

Interview with Ms. Fuller Burns

Date: June 13, 2001

Interviewed by Tracy Caradine

TC: My name is Tracy Caradine, the Director of Library Services at Jarvis Christian College. Today I will be interviewing Fuller Burns. Today's date is Wednesday, June 13, 2001.

Mrs. Burns, first of all, could you give us a little background information about yourself?

FB: I came here in 1963 with four kids and expecting another kid, which I didn't know I was expecting. I came here in another lady's place, who was expecting also, and she was going to go on leave. I started to work in November, one Friday. I think I was supposed to start on a Friday, and I think that was the Friday that President Kennedy got killed, and we didn't have school. They didn't have school, so I didn't get to come to work that day, so I had to come that next week, and I started.

I have three boys, two girls. The last one was born in '64. I lived with a Mrs. Johnson and the Reverend Johnson. They were very, very cordial to me, very nice, and they had one son, who is deceased now, I think. He is also deceased, the Reverend Johnson. Mrs. Johnson still lives, she is 100 and something.

I also worked, with—oh, gosh, I have gotten off it—ask me another question.

TC: When you say you came here, meaning the Hawkins area, where are you originally from?

FB: I am originally from Pittsburg [Texas].

TC: Were your parents from Pittsburg?

FB: Yes, my parents were from Pittsburg.

TC: What type of work did your parents do?

FB: My mother did not work. She was just a housewife. My stepdad worked as a chef cook. My real dad worked as—oh, gosh, he was living in Fort Worth, a plant there in Fort Worth. I can't recall the name of it right now. But I did not live in Fort Worth. I lived in Pittsburg.

TC: Then moved to Hawkins?

FB: Then moved to Hawkins in '63.

TC: When you moved to Hawkins, can you describe the community that you were living in?

FB: I first rented two or three places. The community was small, yet friendly. You were always invited to go to someone's church, and I tried to attend all of the churches that were here and around, and which is a lot of them, two Baptist, two Methodist churches, two holiness churches, I call them holiness, and, I don't know. We had a lot of community affairs that was involved with the school.

TC: Was the community all black?

FB: Yes, at that time, yes, it was all black.

TC: Do you think that your children growing up in this all-black community were aware or were conscious of the fact that they were living in a segregated community?

FB: Yes, they did, because they knew there was a white school on the other side of the track and the black school on this side of the track, as you would call it.

TC: Where did you attend elementary school?

FB: In Pittsburg.

TC: And high school?

FB: High school also. And then I went on to college at Prairie View A & M College and spent four years there.

TC: And what was your major?

FB: My major was business, my minor was library science. Then I came out and started raising a family. I didn't apply for any jobs when I got out. I just started raising kids, as you would call it.

TC: Now, during the pre-initial and post-integration period, at what school or schools were you employed?

FB: When we first started, I was at Southside High. Then they moved me, for one hour, I believe, over to the Hawkins High School for one hour to teach typing. I stayed there for one hour, and then I went back to Southside and did my other chores that I was supposed to be doing.

Then later on, another lady was moved, so we drove over there together to Hawkins High, Mrs. Rucker, and she was teaching math, I believe, math and history. And we would go back over to Southside.

There was another white guy, he went over to Southside and stayed his hour or two, and then came on back to the high school.

TC: Just to get a little clarity on the different names of the schools and the type of school it was, Southside was what type of school?

FB: Southside was an elementary, middle school, and high school at first.

TC: At first?

FB: Yes.

TC: Then it changed?

FB: Then it changed to Hawkins Middle School.

TC: And the Hawkins High School?

FB: The Hawkins High School was still over there on the other side until we built a new school in 1974 or '75, '74 I believe, we built a new school. This is when Hawkins High moved over there, I would say moved back cross the track where we blacks were, they called it. The elementary school was still across the track, on this side of the track, as we would call it.

TC: At this time, were these schools all black schools?

FB: No, we were integrated then. We integrated.

TC: During the time before integration, describe the location and the physical condition of this Southside School?

FB: It was a new school. It was a brand-new school, and we were very, very proud of it. Clean and all. Very well put together, and we loved it because we never had anything new, you know, because when we were back at old black Hawkins High, which I loved there because it is where I first got my start, you had a clean school. The janitors kept the bathrooms and everything clean. You didn't go in and smell a bathroom or restroom. It was clean. Everything was old, but it was kept to a condition so you didn't think about it. You appreciated what you had and you worked with it. You forgot about it.

TC: Now estimating, just estimating, what was the student population, and from what area of town did the students come from in the Southside School?

FB: Most of our students — We had a lot of little different communities. This is an oil town, and so many, many different roads. I still do not know all of them, can't even go to all of them. But you had an area probably like Fouke, there was a school, you had an area like Sand Flat [phonetic], there was a school. Kids came from Big Sandy to go to school here, and that area was from out in the rural areas also, they call it Chalkville. They came to school here also. Big Sandy did not have a high school. They only went to middle school, then they came on up to Hawkins for high school.

TC: During the time before integration, can you give me an idea of the racial makeup of the faculty and staff of the schools?

FB: Before integration?

TC: Before integration? Were there any whites employed in the black schools?

FB: No, we were at Fouke-Hawkins, we were all black. And when we first moved into Southside, we were all black. And then this is when they started putting one-on-one, I guess you would call it, send one from Southside over to the Hawkins High School, and one from the Hawkins High School back to Southside High School. They would try it. I guess this is what they would be calling a trial basis, I guess to get the students and the other faculty members to get involved with that one black and that one white, whichever school we would be going to, but it would be high school at first.

When that happened, we also had—I know about four, five kids, or maybe more, to just go to the all-white school. They went and how was that—they didn't come back to Hawkins. They just stayed over there and went, you know, to that area.

TC: Was this before integration? They actually went to that high school?

FB: We were beginning to do that one-on-one, and this is when they had that opportunity to go if they wanted to, and then four-five or maybe more of them did go on over to the white school.

TC: So before the schools were forced to integrate, there were a few students who did attend the white high school by their choice?

FB: By their choice.

TC: Very interesting. And how well did this one-on-one type of situation work?

FB: It worked fine. I would go and do my little duty, and then drive on back on over to the other in time for my next class. It worked out. You would get to know some of the instructors. The Kirks, for instance, the Kirks. They worked here at one time. Got to know them because he taught math and she taught English. We would meet. The one thing I never did do, I never did go to the lounge to meet people. I always stayed in my room, come to my room. If I had some papers to run off, I would do that during my class period.

At one time I can recall in going in there, I went in there, and they were all in there. I don't think school had started. It was early that morning. And as soon as I got in there, everybody stopped talking. I said, "Humph. It sure is quiet." I said "I'm fixing to leave," just like that. I left. So when I left, I laughed to myself. I said, "They were either talking about me or somebody else, so I won't be going." I didn't like to go anyway, so I didn't go.

TC: So you basically stayed away from the teacher's lounge.

FB: That's right.

TC: Very interesting. In the high school before integration, how many students were typically in one class?

FB: You had maybe about fifteen or more. Let me put it like this. All students took English, homemaking. Did they take Ag? I believe, too. Maybe not Ag, but they took chorus, you were involved in everything. You were not left out. That principal made sure that you were involved in everything, that you had an opportunity to learn how to cook, learn how to work with other materials and things such as Ag.

We didn't have a machine, a wood shop, or anything like that, but the guy did make that kind of stuff, or he did go and they would kill hogs and they would go and get it and they would bring him back, dress him, cut him up, and all. They were involved in all of this.

TC: Do you think that those kind of courses were being taught at the white high school, the agriculture, the homemaking, were you all being taught the same type of courses?

FB: Yes, I believe we were, yes. Yes, we were. The only thing is we got second-hand books. They were either torn or backs off of them or written in, or sometimes manipulated, you know, just weren't any good.

TC: Speaking on the textbooks that you all received, you said that they were second-hand books. By the time that you all got the books, were they still current, or, on average, how old were they once you all got them at the all-black school.

FB: Occasionally we would get a few new ones, but that was rare. Maybe some of the teachers had used that book and handed it down to us. But I'm not sure how old, because sometimes no date would be in. Maybe four to five years or six years, maybe that long. We would look at sometimes where the student would sign in and put that date there and the year there, you know, when they received that book at the beginning of the year, and then we could usually tell, but sometimes, most of the time, they were out.

Now, sometimes I noticed later on in the years, this may have happened before I got here, a lot of that, and I do not know about it, but now we did later on in the years when we moved over to Southside, get new books. We started getting new books.

TC: So it wasn't until you all got the newer school at the Southside that then you started receiving some new books. But before when you were in the old Fouke-Hawkins High you were only given hand-me-downs.

FB: When I was there, I did make a list and order some new library books. I got those books. Probably back there then there were some new books back there then. You know how it is, you never really pay attention, some of us do not, and I guess I did not pay attention too much to that, but I did notice that some of them were torn and misused and abused.

TC: Now, you did say that you ordered some library books. At one point during this time did you change from regular classroom teacher to librarian?

FB: I did not change. I had a twofold job, as you would call it. I was librarian at the same time I was teacher, because I was teaching business, and that was shorthand and bookkeeping and typing. So I had so many classes of that. Maybe one or two classes of typing, then I had time to go to the library to fix it up and to check out books and things.

TC: Now, since you did have a twofold job, teacher-librarian, did the pay reflect two positions?

FB: No, it not.

TC: As a first-year teacher, what was your starting salary?

FB: Would you be surprised. I believe, \$7000 a year, \$7000 a year.

TC: Do you think the first-year salary for a white teacher was the same?

FB: I do believe they were getting more, I sure do. It is just something that kept telling me that they were always getting more until we had a confrontation about—I don't think I need to go into it right now, maybe you might ask me later on—but I'll give you this. We had a conversation about TEA [Texas Education Agency] had to come down, and there were some people put on the merit list, it wasn't called that. And a lot of blacks did not get on there. All of the blacks had their master's, and the whites did not, they did not have a master's degree. So therefore they were putting all of them on there to get that merit pay, not one black got it.

TC: Why do you think that at that time most black teachers degree had their master's degrees, as opposed to the white teachers? Why were they so slow or reluctant to go back to school and obtain a master's degree?

FB: I am not sure why, but I think we were encouraged to go on and get our master's degree, to work toward it, and then on up to a doctorate. But whites, I am not sure why. They knew that probably—I know I am making what I make, you know, and I will get it, and so there is no problem, I have no fear of my job, so I can rest assured. But it seemed like we always had to be reaching, reaching, and reaching to get higher and higher until we could be recognized for a lot of things that we did know. They didn't want to give you credit for, or whatever.

TC: So are you saying that the more degrees and the higher your educational level, actually provided more financial stability as well as gave you the recognition, as opposed to the white teachers?

FB: I think so.

TC: So really, the education that you all strived towards provided job security?

FB: That's right.

TC: Can you basically describe the curriculum for the black high schools? I know you mentioned homemaking and agriculture and some others.

FB: Okay, we had the basics, such as your English, your biology, your chemistry, your physics, we had that. Your homemaking, your business subjects. You were taught music, you know, how to sing and all that, and then you had Ag. You had basketball, tennis, track. We had no football. The whites had football. Where we did integrate that is one things the kids liked. But we had basically the same, I would say.

TC: Do you think that even though the curriculums were basically the same, do you think there was a general effort in the black school to direct the black students toward a certain job career?

FB: Yes, when I first started to work there, we stayed until four o'clock every day at the school. The whites were getting out at three. And I asked my principal, Mr. Burton "Why do we have to stay so long?"

He said, "Oh, we are so far behind that we need to try to catch up. We can't let them, you know, get there so far ahead of us." We need to go to the doctor and places, you know, you have other things to do. We never did have an opportunity to do a lot of things that we needed to do, really.

But he kept this on our mind, and we stayed there until four. So those kids got another extra hour of learning. I caught on real early what he was doing. He was teaching them so they could be way, way ahead. I didn't say anything at first about it, but after we integrated, this is when I confronted him. I said, "Oh, I see now why you wanted us to stay, and we stayed." So this is what happened.

TC: Do you think that the curriculum of the black school was geared towards directing the black students in one career direction or another, as opposed to the white schools? Do you think maybe at the black school there was a general consensus with the staff there black students would

become teachers and perhaps clerk at the post office, as opposed to the white curriculum, were they gearing their students to become doctors and astronauts and things of that nature?

FB: Believe it or not, it seemed it was just the opposite. We had more students in the black school to come out to be doctors, lawyers, dentists, and some were teachers and business guys. Some made careers in the Armed Services. Some had to go there before they could come around and then do a lot of other things that they needed to do. Some of those kids had no shoes, sometimes—I'm getting off the subject—to maybe to go to sing, no shirt or pair of pants to go off to be in activities or something. Then my principal would come around and ask us, "What can you donate? Can you give me some money?" or whatever.

During that time, I had those five kids. I didn't make much money, but I bought shoes, I bought pants, I bought shirts, I bought toothbrushes and toothpaste, just little odds and ends for kids. And those kids went on to make doctors and lawyers and came back, and they would thank you for helping them to reach their goal.

One in particular, which is a friend of mine, one of my principal's sons, one of them is deceased. He got killed. Both of them were in the Korean War. One got killed over there. Both were there at the same time, but they were not at the same area at the same time. And he came back home, and he lives now in Houston, one of the sons. And he used to would tell people, people would ask him "Where are you from?" "Oh, I'm from Tyler." He said he was ashamed of little-old bitty Hawkins. He didn't realize then that this is where he received his education, where he got all of his training and learning was right here in this little Hawkins, and at that little old bitty school, you know, and this is where he learned everything.

Then he said, it just came to him, said, "Hey, I don't need to be ashamed that is where I got it." He said, "I'll be telling people, "Yes, I'm from Hawkins. It is outside of Tyler. It is out so many miles from Dallas," etc.

TC: So you basically, at the black school, you did not want your students to say that "I am only limited to certain careers." You all gave them knowledge that would take them in any direction?

FB: That's right.

TC: What type of standardized test, if any, was administered to the students?

FB: I don't recall any standardized tests during that time. I don't believe we did. If so, I am not recalling it.

TC: At the integrated school, there was a test?

FB: Yes, we had some kind of test, I believe, there. Right offhand, I'm not recalling it either, but I think we had some.

TC: There was some standardized test?

FB: Yes.

TC: Was there a standardized test administered to the students at the white high school?

FB: Maybe so, but I am not sure, I am not sure.

TC: Today teachers across the grades and throughout school districts interact with each other to solve common problems. Did you, at any time, interact with white teachers during your teaching career?

FB: Yes, the librarian there, which was names Mrs. Hines, and one of the business teachers, Mr. Taylor, later on he retired, and then Mrs. Mitchell took his place. We would discuss a lot of innovative ways we could get the students to learning more and getting it, and then we would —

[Begin Tape 1, Side B]

FB: — we had with the coaches—you know how they would do. They would always keep you informed if your child was not doing okay, or if that student was not doing okay, well give him a little more something to do in order to—but we didn't have much of a problem in that area. Usually those students knew that, “Hey, I got to get this if I want to be able to play or make it,” but our students were also geared to, “I need to make a good grade.” That white child, yes, he knows, “But they are not going to give it to me because the color I am, I'm black and he's white, but I have to be ten, twelve times smarter than he or she.”

TC: So any contact there was initiated for any chance given for you to interact with white students. Who initiated the contact? Was it something that the principal said, “Well, you need to get with one of the white teachers at the other school and talk to them?” or was this something that you all just did on your own?

FB: We just did it on our own. Because, may I say this? When we first integrated, they moved a lot of people up into positions that were not really qualified for the position. They would rather move a white and give him that principal job, that man that principal job, instead of being a black man which he knows all about it and would be able to do a good job. But, no, they don't want to see you up there with that kind of ability and all. And they didn't give it to you, either.

TC: At the black high school, the all-black before integration, how active were parents in school activities. How active was the PTA?

FB: Oh, very, very. But, oh, I bet you every black parent in the community would be at PTA, would be at all of the functions that they would have. This man had a way of getting the people in the communities to come to everything. He was dogmatic, too. But he had a way of getting you to do what he wanted you to do.

TC: So the parents were very interested?

FB: Yes, and this is the reason why I said the kids really learned and was prosperous.

TC: What type of relationship was there between the church and the black high school?

FB: They were also just like the community. The Baptists would have church one Sunday, and all the Methodist people would come to that Baptist. The next Sunday, the Methodists would have church, and all the Baptist people would come to that church. This is how it would be.

TC: So the church supported the school?

FB: Yes, they supported the school.

TC: Now, moving towards the transition, the integration period, was integration welcomed? Did you welcome the idea of integration?

FB: The only reason why I did in order to get new materials, new articles, items that we really needed that kids would be able to use. As far as me really wanting it, no, I didn't, because it took away a lot of pride from our students, even from the teachers, I would say. You lost your school song, you lost the way you did a whole lot of things, and when you were a cheerleader, or whatever, didn't any blacks get to be in that at first until our black boys started complaining about it.

I can recall at that time I had three boys in high school. They were playing football. One of the boys told me, he said, "Mama, we need a black cheerleader."

I said, "Well, what are you going to do about it?"

He said, "We're not going to play no football."

I said, "You sure this is what you want?"

"Yes"

I said, "Well, I'll back you. I might lose my job, but I'll back you."

So Mr. Moore, my principal, came to me and asked me. He said, "Ms. Burns, your boys are getting into a lot of trouble."

I said, "What kind of trouble?"

"They are not going to play in the football."

I said, "You call that trouble, just because they want some black cheerleaders?" I says, "No, they are not getting in any trouble. But I tell you what I'll do. I'll call their dad. So if you want to confront him, and he about half-crazy. This is how I put it — He was in World War II. He had to fight just as hard or harder and be on that front line, but he did make it back home safely."

And he said he didn't mind that for something that was right.

So I said, "So, may I use your phone?"

"Oh, no, no, that's fine."

So I said, "I'll call him anyway." So I did call him.

So Mr. Moore went and talked to him. So he said, "If you need me, and my boys need me, I'll be there." So they got some black cheerleaders.

TB: During the time of integration, were the black teachers given the option to transfer to the integrated high school?

FB: During their time, let me see what happened. They moved all of the black teachers and put us in different areas like into elementary, middle school, and high school. That next year, they started letting them go, saying they had too many teachers. So what happened, the blacks were the first to go. And we would complain about it and all, but there were too many teachers, they claim. But it whittled down to nothing, really hardly. Just a few blacks, the rest of them white.

TC: Those teachers who were not given the opportunity to transfer to the new school or who were let go that second year after integration, what did these teachers do to find work?

FB: They had to move to different areas, other areas, and they found jobs.

TC: Moved away?

FB: Moved away from Hawkins, yes.

TC: Was the transition difficult, moving from the black high school to the integrated high school, and how did you feel during this time? Were you anxious or nervous or just didn't know what to expect at the integrated school?

FB: You might say we were anxious, really didn't know what to expect either after that. I guess you just kind of played it by ear just to see what was going to happen. We knew something was up. You know how you can feel like it, you know something is going on, it is not going to be right, and come to find out a lot of our blacks were let go.

TC: So from the beginning of the integration period, you had an uneasy feeling about the whole integration process?

FB: Yes.

TC: Were the black and white teachers evaluated using the same evaluation instrument?

FB: Yes, we were. We were. I think we had, as far as I know right now, I think we had the same instrument that they used.

TC: Do you think that instrument actually favored the white teacher over the black?

FB: I'm sure it did.

TC: How so?

FB: Well, a white would always get a higher rate. And we wondered why we couldn't get a higher rate, we were doing the same thing, or better. So this is how we would be able to tell.

TC: So do you actually think it was the instrument or the person performing the evaluation?

FB: It might have been both, a little bit of both.

TC: Okay, as far as the textbooks and supplies at the integrated high school, did the black and white teachers receive equal quantities of material, equal amounts and equal quality?

FB: Yes, you got what you wanted, you got what you wanted. And going into the integrated system, I can recall they had so many machines, equipment to use, new, just put back in the closet. No one knew how to use them. And they never were used.

So I went in, being the librarian, I went in, and I was using a lot of this anyway, and started working on them and using them myself. By the time I got it going and knew how to work it and all, then it was a demand, "I need to use so-and-so and so-in-so." And then I'd have to go and show them.

TC: So, upon finding this equipment locked away in the closet that wasn't being used, did you feel that the equipment could have been at the colored high school all this time?"

FB: Yes, all this time, that's true. It could have been there.

TC: In general, how were you treated by your fellow white teachers and the school administration, in particular, the principal, at the integrated high school?

FB: Oh, he was very, very genial, very nice and cordial. He just couldn't say or tell you or give you a definite answer to a lot of questions that were asked. You know, you maybe would ask a question or something would come up. He was always beating around the bush.

TC: Do you think that was due to incompetence or just because you were black, he did not want to give you a definite answer.

FB: I think a lot of times he was, "If I can evade it, I will. I can get around it without giving you an answer, or whatever."

TC: Now, if a white teacher asked him a question, would he do the same thing?

FB: No, he was always more positive, I would say.

TC: He would give them a straightforward answer?

FB: Yes.

TC: Were you welcomed at school-related social functions at the integrated high school, functions such as retirement receptions or luncheons?

FB: Oh, yes, we were always welcome. On the whole, they were very, very friendly. Yet and still, you could see there were some that were still kind of unpleasant with you, you know, I guess until they would get to know you and all of that.

TC: In general, you were welcome?

FB: Yes.

TC: Did you attend a lot of social functions?

FB: Yes, I'd attend practically everything. It seemed like we were there.

TC: Do you feel that the white teachers gave black students and white students equal amounts of attention in the classroom? Do you think that a white teacher paid just as much attention to that black child in her class as she did the white student?

FB: I guess so, because the black student was pretty well trained, I would say, when we first integrated, you know, for the first ten years or more, you had that training, you know, coming up. Because they would ask questions, you know, if they didn't really understand. This is what they were taught, you know, if you don't understand, you ask questions. I think they were given that.

TC: So they made themselves be seen and recognized and heard?

FB: Yes, that's right, they did.

TC: That was a result of the teaching that they received at the colored high school?

FB: Yes.

TC: Were black students recognized for high academic achievement in the integrated school?

FB: Yes, but you know how it is, that principal always kept our black students down. It was either graded a point or two lower than the other one. But on the whole, in general, I think that the black student, he was capable, she was capable of doing even better, and did do better, but that principal kept them down.

TC: So do you think that maybe black students, maybe their score or their grade was lowered just a little bit to not give them that highest honor over a white student?

FB: Yes, I do. I do think that.

TC: Do you have any particular points in mind where that could have occurred?

FB: Well, let me see. I can recall in my class, this child is a lawyer now, the white girl is a lawyer. She was taking typing up under me. She did not make an A. In all of her other classes, she made an A. And this black boy, or black girl, I believe it was, whichever it was, made an A in my class. And really they had to earn that A. I didn't have no pets or whatever they call it. I didn't have any. I just gave you what you made, you know. But during this time, I gave this child an 82, and so that meant it was two points I had to give her, and I gave all the rest of my class that two points also.

And, I don't know, the principal took her out of my class. She got out of my class. She started missing, and I just wondered why, and they would never come by. So I went by the office one day, and I told my principal, I said— what was her name—is not coming to my class. But he knew what was going on. I didn't. So I said, "Well, okay, I'm just marking her absent." So finally he came to me and told me she was out of my class. I said, "Well, you could have told me that at first. You knew about it. But that's okay."

So she went on to college. Then she had to take typing in college, because she didn't. I didn't give her any grade because she got out. Her mother came up and told me, she said, "Oh, I wish she had gone under you." I said, "Well, you all took her out. She just hadn't made that A at that time. That was the first six weeks. She probably would have gotten there, but you took her out so that's not my problem."

TC: So do you think she was taken out in an effort to avoid receiving a grade lower than an A from a black teacher?

FB: Yes.

TC: If you had been a white teacher, do you think they would have left her in the class.

FB: Yes, and she'd probably have gotten an A.

TC: Do you feel that integration helped or harmed the quality of education for black students?

FB: It harmed.

TC: How so?

FB: The respect of our black kids were just lost. Our black kids used to would hold the door open for you. If a teacher was coming up, and they saw their teacher, they would stand there and hold that door until that teacher got through that door and let that teacher in.

“un-huh” “unh-unh” All of that started then when we integrated. So on a whole, I think it was a harm to our students because, it seemed to me, we are going to do what they do. And it didn't help them any, not to me it didn't.

TC: Do you feel like things were taken away from the integrated school in an effort to keep quality materials from the black students that were attending? Did you think that maybe some of the luxury items that the white students were receiving prior to integration were taken away because they didn't want those black students to enjoy those same luxuries?

FB: Could have been. Could have been. Probably so. At one time here, Hawkins was one of the richest schools around here because of their oil company that is here, Entex, or Exxon. And they got whatever they wanted because they paid a large amount of taxes here, so therefore they were getting a lot of stuff, really.

That is one reason why I was saying all that equipment and stuff was not used. They would get it, but yet didn't know how to use it. But I feel like maybe they didn't take away that from them because they got everything. They could go places, and they paid for it and all. So therefore, I don't think would hinder it.

TC: So the luxuries that they enjoyed, field trips and different things, they continued when the school was integrated?

FB: They continued.

TC: Did black parents continue to participate in the PTA after integration?

FB: It seemed like the black parents started falling out, just one by one, you know, they just stopped going. I don't know why. You had no one to encourage them that you need to go and check on your kids, see what is going on and make some suggestion, get elected to your PTA and all. It just seemed like, you know, they just stopped going.

TC: Do you think this was because they now had to interact with white parents, or they did not have the chance to interact with white parents prior to integration. Do you think that sort of intimidated them?

FB: Probably did, they figured that, “Hey, my voice won’t make a difference, my say-so won’t be heard,” or whatever, so probably so. Yes.

TC: Do you think that the relationship between the black church and the school suffered as a result of integration?

FB: Yes, because then the churches started to getting modernized and those churches started to have in their own church every Sunday, you know, we need to do this and that, you know, and this is when that started to get going, so, yes.

TC: Was the black church less supportive of the integrated school as opposed to the enormous amount of support that they gave to the black school?

FB: Yes.

TC: Now, even though segregation is unlawful today, do you think that black students can safely attend any school if they so desire, be it private, public, or even maybe even the academies today?

FB: You either have to have the money to get into those private schools, and a lot of time they put it up so high till that keeps you out of it. And nowadays our kids are not studying, our black students are not, most of them a lot. I won’t say all, but it seems like they are going, “Hey, I don’t have, I don’t want to, I can just do enough as to get by.” This is it.

TC: Well, Ms. Burns, I thank you for taking the time to interview with me today. I look forward to talking with you later. Thank you.

FB: Okay.

[End of interview]