



THE ALEXANDRIA ORAL HISTORY CENTER
OFFICE OF HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA
CITY OF ALEXANDRIA



Oral History Interview

with

Ellie Cross Winbush

Interviewer: *Kerry James Reed*

Narrator: *Ellie Cross Winbush*

Location of Interview:
12005 Hickory Dr, Fort Washington, Maryland

Date of Interview: *12/03/2024*

Transcriber: *Kerry James Reed*

Summary:

Ellie Winbush reflects on her youth growing up in Colored Rosemont, her memories of her grandparents, schools in Alexandria, and witnessing the construction of the Braddock Rd Metro Station. She also recounts what it was like watching her block in Colored Rosemont be demolished.

Notes:

This recording is part of the Colored Rosemont Community History Initiative, which was completed between 2024 and 2026.

Table of Contents and Keywords

Minute	Page	Topic
00:00	3	Introduction
09:00	5	Stories of grandmother
13:30	7	Description of Home
18:30	8	Differences in Alexandria Hospital over time
22:29	9	Grandmother's garden & natural areas
25:00	11	Father's Christmas tree
31:00	12	More on gardens & grandmother's job
37:00	14	USO & Bible School
46:00	16	Changes in Colored Rosemont
56:48	19	Favorite Memory with Family
1:02:00	21	Food at home & Family cooking
1:10:00	23	Childrearing
1:17:59	25	Russell Temple CME Kindergarten
1:22:31	26	Shiloh Baptist Church
1:28:36	28	Businesses in the neighborhood
1:33:24	30	Memories of the Atkins homes
1:36:30	31	Schools in Alexandria
1:44:40	33	Johnson Swimming Pool
1:56: 23	36	Churches in Alexandria
2:11:45	41	Closing Remarks

General	Colored Rosemont; African-American Neighborhoods; African-American Churches; African-American Family; Alexandria Hospital; African-American Schools; Gentrification; Displacement; Gardening; African-American Food; Childhood; Family; African-American Businesses; Public Housing
People	Ellie Winbush; Lydia Cross; Hayward Cross; Sheila Cross Reid; Deborah Turner; Anthony Winbush; Jason Winbush; Stanley Greene; Veronica Greene-Pace; Lydia Dundas; Ron Davis; Harold Bass; Walter Dundas; Lloyd Delaine; Melissa Jackson; Roger Dundas; Reverend Stoughton; Bernice Cross; Helen Day
Places	Colored Rosemont; Parker-Gray; George Washington High School; Charles Houston Elementary School; Wythe St; Pendleton St; Madison St; Fayette St; N West St; Braddock Rd Metro; Russell Temple CME; Shiloh Baptist Church; 727 N West St; Fannon Coal Yard; The Berg; Adkins Homes

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:00:00] Eleanor M Winbush, maiden name Cross. I was born on February 21st, 1952, at Alexandria Hospital on Duke Street, and I was raised at 727 N West St, Alexandria, Virginia. [00:00:22][22.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:00:22] 727 N West St. [00:00:22][0.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:00:24] Yes. Yes. [00:00:25][0.6]

Kerry James Reed: [00:00:27] So, really quick: my name is Kerry James Reed. I'm 27 years of age and it is the 3rd of December 2024 and we are at 12005 Hickory Drive in Maryland. [00:00:38][11.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:00:39] Yes. [00:00:39][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:00:40] So 727 N West Street, that was in Colored Rosemont, right? [00:00:44][4.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:00:44] Yes. [00:00:44][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:00:46] What are some of your earliest memories of Colored Rosemont? [00:00:49][3.5]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:00:50] Well, it was a one level house and it was a three bedroom. My grandmother built a fourth bedroom on the back. Beautiful backyard, we had row houses in the back that they used as coal miners, you know, for coal. Then my grandmother turned it into little sleeping places for the homeless people that didn't have nowhere to go. And all of us grew up as one happy family. And the way our house was built, it was like right by the alley and the backyard was big. The middle yard was big, where you could put a swing and everything like that to keep the kids in the yard so they wouldn't have to go to people's houses and there was a fence that separate that and that was the side yard and we had the front yard. But what I really liked was that my grandmother put this front porch on here so we can sit on the front porch and watch everybody come by. And, you know, there was a Safeway across the street from there and there was a gas station when we were smaller.

There was a gas station on the corner named Sinclair. And then there was a restaurant called Roy's Restaurant, you know, and it was owned by white people, but black people worked in it also. But I mean, it was just fun. It was, to be truthful to you, and all jokes aside, you remember that movie Green Fried Tomatoes? [00:02:15][85.9]

Kerry James Reed: [00:02:16] I do, yes. [00:02:17][0.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:02:17] Ok. That's what Colored Rosemont remind me of. [00:02:20][2.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:02:20] Really? [00:02:20][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:02:22] Mhmm. Because it was cozy. Everybody knew each other, even though, like, we lived on West Street, Debbie and the Greene's lived on Wythe St, which is right around the corner from us. So I was like one happy family, you know? And then there was a house called the Carters on West St. And Mrs. Carter was a street seamstress. Her daughter would cook dinners on Saturdays and Sundays. I mean, Fridays and Saturdays. And everybody will, excuse me, go and order Dinners from her. But it was just a lovely weekend, the whole weekend. And everybody got along and I knew each other. Then they built a Safeway, they tore down Roy's Restaurant and they tore down the gas station. Then they built a Safeway. And we just enjoyed it, cause all we had to do is walk across the street to the store. And then across the street from our house, there was Arnold's Automotive place. I don't know if you ever seen any of that, but it was a family-oriented place, two brothers. And then as you be walking towards where Metro is now going up Henry St, there was a machine shop, a place where they curtains and blinds. It was just homely, you know, everybody got along with each other. And the Johnson Swimming pool and everything. So we were right there in the area. And the railroad tracks. And It was fun because you could walk everywhere you went. [00:03:58][96.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:04:01] So you mentioned that your grandmother built a fourth bedroom in your house and, I'm sorry, did that replaced row houses Or did that look at the rowhouses? [00:04:10][9.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:04:11] No, that wasn't even on the houses. None of the houses had extra rooms on there. Everybody would have built another house. I mean, built other back part, like a back porch and a bathroom, stuff like that. Because it was three bedrooms. Between 727 and 715 N West St, which was the Watson's, you might say ours was the biggest because we had already put extensions on our houses. And the other two that was on the other side, they kept them small. And 719 N West where the Burkes lived at, they finally, you know, built them back there too to make a living room. But they were small houses. I mean, each room, like if you come in off the front porch, here's a living room, and to your right there was a bedroom. That you walk, because, you know, the walls separate the houses and stuff back then as far as the walls, but you walk in the dining room, there's a bedroom. And then you walk into the kitchen, there's a bedroom also. And so there was a door, position off the kitchen. That's where my grandmother decided to build the extension onto the back of the house. [00:05:24][72.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:05:24] Got it. [00:05:24][0.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:05:26] And it was nice. We really had fun. So we really did have fun, at least I did. [00:05:31][5.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:05:34] So you mentioned coal miners in the rowhouses? [00:05:34][0.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:05:38] In other words, back in the day we had coal stoves. And, you know, you had to go Fannon's [Fannon Coal Yard in Alexandria] and call Fannon to tell them that you needed to restock for your coals. And the little, I call them sheds, all the sheds back there were, like, empty. But my grandmother had like two sheds that she would put the coal in. So all they had to do was come out and put them in the buckets and stuff and bring them in house, put them in their stoves and stuff. [00:06:05][26.8]

Kerry James Reed: [00:06:06] Got it. [00:06:06][0.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:06:06] Yeah. And then she transitioned, like I said, and turn them into little bedrooms. [00:06:12][5.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:06:14] So both of those shirts became little bedrooms? [00:06:16][1.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:06:18] It was a total of one, two, it was four. [00:06:19][1.4]

Kerry James Reed: [00:06:20] Four of them, ok. [00:06:20][0.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:06:20] But two of them she didn't use for coal. And then she decided, clean it out, paint it and everything, put electricity all back there and everything. So people could live in it. [00:06:31][10.4]

Kerry James Reed: [00:06:31] That's fabulous. [00:06:31][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:06:32] It was. [00:06:32][0.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:06:33] When did she do that? In terms of, did she do that before you were born? After you were born? [00:06:37][3.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:06:39] I'm thinking of before I was born, because they were back there when I was growing up, you know. But like I said, she made sure that we had everything, as far as children to play with, so we wouldn't go wandering out in the street. She kept us occupied, I tell you that. [00:06:58][19.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:06:59] Absolutely. [00:06:59][0.0]

Speaker 1: [00:07:00] She kept us occupied. [00:07:00][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:07:02] You also mentioned that in these little... I guess you can call them tiny homes. [00:07:06][4.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:07:07] Yes. Yes. [00:07:08][0.8]

Kerry James Reed: [00:07:10] What people from the community would live in them? You mentioned, like, were they homeless people? [00:07:14][3.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:07:14] Or they weren't really homeless. It was one family, the husband and wife. But she had two brothers. But they were sort of, kind of homeless. And, like, over my grandmother's other yard, because she had all these houses, like here is 727 N West St and as you be walking around Madison St, there was our corner lot. And then it was the house and it was, you know, the driveway. The brother would always come and sleep there night. And when my grandmother found that out, she said, "no, you can't do that because I get in trouble with the city." So she made arrangements, you know, through social service to take him in. So she took him in, and she put him in one of the little houses. And then when it got too cold she had him come in the house. So then she made a bedroom for him and made a bed for his brother, too. So we had the whole family there. [00:08:19][64.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:08:19] Wow. [00:08:19][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:08:20] So we're like a well-oriented family, everybody had to stay in one house. But it was really fun for Christmas, it was really fun. [00:08:28][8.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:08:28] I can imagine. [00:08:29][0.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:08:29] It was fun. But her front porch was the nicest thing because, you know, back in the day, they didn't have air conditioning. So you would get up in the morning, wash up, eat your breakfast, comb your hair because you weren't allowed out on the front porch without your hair combed. And we would sit out there. We even watched them build the Metro. [Braddock Rd Metro Station] [00:08:48][19.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:08:49] Really? [00:08:49][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:08:50] My grandmother loved watching the Metros. We would get up straight in the mornings and she'd go out on the front porch. I put her feet up in the window because she was, she looked like a white woman. And so I wanted to get a tan on her feet and everything, you know. So she would sit there for the whole eight hours and watch them build the Metro. She would even count each car that they put on the tracks. She really enjoyed it. [00:09:16][26.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:09:16] That's fascinating. [00:09:16][0.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:09:17] It is. I mean, because she had built in with cement, and she had it screened in and everything. And even though it was hot as blazes out there in August, you can just feel the wind coming from all sides. So she wasn't worried about it. [00:09:32][15.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:09:32] You're grandmother sounds like an incredibly community oriented person. [00:09:36][4.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:09:38] Oh honey, she would help out anybody. Anybody. We had this one gentleman that lived in Florida and I called him a hobo, I can't think of his name and everything. But he used to catch a train, like they did back in the days, get off right there in front of Mama's house, come over the tracks, and she would welcome him. And he would stay there for a week. He would, you know, help her do chores and everything, feed him, bed him down and everything. Then all of a sudden, he'd go back. But it was fun because she took in anybody. Just what type of person she was, you know. Yeah. Her and her family, they came from Clifton, Virginia. So they got property up there and all that other stuff, you know. Sold now, but they got their own cemetery and everything. Yeah, she was really nice. You know, Parker-Gray school is around the corner, and all we do is walk out our back gate and go right across the street. [00:10:41][62.8]

Kerry James Reed: [00:10:43] So you went to Parker Gray Elementary School then? [00:10:45][1.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:10:46] I went to Charles Houston, which was an elementary school. Then I went to Parker-Gray for junior high school. Then I went to George Washington High School, and that's where I graduated in 1970. [00:10:56][9.6]

Kerry James Reed: [00:10:56] Got it. What was your grandmother's name? [00:11:05][8.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:11:06] Lydia. Well, Lydia Dundas, I can't think of a middle name. [unintelligible] and all that stuff. [00:11:17][11.8]

Kerry James Reed: [00:11:20] So in the home was your grandmother, was your grandfather living at the time? [00:11:25][4.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:11:26] Oh yeah. You would have loved him. [00:11:27][0.9]

Kerry James Reed: [00:11:28] Oh really? [00:11:28][0.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:11:28] Oh my God, you'd of loved him. He was skinny man, he worked for the railroads. And when he retired, he would stay home all day. And after my grandmother would feed him his breakfast and stuff, he would go and stand at the gate and watch everybody. He'd watch all the kids go to school. You know, back then it wasn't integrated. So he'd watch everybody going over to GW [George Washington High School], he would tell them, "be careful, don't get hit by a car." And he'd mind this one girl that would walk everyday to school, and daddy would greet her in the morning. And then in the evening he would greet her going back home. And she lived over on Powhatan, on Powhatan St. And one day he decided to walk her home. And my grandmother said, "you cannot do that." And he said, "Woman, leave me alone. I'm just going to escort her up to Henry St to make sure she get across the street," you know? And that's what he did. He did it every day. [00:12:31][63.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:12:33] What was his name? [00:12:33][0.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:12:34] Walter Dundas. Yeah. You would have liked him. Our house was a fun house. [00:12:43][9.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:12:44] Yeah it sounds like it. [laughs] [00:12:44][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:12:45] It was a fun house, it was. [00:12:45][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:12:46] So it was your grandmother and grandfather.... [00:12:48][1.7]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:12:50] And my mother and father. [00:12:50][0.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:12:51] Mother and father, what were their names? [00:12:52][0.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:12:53] Haywood S Cross and Bernice D Cross. [00:12:56][2.8]

Kerry James Reed: [00:12:57] Haywood Cross and Bernice Cross? [00:12:59][2.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:12:59] Yes. [00:12:59][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:13:04] And was it just you and your sister or was there anybody else? [00:13:06][2.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:13:13] Just me and my sister. [00:13:13][0.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:13:15] So, when you described the house earlier, you know, you walk in and there's a kitchen and there are the bedrooms. Did you and your sister share a room? [00:13:23][8.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:13:25] Yes. [00:13:25][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:13:25] What did your room look like? [00:13:26][0.7]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:13:27] It was like, let me tell you: it was a big room, you know, big enough for two beds and a dresser and a chest of drawers and everything in the closet. But see, back there, remember, they didn't have closets. So you had to make your own closet space against the walls and everything. And then my mother had a gentleman build a closet in her bedroom. But then she had it torn down so it she could make it big in her room. And then, like when my grandfather had gotten sick and died, my oldest sister Lydia moved up into the big, big bedroom. Then I went to the back bedroom, I call it the back bedroom, goes off from the kitchen, we had to go through the kitchen first. But yeah, so we had our own bedroom. So everybody had their own bed. Yeah. But we got along okay, you know, sisters and brothers going to fight and argue and everything. [00:14:28][61.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:14:29] Of course. [00:14:30][0.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:14:30] No love loss. But it was good, it was really good. Yeah. We really enjoyed ourselves. [00:14:37][6.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:14:38] So what did what did your parents do? [00:14:40][1.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:14:42] Well, my mother worked in the federal government. She was a key punch operator, yeah, she was a key punch operator. And she worked for, like, 25 or 30 some years I think it was. Daddy on the other hand he worked at Alexandra Hospital for 50 years. He was an X-ray technician. Way before they had portable X-rays. So he started way back then in the thirties I guess, or whatever. You know, stand on soapboxes, washing dishes and everything, he worked himself up. And a doctor showed him how to do different things. And then he became a x-ray technician. So, I used to work at Sears when I was in high school. You know, you go to school for half a day and work for four hours, that's what I did. And then I didn't have a job, because they laid off and then had to go back. And my father was at work one day, and he called me and he said, "Ellie, there's an opening for you as a secretary. And they will train you on the spot. Would you like it?" I said, "sure." And I was home washing clothes and everything, hanging them up on the line. And I went home and got dressed and everything and went down for the interview, and I got it. And he did inform me that, he said, "I just want to let you know that your supervisor is prejudice. And if you don't want to stay, you don't have to." I said, "It's fine." And I enjoyed it. And one time I did think about quitting, but I said, 'no, I'm not gonna let these nurses get the best of me.' So I just kept on going. I'm still there after 52 years. I'm 72 years old. [00:16:18][96.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:16:19] Yeah, that's very impressive. What was it like to, you know, come into that workplace place where your father worked and, you know, experienced that level of prejudice? [00:16:26][7.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:16:28] It really didn't bother me because we wasn't raised to be that way. I mean, I just overlooked everybody, you know. But you sit back and you watch people. Some of them will be nice to you. And then all of a sudden, the light bulb comes on and the switch. So when they switched I switched too. But other than that, I figured I'm not going to let them get the best to me. And so I just kept going, I just kept going. I figure I'm not going to let them do it. But then, you know, working down Duke St, it was just like working in Peyton Place. It was family oriented, everybody worked together. Now it's too political. But I'm still there. I don't let nobody get the best of me, do the best I can. But you. Yeah. So it's really, really nice. It really is nice. So I had hip surgery on August the 23rd, so I go back to work on Monday. [00:17:25][56.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:17:26] I understand. [00:17:26][0.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:17:27] So, I'm going to see how it's 'gon be. But I'm just a unit secretary, so I sit down. So I don't really have to do that much except pass the telephone. I like talking to the patients, I like talking to the doctors. But they got new doctors out there now that you got to get used to. I'm used to the old doctors, you know. But these new ones just coming up, I don't know about them. [00:17:53][25.6]

Kerry James Reed: [00:17:53] What are some differences that you observed between the old doctors and the new ones? [00:17:56][3.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:17:57] Well, with the old doctors, you know, everything was paper back then, and I'm still paper oriented myself. And now everything's computerized. But what I liked about it back in the old days, when the doctors came in, you know, they made rounds and nurses made rounds and everything too. Now you have to find these nurses to make rounds with the doctors or

vice versa. And then they can come up to the desk and they can tell the secretaries, 'Well, I made rounds of so-and-so, can you give this nurse this message?' Even though to be truthful to you it's not legal to do that because it might be medication. And if it's medication, I'll tell them in a minute, "I cannot do that." He can go on to the charge nurse, you know, because I don't want to get nothing misinterpreted. But back in the day I was used to taking out the medication orders and stuff like that because I could always make my changes, you know. But years and change, you don't see them as much as you used to. They come and they go just like that. [00:19:00][62.6]

Kerry James Reed: [00:19:02] Interesting. [00:19:02][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:19:03] Yeah. [00:19:03][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:19:03] So they're not as... Their bedside manner is lacking. Familiarity is gone. [00:19:07][3.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:19:09] Right. It is. Whole lot of it's gone, but it is too political. That's my view. That's what I tell a lot of doctors, I say, "in my opinion, it's too political." You don't see nursing like you used to. I'm used to nurses put hands on. And then you even get these doctor and see, they got nurse practitioners out here, too. And some of them act like they're scared to touch you. They'll stand in a doorway and talk to a patient. And I don't think that's fair, you know. The patient didn't ask to be there, you know. And some of them, they forget to ask questions whenever they're in-person from each other, and then all of a sudden a lightbulb will come on and they call and say, "I want to talk to the doctor again." So we got to, now you can chat with them in the computer. And let them know what the doctors want, what the patients want. And they'll chat you back saying whether they can come or not, and some of them come like Johnny-on-the-spot, and some of them will let me know, 'well I can't come there for like an hour,' so I'll go to tell the patients. So they'll be waiting. And as I said, that's all you can do is wait, because I done did my job. Yeah. But see, they're very nice. I'm going to advocate for some of the patients whose families don't know. Because I feel bad for them. Because, you know, we have these patients, like I said, didn't ask to come in, but then they're being heard in the home. But then the family members don't want to take them home. You know, they want to put them someplace. But then when they put them someplace, they don't go visit them. And it hurts. It really hurts. [00:21:04][114.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:21:05] I feel like the hospital systems got a lot more institutionalized, I guess, for the last half century. [00:21:11][6.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:21:12] Yeah, it's bad, it's really bad. I mean, because the patients can't help it. I mean, we got some mean patients in there. We get a lot of them that want to fight you, you know. And I still say, and I tell my charge nurse, that patient knows exactly what he's doing. I say "I'm thinking he means to take it out on you." He's probably trying to think that you [the hospital staff] are my family members, so I'm going to kick the hell out of you one way or the other. But I just feel bad for them sometimes. [00:21:45][33.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:21:48] So when you were talking about your grandmother, it seems like she did a lot of work in and around your home, you know, adding a front porch, encasing it, and then the tiny homes in the back. And that got me curious, did she have a garden? [00:22:03][14.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:22:04] Yes, she did. [00:22:04][0.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:22:05] She had a garden. [00:22:05][0.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:22:05] She put one over in her empty lot. You know, because she couldn't build another house over there. She could have made it a parking lot, but she didn't want to do that. So she built a big old garden from, like, the fence, to separate the alley. She had it from that fence all the way up to Madison St, you know, Madison St where the big tree was. She had all kinds of vegetables. Because see, she liked to can. She loved to care her vegetables boy, her peaches and her apple. We even had a peach tree and an apple tree. We even had chickens when we were small. [00:22:42][36.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:22:42] Really? [00:22:42][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:22:44] And the chicken houses and coop. And we would go out and pick the eggs for her, you know. So everything was homegrown. And she fixed everything from scratch. And, you know, back then, it took all day to cook. Nana, don't take nothing but a snap and a finish. But she enjoyed her work. And she loved her game shows, too. You don't disrupt her when she's looking at her the game shows. Like, she'll get up early in the morning and do what she has to do, feed everybody, clean up the kitchen. And then she would start on the dinner. And it all depends on what she's fixing; If she's fixing soup, that's an all day thing for her. So by the time we get home from school, everything is ready. And we can eat early if we wanted to. But 5:00 was always our time to eat. And my grandfather always spoke up and says, "make sure those children eat first. The grownups can wait till later." So that was his memo. We had to eat first. [00:23:42][58.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:23:44] That is very interesting cause typically, you know, you hear about the opposite. [00:23:47][2.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:23:49] Grown ups. [00:23:49][0.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:23:49] Yeah, the grown ups eat and then children. I mean, when I was growing up, I was not allowed to eat until my mother sat down. [00:23:55][5.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:23:55] Ok, I understand that. Because y'all sittin as a group. [00:23:57][1.8]

Kerry James Reed: [00:23:58] Yeah, exactly. Very interesting. [00:24:00][2.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:24:01] Well, the only time we really, really got together, like holidays. Yeah, my grandmother would, you know, even though the dining room was small, she still had her table and everything that she would, you know, pull out and it was the whole decoration. And then after we would finish, we'd have an assembly line. From the kitchen to the dining room because her China closet was right there. And so all the dishes that she took out of the China closet had to go back in that China closet exactly how she had it. And I figured I want no part of that, I just wash the dishes. I said 'no.' Because she had three sets of dishes and she had a certain way that she put them in there. And I never could do it. So everybody else did, I just washed the dishes. So we had an assembly line and it was fun. [00:24:47][46.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:24:48] Sounds like it. [00:24:48][0.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:24:49] It was. [00:24:49][0.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:24:51] What kind of dishes were they? Were they like, China or? [00:24:51][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:24:51] Yes. Yes, yes, yes. I mean because you know how you have your little knickknacks and everything? [00:25:00][8.8]

Kerry James Reed: [00:25:00] Absolutely. [00:25:00][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:25:01] She had everything to match. You know, her coffee cups, little plates and everything. Even the silverware, the stainless steel stuff that you had polish and all that stuff. And her teapots. Because, you know, back in the day, they had the small China closets. And how she got those three sets of dishes in that small China closet, I'll never know. But she saw this China closet that she loved from Hopkins Furniture. It was a Michelbachs and she loved that China closet. And she said "I'mma get that China closet," I said, "ok. Go ahead and get it grandma, you know you finally got the money, go and do it." But when I watched her empty that small China closet out to put all these other dishes in that big China closet, I said "Ma, where in the hell did you get those dishes from?" I didn't see them stacked in there. She said, "They were in there," but it all depends on which way she did it. But I mean, like I said, she had her way and you didn't touch it once they were in the neither, no. That was her China closet. [00:26:06][64.6]

Kerry James Reed: [00:26:09] Everything was organized just how she liked it. [00:26:10][0.7]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:26:11] Yes. [00:26:11][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:26:13] So for these holiday gatherings, how many people would show up? You know, of course, the immediate family, your mother, your father and sister and you. [00:26:20][7.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:26:21] It was really just us. [00:26:21][0.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:26:22] Just y'all? [00:26:22][0.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:26:23] And then, like, my father's sisters and brothers would come. And as he got older, he liked to put up his own Christmas tree. It wasn't a real one, it was a fake one. But I didn't know, I still don't know and I don't understand it, you had themes of the Christmas holidays and I couldn't figure out why daddy would always decorate his tree the way he did. Plus he had, you know, you put the yarn around it with the churches and stuff, and he had all this stuff assembled. And he made it, it was like a tabletop. He got tired of the floor one, and so he would do a small one and put it right on top of his bar and put his little snowman, you know, snow around it and his decorations in it. And if you came into that house just to say 'good afternoon, I'm coming to visit,' you had to see his Christmas tree. He would not let you through that dining room until you saw his Christmas tree. And you had to have it lit up and you had to take the picture. he'll make you take a picture. But he enjoyed it, so we let him have it. He would go buy a different Christmas tree every year. [00:27:41][78.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:27:42] A different fake one every year? [00:27:42][0.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:27:43] Yeah, a different fake one. And he'd buy different bulbs to it to. That's why I said I didn't know it was a thing. Not that he didn't make it his own thing. But he had different bulbs for different trees. [00:27:54][11.6]

Kerry James Reed: [00:27:55] That's really interesting. [00:27:56][0.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:27:56] And then one year he decided to be crazy and he took one part of the Christmas tree, which was green. And then he had a white part of a Christmas tree, and he put them together and I say, "oh my Jesus, what color bulbs are you going to put on here?" So he found his bulbs. And I said, "you know, when your oldest daughter gets here, she 'gon think you went crazy." He said, "well, this is my damn Christmas tree and I'll do whatever I want to with it." I say, "fine." So when everybody came and they just couldn't believe what he did, and I say, "leave him alone. This is

his tree. Let him do what he want to do with the tree." But he left it up until after January, so everybody could see it. But he went out and bought his Christmas tree every year. [00:28:47][50.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:28:49] That's fascinating. [00:28:49][0.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:28:50] Yeah, but then one year Lydia decided, 'I want a real Christmas tree.' So we put it in living room. So my husband's nephew, no, my husband's uncle went out and found a real Christmas tree just so she can have it in the living room on the floor. And they decorated it together. And I figured, that's fine. Daddy didn't like it because he had to clean up the pine needles afterwards. you know. And it wasn't no carpet back in them days, you know, just the rugs and stuff. So, yeah, it was fun. It was really funny. [00:29:27][37.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:29:28] So you mentioned your grandmother being big into canning the peaches and everything else. Do you remember, not an exhaustive list, but anything else that she grew in her garden? Like greens or? [00:29:41][12.5]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:29:42] She did the whole nine yards. I mean, you know, the first thing you do is get your tomatoes. And then you do, she had greens up there, I think she had collard greens, everybody always do the collard greens. And she tried corn. She didn't really do peppers. She did like the green peppers and the red peppers. And I don't think the yellow peppers was out then, I'm not too sure. But she would try anything, but she would can it. Like I said, she did her peaches and her apples. I don't think she did cabbage though. She just had a green thumb for everything. Yes, my mother tried in one year, but it didn't work like my grandmother's. But she enjoyed going out there, too. [00:30:36][54.6]

Kerry James Reed: [00:30:38] Yeah. So did your grandmother and grandfather originally buy the house at 727? [00:30:43][5.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:30:44] Yes. [00:30:44][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:30:45] Do you know when they did that? [00:30:46][1.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:30:46] I swear, I don't know. I can't tell you. Now, Lydia can probably tell you, but I can't. [00:30:51][5.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:30:53] But they moved up from Clifton? [00:30:54][1.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:30:55] Yes. [00:30:55][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:30:56] Ok. Both of them? They were both living in Clifton before? [00:30:58][1.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:30:59] You know, my grandfather was from Louisiana. [00:31:01][1.4]

Kerry James Reed: [00:31:02] Ok. [00:31:02][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:31:03] Yeah, my grandfather was from Louisiana, and my grandmother from Clifton. But I don't know how they met, but I know they both ended up in that house. Now, you can probably go back in the city and look and see exactly when that house was bought. [00:31:21][17.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:31:21] Yeah. [00:31:21][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:31:22] Yeah. You can go back there. [00:31:22][0.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:31:26] So when she would can these vegetables or fruits and things like that, would you just save it for y'all or? [00:31:34][7.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:31:35] Yeah. Because on a back porch when she finally built it, like I told you, she built like a, I used to think it was a basement, but it was a door, it was a cabinet, a wooden cabinet. And she had all of these preserves in there, she did beets too. But she had this particular cabinet that she had her canned vegetables in. And whenever she wanted them, she could just go in and get them or asked us to go get them. But, you know, everything's nice and fresh when you have them canned. Yeah. [00:32:03][28.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:32:07] So was your grandmother's garden unique in the neighborhood? Did other people have gardens? [00:32:12][4.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:32:14] No, I think we were the only ones who had it. Nobody else really tried it. But see, my grandmother had a lot of time on her hands too. Because see, by her working in the government, she worked in government also, but she worked night shifts. So she was able to take care of us during the day, so we didn't have to worry about no babysitter. [00:32:31][17.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:32:33] Oh my goodness. So she would wake up early to cook y'all breakfast, then y'all to school. And then she would start dinner as well after that. [00:32:40][7.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:32:41] The rest of the day she'd be in her room crocheting while the food for the dinner, you know, dinner was on the stove. She crocheted, she was knitting. She made dollies like nobody's business. And they even put a little Christmas tree in their room for Christmas. She was stuck in her way. No fans, no air conditioning, and she just let the breeze come on through the windows. That was her fun, because she can lay in her bed and watch the people that she let live in the back. And she would watch them you know, she would watch them, and I just see what they're getting into, you know. And she wouldn't say nothing that night, she'd wait 'til mornings when they come to the house. Yeah, she'd get them in. And they tell her, "woman you got more eyes than you're supposed to have." And she'd have her light off in her bedroom and she'd be watching them. And I told her, I said, "ma, you can't do that. You just can't do that." She say, "Yes, I can. This my house.". [00:33:46][65.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:33:48] That's really funny. [00:33:49][0.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:33:49] Yeah. Yeah, but she had a whole lot of property, I tell you that. She has on Cameron St before they actually separated the streets and everything. She had two houses up there. She had a house on Payne St. And we rented that out, she rented that out. And then the lady died, so my sister rented it out to somebody else. Then they had the move when my grandmother died. And so we gave it to my aunt. [00:34:21][31.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:34:26] Ok. So it seems like you had a lot of family living in Colored Rosemont as well. [00:34:28][2.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:34:30] Oh, yes. Oh, yes. Like I said, it was like a circle. We didn't have to go nowhere but up the alley to go to my aunt's house. And then she moved across the canal, where the Giant used to be. And it was a nice area, they were old houses, but they were nice. And then she moved off of that when they moved on Queen St. And she stayed up there with her seven kids. [00:34:53][23.9]

Kerry James Reed: [00:34:54] Wow. [00:34:54][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:34:55] And then as my grandmother died, like I said, she didn't have a will and stuff like that. So we split everything down the middle. So we gave my aunt the house because she always loved that house anyway, so we gave it to her. It was nice. [00:35:11][16.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:35:13] So you mentioned, you know, like the Burke family and the Watsons a little bit. But I was wondering, do you remember all your neighbors from Colored Rosemont growing up? [00:35:23][10.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:35:26] Okay. We were 727 N West St, that was the Dundas house. 719 N West St was the Burkes. 715 N West St was the Watsons and 711 N West St was the McCraigs. But all of them dead and gone. And then as you go on around the corner to Wythe St, it was the Davises, Sherman and them used to live there, but it was somebody else that moved in. Then my grandmother's house was right there, so we didn't have to go too far, because my father's mother lived right around the corner. So that's why Sheila Cross Reid was saying it was a whole lot of action in her house. That's because all of the grandkids went round my grandmother's. And then my grandmother had another little house, noy my grandmother, my dad's mother, she had a little house right next to hers, and she was written out too. And then they decided to just let the family move in. And then there was Debbie Turner's and them house. And then as you go on up the hill, it was another family, I can't think of their names, but we know everybody around the neighborhood. The Greene's live right there, the Armstrongs live right there. All of them dead and gone too. And then the Basses live right up on the corner of Wythe St and Payne St. And he was a workaholic, Mr. Bass was a workaholic. And his wife used to cook all the time, all the time, and have clothes out on line every single day. It was nice. I mean, cause back then, everybody had clotheslines. Everybody had their clothes out on the line. And that was a fun thing, just to watch them blow. Yeah. But it was fun. I mean, you know, like I said, we go sit on people's porches when we could. But my grandmother kept us active by going to the USO [United Service Organization]. At the time, it was called a USO. Then we had to go to Bible school. And then the evenings we would go back to the USO. Because she just kept us active. And then we used to go down the Berg. They called it the Madison back then. Where they had their own playground and stuff like that for us to play with. [00:38:06][160.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:38:06] And that was in the Berg? You said it was called the Madison? [00:38:11][4.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:38:12] That's what they used to call it back in the day because they always say the Madison. And I never could figure out what the Madison was. But then as I got older, I said 'oh, it's jus the Berg," because we're right there by a bus station. And right across the street from the bus station was a playground. Yeah, so they call it the Madison. You can look that up too. [00:38:33][20.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:38:36] I've heard of the playground, but I've never heard anyone call it the Madison before. [00:38:39][3.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:38:40] Yeah, well, I call it. That's what they would say, it's the Madison. [00:38:42][2.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:38:46] Interesting. So why did your grandmother have y'all go to the USO? [00:38:49][3.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:38:51] Well, we went there from like 9:00 to 4:00 in the evening, and it was just like this: like she really had nothing for us to do at home. So to keep us occupied and out of trouble, we would go up there and we would play all day. There are different recreations. [00:39:13][21.8]

Kerry James Reed: [00:39:14] This would have been on Saturday then? [00:39:15][1.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:39:16] No, no, no, Monday through Friday. It's called the Rec now but they used to call it the USO. Like a military base. [00:39:23][7.4]

Kerry James Reed: [00:39:25] What street was it on? [00:39:25][0.7]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:39:27] Pendleton St. Pendleton St and Patrick St. Right there where those townhouses are now, yeah. But it was fun. It was really fun because we got to play all day, went to the swimming pool and like I said, we went down the Berg but they called the Madison or whatever back there. And we will play with the kids from down there. 'Cuz, you know, you had a limitation of where you had to go. And, like when we were small, we weren't allowed to cross certain streets. But as long as you was with an adult from the Rec, all of us went as a group. And we would go to Johnson Pool and swim. Or they would have bike rides and stuff, that would be in a competition. Like the USO against the Berg people. And we would have a bicycle with the tassels on it, and different activities that you would do. And we would stay there for half the day and come back up, then go home. Yeah. You know, my grandmother kept us very active. [00:40:39][71.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:40:41] In the Bible school as well as the USO? [00:40:42][1.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:40:43] Oh, yes. [00:40:44][0.4]

Kerry James Reed: [00:40:43] Where was the Bible school? [00:40:44][0.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:40:45] Well, when we were smaller, it was at the church right on the corner of Patrick St and Wythe Street? It's a little white church. You know where Charles Houston [Rec Center] is now? [00:40:55][9.9]

Kerry James Reed: [00:40:59] Yeah. It's not Russell Temple [Christian Methodist Episcopal] is it? [00:41:00][0.7]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:41:00] No, we went to kindergarten in Russell Temple, yeah we went to Russell Temple for that. But no, right across the street from Charles Houston, like Charles Houston is here [indicates with her hands] it's [unintelligible] little white church, but I can't think of the name of it was when we were growing up. [unintelligible] But they used to have a Bible school out there. And then as we got older, Shiloh [Baptist Church] the church that we belonged to, started having Bible study from 9AM to 12PM. So get up every morning, go to Bible study. But she kept us into the church. Where she went, we went. Because my mother and father worked all the time. And like I say, we ain't have to have babysitters, so that was our babysitter. And we went where she went. Yeah. [00:41:48][47.6]

Kerry James Reed: [00:41:50] So, you mentioned that you weren't allowed to cross certain streets unless you were in a group or accompanied by an adult. [00:41:57][7.7]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:41:59] You know, 'cuz, you know, back there. People wasn't watching what they were doing. And even though you had, like some street didn't even have lights back there, you know. So you had to be very careful. But see, we were only allowed to play in our neighborhood. You know, period. The other time we would go off the neighborhood, like we went shopping. Like

going downtown to King St, we used to love going down to King St. To JCPenney's, Murphy's, Lerner's, kids tennis shoes, you know, the kids shoe store. Tavern Square. Just to walk down there; but now its too congested. Too congested. Like I told Lydia, because she's over here [in Maryland], and since then they did a lot of stuff in Alexandria, she doesn't even know where she is. And I told her, before she got sick, I said, "if you come across that Woodrow Wilson Bridge and if you turn on Franklin St and you keep straight down Franklin St and you come back out on King Street, you're not gonna know where you are." I told her, I said, "even coming back up the West St, you can come up Montgomery St, you're not going to recognize it." Because they have torn so many things down, and rebuilt it. It's not the same, it's not. I mean, like me and Lydia always reminisced about the Polar Bear being on Washington St, the ice cream place. Going to George Washington parades, stand out there being cold. Going to the skating rink, going to the bowling alley, going to the Reed Theatre, all of that, its gone. Through those nice days. Because I even liked going over to Powhatan St, to the drugstore when it was over there. And then they had that barbecue place on Washington St. Yeah. You come down Washington St, because it's on a side street now, but they done changed the name. [00:44:20][140.4]

Kerry James Reed: [00:44:20] Ok. [00:44:20][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:44:21] And it was a barbecue place that had some dynamite barbecue. [00:44:24][2.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:44:25] Was it Dixie Pig? [00:44:25][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:44:28] Yes. [00:44:28][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:44:29] Dixie Pig. [00:44:29][0.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:44:29] Yes. And they moved it on Route One, and then they closed it. [00:44:32][3.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:44:34] Right. I've heard a lot of stories about Dixie Pig. [00:44:37][2.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:44:39] Oh, that Dixie Pig was dynamite. It was dynamite. It really was. [00:44:39][0.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:44:42] Absolutely. [00:44:42][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:44:47] And so those were the days. Because I was really sad, you know, and they tore down everything and then they rebuilt it so quick. Because I kept telling my grandmother, I said, "you sitting out here counting these trains," she can tell when they took them off, when they put them back on and everything. And I said, "ma, how many trains did they put up on the track today?" And she could tell you: three, six. But she just enjoyed watching them build it. Even though we had to keep your windows closed because of the dust coming through. And my mother had white curtains up at her house, and she was really upset when she had to keep washing them curtains because of that dust coming through the windows. Yeah, but my grandmother didn't care, she sat on her special chair on that front porch and watched. [00:45:41][54.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:45:44] Do you remember your grandmother's reaction to all the changes that happened to Colored Rosemont? So when people started to come in and take the properties and things? [00:45:52][7.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:45:53] See, the thing of it is, is she had a lawyer named Lloyd Delane. He was just as nice as can be, I thought. But see, he tried to get her to sell her property a long time ago

before the metro even started. And every time he would come by, he would say, "Ms. Dundas, you know why I'm here?" And my grandmother said, "I know why you're here and you're not going to be here too long. And I told you no before, and I'm telling you no now." She wouldn't sell. He tried for a long time before he died. And then one day, he sent his son down here, my grandmother wasn't very nice to him. And the father came back and told them, "you cannot talk to my son that way." She told him, "this is my house. I didn't ask him to come. You sent him to try and change my mind. And I am not going to change my mind." You know, so he left alone, he didn't bother no more after that. So she didn't really see the change. The only thing she saw was the metro. But if she was living today, I know she'd be cussing up a storm. And my other grandmother. Yeah. [00:47:06][73.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:47:16] What was your reaction to all of the changes in Colored Rosemont? So when you would come visit your grandma? [00:47:21][4.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:47:22] Oh, I enjoyed it. I would be just like her, sitting on the front porch watching the Metro. But see, what really got me was when they built all the townhouses around there, you know, Braddock place. I think it's Braddock place, because Braddock Rd is up this way. And 'cuz I was just used to seeing the projects over there, John Roberts [Homes]. I mean, everybody was getting along and everything, and all of a sudden, like I said, they had to place everybody. But we didn't have no problem and stuff like that cause we were in the house. But just to watch it being built and they built up so fast. And all I could think of was a tornado coming through and just tearing them all down. But they still standing. I don't know how much progress they're making, but they still standing. And now that its gone, now that our section is gone, they probably will make a bundle. But they have built nothing on it? [00:48:15][53.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:48:16] No, it's still that empty lot. [00:48:16][0.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:48:20] So I don't know what they waiting for. I thought they were gonna get rid of the people in the projects first before they, you know, came to us. But they tore us down first. But the people in the projects are still there. Don't look like they're going nowhere no time soon. And, you know, from what I heard, even when I was down there staying for a while, people from D.C. and Maryland was coming over there getting in these projects. And they still have people here that needed to get in. And they still haven't to this day. It's bad. [00:48:59][39.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:48:59] Big problem with the housing in Alexandria, absolutely. Seems like a lot of the local residents, you know, are getting pushed out. And, you know, they are given certain guarantees.... [00:49:11][11.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:49:11] And they're not getting it. Just like the houses on the South Side. [00:49:14][2.8]

Kerry James Reed: [00:49:15] Yeah. [00:49:15][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:49:17] They're still [unintelligible] too. [00:49:17][0.4]

Kerry James Reed: [00:49:20] Tear them down and then takes a decade to build something. By then, everybody's gone. [00:49:24][3.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:49:24] Or they dead. [00:49:24][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:49:26] Yeah, they ain't coming back. [00:49:26][0.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:49:27] And then they building all those houses down Route One. And I was thinking, you know, seem like they can make them for low income people. But they said, "no," it's one building. And their going by income. And I think that is bad. It's just terrible. [00:49:45][17.9]

Kerry James Reed: [00:49:48] What was it like to see your grandmother's home finally torn down? [00:49:52][4.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:49:53] That was a hard way for me. But I was one, and I said okay. They had pushed us out. We had moved out about by 17th. And I'm thinking that they're going to do it the following week. But, Anne and them hadn't moved, so they couldn't do nothing because everybody had to go as a group. You know, I mean, I know her brother had died and everything, and they had to get that together. And from what Lydia was telling me, she wanted an extension, but she couldn't get the extension because everybody else had already said, "We gone. We're not going to pay them no more money." So, I don't know if Anne had to pay any more money or not. But we got out of it on the 17th. But I mean, it was just heartbreaking just come by there every day and seeing them houses like that. And then all of a sudden they were slowly bulldozing. But they left our house for the last to bulldoze, they were bulldozing everybody else's. And they waited for our house on Madison St, and house on West St, to bulldoze last. But it was just heartbreaking. And then I think Chipper, I think it was him and his brother, oldest brother, he came by, they just happened to be driving by and I saw this car on the other side by Metro. And he just was sitting in the car just looking because they had like bulldoze half the house, his house. And so, you know, things were flapping in the wind and stuff like that. And my heart just went down. I just can't believe it's gone. [00:51:28][94.6]

Kerry James Reed: [00:51:36] Obviously its a tragedy and all these people like, you know, their childhood homes, their memories, all of sudden it's just snap of a finger, almost, and it's gone. Yeah, that's heartbreaking. [00:51:43][7.5]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:51:44] And that's why I say this reminds me of Green Fried Tomatoes. I just love that movie. Yeah. The way they talked about it and it just came to me, I said "dang, thats what Colored Rosemont is: Fried Green Tomatoes." Because it used to flood down there like crazy, and we would be sitting on the front porch watching people try to get through, you know. Just like Mud Town [Seminary], you know. They do their canoes and all this other stuff. Because when I went down there and stayed for a while in 2014, it flooded down there on the corner of Braddock Rd and West St. It always floods down here. And we'd sit on the front porch and the water had rose from West St all the way up to Madison St. And the cars coming around that corner trying to get through, and when they couldn't get through, it was just like bumper cars. I mean, I actually watched this car come this way and bump into this car coming this way. But then they couldn't get the cars out, you know. There was, you know, water down all in there and everything. [00:52:54][69.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:52:55] So they were trying to come from Madison St down to West St? [00:52:57][2.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:52:58] And they'd come from West St going up Madison St. And I just sit up and I think, 'them fools, they know it's flooded.' But, you know, they had to wait for the water to recede, you know, recede and stuff before they can get through. I figured, 'boy, it's going to be an accident to happen,' you know. But they made it. They had to pay a pretty price, you know, for the

tow truck and stuff. But I figured, them jackasses, they knew what they were doing. They thought they can come through. [00:53:24][26.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:53:28] So the flooding was always a problem? [00:53:29][0.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:53:29] Yes. [00:53:29][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:53:30] So you always remember flooding down there? [00:53:32][2.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:53:32] Yes. [00:53:32][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:53:33] So how would, you know growing up, when the flooding would happen, how would y'all deal with it? [00:53:39][5.7]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:53:40] I wouldn't. We didn't have to go nowhere. We sat on front porch and watched. But Daddy had told the developer that built the townhouses going back on West St. that, "if I was you, I wouldn't put a basement here, because it floods right here." They didn't pay any attention to daddy. And soon as those people moved in those three little houses before you get to the other houses, it flooded and it went in they basement. And daddy said, "I told you so." I don't know if the city paid for them, you know, to get the basement redone or whatever. But they claim they fixed it, but I don't know if they fixed it or not. I said, "it flood all these many years and they didn't do nothing about it then, why they 'gon try to do something now?" Because some people moved in. That's crazy. And then people say, "they got the money." I say, "no, they got credit cards. That's what it is, credit cards. They ain't got no full-blown money. Yeah, but it was really fun down there, it really was. Because, see, I was a homebody, I didn't like going nowhere. So I always stayed at home to watch everything. [00:54:53][73.6]

Kerry James Reed: [00:54:55] Sit on the front porch with your grandmother. [00:54:56][0.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:54:56] Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Exciting. You know, you see different things. Like, when my mother had retired, and my daddy, they both retired, momma would sit right here [motions with her hands] daddy would sit way over here. And whoever came down alley, mama would make friends with, she didn't care who it was. And then she would invite them up on the front porch. And daddy say, "why are you always inviting these strange people? Even from Metro. If it was a hot day my mother was sitting out on the front porch. She would invite them up on the front porch to have a drink of tea. I didn't mind sharing. But daddy say, "you keep letting these people in here, ok? Keep on." Mama said, "they not bothering nobody, they don't have to go in the house." But she just made friends with everybody, just sitting there, everybody got to know her. She was a nice lady. [00:55:51][54.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:55:51] Yeah. Sounds like it. [00:55:52][1.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:55:52] You'd have liked her. Along with my grandma, yes. But see she, like I said, she wasn't really from Alexandria. She's from Fairfax, or from Clifton or whatever. But my grandmother's sisters and everybody, they're Washington D.C. and New York. So my mama stayed over in New York, I mean, stayed over in Washington D.C. a lot. And then she had her cousins who were cops over in D.C. So she hung with them all the time. But it was fun. Yes. [00:56:26][33.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:56:27] So can you think of your favorite memory that you have with the grandmother? [00:56:30][2.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:56:36] Oh, [laughs] I shouldn't do this. No, when my grandmother got sick, she had a stroke. So in left her where she couldn't really talk. But I usually have fun going into

her bedroom in the mornings, say, "Ok Granny, let's get up. Get yourself together." And at first, you know, she didn't like it. But then she enjoyed me coming in every morning to bathe her, you know. And she would sit there and I turned on the television, just like: she used to keep the little boy next door. And the mother would bring him over in pajamas and my grandmother would go and get him ready for the morning. She'll bathe him, change him. And she had potty that was made of a horse, you know, had the horse's head and stuff, and had this little table right in front of it. So she would put him on the potty, fix his breakfast and he would sit there and look at his television story, whatever kid's game mama would have on television. And he would sit there, and he'd do his thing looking at television and she finished cleaning him up. But she used to have kids around, but she didn't really take care of her daughter's kids, you know. And her daughter didn't really like that. My grandmother said, "This is my house. I take you who I want to take in". And that's what she did. But I had fun. She was always, I mean, even though she would get mad and be fussy, I can calm her down. My kids would calm her down, too. And the little son she just loved, you know. But all of us. I just liked her, because she would do anything, even though she didn't understand what you were saying, she would still do what you asked her to do. [00:58:25][109.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:58:26] Got it. [00:58:26][0.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:58:26] You had to tell her, like, 2 or 3 times. But she wouldn't feed herself. And then she had gotten where she would eat with her fingers, which I didn't really like, but that's what they did when they had strokes. And I feel as long as you give me a mouth, that's fine. I'mma clean you up when you finish. But she just didn't want to eat with silverware. But to each his own, they had their own thing. [00:58:51][24.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:58:52] So your grandmother was almost caretaker of the neighborhood, and then you were the caretaker of your grandmother. [00:58:56][3.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [00:58:57] I was the caregiver of my grandmother, my mother, and me and Lydia helped my father. And she helped out with mama too after I threatened her. But other than that, yeah. I mean, it was just us. Because the other grandkids, they didn't come around. But like, I kept telling them, when she is down and out, we will see who will be there, you know. And sure enough, when she was down and out that's when they started coming. And I just had to tell them, "I don't know what you're coming for now." You know, "she needed you in the beginning, not the end." Yeah, but my grandmother's house was always our house anyway. It was just like a loving family. Everybody just came and mingled. You know, back in the day, I don't know about your house, but everybody sat in their kitchen. It was something about the kitchen. Everybody loved the kitchen. And my mother learned how to, the neighbor used to call her Betty Crocker because she started cooking from the cookbook. Then she turned around, started doing stuff from scratch. But you couldn't be in a kitchen with her because if you be running off at the mouth at her, she will forget to put whatever else she had to put in her ingredients. And one day we were sitting in the kitchen and she was baking the cake, and I really wasn't paying attention to what she was doing. And then all of a sudden, she said, "Ellie, now you sitting up here running of your mouth, I forgot to put such and such in there." I politely said, "ok, you gotta start all over from scratch." And she did. But she was particular in how she made her poundcakes because she used to help out to church, even though she didn't go to church, whatever the church needed, she would always do. And she was famous for making her

poundcakes. And it had to be just right. And if it was a dent in it or, you know, lopsided, she wouldn't give to them. And the minister would make it his point, he would come and pick them up for her. And Mama would tell him, "I'm not going to give you this cake because it's lopsided." And he would say, "Bernice, it doesn't matter because we gonna get it sliced anyway. Nobody's going to tell no different." Mama said, "no. They're not going to know. But I know." So she would make another cake for him. And he would beg her, "please give me this cake. We'll cut it up." Mom said, "no, we're going to cut it up before you even take it." So he would take one cake already cut, and then the other one they cut it in the church. But she would help out anybody. My mother was a kind-hearted person. She would give the clothes off her back if she could. Yes, indeed. Yeah. She was a fine lady.
[01:01:50][172.6]

Kerry James Reed: [01:01:51] So, asides from the pound cake, what else did she make?
[01:01:53][2.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:01:57] She finally learned how to make rolls from scratch. [01:02:02][5.9]

Kerry James Reed: [01:02:04] How to make what? Rolls? [01:02:05][0.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:02:05] Rolls, you know, rolls that you would get in the store. And she would try and try and try, but it wouldn't work. So Nanny's daughter, Aunt Francis, would make rolls and Mama would take them. And Mama will watch her make them, but she just couldn't get the hang of as far as the yeast goes. And so one day she sat in the house and Anthony was small, my oldest son, and he always wanted to help her bake. And I figured you got to wash your hands, you can't do that. So Mama gave him his own batter to make his own rolls. He made the dirtiest little roll one day, and I said, "Uh-uh, you got to keep that yourself." And he did. But she would practice, you know, she went out and got her mixes and everything with the dough handle and all this stuff. And as long as she was in the kitchen by herself, she was fine. But Anthony always had to be in the kitchen with her, you know. Because my kids got into mischief all of the time. And he would be one place and she'd be another. She would hand him his dough and she would keep her dough. And he will watch everything that she did. So she was really mainly for the rolls and the poundcakes. But she loved cooking those Sunday dinner's though. Because her brother would cook Monday to Friday. Then he was gone on a weekend, so he said, "your day is Sunday. I take over on Tuesday," you know. That's what they did.
[01:03:38][93.3]

Kerry James Reed: [01:03:41] What did they like to fix? [01:03:41][0.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:03:44] For Sundays dinner it was, you know, back in the day, I don't know about your house, you know, but like every day you had some different. But every week it was the same thing on different days. But for, like, Sundays dinner, Mom always did: roast, macaroni cheese, collard greens, sweet potato. That was her norm. I then like the weekday, like on Tuesdays, it was always pork chops, apple sauce, and pork-in-beans. And on Saturdays it was pork-in-beans and hot dogs. So you had your days that you fixed the meals, you know. But on Friday she always did salmon cakes. [01:04:23][39.3]

Kerry James Reed: [01:04:24] Salmon cakes, really? [01:04:25][0.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:04:25] Yeah, Friday. Even though we were Baptists we went by the Catholic rule, fish on Fridays. Yeah, so that's what we did. But Tip next door, the Burke family, he always made salmon croquettes. And I tried to do that one day, and I couldn't get it made like a

football. You know, he had a talent for doing that. And I told him, I said, "teach my mom to do that so I can do it." But he never did. You know, so, yeah. But her favorite, she loved cooking Sunday's dinner. And my uncle didn't mind cooking Monday through Friday. And see, by him being in military for two years, he showed me and my sister how to wash dishes properly. You know where to go first, second and third. But he always started off with two glasses first, to get them out of the way. Then you did your silverware, then you did your plates. He always watched your pots and pans last because that was a greasiest. And you had to change the water before you did it. And then you had to dry the dishes and make sure to put them up. That is what he did. He'd go behind you too. [01:05:38][72.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:05:41] What was your uncle's name? [01:05:41][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:05:42] His name was Roger Dundas. [01:05:43][0.6]

Kerry James Reed: [01:05:48] So it was your uncle, your mother, and your father living in that house? [01:05:54][5.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:05:56] And, yeah, my grandfather. Yeah, 'cuz Roger had died. He had gotten married and moved out, that's what it was. But we never thought he would get married. [01:06:07][11.7]

Kerry James Reed: [01:06:09] Why not? [01:06:09][0.1]

[01:06:10] Because he was a single person. He stayed to himself, really. You know, he would stay home, like I say, Monday through Friday he was always home with his mom. He loved his mother. But him and his dad share a room together, too. And my granddaddy was the type person. He would see what his son would bring in the house and put in the closet. And one day he got fidgety; Roger went out and bought some new shoes and some new socks. And my grandfather wanted to get spiffy. So he goes in and puts on his clean clothes, my uncle's brand new shoes he had just bought and brand new pair of socks. And my uncle comes down looking for his clothes and I couldn't tell him what happened to 'em. I was sitting in the kitchen and my granddaddy came through there, saying "look what I got on," I say, "oh, lord. There's going to be a battle in here today." So I went and told my grandmother, I said, "Your husband 'gon get killed tonight." And she said, "Why?" I said, "because he got on your son's clothes." He came in that Friday night, getting ready to go out and was looking for his socks and shoes. Yeah. I did not have the heart to tell him that his father put on his clothes. And so I told Roger, I say, "Well, go in the bedroom. Look on your daddy's bed. You'll see where they are." Granddaddy laying over the bed of his legs crossed, his shoes on. And he said, "you got on my shoes, old man." Daddy said, "these ain't your shoes. These my God damn shoes. I went out and bought 'em." I said, "granddaddy you ain't been nowhere shopping." I said, "you just took Roger's shoes." So Roger let him have them. But he told him "don't you touch nothing else, don't go in my closet." But I mean, the house was lots of fun. Like I said, my uncle cooked Monday through Friday. After Friday, he's off the way, you know, off for the weekend. Didn't come home 'til Monday morning, which was fine with us. We had chores do when he got back. [01:08:16][126.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:08:19] So you mentioned that your son tried to cook rolls with your mother, and that he wasn't very good at it. [01:08:26][6.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:08:26] He did it on his own. I mean, you know what I mean, he had his own little pan, and he ate that roll too, because I wouldn't give to nobody. But, you know, I put

Anthony in, was it Anthony? One of them kids, they went to a kindergarten called Valley Drive.
[01:08:45][18.3]

Kerry James Reed: [01:08:46] Ok. [01:08:46][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:08:47] And, you know, you had to have one Black and one Hispanic or whatever in the school because they're mainly white. But they taught the kids how to cook, too. Make vegetable soup. Took them to the grocery store and everything and they picked out the vegetables and stuff. But the day that they had to make that soup, they made sure, have all them kids have their hands washed. They ain't put no seasoning whatsoever. It smell good, but it didn't taste good.
[01:09:21][34.4]

Kerry James Reed: [01:09:22] [laughs] They just boiled the vegetables. [01:09:23][0.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:09:25] Look, teachers had them do it, and they enjoyed it, too. I say, "no, we don't want any of your soup. No." But they taught the kids how to cook and clean and all that stuff, yeah. So it was fun for them. [01:09:37][12.6]

Kerry James Reed: [01:09:39] So, how many how many children did you have? I'm sorry.
[01:09:43][3.7]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:09:44] I have two boys and a stepdaughter. [01:09:46][1.8]

Kerry James Reed: [01:09:47] Ok. What are the children's names? [01:09:50][2.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:09:51] Anthony Tyrone Winbush, Jason Lamont Winbush, and Melissa Jackson. [01:10:03][11.6]

Kerry James Reed: [01:10:06] Melissa Jackson. So did you take them all to your mother's house growing up? [01:10:16][9.7]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:10:18] Well, Missy, she's not by me. She's my husband's first girlfriend. So Anthony and Missy are six months apart from each other. She was born in January, he was born in July. So, yeah, where I went, they went. Mama, I used to take mama shopping 'cuz Mama doesn't drive. So whenever the kids get on her nerves at home, she would say, "I'mma put them little MF's in the back of the trunk in your car.". And I said, "you can't do that. I'm driving. You can't take my kids and put them in a trunk." So, they will go to the store with us, but then Jason would get to the point where he was too fidgety. So I turned him loose on the arcade machines, so I knew where he was. So he would stay at the arcade machines, Anthony would just be with me and Mama, you know. But they grew up, they went to T.C. Williams [High School], they graduated from T.C. Williams. Because they went to in Jefferson Houston [Elementary School], Hammond [Francis Hammond Middle School] and T.C. But then Anthony, he went in the military after he graduated. He stayed for 28 years.
[01:11:42][84.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:11:44] Wow. What branch? [01:11:44][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:11:45] Army. And now he working over at Howard University.
[01:11:49][4.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:11:50] Fabulous. [01:11:50][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:11:51] Yeah. Yeah. And Jason still at the Safeway where he started, I think when he was 15. On Braddock Road. [01:12:00][9.9]

Kerry James Reed: [01:12:03] Oh, that one. [01:12:03][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:12:04] That one, when it was old, yeah. And now he's out in Annandale, no, Arlington. He's out there by, shoot, out there by the Pentagon. [01:12:15][11.4]

Kerry James Reed: [01:12:17] Pentagon City? [01:12:17][0.5]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:12:18] Yeah, he's out that way, yeah. He's been there for 25 years. [01:12:24][5.6]

Kerry James Reed: [01:12:26] Wow. I can't imagine staying in the job that long. [01:12:27][0.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:12:27] I've been there for 52. But Safeway, like he said, everything has changed. And they keep changing who takes over the stores and stuff. Yeah, he said they're getting ready to change again if they haven't already changed. [01:12:44][16.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:12:51] So were you living in Colored Rosemont, then, when you would take your kids over to your mother's? Or where were you living? [01:12:57][6.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:12:59] When I had Anthony we were living in an apartment. And then when I moved in the house on S Gordon Street, where I'm at now. I've been there for 45 years. [01:13:10][10.9]

Kerry James Reed: [01:13:14] So, when did you leave Colored Rosemont, then? [01:13:16][1.5]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:13:18] Let me see, I think I was 25. I think I was 25, but I do know I would come down there every day. So it's just like I'm still home, you know. I think I was 25, because I was 25. 'Cuz we moved in the house in '77. Because Anthony was born, Jason was born February '77. I'mma say I left the house in like '73 I think it was, or '72. Because we got married in '70. I'd say '72 or '73 that I literally left, but you might as well say I was there every day. Yeah. But see, it was still the same when I left, even though they had torn down everything else. But, you know, just watching Metro. Everybody got used to the Metro. I mean, because like, on this side the bridge was Colored Rosemont, once you go underneath the bridge that's white Rosemont. That's what we consider it as anyway. [01:14:32][74.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:14:34] Did you call it white Rosemont growing up? [01:14:35][0.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:14:36] I ain't never called it white Rosemont, I ain't never knew what it was. I just said, 'it's Colored Rosemont on this side.' So I had to ask Debbie's [Deborah Turner] aunt who's dead and gone now. I say, "ok, so if we Colored Rosemont on this side of the bridge, what's that over there?" By GW [George Washington High School], she said, "that's white Rosemont," you know, so I don't know. But I get along with everybody. [01:15:00][24.3]

Kerry James Reed: [01:15:07] So do you remember if everybody in the community happy that the metro was being built? What was the reaction to that? [01:15:14][7.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:15:15] You know, just to be truthful to you, I know as far as my dad and my aunt and them, they thought it was great because they liked play numbers. So they always went to DC to play their numbers and go to Maryland because like they said, 'your halfway on line from where the metro is.' So they didn't mind catching the metro, but I've never been on it. [01:15:37][22.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:15:39] You've never been on the metro? [01:15:39][0.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:15:39] I've never been on the metro, no. I watched it. But then first time I think it was running, they went underground and it started leaking. But they got it, you know, they were able to get out of it all ok. But I said, "naw, if it's going to leak that way, then I ain't going." I can swim and everything, but I don't want that much water, and I've never been on it. Never. I've been

over there to catch the bus. But I never been on Metro. I either walk, catch a bus, catch a cab, or I drive. It don't bother me. Never been. I think it's purty. I watch it when they say they're going to do this to the metro and that the metro and all this stuff. I ain't never been on it. [01:16:29][50.1]

Kerry James Reed: [01:16:31] That's incredible. [01:16:31][0.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:16:34] No, I don't think my mother ever been on it either. [01:16:36][2.7]

Kerry James Reed: [01:16:38] Y'all just like to watch? [01:16:38][0.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:16:40] It's exciting. I just like to people watch. [01:16:44][3.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:16:44] Definitely. [01:16:44][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:16:45] And I like people watching, and I watched them by open in the morning, I watched them close at night. Yes, because I even watched it when they come, when some of the workers, they would park at the Braddock station, go into the station. Then they go up there, they the ones that turn on the escalators stuff. Then I watched them get on their train to go where they supposed to go. Yeah. But it's exciting to just watching, you know. No problem. I don't mind, I haven't been on it. No, no, I'm not interested. [01:17:25][39.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:17:26] Right, right, right. [01:17:26][0.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:17:27] Not interested, to many things happen. [01:17:29][2.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:17:31] So, you mentioned earlier on that you went to Russell Temple for kindergarten? [01:17:36][5.5]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:17:37] Yeah. [01:17:37][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:17:38] Is that right? What was that like? [01:17:40][1.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:17:41] It was fun for me, Lydia didn't like it. She ain't like the teacher. But my teacher's name was Ms. cope. And even though she taught at Russell Temple, she belonged to Shiloh Baptist Church. And her family lived up the street to Norton's on Alfred St. And Daddy would drop me off in the morning before he went to work. Would drop both of us off. Lydia would cry after he dropped us off because she refused to stay. She did not want to leave me because she thought we supposed to be together. And when they said, 'No, your teacher's going to be such and such,' Lydia didn't want to go. But they had to drag her. And I stayed with mine because I enjoyed it. But one day, I don't know what got into me, my daddy took me to my sister-in-law's house down the street and told my oldest sister, "you take Ellie to school." I told daddy that morning that I didn't want to go. But he insisted. So she had me ready and she said, "come on, let's go to school." I said, "I'm not going to school. I told daddy that I wasn't going to school this morning." She said, "well, you're going to get me in trouble." I said, "if I get you in trouble, I get you in trouble. I'm not going to school." So I stayed with her mother-in-law the whole day, and then daddy came to pick me up and she said, "daddy, Ellie didn't go to school today, she refused to go to school." And he said, "well, she told me she ain't want to go, but I didn't believe her. So I took her to your house so you could take her." And then by the time I got home my uncle said, "the police going to come and lock you up." I say, "why?" "Because you didn't go to school today." I say, "well let them come." But I didn't pull that joke no more. But it was fun going to Russell Temple, it really was you know. See, because back then you didn't have to pay. Now you got to pay an arm and a leg. From what I heard from some of these mothers, it's outrageous. It's terrible. [01:19:51][129.8]

Kerry James Reed: [01:19:54] Did a lot of kids from Colored Rosemont go to the Russell Temple kindergarten? [01:20:00][5.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:20:03] No, not really, no. I know me and Lydia went and then some of the kids from like on the South Side went, and down the projects, I mean, down the Berg. [01:20:11][8.8]

Kerry James Reed: [01:20:15] Because I remember, I think it was Ms. Victoria told me that she went to somebody else's kindergarten, I'm trying to remember the name of it. [01:20:23][8.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:20:25] Ms. Christine's? [01:20:25][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:20:26] Yes, yes. And I was curious why y'all didn't go there? [01:20:28][2.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:20:28] Ms. Christine taught it out of school. I mean, she taught in her house. [01:20:33][4.7]

Kerry James Reed: [01:20:34] Ok. [01:20:34][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:20:35] Then again, if she didn't teach at her house, she taught at Ebenezer [Baptist Church]. One of them. But I know we went to Russell Temple. Even though Victoria Greene they belonged to Russell Temple. [01:20:49][13.7]

Kerry James Reed: [01:20:49] Right, yeah. [01:20:50][0.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:20:52] So I don't know. But I know we went there. I don't know how Daddy got the information and stuff, but that's where we went. Yeah. Yeah, you're right, it does seem crazy, though. Yeah, 'cuz Ms. Christine, she had her own school. But like I said, I don't know if it was at Ebenezer or if it was at her house. Because some of the kids, after she finished teaching them at home or wherever, when they got into first grade and second rate, she used to have a cab bring her and the kids to school. You know, in the mornings at Charles Houston. Yeah. So, yeah, Ms. Christine, that's who she's talking about. [01:21:30][38.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:21:32] Did Ms. Christine live in Colored Rosemont? Where was her house? [01:21:32][0.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:21:34] She was up on Princess St. [01:21:35][0.8]

Kerry James Reed: [01:21:35] On Princess St, so then you said that you all went to Shiloh, Shiloh Baptist? [01:21:44][8.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:21:44] Shiloh Baptist, the 1401 Duke St. We went to the old church. [01:21:49][5.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:21:50] The old one? [01:21:50][0.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:21:50] Yeah. And you might say that was family oriented, too. Because everybody knew each other in Alexandria. And like, we had teachers all over that church. You know, that taught at public schools. Mr. Weber. His sister. His sister, Ms. Alexander was a teacher but forgot what teacher she was, you know. But it was a lot of teachers there that taught us in school. And when Lydia got married, you might've said all of Alexandria, plus the church, was there. That's back in the day. Everybody got invited to everybody's wedding. And the debutantes ball, she was in it. She liked to keep up with the Joneses. I'm a down-to-earth person. But whatever was going on, she had to be involved in it. You know, so that was her thing. But that was a nice, she had a nice wedding. [01:22:59][68.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:23:01] Was it in Alexandria? It was at Shiloh? [01:23:03][2.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:23:04] It was at Shiloh, too. [01:23:05][0.8]

Kerry James Reed: [01:23:05] Where was the reception held? [01:23:06][0.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:23:07] At the departmental club. Everybody was there too, Lord. Yeah. [01:23:16][8.7]

Kerry James Reed: [01:23:18] That's fabulous. What about your wedding, what was your wedding like? [01:23:21][3.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:23:23] I went to the justice of the peace. [Kerry laughs] I wasn't going to waste my money. Plus, I was pregnant, and I figured that 'nah, I couldn't do that.' But, no, what we did was, you know, because there's a church on every corner in Alexandria. And so we went and got the marriage license, the blood test and everything down at the hospital. Because, see back then, you only had to pay \$2, you know. The marriage license, you only had to pay \$5. And so we were going from church to church to find out who could marry us. And the first one we went to was Reverend Armstrong. I don't know if you remember him, he had a church on Oronoco St and Fayette St, and the church is still there but he's dead and gone. He's the one that had the one arm. We went to him first, 'cuz he always sat out on the porch every morning, but he wasn't there. So we went all through Alexandria, and finally we ended up at [unintelligible] Baptist church on the corner of West St and Payne St or whatever. And I figured, 'well, Reverend Stoughton lives here,' ok. Because his family went to Beuloh [Baptist Church] and Shiloh [Baptist Church]. I said, "we can get him to marry us." So, we knocked on the door and this gentleman answered the door and it was our seventh grade substitute teacher named Reverend Smith. And I figured, "oh, my Jesus, we have the wrong house." He said, "no, you're not." He said, "I'm a minister." I said, "well, I didn't know you were a minister." He said, "yes, there's alot you don't know. See, it was only six of us. If I had eight people, he would've been able to marry us in a church. But it was only six. He said he was not allowed to take you into church unless it's eight or more. Yes. So in those houses down there, they are old houses. And in this living room he had the prayer hands up on his altar. So we got married in front of that praying hand in the altar, and he was in the midst of moving to Richmond. And he said "excuse the mess." I say, "don't worry about the mess. It was just nice of you to marry us," you know. And he said, "I'll go ahead and do it, sign the marriage certificate, send it to Richmond, and you'll get it," and such and such. And he wasn't going to charge us. I only paid \$5. It was cheap, it was cheap back then. [01:26:00][156.9]

Kerry James Reed: [01:26:01] I don't even want to tell you about what my wedding is going to cost. [01:26:02][1.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:26:04] Oh you haven't gotten married yet? [01:26:04][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:26:04] Nah, I'm engaged. [01:26:05][1.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:26:06] Well, good luck. Where y'all going to get married at? [01:26:08][1.7]

Kerry James Reed: [01:26:08] My fiancé is from Pittsburgh. [01:26:09][0.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:26:10] Oh, y'all going down there. [01:26:10][0.6]

Kerry James Reed: [01:26:11] Yeah, going to go up there. It's a... [01:26:12][0.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:26:14] Is it going to be in one of those vineyards? Is it going to be in the church? [01:26:16][2.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:26:17] It's going to be one of those vineyards. [01:26:18][0.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:26:20] Ok. Those are pretty. [01:26:20][0.1]

Kerry James Reed: [01:26:20] Yeah, it's gorgeous up there. [01:26:20][0.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:26:20] Going to cost money too. [01:26:22][1.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:26:23] I don't even want to say. [laughter]. [01:26:23][0.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:26:25] Are you going to be next to the winery? [01:26:26][0.8]

Kerry James Reed: [01:26:26] Yeah, yeah. [01:26:27][0.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:26:27] Spring wedding, then? [01:26:30][3.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:26:32] It's middle of fall. So it'll be like, I think it's October 4th of '26. [01:26:36][4.5]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:26:37] That still should be nice. [01:26:37][0.1]

Kerry James Reed: [01:26:37] Yeah. So we're hoping it's not too cool. [01:26:39][1.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:26:39] Well, good luck to you. So, what's the colors? [01:26:42][2.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:26:43] French blue. [01:26:43][0.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:26:44] Beautiful. [01:26:44][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:26:45] And I think, I forget the exact color, but it's Burgundy. [01:26:49][4.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:26:50] Beautiful. [01:26:50][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:26:51] Yeah. And then, I'm in a black tuxedo, of course, her in a white dress and the bridesmaids in French blue and my groomsmen in, it's not burgundy. I don't why I keep thinking that. But dark Burgundy suits. [01:27:04][13.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:27:05] That sounds pretty, yeah. [01:27:05][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:27:07] I certainly hope so. With all the money it better be beautiful. [01:27:07][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:27:14] But I want to tell you too, my daddy always said it is cheaper if you go out and buy your tuxedo, rather than rent it. Because he used to rent his tux all the time and then he found out it's cheaper to buy it. But he was smart enough, because he was a skinny person, and he started gaining weight, so he had like three tuxes. So if he gained weight, he have a tux to fit into. So when he died, before he died, a week before he died, he told us he want to be buried in his tux, which was fine. So my brother looked at me and says, "daddy had three tuxes in her, so find one you think will fit," you know. Because he always said it's cheaper to buy one than it is to rent. So we buried him in his tux. That's what he wanted. But he was also a bartender, too. And he didn't go to school for bartending, because back in the day they didn't have those. And you just figured out your own drinks, you know. Daddy was a cool one, too. If you wanted to get drunk, he made it happen. [01:28:23][69.6]

Kerry James Reed: [01:28:24] Who did he work for? [01:28:25][0.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:28:25] He did it for lawyers, doctors, I mean, all the people at the hospital he's used to cater for. And he built up his clientele where he had his first wife, which is my oldest sister's mother, because she could cook. And, they'd have dinners and stuff like that? My cousin would be involved in it, my sister would be involved in it. Then he had his other bartenders. And he had his own tables and stuff. He would make his table out of refrigerator doors. Back in the day, daddy was handy with his work, handy. Had these long tablecloths. But he just learned the hard way as far as making the drinks. But all you had to do is say, 'I want so-and-so and so-and-so,' and he would think about what he want to mix together and he would fix it. Then they come back for some more, but

every time they would come back, he'd make it stronger and stronger. And I said, "daddy, you know you're going to get yourself in trouble one day?" But he enjoyed his bartending, and he and his crew. Whenever a doctor, a lawyer anywhere in Alexandria and stuff because they knew him. And they got, you know, to tell daddy about any other person that needed to have help, you know, as far as bartending stuff. Because my husband even helped one time too, for one of the doctors. But he enjoyed his stuff. [01:29:59][94.7]

Kerry James Reed: [01:30:00] That sounds like it. He like to make strong drinks. [01:30:02][1.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:30:03] Oh, he kept making it stronger and stronger. [01:30:04][1.3]

Kerry James Reed: [01:30:06] Usually it's the opposite. [01:30:07][0.5]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:30:07] I know. Now it is the opposite. I mean, I only drink beer, but everybody else be drinking alcohol, they'd ask for such-and-such, and I get to looking at it, and I figure 'that don't look right.' [01:30:19][11.6]

Kerry James Reed: [01:30:19] Right. [01:30:19][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:30:20] I look like less-of, more-than. No. But he enjoyed it, so. Yeah, he liked his Christmas, Thanksgiving and New Year parties. He like those parties. [01:30:36][16.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:30:37] Sounds like it. Making all the strong drinks. [01:30:39][2.5]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:30:40] Yeah. He loved it. He loved it. He loved it. Even if he he didn't know what he was doing, people still enjoyed it. [01:30:45][5.1]

Kerry James Reed: [01:30:47] So, you mentioned to me earlier on some of the businesses that y'all would go to. You mentioned the J.C. Penney down on King and a couple of other places. But I was curious, in Colored Rosemont proper, were there any businesses in the neighborhood that y'all would go to? [01:31:05][18.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:31:08] No, I mean, you know, we would go to, like, Sarge's up on Fayette St. But that wasn't Colored Rosemont, that was up off Queen St. Yeah. You know, I wouldn't hang up there because, like, back in the day, I guess that's where they partied at at night on Friday, Saturdays and Sundays. And the only time I would go up there is when I went to the barbershop. At then my aunt moved up there, I will go around and sit on the porch. But other than that, I wouldn't hang up there. They say it was rough, you know. Yeah. Back in the day they say it was rough, but when I always went up there was nice people. I mean they were hanging out in front of the bars, I mean the barbershops and stuff like that. The movie theater was up there, too, where Antioch [Church] is, that used to be the movies. But there really wasn't...No, Dorsey's store used to be right up across the street from Parker-Gray [High School]. Yeah, Dorsey Store was a black owned store, you know, a little store that everybody went to buy stuff. And then they had a the house right there in the middle, right behind the store. All they had to do was lock the front door, lock the backdoor, go out the backdoor and into the house. [01:32:17][69.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:32:20] Who owned that? [01:32:20][0.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:32:20] The Watsons, but not the Watsons on West St. This was a different set of Watsons. Different Watsons. Yeah. They were rich people too, these Watsons. Because they had a house, they had a store, then they had, I don't know the name of the restaurant and it's up on the corner of Henry St and Madison St. But it used to be called The Regal, The Regal Restaurant. [01:32:46][26.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:32:47] Ok. [01:32:47][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:32:48] It was a black owned [restaurant]. The people used to go up. I never did. But no, that was for grown folks. [01:32:53][5.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:32:56] And that was the same Watson's that owned Dorsey's? [01:32:57][0.7]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:32:59] Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. And they were, I liked them. The mother stayed in that big old house by herself. [01:33:09][9.9]

Kerry James Reed: [01:33:12] That's interesting. [01:33:12][0.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:33:13] Yes, stayed in the house by herself. I was sort of kind of scared of her. [01:33:18][5.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:33:20] Why is that? [01:33:20][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:33:21] I don't know. It's just the way she carried herself and looked. Because I mean, she was like the granny type, you know have on her apron and everything because she'd be cooking all the day and stuff and having her glasses. She wouldn't bother somebody unless she really had to, but she would mainly stay that our house. She wouldn't come out, not unless she really had to come out. And then she'd go to the store and come on back up and stay in the house. Yeah, but they were nice family too. I really liked them. And see, right next to Dorsey's store, there was a cleaners, a small cleaners and then right next, it was like a one building. But Dorsey had his right there on the corner. Then it was the cleaners and I forgot, but there was another building right next to that. And then it was an empty field as we went up to, you know, of two streets down. But they were nice people. [01:34:14][52.9]

Kerry James Reed: [01:34:15] Absolutely. When did they close those businesses down? [01:34:20][5.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:34:22] Parker-Gray [High School] was still there. Oh, when they knocked the houses down on Payne St to build a project, that's when those went. [01:34:31][8.9]

Kerry James Reed: [01:34:32] They were at the same time? [01:34:33][0.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:34:40] Yeah, that was, and, you know, just by watching it all being torn down, that was like a dead city too, before they built the projects. It was empty. Spooky, too. Yeah. Because, I mean, you know, it was lit up street, but you know, when they tear down things sometimes they'll take the lights too. Yeah. Before they build back up. But it stayed empty for a while. And then they build the projects. Yep, they built the projects. [01:35:06][26.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:35:07] How quickly did they built the projects? [01:35:09][1.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:35:13] I'm 'gon say between '70 and '72. Because it's called the Adkins [Andrew Adkins Housing Development], I think it's called the Adkins buildings or whatever. So, yeah, you can check it out. But I think it was '70, '72. Like I said, we used to cut through the alley just go to Parker-Gray. Yeah, because all that went. I mean, 'cuz the school stayed empty for a long time before they built those townhouses over there. And it was spooky. I mean, it was bad because all those people round the corner, like I said, it was like one happy family, you know. You go visit them and stuff and it was just alley to alley. Like, we can come out our alley, come out our back gate and go down the alley to my aunt's house or to my other grandmother's house. It was in walking distance, but it was nothing but bushes. But it was cozy. Everybody had a nice big backyard, except for the Davises. [01:36:23][70.1]

Kerry James Reed: [01:36:25] Why didn't the Davises have a big back yard? [01:36:25]/[0.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:36:27] 'Cuz they was on the corner. And there's was small. But his aunt [Ron Davis's aunt], 'cuz see, she's the only one that really, really had a car. And she was always park it in the garage and she made sure that her garage door closed nice and tight so nobody would harm her car. But see back then also, a lot of people didn't have washing machines, we had to go to the laundromat underneath the bridge. Yeah, where that 7-Eleven, where that pizza place is now. Yeah, everybody had to go over there. [01:37:04]/[37.4]

Kerry James Reed: [01:37:08] So that building was always there then? Where the 7-Eleven is now on Braddock Rd? [Mrs. Ellie shakes her head] No? When did they build those buildings? [01:37:15]/[7.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:37:18] Well, they revamped it, just put it that way. Due to the fact that before, where the 7-Eleven is now, it used to be facing this way. [Mrs. Ellie motions with her hands] Everything was this way. So you had a 7-Eleven, you had, it was a pizza place over there, it was a cleaners over there. No, 7-Eleven, a hairdresser--where they used to do the white people's hair--the laundromat. So all of that was like right here. [Mrs. Ellie motions with her hands] And then all of a sudden they decided to revamp it, and they tore everything down. And that's when they tried to send them that-a-way, because he took over everything. [01:38:01]/[43.1]

Kerry James Reed: [01:38:03] Who did? [01:38:04]/[0.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:38:04] The car people. I call them car people. What's the gas station? The car wash? [01:38:15]/[11.7]

Kerry James Reed: [01:38:17] Oh, that gas station there on the corner of Braddock Rd and what is that? Commonwealth Ave? [01:38:19]/[2.5]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:38:21] No, Mount Vernon Ave. [01:38:22]/[0.3]

Kerry James Reed: [01:38:23] Mount Vernon Ave. So he [the owner of the gas station] bought those, ok. [01:38:26]/[3.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:38:27] He bought all of them. He even owned the car wash. Yeah. [01:38:30]/[3.4]

Kerry James Reed: [01:38:32] I'm trying to remember the name. I think it's Arnold, but that's probably not right. [01:38:35]/[2.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:38:35] No, it's not Arnold's. But they bought all of that stuff up. [01:38:39]/[3.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:38:44] So when people first start moving into the Adkins homes, you know, you mentioned earlier that, like, how community-oriented Colored Rosemont was, everything was like a family. I'm curious, did you see that that dynamic change once people started moving into the Adkins homes, or did it kind of stay the same? [01:39:05]/[21.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:39:06] It sort of kind of stayed the same. See, 'cuz Debbie and them had gone. So they had taken all those houses except for my grandmother's house. Right there were my grandmother's house was was an alley. So that's where the Adkins started. But by them moving the people that's in Adkins from the old projects on Alfred St, most of them moved from down here, you know, up there to down there. It took us a while to get used to 'em, but other than that, yeah. Because my kids used to go out back and play with 'em all the time anyway, you know. So it's just like certain

people you get hooked up with. So, we really, well, me and my mom and them, we really only met with the people that was like their backdoors face us. We didn't go farther up the street, like on Fayette St and stuff like that, they stayed themselves. But just like the people in the back, that's all. [01:39:59][52.3]

Kerry James Reed: [01:39:59] So, who were they? Your neighbors in Adkins' homes? [01:40:02][2.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:40:04] No, I mean, I can't remember the last names. I know the Rookers. But all them have moved out. Shoot... the Turners. It was another set of Turners after they [the other Turner family] lived there, we went to school again. Oh, shoot. I can't think of what-his-name's name. I can't even think of their names because they're gone. They're gone. Many were wild people but they were, you know, fun. Mama, like I said, Mama got know 'em. Everybody back there that came down that alley, Mama knew. [01:40:50][45.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:40:52] It seems like your grandmother and your mother just knew everybody in Colored Rosemont. [01:40:54][2.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:40:55] Mama did. Mama Lydia didn't really pay no attention. She was interested in trains. She kept her head forward. She didn't bother nobody. Like I said, by her having a stroke and everything, she just, she'll sit up and listen. [01:41:13][18.1]

Kerry James Reed: [01:41:15] So then when the Adkins homes happened, she had already had her stroke? [01:41:18][2.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:41:18] No, no, no. She was still sound mind, but she didn't associate with them. She just wanted to know who these strange people were in my damn house. But then she got to know 'em, too, you know. But they were sad when she died, though. A lot of them had gotten to know her. My grandmother was strict, even though she couldn't talk she could take that cane and knock you. [Kerry laughs] And she could cuss too. [01:41:43][24.8]

Kerry James Reed: [01:41:44] Really? [01:41:44][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:41:45] Oh yeah. Like I said, even though that stroke had stopped her from talking, her words were curse words. She could definitely tell you that. [01:41:53][8.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:41:54] That's funny. [01:41:54][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:41:55] It is. But I think, you know, you would love my parents, my grandparents, especially my granddad. He did what he wanted to when he wanted to, and he could care less what Lydia had done and said to him. Back in the day she was the ruler of the house and whatever she wanted, like I said, he got it for her. Whatever she wanted, she got it. [01:42:23][27.9]

Kerry James Reed: [01:42:24] So earlier, you mentioned that you went to Charles Houston, and then it was Parker-Gray, and then GW. Did everybody in the Colored Rosemont go to the same schools? [01:42:36][11.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:42:38] In seventh grade, everybody started off that way. But then, you know, they had the zone. And if you're past King St, you had to go to GW, I mean T.C. [Williams High School] But when we first moved over to Parker-Gray, everybody from the Berg did go to Parker-Gray. And then when we got to the ninth grade, as when they separated us and the people on the north side went to GW and people on the South Side went to T.C. It is definitely interesting. [01:43:18][40.4]

Kerry James Reed: [01:43:19] So when you were living [in Colored Rosemont] you went to GW, but I know that some other people in the neighborhood went to T.C. [01:43:29][10.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:43:30] Debbie went to T.C. [01:43:30][0.1]

Kerry James Reed: [01:43:32] That's what's curious to me. So when y'all would meet up, were y'all still friends even though you went to different schools? [01:43:38][6.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:43:38] Yeah. Even though we hadn't seen each other, we knew where everybody went. So we'd go visit them at the house, we'll see them in church. [01:43:46][7.3]

Kerry James Reed: [01:43:46] Right. Right. [01:43:47][0.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:43:48] Yeah. [01:43:48][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:43:49] Were you happy to be going to GW instead of T.C.? [01:43:49][0.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:43:52] Yes. [01:43:52][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:43:53] Why was that? [01:43:53][0.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:43:54] 'Cuz I was just used to be on my side of the building. And I didn't care, you know, about racial thing or whatever. 'Cuz when we went to Parker-Gray on one white, no, when we first went to Parker-Gray, that's when they started the integration. And then I guess they gave the white kids a choice, you know: you can stay here or you can go wherever. So only one person stayed, her name was Joanie. She lived on Patrick St. She was scared to death, but she stayed at Parker-Gray, you know, because even her family said 'if you don't want to stay, you don't have to stay.' Besides, I don't know, Jefferson wasn't there no more I don't think. Jefferson High School at the top of the hill. Yeah. But, you know, they gave her a choice, and she stayed. She stayed throughout the whole thing. [01:44:41][47.1]

Kerry James Reed: [01:44:44] Did you know her well? [01:44:44][0.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:44:45] No. No. She lived on Patrick St. There she was, they were the only white family up in that neighborhood, you know. But she got along with those people up there. But she was the only one that stayed. But her mother was a workaholic. I just loved seeing that woman in her white apron. Because she worked down in Murphy's. She's a real nice lady. And then she had a brother, named Bucky, and I never knew what her older sister's name was. Yeah. But Joanie stuck it out. She was scared to death, but she stuck it out. So I don't know if she went to GW or not because like I said, she was behind me. Like I graduated in '70, so I don't know if she decided to go to T.C. Williams after we went to GW, or not. Yeah. She stuck it out in Parker-Gray. Yeah. [01:45:40][55.8]

Kerry James Reed: [01:45:42] So, you had the one white girl that stayed in the school. Did you have any white teachers at Parker-Gray or GW? [01:45:50][7.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:45:52] No. I had white teachers at GW. [01:45:54][2.3]

Kerry James Reed: [01:45:54] You had white teachers at GW, not at Parker-Gray. [01:45:54][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:45:57] Those were old school. I had old school teachers. [01:46:00][2.3]

Kerry James Reed: [01:46:01] What were they like at Parker-Gray? The teachers? [01:46:01][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:46:03] I was scared to death of them because some of them were stern, but they, you know, they meant well. You know, like they said, 'they got theirs, you got yours to get. I'm here to help you the best I can.' [01:46:16][12.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:46:18] So were they in the neighborhood or around the Berg or anything? [01:46:22][4.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:46:23] No. Who was it? No, most of them lived in Fairfax, and D.C. I figured they traveled from D.C., because when we were at Charles Houston, we had quite a few those from DC. But everybody else was from like Alexandria, right? But at GW, I don't know where they came from. [01:46:49][25.7]

Kerry James Reed: [01:46:50] Ok. So the teachers at Charles Houston were from the neighborhood? [01:46:56][5.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:46:57] Most of them was, yeah. [01:46:57][0.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:46:59] Who were they, do you remember their names? [01:47:00][0.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:47:03] Well, my first grade teacher, Ms. Good, she was from Arlington. [01:47:05][2.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:47:06] Ms. Good? [01:47:06][0.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:47:07] Yeah. G-o-o-d. She was a real nice teacher. She's something of an older sister. And then they had Mrs. Jones, who lived on Henry St. Mr. Butler lived down in Fairfax, he was a principal. Then we had Mrs. Vaughn there, was a principal at Charles Houston, she lived down in Fairfax. Mr. and Mrs. Payne, they lived in Fairfax. They were music teachers. Mr. Long, he lived in Alexandria. Mr. Jackson and his mother were both teachers, they lived in D.C. And this is all from Charles Houston. And then Mrs. Duncan, she lived in Fairfax, too. And Mrs. Shire lived in Fairfax. We had a lot of teachers. Mrs. Claiborne lived in D.C., but her mother's house was on Patrick St. And she stayed over here more than she stayed at home. Because Ms. Edwards lived...most of the teachers we had lived in Alexandria and was in walking distance from the school. So that was nice. And then parent-teachers night, you know everybody showed up. You're allowed to bring children. [01:48:30][83.4]

Kerry James Reed: [01:48:31] Really? [01:48:31][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:48:34] Yeah. But it was fun. But, you know, back when we were in elementary school, we got to know all our teachers, you know. Mrs. Day, she was a math teacher. Good teacher, too. [01:48:51][17.1]

Kerry James Reed: [01:48:51] Ms. Helen Day? [01:48:51][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:48:51] Yes. Ms. Helen Day. They lived on Columbus St at the time. Mrs. Alexander, her name was Ms. Johnson, and then she got married. Her married name was Mrs. Alexander. But they were good teachers back there. And we knew most of the people that worked in the cafeteria, too. There was one lady named Mrs. Ramos, she was the head person of the cafeteria. And back then, everything was home cooked, from scratch. And you had to eat everything on your plate, especially if you bought lunch. You had eat everything on your plate and drink your milk before you were allowed to get any dessert. She was one of these people, she'll come check everybody's plate before you allowed to get your ice cream. She was something else. [01:49:58][67.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:49:59] Made everybody eat it. [01:49:59][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:50:00] Yeah. Everything from scratch, like I said. But nowadays, I don't know what they feed these kids. [01:50:06][5.8]

Kerry James Reed: [01:50:06] Processed stuff now. [01:50:09][2.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:50:11] Yeah, but there was some good teachers back in those days, too. Yeah. Now, like when my kids was coming up, I usually had to get after Jason more than I had to get

after Anthony. Because Jason had taken two years of French. And I say, "why did you take French knowing you cant speak it." And he repeated it twice, but she wouldn't promote him to French Two. She kept him on French One and I kept telling the lady, "take him out of your class." She wouldn't do it. I said, "so don't call me. I'm telling you, take him out." But she wouldn't do it. And I said to Jason, I said, "you can't speak a bit of French. You should have just went into Spanish like everybody else. Right. He said, "well, I wanted to try something different." "You tried it. You lost it, you know, don't do that." But I had to keep telling him, 'these teachers, really, some of them don't give a damn about you because they got theirs. You got yours to get.' But he messed around and messed around for, like, three semesters. But he was able to come up on top. But they never had to keep them back. But almost always, at the end of the year, that's when he pulled his grades up. And I said "why are you messing around? You know, because like I said, these teachers got theirs, you got your's to get. They don't care nomore. And then he tells me, because his wife works in the school system, and like they do it like everybody else, No Child Left Behind. [01:51:47][95.7]

Kerry James Reed: [01:51:47] Yeah, can't fail them. [01:51:47][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:51:49] Can't fail them, and I figured that's wrong. They not 'gonna know nothing, really, when they get out in the big world. [01:51:54][5.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:51:57] Yeah, the education system here in this country is... [01:52:00][2.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:52:00] It's terrible. [01:52:00][0.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:52:01] It's not that good. [01:52:01][0.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:52:02] No, it's terrible. [01:52:03][0.6]

Kerry James Reed: [01:52:04] What school do they go to? Did they stay at GW or go to T.C.? [01:52:09][4.5]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:52:09] No, they finished now. They graduated from T.C. Yeah. See, because both of them went to Jefferson Houston [School] down on Cameron St. And then from Jefferson Houston, we had moved and stuff, he went to Ramsey [William Ramsey Elementary School]. Then they went to Hammond. Then they went to T.C. [01:52:31][22.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:52:32] Got it. So do you, because you mentioned the music teachers Mr. and Mrs. Payne, did you play an instrument? [01:52:42][9.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:52:45] Clarinet. Still got it, too. [01:52:46][1.7]

Kerry James Reed: [01:52:47] Really? [01:52:47][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:52:48] I don't play it. [01:52:48][0.7]

Kerry James Reed: [01:52:49] So, did you play the band at GW? [01:52:50][1.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:52:51] No. I got out of there when we went to Parker-Gray. And they were talking about marching band. I said, "no, thank you." So my clarinet is in my closet at home, collecting dust. But, like, back then, like I said, Mama bought it. So back then, you know, I guess like \$300 or whatever it was then was a lot of money. So I know it cost alot now. [01:53:16][25.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:53:18] Yeah. Absolutely. I can only imagine. So what was your favorite part about going to school at GW, Charles Houston, or Parker-Gray? [01:53:24][6.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:53:30] Well, well, well, well. I didn't like math, I can tell you that. I like history, not that well, but I liked Spelling. I just fell in love with Spelling. But I mean, nowadays, with all these other words, I can't do it. But it was spelling, and at Parker-Gray, I ain't like math, period. I

was always in summer school. I mean, my mother kept me in summer school from the time I left Charles Houston until the time I left GW, you know. Seriously. But like I say, we ain't have to pay back then. Now you got to pay an arm and a leg, you know. But I just enjoyed school. I mean, I went, I was present, I might not get good grades, but I was in school every day. No absentees, no late fees, nothing. So, no, I was there. But when I got to GW, since I only had to stay four hours, I enjoyed homeroom. Because we didn't have to do nothing. [01:54:34][64.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:54:40] Absolutely. [01:54:40][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:54:41] And home economics. The lady, she was from the South and she showed us how to sew. But I wasn't paying attention one day and we were making these dresses for a fashion show and I cut the dress the wrong way. And I figured, "why do I have four sides of this dress?" And she looked at me and she said, "Ellie, you cut the front of your dress off." So I had extra material. So we had to make a seam, another bow to go down the middle and a zipper in the back. And she said, "it looks ok." I said, "this is my dress. I'm going to wear it. I don't care." And people kept looking at it, saying "Ellie, what did you do to that dress?" I said, "not paying attention to what I was doing and cut the wrong one." But I wore it to school every day or whenever I had to wear it, because I wanted to wash it away and impress. And it came in handy. So now I had to pay attention to what I was doing. Made a suit, did the bottom, didn't finish the coat. My mother bought me a sewing machine and I think I still got it in the shed. Yeah. But I like swimming, but I haven't swam in a long time. [01:55:59][77.8]

Kerry James Reed: [01:56:01] That a shame. [01:56:02][0.7]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:56:02] I know. [01:56:03][0.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:56:04] So you must have gone down to Johnson Swimming Pool then? [01:56:06][1.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:56:06] We went to Johnson Swimming Pool, but that's where we learned how to swim. I was six, and Lydia was seven. And we went out to the pool one day, and this guy named Oscar asked us, did we want to learn how to swim? And we told him yes. So he took us under his wing and he taught us how to swim. And instead of us swimming in the shallow waters, he had us in seven feet of water. And then after that, we decided to take swimming lessons and we went to swimming shows and everything. [01:56:45][39.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:56:46] Swimming shows? What were those? [01:56:49][2.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:56:50] It was on a Friday night. Everybody had different colored bathing suits to wear. They would fix up the pool, they would decorate it. And, like, where you go, you know, come down the steps to get in, they would put like a stage overtop of it. But they'd leave it open, and so like once you swam for whatever you were doing for your act, you swam underneath it and came back out of the steps. Lydia, for some ungodly reason, every time we had the swimming shows, she would break something on her body. So she had a broken arm. So Mama got us our bathing suits and everything. She had her cast on her arm, so they decorated her cast to color her swimsuit and whatever swim thing they were doing. So she was, like you might say the flower girl, sitting up there doing her hands. And I figure, 'well at least she ain't have to get wet.' But they would decorate the whole pool. And then they'd have a swimming party afterwards, you know, hot dogs on the grill, hamburgers. We did it twice. And like, my father and mother didn't swim. So everybody had a grown person to be with

them, like in the family situation. And for some ungodly reason, Uncle Harry said 'hey, since your mother and father don't swim, we're going to give you such and such, and you'd be yours and your cousin's father to participate, Uncle. So we all did the diving board. And always did the high dive and my cousin did the low. And then a gentleman, Mr. Carter, whoever he was, I forgot his name, was the father. And so all of us had our own positions as far as what we were doing, as far as the swim thing.

[01:58:44][113.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:58:44] Interesting. [01:58:44][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:58:45] It was beautiful. And they took pictures and stuff. Now Ann, the Burkes, they the ones that got all the pictures. Because their uncle was the one who owned the pool. And he moved up there in Mudtown [Seminary] But he died. And before he died, he lived right next to door to my aunt, Ms Brooks. And he had a swimming pool in his backyard, too. But I think by them renovating or whatever, I think they took the pool out, I'm not too sure. But they moved down to Woodbridge and I think that's where he died at. [01:59:21][36.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:59:22] Was this Mr. Harry Burke? [01:59:23][0.7]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:59:23] Yes. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Now, Holly could tell you some stuff about the pool. There's some stories there. [01:59:30][6.6]

Kerry James Reed: [01:59:36] I'd love to hear it. I'd love to know more about the swimming shows and some of the community events, but you mentioned the swimming shows, were there any other community events that happened at the Johnson Pool? [01:59:47][10.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [01:59:50] No. The biggest thing was the swimming shows. But then they would have cookouts and stuff like that. But other than that, swimming shows was the hit. Because everybody would come. [02:00:01][11.6]

Kerry James Reed: [02:00:04] How often would you go? Just to the pool. [02:00:07][3.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:00:08] Everyday. From one 'til seven. I would even go, and I had my hair done and my mother kept saying, "you can't go." I said, "well, I'mma fix my hair so it won't..." whatever, whatever. Didn't work. We would go to swimming lessons first, from like 8 to 1, 8 to 12. And then Lydia would say, "well, I'm going home because I'm tired," I said, "I'm staying." Even though we were supposed to pay after swimming class, I always managed not to pay. So I would stay until seven o'clock, but at least my mother knew where I was. Everyday. [02:00:42][33.7]

Kerry James Reed: [02:00:44] Sounds a lot of fun. [02:00:45][0.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:00:45] It was fun. It was really fun. I mean, you had your own people that you would swim with and who you didn't swim with. People from the Berg would come up to swim and have fun, too. And then they would bring the kids from the rec, the smaller kids. After we had gone up, the kids from the rec would come. But now, and I don't even know if the recs even go to the Cameron St swimming pool. Remember that? They still got that swimming pool down there. [02:01:15][29.7]

Kerry James Reed: [02:01:15] Do they? I know the one that's at Charles Houston Rec, I don't know about that one on Cameron St. Where is the one on Cameron St? [02:01:20][5.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:01:21] Behind the recreation center. [02:01:23][2.3]

Kerry James Reed: [02:01:25] Oh really? I've never seen that one. [02:01:25][0.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:01:26] You haven't? [02:01:27][0.2]

Kerry James Reed: [02:01:27] No, I don't think so. [02:01:28]/[0.5]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:01:28] You got to go down there. [02:01:29]/[0.7]

Kerry James Reed: [02:01:31] I know where the rec center is but I've never seen a swimming pool. [02:01:32]/[0.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:01:33] Yeah. Well, the rec center is here [motions with her hands] and if you go up this sidewalk, instead of going into the rec, swimming pool right there. You can see it better from the back street. In other words, if you go up Princess St and turn in off of Buchanan St, come up that street and its on your right hand side. You'll see the pool, you'll see the fence and everything, yeah. [02:02:01]/[27.9]

Kerry James Reed: [02:02:02] I'll check it out. So you said some kids from the Berg would come, all the kids from Colored Rosemont, as well, would go to that pool. [02:02:10]/[8.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:02:13] Yeah. Yeah. All over. But then you opened up a pool in Arlington, too. [02:02:19]/[6.4]

Kerry James Reed: [02:02:21] When was that? [02:02:21]/[0.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:02:22] I only ever been there, like, twice, but I went up there with Ann and them. Mr. Burke's cousins, I mean, nieces and stuff. But I just mainly liked the Johnson pool. [02:02:30]/[8.2]

Kerry James Reed: [02:02:32] Yeah, I've heard a lot about it. [02:02:33]/[1.5]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:02:34] Yeah, it was nice. [02:02:34]/[0.3]

Kerry James Reed: [02:02:35] So you mentioned the shallow end and then there were diving boards, so how deep was the pool? [02:02:40]/[5.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:02:41] 12ft. You know, you go from 1 ft to 7 ft. Then they have the line, you got the shallow here and you got the bigger pool here. So it's like 7 ft to 12 ft up here. Yeah. Then the high dive and two lower dives. [02:02:52]/[10.4]

Kerry James Reed: [02:02:56] What was it shaped like? A rectangle? [02:02:56]/[0.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:02:59] Yeah, it was a nice big old pool. Because you could see the water tower, you know, it was right next to the water tower. You know, right next to the water tower. But see, if you go up there now, and if you can imagine the pool still being up there, besides those apartment buildings. Yeah. Because there was a whole [unintelligible] where the apartment buildings are standing. [02:03:21]/[22.1]

Kerry James Reed: [02:03:22] I've only ever seen the pictures. [02:03:23]/[1.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:03:24] For real? [02:03:24]/[0.2]

Kerry James Reed: [02:03:25] Yeah, because when I was growing up and I was running around, I was only very familiar with the apartment buildings. It was only recently that I learned about the pool. [02:03:31]/[6.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:03:32] Oh, well, it aint no fun up there anymore. Because they done build so much. I mean, one minute it was a nondenominational church up there, and then they tore that down and put apartment buildings up there. But I think you can walk through, to get the Monroe Ave now, the path over the underpass? [02:03:56]/[24.2]

Kerry James Reed: [02:03:58] I think so. I don't walk that way. [02:04:00]/[1.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:04:00] I don't either. I don't go were I'm not familiar with. No. But I definitely wouldn't go to Old Town no more. [02:04:08][7.8]

Kerry James Reed: [02:04:11] What changes have you seen on King St since...[Ellie gives Kerry an incredulous look] I know. It's an exhaustive list. [02:04:16][4.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:04:20] Parking spaces. All eateries, you see eateries. But the farther down you go, like in Old Town going towards the river, you know, you got the bookstores and stuff like that. See, when I used to go down there, I just went to Tavern Square. I used to love going to Tavern Square. But I think they said it's not there anymore. [02:04:44][23.3]

Kerry James Reed: [02:04:46] Tavern Square is still there. [02:04:47][0.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:04:47] Is it still there? There's not a whole lot of buildings in it. [02:04:49][2.5]

Kerry James Reed: [02:04:52] No. They tore that down some time ago. [02:04:54][2.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:04:54] That's what they said, somebody told me they did. The farthest I've been down was the Burke & Herbert Bank. [02:04:59][5.6]

Kerry James Reed: [02:05:01] Really? [02:05:01][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:05:02] Yeah. I love going to that one. Because it's so old fashioned. I know. It's so nice, yes. But there ain't that much parking space down there either. [02:05:08][6.2]

Kerry James Reed: [02:05:13] No, you're are lucky enough to find one. [02:05:16][2.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:05:16] Tell me about it. But see, some of them houses, I mean, I noticed, I was taking my sister to get some ice cream one Sunday after church. And it's no parking down here, but I forgot what street I turned on. Whatever street I turned on, it was a house right here. And like they were ripping out their driveway. [02:05:35][18.3]

Kerry James Reed: [02:05:36] Oh, for their own parking? [02:05:36][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:05:36] Yes. That's terrible. Jesus. As siad I'd rather park in the back parking lot and get a ticket for that. That's terrible. [02:05:48][11.4]

Kerry James Reed: [02:05:51] What church do y'all attend now? [02:05:51][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:05:55] Well I, when I was going before my leg started bothering me, I go to Roberts Memorial, the one on S Washington St. But the home church is Shiloh. But since they done renovated over across the street, you know, right next to the restaurant there on the other side, it don't seem the same. Because see, all the people that was there done died or either moved out of town. And it's the minister, he's too long winded. I don't like long winded; I don't like long winded at all. [02:06:32][37.5]

Kerry James Reed: [02:06:33] So do you ever go back to Shiloh at all these days or is it just Roberts Memorial? [02:06:35][2.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:06:36] I just go to Roberts Memorial when I go. Because that's really family oriented. But since the Covid thing happen, a lot of people didn't come back and a lot of elderly people died or moved away and the kids didn't come back. So a lot of churches don't even have kids in it. The only church that's lively is Alfreed Street. And from what I heard they still have their three services. And if you don't get there in time, you won't get let in, which I think is terrible. [02:07:06][30.1]

Kerry James Reed: [02:07:08] Standing room only situation. When you first started going to Roberts Memorial? [02:07:14][5.5]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:07:16] You mean very first? I was christened there at the age of two. My daddy took me there unbeknownst to my grandmother, and she had a fit. Like I said, back in the day if you lived with your grandparents, you got to go under their rules and regulations. They were living in her house. So she pushed a biggie. And ever since then, we've been going to Shiloh. Then as I got older, I just stopped going. And I think it was right after my mother died, because she didn't really belong to church either. And my sister had asked me, "why don't you get Reverend Jones aside and asked her, can she have your mother's funeral in her church." And I said, "Bee, mom didn't belong to church." She said, "well, daddy does." I said, "yeah but still, ministers frown on it." You know, they do, back in the day they did. So she said, "well, all you can do is ask." So I asked Reverend Jones, and she said, "sure." So she preached my mama's funeral. [02:08:25][69.1]

Kerry James Reed: [02:08:25] That was good of her. [02:08:25][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:08:27] It was very nice of her. So we ain't have no problem with daddy. Because, you know, he belonged. But yeah, I was christened there at the age of two. But like I said, I started going to Shiloh; I guess about 4 or 5 started taking me and my sister. So we kept going. [02:08:47][19.4]

Kerry James Reed: [02:08:48] So then, it was Bible school on Sundays, right? [02:08:51][2.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:08:52] Bible school Monday through Friday, yeah. [02:08:56][4.5]

Kerry James Reed: [02:08:57] Monday through Friday, ok. Then Shiloh on Sunday. Did you go to Sunday school as well? [02:09:02][4.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:09:03] Oh, yes. Had to be there. The rules and regulations of 727: if you don't go to church, you don't go to the movies, skating ring or nothing. That was the rules and regulations. And I don't think they make that standard today for the kids. [02:09:23][19.6]

Kerry James Reed: [02:09:24] I don't believe so. [02:09:24][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:09:26] No. [02:09:26][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [02:09:27] So, were there any the traditions involved with church? Like, you know, y'all would always have the same breakfast or anything like that? [02:09:37][10.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:09:38] No. We only had those on special occasions. Like for Thanksgiving, you know, we'd have a breakfast, and then we'd have a play in the evenings? You know, for Thanksgiving and Christmas there's always a play, and Easter too. [02:09:52][13.9]

Kerry James Reed: [02:09:53] At church? [02:09:53][0.2]

Kerry James Reed: [02:09:53] Yeah. Then we had to have that. Well, you also had Easter egg hunts in the church. [02:09:59][5.6]

Kerry James Reed: [02:10:01] What sort of plays would you put on? [02:10:02][1.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:10:03] Christmas plays? Like The Wise Men and Three Kings and all that, yeah, all that stuff. For Thanksgiving, it was just like.... [02:10:12][9.4]

Kerry James Reed: [02:10:17] Pilgrims? [02:10:17][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:10:18] Yeah, that. And then for Easter, you know, you alwayd did your Easter thing. You had more parts to say, it was like the Easter skit. And then, like I said, you had the Easter Egg hunt at the church. Yeah. And my mother always, like I said, she didn't come, she didn't

go to church, but she always came to the plays. That's one thing she was in for, you know, she always made sure we were there. She always made sure we were dressed properly for it and everything. Yeah. And like I said, it was fun. [02:10:54][36.2]

Kerry James Reed: [02:10:58] Yeah, sounds like it. So we have been talking now, Ms Ellie, for about two hours and 11 minutes. I've enjoyed our conversation very much. [02:11:05][6.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:11:05] I enjoyed it, too, and I hope you have a nice wedding. I hope this sense, what I was saying, even though it's out of kilter and stuff like that. [02:11:15][9.3]

Kerry James Reed: [02:11:16] Oh, it absolutely does. However, I just have a couple more questions. [02:11:18][2.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:11:18] That's fine. [02:11:18][0.2]

Kerry James Reed: [02:11:19] Just some closing ones about Colored Rosemont. So, when was the last time you went down to Colored Rosemont? [02:11:25][5.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:11:28] Last week. [laughs] [02:11:28][0.4]

Kerry James Reed: [02:11:28] Last week, really? [02:11:29][1.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:11:30] Me and my son, because I go to therapy, you know, out on Eisenhower Ave. And so I had to drop something off at my grandson's house, and so we decided to go down West St, and Pendleton St, Fayette St, back up Wythe St, and then we went to my grandsons. So then we came back, Jason said, "Ma, they still haven't done nothing." 'Cuz we went straight down Wythe St, and it's still an empty lot. And I think this is a damn shame that, you know, they still could have been there. Minding their own business, leaving everybody else alone. But no, they were greedy for money. So now their paying the piper. They can't do nothing because the projects are in the back, and their wasting money on that land. [02:12:25][55.3]

Kerry James Reed: [02:12:27] Oh, yeah, it's just sitting there. So, when you see that empty lot, you know, when you're going to therapy, driving around with your sons and your grandchildren, do you like to reminisce with them about the times you had? [02:12:42][15.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:12:43] Me and Jason do. We do. I mean, because when they decided to do this, I had forgotten all about it. I had went to the meeting and everything. And I didn't think ten years had come up that daggone quick? And then, like I said, I saw my next door neighbor with all these boxes and I had to ask him, "what you doing with all those boxes?" And he said, "oh, we got to move." I said, "it's that time of year already?" He said, "yeah." So I didn't waste no time, I had boxes in the house anyway for something else. And I just started packing up stuff. And I had to call Lydia and tell her. But before all this started happening, see, Jason used to have cookouts every weekend. It was fun. I mean, because all his cousins and everybody would come. People from the Metro would come. People off the Metro bus would come. I mean, because that's what type it was. And on Saturdays, it was always on Saturdays. And then when daddy was living, he would join in too, when he felt like it, you know, he would mix drinks, too. One day he was so excited about having this cookout, he just put on his Redskin hat and says, "I'll be a bartender if you want to." So Jason was trying to tell them, "you don't want granddaddy to mix your drinks." They wouldn't listen. I figure, 'he already 94 years old honey, you don't know what's going to be in that drink.' Yeah, but that's the funniest, you know, we go down there and we just reminisce. Because I like sitting on front porch, like I said, looking at the Metro watching people come and go. Jason would have his cookouts. I talk

to people coming down the alley, and I know they miss it because they can't come down the alley no more, you know. [02:14:29][105.7]

Kerry James Reed: [02:14:30] Right, there's that fence that's there now. [02:14:30][0.2]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:14:30] Yeah, fence is there. And you know, just by looking at that fence, I can't believe all them houses was there. It doesn't really look like them houses was there. You know, we had those nice big backyards, too. So it was really nice. Really, really, really nice. And we would reminisce and I just sit up there, and whenever we'd go up Wythe St, I always look over at the Greene house and I figure, 'what is poor Stanley doing now?' It's the only one left on the block. [02:15:10][40.3]

Kerry James Reed: [02:15:15] The Greene's, that's Mr. Stanley. [02:15:18][2.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:15:19] Yeah. Mr Stanley. [02:15:19][0.3]

Kerry James Reed: [02:15:19] I interviewed him before, as well. He loves that house. [02:15:22][2.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:15:22] I know he loved it, he grew up in it and was born in that house. [02:15:24][1.4]

Kerry James Reed: [02:15:27] So, when the developments finally happen and there are houses there, townhouses or what have you, where your house once stood, what would you like the people that eventually move in to know about Colored Rosemont? [02:15:41][13.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:15:43] It was a nice, peaceful neighborhood and everybody got along. But you can't say that as far as today. You don't know who's going to be in there. But from what I heard, like Lydia was telling me, I think it's going to be shops downstairs, you know, stores and everything. And it's supposed to be condos or apartments upstairs. Is that going to be the case? [02:16:09][25.6]

Kerry James Reed: [02:16:10] Yeah, it's the same thing like they're doing on... [02:16:11][0.7]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:16:12] Duke St? [02:16:12][0.2]

Kerry James Reed: [02:16:13] No, I think it's by Patrick St there. [02:16:14][0.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:16:15] Yeah. [02:16:15][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [02:16:16] Yeah. So, there's going to be some shops in the bottom and then apartments up top. Yeah, because coming up to Madison St from West, I think when you're on the corner of Madison St and Henry St, I think, on the left there, its going to be just like that, I'm pretty sure. I saw the facade of a shop and a gym on the corner. [02:16:40][23.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:16:43] For real? [02:16:43][0.2]

Kerry James Reed: [02:16:43] I think so. Don't quote me on that. [02:16:45][2.1]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:16:45] No, no, I ain't 'gon quote, but they got too many gyms around there. [02:16:48][3.1]

Kerry James Reed: [02:16:49] Yeah, they got a lot. [02:16:50][1.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:16:50] They got a gym on every corner. But do that many people go? [02:16:55][5.0]

Kerry James Reed: [02:16:57] I don't know. I go to Madison St a decent bit. [02:16:59][2.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:17:00] Oh do you? [02:17:00][0.5]

Kerry James Reed: [02:17:00] Yeah, I get it tattooed up there. [02:17:02][1.6]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:17:04] I ain't getting my body violated. No. But I mean, they building all this stuff, but I noticed that its taking a lot of people a long time move in, too. I told you, tis the credit card, they ain't got the money. [02:17:17][14.0]

Kerry James Reed: [02:17:19] Yeah, they're dragging their feet. [02:17:19][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:17:20] Yeah, it's terrible. I'm just hoping a gust of wind don't come and blow it down. [02:17:25][5.9]

Kerry James Reed: [02:17:28] The materials do seem cheap, have you heard about that? [02:17:29][1.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:17:31] Yeah, because the one that's on the corner of Henry St and Wythe St, you see how big? You see how fast they built that one? [02:17:39][8.5]

Kerry James Reed: [02:17:40] Yeah, it's almost overnight. [02:17:40][0.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:17:41] Yeah. I mena, God. And it's got no parking space, that's the only thing. [02:17:47][5.9]

Kerry James Reed: [02:17:49] I think there might be an underground lot, but I can't... [02:17:52][2.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:17:52] That's still 'gon be dangerous. You don't know if it's going to cave in or not. You know it's 'gon flood up there now, because they done did too much digging. [02:18:00][8.6]

Kerry James Reed: [02:18:03] I mean, then your daddy is not there this time, too. [02:18:04][1.7]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:18:05] Oh, no. He ain't there this time, no. But then, you know, you got these, you got the possums just flying all over the place. Foxes even come down there now. [02:18:13][7.9]

Kerry James Reed: [02:18:13] Foxes, really? I've never seen a fox in Alexandria. [02:18:14][1.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:18:14] Yeah. Man, before we moved, I was sitting on the front porch, this was broad daylight mind you, I saw a Red fox coming down Madison St crossover going over toward the Metro. [02:18:25][11.3]

Kerry James Reed: [02:18:28] That must have been a sight. [02:18:28][0.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:18:29] It was a sight, because I was on my porch. And I figured, boy they bold, I mean, because you don't know where they coming from. [02:18:34][5.1]

Kerry James Reed: [02:18:37] I can't imagine where it went. [02:18:38][0.9]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:18:38] I don't know where it came from. It came down Madison St. [02:18:39][0.3]

Kerry James Reed: [02:18:40] Going towards the metro? [02:18:41][0.5]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:18:41] Going towards the Metro, a red fox. It's bad enough I see the deer all the time out here, but I haven't seen one on my street on South Gordon St, but I've seen them up by the hospital. You know that they built a school up in what a church is, on Jordan St. And in the mornings, the mothers decide they want to cross the street. So I politely just stop my car and I just wait, because the mama stand out in the middle of the street to make sure her baby come across the street. But then you see them all on Van Dorn St, too. [02:19:15][34.0]

Kerry James Reed: [02:19:16] Oh, yeah. All over the place. [02:19:16][0.5]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:19:19] No, but it's been nice. Nice atmosphere. [02:19:24][4.6]

Kerry James Reed: [02:19:25] So then lastly, if there is one specific memory about Colored Rosemont that you could remember forever, what would it be? [02:19:33][8.4]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:19:34] Sitting on the front Porch. And the cookouts. Seriously. I mean, because I was the last member before I had to moved, and everything was closed in and stuff, you know. I had my own space looking on this side, looking on that side and that-a-way. Watched people come from underneath the bridge and everything. I didn't have to really go nowhere. That's the fun. I mean, if you were raised there, you would see. But that's the way I like it, sitting on the front porch. Because this lady I used to talk to on the phone, but she's been sick, I haven't talked to her lately. But I would call every night and I was sitting on the front porch and I give her blow-by-blow and she misses that since I came back home. She said, "I miss you not being at your mama's house anymore. You used to give me blow by blow coming out the metro." I said, "yep, can't do that no more." So you sitting on the front porch and having the cookouts. And if you had lived down there, you would understand it to. [02:20:41][66.2]

Kerry James Reed: [02:20:43] I've heard all the stories. So I think I have a decent imagination, I can picture it, but it just sounds like something that's just not present anymore in Alexandria. [02:20:52][8.8]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:20:52] It's not. [02:20:52][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [02:20:53] And I bet alot of other places as well. [02:20:53][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:20:55] Right. That's like how I feel sorry for the people that was on the South Side that had to move. Yeah, because there's a lady that lives on, I think it's Alfred St, in those townhouses. She's a chaplain at the hospital, and she was so upset when she found out they were tearing down those apartment complexes or the townhouses, because she got to know those people over in those townhouses. And she didn't really want them to move, you know. Because she likes listening to the church. I say "even though you Catholic you still listen to the Baptists?" She say "yeah." She goes all the way up to Blessed Sacrament for church, but she likes to, you know, she likes Alfred St [Baptist Church] because her house is not too far from Alfred St. [02:21:36][41.0]

Kerry James Reed: [02:21:43] Goes all the way to Blessed Sacrament? Oh my gosh. [02:21:44][1.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:21:45] Instead of her going to Saint Mary's. [02:21:46][1.0]

Kerry James Reed: [02:21:47] Or St Joseph's. [02:21:47][0.0]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:21:47] Yeah, yeah. Right. Yeah, no, she goes there. [02:21:50][2.1]

Kerry James Reed: [02:21:50] Interesting. Well, thank you so much, Ms Ellie, it's been a pleasure. [02:21:56][5.3]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:21:56] You're very welcome. [02:21:57][0.7]

Kerry James Reed: [02:21:58] Thank you so much. [02:21:59][0.5]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:21:59] I'm sorry Lydia couldn't help. [02:22:00][1.0]

Kerry James Reed: [02:22:00] It's not a problem at all. Again, thank you. [02:22:02][1.7]

Ellie Cross Winbush: [02:22:02] You will. [02:22:02][0.0]

[7703.4]