

Bells Bend/Scottsboro Oral History Project, 2012

Collection Summary

Creator: Public Library of Nashville and Davidson County. Special Collections Division.

Title: Bells Bend/Scottsboro Oral History Project

Inclusive Dates: 2012

Summary/Abstract: The collection includes 15 audiorecorded interviews highlighting the history and experiences of individuals and families residing in the Bells Bend and Scottsboro communities of Davidson County, Tennessee, capturing the character and memories of one of Nashville's last rural farming areas.

Physical Description/Extent: 15 sound discs: digital; ¾ in.

Language: In English.

Stack Location: Closed Stacks SCC oral histories

Repository: Special Collections Division, Nashville Public Library, 615 Church Street, Nashville, TN 37219

Biographical/Historical Sketch

Originally known as White's Bend, this northwest Nashville area became known as Bells Bend when Montgomery Bell, a wealthy iron producer in the first half of the nineteenth century, purchased more than 600 acres of land on the Cumberland River. The land was subsequently divided and sold. The name Scottsboro was given to the small community at the crossroads of Bell Bend Road, (which later became Old Hickory Boulevard) and Hyde's Ferry Turnpike. Many families farmed or owned property in the Bend, have lived there for generations, and have made significant contributions to its history. As of 2012, the Bells Bend/Scottsboro area was one of the last rural farming areas of Davidson County.

The Bells Bend/Scottsboro Oral History Project began in February 2012 when Tim Walker, Executive Director of the Metropolitan Historical Commission, contacted the Nashville Public Library about collecting the stories from long-time residents of the Bells Bend and Scottsboro communities. Families and individuals who were long-time residents of the area were identified by Beaman Park staff and selected to be interviewed for the project. Interviews were conducted by Nashville Public Library staff at the park.

Scope and Contents of the Collection

The collection consists of 15 audio interviews conducted in 2012 with members of the Bells Bend/Scottsboro communities by Nashville Public Library staff. The interviews highlight the historical family legacies in the communities and serve to preserve and

promote the rural character of the area. Most interviews average about 45 minutes in length; there are no transcripts or indexes for the recordings.

Interviewees include: Wesley Barnes, Helen Brown, Vincent Langley, Denny Cantrell, Martha Jones Creekmur, Jerry Graves, Roy Hooper, Billy Joe Johnson, Charles A. McDonald, David Robinson, Don Robinson, Kyle Robinson, Joyce Robinson, Loni Robinson, Phillip Robinson, Linda Smith, Alice Rogers, Earl Setters, Raymond Setters, Ernest Shelton, George Shelton, Fatima Terry Shelton, Paul Campbell, Jeff Nowlin, Lawrence Smith, Nancy Smith, George West, and Buford Winfrey.

Interviewers for this project, all from the Special Collections Division of the Nashville Public Library, were: Andrea Blackman, Jared Brennen, Susannah Gibbons, and Luke Herbst.

Organization/Arrangement of Materials

Digital files and CD's are identified by the project abbreviation: "BBP" which serves as a prefix. Arranged thereunder alphabetically by the last name of the interviewee.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access: In library use only. Available by appointment.

Restrictions on Use and Reproduction: Copyright deeded to Nashville Public Library at time of creation.

Index Terms

Personal Names:

Barnes family
Graves family
Hooper family
McDonald family
Robinson family
Rogers family
Setter family
Shelton family
Smith family

Subjects:

Agriculture--Tennessee—Davidson County
Artists – Tennessee—Nashville—Oral histories
Barns—Tennessee, Middle
Business enterprises--Tennessee--Nashville
Businesspeople– Tennessee—Nashville
Dairy farms – Tennessee – Davidson County

Dairy farmers – Tennessee – Davidson County
Depressions, 1929--Tennessee
Distilling, illicit--Tennessee--Nashville
Domestic animals—Tennessee, Middle
Family farms—Tennessee—Davidson County
Farm buildings—Tennessee, Middle
Farm equipment—Southern States
Farm life -- Tennessee
Farmers—Tennessee, Middle
Farms—Tennessee—Davidson County
General stores—Tennessee—Davidson County
Illustrators – Tennessee—Nashville—Oral histories
Land use, Rural – Tennessee
Mechanics (Persons) – Tennessee—Nashville—Oral histories
Neighborhoods--Tennessee--Nashville
Rural conditions – Tennessee
Rural families – Tennessee—Davidson County
Small business—Tennessee--Nashville
Stores, Retail--Tennessee--Nashville
Storytelling--Tennessee

Places:

Bells Bend (Nashville, Tenn.)
Cheatham County (Tenn.)
Cumberland River (Ky. and Tenn.)
Davidson County (Tenn.)--Economic conditions
Davidson County (Tenn.)—History—20th century--Sources
Davidson County (Tenn.)--Social conditions
Davidson County (Tenn.)--Social life and customs
Nashville (Tenn.)—Commerce
Nashville (Tenn.)--Economic conditions
Nashville (Tenn.)--History -- 20th century--Sources
Nashville (Tenn.)--Social conditions
Nashville (Tenn.)--Social life and customs
Scottsboro (Nashville, Tenn.)
Tennessee – Rural conditions

Genre/Document Types:

Oral histories (document genres)
Sound recordings

Occupations:

Artists
Businesspeople
Farmers
Illustrators

Mechanics (Persons)

Administrative Information

Additional Physical Form Available: The Bells Bend Scotts Oral History Project is available digitally and on compact disc (CD). Interviews exist in both .wav and .mp3 file formats-- .wav format for the preservation masters and .mp3 format for copy masters and use copies.

Copyright: Copyright deeded to Nashville Public Library at time of creation.

Preferred Citation: [individual interview], Bells Bend/Scottsboro Oral History Project, Special Collections Division, Nashville Public Library.

Immediate Source of Acquisition: Interviews for the Bells Bend Scottsboro Oral History Project were recorded in digital format using a Marantz PMD671 solid state recorder. Interviews were recorded in .wav format at 48 khz and 16 bit and were converted to .mp3 files for access.

Processing Information: Interviews were processed by library staff and/or volunteers as they occurred.

Accruals: No further accruals are expected.

Detailed Description of the Collection:

Person Interviewed	Interviewer	Date	Significance
Barnes, Wesley	Herbst, Luke	02/27/2012	Family moved to the Bend in the 1840's. Built over 100 barns in Middle Tennessee and Kentucky, including the barn at the Nature Park.
Brown, Helen and Langley, Vincent	Gibbons, Susannah	02/27/2012	
Cantrell, Denny	Herbst, Luke	03/03/2012	The only original settler left in the Hollow. Currently works as a mechanic for Metro Nashville Government.
Creekmur, Martha Jones	Blackman, Andrea	03/03/2012	
Graves, Jerry	Blackman, Andrea	03/03/2013	Family farmed in the area for over 100 years.
Hooper, Roy	Brennan, Jared	06/25/2012	Grew up on a family farm in the Bend and bought his own dairy farm in 1930.
Johnson, Billy Joe	Gibbons, Susannah	06/25/2012	
McDonald, Charles A.	Blackman, Andrea	02/27/2012	Family farmed in the area. Built the general store in 1920 operated the store until 1961.
Robinson, David, Don Robinson, Kyle Robinson, Joyce Robinson, Loni Robinson, Phillip Robinson, and Linda Smith	Herbst, Luke	03/03/2012	
Rogers, Alice	Susannah Gibbons	02/27/2012	Family farmed in the area.
Setters, Earl and Setter, Raymond	Brennan, Jared	06/25/2012	
Shelton, Ernest, Shelton, George, Terry, Fatima	Brennan, Jared	06/25/2012	

Person Interviewed	Interviewer	Date	Significance
Shelton, Campbell, Paul, and Nowlin, Jeff			
Smith, Lawrence and Smith, Nancy	Herbst, Luke	03/03/2012	Family struggled financially and father worked as a moonshiner Became wealthy as an adult.
West, George	Herbst, Luke	02/27/2012	
Winfrey, Buford	Herbst, Luke	02/27/2012	Lived in several areas in Nashville and worked as an artist/illustrator for Erickson.