

Neighborhood Histories: Interview with Debra Holliman

Briana Mays: Good morning today is June twenty-ninth and my name is Briana Mays

Kieanna Avery: My name is Kieanna Avery

Briana Mays: And today we are going to be interviewing you about the tale of two cities and we are the focus group for team for success, but we going start the interview by asking you some basic questions to get you answering question. So if you will can please state your name

Debra Holliman: My name is Debra Holliman

Briana Mays: Ok Ms. Debra where were you born and raised?

Debra Holliman: I was born in Tiptonville in the old oil mill quarters and the most of my life in Tiptonville

Briana Mays: How was it like growing up in Tiptonville?

Debra Holliman: Small town everybody knows everybody quiet, friendly people

Briana Mays: Have you lived in Tiptonville all of your life?

Debra Holliman: Not all my life I went away in college for about four years and then I lived in Union city for fourteen years so either

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then that I been here

Briana Mays: So when you lived here what school did you attend?

Debra Holliman: I went to Lincoln from third grade to eighth and then nine to twelfth I went to Lake County high school

Briana Mays: And how was like when you change schools like that when they changed from Lincoln going into Lake County high school like how did it changed

Debra Holliman: It was rather unsettling for me, um, it was a lot of unknown, um, at Lincoln I knew everybody, my teachers I would see them in the community, I was going to a school where I didn't know a single teacher had no clue as to what they're going to be like. I knew I was going to have you know a new set of classmates, white classmates, white teachers, I never really had any reactions with white people until high school. So I really didn't know what to expect a little anxiety, um, fear,

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and a little anger

Briana Mays: So did when you lived in Tiptonville as a child did you every travel to Ridgley much

Debra Holliman: As a child no as a teenager I went sometimes

Briana Mays: What did you what brought you to go to Ridgley

Debra Holliman: What brought me to Ridgley, boys, um, when I was in high school um, I don't know why Tiptonville girls stop Ridgley boys was cute and whatever. And some Sundays we would ride to Ridgley and ride around it was big deal for us then of course I know now that it's not a big deal riding around Ridgley but once a week, Sunday afternoon ride to Ridgley stay a hour or two and come back home that was a big deal

Briana Mays: So where were the hang out spots when you

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were a teenager

Debra Holliman: I think it was an ??? That had a store in Ridgley and um, we would just we would hang out around there like I said it wasn't a real big deal I know before us it was

Briana Mays: Ok so where there a lot of people from Tiptonville come into Ridgley back in those days like did y'all every like meet up Ridgley and Tiptonville people meet up and y'all do stuff together or was it just y'all usually just stay to y'all selves

Debra Holliman: Nahh when we rode around on Sunday's afternoon it was just like a brunch of girls from Tiptonville, three or four of us ride around and then we come back home um, most of our interaction with people from Ridgley was at school. That's the thing about Lake County high school Tiptonville and Ridgley that's how we got to meet each other I mean other than that I wouldn't know people from Ridgley because back in sixty-nine you know we didn't have access

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to cars or social media, you didn't know people you didn't get to meet people unless it was face to face

Briana Mays: So were did anybody from Ridgley ever come up to Tiptonville to hang out that you know of

Debra Holliman: Yea we would see Ridgley people coming up

Briana Mays: Would you say there was a rivalry between Tiptonville and Ridgley back in those days?

Debra Holliman: I think it was, it wasn't, um, a physical confrontation count rivalry you know maybe a little bit jealously and between the two but it wasn't a big deal out on things

Briana Mays: What did what were like what was the rivalry center around that you knew of

Debra Holliman: The only thing I could remember through high school it was maybe you know the Tiptonville girls and the Ridgley girls liking the same guys, the little

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pity high school stuff

Briana Mays: So if you look at if you look how it is now would you say that Tiptonville and Ridgley are closer now than they were back when you were a teenager

Debra Holliman: I think now Tiptonville and Ridgley I'm not sure what the rivalry is about now unless its competition for um, businesses to come meet in or what have you. I think being older now I look at the rivalry, back in high school it was just little pity stuff and now it might be rivalry for economic growth but I don't think it's a bad rivalry at least I don't perceive at such there maybe things I don't know going on between Ridgley and Tiptonville

Briana Mays: Can you go on granted detail about you said economic growth rivalry that what you said

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Debra Holliman: Yes what I don't know if I don't know like if the community or both trying to attract the same business, I don't know if that is an issue, I don't know what what the rivalry issue is between Tiptonville and Ridgley. I often heard that you know once they combine the schools it was some heard feelings about that but I I really don't know to what degrade the rivalry exist

Briana Mays: So do you see a lot of it today like just from your perspective did you think there one

Debra Holliman: No I don't see

Briana Mays: You don't

Debra Holliman: No

Briana Mays: Ok we'll just go talk about the business than when you back in the day when you were growing up in Tiptonville what kinds of businesses were located in Tiptonville

Debra Holliman: Growing up in Tiptonville back in the 60s probable h-i-s um, the sewing factory that was the only thing we had before the prison came in you know we had h-i-s and oh Georgia gulf was here

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and that was about it. You had your mills, your oil mills, your bean mill those kinds of things, whereas farming decline they kind of faded out

Briana Mays: Why do you think that they are more businesses in Tiptonville than Ridgley today

Debra Holliman: I really I don't know if because Tiptonville is close I don't know because of the river, the location that we have a better access to the river that's why, I'm not I'm not sure why there more

business in Tiptonville then Ridgley. The county seat the court house all your elected officials are in Tiptonville.

Briana Mays: Do you think there is a way to create more businesses in Ridgley

Debra Holliman: I'm sure it is

Briana Mays: Like can you add any examples what could Ridgley that would bring Tiptonville people

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down there

Debra Holliman: With there a business that hires people and someone in Tiptonville doesn't have a job I'm sure they wouldn't think twice about going to Ridgley now how do you get a business to come to Ridgley to offer these um, opportunities for people to Tiptonville that's something I think I kind of ??? Have to look at through tax breaks, I don't know how they go by selling the city to business people coming in

Briana Mays: So um, the businesses that were that were located in Tiptonville when you were growing up what happen to those

Debra Holliman: H-I-S I think a lot of factories, sewing factory like that they sit they business overseas they got out source to cheaper market overseas

Briana Mays: Ok did you ever did you were there any businesses in Ridgley that brought you there that didn't have in Tiptonville when you were growing up

Debra Holliman: Oh yes

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I went down to Ridgley there used to be a store in Ridgley ??? Went down there bought some clothes it was couple of stores Ridgley we would go down and shop at

Briana Mays: So what happen to those

Debra Holliman: I think your Walmart, your Jcpennys, I think the largest stores in Dyersburg and people got more access to cars so they started going to Dyersburg and then that local stores just kind of folded

Kieanna Avery: What do you think it's like a big difference in between the way life was back then the way it is now

Debra Holliman: The big difference between there's technology, people have more access transportation more available now, people have more cars, the whole world is change its everyone wants more, everyone wants to go online and found

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things as far as shopping that hurts um, your businesses everywhere being online shopping but the world just change so much and I don't know if technology, people are not as as to pin on one another more depending on computers

Kieanna Avery: Do you think the you saw that life is got worst or better since then

Debra Holliman: I think we got a lot more conveniences in our life to make our daily routine easier but I think socially um, people don't communicate well they don't talk to each other anymore

Kieanna Avery: So would you say that like there that Ridgley and Tiptonville aren't I guess you can say closest they should be with one another

Debra Holliman: I feel like I'm talking about something I really haven't an experience

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like this rivalry things between Tiptonville and Ridgley you know I hear about it I have not witness it um, Tiptonville and Ridgley both in Lake County that's there common bound um, that's bound we both we all Lake County

Briana Mays: Can you just tell us how it was growing up when Ridgley and Tiptonville when you were younger like describe the community back then comparing to how it is now

Debra Holliman: The community was small everybody knew everybody and everybody knows everybody now um we had neighbors we like from my mom went to work if I left home they will tell her they would watch out for us and um they kept an eye it was

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I think it was very safe um I think people have more respect for each other back then I don't remember growing up and people loud music have a lot of cursing in and ??? You will never ride down the streets and little of people sitting on the porch and you have that blasting I think there's more respect and I think it was more caring about yourself and your community more you lived you didn't want older people to see you do something that wasn't proper. Far as I think now people don't care but it was good time um, they ??? Each other out someone was sick you visited, carried food um you cared about each other

Briana Mays: So you say back when you was growing up it seem like all the town was one big family even they were blood related kind of

Debra Holliman: I will say our neighborhoods were

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you know we have separate neighbors and fighting in white neighbors I don't know what the white folks were doing nut the black neighborhoods that's kind like the way we did

Briana Mays: So would you say we not like that today we are not as closest as you there were when you were a child

Debra Holliman: Nah I wouldn't say that because some of my neighbors I don't know I don't visit them I have no desire to visit them and I don't want them to visit me so I think the world has changed

Briana Mays: Do you think there is a way that we can get back to that

Debra Holliman: I don't think the way we can told to get back you never can go back, you can't change time I think we might can do some things that might make us closer but I don't think we can ever get back to the way things used to be

Briana Mays: Well ok Ms. Debra we don't have any more questions to ask you but is there anything else you would like to add

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on that we did not catch on

Debra Holliman: I just feel like that I ??? Wasn't a good person the interview about rivalry between Ridgley and Tiptonville because that mind sense of rivalry was like when we were kids and the boy thing as an adult I never through of Ridgley and Tiptonville ??? Rivalry competition or having ill feelings between the two communities and maybe I been in a different place from everybody else

Briana Mays: We would like to thank you for taking time out your busy schedule to do this interview for us

Debra Holliman: Ok you welcome