

FORT BEND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE



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Abstract: **Thomas Fonville**

Mr. Fonville was born in San Augustine, Texas in 1938 and graduated in 1957 from Sugar Land High School with 34 fellow classmates. He shares stories about living on the Central Unit 2 prison property where his dad worked as the electrical superintendent. His life was idyllic playing sports, fishing, and hunting. By 10th grade, he was allowed to join a country band and even cut a record that went to Number 2 in Houston area.

Today, he is a fiddle champion in the senior division in Texas, New Mexico, and Alabama, including 8th place in the national fiddler contest.

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Interview Summary

People (in order mentioned in interview)

Frierson Family – neighbors

John & Jimmy Lister – neighbors

Tom Drew – hunting buddy

Sonny Astorga – basketball team captain

John Heitman – basketball team captain

Edward Ernest – high school principal

Places / Businesses

City of San Augustine, Texas

Central Unit 2 Prison System

City of Sugar Land, Texas

Sugar Land High School

Rosenberg, Texas

Events

Thomas and his family moved to Sugar Land about 1954 when his dad became electrical superintendent of 7 of the prison farms.

His dad installed a new phone system that connected to the phone company in Sugar Land and did not require cranking it like the former system.

Thomas enjoyed fishing and hunting and shares a few stories of his adventures.

He played sports and played in a country band during his high school years.

He graduated in 1957 in a class of 35 at Sugar Land High School.

Today, he travels around the US entering fiddle contests. Mr. Fonville learned to play the fiddle on his own and is a fiddle champion in several states, He placed 8th in a national contest.