

Shelbyville Main Street Project

An Oral History Project of Shelbyville, Kentucky's Main Street

Interviewer: Mark Mefford

Date: 8-22-96

Interviewee: Bobby Andriot

Running Time: time

Side One

COUNTER

- 000 INTRODUCTION
- 011 BACKGROUND. BORN 1944. PARENTS: WILLIAM ANDRIOT & LILLIAN ANDRIOT.
- 038 EDUCATION: SHELBYVILLE HIGH SCHOOL.
- 050 PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN SHELBY COUNTY.
- 068 RELIGION IN SHELBYVILLE.
- 105 EARLY MEMORIES OF THE DOWNTOWN AREA.
- 135 RACE RELATIONS.
- 149 ANDRIOTS MEN'S STORE.
- 162 GROWING UP IN SHELBYVILLE: SMALL TOWN.
- 190 THE MAMMOTH GARAGE: GRANDFATHERS GARAGE.
- 200 ANDRIOT'S MEN'S STORE.
- 258 COMMERCE IN THE DOWNTOWN.
- 326 CHANGES IN THE APPEARANCE OF THE DOWNTOWN AREA.
- 385 ANDRIOT'S HOME DECORATING.

Side Two

- 005 ANDRIOT'S CRAFT STORE.
- 020 ANTIQUE MALLS IN SHELBYVILLE.
- 060 SCHOOL INTEGRATION IN SHELBYVILLE.
- 105 SHELBYVILLE'S UNIQUE ASPECTS.
- 160 END.

**BOBBY ANDRIOT
INTERVIEW**

August 22, 1995

Interviewed by Mark Mefford

Transcription by Susan McMullan Groves

Full name: Robert Johnson Andriot

When were you born? August 14, 1944 in Shelbyville, Kentucky about a block and a half from where this store is in the old original Kings Daughters Hospital. William Johnson Andriot was my father who is deceased (been dead twelve years) and my mother is Lillian Andriot, a resident in Shelbyville and works for me.

Are you married? Yes, I have a wife name Sue. We've been married 31 years and have four children: 26 year old son, an 18 year old daughter, 14 year old son, and a 7 year old daughter. We have a large family span.

Was your wife from Shelbyville? She was from Finchville...a local girl of the Shelby County area.

I know you said your son works here...your 26 year old, does your 18 year old daughter live here? She lives here and she works for me also on a temporary basis right now and she's going to school, I think, in January--a Louisville Tech for interior design school. I don't think she really knows at this point what she's going to do. But for now, she's working for me at the shop. She graduated this year from high school so she's here.

Do you think she wants to stay here in Shelbyville? Yes, I do. We're just Shelbyville people. I guess your children as they grow up sometimes they move away, but at this point I don't expect her to move away. She likes it here and her relationships here with people and her family.

Where did you go to school? I went to Shelbyville High School. We were some of the last people at Shelbyville before the school closed down. I graduated in '63 from Shelbyville and the consolidation of the schools took place here in the mid '60's. My wife went to Shelby County for her last three years and I went to Shelbyville and the two schools consolidated. My son graduated from Shelby County and my daughter graduated from Living Waters Christian School in the Graefenburg area and my other two children, my freshmen son and my 14 year old--this is his first year in high school and he's been going to Living Waters Christian School, and my 7 year old went to Living Waters first grade last year and we are home schooling her this year. Sue is going to teach her at home.

Why did you decide to send your children to the Christian school? Better education? Well, I felt very strongly about it and I still do and if I had my preference I

probably would have had them all in a Christian school. We've not liked the idea of telling them as they got older that they HAD to go there but we just like the idea of Christian education. I think the schools...with all that's happened in our school systems...the idea of a Christian education is totally more appealing. It bothers you when you can't pray in school and I don't think the students really did that much of it, but we liked the idea...it really wasn't the thing of pulling them away. We really felt like there was a better offering with a Christian education and everything in the Christian school is based around the Bible. The curriculum is, the attitude of the teachers, the prayer in school--all the things they do. We like the atmosphere a lot better. It's a small school--200 students-- a lot of personal attention. Most classes have 8 to 15 students at the most. Just real nice. We like it a lot.

Where's is located? It's in Graefenburg, Kentucky. Right up the road here about 10 miles out or so up 60 back in towards Frankfort.

Do you think religion plays a big role here in the Shelbyville community? Uh, yes, I think so. We're probably like most communities, of course, we're in the Bible Belt, I assume. Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee...we're considered the Bible Belt. I say I think so, I'm not really sure in the public system it does play that much of a role. I'm not sure that there are people that have that strong of convictions that they make that a part...especially from the teacher's side...that it really does make that much of a difference in the school system. I think there are some wonderful Christian people that teach in the school system, but I don't know to the point that they have that much of an influence on the very mass of people. They probably do on individuals lives for what they do...the same with the community.

We're a pretty basic community as far as denomination of churches go. We've got a lot of them. We go to an independent fellowship...my family does. We've had church for about twelve years that started from Bible studies. It's a charismatic fellowship and we're like all the others, I guess. We meet a couple of times a week--Wednesdays and Sundays. We're basically a Bible study type of a church and we focus around the teachings and that kind of thing and that's basically what we do. And again, I think that there is a strong emphasis on religion in our community and there's a lot of super nice people that go to a lot of these churches that we know real well who do make an impact on the community. Shelbyville's a nice place...it's just a real nice place.

What do you think is the most popular denomination? Well, I think, as in most communities, it's probably the Southern Baptist would be the largest denominations you're going to run into. In this community, it is the largest church that's here size-wise and I assume numbers-wise. I don't know what the head count is but if you have a look at that building you'd probably think they're most likely the biggest! I think the most active church from what I understand is the Shelby Christian Church. There's a little more going on in that church it seems like and they're a very fast growing church here, but I'd have to say the Baptist Church is the largest church not the most active church.

And where is your church located? We meet out in the industrial park out here off of 55. It's in the industrial park and we just leased a building up there off of Pearce Drive.

What are some of your early memories concerning the downtown area here in the more or less '50's? They go way back! First of all, as I told you in the beginning of this, I was born in the old King's Daughters Hospital right there over on Clay Street which was about a block and a half from our store where you and I are sitting. I was raised in the city, the city of Shelbyville, and our home that I was raised in was on College Street which is about a block and a half north of us. So, I haven't gone very far! Four years I went to college...or five years I went to Eastern...and that's my only exodus from Shelby County and then I was back home.

My fondest early memories of growing up...you know things have changed considerably all these years...we grew up on a small street, College Street, and it was like a little city in a city and of course, those days are long gone now, but on that street we had four grocery stores--all little 'mom and pop' type stores. Each family had a little charge book at the grocery that you went to and of course, we lived a half a block from the grocery store. I can recall in those early days and we'd need milk or anything, you'd go to the grocery and you'd pick it up and write it down in your little charge book and they'd keep the little books in order and Daddy would go by and pay the bill once a month or however long they'd let that run. But that's back when Cokes were a nickel! We'd buy fuel oil there and it wouldn't be uncommon for Dad to put on his house shoes when we were out of fuel oil in the morning and carry the thing down and get his can full of fuel oil and bring it back to the house for us to have some fuel. That was when I was a real small boy.

We lived on College Street my entire young adult life through...until I was 18 years old and I left to go to college. But, growing up on College Street was a wonderful experience. We had a lot of kids cause we lived across the street from the old school over there. We were one block from the black neighborhood and we knew most of the black people and they knew us. We were all good friends and played basketball together on Sundays and evenings and had a nice basketball court at the school so we always had big games. I never was much a part of them because I was too little so I got to watch them often! Our relationships with the black community were very good and always were...we all got along well without any problems. That and the small house were probably the most memorable thing to me...just living in a little shotgun duplex over there. I can recall sitting out front in the summer months and it was very hot, reading comic books sitting under a big oak tree sitting in the sidewalk with concrete all the way around it. Spent my summers doing a lot of that!

We never took vacations because my Daddy owned a men's clothing store on Main Street right up the street here called Andriot's. His first store he started during WWII and he sold diapers and stuff...a lot of things just to survive. In the early '50's he opened his first men's store that was called Andriot's. So we, he again being owner of a store, vacations weren't in our...we didn't know what a vacation was! The biggest thing we ever had was an ice cream cone from a local ice cream parlor down here and that was thrill for us to get to do that! Over the years growing up, you know, the changes that took place...the big events to us in growing up where the years of the tobacco festival and

things like that! There was no interstate highways, Main Street was a two-way street, we had two theaters in Shelbyville, we had two or three pool rooms in Shelbyville, we had downtown drugstores with counters with good milkshakes and sandwiches. You know, our whole life revolved around these few blocks right here. There was nothing outside downtown Shelbyville...no shopping centers whatsoever. As it began to evolve and change, it was kind of sad in a way and then I guess you think that you have to change, the little privately owned businesses that filled these streets were always very active. Saturdays in Shelbyville during my time were...you couldn't find a parking place in Shelbyville. We had free movies on Saturdays and you got your little free movie ticket from the merchant's and of course, with my father being a merchant, I always had lots of free tickets! We went to a lot of movies on Saturdays and spent a lot of time in the downtown area. The early tobacco festivals were always real exciting cause they closed down the streets, they always had parades, just tons of people...well, you thought TONS of people because you were just a little guy and everything was big and enormous to you. It probably wasn't near as big as I thought it was but they were fun times! My grandfather lived across the street here from where we sit on the second floor of the apartment house with an old screened porch. We'd sit up there on the hot summer nights and watch the traffic and watch everybody go through town. Very busy town! Where we are now was a...early on it was a Chevrolet dealership...there was a Standard Oil station next door that they family tore down. My grandfather at the turn of the century was an auto mechanic and a very fine mechanic with a great reputation worked in this very building we are in. This building was not here at the time, it was torn down and replaced by this. But the back half of this building was called the Mammoth Garage and that was early 1900's and I've got some pictures back there just to show him working here. As time evolved and they kept the back part, they tore the front part down and built on. The old part is still on the historic register for Shelby County.

Tell me a little about your father's store? Well, Dad had...he was a super business man...my early childhood I don't remember a lot about Dad because he had some personal problems which he, through Mother, conquered...that was in the early '50's. He had to go out of business for a season and when he did he worked in the Louisville area in some men's stores down there. There used to be a little store called Martin's Menswear and there was a Levy Brothers, a men's store that's all gone now. He came back to Shelbyville in the mid '50's, I think around 1954, and opened his first shop on Main Street called Andriot's. He was a good businessman.

People liked Dad because he was honest with them and he always bought nice things. If people would come into the store, he would know all about them and their children, the sizes they wore, and people really trusted him with their clothing. So he built a very successful business over the years.

That again was in the mid-50's so my brother, who loved the clothing business, he was going to Eastern as well, he would come home on weekends and work for Dad. Then when I got out of school in 1969, I came back home and went to work for Dad and when I did that, Dad decided to build a new store on Main Street just a few stores down from where the old theater had just closed. That was our last theater in Shelbyville...it had gone out of business...and that was converted to another men's store and there presently

is an antique store there now. He built a new clothing store in the early 70's...a beautiful place...and my brother, my dad and I, and my mom...all of us worked there! Dad had a real successful business and he always had a great reputation. It was hard to find anybody who wouldn't say something nice about my Dad. He was just a nice guy.

When did it close? It closed...Dad died with cancer...and again my brother always worked with him and I left after about two years to work for Jack Lawson who was another Main Street landmark. He had a store called Lawson's Department Store and I went to work for Mr. Lawson for four years and as time went on and Dad was getting closer to wanting to retire, my brother took over the store...bought him out...and he also had a store over in Wakefield-Searce Galleries, my brother did, called W. Cromwell's. He was trying to operate both stores and having a difficult time. It was at a time when the Main Street traffic flow was really starting to slow down. We had the Village Plaza Shopping Center come in first and then the one that's on out the way, Midland, and so it was really drawing the retail people from the downtown area. It was tough to make it and Billy, my brother, was not doing too well with the downtown store but he was at the gallery. He closed down old Andriot's probably...quite a few years ago.

When you were growing up, tell me about some of the transportation? Did you all go to the grocery on foot most of the time or did you all own a car? Yes, one thing my Daddy always had was a nice car. He liked nice cars. Mom said it was always his downfall because he always wanted a nice car even when he couldn't afford one. At that time, we really didn't use a car much. We had one and he drove it to work, but cars...our whole life was on College Street and we didn't really have a need to go anywhere else. Everything we had and wanted was right there and with all the little local grocery stores...I mean, I might go down the street with my wagon and go to the grocery store. It was just a matter of walking half a block. Very competitive market over there with three or four shops! But we did most of that by walking--getting our groceries...there was no such thing as a Winn-Dixie. There was at the time in the downtown and A&P store which was right up the street--I forget the date on that but that goes way back. It was the only major market in the Shelbyville area cause there were Mom and Pop stores on every corner it seemed like. We did most of our grocery shopping by foot, most likely, other than an occasional trip into town.

Was traffic busy on Main Street? Yes. Especially when it was two way. I don't remember it all those years when it was two-way, my memory really goes back to more the one way street thing. I can remember when that changed and the extension was put out on Washington and it went all the way out to the fairgrounds. But up until that time it was very active when you went through town because your big trucks and all had to go right through Shelbyville and it was a busy street. Back then it was tough parking...there just wasn't any place to park...there were just a lot of cars. Especially on Saturdays! It was just always real tight on Saturdays. Everybody did come to town and shop on Saturdays.

Well, what other kinds of things to do where there besides going to the movies...what other social things at that time? I remember there wasn't a lot more TO do! There was no parks--nothing like that. There wasn't a lot to do in a small community, I mean, we did the movies and as I got older--and I guess things changed more in the latter part of my life, of course, I'm talking about when I was just a little guy--there wasn't a lot going on. It was movies, playing on your street, playing games every night...just a tremendous amount of kids that lived over on College Street and we just stayed out and played every night! You didn't take vacations--you just stayed home.

As I grew up...of course, when I got my drivers license when I was 16, I was sort of changing considerably. Also, about that time, our first shopping center came in--Village Plaza. So you began to move out further but there still weren't that many activities. There was a teen center...we always tried to have a teen center and there not very successful ever, but as a young person that might be something we would do on weekends. We didn't really travel to Louisville that much to eat or anything like that. Of course, outside of your traditional weekend ball games, school activities and things such as that, that's really all you did.

My working father and mother who both worked at that store, they dedicated their life to work. It was not six days a week, my dad worked seven days a week! He wasn't open on Sunday but he was always going to the store to do paperwork or do something. It was pretty tied around that.

You mentioned that the street is now one-way and used to be two-way, what are some of the other changes in the appearance of the downtown area? We've lost not too many of our historical landmarks in the downtown area. The surroundings as you pull off in the immediate downtown, we've lost some beautiful homes in my lifetime which now, as you look back, it breaks your heart to see them gone like they're gone. It's really frustrating and I think that's been the biggest thing that I recall. I mean, you get down around 3rd Street area where the Dairy Mart, Kidney Center and all that area is, it's...down where that home is, that was our second store before we moved...we've moved four times in our business. That was our first store in the old log cabin up on Main Street. It's empty now. I found that little old house was covered in clapboard siding and we bought it in 1978 and restored it and put our business in there to start with. It was kind of like we started pulling off that old siding and found a log house underneath and that was a three month project for me to get our store open.

I think that again that the biggest change from a...part of the biggest changes have been the buildings that we have lost over the years. We still have some really neat places but again, all the First Street area, growing up those were all homes down through there...all two story homes up and down the street were destroyed to make way for what we call "today's progress" which I always thought was real sad. That whole end of town, I just think it's just awful now from the way it used to be. We're just making a comeback. I think the Catholic Church with what they've done--they've bought up some properties and really helped that particular corner look a lot nicer. Outside of that, I don't imagine a lot more will be done down in that area because there's nothing left to really save historically, so that's one sad part. On down on the west end of Main, that being all residents, I think that will continue to stay real nice. But as far as changes go,

there really haven't been that many changes. We changed the direction of our streets and that's been about it. We've added some brick sidewalks which were in the long range planning, I guess, all the way down through here and hopefully that will all come to pass. It's taken a lot of years and we really thought we were going to have some long before now where we are but, I don't know, it just takes time.

Tell me a little bit about your business and how it's changed over the years? It's changed a lot! It started a very simple thing and my wife and I worked together. I was painting and hanging paper and that was my only job. I felt like there was a need in the community for a store that sold wallpaper and did a lot of things so we had this idea to get started in business and that was in 1978. So, we just set out to open a little store and then our little cabin here on Main Street...it was 1035 Main, I believe that's right...we sold in that store a lot of craft items that were handmade by local people. I was a picture framer by trade and I did picture framing and sold paint and we did a little decorating and that's sort of where we started. We stayed there one year and it was real tight. We were trying to grow and the store just wouldn't allow it because of the amount of space. We began to look for another place and we moved to the other end of Shelbyville--we went from west to east down on the Main Street in that old two story ante-bellum home. It, of course, needed repairs and we went in and cleaned it up and painted it and papered it and moved our store there for five years.

During that period of time, we were very unsuccessful and business was awful and we just barely got by...it was that bad. But we were going through a time when interest rates were high all over the country and businesses were really suffering and we weren't doing anything. I think I had one helper and he was kind of part-time and we were just scraping to get by. So, we were at the verge of closing up and thought we'd give it one more shot!

At the time, there was a place available in the Village Plaza Shopping Center right next to a major grocery store which was coming in there. It was a smaller space than what we had but we thought it might make a good location. We thought probably perhaps where we located was not a good location. We loved the old house and spending time down there--I like anything that's old anyway! From that point, we moved to the shopping center and we were out there for five years and during that five year period things began to turn around and we were able to get it all back together and make it work for us. We really grew out of that and then moved to this piece of property. We needed more space and this was coming available--this was a Goodyear store for about 20 years and they moved out the other way and occupied the old Firestone building just east of the shopping center--and then we, in turn, took this building and turned it into what it is today. We've been here now for almost six years in this location.

So, we've had a 17 year or 18 year track record, I guess, in this neck of the woods in the Shelbyville area; and since we've been here we've just added a whole lot more. My son has come to work for me and I've got three other employees who work full-time and we lease three spaces upstairs and have got some tenants up there. John Abell has his furniture restorations and he's excellent, just a marvelous talent! We've taken this old building...of course, I just lease it and if I owned it I'd be doing more to it than I'm doing, but it's hard to take a concrete block building and make much out of it.

We feel like we've improved it a whole lot over the years from what it was! Our awnings and things try to make it look a little more attractive and we've utilized it a whole lot differently than it was utilized before since it was an automotive place for all my lifetime and even before. That kind of brings us up to current and I assume we'll stay here for a few more years...I'm planning on it! I've got so much stuff that I don't even want to think about moving now! It's just like moving houses, you know, you accumulate so much stuff and we've accumulated a lot! But the Lord blessed us with this business and we've had an excellent business just continuing yearly growing each year that we have been here...we've just been real blessed to have good business. A lot of people don't, I'm sure, but we have...we've done real well.

How far do your customers come? Just in the Shelby County area or Shelbyville?

No, we get out quite a bit anymore. As a matter of fact, we're starting to advertise a lot more in Henry County and Taylorsville/Spencer County and we're running ads there this week. We decided to branch out a little further. We go into Oldham occasionally. We've just done some work down in Springfield and we go to Lexington occasionally and we do go into the Louisville area in that market, so we've got a good market. We won't go much further than that...that's far enough! This was some connection we had with a local contractor and we just did some work in Maysville. Dry Ridge...we just did a job up there.

Do you have trouble competing with Louisville being so close? Do you offer service, you think, than some of the bigger chains? I think it has to be service...it's never going to be price. You're not going to undersell people...we're very aware of that, but I really feel like...most people do shop around and look around...but most of the people who are your customers in this area are not really...well, they're always looking for a fair price, they're always looking for the lowest price...but, I think that the service oriented side of the business and the atmosphere and the friendly people and all those things have so much to do with your success anymore.

I don't think that the bottom line ticket is the most important thing. And yet those stores in Louisville have a sale every week and, you know, our customers anymore are almost too wise to know or believe that those are really legitimate sales so I think people kind of see past all that stuff. It's a very competitive market but we carry nice products and we have two paint lines here which are both real good paint lines, we have a nice selection of wall coverings and floor coverings...there's really not a lot of reason to shop anywhere else.

Our idea of starting this store was to give a lady a place to go and do everything she wanted to do as far as decorating her home was concerned and not have to go to two or three different stores. We pretty well accomplished that and I think people like that. We can help them put it all together and coordinate and make it all work. Time is important to people and if you have to go to my store and pick out wallpaper and then go to the next store and pick out paint and go to the next store to pick out floor covering and then have to try to get it all together, you've spent a lot of time and most people don't have that kind of time anymore. Most families are...

---END OF SIDE A---

You mentioned earlier that you sold crafts at your first location, when did you stop selling crafts? Crafts didn't make it. That turned out to be...you know, crafts are pretty well overdone in our society...places like Brown County and Gatlinburg and all the surrounding areas. I found, we found, so many people would come in your store and you would hear them talking and all they were really trying to do was figure out how to make those things. So after a little bit of that we figured out that we were never going to do well with crafts. It wasn't long when we took it out. We had a lot on consignment and when you're doing consignment things, although there's no investment on my side there's not much profit either. It didn't work out too well so the crafts didn't stay after the first year. We kind of slowly weeded them out when we moved to the old house down there. But, I loved the idea of crafts and we liked them particularly because it added a real hometown flavor to what we were doing and I think it's real comfortable to see crafts around that people have made and it helps with conversation but it sure didn't put any food on the table!

It seems like there's a market that's related to crafts and that's antiques here. Have there always been antiques and shops? No that has not been the case. Growing up on Main Street when I was a little fella, there was a shop that sold antiques but nothing like what we're into today. We're really into a whole...I mean, it's a business now and it used to be almost a novelty. Now with all the antique malls and things which have come to our Main Street...which I think has been very good--they've taken some old buildings and things that were sitting empty and I mean, nobody really wants to go back down that way anymore.

There's no reason for a retail merchant to be in Shelbyville. I wouldn't have gone any further down Main Street than what I went and this would have it. If this building had not been available we wouldn't have considered being in Shelbyville; but, I've got a parking lot that goes street to street. I can park 30 cars out here, tractor trailers find it easy to travel here. Once you get passed me and up on Main Street, there's no place for any of that and consequently, the retail merchant has pushed his way out of town and the antique malls which really attract people who want to walk and spend their day leisurely and maybe eat at a downtown restaurant...that sort of thing...it's really very conducive for them to do that. I think it's been wonderful what all these people have done! Every time one opens I think, "Wow! Where are they going to get anything?" But it seems like it's no time and they're full. There are always people who want to rent booths and have spaces and the folks that are running all of our places up here are doing a good job. I don't know if you've walked through any of these places or not, but they're loaded to the hilt. I think they're all doing real well with their space rentals and all and are very successful. They have brought a lot of people into our community.

I'm not sure if they directly effect...I don't think they directly effect my business, but they do indirectly because the merchants that own those places may be buying from me, but we don't really get any tourist type traffic in here. They don't have any need to come in here unless they're looking for somebody! We have at times wanted to put up a welcome center sign for tourists and I'm very serious about that! People stop here ALL

the time wanting to know where something is and I enjoy telling them! You know, "Where are you from?" and you find out and get to talk to people! They're looking for Wakefield-Scarce or something that's like that and it's kind of fun.

They have really been a real asset to the community in that they have produced some activity back downtown again. So, I like what they've done and they've have been a lot to come and go. I mean, it looks great right now, but you'd be surprised how many closed up. It's a tough nut to crack and the little guy has been the one who seems to not be able to make it. The malls have done well because they have so many booth rentals and they've got some income coming in, but the ones that have opened the small shops it seems like they've struggled quite a bit.

Integration of the schools is my last question. You mentioned that you lived real close to the black community and everything down along this time. Was there any friction during integration here in the schools? I really don't recall there being that much. I remember the first black boy going to Shelbyville---a real nice young man who's still in Shelbyville, his name is Dennis Morton. He was just a super nice kid! Very clean cut, excellent football player, everybody liked him, he adjusted real well...he did well. I think our society pushed integration into the community and I'm not so sure a thing even the black community wanted.

I think the Lincoln Institute was very successful. They had a nice school system--they had something they took a lot of pride in. They put together some excellent athletic programs but outside of that I think they were doing a good job with education and as unfortunately as time moves on there's an element of society that thinks that we need to tear down these walls. But they were forced to close their school to become a part of ours. If there had been a vote to go out I'm not sure it ever would've happened! They never got that opportunity.

It didn't seem like the integration thing was that much of a problem here and it may have been in some people's eyes, but with me it wasn't a big deal...with us. You know, I had a lot of black friends and most of the black community knew us because we were in business and my dad was in business and dad always...he had a lot of black customers that he kept tabs on and they'd pay him five dollars a week and he'd let him buy clothes for their kids to go to school. Dad was always real nice to the black community and consequently they were always nice to us and our family.

Again, a lot of that's changed and it's a lot different nowadays than it was back then. There didn't seem to be as much of a racial tension...I don't recall it, quite frankly. It wasn't a big change to me regardless. I can see where it is more now than it ever was, but I don't know.

Young blacks and young whites...there's a tremendous amount of friction. It doesn't seem like it's getting any better. I think the lines are getting drawn harder and harder all the time. Again, we've got a little independent church and the one thing that I always liked about our church is we have black people in our church and we want people in our church and I like that and I think that's the way it ought to be. I don't see discrepancy anywhere that it should not be like that. I can't find in the Bible where we're supposed to split ourselves like we do and I've always been real comfortable around black folks and I hope they have with me. I think they have...in a real, sincere

and honest way. I'm not TRYING to make them equal or anything else because they just ARE...they're just as good as I am at any time, I can assure you that. Its just been a thing that I think we've all been pushed and pushed and pushed to have to accept and I think that's where the main friction has been. I don't really get involved in all of that...I try not to.

Well, finally, what do you think makes Shelbyville unique? From what I can gather, from the people that move here from other communities that I get a chance to meet...the last five or six years we've met a lot of new people...the industrial growth here has brought a lot of new people here from the north mainly...from Detroit and all the upper areas...it seems like the automotive industry has brought them into this area. I've talked to a lot of new people over the last six years and gotten to know some really nice people and they like Shelby County and they like Shelbyville because it's friendly.

Now if you've been here a long time, you probably think it's a cliquy community and is not that friendly. I do think there are cliquy groups in our community...always has been. But, the people that move in have come out of such a withdrawn community that to move here has been a real blessing for them and they really like it! It's smaller and the people are nicer, they're friendlier and you can talk to people...so it all seems that it works well for them and I think it's been real good.

But I think that is one thing that has really drawn people to come here and to stay here is that type of atmosphere and our location is paramount. I think it's just super to live here and to be just 20 minutes away from any nice place that you want to eat dinner. It's just there! You can go east or west and be close to anything...you're close to the interstates. It's a very nicely located community and it's a clean community and it seems to really have...again, being here all my life, I really don't know what all goes on in other small towns but there just appears to be just a good overall atmosphere here for raising your children, our school systems...I mean, just the whole thing. It must be compared to other communities just a very nice place to live. But, when you've been here all your life, I don't think you appreciate things like that. You just assume that it's just Shelbyville because that's the way you are.

Anything you'd like to add? I have thought over the years that if I ever left here, where would I go and in my limited travels that I have had in traveling through small communities either going from one place to the other or on vacation or whatever, I don't think I've ever seen a place where I'd want to live other than Shelbyville. But, when you've got your roots here, it's just that way, I'm sure, but I don't think I would ever have a desire to move away from this place. I've had a lot of people ask me that and I have to say no, I don't think I would.

We live in such a transient society now and people move for jobs or raises...they move for everything...and I can't imagine a job that would triple my pay that would make me move from this place. It just wouldn't be worth it! There's no gain to it. What man has tried to achieve in the financial end of his life has probably destroyed his home life and that's real unfortunate. I think you see that in a lot of people though.

So, I guess in closing words, I can't think of a greater place to live then Shelby County...it's home to me and a good place to raise your children. It's just good ole' Shelby County!!