

Weatherford, Erica
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Oral History Program
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Imogene Sanders Bacote
Interviewed at Ms. Bacote's Residence

April 15, 2010

Interviewer: Weatherford, Erica

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Transcriber: Erica Weatherford

Editor: Karen Flint

Title: Interview with Imogene Bacote

Keywords: Greater Galilee Baptist Church, Mt. Zion Church, Busing, Pharmarch

Description [abstract]: Ms. Imogene Bacote was born on January 31, 1950 in Chester, South Carolina. She moved to Revolution Park with her husband, Robert Bacote, in the summer of 1972. The couple has lived in the same house in the neighborhood ever since. They have four daughters and are currently members of the neighborhood association.

Ms. Bacote's story is important to the history of Revolution Park because she experienced some of the early racism of the white members in the community when she and her husband moved there. In her interview, she recalls much of the neighborhood's change over time.

Contributor: Imogene Sanders Bacote

Interview Date: April 15, 2010

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Coverage: Charlotte, NC 1970s to Present

Interviewer: Erica Weatherford

Transcriber: Erica Weatherford

Participant Description:

Age: 60

Birth date: January 31, 1950

Birth location: Chester, South Carolina

Residence: Revolution Park in Charlotte, NC

Education: High School

Occupation(s): Mother

Setting Description: Interviewed at her home in Charlotte, NC.

EW: Erica Weatherford

IB: Imogene Bacote

EW: This is Erica Weatherford, and today is April 15, 2010, interviewing Imogene Bacote, and we are conducting this interview in her residence. OK, so thank you for participating, and I guess to start off, what are your fondest memories of living in Revolution Park?

IB: I think because this is where my children grew up at. It was a family-friendly neighborhood.

EW: OK, so is that one of the reasons why you moved here, because it was seen as a family-friendly neighborhood?

IB: Yes, it was. And I fell in love with my house.

EW: [laughter] Oh, OK. So was it seen as a safe neighborhood when you moved here?

IB: Yes.

EW: And so, did you move--you moved here in 1972, correct?

IB: Correct.

EW: OK. So why did you pick Revolution Park over the other neighborhoods?

IB: Well, we had been searching for a home, and when we saw this and we found--we knew--had a cousin here, and we just liked the area.

EW: OK. And this is the--is this the only street that you've lived on?

IB: Yes.

EW: OK. All right. And you said that--you said in your pre-interview that you have primarily been a homemaker. So what, what does your husband do for work?

IB: My husband works for, well, Charlotte Pipe and Foundry.

EW: Oh, OK. OK.

IB: And he's had multi jobs, different jobs. Yeah.

EW: OK, but they've all been in Charlotte?

IB: But he's--by trade he's a welder. Um-hum.

EW: Oh, OK. OK. My grandpa's a welder. [laughter] We have a lot in common. So when you first moved to the neighborhood, what were your neighbors like?

IB: OK, my neighbors to my left was Mr. and Mrs. Cooper. They was an older set of people. They was African-American. They was very sweet. To my right there was--I think--I don't remember his name, but he was a white gentleman, and he wasn't happy with us moving here.

EW: Really?

IB: So, some days he would speak and some days he wouldn't. But after we was here a few years, he, you know, started talking to my husband. And, you know, when we'd go out, he would throw his hands up at me. But, you know, we were never the best of friends.

EW: OK. So do you think that he was upset because you were African-American?

IB: Yes.

EW: Oh, OK. OK. So was the neighborhood mostly black or mostly white?

IB: Well, in this area, it was probably half and half.

EW: Uh-huh. But if you were to go up more towards the golf course, would, would you say that those--maybe your street, like outside of your street?

IB: Now, I can't speak any further than Cowles.

EW: OK.

IB: And on this side, there were three white families.

EW: OK.

IB: And just one other, you know, African-American family.

EW: OK. Were there mostly families in the neighborhood?

IB: Yes.

EW: OK.

IB: Yes, I think there was. Um-hum.

EW: OK. And did the kids play together in the neighborhood?

IB: I can't answer that. And the reason why, because my children were not allowed to play out--I'm from the country, and I grew up with you stay in your own backyard.

EW: Oh, OK.

IB: So my children didn't get to explore the neighborhood like a lot of other children did.

EW: OK. But did you see--would you have seen a lot of kids on the street playing and things like that?

IB: Well, yes, because at the end of the street was Sandhurst Apartments.

EW: Oh, OK.

IB: And so a lot of those children, you know, were up and down the street.

EW: Would play on the street?

IB: Yeah.

EW: So you don't remember any neighborhood pranks that these children would play?

IB: No.

EW: No? Nothing like that? OK. And when your kids were growing up, did they ever have summer jobs or afterschool jobs?

IB: Yes. Well, when my daughter became a senior, her first job was Hardee's.

EW: Oh, OK.

IB: Yeah, on Freedom Drive.

EW: OK, so she just worked in the restaurant and things like that, the Hardee's?

IB: Yes. Yes.

EW: OK. And do you remember any neighborhood rivalries between the kids?

IB: Not really. No.

EW: No, not really? So you--do you think that all the kids got along?

IB: Not really. Oh, that made me think. It was a house--

EW: Uh-huh.

IB: Past Cowles, like two doors down, and it was about six children there, and they were very rowdy.

EW: [laughter]

IB: They were very rowdy, so. There used to be quite a few bus fights, you know, once you would get off the bus in the afternoon.

EW: Oh, OK.

IB: Yeah.

EW: So were, were fights among kids common?

IB: No. You know, just children.

EW: Uh-huh.

IB: They were older than my kids--

EW: OK.

IB: Because I always said--and I don't know if I need to say this on the interview--but when my girls started girl, then I was going--they was going to be car-riders because they wasn't going to take the bus.

EW: [laughter] Because they weren't going to ride the bus?

IB: Yeah.

EW: So was the bus seen as dangerous?

IB: No.

EW: No?

IB: No, I don't think it was at that time.

EW: Interesting. OK, so where did your kids go to school?

IB: First school was Carm--no, I'm sorry. The first school was Beverly Woods, out in the South Park area.

EW: Oh, OK.

IB: And then--Beverly Woods. Their middle school was Carmel Junior High, and then their high school was South Meck.

EW: OK. So did they take the bus, or did you drive them?

IB: They took the bus. They did take the bus.

EW: OK. Were they, were they involved in any busing? You know how they bused kids to different schools?

IB: Yeah. Well, all these buses was busing.

EW: OK.

IB: Oh, I missed one. When they, when they were in the fourth grade, they went to Barringer.

EW: Oh, OK.

IB: So that was the only neighborhood school that they attended. So first was Beverly Woods, then Barringer.

EW: Oh, OK.

IB: Then Carmel.

EW: Then Carmel?

IB: Uh-huh.

EW: OK. And Carmel was the middle school, right?

IB: Middle school, yeah.

EW: OK. OK. And what, what was the school like? Were there mostly African-American and white children, or was it primarily one?

IB: Well, Beverly Woods was, I would think, mostly white.

EW: OK.

IB: Barringer--it was mixed, but not--I think it was mostly blacks, because it was in this neighborhood.

EW: OK.

IB: And Carmel was mixed, and South Meck, you know, I guess about 50/50.

EW: About half?

IB: Um-hum.

EW: OK. So you said that Beverly Woods, they were bused there?

IB: Yes.

EW: So that's--do you think that's why it was mostly white?

IB: Yes. Um-hum.

EW: OK. So how were the race relations at, at your kids' schools? Did you ever hear of any problems?

IB: No, I can truly say at Beverly Woods we had a very good experience there. We did. And I liked the teachers and the children liked the school. So it was a good school.

EW: OK. So what, what would say the race relations compared--like what they experienced in the school compared to how your neighborhood was, in terms of race relations? Would you say it was better or worse?

IB: It was better in the school--

EW: It was better?

IB: --than here. Yeah.

EW: OK. And why, why do you think that is?

IB: Well, I think the school--children tend to mix better than us, and my, my neighbors was older. So they had the root gut feelings that they had, and I guess I did too. But we didn't have any real problems, you know? It was just much like, "You stay in your corner and I stay in mine." And one funny story: We bought this house from--her last name was Farmer--and we bought the house--and she was a white lady--and about a month, maybe two or three weeks after we moved in--my husband has a real large family, so every weekend we always get together and have cookouts. She had the nerve one Sunday to come here and tell my husband she didn't sell us this house for us to have parties. But needless to say, she didn't come back.

EW: [laughter] Wow.

IB: Yeah.

EW: OK. That's interesting. So do you think then the race relations were better in the schools maybe because of age? Or do you think it was something else?

IB: Yeah, I think it was, I think it was age. I think it was--you know, like I say--the children more so than the neighborhood.

EW: OK. And getting back to the story that you were saying about the woman who sold you guys the house, when you were in the market of buying your house, did you ever hear of any blockbusting?

IB: No.

EW: No, you didn't hear of any of that?

IB: No, I didn't.

EW: OK. So, getting back to neighborhood life, where did people go to socialize? You know, where would your kids go to hang out with their friends?

IB: My children didn't hang out. We were really our social life involved the church.

EW: OK.

IB: If we went to the movies or something the weekend, we went as a family or--like I say, my children were--they really didn't socialize with their peers in the neighborhood, just only at school. You know, maybe a game after school occasionally. But if you talk to my girls, they'll tell you they was 21 before they could ride the bicycle up and down the street.

EW: OK. So, and by games, do you mean sports?

IB: Sports, yeah, like at school.

[phone ringing]

EW: OK. Do you want to take that? I'll hit pause. OK, we're going to go on pause.

[pause]

EW: OK, and we're back. OK, so getting back to--you said your children played games. What kind of sports did they play?

IB: They didn't actually play.

EW: Oh, OK. Oh, with the school.

IB: I'm talking about with the school. You know, like track () games, basketball, football games. They was allowed to attend those on occasion, when it was earned.

EW: OK. So were sports like a really big way for kids to sort of socialize with one another?

IB: Yes.

EW: OK.

IB: Yes.

EW: OK. And where did the adults go to socialize? What would you do? Was it something that you did in church, or were, were there places in neighborhood?

IB: Church, with family. We didn't really go anywhere, you know, as--I guess the neighborhood, was wasn't that type of neighborhood, not in this area. Because my neighbors here, Mr. and Mrs. Cooper, they was older people. And all their children were grown. They had some grandchildren lived there. So that's pretty much it.

EW: So there were no neighborhood hotspots, like maybe a restaurant or something like that that everyone went to?

IB: Not that I know of, you know. Maybe it was, but I didn't know about it.

EW: OK. So what did people do on the weekends?

IB: Now, that I can't answer.

EW: [laughter]

IB: I don't know. I really don't.

EW: OK. OK. But what did you and your family do on the weekend?

IB: Well, like I say, we went--OK, we went shopping, maybe to the movies, visit family. My husband has a very large family, so. They was all over town, so we'd visit family. So that was pretty much it with us. And then on Sundays we was in church all day.

EW: OK. When you said that you visit your husband's family, they don't like in the neighborhood. They live outside of Revolution Park?

IB: Outside of Revolution Park.

EW: OK. Do you remember any special events that took place in the neighborhood?

IB: Oh gosh. [pause] No, I really don't. I don't remember anything like that.

EW: OK. No, no festivals?

IB: Yeah. I'm not saying it didn't, but I don't remember.

EW: OK. So where did you do your shopping, your grocery shopping?

IB: You know what? I'm really trying to think. There was a store up on the corner called--I believe it was Wayne's.

EW: Right.

IB: But I didn't shop there too often because I didn't like their quality of meats.

EW: OK.

IB: But there was a Winn-Dixie over on Wilkinson Blvd. We shopped there a lot. There was-- [pause]. There was another grocery store on down West Blvd. I don't know whether it was called Sky--it was Sky-something, and we used to shop there a lot.

EW: OK. All right. I know that you've mentioned church a couple times. Where did you go to church?

IB: My church was off of West Blvd, Greater Galilee Baptist Church.

EW: Is it Greater Galilee Baptist Church?

IB: Yes, Greater Galilee Baptist Church.

EW: And is that in the neighborhood?

IB: It's in the Wilmore area.

EW: Oh, OK.

IB: That's--do you know--are you familiar with ().

EW: I think, I think I know what area.

IB: Yeah, you just go straight down West Blvd. It's down there.

EW: OK. So did you ever think about going to a church closer to your home, or is that, is that pretty close?

IB: That's pretty close. It might--it's not even five minutes. And I had a lot of family at that church, so I never thought about leaving my church.

EW: OK. And was this your husband's family?

IB: No, it was my family.

EW: It was your family. OK. And were the churches in the community--were they mostly African-American and white, or were they separate?

IB: Separate.

EW: They were separate?

IB: Um-hum.

EW: I understand that Mount Zion started off as a white church, but today it's predominantly African-American. Do you know anything about that transition?

IB: No, I sure don't. In fact, Greater Galilee, the church that we went to, that was a white church.

EW: Oh really?

IB: It was.

EW: And how did it--how did that change?

IB: Evidently they moved out and they put the church up for sale, and we bought the church.

EW: Oh, OK. And what year was that?

IB: I don't know, but Mr. Sanders probably could tell you that exactly.

EW: Do you think it was in the '70s or the '80s?

IB: () I'm going to say maybe in the late '70s.

EW: The late '70s? And do you think--why do you think that was that the church was being put up for sale?

IB: I think because of the neighborhood. The Wilmore area at that time--it used to be predominantly white. Then it had gone to the--it was mostly black, and it was getting rundown, so everybody was getting out of the neighborhood.

EW: OK. So why, why do you, why do you think that people in the neighborhood didn't go to church together, people of different races?

IB: Because that was their--the upbringing, I guess that was. Because we've always been separate, and we too--we was too far to the south. You know, I think Charlotte was too close to the south to think about mixing to worship together.

EW: OK. I know in your pre-interview that you said--we're moving to golf. [laughter] So in your pre-interview you said that you all didn't use the golf course, but did you know any people who used the golf course? Maybe your neighbors or your church members?

IB: No, I sure didn't.

EW: So you don't have any sense of whether or not the community used the golf course a lot?

IB: No, ().

EW: OK. All right. Did the golf course have an impact on the community in any way?

IB: I don't know. I really don't.

EW: OK. OK. Well, let's see. We came across some newspaper clippings in our initial research about the neighborhood that says there was a murder on the golf course in the early '70s. Do you remember hearing anything about that?

IB: [shakes head]

EW: No? OK.

IB: I don't remember it.

EW: OK. Well, since you don't remember, then I guess we'll move on to the swimming pool. You said that--you said in your pre-interview that your kids used the swimming pool.

IB: Yes.

EW: How were the swimming pool facilities different than the other ones in the neighborhood? I mean, not in the neighborhood, but in the city of Charlotte? Sorry.

IB: That I don't know, because that's the only pool, you know, the girls ever went to, other than--

EW: Twelve Oaks?

IB: Yeah. Yeah.

EW: OK.

IB: So, I don't know.

EW: So did you use the Revolution Park pool just because it was close?

IB: Yeah, because it was close, and a lot of the children--and that's the only time my children did get to mingle with the friends.

EW: Oh, OK.

IB: You know, when they was at the pool.

EW: So was the pool seen by the younger kids as a place to meet up with their friends?

IB: Yes. Yes.

EW: OK. And you said that you used Twelve Oaks some. Was Twelve Oaks really different than the Revolution Park pool?

IB: I don't know. I don't remember. I don't remember.

EW: OK. There wasn't one that your kids preferred to go to?

IB: No. They liked this one.

EW: They liked the Revolution Park one?

IB: Yeah, they liked the Revolution Park one.

EW: And why do you think that is?

IB: Because friends.

EW: Oh, because of their friends.

IB: Yeah, and then they could walk there from here, so that ().

EW: Oh, OK. Because it was convenient maybe?

IB: Convenient, yeah.

EW: OK. OK. Let's see. And do you ever remember the types of people that swam at the pool? Was it mostly neighborhood people? African-American people? White people? Both?

IB: Well, it was mostly the neighborhood kids, but there was a lot of swimming events there held from--I guess all over the city, but they was held mainly at that pool, at Revolution, so.

EW: Like swim meets and stuff like that?

IB: Yes. So a lot of times we couldn't use the pool because of that.

EW: OK. Were there ever times at the pool when race became an issue and there was tension?

IB: Not that I'm aware of.

EW: Were the people who worked at the pool African-American or were they white?

IB: Oh gosh, I don't even remember that. I want to say both.

EW: Both? OK.

IB: Yeah. That's what I want to say.

EW: OK. That's OK. Do you ever remember any time when people were turned away from the pool?

IB: No, only if they were having a event, you know, a special event. I don't remember, you know, just being turned away just for being turned away. I don't remember that.

Erica Weatherford: OK. And was the pool expensive to use?

IB: It was free.

EW: It was free.

IB: When the children was going during the summer.

EW: OK.

IB: Yeah.

EW: All right. Was Twelve Oaks pool free too?

IB: I don't remember that one.

EW: OK. No problem. So I guess moving on from the pool, just to ask some pretty basic questions about the neighborhood in general. How has Revolution Park changed while you've lived here? And you said you've lived here for, for quite a while. You moved here in '72?

IB: About 40, about 40--about 39.

EW: Yeah, 39, 40 years.

IB: Yeah. Well, it's changed because there's a lot of rental houses here now, and people is not--you know, they don't rent--peoples who rent, they don't care what the neighborhood looks like, so they don't take care of their properties. And the rental owners, you know, they just--what do you call them, slumlords? You know, slumlords. I really don't think they care. They don't live here. You know, they just want somebody in their houses. So they're not kept. And most of the older people, if they didn't die out, most of them has moved out. And now though, I'm seeing a lot of younger people moving in, and since our neighborhood association is, you know, really got new faces, new idea, that I'm seeing the neighborhood being revitalized, you know, so. Coming to life again.

EW: And then the new people, are they buying or are they renting? Or are--is it like new families?

IB: Well, the ones who are involved in the neighborhood association, they are buying, you know. I, I can think at one meeting we had somebody that was renting, you know, to come in. We even had a owner--she was a white lady--she came to one of our meetings, that she's renting her house.

EW: Oh, OK.

IB: Up on--I think it's on Remount.

EW: OK.

IB: Um-hum. Yeah.

EW: OK. So we know that census data shows that the demographics of the neighborhood changed quite a bit from the 1970s to the 1980s. Do you remember anything about the changes? And racial changes, specifically?

IB: [pause] Not really. The only--the thing that I think was racial, per se, for them to take our pool from us. Now that's, that's one thing I think was racial, because that was something for our neighborhood, and we was promised that when they put--when the Stratford [ph?] Y opened that our children would be able to go there and swim for free. But that didn't happen.

EW: Right. OK.

IB: So, and then when they built the new center here, you know, it doesn't even have a pool. And from my understanding, that center is geared more at--not for the community. You know, that's supposed to be something for the city. You know, I guess we might be able to do something, but it's not mainly for our neighborhood.

EW: OK. And do you get the feeling that it's not for your neighborhood because of the way that they treat you, or the fact that it's not free?

IB: I think the fact that it's not free, and the fact that it's supposed to be one of a kind, the first one here in Charlotte, and I don't think they want that to be said, that our neighborhood--a black neighborhood--you know, has control over this particular spot. So.

EW: OK. Well, are your neighbors currently--have they always been your neighbors?

IB: Depends. Here, this is the grandson of the, the older couple.

EW: OK.

IB: These are new neighbors. They probably been here about 20, maybe, 20, 25 years. They're the best neighbors in the world.

EW: [laughter] That's good.

IB: And the one next to them, now she was a white lady. She--

EW: The one next to the neighbors on your right?

IB: Yeah. She just--she died maybe--the house that Brett [ph?] lived in.

EW: OK.

IB: And she was so sweet. She would come, you know, visit every once in a while, and you couldn't make her leave this neighborhood. So.

EW: So why do you think that your neighbors moved?

IB: [pause]

EW: People on your street.

IB: I haven't a clue.

EW: OK. Do you think that race was an issue for why people were moving in and out of the neighborhood?

IB: Well, the one that lived next door to me, I think it was.

EW: Right, the man that you spoke of earlier in the interview?

IB: Yeah. I think it was with him.

EW: But you don't know of any other instances of where people moved in or out of the neighborhood because of race?

IB: No.

EW: OK. Did you or your family ever think about moving out of Revolution Park?

IB: No. I've always liked Revolution Park.

EW: OK. How did the neighborhood changes affect you and your family?

IB: Well, you used to feel safe here, you know. You don't feel safe now. And I, I don't think you really feel safe anywhere. When my children was going to school, there was a path three, four doors down that they could walk to Barringer. You know, that's a big fence up now because it's not safe anymore. And we have been living here almost 40 years, and we had a break-in last year. You know, stole everything out of the garage, all my husband's 40 years of tools and everything. And now before you could leave stuff in the yard, and you know, you didn't have to worry about it. So it's really changed.

EW: So they broke into your building, not your actual house?

IB: The storage house. The storage house, yes. Yes.

EW: Were you here when they broke in?

IB: We think we were. 'Cause my daughter pulled up about eight o'clock that night. She told my husband she saw a man walking between the house. And when he went out there everything was gone.

EW: So do you feel like the neighborhood isn't as safe as it was when you first moved here?

IB: It's not, yeah. I feel it's not as safe.

EW: And how does that make you feel?

IB: Well, it makes you feel uneasy, you know, but you got to live somewhere. And then I think at our age, I really don't want to move, you know. I'm, I'm happy here. So that's why we're working so hard with the association and trying to keep things abreast. You know, look out for each other.

EW: OK. So does the neighborhood association make you feel proud of your neighborhood?

IB: Yes, very proud.

EW: OK. So I understand the I-77 was built in the 1970s. Did people have any concerns about I-77 being built?

IB: I don't know. I don't know. I remember when it was built, but I don't remember any stories about it.

EW: Did it impact you and your family, I-77, the building of it?

IB: No, it didn't. It didn't.

EW: So it didn't bother you as a, as a neighborhood member?

IB: No.

EW: OK. So did I-77 change the relationship between your neighborhood and neighboring communities, like Abbot Park or Wilmore or Clanton Park?

IB: [pause] I don't think so.

EW: OK. So you don't--do you think that I-77 changed the desirability of the neighborhood, of your neighborhood, Revolution Park?

IB: What does desirability mean?

EW: Like people wanting to move into the neighborhood.

IB: I don't know. I really can't answer that.

EW: OK. Let's see. Are you aware of any loss of businesses in the neighborhood because of I-77?

IB: We've lost a lot of businesses from over here, but just to say it was from I-77, I can't-
-I think it was due more to, to crime.

EW: To crime?

IB: Um-hum.

EW: Do you remember some of the businesses that you've lost?

IB: Well, I know we lost the Winn-Dixie. We lost Woolco.

EW: And that's a gas station?

IB: No, Woolco--oh, you're so young.

EW: [laughter]

IB: Woolco was like one of the first Wal-Marts. You know, it was a place like that.

EW: Oh, OK.

IB: We had a Zayre's over on Freedom.

EW: What's that?

IB: Oh.

EW: [laughter]

IB: Zayre's were like a Wal-Mart.

EW: Oh, OK.

IB: Yeah. What else did we have? We had a Rite-Aid, which Rite-Aid--

EW: OK. I know what Rite-Aid is.

IB: Yeah. OK, but Rite-Aid came back. First it was Rite-Aid. Then they changed their name. We even had--when Rite-Aid used to be on Wilkinson, and I had three children, and my husband wouldn't have the money to get the medicine all the time, he could go to that drugstore, and the man would let him have the medicine, and come back and pay him.

EW: Oh, wow.

IB: So it's--

EW: That is so nice.

IB: It was good experiences over here.

EW: And was he, was he a member of the neighborhood?

IB: No, he was not.

EW: He was not?

IB: He was a white gentleman. He was, he was really nice. And he left there and moved to Sedgefield Drugs on Remount. And we used to see him a lot, but I think he retired.

EW: Oh, OK.

IB: Yeah.

EW: Well that's a good story.

IB: Yes.

EW: So moving on to talking about politics, were you aware of the NAACP and their activities in desegregating the golf course and the swimming pool?

IB: No.

EW: You never heard any stories about the NAACP being involved in this area?

IB: Not in that, no.

EW: OK. Were you and your family politically active in Charlotte, or in the neighborhood?

IB: No. No.

EW: OK. You said you're a member of the neighborhood association. Do you remember why the neighborhood association was formed?

IB: It was to, I guess, keep your neighborhood safe, to make it better.

EW: OK.

IB: Yeah.

EW: Do you remember why it was formed? I mean, not why, but when? Sorry.

IB: No. No.

EW: No?

IB: But I used to attend the meetings sometimes, not on a regular basis. Oh gosh, my girls was young, in school.

EW: OK. So do you attend the meetings more now than you did when you first moved?

IB: Yes. I'm more involved now. Yes.

EW: OK. And why do you think you're more involved now than you were initially?

IB: Because I'm older. I have more time. And I know there's really, really a need now for the neighborhood association.

EW: OK. And what do you think that need is?

IB: I think the need is safety, number one, and to--you know, if we're going to live here, get the best that we can for our neighborhood. And each person needs to do their part. So I think as a member of the neighborhood, we have an obligation to the neighborhood.

EW: And do you think that the obligation is the same for renters and for buyers?

IB: Yes I do.

EW: OK. We've talked about the pool a little bit. We, we understand that you--I understand that you feel that the pool shutting down, that it's upsetting. But up until that time, do you feel that the neighborhood was treated fairly by Charlotte?

IB: You know what, I'm not going to answer that, because I really wasn't involved enough to say it was or it wasn't.

EW: OK. Do you feel like Charlotte treated the neighborhood fairly now?

IB: No. No. There's a lot of things, issues, that has been discussed, that if you lived in another area, you know, it wouldn't--like we have some spots here that needs the City of Charlotte to come in and clean up. And you keep calling and keep calling, you know. And like the rentals, the rundown houses in the neighborhood, we keep calling about them. Nobody's really doing anything about them, so. And I feel if it was in, say, the Myers Park area, it would have been taken care of.

EW: OK. It would have been taken care of. Do your neighbors feel the same way?

IB: Feel the same way. Yeah.

EW: OK. Do you feel like the neighborhood association helps you express the concerns that you have?

IB: Yes, very much so. Very much so.

EW: OK. Well, we're coming to the end of our interview. So looking back, what, what do you think are the main things that historians and that people need to know about the changes in the neighborhood?

IB: That our neighborhood has been revitalized, and that the Revolution Park has had a bad name, I feel, for a while, but we're trying to change that image. So we need young, energetic homebuyers to come in and, you know, help get the job done.

EW: OK. Is there anything that you feel that you would like to add about your experiences living in Revolution Park or anything that you think I should have asked you or anything, that you can think of?

IB: No. One thing about my neighborhood, I think the reason I like my neighborhood, because my neighbors who I did socialize with was all older, older than I was. And they were--they took great joy and pleasure in living here. So that's been a good thing.

EW: OK. And do you feel like if new families were to move into the neighborhood that it would sort of help change the way the neighborhood's perceived?

IB: Yes. Yes, I do.

EW: OK. OK. And is the neighborhood more--is it more families now than it used to be, or is it more older people?

IB: Well, I think more older people.

EW: OK. All right. Well, I don't have any more questions. I thank you for your time. But is there anything else that you'd like to add about the neighborhood?

IB: No. I enjoyed the interview, and I'm sorry I couldn't be more help.

Weatherford, Erica
April 15, 2010

Oral History Program
UNC-Charlotte Special Collections
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EW: Oh, no. You were very helpful. I'm glad I got to get your story. Well, let's go ahead and stop this.

END OF INTERVIEW.

Approx. 36.09 minutes