

Sandra Turner Davis

The Roberson Project on Slavery, Race, and Reconciliation

March 26, 2019

[00:00:01.450] - Bernita Reed

This is Bernita Reed. I'm here in Sewanee, Tennessee, with Sandra Turner. It is March 26, 2019, and we're at the Sewanee Inn. I would like to start with her introducing herself.

[00:00:21.110] - Sandra Turner Davis

My name is Sandra Turner Davis, born and raised here in Sewanee. We were sheltered living here in Sewanee because it was all nationality and we could roam the streets like we wanted to unsupervised. Our parents didn't have to worry about us getting in no trouble because we was taught to mine everybody, even the old lady next door. [laughs] But anyway, she kept us straight. If we got out of line, she made sure she tell my mom and dad and we would get a spanking and we wasn't ready for off the mountain.

[00:01:15.730] - Sandra Turner Davis

We had everything we needed. We didn't lack for anything. My mother was a go getter. My Daddy, he was a handyman. He could do anything: fix cars, build houses, he could fix a lawnmower. He could just do anything, so when they say my Daddy can do whatever he wanted to. My momma was a go getter. She worked for the University and worked for the University for over 50, 60 years. She also had plenty of time to join CCJP. She was with the Cumberland Justice of Peace. That's what that CCJP stands for. She was an Otey Parish member. We all went to Otey. We all went to St. Mark's Church at the beginning and I got a picture of that, it's over there somewhere.

[00:02:27.860] - Bernita Reed

Okay. We'll go back to that.

[00:02:30.610] - Sandra Turner Davis

Anyway, the neighborhood wasn't that big, but we had quite a few Blacks lived here, and the older we get a lot of us moved, especially the young people. So once the young people got up to age, they just moved. Went to College, got good jobs, never came back. My daughter, for one thing, she likes Sewanee, but she don't want to live here. I love it because I lived in Atlanta for 32 years, worked at Northside Hospital, and that was my only job. I started out in housekeeping. I moved from housekeeping to surgery, working in the instrument room, putting all those little sterile trays together. And then I got interested in the operating room being a scrub tech, went to school for that. Come back, got my job at Northside Hospital and worked there for 20 years. So I did a little bit of everything. I have two sisters that lives in Atlanta. My oldest sister Flora Mae.

My sister next to her was Rita Bean and her husband. And they still in Atlanta. So that gives me an opportunity to go back to Atlanta to visit.

[00:04:05.330] - Sandra Turner Davis

I get tired of Sewanee, I go visit the babies. So I just love going back and forth to Atlanta and the traffic is getting horrendous. Thanksgiving, it took me 5 hours to get there because the traffic was so bad. But when I went back on Christmas, I decided I'll leave a little earlier, like 08:00 in the morning and it took me 3 hours. So that was better traveling.

[00:04:41.650] - Sandra Turner Davis

Now I'm talking about my Mama, my Mama, who was a warrior. She did all kinds of peace marches. She was dedicated to NAACP. And a lot of the people here in Sewanee did not want to do the segregation thing, but my Mama wanted better education for us. My Mama, Sarah Staten, Georgia Mae, Emma Hill- she lives off the mountain, but she was very dedicated to the NAACP. We got threats, we got phone calls, but we didn't get no cross in the yard! [laughs]

[00:05:33.770] - Sandra Turner Davis

But anyway, it was a small town, and my Mama fought hard. She was still working at 76 for the University of the South. And with her home going, they did a celebration like New Orleans. We walked from All Saints to the Cemetery. And you're talking about everybody just laughing and giggling. My mother had a good going away party, so, can't say anything bad about her. And she was a strict mother, too. So that's my story.

[00:06:20.490] - Bernita Reed

We're going to go back. That was a wonderful summary too. Tell me who the old lady was next door.

[00:06:30.890] - Sandra Turner Davis

Her name was Ms. Bird Conrad Wynton. And her sister live next door. Her name was Ms. Patty Kennerly. And like I said, we were sheltered and we did all. I just stayed as a child played and I didn't get nosy. I knew some of the people, but I didn't know their people. That's, like some of my classmates, I knew them, but I didn't know their mom and dad. And as I got older, when I came back to Sewanee, that's when I start finding out their mothers, their cousins, their family. And some of 'em, I don't know 'em when I see them, but I can tell.

[00:07:28.090] - Bernita Reed

But she was strict?

[00:07:29.800] - Sandra Turner Davis

Very strict. She even swept outside, kept the yard clean. I thought that was weird.

[00:07:40.870] - Bernita Reed

Where were you living at that time?

[00:07:43.350] - Sandra Turner Davis

I'm in my mother's house now. I'm over here off of Palmetto Road and Kennerly.

[00:07:51.670] - Bernita Reed

What's the address?

[00:07:56.510] - Sandra Turner Davis

57 Palmetto Road. P-A-L-M-E-T-T-O Avenue.

[00:08:01.790] - Bernita Reed

When were you born?

[00:08:03.420] - Sandra Turner Davis

I was born October 31, Halloween night.

[00:08:08.690] - Bernita Reed

What year?

[00:08:09.880] - Sandra Turner Davis

1951.

[00:08:12.510] - Bernita Reed

Same year.

[00:08:13.560] - Sandra Turner Davis

[both laugh]

[00:08:15.330] - Bernita Reed

And where were you born?

[00:08:18.970] - Sandra Turner Davis

Here in Sewanee, at the Sewanee Hospital. There's a hospital right across from Sewanee Inn, but that wasn't it. That's the new hospital. The old hospital is out by the theater up on the hill, and they're using it as a dorm, now.

[00:08:40.590] - Bernita Reed

Was it integrated?

[00:08:42.570] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes.

[00:08:44.550] - Bernita Reed

And do you know which doctor delivered you?

[00:08:49.230] - Sandra Turner Davis

No, I don't remember. I can look on my birth certificate.

[00:08:55.230] - Bernita Reed

And tell me, your parents names?

[00:09:02.780] - Sandra Turner Davis

My mother's name was Dora Turner. My Daddy's name was Willy Turner, but he had a nickname: everybody knew him as Inky.

[00:09:12.010] - Bernita Reed

And your mother's maiden name?

[00:09:14.830] - Sandra Turner Davis

Dora Gray. And I was trying to look up on. . .

[00:09:19.483] - Bernita Reed

Ancestry?

[00:09:20.590] - Sandra Turner Davis

The ancestors. And I couldn't pull it up, but my cousin called, and all I have to do is go to the...

[00:09:29.400] - Bernita Reed

Search area?

[00:09:29.900] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes.

[00:09:29.990] - Bernita Reed

Yeah, we'll find it. Yeah. Do you know when they were born?

[00:09:37.310] - Sandra Turner Davis

No.

[00:09:38.510] - Bernita Reed

And how far back can you go with your ancestry?

[00:09:43.670] - Sandra Turner Davis

Just them and the brother, that's it.

[00:09:48.890] - Bernita Reed

Whose brother is that?

[00:09:50.480] - Sandra Turner Davis

My grandfather's brother. Now, my Daddy, I can only go like grandmother. And maybe some of her people. Never tried to do the research.

[00:10:08.450] - Bernita Reed

What are the names that you know of those individuals?

[00:10:13.770] - Sandra Turner Davis

Cousin Pearl, she's from Elyria, Ohio.

[00:10:18.270] - Bernita Reed

And that's your...

[00:10:20.820] - Sandra Turner Davis

Grandfather's side. My mother's Daddy.

[00:10:24.930] - Bernita Reed

How is she related?

[00:10:26.910] - Sandra Turner Davis

Cousin.

[00:10:28.710] - Bernita Reed

And who's her father? Do you- That's okay. She's a cousin.

[00:10:34.530] - Sandra Turner Davis

Cousin.

[00:10:35.470] - Bernita Reed

And, that's on your father's side?

[00:10:41.550] - Sandra Turner Davis

My grandfather.

[00:10:42.390] - Bernita Reed

Your grandfather, for your mother or your father?

[00:10:46.040] - Sandra Turner Davis

My father's brother, uncle Charlie and some of his kids.

[00:10:58.280] - Bernita Reed

Okay, so that's Charlie Turner?

[00:11:02.300] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm.

[00:11:02.750] - Bernita Reed

Okay, good. Are there any stories that have been passed down in your family?

[00:11:11.310] - Sandra Turner Davis

No. They were pretty quiet. We found a birth certificate one time in Mama's fine cabinet, and it was a little boy she had had. And we tried to ask Mama about it, and she said, "I'll tell you later," and she never would tell me.

[00:11:28.960] - Bernita Reed

Do you remember the name?

[00:11:30.800] - Sandra Turner Davis

His name was... Oh, what was his name? I think it was Dylan. Dylan, I think.

[00:11:41.610] - Bernita Reed

Would it be Dylan Gray?

[00:11:44.680] - Sandra Turner Davis

Turner.

[00:11:45.000] - Bernita Reed

It was Turner?

[00:11:46.290] - Sandra Turner Davis

Uh huh. And when I was born, I was premature, only weighed 3 pounds. Mama had a hard time with me.

[00:11:56.010] - Bernita Reed

How many siblings do you have?

[00:11:58.330] - Sandra Turner Davis

It's five of us.

[00:11:59.820] - Bernita Reed

What are their names?

[00:12:01.680] - Sandra Turner Davis

Flora, Rita, Me, June and Gail.

[00:12:09.630] - Bernita Reed

All girls, you said?

[00:12:11.280] - Sandra Turner Davis

All girls, and one boy.

[00:12:13.110] - Bernita Reed

One boy, I missed that.

[00:12:14.990] - Sandra Turner Davis

So my baby sister, Gail, has passed. She passed two years ago, and my brother passed six years ago. He had a brain tumor. And they removed it, and it came right back with 'vengers'.

[00:12:36.270] - Bernita Reed

Yeah. I'm sorry about that.

[00:12:40.510] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm.

[00:12:40.870] - Bernita Reed

Tell me about your earliest memories of this area.

[00:12:47.230] - Sandra Turner Davis

Being able to go from house to house and sittin' down, talkin' to some of the elders. When they integrated, it was a little rough. You talkin 'bout scared. But Mama fought so hard for this desegregation, we had to go. It's like we had to go to Church. Mama made us go to Church. And now I understand why she made us go to Church. Because if you don't have God in your heart, and Jesus, you're not gon' make it. You're not gon' make it.

[00:13:32.670] - Bernita Reed

And you say that integration was hard?

[00:13:37.520] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes.

[00:13:38.360] - Bernita Reed

What happened?

[00:13:40.930] - Sandra Turner Davis

After the segregation, it was only five families. Kids could go. It's not the neighborhood, Sewanee. It was the people that lived off, like, Sherwood, Midway, Tracy City. They was mean to us, throwing rocks, spit on us. So we tried to stay together in a group.

[00:14:12.490] - Bernita Reed

Was this in-

[00:14:13.909] - Sandra Turner Davis

Sewanee.

[00:14:14.530] - Bernita Reed

-traveling to and from school? Or during classes?

[00:14:18.790] - Sandra Turner Davis

Well as had to walk, we walked to class. We walk to school. We didn't need buses.

[00:14:24.550] - Bernita Reed

And you were just, you were coming down from the St. Marks area?

[00:14:30.970] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm.

[00:14:31.510] - Bernita Reed

Across the road-

[00:14:32.480] - Sandra Turner Davis

-to the elementary school.

[00:14:37.550] - Bernita Reed

And, is there any particular incident that stands out that you want to tell more details about?

[00:14:49.250] - Sandra Turner Davis

Other than they were mean? And this day they act like it never happened. I've run into some of my classmates. And it's like, "how are you doing? Good to see you."

[00:15:08.850] - Bernita Reed

In the classroom also, they were being-

[00:15:12.210] - Sandra Turner Davis

The teachers was very good. The teachers was not mean. They didn't say anything out'd way. It was just once we got on the playground, they wanted to fight, push us around.

[00:15:30.910] - Bernita Reed

Were all the teachers white?

[00:15:33.040] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes.

[00:15:34.750] - Bernita Reed

What happened to your African American teacher from St. Mark's?

[00:15:39.410] - Sandra Turner Davis

Well, once we integrated, they went elsewhere. But they had all the teachers they needed at Sevanee. So they had to go somewhere else.

[00:15:56.210] - Bernita Reed

You didn't go to the school at St. Mark's, you went to the little schoolhouse?

[00:16:02.510] - Sandra Turner Davis

Right here in Sewanee, the Sewanee Public School.

[00:16:05.810] - Bernita Reed

I mean, before.

[00:16:07.700] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes, I did. I did. I did go to Sewanee Kennerly School.

[00:16:11.550] - Bernita Reed

Kennerly School. And who was your teacher there?

[00:16:19.610] - Sandra Turner Davis

Miss Peggy. What was her married-? Her maiden name was Kennerly. So the Kennerlys, was a big name here in Sewanee, too, because her Daddy was like one of the athletic Department. . .

[00:16:36.410] - Bernita Reed

Trainers?

[00:16:37.910] - Sandra Turner Davis

trainers. Peggy Kennerly, and Miss Sophia Miller was one of my other teachers. We went from kindergarten to fifth grade.

[00:16:56.370] - Bernita Reed

What is your memory of that school?

[00:16:59.490] - Sandra Turner Davis

It was nice. I loved it. We had fun.

[00:17:03.210] - Bernita Reed

How did they arrange the classes? One through eight. How do you do that? In one room?

[00:17:10.710] - Bernita Reed

Two- kindergarten to three, I think, was in one-half. And then the other half was Miss Sophia's up into eight.

[00:17:24.790] - Bernita Reed

And was that in the front, in the back of the room, or, how did you do that?

[00:17:30.310] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes. Because we even had a kitchen, two bathrooms. And we didn't do anything down in the basement.

[00:17:39.970] - Bernita Reed

So it had inside plumbing.

[00:17:43.570] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm. Inside plumbing.

[00:17:45.970] - Bernita Reed

Describe that building to me.

[00:17:48.750] - Sandra Turner Davis

It's a big building. Hmm... With two rooms.

[00:18:07.250] - Bernita Reed

It was square?

[00:18:07.427] - Sandra Turner Davis

It was square. Long, and square. Like that. Big ol' porch.

[00:18:07.580] - Bernita Reed

In the front?

[00:18:09.890] - Sandra Turner Davis

In the front, mhm. And a porch over there.

[00:18:12.170] - Bernita Reed

With a railing?

[00:18:15.150] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm.

[00:18:15.880] - Bernita Reed

And the steps going up?

[00:18:17.490] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm. Yes.

[00:18:18.750] - Bernita Reed

How many steps did it have?

[00:18:22.290] - Sandra Turner Davis

About five.

[00:18:23.520] - Bernita Reed

Going up the center?

[00:18:25.020] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm.

[00:18:27.030] - Bernita Reed

Did it have a single door or double door?

[00:18:31.350] - Sandra Turner Davis

It was a single door.

[00:18:33.150] - Bernita Reed

A big door?

[00:18:34.548] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm.

[00:18:35.430] - Bernita Reed

Was there a hallway at all?

[00:18:39.000] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes, it was a hallway. And then the bathroom was on the right-hand side. The kitchen was in front of us. And then a big room on this side and a big room on the left hand side.

[00:18:54.620] - Bernita Reed

So it had-

[00:18:57.610] - Sandra Turner Davis

And it has windows, plenty of windows so you can see out.

[00:19:02.220] - Bernita Reed

So it had a center hallway that went all the way back to the kitchen. On the left was your big classroom.

[00:19:11.070] - Sandra Turner Davis

Right, on the left. And on the right was another room. A bigger room.

[00:19:16.950] - Bernita Reed

A big room also?

[00:19:18.850] - Sandra Turner Davis

And they had cabinets for all their supplies in both rooms.

[00:19:24.130] - Bernita Reed

So there were two classrooms?

[00:19:26.130] - Sandra Turner Davis

Two classrooms.

[00:19:27.190] - Bernita Reed

Oh, okay. So that's how the classes were separated?

[00:19:31.810] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm. And then later on in years, there was another building called the Clubhouse. They ended up using that for the younger kids because we were getting to be bigger kids. And then they split the classes up again.

[00:19:50.350] - Bernita Reed

At the Club House?

[00:19:51.820] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm. But we kept the same Sewanee Public Kennerly School. But the class was getting bigger, so they needed a extra room to teach. And they took the little kids over to the cabin. And the rest of the kids was in the big school.

[00:20:15.010] - Bernita Reed

And that was about what years that they had the clubhouse used as- for the young kids?

[00:20:27.040] - Sandra Turner Davis

I'm not sure...

[00:20:28.750] - Bernita Reed

You think in the 50s?

[00:20:30.710] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yeah. Most of it was in the 50s.

[00:20:33.310] - Bernita Reed

And as far as the way they taught were your books...?

[00:20:45.010] - Sandra Turner Davis

We were behind in books, 'cause the bigger schools, as we say, the white school, had the best books. And then when they got through with them, they gave to us. And we was a little slow once we moved into the Sewanee public because we had those old books. We were still reading Dick James! "See the Dog run!" [laughs]

[00:21:14.040] - Bernita Reed

"Run, Jane, run?"

[00:21:14.750] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yeah! "Run, Jane, run!" [laughs]

[00:21:16.170] - Bernita Reed

[laughs] Oh my goodness. And I wanted to see what else I could find out about the teachers. Is there anything that stands out in your mind that they told you some sort of thing? They told all the students?

[00:21:42.190] - Sandra Turner Davis

No, I don't remember.

[00:21:43.940] - Bernita Reed

That's fine. For the clubhouse, when the students went there, the younger students, this was during the week, and then it was a clubhouse on the weekend?

[00:21:56.620] - Sandra Turner Davis

No.

[00:21:59.810] - Bernita Reed

It was just for students?

[00:22:01.590] - Sandra Turner Davis

For the students. Once they transferred the kids over there, no more clubs.

[00:22:10.290] - Bernita Reed

So this isn't the community center. There's also-

[00:22:16.530] - Sandra Turner Davis

Right, there's St. Mark's Community Center. And it's on Alabama Road.

[00:22:21.650] - Bernita Reed

Okay. So the clubhouse was used as what before?

[00:22:28.810] - Sandra Turner Davis

A club. It's that Jane Brown down there and several other well known.

[00:22:39.290] - Bernita Reed

Who else do you remember being down there?

[00:22:50.790] - Sandra Turner Davis

I think Jane Brown came.

[00:22:53.310] - Bernita Reed

That's interesting.

[00:22:55.830] - Sandra Turner Davis

Some of the locals, you know, 'cause a lot of them was coming out of Nashville.

[00:23:04.030] - Bernita Reed

And was that they would have dances at the clubhouse?

[00:23:08.120] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm, yes. And soul fish, barbecue sandwiches.

[00:23:14.770] - Bernita Reed

And then later this was transferred to the community center, the functions. And the community center is bigger?

[00:23:23.230] - Sandra Turner Davis

Right. A lot bigger.

[00:23:27.050] - Bernita Reed

Tell me what else you remember about the neighborhood. Anything that happened? A story of what happened down there that stands out today.

[00:23:41.380] - Sandra Turner Davis

Not really. Other than a house got caught on fire. And I think one person lost their life.

[00:23:50.153] - Bernita Reed

Do you know whose house-?

[00:23:50.990] - Sandra Turner Davis

And these were old houses, old houses. And I remember in the neighborhood there was an old man and his wife and he was blind. They would walk the street and they could make it to the grocery store and where the book store is now used to be a grocery store. So we had a grocery store. We had a laundromat, we had restaurants. We had the community pool, Lake Chester, all the nature scene, the heights and stuff, we did it.

[00:24:40.010] - Bernita Reed

Were all of those businesses African American businesses?

[00:24:44.640] - Sandra Turner Davis

No.

[00:24:45.320] - Bernita Reed

These were white businesses.

[00:24:47.930] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm. My mother and the rest of the neighborhood worked for the University.

[00:24:54.530] - Bernita Reed

It sounds like there weren't very many African American businesses.

[00:24:59.870] - Sandra Turner Davis

It wasn't that many 'cause a lot of 'em came from Alabama to work up in the Simley drown that's in Monteagle. And they had this place called "Tubbies." They sold beer, they did hamburgers and French fries, fried fish and stuff like that. We weren't allowed to come in the front. We had to

go to the back. So there were some places off the mountain that you couldn't go in the front. You have to go in the back.

[00:25:32.990] - Bernita Reed

Could you go in the front in all places, in-?

[00:25:36.710] - Sandra Turner Davis

Here in Sewanee, yes. But like I said, it was- in Monteagle, on the other side of Monteagle was Tracy. We was told not to go to Tracy. We was told not to go to Sherwood. And Sherwood is not where I thought it was. I thought it was on the mountain. You have to go off the mountain and you in Sherwood, but you on Sherwood Road. And Black people lived in Sherwood. When the mining, some kind of mining. And then off the mountain was the cement mining.

[00:26:27.010] - Bernita Reed

So were you able to go to any restaurants and sit down?

[00:26:33.430] - Sandra Turner Davis

We believe in cooking. We didn't go to too many restaurants.

[00:26:41.450] - Bernita Reed

If you went into- Is there a drugstore?

[00:26:43.190] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes. There was two drugstore, one in Monteagle, one in Sewanee.

[00:26:49.070] - Bernita Reed

Could you eat- Was there a lunch counter?

[00:26:50.490] - Sandra Turner Davis

No, not in that one. But there was one in Winchester. We could go into it. There was a grill that's 14 miles away. Winchester is the main 'lil city 'round here, just like Jasper, South Pittsburgh.

[00:27:10.970] - Bernita Reed

Now, could you sit down at the counter in Winchester?

[00:27:14.810] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes. I remember leaving the school in the afternoon and going over to the grill and gettin' a malt.

[00:27:31.290] - Bernita Reed

I think it was Jimmy was saying that there was some restaurant in Sewanee where, when they integrated, his mother took them to sit down in the restaurant. Do you remember?

[00:27:50.120] - Sandra Turner Davis

And I think that was Tucker.

[00:27:52.300] - Bernita Reed

Okay.

[00:27:53.010] - Sandra Turner Davis

I'm not sure. 'Cause they had two restaurants up here, and I was a little girl, so I just don't remember. I remember the names.

[00:28:04.270] - Bernita Reed

I probably have it confused. Let's go back again to the community and just see what you remember of different individuals. Or do you have anything to share of the early-? You have a picture of the early school?

[00:28:32.080] - Sandra Turner Davis

No.

[00:28:32.810] - Bernita Reed

Okay. Not at that school. So we'll get to these. Tell me about what you remember. Well, tell me you gave an overview after you finished elementary school here. What year was that?

[00:28:57.190] - Sandra Turner Davis

In '65, I think. They had a Black school in Winchester called Townsend High School. I didn't make it to Townsend. They integrated, and they ended up at the white school. Franklin County High School.

[00:29:15.430] - Bernita Reed

And what is your memory of that?

[00:29:19.570] - Sandra Turner Davis

Everything was scary to me. I was a scary little girl. [laughs] Quiet, little mousy.

[00:29:29.690] - Bernita Reed

And when did you graduate from there?

[00:29:36.090] - Sandra Turner Davis

'70. 1970.

[00:29:36.450] - Bernita Reed

Do any of the teachers stand out for you today? Do you remember anyone that had an influence on you or anything special?

[00:29:48.570] - Sandra Turner Davis

Not really. I wanted to just get out of school! [laughs] I can remember some of 'em. My home-ec teacher was... What was her name? Ms. Bryant. Little short, dunky little woman, and everything-she knit something the whole time while we were in class, and I couldn't figure out, "how did she do that"?

[00:30:17.730] - Bernita Reed

It's amazing.

[00:30:19.770] - Sandra Turner Davis

She didn't even have to look at the knitting needles. She just knit, knit, knit, knit. Make all kinda stuff.

[00:30:29.650] - Bernita Reed

What do you feel about the role that the University had in those early years on your family?

[00:30:38.470] - Sandra Turner Davis

Well, they didn't really treat the Blacks all that well. And they ended up working for a little bit of nothing. My mother never complained, though. I never heard anybody complain. And I do remember Mr. Kennerly got fired for taking home a cup of sugar, so they used him as an example. "Do not take nothing home."

[00:31:10.250] - Bernita Reed

What was he doing at the time? Where was he working?

[00:31:14.130] - Sandra Turner Davis

He was working for Sewanee, at the Gaylor, where we were. That was the cafeteria part at Gaylor. I had a picture of my mother that worked at Gaylor. I don't know what happened to it, I don't know if I let somebody borrow it or what. I can't find it.

[00:31:38.850] - Bernita Reed

Let's go back, and, what did your father do?

[00:31:44.610] - Sandra Turner Davis

He did janitorial work. He worked at St. Andrew's, the last work before he retired. He said he worked in a circus, cleaning the monkey cage. He said he-

[00:31:59.670] - Bernita Reed

Where was that?

[00:32:00.860] - Sandra Turner Davis

That was 'round in the neighborhood off the mountain. The biggest thing that happened was the Carnivals would come in and have all these amusement park rides and games. That was the biggest thing for Sewanee. They have somewhere to go besides Chattanooga.

[00:32:22.130] - Bernita Reed

So he would help with that when they came in, just as a temporary type thing? And, did your father talk much about his work, how he was treated?

[00:32:38.710] - Sandra Turner Davis

He talked about when he was a little boy and he was in camp for boys and some Minister that preached up here at Otey Parish. He the one got that group together, and I meant to bring that picture. He talked about the circus. He talked about ridin' his motorcycle. He even had a real bad accident on it. And good thing we gave him all this leather stuff for Christmas. The boots, the pants, the jacket, the helmet. Good thing he had all that on because he would have really been hurt bad.

[00:33:27.270] - Bernita Reed

Where would he ride to?

[00:33:29.440] - Sandra Turner Davis

Just the places like Tallahoma, Shelbyville, Bedville, Manchester, him and a bunch of guys.

[00:33:43.990] - Bernita Reed

Did he talk about any racial incidents?

[00:33:48.460] - Sandra Turner Davis

No. Because he could go anywhere, he went to Tracy City. He would go to Sherwood. Know, he saved a man's life one time up in Monteagle.

[00:34:02.090] - Bernita Reed

What did he say about that?

[00:34:04.220] - Sandra Turner Davis

Other than there was a big write up in the paper about Willie Turner saving this man and the people that- his family wrote a little thank you note in the paper for him.

[00:34:19.380] - Bernita Reed

What did he do to save him?

[00:34:22.430] - Sandra Turner Davis

Was able to get him out of the car and onto the road and flag down somebody for help to get him to the hospital. And I think back then, we've never heard of nine-one-one. [giggles] No ambulance coming.

[00:34:41.810] - Bernita Reed

I don't think they had nine-one-one back then.

[00:34:47.570] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mm-mmh. [giggles]

[00:34:47.930] - Bernita Reed

Did your family have a phone?

[00:34:50.150] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes, we did have a phone. And my aunt, Lacey Bell, she still have the same phone number from when they first got they phone.

[00:35:08.110] - Bernita Reed

Now tell me about your mother. What did she do when she first...?

[00:35:14.180] - Sandra Turner Davis

She was a chef and she would cook. And as the years go on, she was like, over the catering and they would decorate. Oh they would decorate! And that was the picture I really wanted to show you. They dressed out in all they white. I mean, they were professional.

[00:35:47.630] - Bernita Reed

There were some serious cooks around here.

[00:35:51.530] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm. And the guys wore white caps.

[00:35:56.150] - Bernita Reed

Were they the tall white caps?

[00:36:01.710] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm. I got to ask Brett, did I give him that picture? Because he's over at McClurg now, he's the supervisor.

[00:36:09.690] - Bernita Reed

Were both of your parents born in Sewanee?

[00:36:12.880] - Sandra Turner Davis

No. My mother was born in Belvidere, Tennessee. My Daddy was born in Asia, Tennessee. Little small communities around.

[00:36:24.450] - Bernita Reed

So many people that I've talked to were born in Belvidere. What do you know about Belvidere?

[00:36:32.810] - Sandra Turner Davis

It's the country, that's all I can say. Farmland. My uncle, Will Burnett had a farm, and the son had a smoke house. They raised pigs. We was lacking for nothing 'cause we had plenty of food. And the man that lived right down the street from my house, his name was Mr. James Nightingale, and he would have a garden. Fresh watermelon, cantelope. He had apple trees, peach trees in his yard. They're not there anymore.

[00:37:20.530] - Bernita Reed

Did your family own a lot of land in Belvidere?

[00:37:25.910] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes. And they sold the last lot... 'bout 15 years ago because somebody was trying to claim it and we had the deed.

[00:37:45.290] - Bernita Reed

I've wondered if that's the Freedman community where ex-slaves settled. Have you heard anything about that?

[00:37:52.750] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes. I heard about one'a Jimmy Staten's aunt. She was a house person and they abused her. And when she finally got old enough to leave, she said she just didn't want to remember none of that. And I don't know if I'm supposed to say something about it.

[00:38:15.760] - Bernita Reed

No, that's fine. We need those stories. Do you know her name?

[00:38:22.370] - Sandra Turner Davis

Peg Staten. And I don't know if her name was Pamela Staten or just Peg or Peggy.

[00:38:31.610] - Bernita Reed

Or Margaret.

[00:38:33.050] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm.

[00:38:39.150] - Bernita Reed

Any other stories worries about Belvidere that you can think of?

[00:38:44.910] - Sandra Turner Davis

Church.

[00:38:46.530] - Bernita Reed

Tell me about that.

[00:38:48.220] - Sandra Turner Davis

Little bitty Church.

[00:38:50.190] - Bernita Reed

What was it called?

[00:38:51.340] - Sandra Turner Davis

It was burning Bush.

[00:38:53.670] - Bernita Reed

Burning Bush?

[00:38:54.600] - Sandra Turner Davis

Burning Bush.

[00:38:56.070] - Bernita Reed

Baptist?

[00:38:56.920] - Sandra Turner Davis

Baptist. And like I said, small Church. But now they got about 30, 35 people- members. We got a new Church, and the pastor is awesome. And he's from the community. His name is Lee Branon, the third.

[00:39:19.660] - Bernita Reed

Branon?

[00:39:19.750] - Sandra Turner Davis

Branon. He is also a counselor at the high school.

[00:39:28.870] - Bernita Reed

So there's a high school in Belvidere?

[00:39:32.120] - Sandra Turner Davis

No. In Winchester.

[00:39:33.040] - Bernita Reed

In Winchester. Were we talking about the Church in-?

[00:39:39.310] - Sandra Turner Davis

He works at the high school in Winchester. But-

[00:39:43.420] - Bernita Reed

But the Church-

[00:39:44.420] - Sandra Turner Davis

The Church is in Belvidere.

[00:39:48.530] - Bernita Reed

Yep. What do you remember about that Church? Was it the singing? Was it the preaching?

[00:39:54.430] - Sandra Turner Davis

The singing and the preaching and watching the members get happy.

[00:40:00.590] - Bernita Reed

Was there a lot of call and response?

[00:40:05.090] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm, yes.

[00:40:10.050] - Bernita Reed

Are there any people that had really great singing voices that you remember?

[00:40:16.300] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes. The one we have now, this girl is awesome. Her name is Kim Brooks.

[00:40:24.730] - Bernita Reed

Is there a family Cemetery in Belvidere?

[00:40:29.120] - Sandra Turner Davis

They call it The Holler and it's in the bushes now because they haven't burned anybody down there- long, long, long time.

[00:40:42.250] - Bernita Reed

So it's overgrown.

[00:40:44.180] - Sandra Turner Davis

It's overgrown. Mhm.

[00:40:45.080] - Bernita Reed

The Cemetery. So that needs attention.

[00:40:50.930] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes, but most of my family is buried right here in Sewanee.

[00:40:57.850] - Bernita Reed

Where is your family Cemetery?

[00:41:00.570] - Sandra Turner Davis

University of the South.

[00:41:04.150] - Bernita Reed

At the bottom edge- bottom part of at Cemetery?

[00:41:08.260] - Sandra Turner Davis

And it used to be a fence, but they knocked that fence down years ago.

[00:41:08.260] - Bernita Reed

A stone wall?

[00:41:15.610] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm, a stone wall. And I remember the gates going into the Cemetery as a little girl. We used to swing on that gate. And that gate was so big now that I look at it now it's just a little bitty gate!
[laughs] And see, my mother's house is right next to the Cemetery

[00:41:35.770] - Bernita Reed

Oh, the one that you- Is that the one you were telling me the address?

[00:41:49.950] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm, 57 Palmetto.

[00:41:50.420] - Bernita Reed

Both parents were working at the University. Did they say how they met?

[00:42:00.250] - Sandra Turner Davis

Somewhere in Belvidere... I don't know how.

[00:42:05.250] - Bernita Reed

So your father had come to Belvidere for something. Did they have any- Where did they go to school? Did they say where they attended school?

[00:42:22.160] - Sandra Turner Davis

My mother never finished high school, but she did get her GED. My Daddy never finished high school.

[00:42:31.190] - Bernita Reed

Where did they attend schools?

[00:42:33.770] - Sandra Turner Davis

I assume Townsend.

[00:42:38.490] - Bernita Reed

And I'm thinking also with all the people that were such great cooks, what were celebrations like among the African Americans?

[00:42:52.090] - Sandra Turner Davis

Oh, great! We loved Mama Lacy's potato salad. My Mama made the best Turnip Greens. Who made the best fried chicken? I don't remember, but we always wanted to know who cooked what, especially at Church stuff- gathering. But we always had it good. My Aunt Jewel. Like I said, one time they said the sows had 30 babies. That's a lot of pigs, little piglets. A lot of them. So they smoked the hams and they did the sausage right there. You know, they had the machine to fix the sausage. We always had plenty to eat- bacon, sausage, ham, chickens.

[00:43:51.250] - Sandra Turner Davis

I had- one time my grandmother sent me to the barn to fetch the eggs. I never fetched the eggs. That was my first time. They say, don't reach under the chicken to get the egg. If the hen is off the eggs, you get them. But I reached under the hen and got the eggs and made it out of the barn. Walking through the yard and I walked in front of a mother hen with the babies. And that mother hen jumped in my chest.

[00:44:23.830] - Sandra Turner Davis

I screamed, bloody murder. "Ahh! Ahh!" My grandmother comes to the door and she said, "Shoo!" That mother hen took off! I think I saved two eggs. [laughs] She never sent me to the barn to get the eggs no more. She made me churn the butter! And the most exciting thing, we made fresh ice cream. And she made those little tea cakes every Saturday. Nobody got the recipe. Nobody. I said, why they were the best. And she would make those bread box, remember bread box? She'd make that bread box full of tea cakes on Saturday and fresh lemonade, in an aluminum pitcher. And it was a big pitcher. And she had an ice box in her house, and a old wooden stove to cook on. And when she left Belvidere, she brought it to Winchester.

[00:45:30.730] - Bernita Reed

This was who?

[00:45:32.070] - Sandra Turner Davis

My mother's mother.

[00:45:33.270] - Bernita Reed

What's her name?

[00:45:35.350] - Sandra Turner Davis

Jenny Gray. And she also told me, she said, "Come here, Sandra." And I was a little thing. I might have been four or five. She said, "you are a child and you're going to stay in a child's place. If you got something to say to me or any of the other adults, if we're talking, you stand there till you be acknowledged. And then you talk." And I remember my baby sister got sick that night at- down at Grandma's. And I had to go downstairs and tell Mama. And they was listening to Joe Foreman on the radio. Boxing. Back in that time, we didn't have a TV, just had a radio. That was their entertainment. I know I stood there for the longest and Mama said, "Baby, why are you up?" "Gail is sick." I was so scared to tell Mama. "Gail is sick. Can you please come up and help us?" And Grandma Jenny jumped up and she ran upstairs and she was the first woman to jump up. And I was so proud of myself, I didn't get fussed at.

[00:47:05.970] - Bernita Reed

And Gail ended up being okay?

[00:47:11.170] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm. Yes. I think it's something that she ate. And I don't remember being sick a lot back in them days. I catch a cold like this now.

[00:47:27.630] - Bernita Reed

All those fresh vegetables, and fresh- bring outside.

[00:47:31.770] - Sandra Turner Davis

And I remember Grandma going out in that yard, picking one of those hens out, rang its neck, throw it in that big ol' black kettle and pluckin the feathers off, cut it up and fry it, or bake it.

[00:47:52.630] - Bernita Reed

They hade some good food back them.

[00:47:53.180] - Sandra Turner Davis

Maybe the best ol' biscuits. And, you know, we had fresh milk, too. We had a cow and she would go out there and milk that cow and have fresh milk. And she didn't cook one meal or two meals a day; she cooked three meals a day. Grandpa needed to eat and everybody else.

[00:48:16.090] - Bernita Reed

What was Grandpa's name?

[00:48:17.820] - Sandra Turner Davis

Lisa Gray.

[00:48:20.170] - Bernita Reed

That's right. The, maybe, unusual spelling for Lisa.

[00:48:27.250] - Sandra Turner Davis

I'm going to have to go back and look at stuff, going to the courthouse and get that.

[00:48:37.250] - Bernita Reed

Mhm. So, when you had gatherings, was- now, your grandparents lived in Winchester?

[00:48:45.740] - Sandra Turner Davis

In Belvidere.

[00:48:45.910] - Bernita Reed

In Belvidere. So you were traveling to Belvidere.

[00:48:48.230] - Sandra Turner Davis

And then when Grandpa got sick, and died, they moved Grandma up closer because everybody lived away from Belvidere. That was our main gathering.

[00:49:03.510] - Bernita Reed

But gatherings here with all the cooks. Did you have cookouts?

[00:49:09.670] - Sandra Turner Davis

We had cookouts every Monday. My mother would fix dinner for her and her sisters and their husbands. And the kids came along. Mama Lacey would cook in her house at times. Aunt Mary Lou can't cook so, we didn't let her cook. [laughs] Aunt Ruby, she would come her and her kids. But she never cooked at home. Between the two sisters, they did the cooking.

[00:49:46.390] - Bernita Reed

Why on Monday?

[00:49:48.550] - Sandra Turner Davis

I don't know. She's not as busy, I guess. Every Monday they would eat at my mom's house.

[00:49:55.220] - Bernita Reed

Did they have to work on Sunday?

[00:49:59.500] - Sandra Turner Davis

Sometimes.

[00:50:01.690] - Bernita Reed

Were they required to work for the University on Sundays?

[00:50:05.800] - Sandra Turner Davis

I think they had enough employees so they could switch.

[00:50:11.710] - Bernita Reed

I was wondering if that's why the family gatherings were on Monday.

[00:50:17.230] - Sandra Turner Davis

And, you know, Church.

[00:50:24.770] - Bernita Reed

So how did you celebrate holidays?

[00:50:31.050] - Sandra Turner Davis

Well, if I wasn't at school, Thanksgiving and Christmas was all. And East- Mother's Day was always special.

[00:50:41.490] - Bernita Reed

What did your neighbors do? What did families do in Sewanee for those holidays?

[00:50:48.550] - Sandra Turner Davis

Other than those holidays. We had a swimming pool in the neighborhood and the baseball field. And they would gather down there sometimes. 'Special Fourth of July. We played softball. The field was big enough to play softball.

[00:51:08.910] - Bernita Reed

Did you bring food as a picnic?

[00:51:11.810] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes, we would.

[00:51:16.530] - Bernita Reed

Did you cook out? Did you have a grill?

[00:51:20.550] - Sandra Turner Davis

We would do fried fish and barbecue ribs. And the kids love hot dogs. So they always did plenty of hot dogs for us.

[00:51:31.170] - Bernita Reed

How about for Thanksgiving?

[00:51:35.830] - Sandra Turner Davis

After a while, we all start moving away. And Rita would have us down for Thanksgiving. Always Thanksgiving. And now that the parents are gone, we celebrate Thanksgiving and Christmas at Rita's house. Rita said this year she's not doing Thanksgiving or Christmas. She's going to Las Vegas. I said, "Well, you're not going by yourself because we're going to follow you!" We are all goin' to Las Vegas!

[00:52:12.310] - Bernita Reed

Good... family be together. [laughs] And how about for Christmas? What did families do back then? For Christmas?

[00:52:23.610] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mama'd cook a big dinner and we eat breakfast. And then later on, we'd open our presents. I got a bike, one year. And I got a typewriter- I wanted a typewriter! It wasn'd the best typewriter, but I got a typewriter.

[00:52:49.170] - Bernita Reed

How did you learn to type?

[00:52:53.070] - Sandra Turner Davis

"fick, fick, fick", with one finger! [laughs] And then I tried to use all my fingers. I didn't start typing until I got in high school.

[00:53:01.830] - Bernita Reed

And then you were trained, to do-

[00:53:04.350] - Sandra Turner Davis

Uh huh, yes.

[00:53:07.570] - Bernita Reed

Why did you want to typewriter?

[00:53:10.270] - Sandra Turner Davis

You see it on TV.

[00:53:14.690] - Bernita Reed

Did most of the kids have bicycles then?

[00:53:18.560] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm yes.

[00:53:19.460] - Bernita Reed

Where would you ride your bicycle?

[00:53:21.250] - Sandra Turner Davis

Out to the Cross, out to Greensview, out to Lake Chestom, in the neighborhood downtown. But that's where the ice cream was!

[00:53:32.870] - Bernita Reed

So African Americans were free to ride-

[00:53:38.060] - Sandra Turner Davis

Anywhere. Mhm.

[00:53:38.550] - Bernita Reed

The children just were free to roam?

[00:53:41.870] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm. Yes. And once we go off the mountain, it was totally different. They look at you funny. They thought people in Sewanee had money. They thought we was rich. "You live on the mountain?" No, I'm not rich. I got a little money, that's 'cause I babysit. I wash dishes, I mop floors, I make up beds, I help the older- elderly. I'm not rich.

[00:54:22.110] - Bernita Reed

It's interesting to me this whole concept of the mountain, being up on the mountain.

[00:54:31.230] - Sandra Turner Davis

And, you know, back in the day, there was a gate. That's why those two stones are there, that was a gate. It was private up here. You couldn't get in unless you work or you lived here.

[00:54:45.960] - Bernita Reed

Was there someone guarding the gate?

[00:54:48.810] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm.

[00:54:52.390] - Bernita Reed

And was that the only road in?

[00:54:56.950] - Sandra Turner Davis

Uh huh.

[00:54:57.350] - Bernita Reed

'Cause I came through those gates, I noticed that.

[00:55:00.070] - Sandra Turner Davis

And every time we go through those gates, we throw our hands up like, "God bless you. God bless you."

[00:55:08.290] - Bernita Reed

Is that what you do now?

[00:55:10.630] - Sandra Turner Davis

I still do that now, when I go through those gates.

[00:55:14.710] - Bernita Reed

Did you do that as a child?

[00:55:18.490] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm.

[00:55:18.820] - Bernita Reed

Tell me about that.

[00:55:19.720] - Sandra Turner Davis

I'm not sure why we did it as a child, but it was kind of like, sacred. But everybody'd do it.

[00:55:29.590] - Bernita Reed

Tell me that again?

[00:55:32.110] - Sandra Turner Davis

The gates going out of Monteagle, the gates coming up the mountain into Sewanee. And people say, just do a wave, like, "thank you, Jesus." And my idea is, "I made it back home. Thank you, Jesus, I go through those gates."

[00:55:57.650] - Bernita Reed

Do you think just African Americans do that?

[00:56:02.750] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes. But I'm not sure if the white people do it or not 'cause I never seen 'em. And I was wondering, we was going to this place called Lake Juneluzka with the Church, and it's like a Holy land. And my pastor got his calling when he went up there and he went up there with another Minister. And he said, "I want to take you out to this place where I got my calling. And it's called Lake Junaluska, North Carolina." And it is heaven. The trees are so pretty. Just the landscaping is pretty. And these kids was on this bus and we went through those gates and they all did the wave! And I said, "how they know 'bout all of this?" It just amazed me.

[00:57:04.370] - Bernita Reed

So this is considered very sacred.

[00:57:11.310] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm. And you know they had the military school for boys, and it was called SMA. My mother worked out there, too, for years.

[00:57:23.550] - Bernita Reed

What did she do there?

[00:57:28.150] - Sandra Turner Davis

Cook. My aunt worked in the dorms, cleaning the rooms. It was always plenty of jobs up here, but they weren't paying that much. But it was a job.

[00:57:39.370] - Bernita Reed

What's your aunt's name again?

[00:57:41.020] - Sandra Turner Davis

Lacy Bell, Childress. And it was eleven in my mother's family.

[00:57:51.870] - Bernita Reed

Why did people leave the mountain?

[00:57:56.130] - Sandra Turner Davis

Young people, there's nothing to do. We had that one little theater, movie theater. They don't have no bowlin' in the area. They got the gym for exercise and stuff, swimming pool. But a lot of the young people wanted to move into the Valley.

[00:58:25.090] - Bernita Reed

And was that an integrated theater?

[00:58:30.490] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm. Then when I first started going to movies as a little girl, we had to set up in the balcony. They got rid of all'a that. And it's just a theater, anybody sit wherever they want to.

[00:58:44.000] - Bernita Reed

Does it still have the balcony?

[00:58:45.910] - Sandra Turner Davis

No. They got rid of it.

[00:58:47.600] - Bernita Reed

They tore it down?

[00:58:48.640] - Sandra Turner Davis

They tore it down.

[00:58:53.270] - Bernita Reed

Interesting. Was there a separate entrance also for the African American?

[00:58:57.380] - Sandra Turner Davis

No. We went through the same door.

[00:58:59.940] - Bernita Reed

Just had to go upstairs... Did people- While they were in the theater, did they throw things down to the bottom?

[00:59:11.120] - Sandra Turner Davis

No, we didn't do that.

[00:59:13.610] - Bernita Reed

Some people say they did that in those theaters. What was the name of that theater?

[00:59:23.670] - Sandra Turner Davis

The Sewanee Union Theater. And it used to be... You know, where All Saint is? Right across the street from All Saint is a building. You used to go through those front doors, and the concession stand was on the right hand side, and I think on the left hand side was some doors, and I think it was an office building. You walk down the steps into the theater. Now the theater is still there, but it's all downstairs with the concession stand. And they use that part where the upstairs was to make the concession stand.

[01:00:15.410] - Bernita Reed

Let's go back and talk some more in detail about your mother. Tell me, what was she like as a mother?

[01:00:28.430] - Sandra Turner Davis

Very sweet, gung-ho. Very petite. She used to smoke, but she quit smoking. She got bronchitis. Just always a go getter. And she would tell my Daddy what to do. [laughs] And he did it! And she would get us ready in the morning for school, fix breakfast, go to work. And she never would go to the bathroom at the job, she would come home to use bathroom and then she'd run back out.

[01:01:16.650] - Bernita Reed

Did you think that because they were segregated, sort of bathrooms at work?

[01:01:25.050] - Sandra Turner Davis

I'm not sure.

[01:01:29.110] - Sandra Turner Davis

But she would run home.

[01:01:31.810] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm. And then, 'cause we lived in the back of McClurgh and Gailor. And she could walk to work if she really wanted to.

[01:01:44.750] - Bernita Reed

How did she get to work then?

[01:01:48.170] - Sandra Turner Davis

Later years, she just start driving. But in her young days, she would walk up the hill, and she was at work.

[01:02:03.150] - Bernita Reed

Do you know when she was born?

[01:02:08.170] - Sandra Turner Davis

December 3rd, 1928.

[01:02:10.380] - Bernita Reed

And when was your father born?

[01:02:14.590] - Sandra Turner Davis

My mother was 2000- I mean, 1928. My Daddy was 1929.

[01:02:26.930] - Bernita Reed

Say their birth dates.

[01:02:29.730] - Sandra Turner Davis

My Daddy is May 3rd, 1928- '29!

[01:02:32.820] - Bernita Reed

'29.

[01:02:33.530] - Sandra Turner Davis

And my Mama's is 1928, December the 3rd.

[01:02:40.000] - Bernita Reed

Okay, well, you told me about them getting just through part of high school. How did your mother learn to cook?

[01:02:56.730] - Sandra Turner Davis

For my grandmother. She was a great cook. 'Cause everybody would help, not just one person. Everybody would help in the kitchen.

[01:03:07.290] - Bernita Reed

And that was in Belvidere.

[01:03:08.790] - Sandra Turner Davis

That was in Belvidere.

[01:03:10.260] - Bernita Reed

Did she say how she got to Sewanee?

[01:03:14.370] - Sandra Turner Davis

They heard that they were hiring. Aunt Ruby, Mama Lacey, Aunt Mary Lou, and my Mama all moved to Sewanee to work. Aunt Mary Lou came up to babysit, while they work. She kept us. And then as their kids got older, Aunt Mary Lou worked in homes, cleaning houses. Mama Lacey worked for the University. Aunt Ruby worked at the hospital, I think, janitory. And then my mom worked for the University.

[01:03:59.750] - Bernita Reed

How did they get housing here?

[01:04:05.310] - Sandra Turner Davis

Through the University. And you know, when you in these houses, you own the house, but you don't own the land. So you pay taxes and lease. And I never heard them complain about either.

[01:04:25.850] - Bernita Reed

I wonder what the process was for actually getting the house or applying for it.

[01:04:36.470] - Sandra Turner Davis

Some of these houses were not fit to live in. So as years went by, Dixon Myers over-something housing, what they call it? Section eight houses. They start building section eight houses. And my mother had one. Mama Lacey had one, aunt Ruby at one, and Aunt Mary Lou had one. But Aunt Mary Lou's house is so old, she really need a new one. [laugh] But she's 85 years old and she loves her house. She's one of those, "I got to get home, I got to get home!" She loves her house.

[01:05:24.880] - Bernita Reed

Get attached after all those years.

[01:05:27.150] - Sandra Turner Davis

Uh huh. 'Cause we asked- they asked her, would she move off the mountain? Because the weather up here is pretty bad, especially the fog here. That fog is so thick, you can't see. And it could be like that for five days or more. You go off the mountain, it's not foggy anymore.

[01:05:50.670] - Bernita Reed

Who wanted to see if she wanted to move?

[01:05:53.840] - Sandra Turner Davis

Her family.

[01:05:55.350] - Bernita Reed

Not the University?

[01:05:57.690] - Sandra Turner Davis

No. "What am I going to do with all my stuff?" It's materialistic, love. 'Cause when you gone, you know what your daughter gon' do, or your son gon' do? Gon' get rid'a all of it!

[01:06:12.210] - Bernita Reed

Well, consider some papers and photos for the archive. Do you know of anyone that was put out of their house by the University?

[01:06:27.570] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes. 'Cause they kids was bad.

[01:06:30.850] - Bernita Reed

Tell me about that.

[01:06:33.370] - Sandra Turner Davis

There was this family of Mr. John Shedd was here first. He married my grandmother, Maddie Shedd, and his sister house wasn't fit to live in, 'cause they had so many kids. Loretta had four kids. Alice had four. Bobby had five. And Ms. Bobby's kids were more destructive and wanting to steal. And they would go up in the University and take things. So they asked them to leave.

[01:07:27.470] - Bernita Reed

What were the parents doing for the University?

[01:07:31.690] - Sandra Turner Davis

Some of 'em work for the University, some worked in homes. I know miss Loretta worked in a home, and Ms. Bobby worked in a home. But Miss Alice Faye worked for the University.

[01:07:54.150] - Bernita Reed

Was that pretty traumatic for them at the time? Did you hear?

[01:07:58.930] - Sandra Turner Davis

No, 'cause when I got out of high school, I left. So what went on here just went on. But I would come back.

[01:08:09.870] - Bernita Reed

Tell me about that, about your wanting to leave. Or, did you want to leave?

[01:08:16.190] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes, I wanted to leave. I had just had my daughter. My mother was taking over, and I'm saying to myself, this is my baby. I want to do it myself. I'm grown. I'm 21 years old. I'm grown. So I moved to my sister's house in Atlanta, and within a month, I had a job and apartment. All that time working babysitting, washing dishes, cleaning house. I saved my money and I was able to put my first month rent down and kept my apartment. And I never called home to borrow money or anything. I did it all by myself. So when Mama and Daddy start getting sick, I'd start coming home a lot. I'd catch the Greyhound, and then all of a sudden, they had the groom, and it was easy for me to come home to take care of them. So when my mother got sick, I came home. I quit my job and came home to take care of my mom. But she never made it out of the hospital. She was 76.

[01:09:31.550] - Bernita Reed

And you ended up staying.

[01:09:34.870] - Sandra Turner Davis

Ended up staying 'cause my brother got sick. And I'm still here.

[01:09:41.870] - Bernita Reed

Are you happy to be here?

[01:09:43.400] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes. I like the quietness. I like the easy going stuff. I miss Atlanta, but I can always visit.

[01:09:54.050] - Bernita Reed

What are you doing now?

[01:09:55.820] - Sandra Turner Davis

Nothing. This is my first year retiring. Retired in October.

[01:10:04.230] - Bernita Reed

Tell me about having your child. Did you meet someone special?

[01:10:10.830] - Sandra Turner Davis

No, that's embarrassing! I got pregnant, my first time.

[01:10:17.190] - Bernita Reed

Mhm. That's okay. Did you want to say the father of the baby's name or not? You don't have to- that's fine. What is your daughter's name?

[01:10:29.750] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mona, Mona Turner. And then I have a granddaughter, Janelle. This year in October, she'll be 21. She'll be grown.

[01:10:41.710] - Bernita Reed

When was your daughter born?

[01:10:58.490] - Sandra Turner Davis

March 10th, 1971. No- '73. It's '72 or '73, I forget! [laughs]

[01:10:58.850] - Bernita Reed

Tell me about your mother and her being an activist in this community. How did she get started being an activist?

[01:11:11.270] - Sandra Turner Davis

Well, I think it was more the NAACP and they was always go-getters.

[01:11:19.130] - Bernita Reed

How did she get involved with that?

[01:11:23.030] - Sandra Turner Davis

Several women in the neighborhood. And there was a lot of white people that was in the NAACP also that would help them. And they would go to marches.

[01:11:35.690] - Bernita Reed

Where did they go?

[01:11:36.790] - Sandra Turner Davis

They went to Birmingham. They would go. What's that, Selma? They walked across the bridge.

[01:11:50.910] - Bernita Reed

They were in that march?

[01:11:51.660] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm. Yes. And as a little child, didn't understand. "Why are you going, Mama? You might get hurt," 'cause we see this on TV, that they water hosed them. They were throwing bricks and rocks and things at 'em. "You might get hurt, Mama, stay home, stay home!" And then we heard about that, two whites and two Blacks in a car. They got killed in Alabama. Yes.

[01:12:27.010] - Bernita Reed

So your mother was in Selma and got water hosed, or?

[01:12:32.350] - Sandra Turner Davis

They did not that day, but they was doin' it earlier in that time.

[01:12:43.850] - Bernita Reed

What was she doing here in the neighborhood? Were they doing-

[01:12:48.880] - Sandra Turner Davis

She would go to different homes and talk to 'em, joining the NAACP. "Let's get our kids better education." A lot of 'em did not want to do it. And a lot of them was afraid because they didn't know no better. They weren't well educated.

[01:13:11.490] - Bernita Reed

What was voting like here?

[01:13:16.050] - Sandra Turner Davis

They get among themselves and do all the Democrat way because they wasn't Republicans. And they would tell you, go to each homes and tell you who to vote for. And we couldn't hardly get them to go. They couldn't hardly get them to go. To vote. Your right, is to vote.

[01:13:43.130] - Bernita Reed

And what did you have over here that you wanted to tell about your mother? This is the picture-

[01:13:54.220] - Sandra Turner Davis

That's the picture right there.

[01:13:55.920] - Bernita Reed

Hold that up for a second. A little higher. There we go.

[01:14:00.710] - Sandra Turner Davis

This is my mother, Dora Turner, the fighter.

[01:14:05.910] - Bernita Reed

What is it about the leis here? I know that the Memorial Day weekend. What is it about wearing the Luau and having leis? How did that get started?

[01:14:25.490] - Sandra Turner Davis

My cousin Carl got this together, and he wanted everybody to do a Luau. And I don't know what his meaning of it, but everybody joined in. And then we had fried fish.

[01:14:42.430] - Bernita Reed

Do you actually cook a pig or something in the ground?

[01:14:47.930] - Sandra Turner Davis

No. We do a grill, do ribs and hot dogs and hamburgers, pulled pork, barbecue sandwiches. And another girl would come with her fryer and they would fry fish. So we have all the fixins', make desserts...

[01:15:11.390] - Bernita Reed

Now, when do you think that picture was of your mother?

[01:15:22.290] - Sandra Turner Davis

Back in 19... Well, that's a farewell to my mother. This is an article of my mother. There is a fighter. And this is her farewell obituary for her. And it tells you, um- I can't see this, I don't have my glasses.

[01:15:50.230] - Bernita Reed

It's telling when she was born, she moved to Sewanee in 1949. Two years before you were born. So this would be good to have an add to the record, that information. What else is over here that you would like to share?

[01:16:16.120] - Sandra Turner Davis

The peace march. Those peace marches. This is one of 'em at Oak Ridge.

[01:16:30.350] - Bernita Reed

Wonderful. Tell me about that. And what you know about the peace march?

[01:16:36.410] - Sandra Turner Davis

I really don't know that much about it, but this is my mother right here. The only Black, my mother.

[01:16:52.450] - Bernita Reed

And this was in when? This was for- during the Vietnam War, or, when was that? They look. Could that have been...

[01:17:07.310] - Sandra Turner Davis

"Robert R. M- Moore? Never again. Memorial..."

[01:17:15.480] - Bernita Reed

Yeah, that probably is in the 60s, I would think. No, that's probably the 60s. That's probably the Vietnam War. So, yeah, "Memorial walk. Never again." Do you know who Robert P. Moore is?

[01:17:42.870] - Sandra Turner Davis

No.

[01:17:47.330] - Bernita Reed

Okay. So that's someone we have to look up. [laughs]

[01:17:50.510] - Sandra Turner Davis

Uh huh. My sister might know. I'm not sure.

[01:17:54.100] - Bernita Reed

Maybe he was killed in Vietnam or something.

[01:17:57.500] - Sandra Turner Davis

Maybe.

[01:17:58.670] - Bernita Reed

What else do you have here? Who is this?

[01:18:03.510] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mr. Woody told me who this man is. He's famous. And for graduation, they always have somebody famous to come up here. What her name is- Bryce? [Condoleeza Rice was the commencement speaker in 2018]

[01:18:17.454] - Bernita Reed

Uh huh.

[01:18:18.390] - Sandra Turner Davis

She was here last year for graduation, but she always seemed to get a picture with somebody. Yeah. Mr. Woody told me who that was.

[01:18:30.520] - Bernita Reed

Yeah, I recognize them, but it's not coming to mind right now. See what we have here?

[01:18:38.710] - Sandra Turner Davis

That's part of that peace walk.

[01:18:40.880] - Bernita Reed

Okay.

[01:18:41.790] - Sandra Turner Davis

And this is another picture about that peace walk.

[01:18:54.650] - Bernita Reed

"No to use these weapons. March on nuclear weapons in Oak Ridge, Tennessee." And then the banner, the ribbon is from Women's Day program at Mount Oliver.

[01:19:15.170] - Sandra Turner Davis

That's one of the neighborhood churches.

[01:19:18.410] - Bernita Reed

And that was in 1991. What do we have here?

[01:19:26.940] - Sandra Turner Davis

These are photos at my Mama's job. And these are some of the people that she- you can't hardly see because it's a Polaroid.

[01:19:45.430] - Bernita Reed

If you wanna pull those up. This was-

[01:19:49.010] - Sandra Turner Davis

Getting the food prepared at the cafeteria.

[01:19:55.320] - Bernita Reed

And who's in this picture? Is that your mom?

[01:20:01.870] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes. That's my mom.

[01:20:03.080] - Bernita Reed

That's your mother. Okay. And this is more of the kitchen.

[01:20:11.390] - Sandra Turner Davis

More the kitchen.

[01:20:16.290] - Bernita Reed

They had to use big equipment, didn't they?

[01:20:19.905] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm.

[01:20:20.310] - Bernita Reed

And this looks like serving at the cafeteria.

[01:20:23.450] - Sandra Turner Davis

Right.

[01:20:29.650] - Bernita Reed

Are these- Did students help with serving?

[01:20:32.390] - Sandra Turner Davis

No, they do now. But back then, they didn't.

[01:20:38.240] - Bernita Reed

It looks like someone white behind the counter with your mom.

[01:20:42.170] - Sandra Turner Davis

They being served.

[01:20:44.050] - Bernita Reed

Okay.

[01:20:45.130] - Sandra Turner Davis

'Cause this is a worker. And that's over on the other side.

[01:20:48.410] - Bernita Reed

Okay. And this is your mother also, behind the counter-

[01:21:01.420] - Sandra Turner Davis

In the kitchen.

[01:21:02.620] - Bernita Reed

-in the kitchen working. Let's see what else we have here... Let's see who this handsome man is.

[01:21:14.850] - Sandra Turner Davis

That's Alton. [laugh]

[01:21:17.250] - Bernita Reed

Who is that?

[01:21:18.870] - Sandra Turner Davis

Alton Green. He was one of the neighborhood- men in the neighborhood.

[01:21:35.410] - Bernita Reed

In Sewanee?

[01:21:36.400] - Sandra Turner Davis

In Sewanee.

[01:21:36.490] - Bernita Reed

So this is his obituary.

[01:21:39.550] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm. And that was my grandmother's husband on my Daddy's side. John Shedd.

[01:21:52.210] - Bernita Reed

John Shedd.

[01:21:53.210] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm.

[01:21:58.110] - Bernita Reed

These are wonderful pictures they have.

[01:22:01.200] - Sandra Turner Davis

And don't forget my grandfather.

[01:22:03.330] - Bernita Reed

Where is--

[01:22:08.110] - Sandra Turner Davis

Right here.

[01:22:08.308] - Bernita Reed

Oh. This one.

[01:22:08.470] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yeah, that's my grandfather. That's Lisa Gray.

[01:22:12.820]

Lisa. Lisa Gray.

[01:22:16.510] - Sandra Turner Davis

That's my Mama's Daddy.

[01:22:18.070] - Bernita Reed

What year would you think that's in, like, the 50s early 50s?

[01:22:23.960] - Sandra Turner Davis

Gotta be in the 50's. Yeah.

[01:22:24.350] - Bernita Reed

That looks like that type picture. And this is him again?

[01:22:28.520] - Sandra Turner Davis

And this is him with one of the Church members.

[01:22:32.070] - Bernita Reed

He's on the left with the hat.

[01:22:34.060] - Sandra Turner Davis

This is my grandfather.

[01:22:35.430] - Bernita Reed

Oh, on the right, without the hat. I might as well put it closer. Okay, that's great to have those. He looks tall.

[01:22:53.470] - Sandra Turner Davis

He was tall.

[01:22:54.590] - Bernita Reed

How tall was he?

[01:22:55.820] - Sandra Turner Davis

I think he was 6ft. And that's my grandfather's brother. I don't remember his name, but that's my grandfather's brother. With his family.

[01:23:06.110] - Bernita Reed

And his family? What a wonderful shot. That's one of those classic pictures. I wonder what year this was. The women had long dresses.

[01:23:28.270] - Sandra Turner Davis

Have no idea.

[01:23:29.550] - Bernita Reed

Yeah.

[01:23:38.930] - Sandra Turner Davis

And this is one of those Fourth of July pictures.

[01:23:43.310] - Bernita Reed

Who is in this picture?

[01:23:46.250] - Sandra Turner Davis

That's my niece, Tanesia. That's my baby sister's daughter. And I don't remember the gentleman that has my niece, but this is Duval Cravens. He's one of the outstanding people here in Sewanee. Duval Cravens. There's a lot of readings on the Cravens family-

[01:24:11.190] - Bernita Reed

Okay. Wonderful.

[01:24:13.490] - Sandra Turner Davis

-here in Sewanee. And that's the desegregation.

[01:24:24.030] - Bernita Reed

Tell me about that.

[01:24:30.970] - Sandra Turner Davis

Well like I said, my mother and Miss Sarah Staten, Ms. Emma Hill, Mr. Camp, Mr., um... What was his name? It was five of them that helped get this desegregation. They all went to court to get this route so we can go to the white school. And this is a program, Franklin County Public School System. Desegregation. That's my sister Rita.

[01:25:15.070] - Bernita Reed

Where is she?

[01:25:16.180] - Sandra Turner Davis

Right there. That's my sister Rita.

[01:25:18.910] - Bernita Reed

Right here?

[01:25:19.650] - Sandra Turner Davis

Right here.

[01:25:20.330] - Bernita Reed

Right there. This is the sister Rita, right here in the front.

[01:25:33.690] - Sandra Turner Davis

And this was back in January 19, 2014, where it was honored. And there's a plaque up at Sewanee elementary school for people to read about the desegregation. That's the same thing. That obituary of my mother that was typed up.

[01:25:53.930] - Bernita Reed

Okay. Just trying to back up enough that it shows all the page. They'll get this later.

[01:26:14.610] - Sandra Turner Davis

And I was proud of my Mama 'cause she was a dedicated worker and she did so much. And I wanted it to be known. My sister always said, you have to go to all'a these things to dedicate my mom. Like she's not my mom, but she's my mom too.

[01:26:34.830] - Bernita Reed

Tell me about the apple tree.

[01:26:38.370] - Sandra Turner Davis

She used to go out there and pick apples to make apple pie for the University.

[01:26:49.150] - Bernita Reed

So, that tree... When do you remember her picking apples from that tree?

[01:26:52.940] - Sandra Turner Davis

I don't remember her picking apples, but that's why Boo Cravens did it. She said "she always out there picking them apples, making apple pie for us."

[01:27:03.850] - Sandra Turner Davis

And Duval Cravens is Boo Cravens- her name was Marianne Moore Cravens and her and my mother was best of friends. And she said, "I'm gon' buy this plaque, put it up there at Swannie Inn at the Apple tree-" Dora Turner's Apple tree.

[01:27:24.010] - Bernita Reed

What was here on this property before they built the Inn?

[01:27:28.270] - Sandra Turner Davis

The old Sewanee inn.

[01:27:30.310] - Bernita Reed

They tore it down?

[01:27:31.370] - Sandra Turner Davis

They tore it down and rebuilt.

[01:27:34.390] - Bernita Reed

So she would walk up to the Inn to pick the apples.

[01:27:39.730] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm And she wasn't taking them or stealing them. She was working for the University, so she was taking the apples to make apple pies.

[01:27:52.250] - Bernita Reed

What was her apple pie like?

[01:27:54.370] - Sandra Turner Davis

Oh, they divine. They are delicious.

[01:27:58.250] - Bernita Reed

Tell me how she made it. Do you know how to make it?

[01:28:01.940] - Sandra Turner Davis

No. I made Apple pie, but they're not like my mom's. I can't do the crust right. So now I buy the crust.

[01:28:14.510] - Bernita Reed

And did she do a lattice type crust on top?

[01:28:20.900] - Sandra Turner Davis

And she would do it different every time. Sometimes she folded over, put thumbprints around. She have used a fork around the end of the crust to make her pile look good. It's just she just had that- those fingers.

[01:28:39.770] - Bernita Reed

And would she tend to lay a sheet over the cake of the pastry rather than the lattice rather than the strips of-

[01:28:50.870] - Sandra Turner Davis

She did it different every time. Sometimes she just put the crust on top, or crust at the bottom. Just however she felt, that's the way she made it.

[01:29:01.150] - Bernita Reed

Did she use butter?

[01:29:03.710] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm. Lots of butter.

[01:29:05.230] - Bernita Reed

Did you have to churn butter for these?

[01:29:08.670] - Sandra Turner Davis

I churned butter for my grandmother.

[01:29:12.050] - Bernita Reed

But not on the mountain.

[01:29:13.980] - Sandra Turner Davis

No. We made homemade ice cream here on the mountain, but it was better than at Grandma's.

[01:29:23.610] - Bernita Reed

Tell me how you made homemade ice cream, was there-

[01:29:28.010] - Sandra Turner Davis

They put ice at the bottom of the churn. They put this dry ice in there and some kind of way she mixed that stuff up, put it in there, and the more you churn, then it freezes.

[01:29:46.650] - Bernita Reed

Was it dry ice or salt? They put the rock salt in the- on the ice.

[01:29:58.810] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yeah. How they knew to do that, I don't know.

[01:30:03.190] - Bernita Reed

We used to make ice cream that way, and you had to use the crank type.

[01:30:09.350] - Sandra Turner Davis

The crank type, all the grandkids got to crank the ice cream machine or churn the butter. She made her homemade soap, too, grandma Jenny did. So there was a lot of stuff that she did, we didn't have to buy.

[01:30:27.250] - Bernita Reed

Did you ever help with making the soap?

[01:30:29.810] - Sandra Turner Davis

I've never made the soap with her, but I did the butter and the ice cream.

[01:30:35.230] - Bernita Reed

Did she make a custard type ice cream?

[01:30:38.310] - Sandra Turner Davis

Oh, she used to make rice pudding. Oh, divine. Sometimes you put raisin in it, and sometimes you didn't. Bread pudding.

[01:30:48.680] - Bernita Reed

So that was baked.

[01:30:51.730] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm.

[01:30:52.310] - Bernita Reed

But for the ice cream, was that a custard type where they may put egg in the ice cream?

[01:31:02.230] - Sandra Turner Davis

I don't know. She made that and we just churned.

[01:31:06.490] - Bernita Reed

Do you have family recipes that have been passed on?

[01:31:10.380] - Sandra Turner Davis

Some. But them tea cakes is the main one we wanted, but nobody got the recipe. And my aunt was so young, she don't remember half the stuff. But she's 85 now. And my Mama's older sister lived to be 86.

[01:31:37.470] - Bernita Reed

Tell me about the dedication of the plaque for the NAACP. Isn't there a plaque or something?

[01:31:45.980] - Sandra Turner Davis

Other than that desegregation plaque.

[01:31:51.030] - Bernita Reed

Tell me about that. Did you go to a program for that?

[01:31:54.910] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes. And we got on stage. Ms. Sarah's daughter, Pamela talked. Miss Emma Hill's daughter talked. I talked for my mother. Doug Cameron talked for his mom and dad. Who else? That's all I remember. But it's on that dedication- no, it's not.

[01:32:32.230] - Bernita Reed

So at the 50th anniversary of that, that's when they have-

[01:32:36.780] - Sandra Turner Davis

And that's the-

[01:32:38.830] - Bernita Reed

The plaque, okay.

[01:32:39.550] - Sandra Turner Davis

Outside of the elementary school.

[01:32:41.230] - Bernita Reed

I haven't seen it yet, but I've been hearing about it.

[01:32:50.030] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm. And it turned out really good.

[01:32:51.910] - Bernita Reed

And you must have been so proud.

[01:32:54.350] - Sandra Turner Davis

I was! Everybody had their little paper talking. Well, I'm going to do mine natural, I didn't want to write a paper. I said, I have mementos that I looked at when I was here, like Man Craven, Mr. Camp. He was the organ player at Otey Parish and his wife. They were so sweet when I was coming up. I talked about all the NAACP stuff, the day that we integrated, the coming 'bout of my mother's job. But this was my word that I wanted to say because I'm so proud of my mother. And I hope she's proud of me.

[01:33:54.590] - Bernita Reed

Tell me this, did she know Martin Luther King?

[01:33:58.340] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes, yes.

[01:33:59.870] - Bernita Reed

Tell me about that.

[01:34:01.200] - Sandra Turner Davis

I don't really know that much, but she did meet him. She didn't get a picture when she was down there in Alabama.

[01:34:08.350] - Bernita Reed

In Selma?

[01:34:10.430] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm, yes.

[01:34:11.990] - Bernita Reed

What did she say about that?

[01:34:14.170] - Sandra Turner Davis

That he was a wonderful man and he's very soft spoken, and that he was just a great man, a great Minister, a great husband, his wife. I got an article at the house about Coretta Scott King. And she just was in love with Dr. Martin Luther King. And she said, not like a boyfriend. I just love him like I love God and Jesus.

[01:34:50.030] - Bernita Reed

Were there other leaders that she met and talked about?

[01:34:53.320] - Sandra Turner Davis

She met Bishop Tutu. He came up here one year for graduation. She got to meet him. Was that Mandela? I think Mandela was up here.

[01:35:10.870] - Bernita Reed

Nelson Mandela?

[01:35:11.060] - Sandra Turner Davis

And we was telling Mama, I said, "Mama, why you didn't tell us that he was there? We could have came home so we could see him!"

[01:35:17.670] - Bernita Reed

Really?

[01:35:18.000] - Sandra Turner Davis

So there was a lot of stuff that was going on here in Sewanee that we didn't even know, living out of town, living in Atlanta.

[01:35:26.550] - Bernita Reed

So he was brought here after he was released from prison?

[01:35:31.360] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm, yes. And I got to see Mandela out in California, when I was out there. I didn't get to see him physically. He was in a car, mobile car, they stopped the traffic for them to come through. And I was in California.

[01:35:48.570] - Bernita Reed

Did she mention other leaders that she met?

[01:35:52.170] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes, but I don't remember.

[01:35:59.890] - Bernita Reed

What was your father's involvement with the NAACP? Was he not-?

[01:36:04.950] - Sandra Turner Davis

So he was a member, but he wasn't active. He was doing other things.

[01:36:13.670] - Bernita Reed

What haven't we covered that we should talk about? Any special memories, any stories of what's happened on this mountain?

[01:36:25.010] - Sandra Turner Davis

That's it. That's all that I remember, 'cause when I got out of high school, I left.

[01:36:35.310] - Bernita Reed

And how did you migrate to the medical field?

[01:36:42.690] - Sandra Turner Davis

My oldest sister was a nurse, and we both went to Atlanta. We stopped at North Side Hospital. We got hired just like that. They wanted me to start work that morning. And I said, "But I got to get my daughter in a daycare." And I went to work the next day.

[01:37:07.460] - Bernita Reed

This was like in '73?

[01:37:09.350] - Sandra Turner Davis

'73, '74.

[01:37:17.350] - Bernita Reed

So you've worked there for a long time.

[01:37:21.850] - Sandra Turner Davis

32 years.

[01:37:24.490] - Bernita Reed

How did you get along with the doctors being a scrub nurse?

[01:37:30.130] - Sandra Turner Davis

Like I said, I was kind of mild-mannered. Just easy going. Yeah, easy going with the doctors. There was some mean doctors. I never said a word, though. And when they say, "Slap that instrument in my hand," I slapped it in. Never said a word. I remember this one orthopedic doctor. I handed him the drill. He changed his mind and it fell, it hit the floor. He hollered at me, he said, "Sandra!" I said, "You asked for it. You just didn't take it. And we can get you another one." And he was fine.

[01:38:19.470] - Bernita Reed

I can see.

[01:38:20.680] - Sandra Turner Davis

And I was scared to death! [laughs] "Oh, he's gonna kill me!" But he asked for the drill, I handed the drill. I was getting something else fixed up for him, and he changed his mind. And when I released it, it hit the floor.

[01:38:39.690] - Bernita Reed

I know exactly what you're talking about, because I've done some scrub nursing. Let's see what else we have over here for the next few minutes. Was there anything in this wonderful-

[01:39:00.850] - Sandra Turner Davis

I noticed this map in here. The territory.

[01:39:07.400] - Bernita Reed

Oh, that's wonderful! Now what is this is a map of?

[01:39:13.320] - Sandra Turner Davis

This is a map of Sewanee.

[01:39:15.090] - Bernita Reed

Let me back up just a little bit and down. Just this little bit. Oh, that is wonderful! Who did this map?

[01:39:27.130] - Sandra Turner Davis

I don't know. It was in the scrapbook, and my mother was doing articles on everybody in Franklin County.

[01:39:36.930] - Bernita Reed

Is there an area here that is where the African Americans lived?

[01:39:42.900] - Sandra Turner Davis

Mhm.

[01:39:44.100] - Bernita Reed

Wiggins-

[01:39:48.170] - Sandra Turner Davis

That's Wiggins, that's out by the football field. We're in here somewhere. That look like All Saint's. Is that the Cemetery?

[01:39:59.810] - Bernita Reed

We both can't see.

[01:40:03.170] - Sandra Turner Davis

I need my magnifying glass.

[01:40:05.120] - Bernita Reed

Yeah. This is-

[01:40:06.060] - Sandra Turner Davis

Here's some of the names. Homes of both "Telefare".

[01:40:13.070] - Bernita Reed

Oh, this is wonderful.

[01:40:15.950] - Sandra Turner Davis

It tells you right here.

[01:40:20.910] - Bernita Reed

Uh huh.

[01:40:21.318] - Sandra Turner Davis

1 through-

[01:40:21.660] - Bernita Reed

Yeah.

[01:40:22.530] - Sandra Turner Davis

24.

[01:40:24.150] - Bernita Reed

This is the Eastern Star Cemetery.

[01:40:26.930] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes. And see, our house should be over here.

[01:40:30.190] - Bernita Reed

Okay. I think all of the houses probably- "Eastern Star"...

[01:40:36.510] - Sandra Turner Davis

The University Cemetery got to be back over here somewhere. That's Eastern Star, that's down Kennerly Road. Is that it? Right there?

[01:40:55.740] - Bernita Reed

That's Lake "Finner"?

[01:40:58.270] - Sandra Turner Davis

Okay.

[01:41:01.370] - Sandra Turner Davis

Finney. And that's the duPont Library.

[01:41:07.580] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yes. We're in the back of the library here.

[01:41:11.690] - Bernita Reed

Oh here, here's Cemetery.

[01:41:12.710] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yeah, I'm right here somewhere.

[01:41:15.080] - Bernita Reed

Okay. All right.

[01:41:19.550] - Sandra Turner Davis

And why is she stuck in that? I don't know.

[01:41:22.290] - Bernita Reed

Yeah, that's wonderful. A hand drawn map. Is there anything else in here you wanted to-?

[01:41:32.930] - Sandra Turner Davis

No. A lot of articles.

[01:41:34.400] - Bernita Reed

Yeah.

[01:41:35.870] - Sandra Turner Davis

And this is one of her friends right here. Marley.

[01:41:41.970] - Bernita Reed

Up here?

[01:41:42.790] - Sandra Turner Davis

Right here.

[01:41:43.460] - Bernita Reed

Right here. That she worked with?

[01:41:44.140] - Sandra Turner Davis

Yeah, that's part of the Cafeteria. Mhm.

[01:41:45.560] - Bernita Reed

I'll just put it up there, it's talking about this lady more. Okay. Well, it is now ten minutes to one.

[01:42:03.430] - Sandra Turner Davis

Golly!

[01:42:03.970] - Bernita Reed

So I guess we should call it quits. I'm sure there are going to be questions for you later, but we covered a lot.

[01:42:12.590] - Sandra Turner Davis

Okay.

[01:42:13.180] - Bernita Reed

Thank you so much. This is so special!

[01:42:15.850] - Sandra Turner Davis

Thank you! Lettin' me say my piece!

[01:42:16.930] - Bernita Reed

Yes. The beginning piece. [both laugh] Okay, I'mma turn it off.

[01:42:22.180] - Sandra Turner Davis

Okay.