Ethel McFadden Kemp: Saw a record of a picnic that they had in Greenwood, and I remembered when they had that picnic, although I was five years old, because I was at that picnic. And the first time I thought all grown people told the truth, I thought children had to tell untruth to keep from getting a beating. But we went to this picnic, the people in the neighborhood, they would not go, they didn't send the children, but they would wait until the teachers and they'd always leave things there. And they would come with pens and things, and give them that food.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: But my mother would let us go because it's not too far from our house. And we had lemonade anytime we wanted it, but we didn't have ice cream anytime we wanted it. And when they were serving us some lemonade, my brother said my sister and I would like to have some ice cream. The woman told us all the ice cream gone. But then there was a boy, they didn't have flying [indistinct 00;00:01:40], they had a stump where they put a board across, and you could get on that and someone give you a push, and that board would go around, and around around, and around. And a little boy fell, and his parents was not there, and he was crying. They picked him up, they was trying to do everything to console him, and they took him and gave him some ice cream. And we standing up there looking.

Stacey Scales: This is a little White boy?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: No, all the people Black. This was Booker T. Washington's last picnic that I went to.

Stacey Scales: You remember him?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: I was five. Your memory start at four and a half. And I remember that well and I remember that I found out that grown people didn't tell the truth either. That's one thing I found out about it because they didn't tell the truth. And my brother said, "They said they didn't have any more ice cream." I said, "I heard them," because he was asking them for the two of us. But we were the children supposed to drink lemonade and not eat the ice cream. And this was Booker T. Washington and the teachers who were on the campus, they had a picnic every year and it was having it for the neighborhood. But the only thing they could do for those people was leave their food there because they didn't come. But soon as they left, they'd be running.

Stacey Scales: Do you remember Lewis Adams?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Lewis Adams?

Stacey Scales: Yeah.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: I don't know Lewis Adams.

Stacey Scales: He was working at Tuskegee too.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Well maybe he was working there after we left.

Stacey Scales: How was it working at Tuskegee? I mean living in Tuskegee during that time?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: We lived there about six years because I was nine months old when we went there. I had a brother and sister attending there and so quite natural, we knew the people on the campus. We're just down the hill from the campus and we knew just about everything that was going on.

Stacey Scales: Really? How was the relationship between the people on the campus and the [indistinct 00:03:38]?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Well, what they did, that was one thing that they tried to do, they tried to work with the people in the community. And when Booker T. Washington would travel, he'd get clothes, and get things, and beg, and they would send these things to Tuskegee. They would even send clothing, the old clothing but they would be good, bedding and anything, furniture. But the teachers and the people who was close to the teachers had a chance to go through everything first to get what they wanted for their children and for them.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Then I had a sister attending there and those teenagers who were there, they gave them a chance to go through and get what they wanted, and what they wanted for the brothers and sisters. Then they took loads and loads of those clothing and thing, and put them in that Greenwood area where they had the picnics. That's when the other people would come and get theirs, but they would be all picked over. I'd have some nice dresses and some of those girls that were around with me didn't.

Stacey Scales: How were you able to have nice dresses?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: My sister was going to school there and when you went to school there, they considered the students, especially those who were close by and would work. You had to work a day and then go to school a day, along in those days.

Stacey Scales: Do you remember George Washington Carver?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: I've heard of that name. But let me tell you, we left Tuskegee, I think Booker T. Washington died the next year. That's why I was at his last picnic.

Stacey Scales: Right.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: And that was 1915.

Stacey Scales: Did you move here after that?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: No, my father was a minister and he was a person who liked to travel, so we went many places. We stayed many places in Alabama, then he came back to Florida and we was at West Florida, we stayed there. And when he stopped here, he was on his way somewhere on West Palm Beach, but he stopped to work a little while, and he like here and he stayed, so he sent for us. That was in 1921. We did all our traveling around before 1921.

Stacey Scales: How was it traveling during that time? During the time of Jim Crow where you couldn't use public facilities.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: We were on the train and you didn't know anything about Jim Crow, you just knew the Colored people go on this course, the White go on this course. So you went on the course you wanted to go on and you didn't feel like they were getting better than you. This is what you knew and you knew that it was okay because here's one thing that you knew, you knew the White people was very, very good, and you knew they went to some homes and the people went to their homes. You knew they were very, very good because you were very, very close to them. Now, we were always respected by the White people because we were Reverend MacVan's children and MacVan was okay. And I mentioned this once, they was going down saying how people was treated. People was treated good and the best way they knew.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: See, close to slavery the people knew that they came here as slaves. They knew now you free and they knew that when their grandparents were slaved, the grandparents was very close to the White people, especially those who worked in the house and in their homes. And so although they had segregation, you didn't see it because this is what your parents was accustomed to, those who were doing slavery and who was freed. We had a lot of people, like I had uncles who was slaved. All right, when they freed, they gave almost 40 acres of land and that mule, then they was able to work and the people respected them. Now, those people who was doing what some of the people doing now was the one who was not respected. Those who did not want to work, those who did not want to do this.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: But we were respected because my people was, people who worked, they did not steal, did not do this. And I told in a class, they was talking about precious, and this teacher was asking different people, like the Chinese, and they say you've not being treated right either. And I raised my hand and I told him, and they're talking about the southern White, I told him the southern White was good to the Negroes. I said they'd come when they was sick, they'd bring them food if they thought they were hungry, and they helped them with their children. And they would come to your house, and sit down at your table, and eat with you, but they didn't want another White person to know it. He told me I was precious. But they did.

Stacey Scales: Did your uncles, grandparents, or aunts, or anyone ever tell stories of slavery, how things were?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Well, now but they did, I had a grandfather, I think it was from Sherman Army, one of those came down, and he decided to help them because he knew how to tear the backs off the barns and let

the corn roll out. He knew how to help destroy, so he went with them, just enjoying himself, and he was the one they had because he could do it so fast to tap the barns, scatter everything, and the others doing everything they could. Then he wanted to come back home to his family and he told them, "I'm going and getting my family, but I'm going travel but I want my family to be nearby." And they say, "Honor bright." If he said that, it meant he would be back. He said "honor bright", but he went back to his family and start doing the work he was doing.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Consequently, when slavery ended, he was one of the first to get the 40 acres of land, that mule, because he was back there and acted like he wasn't wanting to go and get with those other folks, and yet he had worked with them. And some of the money from that 40 acres was in the building of this house from my grandfather's estate. And the reason it happened so late, he had sons and daughters, and when his son would get married, they'd get the together before the wedding and build a home farm. And when they got married, they went into the home. But he didn't do that for his daughters. He felt that the male should look after the male and the female side of the family. They should be taken care of by their in-laws. That's the way they felt.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: So each brother had what the sisters thought was their fair share of the land. So when they get ready to sell and divide it, the brothers wanted equal share so they wouldn't go through with it. But the last time some of the brothers was dead, but the children had to have the same share that those sisters got that were still living. And for that reason, I think when they settled, it was in 1921 when we was building this house, and so some of the money that my mother received, my father came and just bought all these lots in here. He sold all but from Wahnish Way to that ditch. He sold all of it before he died. But some of that money went into that.

Stacey Scales: Did your uncles have any stories about slavery?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Did they have any what?

Stacey Scales: Stories or experiences?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: My uncles were those close-knit families where the brothers and sisters would stay together, but the brothers going to be together. They were in North Carolina and they got into turpentine business. They left North Carolina. You have pine trees, that's where you get your turpentine from. And when you get all the turpentine you can get out of that one tree, they would move to another place, and they would lease. They would look at the pine trees, they'd find out the owners, and they would lease that property from the owners. Then they would put up buildings and go out getting people to come to work for them.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: And they were really businessmen in turpentine, but that caused them to go from place to place. When they give out there, they'll go to another place. But one mistake they made, there was a White family, let them know you can't trust these little banks. And they had a safe deposit and they gave him permission to use their safe. And at the end, when they were old and whatnot, and was going to get

their money out the safe, those White people had used that money. Very little was left. But they had lived good and lived well. But that's the only mistake they made. They really was in business.

Stacey Scales: What did your grandparents do as a living?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: They got that 40 acres of land and a mule, they farmed. They ran that farm, and the children stayed with them a long time and helped them. But then they went on their way and they took care of our grandparents. They moved them from North Carolina.

Stacey Scales: How was the neighborhood during that time when you moved to this house?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: When we moved to this house, we had trees, all low, tall. And we had the oak trees that would grow tall, we had oak trees that would not. This was a farm, a man, was it a doctor? Dr. Barnes owned all this area in here. And he had a farm, he had people farming for him, but when he decided he didn't want to be bothered with the farm anymore, he decided to sell it to people, and you can do what you want to do with it.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: But he was looking out for FAMU, so he went on the campus and got one of the teachers, and told him, "I'm going to turn so much of this land over to you that's close to the campus so you can sell it. You know who you're selling it to," because of the campus. And even the land where Bill Perry and those, he let him sell that too. And so Mr. Jones sold the land. He sold it to teachers, mostly teachers and the people that was working on the campus, but then he would sell it to other families too. He sold to us.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: He sold to a lot of other people who were not on the campus. But I guess when some of the teachers was getting ready to build, we came in here. Because this house was the first house. The other houses that was built in that time, they've gone. We have just one house and this house is the one that was the original house, and this house was built here, and some family with children up on the hill built a house up there.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: These were the first two houses, but then the other people came along too and they bought because $35 a lot. And see, a lot of people can scrap up $35. When they bought, then when the teachers looked around, they didn't want to live around those people so they didn't build. My father had a opportunity to sell their land, he went into real estate of old age, but he sold their land to the people who couldn't buy. So this normal school subdivision wasn't like Mr. Jones had planned and wasn't like the teachers had planned, but they were not going to let these houses bring down the price of their house.

Stacey Scales: Where did you shop around here? Was there Black-owned businesses?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Well, we had to bring that in. No, they didn't have it. Downtown was close in those days and there were some people in another area had stores, but then we didn't have buses. We had one Black cab driver. You could go anywhere you wanted to go in Tallahassee.

Stacey Scales: Do you remember his name?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: For 50 cent. Rollins. You could go anywhere you wanted to go for 50 cent. But if you walk, walking is all right. We would go downtown about three times a day if my mother went to the center and think nothing of it. Because we would go there, they had a Piggly Wiggly that sold cheap. We didn't have an AMP store but we had those other stores, and we would go there to buy some things. Run halfway, walk halfway. And we did that for years, but now it's so far away. It's so far, far away now if anyone look at me and ask me about walking downtown, it's too far. But then, you could run to town and be back in a few minutes.

Stacey Scales: So the Black businesses, you said you had to bring them, who were they brought?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Well, the Speeds came in and they had a—and we had a store that was real close to us, a man built. You can see a area and that would look like a ditch. My brother built this home that has that brick building, a store was put there and the Bright had a store on Perry Street. Those were small stores but you can go. And let me see, they had a store named Gibbs Market. He sold everything. Then we had Nims that had a store and those was the stores we had in this area, but we did most of our shopping downtown.

Stacey Scales: Were all those stores in the same place?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Here?

Stacey Scales: Yeah.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: No. The buildings of some of those stores are still there, like the Speeds, someone is still running the Speeds store. The Bright store, no-one running it, but I think you can find one or two of the stores still operating, the building but with different people in it. One thing what we did have, we had rabbits, we had squirrels. It was a pond down there, we had alligators. We could catch the frogs and sell them. We had a lot of natural things around here. We had wild fruit trees, all kind. And if you wanted a rabbit, all you had to do is step outside the back door. But the people cleaned that up, a group of boys, we used call them the rabbit boys, they would come and they sent the rabbits away.

Stacey Scales: Were there any cases of hangings down here?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Any paintings?

Stacey Scales: Hangings or lynchings, Black folk.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: No. Those days, when we came here, they didn't do too much more lynching. Now, the only thing we had here in this area to happen, the pecans, there was some boys on the campus, those people planted papershell pecan trees over in our area. The squirrel planted the trees. So you had anything, the squirrels planted. We have trouble with these pecan trees now by people wanting to come pick up

pecan. And the fruit trees the people had, they planted them themselves. We have apple, pear, and all the fruit trees, but there was some people lived up on the hill, they didn't plant anything. The children would come and gather yours, and the children would look in your face and let you know this God's trees.

Stacey Scales: This is God's tree.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: This God's tree.

Stacey Scales: This is Black children?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Yes. They went on the campus around, because there was some papershell there, and these three boys, they went up in the tree to get those papershell, and there was a teacher, he graduated, I was here going to school when he graduated, but they hired him on the campus in the agricultural department. He took him a gun, these buckshots in it, and sprayed those boys in that tree to make all other children afraid to go in the tree. They had just much right to those pecans as he did. But then they didn't do that but they got into something else so they were missing. And later on, they said that they were killed in the [indistinct 00:26:13] graves. But that was the only thing, I think.

Stacey Scales: When did that happen?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Hmm?

Stacey Scales: When did that happen?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: That happened in the 1920s. But didn't anyone say too much about it because the little boys were stealing, so wasn't too much to say about it.

Stacey Scales: Do you remember any very hard times when you didn't have much here?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Here?

Stacey Scales: Yes.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: They had what you call a boom and the people was coming to Florida, they were spending money, they were building. They didn't do too much building around Tallahassee, but that caused students to be coming to Tallahassee. Along the time when I was in the 8th grade, we had more students when we were in the 8th and then the 9th grade than they had in the whole college division. And as long as about 1929, the people was coming from down south, and this was making money for Tallahassee. But long in 1929, in the beginning of the '30s, we had a Depression. Everything just dropped. And this was my senior year in college, Depression was still going. And we had President Lee. And to show you how it was, I had a brother in my class, one that's Alfonso, and we were very little people.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: And we went to President Lee office and we told him that our senior year, you had to board on the campus. We asked him to let one board on the campus one semester and one board on the campus the other semester. He looked at us, "What you doing in the same class?" He said, "Your senior year, you going to stay on the campus the whole year." And he would not let us do that. So I went in the boarding department and my brother stayed out because he could work and produce more for the family, and my daddy didn't believe in his daughters working, so my brother stayed out. That caused me to graduate 1933, and he graduate 1934.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: But well, President Roosevelt just closed the banks because the people was moving the money out, and that day he closed the bank, our tuition and your board was due, and my board was the only one paid because the bank caught the other people, but mine had been paid in cash. And when he closed the banks the people didn't have anything.

Stacey Scales: How did people survive and how did your family survive?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Well, my father had so much pride. He was not going to take commodities. They set up places where you could have food, and you could go there and get food. He established a lot of organizations and one with the CC Camp, different things, the NRA, and different organizations where you could go and work. They would find work for you to do, and you could work there and get a little money. And then the food became very cheap. You could get a can of salmons for five cent. Now, the way my family survived, we really would've been able to do well and have the best of foods like the other people, but you had to sign up for it. And he belonged to, it was a group of people once upon a time that would not accept charity. And there was a lot of people in Tallahassee said they would die before they accept charity.

Stacey Scales: Wow.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: He was one, he didn't mean for any food that they were giving away to come into this house. He was not the only one like that, they just wasn't going to accept it. They were not going standing in line for food, they were not going standing in line to get the bills paid. So what he did, he owned some land in Panama City, he sold that land and enough money would come into this house. That's why couldn't but one board on the campus, enough money would come, and we had to budget and manage, and manage like that. But he never did accept anything during those hard times.

Stacey Scales: [indistinct 00:32:13].

Ethel McFadden Kemp: There were people on the campus got into this, they were the one giving out this and giving out that, and there were a couple wanted my brother to work for them. But they had him to work, Mr. A. Turner, his daughter's living in that house on the campus now, Matthews, living in the home site, and he was in the agriculture department. And he had my brother work for him the whole summer. "I'm not going to pay you during the summer before my school open, I'm going to pay your registration fee, and I'm going to buy your clothes, and just help your parents take care of you with the money you made." But he didn't do it. When school opened, he was trying to register more credit.

Stacey Scales: Really?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Yeah, my father had to go down there and register. He never did pay him. But anyway, they were over giving out clothing to the poor, and they did give him some clothing. My father let him accept them because he said he worked for them. And that's the only clothing we had come in. We had to just do without it if we didn't have it.

Stacey Scales: Did the churches help out or any other organizations in the community?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Well, the churches in the community, they were hit by the Depression too. To show you how hard hit someone was, they were trying to build a church. One reason we could get by, because my father was going to plant enough food for us up there near Wahnish Way with the sugarcane patch, on another area was a sweet potato, and the other was the corn. And he'd all types of vegetables, and we ate what we could and we canned the rest. This rest was canned for the winter and you had all fresh vegetables in the winter. You had those in the summer and you had those canned ones for the winter. And there was some things you could plant for the winter and still have fresh. And he made his business to have 100 hens at all time.

Stacey Scales: Really?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: And he had some roosters too, but he was determined to have 100 hens. But the ones he had was the one for meat, they wasn't the one egg-laying but there was enough eggs for us. It was enough eggs for us to go to the market and exchange the eggs for food. That was the Gibbs Market, you'd go and you would tell him how many eggs you had, then you started shopping and he would allow more for the eggs than you could get anywhere else because you were exchanged them for food. Then we had teachers on the campus would buy eggs from us. I was the one that delivered the eggs on the campus. And we got by like that.

Stacey Scales: Did any White folks ever get jealous of your family because they had so much?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: The White people living out here was in the same shape.

Stacey Scales: Oh, yes?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Dr. Barnes. Let me put these ones down. When he sold the portion that he was going to sell, he divided it. He sold so much to Black people and so much to White people, and he separated them. The White had their area and the Black had their area. But there was some White people moved into this area because now our family became norm to them. Because I had a sister who was a nurse, and she had been a nurse for some of the family that was moving in here. Then Dr. Barnes was real close to us, and that caused the White and the Black to know us. And one time, we were the only family of children going to school. [indistinct 00:37:08].

Stacey Scales: Children going to school.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Yes, at that time, you could go to FAMC to school or go to Lincoln High School, and that was across town. There was school at the Presbyterian church. But you had to pay for FAMC then and you had to pay for this other church. The peoples moving in here felt that they were not able to send their children to school and they didn't want them walking to Lincoln, so they didn't go. One lady taught her children, she would tell them, "There's no need to go to school. You find more educated people in the chain gang than you find any place else." But anything that she saw that she thought would help us in school, she brought it here. And then when my sister got in the 7th grade, she decided that she was going to teach the children, the Black or the White, that were not in school.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: One young lady came, she could come for us to help her, but her father didn't want it. So she had to slip here to come until she got herself where she could go. They were riding the buses where she was able to participate in another school. But the way my sister did, she just let all the children who could not go to school during the summer, they would come here, and they'd get around a dining room table, and she started teaching them. And one summer, my father was having some work done on the house, and there was a man that was working on the house, and he would look through the dining room and see Clarissa teaching.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: And he found out that she was doing this, and the people found out her mama let these children come in her house and didn't mind it. And when she was going back to school, she would let them go until the next summer. One day, he came in and he told her he was tired of going up on houses, fixing windows and things, and ask her to let him have this group, and let the parents know that he was going to take this group and teach them. So then he found one of the churches and asked if he could have school in that church. So he took the group. The parents was paying, my sister received 25 cent a week for every child she taught, and most of that went into supplies.

Stacey Scales: So she taught White and Black children?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Yes. Some of the White would send theirs, they'd slip them in. And when he moved to the church, then the White didn't send them there. There was buses where the White could send their children to school. And then he taught those children, then another woman saw how well he was doing, and he was almost at the age where he didn't much want to be bothered, and she talked to him. She went in that same church and she taught the children. Another woman asked to help. Her name was Dorothy Nash. She became a Tooks.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: But she took them, and she decided to go to the school board and tell them how many children they were having, and that they needed someone else to help teach, and ask them if they could take that school over and support it. And they came and they checked, and they saw they had the students. So that was the beginning of Barnes Elementary School. Dr. Barnes had left space in there. He did leave spaces where if they ever wanted a school, they could build it. So that's where they built a school. And

he left so much land for them they was able to put in those other things later on.

Stacey Scales: Were there places that you weren't allowed to go coming up there?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Going to places? Like what?

Stacey Scales: Someplace for entertainment or was there a place that was segregated.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: They had entertainment. They had some of the best entertainment coming here, the Tallahassee. And they put it up in a place called Frenchtown. It wasn't like it is now, and that's where they would—you heard of Sammy Davis Jr.

Stacey Scales: Yeah.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: He was traveling with his uncle and father. They came here. They came, they had rooming houses then where any Black person could live, but he didn't investigate the rooming house, he just came and made arrangement for them to stay at the jail while they gave the performance here. So every time they would come, they'd stay at the jail.

Stacey Scales: They had rooms at the jail?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: They had room then, because you didn't have as many people going to jail as you have now. So they had room.

Stacey Scales: Did people back then ever talk about spirits and things like that?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: About what?

Stacey Scales: Spirits?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Handsome thing. I can take you to South Carolina now and you would hear more of that. They still do that. People still, but there are some who still believe in the unseen and just certain people can see them.

Stacey Scales: In South Carolina, is there? How about here?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: In Tallahassee?

Stacey Scales: Yeah.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: You can find some people here in Tallahassee. I was trying to think of a family. We had some people, when my brother was sick in that house down there, these people came from the

different agencies where they sent people to take care of them, and then we hired some other people. And one day my nephew, he didn't understand what these people were saying. And he's a doctor, he just finished med school and was taking his internship, and I went there one day, he said, "Aunt Ethel, did my grandfather die in this house?"

Ethel McFadden Kemp: And I told him, "No, the only person died in this house was on your mother's side of the family." Because you know how you think. But there was one person there said she felt the presence of my father and my mother seeing about Robert. I told her she didn't feel the presence of anyone seeing about my Robert and I let them know then, I said, "My mother died in the hospital. My father died in this house up here." But they believe in things like that, but I find more so in South Carolina than here.

Stacey Scales: How is it different in South Carolina? I'm just curious.

Ethel McFadden Kemp: What is the difference?

Stacey Scales: Yeah. Is a lot more people there that believe in it?

Ethel McFadden Kemp: Sure.