

FORT BEND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE



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Abstract: **Nancy Stephenson Woods**

This is a three-part interview with Ms. Woods, who was born at the Dew Plantation in 1933 and worked at the Dew House until about 1993. She cared for the entire family while raising a family of her own.

Nancy provides story after story about living and working at the Dew House including, the lavish parties given by Miss Agnew and Miss Lalley, the people who visited, and the people who worked on the plantation. Ms. Woods has an amazing memory of people, places and events surrounding the Dew House, the Dew Plantation and the community of DeWalt.

44 Pages

⇓ *Scroll down for Key Words from the Interview.* ⇓

Interview Summary

People (in alphabetic order)

Miss Jessie Agnew – owner of Dew House
 Emma Anderson – housekeeper at Dew House
 Effie Blake – cooked at the Dew House
 Slim Blake – cowboy at the Dew Plantation
 Tom Booth – rancher
 R. E. Edwards – preacher
 Lula Belle Goodman – teacher
 Roland Gurtman – chauffeur
 Ida Bell Jackson – aunt
 Miss Ruth Lalley – owner of Dew House
 Alberta Malone – teacher
 Muffie Moroney – inherited the Dew House
 Libby Pickens – lived on Dew property
 Berthan & Lillie Mae Pickett – friends
 Addie Roach – teacher
 Carlos Slaughter – local physician
 George Stephenson – brother

Louis Stephenson – grandfather
 Louis Stephenson – father
 Nancy Stephenson – grandmother
 Roberta Malone Stephenson – mother
 Eliza Watkins – aunt & cook at Dew House
 Sam Watkins – uncle
 Samuel Woods – spouse

Places / Businesses

Dew & Hutchins Mercantile Store
 Mt. Olive Church
 New Hope School
 Playland Park – Houston
 Progressive Order of Pilgrims – insurance
 Quail Valley Subdivision
 St. John Church & School
 Yates High School

Events

Born on the Dew Plantation in 1933, Nancy grew up around the Dew House and plantation until she was old enough to work for Miss Agnew.

Nancy has wonderful stories about her life at the house; the lavish parties; the people who lived and worked at the house, and the plantation as well as those who visited for the day or were overnight guest.

Work hours were long but rewarding. During Miss Agnew's parties, the help would work for days to prepare, and then would not stop until early the morning after cleaning up.

She has wonderful stories about holidays at the big house, including celebrating June 19 Emancipation Day, when there was lots of food and relaxation. That was the only day of the year people of color could go to Playland Park in Houston to ride the roller coaster and other rides.