

Copy of EnixWandalyn 20190906 edited

RAYAH LEVY: I am Rayah Levy, here with Dr. Wandalyn Enix to talk with her for an oral history project titled "Voices from the African Diaspora: The Black Experience of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania," as part of the Lehigh Valley Engaged Humanities Consortium. We are here at the Bethlehem Area Public Library, on Friday, September 6, 2019. Dr. Wandalyn Enix, thank you for your willingness to speak with me. Can you please spell and state your full name?

WANDALYN ENIX: Well, my full name is Wandalyn Jeanette Enix, W-A-N-D-A-L-Y-N J-E-A-N-E-T-T-E -- and then it's E-N-I-X.

RL: And your date of birth?

WE: I was born October 29<sup>th</sup>, 1947, in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania -- [00:01:00] actually, St. Luke's. (laughs)

M1: OK.

RL: Wandalyn, what year did your family move to Bethlehem?

WE: Actually, my grandparents came about a hundred years ago, in the early '20s. We don't know the exact date. But they came from South Carolina. And I -- done a lot of research... And as you know, with African Americans, the research probably starts with white families. Because my great grandparent, Cornelius Enicks -- and Carrie Enicks,

E-N-I-C-K-S, were slaves on the [00:02:00] William Enicks plantation, in Barnwell County, South Carolina. Now on my grandmother's... That would be my father's side. On my grandmother's side, her people were from Aiken County. They were the Johnsons. And the Johnsons' daughter married a Glover. And my grandmother, Estelle Glover, was produced from them. So they left South Carolina, like I said, in the early '20s, probably because -- and this is all conjecture -- probably because of... The one story I heard from my dad was that his uncle was lynched, you know. And knowing my dad and how he did not like the South...

[00:03:00] He would never let us go south. And that's a long story. Because my mother was also from the South. I think that might be part of the story. When my grandfather came to Pennsylvania, he came first. He stopped in Philadelphia. He did not like Philadelphia. He did not like the hurry and scurry, Dad said. He didn't like the hurry and scurry. And he wanted a good education for his children. Those two things, I remember. You know, when my dad died, there were so many things that I had decided I wanted to ask him. You know how that happens? And he died suddenly. So... But I do remember him saying that his father wanted a good education for his children and he didn't like Philadelphia. So I'm thinking, because my

grandparents were very religious people, he heard the name Bethlehem [00:04:00] and said, "Why not try?" And when he came to Bethlehem... I've heard a number of stories from Dad about my grandfather here. I never met my grandfather -- knew my grandmother but not the grandfather. And he found a room to stay in at Calloway's house, on -- well, they called it Calloway's house -- on -- I believe it was Third Street at the time. And it was kind of like a rooming house. And that's where he stayed. And the other thing I knew about Granddad -- like I said, he was religious -- he found a group of men who would pray together. And it was that same group that eventually started St. Paul Baptist Church. And so those were some of the stories behind [00:05:00] our family coming to Bethlehem. Later, of course, my granddad sent for his wife, Essie -- her name was Estelle -- they called her Essie -- and the two children, my dad and his sister. Sister was [Reanell?]. Aunt Reanell, in fact, just left us. She was 98 years old. She just died last August. W--?

RL: So tell me, what did your father do, when he...?

WE: Well, my father worked in the Bethlehem Steel. That's interesting, how he got his job. My grandmother worked for families. She was a cook, very good cook too. I remember some of her recipes my mother had. And my mother would

make them. But one of her families she worked for was the Edmund T. Martin family. [00:06:00] And Martin, he wasn't president at the time, of course. But my grandmother said to him, "My son needs a job" -- this was 1939 -- "Can he get a job at the Bethlehem Steel?" And he did. That's...

RL: Could you tell us what he did at the Bethlehem S--?

WE: Dad worked -- Dad worked in the blast furnace. And it was interesting, because, you know, steel worked 24 hours a day, every day in the year. And if you were a steelworker's child, you knew that he would work what we called, what was called swing shift. Sometimes he worked day shift, sometimes middle shift, sometimes night shifts. So that would mean sometimes we wouldn't see our dad, because he was working, you know. And, you know, he would leave early in the morning. We were still [00:07:00] asleep. And then, if he worked the double shift, we would go to bed for school the next morning and we still wouldn't see him. Depending on the shift-- he worked. And like I said, he also worked holidays. (laughs) So Christmas, we would have to get up early in the morning. I remember, Christmas mornings, getting up and opening our presents, tons of stuff, and then he'd go off to work.

RL: Did he ever tell you about any of his experiences working there?

WE: He didn't talk a lot about the steel work. I knew he had a lot of friends there. I knew there was a point in time when he could have moved to Sparrows Point, so that he could get a supervisory job. But he didn-- he didn't want to move in that area. He loved-- My dad loved Bethlehem. He had lots of friends here. Yes. [00:08:00] And my sister, Ernestine, loved to bake. So she made cupcakes for everybody in the classroom. And only three other students would eat the cupcake. So Ernestine and the other three girls in class ate all of the cupcakes. Then another problem story is that my sister, in second grade, got ill in class and the teacher had me clean up the... Because the janitor wouldn't do it. So I did it. So.

RL: And tell me about... So this is -- this is elementary school.

WE: Yes.

RL: What was your middle school exper--? What middle school did you go to?

WE: Middle school, we went to Broughal. Much, much better. Just a wonderful experience at Broughal, none of [00:09:00] that, you know, edge that we had in elementary school. And then high school (laughs) was even better! So, you know, we had the extremes, from not so good to wonderful.

RL: Why wasn't Broughal so difficult, for you?

WE: I'm sorry.

RL: Why wasn't Broughal so difficult, for you and y--?

WE: It was Madison.

RL: No, so why was Broughal --

WE: Oh, why --

RL: -- a better --

WE: -- wasn't it? Oh.

RL: -- why was it --

WE: You know...

RL: -- a better experience?

WE: All right. Great question. I think back on it. And having been a teacher educator myself... Our teachers in middle school... Well, they called it junior high in those days. Our teachers in junior high and high school were better educated than the teachers in elementary school. And education makes a difference, I think. The teachers had bachelor's degrees and master's degrees at Broughal and at Liberty. And a few had [00:10:00] doctoral degrees, at Liberty. But elementary, the schools were... the teachers were educated in what was called normal schools. Normal school meant that you went to college for two years. So that's part of the reason. Better educated teachers are better for students.

RL: Did you had diverse friends?

WE: Uh...?

RL: Did you have white friends also? Did you have friends who were Caucasian?

WE: Yes! Yes, we did. Actually, in my class there were close -- nearly one thousand students at Liberty High School. Like I said, this was the baby boomer (laughs) era. And there were only ten African American students in my class. So, you know, you had to have (laughs) white friends. And so, you know, there were students that I had from [00:11:00] kindergarten all the way up through in high school. Yes, we had white friends.

RL: And were you welcome at their house? And were -- and were they --

WE: Oh, my goodness.

RL: -- welcome at your house?

WE: Listen. I told you a few things that happened at elementary school. But our neighborhood was totally different. Our neighborhood, most of the people in the neighborhood... The students, the children in our neighborhood were Catholic. And they did not go to public school like we went to public school. But we had a neighborhood that was diverse. We had Greek people. We had Hungarian, Irish, German. Everybody lived in... Syrian families. And we went inside of each other's home,

we played [00:12:00] together -- in our neighborhoods. So it was... Our neighborhood was very close to the Fountain Hill neighborhood. And we lived on Pawnee Street, in the 400 block. And actually, our family was the only family on the block -- only African American family with children. There was a couple a couple of doors up from us. But other than that couple and our family -- we were the only ones in the 400 and 500 block. The next African American family was in the 700 block, where the A.M.E. Zion Church was. And it was the family of whoever was at the time the pastor - of the A.M.E. Zion Church. So, yeah, we ha-- we had a nice neighborhood, growing [00:13:00] up. And we had -- we had also a lady next door to us who was kind of like our play grandmother. She was Hungarian. And we grew up eating strudel and all that, Hungarian goulash and tortes and... (laughs) So today, when I go to Farmers' Market, I look to see if I can find strudel.

RL: (laughs) Were you involved in any activities at Liberty High School?

WE: Oh, my goodness, all of us. We were. To be modest, I'll start with my brother -- was in football and wrestling and -- and he played the trumpet in the famous Liberty High School band. And Ernestine was in art. And she's an art teacher now. And [00:14:00] what else was she in? And

Glee Club. She... But, yes, we all did. And music, I was the most talented girl in my class. We did a lot of music, all of us. So.

RL: I want you to elaborate on that. Because I know you're very good in that. Could you tell us about your music skills?

WE: Unfortunately, I don't really do any of them anymore. But I was a singer, mostly. And, in fact, when I went to college, my original goal was to become a music teacher. So when I went to Howard University... Which, I was influenced by the lady... And I have to talk about this lady, Mrs... At the time, her name was Mrs. Constance Roberts. She was the first African American teacher in Bethlehem public schools. And she is now Mrs. Gates. And she [00:15:00] would play... accompanied my voice teacher, who was Marjorie [Highberger?]. And she would play for me, around town. We'd go and sing. And Mrs. Roberts would play for me. Oh, she influenced me, because she became the first teacher in Bethlehem, in 1963. And that's another thing. We never had any African American teachers. None of the three of us ever had an African American teacher. And that's why I say she was so influential. Because when I saw that she became a teacher in Bethlehem, I knew then that I could become a teacher. And I did. You know,

Bethlehem has a history of... Oh, we had the J.F. Goodwin Scholarship Club, which was started by Dr. James F. Goodwin. Sometimes I call him John. But his name was James F. [00:16:00] Goodwin. And Dr. Goodwin came to town, he saw that African Americans were not graduating from high school. And they were dropping out. So he, together with Mrs. -- in those days, they had the male name -- Mrs. Harry Clark -- but her name was Mrs. Olivia Clark -- and several other people, started the James F. Goodwin Scholarship Club, whose purpose was to provide funding for African American students to go to college. Now Dr. Goodwin had issues, you know, like we all did, getting money for college. And he never forgot that. So what he did was to start the Scholarship Club, in 1935, [00:17:00] here in Bethlehem. And then, when he moved from Bethlehem -- he moved to Reading -- he started *another* organization there. And those two organizations still function. They still function as funds now. And each one... What happens is that the highest-- academic African American student gets money to go to college. And I'm proud to say that, the J.F. Goodwin Scholarship Club -- I'm on the fund board now today -- it assisted each one of the three of us in our family. So.

RL: When did it start, the J.F. Goodwin scholarship funding?

WE: OK. It started in 1935. And what they would do, Mrs. Clark... And there were other people. I can't name all the names now. Mrs. [Jay?] was part of it. Let's [00:18:00] see. There was other people, whose name I cannot remember now. Oh, the Taylors. They would sponsor trips and programs for young people. They had fun -- what do you call it? -- activities, like ice cream festivals, to raise funds to provide for these scholarships and for these grants. And, you know, just maybe about three or four years ago, we looked to see approximately, over the 80-plus years... And, in fact, I have a program here, that I should get out and show you. They loo--

RL: And this program is pertaining to the J.F. Goodwin Scholar-  
-?

WE: Yes.

RL: OK.

WE: This program is the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary program, from one of the celebrations that we had, the 80<sup>th</sup> [00:19:00] anniversary celebration of the J.F. Goodwin scholarship program. And by the way, this is the last picture that I know of of Dr. Goodwin in Bethlehem, at one of these celebrations. He would always come and present it to... That was the year that my brother Ernest, Junior -- that's Ernest Enix, Junior, there -- was the recipient of the

scholarship. And this gentleman on my side over here is Dr. Ernest Smith. Dr. Ernest Smith is a medical doctor -- I say is -- was a medical doctor, who grew up here in Bethlehem too. And similarly, his family, all of the children in his family, like our family, were able... You know, we went to college. And Dr. Smith, by the way, worked in [00:20:00] Detroit, he worked in Los Angeles, and he worked in Philadelphia. Yes.

RL: Why do you think that he moved to Reading, as opposed to staying in Bethlehem?

WE: Excellent question. I understand... And actually, this information, I got from Dr. Smith. Dr. Goodwin could not get the medical credentials to practice in a hospital here in Bethlehem. But he was able to get the credential necessary, you know, to practice his medicine in Reading Hospital. So. Yes.

RL: So you said you gradua-- you went to Howard University?

WE: Oh, yes. No, I didn't say that.

RL: You d--

WE: I...

RL: No, actually, before we go to Howard Uni--

WE: Oh, I did.

RL: -- yeah --

WE: Yeah!

RL: -- before we actually go t-- did you play an instrument, when you were [00:21:00] in high school?

WE: I played organ and piano. But my specialty was voice. Yes.

RL: And were in the band?

WE: No. I wasn't in the band. My (laughs) brother was in the band. No, I wasn't... No. Organ and piano, I can't carry those in the band. But... Oh. Here's another. I don't know if you can get this picture on here. But this is a picture of the J.F. Goodwin Scholarship Club standing in front of Broughal High School then. OK?

M1: We'll have to s-- we'll have to scan those. Yeah.

WE: Yes. I went... When I met Mrs. Roberts... Mrs. Roberts, like I said, was one of my idols. She was a piano player like no one else. I admired that. We had a piano. And so like I [00:22:00] said, my brother and I played piano too. But Mrs. Roberts was excellen-- and they lived up the street from us. They were in the parsonage of the A.M.E. Zion Church, on Pawnee Street. And our house, we were in the 400 block. And so we became close. And like I said, she was the first African American teacher. I wanted to emulate her. And so I went to Howard University. But let me say this. The J.F. Goodwin Scholarship Club had -- one of their activities was to take us to colleges. They took

us to... A group of us went on a bus to Howard University. And I'll never forget that trip, because that was on that trip that I decided, "Well, this is my college. This is where I'm going. [00:23:00] (laughs) Mrs. Roberts went here. So I can go here." Loved it. Because I was coming from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. This was going to the big city, the capital of the United States. I loved it. I met so many people. I met Dr. Martin Luther King, a couple of times. I still have his autograph. I still have it. I framed it. Mrs. King. All the people of the civil rights movement -- name them -- they came to Howard -- like they do now, you know. And I loved it. And it was because of going to Howard University... They told us there, "No, no. You don't stop at a bachelor's degree. You go on." And because of going to Howard University, I decided, you know, "I want to go on." Came back home. I was fortunate. Unlike those other people before me, I was able to get a job teaching in Bethlehem. [00:24:00] By the time I came here, there were, oh, five, six other people who were teachers here, before me. But before that time, during the time of Dr. Goodwin, in the '30s, in the '40s, black people would graduate from college here, they could not get jobs here. They could not get jobs. And they would go south, they got jobs. One lady got a job in Indianapolis. She

won so many teaching awards and prizes and all of that. These people... I knew them, because I knew their families here in Bethlehem. They would come home during the summer. So I knew these people. And as I grew up in Bethlehem, I knew their stories. And like I said, by the time I [00:25:00] graduate from Howard University, in 1969, there were openings, suddenly. And my first teaching job was -- professional teaching job... I always tell people (laughs) --

RL: What was year was this?

WE: -- my first teaching job was teaching -- 15 -- I was 15 -- teaching Sunday school at Second Baptist Church. But my first professional job was teaching at Broughal. And the year I started, 1969, there were three black teachers at Broughal. Believe me, that's a lot. (laughs) There was Mr. Edward Williams. He taught math. And there was a lady by the name of Willa, Willa [Burts?], God rest her soul. She was from a large city. Why don't I just say that? And she went home one summer and, unfortunately, was [00:26:00] shot and killed. She taught business. She taught business. So my first teach-- and then, as a teacher at Broughal, we could get reductions in tuition at Lehigh. So I went to Lehigh, in the summers and at night, to earn the master's degree. And I also earned a principal

certification. Because, you know, the sky was the limit. I graduated from Howard University. I'm supposed to do a lot of things. So I earned my secondary principal certification too. Yes. And teaching at Broughal, I loved it. I loved the kids. And (laughs) the kids now aren't kids. The kids I had are now grandparents. And some of them have become preachers. Some have [00:27:00] become teachers, lawyers, doctors. It was -- it was a great calling. I see teaching as a calling. I loved it. And now, unfortunately, some of... My colleagues did not love it. So I would hear them talk in the faculty room. But we won't be so negative here. And I decided that I wanted to teach teachers. So in order to teach teachers, I needed to go back to school again. And I went back to school. This time I went to Temple University. I earned the EdD. And I was very, very fortunate to get a job at Montclair State University, teaching teachers -- and letting them know about the contributions of my people, so that they could then teach their students. [00:28:00] I loved teaching. I tell people this -- I never worked a day in my life. Because I loved teaching. And I still do.

RL: So tell me, you know. So you left Bethlehem, where the majority of the people that lived in Bethlehem are white --

to a big city, and Washington, at a all-black university.

Did you feel empowered --

WE: I did.

RL: -- when you graduated and --

WE: Oh, my goodness.

RL: -- came back to Bethlehem?

WE: I could do anything! I could... Well, I wasn't a scientist, so I could not fly, but I felt like I could fly. I felt like I could fly. Because it was an empowering experience. You know, you hear Martin Luther King speak, you never forget it, you know. You never forget it. You realize the sacrifices that your people have made. I realize the sacrifices that my parents have made. My dad never had the opportunity that he had for the three of us, you know. And so that's [00:29:00] the other thing. I said, "No, I can do this. Because Dad worked very, very hard. He was very, very proud of all three of us. And I can do this." And I did. And we all did. We all did. Ernie became an engineer, out in California. He had to leave here. (laughs)

RL: Bu--

WE: And, you know, "Go west, young man," that was his thing. And Ernestine teaches. So, yes.

RL: Have these students, black students in particular, come back to you -- and say, you know, "You inspired me.

Because you're..."? You know, because, you know, black kids like to see other people, that look like them...

WE: Exactly. Because that's what happened to me --

RL: OK.

WE: -- seeing Mrs. Roberts. Yes. There's a young lady who became a preacher. She is a wonderful young la-- she was at Broughal. And she talked so much about how inspirational, you know -- (laughs) [00:30:00] not only was I her inspiration but so was Mr. Williams, was also her inspiration. So, yes, you are perfectly right. There are a number of them who are preachers and teachers, who say this, black kids. Yes.

RL: So since you stayed in Bethlehem, were you involved in any political activities --

WE: OK.

RL: -- any kind of organizations?

WE: Well, now, working... I started to work at... Oh, yes. Yes. Yes, I was. That's a simple... I was... What did I do? A lot of things. One thing... And I just remember it now. Maybe this is what's helping me. I was on the board of Black Exposure. And I did a lot of television programming with Esther Lee. You know, you ca-- you can't

talk about Bethlehem African Americans without mentioning Esther Lee. Because you know what she also did? She fixed Madison [00:31:00] School, by the way. There's a long story there. She, together with R. Wakefield Roberts, who was the pastor of A.M.E. Zion Church -- excuse me -- they went and had some changes made in Madison School. I remember one incident at Madison School when R. Wakefield Roberts's four children... He's the father -- the husband of Constance Roberts. The one young man... their oldest child brought home a book, called -- let's see -- *Little Black Sambo*. Yes. Oh, my goodness. Reverend Roberts went wild. He went to the school. (laughs) That was all in the newspapers. You've got to find those articles. There are articles about Reverend R. Wakefield Roberts... [00:32:00] And by the way, he was Young Man of the Year in Bethlehem, in 1964. And, you know, he said, "Well, why are you reading this book?" You know the story. The young man in the book turns to butter and the tigers are after him and all this, kind of, racist kind of stuff. He was upset with that book. Well, needless to say, they stopped using the book. Although, you know, that book was -- that had a lot of awards, you know, for whatever reason. (laughs) But it was the *time*. It was the *time*, you know, the '50s. It was the time. But they stopped using that book at Madison

School. They were unaware. Like I said, teachers need to be educated. And there were some really good ones there. Let me say that. Mrs. [Rader?]. I love her, to this day -- my first-grade teacher -- [00:33:00] was not prejudice-- I loved her. She, together with our mother, set us on the right track. Because when we came home from school, we'd review all the math problems. She made cards for us with the words. I had trouble with *what, where, when, why*. And Ma - she made those cards. And we'd sit to the dining room table and turn all those around, so that we knew, you know, the words -- and we knew fractions, we knew ho-- in fact, we actually knew how to read when we went to Madison School. So all of the teachers were not prejudiced. But just the few who were, you still remember, when you're over 70 years old, you know.

RL: So -- yeah -- tell me about the organization, as an adult.

WE: Oh, yes. That's where we were. As an adult, I became a member of the NAACP, eventually becoming [00:34:00] the president, for a few years. I was one of the Black Exposure... What do you call them? Mr. Jay also did it. We ran the television shows. And we did that. Of course, I was still playing the organ at church, up until I left here to go away and get the doctorate degree. So I did church work, I did NAACP work, organized students. Oh.

Mr. Williams and I, we ran an after-school program to do homework, at the... Mm! It's Pembroke but it's on the south side. Tell me what it is. I can't think of the name of it. But we did that. We did Homework Club for students. There's always something [00:35:00] to do, when you are an African American in a town li-- in the Lehigh Valley, actually -- in the Lehigh Valley, yes.

RL: Could you elaborate more about the NAACP and the role that you're playing in NAACP now and what...?

WE: OK. When I went away -- now listen -- when I went away... It's very difficult to -- I didn't know this -- to stay active here and to be active in the community in which you are teaching. So then I had... I worked at Montclair State, which I loved tremendously, for 28 years. I was assistant professor, associate professor, full professor, emeritus professor, did all of that, and then or-- when you are in higher ed, you have to go around the country and do presentations at different organizations. [00:36:00] Did all of that. But that made it difficult to continue the community work here in Bethlehem. So I had a hiatus. Now I'm back. (laughs) Once I became emeritus professor, I'm back, mostly with the NAACP. And believe me, there are -- there are many things that need to be done -- some of which I can't go into right now and give you details. But we

have done quite a bit of work. I also am a member of the South Bethlehem -- the South Side historical association, which maintains a history of South Bethlehem. South Bethlehem was the heart of Bethlehem, as far as I'm concerned, immigrant communities... We had all sorts of churches, of all nationalities, there. All three of the [00:37:00] oldest African American churches began on the South Side of Bethlehem, 1849 for St. John's A.M.E. Zion. Second Baptist Church started in 1918, and St. Paul in 1925. So.

RL: OK. And in 1968, when King passed away... I received some images from the [Luckenbach?] family. And there was a march here in memory of King, when he passed away. Do you know if the NAACP was involved in that at that time?

WE: I don't know. I was a junior in college. So I was in Washington, DC. I remember that very, very much. Because as you know, in Washington, DC, it exploded. And I remember the night... Oh, boy. [00:38:00] Dr. King was my idol. (laughs) I remember the night he was assassinated, was... I was in class, in Frederick Douglass Hall, on Howard University campus. And we lived on 14<sup>th</sup> Street, at Meridian Hill Hotel. The hotel had been given to the university by the federal government. And it was about seven or eight blocks from the campus. So that meant...

It was nightttime and I had to get b-- we had a bus. We had a bus. But I decided, that night, to walk, walk from Frederick Douglass Hall to 14<sup>th</sup> Street, in Washington, DC, on the night Martin Luther King (laughs) was assassinated. It was exploding. Things were exploding. Buildings were already burning. [00:39:00] I'll never forget it. And so, for a couple of days there, we were there. Finally, I think they shut... Did they? Yeah. They shut school down. My dad told me, "Come home." He didn't want me there. He saw it on television. "Come home." You know. (laughs) And then my sister was in college too, at the time. That's another thing. The three of us were very close in age. So there was a year when all three of us were in college at one time. And my mother... My father always felt that he wanted to keep my mother home. But, you know, in order for us to go to college, even being a steelworker, who worked double shifts, he still needed help. So my mom went to work, so that, you know, we could get the funds to go to college.

RL: What did your mom do, when she went and...?

WE: Oh, yeah! First she worked at Hess's. [00:40:00] Hess's was a famous department store at the time -- Max Hess, the Hess brothers. And lots of people would come to Hess's, famous people, Roy Rogers, Dale Evans. And we would shop

at Hess's. We'd get the reduction, because of (laughs) my mother working there. And, yes, she worked at Hess's. And she was a receptionis-- in the beauty salon. And it's very funny. I think my mother -- I think my mother was chosen to work there by Max Hess, because she was a pretty lady. She was a pretty lady. But Hess's Department Store was well known in the community. And it was fun. It was a fun place, big chandeliers. Christmastime, they would have all these beautiful window displays. Nothing like [00:41:00] going to Hess brothers'. And then after that she worked at Durkee's, Durkee's Fine Foods. Yes.

RL: I just want to... Do you -- do you know of any black businesses, here in Bethlehem?

WE: Excellent question! I would say, back -- I did a little research on that -- back in the 1870s, 1880s, there were two gentlemen, who were known for their business acumen, let's say, Abram Lane, who is the founder of that renown Lee-Lane... Lane-Lee family -- and there was a man by the name of Hiram Bradley, who was... Then later on, into the 1900s, 1910s, -- '20s, there was the [00:42:00] Warner family, Henry Warner, I believe his name was. He was the treasurer of St. Paul Baptist Church, for many decades. And he ran a sanitation business -- which he then passed down to his two sons, Malloy Warner and Hudson Warner.

They're known... They were sanitation. And, in fact, Dad, when the steel company... You know, my father was pretty lucky, in that he never got laid off from the steel. But they had long strikes. And he would work for Malloy Warner, on the sanitation truck. In fact, he found our first piano (laughs) from someone who, you know, wanted to chuck it. So he says, "Hey, my wife plays." So then, my brother and I, we got our first piano from the garbage truck. (laughs)

RL: You know, you [00:43:00] mentioned a strike. And I meant to ask you about that. That was in 1941. Do you recall any stories? I know you were young at the time.

WE: Oh, yeah.

RL: But do you recall your father...?

WE: That time, I wasn't born yet.

RL: Nineteen forty-one?

WE: No. Dad was in World War II. Let me tell you that. He was in World War II from '41 until -- think it was '44. And he was raised in Bethlehem. Like I said, my grandparents came here in the early '20s. So he didn't know about the South. But he was stationed in the South. And he would see these signs that said "For colored" or, you know, "For white only." He and some of his buddies... World War II. Remember now, it was a segregated army in

those days. They would see those signs and my dad, they'd look around, take those signs down, and tear them up -- in the South. [00:44:00] And he'd tell me stories about... They also went around to different bases and posts. One was in Arizona. They went to Fort Huachuca. Fort Huachuca's very known in African American history, because that's where the black soldiers were. In fact, W.E.B. Du Bois's wife ran the shows... What was her name? I think it was Shirley Graham. She ran shows for the servicemen, at Fort Huachuca. So... I forgot your question, though. Y--

RL: No, no. It's OK. I was asking about the strike. But I...

WE: Oh, the strike.

RL: The strike of ninetee--

WE: Yeah, yeah. And there were other strikes. Now, there were strikes when I was young, in the '50s. And that's what I said -- my dad would pick up work during the strike, with Malloy Warner. He would hire men. Yes.

RL: So...?

WE: And he also worked at the Hotel Bethlehem. That's another thing. Not only [00:45:00] did white men work at the Hotel Bethlehem for extra money. Dad worked there. And there were a number of African Americans who worked at the Hotel Bethlehem also, you know. Dad was a worker.

RL: As a -- as a black woman living in Bethlehem, were there any oth-- and are there still any unique --

WE: Exper--?

RL: -- experience-- yes -- yes -- that you faced, just living here in Bethlehem?

WE: (laughs) Just the other night, I was telling somebody about this. I was a teacher. And I decided I wanted to strike out on my own, from my parents, get my apartment, you know. So I saw this ad in the paper for an apartment. I went to this particular home. And the person never answered the door. OK? I knocked and knocked. You know, and they had the [00:46:00] ad in the paper -- in those days, you know. (laughs) And they never answered, you know. Then later on I decided, "I'm gonna buy myself a house." Well, you kn-- I went through all these... I had great credit, because... Well, I didn't have any bills, so, you know... And I had to go through all these contortions to get a mortgage, you know. In retrospect, it was only because I was black, single, female. So I bought this house on Ontario Street. The neighbors on my left never spoke to me. All the years they lived there, they ne-- they eventually sold their home to another black family. But while they lived there, while I was there, they never said a word to me. (laughs)

RL: What section of Bethlehem is Ontar--?

WE: Oh, that was on South Side Bethlehem.

RL: OK.

WE: -- yes -- South Side Bethlehem. And then I moved to the other side of [00:47:00] town too. So. That's another story, unto itself. So I would say that, I guess, after I grew up, became a teacher, living here in Bethlehem, I think the housing was an interesting experience.

RL: I just want to... You've shared so much with us.

WE: Y--

RL: And the project is dealing with, you know, 50 years here in Bethlehem.

WE: Oh.

RL: And when you look back like to the 1960s and you look at now, how has things change? What have improved, what didn't improve, when you look -- when you look back in history and looking at it now?

WE: Mm! Are you talking any particular perspective?

RL: Yeah. Something that jumps out at you, as an African American [00:48:00] woman.

WE: You know, it's very -- Firstly, the '50s, the '60s, in those days, '70s, into the '70s, Dad knew just about everybody in town, you know. I would say the first thing that jumps out at me is that the diversity of the African American community, unto itsel-- African and Caribbean

influence, you know, people from the West. It's much more diverse, you know. Whereas, when we were growing up, it was a product of the great migration, people coming in like my family did, from South Carolina -- or my mom, who was... I didn't talk much about that. (laughs) But her roots are in Alabama, you know, by way of Detroit. In fact, that's interesting. She came here because my Great Uncle [00:49:00] Jake was here. He was a chauffeur for a famous actress by the name of Constance Bennett. I've looked her up. And Constance Bennett had a home out here in Saucon Valley. And he worked for her. He got ill. Uncle Jake was also in the Navy during World War II. In fact, he was at Pearl Harbor on that eventful day, in 1941. He was injured. And like I said before, our services were segregated. And he was a cook on one of those ships out there. And eventually, somehow he came to work for Constance Bennett, who had a home here, which brought my mother here to see about her sick uncle. (laughs) And then Mom met Dad and here I am. So.

RL: OK. I see you brought some stuff there [00:50:00] with you.

WE: Y-- oh, my gosh.

RL: And could you tell us more about, again...? And I want to go back to that last question -- and I think a lot of it

will come out of the information that you brought with you -- pertaining to the African American culture here in Bethlehem --

WE: Oh, my goodness.

RL: -- and, again, the growth, the changes that has occurred here in Bethlehem. What...?

WE: (clears her throat) Something went the wrong way.

M1: I'm just gonna pause it there, just --

(break in audio)

RL: OK, Wandalyn. Could you tell me, share with me something that I di-- that I didn't ask you about? Is there something that you would like to share with us? Because right now I would like to... I thank you, so much, for this interview. It was excellent.

WE: OK.

RL: And before we sign off, is there anything else that you would like to share with us?

WE: (laughs) There is actually [00:51:00] so much. But African Americans in Bethlehem, they started out as domestics. They were domestic workers. As I mentioned, my grandmother cooked for Edmund Martin's family. And so they worked as cooks at Lehigh University. There's a history at Lehigh University, in the fraternities and the different homes up at Lehigh University. There was also a club here in

Bethlehem called the Bethlehem Club. And a famous lady -- "famous" -- (laughs) famous in my book -- she worked there. Her name was Olivia Clark. Olivia Clark, like I said, continued the J.F. Goodwin club, [00:52:00] when Dr. Goodwin had to move on to Reading. And she worked as a cook. Her story is very interesting, in and of itself. Because she was a graduate of Hampton Institute -- it was called then -- could not get a job as a teacher. So she worked as a cook there. And she would hire many of our black youth, so that they would have summer jobs, so they could save money so they could go on to college. One of the young people she hired was a lady by name of Geneva Smith. Geneva Smith went on to, also Howard University. She went to nursing school there. And she became a very high-level nurse. And, in fact, I see her... She happens to be the [00:53:00] sister, the only sister of Dr. Ernest Smith. So in one family you had a medical doctor, a nurse. They had brothers who were educators. And the African American community were just really, really good people. Oh! On the funny side, I might add that there's a historian by the name of Joan [Champion?]. She talks about the history of South Bethlehem. And she talks about speakeasies -- (laughs) -- this is funny -- speakeasies on the South Side. Well, black people also had speakeasies

too, on the South Side. They would make their brews, during Prohibition, like everybody else did. And what they would do -- make it in the bathtub. And when police officers heard about that and they'd come to their door, they would [00:54:00] simply pull the -- pull the plug. So that's a -- that's a funny story, on speakeasy. In fact, there was a gentleman, a high-level gentleman -- highly respected gentleman -- let's say that -- who had a barbershop on the South Side but, in the back room, he had a speakeasy.

RL: What's his name?

WE: I won't say that. (laughter)

RL: OK.

WE: I won't say. And then also, on the kind of sad side, we did have a few murders in the black communi-- murders, yes. One murder happened this way. It was a lady who killed her husband. She was a hairdresser. That's what they called them in those days. She was a hairdresser, nice, nice lady. Unfortunately, [00:55:00] he would take advantage of her and -- domestic violence. He also drank. So one night, when he fell off to sleep... And I don't know if it was the bed or sofa. He was asleep. She finished him off, with a knife. She was able to get the best lawyer in town. And she got off. Then on the other hand, the same... This

is sad, sadness. A man also killed his wife. You know, I'm just telling you these things because, like all communities, there are good things and there are some not so good things. He thought she was philandering.

[00:56:00] So he had a pipe, steel pipe. And... He served time for that one. He served time for that. And he came out, however, became a minister.

RL: What's his name?

WE: No. (laughs)

RL: OK. OK. That's OK.

WE: And won't give bad na--

RL: OK. How about the Fahy bridge and the police officer?

WE: Yeah. Yeah. Everybody... I think, if you were 15, you remember that. Was very sad, very sad. I will only say this. I was a teacher at Broughal, when that happened. And two of his [00:57:00] daughters... I'm talking Bebley Wells. Everybody knows that name. His daughters were students at Broughal. And I remember when they would walk the halls of Broughal. They left town, with their mother and other siblings. And they moved to another town in Pennsylvania. So.

RL: OK. Thank you --

WE: All r--

RL: -- Dr. Wandalyn Enix, for this interview. I appreciate it.

WE: All r--

RL: Thank you.

WE: All right.

END OF AUDIO FILE