

Begin Segment 0:00

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Thank you for participating in this interview. And for the record, can you state your name please?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Name is **Janie** R. Whinfrey.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: And could you state your date of birth?

Mrs. Whinfrey: My date of birth is May the 23rd, 1920.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Okay, and where were you born?

Mrs. Whinfrey: I was born in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, ~~Ledford~~ Rutherford County.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Okay, and what was it like growing up in Murfreesboro?

Mrs. Whinfrey: The way it is in the country, I supposed, I don't know. Course I was ~~There was silos~~ around there for a long time before I went any other place you could see how things were going. My family, we were, we lived in the country and we were farmers.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Okay, what kind of farmers? Did you grow everything?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Uh, we grew a garden and we grew corn, sorghum, sweet potatoes.

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Cotton.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Okay, did you have any brothers or sisters?

Mrs. Whinfrey: There was nine of us.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Oh, nine, where do you rank in the nine.

Mrs. Whinfrey: I was seventh.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Oh, okay. Um-hum, okay. What were your parents like growing up?

Mrs. Whinfrey: They were good parents. They were, -they ~~was~~ saw that we worked. I've been working ever since I was about five, doing the house chores and things like that.

~~Paris Westbrook~~Elizabeth Saba: Did you ever do anything like farm work or gardening or—

Mrs. Whinfrey: Oh yeah, all of it. I used to milk cows, slop hogs.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Okay.

Mrs. Whinfrey: All the works, they killed chickens, geese.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Okay, okay, I was about to ask if you took care of children, but you said you're number seven. Um—

Mrs. Whinfrey: Well, I had a sister, I was five years old when she-

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-I wanted to be the baby because I was the baby that long, but I used to kind of look after her.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Okay, What were the schools that you went to in Murfreesboro.

Mrs. Whinfrey: Well, I went to a two room school.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Okay.

Mrs. Whinfrey: Yeah, they had two teachers. Taught one to four and fourth through eighth. One through eight grades.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: How far was your school from your house?

Mrs. Whinfrey: I don't know, but I had to walk there and back.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Oh, okay.

Mrs. Whinfrey: It was, we had a, we cut through some woods, it was well, we could do it. If it was raining or something and something was going on then we had the long way around. I would say it was a good three miles, maybe more.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Okay. What high school did you go to?

[0:03:00]

Mrs. Whinfrey: ___ high school.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: What were the schools there like?

Mrs. Whinfrey: It was good. It wasn't a big school like schools are now. I graduated in '41, 1941 from that school. And at that time, we were the biggest class.

Elizabeth Saba Paris Westbrook: What was the biggest? Like how many?

Mrs. Whinfrey: I was counting, we get together every year round about Memorial Day. And this year I called myself counting and I thought it was 32, I think it was 33.

Paris Westbrook Elizabeth Saba: Really, and that was the biggest class?

Mrs. Whinfrey: That was the biggest class at that time.

Elizabeth Saba Paris Westbrook: Okay.

Mrs. Whinfrey: But the school was stayed open till '68 and I'm sure they have a bigger class after mine.

Elizabeth Saba Paris Westbrook: But in Murfreesboro, what were the race relations like between whites and blacks and—

Mrs. Whinfrey: Terrible. Terrible. You know how the other race was. They thought they had all the sense and we didn't have any.

[0:04:00]

Elizabeth Saba Paris Westbrook: What was your school, all black, the high school and two rooms?

Mrs. Whinfrey: All black, all black went I was there ~~out of~~ there, but later on, they changed it. It must have '68 because they closed our ~~that~~ school. And their children from then on have been going to a biracial school.

Elizabeth Saba Paris Westbrook: Okay.

Mrs. Whinfrey: But I was long gone.

Elizabeth Saba Paris Westbrook: What was, like what was your community like that you lived in. I know you said you lived on a farm, but I guess.

Mrs. Whinfrey: No, we didn't live on a farm, 'cause most of our land is wood and rocks.

Elizabeth Saba Paris Westbrook: Okay.

Mrs. Whinfrey: But we did farm because people right behind us had—have. It was, we didn't have all of the things to participate that children have now. But we mostly attended edding school.

[0:05:00]

Work weekend. We have ball games. Fish fry's. Good old big drinks that you could get for a nickel. You all know you can't even get a piece of candy for that now. It was, they were just, we were a big family. My sister liked d to play ball and she used to play ball a lot. I didn't play ball that much and we just have picnics and like people do now. And something else ya'll probably don't know anything about we used to have churchin' and have a day where we set up food, you all know anything about that?

Elizabeth SabaParis Westbrook: No, I knew.

Mrs. Whinfrey: Set up food and all, oh that was good times.
Begin Segment 00:05:48:22

Elizabeth Saba: What role did religion play in your community growing up?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Very much. The reason I would say that is because I had attended Sunday School-

[0:06:00]

-from a very small kid up. And we lived not too far from the church I joined. And the church is still there. I think my grandfather, which I don't remember, was part of the starting of that church. I can't say founder because Jesus Christ founded the Christian church.

Elizabeth SabaParis Westbrook: Okay, was everybody in your community actively involved in church?

Mrs. Whinfrey: No, no ma'am. Not everybody, not everybody, but people mostly went to church and they-they also sawthought that children attend Sunday School and Church.

Elizabeth Saba: When you were growing up in Murfreesboro through your elementary and high school years, how did segregation affect your young life, you as a young person?

[0:07:00]

Elizabeth Saba: Well, in a way it did not affect me that much because we were already been in the same community. And we used to have the man they called constable then, the person who took care of the

law of the town. We didn't have a car at that time. He had a '28, uh, Ford and he used to take us wherever we needed to go. Daddy would always get him to take us.

We had a car, but it was short lived. And of course my daddy, he had a wagon with horses and when I was real young, we had a buggy. My dad and mother used to go to different places in it.

Elizabeth SabaParis Westbrook: Okay, when did you leave Murfreesboro?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Well, I left Murfreesboro the year I finished high school which was 1941-

[0:08:00]

-which was 68 years ago. Ya'll can't even think that far. You got any grandparents that age?

Elizabeth SabaParis Westbrook: Uh, no. My grandmother is 63

Mrs. Whinfrey: Um-hum, and when I first left ~~to go to~~ I took up cosmetology. And um, after taking up cosmetology, I attended TSU, Tennessee State University. At that time it was just Tennessee State, but before I finished, they made it into a university.

Elizabeth SabaParis Westbrook: Okay. So you came to Memphis, after you graduated high school.

Mrs. Whinfrey: Uh, I taught about two years at a place called Alamo, Tennessee. When I was there I taught in high school. I taught cosmetology and 7th and 8th grade. And I married in '49.

[0:09:00]

And that's how I got to Memphis.

Elizabeth SabaParis Westbrook: What was Tennessee State like? Your college years?

Mrs. Whinfrey: It was like a big family.

Elizabeth SabaParis Westbrook: Okay.

Mrs. Whinfrey: Like a big family.

Elizabeth SabaParis Westbrook: Did you enjoy Nashville?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Oh yes.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Did you see any differences between Nashville and Murfreesboro, like as far as the city, people interacting and everything like that?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Yes. Because you know, Nashville is called the Athens of the South. You probably don't know that, but it is. We attended mostly, at that time Tennessee State University was mostly black. But there were people from everywhere attending the school, from the islands, from overseas, every place.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: With Tennessee, well, TSU now with TSU ~~and~~ Fisk being located on Jefferson.

[0:10:00]

What was that like? That and Vanderbilt building and surrounding colleges. Did all the colleges interact or was, is still segregated?

Mrs. Whinfrey: No, not that I know of. Not at that time. Not that I know of, they did not. They might have. I just said because most of my time was spent, because I worked and went to school. Most of my time was going to school and working.

Elizabeth Saba: And what did you study at Tennessee State?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Business Education.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Did you do any activities when you were in college?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Uh, not to many because you know, if you're working and going to school there are not to many, I was a member of the _____. Didn't I uh, you know, a Greek organization, but if I had, I would have been a Delta. I did pledge, but I just got out of it.

[0:11:00]

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Okay. You said you went and taught after you graduated from Tennessee State?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Yes. Although at that time, you could go about a year and if you wanted to teach, you could go and teach and then come back in the summer and then finish up. ~~No, I didn't~~ You know how they do that. No.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: What was your first couple years of teaching like in the city that you were in, after you were at Tennessee State.

Mrs. Whinfrey: Oh, it was good. I didn't have a car. And they had, ~~I went to a friend that teaches in the~~ a dormitory for the teachers. A dormitory like ____ right here and maybe about 100 miles from here was, 100 yards or 100 feet was the school.

Begin Segment 00:11:48:07

Elizabeth Saba: Okay. Where did you teach?

Mrs. Whinfrey: It was in Alamo, Tennessee.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~ Paris Westbrook: Where is Alamo Tennessee?

Mrs. Whinfrey: That's about 24 miles going-
[0:12:00]

-I guess, west, northwest from Jackson, Tennessee, which you all might know about.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~ Paris Westbrook: What was Alamo, Tennessee like?

Mrs. Whinfrey: It was a very aggressive high school. It was much more aggressive, but at that time they were playing basketball and all. We had games. We always played football at our school and volleyball and things like that. But, they had more activities concerning sports than we had.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~ Paris Westbrook: Was the school, the school that you taught at in Alamo, was it all black?

Mrs. Whinfrey: No.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~ Paris Westbrook: Okay, can you tell us how you came to Memphis. You said that you got married and—

Mrs. Whinfrey: I married and my husband was from Memphis.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~ Paris Westbrook: Okay.

Mrs. Whinfrey: And we came back to Memphis.

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And then I came back after we married. But I didn't come right back because I taught at the school about two years. And then I was looking for my first child and I told them, well, if the child's okay, then I won't be back. I didn't go back. I've been in Memphis. I've been where I'm living right now for 59 years.

Elizabeth Saba: And when you came to Memphis, did you come to Hyde Park or where did you come when you first came to Memphis?

Mrs. Whinfrey: I was living in what you would call Hyde Park. East Hyde Park is what they would call it. I don't know how they would classify it, 'cause I don't live far from here. The next street over is Hunter and I live on Hunter, across ~~to~~ Springdale.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Okay, when you first came to Memphis, what was that like? What were you—

Mrs. Whinfrey: Same way it was when I left Murfreesboro.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Oh, okay.

[0:14:00]

There was a lot of, I don't know what, how to say it nice, you know and don't know how to say it bad.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Just say it.

Mrs. Whinfrey: Well, when I first came to Memphis, I would say Bill Street was all black, as far as I knew. _____ and you weren't allowed to ride in yellow cabs and they always called it ~~Trump~~Crump Place. We used to tease the children in Nashville and I didn't know I was going to end up in Memphis.

You don't do anything unless ~~Trump~~Crump says you can do it. 'Cause it was a ~~Trump~~Crump run town, the way I understand it. So, a lot of things have changed since then. Riding on the back of the bus.

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And had to get off if somebody came in of another complexion. And it was black, move back and you stood up.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: What was Hyde Park like before—

Mrs. Whinfrey: Hyde Park was, I would call very serene and good and nice. And a place that you felt comfortable in. All that's changed.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: When you got-came to Memphis, did you start working at a teacher?

Mrs. Whinfrey: For a while I didn't. After I had my first child, I stayed home with her, why, she was born in 1950 and I went back to teaching in '53.

[0:16:00]

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Okay, where did you go back and teach at?

Mrs. Whinfrey: At the school. That post office here. Don't know ____, that's where the school was. All of that way. You see all of those houses?

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Uh-huh.

Mrs. Whinfrey: That was the playground.

Elizabeth Saba: Oh wow. What was the school called?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Hyde Park, and it was at that time, from my remembrance, it was the biggest school in Tennessee, elementary. We called it elementary school because they divided the schools up now, but it was one though eight and then later one it became kindergarten through sixth and then that's when they built Cyprus and then seventh and eight grade went to Cyprus. And all that has changed again.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Okay, were you involved in any community organizations when you were in Hyde Park?

Mrs. Whinfrey: All of them. A civic leader. I'm not a civic leader-

[0:17:00]

-but I was involved in it. And whatever was going on in the community, there was quite a bit.

~~Mrs. Whinfrey~~Paris Westbrook: Was everybody in the community involved in community service?

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Mrs. Whinfrey: No, no, no, you ain't going to find 100 percent anywhere. If you do, let me know. What were some of the events that were significant in ____.

Mrs. Whinfrey: In what?

Elizabeth Saba: The events that were significant in shaping the community or changing it or—

Mrs. Whinfrey: They had what they called a full sleeve, I can't tell you what all ____ now, but my husband was over here for a long time and we had

a civic club and it would meet at different times and then they start organizing neighborhood watch and all of that.

Begin Segment 00:17:53:23

Elizabeth Saba: Do you remember the closing of West Drive?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Yes, I do. I don't remember the year.

Elizabeth Saba: Right.

[0:18:00]

Mrs. Whinfrey: But I remember the closing.

Elizabeth Saba: What was that like when that happened and what exactly -was it?

Mrs. Whinfrey: I think it was very devastating to the people in the community. People would want to separate, they don't even want you to go through their street. That's the way I felt about it. I don't know about the other people.

Elizabeth Saba: Can you explain what it was so that people will know what happened. Why did they close the drive and what was the reasoning, do you remember?

Mrs. Whinfrey: I don't know. I don't think I know. The only thing I can maybe say was the reason was because they didn't want you to drive through there.

Elizabeth Saba: Through Hyde Park.

Mrs. Whinfrey: That was open street until they fixed it where you couldn't go through there. And then for that reason, I don't, what that reason was, I don't know, other than maybe there was too much traffic or I don't know. I don't have any idea.

[0:19:00]

You would have to ask the people who did it. Who was responsible for doing it. I just thought it was, we were just kind of devastating ing to need —. Now, nobody else might have felt like that.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: How long did you live in Hyde Park before you moved to where you are now?

Mrs. Whinfrey: That's where I started living when I, well, I wasn't in this part of town, I lived off of Me Street when I first came here. But we was

just rooming with somebody. And then I lived almost downtown. My sister-in-law was living on ~~Munehin~~ Merchant Street, which I don't think is there anymore and we lived with her a while. I was here maybe about, not a good year before we moved to where I am now.

[0:20:00]

Did you retire as a school teacher?

Mrs. Whinfrey: I sure did. I worked till I was 65.

Elizabeth Saba: Can you tell me a little bit about what it was like being a teacher?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Oh, it was really nice. You didn't have the type of students you have now. You had parent's participation. We had PTA meetings and they'd have them at night and the parents would come out and participate and we'd have different activities at the school like one time, I think we had some kind of wedding that we had because I remember the teachers participated.

The lady's name Ms. Crawford was the flower girl. But she taught history and it was, I was like, I'm gonna tell you when everything went berserk in Memphis. If you really want to know.

[0:21:00]

And that was the year they killed Martin Luther King ~~my~~ is when killing. It's when you name it, everything. I don't know where, I don't know, I kind of feel like Memphis person. I don't know how long, but you go back in the ~~room~~ bible and think about how long things happen to anybody because you know, children is slavery 400 years. And when you think of that 40 years that we've had all of this. What else might be coming.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~ Paris Westbrook: Hmm, can you give us a comparison of I guess of Memphis, of the city before the sanitation strike and—

Mrs. Whinfrey: All of that.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~ Paris Westbrook: And then after, you know, he was killed and everything like that?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Um, you mean, the condition of the city?

~~Elizabeth Saba~~ Paris Westbrook: Uh-huh.

[0:22:00]

Mrs. Whinfrey: It was kind of. Like I say, that was during the time where you had, you didn't have to many different rights. You had black water. You had white water. And ~~not really~~ water, but the name black and white. And back door stuff, had to go, couldn't go in the front door. I remember the year I finished cosmetology we had a meeting in Knoxville, Tennessee and we chartered a bus.

There had been people going from Memphis in between my home because we picked p some people in Memphis. And it was the most beautiful ~~city~~ scenery on the way but it was scary because bus, like the bus is going to run off. And we stopped at a place.

[0:23:00]

And they didn't want us, we couldn't go down. We couldn't go in the place where we stopped and I thought it was the bus station, but I don't remember, ~~but the rats run it was a resturaunt~~, I know. And they wanted to know if we wanted something to eat. ~~And here I am way up high.~~ And we said no. In fact, my food gonna be like this I don't want it.

I know whether anybody brought anything, but I didn't. I'm not going to say somebody else didn't, but I didn't.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Can you tell us how the city ws during the 60's, like around he time when civil rights was getting nationwide attention and things like that?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Uh, it was tough. That's all I can say. Sadness on either side everywhere because nobody wanted to-

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-the people who were part of running this city or part of navigating what was going on, uh, they just felt like the sanitation workers wasn't anybody. It's your job and you do it and forget what kind of facilities you need and whatever.

Begin Segment 00:24:28:08

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Do you remember ~~hearing~~ what the community's feelings were, like the community that you lived in, your neighbors and things like that?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Oh, we met with the people 'cause I think it was the Jewish women who you know, after they had all this garbage stinking everywhere and they ~~didn't want to wouldnt~~ pick it up and they wouldn't come to any kind of agreement with the men and calling them boys and whatever. Because if you've ever been to the civil right building-

[0:25:00]

-you can see some of the things that they went through.

Elizabeth SabaParis Westbrook: What was the city like, well, you mentioned it earlier, but could you expand on what the city was like after Dr. King was shot and killed?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Well, it's like I was saying, when I first came here, you didn't have, you had no rights. Now, I can remember when my boys were small, we were out here in one of the bigger stores, department stores and they just felt like you were the one who was going to come in and pickup something. And they would watch you when you were in there.

Like I told one time, I said, my children never-not gone get anything in here I can't pay for. You can go ahead and watch somebody else if you want too. But you don't need to watch me.

[0:26:00]

Elizabeth SabaParis Westbrook: How did Dr. King's assassination affect your community.

Mrs. Whinfrey: That's what I'm saying, it's been killin' ever since.

Elizabeth SabaParis Westbrook: So it was just a steady climbing?

Mrs. Whinfrey: It's just a decline in the morality of the city. Decline in the, in some ways, they were, we were able to get some things that people needed or wanted. But, it was a lot of marching and killing for what the city is now. A lot of it. I wasn't in it, but some of the people I knew was in it.

Elizabeth SabaParis Westbrook: Hmm, do you remember the day that Dr. King was assassinated?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Sure it's as fresh on my mind as the sun is shinning. I was eating lunch and it came over the radio.

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And it says, it was something like the time that Dr., not Dr., but President Kennedy was assassinated, everything just went _____. Even the trees looked sad to me. And he got assassinated on my daughter's birthday and they-we would always have a special something on her birthday.

About 9:00 that night, she said mamma _____ we haven't eaten and I-haven't had a birthday dinner._____.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~ Paris Westbrook: Wow. Has there been anybody in your community or even yourself that has been and tried to bring the community morale back or—

Mrs. Whinfrey: Yeah, like I say, my husband was part of ____.

[0:28:00]

And everybody in the community the ~~Principlesy~~ ____ for the different schools he coordinated with that. And of course, he coordinated with the school system in that he was a part of the meetings that they had at the area superintendent's office, which was down here on James Road.

____ For a while. But I cant right now.

Elizabeth Saba: And going back to your teaching days, did you, were you teaching around the time where they integrated the schools?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Yes.

Elizabeth Saba: Okay, can you talk a little bit about that? What was it like?

Mrs. Whinfrey: ____ in a mostly white school and teach and then that teacher would come in to teach your class-

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-and the one I attended was not so. I don't think it was very, she acted nice. The children were nice. They, I don't have a problem with the children and, but the principal I could see a difference in how she acted, this was a lady.

____ mostly men principals. And—

Elizabeth Saba: What affects did you feel that integration had on the community?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Oh, it didn't—

Elizabeth Saba: Was it positive or negative or anything in ____.

Mrs. Whinfrey: In a way it was positive, in a way it was negative because it didn't reach our children-

[0:30:00]

-like they had been, like we had talked it, to my knowledge. That was one effect. And then two, I don't know, it just, as far as getting, I guess the facility because they ask, you might not know

or you might already know. She might know, that we didn't get the materials or the books that the other schools got.

There are people that I had a chance to talk with showed^{ed} how the football teams had to take the left over, facilities what is that the other schools had?

[0:31:00]

But I don't know how you classify that.

Begin Segment 00:31:09:22

Elizabeth Saba: What about, do you have any stories about any students you've had or how do you feel about the students you taught. Are there any that you see in the community now that have kind of moved on?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Oh, all the time, everyday that—

Elizabeth Saba: Could you tell us about that?

Mrs. Whinfrey: They always said I was mean. They always say I was a good teacher. And oh, even white and the black children I taught, because I taught until our school closed and then I went to **Coleman** Elementary and when I had a mixed group then. And when I went, first went there, I had about seven black and the rest of them was white.

When I left, I had about seven whites and the rest of them black.

[0:32:00]

So, but I had pretty good students all the way through. I didn't have, I've had maybe one or two that I would say were somewhat different, but other than that, I have good, all the students that I've taught, most of them have done well.

Elizabeth Saba: Do you remember any significant events that shaped our community like a **Hollywood dump, the Hollywood theater**, anything like that? ____.

Mrs. Whinfrey: In what?

Elizabeth Saba: The **Shannon** Street incident is something we found out as well.

Mrs. Whinfrey: Oh, all of that was, all things like that are not good for a community.

[0:33:00]

Not good at all. I watched all that on TV. I didn't, and I knew that some of the people got killed.

Elizabeth Saba: In the Shannon Street?

Mrs. Whinfrey: One of them was a Carter. I don't remember his first name, but he was one of them.

Elizabeth Saba: Can you tell us a little bit about that?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Um, I don't even know how it started, but it was not too far from where my brother-in-law lived. He lived on Fox Wood and about half a block from there and they were living there at that time. All of them did now. All the people on my, all my siblings are gone except two, there's two of us left.

[0:34:00] And that's one sister.

And one sister still lives in _____. And she's older than I am. She's 93 and I'm 89. So, it's, but I have a brother-in-law and his wife living not too far from there. It was, I don't know, it was sad because the drama went on night after night after night after night. And I can't even begin to think how it affected the community. And even those folk who were closer than I live to it.

Elizabeth Saba: Do you remember the people's thoughts and feelings on the incident? Like people that you talked too?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Like I say, it was just sad. It was a sad occasion, plus-

[0:35:00] -especially it had to be for the folk who were involved because I know one family that was involved and that was the Carters and I don't even remember who the other one was.

Elizabeth Saba: Do you remember anything about the Hollywood dump?

Mrs. Whinfrey: I remember always it's different, uh, I guess you could say, being ____ was not good for Hollywood because that just settled a few days ago. I was lookin' at a book. I went to one of the meetings and I was looking at the book they sent me. I forget the name of it, but anyway, it was nice for the community.

Elizabeth Saba: If there's anything you could do for your-

[0:36:00] -community or surrounding communities, to help regain a sense of morality and a sense of community and a sense of family, what

could you do, or what would you do? Or what would you suggest that people do?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Um, I suggest that we make ourselves, well, they say make yourself committed one you might contain something. Right now the most I do is, we don't have a civic club like we had. And I used to belong to the ___ homemakers club and we would go through the community and help people out and pay their utility bills and all like that.

And clean up their houses and have their house sprayed for roaches and things. But all the members died and we don't have, and now, you know, we're older so-

[0:37:00]

-that club demised about other things. We just don't have ~~and I think it's~~ the leaders 'cause we don't have people in the community now like we had. We just, so most of, our church, most of our affiliation there is to the church and through, like next week, this coming up week we are having vacation bible school and we reach out to the community.

We go out and ~~re~~evangelize and all variety and vacation bible school starts Monday and go on through the weekend. We serve breakfast at church and we have even the people who are not members want to have food come in and eat.

And—

~~Elizabeth Saba~~ Paris Westbrook: What church to you belong too?

Mrs. Whinfrey: I go to Mount Zion on Davis, I mean, not Davis, we're on Davis. On ~~Chelsea~~, 27th and Chelsea Avenue.

Begin Segment 00:38:00:15

[0:38:00]

~~Elizabeth Saba~~ Paris Westbrook: Okay, what would you say your proudest moment was in your life or your most significant?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Hmm, proudest moment, I got a lot of them, so I don't know which one to say. Well, I would think getting my children through school, you know, high school and college. But I tell you my saddest moment, my daughter died in 2/07. 31st of January ~~first though-~~ And- she had a doctorate degree in ___psychology.

Elizabeth Saba: Hmm. And what does your son do now?

Mrs. Whinfrey: I have two sons.

Elizabeth Saba: Okay, what do they do?

Mrs. Whinfrey: One is, uh, Tim is over at ___ Laboratory.

[0:39:00]

And the other one's been working with a company. He worked with Ford. He worked with ___, but he is branching out into his own business now.

Elizabeth Saba: And are you now working at **Buckman** Laboratory, tutoring at Buckman Laboratory?

Mrs. Whinfrey: I tutor there on Monday nights when I, I've been doing that, I think it's been about 10/12 to every year now, but it was like, but before I was tutoring there I was with the literacy program and I was tutoring in the library, outside library. Well, that's one way, I guess, reaching out to help the community.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: But do you teach children how to read or write?

Mrs. Whinfrey: No, it's at our place it's 25 and up.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Oh, really?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Yeah, so we don't have any children. But there are places children can go like Springdale and some more places.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: How many, what's the enrollment like?

[0:40:00]

Mrs. Whinfrey: Uh, about six.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Six people. Is it usually male or female or mixed?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Mixed. _____. Two, three, well, one man left, and he didn't come back. We had three, I think, three, might have been three because we had three males and we had ___, ___, and ___ we had three female.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~Paris Westbrook: Is there any other community involvement that you do aside from your church and your literacy program?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Uh, the community involvement, well, I just help the people in the community. And you know that there's always help for that.

[0:41:00]

For different things.

Elizabeth Saba: What about if you could offer any words of advice to young kids, what would you say?

Mrs. Whinfrey: I would hope that we would do a better job in taking care of their homeless because we have, we went to, just where we at, maybe the Dollar Store, there was a man there and he was begging and he said, "I haven't had any food today." And those kind of things.

You know, when we say we are one of the richest countries in the world and all of that and we don't take care of our people who are less fortunate. Some of them, you know, it's not that they you know, you, folks say they are kind of falling through the cracks and sometimes when that happens it's hard to get out, because ya'll might have seen when the little boy had his head caught in-

[0:42:00]

-the drain or something and he dropped his little toy down in there and it took them 45 minutes. Did you all see that on TV? It took 45 minutes to get him out. So, I, all of my husband's people have passed and he had one sister left.

And of course, I had to, I took care of her. And it was times that you know, I needed help with her that I, well, anyway, I got the help most of what I needed with her because they had a social worker that came from St. Louis and I asked her how they facilitate for their people who are homeless and doesn't have places to live and know ~~how to~~ where to work.

[0:43:00]

And she said the city cooperate with their business and take care of them. And I ~~know~~ ~~not~~ we do have some of that going on here, but I don't know how much of it. You still see people out in the street and the some of the people, they say, even if they are from homes _____. It's up to them, I guess. But I would like to see more of that. Everybody would have food to eat and places to live and facilities that 'cause, in social studies have the basic of life. You know, have that part that they call food, clothing, and shelter.

The other things, they're more or less not needed even though we want them. And then we get them.

[0:44:00]

But the basic of life is what everybody should have, I think.

Elizabeth Saba: Is there anything else that you'd like to add that we haven't talked about?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Uh, I don't know. I uh, the only thing, I don't have that much time left. I know I don't ~~know how~~ have much, but I continue to do what I can to be helpful to other people because when you study the Bible, who is going to be high up and do what you need to do, you got to be a servant. And try to love your neighbor as yourself.

So I love them, but that's what you try to do, be kind.

Begin Segment 00:44:50:20

Elizabeth Saba: Well, on behalf of _____ we'd like to thank you for taking the time _____.

[0:45:00]

Mrs. Whinfrey: What do you think about and that's all the person I have. I wasn't thinking about the conversation we've had.

~~Elizabeth Saba~~ Paris Westbrook: _____.

Mrs. Whinfrey: Was it in line?

Elizabeth Saba: Reverend O'Neal, have you heard of him?

Mrs. Whinfrey: O'Neal?

Elizabeth Saba: Yeah. He was just somebody that Mr. Fulton talked apart that lead drug marches in Hyde Park.

Mrs. Whinfrey: Was his last name O'Neal?

Elizabeth Saba: I think, no I think his first name is.

Mrs. Whinfrey: His first name is O'Neal_____.

Elizabeth Saba: _____.

Mrs. Whinfrey: I have a lot of the church members go to TSU and I got a girl I taught in, I teach 3 to 5 in the Sunday School class and I taught her in the Sunday School class and she graduated this year and she came and told me, I'm going to TSU. I said, "Oh!"

Elizabeth Saba: Another girl who does the program, she goes to TSU, actually and I got to Fisk, so.

[0:46:00]

Mrs. Whinfrey: You go where?

Elizabeth Saba: To Fisk.

Mrs. Whinfrey: Where?

Elizabeth Saba: Fisk.

Mrs. Whinfrey: Oh, Fisk, yeah. I had a cousin finish Fisk. I had a lot of cousins, I had seven cousins finish Fisk, really. They were Tollerman's _____, well, one of them just _____.

Elizabeth Saba: Yeah, April goes to TSU. April, okay.

Mrs. Whinfrey: We had one of our students graduate from in ____ Memphis and she's gonna be studying, she's going to be studying at—

Elizabeth Saba: Mahary?

Mrs. Whinfrey: Mahary.

Elizabeth Saba: I don't really like Mahary. Not that I'm going to be studying medicine, but I do recommend that people ask that they go there.

Mrs. Whinfrey: She was home for holiday, but she's going, she had to leave like Sunday I think.

Elizabeth Saba: Okay, that's cool.
[0:47:00]

Mrs. Whinfrey: I got three, no I have two in college then I got one that finished in, grandchildren, this is grandchildren. One finished in Charleston in Eastern Illinois University and my daughter's daughter that passed, she finished UT Chattanooga in the third of May this year.

Elizabeth Saba: Okay.

Mrs. Whinfrey: And then I got two there and two more still in school. The one that called me a while ago that's going to come out from the University of Memphis. She's a big junior this year.

Elizabeth Saba: Oh, okay. Very cool.

Mrs. Whinfrey: And her brother will be a sophomore.

Elizabeth Saba: Oh that's cool.

Mrs. Whinfrey: Yeah, I got some little babies.

Elizabeth Saba: Yeah.

Mrs. Whinfrey: That's everybody be saying, ____I got a little baby in the family. I know they think it's my grand grandchild, no it's my grandchild.

[0:48:00]

Mrs. Whinfrey: So _____ one's going to be four and the other one two months last Sunday.

Elizabeth Saba: Oh, these are great grand kids you said?

Mrs. Whinfrey: No, they're my grandchildren.

Elizabeth Saba: Oh, okay, I was like wait a minute.

[0:48:07]

[End of Audio]