Rhodes College Digital Archives - DLynx

Fayth Hill Washington, 2006

Item Type	Moving Image
Publisher	Rhodes College
Download date	2026-03-15 10:55:27
Link to Item	http://hdl.handle.net/10267/33557

Interview of Fayth Hill Washington. Interviewed by Crystal Windless and Daniel Jacobs, of The Crossroads to Freedom Project, Rhodes College.

Mrs. Fayth Hill Washington was a member of the Hoxie 21, a group of African-American students who integrated the schools in Hoxie, Arkansas in 1955. In this interview she discusses her childhood in Hoxie, her experience going to the colored school and then integrating the Hoxie school system when she was in 4th grade. Hill-Washington also talks about her experience going to high school in Gary, Indiana, her perception of the Vietnam War and her time in college.

This interview was conducted in 2006 to be included in the Rhodes College Crossroads to Freedom Digital Archive Project. The transcripts represent what was said in the interview to the best of our ability. It is possible that some words, particularly names, have been misspelled. We have made no attempt to correct mistakes in grammar.

Windless: Well first of all on behalf of Rhodes and the Crossroads to Freedom Project, we really want to take a moment to thank you for taking time out to be here and share your story with us.

Fayth: It's my pleasure. Thank you.

Windless: Can you start off giving us your name?

Fayth: My name is Fayth Hill Washington.

Jacobs: Do you think you could tell us a little bit about where you were born and raised?

Fayth: I was born in Walnut Ridge, Arkansas which is adjacent to Hoxie, Arkansas. Lived in Hoxie, but I was born in Walnut Ridge.

Jacobs: What is your current occupation?

Fayth: I'm retired. And I'm CEO of the Hill Foundation.

Jacobs: Who, maybe could you give your parent's names and just tell a little bit about them?

Fayth: I am the only daughter of Marshall and Rosemary Hill. Both of which were actively involved in the 1955 Hoxie desegregation event. I .had one brother Wesley Hill who also was a active participant in the event.

00:01:08

Jacobs: What was your home life like when you were growing up?

Fayth: My home life was wonderful. I had the swing in the backyard and I had my grandmother next door whose refrigerator was always

full. There was a big grocery store next to her house and I remember my brother and I going over there, didn't have a penny in our pocket and getting what we wanted. Say put it on Granny's bill. And growing up in Hoxie was actually a very unique experience. At the time I didn't think so. But in retrospect it was a complete balance of the community, the church and the school. The community so far as in those days when I grew up you had a check and balance system. Because if you did something wrong, at the school you got a spanking and when you got home you got one too.

00:02:06

I remember learning my Easter speech at the school sometimes because we had to practice so that on Easter Sunday we could say it correctly. And it was just everybody looking out for each other and those particular units work together in harmony to have a good family and community.

Jacobs: Could you tell us a little bit about your parent's occupations?

Fayth: My father was a mechanic and then he was an entrepreneur. He purchased his business in 1955, or '56, I'm not sure. And then my mother worked at a pressing shop during the 1955 period. From that time of course my mother's occupation changed. And my father when we moved, when we moved to Indiana he also owned a business there too. And she became a nurse.

00:03:13

Jacobs: Could you tell us a little bit about what kind of activities, I know you already talked about the church and school, but were you involved in any other activities as a child?

Fayth: Well in Hoxie I think the population of Hoxie being about 3,000 people. The demographics of the town the African Americans probably stayed in maybe five or six blocks of the town. Now within this little radius where most of us lived, there were whites also in there. But we were predominantly in this area. We played together. We had sometimes we ate together.

00:04:00

Which is it was just a small town. Very unique town. We didn't have a lot of stress about getting along with each other. And it was a good place to grow up. And I think that the people that lived

there, there were 17 African American people, families that lived there. We were diverse in what we liked to do of the 17 families; we headed three different churches that we attended. But at the same time, everybody looked out for everybody. So it was a good place to grow up. I wish I was back there right now.

Jacobs: What was or where did you go to school before the Hoxie integration?

Fayth: Well in 1955 when the Hoxie integration started, began, that's when my father was a mechanic and then he owned his own business.

00:04:59

But because of the event, he was blackballed and couldn't find employment. So my brother and I stayed in Hoxie from 1955 until 1959 and going to the new Hoxie school district 46. Previously we had gone to the Hoxie coed school over in Hoxie. So our environment did change. After we left Arkansas, we moved to Gary, Indiana and that's where we both finished high school at Emerson High School in Gary, Indiana.

Video Cut (.flv)
(05:33:00)

Jacobs: Can you talk a little bit about what school was like before you went to the Hoxie Elementary School and then what were the major changes that you noticed?

Fayth: Well the Hoxie colored school sat right on a very on a highway. And of course the so far as the look of the school it was definitely different. To look at the school you could see that it wasn't equal.

00:05:58

Our one room school could not match the brick two story building in which we would soon be going to. There were boards or planks that you had to cross over the ditch to get to the school. Once you got on the yard because that was also our playground and we would go into the school where we had a coal burning fire, what do you call that? Where you put wood in or coal, that was our heat. We had there was a stage and the rest of it was a big room in the back, a big area in the back in which we played. Totally different environment. The teacher, Mrs. Trotter, was one of the people that I talked about in this circle, this triangle of support for the

community. She drove up from Little Rock Arkansas to be our teacher.

00:07:00

The parents were involved in the children's lives at that time. Everybody went to school. And Mrs. Trotter did what she could do; she connected all because she had grades one through eight. The high school students that lived in Hoxie as well as Walnut Ridge were transported to Jonesboro, Arkansas which was 50 miles one way. Because they had no other choice, there was not a high school there. So that's another difference in the schools. The lady that drove them back and forth everyday was Mrs. Essie Steadman. Now Mrs. Steadman in essence drove them from she lived in Walnut Ridge, from Walnut Ridge to Jonesboro and she did that twice a day. So that's 100 miles a day that the high school students had to travel over to Jonesboro to Booker T. Washington High School.

00:08:03

Now of course after the event, we went into this building that we had never seen before. They had inside bathrooms and water and they had a separate room for I mean a cafeteria with hot meals. It was just I couldn't believe it. So of course that situation was not equal. Absolutely not equal. So and there are many other factors as I could just name like the books that we had, they were outdated, torn. There was no place to write your name in the book. It was just a different environment. It was different economically between each school. The colored school and the school that we went to.

Jacobs: Could you maybe talk a little bit about when did you find out that you were going to be switching over to the Hoxie Elementary School. I mean were you aware of the Brown vs. Board of Education? The court ruling, did you find out about that as a child?

00:09:12

Fayth: Well I, at that time, I was in fourth grade. No, I didn't know about Brown vs. Board of Education. However a different environment in a different time. My parents knew about it. And at that time, you did what your parents said do. Now how they heard about it I don't know, I'm sure Mr. Vance called and said what was getting ready to happen probably the day before. At that time, the

youngsters, we didn't know what was going on with Brown vs. Board of Education. But the decision was made you're going to be changing schools and actually the children so far as any of us knew we were just obeying our parents.

00:10:04

Not really intimidated at the time because we'd been playing with the children all the time. All we knew it was going to be a different location. However when you got there, oh my, and they had all these books you could read and they were new and they had actual covers and bindings on them. It was. It was yes it was very different, very different.

Video Cut (.flv)
(10:29:00)

Jacobs: Do you remember what your first day was like? Do you remember any emotions you had?

Fayth: Oh yeah. Well I don't remember the emotions, but I remember vividly some of the things that happened on that day. I remember being taken to school, got out of the car and it was so many people gathered around. And of course because of the desegregation there, a lot of outside agitators came in. And they were congregated in their groups.

00:11:00

Of course you had parents there. Nobody knew what to expect. They were there, I don't know necessarily because they wanted to start something, but this was all new to everybody. Then you had teachers standing around and you had, you know how kids do when they're young. Young and old too, they congregate. And so we had to walk through all of this to get into the school. Because we had no idea where we were supposed to go. So yeah, it was a little intimidating. And there were a couple of people there taking photographs, so it's a lasting impression of that first day.

Jacobs: What were the teachers like? Did they, did you feel like they treated you any differently or was it?

00:11:53

Fayth: Well the teachers in my experience being in the 4th grade, what I remember the 4th through the 7th grade that I went to the school some of the teachers were very, very nice to us. Well to me. They provided, one lady in particular I remember was like a safe haven when I saw her. Because she seemed very, very genuine. But there was some teachers I remember being in a classroom and I was the only African American in the classroom, I think I was in the 5th grade at that time, and the reading material of course was what they were accustomed too. And that was *Little Black Sambo*. And that was very degrading, and to have to read out loud while the kids were laughing and giggling. So you know when you talk about that event and the impact that it had on us, I thought much later about I wondered what those teachers felt like.

00:12:54

They had no idea, no training, no benchmark to accept a whole different culture of children that they didn't know anything about. Now of course back to Hoxie and the environment, there were also white kids who didn't live in our radius. They didn't know anything about us either. So of course there were a lot of negative things said. But it was basically we did okay. You didn't feel as loved; you didn't feel as concerned about changing the environments. You didn't have that one on one or somebody that you know like Mrs. Trotter. She was not there. So you're dealing with all the external environments, walking through the crowds, the name-calling. And then you've got some teachers who didn't use this judgment so far as blending the kids together.

00:14:03

And then you got this long walk back to your house after you leave there, everyday. And of course the road was a rock road. And the cars would drive down, well some of the students, high school students had their trucks and all and you'd be walking home and they'd see us and of course they'd spin their tires and the rocks go everywhere. And oh, yeah, it was some experiences to remember. And back to your original question about the teachers, there were some who were supportive. Some who was trying to keep the peace. Some that didn't really care one way or the other. But again it was a totally different environment that impacted both the African American students, the white students and white teachers because there was not one African American teacher in that school. And the African American teacher that we had at the Hoxie colored school, Mrs. Trotter, no longer had a job.

00:15:03

Windless: You mentioned that the students who integrated you were being obedient to your parents, but do you think as you integrated and afterwards that you all started to realize that you're a part of something important.

Video Cut (.flv)
(15:21:29)

Fayth: You know again, I was in the 4th grade. I didn't realize. I really did not realize but I do remember the next year was easier. I knew that my mom and dad would not put me in harm's way. And of course mom and dad were kind of the leaders in the community as it related to the transition here. They were a young couple and there were, they were like the leaders in the African American community.

00:15:57

I remember that after this event happened, there were outside agitators that came in but we also had the support of the NAACP. They worked with my mom and dad and in fact there's a letter from Thurgood Marshall where and Roy Wilkins where they came in to offer advice to the African American community and keep us calm and all. This support it was great and I look back on that and I think that was just awesome back in 1955 that they would come to such a small town as Hoxie. But I did not know the significance of this event until much later. And I think I didn't because Hoxie did not get the notoriety of Little Rock, of the Little Rock nine.

00:16:50

And many people asked me why do you think Hoxie did not get that? And I'm just thinking that of a population of three or 4,000 people, 17 African American people families we just didn't get the attention and you know you think about the Little Rock nine when that happened, they had media coverage. It's just a larger city. And the resources were available and had it not been for Ebony Magazine who actually documented this event, it probably would have been a historical event never recorded anywhere. But Hoxie has a lot of valuable benchmarks, unsung heroes, and lots of learning as it relates to how we did make this transition so successfully of two different groups blending together actually

successfully in comparison to the Little Rock nine. How did we do it? There was no benchmark, there was no precedent.

00:18:01

Because we were the first, we couldn't pick up the phone and say well how did you all do it? Because it didn't happen anyplace else. There was another impact to the students going back to your question. My brother Wesley Hill was four years older than me. And he was quite an athlete. Now there was a coach there, Coach Duke who took a very special interest in Wesley because he was very athletic and built. And he trained and got him interested in track. And so they went to a meet. They had to go down to Arkansas AM and N College in Pine Bluff, Arkansas because there was no place for the African Americans to participate in a tournament like that. Anyway my brother Wesley won the state championship. But he had to leave Hoxie to participate.

00:18:57

Now there was no acceptance of us by other schools around the county. One particular girl Yvonne Barksdale was a part of the choir. She was so excited they were going on a concert in another school. Had her mom get her a blouse and skirt together for the meeting. And got to school the next morning and she could not go on the bus to this other school. It was like another impact of Hoxie was we were not, we had integrated Hoxie, but we were integrated, we were desegregated everywhere else. We could not go with the school on a team function or anything like that because the basketball team African American couldn't play against an all white team. So it had a lasting impact. Lasting impact.

00:20:02

Windless: You mentioned being in class and being the only African American. Were there any times that you or maybe the others that are longing to go back to your other peers to your former school to the way things were?

Video Cut (.flv)
(20:17:00)

Fayth: Um hmm. We did. But we were told by our parents this is the better opportunity for you. And of course all parents want to see their children improve and have the ability and the opportunity to learn and get a better education. And it was a fight for them and

struggle for them. Because some of the African American men in this little small town had already gone and served in the war, World War II. And then they come home to try to have a better life for their families, then they'd have to go through this to fight for their children to have a better opportunity for an education.

00:21:02

So you know if your parents said go, that's what we did. And I respect and love them for it. But as a child, you don't have this kind of thought process at that time. But our parents were trying to make things better for us. And as I said before, I didn't know that until later, much later, the significance of their commitment because they put themselves in harm's way. In 1955, during the Jim Crow era, you're going to stand up, the superintendent Vance had made the decision that this was going to happen. He had no support in that city. They even intimidated him. They called and threatened him. He in turn called my father, Marshall Hill, please make sure the children come to school.

00:22:06

If we had not gone to integrate this school, this would not have happened and he would have been gone. But at the same time, he's trying to obey the law. So of course we're going to support him. But then there were five African Americans, four African American men in 1955 who had the courage to go to Jonesboro. Arkansas to court in support of this school of the new school board. And I think about that and I just it gives me chills because it was a lot going on in a small, southern town in 1955. So to have that much courage---

00:23:00

Jacobs: Do you remember feeling as a child scared for your parents?

Fayth: Mmhmm. Yes I do. Because there was a guy that came to the house one time that I remember. He had called; he had come to the house to ask Mom and Dad not to send us to school. Well Rosemary and Marshall if you don't send yours to school, nobody else will. And it just didn't work. It just didn't work. And I applaud them for it. And of course you know you could feel the tension. Because it was still again in 1955, with the signs on the doors on which bathroom you could use and all of that, so it was a very uncomfortable environment for a while. And then again you know what? Some of the people never changed.

00:23:54

The impact of the feeling of that some harm is going to come to you, basically came from the outside agitators trying to get the people stirred up. But in the end, it was very successful. And I believe the commitment of the superintendent Vance, the commitment of the African American community who stuck together during a very awful time. If they hadn't stuck together and there's your diversity right there. Unbenchmarked. It wouldn't have happened.

Windless: You mentioned so many strong people during Hoxie and even later, who were some of your role models?

Video Cut (.flv)
(24:45:00)

Fayth: Oh boy. I, my mother and father. My mother and father. Because obviously that took a lot of courage to do that.

00:24:57

And I say that based up on so many memories that I have not necessarily of being didn't have to call the guards in or anything like that, but when mom and dad Mildred Bond came to the house an NAACP field representative. Well we found out that the home phone had been tapped. They had to drive her to Jonesboro to use the phone. Well Jonesboro was about 17 miles away. And I am saying, oh Lord, let them get back home, yeah. Those kinds of feelings, but relating that back to your question of Brown vs. Board of Education, I didn't know what was going on. All I knew was things had changed around my house, I was in the 4th grade and it wasn't a lot of fun anymore. But that's all I knew at that time. And I knew that there were others in the community who I knew were not going to back down.

00:25:59

And that, another guy he had about the Barksdales, Ruben Barksdale. He was another one of the men that went over for testimony at the court for in support of the Board, the school board, I'm sorry, I hope you're going to clean that up. But back then it was just strong people. Family committed people, leaders trying to do better for their children. So they would be my role models. And even my brother and it was more the role models than just my family. But my brother who went who had to go out of the county,

200 miles away to participate, come back, but now you know what? It was not like I said a real negative experience especially for him because once he came back with the state championship award; I mean he became an instant, particularly with the guys.

00:27:02

That was something for them to bond with and that had not been won before and that kind of thing, so. It was good and bad. But yes I do remember being afraid for not only my parents, but others. Mr. Braxton was one of the third guy that went over for testimony. There was a picture sent to his house of Emmet Till saying how would you like for this to be your son? There were rallies held in the city across the track, which is downtown Hoxie. Where the outside agitators were having rallies. It didn't affect me in my house though. You know what I mean? It was just a change in the city, the environment of the city. And I could tell from my mom and dad that there was something going on.

00:28:00

Jacobs: I mean you're talking about the change, do you think and you had said earlier that before the schools were integrated that you played with white children a lot, did that between children, did relations change, I mean did you ---

Fayth: Well I remember we didn't have that many white children in our little nook we was there, but those kids still remained our friends. Now there were some relationships as you said that I remember one girl saying that her mom and another lady, a black lady worked at the same place. And they used to when their moms were together, the children would talk. But once the girl saw the white girl in school, she wouldn't speak to her. And those kinds of things, so. She didn't want her friends to know that she knew her or not speak to her publicly those kinds of things. But as a child, I don't know how it might have affected her.

00:29:03

Windless: Moving from Hoxie to Indiana later to finish school, were there any changes that you noticed where as in with the community, the relationships between the different races, were there things that you noticed?

Fayth: When I left Hoxie and moved to Gary, I entered Emerson school. And it was a school from a 1st through 12th. I started in the 8th

grade. In Hoxie there were 21 of us as we're known as the Hoxie 21, going into a school of 800 white children. Moving to Indiana and where we moved to we, there were probably 100 African American children in a school of 3,000. So not a lot of necessary balancing; however when I got there, I really learned what diversity meant.

00:30:02

It was truly a melting pot of different nationalities, different cultures, I had never met a Greek or Italian, but we were all in the same room and you know what? We made it. We, it just blended together. Just the difference in the environment still not a lot of still in the minority and when I went to Indiana to Gary it was just a richer diversity and move to try to adjust yourself to which actually was a good lesson. Good lesson because you learned nobody, no two people think alike anyway. It doesn't matter the culture or the how you've been trying, but you just learn the respect and people have a right to what they believe in.

Video Cut (.flv)
(30:57:00)

Windless: Moving towards our target period, just generally between the '50's and the '70's, many people who we talk to say during the Civil Rights movement they were confused, they didn't understand what was going on. You growing up getting older and having that experience of Hoxie during your childhood, do you think that helped you to understand more of what was going on?

Fayth: You know probably so. Because I lived through some of it. And then after I got grown, I actively participated in different organizations, the NAACP, PUSH, and other organizations where I kept actively involved in what was going on. After we moved to Indiana, my mother and father I remember them going over to Chicago to Soldiers Field to hear Dr. King speak. So there was still activities going on about Civil Rights. During that time also remember we had the Vietnam War.

00:32:01

There was just too much going on all over men were getting killed in Vietnam and we're still trying to fight for equal rights and equal opportunities. It was, it's a season that was very confusing. However, you still wanted the best for your children and to increase their opportunities for education. So it helps, it helped to

do so but I can understand with everything that was going on why one might be confused. But it did also take away from and this is a personal opinion, the family. We had a lot of people not to return from over there which put a different structure on family. With the mother being head of the household instead of the father. It was a tough period, real tough.

00:32:58

Windless: You mentioned Dr. King and Vietnam, could you share with us one or two of your most memorable moments throughout those years?

Fayth: Oh boy. Between well you know one of the most memorable which I will never forget is the day that I heard of his assassination. And then you just that put a ray of dimness in my perception. And we're looking, still looking for that kind of leader or one comparable to that. There was several events that have happened that I can't really think of an outstanding thing that's happened on the positive side right now and that's pretty sad to say. But there have I can't think of one right now. I'm sorry. We'll

00:34:00

Windless: I know there were so many different events Were there other people that you saw, you mentioned being involved with the NAACP, did you notice other people around pushing for equal rights and doing things like that?

Fayth: Very much so because during that time it was everybody had their mission and their goal. I mean you take Operation Breadbasket and Operation Push, they were talking about feeding the hungry. Then you had the Black Panthers who were doing their thing so far as being able to bear arms. And there, you know then you got the King, then you got the Malcolm X, so there were a lot of different causes on the African American side that was going on. But I tell you the biggest thing in my opinion that had an impact on all of that was the war. And I think that if the war had not been going on, perhaps some of the governmental decisions may have had time to be focused on what was trying to happen with the improvement of the African American and any other group at that time.

00:35:02

But the war to me just dominated and I guess that answers your previous question. That the war. That it was just it was devastating. We've lost a lot of good men. And a lot of my classmates. Because I graduated from high school in 1964. And it's just a lot of them went right after high school, that was it. That was it. And let me clear this too, and then they all weren't African American. There were a lot of men lost in Vietnam.

Jacobs: I guess you're, so after when you graduated from high school, did you go to college immediately after that? Or what did you do?

00:35:56

Fayth: I graduated from high school in 1964. Going back to the family thing this will help me answer that. And when I graduated high school, I thought I was going to go to Business College with my girlfriend. But with my family, very strong grandmother, Ellen Montgomery, she had already decided where I was going to college. She was actively involved in a lot of things in Arkansas; she was still down in Hoxie. But being like a worthy mother and she was Eastern Star and very active in the church, missionaries and all that, she knew the pastors and so I ended up my first year I went to Shorter College in North Little Rock, Arkansas and I transferred over to Philander Smith in Little Rock and that's where I graduated with a BA in 1968 in business.

Video Cut (.flv)
(36:58:00)

Jacobs: What was that like going to college I mean that was such a I mean there were so many things happened during that period that you were going to college in. Can you talk a little bit about maybe what you're involved in?

Fayth: From 1964 to 1968 again we were still at war. However and that's during the time that Dr. King was assassinated. But one thing about going and I remember Philander Smith College with very fond memories. It was the first time in my life I had gotten to a school where I was not in the minority. It's a small school and the thing that I recognized right off was the professors; they were interested in me. And I just I was just devastated and that was the biggest impact of going to college and it really gave me; I just loved it.

00:37:58

And they'd see you walking across campus and ask you about an assignment or I mean it was just a comfortable enrichment for me. I loved it. And I was very, very active in several organizations. My sorority (Delta Sigma Theta) is a public service organization so I got involved in voter registration and even then it's been a continuous civil obligation that I feel that I have that I've got to maintain.

Windless: With always being so active from being young in Hoxie, then being older in college, always doing so much, did you ever find yourself tired or in need of encouragement from others around you to keep going or was it just innate to push on?

00:38:50

Fayth: Well it's kind of a combination of all of the above. Because it's not ever enough done. We have so many outside influences that cause people to lose track, to lose focus. I'm a parent now, I have two children, JiBunta Washington and Marshall Washington. I want the best for them. But the outside influences from when I grew up in Hoxie and the, they have changed tremendously. So but you know. And we also have the wars, if it's different. But the cause is still the same to make a better life for everybody. And of course that includes education and a different lifestyle and to give opportunity as long as the need is there to equalize the opportunity, there's always a reason to be involved in trying to improve it.

00:40:00

And I don't believe that we've reached that yet. So even now I found a great deal of pleasure in sharing this Hoxie story because I think it has so many elements as it relates to diversity, I think it has a lot of lessons to be learned in it. And it's only positive. Very, very positive.

Windless: I wanted to ask going back to your Hoxie experience, do you think that personally makes you very concerned with specifically equal education.

Fayth: Oh yeah. Yeah, but I don't think that's changed from before Hoxie up until now. Because right now, well perhaps it has, but one thing now there is the opportunity the opportunity has increased.

00:41:00

It's more inevitable now then it was then. But again those outside influences will have kids not going to get take advantage of the opportunity. And you got a lot of for an example, some challenges of the drugs. All those kinds of social problems that are going on. And again it goes back to there is a need that we need to concentrate on because we have to think about more than ourselves. We got to save the people, got to save the people, if we're going to have a future.

Jacobs: When you were going to college and I guess you talked about you were in the majority, did your classmates at college had they had the same experience in elementary school where they had gone to an integrated school or where they had been a part of integrating school. And how did you talk about that with your friends or did you think that made you stand out from them or anything?

Video Cut (.flv)
(41:59:00)

Fayth: Not at all. I didn't just stand out at all and they had not heard about the event in Hoxie. And so when I did mention, I said, no you mean Little Rock, don't you? I said, no. I mean Hoxie. I was a part of it. I never heard of that. But I hear that today. And a lot of them they'll have the opportunity to have the experience of going to school in the same culture. They went to an all black school and it was probably small, some of them that live in a larger towns maybe in Jonesboro or West Memphis or something like that, probably had opportunity to go to a larger high school. But of course during that time, it was all black. And you had Hoxie to integrate to 1955, and of course there was Little Rock Central in? 1957. Of course you know what happened. I don't know why, I can only suggest why.

00:43:01

But no-one knew about Hoxie when I was going to Philander and when they saw the documentary, they said, what, I didn't know about that? I probably tried to tell you but you wouldn't listen. But no, that never because nobody believed us. Nobody believed us.

Windless: Do you think your peers and people today as well would have benefited if they had the experiences similar to yours integrating with different races and even different cultures?

Fayth: You know I've, I suppose so. Now I don't know if this came from Hoxie and then it was accented with my experience at Gary, Indiana with that true melting pot, but I have had the opportunity to be able to get along with everybody. Now that may have come from the heart and the way that I was raised.

00:44:00

I don't know I'm sure every experience contributes something. But it's it was a positive. And too if people had listened and learned from the experience of Hoxie, I think that maybe Little Rock might not have been so devastating to people.

Windless: Wrapping up, we talked about so much, is there anything that we haven't covered that you wanted to share with us?

Fayth: You know I just again I'm just delighted to have the opportunity to share the story. I'm delighted that I met this gentleman Dr. Russell Wigginton who took an interest in this historical event that he wanted to get documented and researched and provide educational value that's not been out there before.

00:45:03

And I look forward to helping to get the story told because it is an important part of history it's an important part of Arkansas history as well. And we look forward to because it still 17 of the 21 students still living. We had a very successful reunion back in 2003, in which those 17 came and we had a wonderful celebration. We were given a certificate by the state of Arkansas for the accomplishment there. I have been contacted as the CEO of the Hill Foundation to talk about developing some kind of symbol for the Hoxie 21 to be placed over at the State Capital in Little Rock. So we're not trying to get more notoriety or more or famous or anything like that.

00:46:00

We're not even comparing ourselves to the Little Rock nine, they're truly different stories. However, we do want to be included as a part of a historical event that was successful not only for the state of Arkansas, but for history. So with that, I think that would be the significance of what we're doing. I don't know of anything else right now that I would add to that. But of course if you all want to interview again if you think something else, you could call me.

Windless: And we will.

Fayth: Please. We still rolling?

Windless: Well once again we'd just like to thank you.

Fayth: Oh it's been my pleasure. Thank you very much.

Windless: We really appreciate your time.

[End of Audio]