

Moorestown Historical Society
Oral History – West End Community Center
Kathryn Hall and Pamela Hall-King in conversation with Richard Grey
Recorded on June 25, 2024
Transcribed and edited by Shannon Reilly, January 2025

Transcription Methodology

Because one can't completely avoid the "observer effect" in translation nor transcription, my intention is to be true to the speaker's words while acknowledging that I will, in small ways, interpret the text. These transcripts assume that the reader will use them in combination with the recorded interview.

Here are a few guiding principles that I have applied to this transcription:

- Punctuation in the text reflects the inflection in a speaker's voice as I interpreted it.
- Instances in which the inflection is unclear to me, the text defaults to grammatical correctness.

Transcript

00:00:00 **Richard Gray:** Let's see if it does here...? OKAY. Yeah. There it is, there we go.

There you go. Got it.

00:00:08 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Good to go?

00:00:09 **Richard Gray:** I am good to go. [Laughter] So we're all dealing with our technology, you know. I definitely wasn't a computer science major, that's for sure. How's everybody doing? How you feeling, Pammy?

00:00:23 **Pamela Hall-King:** I'm doing pretty good. Thanks.

00:00:24 **Richard Gray:** Good, good, good. I'm glad. I'm glad you're feeling better. So, I, so just as a, just a way of background, this is really very informal.

00:00:34 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Okay.

00:00:36 **Richard Gray:** It's really, I want it to be more of a conversation and I may have a few conversations with you, so don't feel like we're going to get to everything here today.

00:00:43 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Uh-huh.

00:00:43 **Richard Gray:** You're my second one. My first, my test was with my Uncle Pete. And I had to catch him early because my Uncle Pete goes to, goes to bed at 4:00. [Laughter] He's in his pajamas by, by 3:30 in the afternoon, so.

00:00:55 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** What time does he get up? Oh my goodness!

00:00:57 **Richard Gray:** He gets up... This is a funny thing with Uncle Pete. He gets up at 5:33 in the morning. He said "Not 5:34; not 5:32."

00:01:05 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** 5:33.

00:01:06 **Richard Gray:** 5:33 every morning, that's him.

00:01:09 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Right.

00:01:11 **Richard Gray:** So he... But then I just... So he, he's very regimented so I had to fit myself into him. And then I just set one up for a, I was talking to Perry Wright. I'm setting one up with Mr. Wright. It's good to be able to get them. And so I have a few of them on queue. So, all this really is is that, you know, we've talked about the West End Center.

00:01:34 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yes.

00:01:34 **Richard Gray:** And the idea is for us just to capture stories. Not so much stories that we want people to tell us but... And as you can see in the questions, part of it is I want to get a sense from you about if you're describing this to, say you're trying to, describing this to Jordan someone who has no idea what the West End Center is, how would you describe the... what stories would you tell that would give him a sense of what that, what the place meant to you? What it meant to the community, and so this is all we're really looking for. So, I'm starting off with just start talking about what's your, what's your most memorable experiences with the West End?

00:02:03 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Okay. Actually, Richard when, as a upper teenager I, I volunteered at the Center and I would answer, I would answer the phone for Mr. Adams. And that had to be that had to be in 1950, between '52 and '54. That's when I...

00:02:36 **Richard Gray:** How did that come about? How did that...? How did you come about getting that position?

00:02:41 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** I don't know, actually. I would just go to the Center and then, you know, he didn't have anybody answering the phone. And I, you know, I started doing that. And so I would go a few hours to answer the phone. But actually, my most memorable time there was getting married there. I was one of the many people that got married at the West End Center and it was like, well, the Center was like a central place for, for the community anyway.

00:03:03 **Richard Gray:** That's right.

00:03:12 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** And, you know, I thought about it, and it was a place for all ages because the young people could come there and they had crafts and, you know, recreation for the kids, older people, clubs met their meetings and that sort of thing. And then a lot of times, people would say, "Where you going?" "I'm just going over to the Center," and they just go there to socialize. There wouldn't be anything actually planned, but you just go there and it was and it was that kind of a, that kind of place. And you know, and I think about when my brother came there and Billy came, Billy Brooks came there in '61 and he was the assistant to Mr. Adams and he was...

00:03:57 **Richard Gray:** So, so that's when I was trying to figure out. So, he came in '61 as the assistant to Mr. Adams?

00:04:02 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** And he stayed until, he was there until it closed. And, and he was really an asset because of course he was, he was certainly a full adult and all that, but he was

closer to the children, to the young people, like getting out of high schools. And so, he was able to work with them, get them grants and to write letters of recommendation for college and that kind of thing. And I, I just think about that and it's so for the young people now... I mean because that was the Center, as you know, for Black people. We did everything there and for the young people now they, they need to know that. We, when we weren't wanted at the Community House, we had a place to go where they'd get emotional support and, and just things that they would need. And as I say, educational information.

00:05:00 **Richard Gray:** For the, as you said Mr. Adams... Were there other adults? Because part of it is, you know, capturing you and, and Uncle Pete. And when the, when the West End started, you all were children at the time when you were started. I think Uncle Pete shared that that.

00:05:09 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Uh. Yeah, we were young.

00:05:16 **Richard Gray:** In football, in '45 where he was, you know, so you know, eight or nine years old, right?

00:05:18 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah, but this was 70 ago or something.

00:05:21 **Richard Gray:** Right. So, Mr. Adams was an older adult. Can you remember any of the other adults that might have been working with Mr. Adams or was Mr. Adams sort of the core person that you remember?

00:05:30 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** He, he was, as I remember it, he was the core person. I don't remember anybody else until, as I said, until Billy came. And then he was there and that, and by him being at the Center that made him get involved more in the whole Township, which is why that building was named, that gym-rec is named after him, you know, on, on Church St. It's Billy Brooks rec.

00:05:58 **Richard Gray:** Right.

00:05:58 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** But it all started from him being at the West End Center.

00:06:03 **Richard Gray:** Well, for me, for me, he was my Mr. Adams. Like to, for my generation, really, knowing Mr. Adams...

00:06:07 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah, right. 'Cause the kids called him Mr. Billy. Uh-huh.

00:06:12 **Richard Gray:** He was synonymous with, you know, sort of I'm, I have very sort of childlike memories of the West End Center. Most of my experience is with Maple Dawson that's been more that was more of my, my recreation. But it's, it's been interesting just to hear about people having relationships, like you said, as children...

00:06:30 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yes.

00:06:31 **Richard Gray:** ...then teenagers, and then as young adults, and so that there's different kinds of engagements that were there. And so that was your experience, too, that they were all ranges of ages that used the, the Center?

00:06:40 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yes. Yeah, everybody. Yup. And then there was even a daycare there at one time.

00:06:47 **Richard Gray:** Yes, I saw that. I saw an article, I found an article in the paper about a daycare. Did you, did you, did you know anybody who was with that or...?

00:06:53 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** I didn't. I don't mean, I don't remember. Richard, you're testing my memory now and I can't remember. I don't know...

[Laughter]

00:07:01 **Pamela Hall-King:** It's Okay.

00:07:01 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** ...who was there with those kids?

00:07:03 **Richard Gray:** It's Okay.

00:07:03 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** I don't know who had those kids, but...

00:07:06 **Richard Gray:** It's okay. I'll take, I'll, I'll take whatever you could remember.

Whatever you remember, I'll save it.

[Laughter]

00:07:13 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** You talking to an old... Stop laughing so much, Pam.

[Laughter]

00:07:15 **Richard Gray:** [Undecipherable]

00:07:18 **Pamela Hall-King:** No, I feel I feel the same way. I'm thinking I don't really remember much. I just remember going there. You know, you know, I never lived in Moorestown, but people thought I did.

00:07:32 **Richard Gray:** I mean, I'm going to tell you something. I'm going to tell you how many people actually said that, like "I didn't live in Moorestown, but people thought I did," because of their connection to the Center. So, how did you...? Was it with your mom that you ended up getting...

00:07:43 **Pamela Hall-King:** Yes, well, you know, my grandmother lived on Walker Ave.

00:07:45 **Richard Gray:** Right, right, right.

00:07:49 **Pamela Hall-King:** ...so we would cut through. That now, now I believe there's a driveway that you can walk to the back.

00:07:53 **Richard Gray:** Right.

00:07:55 **Pamela Hall-King:** I mean, there's no Center, of course, but my cousin Michael has a house over there, so I think you can just cut through now. But we used to just walk through the little path. And I would just go there for, you know, with my cousins Veronica and Theresa 'cause every weekend I would be in Moorestown with them. And participate in the crafts and whatever

they had going on at the Center, you know, but. That's basically all I remember. I don't know.
When did it close? I don't know what age I was.

00:08:28 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** '68. '68. '68.

00:08:32 **Richard Gray:** And then they tore it down in about '70...

00:08:34 **Pamela Hall-King:** So, I was twelve.

00:08:36 **Richard Gray:** Like '72, '73.

00:08:40 **Richard Gray:** Oh, so that's how... You know, it's funny. I was saying that there were a number of people that my mother said that a lot of people thought my Uncle Glenn had gone to school there because he spent so much time at the Center. They just assumed that he... And one of the things that I wanted to explore with you that came from my Uncle was how, just like you're describing Pam, the Center also was a place where people would come from different areas. They'll come from Palmyra, they'll come from different places, and they would, they would connect. And was that your experience?

00:09:05 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah. That's right. They did. Everything, the Friday night dances and people would come from all over. All the Black people.

00:09:19 **Richard Gray:** And I can't... I haven't heard... Is there any place in other places in, in Palmyra or other places that was comparable to the West End Center where people from Moorestown would go? Or was it pretty much...?

00:09:29 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Well, I can... There was that place in Palmyra. What was it called? Meadowbrook. Meadowbrook. They would go, that people would go there. But that was just more for dancing. But it wasn't like, it wasn't a center like West End.

00:09:49 **Richard Gray:** Right, right. My Uncle, Uncle Pete mentioned that same place...

00:09:54 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Did he?

00:09:54 **Richard Gray:** ...and he said the same thing. Pretty much for dances. It wasn't, it didn't have the sort of the breadth of...

00:09:59 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** No. No.

00:10:02 **Richard Gray:** He also said if you had an event at the West End Center, by definition everybody was invited to come to it.

00:10:08 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** That was what I was going to say that because back in those days... Why do I get this echo? I'm getting an echo. But anyway, those days Moorestown only had about 10,000 people in it. And, and so all Black people knew each, we knew everybody. And if you had something, you had a wedding, everybody was there. You invited every you pretty much invited all Black. But it was the truth. That's the way it was.

00:10:45 **Richard Gray:** Mama describes her going to Perry Wright's second birthday party and she said "It's the biggest birthday party ever saw for a two-year-old in my life." So everybody's going to be there. So, it's, it's one of those things where if you have an event there, it was, it was, it was a community event, even if it was a personal...

00:11:04 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yep, it was definitely the Community Center.

00:11:09 **Richard Gray:** Right. Now you, you sent that picture of the, you going to the library, that picture of the library at the Community House.

00:11:15 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yes.

00:11:18 **Richard Gray:** So people, Black folks did go to the Community House. What would you sort of describe as the difference in how the Community House was and how to Moorestown and how the West End was to, to the, the Black community in Moorestown?

00:11:33 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Well, the Community House, well when I would go... I can't stand this echo!

00:11:39 **Pamela Hall-King:** Well, Mom, you have... Do you have two devices on?

00:11:41 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** But it's in the other...

00:11:43 **Pamela Hall-King:** You need to mute one of them.

00:11:44 **Richard Gray:** I'm gonna, I maybe I can mute one for her. Let me see if I can do that. I think, I, I think I have, I can mute. I've got to remember which one to mute here. She has one of them muted.

00:11:56 **Pamela Hall-King:** Oh, she does?

00:11:56 **Richard Gray:** Yeah. So, 'cause this one is muted, I'm gonna see. Okay.

00:12:05 **Pamela Hall-King:** Oh, now they're both muted.

00:12:06 **Richard Gray:** Yeah. Now, now. So, so, so now they're both muted. Let me unmute. I'm sorry I'm supposed to.... [Undecipherable] Can we unmute here? Excuse me there and it's not giving me the ability to unmute. Here, let me... Okay. So I'm sorry, let me. Unmute. Now that's strange. I have the ability to mute but not to unmute. Let me see here. Why did I do that here? Let me... [Talks to himself.] Let me try to see here. And she. Can you tap the...? There's a. There's a little microphone at the bottom of your thing. If you tap on that, it should. There you go. Let's see if you get the echo now. Go ahead Miss Kay. Still getting it?

00:13:11 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** I can't. I'm trying to turn off. [Echo]

00:13:19 **Richard Gray:** So what are the two? She has two, two things, two devices set up? 'Cause I have two, two Kathryn Halls. What's the other one that has your picture is that...?

00:13:29 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** But I'm trying to find. I'm trying to cut the phone off. Oh. Oh. Okay, I got it.

00:13:39 **Richard Gray:** You know what it? It's probably the sound on the other one, even though it's muted for you speaking, you're speaking, there you go.

00:13:42 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** So good now. I got it. Okay. We're good.

00:13:49 **Richard Gray:** Alright! Yeah, that's better.

00:13:51 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** I turned it... I finally was able to get it to leave the meeting on the other one. Okay. Now, what did you ask me?

00:14:00 **Richard Gray:** See this is when, this is when we both need to go to the notes that I have 'cause then I can go back to the notes and it can tell both of us what we were talking about. Let me see here. We were just talking about... And. See here. Just give me a second. Oh, the difference between your experiences with the Community House and the West End.

00:14:40 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Oh. Right. Well, when would, we'd go to go to the Community House, it would be just for to use the library or, as I say, for story hour. But that was about the only usage we had at the Community House. 'Cause, we certainly couldn't use the pools. 'Cause, as you can see, I was a little girl then, so that was a long time ago. Maybe 80 years ago or something. But, but that was the difference, because at the at the West End Center, everything was available. I mean, whatever the things that they had to be available was available for everybody, but we were limited to what we could do at the Community House. And I, as I say, spent a lot of time in the library 'cause. I was a reader and then of course, go for the story hour. But that was about the extent of it, Richard. We didn't have...

00:15:37 **Richard Gray:** And you're, you're muted, Pam.

00:15:40 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** You're muted, Pam.

00:15:41 **Richard Gray:** I might, I might have done that inadvertently.

00:15:43 **Pamela Hall-King:** Okay. I was, I was just saying I don't know when that changed because I swam there at the Community House as a child.

00:15:50 **Richard Gray:** Right.

00:15:53 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** You did?

00:15:54 **Pamela Hall-King:** With no problems. Yeah.

00:15:56 **Richard Gray:** It changed, there was a period where, because I think our generation sort of, there, there was I was able to swim there. Greg was able to swim. But I think we knew we were the first group to be able to do that. And so I'm gonna try to find out when that actually changed, when it probably was in the, in the early '60s maybe that it might have actually made that shift.

00:16:11 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah.

00:16:19 **Richard Gray:** Because you know the, the interesting thing, and I would really be interested in your thoughts now. I'm gonna work backwards. Because there's a myth, a mythology, about how and why the West End Center closed, right, in '68, and I know you were an adult at that time to be a part of the conversations. And one of the things that seemed to just in our, in our, in our storyline, the West End started, it's almost the history of, of segregation.

00:16:47 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Mm-hmm.

00:16:47 **Richard Gray:** The West End started because Black people couldn't access the community and there was this center that was both underfunded, but at the same time, because it was Black, they left it alone. So, it's a public institution that was much more responsive to a community than most public institutions are. Then, as we got into the '60s and people started to say, segregated things aren't right that the West End Center was viewed in a different light as something not as something that was providing services to the community, but something that, sort of an example of what was being denied to the community because we had to go here and couldn't go to the Community Center. So I'm, I'm kind of curious how you remember that conversation around the West End Center closing.

00:17:31 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** I'm telling you because by then I was not in town because I was living... See, I was married then, by in the '60s and so I wasn't there. So I don't know. Really don't know how it came to, to find, you know, how the conversation went that they would close it down completely. I really don't know. I really don't know, Richard.

00:17:57 **Richard Gray:** Now, how did you...? Mr. Charlie was a part, Mr. Hall, he was a part of the Blue Chips that started there. So, he had a relationship. Did he go to the Center connected to that?

00:18:01 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah. The only here because Billy. Yeah, because Billy and Perry Wright, you know, Mr. Wright, and I think your Uncle Bill Harvey, they were the three main ones who started the Blue Chips. They were the, they were the three and, and I think the Blue Chips, that came out of them going there to shoot pool and play cards and then they that's how the club started, you know, forms and it went from there. And, and at one time, every man in, in Moorestown have somehow belonged to the Blue Chips at one time or another.

00:18:47 **Richard Gray:** So that's a place where... I actually, when we were going through Uncle Bill's stuff that he had in the outhouse. And go place and back, and I found a crate that had about seven or eight albums, photo albums, of all the Blue Chips, right? And you saw from the '60s with the thin ties and everything all the way to the '70s, everybody had the afros and the bright colors and ruffles and everything. And the same of the wives as well. And it was the history of...

00:19:15 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yes. And there's me, me with a big blonde wig on my head. Yes. [Laughter] It was so high! [Laughter]

00:19:25 **Richard Gray:** Do you remember the Blue Chip events and the Blue Chip dances? There were Blue Chip [Undecipherable]...

00:19:33 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Oh, absolutely! I mean that was the highlight every year of everybody was getting you know back then you wore gowns and everybody was saying what what they're going to wear and and they had, because of Billy's connections, he was able to get Lionel Hampton there at one of the dances, and he had Trudy Haynes. You remember the newscaster in Philadelphia? She was a Black newscaster. You had, Joe Black, he went to college with him and he was, Joe Black was a pitcher for the, the Dodgers. And they were all, they would be the guest speakers at these dances. Yeah, it was, it, it was a big deal back in the day going to the Cherry Hill Inn for those dances.

[Laughter]

00:20:21 **Richard Gray:** I saw a couple of programs of that, yeah, that I think he had saved some of the programs with Lionel Hanson.

00:20:25 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yes. Yep, yes. So, so, the Blue Chips were a big, were a very important part of the West End because they provided scholarships and so forth for young people.

00:20:40 **Richard Gray:** Got you. Got you.

00:20:42 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** So, they weren't just a social club.

00:20:44 **Richard Gray:** Right. You know, and that's what the, there was a, it was a typewritten history. It was, it was...

00:20:49 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Mm-hmm.

00:20:51 **Richard Gray:** ...in one of the albums that talked about how it started off as. They're playing, playing like you said pool and pinochle in the basement, and they decided, "Listen, we're sitting here playing around. We gotta, we gotta do something more purposeful than just playing pinochle."

00:20:59 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah.

00:21:04 **Richard Gray:** And that's when they started the idea of the Blue Chips. And they asked Mr. Adams to, if they had permission to redo the basement of the, of the, of the West End Center and raise money for it and sort of talked about and how they were gonna give scholarships to folks. Even some pictures of some folks like Mr. Bryant, who was my seventh-grade teacher getting a scholarship, you know.

00:21:23 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Uh-huh. Lane Bryant. Yup.

00:21:27 **Richard Gray:** Yeah, that's that's. So, one of the things that did come up and this is why the connection with, with Second Baptist, and I saw that Reverend Griggs was one of the advisors for Second Baptist and there seemed to be an interesting relationship between Second Baptist and the West End Center. And a different one that it existed between Bethel and the people in Bethel and West End Center. And did you? Were there any, ever any, any things that the church did that were connected to the Center that you knew of? Or was that before...? I don't know the dates of when, when you know you were connected with different institutions to be able to sort of know.

00:22:05 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** I really can't give you any info on that, really can't.

00:22:09 **Richard Gray:** Okay. Let me ask you a question about just as, like you said, one of the things that came up, I I did a, I did the talk at the Moorestown Library and then one of my friends asked me he's a, he's the director of the Evergreen retirement home.

00:22:22 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Okay.

00:22:27 **Richard Gray:** So asked if we could have it at the retirement home.

00:22:27 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Okay.

00:22:30 **Richard Gray:** So, Dr. Dow was my dentist back when I was a kid. [Undecipherable] at my teeth.

00:22:33 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Okay.

00:22:34 **Richard Gray:** And so there was a part of it where, when my Uncle Pete came in, he was one of, he was like the president of his class his sophomore year. So, he had all little, he had these groupies chasing him.

[Laughter]

00:22:47 **Richard Gray:** All these people. And one of the you know, one of the people that when my Uncle Pete talked there was this disconnect between what white folks in Moorestown sort of knew about the experience in Moorestown and what Black folks did. And he said, “Listen, I don't go to reunions because I didn't really do much. You all went to the dance at the gym. We went to the left and went to the dances Saturday night at the West End Center.”

00:23:12 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** At the Center.

00:23:14 **Richard Gray:** Right. And so we're talking this, you know, part of this effort is to explain, not explain, to really give people an understanding, particularly white folks, an understanding of the experience. Is there some part of what you would say to someone who's white about why the West End Center was important for Black folks that you think they would need to hear, particularly in this moment, like something that white folks didn't know that was important about the West End Center that you think...?

00:23:43 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** We had to have a place where we were welcome first of all. We, we, you know, you knew if you went to these other places they may let you in, but you weren't welcome. Just like when we went to the movies, we had to sit in the back. That, the Criterion was on Main Street. We didn't, they didn't have a balcony I guess we otherwise would have been

in the balcony. But we had to sit on the back two or three rows in that movie house. When I went to, I was in the last graduating class from Number Seven School.

00:24:17 **Richard Gray:** Mm.

00:24:18 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** On Church Street? I don't know if you remember, you know, there was a school. And that, that was the last class. But when we, Number Nine School, it was where the white people who went junior high. We went to eighth grade at Number Seven, but we would get their old books. And they would get the new books. So, it, it.... There was segregation all along the way. It was just not acknowledged, but it was there. And I don't know what to tell you as far as telling other, you know, white people what, how we felt. But I just knew that we felt welcome in our own area because we knew we weren't welcome there.

00:25:05 **Richard Gray:** That's pretty straightforward. I mean, that's and that's consistent with what, what, what people have been saying. There's a whole other story about Number Seven we need to. That's a whole... that's come up. I think there's a whole.... There's a whole part of Number Seven where it not only is Number Seven, but there is — and I've got all these things I'm gonna do in my retirement — one of the stories is the, the Black educators that have come throughout, in and through and out of Moorestown.

00:25:34 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yes.

00:25:35 **Richard Gray:** You know. Miss Baylor, my Aunt [Unclear], Miss Hattie, right and right there were all these folks.

00:25:38 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** We had Mrs. Ranch. Mrs. Webb, Mrs. Bounds. We have lot of them.

00:25:43 **Richard Gray:** Like there's all these folks that really were sort of central in my own life. Well, my Uncle has, he has a very different experience with Mrs. Baylor than I did, you know.

00:25:53 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** She was my second-grade teacher.

00:25:55 **Richard Gray:** Right, right.

00:25:57 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Mrs. Baylor was my second-grade teacher.

00:25:59 **Richard Gray:** Right. Right. So, there's a whole story that I would love to tell, tell about that. But my Uncle was really the most people that, that said you were comfortable being there, which is why, you know, you weren't... You would go to the to the Community House, but you didn't necessarily feel like you were comfortable when you were there for that.

00:26:16 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yep, Yep.

00:26:18 **Richard Gray:** There was something else I was thinking about with that, was with the, how you were feeling about the experience with the Moorestown... It was comfort and also, I was curious about the, the connection with... One of the things Uncle Pete said, he never, he never saw my grandmother go to the West End Center. And so I was wondering, do you, in your experience answering the phone for Mr. Adams, do you remember the kinds of — and I'm asking, I'm pushing your memory on this one — kinds of things that he would ask you to do or the kinds of... Do you remember sort of his life at the West End Center? His role? How he interacted with people at the West End Center?

00:27:03 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Well. He, he was a very easygoing man. So, you, he was easy to talk to and the kids, they, they respected him. They truly respected him. I do remember that about him. And, and people will call on the phone and, and I would take the messages. He was always congenial, would return calls, and you were just comfortable with him. And he had, he just had a

connection with the people. He was so moving because he had, like a disability. His neck was, didn't turn and all that. So, he was so moving but he was perfect for the job. I don't even know how he got that job. I don't know how that all came about.

00:27:47 **Richard Gray:** Yeah. I never, I haven't heard of the story about how he got there which is interesting.

00:27:51 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah. I don't know how he...

00:27:51 **Richard Gray:** I am interested in exploring about how.

00:27:53 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** But he, but he has a son. Yes, he has, I think his son still, used to live in Moorestown on Farmdale.

00:28:01 **Richard Gray:** Is that Joe Adams?

00:28:02 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah.

00:28:03 **Richard Gray:** Yeah.

00:28:07 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Is he still around?

00:28:07 **Richard Gray:** Yeah, Joe's, still around. I, I'm still waiting to see Joe smile. I, I think... I've known Joe for almost all my life and I've seen him smile once. He's a nice guy. He's a very nice person, like, it's not like he's not a happy dude with a great sense of humor.

[Laughter]

00:28:22 **Richard Gray:** But he does not smile, like his face is always [Laughter] So if you didn't know him you'd have thought he was disgruntled all the time but he really isn't. So that's good.

You know, I'm going to talk to a whole set of people, Pammy,...

00:28:32 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Have you talked with...?

00:28:35 **Richard Gray:** ...sort of your age? I'm like, I want to talk to Bruce Austin. Bruce as also a person that I really associated...

00:28:40 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah.

00:28:41 **Richard Gray:** ...with, with the parks and recreation. I'm curious, how did, did Mr. Brooks, Billy Brooks, like how did connection happen where he sort of became...? Did he come to the Center and then did Mr. Adams take it or did he ask, how would that, how did that connection happen?

00:28:58 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Well, he had come. He came to the Center like all the other young men did at that time, but because of, of who he, his interests in, in kids. If he was interested in the kids. And then he did sports. You know, he was the first Black referee in the state of New Jersey, so.

00:29:20 **Richard Gray:** I do think I've heard that.

00:29:22 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yes, I have all these newspaper, I got all this stuff out of newspaper articles and I...

00:29:26 **Richard Gray:** Please, can we get all those things? 'Cause we want to be able to get those things archived as part of the...

00:29:31 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah, I have lots of newspaper clippings. And because it was a big deal in 1960-something when he got, went through what he had to go through to get that accreditation. And so, because he liked the kids and he would work with them. So, I don't, I guess that's how he somehow hooked up with Mr. Adams. As I say, he went there like all the other young men just to shoot pool and then just he ended up being involved, really involved. Then went on to be involved with the whole Township, but.

00:30:08 **Richard Gray:** Yeah, please, I want to definitely get any, any, anything like those articles just to be able to get them. We're going through the process with the Historical Society.

We have a scanner and our ability to sort of archive all of those things to, and make them a part of the history of Moorestown.

00:30:14 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Well, when you, next time you're on the block. Next time you're on the block, I'll give you that kind of stuff. And you can you can have, take it and do what you need to do with it.

00:30:30 **Richard Gray:** Terrific! And I'm finding there's a theme with Mr. Adams, cause he did this, the same thing, like you just showed, you know, with there and helping and all of a sudden now you're answering the phone and you're, you're actually working. And the same thing with in, in... My Aunt Marie told the story of when she wanted to go to the Girl Scouts the only Black Girl Scouts troop was in in Palmyra. And she went to Mr. Adams to say, you know that she would like to have one there that he didn't just go and do it for her. He said, "Well, okay, you're going to raise the money," and she ended up having to do some of the things to be able to do it. And she said, "That's how I learned to be a boss." Like, you know, she said there was a part of it where they didn't do for you. He created a situation where you could participate and then eventually you could do for yourself.

00:31:16 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** And we, Lucy Adams, I mean Lucy, Lucy Sutherland — was it her mother or grandmother? — was our Girl Scout leader. Your mother, I mean, your Aunt Marie and I, she was our Girl Scout leader. And that all took place at the Center.

00:31:33 **Richard Gray:** So, you remembered that, you remember being a part of the Girl Scouts there?

00:31:36 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Oh yeah. I wish I could find the picture as a picture of me and Marie and a couple other ladies with, with, you know, when we were Girl Scouts.

00:31:47 **Richard Gray:** Is that right?

00:31:48 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yep, and that all took place...

00:31:50 **Richard Gray:** About. How old were you when that, when that was when that picture was taken?

00:31:53 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** I guess maybe twelve, thirteen, something like that. Something like that. I gotta find that picture again 'cause it was a big, it was 8x10 picture. But I'm like like your mother. I have got picture albums all over this house. Pam and them, I know they're gonna cuss me when they, when I die.

[Laughter]

00:32:15 **Richard Gray:** I've been loving going... I've gotta be honest. I've been loving going through. I have a whole box of just the, the circle of friends. And copies. So, I got a whole box of pictures for you just of other things that I'm going to set aside for this.

00:32:27 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yep, I told Pammy one day I said, "Richard's never gonna get finished because you should go through all this stuff and you posted it and you think it's never going to get finished."

[Laughter]

00:32:39 **Richard Gray:** It never ends. It never ends. And you know it was funny. I was going through a, I was going through this big plastic bin and looked like it just had used but, but you know, reusable gift bags in it. And then I go through the bottom of it and then Mom had a bunch of albums in there that were below that were all these pictures and picture albums and, and...

Perry said he's clearing out the house, the Perry Avenue house for his father in Moorestown, and he said, "Rich, I've got more obituaries. Like I I don't... I've got at least, you know, everybody..." And it really is important things because it chronicles who people are and their lives were.

00:33:17 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Pam and I have the same thing. I have a lot of them.

00:33:20 **Pamela Hall-King:** I have, I have a folder of them too.

00:33:22 **Richard Gray:** Yeah, yeah.

00:33:25 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Oh.

[Laughter]

00:33:28 **Richard Gray:** You mentioned, you mentioned the sports and maybe it's a part where we could think about how to connect it. I was surprised that there were actual West End teams. Randy Holmes, I just saw his name come up on my Facebook news, he showed me a picture of, I guess it was in the mid '60s. There was a, there was a basketball team. There was a West End basketball team and they traveled around. And then I didn't know Uncle Pete was a part of the West End football team that was started a year afterwards. So, it seems like recreation was, and sports were sort of a core part of what the West End did.

00:34:02 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yup.

00:34:02 **Richard Gray:** Look, Miss Kay, I'm not going to keep you long. Like there's part of this is I'm going to probably listen and there going to be stories here that will come back and maybe, you know, add on and, and follow up on. I really definitely want to get a connection going deeper with, you know, with Mr. Brooks, because he is so central to, you know, both for me the connection between the West End Center and Maple Dawson. You know, he was my experience, the person that we thought of as sort of the, the central person there. And there's not, you know, there's after there's always something after the fact that you...

00:34:31 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Right. Yes. Okay. Yeah.

00:34:45 **Richard Gray:** ...say, "You know, I wish I had told Richard the story. I wish, there was something I wanted to say ..."

00:34:48 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah, I'm gonna jot it down if I think of something, you know, I'll jot it down.

00:34:49 **Richard Gray:** But before I go is there anything that I didn't ask you anything that you wanted to share that you think would be important to, to know about the West End Center that we didn't get a chance to talk about.

00:35:00 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** No, I think. I think I, because I had it jotted down, a couple notes and I, I hit on what I had on my paper. Yeah, yeah, I'm good.

00:35:18 **Richard Gray:** Yeah. Just so, just so I know, when did when did you? When did you leave Moorestown? You lived in Moorestown, and when did you leave Moorestown to?

00:35:27 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** In 1954.

00:35:28 **Richard Gray:** In '54, Okay.

00:35:33 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** So what happened between that and '68, you know, I was in and out, but I, I was not living, you know, I was married. And I was living, for twelve years we lived in Camden. Then we moved to Willingboro, so.

00:35:47 **Richard Gray:** Got it. Is there anything that, Mr., Mr., Mr. Hall, Mr. Charlie might have kept that was related to the Blue Chips or anything that was really...? Because he was an officer in the Blue Chips.

00:35:57 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah, yeah, I, you know, I've had Blue Chips books. And you know the there are, there are books and things around. So they're out in the garage somewhere.

00:36:08 **Richard Gray:** At some point, if you wouldn't mind, I wouldn't. Would, if you would love.

00:36:11 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** I will see. I will. I will.

00:36:12 **Richard Gray:** To go through anything.

00:36:14 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah, I will.

00:36:14 **Richard Gray:** We're good at going through boxes. I tell you that. Take advantage of it right now.

00:36:18 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** You should be a pro now. And, and have you made a dent in it?

00:36:25 **Richard Gray:** We have, we started to make a dent. You know, we have. We're gonna do a, a, a... One of the things that we wanted to do, the initial part of it is there were just things to throw out, and there were things we didn't really want to just give away. We wanted people to have them. So, Mom had all those hats? And so it was like the Gwen actually sort of had to have hats that folks, the ladies in the church, to be able to pick a hat of Mom's that they wanted and we were able to give things away. But she's got a lot of nice crystal that she had these, these bowls and everything. Don't want to just give away. So we're hoping that we they can they land in a nice place. She has all of this artwork that we're going to also try to figure out where it lands and so. If you want to come over, if there's any piece that you want. And we also, it was little Gregory who did this, you know when, when he was really upset. He's like, "When, you know, what you gonna do with Grand Mom-Mom's stuff?" And I said, "Well, you know, we're gonna figure out how." He said, "Well, I don't want you just to give away something that has grandma's spirit in it."

00:37:23 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Oh. Awww.

00:37:24 **Richard Gray:** And so we said, "You know what? We just thought about that there may be something that, is there's something that you would want that would just be something that you would want to have as a way to be able to remember?" So he had this, he said, "I've got to think about that." You only have to look. With Little Gregory there's no, no small thought within him. Like you know, don't ask him how he's doing if you don't want to sit down for a few

minutes. [Laughter] But we also want to make it available if there's anything you know that is something that you want to have that is set a reminder. We just, we really wanted to, the things to land in places that...

00:37:57 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah. Gregory said you thought you might have a yard sale or something.

00:38:01 **Richard Gray:** Yeah, yeah, he's there now. Yeah.

00:38:02 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** That's work too.

00:38:06 **Richard Gray:** It is. It is. It is.

00:38:07 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah. But Gregory was over.

00:38:09 **Richard Gray:** We pretty much cleaned the house. Everything's out. The whole upstairs is clear, except for large furniture. And we're gonna get we're at the age where we get some helping hands to bring that furniture down.

00:38:19 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah, Jake said. It's heavy.

00:38:19 **Richard Gray:** ... my mother's dresser down... [Unclear]

00:38:22 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Greg said that the chest of drawers is so heavy. It's solid wood.

00:38:26 **Richard Gray:** It is. And there's a couple things. And so we're going to get help them to help us. We have all the furniture pretty much out of the living room. And, and so, most of the things are out. But we've been putting the things in the garage, so there's a lot of Mom's crystal and, and different things that are there and that'll be a part of the what we do with the yard sale.

00:38:48 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah. Right, right. Well, I know once if, if, if you put when you have your yard sale she you had given her a robo vacuum cleaner thing. You know one of those little... I would, that's, I will buy that.

00:39:02 **Richard Gray:** Oh no, we just had that. You don't have to buy it. I'll make sure I'll call Greg. He'll bring it to you today. I'm serious.

00:39:08 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Is it Greg here today?

00:39:10 **Richard Gray:** He's there. He should be there. Yeah, he's there. We're getting a... You'll probably see a large dumpster because we're going to start to move out some of the larger things that just aren't going to be able to do, get out. But we would, she actually has one. And then we have one that's in the box. It's both a vacuum and a mop. And also we can put things and it'll clean the floor so you have your, you have your your choice of either one of them.

00:39:34 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Okay. Okay.

00:39:35 **Richard Gray:** I'll be sure to let him know that you want that.

00:39:38 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah. But Greg was over the other day. We were talking and he told me Little Gregory says he wants to move to Syracuse. And he said when he gets stuff in his mind... First he was going to New York, then it was Philadelphia. Now it's Syracuse.

00:39:59 **Richard Gray:** I tell you, you said it was... When I went to, this is maybe about, t must have been about — I'm losing track of time — I say something's three or four years ago and it was ten years ago. It was probably about ten years ago, maybe about eight or nine years ago, and that's when Hunter was out at, at, in school.

00:40:19 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** And then...

00:40:20 **Richard Gray:** Little Gregory was in that program that was helping, great program and I go to dinner with him. I was out there for a conference. And I go to dinner with, with him and Hunter, and Hunter goes off. She's going with her boyfriend and I hop on the light rail with Little Gregory and Little Gregory's like, "Okay Uncle Richie. You go this way that way." And then, and he hops off the light rail and just goes into the, into the city. And I just remember thinking,

“What is he...? I don't know where I'm going!” And he was really thriving in that city. And Greg really wishes he could have stayed there, but it was...

00:40:51 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Stayed out there.

00:40:52 **Richard Gray:** It was, it cost \$40,000 a year for the program, and there was no financial aid. And so when he brought him back, he wanted to send him back to, to Denver. But Little Gregory didn't sort of understand why he came back so when he came back, he thought he had done something. Greg said...

00:41:11 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Yeah, and Greg said he wanted him to go back.

00:41:12 **Richard Gray:** ...he just couldn't understand the concept, but he just like, you know, he thought that he had done something that, that required them to bring him back and so as he wanted....

00:41:20 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Took him back home.

00:41:22 **Richard Gray:** ...to go back. Hunter's wanted him to come back and he really would thrive in that city because he has friends there and job and it was really.... But Syracuse is a new one. I had not heard Syracuse.

[Laughter]

00:41:35 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** But, but Greg made me laugh. He said, “Well, he's living a good life. He has his own area in the house. Somebody cooks for him.” I said, “Well why would he move?”

00:41:46 **Richard Gray:** That is the truth.

00:41:49 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Okay, Rich.

00:41:50 **Richard Gray:** Thank you, Miss Kay. Love, you.

00:41:53 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Love you too, and thank you. I hope I helped you a little bit.

00:41:56 **Richard Gray:** You know, you helped me a. And like I said, I'll be following up maybe short of things just to go into and if there's anything like you said, if you find that picture, I would love to see that picture, but if...

00:42:04 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Okay.

00:42:06 **Richard Gray:** ...if we and when I come, I'll connect with you and maybe go through some things and a lot of times, even artifacts will job people's memories about particular things.

00:42:11 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Okay.

00:42:16 **Richard Gray:** And it's something we're going to get on, we're going to get on tape. That story about Mr. Spence driving back.

[Laughter]

00:42:16 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Okay, Okay. Could not see what big Gimbel's sign. I'll never forget. And the next couple after what he was, he was declared blind.

00:42:30 **Richard Gray:** [Unclear, talking over]

00:42:36 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** And didn't have any sense, we were just laughing and giggling and driving along with the man who two weeks later was declared blind. [Laughter]

00:42:52 **Richard Gray:** So thank you both.

Miss Kathryn Hall: Thank you. You take care.

00:42:52 **Richard Gray:** You do the same. Thank you family for helping set it up.

00:42:53 **Pamela Hall-King:** All righty.

00:42:58 **Miss Kathryn Hall:** Bye bye bye.