



THE ALEXANDRIA ORAL HISTORY CENTER
OFFICE OF HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA
CITY OF ALEXANDRIA



Oral History Interview

with

Stanley Greene

Interviewer: *Kerry James Reed*

Narrator: *Stanley Greene*

Location of Interview:

Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St, Alexandria VA, 22314

Date of Interview: *4/19/2024*

Transcriber: *Kerry James Reed*

Summary:

Stanley Greene discusses his memories of growing up in Colored Rosemont, change in Colored Rosemont and Alexandria more broadly, his career as a carpet artist, his faith and education, and his research and work on the Colored Rosemont Initiative

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General	Colored Rosemont; City of Alexandria; Virginia; Segregation; Integration; Neighborhood; Community; Parker-Gray; Black History; Sports; Education; Artistry; Family
People	Stanley Greene; John Henry Greene; John Harold Greene; Joe Namath; Eddy Chin; Virginia Wheat Thomas; Douglass Bass Sr.; Eatrice Bass; Tammy Greene; Vivian

	Waterson Johnson; Waterson Family; Major Family; Judge Dawkins; Gayle Lee; Jon Jones; Terry Greene; John Greene; Anderson Houston; Howard Allen Randolph; Vanessa Greene; Veronica Greene-Pace; Frank Barr; Arthur Dawkins; Harold Bass; Howard Bass; Alfred Carter; Herman Boone; Ralph Fox; Horace Cross; William "Bill" Blair; John Breshnahan
Places	Colored Rosemont; 1312 Wythe St; Adkins Homes; Barboursville, Virginia; Norwalk, Connecticut; Philadelphia; Pittsburgh; George Washington High School; Parker-Gray High School; Madison St; Russel Temple CME; Charles Houston Elementary; Federal City College

Stanley Greene: [00:00:01] My name is Stanley R. Greene. My age is 76 years old, and today is the 19th of April, 2024. We are currently at the Black History Museum in Alexandria, Virginia. [00:00:19][17.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:00:20] My name is Kerry James Reed. I am 27 years of age. It is the 19th of April, 2024, and we are at the Black History Museum. So, thank you so much, Mr. Greene. [00:00:28][8.3]

Stanley Greene: [00:00:29] You're very welcome. [00:00:29][0.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:00:30] It's been an absolute pleasure getting to know you over these past few months. [00:00:32][2.5]

Stanley Greene: [00:00:32] Well, likewise to you. [00:00:34][1.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:00:34] Thank you. So, I guess we can start at the very beginning. [00:00:37][3.6]

Stanley Greene: [00:00:38] Not a problem. [00:00:39][0.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:00:40] When were you born? [00:00:40][0.6]

Stanley Greene: [00:00:42] The 13th of August, 1948. And that was on Friday the 13th. [00:00:47][5.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:00:49] Oh, it was? [00:00:49][0.4]

Stanley Greene: [00:00:49] Yeah. So, I'm an original black Cat. Leo, the lion, with the cat is feline. So I'm a feline, and I'm black, so I'm an original black cat. [00:01:04][15.4]

Kerry James Reed: [00:01:06] [laughs] Absolutely. So, where were you born? [00:01:07][1.7]

Stanley Greene: [00:01:08] Alexandria, Virginia. Right in the house that I reside in. I was conceived, born and raised in the house at 1312 Wythe St. [00:01:16][8.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:01:17] 1312 Wythe St. [00:01:18][0.9]

Stanley Greene: [00:01:19] Right here in Alexandria, the Colored Rosemont neighborhood founded by Mrs. Thomas. This is Virginia Wheat Thomas. For me, she is an angelic, abolitionist minded lady. A terrific lady. [00:01:38][19.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:01:40] When did you first become aware of Virginia Wheat Thomas? [00:01:42][1.9]

Stanley Greene: [00:01:43] At our house. She came to visit my parents. [00:01:45][2.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:01:46] Oh, really? [00:01:46][0.1]

Stanley Greene: [00:01:46] When I was 3 to 4 years old. I've been blessed by the creator with near photographic memory all my life. [00:01:55][8.9]

Kerry James Reed: [00:01:57] Fascinating. So, what are some of your first, besides for meeting Mrs. Thomas, what are some of your earliest memories from Colored Rosemont? [00:02:05][8.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:02:06] At home at 1312. At 1312. Once again, I was conceived, born and raised in the house. And with me at that future meeting, I will bring my original birth certificate, birth certificate and excuse my pronunciation because I've just have had oral surgery and I'm being custom fitted for dentures. So I'm in that process now, so forgive me if my pronunciation has come somewhat blurred. [00:02:35][28.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:02:36] That's not a problem at all Mr. Greene. So, when did you first become aware that Colored Rosemont was a black neighborhood in Alexandria? [00:02:46][10.3]

Stanley Greene: [00:02:47] From the day I was born. Because my parents, they always ensured that we were educated properly and authentically. My earliest memories were all book encyclopedias. Before all this technology, I mean, education was just in our home. And my mother's family, my grandmother's sister, she was a teacher. In Orange [County] and Washington, DC. Her name was Grace Ward. That's my great aunt. My grandmother's, my mother's

mother, sister. And so my mother had grounding education. My dad and my dad is a twin, so he and his twin brother, they attended, back then it was called Virginia State College, Virginia State University today. And they also went in the military during World War two. My father in the Navy and my uncle, his twin brother, was in the army. [00:03:59][71.6]

Kerry James Reed: [00:03:59] So, I've heard you describe Colored Rosemont as a utopia. That's how you saw it. Could you explain why you feel that way? [00:04:14][14.9]

Stanley Greene: [00:04:15] Certainly. Because it was a complete comfort and safety. Especially in our home and the community. And once again, you heard the statement, 'it takes a village,' well we were in the village. But no one raised us except Henry and Carrie Green, our family. I mean, we had two of the greatest parents that ever walked this planet. We became first. The children always came first. So, I'm just thankful to the creator for that. And I'm not proselytizing, I'm testifying [00:04:53][38.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:04:54] Absolutely. So, what did colored Rosemont look like when you were a child? [00:04:59][5.2]

Stanley Greene: [00:05:01] A clean, well-kept neighborhood. Well-kept. And everyone worked. And from my memories, you know, not to knock it, but no one was on public assistance in Colored Rosemont. And once again I don't know anything about being poor, broke, and hungry. I sympathize and empathize with those that had to go through that. But our family, we don't know anything about that, being poor, broke, and hungry. And another thing in Colored Rosemont there was no patrolling of the police, of law enforcement. They came only when they were called. It was that peaceful. So, if that's not a utopia I don't know what it is. [00:05:44][43.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:05:47] So what do you attribute that peace to? Because you mentioned that everyone in the community was hard working, they all had jobs. You mentioned this to me before. But even in a place as peaceful as Colored Rosemont, there are certainly going to be like altercations among neighbors and things like that. [00:06:06][18.8]

Stanley Greene: [00:06:07] I did not witness anything of that sort, it was that peaceful you know. And it was ultimate respect for each other and each other's home and property. Now, if there

were thieves there, we didn't know anything about it.
[00:06:22][15.4]

Kerry James Reed: [00:06:24] Absolutely. So, for those not familiar with what colored Rosemount is, how would you, besides for describing it as a utopia, how would you describe it, say, to someone who is, interested in the geography of Colored Rosemont? [00:06:40][15.7]

Stanley Greene: [00:06:41] Well, once again, I'm also proud of my great state, Virginia. As anyone that has any knowledge of history knows, Richmond, Virginia, was the capital of the Confederacy. See, some people say the lost cause, I say the wrong cause. That's what the Confederacy is and the Confederate flag and the Confederate rag. R-A-G. And it's not only because of slavery, its because it's treasonous. It's direct, blatant, blatant treason to the United States first and foremost. And also in our home, we were taught and raised to be American. American. That's what I am. And I want to add, I know its popular now to say African American; I'm an American of African descent. I'm very proud of my African descent. But I'm an American first, a black American. That's what I Am.
[00:07:36][55.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:07:36] Absolutely. So when you were growing up. So, you know, Wythe Street, of course, and Madison Street in addition, the sort of physical boundaries or physical make up of colored Rosemont. So when you would go around the neighborhood as a kid, where would you go? Were there any streets where you would cross and you would think to yourself, I'm definitely not in colored Rosemont anymore. What were the boundaries? [00:08:02][25.6]

Stanley Greene: [00:08:02] Well, for me, once we crossed North Henry Street right here at the 600 block and 700 block.
[00:08:08][5.8]

Kerry James Reed: [00:08:09] Okay. [00:08:09][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:08:10] That was leaving the neighborhood. And going north, it was going across the Route one bridge, across the railroad tracks. South, it would it would be crossing Pendleton and Oronoco St. [00:08:23][12.4]

Kerry James Reed: [00:08:23] Okay. [00:08:23][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:08:26] The 1300 block of Pendleton and the 1300 block of Oronoco. That was the exit from Colored Rosemont for me. [00:08:37][10.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:08:39] Can you describe your neighbors? Anybody that sticks out in particular? [00:08:44][5.4]

Stanley Greene: [00:08:45] Well, the immediate next door neighbors were Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Bass Sr. They were our godparents and our parents were their children's godparents. Mr. Douglas Bass Sr., his wife was Mrs. Eatrice Bass. To illustrate how close we were, our baby sister, Tammy Eatrice Greene string was named after Mrs. Eatrice Bass. She was born in 1959. See, there are three baby sisters in our family. Vanessa, Robin, and Tammy. So Tammy is the baby sister, the final baby sister, and the baby of the entire family. Sibling wise. [00:09:34][49.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:09:37] So there was the Basses. Were they to the left or to the right of you? [00:09:40][3.1]

Stanley Greene: [00:09:42] Facing South they were to the left. And then the Major's family, I mean, Major family. They were directly next door to the West. But they were 1314 Wythe St. And the Watersons directly across the street from us 1315 Wythe St. And the Crosses, 1321. [00:10:01][19.6]

Kerry James Reed: [00:10:07] Did all these families have children? [00:10:08][0.8]

Stanley Greene: [00:10:09] Yes they did. And then the Burkes in the 700 block of Northwest St. The Burkes. [00:10:15][5.9]

Kerry James Reed: [00:10:19] Did you play with all these children growing up? [00:10:21][1.3]

Stanley Greene: [00:10:21] Absolutely. Absolutely. Especially, Joe and Joel Johnson for me. Because I was an athlete all my life, and they were great athletes. They were descended to the Waterston family. Their mother was Vivian Waterston Johnson. Slowly. [00:10:39][18.4]

Kerry James Reed: [00:10:43] So when you would play with your neighbors, what sort of games would you play? Was it only athletics or was there anything else? [00:10:51][7.9]

Stanley Greene: [00:10:52] Athletics. Athletics. For me it was athletics, my sisters, they had a different thing. But for me it was athletics. [00:11:00][8.6]

Kerry James Reed: [00:11:02] Any sport in particular? [00:11:02][0.6]

Stanley Greene: [00:11:04] Track and Football mainly. Track and Football [00:11:04][0.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:11:08] Track in football. So, when y'all would, go play football, where would you play? [00:11:13][4.9]

Stanley Greene: [00:11:14] Well, see back then there was not much traffic, automobile traffic, or truck traffic. We would play right next to Mr. Bass's house in the 600 block of North Payne Street. We would plot it out just like a football field and a track right there. [00:11:36][22.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:11:37] So thinking about your neighbors, what sort of feelings does that bring back for you right now? [00:11:46][9.6]

Stanley Greene: [00:11:48] Euphoria. Happy. Pleasant. All pleasant. I can truly say, for me, I have no negative, any negative memories of Colored Rosemont, for me. I'm not exaggerating. Again, I'm not proselytizing, I'm testifying. [00:12:05][17.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:12:06] Absolutely. [00:12:06][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:12:08] Or embellishing. I'm telling the absolute true facts. [00:12:12][3.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:12:12] Absolutely. [00:12:13][0.6]

Stanley Greene: [00:12:14] And that's one other thing I would like to add. See, our parents also stressed in us to be authentic. No mythology. [00:12:20][6.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:12:26] Briefly, you mentioned education and you mentioned honesty are values that your parents tried to instill in yourself and your siblings. Were there any other values that your parents taught you growing up? [00:12:38][11.2]

Stanley Greene: [00:12:38] Belief in the creator. The absolute belief in the creator. [00:12:41][3.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:12:45] Education, honesty and faith. Absolutely. [00:12:47][2.3]

Stanley Greene: [00:12:48] You nailed it. You nailed it. [00:12:49][1.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:12:52] So, briefly returning to, the neighbors that you grew up with. Do you remember when those families left colored Rosemont? [00:12:59][7.9]

Stanley Greene: [00:13:02] Absolutely. It was like a funeral. Anytime a family, well, the death knell for me was the eminent domain in the creation of the Adkins public housing. That was the death knell of Colored Rosemont. [00:13:18][16.4]

Kerry James Reed: [00:13:19] When did that happen? [00:13:19][0.4]

Stanley Greene: [00:13:20] That occurred between 1969. No. I'm sorry. Excuse me. Between 1966 and '68. See, I graduated from George Washington High School in 1966. So then was the beginning of the death knell. That was the beginning of the creation of the Adkins public housing. [00:13:44][23.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:13:47] What do you think the creation of the Adkins Homes did to the character of Colored Rosemont? [00:13:53][6.4]

Stanley Greene: [00:13:54] Well, we were raised with, again, a respect for other people's property, the neighborhood, and order. See, in our household, my father was a great provider, and my mom was a great household manager. And our house there was complete order, respect, manners. And just overall respect for all elders, respect for the House, respect for the community. And America, being American. We celebrated each American holiday to the fullest. We were blessed. We never wanted for anything. Once again, I cannot stress that our family know nothing about being poor, broke, or hungry. The thing about no shoes and no Christmas, we knew nothing about that. And we also were charged with good behavior at school or anywhere we went. And respect for the city and your state, your origins. [00:14:57][62.8]

Kerry James Reed: [00:15:00] Absolutely. Can you describe what your home, 1312 looked like when you were growing up? [00:15:07][7.3]

Stanley Greene: [00:15:09] Well, another thing, that was stressed was cleanliness. Cleanliness. Cleaning every day and order and respect for our parents. That was a requirement of the utmost. Then we used to describe, you wanted a physical description of the home? [00:15:29][20.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:15:29] Yes, yes. [00:15:30][0.5]

Stanley Greene: [00:15:32] Ok, so it was a small home, but we felt like trillionaires. And our parents were great. I can honestly say. Because we never wanted for anything. Everything was provided for us every day. My mom cooked three meals every day. Speaking of that's where I inherited this cooking from. Speaking of gourmet cooking, we had banquets every meal, three times a day. [00:16:09][37.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:16:14] Did you have a favorite room in your home? Or favorite place in the home? [00:16:19][4.9]

Stanley Greene: [00:16:19] Just the entire thing. [00:16:19][0.4]

Kerry James Reed: [00:16:20] The entire thing? [00:16:21][0.5]

Stanley Greene: [00:16:21] The entire house was just that comfortable and safe. Like a safe cocoon. That I never wanted to leave. [00:16:26][5.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:16:32] So you mentioned that your mother cooked a banquet style, family style meals every day. [00:16:36][4.6]

Stanley Greene: [00:16:38] Every day. Three times a day. [00:16:38][0.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:16:39] What was it like seeing her work in the kitchen doing that everyday? [00:16:43][4.6]

Stanley Greene: [00:16:47] Euphoria. And just pleasantness. And just thankfulness. Because I knew other families outside of the neighborhood. See we always travelled. As I said, my father was a great provider so we always, and then we come from a large family. And my grandfather had 25 brothers and sisters, and he worked for the Southern Railroad for 50 years. He was in charge of the camp car, and the camp car was outfitted to feed. See, back in those days, the railroad companies had what they call road gangs, and they were there to repair. If there was an

accident on a rail, the road gang would go in, repair it, and then to maintain the rail in its entirety, the road gang did. My grandfather's job was to feed them three times a day, and he did that for 50 years. He was born in 1897. He worked from 1906 to 1956. [00:17:40][53.4]

Kerry James Reed: [00:17:45] So you mentioned that your family would travel on the railroad, where... [00:17:48][2.7]

Stanley Greene: [00:17:49] Not on the railroads, in an automobile. My father kept a car. [00:17:51][2.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:17:52] Oh, ok. Excuse me. [00:17:52][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:17:53] Well, my father's family primarily moved from Orange County, Barboursville, Virginia, to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. And my mother's family, they primarily went to Norwalk, Connecticut. [00:18:05][11.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:18:05] Ok. [00:18:05][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:18:06] So, they would visit us, and we would visit them. And then my father's twin brother, he lived in Washington D.C., and we would be back and forth visiting each other. And then my mom had another sister, her older sister, my Aunt Ethel, she was in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. So, we would all be moving back and forth throughout the year, not only on holidays but throughout the year. [00:18:33][26.8]

Kerry James Reed: [00:18:35] Absolutely. Very interesting. 25 brothers and sisters, huh? [00:18:40][5.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:18:41] My grandfather. And his father, my great grandfather, who lived to be 104. He died in 1937. So, simple arithmetic. He was born in 1833. You don't need you don't even need mathematics. Keeping in mind, see, back in those days, in the 19th century, in the early 20th century, we were an agrarian society. If you go back in history and look at the statistics, up until World War II, I would say even past World War II, the majority of the population were farmers throughout the nation. So you needed those children to work the land and feed yourself. [00:19:28][47.6]

Kerry James Reed: [00:19:29] Yeah, absolutely. [00:19:29][0.3]

Stanley Greene: [00:19:30] So, and that's all American families. Before the agribusinesses came along, you had a plethora of

small farmers that could sustain themselves and work the land.
[00:19:43][12.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:19:46] So, when your mother would cook these banquet style meals, what sort of dishes did she make?
[00:19:52][5.8]

Stanley Greene: [00:19:53] You name it, we had it.
[00:19:55][1.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:19:55] Oh, really? [00:19:55][0.1]

Stanley Greene: [00:19:57] And another addendum. My dad was the first black butcher in 1956, 1956 through the entire Giant food chain. And then he was also a prolific outdoorsman. Fishing, hunting. For instance, a typical breakfast would be pork loin or beef loin, beef tenderloin because he was a master butcher. And then he farmed on the weekend, even though he worked for the grocery store. He farmed and supplied. See, we had these relatives in Calvert County, Virginia [Maryland] on a 450 acres farm, they were the Browns. He would farm there and raise livestock and garden. So, then we would have his, requirement was three meats per meal. So, a typical breakfast we would have, maybe fried chicken or fried fish. We had bacon, sausage. Eggs, potatoes, fried potatoes, fried apples. And my mother was a master in making bread. Her biscuits, oh, you would die for a biscuit. She made corn bread. She made a yeast rolls. I mean she was, and then she would can every year. We had preserves and jellies, and also she could make wine from anything that bloomed. She even made rose petal wine. Rice wine, dandelion wine, then of course the fruits. Grapes, strawberries, anything that bloomed she made wine from. And then also we would have brain and eggs, hog brain and eggs, pork brain and eggs for breakfast. All of this in one meal. And then when we had fried chicken for dinner, she would fry 3 to 4 chickens for dinner. It was always enough for us and if we have visitors, it was enough for them. We just had it like that. Thanks to the creator.
[00:22:16][138.8]

Kerry James Reed: [00:22:17] Absolutely. So, clearly, your father was a excellent provider. [00:22:21][4.4]

Stanley Greene: [00:22:23] Now that being a butcher or a meat cutter at Giant, that was his part time job keep in mind. His full time job, he was the supply chief for the adjutant general at the Pentagon. That was his full time job. Straight from the Pentagon to changing his clothes to go to the Giant to cut meat.

And then the weekends he would farm. And then whenever his leave time came he would go hunt. My brother and I, my brother John and I, we were cleaning or skinning rabbits and squirrels when we were eight, nine years old. Because when they would go hunting say in the daytime when he had leave or vacation time from the Pentagon, he would come back from hunting and have the game. But he had to go to work at the Giant. And so it was up to my brother and I to skin and dress the game so mother could cook it. [00:23:27][64.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:23:30] Very interesting. So you would do the skinning and dressing at your home? [00:23:36][5.9]

Stanley Greene: [00:23:36] Backyard. [00:23:36][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:23:37] In the backyard. [00:23:37][0.2]

Stanley Greene: [00:23:38] See, my grandparents had a farm, a working farm. See, when my grandfather, see, being in charge of the camp car for the railroad, his schedules like today's firemen or law enforcement. He would be a week to ten days on and then a week to ten days off. So the farm was run by my grandmother. So my father grew up on a farm, a working farm environment in Barboursville, Virginia, which is in Orange County. So he had our house set up like a working farm almost. [00:24:20][41.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:24:28] So you mentioned that your mother was a heck of a cook to say it lightly. [00:24:33][4.9]

Stanley Greene: [00:24:34] Yes, yes, yes. [00:24:35][1.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:24:36] So, I know that you're quite the cook yourself, but did she teach you how to cook? [00:24:40][4.4]

Stanley Greene: [00:24:41] Well, just observing. And then, see every holiday, as I stated before, we would celebrate every American holiday to the fullest. So we would have barbecues in the backyard. See, we were fortunate enough to have a nice plot of land behind our house. So by me being the oldest surviving son I would assist them. See, I have no problem, still today, getting up at 4:00, 3:00 in the morning to prepare things. So, that's how I grew up. So, I mean, they were very proud of being able to properly take care of their children in the home. My parents were, both of them. [00:25:25][43.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:25:26] So on these holidays, would your family celebrate them by themselves, or would they be more community style events? [00:25:34][8.2]

Stanley Greene: [00:25:35] Well, everyone was welcome if they wanted to come and people would just trickle in and trickle out. Everyone knew that the Greens had it like that and they were well. [00:25:47][11.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:25:52] So, I guess I'm trying to get a physical sense of the banquet style. So for Thanksgiving for instance. [00:26:02][9.6]

Stanley Greene: [00:26:02] Oh, wow. [00:26:02][0.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:26:03] Could you describe in as much detail as you can what the scene would look like at Thanksgiving? [00:26:07][4.3]

Stanley Greene: [00:26:07] Oh, yes. Of course, the turkey. And then my mother, she was a master of making stuffing with cornbread and oysters. That would be typical for that. And then we would also have, sometimes, leg of lamb or bone of lamb along with the turkey. So, again, we will always have two different types of, three different types of meat. And then you would have potato salad, macaroni and cheese and of course, people today they call them green beans, we would call them string beans back in the day, string beans. Greens. Of course, homemade bread. The homemade cakes and pies and cobblers. That would be typical every day, every year or every holiday. [00:27:00][52.9]

Kerry James Reed: [00:27:01] Absolutely. Sounds delicious. [00:27:04][2.6]

Stanley Greene: [00:27:05] It would be. It was. [00:27:07][2.8]

Kerry James Reed: [00:27:09] So holiday meals sounds like a very big tradition in your family growing up. Were there any other traditions outside of holidays that your family practiced or celebrated? [00:27:20][10.6]

Stanley Greene: [00:27:21] Well, birthdays and of course, many of the mothers and fathers anniversary, you know. And then Sundays, and every Sunday was like a holiday meal. [00:27:32][10.9]

Kerry James Reed: [00:27:38] So we've been talking about your parents here for the last, ten or so minutes. I was wondering if you could you describe your father? [00:27:45][6.6]

Stanley Greene: [00:27:46] Yes. I mean, I had so much esteem for both of my parents, but my father was just a hard working man. Honorable, honorable. And very protective of his family. Very protective of his family, and the neighborhood. He was the enforcer for the neighborhood. I mean, everyone knew that my father would protect them as well as his family. [00:28:15][29.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:28:19] His name was Henry Greene, correct? [00:28:19][0.7]

Stanley Greene: [00:28:21] John Henry Greene [00:28:21][0.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:28:21] John Henry Greene. [00:28:21][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:28:22] Yes, but everyone called him...because my grandfather, his father's name was John Harold Greene. That was my grandfather's name. [00:28:30][8.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:28:31] Ok. Could you describe your mother? [00:28:35][3.5]

[00:28:36] Oh, yes. I had nothing but flowery adjectives for my mom. It makes me emotional. [00:28:46][10.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:28:47] Of course. [00:28:47][0.1]

Stanley Greene: [00:29:03] She was just great. Just leaving it there. She was just great. [00:29:06][3.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:29:08] Absolutely. Sounds like a fabulous woman. So, you mentioned that you guys almost had a little farm in the back of your house on 1312. [00:29:17][9.8]

Stanley Greene: [00:29:18] Yes, yes. [00:29:18][0.4]

Kerry James Reed: [00:29:19] Did other families have backyards or lawns similar to your house or what? [00:29:24][5.6]

Stanley Greene: [00:29:25] Yes, yes, yes. [00:29:26][1.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:29:26] So what did the properties look like in Colored Rosemont when you were growing up?
[00:29:31][4.6]

Stanley Greene: [00:29:32] Well, they were all well-kept and well-maintained. Everyone in the community, they maintained their homes very well, very well. And streets were clean. No trash or littering. [00:29:47][15.4]

Kerry James Reed: [00:29:57] Was there a lot of trees or vegetation in the neighborhood? [00:30:01][4.3]

Stanley Greene: [00:30:02] Yes, yes. Like, for instance in our back yard we had there was a pear tree, black walnut tree, mulberries. I mean, we had that and then some. Again, everything was well maintained. It was our job, you know, at our home we had chores, we had chores to do. And then, you know, all that sleeping in, we had to be up and dressed and ablutions done. Ablutions done and dressed properly and groomed properly. See, my mom, there were four girls. Their hair was always done. We were always clean. So it was an order. Like, once again, there was order. It was mandatory. Order. Excuse me. [00:30:56][54.8]

Kerry James Reed: [00:31:04] Can you recall any of the, businesses that your family frequented in Colored Rosemont?
[00:31:10][5.5]

Stanley Greene: [00:31:11] Well, not in Colored Rosemont. Because there weren't... the only business was Mr. Roy's store on the corner of West and Braddock Rd. [00:31:21][10.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:31:22] Ok. [00:31:22][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:31:26] It was like a neighborhood store, and it was a bar too. He was Caucasian. And again, I think then there was no racial utopia or panacea, but it was not like the deep South at all. At all. See, for instance, when we integrated the schools, see again, Judge Dawkins and, Gayle Lee who lived on Patrick Street back here. They were the first to go over before Parker-Gray closed in 1963. My brother John and I went over 64. And there was no racial discrimination. We had a smooth transition. The movie, *Remember the Titans*, is a complete embellishment and lie. The only truth to that is they won state championship. Myself, and Jon Jones and Terry Greene, we were the first on the football team at George Washington High School in 1964, 64-65. And see, back then, George Washington High School had the most technologically advanced high school

athletic facilities east of the Mississippi in the south. It was so advanced that Joe Namath, Broadway Joe Namath and the Jets played an exhibition game in our high school stadium at George Washington at school in 1965. The year I was on the team, football team and I wrestled all through. We had a great wrestling team and was, people speak about diversity today, we had a very diverse wrestling team from 65 to 66. I can name the team Andelson Houston, Turkish descent, Eddy Chen, who was one of my great friends and teammates and classmates. He was Chinese. Then it was myself, Jon Jones and Terry Greene. Of course we were black. How much more diversity can you get than that? You had three blacks, one Chinese and one Turkish student. This was in 1965-66, right here in Alexandria, Virginia.
[00:33:47][141.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:33:51] What was it like seeing Joe Namath play or come to the stadium in '65. [00:33:56][5.3]

Stanley Greene: [00:33:57] Exhilarating. [00:33:57][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:33:58] Yeah. [00:33:58][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:33:58] Because, by us being football players, I mean high school football players, I mean, it was a dream come true. A professional football team playing in our high school stadium. That's how technologically advanced the athletic facilities, high school athletic facilities, were at George Washington. We had whirlpools, girdle pads, Riddell Cleats. I mean, we had the best at George Washington High School in 1965-56. [00:34:27][28.6]

Kerry James Reed: [00:34:29] Was there a particular reason why the athletic facilities at George Washington were so good?
[00:34:34][4.9]

Stanley Greene: [00:34:35] Well, the athletic directors, they made a push from 1963 on, to upgrade the facilities. Now, the gymnasium still stands. It's called the Tulock Memorial. T-u-l-o-c-k, Tulock memorial or T-o-l-l-u-c-k. [Tulloch Memorial]
[00:34:59][24.4]

Kerry James Reed: [00:35:05] So you mentioned that there weren't really any stores within the actual boundaries of colored Rosemont. Where would your family go to get groceries, then? Would it be at the giant where your father was? [00:35:15][10.1]

Stanley Greene: [00:35:16] Yes. And then, forgive me for having a lapse. That was Watkins. They had the store right across the street from Parker-Gray High School. [00:35:25][9.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:35:25] Ok [00:35:25][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:35:30] I'm sorry, its Watson's, Watson's. Watson's. They had that store, the general store, right across from Parker-Gray high School. [00:35:39][8.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:35:39] Okay. So, it the Watson's store. And then it was Mr. Roy's store. [00:35:43][3.8]

Stanley Greene: [00:35:43] Correct. [00:35:43][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:35:44] Okay. [00:35:44][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:35:45] But the Watsons store, which we would frequent more frequently. [00:35:49][4.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:35:50] Okay. Did your family ever go to anywhere else in Alexandria or in D.C. to shop? [00:35:59][8.9]

Stanley Greene: [00:36:03] They would order from the catalog, too. [00:36:06][3.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:36:06] Okay. [00:36:06][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:36:07] So again. And dad, he made sure we had everything as a provider. In fact, he did most of the grocery shopping. Mother would tell him what we needed, and he would supply it. [00:36:20][13.4]

Kerry James Reed: [00:36:21] Interesting. [00:36:21][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:36:24] As far as our clothes, we went to Sears, J.C. Penney, and it was a store for government employees called Gems, which were Home Depot is now on Pickett St. We would shop there too for our school clothes, Easter clothes, you know, and everyday clothes. [00:36:46][21.5]

Kerry James Reed: [00:36:51] So before you mentioned that your great grandfather was born, I want to say 1833? [00:36:56][4.9]

Stanley Greene: [00:36:56] Correct. [00:36:56][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:36:59] So clearly you have a very, deep and intimate knowledge of your own family's history. I was curious, did your father tell you about this growing up? [00:37:07][7.7]

Stanley Greene: [00:37:07] Oh, yes. My mother and father. I mean, they never hid anything from us. They made sure that we knew everyone from both sides in our families. That was a requirement, to know who our people were. [00:37:24][17.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:37:25] Absolutely. [00:37:25][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:37:26] So we were fortunate there. [00:37:27][1.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:37:28] So your parents made a, or actively sought to teach you your family history every day? [00:37:35][6.4]

Stanley Greene: [00:37:35] Everyday. [00:37:35][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:37:35] Ok. Interesting. So, you've talked a lot about your father, you know, in Orange County and your father's family history in Orange County, his coming to Alexandria. Could you talk a little bit about your mother's family history? [00:37:48][13.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:37:49] Yeah, my mother's family from the Montpelier area. Which is, you know, George, I mean Madison, James Madison's plantation. My mother's family was right near, right adjacent to the plant, Montpelier plantation. My mother had 8 sibling. My father had seven siblings. [00:38:16][27.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:38:22] Was there any particular reason that they chose to settle in Alexandria? Because you mentioned that your family went as far as... [00:38:29][6.8]

Stanley Greene: [00:38:29] Pittsburgh. [00:38:29][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:38:30] Yeah. [00:38:30][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:38:31] Philadelphia and Connecticut. Because, as you know, being a historian yourself, back in the 40s, and the opportunities for blacks were limited. So that's why they went North to seek better employment, or more regular employment as such. And then, knowing history again, that was

during World War II. So, the government jobs were here in the nation's capital area. [00:39:01][29.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:39:05] Briefly, you've mentioned that you had, I think six siblings? [00:39:13][8.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:39:14] Yes. [00:39:14][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:39:15] Yeah. Could you give all the names of your siblings? [00:39:18][2.6]

Stanley Greene: [00:39:18] The first one was, see, my mother had a son when she married my father. His name was Howard Randolph Allen. But that's another reason why we love our dad and mother so much. Because our father always told us, 'there's no such thing as halves', that's your brother.' We were never allowed to say, 'that's our half-brother.' So, it was Howard first, then Veronica the second, then me, and then John, then Vanessa, then Robin, and then Tammy. [00:39:54][35.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:39:54] Okay. What was the order of those? [00:40:04][9.1]

Stanley Greene: [00:40:04] Howard, Veronica, me, John, Vanessa, Robin, and Tammy. [00:40:15][10.8]

Kerry James Reed: [00:40:24] So where did you go to elementary school? [00:40:28][4.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:40:29] Charles Houston, right across the street. Charles Houston. That's what the building across the street used to be, before that it was Parker-Gray High school. So, now my brother Howard, he was amongst the first graduating class of New Parker-Gray on Madison Street in 1953. He back in those days the highest grade you could go in high school was the 11th grade. That was for Caucasians and blacks. So in the early 50s that's when you could go to the 12th grade. See, that's when Parker-Gray went to the 12th grade. It was a brand new school then. So my, brother Howard, he was in that first graduating class of 12th grade in 1953. So, then, see, back when I went to school, see, it was no middle school and no junior high. We went first through seventh grade and then eighth grade we went to Parker-Gray and I went to Parker-Gray up until the 10th grade. 11th and 12th I went to George Washington. I graduated from George Washington High School in 1966. And, for me, I had great education and opportunities at George Washington as well as Parker-Gray. And then as an addendum, then my brother and I,

John, we both achieved, we were All-City orchestra at George Washington two years straight. And I think, I'll have to do just a little more research, we were the first blacks to play in the orchestra at the little theater here in Alexandria. Are you familiar with the little theater? [00:42:18][109.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:42:19] I am familiar with a little theater. [00:42:20][0.8]

Stanley Greene: [00:42:20] So we did the musical [unintelligible] by the way of the music director or teacher at George Washington, Mr. Frank Barr. And let me add, at Parker-Gray, Mr. Arthur Dawkins, Judge Dawkins older brother, he was a great music instructor also. In fact, he instituted the first jazz band, or jazz ensemble, at Parker Gray. I was blessed to be in that. I played string bass. [00:42:52][31.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:42:52] String bass. [00:42:53][0.3]

Stanley Greene: [00:42:53] Yes. [00:42:53][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:42:53] Okay. [00:42:53][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:42:54] Or contrabass. At Parker-Gray and George Washington. [00:42:58][3.8]

Kerry James Reed: [00:42:59] Interesting. So, when did you start to play the string bass? [00:43:06][7.4]

Stanley Greene: [00:43:09] At Parker-Gray, under the direction of Mr. Arthur Dawkins. [00:43:09][0.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:43:13] Okay. Interesting. [00:43:13][0.3]

Stanley Greene: [00:43:15] Who also went to Virginia State with my godbrother, Harold Bass. Harold Bass one was one of my godbrothers, Mr. Douglass Bass Sr.'s second oldest son. [00:43:18][2.6]

Kerry James Reed: [00:43:31] All right. So you mentioned that you were experiencing or you were going to GW in the very early years of integration. So, you mentioned the diversity of your, wrestling team, but I was curious, was the rest of the student body diverse or was it mostly Black? [00:43:49][18.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:43:52] No, no, no, no. We had the most, we had the first fully integrated graduating class in 1966, my

year. Now let me add an addendum to that too. Our high school and Wakefield High School in Arlington, we had the most fully integrated high schools east of the Mississippi in the south in 1965-66. Because, our team at GW and Wakefield High's team in Arlington. We had the most fully integrated football teams east of the Mississippi in the south. Our class in 1966, when GW was the first fully integrated graduating grades. Although the majority of the students were Caucasian in 1965 and '66. Ok.
[00:44:46][53.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:44:50] Can you describe some of the teachers that you had? [00:44:51][1.7]

Stanley Greene: [00:44:53] Oh, yes. For me, in both Parker-Gray and George Washington, they were excellent instructors, excellent instructors. Myself, my siblings and myself, we were always on the honor roll from first 1st through 12th grade. See, I was an academic athlete. Again, that was required. That was required in our household, to achieve excellence. So we were, during our time, we were trained and taught to strive for excellence at whatever you did. [00:45:34][41.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:45:37] Do you remember any of the names of your teachers besides for Mr. Dawkins? [00:45:41][3.7]

Stanley Greene: [00:45:42] Yes. Mr. Alfred Carter. In fact, he was the first black coach here in Alexandria with our team at GW. Now, Herman Boone was the first black head coach, but Mr. Carter was the very first black coach at George Washington High School. Now, I have to do further research, but he may have been the first black coach, period in Northern Virginia.¹
[00:46:11][29.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:46:17] Anybody else come to mind?
[00:46:18][1.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:46:22] Well, Mr. Hillman was my chemistry teacher, and he was excellent. I forgot Mr. Hillman's first name, but he was an excellent teacher. And, of course, Mr. Barr, the music teacher, he was excellent at George Washington. And Mr. Ralph Fox, he was our wrestling coach. He was from Ohio, he went Kent State. In fact, I had a football and wrestling scholarship at Kent State but I wanted to stay home. I had three scholarships, four scholarships. I had one to Bridgewater, and

¹ William "Bill" Blair was the Gym teacher and also the Assistant Coach of the GW football team while Stanley Greene attended GW

the other two I can't recall. But I didn't want to leave home. So, I stayed home. Now, Howard, Veronica, and John, they were enrolled at Howard. But I went to Federal City and the federal city was, which is UDC [University of the District of Columbia], the UDC is a combination of Federal City College, Washington Technical College and DC Teachers College. That's UDC. Now, I was one of the first students at Federal City. I opened the school. I was a charter student when the school first opened. And my major was electrical engineering. But I didn't go to school for a degree. I went to school for the knowledge. Now, it may sound strange but that's just me. And then of course, you know when you major in engineering your natural minors are math and physics. But my elective minors were ancient African civilization and African American history studies. So, back then in '68, 1968 at Federal City, I was privileged to be in the course that they had. They had the most comprehensive African-American history, and Ancient African history courses in the nation. I was blessed and privileged to be in there, to be a part of that. [00:48:37][134.8]

Kerry James Reed: [00:48:37] Absolutely. So, before you were taking these, ancient African civilization courses at Federal City, did you have any teaching in or any instruction in black history from schools? [00:48:48][10.8]

Stanley Greene: [00:48:49] No, my sister Veronica and I, we started studying in depth, African American history studies and African civilization. Veronica was 18, 17, 18. I was 15, 16. And the Cross's across the street in 1321, one of the siblings, his name was Horace Cross, he was a independent shoe repair man, or cobbler. And people used to visit our house all the time. And so we would caucus with Horace Cross, my sister Veronica and I, because he was a great man of knowledge, of black history. [00:49:32][43.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:49:35] So what drew you to engineering? [00:49:38][3.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:49:39] Well, I've always was blessed to be good in math and science. In fact, at Parker Gray, I won the blue ribbon in the state science fair with one of my projects. It was the harmful effects of nicotine. So what I did, I blew the glass and put a roach in there and made a siphon for the smoke to come from the cigarette. So I was blessed to win first in the state science fair. At Parker-Gray High School. And this was with the black high schools throughout the state of Virginia. [00:50:15][35.9]

Kerry James Reed: [00:50:16] Okay. [00:50:16][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:50:17] And that science was at what was then Jenny Dean High School in Manassas Virginia. [00:50:22][4.9]

Kerry James Reed: [00:50:23] Okay. Interesting. [00:50:23][0.4]

Stanley Greene: [00:50:24] A black high school. [00:50:25][0.6]

Kerry James Reed: [00:50:25] Right. [00:50:25][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:50:26] So I've always been interested in it. Because my father was always, by observing my father. I call him an engineer because he's always working with the soil. [unintelligible] the reason why my chickens taste so well. Because he was a master curer, he learned from his grandfather, my great grandfather, Grandpa Jack Stewart. He was a master curer in Barboursville, Virginia. My father learned from him then I learned from my father because he would do it every year. We would kill nine hogs a year and one Black Angus cow each year. We would process it right in the back of the house. See now, with beef, it has to go to the freezer locker for three months. So, you cannot eat fresh meat. You have to believe that it is very dangerous to eat any type of blood. But a cow having so much density in their flesh, it takes time for all the blood to drain out.² [00:51:31][65.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:51:32] Yeah. [00:51:32][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:51:33] So we would cure our beef side by side with my father every year curing pork. So, what I did with this system that I have now, I combine the methods of sugar curing along with smoking. So that's how I come up with that. [00:51:52][19.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:51:53] Very good. So, did you have any jobs before you went to Federal City? [00:52:00][7.4]

Stanley Greene: [00:52:01] Yes. I was working full time and going to school full time then at the Library of Congress. See, the Library of Congress back then was the first federal agency to have flextime so we could arrange our scholarly schedules around our work schedules. See, my very first job, my godfather, Mr. Bass, he was the first black to drive a city vehicle. He had a trash business also. So, I drove the trash truck when I

² Pork needs to be cured, not beef.

graduated from high school at George Washington. Then from there, I went to the Library of Congress. And then from the Library of Congress, I went to Pride Incorporated with Marion Berry. I was the in-school administrator. I went to the senior coordinator at Pride, Inc. And after Pride, I went to work as a wholesale meat salesman. And then from there I went into my business for myself as a carpet artist. In other words, if you could conceive in your mind a design I could put into carpet and install. So, I was a carpet artist because I was a master configure of space. See, no one could measure to me. I measured it exact. I only did custom work. So, in other words, I did parallelograms, trapezoids, circles, equilateral triangle, any type of triangle borders. Again, and parabolas, partial parabolas. See, you cannot do it on a flat surface or a lineal space. You only do a facet of a parabola or hyperbola. So I did that. I would put pieces together myself, the designs.
[00:53:44][103.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:53:47] How did you come to become a carpet artist? It seems rather, you know, because when I think of engineering... [00:53:53][6.4]

Stanley Greene: [00:53:55] That is engineering. [00:53:55][0.2]

Kerry James Reed: [00:53:55] Yeah, yeah. It's just, it's a very interesting way to go. And I was curious how you came to want to be a carpet artist. [00:54:03][7.8]

Stanley Greene: [00:54:04] Well, one of my greatest brothers and friends, his name is John Breshnahan, and he is the founder of Arlandria Carpet. Arlandria Floors, rather, which is on Mount Vernon Ave today. He sold a business, I think in 2012 or '13. My very dear friend and brother, his name is John Beard, and he allowed me to, see, I bought my carpet wholesale through him. I not only configured it, I sold carpet too. See, I was a master of configure of space. See, regardless of the geometric shapes, you have to reduce it to rectangular panels, see. Say for instance the room is shaped like a circle or a triangle. I had to reduce because carpet comes in at 12 to 15 foot widths, but the standard width is 15. I mean 12, I'm sorry, 12ft. So, all you get is a rectangle. So you I had to reduce the space to rectangular panels when I am configuring. And also you had to keep in mind the direction of the way the carpet is woven. If you turn the incorrect way, it'll look like two different colors, not the same color. So that's before I did the job, I would have to see what you wanted to do, then I would configure the space. See, no one could measure for me, no one could

configure for me and no one could cut for me, but me. See, all I needed a helper for was to help me bring the material in.

[00:55:44][100.1]

Kerry James Reed: [00:55:44] Right. So speaking of, you know, the history of African Americans and, you know, African civilizations more broadly, how do you see the history of Colored Rosemont fitting into black history in Alexandria?

[00:56:04][19.5]

Stanley Greene: [00:56:05] Well, with the Great Migration from the Deep South, and the apartheid down there. Because from my experience, Alexandria was a haven for freedom. Again, keeping in mind was not a racial panacea, but it was better than the Deep South. There were no night rallies in Alexandria, Virginia. So, that's why it disturbs me when people try to mythologize Alexandria. It was not like that. Because we had friends. And in fact, my godfather, Mr. Bass, he's from Madison, Georgia. He came to Alexandria and thrived, in the 1930s he came. And once again, I'm very proud of the great state, my state of Virginia. Because look at today, I mean, from the capital of the Confederacy to where we are now. You cannot deny that progress. Again, of course, remember our history but don't wallow in it. Don't wallow in it or seek revenge. If you have people going to the churches, the mosque and the temples harboring revenge. And this is one of the greatest tenets of the creator, "vengeance is mine," he said. And as I've stated to you before, what I think about most today is can we come together as Americans to not only save our democracy, but to keep it nourished and pure. If possible. Because again we are a work in progress. Constantly. It's a grand experiment. And we as citizens we have to work at it, to keep it like that. A welcoming place. And, once again, I mean, just the literal facts. People are literally dying to come to America. As we speak today, right now, they get in these rickety boats. Right now, as we're speaking, people are still trying to come to America. We had the greatest democracy on the planet. And this is what I think about constantly. Will we come together, like the people in Ukraine, to defend our country. Because I'm truly one to feel that I am my brothers and sisters keeper. If I can't help you, I won't hurt you. [00:58:54][169.7]

Kerry James Reed: [00:59:00] So you mentioned to me that your father sort of took the role of community enforcer in Colored Rosemont. [00:59:05][5.9]

Stanley Greene: [00:59:06] Yes. [00:59:06][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:59:07] Were there any other...
[00:59:07][0.6]

Stanley Greene: [00:59:08] No, he didn't take it. He was given it. [00:59:11][3.0]

Kerry James Reed: [00:59:11] Okay. [00:59:11][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:59:11] Yes. He was not a forceful person. He was, speaking of democracy, he was the epitome of democracy. A fair man. Very fair. [00:59:20][8.6]

Kerry James Reed: [00:59:21] Were there any other leaders in colored Rosemont that you remember? Community leaders?
[00:59:26][4.4]

Stanley Greene: [00:59:26] Mr. Bass. He employed, with his hog moving and hauling business, and his trash business, he employed quite a few people in the community. [00:59:33][7.3]

Kerry James Reed: [00:59:34] Okay. [00:59:34][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [00:59:36] Douglas Bass, Sr. And I think I stated this to you before, see, up until the mid to the late 1950s, a large portion of the housing stock in Alexandria had outdoor toilets. Mr. Bass drove what they called back then a honey truck. It was the truck with liquid lime. He had designed the outdoor toilets to thwart the rats and snakes. For sanitation. [01:00:08][32.3]

Kerry James Reed: [01:00:18] So, in your in your mind, why do you think the Colored Rosemont Initiative is so important?
[01:00:24][6.4]

Stanley Greene: [01:00:27] For the recording of factual history, not mythology. Because for me, it's a great example of how great America is and can be. Because as you well know, being an historian yourself, we are all immigrants here. And it is my feeling that everyone should have the same opportunity. Being a descendant of slaves, for me, it is of utmost importance to be fair to everyone and to lead where everyone has a chance in America to have a better life. [01:01:13][46.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:01:16] Absolutely. So, how did the Colored Rosemont Initiative begin? [01:01:21][5.7]

Stanley Greene: [01:01:24] Well, I wrote the mayor and he responded, I mean, excellently. He and his assistant, Mr. Mark McHugh, McHugh, I'm sorry, McHugh. Speaking of constituent attentiveness and striving for positive results, they have done it. And they responded to me immediately and correctly.
[01:01:55][31.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:02:03] So, what did you write to the mayor? What were you hoping to gain when you wrote the mayor?
[01:02:08][5.4]

Stanley Greene: [01:02:09] What we achieving now. Just what we are doing. Just having an individual like you. [01:02:13][4.8]

Kerry James Reed: [01:02:18] So in your in your mind, what is the significance of moving from, you know, the construction of the Adkins homes and eminent domain in the late 60s and early 70s to now with the Color Rosemont Initiative, that sort of inverse situation. What does it mean to see the progress being made? [01:02:39][21.6]

Stanley Greene: [01:02:41] With this initiative? [01:02:42][0.9]

Kerry James Reed: [01:02:45] Mhmm. [01:02:45][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [01:02:45] It fills my heart with joy. That's like when you're in science, you have a hypothesis and then you see the end results. [01:02:54][9.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:02:59] So what do you think it would mean for more Alexandrians to know about Colored Rosemont, the history of it? [01:03:06][7.0]

Stanley Greene: [01:03:07] Well, to reference the old axiom, if you don't know where you truly come from, you will never know where you're going. [01:03:15][8.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:03:18] Absolutely. So, we've been speaking for about an hour now, Mr. Greene, it's been an absolute pleasure. And you've mentioned your faith several times throughout our conversation. I was curious, well, I was hoping you could speak a bit more about that? [01:03:36][17.9]

Stanley Greene: [01:03:37] Well, we were raised Methodist.
[01:03:39][1.7]

Kerry James Reed: [01:03:39] Okay. [01:03:39][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [01:03:40] See, our home church is right down the street here at the 900 block of North Alfred St. It's called Russell Temple CME. Back in those days, CME was the colored Methodists. But in the late mid to late 60s, it was transferred or transitioned to Christian Methodist. Of course, I'm quite sure you know about the AME [African Methodist Episcopal]. They were for black people. There were the AMEs and the CMEs. So we were raised CME. So, by studying ancient African civilization and African American history instead of the black history, I have evolved to just being spiritual. Because as you know, religion is a discipline. See, we can religiously make love to our wives three times a week. The religion is the discipline, the church is in you and me. That's what the church is.
[01:04:42][62.1]

Kerry James Reed: [01:04:43] Okay. Could you describe what the church looked like when you were going to it as a kid?
[01:04:51][8.7]

Stanley Greene: [01:04:53] Well kept and orderly.
[01:04:54][0.7]

Kerry James Reed: [01:04:57] Okay. Do you have any favorite memories from your time going to church? [01:05:03][6.5]

Stanley Greene: [01:05:05] Yes. Singing in the youth choir. Because they had what they called little buds from, say, 6 through 10. And then we had a junior choir, and then there was the adult choir. So, for me, that was it. And then hearing the great sermons from, primarily Reverend Pearson Kemp Sr., who lives right up the street, whose house is up the street. His son, who was my age his name is Calvin Bernard Kemp, and his oldest son is Pearson Kemp Jr, and we call him Sonny Kemp, from that family there. He always had a great sermon. Reverend Pearson Kemp Sr. [01:05:48][42.9]

Kerry James Reed: [01:05:54] Pearson Kemp Sr. [01:05:54][0.5]

Stanley Greene: [01:05:56] Senior, yes. [01:05:56][0.3]

Kerry James Reed: [01:06:01] So you said he always had great sermons. Can you remember any of them or what types of things he would say? [01:06:08][6.4]

Stanley Greene: [01:06:08] The primary message that I receive from sermons was, again, taught in my household, respect and honor others, and respect for authority. [01:06:24][15.4]

Kerry James Reed: [01:06:24] Yeah. [01:06:24][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [01:06:25] That's first of all. And treating your fellow human being like you want to be treated. So, my thing is being human. If you behave like a human being, you'll be treated like a human being. [01:06:40][14.6]

Kerry James Reed: [01:06:42] Absolutely. So, you said something interesting that, you know, you came to your to your faith, to your spiritualism, after you had taken the courses in ancient African history. [01:06:59][17.1]

Stanley Greene: [01:07:00] Correct. [01:07:00][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:07:00] I am curious, what about those courses made you, I guess evolve might be the correct word, in your spirituality. What did you learn? [01:07:10][10.1]

Stanley Greene: [01:07:13] You know, of course we in our educational system here in our country is about the mythology. So, I just saw the absolute truth from human evolution. And by learning that every human being came from Africa. In other words, all of us are African origin, every human being on the planet. So, that was a part. And then coming to the realization and understanding that we are all human beings first. And then the struggle of women. They are human beings first. The average male just considers a woman as a va-jay-jay [Vagina]. They see them only as a Va-jay-jay, they are human beings with the brain and feelings. [01:08:07][54.3]

Kerry James Reed: [01:08:12] So it seems like when you learn that it was quite the revelation for you. Almost. [01:08:16][3.8]

Stanley Greene: [01:08:19] It was, absolutely. And having a great mother and a great grandmother, a very good grandmother. And seeing how they kept the family together and did what they did. And then every human being, we not here on the planet without coming through a woman. So, for me, women deserved or have earned utmost respect for me. [01:08:42][22.6]

Kerry James Reed: [01:08:44] So, I was hoping that, briefly, as we move into our final section of questions here, at the meetings that we've had you've always been an advocate about the importance of the factual history, as you so rightly say. And I was wondering if you wouldn't mind giving a brief description of the history of colored Rosemont? [01:09:09][25.7]

Stanley Greene: [01:09:14] Not a problem. Well, again, for me, who should be emphasized always is Ms. Virginia Wheat Fitzhugh Thomas. And with my collaboration with Ms. Sarah Becker, that acutely and the articles that she did in the Old Town Crier, she is to be applauded. Along with the Virginia Wheat Fitzhugh Thomas; and it illustrates how we as Americans are all linked together. Black history, Caucasian history, its all about history. [01:09:54][39.9]

Kerry James Reed: [01:09:57] So, when did Sarah Becker come to you with the idea for the articles? [01:10:03][6.2]

Stanley Greene: [01:10:05] Well, during the pandemic, when the libraries were closed, the only library we could go to because the cybernetic system shut down. We could only go to the library at Mount Vernon Ave and Commonwealth Ave. So that's where we met, that's how it started. From there. [01:10:25][19.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:10:27] So, in collaborating with Sarah Becker, what was the goal that you had for that collaboration? [01:10:36][9.8]

Stanley Greene: [01:10:37] Once again, factual, authentic depictions of history. No mythology, no mythology. See, her research is impeccable. And her facts are impeccable. Chronologically and factual. The chronological order, especially of Ms. Virginia Wheat Thomas. Once again, I cannot stress enough she was a angelic, abolitionist minded lady in America. A true American, a true American. See, that's, for me, I'm an American. And for our great democracy, we have to maintain it and protect it. [01:11:22][45.4]

Kerry James Reed: [01:11:28] Absolutely. So, after the development of the Adkins homes, how much of colored Rosemont was intact after that? I guess you could say. [01:11:38][10.7]

Stanley Greene: [01:11:40] I would say anywhere from 45% to say 55% of it. [01:11:49][9.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:11:50] And using that same percentage, using the same percentages, how much would you say is left of Colored Rosemont today? [01:11:57][6.8]

Stanley Greene: [01:11:59] Just my house. Our house I should say. 1312. [01:12:01][2.6]

Kerry James Reed: [01:12:02] Just 1312? [01:12:02][0.4]

Stanley Greene: [01:12:03] Only 1312. [01:12:03][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:12:06] So from... [01:12:07][0.7]

Stanley Greene: [01:12:07] Excuse me, can I stand for a minute? [01:12:08][0.7]

Kerry James Reed: [01:12:08] Of course, please. [01:12:09][1.1]

Stanley Greene: [01:12:09] This is part of my therapy, the standing. [01:12:10][0.7]

Kerry James Reed: [01:12:11] Not a problem at all. [01:12:11][0.1]

Stanley Greene: [01:12:13] Because I told you I was paralyzed nine years ago. This entire left side, so I continue my therapy. [01:12:18][5.6]

Kerry James Reed: [01:12:19] Take all the time you need. [01:12:19][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [01:12:20] And I just need to stand. And we can, as long as you can hear me through here. When I stand, because I'm enjoying you as well. And I appreciate and enjoy this conversation. [01:12:30][10.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:12:36] Thank you. So, you mentioned that, you know, 1% if that of colored Rosemont is left with only your house, 1312. So, that other 40% that you mentioned, what developments occurred after the Adkins homes that got Colored Rosemont to where it is today? [01:13:02][26.3]

Stanley Greene: [01:13:05] Well, The 700 block of Northwest Street. That entire development now, that was the demise, the total demise. [01:13:10][5.7]

Kerry James Reed: [01:13:15] And when did that development start? [01:13:16][1.8]

Stanley Greene: [01:13:17] 2017. [01:13:17][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:13:18] Okay. [01:13:18][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [01:13:20] And they still haven't developed it yet. It's an empty piece of land. [01:13:22][2.3]

Kerry James Reed: [01:13:25] Did those developers approach you as well? [01:13:28][3.4]

Stanley Greene: [01:13:29] No one ever approached our side of the street. Only the south side of Wythe street. [01:13:32][3.1]

Kerry James Reed: [01:13:33] Ok. [01:13:33][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [01:13:36] See the Bass family, they sold their property in 1989. [01:13:38][1.9]

Kerry James Reed: [01:13:39] Ok. [01:13:39][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [01:13:40] Which was directly next door to us. And the Majors, they sold theirs in, I would say the early 2000s. [01:13:48][7.6]

Kerry James Reed: [01:13:50] Ok. So, how have you experienced the recent developments? And how do you how do you feel about them? What have you seen? What have you experienced? [01:14:00][10.6]

Stanley Greene: [01:14:03] Well, I try to be a realist. I just refer to one of Quincy Jones's tunes. You're familiar with Quincy Jones? [01:14:11][8.4]

Kerry James Reed: [01:14:12] Course. [01:14:12][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [01:14:12] "Everything has changed. Nothing stays the same. The young become the old. That's it." [01:14:18][6.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:14:20] Absolutely. [01:14:20][0.0]

Stanley Greene: [01:14:23] And that is America. [01:14:24][0.6]

Kerry James Reed: [01:14:27] So, are there any aspects of Colored Rosemont besides... So, when you walk down the street on Madison or Wythe, for example, do you see anything that reminds you of the Colored Rosemont of your youth, or is that all just gone? [01:14:42][15.2]

Stanley Greene: [01:14:44] Well, again, I've been blessed by the creator with almost a photographic memory, so I just refer back to then when I'm walking through the neighborhood. I'm blessed like that. You know, I can refer back mentally and spiritually. [01:15:00][16.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:15:03] Naturally. So, what is it like then? Walking through Colored Rosemont and despite all the physical changes, being able to still remember how it used to be? What is that like for you? [01:15:13][10.4]

Stanley Greene: [01:15:14] It's in my soul. It's deeply in my soul. It's something that'll never be erased for me. Or I should say eradicated. [01:15:26][11.9]

Kerry James Reed: [01:15:30] So, there are lots of current residents in the Colored Rosemont neighborhood who I would imagine, don't know a lot about the history of Colored Rosemont. And I was curious, what would you like them to know about Colored Rosemont? [01:15:50][19.4]

Stanley Greene: [01:15:53] The refuting of the narrative that's been going on since D.W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation*. So I mean we would like, once again, I know you're familiar with Ken Burns. Well, he's great with authenticating facts. So that's, I just want to parallel that sentiment, so to say. No mythology, just facts. [01:16:30][36.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:16:30] No mythology, just facts. Absolutely. All right, Mr. Green. We've been talking for an hour and 15 minutes at this point. It's been an absolute blessing hearing you speak today. [01:16:39][8.6]

Stanley Greene: [01:16:40] It's a blessing for me to be with you, my brother. [01:16:41][1.6]

Kerry James Reed: [01:16:41] I just have, two closing questions, if that's ok? [01:16:45][3.4]

Stanley Greene: [01:16:45] Certainly. [01:16:45][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:16:47] So, firstly, if there is one specific memory, about colored Rosemont that you could hold on to forever, what would it be? [01:16:54][7.4]

Stanley Greene: [01:16:55] My two great parents. [01:16:55][0.0]

Kerry James Reed: [01:17:02] Absolutely. And then, more than anything else, what do you want people to understand about what Colored Rosemont is and was? [01:17:16][13.9]

Stanley Greene: [01:17:17] Well, again, to refute all these negative images of Caucasians and Blacks, that we are all

Americans and that we can live in harmony and peace. I'm getting emotional, forgive me. [01:17:28][11.1]

Kerry James Reed: [01:17:37] It's perfectly fine. And then lastly, what do you hope for the future of the area known as Colored Rosemont? [01:17:47][10.5]

Stanley Greene: [01:17:49] This too, that we can live on as Americans in peace. As an example for the entire planet. As Americans. [01:17:57][8.2]

Kerry James Reed: [01:17:59] Absolutely. Absolutely. Well, thank you so much for speaking with me today, Mr. Green. It's been an absolute pleasure. Thank you so much. [01:18:05][6.4]

Stanley Greene: [01:18:06] It's been an honor for me. An honor, an absolute honor. [01:18:07][1.5]

Kerry James Reed: [01:18:10] Thank you. [01:18:11][0.3]

Stanley Greene: [01:18:11] Thank you. Thank you. [01:18:11][0.0]

[4106.2]