



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



# Oral History Interview

with

## Beatrice McGuire

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**Interviewer:** Kerry James Reed

**Narrator:** *Beatrice McGuire*

**Location of Interview:**

*Lloyd House, 220 N Washington St, Alexandria, VA 22314*

**Date of Interview:** 4/19/2024

**Transcriber:** *Kerry James Reed*

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### **Summary:**

Beatrice McGuire discusses her Memories of Growing up in Alexandria, the activities she did in her youth, being a single mother in Alexandria, raising her daughter, her activities with her church, and her memories of racial segregation, integration, housing policies, and Black cemeteries in the City of Alexandria.

**Notes:**

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<b>General</b>	Civil Rights; African American neighborhoods; Segregation; Housing Development; African American Single Mothers; Alexandria, Virginia; Washington, D.C.; African American Cemeteries; African American Women in Church Work; Choral Ensemble;
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	Genealogy; Government Employees; Discrimination; Education; Childcare; Rent Parties; Community; Douglass Cemetery; Douglass Cemetery Initiative; AB&W
<b>People</b>	Beatrice McGuire; Darnella McGuire-Nelson PhD; Steve Nelson; Eudora Lyles; Helen Day; Joseph Howard;
<b>Places</b>	Carr Beach; Sparrow Beach; Alexandria, Virginia; The Berg, Jefferson Davis Homes; Washington, D.C.; Queen St; Fayette St; Gibbon St; Princess St; Royal St; Fairfax St; Zion Baptist Church; S Washington St; Santullo's; Duke St; Shiloh Baptist Church; Princess St; Oronoco St; Hunting Towers; Cross-Canal; Douglass Cemetery; Bethel Cemetery; Coleman Cemetery; Ben's Chili Bowl; Charles Houston Rec Center; Elks Lodge; Franklin St; Lee St; Cardozo Evening School; The Dip

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:00:01] Beatrice S McGuire, age 81. Date April 19th, 2024. The Lloyd House. [00:00:12][10.8]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:00:14] My name is Kerry James Reed. I am 27 years of age. Today is the 19th of April, 2024 and we are at the Lloyd House. So, Mrs. McGuire, thank you so much for agreeing to speak with me today. It's been an absolute pleasure getting to know you. [00:00:25][11.2]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:00:25] Ok. [00:00:25][0.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:00:27] I guess we're going to start from the beginning. Where were you born? [00:00:29][2.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:00:30] Alexandria, Virginia. [00:00:31][1.1]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:00:32] Alexandria, Virginia. What hospital were you born in? [00:00:35][3.6]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:00:35] Alexandra hospital. [00:00:36][1.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:00:37] Alexandra Hospital as well. Ok. What are some of your earliest memories? [00:00:42][4.5]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:00:45] My earliest memories. I was living in the Berg that's down there on Princess St and Royal St, between Royal St and Fairfax St. That was my first address, and it was very pleasant, and the people were very pleasant. And the neighborhood at that time was a black community with people of various low and moderate incomes. [00:01:15][29.2]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:01:17] Could you describe The Berg a little bit more for people who might not be familiar with it? [00:01:25][7.6]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:01:25] Oh, yeah. The Berg is and was known as the projects for low income people, Blacks. It was really Black families who could not find housing in parts of the city of Alexandra, because housing wasn't open to the Black folks of Alexandra during the time I grew up. But the people were very pleasant, very nice. We were just low income in that time, the people that lived there. But it was very pleasant, very Christ-like people that lived in the community. We just was Black, at that time they would say poor, you know, low income. Yeah. So but it was very pleasant. We had no problems, people were very nice, they helped one another. You could sit outside. No guns, no violence, you know, very pleasant. [00:02:25][59.5]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:02:25] Absolutely. So, you mentioned that, you described it as Christ-like. Was there a big emphasis on faith in the Berg when you were growing up? [00:02:34][8.3]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:02:34] Oh, yeah. People in the community where I lived everybody, really on Sunday mornings you would see them going to church. And mainly the church where I attended was the Zion Baptist Church on 714 South Lee St. All the people in that area attended, most of them, the Zion Baptist Church. And then we had some folks that attended, one of my neighbors, the Roberts Memorial Methodist Church on S Washington St, between S Washington St and Gibbon St. Or the Ebenezer Baptist Church on Queen St. Yeah. They were the two main churches where the people in my community attended. [00:03:23][49.5]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:03:26] Can you describe what your home looked like growing up? [00:03:28][2.3]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:03:29] Oh, it was very, it was moderous [modest]. It was like, the kitchen, the front room. At that time was two bedrooms and one bath. And then we didn't have, during that time we had the cold stoves. You used a wood or coal stove. And also, I forgot to say in that in our community you would see the men coming by in our alleys. We had an alley in the back of the house. Very nice, all paved, with your backyard facing the alley. And the men would come by on their wagons selling vegetables and/or wood or coal. At that time, the projects when I grew up, we had coal and wood stoves. We did not have, eventually they did turn to gas stove. After they got rid of the cold stoves. [00:04:31][62.1]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:04:33] Ok. Very interesting. So, you said the men would come back through the alleys and sell produce? [00:04:37][3.9]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:04:38] Yeah. Yeah. Your back door faced the alley. It was a yard with grass and a clothesline. And they would come through the alleys because it was paved. It was a thoroughfare, you could just drive through the alley with a buggy and a horse, believe it or not. And they would sell vegetables and the coal or wood to the people in the community, believe it or not. [00:05:05][27.6]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:05:06] That fascinating. [00:05:06][0.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:05:06] Yeah. Like if you see the alleys back there, if you go down there now you'll see the alleys. That's where the men drove, you know, to sell their products. And that's where my aunt and parents, they would buy vegetables and whatever they needed that the men had on the wagon. [00:05:26][19.7]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:05:27] That's really fascinating. I didn't know that horse drawn buggies would sell produce there. [00:05:30][3.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:05:31] Oh, yeah. When I grew up, I can't remember when they stopped, but when I grew up, that's how we purchased the coal or the wood, from the men that came by on their horse. They drove the wagon, you know. Like you see a wagon, like, shaped like a wagon, with the horse pulling it. That's how the people purchase their things they need for the house. [00:05:59][28.6]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:06:01] Absolutely. So, would members of the community be selling the produce, or was it people from outside the community? [00:06:09][7.8]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:06:09] Outside the community. Just like you have the market on the weekends here down in Old Town, that was the people who sold their vegetables from the outside. Maybe they came in from Maryland or parts of Virginia. I don't know, I was a child growing up. We were just interested in what they had all the wagon to sell. [laughs] [00:06:27][18.4]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:06:30] Absolutely. So, besides from the men who would sell produce in the wagons, do you remember any other businesses in the neighborhood from your childhood? [00:06:39][9.3]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:06:40] Oh, yeah. We had, main business was the grocery store. We had one grocery store, and the main one where the Blacks always went to get their products was Santullo's. I can't spell it, but on Duke St, a block down from the Shiloh Baptist Church. In that area was a market where all we would go to buy vegetables and meats. But we did have one that was up the hill, one block up on Queen St, Queen St and Royal St. That was a store, grocery store. Because if we didn't have money, like if my family didn't have money, the man knew us that you could buy, like, your meat or vegetables. And he would put it on the little card, then when you got your check that month, then you could pay. That's the type of credit we had as far as buying. We didn't have charge cards and things like that. [00:07:42][62.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:07:44] Absolutely. So, can you describe a little bit more for me about what the Berg looked like physically when you were growing up? [00:07:52][7.7]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:07:52] Just like it looks now. Except, they may have done some changes to it, but it's just like it looked when I grew up. The same, they may have done something on the outside, but the same structure is the same as when I grew up. Yeah, it's the same. They may have done something inside, like painting and all, but it's just like it was when I grew up. [00:08:20][28.3]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:08:21] So, when you see the Berg now can you remember all the areas you used to play as a child? [00:08:28][6.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:08:28] In the courts. We mainly played in the front door where we lived. And then they had the area in the back that was a courtyard. And that's where we would play baseball and various games, in the courtyard. All the children liked that. They didn't have, when I was growing up, certain buildings like they have now, the recreation center, we didn't have all of that when I was growing up. We made our own little area of playtime. [00:09:02][34.2]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:09:05] Can you describe the friends that you played with? [00:09:06][1.3]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:09:07] Yeah, they were mostly the neighborhood children that lived in the community. And they were, you know, nice, or if we did anything bad everyone in the community knew about it, but very nice. We didn't get in no big trouble or anything. I played with my cousins and other community children that lived there. And we never had no terrible problems or anything that I can remember; maybe a little fight or something, but nothing serious like you would see today, you know? [00:09:42][34.6]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:09:43] Do you remember any of the names of your childhood friends? [00:09:44][1.6]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:09:45] See, that's it. Some of them. I know one was Diane, one was Carolin. Let me see, **Diane, Carolin**. And I'm trying to remember some, Ted, James, and then my cousins, **Harry, Doris, Evelyn**. Oh, let me see, what was it? Shanklin, that was one. The Elliot family was another. But we just communicated in, oh, and what was her name? **Margo**. I'm trying to think of her last name, but Margo. Yeah, and her family. I can't remember their last names now, but I know people like that, yeah. [00:10:42][56.8]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:10:44] Absolutely. So what was your favorite aspect of growing up in the Berg? Do you have any particular, like, one very strong memory or a story? [00:10:50][6.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:10:50] Oh, my strong memory was that the people were so pleasant and nice. And if you need, like, say somebody ran out, did not have enough sugar in their house or need an egg,

you could actually knock on the door, say, 'oh, I ran out of sugar. Do you have any?' And they would say, 'yeah, I have a cup of sugar for you,' or 'I need an egg. Do you have an egg?' 'Yes, I have an egg,' but you don't see people doing anything like that now. But you could actually do that back then when I grew up, you know, if you ran out. And then the people in the community, my aunt was the type, in the morning she would get up, put on her apron and do her work, and other people from the community would come in and they would all chat and have a cup of tea, cup of coffee. That's how they would get their day started. [00:11:41][51.3]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:11:43] Sounds very community oriented. [00:11:44][1.3]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:11:45] But very community oriented, yeah. They were very, very lovely people back in those days. They didn't hang out in people's houses or anything, but you could go in there and chat if you had a problem and talk and what have you. It was very community, not like today. So I really don't really know, truly, the next door neighbors. They may see you and speak and they may not. Back then you knew all your neighbors. Yeah, it's different. Although the people, we were a Black community, didn't have, you know, money, like a lot of money to save or anything like that. The people were very kind to one another and helpful to one another. Yeah. And they knew one another. If someone was in trouble, they all pitch in. One time I remember, like, if they were short on their rent, believe it or not, in the project, they would throw a party. [00:12:47][62.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:12:48] Oh, really? [00:12:48][0.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:12:48] Yeah. If you remember Langston Hughes, he wrote about that in one of his poems and I say, 'oh, I can relate to this.' And they would have, like, something to eat, and then people will go and pay like, say five--I'm just saying \$5--to go in. That would help them get money for their rent. [00:13:05][17.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:13:06] Oh, interesting. [00:13:06][0.2]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:13:07] Rent parties. Believe it or not, in the projects they would have a rent party. That was right on Princess St, two doors up from where I grew up. [00:13:16][8.9]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:13:16] That's really cool. Wow. [00:13:17][0.7]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:13:18] Yeah. I remember that family just as good. And then if one family got into trouble, everyone would pitch in and help. We didn't have social media, but through their own way, they would know about person's problem, and they will help. [00:13:35][16.5]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:13:38] Absolutely, that's fantastic. So, you mentioned that you would play with your cousins as well as well as your neighbors. [00:13:44][5.3]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:13:44] Yeah. Yeah, because my cousins, they lived in the next block on Princess St. And that was my first house was on Princess St. Then my aunt moved when she got married, she had a two bedroom house that I would spend most of my time in on Oronoco St, you know, Oronoco St right down here from Princess St. Yeah. So the people that was in the neighborhood, all the children that was in that neighborhood, we all played together. And the one thing that we did: when springtime would come, the dandelion flowers, my cousins and I would go around picking the dandelions because my aunt made wine from that. And at Christmas you had dandelion wine. It was very good. We picked the flowers during the spring. She made, I wish I could remember how she did it, but she would do all of this apples, sugar and everything in this jug. And they would keep it in the pantry, keep it in a dark place. And then she would strain it, and I don't know how many times a day, put it in bottles and then put it in a closet. At Christmas time or Thanksgiving, they had their homemade wine. [00:15:03][78.6]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:15:04] Wow. That's fabulous. [00:15:05][0.8]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:15:06] Yeah. They didn't buy it or anything, they did it mostly from scratch, I remember that. And my mother, she was the type that made the good eggnog, homemade eggnog. And the cakes and the fruitcake was her favorite. Yeah. Yeah, I wish I was back in those days, but you know, although we was poor somehow or another we had a little happiness, but only in our own little community. You could still find happiness. Yeah. [00:15:40][34.2]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:15:41] So, I'm very interested in, so the rent party is very much a community centered event where you, the community gets together and would help each other. Were there any other community events that you remember attending or being a part of? [00:15:56][14.2]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:15:57] No. No, except if it was in the church. Other than that, the only community events we would have, we would go, like, my mother would get together, which because she was in D.C. then, and we would come back over to join my family in Alexandria and we would go to the beach. It was only two beaches that the blacks were allowed to go to. The car, the C-A-R, I can't say it right. Carrs Beach and Sparrows beach in Maryland. And they would go by bus believe it or not. And the bus drivers were all white. But my aunt, she cooked the best chicken and made the best potato salad and whatever else they would fix for the picnic. And we always gave the bus drivers a plate and they saved whatever food they had. And they would enjoy it, but at the same time things were segregated. We couldn't ride in the front of the bus, we had to sit in the back of the bus. But on a trip like that, everybody [sat wherever], because we chartered, they chartered a bus. So that was the main, that was one event. Then another event, if the Sunday school was going, like to Hershey Park, that was one place I remember going. Or I think King's Dominion was a part of it when I was growing up. Something like that. That was about as far as we got, growing up as a child. Just a community, local, not too far away. [00:17:31][94.6]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:17:32] Did a lot of your family live in the Berg when you were growing up? [00:17:35][2.7]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:17:35] No, nobody, but just my aunt. And my mother only stayed a while, and then she moved to D.C. because my father couldn't get work or find housing here in Alexandria. He was working in what was known as the Hot Shop. That is like a, like something like a pancake place, you know, coffee and, you know, things like that. So, we moved to D.C. [00:18:05][29.8]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:18:08] Could you describe your father? [00:18:09][1.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:18:10] Yeah. He was quiet, he worked as a printer. That's what he did. But his downfall was that he smoked, and that's why he lost his life because he smoked so many cigarettes during that time, you know. It wasn't like now, watch what you do as far as smoking. And he was quiet and he worked. And my mother did not work. So when he would get paid, he gave my mother money for the household as far as buying the groceries. But he paid the bills and what have you. But she was a housewife and a cook. She loved doing that. She did not work. And taking care of us children. [00:18:57][47.3]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:18:59] Do you remember what type of things she would cook? You mentioned eggnog, was there anything else? [00:19:01][2.6]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:19:01] Yeah. Oh, yeah. Ok. We cook chicken. She made, oh, rolls was her favorite. She didn't have a recipe, she just knew what to put in there. And biscuits. Rolls and biscuits was her favorite. And plus our greens, and she like baking pies and sweet potatoes, you know, yams, stuff like that. And fish, they were our favorite. We didn't have too much pork, not pork, beef, like much steak during that time. Like if my dad enough money to buy steak then all of us ate some of that steak, you know. We didn't have a big household for moneys, you know. Most of the time it was

things that were inexpensive. My mother would make the best, Lima beans and neck bones. They were very good. And I haven't fixed anything like that since, you know. And, let me see, what else did she really cook? And the turkeys, yeah, the turkeys. The baked chicken. Yeah. Stuff like that. [00:20:13][71.6]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:20:13] Yeah, that all sounds really good. [00:20:14][0.7]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:20:15] And she made the gravy and things, but we had the basic food--and apple pies, yeah, I forgot the apple pies. All of this was from scratch. And sweet potato pie, but apple pies too. Oh, she made--the mincemeat pie was her favorite for the holidays too. Yeah. [00:20:33][18.3]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:20:34] Did either of your parents ever talk to you about their family history? [00:20:38][3.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:20:39] No, my mother only...no. My grandfather was the one that would come and visit us, believe it or not. Because she lost... He lived on the Columbus St side, then he moved in D.C. And that's where my mother then kind of lost track of him. And believe it or not, he knew where my mother was because, believe it or not, on Easter he always brought eggs for my mother to dye. Because she was the type of person that, all of our childhood days, you know the people dye eggs and the Easter egg rolls, we would go right down here to Hunting Towers and roll our eggs. And in D.C. we couldn't go downtown in a day. So we all, when you hear people talk about the zoo, well that's where Blacks always did go to the zoo on Easter Monday to roll their eggs. [00:21:35][56.1]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:21:36] Really? [00:21:36][0.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:21:36] Mhmm. I remember my mother just as good taking us to the zoo to roll our eggs. Then we were over here with the rest of the family. We would go down to Hunting towers, there was a hill there, and roll our eggs and play in that area. Yeah. So they done built up down there now, it's not the same. But that's where we used to go. We would walk from the Berg down to hunting Towers, yeah. [00:22:02][26.3]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:22:04] I'm not familiar with the practice of rolling your eggs. What is that? [00:22:06][2.6]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:22:06] All we do is just hide your a eggs and roll like you see them do at [unintelligible]. We would roll them and hide the eggs and go look for them. That's all that was. Just take it out your basket. Just roll your eggs and hide your eggs. That was it. Then find your eggs and get back, eat your jellybeans or eggs. That's all we did. But it was fun dyeing them and putting pictures on them. But I didn't even do it this year because my children, grandson, they don't, he don't eat the eggs and I didn't waste money buying eggs to dye. But where my daughter grew up, we always dyed eggs because that's what my family always did. And we had Easter baskets. If we didn't have a basket, we would take an old shoe box, put grass in it, the Easter grass, put our little candy and eggs in it. So that was a big thing for us. Yeah. And then the church will always give the children little goodies. Yeah. [00:23:14][67.7]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:23:16] So when did your family move into D.C.? [00:23:18][2.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:23:18] Well, I guess, gee, after I was, I don't know what age, but I'd say after because they couldn't find housing here, so. But she had all the children here, she had three children, but we all was born here. So I guess after the last one, that was my brother. But we all was born here. Everyone. My sister, brother, everybody. My mother, everybody's born right in Alexandria, Virginia. So I guess it was in the '40s when they moved to D.C. [00:23:58][39.5]



**Kerry James Reed:** [00:23:59] Did you ever go to school in Alexandria? [00:24:00][1.2]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:24:01] I only went to school one year here. My mother was sick, and then she couldn't really care for us. So I only went to school one year here, elementary school. And then my sister went to be with, on my father's side, his mother. Okay. And my brother and I stayed over here with my aunt. Yeah. And we went to school here for one year. Then we went back with our family after she was well enough to take care of us. She was a diabetic too. And then we went back to D.C., but most of my school was in D.C. except for that one year here. And then we did have some, as far as a lady named Miss Margaret Young, she used to visit us and help the young people as far as educating us with various things. I remember her just as good, and she would come to the house in the Berg and teach us different things, the children. [00:25:09][68.3]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:25:10] So like math or, like, verbal stuff? [00:25:12][1.4]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:25:13] Yeah, math, manners, had to [unintelligible], etiquette, everything like that. Reading, writing, she would just do it on her own, yeah. Miss Margaret Young and I think she's the one that wrote some of our history about Zion Baptist Church. She was a very, maybe very educational wise during that time, yeah. [00:25:35][21.5]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:25:37] So while you were a child growing up in Alexandria, did you ever come across any cemeteries by any chance? [00:25:43][5.6]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:25:43] Oh, yeah. The only cemetery that we knew about was the first one, like the Douglass Cemetery. That was because my uncle, my aunt's husband passed and he's buried there. Joseph Howard, he was the barber, the man that cut your hair. And when he passed, I think it was in the late '50s that he passed, or early '60s. And then he was buried out there at Douglass cemetery. That was my first time, you know, really getting acquainted with the cemetery. Yeah. But I didn't continue to really visit as much, yeah. [00:26:28][45.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:26:29] So, when you saw it after Joseph Howard died, what did you think of the cemetery when you saw it? [00:26:34][5.4]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:26:35] Oh, it was okay at that time. Because it was nothing around it is just that it was just a cemetery. Like the houses that's down there now, nothing was down there except for the cemetery. It wasn't in great condition, but it was the best that for Blacks, you know, to have someplace to bury your deceased. And it was okay then, but, you know, you had to have money to keep it up, right? [00:27:06][31.2]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:27:07] Yeah, absolutely. [00:27:09][1.8]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:27:09] But I didn't think that much or pay that much attention. But it was okay at that time when I saw it. [00:27:15][5.9]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:27:17] So you never saw Coleman or Butler Cemetery, while you were growing up? [00:27:21][4.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:27:21] No. I don't even know about Butler, and Coleman I only learned about that lately after being at the Church, the Zion Baptist Church. When the members would pass, then everybody would go to sit because Douglass was full at the time. And they was able to get burial spot and Coleman. But I guess that's Fairfax, and that was the cemetery where everybody would go, it was either Douglass or Coleman. That's when I started getting acquainted with Coleman. And then now my sisters buried there, my brother and my parents are buried there. Because I wanted them near Alexandria because that was the only place we really knew about that I could get to. I wasn't acquainted with nothing in D.C. As far as cemeteries. This was home. [00:28:21][60.4]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:28:24] So, how often did you come back in Alexandria while you were living in D.C.? [00:28:30][5.5]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:28:31] Oh, every weekend. When I was in school, every weekend, I was here at my aunt's house. Because I didn't have no connection then in D.C. I didn't care for D.C. at that time. D.C. was very, now, we could stay up on U Street, you know Ben's Chili Bowl? [00:28:49][18.6]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:28:50] Yeah. [00:28:50][0.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:28:51] That was a famous place for us. If we would go to the movies there, we would go to the Howard Theater, we would visit Ben's Chili Bowl. This was growing up now, when I was in my teens. And downtown we didn't go. So, it was in many places that I attended. But over here in Alexandria, look like I had more places to freely move about. although it was segregated we still knew our little community where we could go. Yeah. And we had one movie theater up here on Queen St and Fayette St. That was the only movie theater at the time when I grew up. [00:29:30][39.7]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:29:32] So besides for the movie theater on Queen St and Fayette St, were there any other things that you would do in Alexandria while you were growing up? [00:29:39][6.9]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:29:39] Let's see. I'm trying to think. We just, oh, maybe if somebody will have a party or something, and then they would either, I'm trying to think, because we didn't really have a recreation center. I can't remember, like maybe at a school, an auditorium or something. Somebody will have a party that we attended. A party or, what did they call it, something that we called a cabaret or something. Yeah, something like that. [00:30:12][33.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:30:13] Cabaret? [00:30:13][0.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:30:14] Yeah. I think they said the cabaret or something, but I can't remember because I was very quiet. I didn't really go into places in Alexandria. Yeah, I was trying to thin it was the movie or if somebody was having a party or even a party at their house, that was about it. Because we didn't have too many places to go when I was growing up. Not unless it was something at the church, yeah. But I can't remember any places that stand out to me in Alexandria. Because we didn't even have, I was trying to think, we just played, I'm just trying to think, we had no places to really go and play, like the skating rink, although once they had a roller skating rink, but that was when my daughter grew up and they took away that from the children, you know, because that was back where Giant food store used to be, on Cross Canal. Well, I think it was just--oh, I know--we used to go to Green Valley when people would be having parties or either they had a building or somebody or some organization was having something, we would go like that. It would be places somebody would mention to us that we knew, say 'oh yeah, they having something,' like maybe at Charles Houston Rec [Center], something like that. But I can't think of any places we really went to or attended. As far as play, it was either connected to the church or the community. If the community, a group of people got together and had something. Yeah. And, oh, the Elks home [Elks Lodge] maybe the elks home up here on Henry St, maybe they would have some function and then maybe you could go there for some activity, yeah. I forgot about the Elks home. But I'm trying to think of something else yeah, it was very quiet life for me, you know. Except for I was very dull, so I didn't go. So, like I say, it was like if somebody was having a party at their house or something like that. [00:32:39][145.5]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:32:41] So you would come back every weekend to see your friends, and you would also go to Zion Baptist Church? [00:32:47][6.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:32:48] Yeah, yes. On Franklin St and Lee St. [00:32:52][4.3]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:32:54] Yes. When you would come back to church after you were living in D.C., did the community always remain the same? What was it like to come back into the community that you love so much? [00:33:08][14.7]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:33:09] Oh, it was fine because I knew everyone, I think that was why. In D.C. you would see people, but you didn't really know 'em, like I did over here. People was more community over here than the people in the block where I lived in D.C. I knew people, but even my mother, she was a housewife and all, she didn't really go out and circulate. Like she would go to the store, see people, we would speak and be friendly, but it weren't like the people here in Alexandria. They probably were, you know, good people. But they were just, to me, different than the people here. It was more home like here. And maybe the people, they'd stay in their community long, and it wasn't projects or anything like that, just regular housing. But I still did not like it maybe because it was a different type and the character of the people that lived there. They weren't... One family was very nice. There were two ladies that lived and if I needed to make but we didn't have a phone at that time, a telephone call to call over here or something, they would let me use their phone, I guess. And then I really, the way I grew up, we really didn't get a telephone in that house until I started working. And I paid for it to work. I say, 'ok, I'ma get a phone so my mother if she needs to call me or something, we will have a telephone.' That's how it was. My father didn't, you know, really. So when I grew up and started working I said "I'm going to get a phone, I will pay the bill," and that's what I did. My brother worked, my sister, what we did is we let my sister go to college and we say we didn't have college on our mind. We say, 'you go, we work so that we can help out at the house, help our mother. She was such a good person, so we wanted to provide for her and help her out, you know, with things. [00:35:20][130.7]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:35:23] When did you start working? [00:35:23][0.8]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:35:24] Oh, I started work at after I finished high school. And I took practical nursing, I got my license, but I didn't stay with the loan because you didn't make much money. And I started at the children's hospital, believe it or not. Sometimes somebody wouldn't come, and let's say my hours started at 8:00 am, I may be there to 12:00 midnight because somebody wouldn't come in. And you didn't make that much money in the hours where, you know, you worked the weekends. I guess I really wasn't cut out for it. And I said, 'I need to get a job where I can be off on the weekend and make more money.' I went to Cardozo Evening School at night and took English and typing. I passed. I took the civil service test. I passed. It's not like it is now. I could just go from building to building and just ask the guard at the door, "where's your personnel office?" They would direct me. And I'd go to the personnel office and if they had vacancies, I could be interviewed right then and there. You can't do that now. [00:36:55][90.6]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:36:56] No, definitely not. [00:36:56][0.2]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:36:58] But where I grew up, that's how I got my first job. Was just going from building to building. This was after I finished the federal exam and passed the test. And that's how the lady introduced me and told me to go to the Interior Department. And that's how I got my first job, just going from building to build. [00:37:24][26.9]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:37:27] I wish I could do that. [00:37:27][0.5]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:37:28] I wish I could do that now, but its, days are so different and its so competitive and the social climate is so different. But at that time, believe it or not, I found a little job in the government. [00:37:44][16.4]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:37:46] Where you still living at home when you started to work for the government? [00:37:49][2.4]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:37:50] Mhmm. [00:37:50][0.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:37:50] Ok, so still living in D.C. [00:37:51][0.3]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:37:52] Lived in DC and I was still living at home. That's why I said I could start doing different things to help out my mom, yeah. [00:38:00][8.3]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:38:01] When did you move back to Alexandria? [00:38:03][1.3]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:38:04] Oh let me, let me see. When did I come back to Alexandria? After I met my husband to be, he was stationed at Fort Belvoir. And that was one thing that we used to do, that my little girl friends that I used to do, which you can't do now. We would just take the bus. It was called AB&W bus, ride down to Fort Belvoir, and that was a place to go. They had a community center, and we would go and just dance and have a good time. But I didn't move back to Alexandria. I was still in DC, okay. But I would still come over and visit my aunt. But after I would meet up with my girlfriends then I would go back home to DC. I didn't move back to Alexandria until after the death of my husband. And I say I didn't want to move to D.C. because my family and I had connections with the church and people in the community [in Alexandria]. I knew nobody except for my people, my father's family. But I was closer to my mother's family. So, I moved to Alexandria, I moved back, I stayed with my girlfriend for about a month, and then they were building some, the new development called Jefferson Davis. No. What was it called? Jefferson, I forgot what they called it, Jefferson Village, I believe. And man was sitting on, in his, the trailer, and I had my daughter in my arms, and I can never forget. So I just knocked on a trailer, asked the man were there any vacancies. He said, "yeah," and I didn't even have a job. But I told him my situation. He said he had an apartment left and I was able to get that apartment with no job. But I had money coming in from Social Security and like, my husband's death benefit. I said, 'well, if I could just get a place to live. And then find a job, I could make it.' And that's what happened. It was a new development. It's up here, what is it? Yeah, I guess if you go straight up Queen St, Queen St and Princess St, it's mostly Princess St and West St. Up there in that development, it was brand new. It wasn't a project, it was just a new development, believe it or not, for Black people. And I was able to get a place there, an apartment there. It had two bedrooms brand new. But I didn't stay long because I was on the last floor and I said, 'oh my goodness, this is too much.' And a lady in my church had a house here on Pitt St, in the 600 block of Pitt Street and she was renting it out. So I say a house would be better for us because I wouldn't have to go up and down the steps and watch her as she play. And we moved out here on Pitt St, the 600 block, and rented from the lady. She was a member of the church I attend and she let me rent her house and it was a lovely area. And that area was a family oriented community. Everybody knew one another and most of us all attended the same church. So it was a lovely community. [00:41:46][221.8]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:41:47] When did you move into the 600 block of Pitt St? [00:41:49][2.3]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:41:50] Where did I move? [00:41:50][0.5]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:41:51] When. When did you move? [00:41:52][0.9]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:41:52] Oh, let me see. Now, my daughter was, let me see. '64? Maybe '68. [00:42:00][8.1]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:42:01] '68? Ok. [00:42:02][0.5]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:42:02] Yeah. '68. [00:42:03][0.7]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:42:06] So, you mentioned to me before that you interacted a lot with community leaders in and in Alexandria, such as Ms. Eudora Lyles. [00:42:16][10.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:42:16] Yeah. [00:42:16][0.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:42:17] Could you tell me what you remember about Ms. Eudora Lyles? [00:42:19][2.2]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:42:20] Yeah. Oh Miss Eudora Lyles was a very lovely lady. She was so interested in trying to keep housing available for Black people. Because every time you would see a Black family lose their home, they would never get it back. And if they built a new development like say development like they eventually 'gon try to do down the Berg, take all of those houses. But in the meantime, Ms. Lyles will make sure you set aside so many houses for Black people. Low income for people that make a certain income. Because now when I drive around houses are almost \$1 million, or is more than half a million. So I say, who can afford that? You have to have a good job, making plenty of money, and I never would have been able to get a house. Although, I was going to look into getting a house under the G.I. Bill, because my husband was a, you know, had passed. But when Ms Lyles introduced me to this new development and told me what to do. I just say, well, okay, I'll do whatever. In order to get a house, because I remember my husband saying, 'when we move back to the States,' because we were in France then, 'we are going to not rent, we are going to buy.' So I remember that what he was saying. But when I was growing up in this house in Pitt Street, all I thought about was just trying to survive. I didn't think about buying a house at that time until Ms. Lyles introduced me into, I never knew Ms. Lyles until she called me. She called me because she had a sister in law she was trying to help, and her sister in law must have told her about me. And that's how I got to know Miss Lyles. But she was a dedicated person. She went to every meeting, tried for lot of these Black folk to help keep housing here available for Black people. And it's too bad that a lot of these people who really worked in this community are no longer here. They have passed now, but it was an awful lot of Black people working to try to keep housing here for us. [00:44:45][145.2]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:44:47] Did you ever meet Ms. Helen Day? [00:44:48][1.7]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:44:49] Oh yeah. I knew Ms. Helen Day, yeah. [00:44:50][0.9]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:44:51] What was she like? [00:44:52][0.3]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:44:52] Oh, she was very nice, very educated and well rounded. And she also tried to help the community in her way. Because she taught, yeah, she was a teacher and she was a member of the Roberts Memorial Church on Washington St here. But she was very pleasant and she really, I didn't have her as a teacher, but I knew of her and her husband. They all worked in the community, and her brother. And her brother, her husband's brother was the one that helped me out because I lived across the street from them. [00:45:31][39.2]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:45:32] Oh, okay. [00:45:32][0.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:45:32] Yeah. And they used to live down near Union St on Franklin St, and they lost their home to the city. But they were blessed that they were building some new houses on Pitt St, and the people there were able, the Black people were able to get housing there. See, you had to go, some of the Black people already, I don't know how they did it or how they got it, but some Black people actually owned their own homes here in Alexandria way back there before I was born. Out there on the south side. But then when they passed, you know, gentrification, everything changed. And I think there's some Black folks that still own their homes, but they rent, they lease them out. Yeah, I know two people that are like that. [00:46:25][52.4]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:46:26] So, you know, so after '68 it seems like you're seeing a lot, or you saw a lot of black homeowners lose their homes to the city. [00:46:33][7.4]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:46:33] Yeah. [00:46:33][0.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:46:35] Could you speak more about what you remember about that? [00:46:37][2.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:46:38] Yeah. Let's take Gibbon St, you know, where the Safeway is, down there off Royal St. Well, across there on Gibbon St side was all Black families. I remember a lady real good, her name was Ms. Dutch, I may not be saying it right, but then they asked, usually you don't, you know, like you have moneys you could fix up your house if you was lacking something. Well, they didn't have money, but they owned those houses. So she left that area and moved on West St between West St and Oronoco St, you know, where the metro is? She moved in those houses up there. From down here because they, and guess what, those same houses are still there, but the Black people had to move. So I say, after I got a little educated, I say what it was either they, like one man told me when my daughter's godmother and her mother where they lived, the man when I went to ask him question he said 'the city wasn't getting enough taxes from them.' Because they were older and they didn't have a job. So, you know, just like me. I may get a little reduction because of my age. But if they don't think they getting enough income from you, you got to go, and they take that area. But when they took the area from those people on Columbus St, I done skipped all the way to Columbus St, all they did was build a new development. It was just apartments for lease. So they took those people's land that had been with them for years. That's why I say a lot of people get all excited. But the city, what they do, they move people out of the area where their from, and what I can understand and pay attention to, where they don't get enough tax money. I know you have to pay your taxes to keep a city going and keep your community going. But I am finding out just by paying attention that the poor is really making the biggest sacrifice. If you poor and have no money, or not necessarily poor but a middle income and you're not rich and you can't bring in enough revenue so that the City can have more money towards doing what they want to do. So they putting lot of the burden on the poor folks with no money, moderate income that have no money. The burden is falling on you because you're not really helping the City to survive. So you have to move into an area, to me, from what I can see, where you can move, but then they can move in and develop that area where they can get more income or bring in more people who making more income to pay more taxes. That's the way I see it. I love the City, Alexandria, but they go have to do something better as far as raising money for the city to survive. Yeah. I mean, I'm not talking about just race, a lot of people like you, you know, you don't have to be Black. You could be white. If your area is not bringing in enough income, that's the way I feel about. I mean that's my, what I see. [00:50:29][231.6]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:50:32] So you touched on a little bit, but when the city took the homes to be redeveloped, do you remember what the Black homeowners thought was going to happen to their homes? [00:50:42][10.6]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:50:44] I don't know, they just say a new development, they called it. Like in that case, they say the Dip area a new development is coming. But the people that, even live down there where I told you about Union St, I don't know what they told the people. I think what they said is they didn't have the money to bring it up to standards, you know. But then I guess a new developer or a new person would go in there with money and bring the house up to code. But you as a Black person couldn't stay there. But I'm trying to figure out did they, the people that lived on Franklin St, excuse me, did they money? Because they move to a brand new house on Pitt St. So, I don't know if

they gave them money for their house, or just how they did it. But I knew the people that lived on Columbus St, my daughter's godparent. And that lady was so nice. Their house had been there in their family for generations. They had them go around the city looking for houses, a place to live, and they gave them money to move to another house. So that's what they did to them. They gave them money for a house they were going to take from them. But in the meantime, they had to find another with the money they gave them, another house to live in an area that was all new to them, when they had lived in a certain area for decades. And so that's had the people did, you know? [00:52:29][105.4]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:52:32] Absolutely. [00:52:32][0.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:52:33] And if they had no money, and what I'm finding out, too, that's why Black people have to get their education. They have to get a job, and they have to be healthy so that you could try to live a good life, you know. You don't have to be rich, but in an area where you can be pleasant, like where I live now. Ms. Lyles helped me, but they gave us certain moneys to get the house, you know, the down payment to get the house. But in the meantime, in my little head I could see what was going on. And another man, I worked at the Justice Department in a credit union, and he said to me, "whatever you do, you pay that city the money back." I did. Because I didn't want to live where they would send you a letter, "are you still living there? Is your family still there?" And if something was to happen to me, my daughter couldn't even rent the house out, she would have to sell it. That meant I would lose the little home. And I'm finding out, Black people have a hard time passing their house or keeping a house in their generation, because the policies are so, right here in Alexandria, that if you don't have money, you're not gonna be able to own a house and pass it on to your family. You have to sell it. So what I'm finding out now, I don't get connected with no policy where you have to sign, they put their name on it and you have to send over your house to them. And if you pass, you have to sell your home. And that's not right. I don't care what you say, it's not right. But that's the way the city's policy is. And I'm gonna write a letter, their running to have a new mayor, people running now, I don't know. But anyway, I'm gonna let them know what I think. [00:54:42][129.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:54:44] So which departments did you work for while you were with the federal government? [00:54:48][3.9]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:54:49] Oh, I worked for, first the Interior Department. Then I came back after the death of my husband, my job was back with the Department of the Army. I worked for the Corps of engineers in the Department of the Army. And I had, believe it or not, a security clearance, top secret. [00:55:12][23.3]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:55:13] Oh, really? [00:55:13][0.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:55:13] Yeah. It's good. It's not like, I'm sorry to say upside to say, your ex president. [laughs] Oh, boy, I'm sorry. [00:55:20][6.9]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:55:21] Oh, please, you can say anything you want about that guy. [00:55:24][2.7]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:55:25] I'm so sorry. But I say if he could get a security clearance then everyone can get one. [laughs] [00:55:27][2.2]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:55:29] [laughs] You ain't wrong about that. [00:55:29][0.5]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:55:30] But anyway, and then I left there to get a promotion. I went to the Department of Justice. And then I worked in Antitrust Division. That's where I worked all those years, in the Antitrust Division. Then I decided I wanted, I liked the law, but I want to go back [to school]. My daughter was finished in Howard, so I said, I want to go back because I can. She's older

now, so I continued my education. So I went at night because the subway, which I worked on 4th St NW, the metro was right across the street. So I attended Catholic University because it was convenient. I could just go at night, in the evening. So I went for four years to Catholic University and got my bachelor degree. [00:56:19][49.5]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:56:21] That's fabulous. What did you study at Catholic? [00:56:22][0.9]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:56:23] I just took general study. Because I say, well, I'm older. I was in my 40s. I said, I don't want to specialize in anything. They just take a little of everything. So that's what I did. [00:56:33][10.3]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:56:34] That makes sense. [00:56:34][0.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:56:34] But I enjoyed it. It was very nice. I met interesting people, people that was my age who've done the same thing. The children had finished school and they were now attending classes. So it was very, very nice. Yeah. [00:56:48][14.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:56:51] Absolutely. So, you mentioned to me previously that you had studied at Maryland briefly and tried to become a paralegal? [00:56:55][4.3]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:56:55] Oh yeah. I even when I was at the Department of Justice, I took evening classes then. Took University of Maryland paralegal studies. I took ten courses there, got my certificate. [00:57:07][12.2]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:57:08] Was that before or after Catholic [University]? [00:57:09][1.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:57:10] That was after, after. That was after. [00:57:17][6.5]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:57:18] So what drew you to study law? [00:57:20][1.9]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:57:21] I enjoyed working for Department of Justice, and the law. I Love researching and listening to everything, you know, what the attorneys was doing and this and that. I think the breakup of the Bell Telephone [Company], we worked on all that case, you know, to, yeah. We were working on it, I said, "you know, I like this." I wanted to be more intelligent and to understand what the lawyers was doing a little bit. So I said I'm a go to take paralegal studies. But I wanted to increase and go to really be a full time paralegal. But I guess that I had a time trying to find a job just doing specifically the paralegal work. So, I was mostly between the secretary, administrator and paralegal. [00:58:11][50.6]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:58:12] Yeah. So, it's interesting that you worked in the federal government because your daughter has just completed her dissertation about segregation and or discriminatory policies within the federal government. [00:58:25][12.7]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:58:25] Oh, yeah. [00:58:26][0.2]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:58:26] And I was curious, did you ever experience anything like that? [00:58:28][2.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:58:29] Oh my goodness, yes. [00:58:30][1.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [00:58:31] Would you mind talking about that? [00:58:32][1.5]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [00:58:32] Oh, yeah. Ok, now in the government, let's see. You got to remember, you're having, even if they're a lawyer, you got all people from different backgrounds. And a lot of people they want maybe someone like, you know, maybe if I'm Black, I'm only supposed to be able to do a certain thing. Maybe just type. [They] didn't think I was able to do anything else but that. And then you'll get the little young white individual come in and they will tell you what to do. But yet you been there and you have to really tell them what to do because they don't know the routine or how to go about it. But like when I was working and by me getting a little, not all people know, benefits because of the death of my husband. They would say, 'well, she make this certain amount already.'



And I would be, like, working at a grade, let's say a small grade seven, but I still would get the little benefits. But that still wasn't enough for me to care for a daughter and do, you know. But far as they concerned, I have enough. When I found out even if I would save it in my thrift savings account, I've heard the lady that was my boss say, "well, she has certain amount of money in her thrift saving," I ain't supposed to have that. They made it so I'm only supposed to have a certain amount. But they knew it takes a lot of money to survive. But I would go on so many interviews and still not get a job. I was blessed to have what I had, but it was very difficult to try to move up because they would look, because you have to put down the 'do you receive any other benefits?' And even if it was \$500 more they still say, 'well, you know, she getting this or she getting that,' and they didn't judge me fit. And one man I overheard him say, "well she's a good person right here. We don't want to lose her." So they monitor who, it would be like buying me back in slavery time, where you go and where you stay. But they will always make sure the other person...I remember one case, a young man was, I applied for the same job, was eligible, but they gave it to this young man because they say I was making as much as I was supposed to make. But that young man, they hired him, but he didn't stay on the job two months. So, that that's just the way it goes today, you know. My first job, even with the Interior Department, at first they won't give me a desk and I said, 'now how in the world am I going to work if they don't give me a desk.' Then they finally gave me a desk. It was just always something. And when I was at the Army, I was the only one, I was always having to speak up for rights, for justice at all. One man was very good and he was other military, he would say, 'well, let her speak up,' because I could see things was wrong but at every federal government [agency] has an EEO [Equal Employment Opportunity] office that you could complain to. Everyone has their own because you had to file your complaint. But I never filed a complaint. I just would speak up, but try to tell them what was what. But you didn't get nowhere. Sometimes I moved up, but that's the way it was. But some of the people were nice. They did what they could, but it's just that if you in a group, I done found out if you got a group of people sitting around here, well they all work together. If they all white, you know, they don't want you because you're not gonna fit in with them. And me, growing up I was a loner. That's why, you see, I'm so quiet. I was always to myself because I had so much to do. I didn't hang out. Like you would say, 'go to a party or let's have a good time.' I didn't have time for that. I had to think about how I am going to pay my bill, how I'm going to survive, how I will take care of my daughter. I had gone through so much. I just say I had a lot to do then. My parents were sick, I had to look after them. And all of my family members, sister, brother, my father, mother I had to bury. I had to take care of all of that. So, I didn't have time to have, like, a good time all the time. It was if it wasn't dealing with the church and the activities, I wasn't a hang out person. So. [01:03:54][321.7]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:03:55] So you clearly, you know, have been someone who has been unafraid to, like, speak up if you've seen injustices throughout your life. And you mentioned to me previously that you saw Dr. King speak at the national mall. [01:04:08][12.6]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:04:08] Oh, that was my girlfriend and I. We decided at the last minute on that day, April, I mean, August 28th, 1963. We decided at the last minute. The bus was there, AB&W bus, and we said, "we're going to go," because the people were afraid. Because they didn't know, they thought it was going to be a riot. So we got on the bus, and I'm going to try to go and get a copy of what that lady wrote, so a reporter from the Alexandria Gazette was on the bus with us and asking us questions. Everyone was so nervous. If you dropped a safety pin, you would have heard the pin because we were so nervous. We said, 'oh Lord, is it going to be a riot? What's going to happen?' You

don't know. People were afraid. We only took one bus. But when we got there, it was so many people. I was sitting. You could hear, the speech at all because they had, you know, the speakers, but it was just like a big picnic. Everybody was nice. No riots, no nothing. Everybody was there because we was praying for a big change. We thought that right then and day after that speech and that gathering everything was changed; no more segregation, no more nothing. But we didn't realize you got to still fight. Yeah. But it was just a blessing that we all went and it turned out so well, I'll never forget it. And my girlfriend, she's a in Maryland now, but she has a little, what you call it, dementia, yeah. But she and I got on that bus and came back. No problems whatsoever. [01:05:57][108.8]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:05:59] That's fabulous. [01:05:59][0.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:06:00] And I tells my grandchildren, all so that they will understand. And we're still fighting. And not that you want to be better than people, you just want to, and we bless them. We done come a long way because you can go into restaurants, you can go into schools, some schools, that's changed. And now I remember going to a museum, and a man wanted to know why was I going to the museum? You know, a portrait, a gallery of art. I enjoy pictures and beauty just like everybody else, but I think people put a limit, and we got people that do beautiful things off of races. I wish I had some of their skills and what have you, artists. And like, I had a new deck, people gave me a deck from the Rebuilding Together. I applied for it, well, they sent me information, 'did I need anything done?' I said, "yeah," I needed a new deck, and all those people, if they was Hispanics, I don't know. But you know, they were from different backgrounds. And I said, 'boy, I wish I had their skill.' And they did a beautiful job. Brand new deck in two days. [01:07:12][71.4]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:07:13] Two days? Oh, wow. [01:07:14][1.4]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:07:15] Yeah, two days. And those men were, you know, Hispanic, you know, immigrants. They may not have been, but anyway, they were just as nice as they could be. And I say, 'boy, if I could do that,' everything's beautiful, a beautiful deck. And that's why I say don't look down on people. If I had their skills, boy, I would be able to do lots of things. Yeah. [01:07:38][23.8]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:07:41] Yeah. I'm quite envious of people that can build as well. [01:07:42][1.5]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:07:43] Yeah. Yeah. They do beautiful work. [01:07:45][2.2]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:07:45] Absolutely. You also mentioned to me previously that you were on the Alexandria Human Rights Commission. [01:07:51][5.6]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:07:51] Yeah, and I got on that because I said, 'I want to do something for the city.' And they would send notices through the mail, I don't know if they do that anymore or not. And I say, 'well, I'm going to try for human rights because I want things to change.' And I put my name down, applied, and the city mayor and city council voted for me, you know. I just put down whatever question, whatever they asked, and I got selected to serve on a Human Rights Commission. [01:08:25][33.9]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:08:26] That's fabulous. [01:08:26][0.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:08:26] Yeah. And I served with the late Reverend Beatley, he was the pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church. And he and I brought to the attention to the other members that, they didn't have Black people on the fire department. So they brought, that we put it in the notice so that the Human Rights Commission could bring it to the attention of the mayor and city council. And don't you know, they brought that to their attention and then they made sure that they started getting applications from Black people to serve on the fire department. [01:09:10][43.9]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:09:11] That's fantastic. [01:09:11][0.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:09:11] Uh-huh. So we did that, we do remember that. And I miss him [Reverend Beatley] because his wife used to come and sit with us while we would try to, you know, make our little resolutions known and what have you. Yeah. [01:09:26][14.8]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:09:28] Absolutely. So, throughout our conversation today you've mentioned, the Zion Baptist Church a lot, as well as Roberts Memorial and Ebenezer Baptist Church. So I was curious about some of your favorite memories from going to church? [01:09:43][15.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:09:44] Oh, gee, that was, like, let's say New Year's Eve: everybody was in some church, you know, it's not like it is now. And it was safe there, the churches would be packed. Like, I'll tell you from my church, Zion Baptist Church, and the people would, it was like a one big family. All the concerns that we had in the community was brought to the attention of the people in the church, any problems we had. And it kept the church, the people in the community together, you know, doing the right thing, being Christlike. But it was like a family, a big family, because during those days you really didn't have many places to go. Not that we didn't want to go to church, but the church was the center place for the Black community. That was one place we knew we could all go socialize, get together. And one trip we planned was Disney World, you know, Disney Land. Yeah, that was when my daughter was young. And we planned it, the Sunday school did that, planned a trip there into Florida. And we had the whole car to ourself, that group. But I mean, that was where you got together with other people that looked like you to go places together. So the church played a big role in that. And singing and visiting other communities. Yeah. [01:11:26][102.5]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:11:27] Was that part of a choir ensemble? [01:11:28][1.5]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:11:29] No, the choral ensemble--I should have brought, I forgot that-- that was down there too. That started out with the one of our pastor, Reverend Box, his son was the director of the choral ensemble. Yeah, and they were known throughout the community. [01:11:46][17.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:11:49] Were you a member? Did you sing? [01:11:50][1.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:11:51] Yeah. I sang back in those days. Yeah. [01:11:53][2.4]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:11:54] So all the trips then were with the... [01:11:55][1.4]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:11:57] Was with the members of the church or if a certain organization of the church like the Sunday school or the choral ensemble would say, 'let's plan a trip.' And most of the trips were planned to socialize and be together, but also to make a little profit. For the church, it was all for the church. And that's how we would make some of our money, because people from other churches would say, 'oh, we'll journey with you.' And let's say the trip was \$25 and we would charge \$10 more and at \$10 would go, you know, towards the church. Yeah. [01:12:36][39.3]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:12:37] Absolutely. That's fabulous. So where else did you go besides, you mentioned Disney World? [01:12:41][3.5]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:12:41] Ok, let me see, where else did we go? Oh, we even went to Atlantic City. [01:12:45][3.3]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:12:46] Ok. [01:12:46][0.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:12:47] We went to Atlantic City. We would go to Atlantic City and we went to, believe it or not, to New York. We went to, what is that, Thousand Islands [Ontario, Canada] I think that's New York, is that New York? We went to Canada, we would go to Canada. We went to Canada, Thousand Islands because the boat would take us and all these little islands on the, I don't know if you ever, well, you may not had gone. I think that was New York or Canada, all these little different islands with houses on them, we visited that, called the Thousand Islands. I remember that,

I think that was a Canada trip. We went to Niagara Falls, and lets see, some of the other places we would go. We went to Skyline Drive, Luray Caverns, and we would go places like that. Some of it was educational and some was just a pleasant, you know, just a fun trip just to get out of the area and go take the children, you know, the other people and just have some fun. [01:13:53][65.8]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:13:54] Sounds like a lot of fun. [01:13:54][0.5]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:13:55] Yeah, but we did go to those places, New York. Oh, we would even go to New York, yeah, New York to see some of the plays. [01:14:01][6.8]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:14:03] On Broadway? [01:14:03][0.2]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:14:03] Yeah, on Broadway. Yeah, we went to Broadway, too. I'm trying to think of some of the plays, some of the Broadway plays we went to see. I know we went to see the, I'm trying to think what Broadway play did the church go to see. I can't remember right now, but we did go to New York for various things. But we were very, we had good people and they were always going someplace, you know. Yeah. Coney Island. I'm trying to think. [01:14:33][30.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:14:34] You went to Coney Island? [01:14:35][0.4]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:14:36] Yeah, I'm trying to think. No, I'm trying to think where down south did we go. But I said Luray Caverns didn't I, yeah. The Skyline Drive and all in that area. Williamsburg and all like that. Like during the fall we would go to look at the change in the colors of the trees and stuff like that. Yeah. [01:15:00][23.9]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:15:00] Absolutely. Did the choir ensemble exist when you were a child or was that a recent thing? [01:15:06][5.2]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:15:06] Yeah. Because after Reverend Box, his, oh that choral ensemble. I forgot how old it is. It was about 75 years old. I got to look at some of the program. So yeah, when I was growing up that that choir existed, I wasn't one of the original, but some of the original members, that choir existed. That was a choir of the church. Because when Reverend Box was there, I forgot what years his son was the director of the choral ensemble. So it's been there many years. And so I grew up as a teen being a part of that group. Yeah. [01:15:52][46.6]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:15:54] Absolutely. Has Zion or, I guess we'll stick with Zion, has the building changed it all since you were a kid? [01:16:02][8.3]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:16:04] No. The building is still the same one. Still the same. They need to do some upkeep into it now. The front of it is still to same. But the glass, you know, a neighbor that lived next door, they wanted some of our land or some of the land they said was theirs. But whatever, they gave us money and we were able to get stained glass, church stained glass for the church. And inside it used to be, they have a choir box, so they develop a choir box and a new pulpit and all like that inside the church. Yeah, but outside is just about to same, we have the yard. And because it's no members down there now. What happened was we got the wrong people in there as leadership. And if you don't have enough money coming in its hard to get a good pastor. And it's a house that the church, a lady that lost her home to the city, left her house to the church. So that's where they getting the income. But I have not been there because we have a different type of leadership down there now, and all the people have either passed or left. Leadership is very important. If you don't have that right person in there, that's sad. So the church has just gone now. It's not like when we had good leadership, when I grew up as a child. I loved that church, and still do. I haven't really joined another church. I visit. I got baptized in that church and married in that church. Yeah. And the neighborhood, it used to be Black families, a few there. But it's weird, like, really the only Black organization in that block. [01:18:16][132.8]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:18:18] Really? [01:18:18][0.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:18:18] It's no other Black. It used to be a couple of Black, or three Black families that lived on the same side where the church is, but its no longer. And the houses look different, you know, now, but it's no longer like that. But when we would have programs, it was a couple people that were very nice. They would come and visit. And if we had anything going on, had any refreshments left, we would go give it. It was two sisters and we would go, we would give them refreshments and stuff. And if we needed a key we would leave the key with the neighbor, the white neighbor in there, and if somebody need to get in the church and didn't have a key, would go to their house and get the key. It was very nice. We didn't have problems with the community except for if there was a program, something special going on, then you had to get a special permit so that people would know that something that's going on in a church and we need to have this parking space. [01:19:19][60.7]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:19:19] Yeah. Absolutely. [01:19:20][0.3]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:19:20] Yeah, that's the main thing in Alexandra, it's parking. Yeah. [01:19:25][4.9]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:19:25] Yeah, yeah. It's pretty bad. [01:19:28][3.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:19:29] Yeah. [01:19:29][0.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:19:31] So, do you remember any... Well, I guess this is a better way to say it, how do Baptists, especially the Zion Baptist Church, how would funerals go in the church? [01:19:44][13.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:19:44] Oh, ok. The funerals. Let's see. First, mainly if the people wish, they don't do it now, they used to have a wake. Like they would have about an hour or two people could come and visit a family. Then they will have the open casket. You could come and visit with the family. Then the day of the funeral, you will have the services with, the singing and, you know, the regular reading of the Bible, the New and Old Testament. And the special remarks like that. And then go to the burial ground if it's convenient. And then they would come back and have refreshments for the family. Like if they have family or people visiting, so the family wouldn't have to worry about it, then people in the church will prepare a meal, you know, something to eat for the family and those that attend. Uh-huh. [01:20:51][67.2]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:20:56] Do you remember or can you recall where a lot of the people from Zion were buried? [01:21:03][6.4]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:21:04] Most of them was buried, I don't know about Douglass, but most of it was buried at, you know, what is that, Bethel? [01:21:11][7.2]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:21:14] Yes. [01:21:14][0.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:21:14] Yes. Bethel and Coleman. [01:21:16][1.3]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:21:17] Ok. [01:21:17][0.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:21:18] Many of our members, if you go down there to Coleman and you'll see all the tombstones, I could see all of my members that I grew up with in the Berg at Coleman. Then some of them, right, that lived on Pitt St, right there at Bethel. The only person I can really remember is my great uncle who I told you [unintelligible] in Douglas. But it was Douglass, either Bethel or Coleman. They were the three cemeteries for the black people in the City of Alexandria. [01:21:55][36.3]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:21:58] So you mentioned to me previously, last time we had a talk, that on Memorial Day you would take your daughter down to the National Cemetery. [01:22:11][12.4]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:22:13] Oh, Arlington. [01:22:13][0.4]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:22:14] Yeah, Arlington. [01:22:14][0.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:22:14] Oh, yeah. That's where my husband is buried. [01:22:17][2.6]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:22:18] So could you describe why that tradition was important to you? [01:22:23][5.8]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:22:24] Yeah. Because, my husband was very special to me, and I had my little son too. And I wanted to make sure that anything happens she would know, although she didn't know her father, that this what happened and where he's buried. And that's extremely important to me, that we remember him because, my daughter is named Darnella. Then when she had her son, she named him Darnell. And I was trying to keep all of them, his memory and my son's memory in our family. And it's very traditional because we want to show love and that we would never forget because, although his death was so hard, the things that we have accomplished is because of him. [01:23:17][52.9]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:23:18] Yeah, absolutely. [01:23:19][1.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:23:20] Because of him. And when she was born, I had no money. When he passed, I had no money, no place to stay. So the army was a blessing to me as far as where was I 'gon go to take care of her, to grieve and give birth. So the army and the military has always been a special part for us, because we were grateful for that. Not that we lost him, but I always have so much to say I'm thankful for him, and he loved the army and I don't want him to ever forget that I have forgotten. Because it happened so quick, I would never forget, he was so special. So, yeah, I used to take her to her little play activities, but I would go to the cemetery and visit, then go back and pick her up, yeah. But I had to stop, I was going so much. But on memorial day during that time we'd always g., I'd take the whole, we used to take the whole family, the grandchildren, the children, everybody, my cousins and all of us and my aunt, she's passed now. But we all would go to the cemetery, they all would go with me. [01:24:39][79.1]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:24:45] That's fantastic. So clearly you place a lot of importance on on remembering your late husband. [01:24:51][5.7]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:24:52] Yeah. [01:24:52][0.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:24:52] It's very special to you. So with the situation at Douglass being what it is, with so many graves being illegible or destroyed and things like that, it's an absolute travesty that, you know, these people can't be remembered in a way that they should. So, I'm curious, when your daughter told you that she was part of a group trying to do something about the state of Douglass and make sure that the people interred there are remembered correctly. What was your reaction to that? [01:25:25][33.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:25:26] Oh, that's a good idea because they shouldn't be, these are people who's buried in Douglass Cemetery that was part of this community, the Alexandria City community. And they should not be forgotten. They contributed a lot to this community. But I just don't know all of them. But it's a lot of people because before Bethel or Coleman, that's where they went. But I was a child growing up so I don't recall all of them who are buried there. But they should be very much respected. [01:26:01][35.5]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:26:02] Absolutely. [01:26:02][0.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:26:03] Yeah. Oh, by all means. Because if they buried there they lived in this city and they were the backbone of this city. You never know, they may have been a Shoeman, a

carpenter or whatever. They did a job, a good job in this city. And I understand that, the city must have given them that land, I think. That...I'm not sure. [01:26:33][30.2]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:26:34] There's a dispute over who actually owns the land. [01:26:37][2.6]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:26:37] Oh, see, I don't know, but I know all those people. And if they were Black, they struggled here in Alexandria, and they should be remembered, believe me. And I wish it was so. But you know why all the people volunteer and they give their time and moneys? You have people at Douglass who are poor, who didn't have the money. It's like me, to really do justice and really keep that community up. It used to flood, but I think the other gentleman, I can't recall his name, got the city to work on that because they were, you know, really letting it go down. That's because it's probably no people paying attention, or either paying attention but don't have the money or know how to go about to correct it. But I know I can't call his name, but he's been really working hard. [01:27:37][59.2]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:27:37] Is it Mr. Mike? Mr. Mike Johnson? [01:27:39][1.7]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:27:40] Yeah, it's a Mr Mike, I think so, Mr. Mike. Because he even has the sign up there now. Yeah, because he really brought that to attention. And then I heard somebody that say that the people that live out there by that development in those apartments or kinds of housing say that they go out and try to work and do things. But I haven't seen them because I'm not down that way. But I'ma have to work too. But I see a lot of people going down that way. And I've been sitting there in a car while my son is out to go visit his mother, and they bring their dogs down there, they used to do that, you know. I don't know if they still doing that or not. But I think if we, see the main thing I done found out is you have to have money, and that's the root, it's the root of all evil, but you need it, you know, to really help out. And most of the people just don't have the money. And most of those people, I guess the relatives have long gone too, who maybe have relatives there. But it is a good idea and extremely beautiful to keep up that. That's history of Alexandria. [01:28:55][74.7]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:28:56] Absolutely. [01:28:56][0.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:28:57] It's extremely history of Alexandria. And I only know one person that's my great uncle who worked as a, you know, a barber, to cut the hair, that's buried there. And I'ma have to try to see if I can find his tombstone. Because my aunt, she wasn't the type to go visit cemeteries. You have some people say after, you know, they don't. And I was a teen then, so I'd never kept up with it. So that was on me. [01:29:32][34.5]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:29:33] When was the last time your daughter and son-in-law took you to see Douglass? [01:29:39][6.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:29:40] Oh, we were at that last program. [01:29:42][1.9]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:29:43] Ok. [01:29:43][0.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:29:44] The last program there, yeah. [01:29:45][1.3]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:29:45] On Juneteenth? [01:29:46][0.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:29:46] Yeah. Juneteenth. Yeah, I was there. [01:29:49][2.4]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:29:50] Can you describe what Douglass looked like when you were there last? [01:29:53][2.9]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:29:54] Oh, it looked a whole lot better because they have been working on it. [01:29:57][3.5]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:29:57] Fabulous. [01:29:57][0.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:29:58] Yeah, it looked a whole lot better, but the tombstone's was sinking. I remember sitting in the car and I saw a lady come up with another lady, and she was older, like, she

was still trying to find out where whoever she was looking for. It looked like she was having a hard time, cause, like, the tombstones is down and the markers, you don't know, you know. But, no, it looked a whole lot better. [01:30:23][25.6]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:30:24] That's terrific. [01:30:24][0.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:30:25] Yeah, it looked a whole lot better because the people in the community, you know, Mr. Mike and them have been working and trying to take care of it. But you don't have, like I was telling my daughter, the people who used to live in Alexandria and who used to work in the community and do are no longer here. And that makes a difference. If you have new people that come in, they don't know about the community or anything. So it's got to be the people who got to pass it on, and make people aware of it. Just like what you doing now. But if you new coming into the community, you have no idea. But, it looked a whole lot better. But we still had things to do. [01:31:15][49.9]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:31:15] Yeah, absolutely. [01:31:16][0.5]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:31:16] Yeah. But maybe we can get a group together and clean and do things like that. And I know Memorial Day, they always down there. But Juneteenth was the last time, that was, you know, the last year. Yeah, I was there and they had a nice ceremony and in the community. It looked better. [01:31:36][20.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:31:37] That's terrific. Do you remember if...you said that Douglass used to flood? [01:31:42][5.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:31:43] Yeah, yeah. [01:31:44][0.5]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:31:44] Do you remember that from your childhood or while you were living in Alexandria, when it would flood? [01:31:48][4.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:31:49] Oh gee, I then when I lived there. Let's see, I moved in the area in '78. I guess, my goodness, back in the 80s or 90s it used to flood. [01:32:02][12.6]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:32:02] You remember it flooding? [01:32:03][0.8]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:32:03] Yeah. [01:32:03][0.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:32:08] Interesting. Do you remember anybody trying to do anything about it back then? [01:32:11][2.4]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:32:11] No, I don't know anybody because...But the developers came there and built, I was shocked. [01:32:19][8.1]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:32:21] Do you remember when that happened? [01:32:22][1.3]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:32:23] Let me see, because I had, oh gosh, I moved in '78. Let me see, after that first development that was, I can't remember it there now. Oh, gosh, let me see, what is this, 2000...I guess back in the 90s. [01:32:40][16.5]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:32:41] The 90s. [01:32:41][0.1]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:32:43] And I was shocked that they were built so close to the cemetery but they did. And I don't know if they gave any money towards, you know, helping to keep up the cemetery or not. Because I wasn't closely related to that. And the other man, oh what's his name. Oh, I done forgot his name. But anyway, I can't recall his name. But anyway, he worked closely with Coleman Cemetery. Yeah, and I don't know. And I never knew anyone who worked with Douglass, except for Juneteenth when my daughter was telling me all what was going on. [01:33:24][41.2]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:33:26] Is it Mr. Richard Williams? [01:33:27][1.6]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:33:28] That's it. Yeah. I couldn't think of his name. Yeah. And I don't know if he would know anything about it, but he worked closely with Coleman. [01:33:35][7.4]



**Kerry James Reed:** [01:33:36] Yeah, yeah, I interviewed him recently and he doesn't remember the developments. It's a crying shame what has happened to the cemetery. Yeah. [01:33:49][12.6]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:33:50] And it's so many people there that I wish I, I only know one person, can you believe that? I don't know of any of the other people. Even if I could go down and read some of their names on the stone, and I could look it up. But even at the church, I'd never heard anyone mention anyone's name that was buried there. So, it would be quite interesting to see. I know our church was established in 1864, and I bet some of the people that passed may have been buried there. I would like to go back and see some of the names I have in my little booklet to see where they were buried. I could check that out. You know, I could make, when I'm going through papers, I could check that out. [01:34:48][58.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:34:49] Oh, that'd be fabulous. I think anything would help. [01:34:51][1.8]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:34:51] Yeah, I would let you know, like some of the first people who was the first trustees, the first deacons. And just to see where were they buried. I know it's a Dixon man, Herbert Dixon, I'd like to know where he was buried. If he was buried at the Douglass Cemetery because we didn't have Bethel 'til lately. So a lot of people may have been buried right in that Douglass cemetery. And I'll have to check some of the names and just see, I don't know if I could go on the internet and find out, I could see, but I don't know. These was way back. And another lady, she's deceased now, Ms. Elsie Thomas, her brother was the one that had the sit-in at the Queen St library. Yeah, I would wonder, but he's deceased now. But see, all those people are deceased. I'm just trying to think. What I'm going to do, I'll get some of those names and just go to the library and see if I can pull up any information on some of the early members of the church. Because they were all members and they all lived in Alexandria, from what I can see, who were the first people to join. And that may give you a clue of who, I can check on that. Get their names. Who was the first deacon, the first trustee, and then take those names and look them up and see where they were buried. Because Coleman was lately, they weren't Buried in Coleman. A lot of those people were buried in Douglass. And I remember one, Georgianna Byrd. Do you have anybody by the name of Georgianna Byrd? [01:36:53][122.1]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:36:54] We are working on biographies of the deceased at the moment. So we're going through the records like you're doing, and we're trying to figure out who's buried there. I haven't had the chance to look through all of them, though I'm sure if you ask your daughter to get in touch with Mr. Mike, he might be able to provide you with some of those biographies. [01:37:15][20.6]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:37:16] Oh, ok. And I'm gonna see if you have any names there. I'll give her a list of the names. Who were our first church members, and when they passed, where were they buried. Because, remember now, we didn't have those other cemeteries. And they may be buried right there at the Douglass Cemetery. [01:37:36][20.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:37:38] I'd say it's highly likely. Yeah. [01:37:40][1.7]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:37:41] I'm just thinking, all our people. And if my great uncle was buried there, then we got some more folks that's buried there at that cemetery. I just can't think of anyone else right now. [01:37:56][14.6]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:37:58] That's fine. That's why we're doing all the research. [01:37:59][1.2]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:38:00] Yeah. In fact, I'ma get my book and I get the names and then I'll compare, I'll tell my daughter to compare it with what Mr. Mike has. If he have a record of these people. Oh, that would be great though. I sure would like to do something to bring some life back to

that cemetery. And when I see anybody there at the cemetery visiting, I'm gonna ask him who they are looking for. And take that, get their names. Like I missed out on a lady who was there looking like she was in distress because whoever she was looking for she couldn't find. And I wish I had thought that, get out and ask her who would she looking for and get their name. So I have to pay attention to that too. [01:38:46][46.4]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:38:47] Yeah. We all should pay more attention to it. [01:38:49][2.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:38:50] Yeah. [01:38:50][0.0]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:38:51] Well Mrs. McGuire, we've been speaking now for about an hour and 40 minutes. [01:38:54][3.0]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:38:54] Oh, I'm sorry. [01:38:55][0.5]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:38:55] Oh no. No, not at all. It's been an absolute pleasure. I've enjoyed our conversation very much. [01:39:00][4.4]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:39:00] Well, I am going to give you those names. [01:39:02][1.9]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:39:02] Please do. But before we leave for the day, I do have some closing questions for you, if you don't mind. So, the first question I have for you is, what are your hopes for black cemeteries in Alexandria moving forward? So, Bethel, Coleman, Douglass, what do you hope happens to these cemeteries in the future? [01:39:21][18.7]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:39:21] Oh, gee, I hope they get the respect and honor that they deserve and get to be noticed that these people were members of this community. And they contributed to this city of Alexandria because Alexandria is changing. Believe me, they livin' on the backs of these people who are buried here. Each person that comes along makes a contribution, and they should not be forgotten. Whatever what little small deed may be, you may consider, but it's important. Everybody, everyone contributes to the city and have made a contribution regardless. And the Black cemeteries should be kept up to date with their history, yeah. A lot of our cemeteries I notice are better, lookin' better. That's because the people had more money. They got to remember that the income level of the Black community, many of them did not have the income to really do what they can. But we bring it to the attention of members of the community. Then we could all make a donation and try to bring the cemeteries to the beauty that they deserve. [01:40:51][90.2]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:40:52] Absolutely. And along that same vein, how would you like to see the city treat Black history in Alexandria moving forward? [01:41:02][9.4]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:41:03] Oh, I hope the city remembers that this is a community that started out with the Black history, even when they was escaping slavery. They lived along the river, they attended the churches, they lived a decent life. Kind. When they were able to vote, they voted. So they have contribute to education, music, the arts, you name it. The Black history should be remembered. And from that history you should learn something to improve. Anything that was negative should not continue. What we should do is bring it up to a positive. So that everybody can say, 'oh, I live in a diverse city where everyone is appreciated.' That should be the legacy of Alexandria. [01:42:14][71.7]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:42:16] Absolutely. That's beautiful. And then lastly, if you could hold on to one memory forever, what would it be? [01:42:23][7.5]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:42:26] About the City of Alexandria? [01:42:26][0.5]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:42:27] About anything you would like. Just one memory that you find extremely special. What would it be? [01:42:32][4.9]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:42:32] Oh, gee. One memory, I would say I like living in the city of Alexandria, because I have so many fond memories of a community that was like a family. People

were kind, although there was some negative, but on the whole it was pleasant. There was the church. That was a big part of my community and me as a person. And I've always be grateful for the peacefulness of Alexandria. It was more peaceful, and the people were kind and they helped one another. That's what I remember about living here and being a part of Alexandria. I think, I think. But anyways, that's what I think. Although it was segregation, but we were able to survive. [01:43:39][67.1]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:43:40] Of course. Well, thank you so much for speaking with me today Mrs. McGuire, it was an absolute blessing. [01:43:46][5.2]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:43:46] Though I bet I bored you to death. [01:43:48][1.7]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:43:49] [laughs] Not even close. Thank you so much. [01:43:51][1.3]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:43:51] Good bye. But I hope you keep the cemeteries much better. [01:43:56][4.7]

**Kerry James Reed:** [01:43:57] I think we will. Thank you so much. [01:43:58][1.2]

**Beatrice McGuire:** [01:43:58] Ok. [01:43:58][0.0]

[5944.7]