

1906 McFaddin Ave Episode 5: Transcript

Continuing the Conversation: The Story of Charlton-Pollard

Music

RH: Hi and welcome to the McFaddin-Ward House podcast, *1906 McFaddin Ave*. I'm Rayanna Hoeft, director of educational programming.

KT: And I'm Kara Timberlake, the Communications and Marketing Manager.

RH: We're continuing our series featuring Jefferson County African American history and will once again be joined by local historian, Judy Linsley, who recently researched and wrote a booklet on the Southeast Texas Charlton-Pollard neighborhood, a predominantly Black neighborhood. In conjunction, LUTV Productions produced the documentary "They Will Talk About Us: The Charlton-Pollard Story," which recently premiered at the Jefferson Theatre.

KT: Thanks for joining us, Judy!

JL: Thank you for having me.

KT: Let's dig in.

So, after emancipation in 1865, many African American Texans looking for work came to Beaumont to work in the growing lumber industry.

To paint a picture of what the Black population looked like in Jefferson County from 1860 to 1900, I've gathered some figures from your booklet.

"Between 1860 and 1880 the Black population in Jefferson County increased by 285 percent. By 1880 African Americans made up 45 percent of Beaumont's population and 55 percent of the sawmill labor force. Between 1890 and 1900 the population of Beaumont nearly tripled, much of the growth due to the increasing number of African American families moving into the area."

Can you expand on that a little bit more?

JL: It was predominantly, of course, in East Texas because that's where the great Piney Woods were. And they were, they were an amazing resource that hadn't been tapped yet because the trees were yellow pine, and it was thought for a long time that only white pine lumber made really good building material, and it was in the east coast in Pennsylvania, well, all the way up to Maine. By then, the white pine forests were being depleted so a number of east coast people, and also several local people, began to explore the idea of cutting the pine in the forests around here – the yellow pines. They

were called longleaf yellow pines, and they turned out to actually provide better building material than the white. You just had to get used to the wood being a little yellow rather than a beautiful white. And so, it grew very quickly because they realized they could cut the pines in the forest, drag them to the river, put them in the river – which would be the Neches or the Sabine River – and just let them float down to the sawmills that were rapidly growing in Beaumont and Orange along the river.

RH: So that brings up a really interesting point. In a previous podcast, we explored some of the legislative action pertaining to free people of color, as well as the enslaved, instituted in 1837. Free people of color were forced to leave the state. There was this concern of them upsetting the social balance, upsetting the first order – sometimes it's been called that. So how did the white population in 1865 react to this mass migration of the formerly enslaved moving into this particular area for industry type purposes?

JL: Probably at first there wasn't a lot of pushback because they welcomed the labor. They needed this labor in the growing sawmills. They were trying to restore and grow the economy, and so as far as I know, beyond laws being passed - segregation laws - there was not a lot of pushback, and even then, the most restrictive Jim Crow laws were not passed until closer to 1900. It was, at first, it seemed to be more of an accepting thing because they needed the manual laborers that the African American force could provide.

KT: Even in the industry then, there was that kind of separation.

JL: Yes, and I was researching that at some point and asked about for instance, the segregation or lack of it out in the woods where the actual tree cutters were, and you know, they used those big two-man crosscut saws at that time, and the person I asked - who is pretty much an authority on the sawmill industry - said that well, out in the woods the crews would likely be two African American men or two white men working together - that they didn't often work actually together. The whole crew might be out in the woods, and it might be both races, but -

RH: So, it seems during this period of Reconstruction in which basically ends 1877, I think that's when historians usually put that timeline on there, people were co-existing, working in these different industries. I know the color line still existed as well, but the African American migrants were welcome because of industry – that's my understanding, too.

JL: Probably so. I don't actually feel, and this is more of an instinct than a statistic, that the line was as rigid as it was later. It seemed to have been as the white people decided they needed to draw the line more rigidly, they actually made more laws, rules, restrictions, whatever, than existed at first. That at first the effort was maybe just to make the whole system work better, the whole economic system work better. And they didn't worry too much about the African Americans until maybe they began to look like more of an economic threat to them at that time.

RH: That's interesting comparing that specific lumber industry to what we always talk about here at the McFaddin, which is ranching. And how those people were more integrated in their work together. It was more of an egalitarian type structure. They were out together handling the cows and all that comes with that. W.P.H. was on the ground, literally boots on the ground, with his employees and sometimes their lives were on the line, and I remember reading something – I can't even cite the source now – but it was along the lines of when your life is on the line, when you're dealing with a stampede or some rogue bull, it doesn't really matter what color you are, everyone pitches in to get the job done. And I thought that was a really interesting statement made during that particular time period, and we actually have various quotes from W.P.H. stating that, as well as some of his employees made that comment, that it was more of an egalitarian type structure, which would be in contrast to the lumber industry in that regard too, so I guess it was just industry specific how people were getting along.

JL: I think that's true and as far as if you were a rancher, if the person you hired could ride a horse and do everything else that you needed him to do, you wouldn't care what color he was, and there wasn't as much, there certainly wasn't any organized union organization efforts among cowboys, and so it was pretty much up to the rancher to decide how he wanted to pay his men and how he wanted to handle them. And if your employer, the rancher, told you to go do something, really it wouldn't occur to you to question well do I have to ride next to this guy because he's Black, you know that kind of thing.

RH: So, thinking about, since I'm not from here, I hear the name Charlton-Pollard neighborhood and in my mind, I have no idea where that exists in relation to where I am currently at the McFaddin-Ward House. So where exactly is the Charlton-Pollard neighborhood?

JL: It is – really if you go downtown and drive past the port, it is just south of the port. It was sort of in a little pocket almost, and it developed where the river bent - there's not much there now that looks the same because so much of the river has been filled in and redug and rechanneled to allow for all of the port growth, but at that time, it was just south of what would become the port. It was where there were a lot of wharfs and docks, and so some of the early residents of that area would have worked at the docks too in addition to the lumber mills.

RH: Did any of our folks that worked here at the McFaddin Ward House – did they live there?

JL: Yes, some of them did, yes in later years. And some of the ones who worked at the ranch, particularly the seasonal ones, they didn't really live year-round at the ranch and once you had better transportation, quite often someone who - like the ranch foreman or someone - would go by and pick up the ones who lived in the Charlton-Pollard neighborhood and take them to the ranch like during round-up and branding and some of the really busy parts of the year.

KT: So, we mentioned Charlton-Pollard, but there are also other predominantly Black neighborhoods, such as Pear Orchard and the Black business district. Can you tell us more about these and if there were any other Black communities that were predominant as well?

JL: Yes, there was actually a north end. Charlton-Pollard before it was called Charlton-Pollard was called the south end and the north end neighborhood were the African Americans who lived near the Reliance Lumber Company which was located upstream in the north end of what was then Beaumont. So, you had the north end, the south end, and the Pear Orchard. And you had other smaller ones. You had a very small community that grew up around what was known as Brickyard Lake – it was a brick yard – and they were the employees of the brick yard. And you had some who lived around some of the rice fields in the north and the west part of town, well it was out of town. But those were the three I guess you could call them suburban or urban really neighborhoods that grew up, and the Pear Orchard grew up of course after Spindletop came in because it grew up near the oilfield. Again, segregation ruled where they were allowed to live, and it was an upscale neighborhood that grew around there where the land had been donated or sold by two African American brothers who had the land there.

RH: So, I'm interested in the housing development that developed in this particular neighborhood as well as other Black neighborhoods. Did the people moving in - did they get mortgages to buy homes, did they build the homes themselves, were there builders, was it like a company build, what was the housing situation like?

JL: There was some company housing. I don't know of any particular efforts around the Beaumont Lumber Company and the Texas Tram and Lumber Company which were closest to the neighborhood, although that neighborhood as it developed could almost have been considered - that the people who lived there did work for the company. There was - the Reliance Mill in the north part of town did build company housing on the grounds of the mill, and the owner painted all of the houses red and it became known as Red Town. But the ones that grew up in the Charlton-Pollard neighborhood – I don't know for sure, but it's my guess – that probably they paid for the lots on time. It's possible that one of the owners carried the mortgage, but I never saw that documented. I would imagine that there were enough craftsmen among the Black community that they could hire out as carpenters, and they probably built these houses in their spare time. I'm sure they were very modest structures at first. I'm sure it wasn't until after the turn of the 20th century that some of the housing you know really became a typical house say of the 20th century. They were still for the most part very modest. I don't know when they extended indoor plumbing to the whole neighborhood, but I think it was much later. I've read accounts that said that well you have some indoor plumbing but some of it isn't, and so it was probably pretty spotty for a long time as far as the quality of the different houses. I do know for instance that one of the early teachers who inherited a one room schoolhouse did a lot of the improvements himself. And they knew to look to themselves, and I think that's how they got this neighborhood to grow. I'm

sure that a lot of the local banks would - depending on the worker and how much money he made at that time – I'm sure that some of the local banks did extend mortgages to the people – that you could get a note. I know that one of the families in town – the Sprott family – who lived just outside of the Charlton Pollard neighborhood, he was a mail carrier, and he actually took out loans to send his children to college.

KT: So, in the 1880s and 1890s, African Americans in Beaumont established their own schools, churches, business, and organizations due to the rigid Jim Crow segregation. Can you give us some examples of these establishments and why it was necessary for them to do this?

JL: Well, for the most part, they were important because in a lot of cases they would not have been able to go in the white establishments. I compare that rigid segregation to almost like a very intricate little dance that because they could do certain things but certain other things they couldn't. They could shop at the white department stores, but they couldn't try on clothes there. They were allowed to go in grocery stores but for instance later, the water fountains would have been designated as "Whites" and "Coloreds." The white merchants wanted their business, but they also required them to do certain things, so the African Americans decided to do their own businesses, and there were things that they would never have been allowed, for instance, in a white beauty shop as a customer. Now they might be a shampooer or something, but they were not going to be a customer, so they established their own medical clinics, their own stores, their own beauty shops, their own dental clinics - just about everything you could think of – restaurants, bars, and of course churches and community centers. So, they, they really became self-sufficient because they had to be.

RH: One of the prevailing themes of this documentary was the importance of schools as community centers and as an educator, I just loved this so much, and hearing the recollections of teachers and how meaningful those relationships were to these students who remembered them well in adulthood. Can you tell us a little bit about the community-type services that were offered at schools? Some of the things we don't necessarily have today in our public schools?

JL: Yes, the schools were definitely the community center, and that's really the reason why the neighborhood acquired the name Charlton-Pollard is because the school was the name of that, and it did become the center. They had dental clinics in the school, there was a branch of the public library in the school, they had night classes, they provided just about everything that the people who lived in the neighborhood needed as far as enrichment and cultural opportunities and educational opportunities and in many cases health opportunities. Really the other center of the neighborhood would have been the many churches that were in there, and they also provided a lot of education. There were centers to talk to people about how to deal with their money, just general education - not just reading and writing and arithmetic - but ways to improve their lives and to cope with the rigid segregation that existed out there.

RH: Did they have an active PTA at their schools?

JL: Very active. And I read a report – it was a survey of the African American community in Beaumont - and in it they particularly praised the Charlton-Pollard PTA for its activism and its help in the community.

RH: So, the churches, you mentioned those as well, were the churches kind of a seat for civil right action like they were elsewhere?

JL: I'm sure they did become that way maybe in later years – for a long time I don't think they were terribly active in civil rights. For a long time, really until World War II, most of the activism was in the separate but equal sphere. If you're going to have separate, let's at least have equal. They were working for equal, and then as it became apparent that that wasn't going to happen, then they began to push for civil rights for desegregation, and Thurgood Marshall was one of the early activists in there. He became a Supreme Court Justice later. But at that time, he was just a lawyer working for the NAACP, and he would go around, and like I say at first, he was pushing for the equal, and then as it became apparent that that was not going to work, he and others – then they came back and did the desegregation and that led to the initial desegregation efforts here – at Tyrrell Park and then at BISD, Tyrrell Park and then Lamar and then BISD.

RH: So originally Tyrrell Park was a park for the white people in the community?

JL: Well, it was the golf course, and I'm not sure how the park worked, but I think it was probably for whites as well. I don't know that – yeah – it would have been. But the desegregation efforts were originally at the golf course because there were Black golfers who wanted to play there, and they were allowed to play on Monday, and that's when the park was actually closed, and a lot of them were former caddies who wanted to play.

KT: Can you tell us about one of the neighborhood's namesakes, Charles Pole Charlton, and his significance?

JL: Charles Pole Charlton and Woodson Pipkin started a school – it was near the Jefferson County Courthouse – it was in the Live Oak Baptist Church later which was in the north end. And so, Charlton and Pipkin were remembered for starting a school there that became known as the Charlton school for a while.

RH: So how did Mr. Charlton and Mr. Pipkin fund their schools?

JL: At first, it was privately funded, but finally in the 1880s, all of the schools – Black and white – began to be funded by taxes, and the county took over the whole school funding thing, and then later the city of Beaumont. It was kind of iffy for a while for all of them. Beforehand, they had been privately funded – if you had wanted to send a child to school, you had to pay x amount of dollars per semester, and they would use that to pay

the teacher, and the teacher usually boarded with somebody. Now, in the case of Woodson Pipkin, he also was a minister, and he had a mule teaming business, so he probably didn't get paid anything for being a teacher or starting the school. There really never had been a real public school system in Beaumont for white or Blacks but when the City of Beaumont and Jefferson County took over funding, it was paid for with taxes and they funded and managed both the white and the Black schools.

KT: So, can you tell us a little bit about how the Charlton-Pollard school and neighborhood have evolved over time?

JL: Well, they first started out, most of them started out in a church or someone's home. Ultimately, they got buildings built and that generally speaking, the separate freestanding school buildings came after the city and county took over the funding. They began of course as one-room schools even when they were freestanding buildings, and all the grades were in there and that applied to both Black and white schools, and ultimately though the funding was not equal of course, and there was so much that the African American schools had to do for themselves - when you read about how Mr. Pollard took a one-room schoolhouse and did the landscaping, and he did the improvements and just did it all almost by himself with whatever help he could find out there. And then they began to have better schools, better buildings - the building that was built in 1912 that was named after Mr. Charlton was a bigger school. They tended - there were pictures of them in the early years - and they tended to be just blocky two-story buildings. They didn't have a lot of décor or anything, and this applies to all the schools. They seemed to all have been constructed along the same lines, and they were maybe two-story and very plain and up on piers, very tall to keep them out of the mud and as time went on, they finally began to build better buildings and the Charlton, or rather the Pollard High School, that was built in 1917 was a three-story brick building, and it was very fine. Therefore, when the building in the north end of town, the school building, burned, they just brought the north end students to the south end, and that's why it became ultimately named the Charlton-Pollard High School. It started out as Pollard High School, and when they brought the north end students in, they gave it both names and it was a big, fine, brick, three-story building.

RH: Post World War II, really the entire United States, okay, let's just say the whole world, experienced a great deal of change for obvious reasons, but one big change that happened across North American communities was the incorporation of Eisenhower's highway system. How did the highway system that came through this area affect this particular neighborhood or did it affect this particular neighborhood? What did that look like for some of these areas?

JL: The changes in post-World War II really affected, as you say, the whole world and neighborhoods everywhere in the United States - because under Eisenhower's administration, the Interstate Highway Act was passed and as those highways came in, they either tended to cut downtown areas in half as they did in Houston or in the case of Beaumont, they bypassed the downtown area. If you'll look at a map, you'll see that I-10 goes around the north end of downtown, and then just comes around the west and ends

up in the south part of downtown, and bypasses it completely, and it actually took a big hunk out of the north end African American neighborhood. There were some pretty important streets in that neighborhood that are now under Interstate-10, and so it affectedly cut off a lot - like the west end white neighborhood and the north end Black neighborhood - from the rest of the town and certainly from downtown, and that actually just led to kind of an emptying out of downtown over the years because you also began to have shopping centers, suburban shopping centers, and as those developed, people didn't have to go downtown to shop anymore - either in the white or the Black business district. And Charlton-Pollard and the Black downtown business district were kind of isolated under themselves and people began to move out, and as desegregation progressed more and more, neighborhoods became integrated and therefore Charlton-Pollard just sort of was left alone, and it had always been a kind of oasis, a residential oasis, surrounded by industry - the port was on the north, Exxon Mobil refinery was to the east, and to the south and west, there were railroad tracks and thoroughfares, and so there was nothing to keep them there anymore. There was no walking neighborhood, there was no cohesiveness, I'll say, and the younger people tended to move out.

RH: So in regards to the way people today feel about this neighborhood, there seems to be a great deal of connection. We witnessed that - we were at the documentary premiere on Friday - and the chatter in the audience as the documentary was playing was just so special. People were - it was triggering memory and people were talking to others sitting next to them saying "I remember that place" or "I remember that person," and they would clap when certain stores were talked about or certain nightclubs or restaurants and everyone - one lady behind was talking about the menu at this place that she used to go to, and this was during the documentary, and I thought that that was very special that people were having these conversations because it was triggering memory. So, there is this love of place. So, do you know of any preservation efforts, if there were any local preservation efforts, what could be saved, what could be restored, what could this look like for this particular area of Beaumont?

JL: I don't know of any specific preservation efforts. There is a Charlton-Pollard neighborhood association, and they certainly seemed to be out in force on Friday - they were in the audience enjoying every moment, and the enthusiasm certainly indicates that there is a lot of spirit left - a lot of community spirit. And I hope that that will be in the future channeled into some sort of an effort to revitalize the neighborhood because as I researched it, you know, I just fell in love with that place. I thought what a wonderful, self-sustaining community spirit existed back then, and you just almost can hardly bear to think that it might be gone forever. I don't know what it would be - the churches are still there - many of them - and I'm assuming that people still come back to church there, and there are still reunions - Charlton-Pollard reunions. So, I'm hoping that something, that just a general effort to revitalize some of these inner-city neighborhoods, will come about because you can't - you know the growth in these cities is sort of been concentric outward for the better part of a century. But you think what that means is that you leave the inside empty, and you don't really want that at all, and so I'm hoping that at some point the efforts will sort of begin to turn inward again. It was

a wonderful place, and it would be so good to see it come back in some form or another.

RH: So, there is a memorial that was erected honoring the two founders of the school – Mr. Charlton and Mr. Pollard – and the bulldog, the school’s mascot, is represented as well. Is this monument on the grounds of where the old high school used to stand?

JL: I believe it is. If it is not, it’s nearby. And of course to me, the new elementary school in that neighborhood, which is also named Charlton-Pollard and has a bulldog and the same colors that the Charlton-Pollard High School had may possibly – I would love to think it would serve as some sort of a kind of connection, a drawing point, so that people would know they could come back in, and that it would maybe serve as a kind of a centralizing, unifying force, just as the high school did.

Music

KT: In the 1950s, the Charlton-Pollard neighborhood became known for first-tier Black entertainment. Irving Street became an important stop along the “Chitlin’ Circuit.” Can you tell us a little about the “Chitlin Circuit” and what that meant to this community?

JL: The “Chitlin Circuit” was a name informally given to the performers who had to travel from town to town, and the “Chitlin Circuit” was a place that it meant they could play there. It was in the days when they could not go to white venues, and they had to play in Black areas and places like Houston, Beaumont, Lake Charles, Dallas – they were all you know open to these performers, but they didn’t play in the white venues. They played in these Black nightclubs, stages, theaters, whatever, and so they called it the “Chitlin Circuit” because that was a food that was connected with African American culture very deeply. And there were some really famous names that came here – Ray Charles, James Brown, Etta James – just all sorts of performers. The Club Raven was a big venue and it was on – I guess it was not on Irving Street, I think it was right off of Irving – and it was known for hosting these famous names. I actually went there one time when I was in college because there was a group – I believe they were called The Impressions – and I think maybe Junior Walker who was a big African American name at that time was also one of the acts there and it was – it was wonderful. The music was just great.

RH: I just cannot believe white people missed out on Ray Charles.

JL: Actually, one time when I was in high school, we went to Ray Charles, and he was actually at the Beaumont City Auditorium – I don’t know how all that worked out. That would have probably been about 1962.

RH: It kind of – that’s a great segue – into why do you think this story needs to be told?

JL: Because it hasn’t been told before. This story is a story that has been as you call it undertold and even in the histories of the neighborhoods of Beaumont, they tend to

focus on the white neighborhoods unless they were specifically talking about African American neighborhoods, but they should all be included together. And the Black neighborhoods have such an interesting past as to why they're there and how they got there and it's part of the – what do they call it – the history of the non-elite – when historians begin to focus on women's history and minority history. This is all part of it. And anytime you talk about people and why they settled where they did and what their lives were like – you've got a great story.

RH: And I tend to be, as a historian, I'm from that camp that the underrepresented stories, the story of the blue-collar worker, of the common person, and it makes me sad to think that we don't preserve that built environment – that's why I asked about preservation efforts and what that could look like. The preservation of that built environment so it doesn't just become a faded memory. If we could save something from that neighborhood, and of course the monument, I think, is a testament to a desire to remember the things that happened there, to remember the people – I think that's a very powerful part of this community now too, so I'm so grateful that folks erected that, raised money to erect that and buy the space, and that's important for everyone here in our community, too.

KT: So, what inspired the research of the Charlton-Pollard neighborhood? Can you tell us a little bit about this collaboration with Lamar as well?

JL: Yes. ExxonMobil actually approached the Center for History and Culture at Lamar to see if the Center could serve as the umbrella organization for these two things – a video and a booklet that ExxonMobil wanted to fund because the Charlton-Pollard neighborhood literally lies at ExxonMobil's main gate. It's right there, and they wanted to help tell the story, and it was a very generous offer on their part. And the Center contacted – the Center knew that we could do the – I was the director at the time of the Center, and we knew that we could do the history, the booklet, and provide a lot of the research, but we knew that Lamar, LUTV, needed to do the video. And so, we talked to Gordon Williams in that department, and he launched right into it with his students, and they did an incredible job. We were very fortunate in being able to get LULP – Lamar University Literary Press – to do – to design the book. And as I say, we could provide the writing and the research for it, so it turned out to be a very fortunate, happy collaboration.

RH: What was it like working with those young people in developing this story?

JL: They had it all set up – everybody had a job – there must have been 10 students in the room at least, but they all had a job and a function, and they all knew what they were doing. They were really good, and I loved the idea that as Gordon Williams told me - when they leave Lamar, we want them to be ready for a job in the communications business - and I can believe it after watching them all. I think they will be.

RH: Oh, he's doing a fantastic job, and it was so fun to witness that experience for those kids – I call them kids because they're the same age as my children – but they're

not kids - these are grown adults doing adult things and learning very hard technical skills. I'm calling them kids. But they were so proud, and they were glowing, and they just seemed happy to be there and to have made this primary source for that particular audience, and it was so great to watch alumni from the high school hug these kids and tell them thank you for their time. I thought that was very special and endearing and they did a fantastic job – I cannot sing their praises enough.

JL: I agree and for them it was good payback. You don't always get the payback you really deserve for the work you've done, but I think this helped, helped them on their way.

RH: Yeah, I agree. I hope they're proud of what they did because I'm proud of them. I don't even know these people, and I'm so proud. It was great to witness that and be part of that in our community, too. Very much needed I feel like.

KT: When delving into this research, what kind of sources did you use?

JL: To find the information to write the book and also provide some for the video? It's not always easy when you're doing the history of an underserved group, but the McFaddin-Ward House records were a good start. The Tyrrell Historical Library probably had the most information and a lot of photographs, and they also have a lot of the Charlton-Pollard high school yearbooks called the Rice Shock. So that would be where I went. There is something called Survey, and it was a survey done in 1929 of the African American citizens of the whole community of Beaumont – north, south, Pear Orchard, whatever, and it's an incredible demographic study of all of the different stores, of what the community looks like and what it needed. It's pretty amazing, and of course you've got the censuses – you've also got city directories. A gentleman named Amilcar Shabazz has done a lot of research on education in Beaumont during the segregation era and also as the schools began to be desegregated. So, it's there, you just have to find it and then you have to piece it together. That's always – it's like a jigsaw puzzle except you have to find the pieces too, but it's a lot of fun when you do realize you've kind of created a picture of a community.

RH: I do love how the documentary also includes actual voice – the voice of community members and their emotions come out when they're talking about their family and what it was like to be a child in that community, and they truly did feel a sense of belonging with that, and I think the incorporation of voice was probably the most powerful part of that entire process for me as a viewer.

So, thinking about the importance of place as historians, especially as public historians, we often connect stories to place – that's what we do here at the McFaddin-Ward House. How does place also connect with identity in your opinion?

JL: I think that definitely the Charlton-Pollard neighborhood connected with the people who grew up there – it just seemed to be such a strong sense of community and of belonging there as you say. As children, they had a sense of security, they were also

mentored so closely by the leaders in that community - the ministers, the teachers, the doctors, and their parents - that they did seem to grow up – “I am a Charlton Pollard person. I am a member of that community, and therefore I’m going to make something of myself.” I mean I really feel like that that gave them a grounded – a sense of being grounded – that they were able to draw on in their later life.

RH: And I think another prevailing theme that came out during the documentary was this idea that it takes a village to raise a child, and that connects to this African proverb from way back, but they lived that. They lived that philosophy. We hear that all the time as educators – “it takes a village,” but to actually see it demonstrated in a community and what that looked like is very meaningful. People say it all of time, but they lived it.

JL: I think that’s absolutely correct. I saw that in all of the research and in all of those interviews more I think than in any community I’ve ever studied that it really made that saying come true.

RH: Yeah, I think if I were an urban planner, which I’m not – I have no business in even attempting to become an urban planner – but if you’re looking at the kind of community you would want to grow or develop, I think they would be a good example of what that could look like from a community standpoint.

JL: I agree, I agree.

RH: They could be a great example. I’d like to see that elsewhere – in Beaumont and everywhere. Communities are strong when your children are taken care of.

KT: Thanks so much for joining us, Judy. It is always a pleasure chatting with you.

JL: Thank you. I always love to be here.

Music

KT: Thanks for joining us for this episode of *1906 McFaddin Ave.*

Music

KT: Follow along on our social media platforms for behind-the-scenes info and to learn more about the McFaddin-Ward House. If you have any questions or comments, email us at mcfaddinwardhouse@gmail.com.

This episode was presented by Kara Timberlake and Rayanna Hoeft. Todd Hoeft produced and edited the episode. Music produced and performed by Todd Hoeft and Tom Deemer.