

Buckhead Heritage Society

Oral History Project

Interview with Eleanor Eidson Foster

November 29, 2012

Interviewers: Erica Danylchak and Nancy Jones

ERICA DANYLCHAK: This is an interview with Eleanor Eidson Foster of Cumming, Georgia. The interview is being conducted on November 29th, 2012. The interviewer is Erica Danylchak, representing the Buckhead Heritage Society, and Nancy Jones, representing the Blue Heron Nature Preserve. Thank you so much, Mrs. Foster, for joining us today and being willing to share your memories with us.

ELEANOR EIDSON FOSTER: Glad to do it.

DANYLCHAK: Thank you. We're going to start off with Nancy showing you some images, some maps and images, of the old Eidson Mill, and seeing if that triggers any memories for you.

NANCY JONES: We were really looking at this map to start with and talking about where the millhouse was and the mill. Erica turned this map up recently, and it's very cool because of this dotted line right here, which, it's kind of hard to see, shows the flume of the mill. Here's the old stone dam at the back, and then this would have been wooden, and it comes right down to a platform that is still there. So I brought you a picture. And we had an archaeologist come out about three weeks ago and he was really interested in the site, and he was telling us that the flume would have been made out of wood. It would have come right up here to the very top of the dam. The wheel would have been up there, the paddle wheel, the turning wheel, and then the pad down there at the bottom would have been where the machinery part of the mill would have sat. There are no millstones, and there's not any metal pieces left, but I do have a photograph I brought of the pad to show you. And this is how we're opening up the trail. So we're starting with some split rail fencing and some old stone to make a really pretty entrance.

FOSTER: Great.

JONES: And it goes right between these trees and the existing vegetation. And as soon as you walk in there you step right on the pad where the old mill was.

FOSTER: Oh, my.

JONES: Isn't that beautiful? It's concrete but it looks like old stone to me, and it's just kind of broken. And then as you step over that, look up the hill. It's all these stone bluffs going straight up, and the dam is right up there at the back. Such a pretty place.

FOSTER: Yes, it is. Well, the thing about it is, I was born at the mill. So I can't tell you anything about what I saw or knew. I can tell you what my mother told me about it.

JONES: That would be great.

FOSTER: They lived with them after—my daddy was in World War I.

DANYLCHAK: And, ma'm, what was his name?

FOSTER: My daddy's name? My daddy's daddy was William Jefferson Eidson, and my daddy was William Jefferson Eidson, Jr. And his daddy is the one that had the mill. William Jefferson Eidson. And they had the house and lived there. And he had already gone to war in World War I before he ever met my mother. And then my mother's grandfather, Russell Ivey, owned a lot of property right around the corner on Ivy Road. And he gave his family lots over there. So my mother and daddy were building them a house, and they lived with my grandparents there at the mill. And my mother said my grandmother loved to fish better than anything. And she said every day, before she, I was even born, that she'd walk with her up to the mill and she would—or up to the lake—and she would sit there and fish. And she said she was the funniest little old lady. Said she'd reach up and grab a hair out of her head and she'd put it around that worm and she'd throw it out there and she'd always catch a fish. And she said it was so nice, and she enjoyed sitting on the banks of the lake there and watching her fish before I was ever born. And then she said, after I was born, said, of course, I was the only child, and she would come in my room and mother said she would get down on her hands and feet and pat on the floor so I'd come to see her. Said she loved me to death because I was the only grandchild that lived with her then. And so I don't remember a whole lot about anything, naturally, I was so young, except what my mother told me. And that's what she told me, that they lived there until they got their house built around on Ivy. And then they moved around there on Ivy Road.

DANYLCHAK: And when were you born, so we have a time of reference?

FOSTER: When? 12-18-1920.

DANYLCHAK: And how long were your grandparents on that property?

FOSTER: I have no idea, I really don't. It's so funny. We were talking about that the other day. My mother's family, I always knew so much more about them than Daddy's family. Daddy really came from Dunwoody, and he never really talked about the mill much. And it was, of course, soon after the war and after he got married and all. He never much, didn't say anything much about the mill. And so we don't really know a whole lot about it except that he, they had the house and his daddy had the mill. And by that time he had gone, of course, then to Atlanta and gotten him a job doing something else. And so we didn't stay there very long. But I don't remember any—but, of course, as I got older and we passed it so much, I remember seeing the mill. I remember seeing the house and all that. But as far as me seeing the beginning of it, I didn't, because I was still an infant then.

DANYLCHAK: Do you remember later as you passed it on Roswell Road. What did it look like? Can you kind of describe it for me?

FOSTER: Well, you could just see down Lakemoore, they called it Lakemoore, down the road there to see the thing. But I don't really know. I wish I knew when it was torn down. I have no idea. But I can remember that it was there just like an old, kind of like an old, just an old mill and an old farmhouse there. I can't, you know, remember so much about it because I was so little. Then they tore it down and did this other building and all along there. It was real interesting to know that he had that mill for a long time. And I don't have any idea when they tore it down. I

know they all scattered and moved one place and another, and the grandmother, I don't remember much about the grandmother. I remember the granddaddy went to live with one of his daughters. But I guess the, Daddy's mother probably died when I was very small. I don't remember anything about her. Daddy's daddy lived a good bit older, till I was old enough to know, remember that he was living with one of Daddy's sisters. And they had moved to town then. And so I can't remember anything, you know, much about the looks of it because I was just so young. But it was a very interesting thing. Mother would talk to me more about it than Daddy did. Daddy never did say anything much about it. He just—

DANYLCHAK: Do you remember any other stories that your mom told you?

FOSTER: No, not really. I can't think of any right now. She just loved to go up there, sit on the bank of the lake while her mother-in-law fished. And she enjoyed being with her. But I don't know of anything else much that she told me about it that I can remember now. But I wish somebody had gotten my mother before she died, which has only been a few years ago. I don't know why when they were being interviewed by Susan Barnard, one of the people, they should have told her to go see Mother. Mother could have told 'em so much, much more than anybody else. She lived to be 106. She lived with me and her mind was just as good as it could be. And she loved to talk about it. She loved to talk about Buckhead. She loved to talk about the people of Buckhead. Now there I can remember a lot about Buckhead. I grew up in Buckhead. I mean really in Buckhead. So did Bill [Foster]. He grew up in Buckhead too. He can tell you a lot about pranks and jokes and what all the boys did around there in high schools and all that. I can remember about Buckhead, the people that lived there that we all knew, because there was just so many, so few people and all. I can remember how Buckhead looked. The big picture in the, one of Susan Barnard's books, it's got a picture of my daddy with a group of men that all worked at a place there in Buckhead. It's in the book. And there are several pictures in the book that are real interesting about my mother's granddaddy's brother, Seaborn Ivey, down on Peachtree Road. He lived on Peachtree Road. And my mother's granddaddy built houses around and he rented them out and all, on Ivy Road. But I just remember more about Buckhead than anything else because that's where I grew up until I married.

DANYLCHAK: Well, before we get into Buckhead, I just want, for the camera, to show the old key to the mill, which is right there, which is still with the family.

FOSTER: Yes. It sure is. Absolutely. I guess my daddy got that when we moved or when they tore the mill down. Daddy never did say anything about it. He was very quiet about it, and never did say anything much about anything down there. You know, at that time it didn't seem to matter to him or any of the young people, the older people then. I guess when you get real old then you start thinking about this kind of stuff. But when you're younger you just don't think about it. However, Bill's worked on it a long time. He's enjoyed doing that. But I don't remember much of anything except that we didn't get much out of it as far as the other stuff. I don't think we got many things out of it. But I can just remember more about Buckhead than anything else because I truly grew up, went to R. L. Hope School. Went to North Fulton, and I can remember there wasn't anything much in Buckhead but a drugstore and a few things. So . . .

DANYLCHAK: Well, tell me about your experience at R. L. Hope. Do you have any particular memories of it that stick out for you?

FOSTER: Oh. R. L. Hope. Just a great school. I loved it. And I was left-handed. And when I started R. L. Hope, the teacher there, the kindergarten teacher, told my mother if I had not learned by then to write with my right hand, she was not making any of the left-handed children start with their right hand. And I mean, the only thing I can do with my right is scratch my left. Because I never had to use my right hand. And it was just really funny that that was the first year that they said, that the teachers quit making you. They used to make you use your right hand. But she didn't. And she wore high-topped shoes, you know, and that kind of stuff. But it was really nice. I loved R. L. Hope. I've got all kind of pictures of R. L. Hope. But, of course, y'all are not interested in those kind of pictures. You're just interested in the mill stuff. But I've got pictures, I guess, of every year I was going to R. L. Hope.

DANYLCHAK: Can you describe what it looked like?

FOSTER: R. L. Hope? Well, it was there on Piedmont Road almost to Peachtree Road. And it was, wasn't anything much around. There was one house next door to it. And then they had a great big back where the kids played, you know, ball and all that kind of stuff. But it was a big school, it really was a big school. And it was just a nice school. The lady that was the principal was there for many, many, many years. And the teachers, too. Most of 'em stayed there a long time.

DANYLCHAK: Do you remember Ida Williams?

FOSTER: No, but my mother did. Miss Ida! She called her "Miss Ida Williams." I don't think she taught at R. L. Hope when I was there. She was way beyond, past that. Of course, she taught my mother. She liked her. Did you get some history on Miss Ida Williams?

DANYLCHAK: I don't have much history on Miss Ida. So if you have any particular stories—

FOSTER: I don't have anything except Mother always just called her "Miss Ida Williams." And she taught her in school. She's the only one I remember her talking about as much as anything else. But the other ladies in R. L. Hope, they were all about the same, been there a long time. They stayed. They didn't move very much. It was a good school. I loved it. You know, back in those days you just took a picture outside the school, right out the front. Everybody got dressed that day to go to have the picture made. And it was very interesting. You know, there was no problems, no bullying and no fighting or anything. Everybody just got along. We had the cafeteria and it was just, it was real nice. I don't remember when it was built, but I guess I was probably going into it about as soon as anybody, I would think. But I don't have any idea. When R. L. Hope was there, Seaborn Ivey just lived across, kind of across the street not very far from there. But it was down before you get to Mathieson, going on out. But they didn't have many houses there, along there, except for the school and all. But I loved to go to R. L. Hope. It was just a nice school. There wasn't a lot of children there, everybody got along and enjoyed the school and the teachers and all that. So it was very nice.

JONES: Where were you living then?

FOSTER: On Ivy Road.

JONES: Is the house still there, do you think, Mrs. Foster? Do you remember the address?

FOSTER: I don't think the house is there. You just went up from Roswell Road up to Ivy Road where Piedmont comes in to Ivy, and Blackland Road and all. And Ivy Road goes down this way and I lived down the hill there. But I think most of those houses have been put into apartments and all kind of things now. But I lived there from the time I was, the time we moved in there after I was born until I married and moved away.

JONES: Now they call that Old Ivy, and Sarah Smith's Elementary is there on Old Ivy.

FOSTER: Yeah.

JONES: Yeah. Right in there.

FOSTER: Then there's another Ivy going this way, you know, where you run into Old Ivy. There's another Ivy there.

JONES: That's right. There's another Ivy. Do you remember a lake being up there in that area, down the street from where you lived?

FOSTER: I can't think of a lake right now.

JONES: I've got an old map that shows a lake kind of where Sarah Smith is now.

FOSTER: Really?

JONES: Uh-huh.

FOSTER: I can't think of a lake that was there.

JONES: It kind of would have been behind the mill lake. And, you know, there's the street that's also called Land o' Lakes.

FOSTER: Yeah.

JONES: So . . .

FOSTER: I don't know. I can't remember a lake up that way. You know, I could remember some of the houses that were along there. But then Sarah Smith came in. By the time they built Sarah Smith I was gone.

JONES: You were gone.

FOSTER: So I don't remember a whole lot about that.

JONES: So you must have been pretty close to Roswell Road then.

FOSTER: Well, we were. We were about half way down Old Ivy. Several families lived there a long time. A lot of times we'd get to walk to school. We felt that was great, to get to walk to school.

JONES: You walked.

FOSTER: We did sometimes, if it was pretty in the summertime, we'd walk, you know, kids then just walked along from school, didn't think anything of it. We loved to walk. We'd all walk home by ourselves, but no school buses anymore. Parents took you back and forth to school. But if it was a pretty day Mother would say we could walk home. We'd really have a good time with everybody walking all the way home, because there wasn't many people living along there then.

JONES: Erica, that's where the marker is for the Donaldson store.

FOSTER: The Donaldson store . . .

JONES: Do you remember the Donaldson store? You do?

FOSTER: Oh, yes.

DANYLCHAK: Can you describe that for us?

FOSTER: Excuse me?

DANYLCHAK: Can you describe that for us, the store?

FOSTER: Well, let's see. The first Donaldson store was Miss Jane Donaldson. Miss Jane Donaldson was a little old lady that was really, really elderly, with a long dress and high-topped shoes and all. She lived right behind the store. Of course, everybody thought it was so funny. If you went to the store, most of the time she wasn't there. She had a thing to pull for a bell. You'd ring the bell and she'd come out, even if you wanted a nickel's worth of candy. Most of the time we wanted that old hoop cheese, that round hoop cheese. She'd come out there. She lived with her brother, uh, she lived with her brother and his wife. Yes, Miss Jane Donaldson, everybody knew her, because she had that Donaldson store for years. I can't think of her brother's name now, and his wife.

JONES: There's a marker there now. Have you seen that marker?

FOSTER: Um-hmm. You don't know Mr. Donaldson's name? That will come to me. They had, I think it was two sons, Hugh and Holly, and they finally, they tore that store down, and then the Donaldsons built kind of a little, back what they used to call service stations and filling stations there. And the Donaldsons had a big house back there then. I can't remember either one, him or his wife's name. But Miss Jane was very well known. Sweet little old lady. She had to walk out there no matter what anybody wanted. She didn't stay at the store, she just left the store open. And if anybody wanted anything at the store, you'd just ring that bell.

JONES: She didn't lock the store?

FOSTER: No, she'd just stay in there. She'd just come out to the store.

JONES: Do you remember what she used to sell, some things that were in there?

FOSTER: Oh, anything. That's what I said, like that big hoop cheese. Yeah, I can remember. And candies. The kids would go get candies and things.

JONES: Would she have things like fabric?

FOSTER: No. I don't believe so.

JONES: Or clothes?

FOSTER: I don't believe so. I don't believe she did. And then later they built a store across the street, another family built a store across the street that was at Piedmont and Roswell Road. They were kind of in the forks of Piedmont and Roswell Road there. And it was Smith's store. And it was there for a long, long time too.

JONES: I've not heard of that one.

FOSTER: Smith's store. It was there a long time. And people stopped there and got gas, mostly. But they had that store a long time there, and then, of course, it's changed so much now that it doesn't even look at all like it did back in those days. Yes, Miss Jane was a sweet little old lady. She'd come walking out to the store. Had a long dress on. She must have been, she must have been really old to us. We thought she was just a little old lady that was really old. But she ran that store. And then her brother had that old filling station, gas station over there, they had that. I can't think of the next thing that came along there then.

DANYLCHAK: Do you remember Weinstock's Nursery?

FOSTER: Sure, yeah.

DANYLCHAK: Can you describe that for us?

FOSTER: Well, Weinstock's was, of course, down Roswell Road kind of in, I call it kind of in a hollow there. It was a beautiful place. It was really nice. It's where, there's another nursery there now, I think.

DANYLCHAK: Pike's.

FOSTER: Pike's I think it is, yeah. Weinstock's had a beautiful place there. They'd decorate it so nice, at Christmas time it was so nice, and everybody drove through there to see the Christmas things and all. It was a real nice place. They stayed there a long, long time. And, of course, like everything else it moved along. Then, of course, we went to the Sardis Church right out there on Powers Ferry Road. It was already there. Changed two or three times before, you know, before they built the main church. We went out there.

DANYLCHAK: What was service like at Sardis?

FOSTER: Well, it was just, it was a Methodist church, and it was just real nice. They had a good attendance, even when it wasn't the brick church and all. My daddy, we were the closest one that lived to the church, so my daddy would go up there on Saturday and build a fire in the furnace and what they called, banking it or something to put the ashes or something on it. And then the next morning he'd get up and go up there and shake 'em and put some more coals and all on so when the people got to church it would be nice and warm. He always did that as long as he lived there and they had that church. Of course, they remodeled it two or three times and then tore the old wooden church down and built the brick church. But we were in the old church before we were in that church. And there's so many, many relatives of all the natives around there that's in Sardis cemetery.

JONES: Yes, that's an old cemetery.

FOSTER: Oh, yeah, it is. It really is. They've got a lot of people in there. You know, we used love to walk through there and find families and all that we knew. And kin to us, as far as that goes. And it was just an interesting thing. And they've expanded a little bit but not a whole lot. They didn't have enough property I guess, so they didn't have enough room to put very many lots on the back of it. But it's been real nice. But there was a lot of old-timey people that lived there all these years, I think. They were buried in Sardis Cemetery. I don't think they'll ever do anything with it because it's been there so long and all. We enjoyed that, following through there every once in a while and getting things on it. But I'm excited about that trail. I still have got to get myself fixed up where I know where it's going when it leaves the lake down there. Where will it go?

JONES: It's going to go way, it's going to go right up to the lake. And then you'll be able to walk around, go across the water, walk the property where the lake used to be, and then come back down. Now, our property's not connected, so that one little mill trail is really important because it connects to . . .

FOSTER: Really! Well, they have so many apartments down there now, don't they?

JONES: It does. On both sides of it. But the old stone bluffs are still there, and a lot of the original plant material. It looks a little bit like north Georgia. There's some mountain laurel there.

FOSTER: Really?

JONES: It's really pretty. And then I think that stone dam had to be chiseled by hand. The blocks are just beautiful. Now there's a breach in the middle of it. There's a waterfall that comes through. It's so pretty.

FOSTER: I haven't been by there in so long.

JONES: Well, I want you to come, and I wanted to ask you about this too, because, when Wiley Moore developed the property . . .

FOSTER: That's how they got "Lakemoore" on there.

JONES: He changed the name.

FOSTER: Yeah.

JONES: Because the road was called Eidson Mill Road. And so when Wiley changed the road name we lost all your family history, and I was reading Susan's book, and we were looking for Eidsons, and I was reading Susan's book and there was a picture of your parents. And it had the Eidson in the name. And so then I called Susan and told her about the mill. And she said she talked to you and you never said anything about the mill. And I said, well, you call her and ask her. She said, I will. So she called and you said, oh, yeah, I was born at that mill.

FOSTER: Then we got started. Susan's a sweet lady and I've enjoyed talking to her every time she'd call me or we'd meet.

JONES: But I'd like to put a marker at the entrance there where the split rail is, the stone entrance, to put a boulder there and put your family name on it, if that would be okay with you.

FOSTER: I don't mind.

JONES: I think it would be nice because otherwise we're going to lose your family history at that location. And since they had history way back then with the mill, I think it would be nice to say "Eidson Mill Trail," name the trail for your family.

FOSTER: I have to ask Bill [Foster], because he follows this history, what was daddy's daddy's mother's name?

BILL FOSTER: She was a Nesbit.

FOSTER: I know. The whole name.

BILL: I'm not sure right now.

JONES: Do you remember anything about Wiley Moore and him coming in to put that clubhouse in right there?

FOSTER: I don't know, I was probably grown and moved away and didn't remember anything of it, except I knew Wiley Moore built the club and all that and the dancehall and all that kind of stuff down there. I think it burned or something.

JONES: It did burn. We think the foundation is still there for that. Then they built on a new clubhouse more recent than that. Do you remember anything else that was down Lakemoore Road when you went back later, when the mill was still there? Do you remember an old country store or any kind of other building? Log cabin or anything?

FOSTER: No country store, no log cabin or anything down in there.

DANYLCHAK: Do you remember Peachtree Gardens?

FOSTER: Yes, ma'm.

DANYLCHAK: Did you ever go there and participate in dances there?

FOSTER: Very little, but I knew where it was. It stayed there. Do you remember who owned it? If I think long enough I'll tell you tomorrow. On Peachtree Gardens off of Wieuca Road. It would be hard for me to remember, but it was there a long, long time. And Mooney's Lake, have you all every heard of that?

DANYLCHAK: We have. Did you go there?

FOSTER: Well, sure, I did. That was the only swimming hole back in those days. Mooney's Lake, and then there was another one called Cooley's Lake.

DANYLCHAK: Where was that?

FOSTER: Well, I shouldn't have said that because can't remember where it was . . . Mooney's Lake and Cooley's Lake.

DEBBIE: Didn't you have some kind of ice-skating place that over by Lindbergh Plaza? Or roller skating place or something where Lindbergh Plaza, Broadview Plaza, back there in the back, there was some kind of roller skating place? Was that Mooney's Lake that was back there?

FOSTER: I can't remember that.

DEBBIE: You told me that there was some roller skating place that was back there.

DANYLCHAK: So what was at Mooney's Lake besides—

FOSTER: Excuse me?

DANYLCHAK: What else was at Mooney's Lake? Were there other amusements there?

FOSTER: Swimming pool, swimming hole, really. And they had a water slide. People would swim, and some, they had trainers there. They taught swimming. It was just like, I guess a mud hole, but it wasn't really. It was a lake. It was nice. People went there for many, many years.

DANYLCHAK: Would people take picnics? Would that be the outing on Saturday?

FOSTER: Oh, yeah. It was. I really don't know who owned it, but I know it was just called Mooney's Lake, and then, I wish I could remember right now where Cooley's Lake was, but it was real close, not too far away, I know. Both of 'em was the only thing we had, you know, back then. We had an outdoor theater came along . . .

JONES: Where was that?

FOSTER: It was on Piedmont Road.

DEBBIE: Piedmont Drive-In? Is that what you're talking about?

FOSTER: That was a lot later. But it was real interesting. Buckhead has changed so much. I remember when they built Buckhead Theatre.

DANYLCHAK: Is that where you spent your Saturdays?

FOSTER: Yes, we'd—because they had serial movies. You had to go, if you were about to fall off the cliff, next week you had to see if you did fall off the cliff. Or what happened to the horses, or who got shot. It was a serial, always like a Tom Nix or some of those, you know, things. Every weekend all the kids always went to the Buckhead Theatre to the show, because that's all there was, following one week after the other. You had to go and not miss any of 'em to see what happened to 'em. They had the Jacobs, the Jacobs Drugstore was in the corner there. . . Then they started building up on down the street and all, then. But I moved when they built a lot of that stuff. Naturally I was always there then, when they had the stores and the banks and the book store and all that along there. It just doesn't look like Buckhead anymore. It's a shame.

JONES: It's very different.

FOSTER: It sure is. I just don't understand why people do that sometimes. They just don't take care of the things.

JONES: Don't treasure what they've had, just tear it down.

FOSTER: They sure don't.

JONES: Do you remember how much it cost to go to the movie?

FOSTER: Probably ten or fifteen cents. I sure don't remember, but I bet it was no more than ten or fifteen cents. Of course, popcorn wasn't like it is now either. You could buy popcorn but it was not expensive like it is now at the stores. Nothing but kids in there mostly on Saturdays. They'd all go to the theater. That was all the entertainment you had, really. You know, it was very interesting though, because we had to go back every week to the theater. And I remember under the theater down on that same little line they had little restaurants and shoe shops and things like that along there then. But it's really changed. Then there was a place back kind of off a little bit that had, Tidwell's Barbecue. And it was the best barbecue. And they claimed that the grandmother, the mother would not ever tell her children how to make the barbecue, the Brunswick stew. So, you know, naturally, all through the years they learned to make it. She was always right there to make the Brunswick stew. They were first up on Buckhead Avenue. That was where the library was, up there. Then they changed it and moved it on Peachtree Road, right about where, what was the little street that came in there right at Peachtree Road—

BILL: Keith Circle.

FOSTER: Keith Circle. It was right in there. They had a barbecue place. That's the only place that, you know, you could get much of anything as far as snacks and things. They didn't have very many other kind of shops except that barbecue place that was there for many, many years. The Tidwells were the old standbys too. They had been there for many years, all of them. And everybody enjoyed going there and getting the barbecue. But there wasn't much to do around Buckhead then. It wasn't like it is now.

JONES: Do you remember what was on Irby, Irby Street?

FOSTER: Well, Irby Avenue was kind of behind the theater. And there was a blacksmith's shop.

JONES: Oh, there was a blacksmith's shop?

FOSTER: Uh-huh. Bill, what was the man's name? Debbie, he was kin to your daddy. Anyway, the boy that took it over, he followed his granddaddy. His granddaddy was a blacksmith, and he was a blacksmith back there too. Then he finally moved to Roswell.

BILL: Was it Moss?

FOSTER: Uh-huh. Moss. And I've forgotten what his granddaddy's name was. But they went into, you know, the blacksmith's shop back there. That was about all that was on Irby Alley back then.

DANYLCHAK: Was that the 1930s? Would that have been in the 1930s, do you think?

BILL: More like '40s.

FOSTER: The granddaddy may have had it in the '30s. But he—Kenneth, Ken Moss had it, you know, later, as he got older he was probably not as old as I am but older than Bill is.

BILL: Supposedly it was part of, probably re-built several times, but it was originally Irby's blacksmith, behind his store.

FOSTER: Behind the theater there. They never did have anything there to amount to anything. Now they've got a—

BILL: Pool room.

FOSTER: Now they've got a sandwich shop or something down there.

JONES: Henri's. It's been there a while.

DANYLCHAK: Can you tell me about your experience at North Fulton High School? Any favorite memories that stick out for you?

FOSTER: Well, I can't think of anything much at North Fulton. That's when it really started growing and everything changed. And by that time, it got so big that, it just grew so fast and all, I can't remember anything much. Of course, they had a good football team there.

DANYLCHAK: Did you play any sports there?

FOSTER: I played basketball there, with—and I don't know what happened to most of the people I played basketball with. We played basketball. There wasn't anything really outstanding about the school. It was there a long, long time. When I got to North Fulton, finished North Fulton, he [Bill Foster] went to North Fulton. He came home, he said, "Mother, I've got a teacher that you used to have! I've got some of the same teachers you used to have!" But some of 'em stayed there a long time, especially the football coaches and all those kind of things. It was interesting to see how long they stayed and what all they did. They didn't make changes like they do now. It's very interesting. Very nice. It's still there, of course. And eventually, after I married and moved away, Mother and Daddy bought a house right in front of the high school. That's where Mother was living before she moved up here with me. And she sold her house and came up here and lived with me. And she didn't want to go, of course, in a nursing home or anything. She was already in her 90s. She'd been living down there, oh, she'd usually have somebody to live with her. She'd get some good person just to rent a room so she wouldn't have to live by herself. But she'd have somebody with her. My Daddy died much, much younger, sooner, than she did. And he was a lot older than she was. Of course, he died a lot sooner than she did. She lived a long time by herself. And so then she came up to live with me when I had to move into Dunwoody. And then, of course, when the lake started, everybody had a fit to come to the lake. And I thought I'd never get here but I did. And then I didn't mind it at all. Oh, I don't mind it, but I just thought to move to the lake was such a far-away place from Buckhead. But it got to where it was a relief to go. Now you don't even want to get down there anymore, the traffic's so bad. Any way you want to turn, there's just too much traffic around Buckhead.

JONES: It's very different.

FOSTER: It really is. It really is. But we've had some good times all around. We've enjoyed it. But I've enjoyed living up here too, because I've been here about forty years. Sure have. Owned the property longer than that. When they first started the lake, we bought the property then, so we moved up here. My husband got to live here three years before he had a stroke and died. But he enjoyed the lake more than I did. And we had boats for a while, and then we got rid of them when he wasn't here and I didn't care a thing about boats or the water and all that kind of stuff. The kids did, but I didn't care anything about that.

DEBBIE: Her husband was the assistant manager of Colonial Stores down here in Buckhead, at West Paces Ferry and Roswell Road.

FOSTER: And then he had the store on Wieuca. Then he had the store in Sandy Springs. Then he went to work for a food broker. He traveled a little bit.

DEBBIE: Mr. Betts was the manager of the store down in Buckhead.

FOSTER: But he retired and Gene [Foster] took it over. When he went to work for the food broker he traveled a little bit. But we've always lived around the same area, same place, Buckhead. And Bill's dug into a lot of this heritage thing. He's run across a lot of people that I didn't even know anything about, because I didn't keep up with 'em. But he's found some interesting things that I'm glad he did. He keeps digging into 'em. Like he says, he gets on that Buckhead, not the Heritage, the other one.

BILL: Buckhead Natives [Facebook Group].

FOSTER: Natives of Buckhead. Bill said, do you remember this, and do you remember that? What about this and what about that? They don't ever go back as far as he does to know what's going on around there. But I remember many, many things about that. And it was just real interesting about the, everything they had along there. When they built Lenox, and moved on up to Brookhaven, had a lot, built more things up there and all. It's just grown so much. Then when we moved to Dunwoody there wasn't anything much there, and now it's grown too.

DANYLCHAK: Why did you move to Dunwoody? Why did you leave Buckhead?

FOSTER: That's a good question.

BILL: Just to buy a house.

FOSTER: Yes, just to buy a house with more property as much as anything. Bill used to tell 'em when he was in college that he lived in Dunwoody before Dunwoody was cool. People used to talk about, he said they didn't even know where Dunwoody was.

BILL: Just three or four little stores there.

FOSTER: I know. A post office, a little store, when we moved out there. Yeah, it was nothing like it is now in Dunwoody. And we had acreage there too, so that was nice. We enjoyed living there with the acreage and all. Then when they started the lake, my husband wanted to come to the lake and so we moved on up here then.

JONES: Did you work, Mrs. Foster?

FOSTER: Yes, ma'm, I did.

JONES: What did you do?

FOSTER: I worked for an insurance company. I worked for two or three insurance companies. I only had about three jobs. I was a book-keeper. I was a book-keeper for a flour and feed mill in Atlanta when I first started working. Then I worked for a couple of insurance companies, and that's all I did.

JONES: Where was that flour and feed mill?

FOSTER: Behind the Terminal Station.

JONES: Terminal Station?

FOSTER: Oh, I bet you've never seen that gorgeous Terminal Station. And they tore it down.

JONES: Oh, she's talking about Brookwood Station.

FOSTER: No, no, no, no. The old Terminal Station.

JONES: Where was that?

FOSTER: Where Rich's, the big Rich's was.

JONES: Oh, downtown.

FOSTER: It was the prettiest thing, it was gorgeous.

BILL: It was right behind where the World Congress Center is now.

FOSTER: But why they ever tore that Terminal Station down I'll never know.

JONES: How'd you get down there? How'd you get all the way downtown from Buckhead?

FOSTER: Well, let's see. Sometimes I rode the streetcar and sometimes I drove the car. It wasn't far, really.

JONES: Were you working when Bill was little or after he was grown?

FOSTER: Yes, I was working. My mother kept him.

BILL: I used to jump on the streetcar every Saturday when I was about that high.

FOSTER: But that Terminal Station was a gorgeous place. And you could walk in there and you could smell the fruit they had out there where people could buy 'em and get on the train. It was the Terminal Station. It was just so pretty. I don't know why in the world—times change.

JONES: So you were a working mom.

FOSTER: Yes, I was. I didn't like to stay home, so I worked.

JONES: You enjoyed working.

FOSTER: I really have, yeah.

DEBBIE: Have you all ever heard of Hastings? Our grandmother used to stuff seed packets at Hastings.

FOSTER: After I got grown, or not grown, old enough to stay by myself. She loved to work too after Daddy died. She worked at Hastings on a seasonal—

DEBBIE: It was long before he died that she worked. He didn't die until 1973.

FOSTER: Maybe so.

DEBBIE: Yeah, she worked a long time. Retail Credit—

FOSTER: Retail Credit.

DEBBIE: Rich's wrapping and packaging.

FOSTER: The hospitality room. She worked up there in Rich's in the fancy clothes and they got discounts on their clothes up there. You had to have certain colors to wear, and you always got discounts on your clothes, because you had to wear blacks and browns and blues and dark, you know. Clothes like that. She worked up there. But seasonal things, she worked at Hastings. Put the little seeds in the packets to be shipped out and all. She enjoyed it too. Yeah, I've always worked. I never did stay home. I just loved to work. And I did not retire until, what? 80 something? And I guess I would have still been working except the computer took me away. I just couldn't stand the computer. You know, the young people started working on computers and we had a computer room that had computers in it as big as this room right here. I never learned 'em because I was doing the bookkeeping, pen and ink bookkeeping, and I just never did get started on 'em. Even to this day I can't stand computers. I always got insisted on trying to do it. He'd say, you can learn, you can learn. I said, "I'm not really interested."

JONES: Did you like to keep house—

FOSTER: No! No! I didn't mind cooking, but I always had help to clean my house and do that kind of stuff. I never liked—I loved to cook, I don't mind. I would like to even be able to cook now, if I could see well enough, close enough to read books and things. I'll get that way. I've got a lot of good recipes. I'll get around to cooking again one of these days. I love to cook. I don't mind that. No, housekeeping—and I'll tell you something else. I had a cleaning girl that lived over toward Chamblee, and Debbie learned to drive on 285.

DEBBIE: When it was a dirt road. Yeah, she'd take the maid home, and we'd get in her car and we'd get up there and she'd, when they were grading 285, and let me drive. I was only about eight or nine. Drive her car.

JONES: Was your help in the house black or white?

FOSTER: Oh, black. Mother would go—I don't know if you know where, I bet you do, though, there was a black neighborhood called Bagley Park right in Buckhead. And Mother would go over there and get people to come and work for her when she needed somebody. When they lived over there, you know, she'd go get the same ones every time, and she'd go pick them up,

because that was real close to where we lived too. She'd have, even if she wasn't working she'd go get somebody to wash the clothes and do all that kind of stuff, you know, back then.

BILL: Take care of me.

FOSTER: Everything has sure changed around there now, though, I'll tell you that.

JONES: I've got a survey map of when they were putting in Pharr Road, and the survey shows every tree that was there. It's just so interesting. And an old survey with Keith Circle. You all are the first ones I've heard even say it, because when I saw that survey with Keith Circle, nobody had even heard of that.

FOSTER: Well, Mr. Keith lived right down around the corner. He'd just come around, wander up around Buckhead. He just lived, you know, just below Keith Circle there. He'd come and just visit everybody in Buckhead because he lived there so long and all. There was just so few people lived there.

JONES: What did he do?

FOSTER: I don't think, I don't know what. He was like my granddaddy and his brother Steven. I never figured out where they got the money to buy all that property that they had. I don't know what Mr. Keith did. He didn't have a wife, did he? I don't think I ever saw one. I think he always just came ambling up the road by himself there and visited people in the stores, the hardware store and the drugstore, all that. But—

JONES: Do you remember the Grant family?

FOSTER: Yes. The Grants down on Paces Ferry Road. My, one of my aunts' husband was the caretaker of that whole place. What is now Cherokee [Country Club], yeah. He always took care of the place. He had several workers for him, you know, working and doing the garden. He took care of the food. They had fresh vegetables and all. And when Mrs. Grant would want to go to Europe in the summertime, he'd have to get those trunks ready and everything. Because she went on a boat, back in those days, and he'd have to get all that stuff together. He worked for Mr. and Mrs. Grant for many, many, many years, when they lived in that big house that's now Cherokee house. Yeah, I remember that. But, of course, their children were much older than I was. They were much older than I was. But I can remember talking about them, and I know that there was several in the family. They were older than I was. He worked for them for many years. And he could go into the Cherokee Club that way, and, of course, now you can come out in the back. But back in the back and all is where they had the gardens and the cows and everything. He had men working in the fields and everything, and they got almost all their vegetables and everything out of the garden for the Grants to eat.

JONES: So they had a working farm there.

FOSTER: Yes, they did. They sure did. He supervised all that kind of stuff and took care of it, so, yeah, I can remember when they lived down there too. When I was a little girl.

JONES: Do you remember other farms or dairies in the neighborhood? There used to be one on Carmain called, I guess, Carmain's Dairy. Carmain's Dairy, up on Carmain Drive.

FOSTER: Dairy?

JONES: You remember any other dairies?

FOSTER: I don't remember Carmain Drive.

JONES: It's a little ways from Lakemoore, but in that same part of Buckhead, the north part of Buckhead.

FOSTER: Never heard of it. Have you ever heard of that street?

BILL: It's off Roswell Road.

JONES: It runs over to Windsor Parkway too.

FOSTER: I never remembered that. The Webbs, I think, had a dairy somewhere around there. I believe they did, but I think it was near Peachtree Creek. Many, many years before that, and then they moved to Sandy Springs and had a dairy at Sandy Springs.

JONES: You remember the Loridans family?

FOSTER: [no]

JONES: I had heard they had a farm in there too.

FOSTER: Somebody had an egg farm but I can't remember who they were now. I can't remember who had that.

JONES: Does Turner's Corner sound familiar?

FOSTER: Turner's Corner, but I don't even know where it was. That sounds familiar but I don't know where it was.

JONES: It was on Lakemoore.

FOSTER: It was?

JONES: It was. I've got a survey map, it says Turner's Corner, and the surveyor thought, because it was marked and there was the shape for a building there, it might have been an old store or something. . .

DANYLCHAK: Mrs. Foster, was your family involved with the Eidson Brothers Electric Company?

FOSTER: No, ma'm. They were not related. They came into Buckhead a lot later than that. My daddy's family, as I said, all came from Dunwoody. I knew who they were because they lived in Buckhead and had an electric company for a long time. There were a lot of people that lived there a long time and had businesses around too, but they were not kin to Daddy. Daddy just had one brother and that's all, and several sisters, and they all moved in to Atlanta. And so he didn't—I don't know why, he just never talked about the mill or anything. . . He just never talked about it. And, of course, we were little and we never thought to ask him anything about it. And

so we just missed out on a lot of it. Because, like I say, my mother, of course, lived a lot longer, and she talked more and more and more about her side of the family, them still living around Ivy Road and around there and Buckhead. But Daddy just never had much to say about it or Dunwoody or anything to amount to anything. He was very quiet and just didn't do a lot of talking.

BILL: Tell them about going into Buckhead on Saturday afternoon and parking and seeing everybody you'd know.

FOSTER: That's exactly right. They'd all come to Buckhead to buy their groceries and get their hair cut and all that kind of stuff. So you could just see anybody along there. Park your cars, get out and talk to everybody. 'Course I was too little, but the families did. I remember all that kind of stuff.

DANYLCHAK: Do you remember Buckhead during World War II? Do you have any recollection of what the war years were like in Buckhead?

FOSTER: No, ma'm. Because Buckhead then, I was already out of Buckhead, and my, some of my relatives went to the war but I don't remember anything much about World War II, except how well it was to have the WPA. How many people worked in there and earned their pay. Don't get me started on that. They earned their pay when they worked. It wasn't handed to them like it is now. And that WPA just, they built many roads and highways and, you know, that would not have been built today if it hadn't been for the WPA. And why somebody didn't start it again I don't know. But it sure was a big help in those days, because people got money for working. If they didn't work, why, they didn't get paid. Sometimes they just sat out on the side of the road or something. But they still had to get up and go to work. Didn't just ring a bell or something and tell 'em, send me my check, you know. I remember all about that. But I was already up, out and gone by then. So there wasn't anything different or changed about it.

DANYLCHAK: After you moved away from Buckhead was there anything that kept drawing you back? Did you go back to church in Buckhead?

FOSTER: Well, see, I went to church there on Powers Ferry Road for many, many, many years. It's just because we grew up there and my mother grew up there and her family. We always just went back to the Sardis church. And then it divided and went to, part of us moved to Mount Paran Road to St. John Methodist. There are still people there in the Sardis church. It's just slow growing. They say they make more off of weddings because of the setting of the church. They have a lot of weddings there, that people just like the way it's situated up there. That's what keeps it going, they say. They don't have very much of a congregation any more. And then, of course, part of it's the families just split and moved to [Mount Paran] and built St. John over there. And then some of them moved to Sandy Springs and Dunwoody. I still drove back when I was up here. Before I got sick I drove back to church on Mount Paran Road.

JONES: You were doing that when I met you.

FOSTER: Yes, ma'm.

JONES: Driving down there by yourself.

FOSTER: I sure did. . . That's right. When I had that first little TIA in April of this year at Easter time, before that I was driving to church every Sunday. And then we'd have our senior ladies' day once a month on Thursday and I'd go down there for that and help with that. I miss it. I really do miss it. And if I could ever get back, you know, somebody'll always have to drive me though because I can't, my eyes will never focus strong enough to be able to drive. But I'll have to always get my driver's license renewed I guess, for identification, I don't know. They may stop it even though—they may think, that lady's too old.

DEBBIE: You can just have an ID which is similar to your driver's license.

FOSTER: Yeah. So I don't know. But there's just a group of us. We'd go on Sundays and we'd go out to lunch. And ladies, most of 'em were widows, and they'd just go out for lunch. We'd pick a place to go and we'd all go to lunch and enjoy that after the church service and all. But, and so many of 'em have gotten sick since I have, so we don't have near as many as we did. . .

DANYLCHAK: Can you tell me about your dating experiences in Buckhead? Where you would go on dates?

FOSTER: Mostly the picture show. Mostly to a picture show. Go out to eat or anything. Of course, they were very strict when I was dating. I had to be home early. Now, Bill [Foster] lives in Athens, and he says they don't get out till after midnight. What does he say, nobody out but burglars and bad women over there. Nobody starts out till after dark, after midnight. But we had to be home. My daddy would always say, "don't you cause him to have a wreck to get you home by eleven o'clock. But you try to get home by eleven o'clock." That's what always I was told. Get home by eleven o'clock. There wasn't a whole lot to do then. We'd go downtown to the movie and we'd go to the Buckhead movie or we'd just go visit somebody. There wasn't a whole lot to be done by then. But now it sure has changed. A lot different than it was back in those days.

DANYLCHAK: Before we wrap up, is there anything else that I haven't touched on today that you wanted to share with us? Any stories that you thought of before we came that you wanted to tell us?

FOSTER: I can't think of anything, really. It's just remembering things is the main thing for me.

DANYLCHAK: Well, we've covered quite a bit of ground today. We really thank you for your time.

FOSTER: I'm trying to think, who was the famous man got kidnapped up there on Peachtree Road?

DANYLCHAK: Mr. Ottley.

FOSTER: Yes, yes. I remember that was a big scandalous thing back then. I remember that. And, you know the big things like that, but I can't remember anything really. I remember my mother said R. L. Hope then was up on Peachtree Road. It wasn't where R. L. Hope is now. It was on Peachtree Road around the corner up towards Wieuca. That's where R. L. Hope school was then, when she went to school. Now remember, that's a long time ago. She was born in 1902, so that's where—and I guess they've torn it down by then. I didn't remember it was ever up there but she

always said that when she went to R. L. Hope it was up there on Peachtree Road close to Wieuca Road. Probably just a one-room school, I would think. I don't have any idea but I would think it was. She didn't have a lot to say about that, because very few children I guess were there then, in the school, as far as that goes. But, no, that's about all she said about the schooling part, and things just grew and grew. It was very different. Changes were made. It was always Buckhead even till now. We just feel like we still belong to Buckhead, we've been there so long. But it's nice up here, it's nice and quiet, and it's not bad, you know, to live this far away, because now I don't even have to do things. You've got so much stuff up here, you can do without going all the way back, even to Roswell or Alpharetta. So it's nice to be able to be out and it be so nice and quiet and everything up here. We tried to switch and go to church up here but it just didn't feel like the same thing. It does make a difference that way. I went to a couple of churches and then I decided, well, I'll just go on back. As long as I could drive and all. So I hope I'll be able to have people drive me long enough to get to go visit every once in a while. And they come up here. And back before I got sick we'd have, once a year, we'd have the seniors. See, my porch is this way and then it's this way. And this way's got big tables out here. We can set up tables and chairs out here, looking down at the lake. They'd always come about once a year. Two or three different groups of 'em. We'd call 'em the old-timers. That was the one we really grew up with. And then we had the cousins, all my cousins would come once a year. And then we'd have somebody else. Last year was the last time we had, the Thursday luncheon club, when it played out at the end of the year into the summer, they didn't go into the real summer part, they'd come up here on their last time and have a party and a picnic up here. So I've always enjoyed living up here. There's no problem. My neighbors are good, and I enjoy them, so it's not really bad on that respect. It's just getting used to being up here and all. It's real nice.

JONES: I've got one more question. Did you tell me you were born at the mill, or were you born at the hospital?

FOSTER: No, ma'm. I was born at the mill. Yes, ma'm. Sure was.

JONES: How old was your mother?

FOSTER: How old was my mother? I guess she was probably 18 or 19. And there was a doctor in Buckhead called Dr. Adams. Dr. Adams lived down on Peachtree at Roswell, Paces Ferry right out of Buckhead. And Dr. Adams delivered me and then he had a son that was a doctor. Clyde. The old Dr. Adams, I can't remember what his name was. But then he had a son that came along later that was Clyde Adams. Oh, yeah. If you got sick, Dr. Adams would come to see you. Then—

JONES: Did he have a car, have a buggy?

FOSTER: I guess he had a car. Somebody else had a car. I remember somebody else had a car. It would go putt-putt-puttin' down the road. What was the man's name up there? Dr. Chapman. There was a Dr. Chapman lived on Roswell Road. And he had the little putt-putt car. You could hear him coming there. It was, I don't know what kind of a motor, but it was just a sound. You'd hear it putt-putt-puttin' along. He lived up there pretty close to where the Donaldsons lived. He was related to 'em some way.

JONES: Was this before there were phones, so you'd have to go get him, or get word to him?

DEBBIE: It was in 1920. My grandmother was 18 when she had her.

FOSTER: I guess. I don't know about the phones. I can't even think, when I was born, if there were phones along there or not. I never thought about that. I don't have any idea whether they had to go get the doctor or had a telephone or anything. I have no idea. I haven't thought about that. It's been so long ago.

DEBBIE: My grandfather was saying he went out to church, my grandmother went to Sardis and he went after church to get her, to marry her, and she got out of church and they went, they were going to go to Dunwoody to get married, and he stopped by the house, the mill, and they didn't want to tell anybody that they were going to go get married, but one of 'em guessed and they all tried to follow 'em out to Dunwoody when they were getting married.

FOSTER: I remember that story too. They were trying to sneak off and go get married.

DANYLCHAK: Well, we thank you all for your time today. This has been such a pleasure for me to hear your reminisce. I certainly appreciate your time.

FOSTER: Well, you're certainly welcome.