

# Rhodes College Digital Archives - DLynx

Patricia Allen, 2013

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- Caroline Hibbert:* Hello. My name is Caroline Hibbert.
- Kimberly Lemus:* I'm Kimberly Lemus.
- Caroline Hibbert:* On behalf of Crossroads to Freedom and the Center for Transforming Communities, we'd like to thank you for sharing your story with us today. Could you state your name?
- Patricia Allen:* It's Patricia. Most people know me by Patricia Allen and \_\_\_\_\_ Patsy, but it's really Pauline Patricia.
- Caroline Hibbert:* What year were you born?
- Patricia Allen:* '39.
- Caroline Hibbert:* Where were you born and raised?
- Patricia Allen:* Memphis.
- Caroline Hibbert:* Were you raised in the Holland Heights Community?
- Patricia Allen:* Yes, all but about three years during the war. I was with my parents down around the coast because my father was a welder in the shipyards.
- Caroline Hibbert:* What school did you go to?
- Patricia Allen:* Treadwell.
- Caroline Hibbert:* For how many years?
- [00:01:00]
- Patricia Allen:* Twelve. I didn't go to kindergarten. I'm not sure they had a kindergarten there.
- Caroline Hibbert:* What year did you graduate in?
- Patricia Allen:* 1957.
- Caroline Hibbert:* What was it like going to Treadwell for that amount of time?
- Patricia Allen:* Interesting. I always felt that I fit. Otherwise I didn't feel that I fit, but overall my memories are pleasant.
- Caroline Hibbert:* What kind of activities were you involved in?

*Patricia Allen:* \_\_\_\_\_ the scroll. I think speech and drama club, maybe the Spanish club.

*Caroline Hibbert:* What did you end up doing after graduation?

*Patricia Allen:* I went to Memphis State all four years.

*Caroline Hibbert:* What was your time there like? Were there a lot of fellow Treadwell alums there?

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*Patricia Allen:* Some, but not a tremendous amount. It was a wider variety of people like that. People not like from Memphis schools, but out of state.

*Caroline Hibbert:* What was your home life like growing up? Did you have brothers and sisters?

*Patricia Allen:* No brothers and sisters and no first cousins. My mother's only brother died before I was born. He was one of eight. The only survivor of eight and a twin, but I saw second and third cousins.

*Caroline Hibbert:* What was the neighborhood like back then? What was your experience growing up here?

*Patricia Allen:* Well, of course, I played with kids on the lawn and a church. –

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-- Went to Highland Heights Baptist and had a rather maternal attitude toward a lot of them. I felt that I had been around more or had done more traveling. I was what we called training in where we took different parts and I researched some of the information that we would present our parts at night. I was very fond of some of my Sunday school teachers.

*Caroline Hibbert:* Do you still go to Highland Heights Baptist?

*Patricia Allen:* I visit sometime, but no.

*Caroline Hibbert:* What kind of role did religion have in your life growing up?

*Patricia Allen:* Rather profound in that religion is a primary interest area of mine. I do believe that some of that is genetic. You're not gonna hear –

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-- many people say that, but I do think that some of that is genetic.

I majored in journalism at Memphis State and worked at the Baptist Sunday School Board about three years after graduation from there as a news writer.

*Caroline Hibbert:* Who were your role models?

*Patricia Allen:* Well, outside of Christ, I guess Sunday school teachers, workers in the church, some favored at Treadwell Elementary and High School. I was interested, I enjoyed movies. Some of the older actors and actresses, but I can't say that I considered them role models.

*Caroline Hibbert:* Who was the principal while you were at Treadwell?

*Patricia Allen:* Mr. Mabry.

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*Caroline Hibbert:* What was it like having him as principal? We're talking with some other people and he was there for 30 years and he seemed to be a father figure. Did you have that experience with him?

*Patricia Allen:* I liked him okay. I did not consider him a father figure. He liked to brag on the football players. Those that for some reason seemed to be getting local attention. I didn't dislike him for that, but I was not all that smitten with the extent which he did that.

*Caroline Hibbert:* How important were the sports teams to your school?

*Patricia Allen:* How important was what?

*Caroline Hibbert:* The sports teams.

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*Patricia Allen:* Oh, it was extremely important to Treadwell. Extremely. I think one of those teams made it to New York, the national championship and did quite well, but I can't tell you for certainty just how well they did, but it was big time hot stuff at Treadwell.

*Caroline Hibbert:* Which teams in particular? Was it focused on a particular sport I guess?

*Patricia Allen:* I think it was basketball and I believe that group was a couple years older than me; two or three years older than me.

*Caroline Hibbert:* That went to –

*Patricia Allen:* New York.

*Caroline Hibbert:* New York. Okay. What other activities were vibrant at Treadwell during the time? Groups, clubs, anything like that.

*Patricia Allen:* I was very fond of our drama teacher and there was some plays –

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-- that must have been put on at the school, but I can't particularly remember going to plays. I remember the pep rallies and the excitement involved in that. The Honor Society **people** \_\_\_\_\_ in the Honor Society.

*Caroline Hibbert:* Are you in any way involved in the neighborhood now in Highland Heights?

*Patricia Allen:* Well, with the Shalom project that I do consider important and I try to have periodically tried to maintain a contact with some older residents, which of course by this time have moved or died. They're in nursing homes, but I tried to \_\_\_\_\_ a contact there.

*Caroline Hibbert:* Can you describe a little bit of what you do with the Shalom \_\_\_\_\_?

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*Patricia Allen:* Well, this and last year I participated in the \_\_\_\_\_ and I have to help with the first works this coming fall.

*Caroline Hibbert:* How did you get involved in it?

*Patricia Allen:* The neighborhood coordinator for \_\_\_\_\_, **least she was**, is involved in it and told me about it.

*Caroline Hibbert:* How have you seen the neighborhood change since you lived here or grew up here?

*Patricia Allen:* Well, of course, people have moved or died. \_\_\_\_\_ have taken many away. \_\_\_\_\_ is just an **exit east** that is so popular here. Many have gone into other states. People don't seem to know each other as well. Some research that Reverend Martin has done, I –

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-- agree with him, he says there's an attitude of distrust. I hate to admit that I felt that way. Sometimes you're afraid to hire local people **whereas** you might trust them as a woman living alone. You're afraid that that might make it \_\_\_\_\_ back to some unsavory people. I dislike. I wish this attitude of distrust didn't exist, but I realize that it definitely does.

*Caroline Hibbert:* How close were you with your neighbors when you were growing up here?

*Patricia Allen:* How close was I? Well, I would hear talk that my mother and grandmother would do. I lived in a house with both sets of –

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-- parents. They were mother's parents and their home. I would hear them talk about people in the community. They were active at the Masonic \_\_\_\_\_ and it was mainly knowing people through there and **I was fond of**.

*Caroline Hibbert:* Sorry. I just drew a blank. So how have you seen Treadwell change? Have you kept in contact with people from Treadwell? Do you ever discuss how it's changed maybe?

*Patricia Allen:* I've gone to reunions. I would call my contact sort of light moderate or moderate **moderate**.

*Caroline Hibbert:* How have you seen the school change over the years?

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*Patricia Allen:* We lost high school about three or four years. I saw it coming. I did some sub teaching in it. I can't understand it. I wish it hadn't have happened, but we obviously did not have as many teens in the community. They're just not here. So it had to come about. A number of different principals.

*Caroline Hibbert:* You said that you would sub teach at Treadwell?

*Patricia Allen:* Yes, as well as Kingsbury. A number of other schools in the city.

*Caroline Hibbert:* What was that like?

*Patricia Allen:* Everything from pleasant, a good day to horrendous. Most stressful, but I liked it. **Some desired** to be a school social –

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-- worker who was there. It didn't come **through** it technically, but in that respect it did come through for me.

*Caroline Hibbert:* Have you been doing this recently?

*Patricia Allen:* I resigned December 10, 2010 and it started end of February '78. It went on for years. I've also done other types of work.

*Caroline Hibbert:* What other types of work have you done?

*Patricia Allen:* Religious Jewish writing. I did a \_\_\_\_\_ school board in Nashville about three and a quarter years and then subbed on a freelance basis here. There were some publications that had three different owners in about 12 years. I wrote for them for about four or five years.

I had a publicity service for small businesses and individuals for about four years.

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*Caroline Hibbert:* Do you still I guess live in this community in Highland Heights?

*Patricia Allen:* I still what?

*Caroline Hibbert:* Do you still reside here?

*Patricia Allen:* Yes.

*Caroline Hibbert:* Are you happy you made the choice to stay here when maybe a lot of other people have moved out \_\_\_\_\_ like you said?

*Patricia Allen:* I wonder if I had moved just how different my life would be. I'm not all that nuts about some suburban homes, the way they look so much alike. I can enjoy driving out to some sort of social event or

just driving around, but I'm not as nuts about those areas as apparently a lot of people are. There's reasons Highland Heights –

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-- is sorta' like a small town within a big city. I like that, but I don't like some of the crime that definitely has been here.

*Caroline Hibbert:* Have you been involved in anything like a neighborhood watch or something like that to make sure you're \_\_\_\_\_ --?

*Patricia Allen:* My block of \_\_\_\_\_ joined in with \_\_\_\_\_ block. Technically I wasn't a block coordinator, but I have done things like report uncut yards or just sewers that look stopped up. Things like that.

*Caroline Hibbert:* Did you see a lot of positive change in response to the neighborhood watches?

*Patricia Allen:* I think some may be coming gradually. There is some gradual –

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-- change toward the better.

*Caroline Hibbert:* Do you see that in the community as a whole now? Are you hopeful for the future of the community?

*Patricia Allen:* Yes, I'm hopeful. I'm hopeful. It's gonna take time and a lot of effort, but I'm hopeful.

*Caroline Hibbert:* What kinds of organizations do you think are improving it?

*Patricia Allen:* \_\_\_\_\_, a neighborhood watch \_\_\_\_\_ like we have \_\_\_\_\_ as we did for a period of time and SOS. \_\_\_\_\_ worked at SOS.

*Caroline Hibbert:* What is SOS?

*Patricia Allen:* Service Over Self.

*Caroline Hibbert:* Have you done any work with them or are you just aware of their presence here?

*Patricia Allen:* More aware of their presence and thought of asking for help for –

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--myself. I considered it for a neighbor, but some kin of his did get some work done for him and \_\_\_\_\_ helping the church and dormitory house across the street from me. I could see a lot of work being done over there. They helped a neighbor cut down a tree that he wanted cut, an older neighbor who's since died.

*Caroline Hibbert:* Do you have any advice for middle school kids about to go into seventh grade about school \_\_\_\_\_?

*Patricia Allen:* If there's a weakness in their family or in others you know, try to let the teachings of church guide you. Let Christ and his –

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-- disciples be your role models. Don't let the neighborhood gang leader be your role model or someone just because they're famous, made a lot of money. Try to look for the good that they are doing or attempting to do this sort of thing.

*Caroline Hibbert:* Is there anything else you wanted to add about your experience at Treadwell and the neighborhood that we haven't touched on before we wrap up?

*Patricia Allen:* There does seem to be a bond among many other Treadwell former students I hear at reunions. There was both some good and some bad there, but overall I see the good shining through. Have –

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-- pleasant memories and I do think that these neighborhood associations of various kinds are helping students know each other better and the community has helped better.

*Caroline Hibbert:* Well thank you so much for coming in and talking with us today. We really appreciate it.

*Patricia Allen:* You're welcome.

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