One Ashland, Many Voices Oral History Project
Transcript of Interview with William “Buck” Herbert, Jr.

Interviewee: William “Buck” Herbert, Jr.
Interviewers: Kimberly Dutton; Amanda Bass also present
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KD: Okay, Please tell me why you came to Ashland.

BH: Huh, for the town with the education system in Hanover that was convenient to North Richmond. The Richmond school systems had gone down...down...down. And I had four children and I felt like it was a good community. A little bit.

KD: So, you came here with your four children. Anybody else?

BH: No. My wife.

KD: (Your wife). Um..What community or neighborhood did you first live in?

BH: Up here?

KD: (Yes)

BH: I moved in Thanksgiving Day, 1971 on Cub's Lane. Right about one hundred yards outside of the town.

KD: So, what...what attracted you to the school systems here specifically compared to Richmond?
BH: Small classes, they had a good...uh...reputation. When I came, each of my children were in a different school; one was in Patrick Henry, Liberty, Gandy and that and I enjoyed it.

I believe in a public school system. In Richmond was too many of them and the neighborhoods were going to private schools and getting away from it. And I thought that the public school system up here is pretty good.

KD: You mentioned education. Um...In what ways did having a college in the town affect your life...?

BH: In the decision to move up here?

KD: (Yes).

BH: Hmm...nothing...not much on it. I'll tell you the funny thing that attracted me in which you don't have there is transportation. My wife doesn't drive. She can catch a bus down the railroad tracks next to Richmond or she can catch a Greyhound bus on Broad...on Route 1.

KD: So do you make use of the train often...the train services?

BH: No because the train... well I've caught it twice...once in Boston and I think once in Washington. Uhh...we went to Richmond and it will get you further away...you are closer to downtown Richmond from here than you are from the station out on Staples Mill Road.

KD: Hmm. Tell me about your current neighborhood. Please describe it for me.

BH: Well it's a subdivision with about twenty houses in it uhh being built. What I like about it...uh...it had plenty of children in there when we moved there I guess. About ten years we had about twenty kids all around playing...uhh...the thing I liked about it was somewhere I moved from kids could walk to the theatre or to the Little League field was very congenial people getting along with each other. We could build a house on about three quarters of an acre. What else do you want to know about it?

KD: Well, do you have any relatives that live nearby?

BH: Well, three of my children's families live here now.

When I moved up here no uhh my brother lived in Northern Neck and my mother was in Halifax County. Well the friend that lived next door to me in North Richmond lived in the same subdivision...that's what made me go to that. And having the house built. Mmhmm.

KD: Sir, tell me what has changed in your lifetime concerning the community as far as physical appearance is concerned

BH: Well I think, for the best uhh has been a lot of growth. When I came here, Route 1 and 54 were just open fields. You got the shopping centers there. We used to laugh when our kids were in high school and they wanted to go to quote McDonalds. There was no such thing here. They had to ride all the way into Richmond to Celebrity Room or something. A lot of the conveniences, a lot of the oldtimers don't like it

up here. I feel it's good for the young families and all, the stores and such here. It's a shame that the theatre...not enough people to use it and all...but they...I don't think the growth has been that bad in the town.
KD: Did you ever personally go to the theatre when it was in operation?

BH: Yeah, well my wife talks about coming here in the summer time about fifty or sixty years ago to go to the theatre and we used to go over there. I think the funniest thing was Doctor Zhivago. We saw it one night while after we moved up here. The people were going up and down the aisle and the children were on Saturday night and Ms. Coventry she walked in at the intermission and she says,"The popcorn stand is closing and I'm locking the bathrooms so when the movie starts sit down!"

You don't get that at the big shopping malls today but that was a small town.

KD: Have you had any other experiences with interesting individuals in the community?

BH: Well it was a pleasure meeting uh Dr. Moreland. He was president at the college at the time. Not, he was not the president at the time. He was retired. I picked him up Sunday morning and brought him to church up here and just hearing his stories and all it was very nice on that meeting Duke Ellis and I thought one of the finest people that just recently died...she came up here about the same time that we did was…Diana Piece... uh she was an unusual person...very good. I think people got after her because she stood up for what she believed and said it.

KD: What did she believe in?

BH: Well...uh...she was a good lawyer and uh and when the courts told the people that it wanted them to do certain things with the social services and all, they did follow her up to make sure it was being done. She...she was good.

KD: I know that the interview is being taken place in Dunc... Duncan Memorial right now. How has this church had an impact on your life?

BH: Well we uh we've been I've been a Methodist since I married my wife. When I met her when I was sixteen and didn't marry until I was twenty. And uh it's been very good for the children...the programs at the church. We've been blessed with very good ministers...and changed and,... They have had very good programs for the youth. I'm more concerned with the youth than otherwise. I've worked hard and Little League and worked with the children's program here and uh give them a place on it and I think they have been very conscious of the needs for youth here. They've always said they have been interested since we have been here on the college with...uh that's a hard age to get to come to church. I mean they finally gotten a little freedom at age twenty or nineteen when they come here and go and live off at several programs. It's very good.

The scout troop that they brung here...I was real happy on that and I helped that to start back up in '79.

KD: Tell me some more about your experiences with the Scout Troops.

BH: You're really testing my memory. When I first came up here they had one and there was very few people in it. Then in about '76 or '77, uh the Kiwanis Club was the sponsor but they felt like that the troop didn't have enough kids to sign on if they had the minimum so they did without the troop for a couple of years then Les Dukes who's going to be on one of your interviews wrote something for the scouts. He and my oldest son Willy Herbert started the troop up in '79 and started back up and I was one that was working on the troop committee ended up and we were very fortunate in getting very good scout leaders for the young men. They've been very active. One of the best things on the scouts here is
that I researched recently is the old memorial or the big building over by Henry Clay School. Some jockey at Camptown couldn't ride his horse and fell off of it and sued. The town uh the school board had to buy it back but in the uh deed it states that uh the Boy Scout Troop has lifetime use of one of it in there and uh every Monday night... uh instead of the uh the school going and asking us what days do we need it and such, they know that they have the rights to use it on Monday night. And not many scout troops have the facilities like that when it rains they can do anything in there. Uh.

We've been very good...with the church...with good leaders and all. And the troop now is about forty or fifty young men which is unusual. They go camping rain or shine or snow or sleet about once a month. And uh...you can see the plaque in the hall back here that we finally got put up and we got right many Eagles Scouts and they earn it when they get it. We just don't pass them on that.

What other questions on there can I help you with? I'm not giving you too much answers but go ahead.

KD: Heh um. What do you feel about your church's role in affairs in the community?

BH: I think the church here I noticed in the past from a secretary. They felt like it was one of the leaders in the neighborhood because this building is used a whole lot by the community for different programs in the evenings and such uh and I think that's need very much uh the help with the variety shows and letting them have the facilities here and such because Blackwell Hall doesn't have but so many dressing rooms that they can use all and I think the Duncan Memorial is very conscious of the community and wanting to integrate it in and sometimes it gets overcrowded with the facilities and limited income on it but they use it. The college uses it right much. The beginning of the year they our annual used to have some meetings around...

You know that our sanctuary was built by the Methodist Conference for the Randolph-Macon. Randolph-Macon a few years back...weren't having too many students and such using it and so they leased it to the to the church for about one hundred...for ten dollars. I think for a hundred years. And so now we're custodians of the uh sanctuary. We're supposed to walk...and take the lease back. We're supposed to keep the outside in keeping with the rest of the campus and the college has got priorities like I was talking about the boy scouts that if they needed for a baccalaureate or something we will make different changes for them on that.

KD: That is very interesting. I didn't know that before.

BH: Yeah this is the only building that is basically owned by the church Uh right Duncan Memorial. And the parking lot belonged to the college.

KD: I think that we were informed that you worked for the Town Council. Am I correct?

BH: No.

KD: No.

BH: My son was mayor for about two years and on the council for four years. I worked on the council when they asked me to but I was never been on the timey council. That's who... Tommy...Tommy Herbert.

KD: Hmm.
BH: I think the town would have liked to dip him in tar at the time he was mayor when they passed Walmart coming up here. I think that the town's got higher income thought. They are not thinking of some of the lower income that enjoys the prices and things that Walmart has to offer. I think that was one of the things that they...they were scared of the low income. I use it...I use it a good three times a week.

KD: So did you have a particular stance when the Walmart came?

BH: I was in favor of it. I mean they said Walmart was gonna put a lot of people out of business up here. I can only name one of the businesses and they should have gone out before, but Ukrops I've known when the old...when the daddy owned them in south Richmond. Ukrop's has replaced the bank, they replaced the pharmacies. Up here they have more of an impact of putting people out of business but the town won't say it because they think of the...otherwise. I think that U...Walmart has been a good citizen on giving to the uh community. Just as Ukrops has been.

KD: Hmm.

BH: I think that Walmart and Ukrops and them have been a part of the growth that you said...you would have noticed the big change in Ashland. Uhh... When we were first up here the first one to build a department store was uh Peebles. It was a store in the woods after we had gotten up here. But in the growth with the people around there, they've had all of the shopping centers. And if anybody's gotten hurt by Ukrop's or the Food Lion was Cross's market on the tracks because uh they've been doing good business uh that store's as much as Old Ashland as it can be.

KD: So what do you feel about these Old Ashland businesses such as the Cross Brothers?

BH: I feel like Cross Brothers has been a very good...citizen helping the people. I think that a lot of times people will start things up and it will block them on shopping on the weekends and such. But uh I wish that uh Cross and them had a better chance to do more business because they are very fine people. I wish that uh when I first came up there was one...two...I wanna say three but I know of two drugstores on the railroad tracks. They're gone. But you had the pharmacists Hughes and such uh Ukrop's finally came...one of them had been sold to uh Rite Aid had bought the rights to one of them and CVS...I don't know where but it's in Mechanicsville where you live but you have a very fine pharmacy there across from the windmill but it's a little different than going into a CVS store or something. They've changed and they have been lucky that Ukrops when they uh went for the pharmacy they hired local people out of the other pharmacies which helped them a whole lot.

The uh manager of Walmart...you know where he graduated from school?

KD: Where did he graduate?

BH: He graduated from Randolph-Macon. Can you believe that?

KD: I didn't know that. ----

BH: Yeah, he's very proud of it. And he doesn't call it Walmart that he's the manager of...it's Ashland's Walmart....he calls it. So he is very proud to be locally here with it too.

And the education...better talk to the president and see if he can give you a few credits for this.
KD: Thank you.

BH: Hahahahaha

KD: Do you know of any other distinguished graduates from Randolph-Macon or anything of the sort?

BH: It is like asking the mundane. Uh well my brother-in-law... graduated...no he didn't graduate...he went to two years and dropped out. Went to VCU but uh I think one of the finest people that I knew at the college here was Hugh Stevens...He was athletic director when we moved up here and he was the baseball coach. He was a fine gentleman and his wife...she still lives in the community but is well. Paul Webb was the basketball coach and he got big ideas and went to Old Dominion on it...and Jim Blackburn coached the football team over along with uh what's the guy's name? I have a good time kidding him on Sunday mornings. Hmm...it'll come to me when I get home tonight...you want me to call you and tell you?

KD: Sure thing.

BH: Hahaha Uh...Kit...Keller...Ted Keller. With the limited funds they often had up here on things I think they did good with the coaches. I was coaching the girls' basketball team...i worked very very hard with the youth leagues here a long time ago. And I threatened them if they did not let me have a girl's basketball team, I'd make them play with the boys. And so I had mine and since and ...then this is when Luther White was president and he was good. I think they let Billy Woods who is now an athletic director up at Caroline County and he lives here about three houses...He was coaching the girls in my junior high and high school girls were playing Randolph-Macon for practice and all because they didn't have enough start. I think the college did give Billy one basketball. At the time. Y'see, I'm looking out for you girls. It was uh interesting and the little league over there had grown over the years.

KD: What do you think about the current sports at Randolph-Macon and its effect on the community?

BH: Heh you don't want to ask me that. Uh I support it very good mentally but I haven't been to a basketball game in over ten or fifteen years. I think they've done a very good job. They've had good program for them for the basketball team now is doing better than the football team I think and they are rebuilding that and they are all doing very good. But it's given the...having it up here uh is giving a touch to the people that know hey there is lacrosse other than it. In the University of Virginia and up in Maryland somewhere that there are other things...the girls softball teams too and...runs a good team over there and all but I think it adds to it but the games uh go very good. Jack Luck is uh a very good supporter of the athletic program here. I don't know if you have got to talk to him but I think he goes to every one of the programs, helps takes up tickets and y'all go to the finals, he goes up there but uh good program.

KD: So, what do you do for fun in Ashland?

BH: What I do for fun? Uhh...I have got eleven grandchildren...nine of them here now. I enjoy playing with them, working with them, with the youth. I enjoy...I guess my biggest activity other than church uh I was in most offices here and the church over the years...gotten up in age so I want some of the younger people taking over, but I enjoyed the uh Little League watching the kids play and that..such...type of question you were asking?

KD: (Mmhmm)
BH: Uhh.. I've seen more Little League games than the president of the college has seen...hahaha... games over here for y'all I mean I followed that for years on it. I enjoy seeing the young people. You know... you uh Amanda and such from the college... the activities... y'all not as bad as some of them make it up here... y'all behave pretty good. Now y'all may not like that answer but they do.

KD: Thank you. What do you think of um maybe the townspeople's beliefs or thoughts of college students and their behaviors?

BH: I've never heard any negative talk about them. I think I think that it would be nicer if there was more interaction with them but I think the college... the only complaint I have about the college kids... it's exit on Friday. It's not many college kids if y'all hang around up here you don't have many... many of your friends left on it but uh I think that uh I would say that I have never heard any negative. I wish there was more of the support like when they have the Strawberry Fair over there. I think the... the college supports the community very well. In other words, letting them use the facilities over there for the Strawberry Fair and for using Blackwell Hall. I think that works together and I think it helps the two plan together. Very rare you see the the two intertwine. I'm saying uh... do you see much of the interaction with the kids up here and the town-people?

KD: Uh... besides in the businesses, not really.

BH: The businesses, you see them where? I think... I think what tickles me. I didn't realize I could get a full-blown all-you-can-eat lunch for less than five dollars over here at the college. I've been over there four or five times in the past six months I guess but why does a kid want to go over to Ukrop's and eat a salad or a pizza when they can eat all there for nothing. But outside of the food looks very good to me... uh on it... now if I don't... of course y'all have gotten out of your house and you don't want Momma and Poppa around with a lot of the college kids don't so... I think it's good but I don't think uh I think y'all have been an asset to the town. I think that the uh some of the buying you see up here... I don't know how much it would help but I'm sure y'all add a lot to the economy... buying in different places and such... on it. I... Andrews uh I knew before I moved up here... uh had him teaching class at the church in Richmond and uh he's done a lot to keep the people together up here.

What do you think that could help add to the town with the college kids?

She came from an area that's a little closer than you. Hampton's a little bigger. What church in Hampton did you go to?

KD: I went to Northside in Newport News.

BH: I didn't know if you knew Ed Wright when I came up here... he was the pastor and I think he went to a church across from the shipyard... yeah and I enjoyed Ed when I got here. I was asking that to see you know any people from here.

KD: You mentioned the Strawberry Festival... Fair. Could you describe that more for me?

BH: You haven't been around too much in the first of June haha after May? Amanda's smiling. She may know something about it from Mechanicsville.

They used to take the area over by the back of Peele Hall... is that what it is over there by the fountain? And they'd have one hundred or so vendors up here and people from around the state, North Carolina,
Maryland would come and sell quilts, trinkets that they made on that and it was started because I think the Strawberry Farm up north of town here was the one that had the idea and sell the strawberries and they have a lot of booths for the young...for the local ones to make... the Boy Scouts. I could sell 1600 sausages and hot dogs in about four hours and uh on a Saturday...made money and then they a stage over there. They had uh the choirs from some of the black churches...the other churches to sing...a lot of festival. I suggest that you stay up here that weekend hahaha when they have it and I know they came by the office the other day...my son told them about the insurance and some other...but they'll have it...they moved it from over by the fountain...I should have said by the fountain over there because on a rainy weekend, they'll tear up too much of the ground. Too many people walking...several thousand would come. But now they have it out here on the Henry Street up and down. Huh it’s alright but it's not the same as walking...tromping down your azaleas hahaha flowers I guess there's that but uh did I say about right on the Strawberry Fair?

They had a lot of things to sell. The Boy Scouts would sell sausages at church uh I think that one of the churches would sell strawberry shortcake and lotta them...some of them would buy strawberries and sell those on out in that way. It's sorta like Gloucester which way you have the oyster festival and on north of Newport News and such on a smaller scale but uh it's a lot of fun. You get...I guess you got some of y'all hanging around but more older people over there. The ladies uh with little things they made. So a lot of...I wish it was more actively homemade but they get after you with the health department that they have gone on more to vendors that work different fairs you know. And the people here would have sausages and uh on it. And uh I used to enjoy cooking the sausage...we were one of the only booths...and I would cook onions with it. And you were at a state fair, if you smelled onions you knew where to go.

KD: How long has this been taking place here in Ashland?

BH: Lord. Hmm. Let’s see...Tommy wasn't in Boy Scouts...about twenty-five years I say if not more. And she doesn't know about it from Newport News? I'm going to talk to the president now and take those credits away that I told her that she could get. We got to make a Hanoverian out of her, don't we?

AB: We do.

BH: But it's enjoyable. The homemade ice cream at some of them I think and it's it's just a lot of fun. But ladies are already decided what cakes they're going to make for the cake sale out front uh when they got it helps...it helps a lot of the local people like that and of course it's a lot of the people selling the things. The money comes in to the Strawberry Fair. They pay for the booths. And it's gone back into the community for different charities. I think one of the big charities they help is the Hanover Arts and Activities down there on the tracks and uh it supports many little different things like that. They've moved it back...usually it's after graduation. They had it the weekend before uh right after graduation and such before. With all the students moving out of the dormitories, it was chaos. So now they get rid of the students and bring in the fair people so that you're not having people blocking the kids coming down the steps with a trunk in their hands. Isn't that something? Coming out the door.

KD: Definitely going to have to bring my family up here.

BH: Yes, they would enjoy it. In fact, one of my uh daughter-in-law's family comes down here from Maryland a couple of times for the crafts and such there. But it's train of...will run from Richmond to here...they'll let them off on a special thing...it's a pretty big deal.
KD: Are there any other kinds of carnivals or big events here? I know there was a big parade around Christmastime.

BH: Well yeah they have the uh Christmas Parade. Uh Kiwanis Clubs gets uh behind that and works with it. It's a highlight. I was Santa Claus one year in the parade. It's a difference when you down at the kids and they look at you like man it be... must feel great. Uh, then we had a uh Fourth of July parade that they started up after that uh no motors uh everybody has to walk or ride a bicycle or maybe in the parade. And that only goes about four or five blocks from Henry Clay Inn down to Arts and Activity on it. First two or three years they had, I enjoyed uh... {Undecipherable} used to have a Bassett Brigade. If you had a bassett hound you could with your hound in the parade. And now I think they got a lot of other dogs in the parade uh They do have one coming up uh I think for Memorial Day that the uh American Legions has some of its parade or something on it. I think that Ashland is now become a Mecca for race track runnings. They had the 10K and some of the other ones that you uh race on the railroad tracks...the joggers and such on there. We enjoy that. I think it's more than that because it looks like about every weekend for a while that you don't want to drive out before 9-o'clock because people blocking the roads while they are walking and such on it. Uh the Little League has its ball-fields down there and the nicer thing around here for the...for the young people and the older ones is the Poor Farm which has got about four big-sized ball fields, about ten or twelve soccer fields and everything else out there. So a lot of the Little League moved that a way like uh.

[Technical Error. End Part One]

Kim Dutton. Okay, please tell me about your first job in Ashland.

BH: I was selling insurance in Richmond and I've been selling insurance in Ashland. At first I worked for another agency uh running their life health department and then left about the first of 2000 and started my own agency...primarily with health insurance, life insurance, and now we're into the property casualty

KD: Do you like...

BH: I run my own agency now.

KD: Do you like owning your own agency?

BH: That's fine, yes. Uh I was never curbed by ownership of the other one. Frank and I got along fine. Uh Got my son in there and his wife...they're running most of it now.

KD: Are there any other side-jobs that you have had while in Ashland?

BH: Uh not for profit. I was help...restart Aces about 1985...89 I guess which was Ashland Christian Emergency Service and uh I was instrumentally buying the location on Caroline Street for them and I...volunteered over there. My wife volunteers over there three days a week but I'm not there regular. We got a new president of it. When I give up a...a volunteer job I step out and tell the new president if he needs me call me, but I don't like to go to the meetings to say, "Hey I didn't do it that way...heh...You do it this-a-way." They managing it, they should run it.

KD: So, are there any other major organizations or societies that you've been involved of or that you know about in Ashland?
BH: I work real strong several years ago with the uh Ashland Youth Association. I managed...I coached a baseball team...helped with the football. I think I said last time...instrumental in starting up the girl's basketball when Randolph-Macon would only give Billy Woods and them one basketball hahaha now...now they're championship uh...girl does a great job over there coaching. That's the main one in there that I helped with them...at the church.

KD: Has anyone else in your family had interesting jobs in Ashland?

BH: Well my son is with me in that. He was mayor...that was interesting for a while...on it and on town council and mayor...mayor for two years and council for four years. My other son uh had a law practice in Ashland and he's moved up to Fredericksburg...he lives in Ashland but works up there. Let's see...that's two of them...and then my son-in-law uh he just started a business with another person from Ashland. Kevin Parish and Russ Harris started Geotechnical group...Dominion...definitely know what it is...Dominion...uh contracting resources uh...they check the test soil and something like Ray Martin over here at Henry Clay Inn does. Those are about the only jobs that they had on it. My other child...she left uh Ran..Patrick Henry and went with American Field Service and worked uh in Holland and then she ended up from American University working in Bahrain for a while...with the Rotary Scholarship. And uh that was probably the most...offset to what Ashland is. Started some businesses over there and helped...and came back...that's about it.

KD: So, what is the Ashland experience of having a job? Does it differ from working anywhere else?

BH: Well heheheh...uh God, I've been in the insurance for about thirty years...thirty-five years...uh I was a milk...er manager for some of the Richmond Dairy milk uh the whole uh the wholesale end and I delivered bread and I ran a wholesale in Ashland Foods...it's a little difference...not a difference in Ashland. Not very exciting...same job.

KD: So what are the main gathering places in your neighborhood?

BH: Gathering places? Meh uh Pat and I write uh spend a good bit of time with Duncan Memorial. She's involved in it and I used to be...chamber of the board and uh lay leader. I enjoyed teaching the youth. Uh I enjoy what the youth activities now. Yesterday afternoon I had 5-o-clock lacrosse game. I left that over to Hanover...Meals...they had over the uh Arts and Activities Center raising money for art and then uh I went to softball game after that so within about four hours I had three good activities I guess. But mainly we gather here at church for the things that we need to do and such.

At my age, one of your biggest activities is going to the doctor heh seeing your friends and going...you meet them there and go somewhere else. That's it.

KD: heh...um do men and women here have separate organizations or societies or activities?

BH: Well in the church, yes they have uh...not as many separate as they used to be but uh I don't know if you are Methodist or not but they have the uh Methodist...woman's society I uh MW United Methodist Women but they call it something else now. Uh Pat's active in that and they have Methodist men which have been helping with different organizations around with Habitat for Humanity building...I think they got something this weekend that they are going to be building. They have worked um good with Petersburg Urban Ministries...was uh a young minister on now. He started the intercity mission
there and our group has gone over there several times to help them...I donated a truck. Uh it was thirty years old. And uh that's about as much as they do around here.

KD: Have you seen any major changes in um gathering places, activities, or entertainment options over the years in Ashland?

BH: Well I was surprised when MAP...one of them did a survey that uh as far as the college bunch is concerned you may agree or disagree but one of their favorite fast foods was Sheetz Gas Station because it's...when you finish studying at 12 or 1 o'clock in the morning, you can go get a sub or whatever you want. Yes, when we moved to Ashland, it was Route 1 and 54...was nothing but an open field..and they built that shopping center and they built junction...we've seen a lot of others where people can go get their groceries and food. Henry Clay Shopping Center right here at the end of the street next...between here and Route 1...that was already here...on it. But uh...does that ans...what was the question again?

KD: Any major changes in activities or...

BH: Uh That's changes...you've seen a lot of new buildings and such go on up and around uh part of the outfit. They got it next week or week after that...they've started street parties twice a year...spring and fall over by the uh library. And they didn't have the Strawberry Festival uh before we came...that's been an added function to it and uh things. Can't think of too many others. Uh they've added a couple of parades...the one on Memorial Day was pretty and I think it says something on that last time...always had a Santa Claus Parade on it. That's usually the Saturday before Thanksgiving so we can get the floats for the kids. But if it wasn't for the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts and the Cub Scouts...it wouldn't be but so many people in the parade.

KD: You mentioned street parties. Is that held by any major organization or is it town-wide effort?

BH: Uh it's uh. I thought it was part of MAP...M.A.P..but it's uh I think it's part of the uh separate organization for fundraising to uh for the memorial that's around the library for nine-apiece and Jay Pace but I think it goes to that uh primarily.

And of course you've got one of your ex-professor's dad. He started the railroad run. Uh...some of those activities...thought it up...and they got two or three...activities a year...running on the uh jogging or whatever you call it.

KD: Have you lived through any major historic events while living here in Ashland? Anything influential that has affected your life?

BH: Have we had any events of...what is the question again?

KD: Is there anything...like any major historical events...wars...that have affected the community?

BH: Have there been any...

KD: Such as World War II?

BH: Well you've got...well it is interesting what is referred to as the oldtimers...the war memorial down here which is now part of Henry Clay School. That was built as a memorial to World War I and II of course they incorporated Korean and uh Vietnam on it but was had to be sold to settle a lawsuit, schools have bought it...using it on there. Uh and uh Ash...uh American Legion has a small parade...people have
made it...thirty or forty men march on fourth of July...not fourth of July...on Memorial Day in different ones on that. But it's not too much uh historical that I am aware of. I should be but I'm not uh on it.

KD: How do you feel about living in the center of the universe?

BH: I feel great living in Ashland. I think uh we've moved up here Thanksgiving of 1979. Ready or not I told to go. And I've been real pleased with it. It's a good community to raise our children in and nine of eleven grandchildren have been raised in the area here so uh I think it's good. It's a diverse neighborhood uh on it.

KD: When you say diverse, could you elaborate please?

BH: Well you've got uh the blacks which integrate with the whites which you didn't see in the fifties you know too much and it is very good and it's diverse. They work and do together uh Shalom Baptist, Union Baptist Church and such work in it and uh good friends in the community with the ah uh and you got the...don't want to expand on that...and you got people that think of different cultures and such with it. I oh.

KD: Do you think relationships have been very good over the years?

BH: With the community?

KD: Mmmmm.

BH: Yeah, I thought it was a bad situation they had when...I think it was more of an economic...people that had money complaining about everything else. Uh the community split very strongly at first on Wal-Mart. They thought everyone was going to go out of business because Walmart came. Only one business that I know of has gone out of business due to them up here and they should have before the way they were treating people. And uh I think that was probably one of the divisive things...had the flamingos was what they...higher income...I think they didn't want to integrate with them. You were from Mechanicsville. I think you are. One of you. And a lot of the people uh Mechanicsville you know is one of the top Wal-Mart's east of the Mississippi...probably the country's one of the top three. And I think they thought they were going to have the same thing that y'all have. It was overcrowded over there. And I think that Wal-Mart knew that they were losing business over there and by putting one in Ashland here it had a basic business that drew from Mechanicsville over to here and uh. The manager...the assistant manager over there now is the manager here but that had a splitting effect with community for a while but uh you've got them all there. Wal-Mart's been a very good citizen and uh with it's gifts to the community for different things uh as has Ukrop's. I was here when Ukrop's came uh in it and when the shopping center. At first they didn't want to come...they didn't think it was enough people but um I'm sure they're very happy with the volume with it.

KD: Okay, one last question to wrap things up. What do you think makes Ashland so special?

BH: The people. The people get along with it. The community...you don't have too many small communities that have college kids around. I wish y'all look like the college kids don't cross England Street...ya don't cross the railroad track and now y'all stay pretty close to the community. I guess uh people would be glad of that. They don't want teenagers running around throwing beer cans here and trash there. It doesn't happen. You're good citizens up here. Now Amanda's laughing...they're worse than that I'm sure uh it is. And then you've got um the uh rural community...you've got. I didn't realize it but it's right much of a horse country in here right there. People can go a mile out of town. You've got
nice farms...different people...you've got not as much as you used to but you got farming community coming in together...you've got uh Kings Dominion which offers the teenagers uh some jobs...summer employment and such and then you've got another industry just came to town...hadn't been built yet but it's it's got the makes and of course for the good or bad you've got Route 1...95 going north and south uh there and we got overabundance of hotels but they're staying full and making money. I think Henry Clay was a nice addition...the uh Ray Martin and uh Carol built over on the tracks which is built of somewhat to the original Henry Clay Inn which burnt down twice I think before on it. But the people have come from diverse backgrounds...uh you got a lot of people adding to it. I can't think of that much else on it. I mean uh...I think some of us have been here...some people think we've been here since the universe was started. They got the center of it since then. You got the old and the young and uh it's a very good community. I came from North Richmond and uh that was an old neighborhood with uh people coming in and out...you reminded me a lot of the one reason I came to Ashland.

Alright.

KD: Thank you very much.

BH: Does that do it? Thank you girls...young ladies.