

**June 2006**

**Interview with Mollie Sue Whipple**

**By Dick Barnes**

[Information enclosed in brackets [ ] is not on the audio and is inserted for clarification or editorial purposes.]

Barnes: This is Dick Barnes, and I'm sitting here today with Mollie Sue Whipple. The date is June 10, 2006, and this is being recorded in Brownsburg. Mollie Sue lives now at Sunnyside in Harrisonburg, VA, but she's back for a visit in Brownsburg, and we're going to ask her a few questions today about her experience having been such a long-time resident of Brownsburg. It's nice to have you here and back in Brownsburg, Mollie Sue, and I do have a few questions I want to ask you for our history museum. The first one is: What is your first memory of Brownsburg? I know you've lived here a long time, but what are your first memories of coming to Brownsburg?

Whipple: Well, I've lived in Rockbridge County since age five, and when I was in high school, I played in sports, basketball and baseball, and Brownsburg was one of the teams we had to play. So we would come over here to play ball, and they would visit us in Brownsburg – or Goshen – the next year. So that's how I got to know about Brownsburg.

Barnes: Your first introduction to Brownsburg was sports.

Whipple: Yes.

Barnes: Coming over and playing sports.

Whipple: Playing ball.

Barnes: Mollie Sue, before you moved to Brownsburg, you lived in Goshen. Is that right?

Whipple: That's right.

Barnes: What brought you from Goshen to Brownsburg?

Whipple: Well, to teach school.

Barnes: Now, what year was that?

Whipple: 1936. I applied to the School Board for a job to teach school, and this was my first assignment, to come to Brownsburg to teach in 1936.

Barnes: And you taught at the – it was then called the Brownsburg School?

Whipple: Brownsburg Academy. And I taught -- had the first and second grade when I first arrived. But it was the first year of compulsory education, and they beat the bushes and brought them all in, and when they got through registering the first day of school, I had 64 students. Ages 12-6, so they soon knew that was an impossible situation. So they divided them, and got another teacher to teach the second grade, and I kept the first grade.

Barnes: Were there only two grades to start with?

Whipple: No, we had high school.

Barnes: So you had one through twelve?

Whipple: One through twelve.

Barnes: And you were the first grade teacher –

Whipple: That's right.

Barnes: -- in Brownsburg, in 1936.

Whipple: That's right. And I taught there for 33 years.

Barnes: And you also met somebody at school that had a great influence on your life, too, did you not? And you ended up marrying him?

Whipple: Yes. After I had taught four years, I think, then I met Fred. And I was thinking seriously then of moving somewhere else to teach. But I met Fred then, and we fell in love, and I got -- we got married in 1940. And I was married to him for sixty-some years. Almost 64 years.

Barnes: Well, I remember Fred well, and of course, the rest of that is history. I mean, as you say you lived in Brownsburg for over 60 years, and had a great experience with school, and of course, knowing everybody that lived in Brownsburg at the time, and even since you left teaching. What was Brownsburg like during the first years that you lived here? This was even before the paved roads, was it not?

Whipple: The road right through Brownsburg was paved. But up to that point on each end was dirt. But it was an interesting village, to say the least. We had five stores, grocery stores. On Saturday night, people didn't go to Lexington on Saturday night, they came to Brownsburg. And they brought butter and milk, and things to barter at the stores. You could hardly get a parking place, up and down the streets. And the men loafed in the stores and did the bartering, and the women visited in the cars. And the kids played up and down the street, and it went on up until about 10 o'clock at night. And it was very interesting to watch. [Laugh]

Barnes: So somewhat of a social event, and at the same time they were getting their provisions for the week, the next week, weren't they.

Whipple: That's right.

Barnes: Who owned the stores? Do you remember who the first owners were, say, at that particular time when you first came to Brownsburg?

Whipple: Well, this store belonged to the Whipples, but Mr. [Bob] Supinger ran the store.

Barnes: This is the one directly across the street from your home [2728 Brownsburg Turnpike]?

Whipple: Yes.

Barnes: And catty-cornered across the street from the Museum [2716 Brownsburg Turnpike].

Whipple. Yes. And in your home, your house [8 Hays Creek Road], the Farm Bureau had a store. And the [Huffman's] filling station had a store [2712 Brownsburg Turnpike].

Barnes: Now that's next door to – that's Mary Jane Burns –

Whipple: That's right.

Barnes: -- and Wood Burns' place.

Whipple: And John Layton Whitesell had a store in house [2664 Brownsburg Turnpike]. What was the other one?? The Bosworth's store [2707 Brownsburg Turnpike], which now –

Barnes: That was next door to P.G. and Susan Arnold's; the old bank –

Whipple: That's right.

Barnes: -- which, of course has been converted into a home. That was next door to P.G. and Susan Arnold's.

Whipple: Yes.

Barnes: Well, it was – what about, what about the churches. You know, when you first moved here?

Whipple: There was only the colored church, the black church, Asbury Methodist. And all the citizens around, and in the country went to New Providence. That was the only Presbyterian church in the area.

Barnes: Of course we've mentioned schools, and of course they had the Brownsburg Academy here at that point in time. And then, the social events, of course, were pretty much a Saturday night kind of thing. Was there ever any kind of organized social events in Brownsburg that you recall? On the Fourth of July, or any special occasions?

Whipple: No.

Barnes: People just created their own social events –

Whipple: That's right.

Barnes: -- when they came to town on Saturday night.

Whipple: Everybody did their own thing. [laugh] I might add for the schools, the Brownsburg Academy, was up here at first, and it was for men only, young men of the area. And there was a school for young ladies down at the Moneymaker house [Bellevue Home School at 952 Hays Creek Road].

Barnes: That's out on what we now know as Hays Creek Road.

Whipple: Yes. Hays Creek.

Barnes: Out here, the big red brick house –

Whipple: That's right.

Barnes: -- about two miles out of town here.

Whipple: They had quite a wonderful course of study for the young men [at the Brownsburg Academy]. Because many of them went right from there into law school. To be doctors and what not. That's another interesting thing about Brownsburg. They called the doctors, just like they called the preacher to the Presbyterian church. The community got together and put up the salary for the doctor to come. And they built a house, a brick house here on Main Street for the doctor, with an office in it [2744 Brownsburg Turnpike]. And they would call a doctor from, usually from Richmond from the medical school. He would come and live there and he was a country doctor. He would make calls out in the country at night. And that was an interesting thing. I would ride with them a lot, and show him where people lived. His wife and I were real good friends.

Barnes: Now, what was his name?

Whipple: Dr. Williams. Dr. Joseph Williams. And he moved from here then to Staunton. And Dr. Taylor came. And Dr. Taylor stayed a number of years, and he left here, and went to Richmond, I think. And then we haven't had a doctor since.

Barnes: Do I recall that somewhere I read there was Dr. Campbell --

Whipple: Yes.

Barnes: -- at one point time?

Whipple: Yes. He would be back early. I think at one point in time they had three or four doctors here.

Barnes: But that was --

Whipple: Yes

Barnes: -- long since.

Whipple: Horse and buggy days.

Barnes: Exactly. What do you think, in your memory was the most interesting or outstanding event that ever happened in Brownsburg during your living here? Anything stand out in your mind that -- I remember since I've lived here we had our 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary some years ago.

Whipple: That's right.

Barnes: Had a big crowd, a lot of people who came back, and all. But the -- most of the social activities and all, centered really around New Providence church, I think.

Whipple: I think so.

Barnes: You know. They had a lot of events and things like that that went on out there because everybody was, for the most part was a member out there.

Whipple: Everybody in the area belonged to that church. Came in horses and buggies.

Barnes: There have been a lot of other events that were not so good, I guess. Tragic events, bad events, anything come to mind that happened during the time that you lived here that were particularly not good events, or things that made an impression on Brownsburg that would come to mind?

Whipple: Well, before I came, I mean Brownsburg had many things to happen. Many fights. Saturday night was famous for fights here. [Laugh] And Brownsburg had a murder. They had much shooting and going on. I just don't recall.

Barnes: I had certainly heard of a story like that that was mentioned to me when I first moved here. In fact, I think it was Dr. Campbell, down here in Ag Patterson's house, that took care of maybe some of those people that were shot during that Saturday night.

Whipple: Yes, they had at the old Academy School, upstairs was an auditorium. And that's where they held court. And this guy -- Dr. Campbell's [Whipple is referring to Dr. Zachariah Walker] wife was seeing another man. And Dr. Campbell [Walker] took that up at court. And it just got kind of out of hand, and Dr. Campbell [Walker] did the shooting, didn't he?

Barnes: I'm not sure about that.

Whipple: I'm not sure about that either. But anyway, someone was shot.

Barnes: That was tragic.



Whipple: I just don't remember about that court scene. But they didn't have much court there afterwards. [Laugh]

Barnes: I know that you have told me many stories about events that have happened in your life while living here. Tales, I guess, we would call them. Do you recall any right off hand that you would like to share with us?

Whipple. Yes. When Mr. [Bob] Supinger had a store here, he and this other – before that, this lady [Mrs. Mamie Morris] came through Brownsburg, and she stopped up the street at the Swope house, and started living there. And she was a Quaker lady. And they built a church [Friends Lighthouse Mission Church in the lot between 2671 Brownsburg Turnpike and 2651 Brownsburg Turnpike]. And she had church up there, and lived there, and she took anybody that came in homeless – that came through, she'd take them in to live. And she had many different residents up there living with her. And one night, one of them was here in the store – Mr. Supinger's store. And they got in an argument about something. Anyway, they decided to take their fight out in the street. And Mr. Supinger had this big butcher knife that he'd been cutting cheese. So he carried the knife with him, and this other guy didn't have any weapon at all. So he went out there and was picking up rocks. Mr. Supinger said, "Ah ha, you dirty coward, you want to fight with rocks!" And Mr. Supinger was standing there with this big butcher knife to carve him up! And right down the street lived this little old lady with a little girl, a young lady, that she had taken in to live with her. So she said "Mary Stuart, run up there and see who that is fighting. So Mary Stuart ran up here to the fight, and she ran back down and said, "Grandma, it's one of those damn preachers from up at Mother Morris' fighting Mr. Supinger!" [Laugh]

Barnes: We were talking about your experiences at the Brownsburg Academy. Do you have anything you want to share with us, Mollie Sue, concerning any particular events that happened there?

Whipple: Yes, while I was teaching, most of the students came in on school buses. They lived out in the rural areas. And I had this one family that lived up on top of the mountain. They had to walk down to the bus, and then ride about – how far is it from McCray’s store into here? I would say eight or ten miles. And so I was having a program one night, and my main characters lived up on the mountain. And the other – the school bus went up for them. And the other children that lived on that route came, but this one child didn’t come. And I questioned where he was, and some of the people on the bus said “Well he had to jump a creek – coming down the mountain he had to jump the creek, and when jumped the creek, he jumped right on a skunk.” So he had to go back home. He couldn’t come. [Laugh] And another day, I had two little boys that came in, and you could smell them long before they got there. They’d been out skunk hunting. And they were just awful. So I told them I couldn’t let them stay in the room, the children were having a fit. So they’d have to sit out in the hall, and I’d give them their lessons out there. And I went out to check on them, and they’d disappeared. So I just didn’t know what to do. I started inquiring around, anybody had seen them, and somebody said, “Yeah, they said they were going home.” I was horrified, because they had to walk about eight miles home. And I got the principal, and she got in the car and started driving trying to find them, but they’d gotten all the way home before she found them. [Laugh]

Barnes: You mentioned the principal. What was the principal’s name?

Whipple: Miss Trimmer. Ocie Trimmer. And she ran the school more like a military concern. She just – I mean, she had strict, strict discipline. Nobody dared cross Miss Trimmer.

Barnes: And there was a lady that I’ve heard several people mention that lived down where the Post Office is now, and I think she had – she just had one leg. She had a wooden leg.

Whipple: That’s right.

Barnes: Who was that?

Whipple: Miss Pet [Berry]. And Miss Pet would come out on that porch, and prop that stump up on the railing, and stand and lean on her crutch, and talk for hours. She had a real loud voice. And right across the street was the doctor's office. And sometimes he would be away – he'd go to Roanoke on weekends, and he hadn't come back. So Miss Pet would tell everybody that would come to see the doctor where he was. And he wasn't there and he wasn't coming in. And so one day he came across the street, she was one the porch, and he got his checkbook out, and he said, "Miss Pet, I want to pay you." "Oh," she said, "Dr. Bailey, you don't owe me a thing." And he said, "Oh, yes, I do too. I owe for taking care of my business all the time, and I want to pay you!" [Laugh]

Barnes: Taking care of his business. The person that lived where Dick Anderson lives now that had – there was a hospital in the back of that [2671 Brownsburg Turnpike]. The little log building still exists there. Wasn't that a hospital at one time?

Whipple: It was.

Barnes: Right here in Brownsburg.

Whipple: This little lady I was telling you about a while ago [Mrs. Mamie Morris] had a hospital there when she lived there. The little --

Barnes: It's a little log cabin.

Whipple: Yeah.

Barnes: It's still out in the back. It's been restored.

Whipple: Yes. And she would take in people sick, and nurse them until they'd get well.

Barnes: And that was where she did a lot of the nursing. Or –

Whipple: That's right.

Barnes: -- whatever was. A little log cabin out there.

Whipple: And preach. She'd preach to them along while she was bringing them back to health. [Laugh]

Barnes: Mollie Sue, when I moved here twenty years ago, one of the things that struck me as being very interesting about Brownsburg was the integrated community which appeared to have been here for a long, long time. Was this the case? Has it always been an integrated community with the blacks and the whites?

Whipple: Yes, when I came here to live that surprised me too, because in Goshen, the blacks all lived in one section, the whites in another. But here, you'd find every other house was black, and every other house white. And we got along beautifully. And at church also. They built a balcony at our old church [New Providence Presbyterian Church], and the slaves all sat up in the balcony. We've had such a nice class of blacks here. They still have a very active church here. A Methodist church – that's in the village.

Barnes: I know, Mollie Sue, you've seen many changes take place in Brownsburg over the years. Would you like to share any of those changes with us?

Whipple: Yes, we had five stores at one time. And now we have no stores at all. You can't even buy a Coca Cola in Brownsburg. And also, we have a nice antique shop. We never had an antique shop before. And now we have a nice antique shop. We still have a Post Office which is very old, and heated with a fireplace. People enjoy going for their

mail in the mornings in wintertime, and backing up to that fireplace because there's always a fire there.

Barnes: Wasn't Mr. Whipple, Fred Whipple, very involved in the formation of the first bank here, the Bank of Rockbridge – the Bank of Brownsburg?

Whipple: Yes. Fred's father was. The first --

Barnes: Now his first name – he was David.

Whipple: David.

Barnes: David Whipple.

Whipple: And the first bank was in this very building we're in, this Museum [2716 Brownsburg Turnpike]. And the citizens got together and decided they needed to build a bank. And have a real bank. So they organized, and they put up money to build the bank across the street, the stucco bank [2711 Brownsburg Turnpike].

Barnes: What year would that have been, do you think? Early 1900's?

Whipple: Yes.

Barnes: Nineteen hundred? Nineteen ten?

Whipple: Yes I'm sure it had to be about that time. Also, when they built the bank, upstairs, in this building we're in had a telephone exchange in it, upstairs. So when they built the bank, they built the telephone exchange office upstairs. In the bank. And it stayed there until they sold the bank.

Barnes: The bank closed in 1999, I think here after several mergers with other banks. But it closed, as I recall, in 1999.

Whipple: I think it was. I have another story to tell you. This family [the Pete Carwell family] lived down here along the creek, and their house burned down. And they ordered one from Sears Roebuck. And the house came, and they built it up down there, and they had a lot of children. And one little boy – this was during the Depression – they called him “Herbert Hoover”. And Herbert Hoover was down playing along that creek one day, and it was up. It had been raining, it was high. And he fell in, and he washed through the culvert under the road, and the rest of the big kids ran across on the other side, and fished him out when he came through! [Laugh] I thought that was a funny story.

Barnes: Mollie Sue, it was your idea that prompted the creation of the Brownsburg Christmas Tour of Homes. Many successful tours have been held, raising funds for community improvement. And now the largest undertaking of the Brownsburg Community Association is the creation of the Brownsburg Museum. Your willingness to give us a long-term lease on the property next door to your home is sincerely and deeply appreciated. I assume the Museum idea pleases you.

Whipple: Oh, I’m so pleased with the idea, and I’m happy with the way it is coming together, and has brought the community together. I can’t wait for it to be finished and really see what’s there. That’s a nice little house, and it was just empty and falling down. I didn’t want to put a lot of money in it, and it’s just the right size. I’m just delighted to have it for the Museum.

Interview ends

**February 2008**

**Interview with Mollie Sue Whipple**

**By Georgiana Young**

Young: This is Georgie Young. I'm with Mollie Sue Whipple, and we're doing an interview on Leap Day, February 29, 2008. We're at Sunnyside Retirement Home in Mollie Sue's room. So say hello, Mollie Sue.

Whipple: Hello! Hello!

Young: Mollie Sue, how long did you live in the Brownsburg area? Were you born in Brownsburg?

Whipple: No, I came to Brownsburg to teach school in 1952 [according to earlier interview, correct date was 1936]. And I boarded at the McNutt's.

Young: Tell us about the McNutts.

Whipple: Oh, they were an interesting farm family. She just worked all the time. He was the funniest little man. He milked cows, and we'd watch him in the morning to go out to milk the cow, and he'd sit there milking the cow and go to sleep with his head poked into the flank of the cow and go to sleep. [Laugh] And we'd watch him and laugh. [Laugh] After a while, the cow would switch her tail around and hit him in the head and wake him up. And he'd get up and bring the milk on in the house. That was a wonderful place to board. We had a nice room, and Mrs. McNutt was an excellent cook. She had wonderful meals, and it was all home grown. She worked so hard all summer canning all this food and preserving it to have in the winter. And we always had the most delicious country ham. And we packed lunches. She gave us not only breakfast and dinner at night, but lunch. So we packed our lunch for each day; at school we had no lunchroom. You took your lunch. We had wonderful lunches. So I enjoyed my years

there. I lived there five years, I think, before I got married. I met Fred, my husband, while I was teaching, and we went together four years, maybe five, and we got married in 1940.

Young: Did Fred serve in the war?

Whipple: Yes. Fred was in Tokyo, Japan during the war. Freddie [Whipple's son Fred R. Whipple, Jr.] was two years old when he left.

Young: Goodness. That was tough.

Whipple: Before he left, he told Freddie that he would be the man of the house. He had to take care of me, he was going to be away. And Freddie had to take care of me. And he took that so seriously – he's still doing it! [Laugh] And I'll tell you, he was so cute, 'cause I would go to walk somewhere, and he'd say, "Wait now, Mama, let me hold your hand. Dad said to take care of you." So anyway, it got to be a funny joke. He [Fred, Sr.] was gone two years, and I stayed in Brownsburg, and in Goshen, my home, part of the time. But I kept my home [in Brownsburg], and we stayed there because I thought that's where my child needed to be, was in his own home.

Young: How about the farm – Fred's farm, the dairy farm?

Whipple: When he came back from the war, we got dairy cattle.

Young: Right out there in Brownsburg? Right behind your house [2728 Brownsburg Turnpike]?

Whipple: Right there in Brownsburg. Right in the middle of town. We had a barn on one side of the street, and a dairy barn on the other side. They picked up our milk there, I think from Harrisonburg. They ran a truck two or three times a week and picked up the milk from our dairy cows. We were in the dairy business a long time, I don't know how



long. Anyway, I was teaching school all this time, and I just had to walk up the hill to the school. I didn't have a car. What else?

Young: Well, did you have daycare for your kids, or did you –

Whipple: No. I had real good help. A colored girl that lived there in town, she cleaned house for me and did chores, and kept my children. If something happened and she couldn't come, I just took them to school. I was teaching primary grades, and I know I took Fred several times 'cause I had no one to keep him. And he was a real good child, and the children loved having him to come. They wanted to entertain him all day. [Laugh] And it was about five years before I had another child, before Sue [Whipple Hecht] came.

Young: Sue's five years younger than Freddie?

Whipple: Six years. She was six years younger than Fred. And I think I still had the same help when she came along.

Young: How about Miss [Ocie] Trimmer?

Whipple: Miss Trimmer was the principal. And she ran more like a military outfit than anything. I mean you lined up when the bell rang to go into class. You would line up outdoors and wait for her to – we called it “reading the riot act.” She would give us new rules, and tell everybody what they were doing wrong. And then we marched in by the beat of a drum, one class at a time. And I know regardless of the weather, you lined up outside and marched into your room.

Young: So the children didn't come too early to school 'cause they didn't want to have to stand outside in winter!

Whipple: Well, they all rode a school bus. All the children were bussed in. Nobody drove to school except some of the teachers. And they were all country children. All lived out in the country. They had many problems.

Young: Was there anything that ever happened in Brownsburg that was really exciting while you were living there? That you remember very distinctly?

Whipple: No, I really don't. I don't remember. We drove – one of the teachers who boarded at McNutt's with me had a car, so we drove into the village about a mile and a half, I guess, to teach school. And we drove her car. The children all came to school on school busses.

Young: How did you meet Fred?

Whipple: Well, he was a local boy. And he was going to school at AMA [Augusta Military Academy?] at the time. And he came home, I guess for weekends or something. Anyway, I met him. And his brother – I had met his brother before – Doug. And Doug called and asked me if I would go up to a movie with them, with his brother. I'd never met Fred. So I told him yeah, I'd go with them. So we went to the movie, and then Fred and I dated from then on. And then four years later, we got married.

Young: How fun! When did all the different stores close? How did that happen?

Whipple: Oh, there were five stores in Brownsburg at one time. And one was the Farm Bureau. At that time, there were five grocery stores, the bank, a telephone exchange office, and a garage, and what else? It was a busy little town.

Young: Where was the Farm Bureau?

Whipple: In the store that is Dick Barnes' house now [8 Hays Creek Road].

Young: In his house?

Whipple: Um hmm.

Young: And across the street where his [Dick Barnes'] antique shop is now was a grocery store?

Whipple: A grocery store. And there was a garage, Mr. Pete Carwell ran the garage around the corner from the store [across from the driveway to 22 Hays Creek Road]. And he repaired cars. He always had a lot of cars in there working on them. And the telephone exchange. And Saturday night was a busy, busy time in Brownsburg. Everybody came to town. You couldn't find a place to park, hardly, if you didn't come early. And they brought produce – eggs and butter and milk – and exchanged at the store for groceries. The store stayed open, it seemed to me, forever. We had a store, and that store stayed open until 10 o'clock at night. And people just loafing and talking. The men loafed in the stores, and the women loafed in cars. They'd park on the street, and they would move from car to car and visit each other. And the kids played up and down the sidewalk. [Laugh] It was a busy time Saturday nights.

Young: And the Whitesells had a store?

Whipple: Whitesells had a store, and the Huffmans had a store. The Farm Bureau had a store. Mr. [Bob] Supinger had a store. And the men often times – it was a time of – they'd have drinks, and it would get rough! Fights – many fights! [Laugh] And one night two men – one of the men got in a fight with Mr. Supinger and they ran out on the street, and Mr. Supinger carried this huge butcher knife with him. And the guy that he was fighting gathered up some rocks. And Mr. Supinger said, "Uh huh, you dirty coward, you want to fight with rocks!" [Laugh] And he was standing there with this big butcher knife to carve him up! [Laugh] It was very entertaining on Saturday night!

Young: How about the church?

Whipple: The church was a thriving church, an old church. New Providence. When was it organized?

Young: Oh, it was organized in 1746.

Whipple: And we had something like 500 members then. 'Cause everybody came in there. It was the only church in the village. There was a colored church, too. The [Asbury United] Methodist church. So the black folks had their church as well. I played for the black church one year 'til they got someone to play for it. Every Sunday afternoon, I'd go to the colored church and play for church service.

Young: Oh, how wonderful! 'Cause you couldn't go in the morning, cause you were playing the organ [at New Providence].

Whipple: No. I was at my church. That's right.

Young: How long were you the organist?

Whipple: I was the organist at New Providence for 33 years.

Young: Wow. When did you – had you always known how to play the organ?

Whipple: No. No. They gave me a lesson. I went into Lexington, and the organist at the Presbyterian church in there showed me about the organ and told me how to do it. I just kind of taught myself. I practiced every Saturday. I'd go to church and practice the organ and get my music ready for Sunday.

Young: Did you – was it because you played the piano and –

Whipple: I had played the piano, so I knew how to do that. But I had never touched the organ. But I loved playing the pipe organ. People would start dragging the music and I'd just put down another loud stop go right on. They'd catch up and sing right along with me! [Laugh] So we didn't have dragging music.

Young: Did you have more than one service on Sunday morning with all those people?

Whipple: No, we just had the one service. Eleven o'clock. We had Sunday School and a church service.

Young: And was Dr. [Henry] McLaughlin the –

Whipple: Yes. Yes. Dr. McLaughlin was there a long time. I can't remember, we had many ministers, but I can't remember who all they were.

Young: Was he [Dr. McLaughlin] the minister when you got there?

Whipple: I don't know. I think he was, but I don't remember. I'm 92 years old, and I don't remember a whole lot! [Laugh]

Young: You remember an awful lot! [Laugh] Don't tell me that! How about at school? Anything exciting ever happen at school?

Whipple: Always. Always. Of course, all the children came in on school busses. Nobody walked to school; they weren't close enough.

Young: How about the children in the village – did they walk?

Whipple: Yeah, but there weren't very many children in the village. But they did walk, those that were there walked. I had first and second grades. I think there was something

like 50 students. So they decided that was too many students for one teacher, so they got another teacher for the second grade. And I had the first grade.

Young: Is that what you taught the whole time? I thought you'd told me once that you were the Gym teacher for a while?

Whipple: Oh, yeah, that was part of my schedule.

Young: That was 'cause you were athletic, right?

Whipple: Um hmm. I had that with my class. And I taught PE, and music. One day a week, or two days a week, I don't remember, I had the other classes for music class. Teach them songs.

Young: So that's when you started playing the piano for groups?

Whipple: Yeah. Right. I don't remember when I started playing for church.

Young: Did they know you played the piano, and just came and ask you if you'd be willing to be the organist at the church?

Whipple: Yeah.

Young: And you were the organist 'til Carole Griffin came to the church.

Whipple: Yes, I was. A long time, 33 years.

Young: Wow.

Whipple: It was play for church on Sunday morning, then choir practice Sunday evening. Then I played for the colored church for a couple of years. They didn't have anyone. So

I'd go up there at 3 o'clock on Sunday afternoon and play for their church. That was a piano. That was fun. They loved to sing.

Young: That's right.

Whipple: I mean they would really sing. That old church would rock! [Laugh]

Young: Yeah, Presbyterians are a little more circumspect about their singing. [Laugh]

Whipple: That's right.

Young: This is wonderful, Mollie Sue. Do you have anything else you want to tell us about? Tell us about Fred and his dogs, sheep dogs, his Border Collies.

Whipple: Those Border Collies – when we first got married, he had bird dogs. And I never could take the bird dogs into the house and love them and pet them 'cause they were working dogs. “You'll ruin my dogs – don't take them in the house!” “Alright.” So then we had Border Collies. We got sheep, and we had Border Collies. And they were the smartest dogs. He'd let them out of the kennel and say “Go bring the sheep in.” And they were way down the path there, and then over the hill where you couldn't even see them. After while, they'd come back with the sheep. And one time they came back and one of the dogs – we had two – one of them went back over the hill, and I said, “Where is that dog going?” And he said, “Oh, probably jumped a groundhog somewhere and has gone back to get it.” Anyway, after while, that dog came back over the hill with this tiny little lamb. And he'd nudge that lamb along, and then he'd lay down and rest, let the lamb rest. And then he'd get up and get the lamb up and push it along. And it took them about an hour to get down off that hill into the barn with that little lamb. But the little lamb was in good shape when he got to the barn. [Laugh] He wasn't worn out.

Young: That's amazing.

Whipple: That was interesting. The sheep, I loved. When the sheep – sometimes they would be born on a really cold night and they wouldn't survive, they got so chilled. But Fred brought this lamb to the house one day. I kept a pasteboard box in the kitchen to keep the lambs in. So he brought this little lamb up and put it in the box one cold, cold morning. And he said, "I don't think this lamb's going to make it. It's almost frozen." So I kept watching the lamb, and the little thing is lying in the box, and I thought, "You poor little thing, you're not going to make it." But I had some brandy left over from Christmas. I'd made fruitcake, bathed it in brandy. So I gave that little lamb a tablespoon of brandy, and it wasn't long 'til he was up in that box, just jumping around. [Laugh] When Fred came to the house, he said, "What in the world did you do to this little lamb?" I said, "I gave it a drink of whiskey!" And he said, "Well, I'll tell you, he sure is frisky! I can take it back to the barn now." So he took him back to the barn, and that lamb did fine. So I decided that was a good thing to give to lambs when they were too cold.

Young: How long did you have sheep?

Whipple: Oh, I don't remember really. I guess we had them as long as he lived.

Young: Did you switch from the dairy farm to sheep, or did you have both at the same time?

Whipple: No, we switched. We got rid of the cows and had the sheep. We liked those better. They were easier to take care of. The cows were difficult in that they had to be milked twice a day. And I know once Fred was on jury duty. And he didn't come home, and somebody said, "Oh, he won't be home tonight 'cause they went into – they're going to have a night court." So I called up to the courthouse, and asked to speak to the judge. And they said I couldn't speak to the judge. Bobby Day was a Deputy then, and he said, "Mrs. Whipple, you can't speak to the judge. What did you want?" I said, "I want Fred to come home and milk these cows! They're standing around here bawling, and I can't milk the first one. And there are 60 of them down here wanting to be milked." So he



said, “Well, I’ll tell the judge, but don’t be surprised if he doesn’t come home tonight.” [Laugh] So anyway, it wasn’t long until Fred came. He said, “How in the world did you have the nerve to call up there and want to speak to the judge?” [Laugh] I said, “Well, if you stood here and heard these cows bawling wanting to be milked very long, it didn’t take much nerve. And I didn’t know what else to do.”

Young: Had Fred’s family had a dairy before him?

Whipple: No. He went into it cold turkey. But it was real successful. And we liked the sheep much better than the cattle. It didn’t take as much work. And it was more profit. Shear those sheep and have the wool to sell and eat the lambs. Sheep were good business.

Young: And along this time Fred got involved with the bank, too, right?

Whipple: Yeah. His father was instrumental in getting the bank – the first bank in Brownsburg. So Fred fell right into it, and he was always connected to the bank as long as it was there.

Young: That was wonderful. He was President of the Board of Directors for a while, right?

Whipple: He was President of the bank for a long time.

Young: I remember when I’d go into that bank, he’d always be there. Wanted to come in and check on how things were going.

Whipple: Oh, he stayed there. Every day he went to the bank. [Laugh] Jane Wade and Doris Lunsford ran the bank.

Young: Jane trained Doris, right?

Whipple: Yeah, she did. Jen Heffelfinger was in there, and her brother John [Wade] when I went to Brownsburg.

Young: Oh, really?

Whipple: Um hmm. They ran the bank as long as they were living. It was a nice little bank.

Young: It certainly was.

Whipple: Bank of Rockbridge, Brownsburg. There were three branches, I think: Raphine, Fairfield, and Brownsburg. Had the three banks.

Young: And eventually they had a bank in Lexington?

Whipple: Yes. They consolidated. Brownsburg was a thriving little town with five stores, a bank, and a post office, and a garage.

Young: A garage is crucial! [Laugh]

Whipple: A garage. And at that time, too, the blacksmith shop, 'cause horses always had to be shod, or the wagons had to be fixed. So we had a nice blacksmith's shop.

Young: Where was that?

Whipple: It was up on the corner as you come out of Brownsburg going to Bustleburg, going around that corner [2610 Brownsburg Turnpike]. Lots of junk there now, but it was a good blacksmith shop.

Young: Wow! I didn't know that.

Whipple: You didn't?

Young: No. I didn't know that's where the blacksmith's shop was.

Whipple: They shod horses there.

Young: And when you first started, were you just at the old school, and then they built the new school?

Whipple: Yeah. When I went, they had condemned the old school there. We couldn't use the upstairs. The upstairs was an auditorium, but we couldn't use that 'cause the building had been condemned, and they didn't want children up there. So they built a new school then. I don't know what date that was. But anyway –

Young: But it's the old school that's still standing? You weren't there when the original school was –

Whipple: Yes.

Young: Oh, you were?

Whipple: It was the Brownsburg Academy. The original.

Young: And that building was torn down?

Whipple: Yeah.

Young: And the stucco building went up?

Whipple: Yes.

Young: And then while you were still there, they built –

Whipple: Built the big brick building. And also the little brick building on the hill behind. And that was for Home Economics and Shop. The boys took Agriculture and Shop class. During the war, they used the shop a lot to repair farm machinery that would break down. They would have night classes to teach the farmers how to keep their machinery going. That was interesting. [Information repeated from prior interview deleted from transcript here.]

Young: How about Fred's family? How long had they lived in Brownsburg?

Whipple: Oh, I don't know. For years. Years. It was a big family. There were five boys and two girls in that family. They had lived there – Mr. Whipple ran the store for years.

Young: And so Fred was the first one in the family to farm?

Whipple: Um hmm. Yeah, he was. The store that the Whipples had – they ran both the one that Dick Barnes has for an antique shop [Old South Antiques], and where he lives [8 Hays Creek Road]. The house he lives in was a store.

Young: And the Whipples ran both of those?

Whipple: Um hmm. There were five stores when I was in Brownsburg. There was the Whipple's store that the Supingers [ran], and the filling station that the Huffmans ran, and the Whitesells had a store. That's three. The Farm Bureau ran a store. There's another one. I can't remember the fifth one.

Young: That's all right. What else was I going to ask you? So Fred, your husband, started farming. Now your son farms.

Whipple: Yeah, and my grandson.

Young: And your grandson.

Whipple: Yeah, that's all Robert [Whipple, Fred Jr.'s son] is going to do is farm.

Young: And is he running his father's farm now?

Whipple: Um hmm. Yeah, at my place, when I was in Brownsburg.

Young: Oh, really?

Whipple: He's going to have baby calves. He's fixed up a place in the barn, and under the carport, I think he told me. Anyway, he's got it all ready to go into raising baby calves.

Young: I think that's wonderful. So instead of being one of these old farm families, it's a new farm family.

Whipple: That's right. That's all he wants to do.

Young: 'Cause it started with your husband, not his parents, they were merchants.

Whipple: Yeah. Well, Freddie, Robert's father farmed.

Young: Yes. And his grandfather farmed.

Whipple: And Robert can fix anything. He just has that kind of mind. So anytime in the family anybody had something broken, they'd call Robert to come and fix it. And he could fix it usually. And one day he was fixing – Fred told him to fix the radio in his car,

it wasn't working. So I looked out. Robert went there and worked on it a while. I looked out to see what he was doing, and he had all the parts up on the roof of the car. And then he came in and sat down. So I said, "Robert, what's going on out there? Have you gotten it all fixed?" He said, "I'm thinking. Don't bother me, I'm thinking." So I didn't say anything more. After while he got up and went out there and put all that stuff in the car somewhere, and the radio is still running! [Laugh] He got it fixed. But that tickled me when said, "I'm thinking."

Young: Well, he [Robert Whipple] went to Tech [Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University], and Freddie [Fred R. Whipple, Jr.] went to Tech. How about Fred?

Whipple: No, he didn't. But my father went to Tech. And that's what Robert said when he was going. Would I write something for him to get him in. And I said, "You just tell them that you're the fifth generation to be a Tech student. Your great-grandfather went to Tech." I said, "That'll get you in." And it did. That's a picture of my father with his Tech uniform on. See the high collar? That's what the uniform had then.

Young: Well, this is really fun, Mollie Sue. Do you have any other things that you want to say, or do you just want close out?

Whipple: I'll close out.

Young: Well alright. Thank you so much.

[Interview ends]

**April 2008**

**Interview with Mollie Sue Whipple**

**By Georgiana Young**

Young: It's April 30, 2008, and I'm here with Mollie Sue Whipple, and we're talking about Brownsburg. Mollie Sue, you were telling me at lunch about the building that the museum is in [2716 Brownsburg Turnpike]. Could you tell us the history of that? Whose it was, and then how you acquired it?

Whipple: That little house belonged to my mother-in-law, as did the big house that I was living in, the Whipple house [2728 Brownsburg Turnpike]. And it went for sale, so I bought it. And I didn't know what I'd ever do with it, but anyway I didn't want anybody living that close to me. So I bought that little house, and it's just ideal for the museum. In fact, it is a little museum, because the first telephone office was in that building, and the first bank was in that little building.

Young: And your mother-in-law acquired it after the bank moved across the street?

Whipple: No, they had it first. And then after I had it, they thought that would be a good place for the bank. That's where the bank was, and they decided it was too small, they had to build a larger bank. So they built the bank across the street [2711 Brownsburg Turnpike] and put a second story on it so they could put the telephone office upstairs and have it all in one building.

Young: Can you tell us who any of the families were who lived there before that?

Before –

Whipple: Who lived in that house? No. They were tenants, and I don't remember who they were.

Young: And you said a woman who worked for your mother-in-law, for Mrs. Whipple –

Whipple: Yes, Miss Margaret McCormick lived there when she was working for my mother-in-law. And Miss Margaret died, and no one lived there, to my knowledge, after that.

Young: And you bought it.

Whipple: And then I bought it. Yeah, when it went for sale, I bought it.

Young: Did Miss Margaret help Fred at the dairy?

Whipple: Yes, she did. She was his main help when he had milking cows.

Young: So she was a pretty useful lady!

Whipple: Oh, she certainly was! She had no home and no family, so she made her home there. And she lived with Mrs. Whipple for a long time.

Young: Did Fred grow up in – which house did Fred grow up in?

Whipple: The one across the street. The big house. The one we're in now. [2728 Brownsburg Turnpike]]

Young: And that was his parents' home? And his mother moved out when you all moved in?

Whipple: No, she died. We didn't move in until it was empty.

Young: Oh. So did you live somewhere else before you –



Whipple: We lived across the street. In what Dick Barnes' house – the brick house [8 Hays Creek Road].

Young: So that's where you and Fred lived when you were first married?

Whipple: Um hm.. First married.

Young: Did Mrs. Whipple die after the war, or –

Whipple: Yes, I think it was.

Young: What happened – Fred's father died fairly young?

Whipple: Yes, I think so.

Young: And his mother lived for quite a while after his father died?

Whipple: Yes. Yes.

Young: Okay. What about Fred's brothers?

Whipples: Now this is not about the Whipple family.

Young: No, no, just history of Brownsburg. And she [Isabelle Chewning] was interested in Doug and D.W.

Whipple: They're the only two brothers I knew. I didn't know the other boys.

Young: We've got several editions of the Brownsburg Tattler, the school newspaper.

Whipple: Yes.

Young: And among the business ads is an ad for W. E. Mays Mill in Brownsburg. Do you know which one that was?

Whipple: No, I don't.

Young: Yeah. I didn't remember it either. Because I thought there were just Hays Creek [McClung's] and Wade's Mill.

Whipple: Yeah, I thought so, too.

Young: And Hays Creek was called McClung's for a long time.

Whipple: I think so.

Young: How about a little more about the black community in Brownsburg. What was the name of the woman who kept Freddie and Sue?

Whipple: Ada. Ada Pleasants. When I first came to Brownsburg to live, the blacks and whites all lived among each other. There was no section for black folks and white. We all just lived together.

Young: Well that's great!

Whipple: And it was so different. I came from Goshen, and in Goshen, the blacks were all in one section of the village, and whites were all in the other section. So this was so different, because across the street from me lived a black family. And up the street further, there was another black family, and then a white family. And that was sort of unique with Brownsburg.

Young: Wonderful, too. Did Fred employ any of the black men to work on the farm?

Whipple: Yes, he employed Jim. Jim Brown was his name, and he was more like Uncle Remus than Uncle Remus himself. Jim entertained my children telling them stories. And one day I missed the children, so I walked out back of a wood house we had there to see if I could find them. And they were sitting behind that house on a bucket, an old turned upside-down bucket. Jim was sitting on that, and telling the children stories of Uncle Remus! [Laugh]

Young: Oh what fun! Were there any black businesses in the village? Someone mentioned the Gilmore store south of where Doris and Walter [Lunsford] lived. Do you remember that?

Whipple: Uh uh. I didn't know about that.

Young: And do you remember any of the ministers at Asbury? You used to play the organ at Asbury, is that right?

Whipple: The piano. I'd go up there and play for them on Sunday afternoon at church. I did that for about a year.

Young: Do you remember the Asbury lawn parties?

Whipple: Oh, yes! A great time! [Laugh] Someone always got shot! Oh, they'd have big fights. It was an exciting time.

Young: Who were the major black families in the village?

Whipple: Pleasants, I think. And Browns were about the two main families.

Young: There aren't any descendants of the Wade family left in the area. Mollie Sue was good friends with the Wades: Mary Wade, Margaret Wade, and Kate Wade.

Whipple: Yes.

Young: And Jen Heffelfinger.

Whipple: And John. They had a brother, John. Kate, Mary and Margaret and Jen and John. There's another one.

Young: And the house that they grew up in [34 Beard Lane] was named Castle Carbury.

Whipple: Yes, that was out in the country. Out near the church [New Providence Presbyterian Church].

Young: Why did they name it that?

Whipple: I don't know.

Young: Who were Freddie and Sue's good friends when they were growing up?

Whipple: The Heffelfinger children.

Young: Sue and Grace were good friends?

Whipple: Grace, um hmm. And Steve [Heffelfinger]. And Donnie Swope was a neighbor. I don't remember the girl's name – Joyce Swope. They lived in the brick house on Main Street in Brownsburg [2671 Brownsburg Turnpike]. We lived down the street.

Young: Do you remember Mary Monroe Penick who came from Lexington to direct the New Providence choir?

Whipple: Mary Monroe Penick was a great organist of the First Presbyterian Church in Lexington. She taught music, and she directed the choir, a beautiful choir. And she was very musical. And she agreed to come out there and direct our choir for a while.

Young: And why did she do that?

Whipple: Because we didn't have anyone, I think. That was before I joined the church. I didn't belong to the church at that time. The fact is, I had just gotten to Brownsburg at that time. And they got her to come out and direct the choir and teach them. Had a real good choir.

Young: How about some of the characters in Brownsburg: Harve Matheney, who lived in a house in wheels and repaired shoes?

Whipple: Yeah, he lived – it was like a trailer. And he was a shoemaker. He repaired shoes. He was a character. He had no education whatever, but he was wise in ways of the world! [Laugh] Had lots of wisdom!

Young: And he would just go around to people's houses?

Whipple: No, they'd take shoes to him.

Young: And where was his –

Whipple: His shop was – his little trailer was parked behind the – what is now Dick Barnes' house [8 Hays Creek Road]. And the buildings behind there. There were two big garages. So Harve's trailer was parked right through there, and he lived there year round.

Young: How about Clint Troxell?

Whipple: Clint Troxell was another character. He was a plumber, and he lived down in Walker's Creek. And every morning, the first thing you'd see out on the street in Brownsburg was Clint Troxell. He got up early, and he walked to Brownsburg, and he sat on the porch, the Supinger's store porch, all day. [Laugh] And talked. And he was a character. He loved his whiskey. He drank quite a lot.

Young: So by then he wasn't a plumber anymore? When he used to –

Whipple: Oh yes, when you had water problems, plumbing problems, Clint would come. And you knew he had been there because he'd pick up your nice towels and wipe the pipes on them, you know. And you knew he'd been there when he came, 'cause it was really a mess when he left! [Laugh]

Young: And how about Susan Porter? The black woman who lived in the shack behind Dick Barnes' house and cooked outside?

Whipple: She did. I don't know much about Susan Porter except that I'd see her over there. And she did live there by herself. I don't know whether anybody ever looked after her or not.

Young: You might have just arrived by the time of the dedication of the new brick schoolhouse in 1936 – were you there for that?

Whipple: No, I don't think so. Because when I came I started teaching in the brick building.

Young: Is there anything else? How about the Heffelfingers? Tell me about the Wades. There was another family of Wades, wasn't there?

Whipple: The Wades that lived out at the mill.

Young: Right.

Whipple: Um hmm. That was another family.

Young: And they owned a house in town, too, right? Wasn't the house that's now – you know that one next to Bill and – you know who I mean? Across the street from where you were and down the street? Between Betsy and the pool hall and that area? They did that fancy addition –

Whipple: The bank was there [2711 Brownsburg Turnpike], and the pool hall and Bosworth's store [2707 Brownsburg Turnpike], and the Bosworth house [2703 Brownsburg Turnpike]. And then the Withrow house 2693 Brownsburg Turnpike]. And then the Swope's house [2671 Brownsburg Turnpike].

Young: The person I'm thinking of – Miss Amelia Wade – I thought she had a house –

Whipple: Oh they lived out at the mill.

Young: Yeah, but I thought that eventually they owned a house in Brownsburg?

Whipple: Not that I know of.

Young: Oh. Okay. And they weren't related to the Wades you know?

Whipple: No.

Young: Nor were they related to the Wades that owned Wade's mill.

Whipple: That's right.

Young: Isn't that funny. Three families of Wades, and nobody knew each other. I mean, weren't related to each other.

Whipple: That's right.

Young: Is there anything else you can think of that we need to know? Anything really fun that happened, or exciting?

Whipple: Well, I think you need to know more about Brownsburg –

Young: Alright.

Whipple: -- than the people.

Young: Okay.

Whipple: When the folks in Brownsburg decided they needed – like they needed a bank. They just got together and gave the money and did the bank. Built the bank [Bank of Brownsburg] and got it started.

Young: Whose idea was it?

Whipple: I don't know, but the leaders of the village! [Laugh]

Young: Wow.

Whipple: And you know, we got so many people started coming in, they needed a doctor. So they decided to call a doctor, just like the Presbyterians call a minister. They went to Richmond and found a doctor that would be willing to come to the country. So



they thought, “If we get a doctor to come, we have to have somewhere for him to live, and an office,” so they built the house Ag Patterson lives in, the brick house [2744 Brownsburg Turnpike]. And put the office in the basement. So that was for the doctor’s house and his office.

Young: And who was the doctor?

Whipple: Dr. Bailey was the first doctor that came. Then Dr. Taylor came. And then Dr. [Joseph] Williams. So we really needed these country doctors. One at a time, they brought all the babies in the community. And they did house calls. They always called on patients at night, and the patients would come to them in the daytime, to the office.

Young: When did the last doctor leave?

Whipple: Dr. Williams was the last one here. And he moved to Staunton during the war. That was the last doctor we had in Brownsburg.

Young: And is that when the Pattersons moved into that house?

Whipple: Yes, they bought that house then, and moved in there. Better cut that thing off and let me think!

Young: Alright.

[tape stops momentarily]

Whipple: When I came to Brownsburg, there was a lot going on here. We had five grocery stores, a doctor, a garage –

Young: Didn’t you say two garages? How many garages?

Whipple: Two garages. Oh, we had a garage to work on cars and then they had a blacksmith shop. A whole lot of horses had to be shod. A doctor. It was just a lot going on here. At that time, the post office – I mean the telephone office moved in. They had the bank.

Young: Did you have a mayor?

Whipple: No. Didn't have a mayor! [Laugh]

Young: No government.

Whipple: No government.

Young: Well that's nice!

Whipple: Everybody sort of ran it to suit themselves. [Laugh] We didn't have a sheriff. I should make notes.

Young: Tell me one more thing: what about the house that the Bobs [Bob Capito and Bob Williams] lived in that Betsy and Dick Anderson live in [2671 Brownsburg Turnpike]. Was there still – did that still have the – was that still a bar, or had that closed?

Whipple: No, no! That was a private home. A family of Pattersons lived in that house [referring to Sleepy Hollow on Sterrett Road]. That was a private home. Was that the parents of – no?

[tape stops momentarily]

Whipple: -- until they died.

Young: And then the bank just acquired it?

Whipple: Um hmm. The bank acquired that building.

Young: The bank started in the little building that you had, right?

Whipple: Yes, that little museum house was the first bank. And after they got the other one built, then they moved across the street.

Young: You were going to tell me a little bit about the school.

Whipple: Yeah. We had a large high school here [in Brownsburg]. They ran about five or six buses in from the country into the village. Brought children to school on school buses. We had a rather large high school. A Glee Club – they sang well. They would put on wonderful plays at the school to make money. And we had good ball teams: basketball and baseball. And we played other schools in the county, and that was a great day when we'd have a game day.

Young: When you first started teaching, Mollie Sue, I thought you taught elementary school. Was there both an elementary school and a high school?

Whipple: Yeah. We had an accredited high school. There weren't many in the county.

Young: So were they all in the same building, or was the high school –

Whipple: We had two buildings. The high school was in one building, and the elementary in the other building. They all came in on school buses, the kids did. I think we had about five school buses that would run in each day. It was sort of difficult at night to have programs with the children living so far away, a lot of them. But the parents would bring them, and they would come to the programs.

Young: So the elementary school was first through the eighth grade –

Whipple: First through seventh.

Young: And then the high school was –

Whipple: And then the high school was four years. High school. It had a Home Economics Department and an Agriculture Department. And during the war, the agriculture [department] had classes in the shop building. In the agriculture building. And they repaired machinery, that sort of thing.

Young: To help with the war effort?

Whipple: Um hmm.

Young: And your kids went there from first grade through –

Whipple: Through senior class. And they graduated as a senior in high school and go straight on into college and get along fine.

Young: And did they both go to [Virginia] Tech?

Whipple: No, Sue went to Longwood.

Young: Did most of the kids go on to college, or just a few of them?

Whipple: Um hmm.

Young: Most of them?

Whipple: Both of them.

Young: No, I meant of the people who went –

Whipple: Yeah, most families sent their children to college. Most of them went somewhere.

Young: That's great.

Whipple: It was.

Young: Tell me about the principal when you first came [Ocie Trimmer].

Whipple: She was a lady from Richmond, and a very strong person. And she ran that school like a military school. I mean that when the bell rang, everybody lined up outdoors in line and she had a drum. Somebody was beating the drum, and you marched to the drum, marched into the classroom. And you'd better be quiet! [Laugh]

Young: And when did she – when did she retire?

Whipple: Oh, I don't remember.

Young: Who replaced her?

Whipple: Then we had a man principal after that --

Young: Was that Betsy's father?

Whipple: -- from then on. I don't remember. I don't know. Could have been.

[interview ends]

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