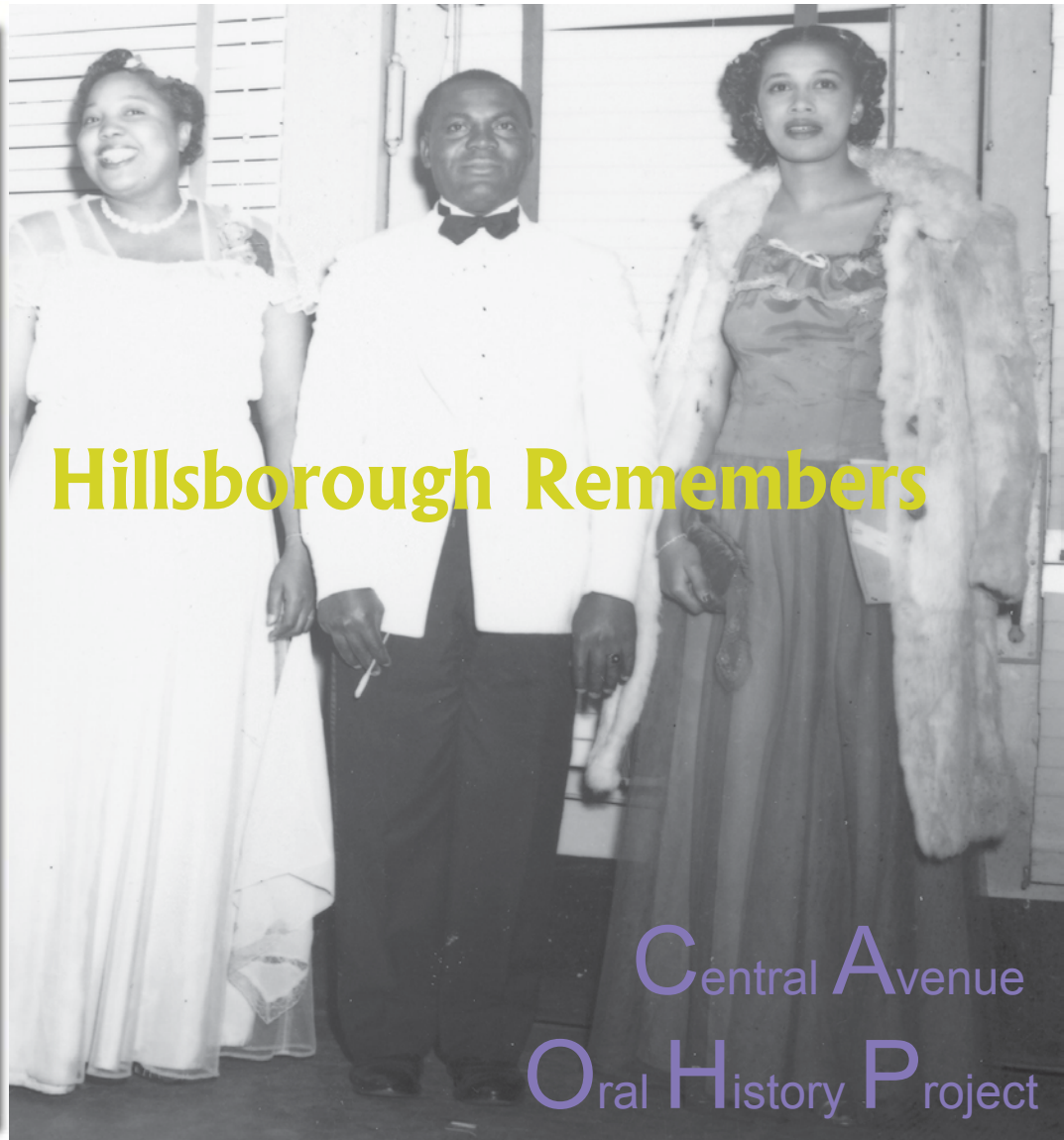


Norma Curry



Hillsborough Remembers

Central Avenue
Oral History Project

Norma Curry

This is an interview with Norma Curry (NC) of 4819 North Gomez Ave., Tampa FL 33614. This interview is being conducted on Tuesday, August 5, 2003 at the Ybor City Library. The interviewer is Brenda L. Staton (BS) representing the Central Avenue Business District Oral History Collection Project.

BS: Good morning Mrs. Curry, how are you this morning?

NC: I'm fine. How are you doing this morning?

BS: I'm fine thank you! Well Ms. Curry I understand that you were born in Tampa?

NC: Yes, I was.

BS: Where were you born?

NC: 213 W. Oak.

BS: West Oak Street, right here in Tampa?

NC: Yes, yes.

BS: Do you remember the house?

NC: Yes, I do.

BS: What do you remember about your house?

NC: Remember about the house, when I became a little older in my early stage we moved from that house. But I can remember passing the house frequently because it was in the very same neighborhood in the Tampa Heights section.

BS: In the Tampa Heights section. Was your house a one story house or a two story house?

NC: It was a one story house an a lot of people infer to these days as a shotgun houses.

BS: Shotgun house?

NC: Yea you know, there straight four bedroom, I think it was, houses you know how they was made in those days in the earlier days. There was just straight houses no room over.

BS: How many brothers and sisters do you have Ms. Curry?

NC: I had two brothers and ah and ah three sisters.

BS: Did you all live in that same house?

NC: No, not all at the same time.

BS: O.K. Where did you move to after you left the house on Oak?

NC: We moved to 2013 Ola Ave.

BS: Is that in the same neighborhood?

NC: In the same, right around the corner.

BS: What was your neighborhood like when you were a little girl?

NC: To me, my neighborhood was a very nice neighborhood! Because during those days we were all poorer I guessed, but we didn't know it. Because my mother was the type of person that tried to get everything that she could for us including good stores and what have you.

BS: Was your mother a homemaker or did she work outside the home?

NC: She was both.

BS: What did she do outside the home?

NC: She ah her what would you call it, occupation more or less she was a laundress. She did laundry at home and she did it at, as us old used to say, on premises. And you know in the Hyde Park area. And ah that mostly where she work but she was around most of the time.

BS: And your father?

NC: And my father was, in those days they called 'em a stevedore, but they call them longshoreman now.

BS: Did it does that mean he worked on a ship?

NC: Founded on Seddon Island. Seddon Island is Harbor Island now.

BS: Harbor Island now. And what was it called before?

NC: Seddon Island. And it was only, um what is the word you would use sometime I'm beginning to get my words confused, accessible by the train tracks.

BS: Oh! The train tracks was close by?

NC: The train tracks was close by it went across the little canal down there at the train end of Franklin Street and Harbor Island.

BS: So that was the only way you could get to Harbor Island?

NC: No, Harbor Island is just a recent name. A recent building, that was just a phosphate, well it was where the ships came in to load the phosphate in that those days. And to tell you the more about the family see my mother came from Madison, Florida. She was born in 1882, she came to Tampa in 1892 when she was eleven years old. She came here when it was called Fort Brookes, all of downtown.

BS: So downtown was called Fort Brookes.

NC: Fort Brookes apart of it. All that in the garrison area where the trees sticks they called it the great garrison area and that's where a lot of Blacks lived right downtown. So.

BS: Is that downtown where Central Avenue later came?

NC: No. That that's downtown Franklin. The City of Tampa. So ah my father was a stevedore and he died when I was twelve and my mother continued to raise us. I was the youngest one, see that's why, I brought in the other you know her coming from Madison. I was the youngest child. BS: So you're the baby of the family?

BS: On this card you said you were the baby of the family. Do you remember what did you brothers and sisters do? What kind of work did they do? Just the different types of things they did as you were growing up.

NC: My oldest sister ah I can't tell you too much about her, cause she left here and went to New York to work after.

BS: Did any of your brothers and sisters stay in Tampa and live? Or did they all move away?

NC: No, they didn't all move away.

BS: The ones that stayed here, do you remember what kind of jobs they had?

NC: Well, my oldest brother he he was a chauffeur. And ah he was at one time the driver or chauffeur that drove the bus for the Collegiate Band for many years. I can remember that about him. And my next sister she was more or less in those days on maid service things like that. And my next sister she was an excellent cook so she was considered a cook. And ah a housekeeper and like that. You know, if you knew things that were a lot of other people that were their occupation. Just trying to live. Especially down here in good style.

BS: Can you think when might have been the best time for your family? If you think back to your family what would you say was maybe one of the happiest moments in your family life growing up here in Tampa as a young girl?

NC: As a young girl? My happiest life, to me my life seem happy most of the time. I was the youngest and it was a a an age – Well, how can I say this?

BS: Any special memory any special event that you can remember when you were a little girl that you think of fondly or you'll never forget? Was there any particular special time or event?

NC: Several little things ah one of the first things I was intrigued about was when I started attending Harlem Elementary School, Harlem Academy in the third grade and I was exciting about that. Cause previously I had attended Mrs. Ada T. Paine's ah kinneygarden. First and second grade and I went out started attending Harlem it was the idea of standing in line and marching with the beat that children up into the classrooms, those that was exciting to me, my first experience in public school. That was one of the experience I had and through the years as I say, I can't complain because my mother had a little intelligence. Although she said that her teachers that told her mother not to kick her out of school because she would make great advances. But during the those days they took the children over what had to leave school to help take with to help the family. So, she kept abreast of everything. She liked to read and she bought us reading materials. And we participated in church activities right downtown and then we knew all about Central Avenue. There was a lot of experiences but the main thing was my junior high school and high school years.

BS: Was that all at Harlem? Was Harlem a junior high?

NC: It was just an elementary school.

BS: What high school did you go to?

NC: Booker T. Washington. It was the only one.

BS: Oh, you only had one high school during that time?

NC: Well, right around the corner. The school right around the corner.

BS: Near Ybor City? Right around here?

NC: No. No. Right here on 5th Avenue.

BS: Oh! O.K. it's still there?

NC: Still there. And the I do remember, you want me to give them the good (), my experiences? Well, my experiences was ah you know, ah I don't want to get excited and not say the right things.

BS: Anything you say is alright. What was the best thing to happen to you when you were at Booker T? Was it a dance or some class or?

NC: Well one thing that happened to me that it was a jealous in my life was when I was selected, even I wasn't the first honor student, but I was the third honor student and we rode the bus, one of our English teachers took us on a tour of FAM C. If you can cement that half of it. And that was very interesting to me to have a chance to go on a college campus. And from ah the sites that we interviewed and ah in Tallahassee we had to come back and write our commencement speeches.

BS: Was that Florida A&M?

NC: Florida but it was FAM C.

BS: It was FAM C. at that time. FAM College I guess.

NC: Exactly. Yes but it wasn't the university yet. And that the enjoyment of walking around the campus. And then I want to go to college, I want to go to college. And we toured the campus and that wrote our commencement speeches.

BS: How did you get to Tallahassee on that trip?

NC: By car.

BS: Oh, you all went by car.

NC: There was five of us.

BS: There was five?

NC: Five young people that be ah ah the grad and yourself and the third honor and the fourth and fifth honor student they had a chance to ride and they didn't have any conceit yet so we all rode together and we get to the school and it ohh, it was very interesting to me. and after we wrote our commencement speeches we had to present them in our graduation in 1936.

BS: That must have been wonderful.

NC: It was wonderful to me and to a lot of other young people because we didn't have a lot of advantages here in the South.

BS: I imagine you all had smaller classes or were the classes large during that time.

NC: Some were larger and some were small it just depended on the () where you were. Because everyone from North Tampa, South Tampa, East Tampa, West Tampa they attended Booker T. Washington Jr. High School.

BS: Very good. When you were growing up what can you remember any events that happened in Tampa that sticks in your mind as a child? Any bad events or um is that before the depression or during the depression or did any um major event occur? Or your teenage years or even adult years was there any bad thing that happened public wise, that you can remember?

NC: No response.

BS: I'll give you a few more minutes to think about that.

BS: Now Booker T. was a junior high school right?

NC: Well, it was built in the beginning to go from seventh to twelfth grade. In 1935 the county decided to build a high school and that was Middleton High School.

BS: So you went to Middleton High School for your final year?

NC: Yes, that was the only school to go for high school.

BS: Middleton is still around isn't it?

NC: They just rebuilt it. A couple of years ago, maybe three years now. That's when 1936, the Fall of 1936 I started high school at Middleton High School.

BS: Did you play any sports when you were at Middleton?

NC: No, I was a cheerleader.

BS: A cheerleader!

NC: I didn't play any sports.

BS: Well that was fun.

NC: And I kept my, kept my, but I kept score because my husband was on the football team during that time.

BS: So is that where you first met your husband?

NC: Yes.

BS: Childhood sweethearts?

NC: Yes, and um we um I did not participate any. We didn't have too many. We didn't have a band or anything that came after. After my senior high school day. well, in my, in around the eleventh and the twelfth grade we had a band master came here and organized a band for the high school. Well it wasn't called a high school in the beginning but he organized, brought music to the trick. And then the men it brings on into the high school. And um, that was a long time a go.

BS: Well, yes it was a long time a go. When you were in high school in Middleton, did you ever go down to Central Avenue?

NC: A lot of times.

BS: And what were you doing down on Central Avenue?

NC: We knew where to go.

BS: And where did you go?

NC: To the Palace Drug Store on the corner and that's all.

BS: That was the only place you were permitted to go?

NC: That's right.

BS: What was the drug store like? Was it Patterson?

NC: The Palace, P-A-L-A-C-E. It was just like a sundry store. That the young people could gather on Sunday evening, mostly Sunday evening before or after church. You had to go church first. And you go in by and sit at this little table and have ice cream, and you talk or maybe I could get a chance to see the boys.

BS: Is that where you used to meet your boyfriend?

NC: No, not necessarily.

BS: But sometimes he showed up.

NC: You could sometime, because he came from Plant City in the later years. Cause he was born in ah Princess, Florida and he moved down to Plant City and then he would come over here, commute to go to school.

BS: Was there a theatre on Central Avenue?

NC: The Central, Central Theatre. It was right down in the middle of the block. Short Emery Street ran right into Central Avenue. And we went to the theatre, we had to come from Tampa Heights all the way up, you don't know the street, but we come straight up be to Orange which is the street before Central Avenue. You would turn south on Orange go to Short Emery and go right into the theatre. That's the way certain parents had their children to go.

BS: Oh, you went –

NC: -- they had a lot of activities on Central Avenue that young people didn't have to go, didn't need to be around. And that's the way we were raised.

BS: Are those areas you weren't supposed to be in you didn't go into those areas?

NC: No cause someone would tell your mama before you got home. So you knew not to do it. And it wasn't like the young people now take a dare.

BS: When you went to the Central Avenue Theatre, what was the theater like? Was it a two-story or a one-story building?

NC: It was a one-story building.

BS: So it didn't have a balcony?

NC: It didn't have a balcony, it was a one-story building. I don't remember a balcony it's a ordinary theatre. Anything they could throw at us to satisfy, that's what my opinion was. And a that's where we had to go and we could go a lot of times on Saturday evening which is after real work. You'd go and see silent films they were all silent at that time. See, and you pay a nickel and go to the theatre. You saved your little pennies and nickels to go to the movies. They didn't say movies they the picture show. That's what they would say.

BS: So while you was looking to the silent movie, you where looking at a film but you couldn't hear 'em speak.

NC: Couldn't hear em, we had to read.

BS: Oh we had to read.

NC: Had to read.

BS: Oohh.

NC: And it was a Hopalong Cassidy or going along with my brother we couldn't go alone. - -- I had a brother three years older than I but we couldn't go alone you had to go like in a group, two or three. That's how my parents where that strict. And as I say, my mother was laundress but she always told us we were just as good as anybody. Because the doctor couldn't do without the laundry and the lawyer couldn't either. Somebody had to do something. And say you always as good as anybody. So in Tampa I grew up knowing everybody.

BS: I guess with your mother being a laundress she would know everybody. Sooner or later they had to come through her.

NC: Not the black people, this was the white people. Black people didn't come and bring her any laundry. But some few did because she had people that she knew and during those days they weren't like they trying to keep us now so far down. They just bring it together cause everyone had a father. Some men had a little bit more than the others but they weren't but that didn't make any difference. That's the way we were brought religiously that you was just as good as the next person.

BS: You say on Central Avenue there were places you could go but what kind of places um was forbidden for you to go to? Places like what?

NC: Ooh, there were bars. BS: Bars. NC: Plenty bars, little restaurants like on Scott and Central and we were right around off of Central right on that first block off of Scott. Scott and Central the area they called "in." Those little places like that. In that particular block. From Scott to Cass Street. There were certain areas that you know that decent people didn't go. I can put it just as bluntly as that and you will read the fact that you be the best that you can be wherever you are.

BS: And you went to a Saint Paul AME?

NC: Saint Paul AME Church.

BS: Have you always gone to that church?

NC: Always is –

BS: And your still a member of that church?

NC: Still a member.

BS: What kind of activities did you have at St. Paul as a young person that you participated in?

NC: Sunday School, all the little plays, and the picnics. We used to have picnics a lot. I participated in all. Usher when I was a teenager, on the usher board and things like that when I was a teenager.

BS: When you had your picnics were they there at St. Paul or did you go other places.

NC: We'd go to other places.

BS: Such as?

NC: Such as um, we had a few areas in the city on the Jackson house, Jackson Heights area where some people had a little more space. Out from Buffalo, Martin Luther King it is now, out to 29th Street and out that area. If some people had a little fortune and enough to acquire a little land we would go to picnic at their home. And then we would go from the school especially, school picnics on the west side to Hale's Farm. Toby Hale had a farm, a black man. Across, across a between Carver City and Lincoln Garden area, across Dale Mabry that way on the west side. And those were the most popular places. And then we would have little activities on the grounds there in the back of Harlem and the back of the church. Picnics and like that, things like that.

BS: Did you ever see any celebrities down on Central Avenue in your adult years?

NC: Oh, in my adult years? BS: Any anybody ever any celebrity ever come to town that you that you got to see perform? NC: No. I wasn't that type. BS: O.K. NC: To like to go to Central Avenue at that time. I was raised different than that but I remember them coming and I read of em and do my brother I knew of em but I didn't go to the dances or anything. I only remember going to one big dance and that was in the forties after I was married. I had married.

BS: Where was this big dance held at?

NC: At the Apollo Theatre.

BS: Oh the Apollo! Was that down on Central Avenue?

NC: On Central and Cass.

BS: What was the Apollo Theatre like?

NC: It was upstairs. Just a hall, a big hall the stores even the bars on the first level. And ah a nice big hall, stage and everything like that.

BS: Do you remember what kinda dances you all were doing then?

NC: We were doing the Lindy Hop, and the Charleston was over then, some people would do that but that was ahead of my time and my next sister's age. They would do the Charleston.

BS: But the Lindy Hop was?

NC: The Lindy Hop, well that's what they called it the hop. The Lindy Hop, you know, where they threw you all over your back and everything. And I could never do it. I was clumsy. But it was a nice place considering. And a lot of, it was a, I don't hear of them any more, but the name of the band was That Was the Good Time. I think it was in the 40's or 41 or something like that. And we would call it International Sweethearts of Rhythm and it was an all women band. I remember going to that. I didn't go to a lot of big dances. Cause we had, I could go to the school dances. But they didn't have a school dance at Harlem.

BS: This all women's band was were the ladies from Tampa or from all over?

NC: No, they was from all over the United States and they traveled. Just like the bands used to travel a lot. That's where my brother used to drive the the band, oh what was the name of that band, it'll come to me. From Tampa, a lot of Tampa musicians, even Ray Charles was in the band at one time. From Tampa.

BS: That's right he was from Tampa or lived here some time, I think.

NC: He came through here, and lived in Tampa. He was in with the band at one time. Cause he was here in Florida anyways. And a, but I wasn't the type to go to dances all the time. I liked to listen to the music but I didn't like to go all the time. Cause my mother said you don't go to the dances all the time. Life is more better than just going up and down Central Avenue.

BS: Well you mother certainly had a point there. Now you were a homemaker for a good part of you life.

NC: Yes.

BS: And then, other than being a homemaker what did you do?

NC: () in 1940 I wanted to go to nursing school then, but I didn't go. And my godmother she told me later I had sent my () into Brewster in Atlanta. And I didn't have the fees and all to pay because my mother raised five children under me. My oldest one of sister's children and my aunt's two children, under me. Nobody ever new if they was sisters or what because that's the way we was raised up together. And there wasn't no welfare. We had to work it. And um, so therefore, um it just past me what I was gonna say.

BS: So at that time you didn't have enough money to go to school.

NC: So but my godmother told me, I should have said something about it, but I guess I had too much pride I wanted to be on my own. And so I didn't go but that was always my intention. To be a nurse. And at one time in my early married life they had a school called the Beaumont School of Nursing, they were trying to get that down in this area. That was in, might have been in the 50's. I went a couple of days but I'd have to leave my children and I couldn't do that at the time so I didn't pursue it for a while. So during that time I more of a housewife, seamstress I used to sew a lot. So that would be a lot of my past time. And when I, when I had my children I'd be with them too.

BS: And you had how many children?

NC: Six.

BS: Six. Did you sew for them?

NC: Yes.

BS: That's wonderful.

NC: And um so my life was pretty good. To my estimatin I wasn't rich but I was happy.

BS: Well, it sounds like you had a full and rich life. And not to be rich with money, you could be rich with a lot of other things.

NC: That's right, and that's the way we believed.

BS: And at one time you were a teacher's aide?

NC: Yes.

BS: What school did you work at? Or different schools?

NC: Different schools, more or less. I had Dunbar for the most part that's where I started. It was doing reading and I wanted you know, to continue to be a teacher's aide and I was there and I was accessible. And a it was () those little children in my life to be doing something and help other children along with my children and keeping some of them parents in that area abreast of what was going on because there's so much prejudice in our schools down here.

And so I worked with her right over here in the Booker T. Washington for Mr. () Hammond. And Assistant Librarian, assistant to Miss Roberta Booker and a but I changed my mind about that. I was going to go to Hillsborough Community College but I changed it. I said I'll go back to my nursing and so that's what I did in I don't even remember the year right off. But we had recently bought a home in Lincoln Garden across Dale Mabry and I saw, read in the paper that was in the early 60's that they were going to have an aptitude test for young people to go for anyone to attend Brewster. A Brewster is um a vocational school. And I told one of my friends I said, "Let's go and take the test." One car in the family, sometimes not even that one, we caught the bus went down to the County Court um courthouse took the test. And it was ten people and there was four blacks. Three of the blacks passed the test. They were admitted to Brewster Vocation School to take Practical Nursing. Now, I decided, I had () I went a while but then I decided I couldn't keep up. It wasn't the system but transportation, everything.

BS: Trying to get back and forth.

NC: Backwards and forwards. And so I stopped and my friend she went on that first class. I don't know if you know her, you probably don't cause she been sick two or three years, her name was Miss Elizabeth Smith. But anyway she um we were some of one of the first classes in Practical Nursing here in Tampa. We had some practical nurses here that they acquired that status in the Waiver System from the old black Clara Frye Hospital.

BS: Oh yeah, I've heard about Clara Frye Hospital.

NC: Some of them that we were like that. But we actually had the chance to go through the teaching part and everything at Brewster Tech. That's what they called it.

BS: So once you got certified or once you became an LPN then where did you work?

NC: I worked my entire fifteen years at University Community Hospital.

BS: Oh, how wonderful! Was that going down on Dale Mabry then or where was it?

NC: That's the new one.

BS: That's the new one. Where was the old one?

NC: It's on thirtieth, well it's Bruce B. Downs now. It was Thirtieth Street and Fletcher.

BS: Oh, well o.k.

NC: Thirtieth Street and Fletcher in East Tampa.

BS: And what was the name of it?

NC: University Community Hospital.

BS: O.K. so that's where it started.

NC: That's where it started. On Dale Mabry is the Carrollwood.

BS: Oh, I see.

NC: University Hospital

BS: Well the one on Fletcher, that's near USF.

NC: Yeah, you right across the street.

BS: O.k. so that's where it started.

NC: That's where it started.

BS: You worked there for?

NC: Fifteen and a half years on med service. I was an LPN but I had my pharmacy license. I could pass medicine.

BS: Great.

NC: Stayed there until I had knee surgery.

BS: In thinking back to your nursing career, and you say you worked in med servs, can you think of maybe the best experience you had being a nurse? Or maybe the most famous patient? Not necessarily the name but was there something—what was special to you about nursing—during that time or? Can you really think of something that stood out in your nursing career that you will always remember?

NC: Well, several things. I was always, I don't know if you'd say intrigued but, just having the ability to help somebody. That was and having people to come and thanking me for helping them and calling on me even if () you know. And really start this inigrating to think that that time had come when they would ask you. () was usually deep down to do something for em. Because we had certain instances they didn't even want you to bath them, they didn't want you to do anything, they had their own mentality of you down and I'm up. And ah but my experience was good. And especially a when I was certified to pass meds and I could go and take up a CEO to get my extra credit and seminars and things. It was a, I liked nursing ().

BS: And you had to quit because of your knee?

NC: Yes, I had knee knee replacements.

BS: That was difficult.

NC: I know it was different. I began to have problems kneeling. You had to () start out () but I was doing my best (). But (). I like nursing I hated to quit. And I kept my license until in force until 1999. Saying I was going back.

BS: What do you miss most about nursing?

NC: People. Having a chance to mingle with the people. Learning. It's a constant learning process. It's basically you know, during the latter years something new always coming up and you wanted to be able to do it. The only thing I disliked about the hospital was emergency. I didn't like the emergency.

BS: You didn't like the emergency room?

NC: I didn't mind checking them but I just didn't like the hustle and bustle.

BS: Too busy for you.

NC: Too busy. And you know when you had to practice seconds I was glad when we were over. But I did like the nursing, I really did. And I didn't want all the papers work. But it had a lot of paper work.

BS: O.k. is there anything else that you'd like to tell me about that you may have forgotten?

Oh, I know asked you a question about was there any um events in your lifetime here in Tampa um bad event or any bad thing that happened in Tampa that you can remember?

Might not have been, I'm just –

NC: Well, not necessarily on on on a Central Avenue?

BS: No, just some major thing that happened here in Tampa.

NC: Yes, I can remember a several things. I remember when I was in first grade at Harlem Elementary School, right over here at Bethel and we turn kids right on it's more or less close

to the expressway coming from town it's a red brick building over there. And I seen part of Bethel Baptist right there on Charlotte Emory, I can remember it distinctly cause there was a lot of people () and running down Morgan Street. A young man had jumped in the buzz saw and they decapitated would people say. His head was decapitated. It was a wood yard and his family was having like we was havin marital difficulties. But I can remember, and one other older teacher, Velma Bryant she wouldn't let us go to the window to peek so you couldn't see through the—.

BS: Oh, he committed suicide?

NC: He committed suicide. Then I can remember when I was a younger a person, young lady, when we used to have () funeral home here. Don't know if you ever heard of it? It was () funeral home it was on Jefferson, that second street west of Central Avenue. Well, one day we heard a lot news there wasn't no TV, barely radios but that was the stuff see Tuesday was a murder. He was murdered because I guess he was on it too much along with the people on the level, you know, the white guy. Sayin if in you want to beat it maybe you can put a different word but ah in different wording but you know, you don't know how it was then. We didn't have a whole lot of burning but we did have a lot of difficult situations that happened.

BS: Racial tension.

NC: Yeah, racial and especially you know a lot of it was black. Like a under () a Apollo Theatre there was a grocery store and there was a bar. They called it Charlie Moonies Bar. We used to call it the "Statement". You didn't go down there by the Statement, cause that's where the loose women would be. The thing about it was here was an affluent person I guess you would say, he wasn't rich he was rich I guess he was, but he wasn't like a professional. But from what I can remember seeing from the neighbors and my mother just listening cause sometimes they run you away, you know, missing listen to everything. He had his own liquor license and the Latin people wanted control of all the liquor license. In they had Hillsborough County wet again. I think it was the whole state because when I was smaller, in the thirties, it was a dry county you couldn't buy liquor everywhere. And he had his own liquor license and they wanted control of it. Now you see a lot of these people on Central Avenue from listening to the elevator people you get growing wheels in the knowledge of you know learn. They are fronting for the white man, they didn't own those buildings. They didn't control the life, they owned the buildings but the ability to sell that liquor or whatever. () And that's history from the older people.

BS: So his his death was questionable?

NC: Questionable. But anyway you never see my mother um associates with any, she was a member of St. Paul's and it was a little church around on Marion Street closer to the bus station on that side, on this side, uh ah well along Marion Street. And ah he would call Mount Mariah and they built that new church. My sister next to me, she marched in that church. From the Mount Mariah into the big new church when she was about four years old.

BS: So it was called Mount Mariah first and then it got the name St. Paul's, yeah I read about that.

NC: It was First Harlem Mission it was on, well on Franklin I think it was.

BS: So the church has gone through different names and different building.

NC: Yes, but that's been since 1910 something. But as I saying a lot of – life wasn't too bad. And not the next, after we went on to something else before after finishing high school. I mean junior high school. But the main thing we wanted to finish high school.

BS: That was very important?

NC: That was very important! And the class of 1939, our particular class was the largest they had had. Until from the beginning, because they started in mid-year. School opened in mid-year of 1935. When you go out there on the plaque out there you see all the name, my name's on there too.

BS: O.K.

NC: My name, my husband's, and my daughter.

BS: Wonderful! So, some of your children went there also.

NC: Just one. The other children to other schools went to Blake that's out in West Tampa. And then the son integrated Leto, North Tampa. My next daughter attended Academy of the Holy Name. that's a big Catholic school on the Bayshore.

BS: Well you certainly had a full and interesting life. Is there anything else you'd like to add to our interview?

NC: Oh, well let's see. I guess I could tell you more, but if blacks interviewed that had me a couple of years ago and I told them all about my life and they was talking about banks that you remembered along with Miss Joyce Bartlett and Sam Denison. And I told them then that I could tell them more but I was tired that time. But they said I remembered a lot of things and I do remember a lot of things.

BS: You sure have remembered a lot of things.

NC: Well my my home life was good. And ah like I say, we were rich you had some love which was () and together. That's what you have to () when you don't have it.

BS: Well I thank you Miss Curry for your interview. I certainly learned a lot more about Tampa that I didn't know before. And I thank you and appreciate you giving me your time.

