

Oral Memoirs
of
Algerine Miller

An Interview Conducted by

Meghan Vance

November 7, 2012

HIS 5067 Oral History Project

University of Central Florida RICHES of Central Florida

University of Central Florida Public History Center

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Interview Histories

Interviewers: Meghan Vance

The recordings and transcripts of the interview were processed in the offices of the Public History Center, University of Central Florida, Sanford, Florida.

Project Detail

RICHES of Central Florida is an umbrella program housing interdisciplinary public history projects that bring together different departments at UCF with profit and non-profit sectors of the community.

Central Florida has often been associated with large-scale, commercial tourism and housing development. While those aspects of Central Florida are important to the economic growth of the region, much of its history has remained unnoticed and under researched. The Public History program at UCF links many projects under one initiative to promote the collection and preservation of Central Florida history. By facilitating research that records and presents the stories of communities, businesses, and institutions in Central Florida, RICHES seeks to provide the region with a deeper sense of its heritage. At the same time, the initiative connects the UCF students and faculty with the community and creates a foundation on which Central Floridians can build a better sense of their history.

Legal Status

Scholarly use of the recording and transcript of the interview with Algerine Miller is unrestricted. The interview agreement was signed on November 7, 2012.

Abstract

Oral history interview of Algerine Miller, who was born on December 6, 1940, in Sanford, Florida. Miller graduated from Crooms Academy, located at 2200 West Thirteenth Street, in 1958. After high school, she attended the Walker Business School for one year. Miller worked for the State of Florida as an Eligibility Interviewer for 16 years and for Seminole County Community College as an Assistant Financial Interviewer. Miller has also worked with the UCF Public History Center as a volunteer, especially within the Crooms Academy Alumni Exhibit: Triumph Through Adversity. This interview was conducted by Meghan Vance at the Goldsboro Museum, located at 1211 West Thirteenth Street, on November 7, 2012.

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Algerine Miller

Oral History Memoir

Interviewed by Meaghan Vance

November 7, 2012

Sanford, Florida

0:00:00

Introduction

Miller How long is this gonna take?

Vance Just a couple minutes. Maybe like 30 minutes or so.

Miller Okay.

Vance Okay. So today is November 7th, 2012. And I'm Meghan Vance, am interviewing Algerine Miller about the Crooms Academy [of Information Technology] exhibit at the Public History Center for the University of Central Florida [UCF]. And we are at Goldsboro Museum in Sanford. Um, so Miss Miller, when, um – where did you grow up?

Miller I grew up in Sanford.

Vance In Sanford? And you went to Crooms Academy?

Miller I went to Crooms Academy.

Vance While it was a high school, correct? Or during – while you were in high school?

Miller It was, uh, the only – uh, ah, not just high school, 'cause I went to Crooms when I was in fourth grade.

Vance Oh, really? Oh, okay. Did – did you go straight through? Like until you finished high school? Or...

Miller Mmhmm.

Vance And what year did you graduate?

Miller 1958.

0:00:50

Life after graduation

Vance Wow. And how – what did you do after you graduated from high school?

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Miller After I graduated, uh, the first year, my parents, uh, you know, couldn't afford school. That was out. Um, it[sic] was no real. So I like babysat, you know. And then, um, my mother told me, uh, that she would help me go to like a trade school. So I went to Jacksonville for business, uh—executive secretary, supposedly.

Vance Oh, okay. And did you stay there long or did you come back?

Miller I stayed nine months. I [inaudible]...

Vance Yeah. And then you came back to Sanford after that?

Miller Then I came back to Sanford. And I got married.

Vance Yeah?

Miller and was married for a year. And we separated, and I went to Philadelphia[, Pennsylvania].

Vance Oh, wow. And how long were you in Philadelphia?

Miller Oh, about 18 years.

Vance Wow. Oh, okay. So you were gone...

Miller My young adult life.

Vance Yeah. So you were gone from Sanford for a few years before you came back and...

Miller Right.

Vance And you came back home?

Miller And I came back home in 1986.

0:01:58 **Creation of the Crooms Academy Alumni Exhibit**

Vance Oh, okay. So that was after the Student Museum [and Center for Social Studies] had already started?

Miller Well—well, no. The Student Museum actually—when you say the Student Museum...

Vance Well, not the Crooms [Academy Alumni] Exhibit[: Triumph Through Adversity]. just the museum itself.

Miller Yeah. Yeah.

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- Vance** Right. And how did you get involved in the Crooms exhibit that's at the museum?
- Miller** Because when, uh, um, the Crooms, uh, Academy group has a – and still has – a following. Of all of the Crooms Academy Alumnis[sic] that we have contact information on and every four years – no. it's three now. And every three years we have a reunion. Everybody comes back and have this big reunion.
- Vance** And are those reunions across multiple classes? or are they, like, specific?
- Miller** Multiple classes.
- Vance** Multiple classes.
- Miller** At one time, it was broken up, uh, like, uh – from [19]49 back to '33, which there wasn't a whole lot of them living.
- Vance** Right.
- Miller** And then from, uh, '50 to '59. And then '60-'61. they start breaking up, because...
- Vance** More students?
- Miller** It was changing. Uh, the environment was changing. So – but we still have people who did not necessarily graduate from Crooms, but attended Crooms at some point before total integration started.
- Vance** Oh, okay.
- Miller** So they felt that they had missed out on what we had. So they wanted to be grafted in. so we still have some kid – some students who graduated from Seminole High [School] in our Crooms Academy Alumni Association, because they went to Crooms at one point.
- Vance** That's interesting.
- Miller** So...
- Vance** So did the reunions kind of spawn the creation of the exhibit then?
- Miller** Yes, 'cause we were, uh, collecting information. Uh, and it was [Francis] Oliver really – Francis. That's why I said she is the, um – actually, I think it was her baby. That – “Hey,” um, “we need to do something. We...” ‘Cause she had information. Other people had information. So we said, “Why don't we try to set up an exhibit?” So they collect everything and set it out, so we had a little exhibit in the Hopper [Academy] – old school – for about three months. And a lot of people came by and were like, “Oh, this is nice. I want to add. I want to put mine

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in there.” And she just had all this stuff so she said, “oh.” and then that building closed down and she had to put everything in storage, until we found a place. And that’s when, um, one of our members, who worked with the [Seminole County Public Schools] School Board – he was a prin – and he is the only living – principal of the , Crooms.

Vance Oh, wow.

Miller You know, he had contact with the school board. So they talked and they talked. And say, “Well, maybe we’ll partner and put your history stuff in our museum.” And it was accepted.

Vance wow. And what year was that – that it went into the museum?

Miller Oh, my, my, my. I gotta think about that. 20 – uh, 2000. I would say [200]9, when we started negotiating. No. Going back to when we started negotiating, I would say maybe 2007.

Vance Oh, okay. And did – was it a long process – getting everything organized and put together?

Miller Not too much. We just had to, um, like do a contract and we had to get insurance. Um, couple things like that we had to do. And then we had to decide, uh, what we wanted to do. And of course, Miss Oliver – it was mostly her stuff. Everybody who had contributed – she wanted them to either have a chance to get their stuff back, uh, rather than her keep storing it. And, um, everybody said, “Oh, just keep it, just keep it, just keep it.” So she was like, “What can I do with it?” And so she was like pushing like, “We really need to get it done.”

Vance That’s great.

Miller So, with that done, she says, “Oh, yeah. that’ll be great. then I’m going to donate everything to the Crooms Academy Alumni.” So she more or less donated to the Alumnis[sic].

0:06:34

Alumni events

Vance Oh, okay. That’s excellent. And does the Alumni still, um, hold events or anything in the exhibit itself? Or did the reunions tie in with the...

Miller Whenever we have a reunion – and it’s only been two since ‘07 – during the time of our reunion, we use that room and that museum for all visiting alumnis[sic] to be able to come and look. Okay, you know.

Vance That’s nice.

Miller And visit.

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Vance Have you guys held any other events in the exhibit besides the reunions?

Miller No. And, um, I don't know – I don't know why. I guess maybe it's never been, um, put on the floor.

0:07:24 **Future plans for the exhibit**

Vance Right. Was – is there anything that you'd like to see happen with the exhibit? Like for it to grow or anything like that?

Miller Well, I think the majority of the Alumnis[sic] wanted to be re – to – to be in safe keeping for the history.

Vance Mmhmm.

Miller Um, to carry, um, the history on.

Vance Absolutely. Yeah, 'cause I know the school doesn't have much there at the school itself. so...

Miller At Crooms?

Vance Mmhmm.

Miller Not room, 'cause we went there first. That was our first, uh, um – how would you say?

Vance The location that you were...

Miller The location that we figured, "Well, maybe there's a room or something." but they wouldn't have had a room big enough for what we would have needed. And, um, they didn't really go along with that.

0:08:14 **Memorable stories about the exhibit**

Vance Right. Was there anything like memorable from when you guys were putting it all together or creating it that happened?

Miller Oh, it was a really, um – taking you back, you know, 'cause if you run across a picture, like, "Who's this?" And, you know, someone says like, "Oh, that's so and so," and "Oh, no. That's [inaudible]." You're like, "Well..."

Vance Right.

Miller and I say, "Oh, I want to tell her." As a matter of fact, I ran into, uh, a young lady, and I have a picture of her family. Who were all – she is only – about three of them are living. I think it was like six in the family. And, uh, I found it going

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through some of those[sic] stuff—some of that stuff, you know. And, uh, we were very close growing up. And it—it was really restoring all of the history. remembering the games, remembering this.

Vance And the pictures of the proms and things like that.

0:09:17 **Adding items from new reunions**

Vance Do you have—would you ever include, um, anything of the new, um, recent reunions into the exhibit? Or do you want—or are you guys just keeping it?

Miller Well, in the back room of the, uh, exhibit is all added stuff. The reunions in the years after. All of that took place in the back room all of the pictures of all—and I think we have books of all of the reunions. Um, yeah.

Vance Wow.

Miller And we'll probably put more stuff in there, ya know. And, um, we even have up to and present day, uh, Crooms Academy, uh—I think it's OIT [of Information Technology].

Vance Mmhmm. Of students that are going—attending there now?

Miller Mmhmm.

Vance That you're just adding?

Miller Not—not right now. But say, when they first named it, and had the first principal, and what not. That's where our room ended—with the OIT...

Vance Right.

Miller Group.

0:10:19 **Connecting the exhibit with the Student Goldsboro, and Sanford Museums**

Vance that's interesting. That's interesting. So, um, have you—so have you um—have you wanted to do anything else with the exhibit? I know that, with it being the Student Museum, the fourth graders are having their field trips there. Um, that [inaudible]—that's not incorporated with that, is it?

Miller Not yet, but maybe. Uh, and I think [Dr. Rosalind] "Rose" [Beiler]¹ was talking about maybe, uh, having a time when someone could be there from that era. And have the kids—maybe have a class come in and actually see some of the living, you know, people.

¹ Director of Public History at the University of Central Florida.

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Vance Right. And how do you – do you think that the Crooms exhibit that's in the Sanford Museum ties in with the Goldsboro Museum that you have here?

Miller Yes.

Vance What – do you think that, um – like how do you connect those two if they're in two different locations?

Miller Because, um – and we have some, uh, we have a little Crooms in the Sanford Museum. Because, of course, Goldsboro – Crooms.

Vance Hm. It'd be nice if they could have all of it in one big exhibit.

Miller You mean like the Goldsboro Museum? But you would have to have a – we would have to have a big room.

Vance Yeah, but it'd be nice to have a...

Miller Right now, we don't – we really don't have the funds to really do anything. And the reason why the museum was an ideal location was, because we really didn't have any money, and we really not paying any rent. I think they are charging us like a fee, or whatever

Vance And the Alumni Association is what takes care of that?

Miller Mmhmm.

0:12:12 **Expanding the exhibit**

Vance That's good. So do you have fu – any future – any plans in the future for events or things like that? Or any changes to the exhibit coming up?

Miller Not that I know of.

Vance Not that you know. Just still expanding the reun – the class – and who does that?

Miller Uh, at – at every reunion we take pictures, and, um...

Vance Just kind of...

Miller Just kind of put the latest book in.

Vance Do you get, um, any kind of new things that you've never seen before from old alumni?

Miller Oh, yeah.

Vance And that – does that get incorporated into it?

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- Miller** Mmhmm. Anything that fits in that era, if somebody gives it to us, that's where it go.
- Vance** That's excellent. That's excellent.
- Miller** And we are—believe it or not—I think the next reunion we're gonna have—we're going to have a mini-reunion, uh—2013.
- Vance** Oh, okay.
- Miller** December 2013. And, um, when the people come in, a lot of them are going to be able to go over to the Sanford Museum and then go to that museum. and...
- Vance** Be able to see both.
- Miller** Be able to see both. And I know they[sic] going to be asking, "Why aren't we doing this?" And "why aren't we doing that?" Money honey.
- Vance** [laughs] Yeah.
- Miller** You know, so, um—and then bringing more stuff. You know, 'cause, when they go into the museum here—and some of the families—"Well, y'all ain't had[sic] nobody[sic] in my family in there." Until you give me some of your information, we—you know.
- Vance** Right.
- Miller** So people are steadily bringing stuff in.
- Vance** So it's definitely community-driven...
- Miller** Mmhmm.
- Vance** To bring in the pieces. And are those normally just donated to the museum? or are they kind of temporarily...
- Miller** Well, there's only one thing that I think somebody temporarily, uh, loaned to us. And that's Colonel Gibson—somebody did, uh, um—like a bobble head...
- Vance** Mmhmm [laughs].
- Miller** [inaudible] [laughs] of him. He's, uh, a black colonel. And he's still living. As a matter of fact, he's still teaching out at, uh, Seminole High.
- Vance** Oh, okay.
- Miller** And his family gave us his [laughs] bobble head.

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Vance His bobble head [*laughs*]. To temporarily put in the exhibit? That's great. And, um, there's[sic] other things besides the pictures, like the marching band uniform and...

Miller Mmhmm.

Vance Things like that. That—that's—It would be nice to get more of those kinds of...

Miller We probably will. 'Cause, like I said, once a lot of people—'cause every year, there's somebody new who's coming back home—Moving back home. Going and seeing, *Oh, I have something—something I could give.* 'Cause I think a couple of months back, a young guy was home for a wedding. And he came up to the museum, and he gave Francis a couple of pictures...

Vance Wow.

Miller You know, from his family.

Vance That's great.

Miller So...

0:15:30 **Sanford as a small community**

Vance Definitely seems like it's a small—smaller community than—than what it looks like. I mean, you came back after 18 years.

Miller And People movin' back now. Um, I guess the trend is: once you've lived in the big city for so long, um, just like me—I was thinking about a young man who was in our festival. He and his wife moved back last year. But they was[sic] in transition. but now he's totally back. They're here. And he participated. they came and participated with the, uh, festival. So he's getting involved, you know. When people move back, some of them are bored, and want to do something.

Vance Wow. Well, I think the—the small town community probably, uh—probably helps.

Miller Mmhmm. 'Cause somebody's going to relate to somebody that you know. Because it's a small town.

Vance Mmhmm. Do you think that Sanford still has that small town feeling...

Miller Mmhmm.

Vance even though it's growing?

Miller Mmhmm.

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Vance It's getting bigger.

Miller Mmhmm.

Vance Do you think that it's because of Crooms? Or...

Miller Well, partially 'cause of Crooms, because, like I was saying, I went to Crooms at[sic] fourth grade. That was a long time.

Vance At the same school.

0:17:00 **Memories of Crooms and school segregation**

Miller [inaudible]. So seeing a lot of the older students coming in – and like I said, Crooms was the only high school for blacks in Seminole County.

Vance Mmhmm.

Miller So the Kids had to come from Altamonte [Springs], Longwood, Oviedo, Gene – I think Geneva – Lake Monroe, Georgetown. They were all bussed in to Crooms.

Now in Goldsboro, we had the [Goldsboro] Red School, which was the elementary school ...

Vance Mmhmm.

Miller when I went to school – first, second, and third. Then you go – everybody in Goldsboro went to Crooms in fourth grade. But, Lake Monroe, Hopper, um, and some of the other schools, they didn't come over to Crooms until seventh grade. And I think it was another school that didn't come over um – Oviedo – I think they came over in ninth grade.

Vance Okay. Did you enjoy going to school there?

Miller Mmhmm.

Vance Yeah?

Miller Oh, yeah. 'Cause that – that was your social life. because back during that time, you were not allowed to mix. I mean, you just – you just didn't, I mean you just didn't mix. When I say "mix," I'm talking about – you weren't allowed to leave your house and just go visit nobody[sic].

Vance Hm. Right. And it was – you – I mean, obviously it was a black – an all-black school. But when you were going there, did you really know – 'cause you were younger – about the segregation and kind of the separation? or was it something that was not really an issue?

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Miller Well, actually, I guess being brought up in that environment, once you knew what the rules were, you – you played by the rules, and you didn't know – you didn't know the big picture.

0:19:02 School desegregation

Vance Right. And you were gone – were – were you gone when it was desegregated in 71? Or 70? Or were you...

Miller Yes. Yes.

Vance Oh, okay.

Miller I left in '60 – I left home in 61. I graduated in '58. I did one year – '61.

Vance Is when you went out[?]...

Miller was when I left[?] Florida[?]. Summer of '61 – something like that.

Vance So you weren't here for all of the...

Miller So I wasn't here for the last, um, hurrah. You know.

Vance Right. And when you came back, what was the status of Crooms? Like, was it still prominent in the community when you came back?

Miller No, because Crooms was changing. That's when, after the integration, then I guess, the – the rules start changing. and I don't know for whatever the reasons were, they didn't really want another high school in – in the [Seminole] County – Crooms.

Vance Right.

Miller So it couldn't be an all-black school, so it would have to be integrated. So I don't know how they felt about integrating Crooms.

Vance Right.

Miller So they closed it.

Vance That's interesting.

Miller They closed it down. And then, the blacks in Se – in Seminole County became upset and they filed a lawsuit against the Board of Education. It's documented. Um, it, uh, sued to keep Crooms open. And they keep it open. Uh, I think they said, uh, a couple of years after that. But they didn't integrate it. They made it like a ninth grade school for, um, girls who had to drop out of school to have a

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baby. Then they stopped that. then they had it for problem children. And then, they stopped that. And then they had a fire. And the building burned down.

Vance Yeah.

Miller And what happened then?

Vance Right.

Miller The building burned down. They were unable to save it, so they, of course, closed it down officially. So that was supposed to be the end of Crooms.

Vance Right.

Miller But the black people still fought for it.

0:21:34 **Lack of representation at other museums in Sanford**

Vance Do you think that the diverse history of that school is what makes it – the community kind of so prideful and – and want the exhibit? and what keeps the exhibits growing?

Miller Because without that exhibit – and I'll tell ya another thing – a friend of mine came down to visit, and they went to the museum, uh, at Five Points [Operation Complex] – the county museum.²

Vance Mmhmm.

Miller And they didn't have no – they had all the schools listed, but they did not have Crooms listed.

Vance Wow.

Miller And then they opened up a museum in Sanford.³ And somebody went to visit that museum, and they didn't have anything about Crooms. So they was[sic] like, "Oh, they really dissin' us." You know...

Vance Wow.

Miller So that's why, you know, we – we said, "This is a good time to recapture a lot of that information." Because if we don't pass it on, see our – our kids know nothing about that. Not at all.

Vance Mmhmm.

² Museum of Seminole County History.

³ Sanford Museum.

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Miller That would have been a lost...

Vance Piece of history.

Miller Piece of history.

Vance Right. That's amazing.

0:22:55 Teaching history to younger generations

Miller You know, I mean, we have it here and we can tell them. but unless we can show them some things – now, I have an old iron that I – you know what I'm talking about?

Vance Mmhmm.

Miller An old iron, and the rub board. You have – you have it – you know what that is?

Vance For washing clothes, you mean?

Miller Mmhmm.

Vance Mmhmm.

Miller Mmhmm. That was left over from a cousin of mine from my family. You know, and I show every now. And then to the kids – and they[sic] like, "Yeah, T." 'Cause it's like they can't connect to it.

Vance Right.

Miller They got the washing machine.

Vance Have you taken your kids and grandkids and stuff up to the exhibit and shown them pictures of you, when you were in school?

Miller No, but I have – we have – old pictures at home that they can look back at[?]. Like my mother, my father, my grandmother, you know. Comin' on up. But, um, we want to do something with the families at a later date.

Vance Oh, okay.

Miller You know, our kids. And that's why we figured that if the kids come in through fourth grade, if we can have some input, they can see us in the room.

Vance Mmhmm.

Miller That's – that's a seed dropping.

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Vance Absolutely[?].

Miller And They can go back and ask—and as a matter of fact, a young lady was working here one summer—we had a summer program and the teenager was working here—and that’s when we were beginning to work on the museum. And, um, we asked would like they like to go over to the museum, because we were putting it together, and they could help us to work it. And of course, they did. And they were cataloging, you know, a lot of our items—you know, taking inventory. And they ru—they were looking at stuff and like—so then they would go home and tell their parents. And their parents say[sic], “Oh, I know that person. I know that person. I was in that class.” and they would say, “Oh, there’s a picture in the museum.”

Vance That’s great.

Miller you know, so that’s what we have to keep it there for.

Vance Yeah. It’d be a great educational resource.

Miller Mmhmm.

Vance Especially for the community. Not just black history, but...

Miller Not just black history, but, you know, history for everybody.

0:25:19 **Integration and the Civil Rights Movement**

Vance Do you think—I don’t remember seeing in the museum any kind of issue with the integration. Do you—’cause it’s more kinda just the classes throughout the years.

Miller Mmhmm.

Vance Do you think that would be a part of the exhibit? Because it goes through like ’86...

Miller Mmhmm.

Vance Inside the exhibit.

Miller Um, I guess that was something—I guess, we didn’t dwell on...

Vance Mmhmm.

Miller Back during that time.

Vance Right.

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- Miller** Now back in the – I’m trying to think what year. It had to be ‘50, before I graduated. When Martin Luther King, Jr.] – I can’t remember when the movement started about, uh – stop the segregation. I can’t remember when it started. But it was slow getting started here, because Sanford was such a small town. And the people here just obeyed the law, and just stayed where they were supposed to stay and – our parents.
- Vance** Right.
- Miller** Okay.
- Vance** So it wasn’t as a big of an issue
- Miller** It wasn’t a big issue.
- Vance** For the students that went there? That makes sense.
- Miller** It does[?]. But when the students began asking[sic] questions, then some of the adults, you know, start answering questions. And of course, when the fight came down, uh, to save Crooms, the parents had to take the charge.
- Vance** Wow.
- Miller** Even though they used students, ‘cause the students was[sic] the one’s making the noise. it wasn’t the parents. And this was when a lot of – I think they only had a couple of protest marches here – not marches – but going down to the diner and wanting a hot dog...
- Vance** Right.
- Miller** you know. It was only a couple of times, you know.
- Vance** Right.
- Miller** Some kids want to go to the [Sanford] Civic Center and crash [laughs] and go into a dance or something for the white kids at the Civic Center.
- Vance** Right.
- Miller** And then, of course, we had a pool. They gave us a pool right over here at Goldsboro. And so we had our own pool, so we were satisfied. No problem. But when the integration came, they closed the pool. They closed the pool down.
- Vance** That’s wild.
- Miller** So that that part wouldn’t be integrated.

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- Vance** And that makes—yeah. That makes complete sense.
- Miller** You know. Then you know, of course, the young people were pro—protesting. but I think more people decided just to leave rather than stay in. Try to change the system or buck the system.
- Vance** Mmhmm.
- Miller** So...
- Vance** That makes sense. That explains a lot of people leaving and then coming back.
- Miller** Mmhmm. So now they come back and it's a different time, you know. But wherever they went to live, you know, uh, they had a good life, but they may have wanted to come back home for a slower pace. That's what I wanted.
- Vance** When you came back?
- Miller** Mmhmm.
- Vance** Calmer slower pace than the big city. And it's much quieter here.
- Miller** And it's much quieter. You know, as in the city, uh—did ya always lived in Orlando?
- Vance** No. I lived in smaller cities too.
- Miller** Okay. You...
- Vance** I like the small cities.
- Miller** Okay. You never lived in the big city?
- Vance** I did. I did. I lived in [Washington,] D.C. That's where I grew up.
- Miller** Oh, okay. So you know the big city.
- Vance** It just never stops. Yeah.
- Miller** So...
- Vance** That's interesting.

0:28:59 **Motivation for working with the exhibit**

- Vance** So do you, uh—how come—what's your, like, personal motivation for being so involved with like Goldsboro and Crooms and—is it kind of a tieback to the city?

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Miller I guess, coming back since I left—I left at a time when, you know, things was[sic] really changing. Now there's a new change that's going to take place. And we are—we're helping bridge that by keeping the memory of the old. But now, there's the new—the new kids coming in. And, uh, they need to know what happened in the past, so it can push them further.

Vance Get[?] them further.

Miller So that's my motivation.

Vance Absolutely. that's great.

Miller You know, when I see the kids, and they don't wanna take advantage of going to school, and doing something, it's like, "You got to do something. What you can do?" So that's my motivation.

Vance That makes—that's great. That's great. That's excellent.

0:30:01 **Local ice house and family history**

Vance And do you have any like thoughts or memories or anything like that we didn't talk about with the Crooms exhibit—that you wanted to add?

Miller Memory? Not really. I can't really think of anything.

Vance Yeah.

Miller You mean like something from my past?

Vance Yeah, like something special, or something...

Miller Uh...

Vance that sticks out in ya?

Miller I can't think of anything right now.

Vance Okay.

Miller except the fact that, uh, my family moved here from—my father moved here from Orangeburg[?]. My mother moved here from Georgia, because I guess the economy in those little towns—Florida was the booming country.

And that's what I was telling you about that ice house. And um, the history of that ice house was the hub of—all the vegetables and fruits in Seminole County was packed and shipped out all over the country. And when I was reading that, I thought about that—I said, *Right in my backyard*. I mean, I used to—I can

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remember the building, but it was always spooky to me, because it was the big, and the lights and the noise. You know, I didn't understand what was and then I read, and thought, *Oh, my God. Everything was going on right there in my backyard.* You know? And now to think – and my father was one of the farmers – working the farms.

Vance I[?] know[?].

Miller And then he grad – he graduated, left the farm. We moved from the farm to where – in Goldsboro.

Vance Mmhmm.

Miller You know, most of the people who left the farms – I guess when the, uh, freeze killed the fruit and the vegetables was fading out. But my father got another job and worked in the cement plant. Hard work. My mother did hard work, working for a, uh, farmer. Let me think about that. His name was A. Dudu[sic] & Son.⁴ I think it was D. A. Dudu[sic].

Vance [laughs].

Miller There was another paper I saw on his history – Mr. Dudu[sic]. I can't spell it. I think it's D – Dudu – D-A-D-A. He was a big farmer here locally.

Vance Right.

Miller And my mother worked for him.

Vance Right.

Miller So...

Vance That's interesting. And it – Sanford community – the history just never stops.

Miller Oh, no. Oh, no. It never stops.

Vance Very[?] – And that's, I think, it's very unique to smaller towns. Big – big cities don't have that as much.

Miller And like I said – what – whatever I say can be added onto, 'cause somebody was there at same time, you know.

Vance Mmhmm.

0:33:08 **Closing remarks**

⁴ Correction: A. Duda & Sons, Inc.

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- Miller** and, uh, just like I said with the museum. The Crooms room – Francis has been on the front line for a long time. As a matter fact, she was – she went to school. She went to college. She graduated, I think, in '61 from Crooms. '60 or '61. She went to Savannah State [University], I believe. And she was involved in the protests up there in, uh, Alabama. You know, their school went to, uh...
- Vance** Right.
- Miller** some of those big marches. [inaudible].
- Vance** So she's been involved in activism ever since it started?
- Miller** Since her high school, you know. So she has been part of that history collecting for a while.
- Vance** Right.
- Miller** You know, so she's the one who really put that all together. Even that museum over there.
- Vance** Right.
- Miller** You know, so she's been the inspiration to go ahead on, and do what we got to do to go on, and get it done.
- Vance** That's great.
- Miller** Yeah.
- Vance** You just keep plugging away.
- Miller** That's why I say she need[sic] to tell the story, because she is the – the mother to that.
- Vance** Right. That makes sense.
- Miller** Mmhmm.
- Vance** I definitely look forward to doing that...
- Miller** Mmhmm.
- Vance** as well.
- Miller** And she has, uh – now[?] the museum – she has up to – I think she's got the new history, like as the time went on from back during the day...
- Vance** Uh huh.

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Miller And even up to [Barack Hussein] Obama.

Vance Right.

Miller Today's date.

Vance That's interesting.

Miller Mmhmm.

Vance Always keeps getting added to.

Miller They'll[?] always be added to.

Vance That's excellent.

Miller Somebody's gonna to add something.

Vance Right. Right. That's excellent.

Miller Mmhmm.

Vance Well, I can't think of anything else. I want to thank you...

Miller Oh...

Vance very much...

Miller you're welcome. Anytime. So maybe...

Vance For doing the interview. I appreciate it.

Miller So maybe when Francis and Dr. Williams...

Vance Yes.

Miller She's the other – the other person.

Vance Mmhmm.

Miller [inaudible]. You know Dr. Williams?

Vance Um, I think I've met her once. Yes.

Miller Oh, okay.

Vance Yeah.

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Miller Now they got—they got different stories, 'cause they were in—I left. I left and went to the city. They left—they stayed and fought.

Vance Right. That's interesting. Yeah. Well, I'll definitely have to get...

Miller Mmhmm.

Vance That put together.

Miller Yeah.

Vance Excellent. Excellent. Well, thank you so much.

Miller Sure. [inaudible].

Vance I appreciate it.

Miller Anytime.

Vance Absolutely.

Miller And I'm...

End of Interview