

March 6, 2008

Interview with Mary Katherine Carwell Robertson

By Isabelle Chewning

Isabelle Chewning: Today is March the 6th, 2008. My name is Isabelle Chewning, and I'm in the home of Mrs. Robertson today [2797 Lee Highway, Staunton]. I'm going to interview her for the Brownsburg Museum. Mrs. Robertson could you tell us what your whole name is?

Katherine Robertson: Mary Katherine Carwell Robertson.

Isabelle Chewning: Right. And do you mind telling me when you were born?

Katherine Robertson: In December the 15th, 1927.

Isabelle Chewning: . So you had a big birthday last year then. You turned 80 last year, just turned 80, right?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: Good for you! And so you grew up in Brownsburg. Who were your parents?

Katherine Robertson: Alice and Roscoe Carwell.

Isabelle Chewning: And Mr. Carwell had a nickname, right?

Katherine Robertson: Pete.

Isabelle Chewning: Most people knew him as Pete.

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: And he had the garage in Brownsburg?

Katherine Robertson: Yes.

Isabelle Chewning: And grew up right there in -- kind of in the middle of town, right?

Katherine Robertson: That's right.

Isabelle Chewning: Which house did you grow up in?

Katherine Robertson: I don't know how to explain that.

Isabelle Chewning: Well, it's the Sears' house, right? The house that came from Sears Roebuck, right?

Katherine Robertson: Oh, the Sears house, that's right, uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: And you had a big family?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: How many brothers and sisters did you have? Say their names out loud so we can...

Katherine Robertson: It was Lois, Virginia, Helen, Mildred, and myself, and Janet. Six girls and...

Isabelle Chewning: Six girls.

Katherine Robertson: And four boys.

Isabelle Chewning: What were the boy's names?

Katherine Robertson: Floyd, Frank, Ray and Herb.

Isabelle Chewing: And who -- you, and Janet, and Herb, and Ray are still living?

Katherine Robertson: That's right.

Isabelle Chewing: Are there others that?

Katherine Robertson: No, that's all that's living.

Isabelle Chewing: Uh-huh. Uh-huh. And who was the oldest?

Katherine Robertson: Lois.

Isabelle Chewing: And then?

Katherine Robertson: Virginia.

Isabelle Chewing: And then?

Katherine Robertson: Floyd, and Helen, I think, maybe. I don't know if Helen's...

Isabelle Chewing: It's hard to keep them all in order. How old were you when the house was built?

Katherine Robertson: I really don't know.

Isabelle Chewing: Do you remember when it was built? When it was new?

Katherine Robertson: It tells you in that book [Mrs. Robertson is referring to a book of photos and information about Brownsburg that was put together in 1987 by Betty Carwell].

Isabelle Chewing: But you don't remember -- do you just always remember living there, or did you live in the other house?

Katherine Robertson: I just remember living in that one.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh. Was it just a couple big rooms upstairs the girl's had...

Katherine Robertson: Wait a minute. When we lived -- no, I was seven-years-old when our other house burnt. And then Virginia and I, we couldn't get downstairs because the smoke was coming upstairs so bad. So we climbed out on the porch roof and jumped off the porch.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh. Oh, my goodness, and you were seven-years-old?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh and I broke my arm. And my daddy, he got burnt real bad.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, that must have been terrible.

Katherine Robertson: But I don't remember, you know, too much about that.

Isabelle Chewning: Where did you live then after the house burned?

Katherine Robertson: Well, different ones around. I stayed at the [Finley] Patterson's for, I think, a little while [Old School Lane].

Isabelle Chewning: And they were your next-door neighbors?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, and really I don't-- I really don't know too much, you know, about that.

Isabelle Chewning: And then did it take a while for the new house to get built?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: And you just-- you stayed with the Pattersons.

Katherine Robertson: And I don't know what we-- I really don't know what we did, you know. I don't know how long I was there because all we had on our backs was what we was sleeping in, you know.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, it was at night? It happened at night?

Katherine Robertson: Everything went, everything just went. It caught us in bed.

Isabelle Chewing: What time of year was it?

Katherine Robertson: It was cold. I don't know what time of year. [A newspaper account of the fire in Betty Carwell's book indicates the fire was in December 1935.] My oldest sister, Lois, had got up to make a fire. We don't know what happened. If she left the -- you know, you started the fire with coal oil and wood and all. We don't know if she left the can sitting on the stove and it blowed up. We don't know what happened because she got burned up, you know, in the fire.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh. Oh, she died?

Katherine Robertson: And that's how my daddy went -- my daddy went and opened the door and then that's when it let it through the house and then we couldn't get down the steps. We had to just climb out the window and jump.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh, my goodness.

Katherine Robertson: I broke my arm. And I don't know too much more about it.

Isabelle Chewing: That's terrible. Oh, my goodness. And so then he built the new...

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, he built the Sears house back. They say it's bad luck to build back in the same place because that one did catch on fire, about to catch on fire.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh it did?

Katherine Robertson: It did, uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewing: When you lived there? When you all lived there?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah. We don't know what happened. All we know is we had some sacks hanging the basement. Some way they caught on fire. We don't know how.

Isabelle Chewing: But you were able to get the fire out that time?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, uh-huh. Mildred ran up to the garage for my daddy and all, and we-- and, or some of us ran up to the garage for my daddy, and then the time I got down there -- we always carried rain water over there to the basement, you know, to wash the clothes. And we'd build a fire in the basement down there, and then we threw that water on them and got it out.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh my goodness. Well, when you were all growing up in the house were there two big rooms upstairs and the boys had one room and the girls had one room?

Katherine Robertson: It was three, three rooms upstairs. One of them was supposed to have been a sewing room, but we used it for a bedroom.

Isabelle Chewing: So did the girls have two rooms and the boys had one room?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewing: Uh-huh. And your parents were downstairs?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. See, that house had three -- five bedrooms in it.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh, really?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh, I didn't realize it had had that many.

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewing: Uh-huh. Four upstairs, or two downstairs and three up?

Katherine Robertson: Two down and three up. Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewing: Uh-huh. And did it have indoor plumbing when it was first built?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. Yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, you had really modern conveniences in Brownsburg then.

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. I think about how my aunt, how they used to live.

Isabelle Chewning: So that would have been about 1934 or something like that if you were -- well, that may have been when the first house burned, so it was maybe in the mid 30s.

Katherine Robertson: I was born -- I was seven-years-old when our house burnt. Let's see.

Isabelle Chewning: Well, and then if it took a couple years to build it back it would have been probably mid-30s when the house was built.

Katherine Robertson: I could tell you. I saw the picture of my daddy a while ago [looking through Betty Carwell's book].

Isabelle Chewning: Mrs. Robertson has a nice book that has all kinds of memorabilia in it about Brownsburg and she's looking it up to see if she can find a little bit more of the information about the Sears house in Brownsburg. So you had -- was the bathroom downstairs?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: And it had a nice modern kitchen, I guess?

Katherine Robertson: All -- it didn't have, you know, built-in cabinets. Like we had a kitchen cabinet, you know.

Isabelle Chewning: Did your parents grow up in Brownsburg or did they move there from somewhere else?

Katherine Robertson: My father's home was in Middlebrook and he just came there and, you know, opened that garage, did the garage work.

Isabelle Chewning: Was there a lot of garage work early on with not many cars? Was he always busy?

Katherine Robertson: Well, he sold gas, too.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, I see. Uh-huh.

Katherine Robertson: Our old house, it was destroyed in '35. The old house was destroyed in '35.

Isabelle Chewning: Who's this a picture of?

Katherine Robertson: That looks like our house, and that's above...

Isabelle Chewning: It does look like your house.

Katherine Robertson: I think that was up above Richmond. I cut that out of the paper.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, this is in Arlington.

Katherine Robertson: Up there somewhere, yeah. I put it in with that because it looked like ours. And that's a Sears' house. It could be the same house.

Isabelle Chewning: Here it says, "House built from kit in 1936 is still sturdy." [News clipping from the *Staunton Leader* dated June 21, 1978] Is that about your house?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: So it was built in '36 then.

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh. So it didn't take too long if it burned in '35 and then they finished building it in '36. It didn't take that long.

Katherine Robertson: No, un-uh. No, it didn't, no. And it had a good basement too.

Isabelle Chewning: Did it? Uh-huh. And then there are a couple of little buildings out back, right?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewing: What were they used for?

Katherine Robertson: Well, we stored meat in one, and we called it sort of like a spring house down-- we always separated the milk, you know. We had two cows and we separated the milk down there in the bottom part of it. And, you know, we had hogs, so we'd put the meat upstairs, up in the upper part of that building. And see we had another building on up there that we had chickens and the hogs up there. And Daddy always just rented the lot there close that, you know, kept two cows in.

Isabelle Chewing: I wonder who you rented it from.

Katherine Robertson: I don't know if it was the Wrights or not. Wrights used to live there.

Isabelle Chewing: Where did they live?

Katherine Robertson: Right there on the...

Isabelle Chewing: Oh, on the corner?

Katherine Robertson: Corner, uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewing: Where that little log cabin is?

Katherine Robertson: The Heffelfinger boy [Steve], you know, lived there [2766 Brownsburg Turnpike], and we always kept a couple cows in there.

Isabelle Chewing: Who did the milking?

Katherine Robertson: I did. [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewing: Did you?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah.

Isabelle Chewing: Were you pretty good at it?

Katherine Robertson: Until I left home, and then Ray did it.

Isabelle Chewing: Uh-huh.

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. Yeah, I had to. I had to get out there and milk them cows before I went to school, you know.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh, you did?

Katherine Robertson: Separate the milk, and the same thing in the evenings, you know. We had our chores to do, you know. It was go to school, do your chores, go to school, come home, do your chores and church, and...

Isabelle Chewing: What were some of the other chores? What did your sister Virginia do? What were her chores?

Katherine Robertson: I don't...

Isabelle Chewing: So mainly you remember what you did.

Katherine Robertson: I know what I had to do. [Laugh] I left home-- well, I went to the third year of high school. So then I left home. I failed English and I went down to the Lee's Carpet and went to work.

Isabelle Chewing: That was a pretty long way from home. Did you drive back and forth everyday?

Katherine Robertson: After I left home -- well, I stayed with my cousins up to Lexington for a while, and then I got married.

Isabelle Chewing: So could you tell me a little bit more about your father's garage? I guess people started first buying automobiles in the...

Katherine Robertson: They had those old Model-As and Model-Ts, you know, back then.

Isabelle Chewning: And so there was a lot of business for your father keeping everyone's car running.

Katherine Robertson: He had a-- yeah, selling gas. Because he had -- George Lotts worked for him, and helped him, and both them took care of the garage and that up there.

Isabelle Chewning: Did he build the garage, or was there already a building there? Do you know?

Katherine Robertson: I think he built it.

Isabelle Chewning: And how long did he stay in business? I remember him being there.

Katherine Robertson: I don't know when he gave it up, I really don't. All his life he -- all his life, but I don't know when he gave it up. I just don't know when he just actually gave it up.

Isabelle Chewning: When did he die? Were your parents...

Katherine Robertson: I'd have to look at that...

Isabelle Chewning: Were your parents still living in Brownsburg when he died?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: And did he die before your mother?

Katherine Robertson: No. Mother died first.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh. So he lived there by himself for a while?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. And then they had to put him in a nursing home.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, uh-huh. So who were your neighbors in Brownsburg? You mentioned the Pattersons.

Katherine Robertson: The Runkles. The Runkles.

Isabelle Chewning: Did the Runkles later-- where did the Runkles live?

Katherine Robertson: They lived right there beside of us [at Sleepy Hollow, 2645 Sterrett Road].

Isabelle Chewning: So the Pattersons lived there first and then the Runkles lived there? You said you had stayed with the Pattersons.

Katherine Robertson: Oh, that was Sam Patterson and them over -- down next to the [Hays Creek] bridge.

Isabelle Chewning: At the foot of the bridge.

Katherine Robertson: Yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: Right. Oh, okay. I was thinking the wrong Pattersons.

Katherine Robertson: Oh, you were thinking about Rosenell Patterson.

Isabelle Chewning: Right. Uh-huh. Uh-huh. Okay, so you stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Finley Patterson.

Katherine Robertson: Fin. That's right, Finley Patterson.

Isabelle Chewning: Right, because they had a big family too, didn't they? They had eight or nine children, I think.

Katherine Robertson: There was a good many of them, I think.

Isabelle Chewning: So the Runkles lived next door to you.

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewing: And then do you remember who lived in those three little stucco houses that are there? Were the Buchanans living there when you were growing up?

Katherine Robertson: Mrs. [Fanny] Buchannan, yeah [2623 Sterrett Road]. And then the Wades [2613 Sterrett Road], and the Dices [2597 Sterrett Road], and then my aunt, Hattie Berry, lived over there [2580 Sterrett Road].

Isabelle Chewing: Oh, she was your aunt?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewing: Was she your father's sister?

Katherine Robertson: Mother's sister.

Isabelle Chewing: Your mother and Mrs. Berry were sisters.

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewing: Uh-huh. Someone had mentioned to me that she sometimes took in welfare children.

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. That's about the only way, I reckon, she made a living. You know, I thought-- I still think about her, you know, how they lived. No running water in the house, and no electricity, you know. They had to fix the oil lamps. They had the lamps, I think. I still think about how they lived.

Isabelle Chewing: Uh-huh. It was a hard life.

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, I know, with no-- they had a cistern outside. They pumped the water up, you know. I think if we had to live like that, I don't know what we'd do, with no electricity, no water, running water in the house.

Isabelle Chewning: Right, right. No, we've gotten spoiled, haven't we? [Laugh]

Katherine Robertson: To see how she would dig in that stove and try to get the wood to burn, you know, to cook something to eat.

Isabelle Chewning: What did your uncle, Mr. Berry, do?

Katherine Robertson: He didn't do nothing much. They had chickens and a cow and just gardens, and I don't know. There once they did have a cannery there. You know, used to be the old Black school, and they had a cannery in there, and I think he worked there some at that. But other than that I don't think he did much of anything.

Isabelle Chewning: Do you remember any of the children that they kept, that they had?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, they were Smiths. It was Woodrow, and Annie, and Irene and James. James worked down at the plant [Lee's Carpets]. And whatever happened to them, I don't know. You know, they got married and had families. I think a couple of them was up around Richmond, somewhere like that. But James was up around Lexington, and he worked down where I did.

Isabelle Chewning: Did the Berrys have any children of their own?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. They had -- well see, the Snyders lived up on the hill, on up there as you go towards the Sterretts [on Sterrett Road]. The Snyders lived up there, and see that was one of her [Mrs. Berry's] daughters. And then she had -- her son lived over Clifton Forge. That's the only two I know of. That's right, one of -- Virginia Snyder lived at Fairfield. There's three.

Isabelle Chewning: What was her name who lived on the hill, Mrs. Snyder?

Katherine Robertson: Tave, they called her Tave [nickname for Octavia].

Isabelle Chewning: How do you spell that?

Katherine Robertson: Tave Berry.

Isabelle Chewning: T-A...

Katherine Robertson: Tave, I -- she was married to Lee Snyder.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh. So two of them married Snyders then.

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh.

Katherine Robertson: We called her Doots [ph?]. Her name was Virginia. We called her Doots.

Isabelle Chewning: Everybody had nicknames, didn't they?

Katherine Robertson: [Laugh] And, you know, I...

Isabelle Chewning: And that's Miss. Berry whose name was Virginia? Whose name was Virginia?

Katherine Robertson: The one that married -- Virginia, she was Virginia Berry married John Snyder and Tave married Lee Snyder [ph?].

Isabelle Chewning: Okay. So Virginia's the one who lived in Fairfield.

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: Okay. And you mentioned your father had come from Middlebrook? He grew up in Middlebrook?

Katherine Robertson: That's where his home was. Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh. How about your mother, where did she grow up?

Katherine Robertson: I don't know nothing about -- my mother was a Clemmer, but I don't know too much about her. Her brother lived at Fairfield and her sister lived in Covington.

Isabelle Chewning: And then her other sister lived right down in Brownsburg.

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, and then the one in Brownsburg, yeah. And then we-- Daddy's sister lived down there at Brownsburg too.

Isabelle Chewning: Who was that?

Katherine Robertson: Aunt Lena Lotts. They lived on a farm down there.

Isabelle Chewning: Where did they live?

Katherine Robertson: We called it going around the hill. You know, as you go between the stores [on Hays Creek Road], and go down in that way like you're going towards Walker's Creek. They lived on a farm down there, Sam Lotts. And Aunt Lena was Daddy's sister.

Isabelle Chewning: You mentioned Mr. George Lotts worked for your dad.

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: Where did he live?

Katherine Robertson: He lived in Pisgah.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh. Oh, he was married to Lizzie, right?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. Yeah, Lizzie. And see, you know, most, I mean, all those are dead.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh. So I guess the fire is probably the first thing you remember about being in Brownsburg. Do you remember things before that?

Katherine Robertson: I don't, no.

Isabelle Chewning: How about school? Did you walk to school in Brownsburg?

Katherine Robertson: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh.

Katherine Robertson: We even went home for lunch. We used to go home for lunch.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, you did?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: Do you remember who some of your teachers were?

Katherine Robertson: Mrs. Buchanan, because I failed the fifth. She was my fifth grade teacher, and she failed me.

Isabelle Chewning: She was too hard, huh?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, she was. And, you know, I think-- I remember Miss Ocie Trimmer [laugh].

Isabelle Chewning: So you remember her?

Katherine Robertson: She was the principal, you know. [Laugh] You could hear her switching those kids. They don't do it now!

Isabelle Chewning: I've heard a lot about her. People say she was quite a disciplinarian.

Katherine Robertson: Oh, yeah, well, Mrs. Buchanan you was scared to move. And now they say kids just gets up and walks around the room, does what they want.

Isabelle Chewning: But she was a hard teacher, huh?

Katherine Robertson: I knew Mollie Sue [Hull Whipple] and Lib Ward. I don't remember them teaching me. But Miss -- I remember Mr. Bosworth. He taught me one class in high school. I think about this when she was a Miss Watson and I think she lived on a farm up Raphine. I think she died, but she was our Home-Ec teacher, Miss Watson.

Isabelle Chewning: What was her first name?

Katherine Robertson: I don't know. I wished I knew. I don't remember. All I know is a Miss Watson.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you like Home-Ec?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, but still -- I sew. Just fix things that needs to be sewed. You know when the dresses got up [indicates short hem line] -- way up here I made me-- I had to make me some. So that's the reason when they went long I said I'll never wear again when they go down long again because I cut my old ones off. When they got down-- I had some long. I cut them off. Now they either get too short or too long. That's why I wear slacks. [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewning: That's a good solution to that problem.

Katherine Robertson: And then you don't have to wear hose too, that's a big problem, wearing hose.

Isabelle Chewning: Right. Right. Yep. Yep. So did you enjoy school?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, playing basketball. Yeah, I played basketball and softball. Even after -- we had games, you know, when we wasn't in school. But we had some -- it was a couple teachers. I don't remember. I've got a picture of them, but I don't remember their names. We had a team, you know.

Isabelle Chewning: Did Miss Trimmer coach the basketball team?

Katherine Robertson: I don't remember her coaching.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you travel around to play other schools?

Katherine Robertson: I don't remember their traveling around. Most of them was just there at the school. And, you know, softball. I played softball after I went down to that plant and went to work.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you?

Katherine Robertson: On the recreation field up at Lexington.

Isabelle Chewning: Were you a pretty good player?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah. See, we used to get over in the meadow, you know. I guess, don't the Sterretts still own that?

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh. Mc is my dad, Mc Sterrett.

Katherine Robertson: Yeah. I knew they bought it and I didn't know if they still owned that or not. Well see we used to get over in the meadow when we was kids and play ball on Sundays.

Isabelle Chewning: Which meadow is that?

Katherine Robertson: Over next to where the creek was.

Isabelle Chewning: Across [Sterrett Road] from your house?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh.

Katherine Robertson: And we had a swimming hole over there.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you?

Katherine Robertson: So we had a swimming hole and we played ball, softball over there, and ride bicycles.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you dam up the creek to make a swimming hole?

Katherine Robertson: No. It was always just a hole over there.

Isabelle Chewning: And that's what you did on Sunday afternoons, just play?

Katherine Robertson: We played softball and ride bikes, and. Only things to do was go to school and church, and then we just, you know, most people stayed to their selves, you know. They didn't mingle, you know, mostly they went on about their own business. And then just some of us kids would get together and play ball, and swim.

Isabelle Chewning: Who were your friends? Who was your age growing up there?

Katherine Robertson: I was kind of in between. They was either older or younger. I was just sort of in there, you know.

Isabelle Chewning: Well, you had a big family, so you had plenty of people to play with, I guess.

Katherine Robertson: Yeah. Yeah. Because I remember I slipped on-- I was running base over there and I slid on the grass and I broke my -- that's when I broke my ankle.

Isabelle Chewning: You've had a lot of broken bones haven't you?

Katherine Robertson: [Laugh] Yeah, because the house burnt and, you know, I jumped off the porch and broke my arm. And then I was playing ball and broke my ankle. It's just been -- I said, I don't know why. I told the doctors, I said, "I don't know why I'm the only one was always getting hurt."

Isabelle Chewning: [Laugh] Now, did the doctors in Brownsburg take care of your broken arm and broken ankle?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah that was Dr. -- I think it was Dr.-- I don't know if he was a Dr. Taylor. Anyway when it broke, he took me to Lexington Hospital and they put a cast on me from my knee down. That was rough. And we had Dr. Williams, and I remember Dr. Taylor. That's the only two doctors I remember.

Isabelle Chewning: I remember Dr. Taylor. I have a vague recollection of him. And so after you got out of school you went down and worked at Lee's Carpet.

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: And how many years did you work there?

Katherine Robertson: It was over 10 years until I started to having back trouble. I fell in '63. And I went out early one morning carrying a garbage can like this, and didn't know it rained and froze ice. And then when I stepped out the garage my feet went out like this and I went backwards. It just knocked me out. I just saw stars, and of course I got up and went on and tried to work. I just kept getting worse. My bones -- my bones just got to like -- you could just feel them gritting together in my back. And I got completely, just I couldn't do it. And Dr. Webster, I came down here to Dr. Webster. He said, "There's nothing to do, but you have a fusion of the spine."

Isabelle Chewning: You don't want to do that.

Katherine Robertson: He fused my spine.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh.

Katherine Robertson: I had. I tell you the doctors -- I was fooling with Dr. McClung in Lexington and that doctor about to let me die. I wouldn't be here if it hadn't been for Dr. Webster. He got a holt of me.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you meet your husband while you were working at the plant?

Katherine Robertson: He worked down there. He came out of the Army. He was in World War II, and he came out of the Army. Mildred was the one that was doing the dating and gathering the men up, you know. [Laugh] And so she was going with this Ray Campbell. And anyway, my husband had come out of the Army and here he -- this Ray Campbell brought him down to our house, and that's how I met him, got in with him like that.

Isabelle Chewning: I see. Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

Katherine Robertson: I didn't date nobody around Brownsburg. I never did -- was in that dating.

Isabelle Chewning: And do you have children?

Katherine Robertson: And then we just -- just one girl. She lives right up here from me.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, she does? Uh-huh.

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewing: Well, that's nice that she lives close by.

Katherine Robertson: Of course, then she works. She gave me a permanent.

Isabelle Chewing: Very nice.

Katherine Robertson: She took up beautician. Well, she's done a little bit of everything.

Isabelle Chewing: I have to look through my questions here. So which church did you go to?

Katherine Robertson: New Providence [Presbyterian Church at 1208 New Providence Road].

Isabelle Chewing: Uh-huh. Did you do things with the young people out there?

Katherine Robertson: I don't remember that.

Isabelle Chewing: Uh-huh. But did you...

Katherine Robertson: I remember-- they did have things, you know, but I don't remember, not that much, you know, back. Because Mr. Wiseman, Toleraace Wiseman, he used to run the school, you know, one of the school buses on Sundays and pick up.

Isabelle Chewing: Did you ride the bus to church?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. We rode it.

Isabelle Chewing: Because there were too many of you for a car.

Katherine Robertson: Because he would make his rounds on Sundays and pick up people. I liked that. That was nice.

Isabelle Chewing: Did you go to Bible School?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh. Did you enjoy being at Bible School during the summer?

Katherine Robertson: Well, we had -- well, we had a teacher that'd come to the school, you know, and had...

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, you did?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. Bible class, too, at the school [Brownsburg School].

Isabelle Chewning: Do you remember any of the ministers?

Katherine Robertson: No. I can't -- I don't remember their names. I have a picture of some way back. He was a McLaughlin

Isabelle Chewning: Right. Uh-huh. Dr. [Henry] McLaughlin.

Katherine Robertson: My neighbor was a Mrs. McLaughlin. She was related to those McLaughlins.

Isabelle Chewning: When did your family first get an automobile?

Katherine Robertson: I remember the old Model-A. I learnt-- I watched Daddy. [Laugh] That's how I learnt to drive, watching Daddy what he did.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, you did?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. He had the old Model-A, and I never will forget.

Isabelle Chewning: So you remember learning to drive.

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, just watching Daddy and I learnt to drive the old Model-A. [Laugh] We went to-- came to Staunton once, and Mama had never drove before. And Frank drove down. They'd come down and, you know, Mom got us some shoes and stuff to wear. We was going back

up, we always traveled the Middlebrook Road. And we was going up the road, and I don't know, Frank just took a notion he wanted Mom to try to drive. And Mom got under the steering wheel. I don't know what she done. All I know, that old Model-A went up a bank and flipped over, you know. [Laugh] And I was in the back, and I was the last one getting out, and I said, "Now, what's Daddy going to say?"

Isabelle Chewning: What did he say? [Laugh]

Katherine Robertson: [Laugh] I don't know. It's hard to tell what he said.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, my goodness. Did you all get it back right side up?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. Yeah, Frank, you know, he turned it back up.

Isabelle Chewning: And he drove.

Katherine Robertson: Nobody said nothing, though. It stayed quiet, but I imagine Daddy found it out. I never did hear nothing out of it though, but I imagine Daddy found it out.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, that's funny! Did you mostly go to Staunton to do your big shopping instead of Lexington?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. Yeah, yeah, most likely Mom always came to Staunton. And then it was Bessie Wade up Bustleburg used to get-- pick the cream up, and bring it down here to Staunton to the creamery. And then she would, if any of the women wanted to come with her, you know, they would come down with her that way and they'd shop and go back with her. They had that-- they had ways, you know, to...

Isabelle Chewning: To get where they needed to get.

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: How often did she pick up the cream?

Katherine Robertson: I don't know if it was once or twice a week, or something like that.

Isabelle Chewning: And so you did the milking and then you also separated the cream?

Katherine Robertson: Cream, Uh-huh. Yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you have a separator or did you just skim it off the top?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. Yeah, we had the separator that separated it.

Isabelle Chewning: Did it turn...

Katherine Robertson: That way Mom had the check, you know, Mom got the check-- she had the check, cream check to spend that way.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh. Did it turn sour before she picked it up, or did it stay sweet?

Katherine Robertson: No. No. It kept it cold.

Isabelle Chewning: In the spring house it kept it cold enough?

Katherine Robertson: Then we just set out there in the road and, you know, she'd pick it up and go on to town with it.

Isabelle Chewning: Did your cows have names?

Katherine Robertson: No, not as I know of.

Isabelle Chewning: What people do you remember most growing up in Brownsburg? Miss Trimmer, probably. Mrs. Buchanan.

Katherine Robertson: Oh, did I name Miss Williams?

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-uh.

Katherine Robertson: Miss Williams. We could just see her and Mr. Dice, you know. He'd pick her up and they'd, you know, he would take her over to his house and then take her back up in Brownsburg. And Lib Ward lived right up there from us too [2763 Brownsburg Turnpike].

Isabelle Chewning: Who was Miss Williams?

Katherine Robertson: We had good neighbors, you know, they were Black people, Joneses way back. I remember the Joneses way back when I was a kid lived right on the corner there where the Wades put that house [at the current location of 2752 Brownsburg Turnpike].

Isabelle Chewning: I don't know which one that is.

Katherine Robertson: It's right on the corner there beside Ed Patterson's wife.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, oh, oh.

Katherine Robertson: That's the house they put right on the -- You know, way back it used to be these Black people lived there, Joneses is who they were. I remember they had this boy, his name was Bobby. And he came down back of our house there and, you know, they had this curly hair, you know, we'd want to reach through -- we'd reach through the fence and feel his head. [Laugh] You know, we never -- well, Mariah Fisher was the old mid-wife, and she's the only one who would come over to my house as I know of, because we never did fool with the Black people.

Isabelle Chewning: Were you born at home?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. Yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: Or in the hospital? Was she the midwife when you were born?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. Yeah. And that's the only one I know we mingled [with] was her, and she'd come over my house and all.

Isabelle Chewning: Do you remember World War II? Do you remember anything going on related to the war?

Katherine Robertson: Well, we was running stuff in that mill down there for...

Isabelle Chewning: Where was the mill?

Katherine Robertson: Down in Glasgow [at Lee's Carpets].

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, oh, so you were working there.

Katherine Robertson: Yeah I was there. I was working down there. Yeah, I went to work down there. And they was running. See, I went there in '47 and they were running yarn and stuff to make, you know, stuff. I worked in the spinning mill. And we run mostly wool then, and then they went to running nylon. Then we run wool and nylon.

Isabelle Chewning: And what were they making? Were they making rugs?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, they made rugs down there, and then they'd ship out yarn. Some of that yarn they were shipping it out to other places. And I think it was Lee's Carpet, Lee-- they called it Lee's Carpet when I was there. And then Burlington took it over. Now they say Mohawk's done took it over.

Isabelle Chewning: Right. Do you remember Mr. Beckner, Wallace Beckner. Did he work there when you did?

Katherine Robertson: Wallace. I remember Wallace Beckner. I remember Wallace Beckner.

Isabelle Chewning: I think he worked there.

Katherine Robertson: You know, it' so many people that I knew and I see them now. They've got so much older and changed, I don't know them. I'd have to ask, you know. They've really-- so many of them has got older, and they've really changed. I have people don't know me, you know. We was -- used to go up to that Westmoreland Restaurant and eat sometime on the other side of Lexington. And Kenneth Beard and Ruth was -- Ruth looked like she was tired. You know Ruth?

Isabelle Chewning: Right. Uh-huh. I know them.

Katherine Robertson: She looked like she was so tired and they was right there at us eating, and she didn't know. I said, "Ruth, you look --" she was yawning then like she was sleepy and I said,

"Ruth, you look like you're tired." She didn't know who I was. And I heard him, Kenneth, tell who I was.

Isabelle Chewing: People change, they really do change. Do you remember the businesses in Brownsburg, the stores? Did your family shop at any of the stores in Brownsburg?

Katherine Robertson: I've got stuff at Bob Supinger's', and the Huffman's, and it used to be the Engleman's, Hinsel Engleman, he was, you know, I remember them when they was there.

Isabelle Chewing: Where was their store?

Katherine Robertson: It was right where you go in between those two stores there [on Hays Creek Road]. The Englemans used to run that one on the left [the current location of Dick Barnes' house at 8 Hays Creek Road], and Bob Supinger was on that one on the right [at the current location of Old South Antiques]. And I remember Clint Troxell and Harve Matheny used to stand out there on that corner. [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewing: Oh, tell me what you remember about them.

Katherine Robertson: [Laugh] You know, a girl would go by them, Clint Troxell would stand there on the corner and a girl would go by and he'd say, "Aren't you purty!" I was saying something to Marjorie Ann [Whitesell Chittum] about that. We was saying about something, and I looked at Marjorie Ann and said -- talking about them standing there on the corner and I said, "Clint Troxell would go say, 'Now, aren't you purty,' or 'Ain't you purty,' or something like that."

Isabelle Chewing: Do you remember Harve Matheny.

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, Matheny.

Isabelle Chewing: What do you remember about him?

Katherine Robertson: He used to come down home, down my house. He'd come down my house, and Daddy had that old shanty there, you know, for him to stay in. And there used to be this old colored woman, well, they say you're not supposed to say colored now, it's "Black". This old Black woman, it used to be just like a shanty. She cooked outside, had this stove outside, and she cooked outside. Porter, Susan Porter was her name, stayed in that little shack right up from Harve

Matheny's, where he stayed. I think about-- I think about those people now though, you know it? She cooked outside on that stove, and I wondered well, how'd she keep warm on the inside.

Isabelle Chewning: And she was kind of across the road from your father's garage?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: Is that kind of where she was?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh, kind of up in there and it was kind of growed up. Mr. -- what was it, Walter Dice lived in that big house? [22 Hays Creek Road] And then she had this -- this kind of growed there, and this little old shanty set there in the brush. She was more like a, I thought, a witch. [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh. So you were sort of scared of her?

Katherine Robertson: I -- we didn't get close, you know. It was like a path come down through there from the school, you know. And you could walk down through there, you know. We could see her out there with the -- burning wood in that stove and all like she was cooking stuff on that stove, you know, to look at her, you know. [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewning: But she stayed there all winter?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah. She stayed there all the time. And you wonder how those people made a living.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh. Well, Harve Matheny fixed people's shoes didn't he? Isn't that what he did?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah. Yeah. He fixed people's shoes. Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: And did he live right there too?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, yeah. There was a little shanty-like.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh, but sometimes he would come down to your house?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, he'd come down home, yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: And stay?

Katherine Robertson: He didn't stay. He'd just come down, and I don't know, just visit, I reckon, to see what's going on. [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewning: And catch up on the news.

Katherine Robertson: I reckon. [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewning: Well, someone told me that he used to make peoples' warts go away. Did you ever hear that?

Katherine Robertson: That is true. That is true. He made one go off my toe.

Isabelle Chewning: He did?

Katherine Robertson: I had one right on -- next to my big toe. A wart was sticking out and he said, "I can make it go off."

Isabelle Chewning: And how did he do it?

Katherine Robertson: He rubbed his finger over it, and he'd say something in his mind. He wouldn't tell. He said something in his mind, and that wart went away. But he wouldn't tell nobody what.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh. Huh and how did he -- did he cook for himself too, or did people...

Katherine Robertson: Yeah. He just "bached" by his self because the stores was there and they could get stuff at the stores. And I had one of the teachers. I liked her. I can't think of her name. She was a preacher's wife. She lived at Rockbridge Baths. Her name won't come to me. And she

would get me to get her, you know, I'd go home for lunch and then she would get me to get her things at the store, at the store for her.

Isabelle Chewning: So she'd give you the money and then you'd go buy things for her lunch?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. Yeah, and I'd stop by the store and get it for her. Uh-huh, and pick it up. I liked her.

Isabelle Chewning: Where did Clint Troxell live?

Katherine Robertson: Way down by Brownsburg towards Walker's Creek. He lived in a shack down there. They said the chickens roosted on his bed. [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewning: And how did he support himself?

Katherine Robertson: I don't know.

Isabelle Chewning: Did he just do odd jobs for people, work for people?

Katherine Robertson: I don't know. I don't know what he ever done. I don't think he done much of anything.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh. But I think someone told me he -- was he the one who used to raise Dahlias, flowers?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah. He would have an orange, an orange tree, or lemon tree, I believe, or orange tree. He would have something like that to fool with, and he just lived down there in a shack, you know, to his self. I met a woman down here at Staunton one time, and this other lady told me that she was his sister, but I never did know any of them. I just knew he stood on the corner up there.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh. Did your family have a big garden?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh, yeah, that we raised...

Isabelle Chewning: Where was the garden?

Katherine Robertson: Right there at the house. Because we used to make the sauerkraut, you know. You know, people -- I think about during the Depression, I remember back during the Depression people would store up stuff, I remember. They'd buy a whole sack of sugar, and they'd buy a barrel of cider, you know, put it in the basement. And they'd put stuff up, you know, for to use for winter time and all, which people don't do now. And just can stuff, you know.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you go to the cannery to can things, or did you can them at home?

Katherine Robertson: I think I remember going over there, but I don't -- I remember that cannery, but I don't know if we canned any. I don't remember if we canned. I think most -- we did most of it there at the house. Daddy was good on garden, raising vegetables. It's stuff, you know, he didn't raise like squash and -- I eat stuff now, squash and cauliflower and stuff which we didn't have in the garden. He was good on raising onions and potatoes, and beans, and cabbage, and stuff like that.

Isabelle Chewning: He had a big family to feed.

Katherine Robertson: Yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you always have plenty to eat?

Katherine Robertson: We always had plenty to eat because we raised hogs, had meat, and chickens. I was saying something not long ago. I said, weekend come people go out and kill one of them chickens. [Laugh] Eat chicken, you know on Sundays.

Isabelle Chewning: Your mother would fry chicken for Sunday?

Katherine Robertson: Fried chicken and we had ham, chicken. Daddy would go out rabbit hunting, squirrel hunting, you know. And he had that old place -- Daddy had the old place out in Pisgah.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, he did?

Katherine Robertson: And it had a spring, a nice spring out there and it had the nicest watercress.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh.

Katherine Robertson: I like that watercress. I like greens.

Isabelle Chewing: Where was it?

Katherine Robertson: It's on out past -- next to Newport, there's a little old road that turns up in there [Pisgah Road or High Rock Road], and he had the -- I think the Miller boy, Milton Miller I think he's renting it now or something.

Isabelle Chewing: What did your father use it for?

Katherine Robertson: He, at one time, he-- well, he had guys that cut the wood off of it.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh, I see. Uh-huh.

Katherine Robertson: And then he had some cattle out there at one time. And after he got too old and all he sold it, found some guy that bought it.

Isabelle Chewing: But the garage was really his main occupation.

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewing: Did he do the butchering himself, or did he have somebody come in.

Katherine Robertson: No, Frank Patterson and some of the guys, Ollie Strickler, they helped, you know.

Isabelle Chewing: Someone, I think, Mollie Sue Whipple was telling me one time there was a big rain, and the creek got up, and Herb [Carwell] got washed under the road and then came out on the other side.

Katherine Robertson: Oh.

Isabelle Chewing: Do you remember that at all? You were probably really little.

Katherine Robertson: There used to be a little old culvert down there. You know, they had these big round pipes that'd go through. And Herbie and Ray and-- they was down there and they had the bicycle setting in the water, you know, spinning the wheel. How Herb got in there I don't know. Herb got in there, he was just little, got in there and he washed through that pipe, and they caught him when he fell out.

Isabelle Chewing: That must have scared everybody.

Katherine Robertson: If he would have, you know, got-- if his clothes had just got hung in that thing it would have been too bad. He was awful about falling. Him and Ray would go fishing, and down next to where Sam Patterson and them lived down there [Old School Lane], he fell in. And he washed, they said, clean through under the bridge and then Ray pulled him out, went in. [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewing: Sounds like he was in trouble all the time!

Katherine Robertson: I don't know what-- you know how the way kids are, I just don't know.

Isabelle Chewing: Did he help your father as he got older, in the garage?

Katherine Robertson: Frank's the one that helped Daddy. A lot of times Daddy would have to go somewhere in the mornings and sometimes Frank would stay at the garage until he came back. He probably had to come to town, you know, get parts or something, and then Frank would stay there until he'd come back.

Isabelle Chewing: Did Frank-- was he a mechanic? Did he learn to be a mechanic?

Katherine Robertson: He didn't. No, he left and went up to Ohio. He worked in the Goodyear plant in Ohio, you know. They make tires, stuff up there. He went back to Ohio. He came -- he came, moved back here on account of Lavon's mom, and was over at Monticello Lake. He was living over there. So he just -- he sold his house last year. I believe it's been about a year, and he went back -- they went back because his kids live up in Ohio, so he went back up there. Put her mom in a nursing home, and then they went back to Ohio. But he comes down all the time.

Isabelle Chewing: And this is your nephew?

Katherine Robertson: Frank, my brother.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, your brother.

Katherine Robertson: My brother, Frank.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, oh, I didn't realize that-- I thought there were only four of you left, so there are actually...

Katherine Robertson: Let's see, Frank's in Ohio, and Ray's over Lyndhurst, and Herb's in Fairfield, and Janet's up at the [Rockbridge] Baths, and I said, "I reckon I'll die here."

Isabelle Chewning: Well, it's a nice place to be.

Katherine Robertson: I like it, you know. I didn't like where I was. I lived in Lexington, and I don't like town. I like the country. I liked it here because I feed the deer, and I've been trying to raise some bluebirds, and it's -- I get out here and just mess around, go back here and mess around. It makes you feel better.

Isabelle Chewning: How long have you lived here?

Katherine Robertson: I moved here in '75.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh. Oh, so you've been here quite a while.

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: Did you build this house?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. I took -- I had books of houses, and I studied the plans of them, and I built this one the way I wanted. And I told my husband -- we looked at houses and water had been in the basements. I said, "No, I ain't about to put no money in them." I said, "I'll stay where I was at." But I didn't like where. I lived up there in Lexington close to the recreation field. You know, I was just closed in. Houses -- I don't like that, houses on top of houses. I like a little space, you know, you can breathe. And I didn't like it because they built these new houses.

Isabelle Chewning: And your husband worked at the plant too? He worked at Lee's Carpets?

Katherine Robertson: He worked there, and then he worked at the Farmer's Co-Op. He drove the oil truck, like the gas and oil truck, and then he went on a tractor trailer. He drove tractor trailers for over tens years, Wilson's Trucking. That's why we moved, because he was driving down here to the Wilson's Trucking, and I had been in and out of King's Daughters Hospital. We had two cars up and down that road, so that's why-- that's why we moved.

Isabelle Chewing: So you were working at King's Daughters?

Katherine Robertson: No. I had my back operation.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh, I see, I see. Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

Katherine Robertson: And I was coming down to see the doctor down here, Dr Webster. And I would look -- when I come to the doctor I hunted for land then. So then we sold our house up there and built this one.

Isabelle Chewing: I think before we turned the tape on you mentioned that you stayed out with Mrs. East [Breezy Hill at 1223 Hays Creek Road] sometime while her husband traveled?

Katherine Robertson: One time. I don't know. He was hunting or something. I went down and stayed with her while he was gone.

Isabelle Chewing: Because she didn't want to be by herself?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewing: And it was her son who was killed in the war, right, George?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, I believe so. And then it was the Slusser boy. Wasn't the Slusser boy named-- what was his name? Was he-- I thought his name was George.

Isabelle Chewing: His name was George too.

Katherine Robertson: George, too.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh.

Katherine Robertson: I remember Hugh Slusser. It was another one, but I can't think of his name.

Isabelle Chewning: Harry and Bruce.

Katherine Robertson: Bruce. I remember Bruce. I see the, you know, deaths in the paper, that we went to school with. There was a Keith Miller, he was way out in some state. I remember seeing his death in the...

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh. How about the phone? Did you all have a phone when you were growing up?

Katherine Robertson: No. Un-un.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh.

Katherine Robertson: Mom and them didn't get one until later years.

Isabelle Chewning: You were close enough right in town that if you needed to talk to somebody you could just go...

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewning: Talk to them, probably. Do you remember any important events that happened in Brownsburg?

Katherine Robertson: [Laugh] No. Back when I was there, there wasn't much -- there wasn't much going on. I think about back, you know, they didn't put salt on the road. People, when it snowed -- my insides are just growling and I ate some lunch! Back when I was -- I know how we used to get up in Brownsburg and sleigh ride down through there, you know. Because back then they didn't put salt on the road and all. When they'd scrape it, it was still just a nice slick bed on it to sleigh ride, and nobody was out, you know like they are now.

Isabelle Chewning: It seems like it snowed a lot more back then than it does now.

Katherine Robertson: Oh, yeah. I've seen it up to the fence posts. We don't -- we don't get it like we used to. It used to drift so bad. I've seen it out there next to the New Providence Church right up to the top of the fence posts.

Isabelle Chewning: Well, I bet people had a hard time getting up that little hill right at the stop sign in Brownsburg [at the intersection of Sterrett Road and Brownsburg Turnpike] in front of your house when it was slick.

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh. Yeah.

Isabelle Chewning: Were some people still using horses and buggies in your memory?

Katherine Robertson: I remember Mrs. Dice out there next to where you live. [Mrs. Dice lived at 2081 Sterrett Road.] Mrs. Dice had that buggy. [Laugh] She'd come into Brownsburg and Miss -- lived down back of Brownsburg, she had an old Model-T, old Model-T Ford, you know, she'd drive. She was a McClung, I think.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, Uh-huh. Miss Sally Reid McClung?

Katherine Robertson: Sally Reid, Sally Reid McClung.

Isabelle Chewning: Uh-huh. Was Mrs. Dice related to the Dice that lived next to the Wades?

Katherine Robertson: You know, I don't know if they was related or not. And then the Dunaways, you know, lived out there, too [at 2297 Sterrett Road].

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, right. Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

Katherine Robertson: I guess Audrey's still living, that I know of. He, now, the boy, I can't remember his name, I seen him when Aunt -- my Aunt Fern Clemmer died, was buried. I saw him, Rudolph [Dunaway]. He was Rudolph. I saw him then. In some way they were kin, the Dunaways and the Clemmers, somehow they were kin. And Rudolph died. I think Audrey, I think, she's still living. I don't remember seeing her death.

Isabelle Chewning: Was your family pretty healthy other than all your broken bones?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah. I mean, they done their own doctoring. They mostly, they didn't have -- they didn't spend a lot of doctor bills and all. We'd take aspirins. I remember we had mumps. I don't remember -- Mom always thought those little liver pills cleaned your liver and all that. But I read in later years that they didn't do what, you know, it says on it.

Isabelle Chewing: Did you have measles and chicken pox and all those things?

Katherine Robertson: I don't remember chicken pox. I know we had the mumps, but I don't remember measles and chicken pox.

Isabelle Chewing: Did your mother have any home remedies?

Katherine Robertson: They would -- we called it the toddy.

Isabelle Chewing: Uh-huh. What was it?

Katherine Robertson: And I still do it. You know, when you can tell before you get choked up it's going down -- scared it'll go into pneumonia. You start getting choked up down in your chest, and I mean, I fix me a hot toddy.

Isabelle Chewing: What do you put in it?

Katherine Robertson: You take a glass of pretty warm water, about a half a glass of pretty warm water, and put a little whiskey in it, and sweeten it down with sugar, and then take it with an aspirin at night. Take it when you go to bed. That has helped me more than anything. It'll knock it right out of there.

Isabelle Chewing: I have to remember that.

Katherine Robertson: And some people says they put honey in it. I've talked to people, and that's the thing 'cause I'm scared, you know, going into pneumonia when it tightens up down in there. When it tightens up and goes down in there and tightens up that's when I'm scared of pneumonia. And then you take it and you go to bed and that will -- that'll help -- help you. That's the reason I stay in, on account of this flu and all, stay away from the people. I just stay -- because they've been running it in the paper, don't want people at the hospital on account of the flu. And, but when I start and know I'm choking up and them, and I just take it at night, and an aspirin. And that breaks it up. I don't let -- I don't wait until it gets a good holt.

Isabelle Chewing: Right. Yeah. Did people worry a lot about polio?

Katherine Robertson: I don't think they do now. You hardly ever hear of it.

Isabelle Chewing: I mean then when you were growing up?

Katherine Robertson: See, my mom had it.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh, she did?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah. My mom had polio. Yeah. It left her crippled.

Isabelle Chewing: Did it?

Katherine Robertson: Uh-huh.

Isabelle Chewing: Uh-huh.

Katherine Robertson: And she got around good except, you know, she had corns and calluses on her feet. And she had them on her feet, but other ways -- she just couldn't wear shoes. Like she'd wear tennis shoes and things. She just couldn't wear other shoes like some people do.

Isabelle Chewing: How about holidays? Did you all celebrate -- did you have a big celebration for Christmas? Did you have a big Christmas dinner?

Katherine Robertson: Well, Christmas, and well, mostly Thanksgiving and Christmas was the main ones. And, you know, back when they had big families, they don't do like they do now. I tell people -- I tell people the way you did. When we was kids we'd take a shoebox and write our name in it, you know, and put it around under the tree. People think that's funny now. And then, you know, so they'd know which one to put the doll and the coloring book, and crayons and things in when we were kids. But now, you know, these kids, it's all got to be wrapped, and presents, you know, around the tree.

Isabelle Chewing: Did you have a big Thanksgiving dinner?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, we always had Thanksgiving dinner and Christmas.

Isabelle Chewing: Did you butcher on Thanksgiving? I know a lot of people...

Katherine Robertson: See, probably around that time. I think that's most of the time around that time they butchered. I didn't get in that. Virginia helped, you know, to cut up the meat and stuff. I couldn't -- I can't stand -- if I worked in meat, I just wouldn't eat it. I got a weak stomach and, you know, I just-- I couldn't stand to work in it that's --

[End of Side A]

Isabelle Chewing: Well, Mrs. Robertson, I think I've gotten through most of my questions. Anything else you can think of?

Katherine Carwell I don't know. Did they tear down both of the buildings up on the hill, at the school?

Isabelle Chewing: The stucco is still there. And then the building that was the shop, it was the Agriculture building, that's still there.

Katherine Robertson: I remember one time we was up there. Us kids just walked up around there, you know. And way back, you know, they had these old pot-bellied stoves that they'd heat with, put coal in there. And they kept it down in the basement. That was just a coat building, I think. And they kept it down in the building -- in the basement part of it. And it was this one pane of the window out. I would always just spook easy. [Laugh] It was ghosts. It was just one pane out of the window. And we just picked up this little gravel, and throwed it through that pane that was out, and that window just raised up.

Isabelle Chewing: Oh, my goodness!

Katherine Robertson: [Laugh] You know, my parents used to tell some of the awfulest tales, you know people who was killed around Brownsburg?

Isabelle Chewing: Oh they did? Like what?

Katherine Robertson: Well, way back, it's sort of like that little old building in here [referring to Betty Carwell's book]. They would tell me, said that -- they named who the people were. That took an axe, and killed this boy in this little old building. I don't know if that's the little old building that's in here or not.

Isabelle Chewing: You're talking about Mrs. Morris' little ---

Katherine Robertson: No, it's another one somewhere down around there somewhere. They was telling me about the man took an axe and killed the boy. [A newspaper article in Betty Carwell's material titled "A Shocking Tragedy on Walkers Creek" describes the axe murder of 11-year old

Wilbur Cales by his aunt, Myrtle Dice who had been “adjudged insane.” The article is dated November 7, but there is no year.] My parents used to tell tales. [Laugh] That was something, though. That pane was out of that window, and we just threw that little gravel through there, and that window just raised up. [Laugh] That’s not no lie, either. We said there was ghosts up there.

Isabelle Chewning: Any other ghost stories in Brownsburg?

Katherine Robertson: But you know, I tell people, we used to see the jack-o-lanterns come down that creek. It used to be an old be swamp up there. My parents said it was a horse and buggy that went down in that swamp. You know, the McLaughlins used that camp up there [Camp Briar Hills].

Isabelle Chewning: Right.

Katherine Robertson: Used to be a big swamp way back up there. But we used to – I said it must have been gas coming from that swamp. At nights, you could see the lanterns just like, come down the creek. And then they’d go out. We called them jack-o-lanterns. I tell people that we could see them. They just run along. You could see it just run along that creek, the light. Like a lantern. But I don’t reckon – evidently it’s just gas coming from that swamp, I figured.

Isabelle Chewning: Coming down Hays Creek?

Katherine Robertson: It would come right along the big creek. It would come down the big creek, and then that little creek then that came from Mr. Dice’s down? It would come down that big creek to that -- where that little creek, and it’d go out. And that’s true. We would see it. Just like a lantern running along that big creek. And one night, after this other bridge over there, that little culvert that used to be there, you know where the Runkles and my parents lived [between Sleepy Hollow and the Sears House]. They built this other bridge over, a bigger bridge. One night, it just lit up there. It just lit up, then it was gone. [See attached article on Briar Hills for possible explanation of lanterns.]

Isabelle Chewning: That’s really strange.

Katherine Robertson: I know. It’s just like all at once, it just lit up, and that’s it. But that’s true. I mean we did use to see the jack-o-lanterns. And that’s the only thing I could figure, maybe gas coming from that old swamp. Of course, it’s dried up.

Isabelle Chewning: Do you remember when the camp was up on the hill?

Katherine Robertson: Um hmm. I remember Nell. Nell Brown, Cara Fan [the daughters of Margaret McLaughlin Hogshead, who started Camp Briar Hills as a summer recreational camp for her children and a few of their friends.] Mrs. McLaughlin, I remember. They’d come walking along the road, you know, to Brownsburg. Do they still own that, the McLaughlins?

Isabelle Chewning: No.

Katherine Robertson: Who owns it?

Isabelle Chewning: A woman, her name is Lucy Rhame. There's a log cabin up there now.

Katherine Robertson: Oh, it is?

Isabelle Chewning: Um hmm.

Katherine Robertson: What do they do, use it just for a summer vacation?

Isabelle Chewning: Um hmm. Right.

Katherine Robertson: Lee Massie [McLaughlin]. Is he still – didn't he die?

Isabelle Chewning: Right, Um hmm.

Katherine Robertson: Sam [McLaughlin] – I reckon, is he –

Isabelle Chewning: He's dead, but his son, Sandy, lives out in Pisgah now.

Katherine Robertson: This Mrs. McLaughlin that lived over here, she was a good neighbor.
[Material not related to Brownsburg was not transcribed.]

Isabelle Chewning: And you think they were related to the Brownsburg McLaughlins?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, um hmm, they were related. [Material not related to Brownsburg was not transcribed.] The Williams boys [Dr. Williams' sons] bought Mrs. McLaughlin's place. Joe's son?

Isabelle Chewning: Um hmm.

Katherine Robertson: And they've got them a shop over there. They mow for people and do stuff like that.

Isabelle Chewning: Tree work and things, too, right?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, I think. Um hmm.

Isabelle Chewning: Well, if there's nothing else about Brownsburg you'd like to tell us, we sure appreciate your time.

Katherine Robertson: I don't know. I don't know. Not many are left over there that, you know, I really know.

Isabelle Chewning: Well I really appreciate you taking the time to talk to me. I wanted to make sure I got to talk to somebody from the Carwell family.

Katherine Robertson: It was just always – it was a quiet little place, you know. And everybody just went on about their own business, you know. Ocie [Supinger] and Mattie [Wade] run the telephone

company, and then the Wades run the bank. And Mrs. Bosworth standing up there and run the post office. All of that's gone, you know. Everything's gone, I'm telling you. They don't – do they still deliver the mail in there?

Isabelle Chewning: There's a post office. They still have a post office, right.

Katherine Robertson: I remember Irene Swisher, you know, always carried the mail.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, she did?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, Irene carried the mail to go over at Decatur or somewhere.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, did she!

Katherine Robertson: Some way traveled over in there and backwards and forwards to carry the mail.

Isabelle Chewning: He [Lewis Swisher] drove a school bus, I know.

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, um hmm. I wonder what J. L. [Swisher] is doing.

Isabelle Chewning: I see him in the post office.

Katherine Robertson: Do you? I wondered what he done after his parents died.

Isabelle Chewning: I see him in the post office. Um hmm.

Katherine Robertson: I wonder what – is he "baching" by himself? Is that what he's doing?

Isabelle Chewning: I think so.

Katherine Robertson: I asked Marjorie Ann [Whitesell Chittum] what he's doing after his parents were gone. She said, "I don't know."

Isabelle Chewning: Well, I sure do appreciate it. Thank you so much for all your time.

Katherine Robertson: Well, did you want to look at –

Isabelle Chewning: I'd love to look through your book. [Begins to look through Betty Carwell's materials.]

Katherine Robertson: Hanging out over them banisters [shows pictures of Miss Pett Berry's house, the remaining part of which is now used as the post office at 2741 Brownsburg Turnpike.]

Isabelle Chewning: That was Miss Pett, and her last name was Berry?

Katherine Robertson: I think it was Berry, Miss Pett Berry. She walked with a cane. Now [Ronnie] Green, he died, didn't he.

Isabelle Chewning: He did.

Katherine Robertson: Is she [Letha Green] still living? Seems to me like she died.

Isabelle Chewning: I think she died, too.

Katherine Robertson: Now who's living there [referring to a picture of 2693 Brownsburg Turnpike]

Isabelle Chewning: Jo Swisher [Heath] lives there. What's that?

Katherine Robertson: I remember walking by them old houses going to school. It was the Withrow-Wade house.

Isabelle Chewning: That's where Jo Heath lives now.

Katherine Robertson: Oh, that's the back part of it. Cause I think slaves – I think it said slaves stayed in some of the back parts.

Isabelle Chewning: That's the Green's house [referring to a photo of 2682 Brownsburg Turnpike] .

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, the Wiseman's lived there.

Isabelle Chewning: Somebody's working on that.

Katherine Robertson: There's where Carl Swope lived [referring to a photo of 2671 Brownsburg Turnpike].

Isabelle Chewning: And Mrs. Morris lived there, right?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, um hmm. Oh, that's the back part of it. That's where the Huffman's station was [referring to a photo of 2712 Brownsburg Turnpike]. I saw their anniversary in the paper. If I'd have seen them out somewhere, I wouldn't have known them. Cause I haven't seen they was young, and they've aged. That's the old shanty that [Harve] Matheny lived in. Daddy moved it out in Pisgah. That says here he "was a shoe maker 1930 to 40." That's the shanty he stayed in. And Mrs. Bosworth, that's the house she lived in [referring to a photo of 2703 Brownsburg Turnpike]. They tore the porch off of it, didn't they? That's it. That's the old home of Andrew Patterson. [Mrs. Robertson is referring to a photo of 2703 Brownsburg Turnpike from McClung's book, The Historical Significance of Rockbridge County.]

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, that's what it looked like with the porch!

Katherine Robertson: Mrs. Bosworth lived there, and she'd sit up there on the porch.

Isabelle Chewning: This is just great, everything they've collected.

Katherine Robertson: The Gilmore house, anybody still live there [referring to a photo of the Gilmore house at 2613 Brownsburg Turnpike]?

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, no.

Katherine Robertson: Says Clyde Runkle said he'd eaten up there many times.

Isabelle Chewning: Gilmore. They were black people, right?

Katherine Robertson: Right across from the Potters. Is that house still there?

Isabelle Chewning: The house is there, but it's almost falling down.

Katherine Robertson: And then that's the old Dudley house [referring to a photo of 2640 Brownsburg Turnpike]. Right there, it was on the side of John Layton's [Whitesell's]. That was John Layton's grandparents. Is it still there?

Isabelle Chewning: Oh it's there. It's real fancy now.

Katherine Robertson: I thought they'd done a lot of work. Glasgow Craney's house [referring to a photo of 2650 Brownsburg Turnpike]. Tootsie [Margaret Wade Harris] said she'd go up to see the Craney girl [Frances Craney Porterfield]. She died.

Isabelle Chewning: Frances Porterfield.

Katherine Robertson: Frances. Yeah. Used to be, along the creek was a woolen mill at one time. [Reading from the book:] "Mr. Tom Bosworth told Miss Mattie Wade that they used big thorns to hold the wool together." Brownsburg wasn't nothing, you know, to build it up.

Isabelle Chewning: What's that? Where's that?

Katherine Robertson: The Newcomer house.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, okay. That's where Dick Barnes lives now [referring to a photo of 8 Hays Creek Road].

Katherine Robertson: See, the Englemans at one time run the store there. And then they moved to Stuarts Draft. They had a store up at Stuarts Draft. And then – I can't think of his name right now – run that one. There's where they stood on the corner [still referring to the photo of 8 Hays Creek Road]. And that was just an old blacksmith's shop [referring to a photo of the building directly behind Old South Antiques.]

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, right. That's next to the garage, right?

Katherine Robertson: Um hmm. Right there. [Reading and referring to a photo of the building that houses Old South Antiques:] “The Trotter-Whipple-Nye-Heffelfinger Store.”

Isabelle Chewning: That was Mr. Supinger’s store, and Carl Swope’s [store]?

Katherine Robertson: And there’s where they [Harve Matheny and Clint Troxell] stood on that corner right there.

Isabelle Chewning: That’s the museum [referring to a photo of the building that will house the Brownsburg Museum].

Katherine Robertson: Well I, you know, I wondered where it was at. There’s where I seen that truck and thought somebody was living in there. Who lives in this house [referring to a photo of 2728 Brownsburg Turnpike.]

Isabelle Chewning: Nobody right now. Mollie Sue’s [Whipple’s] grandson was living there, but he moved out.

Katherine Robertson: And then the Potter’s [referring to a photo of 2610 Brownsburg Turnpike]. Mollie Sue and them lived in that one at one time [referring to a picture of 2685 Brownsburg Turnpike].

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, this says, “Dr. and Mrs. Walker lived in this house when they were killed.” Were they the ones in the [courthouse murders]?

Katherine Robertson: Whipples owned that house. Well Mollie Sue lived in that house when she taught school. See, there’s part of that old house there that goes up to the school. [Unrelated material not transcribed]

Isabelle Chewning: Then there’s Ag’s [Patterson] house [2744 Brownsburg Turnpike].

Katherine Robertson: Who lives there now?

Isabelle Chewning: Well, Randall Wade lived there.

Katherine Robertson: Oh, that’s right!

Isabelle Chewning: Then a man named Richard Kauffman built a log house there [at 2752 Brownsburg Turnpike].

Katherine Robertson: Oh, is that right? [section of audio not transcribed]

Isabelle Chewning: There’s Mrs. Whipple’s house [2728 Brownsburg Turnpike].

Katherine Robertson: I remember Miss [Margaret] McCormick that worked for them. You know, she’d go down at the barn and milk. I’d see her going all the time, backwards and forwards. There’s

Mrs. Mollie Sue [Whipple, referring to photo taken at the October 26, 1980 [??] ceremony celebrating the designation of the village as an historic district]. And Jen Heffelfinger. Them others, I don't know who they are. Brownsburg celebration. That's Lib Ward's place [referring to a photo of 2763 Brownsburg Turnpike].

Isabelle Chewning: You wouldn't even recognize that now. They've ripped the front off of that, and it's a log house now. They took off all the weather boarding.

Katherine Robertson: Well, for heaven's sake.

Isabelle Chewning: It's log.

Katherine Robertson: Who lives there?

Isabelle Chewning: They're working on it right now.

Katherine Robertson: Oh, they're working on it. Mr. Bosworth's [referring to a photo of 2690 Brownsburg Turnpike]. There's nobody living there either?

Isabelle Chewning: That one's for sale.

Katherine Robertson: That looks nice, the Patterson's [referring to a photo of Janis Ayres current residence on Old School Lane]. Somebody told me one time, I don't know if you ever heard it or not, said she was bootlegging.

Isabelle Chewning: Who, Mrs. Huffman?

Katherine Robertson: Yeah. I didn't know if you ever heard that or not.

Isabelle Chewning: No, I never heard that.

Katherine Robertson: It was somebody who was kin to her told me. She said well, "I came from Ohio," and some of her people came here. They used to live in Brownsburg, the Huffmans used to live in Brownsburg. Up where all the maples go. That house up there where the Huffmans used to live, Claire. Some of our kin people come here from Ohio sometimes and spend a couple of weeks, and they told her not to stay all the time – she lived in town. And they told her not to stay in there all the time, to go up there and stay some. She didn't like to go up there, 'cause she said them old men come in there and went out carrying their little brown bags. [Laugh] That's what she said.

Isabelle Chewning: What is that? Oh, that's where the Drivers live [referring to a photo of 22 Hays Creek Road].

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, Mr. Dice. Walter Dice. The places, they look nice. That's something – tore the porch off of that [referring to a photo of Sleepy Hollow at 2645 Sterrett Road]. Wonder who lives there.

Isabelle Chewning: They're real nice people. Their name is Reid.

Katherine Robertson: That's Mrs. Buchanan's house, where Mrs. Buchanan lived [referring to a photo of 2623 Sterrett Road]. [section of audio not transcribed] I went up there to their anniversary not long ago. There's the Wades, and the Dice house. I always thought he kept that nice. You know that house [referring to the Carwell Sears house, 2669 Sterrett Road] had a good basement, but if I could have remodeled the downstairs like I would have wanted it, it would have cost too much money. You know? Cause I'd have it all tore out. That's the reason I said it'd pay you to build. But I'm telling you, it's awful to build one. It's awful. I wouldn't start again. [Information on the audio not transcribed.] Oh, there's Clint [Troxell, referring to a newspaper clipping from February 22, 1944] [Laugh] There he is with his oranges.

Isabelle Chewning: Giant lemons.

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, with his lemons! [Laugh] They say he'd wear one old pair of overalls until they got so dirty and then he'd just throw them away and buy him another pair. [audio not transcribed]. I remember hearing of him, Billy Ward. That was Elizabeth Ward's brother, I believe that's the way it went. There's Mrs. [Sally] Wade, she taught music. Probably you'd like to read some of this stuff.

Isabelle Chewning: I'd love to see that sometime.

Katherine Robertson: Here's an article: "Brownsburg Man Is Fatally Shot by Sam Carter." I though it was somebody that shot – I must have it wrong. See, up there at that house across from where the Potters was, that house you said was empty now on the turn [the William Gilmore house]. It was somebody they said shot this black man there one time. They never did find out. You know, way back in those days –

Isabelle Chewning: People settled things that way?

Katherine Robertson: It was rough. It was rough back in those days, I think it was kind of rough around Brownsburg. I think that's the little old house they was talking about that somebody killed. This guy took an axe and killed a boy in, I think that's it. Did you have anything you wanted to do, or was you in any hurry or anything?

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, no, I'm not in any hurry.

Katherine Robertson: That's New Providence Church [referring to photo].

Isabelle Chewning: That's before the Sunday School building.

Katherine Robertson: I see Richard Beard once in a while. [information on audio not transcribed] There's the old McClung mill, you know down back of Brownsburg [on Hays Creek Road]. I doubt if there's nothing there now.

Isabelle Chewning: No, it looks like this.

Katherine Robertson: Oh, there is Miss Sally [Reid McClung]! I've heard that name. Is it a song or something about Miss Sally? Would be good, wouldn't it, to make a song, "Miss Sally," [Laugh] Her and Mrs. Dice and the horse and buggy. I think about back then. [Laugh] Sometimes I wished it was back then. The way it is now, I'm telling you! [Reading:] Miss Sally, she taught a Bible class in the office of the mill. Didn't know that. That's good, Wade's Mill [referring to photo]. That's out there at Daddy's, where Daddy owned, out in Pisgah [referring to photo]. Part of that house was in good shape.

Isabelle Chewning: Looks like it's in good shape.

Katherine Robertson: Herb always said he would have liked to have had that place. The guy who bought it started to build a house up on the hill, but he never did finish it. There's where – it was out there, is a good spring water out there. Good spring, and had good watercress. I like watercress. But I don't like to wash it.

Isabelle Chewning: Oh, there's the [Carwell] garage [behind Old South Antiques].

Katherine Robertson: Floyd always said he got the old garage. I don't know if Daddy give it to him or what. And then Floyd's son got it, and then he sold it to somebody. Somebody wanted to keep his car in there. That was Lois [Carwell, the sister who died in the fire]. She got burnt. That's her, Lois. This is Lois and Virginia. Daddy and his turkey. Freddie. That's Virginia's boy. He built that little – he took popsicle sticks and built that little church or whatever it is. That's Herb on his motorcycle. Herb would get ready to go, and his dog would hop on there with him. [Laugh] Here's our bunch [referring to a family photo].

Isabelle Chewning: Which one is you?

Katherine Robertson: This one, the ugly one! [Laugh]

Isabelle Chewning: [Laugh]

Katherine Robertson: That's Mildred. She was the trouble-maker. Mildred was the trouble-maker. She just stirred up something all the time, most of the time. That's Marjorie Ann [Whitesell Chittum]. [Laugh] That's Herb. He had his white head. Me. That's Ray, and that's Helen, and that's Virginia. There's Mildred. Floyd. I don't know, that don't look like Frank to me, but it must be him.

Isabelle Chewning: There's somebody who's cut out of the picture.

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, I don't know who that is. And then that was taken when Janet lived up there in that house at Rockbridge Baths and we was all up there, had a picnic. Another picture of us. Something about – I remember talking about Indian Bottom down there [referring to a copy of an item from McClung's book, The Historical Significance of Rockbridge County].

Isabelle Chewning: My goodness, that was great! That was just great.

[interruption in audio]

Katherine Robertson: Yeah, Lauderdale.

Isabelle Chewning: Mary Lauderdale?

Katherine Robertson: Did you know her?

Isabelle Chewning: No.

Katherine Robertson: She was Preacher Lauderdale's daughter. She taught at Brownsburg and –

Isabelle Chewning: What did she teach?

Katherine Robertson: English. I failed English and I quit.

Isabelle Chewning: Was she a hard teacher?

Katherine Robertson: I don't know if she was really hard or not. She was a good person and all. I don't know if she was that hard or not.

[End of Side B]

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