

Oral Memoirs
of
Luticia “Tish” Roberts Lee and Catherine “Cathy” Lee
Dingle

An Interview Conducted by
Trish Thompson and Laura Donaldson

July 2012

Celery Soup

Creative Sanford, Inc.

Creative Sanford, Inc.

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Interview Histories

Interviewers: Trish Thompson and Laura Donaldson

Transcriber: Freddie Roman-Toro

The recordings and transcripts of the interview were processed in the offices of the Creative Sanford, Inc., Sanford, Florida.

Project Detail

Creative Sanford, Inc. is a non-profit organization created to manage Celery Soup community theater productions. The original idea for the Celery Soup project came from Jeanine Taylor, the owner of a folk-art gallery on First Street in Sanford, Florida. Their first production was *Touch and Go*, a play focusing on the people of Sanford and their determination to overcome various obstacles, including the Freeze of 1894-1895, the fall of Sanford's celery industry, and the closing of Naval Air Station (NAS) Sanford in the 1960s. In the process of producing the show, Creative Sanford decided to rehabilitate an historic building, the Princess Theater, which is located on 115 West First Street and owned by Stephen Tibstra. The Creative Sanford offices are housed in the Historic Sanford Welcome Center, located at 203 East First Street.

Legal Status

Scholarly use of the recording and transcript of the interview with Luticia Lee is unrestricted. The interview agreement was signed on July 2012.

Abstract

An oral history of Luticia "Tish" Lee. Lee was born in Sanford, Florida, where her mother bought a grocery store on First Street at half-interest in 1910. Lee's mother graduated from Sanford High School in 1913 and Lee graduated in 1942, after it was renamed Seminole High School. Her children in the attended the school in the 1960, and her grandson graduated later. Lee met her husband, James, who had just gotten back from service in the United States Army in December of 1945. In September of 1946, the couple married. They had three children and five grandchildren. In the oral history, Lee discusses how they started the tradition of throwing "pasture parties," life was like during integration in Sanford, how Jim Crow laws were applied, her old house, and tornados and hurricanes that had passed through Sanford.

Luticia “Tish” Roberts Lee

Oral History Memoir

Interviewed by Trish Thompson and Laura Donaldson

July 2012

Sanford, Florida

Thompson So, if you would like to give us the story of how you got to Sanford.

Lee I was born here.

Thompson How did your oldest relative get to Sanford?

Lee My grandmother, after my grandfather died in Mount Olive, North Carolina – she had four girls and two boys. And Mr. Nathan Garner from Sanford was a friend, and he was visiting when my grandfather died. And he had a grocery store down here, so my grandmother bought half interest, and they came in 1910. My oldest aunt didn’t come, but then the next one, Aunt Marty [Roberts] – she came and she roomed at Miss Bessie Long’s. Do you know Miss Bessie Long? Her house was on [North] Oak Avenue right across from the park. The Higgins’ house was next door and Aunt Marty roomed there.

And my uncle roomed in Captain Mark’s house which was on [East] Third [Street] and [South] Palmetto [Avenue]. They had the grocery store on First Street. And then Mr. Garner’s son didn’t want to be in the grocery store, so Uncle James [Roberts] bought him out and changed the name to Roberts’ Grocery.

Mother was in the first class to graduate from Sanford High [School] in 1913. And I graduated in 1942 and my children graduated in the [19]60s. and then my grandson graduated, so there were four generations that graduated. They changed the name from Sanford High to Seminole High [School]. That’s how we got here.

Thompson Now did you work in the store?

Lee No. I never worked, except at home. Right after I got out of high school, I worked at the ice plant¹ for a while, but I didn’t work there too long. I got married. James [Lee] went to Stetson [University]. He got back from the [United States] Army in December 1945. Our first son was born in DeLand, when he was going to Stetson.

¹ Rand Yard Ice House.

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- Donaldson** How did you meet?
- Lee** His sister lived in Palmetto, right behind us. And she was a friend of Mama's. When he came back from the war, I met him and it worked.
- Thompson** How long have you lived in this house?
- Lee** Mom and Daddy built it when I was three years old, but I just lived here 'til I was married. And then James and I—after Mama died, we owned the house over on [West] 15th [Street] and [South] Oak and that's where we raised our children. After Mama died, we moved back here. I've been here ever since. This house was built in 1926. It's 85. It's younger than me [*laughs*].
- Thompson** Well, it isn't holding up as well as you.
- Lee** It might be doing better [*laughs*].
- Donaldson** So how long did y'all go steady before you got married?
- Lee** From December '45 to September '46. You know, he had been overseas for three years. He was ready to live [*laughs*]. Go to school and have a family. I was too.
- Thompson** When you live through such a traumatic thing as the [World] War [II], you learn what's important. Was he in the Pacific [Theater]?
- Lee** India and China. He was over there, and my brother was in the Pacific too. Then when the Second World War started, my daddy was the shop superintendent of the Crown Paper Company, when they used to print all the paper that they used to wrap all the oranges in. and then when the war started in '42, they asked for all scrap metal to be sent back. And Daddy was in the [American] Legion [Campbell-Lossing Post 53]. And there was a cannon in front, and Daddy helped dismantle it, and that's when he got spoke[sic] to make my rolling pin with.
- See, I graduated in '42, and that's when you always got a hope chest [*laughs*]. And mother was crocheting me a bedspread. Since Mama was making the bedspread, Daddy wanted to make something to go in my hope chest, so he had that spoke so—and they had a shop in the Crown Paper Company, so he could make my rolling pin.
- Thompson** So your daddy made that rolling pin? Is it signed?
- Lee** No. I wanted to get a picture of the cannon, and I had a hard time. But I went down to the museum, and I started finding things, and I've got quite a bit of information on it.
- Thompson** Did they turn that cannon in during World War II for the metal?

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Lee Yeah. For the metal and it had been used in the First World War and they put it in front of the [Legion] Hut when they built it.

Thompson Well, tell me how your father got involved in the legal system – in the jails, corrections...

Lee Well, it was my husband. Well, he graduated from Stetson with a business degree, but then he went to Rollins [College] and got a Master's [degree] in Criminal Justice. When he was in the Army, he was in the military police and was interested in all that. When the Parole Commission advertised for people, he applied, took the test, and passed, and was hired. Then we went to Orlando for a little while. And then when an opening came in Sanford, he wanted to raise our family here, so we came here and then he was with the state for 32 years.

Thompson Did he ever have any parolee problems – coming to the house?

Lee No. My husband was very good. People liked him. I remember after he was retired, and we were living here, we wanted to put a fence down the side in between the houses. And they said we couldn't put a chain-link fence, and he went down and talked to somebody, and he said, "Well, you know, we wouldn't put just an old chain-link fence. we'd put a green one down. We could put a barbed wire one down. It's not prohibited." The man said, "What?" And he said, "Yeah. I looked it up." We got our fence [laughs]. It's a nice fence. In fact, the people that live there, when they came home, they didn't even notice it, 'cause it was green and it was pretty, you know.

Anyway, the head of one of the departments said, "Mr. Lee, you don't recognize me do you?" And James said, "No. I'm sorry. Should I know you?" And he said, "Well, I'm one of your success stories, and you told me..." He was very young. "I should think about what I wanted to be and start working toward it, and then try to get an education and become that. and here I am. I'm the head of the department." I don't know what department it was or anything, but he came home and said, "You know, I didn't recognize – he's a man now. He was a boy then. That was great."

And another time – this was funny – is when the post office was Downtown. I still call it the post office. Not the one on Lakefront. the one on First Street.

Thompson Where the Historic [Sanford] Welcome Center is now. Okay.

Lee He came out to the car and he had the funniest look on his face. and I said, "What's the matter?" He said, "I just got a Father's Day card from this elderly man that was so old, he didn't have his regular birthday. So Daddy figured out and got him a birthday..." And he said, "This is your birthday." So he sent Daddy a Father's Day card [laughs]. He had a lot of stories. I don't remember too

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many of them, but he did have a lot. He said he was going to write a book after he retired, but he never had time.

Donaldson Now how many kids do you have?

Lee Three. Cathy [Lee Dingle], Linda [Lee Maliczowski], and Jimmy [Lee]. They were all under three – we had one, two, three. He retired and we've enjoyed it. And then he got sick, but everything's okay.

Donaldson How many grandkids do you have?

Lee Well, we have five now. And then we had four great grandchildren. And when we add the in-laws, including me, there's 18 of us. You know, it multiplies.

Donaldson And do you get together?

Lee Yeah. Maybe we don't get all together at the same time. But Mendelson's getting married, but it'll be about a year. He just got engaged. He's a nurse at the Florida Memorial [Medical Center] hospital in Daytona [Beach]. They grew up so fast. I've had several parties here in the yard, and she wants to have an engagement party in the yard now. In the '70s and '80s, [inaudible] Sawyer's had a pasture out. And they had horses in it, but the horses were not where they had the parties. but they had what we call "pasture parties."

Donaldson Mm-hmm, I went to them.

Lee You did? Wonderful. Anyway, it was a lot of fun. But then we all got old – they don't have pasture parties after you get old.

Thompson Describe a pasture party. What is a pasture party?

Lee Well, it was a pasture. And then Blake [Jones] – Joyce's husband – he had a grill out there and a real small trailer and electricity. And he built picnic tables and a thing over it, and had a shed that he could keep chairs in. and when we went, we all took something – potluck. The men would cook on the grill and it was a lot of fun.

Thompson Did people ride horses or did you play games?

Lee No. The kids – but I'm talking about the old folks. We didn't ride horses. We just talked and laughed and had a good time. Then we lost quite a few. And last summer, we lost a couple: Elizabeth Steele and Joyce Adams Jones. And I thought it would be a lot of fun to get all the old people back together, so I had a backyard pasture party. But I didn't want anybody bringing potluck, so I had [inaudible] catering. I said, "We're too old to try to cook and bring things." We took a lot of pictures. we really had a good time.

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Thompson When you had these, was it for Fourth of July or Memorial Day or things like that or spontaneous?

Lee Spontaneous. It was always on the weekend, because some people were still working. and it was a lot of fun. I had pictures of when we were young and we took pictures at the backyard party.

Thompson Have you all followed the tradition?

Dingle Well, she had one here in her yard recently.

Lee It was in November. And now they're all saying, "When are you having the next one?" Well, our helpers had to get over the last one, because I couldn't do that much they were having to do it.

Thompson So it's gone down to another generation. The leaders of the pasture party.

Lee Anyway, those of us that were in it had a wonderful time. Benny and Louis Austin, Gladys and Doug Stenstrom, Joyce and Blake, of course. And Margie and Leo [inaudible], and [inaudible] and Charlie Smith. Ken and Mary McIntosh were here. Paddy [inaudible], Dr. Bill White. Even when James and I were at the beach and they had a condo[mini], and upstairs they had a meeting room. I called all the folks and said, "I'm having a beach pasture party." so for a couple of years, we had a beach pasture party [*laughs*]. They'd all come over to the beach and go up to the 7th floor...

Thompson It sounds to me like you're the social director of the group.

Lee No. I really wasn't. But I did have the extra parties where everybody came and brought something. but Joyce and Blake and Margie really started it. They had the real pasture. I never had a real pasture. Did it in the backyard or the beach. It was Benny[?] and Phil Logan and...

Thompson All of these people that you're naming – when your husband – when you were in Orlando, and he said, "I want us to move to Sanford and raise a family here," were all his friends here? What is Sanford to you all?

Lee Sanford's home. We grew up here, we went to school here, and most of these people we went to school with.

Thompson And did they leave and come back also?

Lee Some of them left and came back. Now, James and I weren't gone long. We were at Stetson for three years and then...

Dingle I was in the third grade when we came back here. I was eight. We were probably gone 10 or 11 years.

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Lee But we were always coming back. You know, Mother and Daddy were right here in this house, so we were here a lot – most every week. And never felt like we had gone away. He did want to live here and raise our children.

Thompson How many people were in Sanford when you came back? When I opened my restaurant in 1981 there were 20,000.

Dingle Really, just 20,000?

Lee That's a lot more people.

Thompson But it still has that small-town feel to me. The people we've talked to – I'm trying to get that feel of what was Sanford that brought everybody here.

Lee Well, like Margie and Leo [inaudible]. He was in the Navy. They were gone a long time, but then they came back. but then a lot of people stayed anyway. Joyce and Blake went to California, but then they came back.

Dingle I think, as time goes on, when you're younger, you want to leave and go to another town. And then you go to some big place and it's not very friendly and a lot harder to get around. and you feel uncomfortable and you say, "Sanford wasn't as bad as I thought it was. Let's go home."

Lee And you know everybody. Sometimes I go to town and I don't know anybody and that feels funny. Our group – all of us – us pasture parties – we get together all the time.

Thompson Gladys moved to Jacksonville, right? Does she ever get back down?

Lee Yeah. She comes down. Of course, she came down when Ralph [inaudible] died. He's her cousin. She's coming down in April. Joyce and I have a birthday party for about four of us, but we couldn't do it this time. But we're going to do it – I think George said we were going to do it in June. Gladys couldn't come for a while. She was sick, but she's okay now. and we're going to have a belated birthday party for Linda Roth. Linda Roth was a pasture girl [laughs]. Linda is Leroy Roth's wife. They were pasture party people. Linda has moved down to where her daughter lives, but she's coming back.

Dingle She just moved right before Christmas right?

Lee Yeah. It's hard to believe she's not sitting in church every Sunday. She's going to church down there.

Thompson Now, your kids were too young to have gone through integration of...

Dingle We were the class. Ingrid was the first person to be integrated, and she was in our class – Ingrid Burton. We were in junior high school. I remember pulling her

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across the street. she did not want to come. She was the only – in that whole school. We were upstairs in science class looking out the window, and they were pretty much pulling her across the street – her parents. She was the one they chose to be integrated. I'm sure she was very smart. She's a schoolteacher out in Lake Mary. She came back here. There were only several black kids in our graduating class. Maybe about five or six in the whole class, I believe.

Thompson Of high school?

Dingle Of the class of '68. There weren't that many.

Donaldson Because integration was '71. Forced integration was '71.

Dingle It was either 8th or 9th grade when she came. so she was with us for about five years.

I was on the yearbook staff and I was the editor my senior year. I don't think there was a black in the senior class, because integration started in my class. Henry June – I remember him.

Lee That must have been hard for those children.

Dingle Ronald Thomas – I didn't know him. At least Henry had someone. There were only two black students in the senior class of '67.

Thompson Did you have any black friends or know any blacks?

Lee No. see, at that time, my mother always had help. We always had maids. And as I had my children, I had Ines. She worked for me for 25 years. We're still friends. I send her a birthday card with a check and a Christmas card, and she calls me. When I lost James, she came here and she came to his funeral.

Thompson And you didn't have any of the prejudice? That is wonderful. With what we're going through now,² there's a lot of talk.

Lee And see, to me, that's not Sanford. I feel terrible that they are misrepresenting things, and they're not telling the truth about Sanford, because I had never known that. When Charles and I were little...

Dingle There were eight in our junior class. That's Ingrid. I don't know if they all stayed and graduated, but Viola Jordan – we were in PE [physical education] together.

Lee My brother was two years younger than me, and he's been gone 20 years. But Mama had – and he loved old Catherine, and she used to take him down to the

² The trial of George Michael Zimmerman for the fatal shooting of Trayvon Benjamin Martin on February 26, 2012.

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lakefront to fish before he ever started to school. We were close to those that were there and worked for us.

Thompson Where did they live?

Lee They lived either in Georgetown or Goldsboro[?]. Now, when Aunt Ruth lived on Second and [inaudible], there was a two-story house. I don't remember why it was built. It was used – downstairs had been for the wash. And then there was the upstairs that we had as a playroom. But then later, when we were in high school, Aunt Ruth had a maid that lived downstairs. It wasn't like that movie – I haven't seen it but...

Thompson *The Help?*

Lee Yeah. I haven't seen it, but Cathy saw it. She said that somebody asked her if she knew anything like that, and she said she never knew anything like that in Sanford. We didn't.

Donaldson It wasn't an accurate portrayal is what I heard.

Thompson It was in some areas.

Lee See, we're not Mississippi or Alabama.

Thompson You go to Mississippi, you go to Alabama – this is your story. But my mother's from Mississippi, and her mother had a boarding house. And they had black maids that came in, and they literally lived in shotgun houses. You could shoot a gun straight through the house and go out the back door. Lived across the tracks. Absolutely, there was the line. That was very much in the small town of Mississippi, when I was a child. It was absolutely amazing to me, because I was a Navy brat. Born in the Dominican Republic. The only white child anywhere around and lived in California and New York. You know, very cosmopolitan compared to Mississippi. Yeah. but in Tennessee, we didn't have that at all.

Lee Cathy said that. She saw it with some of her friends and she said, "Was it like that in Sanford?" She said, "No."

Dingle Like what? Drinking in bathrooms?

Thompson Separate bathrooms and drinking fountains.

Dingle Well, I remember as a kid in Orlando going to Sears[, Roebuck & Company] through the back door. We would park in one parking lot, and go back and there was a water fountain. one was black and one was white.

Lee I do remember water fountains.

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- Dingle** They called it “colored” then. I remember we’d go in there, there’d be nobody there, and there’d be three of us and we all wanted a drink of water. And we were wanting to go over there and we were told that we couldn’t go over there. that that wasn’t our fountain. And I remember going, “But why not?”
- Thompson** Did they have a fountain guard?
- Dingle** We were just told not to use that. “Here. this is yours.” “But there’s three of us and I want a drink.”
- Lee** I do remember it was separate there, but not in homes. You had a maid. She used your bathroom.
- Thompson** And of course, I guess you didn’t notice that they wouldn’t be in touch at drug stores. They couldn’t come through the front door. They had to go to the back door to get their prescriptions.
- Lee** I didn’t know that. No.
- Thompson** They wouldn’t let them. They wouldn’t serve them if they came in through the front door.
- Dingle** I do remember that they had their own entrance in the movie theater. There was a wall. There was the downstairs part and then the balcony had a wall in between, and on one side, it was this section, and on the other, there was a door, and that’s where the blacks would come in. The theater was divided. We thought that was so weird.
- Thompson** We never had that.
- Donaldson** Well, you see, this is what she and I were talking about. So many people were saying, “It just didn’t seem right.” and it seemed like such an injustice. How did it last so long? And how were there that many people who thought it was the right thing to do if everybody I meet says, “I felt like it was an injustice”?
- Dingle** It’s just like when any law is made. It’s easy to make the law, but it’s hard to change it. These were laws. It was just, “Put the wall up.”
- Thompson** Really and truly, I’m going to give us the credit for it, because I think men would just go along. And I think the women finally stood up and said, “I want my friend to be here.” We weren’t the militant – we were quiet and easing into it. The men were militant.

With everything that’s going on right now, we’re seeing more openness. We’re seeing more blacks downtown. We’re seeing more people speaking to each other. I was at the post office – the guy in front of me was black. The person behind me was black. They all looked me in the eye and smiled at me. Said, “Hello.” and I

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said, "Hello" back. I don't know if they wouldn't have at another time or maybe I'm more sensitive to it now, because of what's happened.

Now, let's go to the past a little bit. Can you tell about being in the [inaudible] Club?

Lee Well, I wasn't in the [inaudible] Club. I was just there. Gladys invited us. I took my picture with them, but I wasn't one of them as a youngster. I think they were younger than me. Gladys was younger. I think Gladys was 12 years younger than Florence [Stenstrom], Violet, and me.

Thompson Now was Florence Doug's first wife?

Lee Yes. And they were the first pasture party people. After she died, he married Patty [Stenstrom] and she was a pasture party person.

Donaldson Which grade school did you go to?

Lee I went to Southside Grammar School, junior high, and then high school.

Donaldson Break that up. How many years did you go to Southside?

Lee Four years – two. Junior high was two and high school was four years.

Donaldson Who was your first grade teacher? I'm just curious, because my dad and I had the same one.

Lee At the time, she was Ms. Chapman, but then she got married and she was Mrs. [inaudible], and they belong to our church too. When we moved back over here, she was substituting. She had a kindergarten, and the children would stay with Mama, and Mrs. [inaudible] would let them come and stay in her kindergarten. It didn't matter if they were students or not. She loved us.

Thompson Can you think of the scariest time you ever had? Gladys tells the story of how frightened she got when she saw the Ku Klux Klan on the corner of Melonville [Avenue].

Lee I remember one time, Jimmy was sick. They had to do a bone marrow – I remember Cathy went with me. Cathy always wanted to be a doctor. She'd even keep her eyes open whenever the doctor would do something to her. I'd always close my eyes. I remember that I couldn't talk. I couldn't say anything. I remember I was listening – that they were saying that they had to do the bone marrow test. and after they did it, it was alright. His white blood count was normal in the bone marrow test. I remember being scared then.

I wasn't scared when I had the kids. Of course, I was awake when Cathy was born, because all three were Caesarian [sections]. But hers had gone too far, so

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they had a tent in front of me, and the doctor asked me, "Do you feel that?" And I said, "Yes. it feels like you're running a pen down my tummy." When I heard her cry, he started doing something and I said, "Are you getting another one?" This was 67 years ago. I didn't know anything back then. He said, "No. it just takes longer to sew you up than to cut you open." I can remember all that very plainly. I always thought everything was going to be alright.

Thompson What's your happiest memory? What memories always make you feel great?

Lee Getting married, having all my children, moving back to Sanford. I was thrilled. And buying that house over on 15th Street. The dining room was fantastic. It had beamed ceilings, and stained-glass windows, and a built in buffet all the way around it. The floor was striped – dark wood, black and gold.

Thompson Like inlaid wood? Oh, man.

Lee And I remember James said, "Honey, we can't heat this house." It had 12-foot ceilings, you know. And I said, "Honey, that's alright. I'll put my coat on and I'll go sit in the dining room and say, 'This is why we bought the house.'" That was a happy time.

Thompson And how long did you live there?

Lee Well, honey, it felt like I lived there longer. It was just 18 years, but the kids all went to school and college, the girls got married, I lost Mom and Daddy. You know, so much happened. I've been here since '79.

Dingle It was '78 or '79, because I got married in '76. and then we bought the house from them when they moved back here. We sold the house about eight years ago.

Lee You see, they had it for longer than we did, but it seemed like we lived there longer, because so much happened. It just seemed like I've been here since then, and I've had all the grandchildren, but of course, we had grandchildren over there. You lived there like 27 years.

Dingle And before that.

Lee And you lived there before that, because you grew up there.

Thompson And did you love the dining room just as much?

Dingle Oh, yeah. It was a great house. It was huge though. I have a son and he is now 23, and he was a big person. And we were gone all the time. Because of baseball and all these things and it was just too big of a house to take care of, and we decided it was time to find a smaller place.

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- Lee** You see, I was there all the time, and all the neighbor kids were there and my kids too. I had Ines. she worked.
- Dingle** And when Joshie [Dingle] was little, there weren't any kids in the neighborhood. We had to import them.
- Lee** If they ever put it on the [Sanford Holiday] Tour [of Historic Homes], y'all should go. I can't go back. I just don't want to see it again.
- Dingle** She means since it's not in the family anymore. It's a beautiful house, and they've done a lot of work since they got it.
- Lee** It was 14 rooms and look how many outside doors. If I was there by myself, I could not live there by myself, like I can here.
- Dingle** I can. It was easy.
- Lee** I remember when James and I wanted to move back here, Linda said, "If you ever sell this place, I go with the house." I remember her saying that.
- Dingle** So I bought the house instead. I always said the house had a protective blanket over it. It was protected.
- Thompson** It just felt that way.
- Dingle** I could walk through the house blindfolded. I would walk through it in the dark with no problem. I knew where I was going. When the tornado hit here, I was out of town when it happened, and Daddy called me from here. I was visiting a friend in Washington, and Daddy said, "You need to come home. The tornado came." that was when Sarah [Dingle] was born, or about 35 years ago.
- Thompson** Would this be in '83? The real bad hailstorm...
- Donaldson** The hailstorm was in '83. The tornado was in the '90s.
- Lee** The tornado was later.
- Thompson** I think they were at the same time, because I was looking at the sky and it was green.
- Dingle** It was a hailstorm, but it was also a tornado.
- Lee** It went all the way around the house, because we had to have all the windows and screens replaced.
- Dingle** Yeah, but that was here. Over there, we went back and nothing, except some of the roof, was — a friend of mine, Cindy, was staying in the house when I was

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gone, and she left work. She said she drove home and there was stuff all over the place. it had been getting bad. She thought, "Man, I've got to get in that house all by myself and it's dark." She first went in and didn't try to turn the lights on, because she knew there wouldn't be any. and then she walked in the room and forgot and turned the light on and they were all on. We didn't lose power. we didn't lose anything.

Donaldson And that's Cindy Slaten Lee.

Thompson What about the hurricanes? Were you living in that house when they had the four...

Dingle I remember living there during Hurricane Donna. That was when we were kids. I was living there when – I remember that I cooked everything in my freezer, because I was afraid it was going to go bad, because we were going to lose power. and then it didn't go bad and I had to have all these people over to eat all the food. I remember that was the only time we boarded windows, because we always taped windows. But it was supposed to be bad, and that house is three feet off the ground and then the windows are humongous. we went and got plywood and boarded up that house. It was just me and my husband, and I was there holding the boards, and then the hurricane never came. But I would rather be prepared. I was in the other house when the other four came. They weren't fun.

Lee But, you see, in this house, the worst we had was when there was a hailstorm and it went all around the house. When it comes to hurricanes, I never worried. This is a well-built house.

Dingle I made her come to my house during those four hurricanes, and the next time, she said, "I'll stay home. You have to come to my house next time."

Lee You know, when I was little, I remember telling Daddy, "I'm scared somebody will come." And my Daddy would say, "Honey, don't worry. If anybody comes, as soon as morning comes, and they see you, they'll bring you right back."

Donaldson Tell her the story about the pond.

Lee Well, my Daddy built the pond in the '30s. My mama wanted it, and we went to Daytona and got the Kokino[sp] rock, and it's still there around the pond. Heidi has to take care of it by herself. She's got three lots. I've just got two. She comes over and takes care of my pond. It's got fish, water lilies, and I've got stuff blooming in the pond. In the early '30s, you might find more ponds around. They were popular. People liked to have them. Mama's fish were tame. Mine aren't tame. Mama could put her finger in the water and wiggle it and the fish would come. When I come by the pond, mine hide.

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Dingle Well, maybe because they think that you're going to eat them like the owl did. Heidi has an owl that lives in her backyard and he's eaten some of the fish.

Lee It's a natural habitat over there. It's a shame she isn't really out in the woods, you know. She's got a plaque from the state that says her backyard is a habitat.

End of Interview