

FORT BEND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE



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Abstract: **Charles Vincent Court, Jr.-2016**

Mr. Court, whose family operates Courts Hardware Store in Stafford, was born in 1934. The store was started by his father and is now owned and operated by his son, Chris. Charles talks about attending the Missouri City school system from 1940 until graduation with 26 classmates in 1952. He recalled that Rice University played some of their basketball games in the Missouri City High School Gymnasium when their court wasn't available because Missouri City had the largest playing court allowed in the state at the time.

Charles describes the layout of the 1st – 12th grade classes and the gym. There was no air conditioning and jackets were worn in the winter. Most student activities were centered on sports, band concerts, and dances. He remembers many of the teachers and sports rivalries.

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Interview Summary

People (in alphabetical order)

T. V. Abercrombie – shop teacher
 Lawrence Elkins – basketball coach
 Kenneth Hall – Sugar Land football star
 E. A. Jones – principal
 Francis King – history teacher
 Carolyn McCord – friend
 Pillar Miller – Sugar Land friend
 Margie Plant – classmate & salutatorian
 Inez Prater – teacher
 Nannette Robinson – 1st grade teacher
 Louis Rodgers – superintendent
 Mr. Scanlin – bus driver
 Rose Scanlin – school secretary
 Leon Scarcella – band director

Mrs. Scarcella – 2nd grade teacher
 Mr. Telge – math teacher
 Davis Tucker – classmate & valedictorian
 Minelma Tyng – typing teacher
 Fount Wade – coach
 O. R. White – custodian
 Bobby Williams – Missouri City football star
 Mrs. Yates – principal

Places / Businesses

Carlsbad Caverns, New Mexico
 Houston, Texas
 Missouri City, Texas
 Rice University
 Stafford, Texas

Events

Charles' father moved to Stafford in 1919 to open a general store with other family members.

In 1945, his father opened Courts Hardware store which is still in business today, managed by Charles' son, Chris.

Charles went to the Missouri City school system from 1st – 12th grade graduating in 1952 with 26 classmates. He provides detailed descriptions of the layout of the buildings, the classrooms, the gym, cafeteria, shop, and offices.

Charles talks about various teachers; his attempt at band until it interfered with working at the store; playing basketball, having difficulty with math and learning to type, which helped him in the military.

Also, he reminisces about his classmates raising money for their senior class trip on a school bus to visit Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico.

Today, he and his wife are retired. Charles states "I'm a long-term guy! 56 years married, 61 years in the hardware business, and 82 years in the church."