

Interviewee: Freddie Dixon

Interviewers: Allie Adamczyk, Bethany Gradwohl

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Allie Adamczyk: Well, it says that it is picking up our voices so hopefully all goes well. So I guess where we are looking to start is what it was like growing up when you were a young child in High Point. Kinda start from childhood and elementary school and work your way towards high school, if you are comfortable talking about it.

Freddie Dixon: Well as a preschool kid because then there was not a kindergarten, pre-k like they have now. I lived with my maternal grandmother and I am an only child so to keep me busy she sat me at the piano, which it has been fruitful as I ended up being a pianist. So I entertained myself with the piano and my mother's only sister was a elementary school educator and she was also a musician so she was my first piano teacher. My first elementary school, and I say first because I ended up going to two was on south side High Point, Fairview Elementary, and the first three grades and then in the fourth grade I went to what is now Parkview Elementary. When I went there it was a brand new school and it was named for the street Boundary, Boundary Street School. So I was there in the fourth and fifth grade then sixth grade was then junior high and I went to Griffin, and was all excited about going to William Penn in the ninth grade because of the band, and the year my class was supposed to go to high school they made ninth grade part of junior high so we were in junior high an extra year.

AA: So you are like great I am stuck in this place for another year.

FD: We were so angry. So we only had three years at William Penn. Life for me was good, I was fortunate to have two parents and I guess there was this thing called being poor, but we were medium and our parents did everything for us to make sure that we were successful. My dad was a factory worker, and he worked his way up from laborer to supervisor, and my mom when I met her, was a factory worker but she ended up being office support for a funeral home, and so when we got to the 10th grade I was finally at William Penn it was heaven. We went straight for the band and one of my fondest memories was the day that we were issued our band uniforms

and they were about 92% wool and this is in August and it was about 92 degrees outside but we put those uniforms on and marched home with the schoolmates that lived in my neighborhood. My mom said she looked out the door and said take that thing off, you're going to faint. So the band was my thing. But in the midst of my high school years came the civil rights movement and I became a part of that, the protests. Only the protests never the trespassing. My mom, just no.

AA: Yeah she was just like no you're not getting in trouble.

FD: Because you would be arrested, and she would not have that. But I was going every night and so to put her mind at ease and to put his mind at ease I guess my dad became part of the movement. So there was a protest of high schoolers, William Penn High Schoolers and several parents, adults, would be at the back of the line. It was a frightening time, just that part, a frightening time, but it was a necessary time and we had no idea I don't think I put really what a great impact, you know what wheels was going to start to turn. So I was in the protest, I was in high school, I continued with my music and then it's time to go to college, and my friends and I all splintered. For one year, I was in Virginia at Virginia Union University, and HBCU, and then came back home and ended up at North Carolina A&T (Aggie Pride!) and go a degree in performance actually but I did some lateral entry so now I am a music educator in the Guilford county school system. But before even teaching I worked for four years in the High Point City schools because at one point there were three systems.

AA: Really?

FD: Mm-hm. High Point City, Guilford County and Greensboro City. So everybody had their own calendar. So I loved it, I wish it was back that way because Greensboro or Guilford could be out for inclement weather and High Point would have been in so it was three different calendars. But then I was the administrative assistant for the exceptional children administrator. But like I say I am now in the merged system as a music educator at a predominantly black school. At a school which was the arch rival of my school.

AA: Oh really?

FD: Yeah, it was Dudley in Greensboro was the arch rival of William Penn. So we used to beat them in music and in football, and I mean in all the sports, but they have been able to maintain

some semblance of back in the day in that they were able to keep their school unlike me. You know.

AA: Where it closed and then reopened?

FD: Yeah which I have not been able to embrace the merged school. I have been up there maybe twice to see the renovated auditorium and then I was there last year singing in a choir named for the chorus teacher at William Penn to present the Messiah.

AA: Oh wow. That's pretty cool.

FD: So several of the people who were her students then are still singing. Oddly enough I was never in chorus. I was a band person but I used to accompany her in presentations sometimes. But the time growing up in High Point was a good time for me. Like I say because we were all alike as far as the income we did not know, we were not poor to us, we had what we had. I mean as I look at my kids now, my students who I showed them a youtube presentation today of Ella Fitzgerald and it was in black and white, they could not get over that it was in black and white.

AA: Yeah to us it has always been

FD: Golly, I don't think I could look at black and white and I was like give me a break. I mean they were black and white on a little screen in a big old cabinet and like I said it was a good time for me. My class is the class of '67 from William Penn and I think one of the more active classes from the school, but all of the classes from William Penn have maintained and there are reunions all the time. I mean there is a reunion every other year in different cities, and this time it was in High Point. So if you were from High Point and went to William Penn it is called the Pointers, so it was a good time for me. An excellent time. It was a time, I grew up in High Point where I could not have gone to High Point College. At the time of segregation so but it was a good time for me. What else did you wanna know?

AA: When you say that you took place in the protests how exactly did you protest? Was it like the sit-ins in Greensboro or just kinda marching?

FD: It was marching from the division line is Centennial, so once you crossed Centennial you were in the black neighborhood. And a church that was near William Penn was the meeting place for mass meetings, so you always went there first and it was like a pep rally. And then we came up Centennial and came into downtown onto Main street and so this used to be Burger King, maybe where the parking lot is used to be Burger King, and those places were segregated and you had to agree you had to consent, like I said if you were going to trespass you were going to be arrested so I was never in that part. I was in the public right away so we were always on sidewalks. But so yes if it was not a night that they were not going to do the trespassing we would come up Centennial up to Main walk down Main past any of the segregated systems, the Center Theater, which is across the street from a hotel called the Plaza and we would just go the block and now that was probably the worst time because hecklers were everywhere. Some people got spat on, just like you see on TV, got spat on or you know you're already nervous and you can't look like it and you're walking and trying to concentrate and somebody would kick something and oh my god.

AA: Yeah you are trying to keep that poker face on

FD: Yeah so we several nights we would see as the climate became more tense, then you would see the presence of more well the military came on so now you are looking and see these folks standing on top their trucks with guns and having seen the news, in other cities they were shooting, they were firing. So you had to get over that and we would walk the block and come back around and come back down I think that's Hamilton, come back to Centennial, walk back down I mean Washington Street and walk back down and we knew that once we got back across Centennial we were safe.

AA: Then you are okay.

FD: Yeah then we are safe and one night as we approached Centennial there stands firemen with hose and we are like what? What we didn't know is there is a mob behind us and had they tried to come across the intersection they were going to have to turn them back so

AA: Okay wow.

FD: So we would go back to the church and sort of debrief and see if everybody was okay and give you the plan for the next night. So everyday I went to school during the day and I would have to rush home and I would do my homework and then be ready for 6:30-7 o'clock mass meeting and the church was then called St. Mark. It is this side on William Penn's campus and we would go there for mass meetings singing the music that I have taught my students. The sounds of the movement, because they don't know anything about it. They only know about and vaguely about the A&T Four, because one of those guys is a Dudley alum. But we would sing those songs and what can I say it was a hot time as far as intensity but it was still a good time for me. I would not have not done it.

AA: So did anyone ever end up getting hurt in any of the movement?

FD: Oh for sure! Workers came from CORE, and Jews and northern whites just like on TV would come to help work, and one night walking past the Center Theater, that was when the ticket booth used to sit forward, and one of those workers had got jumped and pushed his head and knocked him into that glass and he was bleeding like that but not to my knowledge none of the locals got hurt other than when they were in that group that was going to get arrested that they got a little you know thrown around or whatever but of course they were bailed out almost as quickly as they were booked.

AA: Put in.

FD: Yeah. But so that was what became and I am trying to think they had the McDonald's they had the arches that went from in the ground.

AA: Oh wow.

FD: Yeah. How old are you guys?

AA: I am 20. Yeah I am junior at High Point University and she is a junior at Penn Griffin.

FD: Oh okay. Yeah it was something. Like I say the High Point City had our own Martin Luther King Jr. His name was Reverend B.Elton Cox. He was a minister for the United Church of Christ

which is for equal rights, for civil rights in the humane way and he was our leader. In fact on some of the footage for the Woolworth sit-ins you see him.

AA: Oh Really?

FD: Yeah. And he suffered some of the bomb threats to his house and the church was going to be bombed and that kind of stuff. And he also was the person in High Point who started coming around, oh that was the other thing. The summer we were getting ready to go to the 9th grade, I mean to the 10th grade we were finally getting to go to William Penn, he came around trying to persuade us to be some of the first blacks to integrate High Point Central.

AA: Oh wow. You wanted nothing to do with it?

FD: No because I had to wait an extra year to be in the band and that was the explanation he got from all of my friends.

AA: Yeah you are like no, we finally get to go there

FD: Yeah he was saying stuff like well you are using used books, you are using books that somebody else had used. I'm OK. If you at William Penn the soup taste like dish water and you go to High Point Central they got two or three kinds of soup in the lunch is better and I remember my answer clearly being that won't matter to me because I take my lunch.

AA: Yeah I know at least for me my mom I would walk downstairs and there would be peanut butter and jelly and a juice box and there's lunch.

FD: So none of my friends who took him up on that. There was one girl out of my class where her dad was one of the first High Point black policemen and she went. But nah, that didn't interest us.

AA: Yeah you were just like nope I want my band.

FD: That's right.

AA: So then as part of the band was that band class and marching band?

FD: No then it was an activity.

AA: Okay so it was like marching band and like pep band for football?

FD: Mm-hm. Meet after school, but it was A-number one. We had an excellent band director and back in the day, you started learning instruments in the elementary school and there was only that one band director so he knew you from fifth grade up.

AA: Yeah that's how ours was. We started fourth grade you started to learn your instrument.

FD: Yeah he would come to your elementary school and then you learned to play and then you went to junior high and you had that same band director, because there was only one black school everybody was going to William Penn and he already knew what you could do when you go there. That kinda thing.

AA: Yeah so he was able to start training you from when you were little to have a really nice band by high school.

FD: Yeah, we were A number one. In fact William Penn's band was invited to go to, they marched one years in Macy's parade.

AA: Really? Wow! So was that your year?

FD: Look, you know it wasn't. It was the year before me so that was another reason.

AA: Where you are just like, come on I am supposed to be in that school.

FD: Yeah, the William Penn Marching Tigers, they got to go to Macy's.

AA: Oh wow. That's pretty cool.

FD: And the parents did everything for them to get the money for them to go up.

AA: Yeah I can just imagine just how much fundraising they did.

FD: A lot of donuts. Like I said it was a good time. I loved William Penn.

AA: So then what instrument did you play?

FD: In marching band I played B flat clarinet, and in concert band I started off oboe and ended up on bassoon.

AA: Okay, wow. That is pretty cool.

FD: And when I when we graduated from high school, the graduation was in the gymnasium. And when we were seniors, back in the day, there was also a Sunday service, a baccalaureate, and that was in the auditorium and it was actually a church service because there was always a minister to read the words on that Sunday and then on that next Friday you graduated.

AA: Gotcha.

FD: So when we were up at William Penn, we came back down the halls and came down the stairs to the gym reminiscing about it, hearing Pomp and Circumstance, and it was a good time. It was a very good time. Those were very good years [sings]. What are you doing at William Penn?

Bethany Gradwohl: I am a visual arts major.

FD: Okay they are majors now.

AA: Yeah most of the kids in her class are band and art and I am just like yeah...

FD: Is my piano teacher Mr., Grady still there?

BG: Yeah he is still there.

FD: He started, Mr. Grady is probably an eyelash shy of being just a total genius. He graduated from college at the age of 18.

AA: Oh wow.

BG: Oh gosh.

FD: And he had done his student teaching in High Point with my band director as an instrumentalist, so I had no idea that he even played, and then a chorus job came open and he took that job and he was teaching piano and then he would come to you and now I think that the students go to the teachers. He used to come to my house and so he was the first professional teacher that I had. Up until then my aunt was my teacher. But I loved him to death of it, so my mom would pay him and then we would go eat that money up and go get ice cream or whatever. But it was good times. I don't have any regrets or neither do I think I missed out on anything being in the segregated times. In some ways I think my times were better than that of my students now.

AA: Wow.

FD: I do know as I look at the young teenage pregnancy. Back in the day you got pregnant and if the principal found out you were put out of school. And when they found out who the daddy was he was put out too.

AA: Oh wow.

FD: Sometimes I think they need to go back to that.

AA: Oh yeah. I can tell you that even in the north there are some girls.

FD: Yeah and there have been repeaters.

AA: Oh yeah.

FD: Don't you know what causes that?

AA: Yeah, I am from all the way up in New Jersey and I remember there were a couple girls that I was just like, to each their own.

FD: Yeah and that just shows how much times have changed because they didn't really want the teachers to be pregnant around the students, you know. So certainly not you as a student you had to get out of here. But now, they walking around...

AA: So they didn't even have the option to even try to finish out high school?

FD: Right. Now they could come back but they had too. I had maybe 3 classmates who didn't graduate with me. So in the midst of that, oh in my senior year, I was just trying to think of fun times, I was presented in the cotillion, so that was a big, that was a big event for the black community for black parents, your daughter is in the deb ball again it was in the gym. Everything was at school.

AA: Yeah everything happened in the gymnasium.

FD: And even the Messiah, the presentation of the Messiah that was the big event in the black community and on that Sunday boy you had to run home and get your dinner so you could be at the auditorium and it would be packed. So those were good times for me. I loved it. So I am here. I still live here but I teach in Greensboro.

AA: So even going to school in Virginia you never wanted to like leave the city?

FD: I guess it was because of my parents and being an only child, and came back and I lived in, I live in my aunt's house, in the house that was my piano teacher wa my growing up and I can actually walk to where my parents live, but my dad in 2010 and my died in 2012. They were both in institutions by then, but it was a good time.

AA: So other than the protests what did you all do for fun?

FD: Well back then there were house parties. And Washington Terrace Park was the park for blacks. They call it High Point Lake now. That was High Point City Lake and that was the park

for whites. It was segregated down the line. Even my dad's factory gave an employee picnic annually, but the black side went to Washington Terrace and the white side went to City Lake. You had the same stuff I guess.

AA: Yeah as far as they knew you had the same stuff.

FD: Yeah, our barbecue was cold theirs might have been hot, but we did house parties and went to the park except it was really funny. They used to have a dance floor on top, and my dad did not allow me to go up there. So most times I stayed at my house, if I sat on the porch I could hear the music from the jukebox because you couldn't go nowhere fun and he was a part time security officer at the park so I couldn't sneak out there

AA: Yeah all of a sudden there would come dad doing rounds and you would be like hide behind a tree.

FD: Yeah so I just stayed at my house, and sometimes we had parties say birthday parties were given at, you know where 4th Street is?

AA: No.

FD: You know where Centennial and Washington intersect?

AA: Yeah.

FD: Okay if you were turning onto Washington off of Centennial the first left is 4th Street. Right there on the corner was the colored library, and down the next building was the YWCA.

AA: Oh okay.

BG: Oh.

FD: So that's where some of our parties were, in the all purpose room. So that's what we did was go to somebody's house or went to the Y or we went to the movies. Of course we had to go upstairs. There was another movie, the Center Theater was one, but now it's furniture. It was

called the Paramount and when I think back that was so funny that we would go right here to the booth where everybody else had to buy their ticket but then we had to come around to this door and go upstairs and there was no elevator so it was like climbing to heaven. Climb, climb, climb but my dad would always take me out like that and take me to the movies. Then of course we had they athletics and that was a big thing. The whole community.

AA: Would show up for football games?

FD: Mm-hm. And basketball games, track, all of that. So it was, we did what we want so it was a good time. Now the folk go to clubs and that type of stuff and I don't do that.

AA: Yeah that's okay I am right there with you.

FD: Yeah I don't do people. I will only go to the parade tomorrow. Everybody laughs because I did not go to the football games when I was a student. I don't do crowds like that but you know it was a good time. Oh I know I am rambling but as these things come back to me

AA: No that is fine.

FD: I remember we were in Greensboro, my dad and I, and like I say the old McDonald's the arches went all the way from the ground

AA: All the way up.

FD: And there was one on Greensboro Road over near the Coliseum and my dad drove up to get me something and then McDonald's was just a drive through, you couldn't go in, and when my dad approached the window the clerk put a board there to cover the hole and my dad was like what you aren't closed and it was a young teenage boy and he apologized but he could not serve him.

AA: Oh really?

FD: And I remember my dad crying. So I think that helped spur him on when the protests when that time did come. He remembered that and all he knew was his child was ugly and I don't even

know where we went after that. Eating out, that's what I tell my students all the time is that they think they have arrived just because they can go to the malls, go to McDonalds, but they have no the value of it has no seeped in as to how they got that privilege.

AA: Yeah to how they got to where it is.

FD: Yeah they don't, I guess when I try to tell them it makes me sound like I am Miss Jane Pittman, "when I was your age." [sings] So there were no malls, there was downtown where all the furniture is that was department stores so you could go there and of course there was where the Plaza Hotel that was Woolworth's and in back there is a plaque that commemorates the High Point I don't know how many of those sat in like the Greensboro 4, but you would go in the backside and that's where there was a counter and blacks would eat there, and you could shop the whole store but you could not eat at the front. But again that was how it was.

AA: And to you that was normal.

FD: Yeah, 'cause they had the bomb hot dogs so you know that's the way that it was. But I feel, like I say I don't feel that I have missed out on anything. I think that I am probably richer than my students now who might like I say their history is going to be bland. I mean what are you guys going to talk about? You are going to talk about all the diseases.

AA: Yeah all the diseases and 9/11.

FD: And the disrespect of human life, because that was not happening as we were growing up, you didn't even lock your doors.

AA: Yeah, that is the one thing that I find is so funny down here is all of my friends lock all of their car doors whereas at home we don't lock any of our car doors.

FD: You better if you want to have at least the seats left. I mean like I said there is no regard now for human life or human property. But back in the day

AA: There was a lot, you respected one another.

FD: That's right. Your doors were left open, maybe every two to three families even had a car and most of the streets were dirt but that is the way that it was. There was a stronger spiritual life and more things began in church or were supported by the church.

AA: Yeah I was going to say you had said that you all met at the church so they church supported the whole movement?

FD: Right. So all of the pastors like I say if they were progressive minded whites like the Friends, the Quakers and the white UCC pastors everybody was in that line together. That's where the intense part I came sometimes I think from because the hecklers because that angered them because you know what they were called, "The N Word Lover". So but hey here I am in 2014. I'm 65 years old and life is good. What are you planning on doing with life? Can I ask that on this?

AA: Oh sure! Absolutely.

BG: Oh gosh I don't know.

FD: What grade are you?

BG: I'm a junior. I probably want to be an artist, I'm also a ballet dancer right now, but I don't think that's gonna be my profession, so I am probably going to go to an art college somewhere and then figure out what I am going to do after that.

FD: How did you get to Penn Griffin?

BG: I actually heard about it last year.

FD: This is your first year there?

BG: This is my first year there.

FD: What is your home school?

BG: Northwest Guilford.

FD: So why did you go to Penn Griffin rather than Weaver?

BG: I don't know. I guess it is because when I tried to apply Weaver said you can't, and even with Penn Griffin they said raising juniors and seniors like rarely get in. So like we were just it is worth a shot so I tried and I got in.

FD: Oh okay.

BG: And my younger sister is there too. She is in chorus.

FD: Oh okay. They have a new chorus teacher. 'Cause the one there is at Weaver.

BG: Yeah

FD: Okay just for my information.

AA: Yeah and then I am a junior at High Point University. I'm Political Science and History double major.

FD: To do what?

AA: Constitutional Law and Foreign Affairs after graduation. Over the summer I worked over in Russia at the US embassy working with foreign affairs. My mom was real happy that I was over there when the whole thing with the Ukraine started. So several emails a day from my mother "Are you alive? are you okay?" and I was like yeah I am okay mom so that is what I ultimately want to do.

FD: Excellent. You're gonna be a foreign traveler

AA: Yeah. My mom is better about it than my dad is. He is like I prefer that you stayed within the country and then my mom is like if it is what you want to do then go for it.

FD: One of my classmates, and she has retired, she ended up being a Russian translator at the U.N.

AA: Wow

FD: Yeah she lives in D.C.

AA: That's okay mom got mad at me since I took Russian I speak it and there was one day I was looking at my phone and it was one of the guys that I was working with and he sent me a message about something and he had typed it in Russian and I asked my mom to look at it and she like picked it up and was like yeah I don't know what this says and just stared at the screen and was like there are a bunch of lines on here. I mean there are some like a few of their letters are the same as our alphabet but then the rest are totally different and my mom just kinda stared at it and was like. There was one day like I was on the phone with him and I was speaking in Russian and she was just like I don't even know what you are saying, I hope you do.

FD: You better be saying something proper.

AA: Yeah she knew that I was like getting angry and me and him were like arguing back and forth and she was like I know you are yelling at somebody about something. I don't know what you are saying but hopefully you were being polite about it.

FD: I love it. So is the interview team one university student and one Penn Griffin student?

AA: Yes. The class that I am in that is doing the whole project, we paired with their A.P. history class.

FD: Oh gotcha.

AA: Yeah to have them help us out with it and get them some experience.

FD: So then how did Mr. Pressley get in it?

AA: My professor I guess he talked to Mr. Pressley because he is in charge of the Alumni Council so

FD: Yeah he is my classmate.

AA: Oh really okay, so then we worked with him which is how we got all of your emails and everything to get in contact with you.

FD: Excellent

AA: When I actually signed up for the class I didn't even know that this is what I was going to be doing until the first day of class. Our just little thing when we signed up for classes just said History Detectives and was like students will focus on one area of history all year and go in depth on it and I was like okay we will do research on that one specific area and it didn't say what time and I was like okay I have to take this for my major and for my research so okay I'll take it, it fits in my schedule and then get into class and he is like okay you are going to go out into the community and do interviews and we are all sitting there like okay?

FD: Too late to drop this class this semester...

AA: Yeah, we all just kind of looked at him like cause the last class that did it they focused on the Civil War and the effect of the Civil War on High Point so we did not expect that okay the did all research on the Civil War in High Point so we are going to do the same type of thing and we show up and are like

FD: Civil Rights

AA: Exactly, go out and do interviews and this stuff and I was just like okay. I know we are the first class to do this and they are doing it again next semester and he is like yeah you guys are flying by the seat of your pants and I'm just like yeah, yup, alright we will give it our best shot. So that is what we are trying to do with the whole project. I know they are trying to do another bigger presentation for the whole community at the end of the semester. Not really sure what we are doing yet, he kinda threw it at us as we went on break. This is actually our break for since furniture market is here we get the week off and then most of us work furniture market or what I

end up doing is I went to my friend's house out in the mountains. It was supposed to be 5 girls and a couple of the boys and somehow it ended up being 11 boys and me. Yeah, when I got there I called the other girls to find out where they were but it ended up not being a problem and being an interesting week. I called my mom and was like I am the only girl here and she was just like okay and I had my paintball gun with me and the one boys parents were there and they had a guy and asked me if I knew how to shoot. I was like yeah and they told me welp if any of them give you a hard time this is where the bolt is, this is where the ammo is and the rest is free range and all the boys were standing there like okay yeah nope. The next morning we all went out shooting because they wanted to learn how to shoot a gun, and it was a small caliber so the dad took us out shooting and the dad went out with us and I had told him that it was the same type of gun my grandpa had, so the boys picked it up to shoot it and none of them could figure out how to use a gun.

FD: And you were like let a woman do it.

AA: Yeah so I walked over and

FD: Chink chink chink boom

AA: Yeah we had lined up a bunch of empty cans the mom had from dinner, all the vegetable cans and shot one right off and they were all like yeah no we aren't going to give you a hard time

FD: Yeah, leave her alone, she is dangerous.

AA: Exactly, this is why you send a women to do these things.

FD: A man's job. Send a boy to do a women's job, no.

AA: Send a women to do a man's job she got it covered.

BG: Oh yeah.

FD: So when will you say this compilation will come to fruition when?

AA: For us you are our first interview and then when we get back to school next week Mr. Pressley is sending us another list of names for us to do a second interview and then our class is doing some form of paper or project to be put up onto the website and we will transcribe your interview and send you a copy and then I know at the end of the semester they are planning on doing some kind of presentation to the community that way other people can come in and look at it, 'cause we're also finding all artifacts from the 50's and 60's all old photos and like I found the football trophy from the state championship in the alumni room to get all the stuff in there that way we can do this walk through of the history of it for the whole community.

FD: Somebody even had a band uniform.

AA: Oh wow

FD: Yeah the man who was our band teacher when William Penn closed became the band teacher at Andrews and now the band room is named for him, J.Y. Bell. And they have his uniform, well they did have his uniform over at there and somebody has the tiger costume.

AA: Wow, I gotta see if I can figure out who that person is.

FD: So it was a good time. A lot of my teachers, well a lot have died, but a lot of my teachers are still living and they come to the reunions. So that is my story.

AA: Is there anything that you thought we would ask about that we haven't?

FD: I really didn't know. Oh, as I look at High Point Hospital, when I was born there were two mothers in a room and my mom was in the room with one of her friends, oddly enough, and the babies are a day apart, and now that my mother has died that mother looks after me, and so I was born on the 30th and the other baby was born on the 1st and we always laugh because she is late a lot and so I tell everybody she was late coming here and she has kept up that practice. I say my mom and I had gone home and the baby was still trying to get here. It was High Point Hospital back then.

AA: Yeah I am familiar with it because the middle of last semester I had torn my ACL.

FD: Oh no.

AA: My mom was real happy when I gave her that call. All last year I was constantly broken. I had broken my foot playing soccer and I had gotten back to my first practice and we were running and tore my ACL turning.

FD: Girl do you like having to go to therapy or what's the deal with you?

AA: No. Now it is not too bad, the whole learning how to bend my knee again was not a fun time. And God bless everybody who has knee problems, because they are not fun. Like I forgot how to walk up stairs like I had to learn how to walk again and then walk upstairs again and now they are finally letting me learn how to run again. I'm just like oh yah fun! I hated running in the first place and now I have to learn how to do this again.

FD: Learn it all over again.

AA: There was a reason I swam.

FD: Gotcha!

AA: I could swim a mile faster than I could run one.

FD: Well I think that is it. I can't remember now what was right here on this corner. I do know that Burger King was where Krispy Kreme is now. It was so funny to see, or well not funny but ironic, and we would stand on the sidewalk and watch the people walk up to the window the ones who were trespassing, wanting to be served knowing that somebody was going to come out real mean and say there is no trespassing get off the property we don't serve coloreds only they would say the N-word and they would be persistent and here would come the police and they would cart them off. There is some, you know who you need to talk to, I will write Henry. There is a women in my church who was part of the Woolworth sit-ins and she traveled the country and we had no idea that she had been that involved in the movement and she worked with CORE and SNCC, which was the Student Non-violent. I'll send her an email and she was '63 I think it is, '63 or '64.

AA: Wow, yeah she would be someone right up our ally of someone to interview.

FD: So I will write Pressley and give him her name. But that's where we were and that's where we were and that's where we are now.

AA: Oh the other thing I wanted to ask about was were you in high school during the Kennedy assassination and the Cuban Missile Crisis?

FD: Well I was in middle school, well junior high

AA: Yeah that's what ours was we called it junior high.

FD: Yeah so I was in junior high so that was one of those you can't believe it moments

AA: Like what just happened?

FD: Right. Just that the things that have happened like that in my life, like the 9/11 catastrophe I was teaching middle school.

AA: Oh really.

FD: And the kids came to my class having seen it in another room saying an airplane just ran into one of the twin towers and I am saying sit down and they are like no no really and when I got a chance to look at a TV

AA: You were just dumbfounded.

FD: Yeah, historically having seen the release of the prisoners from Vietnam and we lost not a lot, I can only remember two guys from our class who got drafted as soon as we graduated, and they were sent to Vietnam and they did not live six weeks.

AA: Oh wow!

FD: So that was a dark time. Like I said my mom was working at the funeral home then and the bodies were coming back so quickly that some days the brigade, the honor guard from Fort Bragg would just come and stay because they were just having service after service after service.

AA: Yeah for them to go back and forth they did not have enough time.

FD: I can just remember the fright or the apprehension of our male classmates

AA: Yeah, when they were going to get that letter.

FD: Because everybody was getting killed. Some of them weren't able to get that waiver to go to college. That was the out, but not everybody to fortunate enough to get it and you were gone and came back in a body bag. So our classmates are all when the wall was erected in D.C. our classmates are some of the first names on there. I remember making that trip up there just to see those particular names. So I was in middle school when Kennedy got killed and I was in college when Martin King was assassinated. There were some dark times.

AA: Yeah just looking at the TV saying this didn't actually happen did it?

FD: Yes and you thought 9/11 was bad, but the climate is getting worse. I don't know. It is almost like we are digressing. Like we reached the peak and now we're going backwards and I think that this election will either make it or break it.

AA: Oh yeah.

FD: Yeah the country has never gotten over the fact that the president is black. He is almost ready to go out and you are still stuck on it

AA: Yeah stuck on something that happened 8 years ago.

FD: Yeah really?

AA: Especially being a political science major we are sitting there like there are a lot bigger issues right now and you are still stuck on that.

FD: Yeah right, give me a break!

AA: Yeah like we got bigger problems people.

FD: Yeah and when he won that re-election they about died

AA: It is crazy how that's priority to some people.

FD: And they have spent their time trying to find dirt when there is nothing there. Duh.

AA: If it was there he wouldn't have been running in the first place.

FD: Exactly. But we go one day at a time. Well I will have to keep up with you, young lady.

AA: Yeah I think that is pretty much it.

FD: So now do you exhibit your art?

BG: Not yet but I think that my first one is in December.

FD: Now what medium do you like? What do you prefer?

BG: I mainly do black and white drawings with graphite. I have not quite figured out how to use charcoal. But I'm not very good at painting things, so I have to work on that.

FD: In one of my summer classes I met this artist who now is the visual art instructor at Weaver. He is a beast.

BG: I have heard apparently he is pretty cool.

FD: He is a beast. He does really, have you done any self portraits?

BG: Not this year but I have before, I am not very good at those either. I mean I first started probably back in the 8th grade because one of my friends I saw her draw portraits of famous people and I thought it was really well done and so I wanted to attempt it myself. I wasn't very good back then, but it has been three years since I have started.

FD: I will find the picture and send it to you. Allison what is your last name?

AA: Adamczyk

FD: Okay I was going to say when I come in I am going to ask for Allison Adamczyk but did not know how to say the czyk.

AA: Yeah it is Russian and everyone who looks at it is every time I had a substitute I have always been on the very top, first one on every list alphabetically they look at it and they go Allison... here.

FD: Right they go Adam-somebody.

BG: That is my name too. It is german and they

FD: So is your dad Russian?

AA: Yes.

FD: So is that part of your interest in it?

AA: Yeah my grandparents they spoke Russian when I was growing up so like learned small bits of it. Really my interest in going the Russian route was when I got to college we have to take a foreign language and I had taken French from 6th grade through 10th grade and absolutely hated it. I will be honest with you I took French because my brother took French so I got him to do my homework for me. That was my reasoning behind taking French. So I was like I really don't want to take French again and I was looking at the list of what I could take and it said Russian and I was like oh I learned bits of it when I was little you know that would be interesting to learn and with political science if you know Russian or something like that it is going to help you

because now-a-days everybody and their mother is learning Arabic. So I was like I will be different and I will try that. The first day in class she put up the alphabet, I was like this is the worst decision of my life. I was just like what am I getting myself into but now I love it.

FD: Okay, Adamczyk, there is a bit of music to it.

AA: There was a couple times my friends took French and I looked at it and knew everything and in my mind I haven't taken this class in two years I'm not going to know any of it. I looked at it and I knew what all of this is, I should have taken this and taken the easy A. But now they opportunities that it has given me from having learned that instead of just taking French I am definitely better off for having taken it.

FD: Wonderful.

AA: But the two years that I did take it I was like good lord help me now.

FD: Wonderful. When I find it I will pass it onto you

AA: Thank you. Yeah I think we are done. I can't think of anything else, Thank you for coming and meeting with us!