

# FORT BEND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

## *ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE*

Interviewees: **Dorothy Pollard Hightower**

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Interviewer: Jane Goodsill, Bruce Kelly

Transcriber: Jane Goodsill

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29 Pages



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*Transcript*

GOODSILL: This is Jane Goodsill. Today is August 31, 2007. I'm interviewing, for the first time, Mrs. Dorothy [Dot] Hightower. The interview is taking place in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bass, 2514 Esperanza, Richmond, TX 77469. This interview is being conducted by the Fort Bend County Historical Commission, Richmond Texas and is part of the Fort Bend County Historical Commission Oral History project.

Good morning, Dot!

HIGHTOWER: Good morning, Jane. (smiling)

GOODSILL: I wanted to start the interview with asking you where you were born and where you were raised.

HIGHTOWER: I was born in Bishop, Texas and raised in Alice, Texas.

GOODSILL: How did you get to Sugar Land?

HIGHTOWER: I graduated from A & I, and met L.V. "Dugan" Hightower. We married, and when he went into the service I took his place teaching at Benbolt, that's about 10 miles from Alice.

GOODSILL: What did you teach?

HIGHTOWER: At that particular time I taught seventh grade English and history. That's what he was teaching and I took his place. When he came back, he took a job in Alice and I taught in Alice, which is where we lived. We were there two years and he decided he'd try something besides teaching. We went to Livingston. That wasn't a very successful job (laughs) and then he decided he'd try something else—he worked for the salt company

GOODSILL: The salt company? Doing what?

HIGHTOWER: It was in the office. And then he decided he'd go back and get his master's degree. When he went to the University of Houston, he met Chuzzy Jenkins. Chuzzy and Dugan became instant friends. When he came home, he said that Chuzzy had said he needed to coach. And Chuzzy needed a coaching assistant. So we decided to move Sugar Land. At that time Houston had already offered him a job. But he said "No, I would prefer to bring up my girls in a small town", and we chose to come to Sugar Land

GOODSILL: You already had your children by that time? Two girls? Why don't you tell us their names?

HIGHTOWER: Neva Virginia, we called her Tuta. And then Margaret Scott Hightower, we called her Scotty.

GOODSILL: What year was it that you came to Sugar Land?

HIGHTOWER: 1953.

GOODSILL: What was it like in Sugar Land in 1953?

HIGHTOWER: To begin with, we almost left. (laughs) We got a little bitty wooden house; a teeny tiny house right across from the football field.

GOODSILL: Is the house still there?

HIGHTOWER: Oh no, they tore it down a couple years after we were here. I didn't come for about a week and Dugan got all the furniture. When I got there I thought, "Oh, no, this will never do." They had painted the porch, all porches were grey at that time, I think. I got up that morning to get the paper, and I went sliding out the porch onto the grass! "Um ummm!!!" [meaning NO GOOD] Mr. White, the superintendent, said, "I knew Dot wasn't going to like that house."

In the meantime, Corpus had called and wanted him (Dugan). I said, "We'll go," because it was just a short piece from Alice. Dugan told Mr. White that Dot's not happy. Mr. White said, "Tell her to hang in there; we'll give her a house. Mr. Enquist [employee of Imperial Sugar] is working on it." Chuzzy and Dorothy were living in a house on Fourth Street. The house they were going to give me was on Wood Street. Dorothy wanted a larger house so we traded. We moved to Fourth Street and Dorothy and Chuzzy moved to the one on Wood Street.

GOODSILL: And things got better?

HIGHTOWER: Things got a whole lot better! (laughs) Of course, I needed help. It's very difficult to move with two children and not know very much, not know anyone. Mrs. Earl Binford came and said she was looking for a job and I said OK. Tuta was six months old and Miss Binford worked for me until Tuta was six and started to school. She was wonderful! We became very good friends with the Binford family.

GOODSILL: What were Dugan's responsibilities when he first got here?

HIGHTOWER: Teaching math and history and coaching, those were his responsibilities. And he and Chuzzy really enjoyed each other's company

GOODSILL: It was a good mix?

HIGHTOWER: Uh huh! And then the next year Chuzzy left and Dugan became head coach.

GOODSILL: Tell us about the Sugar Land school district at that time.

HIGHTOWER: It was wonderful, wonderful! I taught fourth grade to start with. Mr. Williamson was principal. He was really a good principal. When we were on duty we were assigned places on the playground. If a child spoke Spanish he went to Mr. Williamson. We were not allowed to speak Spanish. And I'm of the opinion, if you're going to live in America, you speak English. And that was Mr. White's, the superintendent's, philosophy. You learn to speak English. We did not speak Spanish or teach Spanish. Now, at the very beginning, in first grade, they would teach different words; 'teachers', 'lunch', 'recess', that sort of thing.

GOODSILL: When you first came was Dugan the only one working? Or were you working as well?

HIGHTOWER: Oh, I was working also.

GOODSILL: Both of you started working right from the beginning, even though you had two little babies?

HIGHTOWER: That's right, but that's where Mrs. Binford came in. I could walk from Fourth Street to school. We only had one car.

GOODSILL: Was the school set up in the crescent formation?

HIGHTOWER: Oh yes! That was wonderful. Each little building had a cloak room; a girl's cloakroom, a boy's cloakroom. They put their lunches in there and their cloaks. Each one had a girls' bathroom and a boys' bathroom on the outside in the back of the building. And then there was a porch. And you could send children out there to read to each other, if you had a little play you could do that sort of thing. It was a wonderful setup.

GOODSILL: How many children were in each classroom?

HIGHTOWER: Whooo! (rolls eyes) At that particular time, they pulled all the, we say 'slow children', out. I started out with 38 children, 'slow children'.

GOODSILL: You had 38 in your classroom? And you taught 38 for the whole year? How big would you say that classroom was?

HIGHTOWER: It was rather big.

BRUCE KELLY: They were about 24 by 40 feet.

HIGHTOWER: We would regulate our own heat. We didn't have the air conditioning, but heat was in your own room.

KELLY: Before school started, what would you have to do to prepare for the school year?

HIGHTOWER: Oh, we had to get our room ready. We would go and put their books on their desks. Everybody had the same books. And you taught the whole class, except some teachers were little more innovative - they would pull groups aside. We let the children teach other children. I had a little boy one time, one of the sharpest boys I ever taught. It was the little Fulton boy. Billy, he was the sharpest. And I had a little boy by the name of Alex. Oh, I would brag on him. Billy got up and he said, "Miss Hightower, you may think he's doing good, but he's copying off of me!" (laughs) I said, "I know it, but if he's going to copy, let him copy someone who's perfect." (laughs) I said, "Help him any time you can." Billy took him under his arm! (all laugh) He was so sharp. He and Chuck Guinn were two of the smartest children I ever taught.

KELLY: They were in the same class? They were neighbors of each other on Oyster Creek, weren't they?

HIGHTOWER: They were in the same class. His mother came up one time for an interview and I said, "The only thing about Chuck, is that if I put a red check, or a period or anything red on his paper, it was my fault." "Oh," she said, "sure it's your fault. If he breaks a glass, I should've had a plastic one there." (all laugh) I just loved him, he was such a good student.

GOODSILL: Did you have an aspiration to be a school teacher?

HIGHTOWER: Always! My grandma was a school teacher years back. My sister was a school teacher. Yes, I knew. I always knew I was going to be a teacher. I loved every day I stayed there. And then Mrs. Pirtle and Mrs. Webb, one was on each side of me. They were so funny! We enjoyed teaching, we really and truly did.

GOODSILL: Every day was an adventure?

HIGHTOWER: Uh huh.

KELLY: Tell us a little bit more about Mrs. Pirtle and Mrs. Webb.

HIGHTOWER: Oh, I think that's why Sugar Land was such a successful school. I really do. We all worked together. We drew names; before school started we drew names. Like Steve Shelton said, "You're lucky you drew me, a fan comes with me." (laughs)

GOODSILL: What does that mean?

HIGHTOWER: We didn't have air conditioning. And Herbert [Shelton] and T.C. [Rozelle] had a window fan. They closed it so that some big kids couldn't get into it and you set it on the floor.

GOODSILL: So the student brought his fan with him? (all laugh)

HIGHTOWER: Mrs. Webb, we could see her coming, short little walk, prissy little walk. And Mrs. Pirtle would say, "I know what she's going to say! (first day of school) Those kids did not learn one thing, I don't know what I'm going to do." Before the first six weeks is up, "That's the smartest group of children I've ever had!" (all laugh) Mrs. Pirtle was so funny; she just kept us in stitches. We had a teacher who would never put her decorations up until the night before school opened. Nobody was going to copy her! Mrs. Pirtle would say, "Hmmm, if I lay an egg, I'm gonna cackle." (laughs) She was so funny! But we enjoyed it, we worked together, we really did.

GOODSILL: Each teacher had their own classroom and was in charge of the grade, right?

HIGHTOWER: Yes. That's right.

GOODSILL: So there might have been 30+ in second grade. Someone else had first grade?

HIGHTOWER: Well, Mrs .Pirtle taught second, Mrs. Webb taught third. We all would work together. I couldn't carry a tune in a bucket, I really can't. Mrs. [Maxene] Gary was wonderful. I would switch two days each week. Maxene would come and teach mine music and I would go and teach her slow children. And if there was a program, she would do the program for us.

GOODSILL: She was the creative musical talent?

HIGHTOWER: Yes. And she played the piano too. So we would switch off. And the second year I came here, Ruth Brown came. And she taught [phonics], I had never had a lesson in phonics in my life. Well, really none of the teachers did, at that time. And we would all stay after school, and we would go over the lessons or what we didn't understand. People from town would come and listen to her, to learn what phonics was all about. If we came across something we didn't really know, and we were teaching, we would write a little note and send it to Miss Brown.

GOODSILL: She was a teacher at the school? So you'd send it to her classroom four doors over?

HIGHTOWER: Yes. And she'd come right as back with what to do.

GOODSILL: So everybody in the school was teaching phonics? Wow. That must account for the scholastic success of so many of your students.

HIGHTOWER: That's right! That's what Buddy [Wheeler] said, "Dot, that's what really helped all of us, was the foundation that we got from Ruth Brown." And in fact, after I quit teaching, I had a lawyer whose child I was tutoring. He said, "Do you have any of those rules?" I said, "Oh, I have them all." "Could I have a copy?" And he took a copy. He said, "I do not know one thing about phonics." He said, "I can't spell." But, I will say the success of that particular time was Mr. White, the superintendent. We called him 'the great white father'. He always wore a white shirt. (chuckles) You remember him? [to Bruce Kelly]

KELLY: No, I don't.

HIGHTOWER: He wore a white shirt, 'great white father'. If the football team didn't do right that Friday, Monday morning he was out there marching them, like the band. Or he was out there coaching. He took care of everything. And he would tell us, "Take a test, if we were low in this area, we'll stress that, we won't come up low anymore."

GOODSILL: So he was a hands-on administrator from the coaching of the football team to the educating of the young children?

HIGHTOWER: Yes, ma'am.

KELLY: How long was Mr. White your boss?

HIGHTOWER: Four years, I think. I'm not quite sure. He died, he had a heart attack. And then we consolidated with Missouri City and Mr. Rogers came. But Mr. White, "If you need anything, you tell me, I'll get it." We would go to county meets at that time, come back with a first [award]. We knew better than not to come back with a first. (laughs)

GOODSILL: County meets in academics or sports?

HIGHTOWER: Academics.

KELLY: Like spelling bees?

HIGHTOWER: Yes, spelling bees, declamation, and writing, all of those skills. The whole area would meet. Sometimes it would be in Sugar Land, sometimes it would be in Katy, different areas.

KELLY: We're talking about a time in the fifties, when you first came here. Did you get parental support? Tell us about discipline in those days.

HIGHTOWER: Oh, you could use a paddle any time you wanted to. (laughs) You didn't use it often, but you could. Oh no, there were no discipline problems.

KELLY: The parents were supportive of the teachers?

HIGHTOWER: Very supportive. Yes, very supportive. Let's say for instance, we gave milk at 10:00 AM, in the room. Betty Jenkins [local parent] had a little boy [she helped]. Betty Jenkins sent \$.25 in every Monday for him. If they [underprivileged students] didn't have it, that's the way it would be. The parents were very supportive. Anytime you needed help with clothes, or whatever, they were there and they would help. And if their child needed discipline, that was fine with them. Just let them know.

GOODSILL: What would you do with the child who was extraordinarily talkative, for example?



HIGHTOWER: Sometimes we'd put them on the porch, the porch was wonderful! Put 'em out on the porch. (laughs) I had little girl, very slow, and she sang all the time. When she got to singing, I'd put her out on the porch, close the door and go on.

KELLY: And the way the classrooms were designed, it did not bother the other classrooms.

HIGHTOWER: No, that's what was so great about it.

GOODSILL: How many grades were there?

HIGHTOWER: In that circle [half the crescent] it went through third grade and in the other circle [other half of the crescent] fourth and fifth grades. We had two circles; this one was one through three, and this one was fourth and fifth. And I believe Mr. Vavrecka was sixth, I believe he was in that middle circle.

KELLY: Tell us a little bit about Mrs. Moy. [cafeteria cook]

HIGHTOWER: Oh, she was wonderful! (laughs) She made the best corn bread in the whole world. (laughs) She was bossy, oh! But she was a wonderful cook, wonderful!

KELLY: What was your favorite food that she cooked?

HIGHTOWER: Corn bread! (laughs) We could go get it, and the government gave us seasoned butter. And at 10:00 we had recess. We would all go get us a piece of cornbread and some butter. (laughs) She was excellent, excellent.

KELLY: So the children got good nutrition?

HIGHTOWER: Oh yes!

KELLY: Did Mrs. Moy once live in the apartment above the auditorium?

HIGHTOWER: No, that was Mr. Wanjura.

KELLY: Tell us about Mr. Wanjura.

HIGHTOWER: He was a character. I don't know, but Chuzzy said, that he had a little hole dug in the floor. The board met in that room under [his apartment] where he lived. Mr. Wanjura put his head down-- he knew what went on at the board meeting (laughs) before anyone else [in town] did. But he was good he was really a nice man. He did all kinds of jobs.

KELLY: In those days they heated the rooms individually. And he was in charge of making sure the rooms were heated before school, and the boiler was running.

HIGHTOWER: That's right. Mr. Myers helped too, Otto Myers.

GOODSILL: Dot, when you came to Sugar Land, was The Teacherage [dormitory for teachers at 110 Venice Street, Sugar Land, Tx.] still a place where teachers lived? Did you know any of the teachers who lived there?

HIGHTOWER: Oh, yes.

GOODSILL: Were they mainly single ladies?

HIGHTOWER: They were all single.

GOODSILL: That was a requirement?

HIGHTOWER: Yes. And you see, Mary Shelton's mother [lived there] and Mary lived at the Teacherage too. Not when I knew her, but as a child. Oh, yes.

GOODSILL: What were some of the rules and regulations of your contract as a teacher? Do you remember any of them?

HIGHTOWER: Uh uh. I don't know that there were any at that time. I don't think there were. Now at the Teacherage, you had to be single.

KELLY: In a small town you probably knew all the school board members. Would they ever come to you individually and suggest anything?

HIGHTOWER: Oh, yes. (laughs) Yes, indeed. And we'd go to them sometimes. For instance, after we consolidated, they redid some of the schools and put air conditioning. I just can't stand heat, can't stand heat. They had air conditioning. Well, Lakeview didn't have air conditioning. That year it was so hot! I went to Mr. Streich, I said, "We need air conditioning at Lakeview. Why don't you run for the board?" "Well," he said, "I don't know." He said, "Let me think about it." So he said, "Who would help us?" At that point Sugar Creek was just getting started. Mr. Mercer came and said, "Dot, you're getting involved in the school board." And I said, "Yes sir, I think we need air conditioning." He said, "You know, this could cause some problems?" I said, "Yes sir." And he said, "I think so too, I think we need air conditioning." So Bill Streich ran and through Bill, we got air conditioning.

KELLY: Did you cause problems?

HIGHTOWER: No, all I wanted was air conditioning. I called everybody I knew, called every parent I knew-- "Go vote."

KELLY: I'm sure everyone was grateful, because when I went to school there, there was no air conditioning and it was miserable.

HIGHTOWER: I remember one time, Mr. Darwin Altenhoff was principal at that time. That was undoubtedly the hottest day. You could go home but you had to tell him after school. School ended at 2:30 I believe. I said, "Darwin, I have taken off all the clothes I can take off. I got to go home." (laughs) The perspiration was just running. Teachers wore dresses and hose. Those hose were sticking to me! I thought, "I'm gonna die." He said, "Go." He was a nice principal.

GOODSILL: What did you mean when you lowered your head like that?

HIGHTOWER: He didn't want to talk about me taking off my clothes. (laughs) (all laugh) "Go!" We had wonderful parents. If there was a child that needed something, there was always help. If we went on a band trip or class trip we had plenty of help.

KELLY: It wasn't until the mid sixties that schools were integrated. So the schools were segregated. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

HIGHTOWER: The year before it was time for everybody to be integrated we had a wonderful transition. They came to me; there were three of us, myself, Laura Lai and Margaret Havens. They pulled us out of the classroom and we were sent to the black schools. I got M. R. Wood, Margaret got the school at Stafford, and the other one got Arcola. She was so funny. (laughs) She thought, you know, that we had mistreated the blacks. Good, OK. Lawrence Elkins was head of that program, it was a Federal program. About three weeks down at Arcola, Laura Lai had had it. She knew there was no problems at our school.

GOODSILL: What did you mean 'she had had it'?

HIGHTOWER: That they wouldn't come up. They didn't want to do anything. They were very low; their schoolwork was very low.

GOODSILL: So when they got integrated how did that work?

HIGHTOWER: Well, it was hard for them. But they went to Stafford, ours came to Lakeview. Charlie Thomas was a great, great help in integration. He was a teacher and then he became a principle and he just died recently.

GOODSILL: How was he so helpful?

HIGHTOWER: He took care of the children.

KELLY: A little bit about Charlie's background, he was born in Sugar Land. His father worked for the company, so his roots were Sugar Land.

HIGHTOWER: And he went to school at M. R. Wood. And then went to Prairie View and then he taught here.

GOODSILL: He was a black man?

HIGHTOWER: Uh huh. Well, you know Jingles, the principle? He was an excellent principle, but he ruled. Well, that was another, Laura Lai came back and she said, "Those straps have got to go." Teachers taught [with straps], "Those straps have got to go."

KELLY: They would put straps around their arms?

HIGHTOWER: Yes, to teach. They would use them on the children. And Mrs. Collins was our speech teacher and I had little room at M. R. Wood. There was just one way out. And Mrs. Collins said that morning, she said, "Dot, don't go in the hall, they're having some problems." Jingles had a whip! And I could hear him. She stayed in with me. He would pop that whip on the floor, "Drop them!" We'd hear a knife [clatter to the floor]. They were fixin' to have a knife fight. He backed them past my room to the end of the hall. "Drop them!" And you could hear them come down. [clatter, clatter] I went back and I said, "Lawrence [Elkins], leave those whips alone." Lawrence was funny. He was so funny.

KELLY: Tell us a little about Lawrence Elkins. He later became superintendent of schools.

HIGHTOWER: He was principal and then superintendent. After he was principal he moved into the Federal program. We had a lot of help from the Federal program. And Lawrence was in charge of that. After the superintendent died, he moved up. But Lawrence was great, Carroll Rome and I used to sit after school and we'd talk. We'd say, "Here comes Lawrence. He wants to know something."

He wouldn't come out and ask us, he'd beat around the bush, 'What do you think about this, or that, or phonics, or what ever.' But he was great, Lawrence, funny.

KELLY: Speaking of integration, before the blacks came into the school system Latinos went to school at Lakeview.

HIGHTOWER: Yes, they came from Fifth street. Not Fifth street ...

KELLY: Grand Central?

HIGHTOWER: Some of them came from Grand Central.

KELLY: Many of them were sharecropper families and, as I understand it, oftentimes children had to work in the fields for a little bit of September. They would come to school later than some of the other children. What was your attitude about helping the Latino children catch up?

HIGHTOWER: Well, see, I was the only teacher at that particular time that spoke Spanish. And I would help them in Spanish and then in English until they caught up.

KELLY: You told us earlier that there was a rule that you couldn't speak Spanish on the playground, but you could speak Spanish in the classroom?

HIGHTOWER: Yes, but very limited. They monitored the classes. Mr. Altenhoff would monitor or Mr. Williams.

KELLY: Were most of the children able to learn English?

HIGHTOWER: Oh, yes, yes.

KELLY: But it took a little while, they had some help?

HIGHTOWER: Yes that's right. I would label everything in the room in Spanish and then speak to them in English; "This is a pencil" or what ever. And some of them would come and then leave. They would come and pick cotton and then they would go back to wherever they came from.

KELLY: Did you have contact with the parents very much?

HIGHTOWER: We had to. That was one of the rules; visit every child's parents.

GOODSILL: At their homes?

HIGHTOWER: Yes ma'am! After school, once a year. And then we got a new car. Carroll [Rome] and I would ride together. We bought a new car and we went out to one of the family's [home]. It was hot and in those days we didn't have air conditioning in the cars. We had the windows rolled down. (laughs) One of the chickens flew in my new car! "Shoo chicken, shoo!" Carroll laughed, she loved to tell that story. We went and visited every child. Saw where they came from, their background, which helped [us], you know.

KELLY: So if you had 38 students, you had to make 38 visits? Any unusual visits with anyone? Were they pretty cordial visits?

HIGHTOWER: Oh, very cordial, very helpful. Oh, yes. And you see, I could speak Spanish to them and I would help Carroll with hers

KELLY: How did you learn to speak Spanish?

HIGHTOWER: I do not know. I read and write it. I lived on a farm and all we did was play with the Mexican children. But I never had a Spanish lesson.

KELLY: Your husband was known as Dugan. He was a coach and he came to assist Chuzzy [Jenkins] that first year. And there was a star football player that you know well...

HIGHTOWER: Kenneth Hall. (laughs) Yes. He was one of the most unusual boys. He would play football at half [time], change, march with the band, come back and play football. I went several times. Tuta was a little girl, she was six months old. And Herbert Shelton, Herbert would go home with me and help me carry Tuta in after the ball game. But it got so boring to me, you know. He'd [Kenneth] get the ball, he'd run for a touchdown. But he was, and he still is, one of the nicest men I know.

GOODSILL: Did you have him as a student?

HIGHTOWER: Nope. He was a senior the year we came here. [His father] Mr. Curtis [Hall] was, I'd say, the sheriff or the law. You do not fool with Mr. Curtis! They said, do something, you'd do it. "Mr. Curtis will be after you." Even the little kids, [said in a threatening tone] "Mr. Curtis..." (laughs)

KELLY: Did you find it challenging to be the coach's wife in a small town?

HIGHTOWER: No, the people in Sugar Land were very unusual people. They were appreciative of anything that you did for their children. They kind of looked up to the teachers. It was a profession that was a little bit on the top shelf. Yes.

KELLY: Why do you think that was so?

HIGHTOWER: I never could figure it out. Never. Like the Shelton children, Herbert would have worn them out if they had been disrespectful to a teacher. Yes. We didn't have any drug problems in those days. One time (laughs) Sweet Pea Gandy calls Dugan. He said, "Coach," he said, "Either your car's on fire or those girls [coach's daughters] are smoking. Smoke's coming out every window." (all laugh)

The parents looked after everybody else's children. They really did. And if you needed help, all you had to do was ask for it. I have a cabinet that was Tuta's, Ashley has it now, I called Mr. Enquist and I said, "Mr. Enquist," (we didn't have but a little bitty closet about that big in the middle bedroom.)

I said, "I just don't have room to put the girls' clothes. He said, "I'll have a cabinet made you, IF you make me an apple pie." He liked my apple pie. (laughs) "It's coming." That is the nicest cabinet. It takes four men to move that cabinet. They used excellent lumber. I carried that cabinet wherever I went. Ashley has it now. But people were so helpful to you. Whatever it was that you needed...

KELLY: One of the extra jobs that your husband had was swimming teacher in the school pool in the summers. You have any stories about that?

HIGHTOWER: Yes. When we first knew about polio we took the Earnest children and my children and the Milam children to Playland Park. And Jo Grace Ernest fainted in the mirror house. They started screaming and Dugan ran in to get her. They were all mad at her because we had to go home. The next day they were going to Kerrville, that's where Mrs. Ernest's family lived. They called back and said Jo Grace had polio. [solemn pause] I was petrified. We were all in that one car, you know. Jo Grace had it, then her brother and her other sister had it. And we were petrified. I was petrified! We decided that we'd all take shots. We would go down even on Sunday morning and Betty Norman, she was Dr. Slaughter's nurse, and they had this table with all these needles. I think it was 12 shots we took for the polio. Even a lot of the adults had polio. I'm not sure but I believe according to the population, Sugar Land had more polio cases than any other city in the area.

Dr. Slaughter decided that everyone would take a nap. Rest, all children should take a nap. So this little boy called one day and he said “Mr~s. High~tower,” [in a lilting accent he always said] “I was a-wonderin’”. “I was a-wonderin’, what do you need to go swimming?” The pool was here and then there was a fence and the parents could sit and watch their children.

KELLY: It was an indoor pool attached to the back of the gymnasium.

HIGHTOWER: So, “I was a-wonderin’, what do you need to go swimming?” “All you need is a cap.” (laughs) Dugan came home, he said, “That little son of the bitch came out there with nothing but a cap! No clothes, nothing, just naked as a jaybird! Jumped in the pool.” (all laugh) We were all taking a nap and there was a [firm] knock on the door, “Mr~s. High~tower, I was a-wonderin’ ... why you didn’t tell us we had to have a bathing suit?”

KELLY: Tell us about coaches and Saturday morning of the drugstore.

HIGHTOWER: Oh. That was something else. They all met down there for coffee. They’d go to the drug store, eat, they’d quarterback everything. Dugan wouldn’t have missed that for nothin’. And sometimes in the afternoons they would go. But Dugan was down there [one time] when Tuta was bad. I had to go take her to the clinic and I had to take Scotty too, because I didn’t have anyone to leave them with. And they were down there, Mr. White was drinking coffee. I had Scottie and Tuta was running around and stepped on a big piece of metal. Dr. Slaughter was going to give her a tetanus shot. Well she misbehaved. She ran around the table, Dr. Slaughter running after her, you know, [Tuta] screaming and crying. Finally I called Dugan, he told Mr. White, “I gotta go, Dot’s crying and Dot never cries.” They [the children] had really upset me that day. (laughs)

KELLY: Was there a quarterback club?

HIGHTOWER: Oh, yes. Everyone supported the team, the parents, all of us.

KELLY: Tell us about the medical care you received in Sugar Land. Did you have to pay for medical care?

HIGHTOWER: Yes, but very minimal. I remember one time I went to see Dr. Wheeler, the dentist. I said: “It’s cold in here.” He said, “You should’ve been in here yesterday, it was so hot!” Dr. Slaughter saw so many people, I forget, 100 or something. I said, “You know it’s really not the money with him.” “Ha!” He called me Pasquale. “Pasquale don’t kid yourself. He 3-dollared them to death yesterday.” (laughs)



KELLY: Describe what procedure you would have to go through to see the doctor in those days.

HIGHTOWER: Just go down there.

KELLY: There was a clinic and it was on the property of the refinery.

HIGHTOWER: Right there by the railroad station.

KELLY: At the corner of what is now Kempner and Ulrich Streets. Did you have to call ahead?

HIGHTOWER: Well, sometimes you could call ahead. But if it was after school I'd go and they would work you in.

KELLY: Did you have to pay for a visit?

HIGHTOWER: Yes, but you charge it. It was \$3.00. I wasn't sure about illnesses, because we were never ill at home, I don't think. But we would go down and it was \$3.00 – billed, if you didn't have it, you didn't pay it. In the summer Dugan would measure cotton and keep the poll, and we'd pay our doctor bill.

GOODSILL: Measure cotton? What does that mean?

HIGHTOWER: At that time the government only allowed you to plant so much cotton and so much feed. You measured and if it was over that, you had to plow it up.

KELLY: Did he work for the government?

HIGHTOWER: Yes, the federal government. That's how we made extra money and paid our bills up.

KELLY: Plus he taught swimming at the pool?

HIGHTOWER: He measured the cotton in the morning, he and Johnny Vavrecka, and then in the afternoon he kept the pool.

KELLY: When did he start his practice for the fall football season? Could he get his boys in the summer and start training?

HIGHTOWER: No, there was a limit. I can't remember what it is. I think he might have done it on the side, knowing Dugan. (laughs)

GOODSILL: Going back to what it was like in Sugar Land in those days, at the store you could charge for what purchases?

HIGHTOWER: Any. We called it the Big Bill. We got one bill and anything you bought at the heavy hardware, light hardware, the drugstore, the dry goods store, whatever you bought, if you didn't want to pay for it you just charged it.

KELLY: Even your gasoline.

HIGHTOWER: Oh yeah, you just charged it. And then you got the bill - one big bill once a month. If you couldn't pay it all you would go and pay a little bit on it. They extended you credit. There was no interest; whatever you bought, there was no interest. Like if you bought a washing machine, no interest. Like Breau [grandson] said the other day, he said, "Dot, how did you save up so much money that you could send four (grand)kids to college?" I said, "Because we weren't out anything. There was no interest if you borrowed money."

KELLY: It was such a wonderful place to live, you're not the only one who is described that. That may have something to do with why the teachers got so much support. People lived here for a long time, they were happy, they wanted their children to be educated and they were willing to do what they needed to do to be part of the community.

HIGHTOWER: That's right. Joe Bono came to visit me not too long ago and he said, "You know Mrs. Hightower, I try to tell people how it was but they don't understand." He said, "My children don't understand. Daddy and Mama would bring me in [to town] on Hallowe'en and turn me loose and they knew it would be OK, nothing was going to happen." On Saturdays I go into town, Dorothy [Jenkins] and I, and I would take Tuta and Scotty to the to the picture show and just drop them off. And that was it.

GOODSILL: So there was safety in the community? In addition to that, people didn't get behind in their bills?

HIGHTOWER: Oh yeah, but they'd catch up eventually.

GOODSILL: Everybody had a job?

HIGHTOWER: Everybody that lived here had a job.

GOODSILL: You couldn't live in Sugar Land unless you were employed?

HIGHTOWER: You didn't get a house and you couldn't live here if you didn't get a house.

GOODSILL: Houses were in short supply?

HIGHTOWER: Well I don't think so, I don't know. I had one at that time (laughs). All the teachers had a house and they had the Teacherage. We only paid \$32.00 rent [for our house – owned by the company].

KELLY: What was it like making friends when you first came here?

HIGHTOWER: That was wonderful. When we first moved here, the first person we met was Mary Shelton. We've been friends all these years-- it was great. Down the street everybody was-- Rita Drabek moved here and she lived over on Lakeview in one of those little houses, she lived across the street in that little wooden house. And we were all good friends. It was a wonderful place to live.

KELLY: Tell us about the house she lived in on Fourth Street. How much rent did you pay when you first moved here?

HIGHTOWER: I think \$15.00 per month. I didn't live there a month though. (laughs) Oh, you mean that little house? \$32.00 is what we paid.

KELLY: My understanding was that if you stayed in the same house your rent never went up. Did your rent go up? You paid \$32.00 until they offered for you to buy the house?

HIGHTOWER: That's right. Dugan was not one to charge anything. Cash was Dugan. Other than the Big Bill [from] the grocery bill. He called Mr. [Bill] Little and said, "How much is the house? I gotta get my money together." He said, "\$3,800."

KELLY: What year was this?

HIGHTOWER: It was in the sixties, the early sixties. And Dugan said OK and so he got his money together and went down there and paid it.

GOODSILL: Didn't pay it out over time?

HIGHTOWER: Uh uh, but you could if you wanted to, the company extended time for payments. But Dugan just paid for it. Well, we lacked \$500 I think; we borrowed that from Mrs. Hightower.

KELLY: Describe the house to us.

HIGHTOWER: It was, you know how they built, just straight houses. You had a living room and dining room and a kitchen and a bedroom. That's it.

KELLY: Your house was a brick house which was a little unusual.

HIGHTOWER: Yes, on this side [of the street] they're all wooden houses and on this side [indicating the other side of the street] they were brick.

KELLY: And do you still have that house?

HIGHTOWER: I had it up until about 10 years ago. Now Buck [grandson] owns it, I sold it to Buck. (laughs) But you know those houses now are selling for \$100,000-\$150,000.

KELLY: So \$3,800 to \$150,000, I wonder what the profit would be, inflation added in?!

GOODSILL: Why don't you tell us the full names of each of your grandchildren?

HIGHTOWER: Buck Bass, Jay, Breau and Jenifer. Then I had Ashley and Katlin. I have seven grandchildren. They all went to school and Sugar Land. All of them went to Lakeview for a short time.

GOODSILL: What year did you retire?

HIGHTOWER: 1979.

GOODSILL: What did you do after you retire?

HIGHTOWER: I opened a tutoring business and tutored for 12 more years.

KELLY: Was that satisfying to you?

HIGHTOWER: Oh, yes, it was really very enjoyable. I got to meet other people. By that time Sugar Creek had opened and all of that other area was open

KELLY: Of all your time and Sugar Land who influenced you the most, career wise?

HIGHTOWER: Career wise? I guess Mr. White. He was so into every phase of education. And I can remember one time, I had a little girl, and she would not study. She would not study her math. Aat that time I was teaching fourth. She would not study spelling. So one day I told her, "If you don't learn to spell and I am going to spank you." We could do that back then. Well, she called Dr. Wheeler, Dr. Wheeler called Mr. White.

KELLY: Why would she call Dr. Wheeler?

HIGHTOWER: Because he was president of the school board. So, Mr. White came in and said, "Dot, did you tell her you are going to spank her if she didn't learn?" I said, "Yes sir." He said, "Don't ever use the word 'learn'. I'd eliminate that from my vocabulary. You can say, "If you don't study I'm going to spank you, but you have no control over learning. You have control over studying." He taught his teachers.

KELLY: When he died did you go to the funeral?

HIGHTOWER: Yes!

KELLY: Was the funeral in Sugar Land?

HIGHTOWER: Yes. He was a wonderful educator, wonderful. We had some very, very wonderful educators, teachers, well, Buddy Wheeler said when he went to A& I, he drew a teacher in English I believe. Oh, they told him, "That's the hardest teacher that ever you can have." He said, "I made straight A's. And you know why? It was my background in Sugar Land."

KELLY: Now Buddy Wheeler was in the last class of Sugar Land High School before it consolidated with Missouri City to form Fort Bend Independent School District. What were your feelings about consolidation?

HIGHTOWER: I really didn't want to. I really didn't. I'd liked the little school. I'd just like the little school. And that way you knew everyone. I didn't know anybody down at that end of the county.

KELLY: What was your impression afterwards? We're glad that we did it?

HIGHTOWER: Yes. Because we got music teachers, all of this. We got a lot of extra help when we consolidated.

KELLY: When you were a teacher before that, you had to do everything?

HIGHTOWER: Everything! Music, art, all the academics and we got very little for supplies, art supplies. I had Mark Loik, I believe he still lives here. His grandmother decorated Sakowitz windows. That was the first corrugated paper. Oh man, my room! I had corrugated paper to put on the poster board! Oh yeah, you didn't order anything for bulletin boards, uh uh.

KELLY: Did you ever spend any of your own money?

HIGHTOWER: Yes, indeed, all of it. Many teachers did. We had to, if we got anything. We'd go to Teachers' Supply and buy anything we wanted, out of our own pocket. And now I think of all the things that they get to teach with and I'm amazed! You really don't need all that, that's money wasted.

KELLY: There's one building left of the first circle where you taught and that's the auditorium. There's a lot of attention being paid to it because it's being renovated. Can you tell us about the auditorium and some of the functions that were held there?

HIGHTOWER: As I said, Mr. Williams was my first principal, I got my master's degree and I took all these classes, teaching that you have to put on programs and all of this. So when I came he said, "I'm gonna put you in charge of the programs."

He said, "When we have a program, a curtain goes up at 7:00 o'clock, ready or not." (laughs) We had a program, PTA and a program every month. Each class would have one for the PTA.

KELLY: And a Christmas program and an end of school program?

HIGHTOWER: That's right.

KELLY: What did you do to put on a program?

HIGHTOWER: You had your classroom, that's where the little porch came out so great -- you'd go out [there to] practice. This was his [the principal's] philosophy, "I want a first when you go to a meet. If there's anything you need, I'll get it for you." For example, we had a program where one of the songs was A Bicycle Built for Two. Tom Acord sang that song. Altera Myers brought a bicycle built for two; it was there on the stage. He wanted one, and you better give it to him!

GOODSILL: So that was a very well-used building?

HIGHTOWER: Oh, yes. Buddy Wheeler [dentist] and his wife would come and they checked every child's teeth. We use the auditorium for that. We used the auditorium if it was raining and we had to do bus duty. And the children who didn't go home at that particular time, we put them in the auditorium. They'd show them a little film or whatever. It was used for PTA meetings and sometimes we had a speaker come or a little program. Oh, and pep rallies! Ooooh, they would come because the high school was over there and they would come over to the auditorium.

KELLY: When I was in school in the fifties the nurse's office occupied what is now the lobby of the auditorium. Tell us about the school nurses, how they functioned...

HIGHTOWER: Louise Hall was the nurse when I came here. She gave shots to all the children.

KELLY: Was that an ordeal?

HIGHTOWER: Yes. They would fall on the floor, some of them. (laughs) If they knew it was going to be shot day, they wouldn't come, Then they'd have to go make it up. Dorothy Gandy became the school nurse for the district. But they were excellent.

A child gets sick, they took them home. They'd check on them to be sure that they were sick if they missed several days. They were used for a lot of different things.

KELLY: Did they ever do other duties besides nursing if they were called upon?

HIGHTOWER: Strictly there for nursing. They didn't mind [helping] if a teacher got ill during the day. Louise or Dorothy wouldn't pay mind filling in. Jay [grandson] had to have the shots for allergies and I would get the medicine from the doctor and they would give shots to children for things like that. Not only mine but anybody else's. If you had a child you could send them the medicine and say he's supposed to take this at 2:00. At 2:00 the teacher sent the child down.

KELLY: When you first came to Sugar Land what were the rules about absenteeism for teachers, personal days sick days? How did the school district handle that sort of thing?

HIGHTOWER: You are given six or 7 sick leave days, and then the lost your pay.

KELLY: Where did substitute teachers come from in those days?

HIGHTOWER: The community. And then they got to the point where [if you had] two years [education] you'd get paid this much, if you had your degree... [more pay]. We had some wonderful teachers. Really and truly gifted teachers.

KELLY: I know this would be very difficult to do, but if you could pick out one favorite student? Is there anyone who stands out above all the rest?

HIGHTOWER: That would be hard to say. I had several.

KELLY: Who was a delight for you to teach?

HIGHTOWER: Oh, that would Nato. I loved Nato. Nato Garcia. He was outstanding. He was funny, he would look you in the eye, he would not tell you a lie. He got crossways with Dr. Kuykendahl. Dr. Kuykendahl called me and I said. "Did you do that to Kirky?" "Yes ma'am. I was just kidding him though." (laughs) (all laugh) Oh, yes yes.

KELLY: I don't know Nato Garcia.

HIGHTOWER: His children went to Scotty's school [Meadows]. He worked for the company, made an excellent citizen, but he wasn't the brightest one. But he was a delight, just a wonderful citizen too.

I think you measure how their life turned out in what they offered. And Nato would help, anything on the football field that you needed, he was there to help you.

There was one parent who was so helpful to me. One of his grandchildren is a police officer for the school. Mr. Morales. All his children! I know one teacher one time said, "Why do they favor his daughter?" And I said, "Because she deserves it." He told me he only went to the third grade and his father drowned there behind school. He dropped out of school and sold tamales. He had the Morales Dance Hall in Stafford. He was my "room mother" every year. His wife, she was beautiful, his children all have been successful. Mr. Morales would go wearing that white hat, he would put a chair there, "Mrs. Hightower, you sit there", wife here. He would pay for all children's tickets to ride the train through the zoo. Everything. He and his children were, I think, one of the assets of Sugar Land.

They said he would loan out money. Then he would stand at the gate when they got paid at the sugar company collect it, plus interest. [slaps back of hand to other palm]. (laughs) His grandson would love for a school to be named after him and I think he deserves to have a school named for him. He always wanted a certain kind of boot and his daddy said, "No." But when he went off to school, went off to college, he said, "It's time you got the boots, you know how to take care of them." His wife told me every night he polished his children's shoes, lay them out. [Mimics putting one pair next to another with her hands.] He sent them to school like that. That's a wonderful family.

KELLY: Is there one day in your school career that you would consider would be the most difficult day for any reason?



HIGHTOWER: The day that John Kennedy died. I was teaching and the teacher next door came running in and said, "They have shot the president." I'll never forget that day. The children were just there and Mr. Mercer came in and said, "The buses will be leaving, line your children up." And he dismissed school and we went home.

KELLY: You were teaching second grade? Did you tell the children in school?

HIGHTOWER: Oh, yes. Oh, yes we told them.

KELLY: Did they understand?

HIGHTOWER: I think they did. I think my children did. I said, "The president has been shot." Mr. Mercer came on; he announced it [over the PA system]. So they dismissed school and the next day we didn't have school. And Dugan and I were watching and that whole day, we did not leave the TV.

KELLY: Did you have to talk to your children when school came back, the next week?

HIGHTOWER: No, we didn't, not in second grade.

KELLY: Tell us a little bit about Hightower High School.

HIGHTOWER: Oh, that is such an honor! Scotty says when she passes by and sees the name it gives her chills. That is really a wonderful honor.

KELLY: How did that come about? Why did they want to name a school after Dugan?

HIGHTOWER: He was a very unusual person, as you know. (laughs) Not only did he teach or be a principal but he taught the children a lot and he looked after them. Many a time we fed a boy, then he'd come to school and play football. Many a time. Once in a while I'd say, "Dugan we just can't buy anything else for the football team." And one thing I would like to add about Mr. White, a lot of principals superintendents, they'll accept gifts and trips, whatever. Abe Croft was the football sales person and he gave Mr. White a set of knives. Mr. White called Dugan and he said, "Dugan, tell Abe I will take them this time but don't ever give me a gift. All I want is the best equipment I can get for the money we spend." And we never took a trip. We could have but we didn't. Dugan was a very honest person and loved his job."

KELLY: What did you do admire most about him?

HIGHTOWER: [Immediate reply:] His honesty. And his love for his children. He thought those were the only two children.

KELLY: He was a principal when I was in junior high and as long as I can remember the students referred him as 'Coach'. They called him 'Coach' even after he was a principal. Affectionately. He was a wonderful principal, the children loved him.

HIGHTOWER: He loved every one of them-- knew them personally. Knew them personally. At that time, of course, we didn't have computers. He placed every child in school by hand and would match -- this child would do well with this teacher...

KELLY: So he knew his teachers well.

HIGHTOWER: Oh, yes! He was principal of Dulles Junior High, he was assistant principal of the high school. Mrs. [Judy] Schrum's favorite story, she was not being critical. Dugan love to talk on the intercom (laughs), he would get on the radio [frequently]. So she said she was reading a Christmas story and she as she read, "... and the Lord said..." Dugan came on, "Mr. Stott [janitor] call the office." (all laugh) That was Judy's favorite story.

GOODSILL: So your husband was principal and your daughter was a principal too?

HIGHTOWER: Uh huh. She was a principal and I was a reading specialist. That involved going and doing demonstration teaching. At M.R. Wood I did phonics because that's what we were doing when they were integrated, teaching phonics. So I would train teachers. The government gave us all this equipment which I didn't know how to use. But Maxene said, "Dot, you never have been one to learn." I said, "I'm gonna learn." And I did. We never even had a projector for years or a tape recorder. At that time instead of the teacher getting out the spelling we would put it on tape and the children would take a test from the tape, different things.

KELLY: In your career as teacher what would you consider your greatest accomplishment?

HIGHTOWER: I guess teaching [students] to be honest, respectful to their government, that they live in a wonderful country. Help build character.

KELLY: Do you think the children are getting that today?

HIGHTOWER: Nope!! I do not. And if today I were teaching math and they were really getting it, I might teach math an hour and  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 2 hours, tomorrow I'd teach reading. Now you get cut off and what ever time allotment you have. I would ask them that the end of the day, "How many of you feel like you've really learn something today?" Flaviano raised his hand that day, I said, "Do you. Flaviano?" 'Oh, yessum! Yesterday I didn't know nothin'!" (laughs) So whatever he got today it was more than he had yesterday. That was fun to us, really fun to teach.

KELLY: And did you have to prepare a lesson plan? Were there team leaders?

HIGHTOWER: Oh, yes, lesson plans. We had team leaders but the principal checked your lesson plans.

KELLY: Did he correct your lesson plan very often?

HIGHTOWER: Yes. "Why are you using this material?" You see, we didn't have anything to run off stuff. Now teachers are allowed just so much time for reading, so much for math.

KELLY: Today there's loads of paperwork for teachers. Did you have any paperwork other than report cards?

HIGHTOWER: No.

KELLY: Did you have to justify what you spent?

HIGHTOWER: No, but we'd go and run off say, Monday morning or afternoon. Most of us do our work at home on the weekends or at night and we'd run it off. [No copiers at that time, they ran sheets off using a mimeograph machine.] We were permitted to run down to the office and use the run-off machine right quick. The kids were good in class [while we were gone]. I don't think you could do that these days

GOODSILL: Mimeographed sheets?

HIGHTOWER: um hmmm.

KELLY: You don't have to mention names, but were there any teachers that came to work for the school district that just weren't good? And how did the school district handle that?

HIGHTOWER: They fired them. That was it. Some of them may have used some other excuse or something.

KELLY: So they weren't hesitant to fire the bad ones and keep the good ones?

HIGHTOWER: You know Tuta was really, really, really sharp. She really was a gifted child. We had a lady teacher there and she should've taught in college instead of first grade. So the first couple of days Tuta came home with a word: earth, axis, all of this. I looked at it, [thinking they were too hard for first grade] and I went to her [teacher] and I said, "Tuta didn't go to kindergarten." You paid to go to kindergarten and I paid a housekeeper rather than kindergarten because I couldn't do both.

The next day she had Tuta stand in the corner. I said, "Honey, what did you do?" She had little fat fingers. She said, "I just killed ants, killed ants." [Demonstrates child killing ants with her fingers] So I went to the teacher again. I already had a plan made. And that date I went to see her and she said, "Well, you can have her tested for \$15.00." Dugan said, "Hell, I could have her tested for five!" (laughs) So I went to Darwin and I said, "Darwin, come Monday I'm going to send Tuta with Mrs. Neal." He said, "Oh, Dot, don't". Some of the parents had already begun... [to complain about this teacher] He said, "Don't do that. Wait just a little a bit. Let me go see what I can do." And I think Maxene had slow children, well, I didn't want her [Tuta] in [with] slow children. Darwin talked to Mr. Mercer and he said, "Tell Dot not to move her. Because when Tuta is moved they're going to all..." [want their children moved] So that's when we hired Ruth Brown. [Mrs. Brown taught Tuta and others] And they moved Miss X she to the fourth grade. The next year she didn't come back. So you just got rid of them.

KELLY: The Sugar Land Independent School District was good about hiring a man and wife both. There are a lot of couples who worked for the school district. I guess you made friends with a lot of them?

HIGHTOWER: Oh, yes. The Neals, the Altenhoffs, Garys and the other teachers, their husbands worked for the company. Oh the Ernests

KELLY: Do you remember the McNeil's? She was my first grade teacher in 1958

HIGHTOWER: No I don't.

GOODSILL: Is there anything that we should have asked you that may have forgotten to ask you?

HIGHTOWER: It was just a very unusual school and community. Not many people experience that and for that I am very grateful. Not only for myself, but for my children. They got a good education. Other than that there's nothing I could say that wouldn't be complimentary. You [teachers] had to visit all the children, even the ones that lived out at the prison farm. Mr. Jim Ellis went with me one time. (laughs) We got stuck. I was driving; Jim was pushing. Finally he just played out, and he said, "You push and I'll drive." (all laugh)

KELLY: Jim Ellis was a big strapping guy. (all laugh)

HIGHTOWER: He was one of the best principals, he was excellent. He let the teachers teach. He had all the faith. We had a music teacher Myla Beth Gibson. Excellent, funny, she couldn't survive today. She'd come dressed for Halloween as a witch or whatever.

One time Myla Beth was up on the stage directing the choir. One of the parents called the next day and said, "Tell Myla Beth she needs to wear a petticoat." (chuckles) Anyway Mr. Ellis came to me; they had been invited to take the choir to Washington, D.C.. But they had not so much money. It was still with the federal program. I had Lula Belle as an aide and he said, "We need to make some money, let's have a spaghetti supper -- in two weeks." I said, "No way." He said, "I have all the faith in the world in two weeks we will have a spaghetti supper. Cut your classes down and let's go for it." OK. Lula Belle was good about getting free stuff, "I know this one and that one." We got the meat at real discount from somebody in Rosenberg... free coffee... Everybody brought desserts, we had a cake walk.

But the rule was we had to pay a lady to be in the cafeteria, a cafeteria worker. We had the meat going. Buddy Wheeler and all of that bunch were there to help-- I solicited their help. I didn't want the meat and the noodles all mixed up. I hate it. I like the noodles [motion separate]. We ran out of noodles. Everybody down Lakeview Street was cooking noodles. (all laugh) Everybody was dishing them up. Maxene was cooking noodles, everybody was cooking noodles. We made \$8,000; the most that's ever been made. Buddy and them washed up all the dishes. We had to clean the cafeteria and there were lots of men there to help. and the kids went to Washington. So that's the community, see?

GOODSILL: Wonderful stories, Dot. Thank you very much, great interview.