing blasting all the way there, and the music would sound so good.

Reneé Donnell: How far is Mosquito Beach from where we are in this lodge?

Cubby Wilder: About a mile.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: Over three-quarters of a mile. But, this community was really quiet, so when them, um, jukebox start playing, you could hear the music. I be in my bed sometimes, you know, I need to get out of my bed and go down there. They sound like they're having fun down there. 'Cause the music was you know, and they had people like Sam Cooke, Fats Domino, James Brown, um, and, so, you know, and Little Richard and all them boys back there in the days. You know, there- there was some good music.

Reneé Donnell: So, where did the, um, where did these famous people stay when they were-

Cubby Wilder: When they come to, um, the few that come, when Fats Domino came up with Blueberry Hill, everybody loved some Blueberry Hill, so he'd go to Folly Beach to- they had a big pavilion out there over the ocean. That's where I think my uncle got the idea to build that pavilion because his- the pavilion that he built was- had almost the same replica of what was on Folly Beach, but the Folly Beach one was larger. And, Fats Domino used to play there, but he never came here.

But, when the Black entertainment would come, they had a hotel downtown called Hotel James. The family that built that hotel used to live right up the street here, the Washington family. Hotel James. Then, they had a hotel in Mt. Pleasant on Remleys Point, um, that was Right Paradise. So, James Brown used to stay over there a lot. When James Brown would come to Charleston, he'd stay over on that end.

We couldn't get James Brown down on Mosquito Beach. I don't think we were big enough at the time, you know, 'cause we were like an infant, and the- and them other place. But, um, we did have one entertainer that came down there. He's noted, uh, Jimmy Reed. He was a blues and jazz singer. And he had some hips. And, he didn't last long. He can't but sing but three song, and messed with that moonshine. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Cubby Wilder: He met with that moonshine. That the last- that the end, and he'd pass out.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: All right. So, you said Hotel James. Was that on Mosquito Beach, or-

Cubby Wilder: No. Hotel James was in the city of Charleston.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: Uh, on Spring Street. On the corner of Spring as you're going out and Lockwood. Spring and Lockwood. Right near that area there.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: say Hotel James. All that area's long gone. And, Remleys Point is gone. And they had a beach over there, Black beach over there called Riverside Beach. There was five Black beaches, so-called Black beaches. 'Cause, Mosquito Beach is not a beach. It just- that pavilion is on a inlet of water, and there's water there. But, you had Riverside Beach, you had Mosquito Beach, you had Peter Miller's. That's off of 17. And, then, you had, um, Edisto Beach. And then, we had Frazier Beach. Frazier Beach is on John's Island. I think I been over there but one time. But, Frazier Beach almost is- was similar to just to like Mosquito Beach.

It was- and, you know, I get to improvise calling 'em beach, and it was really a beach because you wasn't near the water.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Cubby Wilder: And, then, you couldn't get near the water unless we went 110 miles up to a place called Atlantic Beach, which is north Myrtle Beach, which is now historical. And, uh, that where

we had to go to be near the water, a real beach, 'cause we couldn't go right there.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: I'm putting you to sleep.

Reneé Donnell: No, you're not.

Cubby Wilder: Oh.

Reneé Donnell: It's hot. It's a little warm.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah, I agree.

Reneé Donnell: Yes. So, um, this is all excellent information. Okay, so you said Riverside Beach, Mosquito Beach, Edisto Beach, Frazier Beach, which was on John's Island, and I'm missing one.

Cubby Wilder: Edisto Beach, Edisto Beach is, um, was on Edisto.

Reneé Donnell: Island

Cubby Wilder: And, what they did, they had the white area nice and sandy and sandy beach, and then the Black area was roped off that you couldn't go, and then it was by the rocks and the rough part of the area.

Reneé Donnell: It was roped off?

Cubby Wilder: And, nobody would like to go down there. It was roped off. The white was over here, and the Black was in this area over here with all the rocks and the rough and the shales and all the stuff and that. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Um, and so, what was... Mosquito Beach was closer-

Cubby Wilder: No, Edisto Beach is a- was a real beach.

Reneé Donnell: Uh-huh.

Cubby Wilder: And it's still there, but no, you know, everybody is integrated now.

Reneé Donnell: Yes.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: So, while you were growing up, I know Mosquito Beach was closest to you, but was that your beach of preference to go to, or was it just-

Cubby Wilder: Yeah. My uncle owned it, so, yes. I had prestige.

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Cubby Wilder: You know, the girls was there. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: I was gonna say, did you say, "You know, my uncle owns this."

Cubby Wilder: Yeah. You know that.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm. Okay. Who was your uncle's name?

Cubby Wilder: Andrew Apple Wilder. He was a twin. And, uh, they used to call 'em Apple and Orange. That was the twin... Apple was one, and then Orange was the other one. They would call 'em Apple and Orange. And- and, my grandmother, she had, um, she- with my dad and them, they had- she had 10 kids. And, the Apple and the Orange was twins.

You know, in here, you got a lot of nicknames.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah, the aunt that I stayed with in New York, they used to call her Sweet. Her name was Elizabeth, but they used to call her Sweet. Uh-huh.

Reneé Donnell: All right, and then-

Cubby Wilder: And, my daddy would used to call my- daddy and them used to call 'em Dolly or Chick. He was a chick. (laughs) Um-

Reneé Donnell: All right. (laughs) Um, and then, what were some of the sports that were-

Cubby Wilder: Well, anyway, Gresham Meggett opened 1953.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: I started Gresham Meggett when I left New York.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Cubby Wilder: In the 7th grade.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: I started 7th grade. Then, they- the- then- this was at the high school, but, you know, now it's junior high school, seventh, eighth, and ninth are junior high, but I started 7th grade at, um, W. Gresham Meggett. And, I guess you could say I was kind of a little uh- I was in school in New York, I was a little ahead of the- the kids here, so I didn't never struggle in school. I was always pretty good. So, um.

In after the school opened up, uh, I think it was in 8th grade, they started a football team from scratch. And, uh, we did good the first year and never looked back. 'Cause, we were country boys. And, we- we always had a pretty good team. And, um, not too much basketball. They tried to do the basketball thing, but we didn't have a gym. Gresham Meggett didn't have a gym.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: And, so we did a lotta, I would say, um, yeah, agriculture. So, we- they would teach us how to- how to plant and stuff like that and move things around. Then, finally, they did the brick mason thing and the small engine stuff, and then, they got a- like, what do you call the school? Um, resource school, where you - well, if you didn't make it to college, you could- you can do other things like lay bricks, welding. What you call them school, they are.

Joshua Parks: Vocational.

Cubby Wilder: Vocation. There you go.

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Cubby Wilder: there you go, Vocational school. Yeah. So, they try to give you a trade or p- prepare you for college academic subject. The guy that didn't want the college, 'cause that- those schools were a little harder, they would take the vocational hands on stuff.

So, anyway, at Gresham Meggett, I love Gresham Meggett. I guess you would tell my interview, I was the man in that school. Yeah, I did some everything.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Cubby Wilder: Then, finally, uh, I started drive school bus- they used to let the student drive the bus, and I started- I started driving school bus in the 10th grade. So, playing football and driving the school bus and standing on the roof. You know, I had three category of ladies. (laughs) So, I had a good time. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: (laughs) Okay.

Cubby Wilder: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Um, (laughs) before school, um, I know you were driving the school bus, so that was like your job?

Cubby Wilder: Yeah. Well, the school bus, you know, I sit up and think now, a 16-year-old cannot drive a school bus now. I wouldn't dare put a 16-year-old behind the wheel. I was driving school bus I was 16 years old. And, that was, I think it- that was a lot of responsibility, and sometimes my bus be full up with kids.

And, um, I was smart enough to get the rowdiest guys to be my patrol, the guys who give me the most trouble, I said, "Listen, I'm gonna make you take a little patrol on this bus. Keep everyone in their seat, and keep them quiet." And, that work out pretty good for me, 'cause the bully, that's who you get to put in charge.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Cubby Wilder: And, they got a sense of responsibility. So, the football team was great. We won about two or three state championship.

And, when, I wasn't here when when they integrated the school in 1969, when they decided to merge, uh, James Island High School with W. Gresham Meggett, but I heard about it, that it didn't- it wasn't a smooth transition. But, we won a lot of championship, and they didn't win none, and they didn't want- they wanted to put our trophy somewhere in the background and them too said, "Oh, no. We earned these." So, anyway, finally, the merger took place, and the transition took place, so.

Um, and Mosquito Beach, all that time, was still jumping. Um, in 1959, Hurricane Gracie took that pavilion right there,

the one on that picture right there, and then my uncle built another pavilion just a little further up from that one, and that opened in 1960. And it- and, Hugo took that one. Hurricane Hugo took that one.

But, he was very- my uncle was very resourceful, because he built a pavilion, he built a motel, he built a restaurant, then he had a little grill, then he had a oyster factory, just like the oyster factory that was down on the beach. He had a oyster factory, he employed a lot of the community. People in the community, they would shuck oysters, can oyster, fill oyster, and stuff like that.

So, he had like a empire, and, um, when I came home after I went after I left the Air Force, joined the service I went to college for a year, but my folks, they had no money.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: So, I went to Voorhees College in Denmark, South Carolina, and my brother was already in college. They had no money, so I went on and joined the Air Force.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: And, I came back, didn't like nothing I seen.

Reneé Donnell: How was it different when you came back after the Air Force? Or, was it not different enough?

Cubby Wilder: Well, if you travel the world, which I had done, and you come back to your community, and you see them things that need to be done, we still didn't have the sewage-

Reneé Donnell: What year was this?

Cubby Wilder: '80- '84 or '80... I- well, um, '80- I came home in '84. Right? By '87 or '89- '88, I believe, I fought to try to get the sewage Sol Legare, and we got the sewer line put in. And, it wasn't there but just you gotta- with the government, you gotta show force. And, I got the whole- I round up the whole community, and we went downtown to the county government. "We want- we need the sewage because you got health condition, you got...". By then, people are moved to- well, not the hand pump, but well water with electric pump.

And, some people had the electric pump with the outhouse right next to it. So, I I got DHEC, I mean the health people involved. This is health condition. So, I went- I took the church bus and a bunch of people, said, "We going down here and talk to the county government. We got a health condition here."

So, I went to county council, told 'em we got a condition, here's my letter from DHEC, health department, see the condition. About six months later, \$250,000, \$350,000 came in, and then we went to the James Island PSD, that's the government body that run James Island, and same amount of people I took in that place and I said, "We need the sewage. We got a HUD grant for 1.4 million dollars, and that started they did put the sewage in.

The \$350,000, they used that for the people, the older people to tie in. After you don't get the income, you have to go to and get all the older people income, see what they qualify. And then, they install the sewer to Sol Legare.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah, and then, um, there was no sewer down on Mosquito Beach at that time, either. Believe it or not. With all our partying going on down there. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Well, okay, so, obviously, you were a big part of this community. Who was helping you, or was this all you?

Cubby Wilder: No, no, the older people.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: The older people, they rally behind you. They see you stepping up to the plate, and then older people's now- Miss Susie Backman, at the time, she had six shrimp boat, her family, and they were very prominent here in the community, and all they boats was right there. Only one out there now. If you [inaudible 00:44:01]. And Susie Backman, my mother and all these older people, they rallied behind me and when you try to do something, they gather around you. And, they gather behind me, and we got things done.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Cubby Wilder: I miss them today, 'cause the younger people, some of them, I ain't gonna say all, they got too many- the younger people got a lotta issues going on.

Reneé Donnell: Um-

Cubby Wilder: But, the older people are for progress, they always stress you go to school, learn. You know that.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Cubby Wilder: They want you go to go school, get as much education as you can, and then come back and help your community. Now, here what happened. The older people, also that third

generation, they went to New York, but they still came back home and try to build they houses.

If you look to this community, you see cinder block houses and then the government try to change the, um, they change up on us because of flood conditions that are coming, so they put our community, Sol Legare community in the most severe flood zone there is, a V7, or, I mean, V15. That mean that the houses have to go up.

So, they kinda stagnated our community, the Sol Legare, 'cause when the kids would have their money to build their houses, you had to elevate up. Foundation for house, elevate it up, but if you put poles down with cinder block whatever, you out of- you out of big money before you even can even get to build your house.

So, a lot of our young people, um left the community and settled in- in, um, in- in the north area. Many of young people because the stipulation that they set upon this community and the young people who can wait and they not- they have to try to save up they money, uh, as South Carolina being a very poor state, a lot of people still leave here to get good jobs. It's getting better. That's why you see a lot of our people Atlanta, Charlotte, all them places were paying good money.

Reneé Donnell: How do you think you can get people to come back here?

Cubby Wilder: Oh, they come. I'm telling you, if that motel gets finished, it might- I got another building there, the restaurant, if that get finished, and I can get, um, the other restaurant and stuff down there, um... Oh, when you said- you talking people in the community or people, uh-

Reneé Donnell: Like, uh-

Cubby Wilder: To- to come back to- to come back and visit?

Reneé Donnell: People- people in his generation. How do you get more of them to come back?

Cubby Wilder: Well, I gotta leave it to him. He have to rally- he's young enough to rally up the people and- and talk it up. So, if I'm going back, and he's coming, he's gonna rally up these people, keep talking. It ain't gonna be easy, 'cause some of them are pretty hard headed, and some of them think easy money is selling some drugs. But, they gotta realize one thing. Sell- you got to go on, have a foundation, and, uh, a foundation, the first thing is a home. If you get a home, leave the car alone. Get a house.

And, um, the last thing will fall in place. But, we gotta get their mindset together, because many of our young people have been brainwashed, and they don't see the significant in land. Land, they don't realize that land is money. And, sure, a lot of our properties, it is, but if we can just get heirs properties straighten out. And, they could have a house spot, and they need to build on it and live on it, and then move the next generation up.

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Cubby Wilder: And, go to school. If you can't go to school, get a trade. Do something.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm. Um, I guess, last question, What- what are your hopes for Sol Legare and this area coming up? So, what would you like-

Cubby Wilder: Well, Sol Legare now is, um, Sol Legare was all Black when I was a kid. It's salt and pepper now. And, what I see is folks moving in the community. I was a community leader for a long time, and like I'm trying to ease myself out of, um, out of some of the leadership, and- as the young people step up, then I just sit back and enjoy my Air Force retirement, my, I teach school for a little bit. All that, retire from that, I could kick back and you know, but what I'd like to see is, uh, them to show that they can maintain what is here, they legacy.

And, I am very disappointed with Backman Seafood, because I was old enough to remember Miss Susie Backman and Thomas Backman, they had seven boys and one girl, and they had a empire. They started from one shrimp boat, they got another shrimp boat, and now, by the time they empire grow into six shrimp boat of the modern day shrimp boat, and they died. And, they legacy is not being maintained. That place right over there right now should be on the National Register of Historical Places. All they gotta do, it's already been noted that they should be, but they not doing anything to the paperwork. The paperwork got to be initiated.

And, um, they were- and, and with Back- Susie Backman, let me tell you something, uh, when she had all those shrimp boat, nobody never go hungry. She would, uh, they kept a load of shrimp, fish and shrimp. She would want it out to the community, 'cause it was a poor community, but nobody went hungry. We didn't know we was poor, 'cause everybody ate.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Cubby Wilder: And, had good time, and had fun. You know? So, I would like to see, um, if I could get the motel and the- and my restaurant back together, I may go back at the, uh, there no pavilion there over the water now, but I've been thinking about maybe a big, building a gazebo over the water down on Mosquito Beach, and with the good food, a place to go, and all that down there, I'm talking about good food and, and, uh, openness, transparency, we could have a- Sol Legare and this community and Mosquito Beach can come back with good, innovative, um, plans and programs. And dancing. Gotta dance.

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah, I like to dance now

Reneé Donnell: Yes.

Cubby Wilder: (laughs) I was on time. I can't do the new one now, that new Electric Slide. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: I'm sure you can.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah, I- oh, maybe if I take time. I might take the time, you know.

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Cubby Wilder: (laughs) Oh, yeah. But, the old Electric Slide, I got that pat down.

Anne Wiman: [inaudible 00:51:57]

Cubby Wilder: When I was on a cruise, uh, two years ago, what was- before COVID got, so you know where I stayed at? 'Cause, I don't

have a wife right now. Me and my wife, um, separated long time ago. But, um, I was right there by the pool area on the ship by the bar area. That's where I stood at. And the music was right there all over, so I was cutting the rug, looking at the ladies, (laughs) and having a good time. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: (laughs) [inaudible 00:52:34].

Cubby Wilder: You done with me? Or, you done now, right?

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah.

Anne Wiman: I'll come get that.

Cubby Wilder: Yeah.



JOSEPHINE BROWN WILLIAM E. BROWN JAMES ARTHUR WASHINGTON

William E. Brown: ... but yeah, and um-

Anne Wiman: I am rolling. See that light and this count?

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Anne Wiman: So, that's gonna count how long we're recording.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

William E. Brown: Um, Billy was tellin' us, or, or Laura was tellin' us that [inaudible 00:00:09].

James Washington: Oh yeah?

William E. Brown: Yeah.

James Washington: Hmm.

Josephine Brown: Well, I think they're ready.

William E. Brown: All right.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. So, um, we are recording now. I'm just going to give you a brief introduction, and then we'll get into it. So, we are going to, or I'm gonna be asking you mainly about different areas or neighborhoods, um, on James and Johns Islands. Um, but you can share as much as you want. I have some guiding questions, but all information is welcome. Um, okay. So, would you be able to say your names, and then spell it. And then we'll do that for each person.

William E. Brown: Okay. You want me to spell and say my name? (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Yes.

William E. Brown: Okay. (laughs). Well, my name is William E. Brown Senior. And that's W-I-L-L-I-A-M, E, period, Brown, B-R-O-W-N, S-R, Senior.

Josephine Brown: My name is Josephine Brown. J-O-S-E-P-H-I-N-E B-R-O-W-N.

James Washington: My name is James A. Washington. J-A-M-E-S, uh, and Arthur's my middle name, A-R-T-H-E-R. Washington, W-A-S-H-I-N-G-T-O-N, Senior.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Thank you guys very much. So, um, I know that you are from here. Is your family from James or Johns Island?

James Washington: James Island.

Josephine Brown: James Island.

Reneé Donnell: James Island, okay. And how long has your family been on James Island?

James Washington: Well, I'm 78-years-old, so they been there before me, and then I'm the youngest boy. I got uh, seven, uh, seven? Seven ahead of, front of me.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

James Washington: There was 10 of us all together, she's the youngest. (laughs). I'm the youngest boy, at 78.

Reneé Donnell: All right. So, were you parents the first ones on James Island? Like, how long has your family in general?

James Washington: I think in our graveyard it was, uh, they was coming, daddy was 18?

Josephine Brown: 18 or, 1890, 18 ...

James Washington: 90?

Josephine Brown: 97 or 1878 somethin' like that.

James Washington: Yeah, something' like that.

Josephine Brown: That's, that's ...

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And for you, sir?

William E.: Okay. My mother was born in, uh, Florida.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

William E. Brown: Um, my father, right here on James Island. Um, like he says..

Josephine Brown: And his father?

William E.: Huh?

Josephine Brown: And his father.

William E. Brown: His father's from James Island too.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

William E. Brown: Um, I can't give you no dates. But um, my grandfather was a native of James Island.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. All right. And then, uh, what was, since y'all are brother and sister, what was family life like growin' up on James Island?

James Washington: To me, back then it was all right, (laughs). It was good, but we- where the country...

William E. Brown: Used to be.

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

James Washington: And we lived right by the water, and all highway Central Park Road, wasn't that where we live at...

Josephine Brown: To where ...

James Washington: ...we lived off of a dirt road, dirt.

Josephine Brown: Yes.

James Washington: And we couldn't go to the road. We had to stay back in there.

Josephine Brown: Only time we went is, went is when we went-

William E. Brown: To school.

Josephine Brown: ... to school.

James Washington: School.

Josephine Brown: And we had to walk from, what they have here-

James Washington: From Central Park Road-

Josephine Brown: Only time we went to all the way to, um, where the Cut Bridge School on Riverland Dr. And when we get to the school if it rain-

James Washington: No, if tide high.

Josephine Brown: Tide high.

James Washington: (laughs)

Josephine Brown: And for us to-

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William E. Brown: [inaudible 00:04:47]. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Sorry.

Josephine Brown: And, in order to get to the school, a lot of times to get out of our road, a lot of times if the tide high, we had to walk across little block, you know, bricks in the b-, rocks in the road. I was always the scary one, 'cause I-

James Washington: (laughs)

Josephine Brown: ... the water was rushing, you know how rushing water under [inaudible 00:05:14]. So, you had to, you had to-

William E. Brown: Take off your shoes.

Josephine Brown: ... take your shoes off, and-

James Washington: Yeah, walk across it.

Josephine Brown: Walk across the w-water. And sometimes the tide would be high, but you still had to go to school. Yeah.

James Washington: Then when you get to school, in order to get to school you got to walk through water across the ditch, or to get to the school, the tide, um, high, and in order to get to school, you have to walk across that, and walk through the water to get to school Cut Bridge school.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, um, all right. So, what would you say is the name of the area that you guys grew up in?

James Washington: That's-

Josephine Brown: The name?

James Washington: Yep.

Reneé Donnell: Yes, like-

James Washington: Down Cut?

Josephine Brown: Down Cut.

James Washington: Down Cut?

Josephine Brown: No, Cross Cut.

James Washington: Cross Cut. Cross Cut.

Reneé Donnell: Cross Cut?

James Washington: Cross Cut, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And so you said you were born in Florida?

William E. Brown: No, no, my, my mother was.

Reneé Donnell: Your mom was, okay.

William E. Brown: I'm, all my 78 years right here on James Island.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And were you also from the Cross Cut area?

William E. Brown: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Josephine Brown: He was from the city side. (laughs)

James Washington: (laughs)

William E. Brown: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: So, all right, so you are all from the Cross Cut area. Does this map look like an accurate depiction of the boundaries of Cross Cut.

James Washington: Um, the only thing I see here is where Turkey Pen and stuff. I don't see-

William E. Brown: You said Cross Cut?

Reneé Donnell: Yes, Cross Cut.

William E. Brown: [inaudible 00:06:56].

James Washington: Oh, Cross Cut down here. Cross Cut here.

William E. Brown: Okay. Right here where you got Cross Cut the boundary which separating Down Cut and Cross Cut was the water. That was a little bridge across there that separated um-

Josephine Brown: The Down Cut-

William E. Brown: And, and Cross Cut.

Josephine Brown: And that is where the school was.

William E. Brown: Yeah.

Josephine Brown: Right in there.

William E. Brown: Right off Riverland drive, just before you get to the bridge from Cross Cut side.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. So, Cut Bridge School was on the Cross Cut side?

Josephine Brown: Right, mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Do you, um, we have pushpins, would you be able to put a pin on the map where Cut Bridge School was?

James Washington: If we can find (laughs).

William E. Brown: This one here depicts it a whole lot better than, um, than that. You know? See, but I see what she's sayin', you can stick it in the cardboard over there. Yeah, you

just, you have to make an indication on that just like they did with Brad store and all that.

Reneé Donnell: If you would like, you can put an X. X marks the spot.

William E. Brown: Okay. Okay.

Reneé Donnell: And that's where the school was?

William E. Brown: Right.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

William E. Brown: That was, like he says, uh, the tide come up, there were many days where you spent on the side of the road all do-, all day long. An entire day on the side of the road because the water went so, so high that in the lunch section, the water went into the building.

Reneé Donnell: It might not show up. [inaudible 00:08:52].

James Washington: [Crosstalk 00:08:53]. Yeah, that's the water come through, [inaudible 00:08:56].

Josephine Brown: [Crosstalk 00:08:57].

James Washington: Uh-huh.

Josephine Brown: You, you [Crosstalk 00:09:00].

James Washington: Right here. [inaudible 00:09:03].

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Okay.

James Washington: [inaudible 00:09:07]. That's where the water come through, I think.

William E. Brown: Yeah.

James Washington: [inaudible 00:09:13].

Josephine Brown: Oh yeah.

James Washington: And back over here was a store over here too. I never remember that store.

Josephine Brown: A store?

James Washington: Yeah, a store was over there around the side of cut-, around Down Cut.

William E. Brown: Oh, Down Cut side. Yeah, but I don't remember that either.

James Washington: [inaudible 00:09:37].

William E. Brown: It was a little wooden store, yeah.

James Washington: (laughs). Right around here somewhere. That's the Ferguson valley.

Josephine Brown: I remember this.

William E. Brown: Yeah, just before you get to Ferguson Road.

James Washington: Yeah. Uh-huh. Right around here somewhere.

William E. Brown: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And which store was that?

James Washington: Um, I-

William E. Brown: (laughs)

James Washington: I don't remember the store hardly-

William E. Brown: [inaudible 00:09:45].

Josephine Brown: We couldn't go beyond that.

William E Brown.: Couldn't go beyond-

James Washington: And the bridge stopped right here.

Josephine Brown: We couldn't go beyond the bridge.

James Washington: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

James Washington: And the bridge stop right here.

Josephine Brown: And, and the bridge was a wooden bridge. It was made of wood, and you could hear it

James Washington: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

William E. Brown: And the teachers had authority then. They could, um, come by your house, and you get one whooping at school, and another one at home.

Josephine Brown: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: I heard of that from my dad.

Josephine Brown: (laughs)

William E. Brown: That's a fact. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: So, okay, so I know that you guys are from the Cross Cut area. Do you know of any other neighborhoods or areas that are not mentioned on this map this, um, would also be historic neighborhoods that could have been around while y'all were growin' up? So, we have the Cross Cut, Down Cut, Turkey Pen, Ferguson Village. Any others?

William E. Brown: No they... Cross Cut was just mainly everybody.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

William E. Brown: See?

Josephine Brown: Well, what about the Laurel Park area where Drayton and them live at?

James Washington: That come afterwards. That's comin', that's probably was the late '60s.

Josephine Brown: Oh, really?

James Washington: Yeah.

Josephine Brown: Them Draytons didn't, didn't-

James Washington: Drayton he ain't never had nothin' there. All that was Down Cut or Cross Cut.

William E. Brown: Cross Cut, yeah.

Josephine Brown: Oh.

James Washington: Laurel Park when they built that up, they named it Laurel Park.

Josephine Brown: No, um, hmm.

William E. Brown: Laurel Park was the white subdivision. And every-, everybody in Flint Street, you from here, are you familiar with any of James Island?

Reneé Donnell: I've been reading a lot about it, but I am not from here.

William E. Brown: Okay, well you know the post office on Central Park Road is?

Reneé Donnell: Yes.

William E. Brown: Okay.

Josephine Brown: They recordin'?

William E. Brown: Okay, just below that-

Reneé Donnell: Hold on just a second.

William E. Brown: Okay.

Josephine Brown: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Okay, go ahead.

William E. Brown: Just below that going toward Riverland Drive, is a street called Flint Street, that he was talking about. The Draytons live back up in there.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

William E. Brown: Um, Up on the Hill Road, was almost across from that too.

Josephine Brown: Up on the Hill Road is a little further down. It never, it never had a name.

William E. Brown: Well, that's where they got on it now-

Josephine Brown: I know, but-

William E.: Brown Up on Hill Road, but all that would be Cross Cut.

Josephine Brown: Well, yeah.

William E. Brown: Yeah, see all, all the Black area was still Cross Cut.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And the Flint Street was the white area?

William E. Brown: Flint Street was where the Blacks lived back up in there, off the road.

Josephine Brown: Front part.

William E. Brown: Yeah.

Josephine Brown: And then the Black part.

James Washington: All the way back in the woods.

Reneé Donnell: So the front part was for-

Josephine Brown: The whites, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: The whites. And then the ... Okay.

William E. Brown: When you say front part, it was-

Josephine Brown: Front part of the highway.

William E. Brown: ... was mostly toward Folly Road.

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

William E.: Brown All the other ones still was Black area. Am I wrong or?

Josephine Brown: [inaudible 00:12:59].

James Washington: That's uh, from Seabrook Island

William E. Brown : Seabrook, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay, that, that helps. And the back part, you said it backed up to the woods? Is there-

James Washington: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Okay. And then what made Cross Cut special? So when you guys were growin' up or yeah, what made Cross Cut special? Was there like special hangout places, or were there different festivals, or annual celebrations? What were some things that made Cross Cut unique?

James Washington: Uh, Cross Cut, we had our, our little club to go to.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

James Washington: And down, down at the end of the road-

Josephine Brown: Used to call it Bee Corner.

James Washington: Bee Corner. Yeah, Bee Corner.

Josephine Brown: (laughs)

James Washington: That's where we used to go at, a little club there. And they, and back before our time. You had three, it was three clubs there.

William E. Brown: Jazz Box.

James Washington: Yeah, yeah, that's, that's Jazz Box there.

William E. Brown: Yeah.

James Washington: Then there was another place across the road like in Central Park on the, Boone Drive, had a little club outside.

William E. Brown: Yeah, the little, uh, ice cream parlor across.

James Washington: [inaudible 00:14:25] ice cream, back then you ain't have no ice cream parlor.

William E. Brown: Yeah, we had ice cream.

James Washington: Oh yeah?

William E. Brown: Yeah.

Josephine Brown: And remember Ms. Persil and them used to sell, um, ice cream.

James Washington: Yeah?

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Where was this ice cream parlor?

William E. Brown: Okay, there was one on [inaudible 00:14:38] side of the road too.

James Washington: Uh-huh. Yeah. [inaudible 00:14:47].

William E. Brown: And then there was one across the road. And then B had another, or Ms. Persil had another little one on the side.

James Washington: Yeah. Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

William E. Brown: So ... You don't remember that?

Josephine Brown: I don't remember.

William E. Brown: You too young?

James Washington: (laughs)

William E. Brown: (laughs)

James Washington: [inaudible 00:14:59] where Bee house at, another place was over there.

William E. Brown: Yeah.

James Washington: Then was, what you call them? Moose built a house there, and she had the restaurant and [inaudible 00:15:08].

William E. Brown: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: So you're saying that there were three ice cream parlors?

William E. Brown: Well, yes. Was, um, was one on the, how would you put it? Okay, the intersection of Riverland Drive and Central Park. When you get to the intersection of Riverland Drive and Central Park, there was one, they had a little ice cream thing on the corner of Riverland Drive and Central Park. At the end of Central Park, across Riverland Drive, they had another little parlor. And then the other one, you were talking about by Ms. Piroleau them that was there too. 'Cause I know, I, I remember that one, 'cause

I got my behind cut over that. (laughs). I remember that one good. And then they built the club right there, you know, they turned, which is still there.

James Washington: Yeah. He could, I couldn't go there though. (laughs). We couldn't go that far.

William E. Brown: Had to be back by sundown, and I didn't make it.

Josephine Brown: (laughs)

William E. Brown: So, I got my behind cut.

Reneé Donnell: All right, so we had an ice cream parlor. Your cousin was tellin' me about this Bee Corner.

William E. Brown: Right.

James Washington: Mm-hmm.

Josephine Brown: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: And Club Villa?

William E. Brown: That's the other one, Club Villa-

James Washington: Club Villa would follow that. Yeah. Uh-huh.

Reneé Donnell: Yes, okay.

William E. Brown: See, that's why you get people together, you get more information because some things that we forget, that person will pick up. And Club Villa was one that, uh, I forgot all about it.

James Washington: Yeah, Club Villa, yeah. Uh-huh.

William E. Brown: So, that, that was a club.

James Washington: Yeah.

Josephine Brown: And, we also had, Ms. Persil she had a beauty shop.

James Washington: Beauty shop, yeah.

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Josephine Brown: Yeah, it was like right across the street from Riley Road. And uh, so it was, it's really a shop.

Reneé Donnell: Do you know what the name of that, um, beauty salon was?

Josephine Brown: [inaudible 00:17:40].

William E. Brown: [inaudible 00:17:40].

Josephine Brown: We used to call it uh, Ms. Persil. Ms. Persil's Beauty Shop.

William E. Brown: That's right. (laughs)

James Washington: I think a store was there too, eh?

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

James Washington: Had a little store there too huh.

Josephine Brown: Um, I think Mr. Dunmar them um, was stayin' in there, they used to sell ice cream at that store. I remember going there, buying ice cream.

James Washington: Dunmar and them were staying there?

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

James Washington: [inaudible 00:17:49].

Josephine Brown: Yeah. That's-

James Washington: I knew someone was staying there. I forget who it was.

Josephine Brown: And they used to sell ice cream out there, out the store.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And then were there any meeting places that you guys could, maybe as teens or something, was there a place that you guys could go to hang out, or did you just go fishing, or church was your hangout spot?

James Washington: Yeah, yeah.

William E. Brown: Yeah, church was number one.

James Washington: Church.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

James Washington: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: And what church did you guys go to? Did y'all go to the same church or?

James Washington: We, yeah, we-

William E. Brown: Basically, Bethel church was... (laughs)

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

James Washington: Yeah, but we used to go to, uh, Presbyterian Church, our father's church Presbyterian Church.

William E. Brown: But you didn't go to Bethel?

James Washington: Every now and then when we can't go to Presbyterian Church, we had to walk and go to, um, Bethel Church. We go to Bethel Church 'cause Bethel Church was close by us.

Josephine Brown: Yeah, you could walk.

James Washington: But then my daddy's church was all the way down the island out here, the Presbyterian Church. And uh, I think-

Reneé Donnell: The St. James Presbyterian?

James Washington: St. James Presby-, Uh-huh that was daddy. And we always go there. And um, after we get a certain age, I think 16 or 17, we had to seek to join a church, you know about that?

Reneé Donnell: Not yet.

William E. Brown: (laughs)

James Washington: (laughs)

Josephine Brown: (laughs)

James Washington: Uh, we had [inaudible 00:19:16] church. We had to go in the wilderness.

Reneé Donnell: The wilderness?

William E. Brown: Yes, outside in the dark at night.

James Washington: Three times. Three times, three times a day like 5:00, 6:00 in the evenin', 12:00 at night, about 6:00 in the mornin'.

Reneé Donnell: And what were you doin' there?

William E. Brown: (laughs)

James Washington: Oh, prayers. Get on your knees and pray. I guess some people don't pray too-

Josephine Brown: And hope you don't-

James Washington: (laughs)

Josephine Brown: And hope you don't kneel down in no ant nests.

James Washington: yeah prayin.

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

William E. Brown: And you dream-

James Washington: And dream.

William E. Brown: You had a dream, and the dream-

James Washington: What church.

William E. Brown: The church you go to.

James Washington: What church you supposed to go to, who's your leader.

William E. Brown: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

William E. Brown: Your spiritual leader.

Reneé Donnell: And what was the name of this wooded area again?

William E. Brown: Just outside your house.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. (laughs)

Josephine Brown: (laughs)

James Washington: (laughs)

William E. Brown: James Island was built up now, everybody had woods in the backyard.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

James Washington: James Island was nothing like it is now. James Island was James Island back then, cars, one time when I was coming up, you might see a car every 15, 20 minutes. Back in the '50s, I was born in '43, and I think when I was six-years-old, uh, you were born in-

William E. Brown: '47.

James Washington: '47.

Josephine Brown: Me? '47.

James Washington: '47. '47.

Josephine Brown: Mm-hmm.

James Washington: And uh, we saw- Folly Road is a, a horse and a buggy. Ridin' off Folly Road, and people throw a, throw ball at us, and they would call us names and everything. (laughs). Down off Folly Road. horse and carriage.

William E. Brown: But those are things that we ... I too went to Bethel Church when I couldn't go to my, um, mother and father's home church was Payne Church church at the time. Um, and like we said you, you went to church. There wasn't no, really no special place that you gathered when we were comin' up, when we were teenagers.

James Washington: No, now older people had-

Josephine Brown: They gathered at the baseball field.

James Washington: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Tell me about this baseball field.

Josephine Brown: Yeah, that's what they did.

James Washington: [inaudible 00:21:29].

Josephine Brown: They were, they were the entertainers of the island. Every Sunday. (laughs)

William E. Brown: Saturday and Sunday. (laughs)

James Washington: Saturday and Sunday.

Josephine Brown: Saturday and Sunday, and if you ain't goin' to church, you can't go to the game.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

William E. Brown: You couldn't, you couldn't play ball either. Now, I couldn't play. I can't talk for him.

James Washington: Yep, I couldn't-

Josephine Brown: Yes, so that the gathering, s-

James Washington: Yeah, I had to work. 'Cause my father died when I was 10-years-old. And with nine of us, and my second oldest brother had to quit school to work to help mama. And, and the rest of us went to school. And uh-

Josephine Brown: So that, uh, that gathering, ball, was that at the school yard.

James Washington: Yeah, and that's-

Reneé Donnell: At Cross Cut, Cross Cut Bridge School?

Josephine Brown: It was Murray-La Saine.

James Washington: Murray-La Saine.

Josephine Brown: When Murray-La Saine first got built.

William E. Brown: That was '56?

James Washington: Yeah, '56, '57,

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay, then. And you said Morris Inn? Morris Inn?

Josephine Brown: Hmm?

Reneé Donnell: Where was the ... Which church? I mean sorry, which school did you say the baseball...?

Josephine Brown: Murray-La Saine.

Reneé Donnell: All right. And can you spell that for me?

Josephine Brown: M-U-R-R-A-Y-L-A-S-A-I-N-E. And that was an elementary school.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: I haven't heard of that school yet.

Josephine Brown: It's still there.

William E. Brown: Yeah, it's still there.

Josephine Brown: (laughs)

William E. Brown: It's a Montessori school now.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And you said that was in the '50s about?

William E. Brown: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: 60s.

William E. Brown: '50s.

James Washington: '55, '54, '55. '55, '56?

William E. Brown: '56.

James Washington: '56?

Josephine Brown: And the unique thing about Cross Cut is, um, there was a public transportation, but it only came in the white area, and so you had to walk miles if you needed-

Library Intercom: May I have your attention please? The time is now 7:30, and the library will be closing in 30 minutes.

Josephine Brown: And, uh, so if you need to go in, like, my mom and when she had to go shoppin', we had to catch the bus. We had to-

James Washington: Catch a ride.

Josephine Brown: Catch a ride to go to the bus stop, or else you, you walk, it, it'd take you a long time to get to the bus stop. And, and of course when you get to the bus stop, you got to go find your seat in the back of the bus. And so, uh, and the bus only runs like every two-and-a-half hours or so. (laughs). And so ...

Reneé Donnell: So, you saying that actually brings up two questions for me.

Josephine Brown: Okay.

Reneé Donnell: One, where were you guys going shopping? Was it on James, or did y'all have to go into Charleston?

Josephine Brown: In Charleston.

James Washington: South Windermere in the city.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

James Washington: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: And then where, where were ... 'Cause I know that the majority of the population on James was African American.

James Washington: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Where did the white people live? Did they all live in one area, like they just-

Josephine Brown: Kinda like, yeah. Mm-hmm. Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Where did they live?

Josephine Brown: Like in-

Reneé Donnell: Can you show us on the map?

Josephine Brown: [inaudible 00:25:04].

James Washington: Um, it was Woodland Drive, Woodland Terrace.

Josephine Brown: Riverland, Woodland.

James Washington: Woodland Terrace.

Josephine Brown: Is it on the map? Is it on this? I don't think it is.

James Washington: Woodland Terrace. Woodland Terrace. It's on there.

Josephine Brown: You see it?

William E. Brown: No.

James Washington: Wappoo Hall. It's up in here somewhere in there, right by the waterside.

William E. Brown: It's by the golf course.

Josephine Brown: By the golf course, yes.

James Washington: By the golf course, this where the golf course at. Right around here, yeah.

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

James Washington: Back by the water. This is the water right here.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

James Washington: The back side here

Reneé Donnell: And because I'm upside down, what water is that river?

James Washington: [inaudible 00:25:41].

William E. Brown: That's the, um, Wappoo River.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

James Washington: That's where mom used to work offa [inaudible 00:25:47] in that area. Yeah, all that was stayin- white people was stayin' over here. And down...

Josephine Brown: Stefan Drive, Stefan.

James Washington: What is that? S-E?

Josephine Brown: The name sound familiar, but I don't ... Stefan.

James Washington: Woodland Shores Road. Yeah. Woodland Shores Road that will go to, what you call it? Go into here.

William E. Brown: Go into Maybank?

James Washington: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And so, if the area of Cross Cut is only within those lines, what was all of this land above it called?

James Washington: Over here? Over here?

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Josephine Brown: I don't know, 'cause we was never allowed. (laughs)

James Washington: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Josephine Brown: We only went there to go to work and,. Go with my mom to work.

James Washington: Yeah right in this area, go to work in that area, yeah.

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

James Washington: It was all the white people staying over here that go work over there.

William E. Brown: You had the country club, we had Laurel Park. Um-

William E. Brown: Huh?

James Washington: That's after, after we get at least 16 years old.

William E. Brown: Yeah, but those are the areas that, uh, off of Harbor View Road.

Josephine Brown: Oh yeah, mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Um, all right so you mentioned that's where we would go to work. So what kinda jobs were available?

James Washington: Cutting yard and housework.

Josephine Brown: Domestic and yard work.

William E. Brown: Workin' in the farm, workin' on the farms.

Reneé Donnell: Okay, farm work.

Josephine Brown: Domestic.

Reneé Donnell: Domestic work. Okay.

Josephine Brown: Cutting yards, mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And I guess kinda goin' back to the question about big events or festivals that happened. What were, what were ... Were there any festivals or annual celebrations?

James Washington: Yeah, every year-

Josephine Brown: May Day. (laughs)

James Washington: May Day, and uh, you go-

Josephine Brown: We go to the beach. Once a year.

James Washington: Once a year, that's in June.

Josephine Brown: Atlantic Beach. (laughs)

James Washington: After that, we made us a picnic, and all saved money. We'd go to Atlantic Beach. Yeah. And uh, sometimes I may says uh-

William E. Brown: Well, the Easter Festival.

James Washington: Yeah, and we'd go by Burke School, every year-

Josephine Brown: The fairgrounds?

James Washington: Fairgrounds, yeah. Fairgrounds, yeah that's it. We'd go to the fairgrounds by Burke School.

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

James Washington: Every year.

William E. Brown: October, November.

Josephine Brown: Mm-hmm.

James Washington: Yeah. And the white folks have it the week before. Two weeks before, we have it the next week.

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: The fairgrounds?

William E. Brown: Right

James Washington: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And what was May Day?

James Washington: May Day, that's James Island church and where you uh,

Josephine Brown: That's a church get together.

William E. Brown: Yeah, you get together. They had a pool there and-

Josephine Brown: Plant the May pole (laughs)

William E. Brown: You, they had these different ... How many rivers that come off that?

James Washington: Different kind of river, yeah.

Josephine Brown: Yeah, and you plant the may pole.

William E. Brown: You go in and out, and all that.

Josephine Brown: Yeah. And I mean and they have all kind of things, bobbing for apples.

James Washington: Yeah.

Josephine Brown: They did, uh, what else they did?

James Washington: Candy apples, eat, cotton candy.

Josephine Brown: Yeah. (laughs). A couple sack race.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Josephine Brown: Did, um, They had, um, the march.

Reneé Donnell: So, where, where did May Day take place?

Josephine Brown: At the, um Presbyterian Church.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Josephine Brown: Front yard.

James Washington: Yeah, we still have it.

Josephine Brown: Yeah, they still have it.

James Washington: Last week they had it.

Josephine Brown: Yeah, still it's going on.

James Washington: I think the two years before we didn't have that because of the COVID thing.

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

James Washington: Um, and we have all the fire truck, and the police men, and car dress up parade and all that.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

James Washington: Motorcycle.

Josephine Brown: (laughs)

James Washington: Tractor trailer. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

James Washington: Horse and ridin' buggy, horse and wagon. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: (laughs). Okay. And so that's pretty good. Can you tell me, what were the closest communities to you? So I know based on what he said, he didn't get out much out of Cross Cut. But if you did, or if you knew what was out there, what were the neighboring, uh-

James Washington: Uh, when we get a little older, 'Squito Beach.

Reneé Donnell: Skinny Beach?

James Washington: Mosquito Beach.

Josephine Brown: Mosquito Beach. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Oh, okay. (laughs)

William E. Brown: Well, they call it 'Squito Beach.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Josephine Brown: (laughs)

James Washington: That was the party place. That's when we get older, and see, I think I was 17, 18 when I first gone there.

William E. Brown: Yeah, we were almost on our own, you know?

James Washington: (laughs)

Josephine Brown: No. (laughs)

William E. Brown: We weren't afraid of gettin' killed.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Okay.

William E. Brown: Father, we had family out, basically we had family all over the island. They had family on Peas Hill. People on what we call down there Rainbow Road, Barn Hill, and stuff like that. There was another section of James Island, Barn Hill, Bee Field, Scott Hill.

James Washington: Grimball

William E. Brown: So...

Josephine Brown: So, you visit your family.

William E. Brown: Mostly, you visit family at that time.

James Washington: No, you don't go to Folly Beach now.

Reneé Donnell: You don't go to Folly Beach?

James Washington: You don't go the Folly Beach.

Reneé Donnell: Why not?

James Washington: That was the white folks beach.

William E. Brown: (laughs)

Josephine Brown: That's why we had to go to Atlantic Beach once a year, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

William E. Brown: The big one day vacation.

James Washington: (laughs). Have a party there, carry a lunch and everything else.

William E. Brown: And you wanted, if you want fried chicken you better go kill that chicken in the yard. You think I'm kiddin'?

James Washington: He serious.

William E. Brown: (laughs)

James Washington: Back then in our fathers time, we don't go to the store that much. Only thing we go to the store for to buy grits- I mean rice, sugar, and, and, grits. That's the only thing we'd buy.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

William E. Brown: Everything else you got from the field.

Josephine Brown: Or out of the river.

William E. Brown: That's right.

James Washington: And the grits, uh, some of our uncles used to grind the corn up and make the grits. Yellow corn make yellow grits, white corn make white grits. Uh, grind it up, and then-

William E. Brown: And we always had somethin' people goin' in the river catchin' shrimp, crab, fish.

James Washington: And mullet was the real deal.

William E. Brown: (laughs)

James Washington: They go there and catch a boat full of mullet.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

William E. Brown: Life was simple back then, but uh, wasn't too bad. I mean, like you say, you couldn't leave home unless they say, "Hey, you can go such and such a place, but be back by such and such a time." And they was strict on that. We didn't have all this shootin', and cuttin', and fightin', and all that you have now.

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Josephine Brown: They fought, you'd fight. (laughs)

William E. Brown: Well, you didn't have-

Josephine Brown: You fight with hands. (laughs)

William E. Brown: You fight with this, yeah. You get beat, that's you just got beat. But now you-

James Washington: That's a friend afterwards (laughs)

William E. Brown: Ain't no lie, you end up be friends. (laughs)

Josephine Brown: (laughs)

William E. Brown: But you know, this what's happenin' now is just outrageous. I mean, and you teach, my parents taught me that we were equal or the same as anybody else. And the, I teach my kids the same thing. That they're

no better than anybody else, that other people are no better than you. And I believe that to today. I don't never take too much stuff, but uh, I didn't get in too many fights. But we'd, (laughs), we did fight.

Reneé Donnell: Well-

William E. Brown: But we, most of the guys that we grew up with did pretty good.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

William E. Brown: And now, just like he said, he came from a large family, I did too. I'm the oldest of 11 head of kids. The youngest is ... I'm 78, soon to be hopefully 79. My youngest is 61.

James Washington: you're not 79 huh.

William E. Brown: Shut up, boy.

James Washington: (laughs). You say you're on the 9th.

Josephine Brown: The 9th of June.

William E. Brown: The 9th of June, that's me.

James Washington: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Josephine Brown: (laughs)

James Washington: (laughs)

Josephine Brown: Stay in your lane, stay in your lane. (laughs)

James Washington: I ain't gonna say nothing else bout that. (laughs)

William E. Brown: My youngest brother was born in '61 when I graduated high school. So, we all ... And mainly believe it or not, they said it took v-, it took a village to raise kids back then.

James Washington: That's right.

William E. Brown: Anybody would cut your behind if you did wrong.

Josephine Brown: Mm-hmm.

William E. Brown: And don't come home and cryin' to mama and daddy because-

William E. Brown: Won't say nun, but they make you want to cry now. (laughs). And you had to get your own stick. Some people got beat by rope. I was blessed, I only got beat with an extension cord. (laughs). They rope'll give you a fever or somethin' like that. I don't know.

Josephine Brown: (laughs)

William E. Brown: But we, led a sheltered life. Believe it or not.

James Washington: But I tell you one thing, we thanks them right now. We thank, I know I thank my dad, but my dad beat me, and he never.... (laughs)

William E. Brown: (laughs)

Josephine Brown: No, Milly.

James Washington: Milly the cat and uh.

Josephine Brown: The rat.

James Washington: The rat, the cat and the rat. (laughs) See, she ain't never get no beatin'

Josephine Brown: I did.

James Washington: You get it from mama?

Josephine Brown: I got, when we went swimmin' in the river.

James Washington: not, oh daddy?

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

James Washington: Oh, you were. Oh yeah?

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: So, family was really important?

William E. Brown: Everybody.

James Washington: Yes, yeah.

Josephine Brown: Yes.

James Washington: And they, they raise us, older ones take care of the young one right down the line. If the young one do somethin' wrong, or something like that the old ones get their behind cut first. You take care your sister and your brother, the youngest one gone c'mon. That's the way we come up, and that's why we so close, uh, with nine of us, and uh, we, we close. Uh, Sherrie, my sister, and my sister had, uh, sister and them sleep in one bedroom to herself but we sleep up in the attic. (laughs)

William E. Brown: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: The attic?

William E. Brown: Yeah.

Josephine Brown: Either the attic or the barn.

James Washington: Yeah, or the barn.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

James Washington: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. (laughs)

James Washington: With the cow and the horse.

William E. Brown: You learnin' something, huh?

Reneé Donnell: Yes. So you chose to sleep in the barn?

William E. Brown: No, they just sent you in the barn.

James Washington: Chose? you got four rooms, you got a kitchen, dining room, living, dining room, two bedrooms. The girls sleep in one bedroom, daddy and girls sleep in the house. The boys got to go outside. And my older brothers sleep in the what you call it? Then when you got older, you'd go out in the, in the attic and sleep in the attic.

Library Intercom: May I have your attention please? The time is now 7:45, and the library will be closing in 15 minutes.

Reneé Donnell: So, we are going to be, I apologize, but we are going to be ending this.

Josephine Brown: Okay.

Reneé Donnell: It was a pleasure speaking with you. Is there anything else you guys would like to add about the history of James Island, or your experience in James Island?

Josephine Brown: Mmm. I think, I think about, I covered all I know.

James Washington: Yeah, I covered all I know too.

William E. Brown: Basically, we, (coughs).

James Washington: A lot of things, uh, Folly Rd. farm down there, [inaudible 00:38:27].

Josephine Brown: [inaudible 00:38:30].

James Washington: [inaudible 00:38:30].

William E. Brown: McCleod?

James Washington: McCleod. McCleod, and so forth in there.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

James Washington: Uh, but we never, our family never-

Josephine Brown: His family, his family lived in McCleod.

Reneé Donnell: Oh, okay. Um, in one of those -

James Washington: Little houses.

Reneé Donnell: ... buildings that are still out there today?

William E. Brown: Yes, one of those buildings.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

William E. Brown: Mm-hmm. And when they socialized, there was a big bonfire in the yard, that's how they socialized, because the houses were so small you couldn't get everybody in there. And most of the people who lived were family.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

William E. Brown: And wasn't, let's see, wasn't too long ago that they moved out of there.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

William E. Brown: When I say not too long ago, I mean about '60s or early '70s.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

William E. Brown: So, then, they made a park in there now, McCleod Park.

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

William E. Brown: So ...

Reneé Donnell: Last question. Rainbow Road, you mentioned that. What is, where is Rainbow Road?

William E. Brown: Oh you ain't talking Porgy and Bess.

Josephine Brown: Na-

Reneé Donnell: I've heard about Porgy and Bess.

William E. Brown: But this, this is a different, different Rainbow Road on James Island.

Anne Wiman: Okay. I'm out of space.

William E. Brown: Beg your pardon?

Anne Wiman: I'm out of space, I can't record any more video. The audio's still going.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

William E. Brown: The Rainbow Road is right down here off of, um, Folly Road by Westchester.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Sean Stucker: I've never heard of that one.

William E. Brown: Rainbow Road.

Reneé Donnell: That's why I was like I have to come back to that.

Sean Stucker: I mean, I obviously know the main ones downtown, but-

William E. Brown: Yeah.

Sean Stucker: ... I hadn't heard of James Island Rainbow Road.

William E. Brown: Yes, my aunt lives on Rainbow Road.

Sean Stucker: Okay.

William E. Brown: Yeah.

William E. Brown: That's where Donnell lives there too, on Rainbow Road.

Josephine Brown: Yeah.

William E. Brown: So ..

Reneé Donnell: Donnell? I'mma Donnell, so-

Josephine Brown: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Okay. This was awesome. Thank you guys so much for coming by. Um, and I'm sorry that we ran out of time.

Josephine Brown: No problem.

Reneé Donnell: Um, but you guys were a wealth of knowledge. Um, we will be ... Want me to turn this off?

Anne Wiman: Oh yeah, that's fine. Just the same red button.



JOHNS ISLAND ORAL HISTORY PARTICIPANT TRANSCRIPTS

"...PEOPLE THAT CAME AROUND ME, YOU KNOW, THEY ALWAYS KNOW WHEN THEY SEE ME, "OH, WE GONNA HAVE FUN. WE GONNA HAVE A GOOD TIME." 'CAUSE THAT'S WHAT I LIKE TO DO, YOU KNOW, ENJOY MYSELF AND ENJOY PEOPLE, NO MATTER WHAT COLOR, NO MATTER WHAT CREED. A LOT OF PEOPLE LOVE ME AND I LOVE PEOPLE BACK SO, YOU KNOW, I JUST DO IT WITH A SMILE..."

Antwoine Geddis

Johns Island Pier(Dreamstime)



ETHELMAE SIMMONS BOYD

Reneé Donnell: All right. So, um, would you please state your name and spell it for us?

Ethelmae Boyd: Ethelmae Simmons Boyd. 843-559. You said telephone, right?

Reneé Donnell: No, spell your name for us.

Ethelmae Boyd: Oh, spell it. E-T-H-E-L-M-A-E S-I-M-M-O-N-S ... B-O-Y-D, Boyd.

Reneé Donnell: Awesome, thank-you so much. All right, so, Miss Boyd, are you from John's Island?

Ethelmae Boyd: My home.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And then how long has your family been on Johns Island?

Ethelmae Boyd: I can't answer that because this is the only place I know. Uh-

Reneé Donnell: Okay, so as long as you-

Ethelmae Boyd: As I could remember, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm. And what part of Johns Island are you from?

Ethelmae Boyd: Um, am I from? I live on Plow Ground Road, that's all I can tell you.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: Hmm.

Reneé Donnell: All right. And, so, in ... around Plow Ground Road, is that a part of like a Geddis neighborhood? Or-

Ethelmae Boyd: The Geddis?

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm, or-

Ethelmae Boyd: They're behind me. They're be... You get to them before you get to me.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: I ... that's my original place for my grandfather. They live over there where the Geddis live.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: And they bought land over ... across the road, just across the road, you know, on Plow Ground Road, and he built his house there. So that's where I was born, on Plow Ground Road.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And then what was family life like for you when you were growing up?

Ethelmae Boyd: Well, I remember a little bit about my grand-grandparents. My grandfather, rather. I know all of my, um, my mother's family. They live on Exchange Landing. My grandfather, my

daddy's father, live on Plow Ground Road. It was nice. It was friendly. We all love each other. We were all one on Johns Island, one need, and the other have, you get. If you need help, someone is always there. And my father was the, uh, veterinarian but all ... and he never went to school for it, but when they need something with the animal, they'll come and get him. And then they had a certain time of year that they used to butcher, in November. So my daddy says, he was the, he was the one that do it ... he does the butch- ... the butchering. He'll, um, he do his pigs or whatever he's gonna kill first.

Then he had a smokehouse and he put meat in the smokehouse. Some was in some kind of sugar, and some was in salt. Then he had big s-s- ... it was a real barn, like ... all the meat was hanging up, hanging up on that particular barn, yeah. I didn't like the meat, but anyway, we had to eat it (laughs) 'cause it was too salty. And, um, and then when he finish his, um, job, then he go to the next man, but all the people in the neighborhood would come to help the other one with whatever chores you have to do.

I know one time he ... well, I built a house there for them, and he took the old house we had, and he rolled it in the back and make a ... made a barn out of it. Everybody in the neighborhood was there.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: All they had to had was the moonshine and everybody else was working. And my ... we are, we are cooking dinner and then they go to the next man house, and the next

man house, and do it until they are ... everybody had done their butchering.

Reneé Donnell: You mentioned that your dad was a veterinarian for the island. Where did he do his work? Or did he just kind of travel to different people's houses?

Ethelmae Boyd: It's something he'd pick up something, that's something he'd pick up with ... he ... my daddy went to private school.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: Yeah, on Johns Island.

Reneé Donnell: Where did he-

Ethelmae Boyd: The teacher was the ... he was a Presbyterian Minister, Reverend Scott.

Reneé Donnell: What was the name of his private school?

Ethelmae Boyd: I guess, I don't know. All I know, he went to the man's house. I don't think it had a name.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And then for his-

Ethelmae Boyd: But he didn't, um, it didn't last 'cause Reverend Scott left, so then they had to go to public school. But his father had, um, a store on Plow Ground Road. He had a gin mill, grocery store, something ... they plant cotton and, um, sugar cane and, all the vegetables and whatever. We never had to buy no vegetables.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ethelmae Boyd: Yeah, I had ... we shelled beans, lima beans and shucked corn and, and all that. We never wanted for food, that's for sure. My daddy was the type of man, he was a hardworking man, yeah. Loved him to death.

Reneé Donnell: So in addition to his veterinarian work, um, was he a farmer as well?

Ethelmae Boyd: He was a farmer, yeah. My grand-daddy was the big farmer. He had people used to work for him.

Reneé Donnell: Oh.

Ethelmae Boyd: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Did he own his own land, your grand-daddy?

Ethelmae Boyd: Yeah, you know back then, back then, land was just there for the grab. It's they call it a squatter's right.

Reneé Donnell: Hmm.

Ethelmae Boyd: And they, and they went down to the, um, to the place where you buy land I guess. I don't know what you call it, uh, and he put a ... and that's how he got the land from- from them. He bought it, no he had to buy it, but they chose what ... the one he did want is not the one he really got. He got 'bout, about let me see now, from Bohicket Road to Baptist Church, that's what he had wanted, farther than that, but they didn't give him Bohicket Road. They start at Baptist Church, and he went all the way down. He had 200, 200 acres. Yeah. I still have most of it anyway.

Reneé Donnell: That's a lot of land. Um, around what time period was that, do you know?

Ethelmae Boyd: When he-

Reneé Donnell: Like late 1800, early 1900?

Ethelmae Boyd: I guess in 18 ... my daddy was born in 18 ... my mama was born in 1898, and my daddy was born in 18 ... he was born in October of the year before.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: What's that, 97? My mother lived a whole century. The whole of the ...

Reneé Donnell: Apparently that's a common thing on this island.

Ethelmae Boyd: ... 19th century, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: That's [inaudible 00:08:01].

Ethelmae Boyd: 19th, yeah, I think, yeah, 19th.

Reneé Donnell: And, so you said your granddad owned about 200 acres.

Ethelmae Boyd: 200 acres, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And you still own part of it today?

Ethelmae Boyd: I still have.

Reneé Donnell: That's really good.

Ethelmae Boyd: I still have about 50 or 60 acres of it.

Reneé Donnell: So, um, when your granddad was running this farm, um, where did he find people to work on these 200 acres, or did he just--

Ethelmae Boyd: People who live in the community.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: And the other people who need jobs and they come and they worked on the farm, yep. And then his, his ... my daddy ... my grand-daddy's brother had, what you call it, a ferry? To take the people to the market, hey? He goes down to, um, he went to, um, Exchange Landing. That's where the ferry was parked.

And he, my grand-daddy didn't want none of the land that his grandfather had, so two brothers, Uncle Jack and my grandfather, they left Whaley, 'cause we were supposed to be in Whaley. That's where we were supposed to be from. But they came out and they got their own land.

One, uh, was on, um, Uncle Jack, he was on River Road. He didn't have that much, uh, he didn't buy that much land though, but he had a nice house and store too. And he used to take the people back and forth to the market to sell their vegetables. And-

Reneé Donnell: Where, where was this ferry located? You mentioned that there was a ferry to get people-

Ethelmae Boyd: It's on Exchange Landing.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: Exchange Landing, running to, um, Atlantic Ocean. It's beautiful down there. You need to take a ride and look. Very pretty.

Reneé Donnell: And did your granddad have a name for his farm?

Ethelmae Boyd: No.

Reneé Donnell: Okay, just a farm?

Ethelmae Boyd: Not that I know of, not that I know of, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: He died when he was in the 50s, but nobody knew what he died from. So then that's how come he lost most of his land, 'cause the children didn't have the money to ... farmers usually borrow money to farm. And if you don't make a crop to, to pay back, then that's where the other people take your property away. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And so, have you lived on Johns Island your entire life?

Ethelmae Boyd: All my life. Would not leave till God calls me home.

Reneé Donnell: Can you tell me of any specific neighborhoods that you know about, or specific, like, areas or sides of town?

Ethelmae Boyd: Yeah, oh no, you mean besides Johns Island?

Reneé Donnell: Uh, no, on Johns Island?

Ethelmae Boyd: On Johns Island? Well, we visit all the areas, you know. We were, we were ... Johns Island was mostly a group of people together. Yes, 'cause we had, um, my daddy was ... I belonged to the Presbyterian church.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: And they had a lady there, she used to come Mrs. Brewer, right, yeah. And she used to come to our house to teach us Bible school and Sunday school, and-and we had to wait ... invite all the children from Whaley and-and Plow Ground Road. They'll come in and-and the ... in my yard ... my mama's yard. And she had an organ, so the organ, most people played with, um, a battery, because we didn't have electric light at that time.

Reneé Donnell: And what decade was this, with the no electricity?

Ethelmae Boyd: Well no ... they didn't have ... we didn't have electricity until I was ... I went to college a year or two before we had electricity.

Reneé Donnell: All right.

Ethelmae Boyd: Before ... because they-they did all the highway first, and then they did the side roads, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: What year was that about? So you said it was when you went to college.

Ethelmae Boyd: When I went to college in 1950.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: We didn't have no light. 1951 we had no light.

Reneé Donnell: Okay, okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: Around '52.

Reneé Donnell: And you said they did the highways ...

Ethelmae Boyd: The highways were, um ...

Reneé Donnell: ... first?

Ethelmae Boyd: ... dirt. That-that didn't happen ... that happened a long time after I was teaching. 'Cause they did, they did half of Plow Ground Road because the farmer there said a road, uh, would bother his tractor and equipment so he stopped it after he passed our house. Then he stopped it, yeah. So whenever I was going to school in the morning, driving going to school, I'd get stuck every morning 'cause the road was bad, yeah (laughs). But I know that the white fella up there, he and my daddy was friends. He bought

my grandfather piece of land what he lived on. And I know he used to go down to see about the people that were working for him, so I'd sit home until I see him pass, then I'd go in the car and go, cause I know he coming back, and he'd push me out (laughs). Yeah, but he does it every ... and he did it every morning, never said a word (laughs). Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And so, what-what were the main streets that were already paved before?

Ethelmae Boyd: River Road.

Reneé Donnell: River Road?

Ethelmae Boyd: Bohicket too. Yeah, and Bohicket, yeah. All the main roads were paved. And the, and those dirt roads had some holes in it. Either way I went I-I would get stuck.

Reneé Donnell: And what-what school, what elementary school did you go to?

Ethelmae Boyd: I went to Miller Hill Elementary School for three or four years. Then I went in the city school, lived with my aunt.

Reneé Donnell: Um ...

Ethelmae Boyd: And on Market Street, I went to Buist [?] Elementary, Charleston. And they went ... Buist [?]... that elementary school went to the seventh grade.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: The one on Johns Island only went to the fifth grade. And that's why the children had to finish the fifth grade and go away, they had to find work. That's all the education they had.

Reneé Donnell: And then did you go to Burke High School?

Ethelmae Boyd: Then I graduated from Burke High School, and I went to Claflin, and I went to State, then I went the other school around in the area, you know. Night school sometimes, yeah. They used to ... the superintendent, he used to always send me there (laughs). Any time somebody needed to go to a class to-to bring it back to the other teachers, there were two of us. He always said, the two math teachers, I would ... my major was math.

Reneé Donnell: Hmm.

Ethelmae Boyd: And he would send me to math and science. Then I got ... went in the elementary school, and then I went back and got my major in elementary ed also, but I like elementary better, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And for school, elementary school ...

Ethelmae Boyd: Elementary.

Reneé Donnell: And I guess they call it middle school today?

Ethelmae Boyd: They didn't have no middle school then.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: Elementary school in Charleston was from one to seven.

Reneé Donnell: Okay, and then high school was eight through ...

Ethelmae Boyd: 8 to 12.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: It was four years, now it's five.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: Yeah. 'Cause they took the, they took the seventh grade out of ... the sixth and seventh grade out of it. Sixth and seventh grade, right?

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Ethelmae Boyd: Yeah. That's middle school.

Reneé Donnell: And, um, can you tell us where Miller Hill Elementary was located, approximately?

Ethelmae Boyd: Oh, as you ... I don't know. About a, about a third of a mile after you leave Plow Ground Road, on that ... about round there, yeah. It was a two room. The first teacher had first through third, and the next teacher had fourth to fifth. And when you finished that, that was it. Children used to head up and go to New York, or ... I didn't want to go to New York.

Reneé Donnell: Hmm. Why not?

Ethelmae Boyd: I didn't like New York. I used to go to visit my sister, during the summer time sometimes. But they used to send, when they-they got married and in the summer time, they'd send all the children down to me, so I raised all of them. So I had a lot of children (laughs).

Reneé Donnell: How many approximately?

Ethelmae Boyd: Uh, how many, how many children that I raised?

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Ethelmae Boyd: Ooh, my ... one of my, one of my sister's child, I raised her from one day old. She didn't know, she had a baby, she didn't know nothing about no babies. But I never had a child. But it's just something here, I took it, you know.

And my other sister, she had two boys. One was two and one was three when she brought them home, until they go ... able to go to school. And my other sister took her son when he was five, to New York. Then my other brother, when my brother started sending two of his sons down in the summer. Then my uncle used to send his son down in the summer. So (laughs), and that was me pumping water (laughs).

Reneé Donnell: Oh, 'cause there was no ...

Ethelmae Boyd: No light, no electricity, yeah. You had the part when you washed, you had to have three tubs of water. One to wash, one to do the second wash, and the other one to rinse.

Reneé Donnell: And, so, I know that you said that you were a teacher, and so where did you say you taught?

Ethelmae Boyd: At first when I came up, first came ... I ... well I had two jobs if ... three jobs if ... two jobs in that Orangeburg, but my mama didn't want me to stay up there so I had to come home. Because I was really working up there while I was there, but I wasn't getting paid for it, 'cause every time the school, the elementary school or whatever the high school they need teachers, substitute teachers, they would get a group of us. Your sister was one of them too. But we never got paid for it.

Yes, but when I finished school, I had two jobs, and I was offered two jobs in Orangeburg. But I, I had no money to go there in the first place, so I had to do what my mama said. Then I had a job at, um, at Walterboro, Walterboro, but I didn't take that either. Abbey went there too, right? Yeah.

So then I substitute at Haut Gap. Haut Gap at that time was an elementary and a high school, right? Yeah. And I had the seventh grade there, for a semester. Then the next year, they sent me to Promised Land. There was two vacancy, Promised Land and-and Legare, Legareville. Miss Breland went there, and they sent me to Promised Land because I was just out of school, and Miss Breland was out of school for quite a while. So if I had went to Legareville, I wouldn't have known what to do, so I didn't accept it. Uh ...

Reneé Donnell: What was so different about Legareville School?

Ethelmae Boyd: Huh?

Reneé Donnell: What was so different about Legareville School?

Ethelmae Boyd: I would have been there by myself. I wouldn't know what I was supposed to do as a Principal, you know? And I wouldn't like to go in a job I don't know nothing about. Yeah, so I didn't, I didn't accept it. He even came for my brother when Mr. Davis left, the superintendent came for my brother, 'cause he wanted somebody from Johns Island to, to live there with the children, you know? But my brother didn't ... after he finished school, he went in service.

Reneé Donnell: What was it like teaching, um-

Ethelmae Boyd: I loved it.

Reneé Donnell: Yes?

Ethelmae Boyd: I didn't like high school though. But that was my major (laughs). But I didn't like it. The children ... I had a boy in the

class was just as old as my ... he was older than me (laughs). And all he did all day was say, "Miss, you're sure pretty though," that's all he did all day (laughs). Richard, Richard, um, Gibbons (laughs). He had a big attaché case, "Miss, you sure are pretty." I know (laughs), and a little, a little boy was there, I ought to tell the story. I don't know, I shouldn't tell that story though. No, I'm gonna tell that story.

A little boy there he teased me the whole time. Lord forgive me. But I hit him. I just go ... I-I didn't know I was gonna do it. That's not me. That's not me, that's not me. And when I looked up, who was at the window, but the Principal. And, and he called me into his office, oh Lord I just got the job and just lost it (laughs).

He said, he said, "You are a pretty woman, and those boys in there, they're gonna give you a bit because they like pretty women." And I thought, is he not gonna fire me? He said, "But I didn't know you had it in you. Now you're gonna make a good teacher." I said, "Well, thank-you." When he called me in there, give me my check for the... (laughs). He gave me the check, I looked at the check, a little bit of money here, he said, "You're surprised to see how much money you got, huh?" So I said, "Maybe I didn't look at the check right." And I looked at it again (laughs). I looked at it and I say nothing, 'cause I would have said something wrong so I just walked out the door (laughs).

That little bit of money was all I earned for nothing. Nothing, nothing, but back then it was a lot of money, 'cause things were cheap. I built my house when it was cheap.

Reneé Donnell: So, just for reference ...

Ethelmae Boyd: Hmm.

Reneé Donnell: ... for that check that you got, that you said was so small, how much was in that?

Ethelmae Boyd: How much money was?

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Ethelmae Boyd: 250.

Reneé Donnell: Two ...

Ethelmae Boyd: For one month.

Reneé Donnell: Two dollars and 50 cents?

Ethelmae Boyd: \$250. That's what we made. You know I retired 36 years and I still wasn't making, um, \$30,000. But things were cheap when I bought them. Nobody can build a house the way I built mine, but I had a head and I used it. First I built my mom and then a house with that same \$250, and sent my brother to Johnson C. Smith [University].

Reneé Donnell: [inaudible 00:24:26]

Ethelmae Boyd: \$250. I didn't have to finest clothes to wear but I was clean. I didn't have the best cars to drive, but I was driving. I would, I would have gone on a tractor but I had ... as long as I wasn't walking, you know? Wouldn't matter to me what I ride, but I know what I had, I had in head what I wanted to do. I was going to send my brother to college now, and I did. And I built my mom and then an eight-room house, five bedrooms. You wouldn't believe what the man charged me to ... for the labor. \$550. But he was a family member. He

could only work on Saturday, but it didn't take, it didn't take a year to do it though. 'Cause sometimes he'd bring people in and share some of that same \$550.

But he would believe in me, you know, he believed in ... 'cause I was trying, I was trying and I was trying. And he said, he ... I don't think he really knew my name. He used to call me Girlie (laughs). Or that Sunny Gal, that Sunny Gal (laughs). Those [inaudible 00:25:35] make me eat, Sunny Gal, or Girlie. There was three men on Johns Island. They liked the way I lived my life. And nobody couldn't say nothing about me 'cause I didn't bother nobody. I didn't go to no party, didn't party. Stayed home and take care of everybody's children, and everybody else who needed help, Ethel was there and I was still ... I'm still doing it.

Reneé Donnell: So you mentioned that you didn't go out to party and things like that. Where was there to hang out, or go dancing in Johns Island?

Ethelmae Boyd: Oh they had piccolo joint, I didn't, I didn't like no piccolo joint

Reneé Donnell: Where was piccolo joint located?

Ethelmae Boyd: They had one, um, right across from Miller Hill School. One across from, um, Fifth[s?] Garage. And then they had, um, the-the-the, um, the on the island going to Kiawah, what's that? There's a ... yeah, um ... no, they had it, had the building down there. What did they call it? There was a beach, Frasier Beach. Uh, they used to go there, and I used to go down there sometimes during the day, just for the ride, take mama down there. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Frasier Beach was on Johns Island?

Ethelmae Boyd: Yeah, it was on Johns Island, but down there actually going to Kiawah. Closer to Kiawah. They don't have that any more, do they? No.

Reneé Donnell: And for Frasier Beach, um, have you heard of Mosquito Beach on James Island?

Ethelmae Boyd: Yeah, I was there too but I never got out. I just go for the ride and sit in the car. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Was Frasier Beach kind of set up like-

Ethelmae Boyd: Just like that, yeah. That's when my brother take me out, that's the only person I used to go out with. He going, he going Mount Pleasant, so we can act up over there, no school children over there (laughs).

Reneé Donnell: And where did you go on Mount Pleasant?

Ethelmae Boyd: I don't know. It was a beach. It was a beach some place, and a woods some place back there. When I arrived with him, I looked to see where I am going.

Reneé Donnell: And then, you also mentioned, um, how you got to school, or your job as a teacher, how you would get to school. Did you live close to the Haut Gap, Haut Gap Haut Gap ...

Ethelmae Boyd: Haut Gap School? I didn't have a ... My brother had a car, but I couldn't drive, until after I finished college. And my ... I had a grand-uncle who used to live across the road from where I lived and he used to take me and pick me up, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Every day?

Ethelmae Boyd: Yeah. But before ... but see when I finished college, my brother was still in high school. He was a senior. So he had a car. Later, later he bought a car. And when he went to school, he went Johnson C. Smith, he left the car for me so I could get to work, yeah. It was very nice, nice brother. We-we were like this. Yeah. But he got killed in Vietnam.

Reneé Donnell: I'm sorry.

Ethelmae Boyd: Yeah, yeah. That's one death, I used to think if I can live through that one, I can live through any one, 'cause we were very, very close.

Reneé Donnell: Um.

Ethelmae Boyd: Sometimes when I'd wake up in the morning, who laying on the side of the bed, but him fast asleep (laughs). And mama catch you in here (laughs). He's just laying on there fast asleep. I know you lonesome back there. He would come and look up, he'd sit on the side with it. He used to go up some time and when he came in, bag of food. He would turn the TV on and we'd sit back there, be laughing, talking, eating (laughs). And he fell asleep right there.

Reneé Donnell: Thank-you for-

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: Oh what, what we talking about?

Reneé Donnell: So. (laughs) You mentioned um, that you were a teacher. What, so you taught for 30 years and you taught at two elementary schools.

Ethelmae Boyd: Angel Oak. Angel Oak. Angel Oak and Mount Zion. And Haut Gap. And I teach summer school at Saint John. I taught summer school at Saint John. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Where is that? Is that a church, Saint John?

Ethelmae Boyd: No, Saint John is the high school on our main road. I mentored for the summer and, and the principal didn't want me to leave. (laughs) My principal tell me "You can't, You can't keep her." There were two of us he wanted to keep. But my principal said no, can't keep those, that's the two best he has. I enjoy, I enjoy teaching, I enjoy it 'cause I didn't have to teach but 25 years. I did 36, and one day I got home, and this whole year, I couldn't write on the board. And something touched me saying, you know your momma's back there 90-years-old, why you working? Won't you stay and spend some time with your mother? I went to work the next day and I told him. My, my principal was my classmate in high school. We were classmates.

So, I mean, I said "Ruby, I'm not coming in. This my, this my last year." She said "You serious, Boyd?" I said "Yeah, I'm not coming back." So, when I came the next morning, that's Boyd, tell Boyd come here. I ain't coming back either. (laughs) So that's another friend of mine, she come in there, she come in the class just wiggling, wiggling, wiggling. She said I'm not coming back either. One of my other friend from James Island, she said she wasn't coming back either. And one of the cooks said she wasn't coming back either. I said boy, I'm taking a lot of people with me. (laughs) And they retired too.

Reneé Donnell: Oh, they actually retired?

Ethelmae Boyd: Yes they did, they did, they did. I went two schools, no you put that in. They're gonna read that. (laughs) Can't put that one in there. (laughs) Oh lord, but I had fun. Every, all of, all of the cuts will make me, all of them. Had fun, I had fun. But I didn't, I didn't gossip. I get up at 5 o'clock in the morning and I go help my momma with my daddy, give him his bath, put the, he liked grits, he'd eat grits every morning. Put the grits on, put the bacon in the microwave, then I give him his bath, and if I have time I give him his breakfast, change him and put the clothes in the washing machine. My momma hang it up when she get done. My momma still in bed now.

Now, I have to leave the grits on the stove in the pot of water, so it wouldn't dry out, you know, so when my momma get up she'll have something. Then I cook dinner at night and carry them their plates, put them in the refrigerator, set the microwave so my momma, you know, won't set it too high. But my momma likes those stories on T.V. And you don't talk to her when she, when her stories on. So, it was time to eat and she say it wasn't hot enough, so she reset it. (laughs) When she went in, the food was marble, was rolling all over the place. (laughs) All of the water was dried out of it. You think she cook simple? No. Then my daddy start fussing at her. Daddy was working me too hard. Then when my daddy dies, you tell me you don't act the same since your daddy died, you know.

I said "Mom, you wanna kill me? I was helping you." (laughs) Oh lord, my daddy, I love my daddy, and I love my momma too, but I love my daddy more. Yeah, you can have, you can love both, but one can be different, and my

daddy was my buddy. Momma, she like to bitch too much. Every little thing, momma chop you.

Reneé Donnell: Well, um, what, so we know that your family was big into farming and you were big into education. What, where did it, um. So there were places to go dancing and things, where were--?

Ethelmae Boyd: They had movies too, you know.

Reneé Donnell: Like movie theaters?

Ethelmae Boyd: Not, not on Johns Island, we didn't have none on Johns Island.

Reneé Donnell: All right.

Ethelmae Boyd: We had to go on, it was James Island with the drive-in, drive-in movie. Yeah, that's where we used to go to.

Reneé Donnell: Where was that located?

Ethelmae Boyd: On James Island, I don't remember the place we was, I guess. I used to go with my brother, you know.

Reneé Donnell: And where were some of the main, I guess, gathering places? I know, were there any recreational sports here on Johns Island? Were there, like, what did people do for fun, you know?

Ethelmae Boyd: They had a, but they had a lodge, my mom, the, the older people had belonged to the same place where, um, Miller's School was.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ethelmae Boyd: On the side, yeah. It was a, used to be a undertaker there and then um, my daddy and them, they bought it

and make a lodge out of it. And on Labor Day, the whole island, whole island, Legareville and, and the, all the island around get together and they have a parade. You don't know nothing about that. Do you? No. (laughs) And they used to, they used to roast a whole cow, a whole pig, and they'd march from, from Miller's School. I don't know how far they went, no, 'cause I never went all the way down there with them. And they marching, that band be playing, it, and, that was a good sized group and it still was doing it. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Do you...

Ethelmae Boyd: I...

Reneé Donnell: Do you know what the name of that lodge was?

Ethelmae Boyd: No, I don't remember the name. Um. But they used to have a cookout all the time. And everybody had their own table. And you wouldn't, this one table, if you go to your family table they say don't come to me, go to somebody else, 'cause they don't, they don't want to share you stuff, you know? 'Cause they know you want it for free. And then, and then the lodge, my husband was in the lodge, the Zion Temple lodge. He used to always have something. That's where I used to give my daughters their birthday party there.

Reneé Donnell: Where was this Zion Temple Lodge located?

Ethelmae Boyd: On um, Bohicket Road, going toward Kiawah. They visited the churches and they was all, my husband was a big man and he went the highest he could go. He's whatever, the 33rd degree, that's when Jesus was, yeah, so he had his

33rd degree. And all he wanted. I said boy, what did you want out of life? A diamond ring and a Cadillac car. (laughs) I didn't say nothing but you know, when I got, when I got, I was in a class before, before he, before I got married and this teacher said that's all a, you know, a man want. I said why do you want just a diamond ring and a, 'cause a man used to come in his neighborhood and they had all these diamond rings and the big cars in the neighborhood and he wanted to be like them.

I said, you got to live your life for yourself, not somebody else. But he never did get the Cadillac, 'cause he settled with a Lincoln. Yeah. And the, the, a teacher said that in um, family marriage class. And I was offended, to say that's all a black man want was a diamond ring and a Cadillac. 'Cause he was black himself. (laughs) And here he come, my husband told me the same thing. (laughs) A diamond ring and a Cadillac car. (laughs) Oh my lord. God is good. What else you wanna know?

Reneé Donnell: I wanna know.

Ethelmae Boyd: You gonna give me some money?

Reneé Donnell: Huh?

Ethelmae Boyd: You gonna fix it so I can get some money?

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Ethelmae Boyd: Don't let them put around no wire or road to my property. Don't put that down there.

Reneé Donnell: Oh, no.

Ethelmae Boyd: Okay.

Reneé Donnell: (laughs) Um, I wanted to know how did education change over time for Johns Island? Especially since you were teaching for 36 years.

Ethelmae Boyd: 36 years, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: So, I know that you said earlier one of the schools you taught at was just a two room school?

Ethelmae Boyd: Two room and then the other building was over a little bit.

Reneé Donnell: And so, like.

Ethelmae Boyd: They didn't have no lunch, but you didn't go to school 'til nine to two.

Reneé Donnell: Nine to two?

Ethelmae Boyd: Yeah, they didn't have no lunch. I used to carry fruits and stuff. Big bread and stuff, you know, and take it for them.

Reneé Donnell: What did you do after work, did you raise other peoples kids?

Ethelmae Boyd: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Ethelmae Boyd: Well, no I, when I go home I, I be doing school work, you know? And then, the principals when they get in meeting they used to talk about me. And the teachers didn't care for me too much. 'Cause the principal, he never evaluate me. He said he didn't have to 'cause they were doing passion when you were working, and that's what I wanted to do for my children. I want my children to get what I didn't get on Johns Island. 'Cause those people used to come from Charleston, the school I went to in Miller Hill.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ethelmae Boyd: When the lady teach from third to fourth or fifth, she said but I barely stove. And she didn't move there when it was time to go home. And you get up, okay Ethelmae, Jack went down the hill dun-dun-dun-dun, they didn't wanna read the next paragraph, that's reading. That ain't no reading. I went to Charleston, I had a um, a time table chart that um, that run it down um, in Charleston they used to give you those cards. I didn't know how much two times two, I could say that. What does it mean? I don't know.

And I went in this lady class, Mrs. Mason, half-and-half, and every day she called her brother, and her brother was the principal, that I didn't have no right in there because I didn't know the multiplication. I didn't, I didn't use it. And she asked me, what five times whatever, I can tell her, but I don't know what to do with it. And one girl there used to laugh at me all day, she called me nappy-head. And she must have felt sorry for me one day, and she brought a card home but I had plenty of them. And she sat there with me, and she showed me how to do it. And math was my best subject ever since. Best subject, girl.

And then, and that lady, but, and I, I majored in math and science because my best teachers in high school was math and science. Not all science, now. I had a Chemistry teacher, he read paper all day. Friday, you have current event, you, he still reading the paper, he can't hear what you're saying. So you could your paper back to this one, back to that one, back, and read it. I didn't get nothing

done in there neither. I did my most hard study when I went to college really, you know, it's everybody there didn't teach either. You know. Your, your sister major in, in the History, but she's a good history teacher now.

And the teacher that taught her, didn't teach me. The same teacher though. He never taught me nothing. And he calling me every day. And the boys used to tell me, Ethel watch her, watch them, they're picking at you. (laughs) And every time he said something to me, I'd look at them boys just. (laughs) Oh lordy, I had a time. I had a time. (laughs) Oh lord, he tried, he tried, but I wasn't who he thought, I wasn't who he thought I was, you know?

Reneé Donnell: Um, did you ever teach at an integrated school?

Ethelmae Boyd: Integrated school?

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ethelmae Boyd: Yeah. Mount Zion was.

Reneé Donnell: Mount Zion was? Okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: And, and um, Angel Oak. Um, Saint, Saint John wasn't at that time, not at that time. Yeah. 'Cause when I went to Haut Gap, it wasn't integrated then. Yeah. But now, everything together, everything together now. But it's so, it's so hard for the teachers though. The parents will tell them they don't want the Black children, the white parents will tell them, don't let a black teacher touch you. You can't teach a child if you can't touch her, you know? And the Black parents will tell their children, don't the white teacher touch you, if they touch you let me know.

You can't teach a child like that. So when I go to, go to school in the morning, everybody wanted to be in my class. But, but the teachers, the parents used to come and ask for me during the summertime. 'Cause they know I don't play. I love them to death, give them my heart, but I don't, I don't take foolishness. And, the principal, the first day of school, the principal will walk in, Mrs. Boyd, if you put all these children in your class whose parents come and ask for you, the other teachers won't have none. I said, lord I'm bad, and she said yeah. I said, that's okay, give them to me.

But, I had news for them. I wrote a form, if you don't want me to touch your child, don't put them in my class, 'cause if you're bad I gotta cut his tail. If he bad, I'm gonna cut his tail, I don't care who it is. I'm gonna cut his tail, and one little girl. She could have been, she used to walk and look at me. I said lord, I went home, and I had two rulers, and I tape it together I said I cut her tail tomorrow. And she got up again. If she do it, the other children can do it too, right? And I tore her tail out. (laughs)

And one of the, a substitute teacher came and said that parents was coming in. She wrote me a letter the next day. I was like, girl I don't have time to read no letters, just put them in trash. I read it after they left and went to another class. Then she came in and she said the mother's coming in today. I said let me know when she comes. So I go, I said why did you write me that letter? She said I don't want nobody to hit Shannon. Did you send Shannon to school to learn or do you send her to model all over my classroom?

He can stay home and model but he ain't gonna model in my classroom now. She's not gonna do that. Well I didn't know he was doing that. Well you told I can't touch them, how can I teach them if I can't touch her? You know, I saw that little girl, that was in the, in the restaurant, she and her husband. And she saw me, she run to me and she grabbed me. She said, Mrs. Boyd I love you to death. And she told her husband, this is the teacher here who made a lady out of me. She said, I wish you was still teaching so you could teach my son. I said, I finished with that now.

I hadn't seen her since. And other parents got on me because you had a certain length of time to learn the table, the time table that I'm working on for this Greek, Greek. She wasn't dumb, but she wouldn't study. And maybe he was working the day, the problem, she couldn't work it 'cause she didn't know it. But, she won't study and learn until she ready, and I supposed to sit there and hear her tell me two times two is four, and two nine, this and that. It don't work that way. You gonna learn how to use it in the example multiply, divide, and everything else with it but those numbers.

The parents got mad with me. But the girl said, Mrs. Boyd, don't mind what momma say, you tried, but I didn't just, just didn't do, you know? I said thank you, thank you. I could have retained her because she did know time tables, how to right use it, but she knew the time table. But she didn't know how to use it. But, I, I kept her and she made, she made it, she made it through, you know. But that's the only problem I really had, I had no other problem.

High school was problem, though. (laughs) I had a little boy, oh boy, I see that little boy right now.

Reneé Donnell: Well.

Ethelmae Boyd: Every time I speak, he said, he said holy shit, repeat it, repeat it. (laughs) But I know I slapped that boy down to the floor. Lord Jesus, what did I do? But, you know, I had no trouble out of him. Or nobody else either. I said lord forgive me. Never I let that principal stand up or anything. They said that already. I tried to stop him and I repeat myself. 'Cause I repeat myself a lot, you know.

Reneé Donnell: It's okay.

Ethelmae Boyd: Okay, okay. But I did pretty good for 91 ain't I?

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ethelmae Boyd: I'll be 91 next month, you know. Yeah, 3rd of next month.

Reneé Donnell: Yeah, you did great. Um, is there anything else you would like to share with us?

Ethelmae Boyd: What was good?

Reneé Donnell: Where there anything may have been located, or?

Ethelmae Boyd: You want, you want, you know, somebody who will buy some land? (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: We don't want no lands.

Ethelmae Boyd: (laugh) Yeah, I'll sell my land, ready land.

Reneé Donnell: Hold on to your land.

Ethelmae Boyd: No.

Reneé Donnell: Hold on to your land.

Ethelmae Boyd: I don't have long to live and I'm the last of the siblings.

Reneé Donnell: Well.

Ethelmae Boyd: I'm gonna sell it and put it in. Don't sell it. Oh.

Reneé Donnell: (laughs) All right. All right, well thank you so much, Mrs. Boyd.

Ethelmae Boyd: Mm.

Reneé Donnell: Um. Yes, thank you.

Ethelmae Boyd: She finished?



ANTWOINE GEDDIS

Reneé Donnell: ... not here.

Antwoine Geddis: All right.

Anna Wiman: Okay. I am rolling, whenever you're ready.

Reneé Donnell: All right, Mr. Geddis-

Antwoine Geddis: Yes, ma'am.

Reneé Donnell: ... thank you for coming here today.

Antwoine Geddis: Not a problem

Reneé Donnell: Would you be able to start off by sh- giving us your name and how you spell it?

Antwoine Geddis: My name is Antwoine Geddis. That's A-N-T-W-O-I-N-E. Last name, G-E-D-D-I-S. And from my knowledge, it's supposed to be French, so. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And are you from, uh, Johns Island?

Antwoine Geddis: Yes, ma'am. Originally born and raised here. Um, at the age that I am now is 38.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: And, um, always was from Johns Island. Uh, but it is Charleston, South Carolina also too.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: And has your family been on Johns Island for as long as you know?

Antwoine Geddis: Yes, ma'am, several generations, back to the... I'll say the middle 1800s.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: And what part of Johns Island did you grow up on?

Antwoine Geddis: Well, the place is called... Well, it's called Cane Slash Road but the community was better known as the Whaley Plantation where I still resides today, you know, as a resident with, um, family property that dates back to that, um, property that we live on today.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: All righty. And then, um, what was life like growing up here on Johns Island? So you grew up here in the '80s and '90s

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: ... or so. What was it like growing up here?

Antwoine Geddis: Oh man, we had a awesome time. You know, which me, I'm an only child to my mother and the oldest to my father, so a lot of my cousins are like my siblings. And we all grew up together playing hide-and-go-seek. But we had to be in the house by time it got dark, you know-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: ... 'cause we didn't want our parents to worry about us, you know, things like that. And we'd ride bicycle. We could go from neighborhoods and have little path to go, you know, to the next street out or over to the other side of Johns Island. So it was growing up, growing up here was a lovely time as a kid and still is today as an adult, you know?

Reneé Donnell: And what school did you attend?

Antwoine Geddis: Well, at first I attended, well, back then they had a Headstart Program, which my Headstart School is a place it's off of Bohicket Road but it now serves as like a community center to the United Methodist Church.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: And, um, and my first Headstart teacher's name was Ms. Shirley Johnson. She is 86 today.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: I mean, as of years and she is still in her right mind. That was my first teacher at Headstart. And then, my second school after we graduated from there was Mt. Zion Elementary located on River Road. And, after I left

Mt. Zion in the fifth grade, went to Haut Gap right here off of Bohicket Road. And, after that was St. John's High School, which I serve as Mr. Homecoming King.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: And that was, uh, that was something also and pretty much after that life was off, on to the person that I am today, you know?

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: But going back to Haut Gap, now-

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: ... but during Haut Gap, I can say in the seventh grade there was a project that we had to do. It was a group called Cultural Experience led by Miss Jackie Jefferson. And it was like, you know, teaching us about our culture and heritage even from the practice of African Americ-Africa ways or, you know? And then we'd learn about it in the language that they speak. And one of our project was to research our family genealogy.

And so I, at that point in time, I had my great-grandparents living. So they could have told me who their grandparents were. And, um, and that project started me off in genealogy from middle school. And I mean, that was a continuous hobby that I mean, it inspired me 'cause I didn't know those, those things. But sitting down and being able to talk with three of my great-grandparents and my great-grandfather. And that really inspired [me] with the stories that they could have told me about their parents and grandparents.

And life growing up on the island like we are doing today, so that's the good part about Haut Gap that I almost forgot about. And I was featured in the news here at age 14 for tracing my family generation back to that 'cause I aced the project. Yeah, I aced the project and Mr. Representative Curtis Inabinett even gave me a frame [for] being at, in the seventh grade for tracing my family generation back that far. So-

Reneé Donnell: That's-

Antwoine Geddis: ... yeah. So that was a awesome thing from my middle school. Like I knew I jumped on to, to high school before I talked about Mr. Homecoming but I had to come back to that. But-

Reneé Donnell: You know-

Antwoine Geddis: ... yeah.

Reneé Donnell: ... that's awesome.

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: And for that to be a middle school project that's-

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: ... that's really impressive. Okay. So, uh, how did you get to these schools 'cause they're not necessarily ... Haut Gap and St. John's aren't close to each other.

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Not necessarily Mt. Zion, so how'd you get to these schools?

Antwoine Geddis: Well, we had, um, transportation such as bus transportation like we still have today, you know? And, um, the best thing you had to do was behave yourself on the bus 'cause if you didn't, if you got suspended, you know, you have to hit your parents up for going all the way to Mt. Zion, take you to school or on to Haut Gap, you know, when you could ride the bus for free. So the best thing was to do, behave yourself, get your schoolwork done. But we did have some days where we got suspended off the bus too, now, so, you know?

But my mother, I mean, my, uh, family made sure that transportation was provided for me to get back and forth to school too, you know? And even at Headstart we had a little bus that would pick us up early in the morning. And our bus driver Miss Mary Brown and she didn't play. And she still don't play today so-

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Antwoine Geddis: ... and that was the good thing about transportation, you know? We, they always looked out for that purpose with people on Johns Island and, and in Charleston County too, so.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And so you mentioned, uh, taking the bus and riding the bus. Was it rural here still when you were growing up or was it kind of not?

Antwoine Geddis: No. It was always rural-

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: ... you know? All the houses that seeing now wasn't around. I mean, we could, uh, go hunting, fishing, little

ponds and things like that. But, you know, like I tell everybody, “Development is gonna happen sooner or later. Things are not gonna stay the same forever.”

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: So and I mean, like you’ll hear some of my grandparents or aunts and uncles remember when the roads were dirt roads on Johns Island.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: And now, you look at the roads today, it’s paved and things like that. So I mean, like main, these main roads like MayBank and River Road used to be dirt roads, which people do say these roads are made for truck farming over here on the island and not everyday driving. But that’s why we got to be careful drivers on these highways, you know, ‘cause it was for truck farming, getting back and forth from the farms and things like that. And then when we were growing up, it was farms.

And we had to go on the farms and pick tomatoes. Uh, make a little change in the summertime or help our uncles, our family members that farmed. So that’s a thing that I had to, thought I would never have to do again but being in the peanut business I have (laughs) to farm too, you know, and keep my local things going on, especially if you selling veggies and things to people. They like it locally so, so things are still rural and some things have changed. But like I said, I adapted with the changes ‘cause I met a lot of people that moved to the island and they appreciate meeting me. And I appreciate

meeting them too as a businessman on the island with a business, so.

Reneé Donnell: What is the peanut business you speak of?

Antwoine Geddis: Well, it’s D.J. Sporty Mobile Sugar Shack, with snacks and I used to go around selling like little candy for the kids ‘cause when we were growing up, when you the ice cream man coming, oh, man. That was a exciting time. You would make sure you got a little change to go with the candy man or we had candy ladies around here too and things-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: ... like that. And little stores that we could walk to s-um, corner, you know, you would get like things that I sell then, like pickles and hard sausage. And, you know, bubble gums and Air Heads, you know, ‘cause that was a important thing of life, you know, being a kid, you know? If you be good, you can get a candy so and most times, now, that’s why I had to try br- keep that rural heritage around, you know, here on Johns Island even after development has happened ‘cause I have family members that did it. And it didn’t hurt them and it benefit them pretty good so why not try it myself? So and that’s a continuous legacy that I carry on that my great-grandfather and his brother did. But they went to the downtown market and sell their vegetables and-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: ... things like that, you know, with no transportation or car. But people that had the vehicles around here would

give them a ride and they always look out for each other like that to 'em. Make sure the family eat over here on the islands, sea islands rather.

Reneé Donnell: That's nice.

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: That's really cool. Um, so you mentioned how you had so much fun growing up here.

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: What were some recreational things that you would do with your friends like say in high school?

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Where did the homecoming king hang out?

Antwoine Geddis: Well, me it all started for me probably I'll say in the eighth grade, early ninth grade 'cause that's when I became a DJ.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: And I started off charging people like \$50 dollars for a party with house speakers and a little CD player. So I always was the life of a party. And I try to still be the life of a party these days 'cause I like to see people have a good time and enjoy life. So that was one thing about people that came around me, you know, they always know when they see me, "Oh, we gonna have fun. We gonna have a good time." 'cause that's what I like to do, you know, enjoy myself and enjoy people, no matter what color, no matter what creed. A lot of people love me and I love people back so, you know, I just do it with a smile even as a DJ for over 25 years 'cause I believe I started in the ninth grade-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: ... with a permit. And so we always had a little spots to hang out at or little places. But a lot of places have already closed, you know-

Reneé Donnell: When-

Antwoine Geddis: ... as time went on, you know, on the island.

Reneé Donnell: What are some of the places that have closed?

Antwoine Geddis: Well, now before, before my time, you know, was a place off of, let's see, Thomas Jones. I had a cousin named Mr. Senior Jenkins. He had like a little piccolo joint. And everybody talk about having a amazing time there. And the guy that lives there now, he's a good customer of mine and he always talks about how everybody talks about, "Man, are you gonna build a club back and this and that?" He just, you know, and he just moved here recently.

He always hear about the stories about the property that he bought. And, you know, and he came, comes here all the time. And we talk about it all the time. And then was another one. And I know somebody probably already mentioned this but, um, Progressive Club was a good place for people. I never played there, you know, 'cause after the Hugo, you know, it kind of damaged the building. But I know if that building was still up and running, I would have a spot there playing music there too.

And also Johnson Lounge was a place that Mr. Frances Johnson and his wife, um, Miss Thomasina Johnson, Tom Johnson, ran also. And I DJ'd there. And had several birthday parties there. And me and his grand kids and all of us, we grew up together. But that's unfortunately got closed right now, too. And, um-

Reneé Donnell: Where was this Johnson's-

Antwoine Geddis: Off of River Road.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: Most of these places I'm talking about is off of River Road. And, um, and then you have several other clubs but most of 'em are closed now-

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: ... doing, you know, due to the increase maybe in violence, uh, things like that. And, and, you know, people just don't come up to have a good time like that anymore. And as a DJ, I usually do functions. And by 11 o'clock I'm, I try to be home these days, instead of being up there two o'clock. And I remember being out till the sun come up sometime, you know, but like I tell 'em, I'm not getting no younger and I had my fun, you know?

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: And sometime you got to wise up and, you know, put things, other things first, especially, you know, your life and your family and things first. So back then, it probably was just like a hobby to me but now, I treat it as a business. And, you know, as a business relation see,

not just a hobby and something doing to have fun, you know?

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And were there any like baseball fields or football fields or sports fields-

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: ... here?

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah. Well, um, right behind Haut Gap we used to play little league football. Um, Mt. Zion School at the football field there, that was like, um, a Saturday thing, which one of my uncles was a coach. Um, Mr. Thomas Geddis, you know, of the little league and several other guys from Johns Island were coaches too, you know? And, um, we always had the little league and they still trying to keep it going on as it goes on today, you know? But usually they'll play like a little, little league game here at Haut Gap in the front now, you know, instead of the back.

Or sometime they go to North Charleston or West Ashley to a rec center, you know, and play with other teams. But it used to be like six to seven teams over here, you know, but now, it's just like one big team between Johns Island and Wadmalaw. But one time, Wadmalaw had a team and they could have played against Wadmalaw. And Johns Island could have played against Rantowles and things like that 'cause it was much, that much team. But now that I, you know, do little functions with the

little league, it's just like one big team. You know, you got the guys from Wad- little kids from Wadmalaw. Got some on Johns Island, some that don't live on the island but they parents take the time to bring them back-

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: ... to, you know, play little league and grew up like they did, you know? So that's one thing we try to keep going on and I try to help out as much as I can carrying the little store and giving them some music and things like that to encourage the young kids around here with something fun, you know and recreational-wise, you know?

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And was swimming was/is swimming out in the creeks and the-

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: ... rivers and stuff--

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah, swimming that was something we could, uh, go in the creek and all of that but we had to be careful just like me 'cause I, I lived on Johns Island all my life but I'm not a swimmer.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah, but I can go in the water.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: But you don't want nothing ... You don't want a tide to take you out and you can't swim. But as long as you go in there with a cousin that can save you. But it al- ... And it usually in the summertime, it usually be like that, you know, and most of us couldn't swim. But I glad

they give, offer classes today 'cause my children learn, you know, at the summer camps and things like that. So they need to teach their daddy how to swim now-

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Antwoine Geddis: ... so but, you know, but like going fishing and things like that. You know, we do, do those things like that. But knowing how to swim, I mean, if you don't know how to swim you got to learn the idea if you fall over the boat, off the boat, you know?

Reneé Donnell: Yes.

Antwoine Geddis: So some people learn how to swim but, yeah. Swimming in creeks like that and things like that. But now, we so fortunate we got pools and things now so I usually just go and hang out at the pool or to the beach or something like that now, these days.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Um, and so you mentioned that you grew up in the old, Whaley Plantation-

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: ... also known as the Cane Slash Road.

Antwoine Geddis: Yes, ma'am.

Reneé Donnell: Um, yeah. Do you know what the boundaries of the Cane Slash area are?

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah. Well, my great-grandfather-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: ... and his uncle were two of the big-times of the Whaley Plantation. My great-grandfather is a gentleman by the

name of Caesar Geddis. And, um, and I do have his let's see ... This is his World War II draft registration card here. And, um, and I had him on, uh ... And this is his, yeah. When he registered in the Army, which he, uh, was the son of Mr. Archie Geddis. And, um, his mother was Miss Rose Green Geddis.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: So that's why Cato who worked side by side with him was his uncle. So Cato might, you know, have showed him a way, you know, showed him the way-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: ... as of coming up and just in case like when he died 'cause I believe Cato was older than my great-great-grandfather. And, um, and they worked for the Whaley family.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: And, um, then after that my great-grandfather, great-great-grandfather he married a lady named Miss Sarah Chavis Geddis and they were from the island right here. Same area and, um, but when she married my great-grandfather, Great-great-grandfather Caesar Geddis, she was working for the Whaley family in the house 'cause my great-grandmother was a "high yellow"-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: ... woman. So most people that were high yellow usually can work in the house. And usually when I ask people about her they say, "You know, she was a sporty woman and she dressed with style-

Reneé Donnell: Hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: ... and everything." And, um, and I know, um, even when the Whaley family, they had a house on Johns Island. They also had a house in downtown Charleston. And my grandmother, Great-great-grandmother Sally would work for them also too. And then they was a article that a cousin of mine, you know, had found online where one of the Whaley sons came and checked on his father. And I believe his father's watch was missing. And my Great-grandmother Sally got accused for it, you know, and she did get arrested. But she bonded out of jail, you know?

How? I don't know. I don't know if the watch was ever found. The next thing I know, you know, we had all this property on Johns Island. You know, maybe it was granted from Mr. Whaley as good as my people, you know, worked with the family. And, um, and like I said, he was the one then and we still stay over there today. But if it wasn't for Caesar Geddis, you know, we wouldn't have the property that we have today. And I'll say my Grandmother Sally, also too, 'cause they worked very hard with the, uh, Whaley family until the day they died, you know? And even after Mr. Whaley passed away, his daughter inherited, uh, the land over here on Johns Island. And she was pretty good to, you know, to the family also too, so. But-

Reneé Donnell: Do you know where it got the name Cane Slash from?

Antwoine Geddis: Cane Slash, no, 'cause it always was considered Whaley.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah, because I mean, if you talk about I mean, people will usually say, "Well, you live Whaley." Before they say, "Cane Slash Road." You know?

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: That just became something modern after I probably was born, you know?

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah. But other than that it's, that neighborhood is still known as Whaley where the Geddis and the Greens and the Pinckneys stay over, over there. And Chisholms too. And we also have a historical cemetery there on our property, um, created by my great-grandfather, Mr. Caesar Geddis so and, and, um, graves are still there today. And it was preserved even after a development happened next to our property. And I believe who then paid my Great-grandfather Mr. Caesar Geddis's son.

They went on that side. Wasn't on our property but then, um, who paid him I believe they'd been on the side where we owned, you know? But everything worked out and no graves were moved. None of it been touched, you know? And everything is still preserved today, you know, as my grandfather did, had started it out, Caesar Geddis.

Reneé Donnell: Do you, can you describe where that graveyard is and does it have a name or is it just like the Geddis Family?

Antwoine Geddis: Well, it's, it's used to be called the Whaley Family Cemetery.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: And, um, and it's d- it's two ways you can get there 'cause the road that we live on, which is Herman Road named after my ... Well, I call him my uncle 'cause my Great-grandmother Sally raised him. But Herman Geddis and that's, um, that if you drive that road, that'll take you in there but you will come into the bushes part of that, which it's still up, you know, with grass and everything. You know, covered up.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: But you can still walk through the graves. But then there's another way on the developer side's an oak field on Colson Drive, which they cleaned that part off and fenced it off. And, um, and you can see a few graves right there.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm. And that's fenced off with a low walkway. And they did that and put up a sign, you know, describing the history of the Whaley Cemetery. So-

Reneé Donnell: Awesome.

Antwoine Geddis: ... and that was good that they did that, you know, with the help of the community and, and some county officials, you know?

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And ... Mm-hmm. I'm so sorry.

Antwoine Geddis: That's all right. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: All right. So do you know of any other historic neighborhoods? I know you saw that yesterday-

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: ... and he said you were just like, "Oh, yeah. That's this, this, this-

Antwoine Geddis: Oh, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: ... and this." Um, and we can bring it to you-

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: ... if you need it.

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah, well, if y'all want to bring it but I can start with, um, the Cape.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: The Cape and Stevens.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: The Cape is where my grandmother's from and her name's Helen Springs Geddis. And, um, the Springs is a big fam- big part of the family over there on Plow Ground Road. And, um, which they came from Wadmalaw. My great-grandfather's father was To- ... His grandfather was Thomas Springs and Chloe Springs. And his mother was, um, Emma Singleton Springs. And, um, and Thomas Springs. Okay, so my grandfather, my great-grandfather's grandfather was Walter Springs, okay-

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: ... that had the son named Thomas Springs, which is my great-grandfather, Jack Springs' father.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: That's the way it goes. And my great-grandfather's grandmother was Chloe Springs. And they had a big house out on Plow Ground. They say they was a nice big house and it set high up off the, um, off the land, you know, like with stilts. And people could have played, they could have played underneath the whole house like that. That's stories I heard about the big house that they had.

But, um, but like I said, they came from Wadmalaw to Johns Island as a new settlement. And they settled in a place called Cape Plantation. And that's the place they used to be called, Cape. And, um, and like my great-grandfather always say, his father had the, his grandfather had the cut light stump wood to have the property that we have today. And which is like 18 acres on one side and like eight, seven-something on the other side, which we still own today. And, um, and he was a great man, you know, my great-grandfather.

And he's lived to be about till 96 I believe, and my great-grandmother, his wife Daphne Gibbes Springs. And she was from Cape also too. When they got married, they ... Well, let's see. She was maybe 15. Grandad was 18 then 'cause they could get married at the young age like that. And her father, my Great-grandmother Daphne Gibbes Springs' father was a gentleman by the name of Hector Gibbes. And Hector Gibbes was, um, one of the first carpenters on Johns Island responsible for building caskets, um, on Johns Island before anybody could go to the mortuaries downtown and things like that.

And, um, and he built, uh, a church called Wesley United Methodist Church. And that's, um, right off of River Road, when it was a board church. The church is brick right now but I don't, you know, know about. I don't hardly see that in historical records and things like that. But and also, um, Mt. Zion Holiness Church. That's off of Exchange Landing Road. He built that also too. And, um, and Hector Gibbes, this is, uh, an 1870 census. And, um, it said that my great-grandf- great-great-grandfather, he was born about 1849. And at the age right here, it says he's 21.

And, um, household members, um, he was living with, um, which his name was Hector Gibbes. And John Gibbes and Calvin Gibbes, Ben Frasier, some other people that I don't hardly know too well but then later on documents it showed him living in a boarding house with some Geddis, (laughs) you know? And, um, and but this was the Bible, um, that Hector Gibbes had. And also his wife, uh, Rebecca Gibbes. And I know it's a little tattered, you know, and I don't try to open it up too much.

And right here, uh, you can see this was, uh, a independent lodge that he was paying dues, you know, he would pay his dues. Like they would have a [inaudible 00:27:46] society. And this is, let me see. I don't know if it has a year on here. But it shows what my great-grandfather paid as his dues before they h- could have like insurance policy. They would put their money in things like this. And at the time, Mr. David Miller was the financial secretary. And I always heard of David Miller, which, um, in the church that I go to Cedar Spring on Plow Ground Road, which is in the Cape Plantation too.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: His name is, you know, listed in some records of the church and things like that. And, and also in this census record. So I, um, and the lodge was Kings of Glory Lodge, you know, and that was a free lodge. And I guess that's what they paid, you know? This was what they had money stored in when they didn't have insurance like, uh, we would pay insurance, you know? So his money went into that.

Reneé Donnell: Question.

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Do we know where this Kings of Glory Lodge was?

Antwoine Geddis: I never heard of it so I, I think I need to do something.

Reneé Donnell: We'll look it up.

Antwoine Geddis: Research, yeah, 'cause-

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Antwoine Geddis: ... you never know. It probably was a lodge in the Cape Plantation.

Reneé Donnell: Uh-huh.

Antwoine Geddis: You know, or it might have been, uh, you know, a church hall. Uh, a-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: ... meeting house, you know, or a praise house rather too. Like the Moving Star Hall. The Moving Star Hall had a society just like this too, that my family members were a part too. You know, Hector Gibbes' daughter, Miss

Julia, she was a part of a lodge, something like this too. And then in this here, it just names like the daughter like his children, which is Catherine Gibbes. And, um, they had a daughter Janie who died at a young age.

And Julia was, uh, who I just was talking about. And she married, um, she was Julia Frasier Gadsden. And my Aunt Mary, which we call her, um, Annie. And she was, uh, Mary Smalls. And my Great-grandfather Daphne. And we used to call her Gal Gibbes and, which she was married to a Springer. And these gives a date during the time they were born. They, they wrote this down in the Bible right here. And then he also his, um, wife, my grandmother, Rebecca Roper Gibbes, she have the death data for, um, father and her mother.

And I believe, um, grandfather' mother also too 'cause his m- I think the Gibbes' mother was named Mariah Gibbes and Hector Gibbes too. But Grandmother Rebecca, her f- her mother, her father was Jackie Roper. And, um, Diana Roper, which I heard Diana was a midwife responsible for, um, doing the, you know, delivering babies. And, and that's how I'm related to, um, some of the people that was, uh, tragically killed in the Emanuel Nine through my Grandmother Rebecca' side. Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: No.

Anna Wiman: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah, it w- it-

Reneé Donnell: Yeah. It's a-

Antwoine Geddis: ... it was tragic.

Reneé Donnell: I hate to talk so much when you're rustling paper.

Antwoine Geddis: Rustling that paper, okay.

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Antwoine Geddis: So we got to go back on that part?

Reneé Donnell: Yes, but-

Anna Wiman: Um, you can still hear it. It's just-

Antwoine Geddis: You want to clear it up? Okay.

Reneé Donnell: Yes.

Anna Wiman: Have some just-

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah. We can put this down.

Anna Wiman: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Yeah. And then you mentioned a mit- the Emanuel nine?

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: What is that?

Antwoine Geddis: Well, a tragic loss that happened at the church where the, um, people were killed in that-

Reneé Donnell: The, um-

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah. In that, yeah. But, yeah. With Dylann Roof and all this was related to my, um, Great-grandmother Rebecca Roper. My, Rebecca should be her, Miss Susie's grand-aunt 'cause her father is, um, her grandfather is my Great-grandmother Rebecca's nephew. I know

that sound pretty distant but, yeah. But if you look at it like my grandmother, my great-grandmother and Miss Susie's father, Mr. Jackson is, um, first cousins.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah. Just like I have first cousins, that's how I break it down, you know, just like that. And I just want to show you a picture of Rebecca 'cause we do have her. And like the kids that I showed you on the, uh, listed in the Bible. This is Catherine here. And this is my great-grandmother when she was a little younger. And the son, um, Henry Gibbes. And the sister Mary, right here. And this is the son right here also too. And this is Rebecca when she got a little older. She lived to be 100 and something.

But I got that, um, document, uh, right there. But this is her s- other daughter Lucille, my great-grandmother, Miss Rebecca Gibbes and my other great-grandmother right there. But this is Rebecca Gibbes when she died, which this was in 1976 when she passed away. And I believe she was born 1880 if I'm not mistaken 'cause I have that, um, right here 'cause this is where I put that, s- so you guys would see the information. And it was amazing how long she lived and how much great-grandkids that she had.

But I have the original obituary right here. And, you know, she was born January 1st, the New Years and, and, and if she wasn't, you know, that's was the best holiday most people celebrated, you know? And it was 1880 on Johns Island. And, um, her children are listed. And

when she passed away, she had 57 grandchildren, 158 great-grandchildren and 54 great-great-grandchildren. And I wasn't even included in that yet 'cause I was born a couple years after that if I'm not mistaken, '76, yep. I was born in '84, so, yeah. So that's Miss Rebecca Gibbes right here, you know, and she lived, she lived a nice long life, you know? And she was married to my Great-grandfather Mr. Hector Gibbes the first carpenter on Johns Island in the Cape Plantation that we were, um, talking about places.

Reneé Donnell: You said he used to build caskets?

Antwoine Geddis: Yes, ma'am. He was the one that would build the caskets for people to be buried in. And there was a guy named Mr. Ben Simmons who was responsible for making the headstones after, um, people ... You know, after they buried if the family wanted to purchase them like a cement block headstone with the inscription on it, you know? It wasn't a fancy headstone like we have today. You know, just a block one but my great-great-grandfather was responsible for building the graves. I mean, not the graves, the caskets for the deceased.

Reneé Donnell: Where did he build these caskets, out at his house-

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah, his house-

Reneé Donnell: Or did he have a shop?

Antwoine Geddis: ... right there on Cape, um, up on Cape Road and there's still a road called Cape Road. But we in the family do live back there. And we have a name of the road called Hector Road in memory of Hector.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. 150-some great-grandkids?

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Lots.

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah. And that's what we ... I got a lot of cousins so and it is a big family. My grandmother has like a bunch of first cousins and that I have to call aunt so, you know, that's how close-knitted our family is, you know, and still is today. As, not as much as, um, my kids might, don't know some of my cousin kids so that's how big the family is now. So but we try to have reunions and things like that to keep the family together.

And especially me. With all the history I got, I try to teach them as much as they, who want to know. I try to teach them and you can't force history on everybody 'cause everybody can't take the truth. And then some things, you know, you got to keep to yourself. But the ones that want to learn and want to know, they always come to me. And I feel free to, you know, just to talk to them.

Reneé Donnell: Where, so does your family have annual family reunions?

Antwoine Geddis: Yes, ma'am. We usually do and we started that back in 2009. And the first one was a big success, you know, and that's on the Gibbes' side of Hector Gibbes. And even on this past year, even the Geddis, we had one this year, you know, with shirts. And I said, well, I started to wear my shirt today, I while I saw the map with the Geddis on it, I said, "Well, you know what? I need to put my Geddis shirt on." But I, so I'll just bring it to show, you know, that we ... And this was the first one we had in several years, uh, probably since I was born. So we probably didn't have one. This was the first one in a while so it was nice, you know?

Reneé Donnell: Where do you guys host it?

Antwoine Geddis: Well, um, this one was at my great-grandmother's house. Um, Christina Johnson Geddis and, um, James Donnie Geddis 'cause James is the son of Caesar Geddis that, you know, who I was talking about earlier. And then, um, while I was talking about James and Caesar Geddis, I just want to hold this picture up 'cause I know it's a little tattered. But this is a picture of Sally, who I was talking about being a fancy woman. And this is a picture of her, which I could get it in color and get it a little better.

But I had it for several years and I was so amazed that they have a picture of her. And this is, um, my great-grandmother, Sarah Sally Chavis Geddis who was buried right here at Bethel Church next to Haut Gap, you know, and my Great-grandfather Caesar Geddis 'cause from my understanding, they established that church right there next to Haut Gap, so along with the Green family also too, so.

Reneé Donnell: And are there ... So you mentioned cemeteries where your family is buried.

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm. Uh-

Reneé Donnell: Are there any cemeteries that ... And you might not know this but are there any cemeteries that have kind of become overgrown and people might not know where they are?

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah. But most of us know and they try to always let the youngest one know.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: So we do it, you know, always if you see something happening right there you need to open your mouth 'cause, um, you know, people are very dear. And we already had this I know happen before where people used to remove headstones just to build a house and things like that. And that had to be stopped, you know, even when I, and I was a little bit too young to open my mouth about it.

But people spoke up about it and, you know, and told us, "Hey, you see this happening, you can't, you can't let them do that." 'cause it's, um, a burial is a sacred place. But I know of a few that's, um, growing up but it was already documented with pictures and things like that for some friends that I know. And they came and documented about two of 'em, um, that I knew of. And then, this happened about 10, maybe 15 years ago.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: So I hold onto that booklet with those pictures of graves. And then they have the names of the graves that's all, in the cemetery. But I wouldn't point none of them now, you know, on, you know, but it's, it's, it's about one more that I really know about. And I think it's another grave that, that's a family cemetery. But I know some people bought the property. And but some people know that their great-grandmother's buried back there but, not able to go back there to that.

And, um, and I know, yeah. I know about two or three 'cause I have a grandfather buried in one on, on Wadmalaw. And, um, I wasn't able to, never will see him. And when I talked to my grandmother she usually, she says, she wasn't back then. Said, she buried him, which was a hard time for her at that time. So and one day I tried to ride and look and m- and see if I could find the grave. But I didn't find it but a cousin told me said he knows where it's at. Said he's gonna take me so we haven't did that yet, so hopefully I'll be able to make that one day.

Reneé Donnell: Sorry.

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Can you, yes. Okay. Awesome. Okay. So, um, were there any big or annual festivals that used to take place or still taking place here on Johns Island?

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah. One of 'em is the Sea Island Festival. And last year, it was right here in front of the nursing home or, yeah. I know this used to be called Hermina Traeye but Island Oaks, which, um, a Sea Island rest- it used to be, it used to be called. And we usually have that in September. And a lot of vendors and churches and schools and things like, uh, people like that usually come out and sing or perform and things like that. And usually I used to be one of the DJs that set up. Me and Mr. Jenkins, um, um, who used to own Hot Spot Records.

Me and him I- used to set up and be able to play out there but over the years things had changed, you know? We got a little older but he passed away now so, you know,

things gonna change. And you, and everybody don't want the same thing every year, you know? So we backed up a little bit and then, you know, and some change is done. But that's one big festival that we look forward to in September. And the other one is the homecoming. Yeah, the Homecoming of St. John's. Like that's like, you know, the big night of the game, football game.

And you'll have a lot of churches and people we'll have a parade that starts from Haut Gap to St. John's High School. And usually you'll have people like me, you know, I usually arrive with my store in there and, and be on the back of my truck doing a little music. And talking to the people, you know, and that's another big fun event that everyone look forward to also too. And, um, such as any other big events, you know, usually families like have like big events like that, you know?

And people know to go to like the, on the 4th of July, we'll go to the Chisholms or the Ropers or things like that. Or Christmastime, some of the families around here have big Christmas parties, you know? So it, it's usually, you know, people have their functions, you know, and things for all of us to get together, you know?

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And ... I guess I would like to know when do you think Johns Island started to, to transition in development?

Antwoine Geddis: I'll say probably in the early 2000s. Like 20 years ago. 20 years ago, you know, that's when we start seeing Johns Island getting a little bigger and roads start to get wider. And, you know, and things start to change a

little bit when bridges start. You know, we had, used to have draw bridges and that changed. You know, we, and which was good. You know, 'cause the traffic usually will be horrible and sometime the bridge would get stuck. And you'd have to go all the way around, so that was a little ...

You know, that was a little upgrade to Johns Island but when some upgrades start, you know, it, it, it, more, more progress gonna come along with it too. And I know one thing that we were trying to fight for, against rather is the 526 coming to Johns Island 'cause we felt like a lot of our development and our urban living would be, uh, damaged. So I'm one of those people, I'm not for it 'cause I'm used to, you know, the rural Johns Island. But it ain't too much of the rural Johns Island though, which I can go with, you know, with, um, development a little bit.

But, but taking away, you know, and tearing down people's houses. And taking land from people and not compensating. And that's something I can't go with, especially I know how hard my family fight for what we have today, you know, so I just can't let that happen. And I know it's a lot of people, you know, from Johns Island feel the same way also too, especially when it comes down to property or your home that you were living in. And, and some people were already forced out many years ago the same way with development.

So, so I mean, we don't want to see that happen again. So but I know 526 might be a little better for traffic in the flow to get to the island but I think, I can, I, I can pretty

much live the way I am living with the traffic, you know? Only thing to do is put on a nice jam and flow through the, around traffic, you know? And take your time, you know? I know people are always in a rush. Why I say that but I see the rushers. I see the ones taking their time and I mean, you know, the roads are rough but we can make it on Johns Island.

You know, if we've been, if we've come this far nows, ain't no need for us to try to eliminate it or feel like we need all of that, you know? So and it already happened to other places with development so we just don't want to see that here. But if it happen, I can't get mad, you know? I know we fight for a long time, you know, and still some fighters out here now but they're getting a little older. And somebody else got to take a stand, stand with it, you know? And it's costing us plenty of money to get that done, so.

Reneé Donnell: Is there anything else you would like to add, um, anything that maybe my questions didn't go over?

Antwoine Geddis: Well, I think we did talk a good bit. (laughs) Um, nothing too much, you know. But I'm just happy to take a part in this interview and, and feel free to talk about Johns Island and Wadmalaw Island. And, um, 'cause like my father is from Wadmalaw Island and my mother is from Johns Island so I got a big part of me on Wadmalaw Island also too. You know, with my great-grandfather being my great-great-grandfather being a man named Reverend Jay Campbell. I don't know if ... I know if people heard of the Angel Oak Tree.

Reneé Donnell: Hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: But there's a tree on Wadmalaw that was older than the Angel Oak Tree called Bull Hog Tree. And my great-great-grandfather was one of the caretakers of that tree along with his, um, wife Lavinia, which Lavinia was my step-great-great-grandmother. And, um, the story behind Jay Campbell, you know, he was a pastor. But he was working, you know, for whoever he was working with at that, uh, for that time. But it was the weather was bad. And they told my great-gran- great-grandfather that he had to go out and plow the fields.

And he did. Went out and obeyed the command that was sent to him but he was struck by lightning and got killed. You know, and that was my great-grandmother's father. And it's, um, it's in the death records and I looked at his death record. And it showed he was electrocuted. But the good thing about it, you know, my great-grandmother, she lived to be ... Her, her, his daughter, which is my great-grandmother, Lilia, Lydia Campbell Jackson, she lived to be 103.

So a long history of genes live in my family, you know, and, um, and that's the story behind the Campbell side, you know, on my father's side. That's a big story I always talk about in her long, my great-grandmother lived to be, you know? And it's amazing. I mean, when I heard that story but when you see the documents that states it, that'll really open your eye, you know? It's like, "Well, did granddaddy really get electrocuted? Is that a tale or a fib?" But it is the truth, you know, which people

always had, my great-grandmother told me that herself, you know?

So but that's one of the stories I just wanted to touch on about my Wadmalaw family, you know, 'cause I just didn't want to talk about the Johns Island family so much and then, um, and I have family on James Island too. You know, the Chavis's over there, those are my cousins too. And that's my great-grandma. My great-grandmother, Sally has all of the aunts. You know, she was one of the first sisters and her two brothers left Johns Island. One moved on Grimball Plantation and the other one moved on Sol Legare.

So that's why you will hear me say, Chavis, you know, they was, uh, my cousins too. So the family just don't stop here on Johns Island. It's over there on James Island too and we all stay connected. We had a big Chavis family reunion and hopefully we looking at planning another one, you know, pretty soon. And so and that's the goodness about my family. And I try to keep all of us connected. And even my children, I try to say ... I know some people get tired of that 'cause I used to get tired of that being around my great-grandparents like, "Oh, that's your cousin."

I'd be like, "Man, I must of can never find a girlfriend over here on the island 'cause everybody my cousin, you know?" But the good thing about it is, you know, life is good and I'm glad of the stories that they told me. And the history that they gave me that at 30, I better see that now to be the youngest one 'cause I ain't gonna be

the youngest historian forever. Somebody gonna come and take my title one day but that's why I got to put these stories out here and let it be known, you know?

And I know people all around the world can hear, hear it, you know? And this is good when you can talk about your family and everything else, so especially the good. Everything gonna be good in every family and everything gonna be bad, you know? But you got to take the good, you know, and I try to be one of those good ones that keep it discreet. And I can't keep all discreet, you know, so and I don't think I can pull off a belt no more or cut nobody behind 'cause we used to get behind cuts around here.

But it didn't hurt us, you know, and especially we, like you say, we're kind of r- ... Well, moving back is a little too, you know, but we are, um, we are that, you know? And like it didn't hurt me so, you know, and if anything else I need to talk about, just feel free to let me know. I see you got Stevens down there.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Antwoine Geddis: There's a place called Stevens, which, uh, Dr. Stevens is, um, the place why they n- called that Stevens is 'cause Dr. Stevens had a big house. And my great-grandmother, Christina Johnson Geddis, was born on Stevens' place. And, um, her father was Thomas Johnson. And her mother was Venus Deas Scott-Johnson. And, um, and she had brothers. I think I have her census record, the list that shows her brother and siblings while they were living on Dr. Stevens place, would be specific. Yeah.

Let me make sure. I think this is it right here, if I'm not mistaken. But look-

Reneé Donnell: Question.

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: So this is listed together as kind of the same place. Or-

Antwoine Geddis: Well-

Reneé Donnell: ... they're not?

Antwoine Geddis: ... no, they're not too much 'cause, um, Cape is on Plow Ground and Dr. Stevens' place is near River Road and where you find Johnson and Scott Road at. And I think j-uh, Dr. Stevens is on like a little, like most of that property right there before it got, you know, subdivided with other people. Like 'cause I know, um, there's another big place right there. So, um, but my family was, uh, my great-grandma was born there on Dr. Stevens' place. Yep. And she, even when she was in her 80s and at that time we all say going through dementia.

You know, but her mind would come and go. And she always would say, she want to go home l- um, to Stevens. And I'd understand what she was talking about when I did the research and saw that, that the guy who owned the property was Dr. Stevens. And I think Dr. Stevens was a good guy the way they talk about him and, and everything else too. But, you know, and I wish I could have find that but they know, you know, I have so many documents I can't look for everything 'cause I would have showed you about that but, um, uh, 'cause it had them listed on living on Dr. Stevens' place. But like

I said, I can't find everything right now, so but, yeah. But that's, um, and yeah. But that's pretty much where, um, the Stevens' Plantation was.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Antwoine Geddis: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Well, great. I think we're good.

Antwoine Geddis: Yeah.



ABRAHAM BILL JENKINS

Reneé Donnell: ... of, um, water beside you just in case you get thirsty?

Bill Jenkins: No, I just had some water, so.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Bill Jenkins: Thank you.

Reneé Donnell: All right. Whenever you are ready.

Anna Wiman: Okay.

Reneé Donnell: All right. So, um, would you be able to say your name for the camera and then spell it out, please?

Bill Jenkins: Abraham Bill Jenkins Jr. I mean Senior.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Bill Jenkins: And it's A... Capital A-B-R-A-H-A-M B-I-L-L J-E-N-K-I-N-S Junior.

Elaine Jenkins: Se-

Bill Jenkins: Senior.

Reneé Donnell: All right. Thank you for that. And first question, are you from Johns Island?

Bill Jenkins: I was born and raised there.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. What area were you raised in?

Bill Jenkins: We used to call it Maddas Road, but it's Legareville Road.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. All right. And how long, how long has your family been in... on Johns Island?

Bill Jenkins: All my life.

Reneé Donnell: All right.

Bill Jenkins: Until I went in the military.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And then how many generations of your family has been on Johns Island?

Bill Jenkins: I've been on Johns Island?

Reneé Donnell: Your family. So, your grandparents, your great grandparents, just your parents, just you.

Bill Jenkins: No. My parents and grandparent.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And do you know why the generation before your grandparents came to Johns Island?

Bill Jenkins: How would I know that?

Elaine Jenkins: They were slaves.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. All right. So, um, what, what can you tell me about the building that we're in right now?

Bill Jenkins: Well, this building came up in, I think it's 1894, in '96 or '90-... Oh. '99, I'm not sure. But it been here when I grew, grew up. It was here. It was an old building then.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Bill Jenkins: And I grew up in 19-... I was born in 1929.

Reneé Donnell: You look good for your age. You look very good. All right. And then can you tell us what the original purpose of this building was?

Bill Jenkins: This before telephone time, they used to beat drums.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Bill Jenkins: To, to let... They couldn't say what was happening, but this is if something happen on Johns Island. Then they go to James Island with the Wadmalaw. And they would send it on to... Especially if you go to Yonges Island and Edisto. 'Cause the drumming, they couldn't go that far, but they know something is happening on Johns Island. Have all... Each island had a drummer and they used to communicate through the drum.

Reneé Donnell: So, this building was where the drummer would drum?

Bill Jenkins: This building here was one of the first that start sending message by drum.

Reneé Donnell: All right. And so do you know around what decade that was? I know it was in the late 1800s, early 1900s. Do you know?

Bill Jenkins: Well, I can go back to my time because I didn't read that much, Black history at that time. But, 1929 was, uh, my birthdate and this building been here about 80 years before I was thinking about coming on the earth.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And can you tell me what was life like growing up here on Johns Island?

Bill Jenkins: To me then, it was, was pretty good that I thought. But then as I started growing and saw that, uh, when I got to the 7th grade, which was all the education I was supposed to get 'cause I went to Burke School in Charleston.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. I don't think I've actually met anyone who attended Burke School, so that's really cool. Would you be able to tell me a little bit about Burke School? How did you get there?

Bill Jenkins: Well, my daddy had a trucking farm on Johns Island and he also, uh, had... got a bus later on, but he had the trucking farm. And he used to take us to school when he take the farmers to the market 'cause the market was then in Charleston.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. All right. And then so what were some of the... What were some of the activities you used to partake in when you were growing up here?

Bill Jenkins: Well, I'll start it off with, uh, some boxing glove. When I got to... When I heard about Joe Louis, I thought I want to be another Joe Louis. So, I was about seven year old when Joe Louis fought Max Schmeling and Max Schmeling beat Joe Louis. I cried like a baby.

Reneé Donnell: (laughs) Okay. And where did you box?

Bill Jenkins: We draw... Just take a stick and make a, No, didn't have no training and I just wanted to box. I bought two pair of boxing glove, and what I did was put it in the truck when Papa let me have the truck on the weekend. And anybody who want to box, I'll box 'em. I didn't have any training, but all I know I was another Joe Louis.

Reneé Donnell: (laughs) All right. And then about how many years did you box?

Bill Jenkins: Till, till I went to Burke... to, uh, uh, Burke School in Charleston and I saw this guy was in the Sixth Fleet in World War II. And he was talking about, uh... He was this Sixth F-... uh, Sixth Fleet champ and he was ordered to service there. And I was still a s-... junior in the high school, and he said, "I'll box with you." Then I got scared.

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Bill Jenkins: Because, you know, I, I didn't have any training. I just liked to box.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Bill Jenkins: So, he put the gloves and he start talking to s- some of the people around there about how, how many people he knocked out in, in the Mediterranean and all that whole area. Then I start trembling 'cause I was scared. So, when we got in the ring, we drew a line and make a round. And we got in there and I saw him dancing around me, dancing around me, but I saw he was... had the hand low. I hit him upside his head and he fell. From then on, he was my meat. So, his friends said, "Give me those gloves, man. You let me down on this island." So, he got in the ring and he tried to fight it like th- the cowboys do in the movie. So, I just, I just flattened him. So, he said, "Take these damn thing off." Then he said, "I'll wrestle you." I said, "No, I didn't say anything about wrestling. I said I'll box." So, from then on, then I went into r- run some track out here. And, uh, my daddy used to play baseball, so I used to watch him play baseball.

Reneé Donnell: Where did your dad play baseball?

Bill Jenkins: Oh, in the field out here. They didn't have no baseball park or anything here. They had a sponge ball instead of a regular hard baseball. They used to play with a sponge ball and he used to pitch.

Reneé Donnell: And do you know where about was this? I know you said they didn't have, um, like a field like we them today, but do you know about where they used to play?

Bill Jenkins: They used to play on River Road. Not River Road, I'm sorry. On the Legareville Road, which we used to call Maddas at that time. And they had a field out there between our house a- and the next neighbor house, was an open in-between. So, they used to get out there and play base-

Reneé Donnell: And... Sorry, go ahead.

Bill Jenkins: No, I... That's where they used to play baseball.

Reneé Donnell: And was that a big activity on Johns Island to play baseball?

Bill Jenkins: Well, we had one guy came here from... He was, he was born here, but he went in, Pennsylvania. And while he was up there, he learned to play a little baseball. So, he came back home and h-... and they said he had the curve ball.

We... Nobody know what a curve ball was. We never... All we do, throw the ball. So, my daddy was also a pitcher so he had a fastball. So, they started playing and my uncle, who was my daddy's half-brother, was on the opposite side of the... from, from where my daddy was. And he hit a ball and the ball went to second base, on the right side of second base, and he tried to steal the second. And, and he got the ball and threw it back it to my daddy. My daddy ran down and put him out. So, then what was, "Boys, I thought you was faster than that." He said (laughs), "But you don't know how fast Esau was." So, that's how... I mean, that's how we used to play. We never had regular... except for the boxing glove.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Bill Jenkins: But we didn't have regular... We just played with anything we had. Any ball, baseballs, sponge ball, we just played with them.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And did you, uh, and your family do much swimming or fishing or any-

Bill Jenkins: Any seafood stuff?

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Bill Jenkins: I went fishing once in my life, but... up to that time. And I didn't go fishing, I went there to bail the water out the boat. I didn't call their name 'cause it wouldn't make no difference to you. But the guy who was fishing wanted me to bail the water out of the boat, was leaking a little bit. And all I do is to keep the water... bail out of the boat. That's the only I went fishing during life. Early days in the... Until I go in the military. Then I started doing some more.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, um, for you and your siblings, what did you guys used to do for fun?

Bill Jenkins: Uh, we used to farm. We did a lot of farming.

Reneé Donnell: Right

Bill Jenkins: We was selling on the market. Uh, my dad, he had to learn a little Greek because that's where he could, [inaudible 00:13:50], what he's saying to the Greek buyers, "Come here, I'd like to speak with you." And they would say, "Come down 'cause you wanna hear the Black Greek speak." And so that's where he used to sell his, his stuff.

Reneé Donnell: Where did your dad learn Greek?

Bill Jenkins: It was a place on King Street that, uh... After he, he stopped school in the 4th grade, he got married when he was 17, and he start working on a boat in the city. And, uh, from that boat, one day they couldn't go out because a storm was coming, so they went into the market place because it was right by the market. And a lady from Johns Island had a bushel of plum that she had wanted to sell, but she had a doctor's appointment and she couldn't be there all day trying to sell a bushel of plum. And so he, my daddy asked, "How much you want for the bushel?" She says something like \$2 or something like that. And he took that \$2 'cause he had about three in the pocket, I guess, 'cause he gave him two so she can go and... Mostly to help her than to sell in the market.

But he made more from that bushel of plum that he did working a day on the boat. So, he never went back to the boat. He started hustling in the market. And he started

hustling in the market and he did that until he got enough people to believe in him that they would give him a deposit and he bought a little F- Ford truck. Then he start using people from the country and bought his stuff from 'em and take it to the market and sell it.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, um, so you mentioned that your dad spoke Greek. Was he fluent in it or did he just know a few words?

Bill Jenkins: No, he wasn't fluent. He couldn't e-... He couldn't even, uh, read it.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Bill Jenkins: But He knew enough about it that people started believing in him, especially... 'Cause most of the stores in Charleston was owned by... Corner stores were owned by the Greeks, not the Jews, at that time. It was the Greeks. And he had... Many of those people used to order from him and he'd drop it off out there... Stores instead of they coming to the market and try to take it back to the store.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And so what... So, you mentioned that you went to school on Johns Island until 7th grade. What school did you go to on this island?

Bill Jenkins: The Legareville Elem- Elementary School on, on Johns Island was on Maddas Road, on the Legareville Road. And I saw my first football game when I was in the 7th grade.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. How was that for you?

Bill Jenkins: Well, I was kinda heavy and thought I was pretty tough, so they asked me to come and, and play football for Burke. So, the next year I went out there and they got out and

they used... As a young man used to go to Burke School, I usually had a little bit of hair on my head then. And he said, "What kind of grease you use on your hair?" I says, "Sweet Georgia Brown." So, they just start... Everybody started calling me Sweet Georgia Brown. I went through Burke School as Sweet Georgia Brown. But after I graduated from Burke, I got a scholarship to go to Alabama State playing football. And I went there and I played there for four year.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And so you mentioned that you and your siblings and your dad did a lot of farming when you were growing up.

Bill Jenkins: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Um, did you or did your dad own his own land or was he a tenant farmer?

Bill Jenkins: Not... He didn't own all of his own property. He used to lease some property from... I can't think the person name. Anyway, they did had a lot of property and he had... My granddaddy, my father's daddy, bought seven acres of land f- for his two boys. And then Papa had three acres and the other guy had four acres and Papa had a house spot. So, we used to plant that. Mama, myself, my two sisters, we all used to go out there and help cultivate, harrow, sweep, plow, all those were part of growing the crop. So, that's what we did.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And did you do farming before and after school? Just before school? Just after school?

Bill Jenkins: No. I'm gonna have to go back a little bit. When we graduated from elementary school and middle school,

there was no school out here for Black folks. You had to go to the city. But in the city, you had to have a city address. So, I went to Burke School and my address was 23 Felix Street, was my home address, Mama's sister. And that's how I could stay there long enough to play football. But I couldn't play basketball then because I had to get back here and start plowing the ground the fall crop. But they let me stay there to play football, so I stayed at the Felix Street till the weekend then I'd come home.

Elaine Jenkins: [inaudible 00:21:00].

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And what kind of crops was your family growing?

Bill Jenkins: Start of with sweet potatoes, watermelon, collard greens, cabbage, string beans, okra, tomato, and et cetera. Most of those food is easy, easy. He planted it or he'd buy it then take it to the market. Just all depend on what the p-person from the store ordered, then he'd make sure you filled those orders.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And then what would you be able to tell me about different areas on Johns Island? So, you said that you grew up around Maddas Road. Um, what, what would you be able to tell me about the different neighborhoods or the different sides of town?

Bill Jenkins: Well, each little road had a name and it's not the name that we're calling it now. The Legareville Road was Maddas Road. And from Maddas Road, we had a place, what did we call, uh, Yellow House. And from Yellow House, it was White Hall. From White Hall, there was Mullet Hall. From Mullet Hall, Mullet Hall, was named Kiawah. And from Mullet Hall, then we had, uh... I can't even think of the

name right now, but the two other roads that we had, Hebrum, Bohicket Road. But then Bohicket Road had m-many side roads on Bohicket Road.

Reneé Donnell: So, was each of these streets was also its own neighborhood or, like, with its own, um, set of stores and churches and schools or?

Bill Jenkins: Well, they end up... Transportation was out bad out here, you want to have a church almost on every little island. And people didn't have no way of move. Uh, well, there was a few trucks. My daddy had one and couple other people had trucks. But most of the time, like Septima Clark used to say, "When you come over here on Johns Island, you don't come and go back every day. You come for the week." She was a school teacher over there and she used to there down there in Promised Land. And, uh, she would come down here on a Sunday and stay until the Friday or, or Saturday to get... There was a ferry boat there. Wasn't no car and truck that could... All this was dirt road. Then, uh, they used to ride this boat back to the city and she stays for a couple of days and back over here until teaching season is over. Then when teaching season is over, then they still go back to the city until the next year.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Thank you. Um, you mentioned that there was a ferry at that time. Do you know what the name of that ferry landing was or where it was approximately?

Bill Jenkins: I didn't hear you.

Reneé Donnell: Do you know where the ferry to get to, uh, mainland Charleston, where it was?

Bill Jenkins: Well, one was on, uh, Mr. [inaudible 00:25:09] Gaillard had one that was further down going toward Kiawah. And Mr. Boyd Washington had one that was not too far from here by Howard's Store. Then they used to... W-... The potato boats used to come all the way out here to pick up the potatoes and take it back to the city to be graded and so. And those ferry boats used to come and they used to run once a day in the morning, the afternoon, every day except Sunday. And what they used to do was, uh, take people there in the day, but you don't go to Charleston and come back the same day most of the time unless you were a planter or something like that and... And then if they leave at 3:00, you have to do everything you gotta do by 3:00 or they're on their way back. And if you miss that boat, you have to wait till the next day.

Reneé Donnell: And you said Mr. Maddas had near Kiawah and then you said who had the other one?

Bill Jenkins: Mr. Boyd Washington and up near the north farther Johns Island was a Mr. Clement had a boat, ferry boat.

Reneé Donnell: And do you know when the, uh, roads started being paved here?

Bill Jenkins: Well, this road here... They didn't pave everything at the same time.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Bill Jenkins: They planned it and did it in stages. First it was Maybank Highway. Then it was River Road and Bohicket Road, but they didn't go all the way to Kiawah. River Road, uh, stop at 400 feet of road, which is a Red Howell Store. That was a big store on the island at that time. They... It, it used to stop there. And it stayed that way until about 10 years later then they went and start paving the rest of the roads.

Reneé Donnell: And you said... What was the name of that hardware store?

Bill Jenkins: It-

Elaine Jenkins: It wasn't a hardware store.

Bill Jenkins: No, it wasn't a hardware... Hardware store was... No, I wouldn't even go in. It was Howell's-

Elaine Jenkins: Howell-

Bill Jenkins: Howell's Store.

Reneé Donnell: Howell. Okay.

Bill Jenkins: H-O-W-E-L-L.

Reneé Donnell: Oh, okay. My apology. And was that a Black-owned store?

Bill Jenkins: Mm?

Reneé Donnell: Was that a Black-owned store?

Bill Jenkins: No.

Reneé Donnell: [inaudible 00:28:00]. Okay. What, what, what was race relations like on Johns Island when you were growing up?

Bill Jenkins: Well, I know we didn't have a school bus. We had to walk to school. And when it rains, you better make sure if you see that school bus coming... And school bus was for the white kids. You had to make sure you get far enough back so that they don't splash that water on. And they know... If they see you, they'll try to run through it so the water could splash

on you. So, I'll say race relation was nonexistent. They didn't even have a high school for Black kids out here.

Reneé Donnell: And I've seen, um, pictures in books and they talked about yachting clubs and... or boating clubs and just all kinds of things. Were you ever a part of any boating clubs?

Bill Jenkins: Well, I used to work at the pool. I worked with the pool about 10 years, but this was much later. I was about 40-some years when that started happening.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Would you be able to tell me about Mr. Esau Jenkins?

Elaine Jenkins: Can we stop one second?

Reneé Donnell: Yes.

Elaine Jenkins: I just wanna say this. My siblings and I are writing a book about our parents.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Elaine Jenkins: So, you know, I don't want to share too much information here on that-

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Elaine Jenkins: ... at this point. Uh, there's a lot of, there's a lot of misinformation out there already and we wanna write about them. And I'd rather we do that before we put that on... more information on, on tape.

Sean Stucker: Sure.

Reneé Donnell: That's fair.

Sean Stucker: And, and what we're... The kind of things we're most interested in is, like, where exactly the Howell Store was and-

Elaine Jenkins: Mm-hmm.

Sean Stucker: ... where, where the, you know, your properties. You said the baseball field was between your property and your neighbor's property. Where your property is... And then we ha-... These are the kinds of things we wanna know. We don't wanna, we certainly don't wanna take the excitement out of, anything that you, you know, might be doing. We're looking at really trying to map places, locations, important places, and significant, you know, significant locations in the community. Um, but not... We're not trying to tell the stories that you're trying to tell. Like, for sure.

Elaine Jenkins: Yeah.

Elaine Jenkins: You may wanna talk about... I mean, you all talk about this building, but you never said what the building name... the name of the building, what it is. And you may wanna talk about the Progressive Club.

Sean Stucker: Mm-hmm.

Bill Jenkins: Mm-hmm. Well, that's a... almost a story in itself because, uh, the Progressive Club started because a man shot a Black... white man from Mississippi shot a Black man because two d-... This man, Black man, had a dog. This white man had a dog. And he was going to work one morning and the dog was mating, and this man, white man's wife went back and told her husband that she was... he, he was... She was insulted by this w- white... uh, Black man. So, the next morning when the truck came and stopped to pick him up, he came out to the truck and called for this guy's name and shot him. He didn't kill him, but he shot him in the stomach. My daddy at that time was

selling on the market in the city. So, he and my mother's two brothers went to the hospital, talked to him, and they said he had needed blood and they both, three, all three of them give them some blood. Then they tried to bring him to court.

Reneé Donnell: Let's take it back just a little bit. Can you tell me the names of different schools on this island that you remember?

Bill Jenkins: Some of 'em. I can't remember all of 'em. They had a Promised Land School, elementary school. We had a Legareville school on Maddas Road. We had a school up there by Miller Hill, Miller Hill School. Had a school across on Maybank Highway. I can't remember the name of the school. I know the one all the way down by Kiawah was called Promised Land because people didn't no means of having transportation. Either you ride a horse or you walk.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. So, we have those three schools and the Mt. Zion school. Do you-

Bill Jenkins: There's some more school in ever-... I can't remember some of 'em.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. That's fair. That's fair.

Bill Jenkins: Yeah. There's schools almost in every lit-... community of over 100 people, they had a, a school building that was built.

Elaine Jenkins: For the Black community.

Bill Jenkins: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: All right. And then what were some of the churches that were here? Some of the main churches that were here?

Bill Jenkins: They had a church almost, almost like schools.

Reneé Donnell: In every neighborhood?

Bill Jenkins: Uh, because transportation still was a big problem. So, you had to be within walking distance from a church. That's why anytime we have any kind of a get together, talk about community service, you have to get to the building like this or some of these other buildings. So, the churches was almost... We had St. James Church on the Legareville Road. We had Mt. Zion Church up here. We had, uh... On Bohicket Road, we had ano-... Three churches on Bohicket Road. I can't name all of 'em. And North Johns Island, you had the Baptist church all the way up there and it was up there by the water on... by Limehouse Bridge. And-

Elaine Jenkins: Down River Road west [inaudible 00:35:59].

Bill Jenkins: Mm. They had so many churches over here. You had churches like you had dogs almost. Every little corner had a church on 'em.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And were there any annual festivities that you know of on Johns Island and where did they take place?

Bill Jenkins: Well, I mean, I don't know if you call it activities, but, uh, we had Fields Day.

Reneé Donnell: Fields Day?

Bill Jenkins: Fields Day was one of the day that you have, uh, once in a... once a year and you go from school to school. It's almost like a track meet. You go out there and you run and you do some of the other stuff. But-

Elaine Jenkins: What about Watch Night?

Bill Jenkins: Mm?

Elaine Jenkins: Watch Night.

Bill Jenkins: Oh, yeah, Watch Night. Well, I can't... Watch Night is one of the big outing on, on, on, on all of these islands, James Island, Johns Island, Wadmalaw Island, Yorges Island, and Edisto. And being that, uh, transportation was still a major problem, each island had many, many churches and each one on New Year's Eve night... [inaudible 00:37:37]. That's New Year's Eve, right? They get like in here. Show them in that book that we brought 'em.

Elaine Jenkins: What? Show them what?

Bill Jenkins: About the... Some of the, uh... See that? The gentleman right behind you there?

Elaine Jenkins: Oh, yeah. (laughs)

Bill Jenkins: Go... The people right there. This... These people were the Moving Star Hall Singers and they used to go... My daddy used to take them all around. But then it didn't have windows in here. They had [inaudible 00:38:14] like the doors. And if you... I, I was looking for that picture. This one here, over here, this was after they put glasses in. But they had... Before they had window so you can get the breeze come in in the summertime. In the wintertime, then they close it and just had the lights.

But the Watch Night was a thing that just before midnight New Year's E-... New Year's, it start about 10 to 12 minutes before, the New Year comes in. And they start singing, "Watchman, watchman, please tell me the time of the, the evening." Then one of the guys was the person do the speaking, got a watch on, and he would say, "It's 10 minutes before the hour." And they do that until midnight is... till the midnight come over and say, "You're now in the new year," and they start singing the song. That was the big thing every New Year all over this island, all these islands.

Reneé Donnell: Was it, um, just any songs that you would sing or was there a specific song that you would sing to bring in the new year?

Bill Jenkins: No. After, after the s-... new year come in, it just a regular service after that. So, they sang a lot of different songs.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Um, did you guys celebrate May Day here? The May Day celebration?

Bill Jenkins: No, not too much. There wasn't that much to celebrate.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Um, and then is there anything else you would like to share with us? Anything that we may have missed location-wise? Any important places you used to go, hang out, or know about?

Bill Jenkins: Well, there's many thing that we brush over, but we didn't go into any detail on, and I don't think we gonna have time to do it today.

Reneé Donnell: Try us. We have time.

Sean Stucker: Did you a swimming spot or a place to go crabbing or, uh, shrimping?

Bill Jenkins: No. Somebody-

Sean Stucker: Anything that... You said you only fished one time, so.

Bill Jenkins: Some- somebody would will have to teach you how to shrimp.

Sean Stucker: Right.

Bill Jenkins: 'Cause we didn't have a, a classroom that you can go to, especially Black kids. So, some of the older people in the island would take you out there and t- tell you what you have to do to learn how to shrimp. And from that, we kind of, uh, learn how to dive. And one of the thing that you had to do with the potato boats used to come in and load up some potatoes, they, uh, said, "Once you learn how to dive, you have to go to the bottom," and thing is that you have to get a handful of dirt and bringing it back up and show it to everybody.

Then they say, "Now you can shrimp." 'Cause if, if you can't dive, you, you may be able to paddle and stay on top of the water. But if you can't go down there and... And that was about 20 feet, I'll tell you. 'Cause I know the first time I did it, I, I, I thought I'd better live forever. But, uh, that, that was part of the training, and we did a whole lot of those over here. And not only here, but on all these islands. School bus was a new thing for Black folks on, on these islands. We didn't start getting the school bus until... It was after she got out of school.

Reneé Donnell: And when was that?

Bill Jenkins: I was out of, out of college before she was born.

Reneé Donnell: All right. Okay. Um, so about what decade did the school buses come?

Bill Jenkins: Mm?

Reneé Donnell: About what decade or what year did the school buses come to Johns Island?

Bill Jenkins: Not during my lifetime. I- it... Not when, when I was in elementary school. It wasn't no school bus. When I got out of high school, there were no school bus.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Bill Jenkins: So, you're talking about now 1954, '57. I think the kids start coming Haut Gap became a high school. They started having, uh, buses run. But they always had a bus for white kids.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And then can you tell us... So, we're in Moving Star right now. Um, can you tell us the, the different phases of Moving Star? So, I know you said it was started in the late 1800s as a place where they would drum to communicate. And then I think we went awhile and then it became the Pro-... a part of the Progressive Club. And then after that, when the Progressive Club left here, was it just a church or was it-

Bill Jenkins: It was always independent. It's a church now, but I meant it's not part of any denomination.

Elaine Jenkins: It was a praise hall, meeting place, for the community. And we both went... They belong to different denominations, but when they came here, they all came together from all of the denominations. Talk about community concerns, um, just to praise God. Um, I'm gonna recommend to you all this book. It's about the people of Johns Island. Um, it's Ain't You Got a Right to the Tree of Life? And it talks about-

Bill Jenkins: \$24.

Elaine Jenkins: ... landmark places on Johns Island and what they were for and who the people are. Um, Progressive Club was never part of Moving Star Hall. Um, it grew out of it, but it was always separate and apart. So, when Progressive Club started... I mean, this continued to be a praise house.

Bill Jenkins: Mm-hmm.

Elaine Jenkins: Progressive Club was more community oriented. There was no place for the Black kids to go for recreational activities. That's one of the reasons the club was started. It the only place-

Bill Jenkins: People used to get married over there. They used to do dances over there. They did some... This was a social gathering place. And at the same time, you get a chance to open people ears up a little bit and talk to 'em. People used to make a lot of nets over here, fishing nets. They, th- they used to make a lot of nets here. But everybody almost had to learn how to make a net 'cause everybody can't... cannot make a net. I can't make one now. But you got a horn up here, cow horn about that wide, then ev-... all the strings run through that. And you got bullets on the bottom, we call 'em bullets, that weight, that keep it, the net, from floating, but it'll go down. And when you'd throw it, [inaudible 00:47:11] threw the net.

Elaine Jenkins: Yeah.

Bill Jenkins: When you throw it, it's wide open. And when it falls, then whatever's in there, when you pull it together, is... it's sucked it up.

Reneé Donnell: All right.

Bill Jenkins: And you keep doing that until you get enough [inaudible 00:47:28].

Reneé Donnell: Well, thank you. I think we got some-

Bill Jenkins: God bless you.

Reneé Donnell: ... good information. Yeah, we're good. So, thank you.

Bill Jenkins: God bless you.

Reneé Donnell: Good information. Yeah, we're good. So, thank you.

Bill Jenkins: God-

Reneé Donnell: And we will be in-



GERALD MACKEY

Crew: Whenever you're ready.

Reneé Donnell: All right. So would you please state your name and spell it for us?

Gerald Mackey: Okay. Gerald Mackey, G-E-R-A-L-D M-A-C-K-E-Y.

Reneé Donnell: Awesome. Thank you. And are you from John's Island?

Gerald Mackey: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Is your family from James, John's Island?

Gerald Mackey: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: How long has your family been on John's Island?

Gerald Mackey: Oh, I guess since the 20s, 1920s.

Reneé Donnell: And do you know why they came here or where they came from?

Gerald Mackey: Charleston.

Reneé Donnell: Ah, okay.

Gerald Mackey: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. So what was life like when you were growing up here on John's Island?

Gerald Mackey: Hmm. In, in what respects particularly, uh, specifically? Any, anything in particular?

Reneé Donnell: Like daily life, um...

Gerald Mackey: Okay.

Reneé Donnell: Things you got, you and your friends or siblings did for fun. What was it like here?

Gerald Mackey: Okay. When I grew up on John's Island, the island was, um, exclusively agrarian. Um, thousands of acres of farmland and, um, it was rural. Um, we farmed, we well, worked on the farms because the farmers planted. It was soybeans, tomatoes, cucumbers. Especially this time of the year and the summer, we would be working out on the farm, helping to harvest crop and making whatever little money that we could make. Um, but we went to, I went to elementary school on the island, um, which is Mount Zion elementary. It's still there right now. We had to walk to school because if this, at that time, if you're the school was at a certain distance from your home, you had to walk. And I think Mount Zion was about a half to, uh, three quarters of a mile from my home. So we walked to school and back from school.

And when I got to high school, we rode the bus, of course, because the high school was miles away. So, um, but it

was, it was a very interesting place to, to grow up. We all lived in a small area, family, immediate family, cousins, and friends. And we went out and played with each other at each other's home and in the safety of each other's home. Um, the parents got along with each other and it was just like one big happy family, even though it was extended, it was not completely nuclear. It was extended. So everybody's parents were your parents and, um, you, if you went to somebody's house, when they prepared dinner of, they fed their kids, their parents fed their friends as well.

So it was overall, I think it was a, a great place. Um, I only thing I didn't like about it when I grew up was working on the farm in the, in the hot summers. I hated it. (laughs) when I, when I got, when I got, I think, 15 or 16 that I could stand up for myself, I told my mother I was not going back on the farm and I didn't.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: But-

Reneé Donnell: And was it, um, a family farm you were working on?

Gerald Mackey: No, it was other people's farm. The farmers, big people, uh, big farmers who own the, uh, we planted a little smaller garden, but it wasn't, that was separate from the farms that we worked on, we went to harvest. This is where, where we got paid, um, to pick tomatoes, pick string beans, pick cucumbers. And, um, so we got paid for that and that helped, again, to help, to save money, to buy our school clothing for, uh, the next school year or pay for our books. Because at that time there was, you had to rent

your books for a fee. There was no, um, free books then, you know?

You had to rent your books for a fee. And, um, at the end of the year, you had to turn those books back in. If they, and if they were marred you had to pay for them the full cost. Or if they were lost, you had to pay for the full cost of the book. So you had to hold onto those books because it was very tough time for parents. They, I mean to rent textbooks. Um, and when you have three or four kids, have parents who had three and four kids in school, it was kind of tough.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And so you mentioned you walked to Mount Zion elementary.

Gerald Mackey: Right.

Reneé Donnell: But rode the bus to high school. Where did you go to high school?

Gerald Mackey: Haut Gap High School which is now Haut Gap middle. And my high school class in 1970 was, uh, last graduating class from Haut Gap High School. And that's when it became a middle school. And that's when you had, um, mass integration across the state because finally South Carolina, uh, went kicking and, screaming into integration 14 years after the Supreme Court ruling of Brown versus the Board of Education. So they were forced to do it in order to get the federal funds. So Haut Gap became a middle school and St. John's high school became the high school. And of course, St John's and Haut Gap was more like a quarter of a mile apart during that time, a quarter of a mile. It's that long far. And, um, but St John's was the high school

for whites, Haut Gap was the high school for Blacks, two separate.

Reneé Donnell: And those are both kind of on the north, Northern side of the island.

Gerald Mackey: Southern side, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Southern side? Okay.

Gerald Mackey: Yes. Uh-huh.

Reneé Donnell: O-okay. So what if you lived on the opposite side of the island? Were those still just the high school options?

Gerald Mackey: Oh yeah. That's what they, you were bused in. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: Kids from north of John's Island were bused into Haut Gap and kids-

Reneé Donnell: And-

Gerald Mackey: ... from Wadmalaw Island was bused into, John's Island to Haut Gap. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Oh.

Gerald Mackey: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: And okay. So you said you rode the school bus to Haut Gap high school.

Gerald Mackey: Right.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. So, um, when did John's Island get school buses?

Gerald Mackey: Uh-

Reneé Donnell: For the black students.

Gerald Mackey: For the black students, I think back in the 50s, maybe the 50s, yeah. We had some civil rights leaders, like the late Esau Jenkins and some others who fought for transportation for the students on John's Island.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Awesome. And I know that you mentioned it was still kind of an agrarian, um, culture here...

Gerald Mackey: Right.

Reneé Donnell: ... on John's. Um, were there still dirt roads when you were growing up?

Gerald Mackey: There were dirt, dirt roads in certain places, but I lived on River Road, right off River Road, which was, uh, uh, rock road. It, it was not asphalt at that time.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: It was what they call rock. It was a lot of, made outta rock. The roads were made outta rocks. Had some asphalt, but that the, the on top of the asphalt were rocks.

Reneé Donnell: Like gravel?

Gerald Mackey: Gravel, yeah. Hard surface.

Reneé Donnell: I bet you, that was fun trying to ride a bike on them.

Gerald Mackey: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And would, do you know if, where you grew up had like a neighborhood name, like, were you a part of the Geddis community or the Pinckney community or where did you grow up?

Gerald Mackey: We didn't have a, a particular name, um, for our, 'cause we lived right off River Road, as I said, but I've, you know,

I've heard my parents talking about places like Bugsby and Miller Hill and uh, Greg and Maddas, but we didn't have. We were just in, off River Road, John's Island. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And where were some places... Well, while we're still on schools.

Gerald Mackey: Uh-huh.

Reneé Donnell: While you were, about how old were you when you started working out in the fields?

Gerald Mackey: Seven. I remember that exactly. Seven years old, picking tomatoes. The bucket was larger than I was, I think. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And did you do that, was that only in the summertime?

Gerald Mackey: Yeah, in the summer. Hot summer.

Reneé Donnell: mm-hmm. And so would you say that your daily life was more similarly structured to students these days where you wake up, you go to school, you come home and then it's free time? Or would you say it's more like the early 1900s where you wake up really early, you go to work, you go to school, you go to work again, and then you go to sleep.

Gerald Mackey: It was structured. Um, I didn't go to work in the morning, but we woke up early. We went to school, we came home from school. And you had, you went to work on the farms after.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: Or if you didn't go to work on the farms after, you had to go out in the woods and get firewoods to make fire for the, the stove the next morning. Um, or you had to prepare the firewoods, you had to prepare water 'cause you had the handheld pump at that time. A lot of people did not have indoor plumbing. So we had the handheld pump that you get water. So it was work after school and before you retire for the night. So it was all, it was structured activities all the time. Not much free time.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And do you, can you give me an estimate of about the decade in which indoor plumbing became common on John's Island?

Gerald Mackey: I would think, um, around the 70s. Yeah, some people had it before then, but most people started getting it around the 70s.

Reneé Donnell: And did that, that included, um, like toilets and...

Gerald Mackey: Yeah. Oh yeah, yeah. Right. Yeah. Bathtub, toilets, and kitchen sinks. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Gerald Mackey: The full works.

Reneé Donnell: And okay. So we have that. Where were... When you were growing up, so high school age, maybe a little bit older, where did you go to hang out with your friends? Were you allowed to hang out with your friends?

Gerald Mackey: Only in the immediate neighborhood.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: In the immediate neighborhood. We didn't hang up like the kids do today. Now, as I said, we had, it was always a lot of structured activities to do at home. It was not, not...

If we went out, it was on a special occasion, maybe the Progressive Club, which was, uh, had a gymnasium. And if there was a wedding reception or a dance, or they had a basketball court or something, you could go and hang out with your friends there, but that was on rare occasion. It wasn't everyday.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: No, you always had something to do at home.

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Gerald Mackey: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And, um, were there restaurants on John's Island or you ate at home?

Gerald Mackey: We ate at home. No restaurant that I can think of on name at the moment. Yeah, we ate at home. Everything was prepared at home. No fast food places. No fine dining, you know.

Reneé Donnell: Right. And, um, in terms of church.

Gerald Mackey: mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Was that a part of daily life, at least for you and your family?

Gerald Mackey: Yes. Yes. A part of daily life, all family, we attend, we were, we are Methodist and we attended Wesley United Methodist on River Road, directly across from the Charleston Executive Airport. And again, we didn't have a car. My, I, I'm from a single parent family, so my mother did not own a car. So we walked everywhere we went as most people did during those days. Um, my church was

exactly two miles from my house and we walked every Sunday to church and we walked back. Unless sometimes, uh, we, the people, some people who had a call like Mr. Esau Jenkins, he had a little Volkswagen. He would si- and he was a, um, he was a lay leader at the church as well as a adult teacher, Sunday school teacher. He would pick us up in his little van and take us, but we had fun just walking and spending all our dimes and nickels to the stores on the way...

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: ... and not putting it in church, like we were supposed to (laughs).

Reneé Donnell: And so you mentioned the Progressive Club and also Mr. Esau Jenkins. So did you know him personally?

Gerald Mackey: Oh yeah. He's my pro- I'm his protege. I'm a protege of Mr. Jenkins. He taught me in, in adult Sunday school and he got some of us involved with the civil rights movement. We used to, the youth part of it, he would take us to youth meetings at, uh, Morris Street Baptist or Morris Brown Baptist in the city of Charleston. He would pick us up and got us involved in the civil rights movement from the youth perspective. But yeah, he was a member of my church, the entire family, so...

Reneé Donnell: Okay. So were there NAACP chapters on John's or Charleston as well or was it mainly just a Progressive Club?

Gerald Mackey: I think there were NAAP-, NAACP chapters in Charleston. I don't think there was one on John's Island particular.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And so 'cause you grew up in, I'd say the 60s and 70s?

Gerald Mackey: 50s. I'm 52. I was born in 52, 50s and 60s, yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And what, what was race relations like on John's, especially during that time? Um, were the, did the whites and blacks live near each other or was it like the Blacks got one side of the island, the white's got another side? How, or-

Gerald Mackey: I think, yeah, mo- for the most part they li- whites and Black live near each other but they were separated.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: I mean, separate, you know, even though you were next, not exactly next door, but down the streets, you have, we had white people living, but we never socialized with them and they never socialized with us.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: So other than if people were working, you know, I, on the farm, a lot of the farmers, most of the farmers were, um, white, were poor farmers. So we worked for them. And that, you know, that was the only interaction that you had.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: But for the most part, it was separate. People stayed, Black people stayed to themselves, whites stayed to themselves.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And were there any annual festivals or annual activities? Uh, I know James island mentioned that Mayday was a really big celebration for them.

Gerald Mackey: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Were there any large annual celebrations on John's Island?

Gerald Mackey: Later on, I remember they had the Sea Island Cultural Arts Festival, that was later on, but I was an adult then, you know...

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: ... when that happened. And that went on for a couple of decades. Um, they haven't had it in, um, a number of years because I think many of the leaders who were, uh, organized and sponsored that, um, have passed on or either old and sick now so...

Reneé Donnell: And where did that festival take place?

Gerald Mackey: Right on, um, off Maybank highway where Sea Island Comprehensive Healthcare, um, Center is located. Was right there every year.

Reneé Donnell: And what decade approximately did that start?

Gerald Mackey: I would think in the 80s.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And so you mentioned that your church... In today's terms, two miles isn't far.

Gerald Mackey: Right.

Reneé Donnell: But when you're walking-

Gerald Mackey: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: ... it's not, it's not as close. Um, but you said-

Gerald Mackey: As a young person, eight, nine years old.

Reneé Donnell: And I guess if that's kind of all you know then it's like, "Oh [inaudible 00:19:12]."

Gerald Mackey: Yeah, that's right. You can do it quite easily.
Reneé Donnell: So your friends lived near you, your church was near you.
Gerald Mackey: Right.
Reneé Donnell: Your elementary school was near you.
Gerald Mackey: Right.

Reneé Donnell: So would you say that being around the River Road area, it was really like its own kind of community and that it had basically all of your needs there.

Gerald Mackey: I would say, right, I think that we would consider that our own little enclave and, um, it had all. We met, we played, we had all of our needs, schools, church, school, church, community, everything within the same vicinity. So we didn't venture off. We didn't go north John's Island or Charleston or James island. Quite isolated.

Reneé Donnell: Kinda isolated, okay.

Gerald Mackey: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And you mentioned there were some stores along the way to church that you gave your money to.

Gerald Mackey: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: What were some of those stores?

Gerald Mackey: Uh, one was, uh, Fields. Um, they had a, um, uh, gas station and they used to sell, um, candies and cookies. A little small, um, mom and pop store.

Reneé Donnell: And-

Gerald Mackey: And then the another one was a, there was a lady that used to sell things outta her house.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: Uh, we used to stop off on the way to her on, um, and buy stuff from her, candies and cookies and little treats on our way to church or back from church.

Reneé Donnell: Do you know what her name was?

Gerald Mackey: Ms. Clement, Dessie Clement.

Reneé Donnell: And, um, I'm assuming this is also off of River Road.

Gerald Mackey: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: But do you know approximately where her house was?

Gerald Mackey: From the church it was, I guess, about a quarter of a mile from the church or less, less than a quarter, less than, maybe a third of a mile from the church.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Okay. And do you know approximate, is Fields the gas station?

Gerald Mackey: Yes, Fields is gas station. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Is it still there today?

Gerald Mackey: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: [inaudible 00:21:50]

Gerald Mackey: Yeah. Yeah. It's still there today. It's, of course, it's not the gas station they use. They have, um, a restaurant there. And they have a small section where they sell goods, food, and beverages. And then across the street from them, they have the, um, the farmer's market where they sell.

Because they farm, they were one of the largest, um, black farmers on the island. And they're still, uh, some of the family members are still farming and they, I think, uh, Joseph Fields, um, was the first, um, certified organic farmer in the state of South Carolina, Black or white. So he sells, he and his wife work together and they sell a lot of organic goods.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: And that's right across from the, the store.

Reneé Donnell: And you said he was the first organic farmer.

Gerald Mackey: Certified organic farmer, yeah, in South Carolina. Black or white.

Reneé Donnell: Awesome. Okay. And were water activities a part of your unstructured daily activities?

Gerald Mackey: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Did you...

Gerald Mackey: What?

Reneé Donnell: ... go swimming or crabbing...

Gerald Mackey: No.

Reneé Donnell: ... or anything ever?

Gerald Mackey: No, no. We had no swimming pools. If you, you did, people did go in the creek to swim.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: But, um, that was strictly forbidden by most parents because it was no supervision. And a lot of, not a lot, some

people who went in the Creek to swim ended up drowning. So, um, that, that was definitely forbidden territory. You didn't go there. Now, the adult people did go shrimping and crabbing and, fishing, but, I never did. I just never was patient enough to sit there and waiting for a fish to bite or crab to bite.

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Gerald Mackey: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: And to this day I still don't fish. But yeah, that, that was a way of life for many people on the, for the adults. They would go in fishing and, and they sold those fishes, um, fish when they went, um, fishing. And, um, I remember at that time it would, like 25 cents a pound, you can get a pound of fish with mul-... And mullet was very popular in the area.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: Mullet fish.

Reneé Donnell: I wish I could get anything for 25 cents.

Gerald Mackey: Yeah, right. Today.

Reneé Donnell: All right. And so what were some... You mentioned that, uh, the Progressive Club allowed for school buses to come on the islands for the black students and that Mr. Jenkins would take the youth to Charleston to learn about. Um, different...

Gerald Mackey: mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: ... forms of activism.

Gerald Mackey: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Um, were there any other, I'd say, like, island leaders?

Gerald Mackey: Oh, oh yeah. Yeah. I would think, uh, Bill Saunders, William Saunders, he was a civil rights activist as well. He is, um, ill right now, but in his 80s, mid 80s, late 80s. But, um, he was very active in, in the civil rights movement and, um, um, uh, Reverend Willis T. Goodwin, the late Reverend Willis T. Goodwin. Um, he was very active. Um, the late Reverend Alonzo Clark Jenkins, and these were ministers at, um, these two gu-, the last two guys I mentioned were ministers at Wesley United Methodist church, but they were activist ministers, you know?

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: They, they worked for, for equal rights and civil rights for people on the island, in the low country so...

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: But yeah, they were other activists as well. Yeah. Even Ms. Clark, Septima Clark, who taught on John's Island for many years. She, along with Mr. Jenkins, started the citizenship school at the Progressive Club. Uh, that they went to, um, Highlander Tennessee to be trained. And then, um, they came back. Because at that time, uh, black people had to read and interpret certain parts of the U.S. constitution in order to become registered voters. And a lot of the older people were not able to read all right.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Gerald Mackey: So they, they, they were, again, on the Johns island was the first, um, citizenship s-, had the first citizenship school in the country. And of course, a lot of other schools grew out of that school. Um, but Septima Clark, Bernice Robinson, and some of the others came and taught the senior citizens how to, uh, read and interpret parts of the constitution. And even, some people couldn't even write their names at that age. But they were just you, at that time people who couldn't write or read just signed a signature with an X. And um, now, and they, they taught them how to write their signatures and everything so...

Reneé Donnell: And where was this citizenship school? I know you said at the Progressive Club, but...

Gerald Mackey: They had that, that the e- the Progressive Club was a store, a grocery store.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: ... of service state gas station, and it had other, uh, a gymnasium and then they had other rooms...

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: ... where they could, um, teach classes. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: And was this the location that's by the Mount Zion elementary school?

Gerald Mackey: Yeah. Close to Mount Zion elementary school. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. I think that's pretty good information. And if you were to go out of town when you were growing up, did you guys ever go to any beaches or anything? Even if it was around on, like, other islands and things, or...

Gerald Mackey: Nah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Gerald Mackey: No.

Reneé Donnell: Um, and as we come to an end, is there anything else you would like to share that maybe I did not cover in my questioning?

Gerald Mackey: Well, unfortunately, John's Island has lost its rural character. Um, I think when you look at, you have six and seven sub-subdivisions going up simultaneously. You look at, um, a whole lot more on the, on the books for years to come and, and, and these people coming in, the Black people are no longer the majority on John's Island. We are now the minority. And the housing, again, I don't know, eventually, it'll be gentrification on John's Island like it is in the city of Charleston. Uh, because not many people can afford houses that start at 300,000 or \$400,000.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Gerald Mackey: So these are people coming in from elsewhere. So they will push the few people who don't own their own home and land. And even if you owned it, sometimes when they're ready for it, you know, like with this, um, highway cutting through, if they want to take it, you know? but, Bill Saunders, as I mentioned earlier and William Saunders, he always used to say Black people don't own any land. We only keep it as long and, as a, until the white people decide that they want it.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Gerald Mackey: And then it's gone, you know? So yeah, John's Island has lost his rural character and I don't know, um, and I think for the most part, the Black people are, are now the minority on the island. And you have a lot of transplant coming to the island with big, with deep pockets so...

Reneé Donnell: Where do the John's Island natives, where do they go? Just to Charleston or just wherever they can...

Gerald Mackey: Wherever they can afford, Charleston... And, you know, they, they can't afford anything in Charleston, North Charleston, Goose Creek, Summerville and, and Ladson. But those areas are now becoming populated as well, so...

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And when would you say was the major shift in development on John's Island? Around what decade?

Gerald Mackey: I think it started around the 80s when Kiawah Island and Seabrook Island started developing more and more. And that's when, the late 70s or early 80s when, when it started. And I think I'm attributing a lot of it to the development taking place on Kiawah and, um, Seabrook islands. And again, the land prices started going up because people wanted to come and get close to the I-, those resort islands and, um, other people wanted to move out to the islands. And so I think that's what, uh, I would say the late 70s or early 80s, when those developments started.

Reneé Donnell: And were they changing roads, any at that time? Were there new bridges coming to connect the islands or to the mainland?

Gerald Mackey: The only thing they did with in terms of infrastructure, improving infrastructure, um, the Limehouse bridge and

the, um, Stono bridge were draw bridge, old draw bridges and they made those fixed span bridges. And, um, but in terms of really working on the infrastructure, not much, um, that's, I think that's one of the biggest complaints right now from the Islanders. Is that you keep adding more and more homes and we have no infrastructure. You think about infrastructure after the fact.

And, um, right now everybody's afraid that if we have to get off the island for a hurricane or a tornado, people will be stuck because you only have, you know, either River Road or Maybank road, those two.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Okay.

Gerald Mackey: So that's, that's all I had to say about that. Yeah. I don't know whether that answered your question or not, but...

Reneé Donnell: It did.

Gerald Mackey: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: It did. And I think you mentioned that... You said in the 70s that's when, like, indoor plumbing became...

Gerald Mackey: Yeah, for, for many peoples. Uh, few people had it then, but in the se-, it was in the 70s that when many people were able to start getting indoor plumbing and...

Reneé Donnell: Looking back on that, do you think, since you said the late 70s, early 80s was when they started on Kiawah and Seabrook and then that's when you think they got their eyes on John's Island.

Gerald Mackey: mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Do you think indoor plumbing was a part of that development plan or do you think it was just separate?

Gerald Mackey: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Like, we just needed indoor plumbing?

Gerald Mackey: Yeah, I think for the, for the most part, it was just separate, you know? Not, but 'cause, a lot of the whites already had indoor plumbing, but for black people it was different, so...

Reneé Donnell: Okay. All right. I think we're done.

Gerald Mackey: Okay.

Reneé Donnell: Thank you so much.

Gerald Mackey: Okay, great. Thank you. I guess you get ta-



CAROL BLAKE MCCLUE

Reneé Donnell: All right. All right. So, uh, good evening. Thank you for coming here today. Would you be able to say your name and spell it for us?

Carol McClue: Okay, my name is Carol McClue. C-A-R-O-L, and I need to put my maiden name, B-L-A-K-E, M-C-C-L-U-E. Thanks for inviting me.

Reneé Donnell: Thank you for coming. Um, yeah, thank you for coming. So are you from Johns Island?

Carol McClue: Well, I could say I am because when I came to Johns Island, I was two months and two weeks. And Hannah Blake, Jerry Blake, they raised me. They are my cousins, but I still don't know what cousin. So just goes to show, this is my momma and daddy. The only momma and daddy I know. They are beautiful people. He was the second Black mailman on Johns Island.

Reneé Donnell: And what was his name?

Carol McClue: Jerry Limehouse Blake.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: And he had a great farm where we had people working for us. All over different communities and different counties came and helped work. He took the food down to the market like greens, cabbage, watermelon. We had every, uh, veggie, corn, to sell at the market downtown.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Okay. Uh-huh.

Reneé Donnell: Uh-huh.

Carol McClue: And Hannah Blake, which is his wife, she taught people how to sew. She had, uh, people coming by the house and teaching them how to sew. They had a lot of people got married out in the yard and stuff.

Reneé Donnell: All right. So a couple of follow up questions. You mentioned that Mr. Blake was the second Black postman on the island?

Carol McClue: No, mail carrier.

Reneé Donnell: Mail carrier

Carol McClue: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And... Okay. Where was... Was there a separate post office, which sounds-

Carol McClue: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: ... for Black people, and white people or was it-

Carol McClue: I don't- I don't... I can't tell you that.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. All right. And then you also said he had a farm?

Carol McClue: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Where was his farm?

Carol McClue: On Old Pond Road where I live at right now. I live in the same yard. We had a okra field, veggie where I live. Uh, veggie, uh, crops was up and down Old Pond Road. And then he also had a petition going with Simmons Creek. The creek was so little and the county opened it up, so he had a petition, had different people to sign it, that it would be opened wider, which they did.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: And, um, I had the bridge in the memory of Hannah and Jerry Blake on Old Pond Road. I named the bridge after them the Memorial Bridge. And I also named the road after them, um, 855 Blake McClue Road. Blake is my maiden name, McClue is my married name, in the honor of them because they were great people, and they help a lot of people in the community. His cousins used to call him from Jersey City, any business wh- they need to do, ask Jerry Blake and he did it for them.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: That's awesome.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: That's very awesome.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: And, so you said there's a road named after them and a bridge?

Carol McClue: Well-

Reneé Donnell: A memorial bridge.

Carol McClue: ... the road name after... Well, this was 'cause he was a Blake.

Reneé Donnell: Uh-huh.

Carol McClue: So I have his name.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Carol McClue: So my married name, 'cause they adopted me. My name is Carol Blake.

Reneé Donnell: Uh-huh.

Carol McClue: So I took my maiden name and my husband married name, and we named the road after us. If you put it in a GPS, it'll come straight to our home.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: All right. And you mentioned that Mrs. Blake used to teach people how to sew.

Carol McClue: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Where did she teach people how to sew?

Carol McClue: In that same location.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. All right, and then about how many acres was this farm?

Carol McClue: I don't know, but I know the nephew... his nephew, Mose Buckingham and him, they had 90 acres together.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: So everybody... They had fields up and down Old Pond Road. At the time, they also call it Old Town Road, and the old address was Route Three Box 494. And then Hannah Blake also had, uh, the Presbyterian. She was a Presbyterian before she changed over to AME.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: They used to send her lots of clothes and materials. That's how she got it to share with the community. Sew the how... Showed them how to sew and everything. She's just, um, sew with the pattern, and without a pattern. That's what she can do. She was very talented.

Reneé Donnell: And you mentioned earlier that the government would just drop things in your yard.

Carol McClue: Yeah, back in the days. That's before my time, but since she raised so many kids... See, all of them were different ages. The last two that I helped take care of, they were 91 years old. One died in 2018, and I think the other one died in 2017. There was two sisters right behind each other. They were really Buckingham, but daddy adopted them. That's how they became a Blake.

Reneé Donnell: And so how did m- did Mr. and Mrs. Blake have their own children as well?

Carol McClue: No.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Can you explain-

Carol McClue: He- he never... She never had any children, but he did, but I guess it doesn't matter because daddy accepted her and mama helped raise her. She's from James Island. She's gone. She died about five years ago. She was 94 years old. Her name was Ethel Brown. That was daddy outside child.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: And mama help raised her, (laughs). Uh, it was funny.

Reneé Donnell: All right. And-

Carol McClue: And he had the first... Remember now, I told you that, uh, his brother was the first Black photographer in Charleston.

Reneé Donnell: And what was his name?

Carol McClue: Michael F. Blake. And all his pictures right now is at Duke University.

Reneé Donnell: And did he have a shop in Charleston or did he-

Carol McClue: Yes. Yes, he did.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Do you know about where that was?

Carol McClue: I'm not sure, but I know it was not too far from... Either was on Laurens [Street] in Charleston, but I just met someone and he was telling me that they had a big old beautiful home there, and that's where he did all this work.

Reneé Donnell: Your family was filled with movers and shakers.

Carol McClue: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And I actually want to know about this picture. So can you explain what this is about and who these people are?

Carol McClue: The only person I know on here... This is Jerry Blake, brother Michael F. Blake. He- he's the photographer.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Um, my sister that was raised to be, you know, in the same house because she's much older than me, this is Rose Buckingham. That's her aunt. And the rest of the people I don't know because I was born in '49, so I wouldn't know them, but I'm sure when the newspapers sent this out, "Who were they?" some people went and picked out some pictures they knew that they were their family. And next minute, I know they sending the pictures to Duke University, so that's all I know. I gotta tell what I know (laughs).

Reneé Donnell: That's nice.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Kind of, like, yeah, how I was talking about how the Black photographers work is being revisited-

Carol McClue: Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: It's very cool. All right. Um, so you said you were born in 1949. Your skin looks great.

Carol McClue: Thank you.

Reneé Donnell: Um, what was life... what was family life like growing up here on Johns Island?

Carol McClue: Well, to be in my home, it was is a beautiful life, even though she was strict, she whipped us, but only thing I dislike about it, they had, uh... We just got integrated in 1966. That's the year I came out of school. Uh, they... I

remember this. They had a Black faucet, and they had a white faucet on Meeting Street. Uh, you drink out... If you drink out the white faucet they get upset. At the time they didn't have, uh, guns. They carried bully sticks, and they used to run me and my brother 'cause we always used to say, "Well, we wanna know the difference was between, uh, why we can't drink out the white faucet?" (laughs), so we would drink out it, they'd get upset.

Then, I remember they had a store on King Street, Woolworths. We couldn't eat in Woolworth. Okay, until we... I don't remember what year when we started eating at the counter, but I know we couldn't eat there one time. And I remember one time I went in there and, you know, like you picking up things to look in. And they say, "Nigger touch. Nigger touch," and then, uh, I do like that at the parrot. The parrot said, "Nig- Nigger handed me." You know, they were trained to say these things, and that was very irritating to me at the time and I would run up...

Reneé Donnell: They had actual birds saying this.

Carol McClue: Yes, ma'am. They taught their parrot how to say. That's right. I experienced that. I'm talking from experience. And then when we went to Charleston to try on shoes, daddy put the paper bag, the brown paper th- bag on the floor, and have us to put our feet in it and he'd draw a circle around it, and he take us- take it to get us a pair of shoes. We couldn't try on dress. We couldn't try on hats. This was in the 60s. When Martin Luther King came down, they didn't wanna allow the- him in the Francis Marion Hotel. They really didn't want us down in the market. Uh, they

had a lot of people, you know... That's where daddy sold his veggie, down at the market. But before the market, they were selling Black people for five and 10 cent. And if you weren't heavy enough, you just got to go. They loved, uh, muscle guys.

You know, if you boney, they don't... they're not gonna use you. So Charleston went through a lot. We weren't allowed to go down to the Battery. I remember one year, we went to the Battery just to sit down and cool out after prom. The cop ran us off the Battery. And that's why you see a lot of people in Charleston, South Carolina are Black people. They really don't like to go on Market Street and to the Battery because there's a whole lot of memories down there. But now, it's opened up to everybody. Like I say, where I- where I work at, it took them 158 years before they let Black into that club.

Reneé Donnell: Can you talk about their club?

Carol McClue: Yeah, they're not gonna... The truth will set you free. Well, we just had... May the 22nd, we had doctors, lawyers just join that club and they had to pay a certain amount of money to join in our club and also be referred to it.

Reneé Donnell: And what's the name of this club?

Carol McClue: Carolina yet- Yacht. Carolina Yacht, 50 East Bay Street.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. 158 years.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm. It took 158 years. And we have slave and master pictures all over, still in the club. They have a lot of plantations there in Charleston.

Reneé Donnell: So you mentioned the Yacht Club. And I know that Johns Island actually has a history with several different yacht organizations or yachting events and things.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: Um, were there Black yachting clubs on Johns Island that you know of?

Carol McClue: Not to my knowledge.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And-

Carol McClue: I know one thing before our- we got integrated. We as Black people, we got along and everything was great. They had their own stores, their own Black hospitals and stuff like that. They were nice. It was great.

Reneé Donnell: Do you- do you know where the Black hospitals were located?

Carol McClue: Uh, in Charleston, one on, um... What's that street? It's the offices off Calhoun Street. Um, I can't remember- I can't recall the name, but I know exactly where at if I, you know, go there, but it's- it has a different name now.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Okay.

Anna Wiman: Pause just for a second.

Carol McClue: And so when we got integrated, they send some of the kids to private school because they didn't want it- them to mix with us. And the one who couldn't afford private school, they stayed and went to school with the Blacks, but I wasn't going because it's my last year in school, '66. Right now, I'm 72 years old.

Reneé Donnell: Doing great.

Carol McClue: Thank you.

Reneé Donnell: So where did you attend elementary school.

Carol McClue: Haut Gap High was from first to 12th grade. Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Do you know when it switched over to including elementary to high school? Because I think-

Carol McClue: Right now, it's a middle school, so I- See, I lived in New Orleans, and I just moved back home. I moved back home in 1988, but I didn't know they was gonna make it out of middle school, and they changed our, uh, logo. Our logo was supposed to be Rattlers. Now it's Bulldogs. And it a- it's a elementary school, and Burke School, was supposed to be Bulldogs. So I don't know how they did that, you know.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. All right. So when you were growing up near Old Pond Road-

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: ... was there- was that in a neighborhood? Like, what was the name of the neighborhood around it?

Carol McClue: It wasn't really a neighborhood. Sometimes some people called it, um, Blake Hill. Um, what's the other name for it? I can't remember, but when I came back- I- on that road was Route Three, 49- uh, box 494 at the time when I came. Um, and it wasn't paved like it is now. It was a dirt road, and we had about six houses on the road and it was far from each other. Now, it's getting crowded. One time, I used to know everyone on that road. Now I don't because it's really crowded.

Reneé Donnell: Do you know when that road got paved?

Carol McClue: No, I don't re- I don't recall the year.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And do you know of any other neighborhoods on Johns Island?

Carol McClue: Well, I- I know... I can tell you the different people who had big farms and people working for them.

Reneé Donnell: That works.

Carol McClue: Uh, uh, Rufus Blake. The Fields. Robert Fields. Um, these are the farms I can remember that- I'm talking only about Black folks, right?

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Carol McClue: Um, let's see. They had another... I think Levi Frazier had a farm also. And then at our school, you know, like kids don't have no job. At our school, we had workshops at our school. They taught you how to plant and stuff, and they had bus drivers that were students. They drove us to school. Pick us up and brought us back home. They were in the 11th and 12th grade. They drove the bus for us. Then, they also had, uh, older people on the island. Uh, they used to work at the Navy yard and they brought people back and forth to work. Their name was Esau Jenkins, Danny Brown, uh, Ge- Georgie Bellinger. Um, I had the name right on the tip of my tongue.

Anyway, we had... even my cousin, my favorite cousin, which is his mother, she used to drive. I remember she took us on a trip on across Mount Pleasant Bridge. It's Ravenel Bridge now, but it used to be Cooper River Bridge.

It's a new bridge. And boy, that was a dangerous (laughs) bridge. I was scared to go up and down.

Reneé Donnell: What was it? A- a wooden bridge?

Carol McClue: Yes. That was scary and it was long and narrow. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Was it one of the one car at a time bridges?

Carol McClue: Yes. You know, nobody passing. Like, one on this side. It just scary. Oh, that was a dangerous bridge to me.

Reneé Donnell: And so did you guys hang out on Mount Pleasant a lot when you were growing up?

Carol McClue: No, we weren't allowed to go. We- we went to the beach over there. I don't know whether the name was Lincoln Beach. Because see, I've traveled, but I know Lincoln Beach, we were- we- that was the Black beach. We weren't allowed to go to Folly Beach on James Island. They would not let us in. We went to Mosquito Beach, and that's the Black beach.

Reneé Donnell: And so... Okay. What- what- what are some of the Hangout places when you were growing up? And I know that you grew up in a different time where the island was really going through a change because of integration.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: People moving away. But where were some of the places that-

Carol McClue: I couldn't hang out. My parents didn't allow me to go, no way, but I know a lot of people used to party at Peter Miller. They had a Jenkins place, uh, on South Johns Island, a nice club, but I- I wasn't allowed to hit any clubs. (laughs) I want to go with my friends, but I couldn't.

Reneé Donnell: [inaudible] Peanut Miller?

Carol McClue: Peter Miller.

Reneé Donnell: Peter Miller.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: And do you know, I know you couldn't go there, but do you know about where that was? Just round about.

Carol McClue: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: That was in, before you get to Ravenel. It's right on the bridge, like the water like. It was really nice. And he has a- and he also had a hotel. Uh-huh.

Reneé Donnell: What- for a Black person hotel.

Carol McClue: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: What was the name of that hotel?

Carol McClue: I think all... I don't remember the name, but I think it was, uh, like a Peter Miller hotel, Peter Miller Joint, whatever. See, I couldn't go party (laughs).

Reneé Donnell: (laughs) That's fine. Okay. So, um, what were some things that were important to... I know you couldn't go party, I know you got your education, so what were some other things that were important maybe to your parents? What did they see as important? What did they do in their spare time that they told you?

Carol McClue: Well, like I say-

Reneé Donnell: Uh-huh.

Carol McClue: ... they were older people when I came there and daddy... They just worked with the community a lot. That's all I can remember. They worked in community. They made sure I went to music. They gave each child what they wanted to do. They tried yacht and they tried me on music and, um, I played for my school choir and I also played for s- some churches.

Reneé Donnell: Piano?

Carol McClue: Yeah, and organ. And they sent me to school. I went to, um, Miss Sumter on Smith Street. That was my music teacher in the city. And that's the only time I went into city for music, or paying bills on King Street for them. And, um, they wanted me to go to college, but I didn't want to go. I chose not to and they had three applications. I- and I said, "No, I don't want to go," so I went to Jobco at Poland Spring, Maine. And at the time when I came up, it was key punch. So from key punch, as I got older, you know, I did data entry. I worked for two insurance company. I worked for New York Life, Medical University. I have a home daycare. So I'm just a jack of all trades, and I made just as much money as people who went to college, so... Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Uh, yeah, um, that sounds like a variety of skills. Do you still play piano now or organ?

Carol McClue: Just around the house. Sometime when I get depressed, I'd start playing something. But other than that, I'm not into it. I taught music before I left home. I was 16 years old. I had three music, uh, students so far. And then I left. When Jobco called me, I had to go to Poland Spring, Maine. That's where I went at.

Reneé Donnell: Um, where did you teach your three students when you were 16?

Carol McClue: At my- our mother's home.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Right in their yard, 2954 Old Pond Road. Right there.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And I can only imagine the shock-

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: ... of going from South Carolina up to Maine.

Carol McClue: Oh, yes. It was cold up there. One day summer. And then I left there and had my, uh, training in New Orleans, Louisiana, and that's where I- my first husband, I married him there. Then I brought a second husband home after I divorce him (laughs). I said I wasn't coming back home until I had a husband, somebody of my own (laughs).

Reneé Donnell: And when you came back to Johns Island-

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: ... what decade was that again?

Carol McClue: What? I didn't understand.

Reneé Donnell: What year was that?

Carol McClue: 1988.

Reneé Donnell: How had Johns Island changed from the time that you left to when you came back?

Carol McClue: Uh, well, the road was paved. And a lot of stores that was on the corner on Old Pond Road was missing. Limehouse Store was gone, which they have a bridge, um, named after him. Limehouse Bridge, 'cause I lived three miles from Limehouse Bridge. And then I took care... I came home and I took care of my sister, and she gave me a piece of property, and my husband and I built a home. we live off Simmons Creek. We can fish and crab every day in our backyard. So, it was different. The people was different. Some... You know how people are. It- it just... A lot of people's not together. You know, you gotta be together. You gotta be happy. You gotta be joyful. You gotta be proud of yourself and be proud of your family and everything'll come together.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Carol McClue: But, I guess that's life. You just gotta a different spirit. I'm a happy, go lucky person.

Reneé Donnell: I can tell.

Carol McClue: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: I can tell. Okay, do you still do crabbing and stuff in your backyard?

Carol McClue: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Did you do that when you were growing up as well?

Carol McClue: We weren't allowed to go by the water. That's why I don't know how to swim today. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Oh, she was really strict, "Don't go by that water." She just think we gonna sink. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Did you go to church when you-

Carol McClue: Yes. When- I used to go seven a days a week with my parents. If they go into church, they'll put the communion cloth on, cleaning the church out. I stayed in church. I got burnt out. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Carol McClue: But now, you know, I- it- it's a little different now. I grew up and I know better. I still believe in God, the Creator and everything, but I'm just doing my own thing now. You know, church is where- is in your heart and how you treat people. Do unto to others that you wish them to do unto you. So I guess I'm burned out because I was going so much.

Reneé Donnell: That is a lot.

Carol McClue: We did homework in church and everything. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Well, I can see why you didn't get to go hang as much 'cause you were-

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Where were you going to church?

Carol McClue: St. Stephen AME Church on Johns Island. That's on Maybank highway

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: And they had a young lady, her name was Emma Brown, and momma... They were responsible for a little house they used to have in the church yard, and I used to love to go there to eat... They used to have ice cream float at the church, so that, you know, giving the kids ice cream

and stuff. You know, like some churches now, I won't say all, they don't keep it alive for young people to come and want to go, so we just want to go to the get the (laughs) ice cream.

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Carol McClue: Ah. And she really worked with the community, and a lot of people got married at our yard. The same yard I'm in now. That yard have a lot of history.

Reneé Donnell: I can tell.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: And you said her name was Emma-

Carol McClue: Han- Uh, Emma and Hannah Blake.

Reneé Donnell: Oh.

Carol McClue: They were responsible for the little house in the church yard for the ice cream float, but, um, Hannah Blake, where who raised me. Hannah Bishop Blake and Jerry Blake. They had raised me.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Carol McClue: Hey had a lot of people in the yard got married at the yard. Matter fact, my real mother got married out the yard. She got married when I was three years old. You know, the thing about it. May the 28th, 1952, that's my husband birthday. My mother got married May the 28th, 1952. Isn't that something?

Reneé Donnell: Wow.

Carol McClue: (laughs) That's a coincidence.

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Carol McClue: Yeah, because I'm three years older than him.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. So what... How did everybody find out about all the services that you, Mr. And Mrs. Blake, and I'm guessing others-

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: ... how did they find out that you could go there for sewing classes, you could go there for music lessons, you could go there to get married? How did they find out?

Carol McClue: Through church. Through the church.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: They was church going people. They'd work in the church very well. Momma was a steward in church. Matter fact, I have her, a little bit about her, but they didn't put everything about momma. They did everything about daddy. That's- I don't know what's- what's the reason for that, but, uh, this was Jerry Blake obituary. They have everything about him. You can read over it.

Carol McClue: Thank you.

Reneé Donnell: What is Rushland School? What is- what is Rushland School? He went there.

Carol McClue: That's- I think that's off River Road, right down there... I don't- You're not familiar with Food Lion on Johns Island, so you wouldn't know.

Reneé Donnell: The guy that was with us-

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: ... he was- he's familiar with this area.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: And then they had Wellington School before they Haut Gap High School. I know someone... Uh, that school was from first to sixth grade, and I think Haut Gap was built either around by '53 or '54. 'Cause I remember when I was in the first grade, it looked like the school was not finished yet. And my parents also worked there.

Reneé Donnell: They worked at school too?

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm. They helped clean the school and stuff. They helped a lot of people on the island. They even give people jobs. They sent some people to school, they help her. It wasn't for momma, her daddy wouldn't know how... You know, they build different houses 'cause momma sent him to school. That was her golden child. His name was Ezekiel Jones.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm. They just loved children. And, uh, let me tell you about this. She also was a foster parent. We had a lot of welfare kids in and out our house.

Reneé Donnell: Hm.

Carol McClue: When I came up, we had eight of them staying with us. We had babies. All different age. And I remember, she

had this little girl named Wilhelmina. And I was looking for Wilhelmina. The thing about her, her name was Wilhelmina Blake. So Wilhelmina couldn't walk. She was five years old and looked like she was five months. So what mo- momma did, she burned a pot of grits, burnt it up, and took the grits cake and rub her leg every day. And do you know, Wilhelmina started walking.

Reneé Donnell: Interesting.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm. Her name was Wilhelmina Blake. She had so many kids in and out of that house.

Reneé Donnell: So I guess that kind of... Where- where did they find these different children?

Carol McClue: Well, the welfare department in Charleston, South Carolina. You know, they'd bring the kids there. And she raised a lot of her cousin children because the mother left the daddy and left him with six children, so he had to work, so they brought the kids and momma raised them.

Reneé Donnell: Do you know how long she was raising... Like, before you, do you know how many kids she brought up?

Carol McClue: Well, she had... Before me, she probably had about 20. We had, uh, plow... They had to plow their ground. Uh, we had chickens, geese, turkey, goat. (laughs) All kinds of things. Pigs, hogs. Everything in the yard you wanna know. They had a rooster couldn't stand me, a red rooster. If I'd go in the yard, it used to run and pick my leg. I don't think I had... They'd pick right on my leg (laughs) right... That rooster couldn't stand me, so momma killed the rooster and we had the rooster for dinner (laughs).

Reneé Donnell: Oh, no.

Carol McClue: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: So... Okay, so was this a big farm or a small farm?

Carol McClue: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay, a huge farm. Okay.

Carol McClue: Yeah, 'cause we had people working for us.

Reneé Donnell: Right. And how did your dad... How... So did he pay these different employees?

Carol McClue: Yes, 'cause he went to the market-

Reneé Donnell: Right.

Carol McClue: ... and sold the okra, the, uh, greens, whatever, and he paid them. And they also had a lot of us working on the shed to- tomato shed, but they'd never allow me to go into work on tomato shed. I weren't allowed to work in the field either (laughs). I had to be the house lady, cook and clean.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And what was happening in the shed?

Carol McClue: Well, they had this, uh, this guy... It was in... That's where Black people would work for other significant, you know-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Carol McClue: So I think my brother said the tomatoes would go through and they would pick out the rotten ones. You have to be fast with your hands, and they used to be so glad with a bag of change. I don't know how much they paid them. I never asked, you know, but they used to put it in a little bag. I'll never forget. He would come home and throw his bag on the table and try to count his money (laughs). That's okay.

Reneé Donnell: And when you were growing up, before you left to go to Maine-

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: ... Were there lots of paved roads on Johns Island?

Carol McClue: None. No, no.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And...

Carol McClue: I left home around, uh, 1966.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: The same year I finished school.

Reneé Donnell: Did you guys have indoor plumbing and elec.. Yeah, did you have indoor plumbing by then?

Carol McClue: Yes. Uh, we had a bathroom in our house and also out of the house. And when company come and they wanna use the bathroom, (laughs) we had to go in the outhouse. I hated that outhouse. Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And when-

Carol McClue: And we had electric pump on the also well. That's when I came up. When my sister was saying, "Oh, you all had everything. I didn't have that when I was there," I said, "Well, that's not my fault. It's time change, you know. You're older than me." (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: (laughs) Okay. And then... So I know you weren't allowed to work in the fields and you went to church seven days a week.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Did you... Were you a part of any, um, sports teams? Did you know of any sports teams?

Carol McClue: Well, I was a head cheerleader at my school, and I was different queens. Uh, May Day Queen, Mrs. Senior.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: And I also, something... It just slipped my mind. I just did a lot of things. Oh, and church, I also... They had us saying our- our speeches. Plus, I used to sing a little solo every time and play on the piano 'cause they liked that, you know, and I used to say different welcome address, welcome people in the church when they had different programs.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: Now, you mentioned May Day.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: Um, was that an annual celebration that you...

Carol McClue: That's for the school.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Yeah. May Day Queen. They picked that. That's just a little celebration. They had parades, have you riding on a car and stuff like that. And momma had to raise money. And the one who raised the most money, uh, child was gonna be the May Day Queen.

Reneé Donnell: And did this actually take place in May? I know that sounds like a dumb question, but...

Carol McClue: I think so 'cause it said May Day.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: That works.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm. I used to dance the stage, be in different programs. We had a great teacher out... My fifth grade teacher, her name was Mrs. Thomas, she had us in everything. We had to act on the stage. It was very good. We was in different talent shows. It was wonderful.

Reneé Donnell: What was your talent whenever you would...

Carol McClue: Loved to dance and still like to dance. (laughs) I'm a dancing machine. My kids say, "Momma, when you gonna stop dancing? You know, your age." I said, "Well, I just love to dance."

Reneé Donnell: And do you have any other annual events or celebrations that were big events that?

Carol McClue: Yeah, we used to have 4H Club. That's mean that they used to give chicken to raise and they had the club... You go pick the best chicken. See how they look, see how fat it is, and you get prizes, the chicken and stuff.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm. And that's how momma got a lot of chicken in her yard too, from 4H Club.

Reneé Donnell: (laughs) Okay.

Carol McClue: See, I don't know if they still existing right now, but I know it was the 4H Club.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: And, um, was there

Carol McClue: They have different fairs too-

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: ... where you gonna have different table, making different things, different rides.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: Um, do you know where they... Do they just show up in random places or is it in the same location each year?

Carol McClue: No. No, it was, um... I think one fair was over at Lincoln Beach that I could remember.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: You know, we also had a lot of Black people on the island. They were RN nurses, and they could not eat in the same cafeteria are the white people's eating in, so they had it in the bathroom, but they all doing the same job. And that was Roper Hospital. 'Cause my, uh, cousin told me that before she passed away, and she was a RN.

Reneé Donnell: And was Roper Hospital in?

Carol McClue: Charleston.

Reneé Donnell: Charle- Okay.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm. There's a lot of things we couldn't do, you know.

Reneé Donnell: What were race relations like on Johns Island while you were growing up? Were-

Carol McClue: To me... Let me tell you about that.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: To me, I don't really... I didn't experience that because of the houses so far apart.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Carol McClue: And the white folks that we did know was Mr. Polk, Limehouse. We didn't have any with them because they knew Jerry Blake.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Carol McClue: See, Jerry Blake and th- them, you know, they were well known, so we didn't have any problem with them. And we didn't mix like that because they were going to St. John, which w- was the white school, and we was going to Haut Gap, so I really didn't have no dealing with them, except for when we had the party line. You ever heard of a party line?

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Carol McClue: You pick up the phone and you wanna use it, they gonna stay on the phone all day. You could hear people say, "Hey, hey, you can't hold the phone. Let us use the phone," and they'd just keep on talking on the phone and hanging up

and they'd call back. Every time you try to call, they'd get back on the phone and you never could get a call out. That's what they call a party line.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: Um, so how many... This party line, was it just for the people living on your farm?

Carol McClue: No, all on Johns Island. That's where the- how the telephones went. It wasn't like the telephone today. You could hear other people conversation. Sometime they can't even hear you on the other line listening to them. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Oh, no.

Carol McClue: Yeah. The telephone came a long way. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Um, okay. And then, so did the white Johns Islanders have a separate side of town or did... I know you lived on a really big plot of land-

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: ... so it was really kind of-

Carol McClue: Well, when I came up, really, it was no white people living on my road. None. But they have white folks living on Johns Island.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm. And we went to the white store. On the end of Old Pond Road, they had Glover Store. And on River Road, they had, uh, Butler... No, Tom- Tom Butler Store. His store was there. And I remember in the city, uh, we really didn't have to buy any meat, anything. You know, daddy just went to Carl Holley on President Street. That was the store. And what they do, they give Black people credits and they buy from there her.

Reneé Donnell: Were- were there any Black owned stores on Johns Island that you know of?

Carol McClue: Yes, I... The one Black owned store I know, her name was Sissy Glover. I don't know her real name-

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm

Carol McClue: ... but momma used to go there all the time. We used to get cookies and candy from that store.

Reneé Donnell: And that's the one on Old Pond Road?

Carol McClue: No, that's the one on, um, River Road, all the way down. The Glover, her name. She was a Black. And then they had another store, I remember Georgie Bellinger had a Black store. And I remember, um... Let me see. We went there. Sissy Glover. Georgie Bellinger. And I had... I don't... I think Esau Jenkins mighta had the center, but they did have, you know, some... Then they also had a house near, where Black people used to go and have their meeting, private little meeting.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Uh, and that was also on River Road. And then they also had the Johnson Store on River Road. That's all I could recall right now that I know of.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And what did the Johnson store... I know you said Sissy Glover, y'all would go get candy and cookies.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: What did the Johnson store sell?

Carol McClue: They sell cookies and stuff also.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: And little. You know, the come in a... Well, pickles, stuff like that.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Okay.

Carol McClue: And luncheon meat. Even our... This Milton guy on Wadmalaw Island, he used to sell... He was famous for the cheese and bologna sandwich. And I loved that, his cheese and bologna. And he was... He lived on Wadmalaw Island.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And...

Carol McClue: And you know, we also had a lot of midwives here. Bobby Gray and aunt. Her name was Sarah Honor. She delivered my sister and a whole lot of people on the island.

Reneé Donnell: And so she traveled to different people's houses.

Carol McClue: House, yes. Deliver the babies. Called a midwife.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And who were some major individuals, other than apparently your parents, um, who were some of the movers and shakers when you... before you went to Maine? If you know of any. You mentioned Mr. Esau Jenkins.

Carol McClue: Yeah, he was great.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: He was something like Martin Luther King to me.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Anybody else kinda similar to him?

Carol McClue: On Johns Island?

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm

Carol McClue: I can't recall their name.

Reneé Donnell: That's perfectly fine. All right, and-

Carol McClue: But I do know, my people, they were business people, Jerry Blake.

Reneé Donnell: All right.

Carol McClue: Anything anybody would wanna know, they'd go to him, ask him questions. And when they wanna get his mail by being the mail carrier... Uh, he had a lot of mail s- still coming to the house. and I had to walk those long road on Old Pond Road, taking mail to different people houses. And sometimes they come for their mail.

Reneé Donnell: I think Mr. Blake is fascinating.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: Farmer, mail carrier. Um, foster parent. Um, he- he did a lot.

Carol McClue: Yes, he did.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Is there anything else you would like to share that maybe I didn't-

Carol McClue: The only thing I can share, daddy always going to the church, different conference, and bringing back reports. I said, "Where you going this time?" He's going to Philadelphia. He's going to, uh, Wash... I said, "Oh my gosh, daddy," but momma didn't like to travel. She was afraid. She used to drive, but since she killed a dog, she said she not gonna drive no more, and so that stopped her from driving.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: When did you learn how to drive?

Carol McClue: When I went... Well, let me tell you the story. (laughs) You're gonna laugh about this. Everybody said that daddy had me spoiled rotten. When I was two months, he used to hold me in his hand and driving, so a lot of people teasing me, "Oh, you've been driving since you was two months."

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Carol McClue: And I remember when he caught a heart attack, coming from, Fickling Hill by his cousin, and I had to drive him home, and I was five. And, uh, we going all over the road back and forth til we (laughs) get home. And momma hollered, "Eh, eh... quicker. Quicker." She saw me behind the wheel. But uh, I really got my license when I went to Poland Spring, Maine. They- I went to driving school there.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: I don't mean to laugh at your story, it's-

Carol McClue: It was funny.

Reneé Donnell: I can't imagine a five year, like, trying to-

Carol McClue: Yeah, and he was trying to help, so we going all over the road, back and forth, back and forth til we got there. (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Carol McClue: Mm.

Reneé Donnell: All right. Well, I think that's... I think that's good.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: And you were a wealth of knowledge and it's very nice to be introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Blake.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm

Reneé Donnell: So-

Carol McClue: I'm so proud of those people, you know, so I made a good decision. My mother made a good decision when she left me- left them adopted me. You know, a lot of people... I wanted the island to know because a lot of people on the island said that I was a foster child, which I never was a foster child. They raised a lot of their cousin children, and I was one of the cousin, but can't tell which- what... you know, they weren't told me. And then my family, the Ford family... Kit Ford Road is my grand uncle road. And they had eight children and everybody had an instrument to play. And they did not go to school for music, and they sound- sound just like the sound that be on the radio and stuff. They were very good. Each one of them had... Some had a guitar, a horn, horn, drum, whatever instrument

they could play. And see, I can't play by ear like them. I only play by notes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Carol McClue: Yeah, they were great.

Reneé Donnell: Interesting.

Carol McClue: Mm-hmm. The Ford family.

Reneé Donnell: Well, thank you so much.



SANDRA HUTCHINSON SANDRA GREEN AUDREY DEAS

Crew: But...

Crew: We're rolling here.

And I'm rolling here, so whenever y'all are ready.

Reneé Donnell: This is gonna be just like a conversation, so feel free to answer however you so choose. Please speak one at a time so the audio can hear you, um, and it doesn't get jumbled up. Um, okay, so we're gonna go ahead and start. Thank you guys so much for coming here today. Would you be able to, one at a time, say your name and then spell it? So we'll start here.

Sandra Hutchinson: My name is Sandra Jeanne Bligen Hutchinson and that's S-A-N-D-R-A, Jeanne, J-E-A-N-N-E, Bligen, B-L-I-G-E-N, Hutchinson, H-U-T-C-H-I-N-S-O-N.

Sandra Green: My name is Sandra, S-A-N-D-R-A Green, G-R-E-E-N.

Audrey Deas: My name is Audrey, A-U-D-R-E-Y Deas, D-E-A-S.

Reneé Donnell: Awesome. All right. So, um, are the three of you from John's Island?

Participants: Yes.

Yeah-

Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And you can either leave it up or down. It can hear you either way.

Audrey Deas: Oh I, I don't even have mine. Uh, oh.

Reneé Donnell: It's okay.

Audrey Deas: Okay.

Reneé Donnell: Um, okay. And we'll go from right to left.

Participants: Mm.

Reneé Donnell: Um, is your family from Johns Island?

Audrey Deas: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: For about how long? As long as you can remember?

Participants: Yes.

Sandra Green: Yes. The entire time.

Sandra Hutchinson: Yes. All of my life.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And what part of Johns Island is your family from?

Audrey Deas: My family is from, um, the Legarville Road section of Johns Island. Quote unquote, "Maddas" M-A-D-D-A-S, which is River Road South... Am I correct?

Participants:	Mm-hmm.	Sandra Green:	Literally every Sunday it was church, and church used to be for at least, like, 2:00, 2:30.
Audrey Deas:	River Road South off the Abbapoola Creek onto the Legarville Road.	Audrey Deas:	(laughs) Yes.
Reneé Donnell:	Thank you.	Sandra Green:	So we spent our entire time on Sunday in Church. But the remaining of the weeks, we were farming.
Sandra Green:	I'm her neighbor.	Audrey Deas:	Agricultural.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Sandra Hutchinson:	Mm-hmm.
Audrey Deas:	(laughs)	Sandra Green:	And we had, um, animals. So that were our responsibilities. Um, we had wood, so, like, wood stoves. So I mean we had to find the woods to put in the wood stoves.
Sandra Green:	(laughs) So...	Participants:	Mm.
Sandra Hutchinson:	Same here. (laughs)	Sandra Green:	Um, and we were literally a community where everybody went practically every time together. (laughs) We went w- wood hunting together. (laughs)
Reneé Donnell:	Okay, awesome. Okay. So, uh, what was family life like as, did you guys grow up together?	Audrey Deas:	(laughs)
Participants:	Yes. (laughs)	Sandra Green:	Literally, if we went fishing, that was together.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.
Audrey Deas:	Yeah. She's the baby and my last one [?]	Sandra Green:	If we did vegetables and things, that was together. So it was literally, that's how we lived because everybody depended on everybody else.
Participants:	(laughs)	Audrey Deas:	Communal.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Sandra Hutchinson:	And along that line, we were, uh, um, a community of villagers. Everybody's children belonged to each other.
Audrey Deas:	But we grew up together.	Participants:	Yeah.
Reneé Donnell:	Awesome. So what was life like as you guys were growing up off Legarville Road in that side of town? What was life like?		
Sandra Green:	Church-centered.		
Audrey Deas:	Immensely.		

Reneé Donnell:	Okay. You mentioned church-centered. What church did you guys go to?	Audrey Deas:	And, um, what's the other road, Pointfield?
Sandra Green:	I went to Saint James and it's right on the road where we live.	Participants:	Mm-hmm.
Participants:	Mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	Is that the name of that road?
Audrey Deas:	African Methodist Episcopal.	Participants:	Eh, not anymore.
Sandra Hutchinson:	And I went to Hebron Zion Presbyterian Church, but I would also go to her church, which is the church my father belonged to.		No.
Participants:	Yeah.	Audrey Deas:	Oh. Okay.
Reneé Donnell:	You said Hebron Zion?	Participants:	It's Abbapoola.
Participants:	Mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	Abbapoola?
Sandra Hutchinson:	Heber- Uh, yeah, I think.	Participants:	They changed it.
Participants:	Mm-hmm.	Reneé Donnell:	And what was the original name of this road?
Sandra Hutchinson:	It's...	Participants:	It was-
Participants:	It wasn't-	Audrey Deas:	Pointfield.
Sandra Hutchinson:	(laughs)	Participants:	So they moved Pointfield inside now.
Audrey Deas:	That's, that's the result of a merged church, Zion and Hebron.	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm. So it's one of the roads that Sharon goes home to now?
Sandra Hutchinson:	Yeah.	Participants:	Yes. That's where they put their...
Audrey Deas:	But initially...	Sandra Hutchinson:	(laughs)
Audrey Deas:	... it was the Zion Presbyterian Church, which is right at the corner of River Road and Edenvale.	Participants:	... the name now. (laughs)
Sandra Hutchinson:	Edenvale Road, yes.	Audrey Deas:	Okay.
		Participants:	So you have to walk... (laughs) ... down the dirt road to get to theirs.
		Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm, correct.

Participants:	Mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	We did. A matter of fact...
Reneé Donnell:	So you mentioned dirt roads.	Participants:	Oh my gosh. (laughs)
Participants:	Mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	... our bus driver is still living. The lady that drove the bus for us, Shirley Jeanne.
Reneé Donnell:	When did the roads, uh, where you guys grew up, when did they start getting paved?	Sandra Hutchinson:	Mm-hmm.
Sandra Green:	In the '60s.	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.
Audrey Deas:	It was dirt.	Participants:	Oh my gosh.
Sandra Green:	And it hasn't been done since.	Audrey Deas:	She's still living.
Reneé Donnell:	(laughs)	Reneé Donnell:	Do you know, is that, well, that little wooden bridge you were mentioning, um, where was that? 'Cause I'm sure it's not there anymore.
Audrey Deas:	We, um, we were, I don't know how old we were. I know going to elementary school, we all went to Mount Zion Elementary School.	Audrey Deas:	No, it's not there anymore. Now it's cemented. But it was on, um, r- off River Road, on Bryans Dairy. It's the only...
Sandra Hutchinson:	Okay.	Participants:	Mm-hmm.
Audrey Deas:	Excuse me. Um, we'd have, if it rained, we'd have to meet the bus to the, to River Road.	Audrey Deas:	... one bridge in and one bridge out of our community.
Participants:	Mm-hmm.	Participants:	Mm-hmm.
Audrey Deas:	Because (laughs) the bus didn't come across the little wooden bridge to pick us up. Sandra, did you go through that?	Sandra Hutchinson:	Audrey, was that bridge changed after Hugo or before?
Participants:	No. (laughs) Thank goodness.	Sandra Green:	They did it after.
Participants:	(laughs)	Sandra Hutchinson:	Yes.
Reneé Donnell:	(laughs)	Audrey Deas:	Eh, yeah.
Audrey Deas:	Yeah. Sandra didn't go through that. But...	Sandra Green:	They just did it in 2014.
Reneé Donnell:	(laughs)	Sandra Hutchinson:	Oh, mm-hmm.
		Audrey Deas:	Yeah, I wasn't even living here when they did that bridge.

Sandra Hutchinson:	Yeah. I, I wasn't living here either.	Audrey Deas:	After the tomatoes...
Reneé Donnell:	S- I'm sorry. So you said (laughs) that it just got paved over in 2014?	Sandra Hutchinson:	And the green beans, and corn and all of that-
Participants:	Mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	And, and all that stuff.
Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.	Sandra Hutchinson:	Yeah.
Reneé Donnell:	Or 2017?	Audrey Deas:	Whatever the big farmers plant.
Sandra Green:	It had got expanded.	Sandra Hutchinson:	Cucumbers.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay. Okay.	Audrey Deas:	Cucumbers.
Sandra Green:	And changed.	Sandra Hutchinson:	Mm-hmm.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Audrey Deas:	Whatever they planted, only after that season was over. Even, was it before or after picking weeds outta soy beans?
Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.	Sandra Hutchinson:	Well, I don't know. All I remember is that we didn't get to really go until around the 4th of July time.
Sandra Green:	Before, it was a cement road. But it used to break up, so, so they decided to make it a little bit higher and expand it.	Audrey Deas:	Eh, around the 4th of July.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay. Very nice. Okay. And so I know that you guys did everything together.	Sandra Hutchinson:	Mm-hmm.
Participants:	Mm.	Audrey Deas:	And that property was owned by African-American, George Bellinger.
Reneé Donnell:	Um, did you go swimming when you were growing up?	Participants:	Mm-hmm.
Participants:	(laughs)		Hmm.
	No.	Audrey Deas:	And everybody from the surrounding counties would come to that landing, we would call it.
	(laughs)	Participants:	Mm-hmm.
	(laughs)	Audrey Deas:	And that was our 4th of July joy.
Audrey Deas:	After farming ceasing.	Sandra Hutchinson:	And- Mm-hmm.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.		

Sandra Hutchinson: To go, to go swimming. People would come with their music, um...

Sandra Hutchinson: On buses.

Sandra Hutchinson: (laughs)

Audrey Deas: On buses.

Sandra Green: I wouldn't play in the water.

Sandra Hutchinson: (laughs) Yeah.

Audrey Deas: (laughs) Yeah.

Sandra Hutchinson: None of us...

Sandra Green: Did we...

Sandra Hutchinson: None of us...

Sandra Green: None of the girls knew how to swim.

Sandra Hutchinson: (laughs)

Sandra Green: That's exactly...

Audrey Deas: No one...

Sandra Green: (laughs)

Participants: (laughs)

Sandra Hutchinson: (laughs)

Audrey Deas: ... knew how to swim.

Sandra Hutchinson: The boys all knew how to swim, really.

Participants: Yeah.

Sandra Hutchinson: The girls did not know how.

Participants: (laughs)

Crew: Okay.

Reneé Donnell: And you said that was George Bellinger's land.

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: W- was this like a, um, a beach type situation?

Participants: No.

No.

We called it that back then, but it's...

Audrey Deas: We-

Participants: ... not, um-

Audrey Deas: Georgie Beach, we called it. (laughs)

Audrey Deas: But it was not.

Participants: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Audrey Deas: (laughs)

Participants: Water with weeds.

Uh w-

Yes. (laughs)

Audrey Deas: W- (laughs) Lots of weeds.

Reneé Donnell: And where was this located?

Audrey Deas: Off of, um, by-

Participants: George Bellinger Road now.

Reneé Donnell:	Oh.	Participants:	Yeah.
Audrey Deas:	Yeah.	Audrey Deas:	Yes.
Participants:	But they, they finally...	Reneé Donnell:	Yes? Was that, um, more for fun or more for work?
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Participants:	Oh.
Participants:	... named it.		Fun.
Audrey Deas:	Yeah.	Audrey Deas:	Yeah. I would think, a hobby?
Participants:	So sh- sh- they'll be able to find that hopefully on a map.	Participants:	Eh, eh, well for food. (laughs) For...
Audrey Deas:	Yeah.	Audrey Deas:	A- and food necessity.
Participants:	Yeah, Legareville. To-	Participants:	Yes.
Audrey Deas:	Absolutely private road now.	Reneé Donnell:	Okay.
Participants:	Yeah.	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Participants:	Yeah.
Audrey Deas:	Haven't been down that road in ages.	Audrey Deas:	Her mother was the great crabber. Jeanne's mom.
Participants:	You can't go. (laughs)	Participants:	My mom.
Audrey Deas:	Mm, mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	My aunt.
Participants:	They always have it chained.	Participants:	Okay.
Audrey Deas:	Yeah. Stop you right at the back of the house.	Audrey Deas:	Was the great crabber. She'd, she'd catch the crab, and pick it, and make, um, crab balls, et cetera. But, um, I couldn't enjoy it because I, I'm allergic to it, shellfish. (laughs)
Reneé Donnell:	So that was your 4th of July celebration, and y'all would go to Georgie Beach.	Participants:	(laughs)
Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	But, um, that was one of our great joys.
Reneé Donnell:	And... Okay. All right. Um, and then I know that you guys mentioned farming. Did you guys ever do, um, like, crabbing or fishing as well?	Participants:	Mm-hmm.

Audrey Deas: A- after the work was over, to go crabbing. You put crab in the freezer for the winter, so forth and so on. Didn't we have a freezer then?

Participants: We had a c-
Icebox.
... an icebox?

Audrey Deas: Ice box.

Participants: Yeah.

Audrey Deas: Yeah. (laughs)

Participants: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Okay. All right. So couple of questions. One specifically for you, since your mother was a great crabber. Where did she go to catch these crabs?

Participants: Mm, any-

Reneé Donnell: Like, did she have a favorite spot or did she just kinda go all over?

Sandra Hutchinson: Well, she had a favorite spot and it's not too far from where she lived, where she can go on the wharf and sit it, and throw out her, um...

Audrey Deas: Mm, mm.

Sandra Hutchinson: Uh, uh, plant, her, uh, her basket to catch crabs. You know?

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: Um, prep the lines, I mean.

Audrey Deas: Yeah.

Sandra Hutchinson: Set the lines to catch crabs. But no.

Audrey Deas: But before the wharf, it was.

Sandra Hutchinson: Ab- the, just the bank, right?

Audrey Deas: Georgie Creek.

Sandra Hutchinson: Yeah. That's right, the same creek where we swam at.

Audrey Deas: Mm, the (laughs) where we s- where we went, uh s- uh, swimming in.

Sandra Hutchinson: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: How much land did this, uh, George Bellinger own? Do you guys know? A lot?

Sandra Hutchinson: Oh, that's our family, by the way.

Audrey Deas: Um... I don't, uh, this was 16, so his was more.

Sandra Hutchinson: Yeah.

Audrey Deas: So I don't know the exact number, but it was more than 16 acres.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm. And all right, so you also mentioned you went to Mount Zion Elementary.

Audrey Deas: Mm.

Reneé Donnell: And fun came after the farming was done.

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Okay, so what, if you were to go back to your fifth grade selves or maybe even, like, sixth grade, seventh grade selves, what did your day look like from wake up to go to bed?

Audrey Deas: (laughs)

Sandra Hutchinson: Well, my mom was always in the fields and also had us in the fields. We went to, we couldn't go back to school initially each year until after the first week because we had to buy our books. So we had to work that first week so that we can pay for our books.

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: And that was throughout-

Audrey Deas: Used books too.

Sandra Hutchinson: Hmm?

Audrey Deas: Used books too.

Sandra Hutchinson: And used books, yes. Um, and so, you know, we'd get up and go in the fields, and then come back, get ready for school, go to school. Do our thing all day, come back home, and we are supposed to be helping our parents by hoeing and...

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: ... you know, doing things in our own little gardening. S- but if, the boys would choose to play with marbles, shoot marbles until they hear the car coming, and the girls would choose to make their little doll baby from grass. (laughs) Instead of doing what they're supposed to do.

Audrey Deas: (laughs)

Sandra Hutchinson: But those are the kinds of things that we did, um, ah, until we had to really be forced to go in the field to get the hoeing and things done. And then we'd come home and, uh, by then the, one of the parents would've cooked something. And, um, we'd have-

Audrey Deas: Or the oldest child.

Sandra Hutchinson: Yeah. And somebody would have pumped the water for the tubs.

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: For people to take their baths, and their wash off. Well, we called it bath. (laughs)

Audrey Deas: (exclamatory laugh)

Reneé Donnell: (laughs)

Audrey Deas: Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Where did you rent the school books, or your textbooks from?

Sandra Hutchinson: Ra-

Sandra Hutchinson: From the school system. This, mm-

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Sandra Hutchinson: Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: And was that on Johns Island, or did you have to go to Charleston?

Sandra Hutchinson: Johns Island.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Audrey Deas: Yeah. They'd give it to the school, schools.

Participants:	Yeah.	Sandra Green:	My dad j- used to work at a r- fertilizer plant. So he would take his vacation when school is out and all of us ends up on that farm.
Audrey Deas:	And we had to go, had a s- a book room in the schools.	Audrey Deas:	Mm. (laughs)
Participants:	Yes.	Sandra Green:	I did not like farming.
Audrey Deas:	I don't know whether the teachers got the books, or...	Audrey Deas:	Mm. (laughs)
Sandra Hutchinson:	We had- I don't know. But yeah.	Sandra Hutchinson:	(laughs)
Audrey Deas:	Yeah.	Sandra Green:	So at 12, I quit.
Sandra Hutchinson:	I think the teachers did.	Sandra Hutchinson:	Okay.
Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm. And brought 'em to the classroom.	Audrey Deas:	Mm.
Sandra Hutchinson:	For the children in the class, yes. Exactly.	Sandra Green:	But it was go to school, come home, go find wood. (laughs)
Audrey Deas:	You only got 'em if you paid for 'em.	Audrey Deas:	Mm.
Sandra Hutchinson:	And they were really used books, and it had all the c- students who'd already, the names of the...	Participants:	Yeah.
Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.	Sandra Green:	If you had to do, um, bring it in, cut it. (laughs)
Sandra Hutchinson:	... students and schools who had already had the book, so it, and s- and if we misplaced that book, that used book...	Audrey Deas:	Mm, mm-hmm.
Audrey Deas:	We paid for it.	Sandra Green:	I had a brother who would try do it, but he would do just the least amount...
Sandra Hutchinson:	... that we paid for, we'd have to pay for it again.	Sandra Hutchinson:	(laughs)
Audrey Deas:	Yeah.	Sandra Green:	... that he could possibly get away with.
Sandra Hutchinson:	Mm.	Sandra Hutchinson:	(laughs)
Reneé Donnell:	Okay. Same story as...		(laughs)
Sandra Green:	Same story. A different time 'cause literally, I would go to school. I didn't have to work until summertime.	Sandra Green:	And so the rest were up to the girls.
Sandra Hutchinson:	Mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	Mm, mm-hmm.

Sandra Green:	And it was five of us.	Audrey Deas:	And you went-
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Participants:	You guys g- did ahead of me. Um...
Sandra Green:	And then we'd take it into the wood box. So that's what we did.	Audrey Deas:	And you went to college in?
Reneé Donnell:	Was this wood that you were cutting, was this for heat or for cooking?	Participants:	'69. '68, right?
Sandra Hutchinson:	Ah, both.	Audrey Deas:	'68.
Sandra Green:	Everything.	Participants:	Yeah.
Audrey Deas:	Both. Both.	Audrey Deas:	Yeah.
Participants:	(laughs)	Participants:	So...
Reneé Donnell:	Okay. 'Cause I, I guess in my mind, it's hot outside now. So you wouldn't wanna cut wood for heat. So-	Audrey Deas:	Well-
Audrey Deas:	We did though.	Participants:	But at different times.
Participants:	(laughs)	Audrey Deas:	Sometimes in the '60s, early '60s, I would say. Thank you for that time period because...
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Participants:	Mm-hmm. (laughs)
Audrey Deas:	We did.	Audrey Deas:	I'm not good with the time period, but you're right.
Participants:	We had to.	Participants:	Yeah.
Audrey Deas:	Until we were able to afford what, gas stoves.	Audrey Deas:	Mm.
Participants:	Mm-hmm.	Sandra Green:	Mine was '83 when we ended up building, when I ended up building the house.
	Gas stoves, yeah.	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.
Reneé Donnell:	Um, about, for your Legarville area, about when did indoor plumbing come to the different houses?	Sandra Green:	So literally up until that time. So yes. So we still had it when I went off to military, um...
Participants:	Audrey, when I went away to college, we still didn't have...	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm. Hmm.
		Sandra Green:	To the military. And that was, I was commissioned in '77 and I left in '78.

Audrey Deas: And she just retired, when? Last year? Is it this year?

Sandra Green: Retired, I retired from the VA system in t-

Audrey Deas: This year?

Sandra Green: '21, but I retired from the military in 2014.

Audrey Deas: Mm. Veteran.

Sandra Hutchinson: Very.

Audrey Deas: RN.

Sandra Hutchinson: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: So I know you were military, so you did not stay here.

Sandra Green: I was away 10 years.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Sandra Green: I was, um, I left in '78. I returned in '87. Uh, my dad died in '88 and then I joined the VA facility, and I remained there. And then they activated us for Desert Shield and Storm so I had to leave again. So I didn't return again until '91.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Sandra Hutchinson: And I was gone for 41 years.

Reneé Donnell: Why did you leave?

Sandra Hutchinson: I went away to college.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Sandra Hutchinson: That was the first time I went away, and then I stayed. I went from one, from graduate, from undergraduate to graduate, and then living, married, having children. Lived in Nigeria. Just, yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. Uh, well, congrats to you for living, I guess, outside the country. That's really cool.

Participants: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Um, so what brought you back here?

Sandra Hutchinson: I've always loved Johns Island.

Participants: (laughs)

Sandra Hutchinson: I will tell the world that no matter where I go, no matter how much I accumulate, no matter what my life is about out there, the place that I'm happiest...

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: ... is here.

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: On this island. And I don't...

Sandra Hutchinson: And it's the family, the village that I talked about.

Sandra Hutchinson: Mm.

Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: That's what it's, and the, you know, the church.

Sandra Hutchinson: Yeah.

Sandra Hutchinson: It's, it's just so, so important to me.

Sandra Hutchinson: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: Here, so I've just never gotten this out of my system. I can't imagine that. And even my children will tell you that if you ask them whe- where they're from, they will say Johns Island.

Sandra Hutchinson: (laughs)

Sandra Hutchinson: That's because I'm from Johns Island. And truth and fact, one's from Minnesota and one's from North Carolina.

Sandra Hutchinson: (laughs)

Audrey Deas: Mm-mm.

Sandra Hutchinson: (laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Audrey Deas: I did the same.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Audrey Deas: But I went on to undergraduate school in Ohio in '70, in '70.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Audrey Deas: 1970. I came back here around '74, '75. My mother was sick. And I've been here ever since. And I worked in the, um, two year college. Uh, system, Trident Technical college for over 30-something years before I retired. And, um, and also went back to seminary in '80, '81. Or graduated from seminary in '81. And even though I'm retired as of this date, I'm still active in the church because they can't find ministers. So, but I love Johns Island also. I don't care where I go, I love home.

Sandra Hutchinson: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: So we're gonna go from you, to you, to you.

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Because your times coming back actually form a timeline.

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: So in the four or five years you were away from Johns Island...

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: ... when you came back in the mid '70s...

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: ... um, what were some changes that you had noticed? I know it, yeah, what were some changes that you noticed?

Audrey Deas: There weren't a whole lotta changes. Of course, things weren't ex- as extreme as they were when we were living on the island before college. Um, because we worked in the fields even in high school.

Participants: Yes.

Audrey Deas: But, um, things were just not as extreme as they were. We were no longer working in the fields. Um, our parents were older. Um, some of us had had children, even. Living was still somewhat, uh, stagnant. I don't know. Wh- is that when we're slow?

Sandra Hutchinson: Slow.

(laughs)

Sandra Hutchinson: But we did have cars.

Audrey Deas: But we did have cars, yeah. Yeah.

Sandra Hutchinson: Yeah. A lot, a lot of people had cars at that time.

Audrey Deas:	Yeah. And that, that was a plus.	Sandra Green:	Um, well, I lived at Fort Jackson for five years. So I would come home...
Sandra Hutchinson:	Yeah.	Reneé Donnell:	Okay.
Audrey Deas:	We had to learn how to drive in order to get anywhere we needed to go.	Sandra Green:	... when I'm off on the weekends.
Sandra Hutchinson:	Uh-huh.	Reneé Donnell:	Okay.
Audrey Deas:	S- didn't mean, (laughs) necessarily mean we had a car. But we had to learn how to drive.	Sandra Green:	So it was not too many changes.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Reneé Donnell:	Hmm. (laughs)
Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.	Sandra Green:	Literally.
Reneé Donnell:	And so were there more and more roads being paved at that time as well?	Participants:	Mm-hmm.
Participants:	Yeah.	Sandra Green:	What is it, two hours away from (laughs) where I live? Um, when I went for, um, Desert Shield and Storm, um, my parents were older, my dad had already gone. My mother was ill. So literally, I stayed mostly with her. So it was...
Reneé Donnell:	Or were they already paved?	Reneé Donnell:	Okay.
Audrey Deas:	Yeah.	Audrey Deas:	Mm.
Participants:	Yeah.	Sandra Green:	... just to make sure that she was doing okay. Um, and she died June of 1991, so I called her, I think, the day before, something like telling her I was s- um, clearing post. And then I got the call back that she had passed away. So literally, (laughs) it was a transition for me. So after that time, I just, um, had a nephew that was staying with them. So more responsibility.
Audrey Deas:	They were, um, at that time they were already paved.	Sandra Hutchinson:	Mm-hmm.
Sandra Hutchinson:	Mm-hmm.		Mm-hmm.
Audrey Deas:	Mm, mm-hmm.		
Reneé Donnell:	And then, so you mentioned that you came back in the '80s and then again in the '90s?		
Sandra Green:	Mm. I just was activated for Desert Shield and Storm.		
Reneé Donnell:	Okay. Uh, from the time when you left until when you came back, maybe the first time and even the second time, how had things changed for you?		

Sandra G.: So that's what that ended up being. But now he's grown, so he takes care of himself.

Sandra Hutchinson: Mm, mm.
(laughs)

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And for when you came back, what were some changes you noticed?

Sandra Hutchinson: Oh. (laughs) To me, because I'd been gone so long, there were just so many significant changes.

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: I didn't really recognize a lot.

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: Um, of Johns Island.

Participants: Mm.

Sandra Hutchinson: And when Hugo happened even, you know, um, I realized when I came home to see how my mom and them were doing...

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: ... and, uh, they were at the church, uh, and we made an attempt to come to where the house was, I had no clue...

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: ... where I was going not only because of the storm with all the trees down, but I just, eh, had been gone so long, I couldn't figure some of that out. But, um, but I came home on a regular basis too, as often as I can.

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: Even when I lived in Nigeria, I came home.

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: Um, but I didn't know my family, the, the younger people in the family. I didn't know them and they didn't know, but I, because we grew up in the same... People didn't know whose children they were...

Participants: Mm-mm.

Sandra Hutchinson: ... versus who we were. They didn't know who our parents were. You know, are you Nay's child or Tootsie's child?

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: That's just how we grew up. So it was kind of, eh, devastating to me that, um, I didn't know some of the younger people an-

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: ... anymore.

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: Um, but no. Not, not, I mean, there were just so many t- I mean, there were...

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: ... stores on the island that were not here when I...

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: ... lived here. Um, there was a laundry mat around (laughs) that is nowhere.

Participants: Mm-hmm.
(laughs)
Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: I mean, we were washing on the washboard growing up, you know?

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: And so just so much had, had changed.

Participants: Yeah.

Sandra Hutchinson: We had a gas station right here.

Audrey Deas: Yeah.

Participants: Hmm.

Audrey Deas: But the changes were almost devastating, I would say.

Participants: Yes.

Audrey Deas: To a certain point. And at sometimes it looks like, mm, we saw the evolving of a generation of people. And that's the thing that's most frightening, because now we see that, that evolving even more clearly because our parents aren't here anymore.

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Audrey Deas: And, um, none of our parents are here anymore. So we, we see a, a, it's a whole different light now, w- (laughs) we- we are now the parents.

Sandra Hutchinson: Yeah.

Audrey Deas: And...

Sandra Hutchinson: The other thing, Audrey, were drugs.

Audrey Deas: Yeah.

Sandra Hutchinson: When I left home, mm, I don't, didn't know anything about any kind of drug.

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: As a matter of fact, I would have debates with coworkers that people on Johns Island...

Participants: (laughs)

Sandra Hutchinson: ... don't know anything about drugs.

Participants: (laughs)
(laughs)

Sandra Hutchinson: You n- (laughs)

Participants: Mm, mm.

Sandra Hutchinson: You know? Well, little did I know that drugs had already come to the island...

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: ... and people were doing on Johns Island what they were doing in other places.

Participants: Every place, yes.

Reneé Donnell: What would you say is the mindset of your descendants now? Do they want to be here? Do they want to live elsewhere?

Participants: Hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Are they...

Sandra Hutchinson: They find jobs, difficult.

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: Good paying jobs, difficult to find here.

Participants: Mm.

Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: And in South Carolina.

Participants: Yeah.

Sandra Hutchinson: So as much as they wanna be home, they would love to be with family, they try it for a bit and then they leave because of that.

Audrey Deas: Yeah. It's really suppressing.

Sandra Hutchinson: Yes.

Audrey Deas: In terms of finding good paying jobs.

Sandra Hutchinson: Yes.

Audrey Deas: And, um, supporting a family here. It's good for single people. It's good for a place to come back and visit too.

Sandra Hutchinson: Yeah.

Audrey Deas: Place that you will never forget. But it's a good place to visit. It's a good place to retire.

Participants: Mm.

Yes.

Audrey Deas: But not, um, just doesn't give you what you need to maintain a, a life with people who you've been through college with, so forth and so on. To maintain that sorta,

uh, I think it, they use this word, status or whatever. Because it's not status. It's just keeping up, keeping up with wh- with progress. It's hard. Uh, folks who ca- who are doing those things aren't here.

Participants: Right.

Audrey Deas: And we who left or are left behind, we try to maintain. We try to maintain. But most of the times, because we're so busy trying to maintain, we miss meetings.

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Audrey Deas: Um, uh, and, and we don't get the newspaper because now, guess what? We're computer-savvy, we're on the telephone, we are on the internet, so forth and so on. So we miss so many things. And on, to p- put our input in how our community evolves. Still, we still don't like it because t- s- again, eh, a lot of our voices are still not being heard. So...

Sandra Hutchinson: And we've found that, um, a lotta times, meetings about what's happening on the islands...

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: ... are being held without representation for, uh, proper representation.

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: Like, how did, how come we don't know about that.

Audrey Deas: Yeah.

Sandra Hutchinson: How come we didn't get invited to that meeting?

Audrey Deas: Yeah.

Sandra Hutchinson: Um, my do- my son and his wife, uh, were just riding around one day and they saw these cars at this place, so they decided they were gonna stop and see what was going on. That's how his wife is. That's how Mary is.

Sandra Hutchinson: (laughs)

Sandra Hutchinson: And so...

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: ... they go and then they were having a community meeting. They were having a meeting about Johns Island. So of course, she's, she's an activist. She says, "Is this meeting about Johns Island?" Well, we're from Johns Island. We don't know anything about it.

Audrey Deas: Yeah.

Sandra Hutchinson: You know? And so, you know, we encountered that a lot.

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Yeah.

Audrey Deas: Or as you're driving, there's a sign on the side of the road.

Participants: Yeah.

Audrey Deas: Okay, you're driving.

Participants: Yeah.

Audrey Deas: There's a sign on the side of the road that...

Participants: Mm.

Audrey Deas: ... says where the, the date and time of a meeting. Come on.

Sandra Hutchinson: (laughs)

Audrey Deas: So those are the stuff that really gets under my skin. I can't stop. (laughs) I'm old, and I can't stop and read signs...

Sandra Hutchinson: Mm-hmm.

Audrey Deas: ... when a car's behind me.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. All right. So since we're talking about Johns Island and how it's kinda changed, do you guys know of any other historic neighborhoods on this island? And have they also been seeing similar change as to what you guys are mentioning for where you grew up? Or is it, like, a island-wide?

Audrey Deas: I would say... You go ahead, Sandra.

Sandra Green: (laughs) Island-wide.

Sandra Hutchinson: Mm.

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: Yeah. Hmm.

Sandra Green: The whole island really has changed. Everything.

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Green: All of the places. All of the neighborhoods. One that literally has stayed status quo would be Wadmalaw.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Green: The only island. They have some people there, but they don't have running water. They don't have city water. Nope.

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Green: They literally have pumps, all well water.

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Green: So literally, that is a facility that literally have kept their heritage intact. (laughs)

Participants: Maybe 'cause all those [inaudible 00:32:08].

Sandra Green: And I just learned the other day, reading the paper, this was determined since 1988.

Participants: That what?

Sandra Green: That they were going to be able to maintain that status, that they didn't have to get the water. They did not have to get this, they did not have to get that.

Participants: Because people don't-

Sandra Green: So they were able to maintain it.

Sandra Hutchinson: Mm.

Audrey Deas: The folks on Wadmalaw didn't allow them to come in and change their community.

Sandra Hutchinson: Mm-hmm.

Audrey Deas: They're very, very (laughs) what do we say? Proactive? Even...

Sandra Hutchinson: Mm-hmm.

Audrey Deas: ... if sometimes wrong.

Sandra Hutchinson: Mm-hmm.

Audrey Deas: But that no one's gonna walk into their community and make the changes that you see going on on Johns Island.

Sandra Hutchinson: Yes.

Mm-hmm.

Audrey Deas: You know? And, uh, you look at, uh, River Road the south to Bohicket. Major, major changes. And growth in that area as well. And some of the people that we wanted to come here for this meeting, um, especially aver- Alvin Jenkins, they're outta town. So, um, they couldn't be here. But that place has seen a lot of growth and as new people come in, they come in with their ideas of the businesses they wanna bring down on that end. And I think the last idea of concept they were coming up with is, um, what you call the little putty, putty golf thing?

Sandra Hutchinson: Oh, miniature golf.

Put put?

Audrey Deas: Put put golf on, um, on, on, um...

Sandra Hutchinson: Betsy-

Audrey Deas: Betsy Kerrison.

Sandra Hutchinson: Mm-hmm.

Audrey Deas: And something else. I can't remember what the other thing was. But folks started complaining about that. So I haven't heard what has happened with that. It woulda been good if, if Alvin or even one of the Freeman guys, um, Sandra would've been here to speak on that.

Sandra Hutchinson: Mm-hmm.

Audrey Deas: Because, uh, that's where they live, that's their community. Another community that seemed rather slow in progress, um, I don't know what happened to this, is Whitehall. Which is on River Road at, also. But, ooh, Whitehall's progress is off of the main road. It's not on the main road. You go, um, into, uh, what's that road the Millers live on? Black [inaudible]?

Participants: Black Ground.
Black Ground?

Audrey Deas: Black Ground.

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Audrey Deas: Black Ground Road. And there's a major development back there.

Participants: There's a major one in Mullet Hall...

Audrey Deas: And Mullet Hall.

Participants: ... as well.

Audrey Deas: A major development in there. But you couldn't tell it from River Road.

Participants: Mm-mm.

Reneé Donnell: So where originally was this Whitehall area? Like, what were the boundaries for this Whitehall area originally?

Audrey Deas: It's past, it's past, um...

Audrey Deas: It's on the, it's still on River Road South.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Audrey Deas: Past Bryans Dairy, where we live. And it's the next community. But, about 10, would you say about a mile or two from us?

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Audrey Deas: About a mile or two from, from Bryans Dairy.

Reneé Donnell: Okay. And you-

Audrey Deas: And remember now, those same people went to church with, uh, with us as well.

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Participants: Also family 'cause, um...
Yeah.
... we had family on Whitehall.
Yeah.
Mm, mm-hmm. That's another section. We call it Whitehall. But it's still River Road.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Participants: My mother, uh, r- and sister live there. So...
Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson: Who, what, what do you call where momma lived?

Participants: Uh, is, is it Sand Hill?

Sandra Hutchinson: Sand Hill, yeah.

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Sandra Hutchinson:	Sand Hill?	Participants:	It's, um...
Participants:	Mm-hmm. Mm, that's on Bohicket. From, what did you say? From t- from, from Edenvale...		Oh yeah. The name?
			Yeah.
Sandra Hutchinson:	Mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	Yeah.
Participants:	... to, um, to, to Betsy Kerrison.	Participants:	W- mm.
Sandra Hutchinson:	Mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	It was Miller Hill. Miller Hill had one. Miller Hill was, um, oh lord. What's the landing road off of River Road?
Participants:	Sand Hill.		
Sandra Hutchinson:	That's Sand Hill. Yeah.	Participants:	Exchange Landing?
Participants:	Mm-hmm.	Sandra Hutchinson:	Exchange Landing?
Sandra Hutchinson:	And... Oh, Betsy.	Audrey Deas:	Exchange Landing. That was Miller Hill. Miller Hill had its school.
Audrey Deas:	These just little areas coming up in our, our mothers, uh, our parents' time. Had their own little school too.	Participants:	I think all communities must be had their school.
Reneé Donnell:	What was the name of their school?	Audrey Deas:	Yeah, all communities had their, their own one room school.
Audrey Deas:	Sand Hill was Sand Hill.		
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Reneé Donnell:	Okay.
Audrey Deas:	Jeanne, do you know the name of the one that was in our community?	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm. I can't remember the name of the one that was on our road though.
Participants:	Uh, uh, re- uh, Audrey, I had it in the tip of my tongue.	Participants:	And they, and, mm-hmm.
Audrey Deas:	I know the spot where the, where it was.	Sandra Green:	My older brother and sister went there, but...
Participants:	[inaudible 00:36:53] they call it Maddas.	Audrey Deas:	No, I did [inaudible 00:37:33].
Audrey Deas:	(laughs) Mad-		Yeah.
Participants:	No, no, no.	Sandra Green:	I didn't (laughs) pay attention.

Sandra Hutchinson: Education was very, very important to the parents o-

Yeah.

... in these communities, all, all parents.

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Participants: They wanted us to do better, to have more.

Audrey Deas: Mm-hmm.

Participants: To experience more.

Audrey Deas: Exactly. The parents were, with, what, third, fourth, fifth grade educations sent their...

Participants: Yes.

Audrey Deas: ... children to college.

Participants: Yes.

Mm-hmm.

Audrey Deas: Mm, mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: Um, so in your part of Johns, in the Legarville Road area, what made your neighborhood or your community unique? Did you guys have certain annual celebrations that other areas didn't have, or...

Participants: Mm, mm.

I think the uniqueness is because we knew everybody.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Participants: We knew everybody's name, we knew everybody by sight.

Mm-hmm.

We knew where they live, where they go. We were able to walk across their property without...

Sandra Hutchinson: Hmm.

Participants: ... a sign being posted.

Mm, mm-hmm.

No trespassing.

Yeah.

Mm, mm-hmm.

(laughs) No gated community.

Mm-mm. Mm-mm.

The dog wanders from end to the next, the cow, the calf, the pig.

(laughs)

Sandra Hutchinson: (laughs)

Participants: So literally...

Participants: Yeah.

Participants: ... everybody was connected.

Participants: And we really didn't have celebrations per se. Uh, a big wide...

Sandra Hutchinson: Mm.

Participants: ... like how people do it now, you, they celebrate all these...

Participants: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

<p>Participants: ... different things. Like Juneteenth and things like that. We didn't do things like that in the big celebration. But if we had Christmas, everybody went to everybody house at Christmas.</p> <p>Mm.</p> <p>Yeah.</p> <p>Yeah.</p> <p>Everybody got an apple.</p> <p>Everyone-</p> <p>Everybody got an orange, everybody got a piece of candy, a fruitcake, and a piece of, oh, what is it? Cherry wine.</p> <p>(laughs)</p> <p>So that was the celebration.</p> <p>L- love the cherry wine.</p> <p>Mm, and don't forget, we used to go dancing at Miss Irene's store on Saturdays.</p> <p>Yeah.</p> <p>Well... (laughs)</p> <p>Yeah. Yeah.</p> <p>Everybody.</p> <p>That was our place.</p> <p>(laughs)</p> <p>(laughs)</p>	<p>That was our place.</p> <p>And to be home on time to go to church on Sunday.</p> <p>That's right.</p> <p>Sandra Hutchinson: (laughs)</p> <p>Participants: (laughs)</p> <p>Okay. So... (laughs)</p> <p>You were going to church on Sunday.</p> <p>(laughs)</p> <p>(laughs)</p> <p>Audrey Deas: Well, that's a very good point, Sandra.</p> <p>Participants: So literally that's...that's what made it.</p> <p>Reneé Donnell: Okay.</p> <p>Participants: Because everybody knew. We knew from the beginning where we live to the end of our, where we live.</p> <p>Sandra Hutchinson: Hmm.</p> <p>Participants: Everybody. Name. And we really didn't have that many Caucasian families. It was mostly black people in that...</p> <p>Sandra Hutchinson: Mm-hmm.</p> <p>Participants: ... area.</p> <p>Yeah.</p> <p>So that's...</p> <p>Audrey Deas: Yeah, we'd only mingle with Caucasians when we were on the farms. That was it.</p>
--	--

Participants:	So literally, that's that. That's what it was.	Audrey Deas:	Mm.
	Except for the, except for-	Participants:	And he, eh, um, tried to tell her who he was, that he was related to the Bligens.
Audrey Deas:	Except for the Cravens.		(laughs)
Participants:	... Cravens. Yeah.		(laughs)
Reneé Donnell:	Who were the Cravens?	Sandra Hutchinson:	(laughs)
Participants:	They were my neighbor at one, my neighbors at one time.		(laughs)
	Mm-hmm.		(laughs)
	Mm, and then their parents passed, and my mother kinda became an adoptive mother to them.	Audrey Deas:	Yes.
	Mm-hmm.	Reneé Donnell:	Um, you mentioned a place where y- y'all would go dancing.
	So they are seen as, uh, our family for that reason.	Participants:	Hmm.
	Yeah.	Reneé Donnell:	What was the name of that place?
	Yeah. To this day.	Participants:	W- Uh, her aunt's store.
Reneé Donnell:	Hmm.		We called, I called it Miss Irene's store. What did y'all call it?
Audrey Deas:	Even though the only one left is the sister.		We called it Auntie Munn.
Participants:	Rainy, yeah.		(laughs)
	Mm, mm-hmm.		Auntie Munn's store. (laughs) Miss Irene.
Audrey Deas:	All of 'em of, have passed except the sister to that family.	Audrey Deas:	Cynthia calls Auntie Munn too.
Participants:	So-	Participants:	(laughs)
Audrey Deas:	They were just as poor as we were.		Yeah. That's the only thing we know her by.
Participants:	Mm, um, Brenda told me that she met Dave this past week.	Reneé Donnell:	And where was that?

Participants:	Just down the road from us.	Audrey Deas:	Progressive, but...
	Yeah, because everybody walked down there.	Participants:	But that wasn't on our road. But-
	Probably about a half.	Audrey Deas:	That wasn't on our road.
	Yeah.	Participants:	... we did have Bernard's place, eh, on our road.
	Yeah.	Audrey Deas:	Eventually.
	But walking distance.	Participants:	Eventually.
	Ah, she had a little store and she would sell things, lunch meat, and honey buns, and...	Audrey Deas:	Yeah.
	Mm.	Participants:	Yeah.
	Pep- and drinks, and...	Audrey Deas:	Miss Irene's place was closed.
	Candies.	Participants:	Mm-hmm.
	... even some, you know, bleaching p- and, and...	Audrey Deas:	When Bernard opened up rent.
Audrey Deas:	Yeah.	Participants:	Oh.
Participants:	... those kinds of things. Wash things. She had some of everything in there.		S- I, I do usually picture Auntie Munn in the t- '60s.
Audrey Deas:	And she was Friday night and Saturday night.	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.
Participants:	Yes.	Participants:	You know? The early part of our time.
Reneé Donnell:	And it, that's where everyone...		Yeah.
Audrey Deas:	Entertainment.		I think Bernard came later.
Reneé Donnell:	... would go? Okay.	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.
Participants:	(laughs) Yeah.	Participants:	'80s, '90s.
	(laughs)		Okay.
Reneé Donnell:	Were there any other clubs, for lack of a better...		Yeah.
		Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.

Participants:	You know? And then we had Miss Mary's store too, which was just-	Audrey Deas:	Mm, and Mary's place, that was my great aunt and uncle's place. That's the one you mean, right?
	Oh, Aunt Mary.	Participants:	Mm-hmm.
	Yeah.		Yeah.
	Um, a little store that she used to sell Mary Jane and things.	Audrey Deas:	Yeah.
	Yeah.	Participants:	Mm-hmm.
Audrey Deas:	(laughs)		Yep.
Participants:	And so...		Mm-hmm.
	And coconut cookies. (laughs)	Reneé Donnell:	Mm. And so 4th of July was a big time.
	That's about-	Participants:	Oh yes.
	Yeah.		Mm-hmm.
	That's true.	Reneé Donnell:	And then Christmas was where everyone kind of went and just mingled, and shared.
Reneé Donnell:	And so Bernard's place and Mary's store were also off of, um...	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.
Participants:	The same place.	Reneé Donnell:	Okay. And then, what, were there any, like, local pharmacies or...
	Legarville Road.	Participants:	Local what?
	Legarville Road.	Reneé Donnell:	Pharmacies?
Reneé Donnell:	... Legarville Road.	Participants:	(laughs)
Participants:	Mm-hmm.		My mother.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.		(laughs)
Audrey Deas:	Yeah. Legarville.		Pharmacy? Oh yeah. No.
Participants:	Yeah.		(laughs)

	Her, we used to call her Dr. Doris. But, um, no, we didn't have pharmacies.	Audrey Deas:	Go ahead.
Audrey Deas:	No.	Participants:	And Mr. Watson too. Mm-
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Audrey Deas:	Wat- Watkins.
Participants:	But if something was wrong, and I'll give the example. My cousin had a plastic ring on her finger. She was a little girl. And, um, she, it, it swole over her, I mean, the flesh came over the, the ring.	Participants:	Watkins. Okay.
	Mm, mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.
	And we took her down to Dr. Doris's (laughs) house and she was able to take it off. And we went to her for a lot of those kinds of things.	Participants:	Used to come around and he would sell some.
	Yeah.	Audrey Deas:	Sell medicine as well.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Participants:	Yeah.
Participants:	But no, we didn't have a pharmacy.	Audrey Deas:	Sell medicines, uh, you can buy things off of his trunk, um, sweets, or...
Audrey Deas:	Yeah. There's certain times of the year whenever we would entertain our adults with those things like candies or...	Participants:	Yes.
		Audrey Deas:	... Kool-Aid.
Participants:	Oh yeah.	Participants:	Yeah.
Audrey Deas:	... sweets.	Audrey Deas:	Um...
Participants:	Mm-hmm.	Participants:	Vanilla.
	That's time to take certain medicines.	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm. Things to bake with. This old white man that came through and sold stuff on his truck. And he was also the local-
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Participants:	Also the magistrate.
Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm. That-		He was a magistrate.
Participants:	And then- mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	Magistrate. (laughs)
		Participants:	(laughs) Yeah.
		Audrey Deas:	Yeah.

Reneé Donnell:	Okay. (laughs)		And that's how they were. That's how she did it.
Participants:	(laughs)		That's how, that's how we were brought up.
Sandra Hutchinson:	(laughs) Okay.		So for, what? 20 full years, I think I went to a doctor at
Participants:	But it's Watkins products.		18. When they said we have to have physical in order to
	Yeah.		go off to college. (laughs)
	It's still today.		College. (laughs)
	Yes.	Reneé Donnell:	Mm-hmm.
	It's sold online.	Participants:	Yeah.
Reneé Donnell:	Really?		Exactly.
Participants:	So he used to bring it out to the people because of lack of transportation.		Yeah.
	Yeah.		So that's what it is.
	Mm-hmm.		That was my first experience also.
	For we to have transportation to go to where we need to do it.		Mm, mm-hmm.
	Mm-hmm.	Participants:	Yes.
	And literally, my mother was the caretaker in our home. I tell people all the time, we never went to a physician until my sister took sick because she had a seizure and my mother didn't know what to do.		Not mine.
	Mm, mm-hmm.	Reneé Donnell:	If we can pause just for a moment please.
	She took her. But everybody else was taken care of by her. I don't care what you had, she had a remedy for it.	Crew:	Yeah, just gotta change batteries.
	Yes.	Reneé Donnell:	You want me to push pause here?
		Crew:	No, it's o- good.
		Reneé Donnell:	Speaking of, I think it's hilarious that this Mr. Watkins was bringing around medicines and also Kool Aid and sweets. Like y-
		Participants:	(laughs)
			(laughs)

Reneé Donnell:	Yeah.		Yeah.
Participants:	Literally, when they'd say Kool Aid, it's like a flavored liquid in a bottle.		Yeah.
	Hmm.	Reneé Donnell:	Okay.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Participants:	And you go online now, and the same thing he brought is still there. (laughs)
Participants:	And it was a Watkin product.		Hmm.
	Yeah.		So I always order the salve.
	Yeah.		The other thing that was big, um, among us, and I think is still probably for the, most communities on the island is that a lot of medicines were bushes that the older people...
	Just like how all the other Watkin products were.		Mm-hmm.
	Just-		... recognized as, um, healing kinds of things.
	Vanilla for the cakes and things...		Mm-hmm.
	Mm-hmm.		So we did a lot, had a lot of that going on. Things that would kill us today. I mean...
	... that they did. So that's what it was. He was like a, you remember have you ev- ever watch old movies and these people were in their little cars or their little wagon, a buggy.		(laughs) Yeah.
	Mm-hmm.		(laughs)
	And they went from place to place selling those things.		We thought would kill us back then. But... (laughs)
	Yeah.		(laughs)
	That's what that was.		We still had it. Yeah.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Reneé Donnell:	Okay. And did, since we're on the topic of medicine, in a way, did you guys know of anyone that practiced the root or the hag, or was there a local person on Johns Island for that? Or had that already kinda gone out of style?
Participants:	(laughs)		
	Yeah.		
	But he just had a car.		

Participants:	No.	Participants:	Mm-hmm. (laughs)
	No.	Audrey Deas:	(laughs)
	Mm-mm.	Participants:	But y'all just called her that because she dressed like a... (laughs)
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.		(laughs)
Participants:	No.	Audrey Deas:	No.
Audrey Deas:	But, ah, on, on the island, we didn't know of anybody. Um, that practiced the folklore. I guess that's what you would call it.	Participants:	No?
		Audrey Deas:	No.
Participants:	Mm.	Participants:	(laughs) Okay. (laughs)
Audrey Deas:	They practiced that in Beaufort.		(laughs)
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Audrey Deas:	All right, you never sleep on your back because hag will ride you. Ever heard that one?
Audrey Deas:	You heard that?		
Reneé Donnell:	Mr. Buzzard, Dr. Buzzard?	Reneé Donnell:	I read it in a...book.
Audrey Deas:	Yeah. (laughs)	Audrey Deas:	(laughs)
Participants:	[inaudible 00:48:14].	Sandra Hutchinson:	Yeah.
Audrey Deas:	Dr. Buzzard.		Yes.
Participants:	Mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	(laughs) Because it was real.
Audrey Deas:	They practiced that in Beaufort.	Sandra Hutchinson:	(laughs)
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.		(laughs)
Audrey Deas:	All right. But, um... Jeanne, you remember we used to call Cun Sarah?	Audrey Deas:	And it probably just had something to do with circulation, but that feeling was out of this world.
Participants:	Hmm.	Participants:	Yes.
Audrey Deas:	Hag? (laughs)	Audrey Deas:	And it has me at 71, I'm still afraid to (laughs) sleep on my back.

Participants:	Oh. (laughs)	Sandra Hutchinson:	Mm-hmm.
Audrey Deas:	Because your eyeballs, I guess, would move, and you're screaming for help and, and nobody can hear you. Your mouth is not opening, so forth and so on. And hag is riding you then.	Audrey Deas:	Oh really?
		Reneé Donnell:	[inaudible 00:49:28] or something. I think.
		Participants:	Oh. (laughs)
Sandra Hutchinson:	Mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	Well, you could've fooled us. That was a hag.
Participants:	Yeah. And you know, Alice recently had one and she said...	Reneé Donnell:	(laughs)
Audrey Deas:	Really?	Participants:	(laughs)
Participants:	... "Jeanne, you know, Hag rode me last night."	Audrey Deas:	And if anybody was old, that was...
Audrey Deas:	(laughs)	Participants:	(laughs)
Participants:	So, oh, I'm so sorry.	Audrey Deas:	... that person. (laughs) And-
Sandra Hutchinson:	(laughs)	Participants:	Yeah. Everybody old and mean were hags.
	(laughs)	Audrey Deas:	Or, old and mean were hags.
	(laughs)	Reneé Donnell:	Okay.
Participants:	(laughs) 'Cause I know the feeling. I've had it myself.	Participants:	Yeah.
Sandra Hutchinson:	Yep.	Sandra Hutchinson:	Okay.
	Oh. (laughs)	Audrey Deas:	Miss Stien.
Participants:	You know? So...	Sandra Hutchinson:	(laughs)
Audrey Deas:	You ever had it, Sandra?	Participants:	Oh, don't be calling people's names out.
Participants:	No. (laughs)	Sandra Hutchinson:	(laughs)
	(laughs)		(laughs)
	I never heard of it until...		(laughs)
Reneé Donnell:	What do they call it? Sleep paralysis now.		

Audrey Deas:	Cun Sarah.	Participants:	But anything else...
Sandra Hutchinson:	(laughs)		Mm-hmm.
	(laughs)	Audrey Deas:	Jeanne had a broken leg.
Audrey Deas:	And rather than saying Cousin, you say Cun.	Participants:	A broken femur.
Sandra Hutchinson:	(laughs)	Audrey Deas:	And mother set that thing before, before you went to the doctor, right?
	Mm-hmm.	Participants:	While they were trying to get me to the doctor because transportation was a problem.
	Yeah.	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.
Audrey Deas:	Cun Sarah was, um, Cun Sarah was one of them hags.	Participants:	So it-
Sandra Hutchinson:	(laughs)		And all my mother does is cry. You know, my mother sent us to her mom for everything.
Audrey Deas:	I still could see her in my mind's eye.	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.
Sandra Hutchinson:	(laughs)	Participants:	So yes, literally everything she took care of.
Participants:	And rather than Auntie, it was Annie.	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm. A- an-
Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.	Reneé Donnell:	And where did she get this training? She just...
Reneé Donnell:	Okay. And I think you guys were actually a lot of help. You mentioned that your mom was kind of a doctor of sorts.	Participants:	I think she got it from her mother.
Participants:	She took care of the whole family.	Reneé Donnell:	Okay.
Reneé Donnell:	Where did she-	Participants:	Because...
Participants:	I don't care what it was. We did not go to a doctor. Cold, she took care of. If you cut yourself, she took care of. If you injured yourself...		Yeah.
Sandra Hutchinson:	Yeah.		... that's what they did.
Participants:	... she took care of. Thank goodness nobody had a fracture.		Yeah.
Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm. Jeanne-		They have to take care of themselves.

	Mm-hmm.		same thing.
	If you were in a field working, you did not have time to stop.		Yeah.
	Right.		People had 10, 11, 12 people.
	And do things. So you had to get it done right then and there. So anything from nature...		Yeah.
Reneé Donnell:	Mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	That's a lot of children for a person to have.
Participants:	... they learned to use it.	Participants:	Our bible study last night was about...
	Yes.	Audrey Deas:	But they-
	Mm-hmm.	Participants:	... that. That's a, that's called a progeny blessing.
	In order to cure things.	Audrey Deas:	Yeah. Because...
	Mm-hmm.	Participants:	That-
	And you could not stay home and, 'cause I always keep asking. Like, I said, "Why y'all have so many children?"	Audrey Deas:	... literally, it was so many.
	(laughs)	Participants:	Yeah.
	Even...	Audrey Deas:	And, but that's how they did it. They had to do it that way in order to take care of themselves, survive. You know?
Reneé Donnell:	Mm-hmm.	Participants:	Yeah.
Participants:	... though it was only six of us, I thought that w- and you look at somebody else, they got maybe two.	Audrey Deas:	Dad was the only, really, breadwinner in the house. He...
	Mm.	Participants:	Yeah.
	I said (laughs), and then I figured out, yhey have all these children to work. (laughs)	Reneé Donnell:	He went out.
	(laughs) That's right.	Participants:	Mm-hmm.
	And when you ask about the siblems, siblings, it's the	Audrey Deas:	We had one car. You could not learn to drive. Just like how she said, you had to learn how to drive but he would not let you use the car because he didn't want you to break it.
			(laughs)

Participants:	Because if the car got broken, then he wouldn't be able to go to work. So that's the lack of fund for the house. So then you don't have no money.	Participants:	Now, mind you, we would have our fights. As...
			(laughs)
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.		(laughs)
Participants:	The good thing about coming up in the time that we did, things were reasonable. They were cheaper. Even though it w- was money to them, compared to now we will not be able to survive.		Family fights. We would.
			Yeah.
Audrey Deas:	Mm-mm.		But we have never had anything where we hurt each other or we don't get back...
Participants:	Because you couldn't get sugar, you couldn't get flou- Those things are very expensive these days.	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.
	And even though we didn't, even though we, we lacked what we call so much, nobody knew they were poor because everybody...	Participants:	... together when it's done.
			Or go and get a weapon and come back.
Sandra Hutchinson:	Was poor.	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.
Participants:	... was in the same position.	Participants:	But yeah, no. We didn't do those kinds of things.
	Yeah.		So f- f-
	Everyone.	Reneé Donnell:	Yeah.
	So Audrey didn't get no sneakers in that- While, I'm going, um, Brooklyn. Well, if we can't get any sneakers just like I can't, you know?	Participants:	Um...
Sandra Hutchinson:	Mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	And usually, those conflicts came more out of when our parents went to Charleston...
	Mm-hmm.	Participants:	Yes.
Participants:	Um, I, yeah. We, it's the, it's the closeness of the people.	Audrey Deas:	... on Saturdays. But I bet you it was fixed (laughs) before they got back home.
Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.	Participants:	(laughs)
		Audrey Deas:	The situation was fixed.

Participants:	Yeah. We knew. Yes. Mm-hmm. What the outcome would be. And I finally figured that out the other day, why our parents didn't take us. (laughs) Really. Yeah. Because if they had taken us, with six children, everybody yelling and screaming for things that they want... Mm. ... and then they couldn't afford it.	Participants:	To you, whatev- however she, your mama disciplined you, she had the right or he had the right... That's right.
Audrey Deas:	That's right.	Audrey Deas:	To do the same.
Participants:	So the best thing to do was to leave us at home.	Participants:	... to do same thing. And nobody got anything to say.
Reneé Donnell:	Mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	No complaints.
Participants:	With the older one in charge. That's it. Exactly.	Participants:	So yes. Yeah.
Sandra Hutchinson:	Yeah.	Reneé Donnell:	And as we're wrapping up this interview, um, two questions. First one is when, when would you say when would you say the major change in development on Johns Island started? So when did you really, really, really start to notice the farming lifestyle, the rural areas, demographics? Like, when did you really start to notice the switch over or the change?
Participants:	And that's another thing. The older children or child in the family can do whatever your mother did.	Audrey Deas:	I don't know. I think the farming changed wh- wh- when we went away to school because, I mean, to college, because we didn't have to work in the fields any longer.
Audrey Deas:	(laughs)	Participants:	Mm-mm.
		Audrey Deas:	N- noticed that. But, um, uh, and other people weren't working in the field also because maybe that's the time Kiawah and Seabrook came into being, and people started getting jobs there.
		Sandra Hutchinson:	Mm-hmm.

Audrey Deas:	Um, my mother who, and Jeanne's mom, who worked in the fields all their lives, all worked f- um, in, um, the laundry.	Participants:	Yes.
Participants:	The, mother worked in the laundry.	Audrey Deas:	C- had to catch a ride there, had to catch a ride back on nine. Um...
Audrey Deas:	Yeah. But auntie, they were, before they even worked in the laundry at Kiawah.	Participants:	So when the, I, I can't answer that question because...
Participants:	Mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	I think Kiawah and Seabrook brought in the changes on the island. Because people were still working in the fields, um, prior to that.
Audrey Deas:	Country club.	Participants:	But, but did they come on before Uncle got at Byrd and Sons? Because that move for uncle at Byrd and Sons...
Participants:	Oh yeah.	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.
Audrey Deas:	The country club off of Folly Road.	Participants:	... was bringing all those men.
Reneé Donnell:	That was on Johns Island?	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.
Audrey Deas:	Mm-mm.	Participants:	You know, on board to work, allowed, mm, people to be able to do more...
Participants:	James Island.	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm. To f-
Reneé Donnell:	James?	Participants:	... increase their...
Audrey Deas:	It was on James Island.	Audrey Deas:	That's right.
Reneé Donnell:	Okay.	Participants:	So which one happened first? Uncle's thing or Kiawah and Seabrook?
Audrey Deas:	And notice I said, "The country club." That's where they worked. Um, mother worked for an architect and his, uh, wife. Auntie, aunt-	Audrey Deas:	I think they were simultaneous.
Participants:	Worked for, for some Van Burens.	Participants:	Okay.
Audrey Deas:	Van Burens.	Audrey Deas:	Um...
Participants:	Mm-hmm.	Participants:	'Cause '72, when I graduated from high school, they were still working on the field.
Audrey Deas:	In the country club. And, um, still low paying. But they worked every day.		

Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	Yeah.
Participants:	I refused to go, but other people were still going.	Participants:	So those were the change-
Audrey Deas:	Yeah, yeah.	Reneé Donnell:	So the late '70s?
Participants:	Um, I stayed home...	Participants:	Yes. Early '80s.
Participants:	... until '76 and I think people were still doing it at that time.	Reneé Donnell:	Early '80s?
Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.
Participants:	They go and pick who they want to work for at that time.	Participants:	Exactly. Where the changes were, um, being made.
Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.	Reneé Donnell:	Okay.
Participants:	But it was, you know, I'll go work with this person this time and the next person the next time.	Audrey Deas:	Yeah.
Audrey Deas:	Yeah. Yeah.	Reneé Donnell:	And then, is there anything else you would like to add about place, places, neighborhoods, or just in general that maybe my questions didn't go over?
Participants:	So that's how they did it. But the fields were still there.	Audrey Deas:	Um, there's a hickory, hick, Hickory Hill? Hickory Hill?
Audrey Deas:	Yeah.	Participants:	Hickory Hill, mm-hmm.
Participants:	So in that time, I know when I-	Audrey Deas:	That's, um, that's, um, it, what'd you call it? Lower Bohicket?
Audrey Deas:	People, like, two died.	Participants:	I don't know.
Participants:	That's it.	Audrey Deas:	You n- you know...
Audrey Deas:	Working in that field.	Participants:	(laughs)
Participants:	But, Leslie, '76 or '77, '78, when I came back, then my sisters and things, they were down at Kiawah and Seabrook then.	Audrey Deas:	You know where River Road end, Betsy Kerrison intersects.
Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.	Sandra Hutchinson:	Uh-huh. Yeah.
Participants:	So in that era.	Audrey Deas:	Further down. Like, um, where-
		Participants:	Where the Taylors live? And the [inaudible].

Audrey Deas:	Mm, I think they call that whole area Hickory Hill.	Audrey Deas:	[inaudible 00:59:18] that's right across the street, over there.
Participants:	Okay.	Participants:	Yeah.
Audrey Deas:	And, uh, Saint Johns Church.	Audrey Deas:	That's right across there.
Participants:	Okay.	Participants:	Uh-huh.
Audrey Deas:	Hickory Hill area.	Audrey Deas:	Across the road. Wappoo. Is that Wappoo Way? This done moving.
Participants:	Mm, okay.	Participants:	Okay, that's, yeah, that's across the street.
Audrey Deas:	Um...	Audrey Deas:	I guess these are stree- This is, there's a, streets and, these, mm, that subdivision.
Participants:	See, I don't know the local names 'cause...	Participants:	It's that neighborhood, yeah.
Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.	Audrey Deas:	Across from the McDonald's.
Participants:	... I don't recognize any of these names.	Participants:	Mm-hmm.
Reneé Donnell:	That's James Island.	Audrey Deas:	Bohicket is going this way.
Participants:	Oh, okay. (laughs)	Participants:	Yeah.
Reneé Donnell:	This one...	Reneé Donnell:	And we understand that this map is not a complete map of Johns Island.
Audrey Deas:	I've heard those names. Cross Cut.	Participants:	Uh-huh.
Reneé Donnell:	Yeah. This one's the one for Johns.		So is this River Road here?
Participants:	(laughs)		Yeah.
	(laughs)	Reneé Donnell:	Yes, that's River Road.
	Let's see that, yeah.	Participants:	Okay.
	'Cause I figure, I didn't recognize any of those names.		Uh, and we're off this r-
	Oh, we gotta find us on this map.		We are off of River.
	I said where, where are we on this?		
Reneé Donnell:	This is only...		
Participants:	Oh, I know Cane Slash.		

Cane Slash.
 This is Kroger, so we have to be further down.
 Yeah.
 Because-
 Where's Kroger?
 The Kroger's the store.
 Where's-
 What, the old store? That-
 The old store, you know, the...
 The new, the new office.
 ... hardware.
 The new office.
 Oh, oh, oh.
 Oh, oh, okay, okay.
 I'm assuming that what-
 Yeah.
 Yeah. Because this is Ardwick.
 Okay.
 And I know where Ardwick is, so that is the Kroger store.

Sandra Hutchinson: Mm-hmm.

Participants: Um...

Audrey Deas: Okay, yeah.

Participants: So then we have to come all the way down so we're not even on the map.

Yeah.

Audrey Deas: This is Cane Slash here.

Participants: 'Cause this is Burden Creek. Remember Burden Creek is where the LaRoches ...

Audrey Deas: Where they live at.

Participants: Okay.

Yes.

Okay.

Yeah.

Yeah. So yeah.

Sandra Hutchinson: Yeah.

Participants: We're not on there.

Sandra Hutchinson: Yeah.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Audrey Deas: [inaudible 01:00:28]. Berry Hill.

Participants: Yeah, I see that.

Audrey Deas: Um...

Participants: So where, where will be the...

We-

The extension...

Yeah.

	... of the expressway?	Participants:	Mm-hmm.
	Yeah, where will that be?	Reneé Donnell:	The different neighborhoods that we know about.
	Because I'm thinking it was gonna be Edenvale.	Participants:	Yeah.
	Me too.		Family settlement. Ooh, excuse me, Sandra.
Sandra Hutchinson:	So-	Reneé Donnell:	And so we're trying to see if we can get names for these unknown areas. Um, find some different places.
Participants:	Area. So we went-		
Audrey Deas:	This North Johns Island, Thickland Hill.	Participants:	Partner Prosperity? Never heard of that. See, with the new community-
Participants:	Yeah. That's North Johns Island.		You know where that is.
Sandra Hutchinson:	[inaudible 01:00:52] we are all the way [inaudible 01:00:54] here.		Mm-hmm.
Reneé Donnell:	This map is...		Yeah.
Sandra Hutchinson:	Mm-hmm.		On our road?
Reneé Donnell:	... the, which is why it's not the entire Johns Island. This is the-		No.
Participants:	What's going to be affected by this?		Yeah.
Reneé Donnell:	Mm-hmm.		Sailfish?
Participants:	So we're not...		No...
Participants:	Oh, okay. So no, we're not even on there.		This is I- uh...
Participants:	So is the yellow areas the affected area?		Yes. Sh- Shawn live here. Blackfish is the other...
Reneé Donnell:	No. The yellow areas are just different, um-		That's correct.
Participants:	African-American settlements.		Yeah.
	Mm-hmm.		That's the road where Gerald used to live.
Reneé Donnell:	Yeah.		That's correct.
			That's where we, how we get to Andrea's school.

Okay.

Um, on Murray Hill.

Okay.

Yeah.

What ch- this, Blanchard? That's what it says?

Barracuda.

I don't...

Yeah.

Mullet Hall, that's close to Mullet Hall?

Sandra Hutchinson: Mm-hmm.

Participants: Now, Mullet Hall is, is consumed with progress.

Yes.

Reneé Donnell: Okay.

Participants: Mm-hmm, yeah.

That's one of those areas where tha- f- s- super big,
um...

Produce is that new development...

Sandra Hutchinson: Park

Participants: ... that just got up.

Sandra Hutchinson: Um...

Participants: Across from, um, S- St. Stephen Church.

To-

Yeah, St. Stephen.

Mm-hmm.

Bluebird, right across, n- new-

Produce.

Mm-hmm.

There's a road there, in that housing development
across from St. Stephen and the wash.

Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Yeah, that's what that is.

That's right. Bluebird. Bluebird Lane.

Mm-hmm.

It used to be called Jesse Elizabeth. Never heard of that
one.

Mm-hmm.

Unknown. Partner Prosperity. I don't believe it to be
unknown.

(laughs)

And you don't see. It's Partner Prosperity.

Sandra Hutchinson: Well, currently our community isn't affected by this.

Participants: Oh, Pine Log. I know where Pine Log is.

Mm-hmm.

'Cause Wilhelmina used to live there. This is North
John's Island.

Mm-hmm.

Okay.

	Yeah. That's north. You know where b-	Audrey Deas:	Both ends of, um, Maybank have new.
	This is North John's Island too.	Participants:	So this literally is North Johns Island area here.
	... um, Brownwood Road is? If you go Brownwood Road, you'll find this area.	Audrey Deas:	Mm-hmm.
	Mm-hmm.	Participants:	Yeah.
	That's what that is.		And all the way back here...
	Jeanne, this is where Asha was, um, s-		Maybank.
	Mm-hmm.		... is that new neighborhood that they are doing now.
	School, in this area.		See Maybank?
	Yeah. Yeah.		So it's literally Brownwood Road, which is down from the high school.
	So yeah. That's North Johns Island.		Maybank.
Audrey Deas:	Fenwick Plantation, Fenwick Hall.		And across from Sea Island t- Center.
Participants:	Right there.		But we're back here somewhere.
Sandra Hutchinson:	Mm-hmm.		So that's where that is.
Participants:	On River Road.		No, we're back here somewhere.
Sandra Hutchinson:	Right- r- uh-		We, no, we're down this way.
Participants:	Remember where that-		Yeah.
Audrey Deas:	Maybank Highway.		Look it up. This mayb--
Participants:	... hospital, yeah. Where they're building now.		That might be Maybank.
Audrey Deas:	Yes, buddy.		It-
Participants:	Food Lion.		But we gonna trig- you know, we gonna do River.
Audrey Deas:	Both ends.		Okay.
Participants:	Yeah, so that's where that is.		If we, stay on River Road, 'cause I said Kroger store.

	Mm-hmm.	Participants:	It's not that old.
	Okay.		Mm-hmm.
	I remember that as the main road, our River Road.		No.
	Mm-hmm.		Mm-hmm.
	Johnson Scott, that right.	Reneé Donnell:	Okay.
	So then we come this way.	Participants:	It's one of those new churches that...
	Yeah.		Not that old that...
	That's where that church is.		... came. (laughs)
	Yeah.		Yeah.
	Yeah, yeah, yeah.		So yeah. We're on this way.
	Mm-hmm.		Okay.
	Um, Simply Amazing church.		This area here that they have marked out, that's literally North Johns Island.
	Mm-hmm.		
	That's it. So that's where we are.	Reneé Donnell:	So is that what this is called?
	Yeah.	Participants:	Yes.
Reneé Donnell:	Is that an-	Reneé Donnell:	Is just North Johns Island?
Participants:	So we are off the map.	Participants:	North Johns Island.
Reneé Donnell:	... old church?		Mm-hmm.
Participants:	Mm-mm.		That's what that is.
Reneé Donnell:	The Simply Amazing Church?		Or little, little or big Johns Island. Um, across Maybank.
Participants:	Mm-mm.		Um, left of Maybank, if you're standing up left of Maybank, is Little Johns Island. Um, right is Big Johns Island. We live on Big Johns Island.
Reneé Donnell:	Oh, is it new?		

Yeah.

Okay.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Participants: What I always say is airport.

Yeah.

We live on the airport side.

Mm-hmm.

Airport side, yeah.

S- But that's what that is. So the unknown area is North Johns Island.

Feldman. This is the Taylors. The Taylor. This is o- on Cane Slash.

Yeah, I know...

Feldman Road.

C- Cane Slash is the new area that's being built now. Remember? All those houses in there.

Oh. They-

With [inaudible 01:05:19]?

They even got a...

S-

Turnabout in that area.

Oh, okay.

Hate turnabouts. People get in accidents.

Sandra Hutchinson: (laughs)

Participants: So yeah. That's what that is. So literally... Frank Farm.

Herman Road, oh, that's Cane Slash.

Mm-hmm.

Um...

So, so it's, it, it comes, eh...

We'll be affected with anything, by anything that happens on River Road.

Yeah.

Because that's our only way.

Do you see River Road anywhere?

Out or in.

I just fol- follow Kroger. (laughs)

So...

'Cause that's River Road.

Reneé Donnell: And that's kind of what I think it-

Participants: So it comes out this way.

Yeah.

Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: If it impacts...

Participants: It is.

Reneé Donnell: ... any part of the island, it'll impact...

Participants: It im- yeah, it impacts us because River R-

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

Participants: We have to, we have to take River Road.

Exactly. At, at, mm, Bohicket Road is extremely busy and dangerous. River Road is the same. A- at, and folks can't get through. What did we have happen the other day and traffic was a nightmare out here? Um...

S- Um, a guy ran into a tree that fallen out on the road, across the road.

Nightmare for hours.

Reneé Donnell: Mm.

Participants: Mm, mm. No way. No way to go.

See, that's the, know, we- everybody like development, but that's the issue with the development. You can't continue to make all of these changes. Even the ones that they're planning to make are [inaudible 01:06:37] - without first doing something with the infrastructure, you've gotta do that...

Yeah.

... first.

(laughs)

Yeah. A- I'm just, I'm, I was just totally surprised and very upset where county council still at because, and I think Anna Johnson, who is on, um, um... District Eight.

Reneé Donnell: Mm-hmm.

Participants: Is the only African American that sits on county council. I don't know how much of a difference she would make. I, uh...

But you know, Kiawah has this government. Seabrook has their government. Part of Johns Island, especially North Johns Island, have a government. We don't have any.

Uh, exactly.

We don't have anybody.

And we're not supposed to have any because...

They're unincorporated.

... you can't-

Yeah, we're not, that's right.

Yeah.

(laughs)

We're not in the incorporated area.

We are county council.

Sandra Hutchinson: Okay.

Participants: Uh, which is the City of Charleston.

Sandra Hutchinson: Okay.

Participants: Mm-hmm.

And I think that's why we're left out of so much.

Yes. But we pay county taxes.

Yeah, but we pay county taxes.

Just like everybody else.

Reneé Donnell:	Mm-hmm.	Eminent domain.
Participants:	So...	Eminent...
	Can get, uh, uh, ou- our, the grass is cut on the side of the road maybe once or twice during the season. Once or twice. I can't pay my taxes, like that.	Sandra Hutchinson: Domain.
		Participants: Domain.
Reneé Donnell:	Mm-hmm.	(laughs)
		Yeah.
Participants:	When they sent the bill they wanted and at, at a certain time, and if we don't pay it then, it either goes up, uh, or they start some foolishness with your property.	Sandra Hutchinson: Mm-hmm.
		Participants: Eminent domain.
Reneé Donnell:	Mm-hmm.	Sandra Hutchinson: Mm-hmm.
Participants:	It's a interesting, it's a interesting thing. Um, eh, eh, it, when you're gonna talk about changing a community, you've got to have input. Can't just come in because somehow the other people's properties are involved and people get bad feelings when it comes to their property, and people just taking it. What's the, what's the word they use when they just take your property?	Participants: Or, um, or they offer you something at what, less than fair market value?
	Um...	Yeah.
	(laughs)	Come on.
	There's a word for it.	(laughs)
	Yeah.	Sandra Hutchinson: Yeah.
	Um...	Participants: Joke.
	Oh, geez.	Sandra Hutchinson: Mm-hmm.
	Oh. Eminent domain.	Participants: Yeah.
		Reneé Donnell: Well, thank you guys so much. And you knew where things were.
		Participants: Mm, mm-hmm.
		Reneé Donnell: Which is awesome because we're actually adding places to maps, uh...

Participants: Mm-hmm.

Reneé Donnell: The other person working with us, Sean, he's in somebody's archive right now. But he is going back, he's, oh..

Sandra Hutchinson: Mm, got it.

Reneé Donnell: Yeah.

