

LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY
"SHADES OF L.A." INTERVIEW PROJECT
INTERVIEW SUMMARY

INTERVIEWEE: MARILYN WHITE
INTERVIEWER: AMY KITCHENER
DATE(S) OF INTERVIEW(S): 7/24/92
LOCATION: INGLEWOOD, CA
ETHNICITY: AFRICAN AMERICAN
OTHERS PRESENT: NONE
SUMMARIZER: AMY KITCHENER

INTERVIEW NUMBER: SH-2
NUMBER OF DAT TAPES: 1
NUMBER OF CASSETTE TAPES: 2
LENGTH:

Note: Interviews were recorded on DAT (Digital Audio Tape) and transferred to standard cassette tape for transcribing and listening purposes. The three digit numbers are indexed from the cassette recording and not the original DAT recording.

CASSETTE TAPE 1, SIDE A

000 Silence
002 Explaining release forms
029 Begin interview
031 Birth, parents, grandparents
035 Father was custodian for L.A. Unified School District
Mother worked as letter sorter for US Postal Service
043 Grandparents
051 Migration of grandparents -- Laurence, KS to Denver, CO
to Arizona to Los Angeles
055 Grandmother finds real mother in Arizona, 1903-1911
072 Move to LA in 1917--They had a contact in Yuba City.
Moved due to racial problems around Phoenix
082 Grandmother's political activities in Phoenix to fight
against prejudice
090 Grandfather witness to lynching in Tyler, Texas

- 101 Grandparents -- Julius Caesar Johnson worked on
railroad, Kansas City, MO and grandmother came to L.A.,
then rest of family came out to join her
- 107 Brothers and sisters -- brother lives in Brazil is
translator, twin sisters in Georgia
- 125 Growing up in LA -- family homes
- 146 Moved and made "steps up"
- 154 Recollections in different neighborhoods
- 164 Had many responsibilities as eldest child
- 180 Mishaps and learning domestic skills
- 188 Preparing for the Olympics
- 200 109th Street home, 1967
- 205 Goes to Washington, D.C. for a year as P.E. teacher
- 229 Education
- 235 Third grade experience in Catholic school -- rebellion
- 267 Memories of childhood -- mischief making
- 275 High School successes in studies and athletics
- 288 Goes to UCLA, struggles in large impersonal environment
- 321 Qualifies for Olympic team
- 324 First member of Los Angeles Mercurettes
- 350 Beats Wilma Rudolph at Los Angeles Invitational track
meet, 1962
- 360 Pan-American Games in Brazil, 1963
- 370 Trainer Fred Jones
- 393 1964 Tokyo Olympics -- frustrations and successes
- 425 Reflections on Silver Medal
- 432 Specialties in Track
- 444 Identity as a sprinter

- 450 Gets in shape again in 1984 -- Los Angeles Striders track team
- 483 Highlight of sports career -- 1964 Olympic Trials in New York
- 500 Father's support in athletics
- 517 Parents influence and philosophy
- 527 Sacrifices of family for her sports career
- 548 Teaching experience and avocation
- 583 Inspirational role models as teachers
- 612 Teaching career -- teaches one year in Washington D.C. returns to L.A. and works as P.E. teacher -- 92nd Street School
- 665 Field Day with Olympians
- 675 95th Street School -- decides to teach Kindergarten
- 722 END OF CASSETTE TAPE 1, SIDE A -- CONTINUED ON SIDE B

CASSETTE TAPE 1, SIDE B

- 001 Woodcrest school -- teaches in Open Education program
- 016 Begins to use Spanish in the classroom
- 027 Miles Avenue School in Huntington Park - 13 years
- 036 Teaches bilingual in 3rd grade
- 045 Teaching philosophy
- 062 Motherhood -- biological son and adopted son
- 077 Single motherhood -- support of Lord, parents, aunts/uncles, sisters, neighbors
- 088 Leon is going to St. Augustus College in N. Carolina -- went on Black College Tour
- 097 Needs strong black male role models
- 105 Had slight dyslexia and so does son
- 120 Leon is an athlete; football and wrestling

- 130 Family history/genealogy
- 139 Genealogy experience and interest
- 150 Unearths boxes of old family photographs
- 170 Finds connection between maternal and paternal family lines in Laurence, Kansas
- 195 Discovers living family in Kansas
- 204 Family resemblance in eyes -- reunion
- 209 Michigan genealogy experiences -- finds "missing link" in family
- 240 New Orleans -- tracing mother's side
- 248 Next work in North Carolina
- 270 Les Seaton -- Chain Lake story in Michigan
- 292 Greatest goal is to make connection to Africa
- 299 Guinea, W. Africa -- story of kidnapping
- 320 Alex Haley's work and influence
- 338 Religious and church activities -- Choir -- singing is way of praising Lord -- raised Catholic and remains so
- 365 Black Catholics convention in Washington, D.C.
- 384 Mother was most influential person in life
- 396 Grandmother's influence
- 409 "This is Your Life" award to grandmother -- how she wrote her autobiography
- 440 Clubs and social organizations -- Delta Kappa Gamma -- Choir -- National Council of Negro Women -- California African-American Genealogical Society
- 456 Politics -- supported cousin -- senator Diane Watson
In general politics is adversarial
- 479 Civil Rights movement -- sheltered from prejudice -- one instance of racism -- never felt racism personally
- 515 Exposure to different races/ethnicities

537 Rodney King Rebellion experience/ Watts rebellion
 590 Changes in Los Angeles -- danger in the streets --
 Police harassment
 625 Future lies in young generation
 636 Changes in African-American communities
 680 Goal to provide for son's education -- and be able to
 stand back and let him run his own life
 718 Begin of photographic interview

722 END OF TAPE 1, SIDE B

CASSETTE TAPE 2, SIDE A -- PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERVIEW

000 Silence
 002 Tradition of family photography -- many photos passed
 down -- 60% had photographic identification
 014 Archiving photographs -- keeps them in original box
 023 Donated photograph to Spensor Research library in
 Kansas
 029 Role as family historian -- family members give her
 photos to care for
 040 Photo Albums -- father assembled albums of track and
 field career -- mother kept baby book and kept
 narratives -- she does same for Leon
 056 Occasions for viewing photographs -- alone and with
 family and friends
 070 Trophy room, important documents -- role of mementoes
 073 Plans for photos -- wants them accessible to public
 092 Significance of photographs
 103 Photographic review -- choose five of greatest
 significance
 105 #18, 28, 32 -- Grandmother
 124 #12 -- Gilbert White and Ela Sarah White

136 #41 Suzanne Jaques -- nun
163 #26 -- George O. Paris White -- grandfather
176 #35 and 36 -- father's invention of gas tanks --
architectural award
202 #1 -- Fourth birthday party
222 #2 -- Family portrait
244 #49 -- Fishing portrait, Kansas
251 #3 -- Family picnic
283 #4 -- Athletes
294 #5 -- Boys Club of Santa Monica -- field day -- with
olympians
321 #6 -- 1964 Olympic Games
345 #7 -- LA Invitational Track Meet
360 End of interview
360 TO END IS BLANK
CASSETTE TAPE 2, SIDE B IS BLANK

LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY
SHADES OF L.A. INTERVIEW PROJECT
TRANSCRIBED EXCERPTS

INTERVIEWEE: MARILYN WHITE
INTERVIEWER: AMY KITCHENER
DATE(S) OF INTERVIEW(S): 7/24/92
LOCATION: INGLEWOOD, CA
ETHNICITY: AFRICAN AMERICAN
OTHERS PRESENT: NONE
TRANSCRIBER: AMY KITCHENER

INTERVIEW NUMBER: SH-2
NUMBER OF DAT TAPES: 1
NUMBER OF CASSETTE TAPES: 2
LENGTH:

These excerpts have been selected for the purposes and use of the Los Angeles Public Library Photo Collection. They represent only small portions of the tape recorded interviews available for public use. Researchers are advised to refer to the actual tape recorded interviews.

Note: Interviews were recorded on DAT (Digital Audio Tape) and transferred to standard cassette tape for transcribing and listening purposes. The three digit numbers are indexed from the cassette recording and not the original DAT recording.

CASSETTE TAPE 1, SIDE A

000 Silence
002 Explaining release forms
029 Begin interview

K: 031 I wanted to start off by asking you when and where were you born?

W: I was born in Los Angeles, California October 17, 1944 at 1:25 a.m., Hoover Street Hospital.

K: Who were you parents?

W: My mother is Mary Lorenza Susan Johnson White, my father L.A. Nelson White.

K: And what did they do?

W: My father was a custodian for L.A. Unified School District for as many years as I can remember and my mother worked for the United States Post Office.

K: 037 What did she do there?

W: She was a letter sorter. A clerk.

K: When did she finish working there?

W: Oh, my. Let me think. (pause) Probably in the late 60s is when she retired.

K: Do you remember where she worked?

W: She worked at Terminal Annex downtown and then when Worldway Post Office was built she transferred to Worldway Post Office and that's where she retired from.

K: 043 And what about your grandparents -- Who were they?

W: On my mother's side her father was Julius Caesar Johnson and her mother was Cora Lee Agath Jacques. On my father's side, his mother was Ela Sarah Thompson White and his father was George O. Paris White.

K: And could you tell me a little bit about them and where they lived and what they did?

W: 049 Well my grandparents lived in Laurence, Kansas until approximately 1900 after my father was born they moved -- Well I have to back up a little bit because they were in Laurence, Kansas. My aunt Gladys was born in 1900 and they moved to Denver, Colorado from Laurence, Kansas. And then from Laurence, Kansas and Denver they moved to Arizona. From Arizona they moved to California.

K: Do you know why they moved from Kansas?

W: 056 Well, my grandmother had found her real mother. She was adopted early on by Nelson and Sarah Thompson of Laurence, Kansas but her real mother was Molly Varnes. This is something that she wrote in her autobiography that she had finally found her real mother. And her real mother lived in Arizona. So they left Denver to go to Arizona. And they were in Denver because my grandmother had lost a baby, it had died and when my father was conceived they were afraid that she was going to loose that baby also so she moved back from Denver where my grandfather was working on the railroad. She moved back to Laurence, Kansas to be with her family when my father was born. Otherwise he would have been born in Denver.

K: 067 And then they moved to Arizona?

W: They moved to Arizona probably in 1903 or so and they stayed in Arizona until 1911. (I knew that I was going to have my gardener come here. Just at this time. I hope it blocks out.) So they moved to Arizona around 1911 or so and then to Los Angeles by 1917.

K: And why did they come to Los Angeles?

W: 073 Well, I'm not sure exactly why they came to Los Angeles. I think it was because they already had someone living here in the Los Angeles area. Actually it wasn't Los Angeles. It was in Yuba City. And that was -- what was his name -- not Clarence. Oh, it will come to me in a few minutes. Anyhow they had somebody who was already living in Yuba City and I think it was mainly because of the racial problems that were happening around Phoenix at the time.

K: 080 Did your grandmother tell you about those problems?

W: Well, in her autobiography she talks about certain movies that were being shown in Arizona and their black women's club there was picketing so that those movies wouldn't be shown that degraded blacks and for the life of me I can not remember the name of the movie but it was one of those that depicted blacks in a very poor manner. And they were successful in getting the movie theater to not show the picture. But that was the only thing that she, you know, told me about. My father has a picture of, I guess it was about 1920 or so of a lynching and that was really sad to see. That was in Tyler, Texas and there was just so much racial strife. (See photos A-006-826.1 to A-006-826.3) I think that's why they came here. There was more of a chance of succeeding here.

K: 093 Do you know how your father came to have those photographs?

W: No, I don't. They were in his belongings that we looked at after he died and I don't know how he got them but I do remember my cousin, Yetto, saying that my grandfather had just barely escaped being lynched and I don't know if that was the same lynching or not.

K: Did your father ever show them to you while he was alive.

W: Never. Never. It was quite a shock to see them. You know.

K: They are shocking. And what about your grandparents on the other side?

W: 101 Well, Julius Caesar Johnson worked for the railroad and he stayed in Kansas City, Missouri while my mother came out here to live with relatives. And she came here mainly to work and go to school. After she found out that it was a pretty good place to live then the rest of the family came out from Kansas City, Missouri and lived here.

107 Brothers and sisters; brother lives in Brazil is engineer and translator, twin sisters in Georgia

K: 125 Where did you grow up?

W: I grew up right here in Los Angeles, California. I'm native born. I didn't leave Los Angeles until my first year of teaching which was in 1967. And I taught for one year almost exactly to the day in Washington, D.C. and then I came back home and started working for L.A. Unified.

K: And where was the family home where you grew up?

W: 131 Let's see. Well, the first family home was 1158½ E. 41st Place. We lived behind my grandmother. In fact my grandparents. Because when I was first born my grandfather was alive. He died, oh, I don't even remember exactly when he died. But we lived behind them. And then, when I was, oh, I would say about eight years old we moved to 231 W. 43rd Street and that was right off of Broadway and 43rd and I went to Holy Cross School which was on 47th and Broadway. And I can remember walking back and forth to school from there. Then we lived at 1825 Wilton Place which is right off of Washington. And I went to Connelly High School and I was able to walk from there and the last place we moved before I moved independently was at 2319 W. 109th in Inglewood.

K: I see. It seems like you moved a lot of times. Is there any certain reason that your family moved?

W: 145 Well, mainly because we were each time making a step up. You know, first we were behind my grandmother's house. It was a tiny little bungalow and then my brother and I were born at that time. And then the twins were on their way and we moved to 43rd Street for more space. Oh, I forgot Brighton, 2956 Brighton. After we were on 43rd we were on Brighton. And then from Brighton to Washington. But it really wasn't that many moves actually when you look at the span of years involved.

K: What do you remember about those different neighborhoods?

W: 154 Well, I don't remember a lot about my grandmother's neighborhood except that I had my very first boyfriend who lived next door and I had ballet lessons. I remember that and I used to always follow my dad down to Central. He would walk down to

Central to go to the market. And I always -- I loved hot dogs. So my dad would go to the market and he would always get me a hot dog but the neighbors said, "Every time you see Nelson White, you're going to see Marilyn because she's his shadow." And that's quite true. It's always been true.

(Tape turned off to shut out noise)

W: 161 I would always follow my dad down to the market so I was basically his shadow. And then when we moved to 43rd Street I can remember being kind of the lady of the house because my mother worked at night and my father worked during the day and I'd have to always get up early in the morning and make my father's breakfast and his lunch. And I hated, oh I hated getting up so early to do that but I did it because that's what I had to do. But I can remember one day actually rebelling against this. And I made my father a watermelon sandwich. (laughs) And when he got home from work there was nothing I could do except just stand there and know I was going to get spanked because I'd really done it this time (laughs). But I can remember that happening. That was on 43rd Street.

K: 173 How old were you?

W: Oh, I guess I was around nine or ten. I can remember having my tenth birthday there and making a birthday cake but the recipe called for melting the butter and everybody was gone. Mom was gone somewhere. My dad had gone somewhere so I was there by myself and I melted the butter in a broiler and I caught the kitchen on fire. And instead of having sense enough to call somebody I ran next door to the neighbor. And Mrs. Franklin said, "Well, what's the matter?" And I just kind of stood there and looked at her for a while and then finally (laughing) I said, "The kitchen's on fire." And she called the fire department in. That was all taken care of. But that birthday, besides the cake and burning half of the kitchen down, I can remember getting my first record player. And I still have that record player. So I've had it all this time. (K: Wow.) Yeah.

When we were on Brighton. This was during the time that I was preparing to go to the Olympic Games and I was practicing all the time. I was doing the long jump and the sprints. And the sprints I couldn't practice in our backyard, but the long jump I could. And my father dug out a long jump pit in our back yard and filled it with sand. And I remember that. And sometimes when I pass that neighborhood now I glance down there to see if my long jump pit's still there.

W: 204 ... because I was going to Peperdine. I had finished Peperdine College. I had gotten a scholarship. I started out at UCLA and then I got a track and field scholarship to go to Peperdine. So I finished at Peperdine and graduated in '67. And the month after I graduated I decided I was going to Washington D.C. because there was a good coach there and I was thinking, well, maybe I'll try for the '68 Games. So I got to Washington D.C. and I got a job and my very first time really away from home. I can remember being the P.E. teacher at Adams Mill Elementary School. And my P.E. office was in the basement. And they had this Federal Lunch Program and they couldn't throw anything away. They had to burn it. You know, because they were afraid if they threw it away somebody would get it and I don't know. They just didn't want it to be useful I guess. And I can remember in the wintertime being down there in that basement with all the burning oranges and stuff and still trying to do P.E. with the kids. The very first winter I was there I was doing snowball throw for accuracy and all kinds of things in the snow because I hadn't seen snow before. So I had all these kids outside and we were all throwing snowballs and rolling in the snow and making angels in the snow. None of the kids got sick, but I did (laughs). The reason I brought that up is because I can remember that Christmas -- being so homesick and coming back home on 109th and feeling so good that I was back home. So that's kind of it.

K: 228 I was going to ask you about your education where you went to school. You touched on that a little bit. What do you remember about school, experiences and learning, and what your interests were?

W: 231 Well, I loved going to school. I just didn't like studying and I guess that's kind of typical of all kids actually. I was basically a brat. Always into something. Always had something to say. I was very stubborn. And I can remember in the third grade my mom -- somebody in my mother's family had died and so we went to the rosary the night before which was on a weekday and I hadn't done my homework. So I went back to school the next day and tried to explain to the teacher that something had occurred in the family and I didn't do my homework. And at that time being in Catholic school, well, they kind of got you on the hand. (K: Were you Catholic?) Yes, I still am. This particular teacher decided well, you didn't do your homework so I'm going to swat you on the hand with this little red stick. And I remember this little red stick so well. And I looked her straight in the eye and I said, "As long as you keep hitting me with the stick, I'm not going to do my homework." And that went on for weeks. For weeks, every single day she would hit me on the hand because I wouldn't turn in homework. And finally she said, "You're incorrigible. I give up." And as soon as she said that, I went to my -- Well, we didn't have book bags in those days. But I went to my folder and pulled out all the homeworks.

I had done them. I just wasn't going to give them to her. And I gave her all of the homeworks (laughs). I was really kind of a stubborn little kid.

And then I guess I was a fighter too. It seemed like somebody was always picking on either my brother or my sisters or they would start it and they would say, "Marilyn, Marilyn -- They're hitting me." And I would of course have to defend them because these are baby sisters and brother, you know. And I can remember one day we were walking down Broadway because this was when we were living on 43rd Street and I was going to Holy Cross. And we walked down Broadway and in those days they put the cans out separately. You usually had a wooden box or something and they put the tin cans in the wooden box. And this eighth grader pushed my little brother into those cans and he cut his hand. And as soon as I saw the blood I just went totally berserk. And being a ballet student, I was able to do high kicks and I did, I'm telling you, all kind of high kicks. And I got into so much trouble. But I was defending my little brother. And that's what I had to do I felt.

And then I can remember treating all of the kids at Thrifty's with the raffle money. From the raffle tickets. I was a terrible terrible brat. I really was. But I had a great childhood. I had a fun childhood. And I'm really sorry that the kids nowadays don't get to have that kind of fun. I mean we weren't bad. We were just mischievous little kids, you know, just rascals into everything.

In High School, all of a sudden I decided, "Well, I guess I should study something." And I got wonderful grades in High School. I was on the volleyball team, and the basketball team. That's when I was really introduced to track and field in high school at Bishop Connety. We had a field day once a year and I still have my very first trophy that I got there. It was great fun. Great fun. And it turned me on to excelling in something. It felt good to excel. (K: In athletics?) In athletics and in studies and in whatever I did. At that point I wanted to be the best at whatever I did. Don't ask me how the transition occurred because if I could figure out how it occurred I would be absolutely happy to teach my kids that. But I don't know how it occurred so I can't.

K: So you really became a student at that point.

W: 287 I really became a student at that point. And then I went from that very small Connety High School to UCLA and it was just a world of difference. A world of difference. There was nobody there to tell me, "You have to do this and you have to do that." There were no quote rules. So I did what all the rest of the kids did. I went to the Coop and I learned to play bid wizz and oh, I went to class when I felt like it. I ended up on

probation (laughs). On academic probation. And it was just a struggle uphill. It was just really hard to apply myself without having somebody to compete with. I didn't realize at the time that's what the problem was. But I think that's what the problem was. (K: What do mean "somebody to compete with," who were you competing with before?) Oh, with all of the people in the class. The classes were very small in high school. The school was small. So if you did something really well everybody knew who you were. You had done something really great.

K: So there wasn't the feeling of individuality at UCLA?

W: No, I was just a number. I was just one of however many. And there didn't seem really to be anybody who cared whether I made it or not. Well, my parents of course did, and they were pushing from their end the best that they could push. But something about that excelling, I don't know, just seemed like so much work to excel that I didn't really excel.

Except in one area, and that was track and field. And that one area helped me, I guess, be known at UCLA because I was freshmen Vice President. I ran for and was elected to Freshman Vice Presidency at UCLA. I wasn't all that good a Vice President because it was hard to be a part of that campus and being a commuting student was very difficult to do. And I'd have to leave at a certain time or I'd miss my bus and I'd miss a lot of meetings and it was very frustrating. Very frustrating so I never ran for any other office again because I wanted to give it everything I had. And I wasn't able to. But I did qualify and go to the Olympic Games in 1964 while I was a student at UCLA. I wasn't on their track team. I was on the Los Angeles Mercurettes. I was the very first member. There's a whole story that goes with that too. (K: I want to hear that.) O.K.

324 Well, I was taking, as I said I was a ballet student. I took ballet. I took tap. I took acrobatics. I took modern dance, Afro-Cuban. (K: When?) Forever, since I can remember. I can remember taking tap dance and all that. My mom and dad made sure that we had other activities to do. So as young as five or six years old I was dancing or doing acrobatics or something.

And I was at a dance class on Washington/Arlington and this guy came in who was a friend of the teacher and asked, "Who's that girl with the big legs?" And of course it was me (laughs). So the teacher told him who I was and he says, "I bet she can run." So he took me out on the track. Not that same day of course, but he took me out on the track and I barely made it around one time. Oh, I mean I struggled but I was determined I was not going to lose face in front of this strange man (laughs). So I struggled until I got all the way around. He says, "Well, you're not very fast, but you're pretty determined so I'm going to train you."

And he started working with me. And this was -- I was still in high school. I was a senior in high school. And he took me to the indoor track and field meet at the Sports Arena to see Wilma Rudolph run. And, oh, I was just so enamored with this and I thought, "Well, I'm going to beat that lady next year." And you know what? I did. He got me in shape.

I qualified for that meet and in the first heat I couldn't understand why or how the press was asking me all these questions. I couldn't figure out, "What are they doing? Why are they doing that?" And it was because I had beat the German champion in the preliminaries and I didn't realize I had done that because I came to beat Wilma Rudolph. That's what I wanted (laughs). And so it was really a phenomenal evening and I got Athlete of the Meet Award and I still have that trophy in there too. It was phenomenal but that was the one thing that I really excelled in and so that next year in '63. Well, it wasn't even the next year, it was probably the same year in '63 -- I qualified for the Pan-American Games in Brazil and I went there and I came out -- I think I was third or fourth in the 100 meters and we ran the relay and it was O.K. It wasn't the greatest. I was so homesick. And I was still sending lessons home. Everybody else was having a great time and I was doing German homework. Trying to send it back to UCLA and as it turned out I failed German anyway (laughs).

K: Can you tell me who was this guy who trained you?

W: 370 Oh, this was Fred Jones.

K: And did he go around to all the schools looking for young talent to train or... ?

W: No. He just happened to be there at this dance class and he had gone to Morgan State. He was a trackman himself at Morgan State and he wanted to coach. This was his opportunity to coach. This was his first track team and my first track team. (K: And the track team was called?) Well, we named it the L.A. Mercurettes, uhuh. And I was the very first member of that track team and since then there have been lots of folks that have made Olympic Games, Barbara Ferral being one of them. She ran in two Olympic Games. So he's a good coach.

K: So he's still around and training?

W: Oh, yes. In fact, at my son's graduation from high school, I looked up and who should be there but Fred Jones himself. He said two of his athletes whom he was taking to the Olympic Trials that next week in New Orleans were graduating in the same class as my son (laughs). So, yes, he's still coaching.

K: So there was '63 and then you did the L.A. Invitational?

W: 389 The L.A. Invitational was January 19, 1962. The Pan-American Games were in April of '63. Olympic Games were in October of '64.

K: Can you tell me about your experience at the Olympics?

W: 394 It was a phenomenal experience. I think that was the last of the non-political Olympic Games in '64, because as you know in '68 there was just turmoil. It was wonderful. I had gotten over the shock of being away of home for any length of time, but I still ran up phone bills of course. And I've saved letters that my mother wrote me in Olympic Village. So I've still got those letters here. It was wonderful. I was frustrated because I ran fourth in the 100 meters with the same time as second and third place. But I got fourth and I think it was because I'm shorter and even a lean doesn't appear to cover the distance that a lean of a taller person would cover. And then there was the relay.

The relay pass got messed up between my leg and Wyomia Tias' anchor leg. And I believe it to be because coach Ed Temple changed the steps -- Our lead-in steps for the pass. After the preliminaries -- We ran beautifully in the prelims and he says, "Oh, no, no, no. We can stretch it out more." And he had Wyomia Tias take off earlier and it was hard to catch her. So we boggled our pass and we came in second instead of first. So it was a frustrating Games, but it was a learning experience. It was a wonderful experience. I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world because once you are an Olympian, you are an Olympian forever. And nobody can ever take that away from you. And having a Silver Medal on top of it all is great. For a long time I was aggravated. I didn't even want to look at the Silver Medal because I thought it should have been a gold. But it has come to represent my place standing in the 100 meters in my mind because if I tied with the same time as second and third, I should have had one of those medals. They should have duplicated the medals.

K: 430 In the 100 meters you ran individually rather than as a relay.

W: Yes.

K: What was your specialty then in track?

W: I loved the 100 meters. I loved indoors. Indoors was just such a nice feeling running on the track. Mainly because I'm short and I have a short choppy stride. So I ran indoors on the wood you can feel it more and it just bounces you up. It just -- It's a nice feeling. So I like indoors. Outdoors I liked the 100 meters, but I seemed to have been better in the 200 meters a lot of the time. But I didn't particularly like it. It was having to run too fast too long. (K: You're a sprinter then.)

I'm a sprinter. Uhuh. I say, "I am a sprinter" because I think once you are you just are. Last year the school where I work had a faculty/student baseball game and when it was my turn up at bat, I hit the ball and ran to first base and I couldn't believe how fast I got to first base. And afterwards everybody said, "Wow, you really can still move it." And here I am, you know, a hundred-and-bubububu pounds (laughs). And I can still run. But you don't loose it and I did run again in 1984. I lost a lot of weight because I couldn't stand to have my Olympic friends come to Los Angeles and see me fat (laughs).

So I lost a lot of weight that year and I decided to participate in Masters Track and Field. (K: Which is?) That's for age group track and field. So you run against people of your own age. (K: At the Olympics?) No, this is just the Amateur Athletic Union. But it's age group wise. So if you're sixty years old you run with the sixty year olds. There's no threat, no problems. And I really did well. I did very well. I ran the 100, the 200 and one 400. I really am not all that thrilled with the 400. But I used to double 100/400 when I was actually running track and it's a very hard double. Because the moment you finish the 100 -- Usually the 400 has been scheduled because they don't expect anybody to run that combination. But I did. But I ended up representing the Los Angeles Striders Track Team in Eugene, Oregon. I came out second in the 100 meters, first in the shotput, and the second in the discus. I couldn't believe it but I got back in shape. I lost forty pounds. And it was not dieting or anything. It was just going out and being active. And I keep saying, "Well, maybe I'll go and be active again." Because you do not loose it. It's still there.

K: Sounds good. If you had to pinpoint one experience in your sports career, that was the highlight or the most exciting or the most meaningful one, (W: wow.) could you pick one?

W: 487 Oh, my goodness. (pause) Actually I can. It was Olympic Trials. And they were in 1964 -- They were held in New York and I had heard about these wonderful Olympic Games and I had only dreamt of being in the competition. To come up high enough in the competition to even qualify, and I remember the night that I qualified for the 100 meters calling home and having my whole family laughing and crying and yelling in the phone on one end and me laughing and crying and yelling in the phone in the other end. That was great. That was really good. And I was just grateful that I was able to go to the Olympic Games while my father was still alive to still see it. Because his baby, his baby, his baby . . . And with him going through what he did -- Because that man worked so hard as a custodian and then in the evenings he would take me to practice and sometimes he would be asleep at practice because it was just so hard on him. And he did that every single day. And when I had double practices, he made sure I got to both of them. When we had track meets he

drove all over creation on the weekend on his days off just so I could participate. And I was just so glad that I made it while he could see it.

K: 515 What were their aspirations for you?

W: I don't ever remember my mother or my father telling me what I should be in life. I can remember my father saying that as a black person, you're going to have to work twice as hard to go half as far. And I always remembered that. And I remember my mom telling me, "Whatever you decide you want to be, you can be that. Don't worry about it. Just go do it." So they never really told me what to be.

K: But it sounds like they were very supportive of you.

W: Oh, absolutely. I can remember some of the sacrifices that they made because during the time I was running track all of the nutritionists were saying, well you know, protein, protein, protein. Of course that meant steaks and hamburger. And looking back on it now. I can think of times when my whole family, my two sisters, my brother and my mom and dad were eating beans and I was sitting there eating a steak. And nobody made any differentiation between what we were eating. We were just having dinner. To them, they didn't mind giving that up to make sure that I had what I needed to do what I wanted to do. And I think back on that and it just chokes me because to think what the whole family sacrificed so that I could do what I wanted to do. But I think we've gotten away from that. And that's what's really sad and makes me unhappy about what's happening in today's society. It's very sad that a lot of people don't feel that way any more.

K: 548 How did you decide to go into teaching?

W: I think I had been a teacher since I was age two or three. I really believe that teachers are born, they're not made. And I can remember when we lived on 43rd Street, my backyard had this pomegranate tree and it was a giant tree that came out and looked like a cave. There was a little dark area you could go inside. I used to play school out there. I'd make my little sisters and my brother sit there and I'd play school with them and you know, sometimes the kids in the neighborhood would come over and we'd play school. I mean, I was always the teacher. The one who was going to take care of it all even though I was the one who was probably the worst student, the one that my third grade teacher -- I know that poor lady probably pulled her hair out every single night when she went home because she had this incorrigible student in her classroom. But that lady, Mrs. Cutler was the one person who recognized that I had talent in teaching and she asked me when I was in high school -- She asked me if I would help her in her tutoring service. Now here's a kid that we had bumped

horns, I thought we were mortal enemies actually. And yet and still, she pushed me so hard because she knew what was there and then she let it kind of simmer and then when I was in high school she invited me back to work with her. And that, again, I have lived such a blessed life. The Lord has just put all of these wonderful people in my path to push me the direction I need to go.

K: Were there others who inspired you as teachers to want to be like them?

W: 585 Oh, my chemistry teacher at Connety, Sister Mary Donald. That lady was so patient and so kind. She taught chemistry and physics. She was another one who pushed me and would not let me get away with doing things half way because she knew that I could do them well. But she did it in such a loving way that I wanted to do everything that she wanted me to do. And I ended up getting the Baush and Lomb Science Award because of the way she had pushed and helped me to develop. And then there was another teacher, who will remain unnamed, (laughs) and the Lord has never let me find her because I want to say to her in Spanish that, "Yes, I will get a grasp of the language." I was told that I would never get a grasp of the Spanish language. And here I am a bilingual teacher.

K: Do you think that someone telling you that made you want to do it?

W: Yes. I'm very stubborn (laughs). I'm sure that's it. If you tell me, "You can't do this" or "You can't do that." Well, I'm going to go do this, and then I'll do that to show you that I can (laughs). That's true. Reverse psychology worked very well on me.

K: So could you tell me about your teaching career and what you're doing now. Maybe give me a little bit of the history of where you've taught and what you've taught and what your experience has been?

617 Teaching career -- teaches one year in Washington D.C. returns to L.A. and works as P.E. teacher -- 92nd Street School

667 And we ended up having a field day kind of like the ones that we had at Connety when I was there but I invited all of the folks that -- And this was right after Olympic Games so I had a lot of contacts and we had C.K. Yang and Reyford Johnson came out and Billy Mills. They all came to my school for this field day and they judged the races and handed out medals and the newspaper came and the T.V. came. It was wonderful.

And then I transferred to 95th Street School. Actually I started at Hyde Park and then I went to 92nd when I was assigned and then I went to 95th Street School. And at 95th I got tired of doing P.E. It was just too much having to be up all of the time all day long for all of these kids. And I would see fourteen hundred kids a week. And one person -- It was just too much. They got me an assistant and that worked for awhile but we had different ideas of what should be happening and it was just conflict. So the next year I thought, "O.K. I'm going in the classroom." I have a credential just like everybody else's. I should be able to do this. I had never gotten through the training, but I figured I trained all the way since I was five, I should know how to do this.

And I asked for a kindergarten because I figured, "Well, I at least know the material" (laughs). How can you go wrong if you know the material? So I taught kindergarten actually for seven years. And my room partner was a wonderful lady by the name of Audrey Wilson. She has since died, but that lady taught me so much. And she was so patient and I was just hungry to learn because this was really fun. This is my idea of a job. You look forward to going on Monday and you're really sorry that Friday's come. And teaching has remained that way for me. Even now. During vacation time I'm usually looking in Pick and Save or swapmeets to find stuff that I can use the next year. Even though they're cutting my salary. I'm still spending. But it's a matter of wanting to do the best job that you can do. And if you're not given what you need, you get whatever you need to do the job you have to do.

722 END OF CASSETTE TAPE 1, SIDE A -- CONTINUED ON SIDE B

CASSETTE TAPE 1, SIDE B

001 Woodcrest school -- teaches in Open Education program
016 Begins to use Spanish in the classroom
027 Miles Avenue School in Huntington Park - 13 years
036 Teaches bilingual in 3rd grade
047 Teaching philosophy
062 Motherhood -- biological son and adopted son
077 Single motherhood -- support of Lord, parents,
 aunts/uncles, sisters, neighbors
088 Leon is going to St. Augustus College in N. Carolina --

went on Black College Tour

097 Needs strong black male role models

105 Had slight dyslexia and so does son

120 Leon is an athlete; football and wrestling

130 Family history/genealogy

139 Genealogy experience and interest

K: 141 How did you get interested in doing genealogy?

W: It all started at Black History Week in 1988, in February of 1988. I read in the newspaper in fact it was a throw-away newspaper, it wasn't even one I had purchased at the store. But the California African-American Genealogical Society was having a workshop on how to trace your family history. And I thought, "Well, I don't have anything to do that Saturday so I'll go to it and see what it's like." And they gave step-by-step how to do it. And I was all excited and I came home and told my mom. My mother was living on 109th at the time. I went to her house. I didn't even come to my house. I went straight to my mother and I said, "Oh, guess what I learned today?" And I started telling her about that. And she said, "Well, you know your dad's got a whole drawer full of stuff in there." And when I opened that drawer, that was the rest of the day. We were in that drawer in the closets, probably until two o'clock in the morning. And my mom got excited and I got excited and we called up relatives and we had them come over. I fed them spaghetti to butter them up (laughs). And then we started talking and I tape-recorded all the conversation. And that's how I got hooked on genealogy. I joined the society of course and now I'm recording secretary of that society. But it has been wonderful.

I have traced all the way back to North Carolina on my father's father's side of the family. I've traced back to Virginia on my father's mother's side and there are family stories that connect the Seaton family in Virginia to Guinea, West Africa. So I haven't crossed the ocean yet, but I'm standing on the shore (laughs). On my mother's side of the family I have traced back to Lawrence, Kansas in the 1860s and found Alexander Johnson who was Julius Caesar Johnson's father. I have gone to New Orleans and traced my mother's part of the family back to Laurenza Landoor. That was my mother's grandmother -- Early 1840s or so. And in Lawrence, Kansas it was very emotional for me. I went to visit Lawrence, Kansas a couple of years ago and I found that both sides of both of my parents' families were in Lawrence, Kansas at the same time. But my two grandfathers knew each other and played with each other as kids. And the wonderful thing was I found actual living family there. The two family lines had

been broken when Ela and George left and went to Denver and then to Arizona. I don't know why they didn't contact family again after that. I can't even figure that out but I know the sides were separated at that time.

K: These are your grandparents?

W: 181 Even my grandparents, right. And so when I went to Lawrence, Kansas I met a lady by accident in the elevator in the dorms of University of Kansas. I was going to the Spensor Research Library there. And I was staying in the dorm. This lady was going to visit her son and by the time we went from the first floor to the fifth floor I had told her everything I knew about genealogy (laughs). And had introduced her to my family. She said, "I think I know what church they probably belonged to. I have a book that talks about this church. So next time I come to visit I'll bring it with me." And she did do that. And on the very first page it talked about my grandmother, Phoebe Jane Seaton White. She was one of the founders of the First Regular Mission Baptist Church. So that was just phenomenal that that occurred. But it brought together the family because on that page it said, "Phoebe White who is related to Vernon Newman. And I thought, "Hummmph."

I looked in the phone book and there was a Vernon Newman the third in the phone book. So I called him up and said, "Hi. I think I'm related to you." And we started talking. He came and picked me up that evening to take me to his house. He called up family in Topeka. They got in their cars and came to Lawrence, Kansas. This is about 30 miles or so. Not too far. And we had a mini-reunion right in his front room with fifteen people or so. And then they arranged a total reunion before I came back. The newspapers got a hold of it and did a whole page article on our family. And we have this funny thing with our eyes. We have brown eyes that have grey around it. And my dad had eyes like that too. And I used to always say, "Oh, I wish I had Daddy's eyes." And I really did and didn't know it. And when I got there to Lawrence, Kansas, we started looking in each other's eyes and all we could do was laugh because we looked so much alike. 209

209 Michigan genealogy experiences -- finds "missing link" in family

240 New Orleans -- tracing mother's side

248 Next work in North Carolina

270 Les Seaton -- Chain Lake story in Michigan

K: 292 When will your work be complete in genealogy? What is your biggest goal?

W: Oh, my goodness. Well, if I live to be 172, I think that I will be back to Africa. We're very very close to being back as far as Alex Haley went. I think that's really what I want. I want to find out if Guinea, West Africa is really where this seventeen year old -- The first Seaton that was ever in the United States was basically kidnapped. He and his family lived on the coast line in Guinea, West Africa. And they had nothing to do with the slavery. The slavery was, you know, people being drug from the interior of Africa to the coast and then put on the slave ships. This silly child, a seventeen year old, either talked his mother into letting him see what it looked like on board or defied her and went on board anyway. And when he wanted to get off -- as our family story goes -- Captain Bernard would not let him get off. And brought him to the United States with all the rest of the slaves. So, what I would love to have happen is for me to end up in Guinea, West Africa searching, doing my genealogy research and having somebody come up to me and say, "You know, I'm searching for my family in the United States. We had this seventeen year old who got on this slave ship and this Captain Bernard wouldn't let him off." That's all I need to hear (laughs). That will connect the two families and I would love to hear that. But I don't know if I will in my lifetime. And I don't know who I'm going to pass it on to because my son's not really very interested.

- 320 Alex Haley's work and influence
- 338 Religious and church activities -- Choir -- singing is way of praising Lord -- raised Catholic and remains so
- 365 Black Catholics convention in Washington, D.C.
- 384 Mother was most influential person in life
- 396 Grandmother's influence and similarities
- 409 "This is Your Life" award to grandmother -- how she wrote her autobiography
- 440 Clubs and social organizations -- Delta Kappa Gamma -- Choir -- National Council of Negro Women -- California African-American Genealogical Society
- 456 Politics -- supported cousin -- senator Diane Watson
In general politics is adversarial

K: Do you remember the Civil Rights Movement?

W: 480 I vaguely do and the reason I say that is because my parents I guess kept me sheltered. I never felt any kind of prejudice anywhere they ever took me and the only time that I had a taste of it was when I was doing my student teaching. And I

*Ms. John
my
has
to my*

was observing. In fact it wasn't student teaching, it was observation. I was observing at this one elementary school. I don't even remember where it was. And this line of kids went by and the last little kid in the line turned around and pointed at me and said, "Look! A nigger." And I was so stupid and naive I turned around to see "the nigger" too (laughing). I looked and the kid was pointing at me. And that was the very first time. And I was an adult then. But I had never felt that. I don't know if it's because my parents made sure they didn't take me anywhere where I would feel that. Or whether it just was my lot to not, you know, be in the midst of it. It does not mean that they did not support Civil Rights. Because they always taught me about my own worth. Maybe that's why I didn't feel it as much. I knew that it was going on because I could see the television and the newspaper and I always thought it was horrible. Why can't they settle this argument. I never understood why black people had to be different than anybody else. And I thought, "I'm not different than anybody else. I wonder why they can't see that that person's not different." So it was just a matter of wondering to myself, but not actually going out and being involved.

K: 511 When you say that your parents sheltered you, was that within the African-American community or did you have a lot of exposure with different races and ethnicities in L.A.?

W: I did have a lot of exposure. You know, I went with my dad to work. He worked at Burnside Elementary School and it was an all-white school. And all the teachers were white except maybe one or two. But it was somewhere where they respected him so much that I would never have gotten that from there. And the same with my mother in places that she took me. There was never a matter of a difference of respect in the circle of friends and acquaintances that my parents had. So I didn't feel this rejection that a lot of people had to go through and I count it as a blessing and in a way it's detrimental because I had ostrich syndrome for such a long time. You know, it's not happening to me so it must not be happening. And then all of a sudden you find out, well, it really is happening. And sometimes even now my son tells me, "You're naive, oh please, don't even tell me. That's not how it is." Even now, sometimes he tells me that.

K: 537 What was your experience of the recent rebellion over the Rodney King verdict? What did you personally experience?

W: The first thing was disbelief. How could this be happening again because I remembered the Watts Riots. We were not directly involved with the Watts Riots, although we lived close enough to watch people bring the loot that they had taken from stores. We saw it happening but it was not something that my family was involved in. So we looked at it from the inside looking out. Understanding that it was happening and not really understanding

exactly why, knowing logically why, but not understanding why.

And then this occurred, and I thought, "How can this be happening again?" We didn't learn anything. How can this be happening again? But it was still a matter of being on the inside looking out. I was in my living room looking at television and seeing this happen. So it wasn't as real to me as I was thinking about, well, O.K. tomorrow morning I have to drive down Manchester to go to my job. I don't think I can do that. I'm scared to go down Manchester to go to my job. And I called them up and I told them, "I'm not coming." So that was the first feeling of "Ut-oh, we really are in this." And then the second thing was I got ready to go to the market and you know, you're hearing this market's burned, that market's burned. But I hadn't heard anything about our Ralph's market up here. And so I think we needed milk or something. I got in the car and I drove up to the Ralph's and when I drove up to the Ralph's here were all of these soldiers at my Ralph's. You know, why are you at my Ralph's? This is in Inglewood. This isn't part of that stuff. Why are you here? And then all of a sudden I knew we were really in it. And I was really frightened. And I came back and I thought well, "What is it going to have to come to?" What do we have to do to each other before we understand that we can't be in strife all the time. And I still have not answered that question. I don't know the answer to it. (pause)

590 Changes in Los Angeles -- danger in the streets --
Police harassment

625 Future lies in young generation

636 Changes in African-American communities

680 Goal to provide for son's education -- and be able to
stand back and let him run his own life

718 Begin of photographic interview

722 END OF TAPE 1, SIDE B

CASSETTE TAPE 2, SIDE A -- PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERVIEW

000 Silence

002 Tradition of family photography -- many photos passed
down -- 60% had photographic identification

014 Archiving photographs -- keeps them in original box

023 Donated photograph to Spensor Research library in
Kansas

- 029 Role as family historian -- family members give her photos to care for
- 040 Photo Albums -- father assembled albums of track and field career -- mother kept baby book and kept narratives -- she does same for Leon
- 056 Occasions for viewing photographs -- alone and with family and friends
- 070 Trophy room, important documents -- role of mementoes
- 073 Plans for photos -- wants them accessible to public
- 092 Significance of photographs
- 103 Photographic review -- choose five of greatest significance

K: 103 Could you pick out five that mean the most to you -- that have them most significant meaning to you for different reasons.

W: O.K. We'll take a break and do that.

(DAT turned off to select pictures)

K: 108 O.K. We've got photo 28, 18, and 32.

32. (S-000-328) Northwestern Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, Los Angeles, St. Paul's Baptist Church, 1923. Bi-ennial Convention.

18. (A-006-822) Union Station -- Elks, Ella Sarah White (center).

28. (S-000-332) Ella Sarah Thompson White receiving "This is your Life" award for contributions to community, early 50s.

W: Well, these photographs remind me of how active my grandmother was in all of these different societies -- In the Elks, in the women's club movement and she really served as an example to what I need to do in my life to be a benefit to society. Because that's exactly what she was to society during her lifetime. Always lifting others up and the banner that the women's group is holding says, "Lift as we climb," (K: in #32?) And that is a philosophy that I have tried to hold on to all of my life. Even before I knew that she was in a club like that. There was just something about Grandma that she could bring the best out of you without ever squashing the excitement and the adventure in you. And that's why.

12. (A-006-812) Gilbert Seaton, Sr., Ella Sarah White and (background) Gladys White.

This other picture, number 12 shows Gilbert White and Ella Sarah White and my aunt Gladys. I think the reason I love this picture so much is because the smile that is on my grandmother's face is the smile that I got from her as a child. It's one of those that lifts you up and it doesn't matter what's going on in your life when somebody looks at you with that much love, there's nothing that can go wrong that can't be fixed. And that's what that is. Just a wonderful lady and a wonderful family. And this Gilbert White was named after Gilbert Seaton who would have been his grandfather and my great-great grandfather.

41. (S-000-083) Suzanne Jacques, New Orleans.

136 Moving on to picture number 41. This is -- It's labeled Suzette Jacques, but when I went to New Orleans I found out that she was Suzanne Jacques and that she was a nun living in New Orleans. She and another nun had joined the convent together from the same family so we had more than one nun in the family. Suzanne stayed and I found her obituary in New Orleans. The other nun was Suzette. So there was a Suzette and a Suzanne. And they were related. They came from the same city, the same neighborhood. The other nun was put out of the convent because she and her friend decided that they wanted to run one of the missions without the Mother Superior's knowledge and they gave a fair the local elementary school. They would not have gotten caught if they had not forgotten to turn out the lights in the school. And so Mother Superior was notified that the lights were on. And she found out that they had given a fair and made some money. So she called the railroad. She went down to the railroad office and found out that two nuns had bought one way tickets to this mission. So she telegraphed ahead to the mission and told him what had happened and they were sent packing and put out of the convent (laughing). That was one piece of information I found when I went researching in New Orleans. And that's the fun of researching. But you come up with these tidbits that you never have thought could have happened. And it puts the life of the people -- It makes it real. And it's not just a book you're reading, but it's really something that happened.

26. (S-000-335) George O. Paris White, 1914 or 1915.

This is George O. Paris White, my grandfather, number 26. This man is what the kids call now, "a class act." I don't remember him too well except that he was always so stately and I looked up to him. If there was a picture of God, I knew God was going to look just like him. There was never a doubt. He was loving and kind. My grandmother and my grandfather. They went together. They were really perfectly matched. I think the Lord matched these two people up. They were super people and they meant a lot

in my life because they gave me the confidence for whatever I wanted to do in life. That's where my father got his philosophy from. That's where I get my philosophy from and I hope I've passed it to my son. But that's what we have to do. That's what families are for.

35. (S-000-339) Architectural Trophy - Ela Nelson White - Contest between P.H.S. and Manual Arts High School, 1917.

36. (S-000-338) Patent for combined automobile trunks and gas tanks, March 8, 1938.

177 And then this picture number 35, actually 35 and 36 go together because this is an example of why my grandparents' philosophy of being the best you can be and knowing who you are and whose you are makes a difference. My father invented a gas tank in the trunk of a car. Now somehow or another talked him out of it or sold it to someone who really made a lot of money on it because that's basically where the gas tanks are now. Under the trunk of the car. But it just shows that this philosophy works and I'm not going to veer from it one bit. And I hope that my son will not. This architectural award that my father won just is evidence of his talent. He was a very very talented artist and I have a picture that my mother found when she was moving here to our house of the Last Supper that he started painting and is only half finished. So I'm keeping it exactly like that. But he was a very talented person. It helps me make my son understand that each of us is given talents and that it's our job to figure out what these talents are and to use them according to the will of God. If we do them that way he will honor them and enhance them. If we use them contrary to the will of God he will let us get away with it for a little while, but then it will be to our detriment that we continue to use them that way. Looking back on my ancestors I can see that the talents that they had they used according to God's will because the blessings are still flowing through this family. There's just no doubt about it.

(End of selection of "most significant" photos made by MW)

202 Oh, boy (laughs).

K: These are some of the ones that have you in them.

1. (A-006-828) Marilyn White's fourth birthday party, 10/17/48. 1-r, front row: Tommy Johnson, Toi, Marilyn White, Donald, Danny Johnson.

W: O.K. Picture number 1. Oh, yes. This fourth birthday party. I'm telling you. Most of the faces I remember. Now there's one little girl back here, her name was Toy. And I don't know what kind of magnet that this girl had, but I would go and

play with her, she would fuss at me, she would make me eat salt (laughs). I'd come back crying every day, but every morning I wanted to go over there and play. So I haven't figured out exactly why (laughs) but I remember her name. This is Toy right here (pointing), right next to me. Of course, right behind me, probably pinching me, who knows. And then my cousins, Danny and Tommy are in the picture. A lot of the neighborhood kids. These are kids who lived on 41st Place right off of Central. When we were living at 1158 1/2 E. 41st Place. Let me find Donald. Donald was my boyfriend. The first boyfriend I ever had in life. That's Donald right there. (pointing) I always wonder what he's doing with himself now. (laughing) So, Donald, if you're out there... (laughs) Oh, golly.

2. (S-000-084) White Family Portrait, 1954. l-r: Laurenza White, Donnis White (in lap), Marilyn elaine White, Ela Nelson White, Donna White (in lap), front, Robert Milton White.

223 This picture, number 2, is a family portrait done, oh, I guess in 1954. I look like I'm about ten years old. The twins are sitting there looking astute as usual. And the funniest thing about this picture was that right before the photographer came my brother was playing with a pair of handcuffs. And he couldn't get them off when it was time to take the picture. So he had to take the picture in those handcuffs. Approximately twenty five years later, I don't know, maybe 20 years later. We recreated this same picture with my mother and father sitting exactly where they were sitting in this picture with me standing in the back. Let me see if it's up there, oh, it's right here, on the wall (pointing to a framed portrait on her wall). And instead of my brother being on the little chair in front, we put my son in the little chair. And I looked and looked and looked for handcuffs because I wanted the picture to be exactly the same and we couldn't find handcuffs. So we had to use a little bunny rabbit, you know, a little stuffed animal instead. But we recreated the picture, my sisters were standing behind each parent, who's lap they were sitting in this picture. And it's a very special picture. But, when you look at our faces that was really us. It wasn't just a smile put on for a camera. That's really us. And if I say so myself, we're pretty cool folks.

49. (S-000-085) Catfish from Kansas River, 1896, Abe Burns and Jake Washington.

244 Now, on number 49 I don't know the names of these two men but they were blacks in Lawrence, Kansas around 1870 and this was on the river. I think it was the Kaw River. They caught two of the biggest fish you ever want to see. And I guess so that they didn't want to go home and tell the old fish story, "Well the fish was this big (extending her arms)," they took a picture of it. (K: (laughs) This is a great picture.)

3. (A-006-810) Marilyn White at Val Verde, ca. 1954.

251 This was a family picnic. Number 3. The family picnic is a continuing picnic that started in -- what did my mother tell me? -- 19 -- Let me see, this was the 50th year last year. So, 19 what? I can't subtract. Come, Amy, help me.

K: What was it again?

W: Last year was the 50th year of our family picnic. It started before '40 because it was before Mama came out. But it started in Kansas City when my mother was a kid. And the people would go around and they had two trucks they said. The first truck went around and it picked up all of the people who were going to the party. And the second truck picked up all of the food. And so then they would go to a big park in Kansas City, Missouri and have this picnic. It was once a year. And it continued once a year all the way here into Los Angeles which is where most of the family is now. And my cousin and I have been in charge of the picnic for the last three years. And we're having it again on-

K: Where do you have it?

W: At different parks. We're trying to find a park that we really like. But the parks have changed so much that it's hard to find one that's safe and secure and it has easy access for the elderly and parking close enough. So this year we're going to have it at Westchester Park and we'll see how that works. It's been hard getting the kids to come out because there's nothing to do but sit around and talk. And the kids don't like that. So we're hoping that Westchester Park will help. There's a bowling alley across the street. There's golf. There's swimming. You name it, it's there. So we're hoping to continue this tradition. We don't want to let it slide.

4. (A-006-814) Mount Saint Antonion Relays, 1965. 1-r:
Charlotte Cook, ?,?, Marilyn White.

282 Oh, boy. This was in -- This is number 4. And this was right before I went to Washington D.C. to teach. I was still running track and the girl on the left, Charlotte Cooke, was my roommate when I was in Washington D.C. Because I arrived there with really nowhere to live (laughs). And she had an apartment. So we shared an apartment that first year.

K: She was an athlete too.

W: Yes. And she was a 400/800 runner. And I was a sprinter. We were on Brooks Johnson's team.

K: And you have trophies here.

W: Well, this was some meet or another. I don't remember which meet it was. I could probably go find it. It's on my trophy shelf I'm sure (laughs).

5. (A-006-815) C.K. Yang (Decathlete 1960), Rafer Johnson (Gold Medalist 1960) and Marilyn White, 1965-1966.

294 O.K. Number 5 is when I was working at 92nd Street School. 92nd and Grape. It was my very first year of teaching. I had been basically dumped into a position of teaching physical education to 1100 students per week and it was without benefit of student teaching that I was doing this. So it really goes to show that teaching is something you're born with, not necessarily something you acquire along the way. But it happened right after Olympic Games and so I had a lot of contacts and I went. I had just finished. Oh, wait a minute. I have to back up. This is not either at 92nd Street School. I take that back.

Number five is at the Boys Club of Santa Monica. And I was going to UCLA at the time. I went to the work-studies office and they told me that Santa Monica Boys Club had an opening for a physical education teacher, but they couldn't give it to a woman. And I asked them, "Why can't you give it to a woman? I can do anything that a man can do in this position. I can teach these kids whatever they need to be taught and I will work for free for a month to show you that I can do it." Well, after the first week they decided to pay me. And so I got the position. And at the end of that year we had a field day. And it was a field day, it was dog show, it was a carnival, it was a wonderful event that we had at Santa Monica Boys Club. And I invited C.K. Yang and Reyford Johnson to it. And they came. And this was a picture of when I was there.

6. (A-006-825) Makiko (200 meter) and Marilyn White (100 meter), 1964 Olympics.

321 Number six is a picture of Mikiko -- a Japanese athlete I met when I was in Tokyo, Japan for the 1964 Olympic Games. We decided to exchange gifts. We had become friends and we exchanged gifts. And during the 1984 Games I attempted to try and find Mikiko again. And in my attempt the article was run in the Japanese newspaper and my whole class and I started receiving all kinds of mail and trinkets from people in Japan who had read the article about me being in Tokyo and looking for Mikiko. And people just started writing and we wrote back. And we had pen pals for the whole year. My class made their own kimonos out of sheets. They sewed their own kimonos. In fact, I have some samples that I kept. We had an Olympic Games. We had everything at the school and it all was an outgrowth of this attempt to find Mikiko. We ended up with a pen pal room. They took an empty classroom and allowed my class to use it as a museum to display all of the pen pal materials that they had received over the last

year. And people came from the District office to see it, from downtown, 450 N. Grand to see it. It was a wonderful, wonderful event.

7. (S-000-341) Track Meet -- L.A. Invitational, Los Angeles Sports Arena, January 19, 1963.

345 Oh, this (number seven) was basically the surprise of my life. I ran in the L.A. Invitational in 1963. And I could not believe that I actually had beat Wilma Rudolph, but I had. And in the process I had beat Uda Heiney of Germany, the German champion. So I received the Athlete of the Meet Award. And as you can see we didn't even have uniforms. We just had sweat clothes and that's what our team wore because we were such a new team. But this was just the amazement of my life.

K: You're face is just so great in that picture. Your smile is so big.

W: (laughing) I know.

K: Well, those are wonderful. Thank you so much.

W: Oh, thank you. I have enjoyed this. It's nice to relive life (laughs).

360 End of interview

360 TO END IS BLANK

CASSETTE TAPE 2, SIDE B IS BLANK