

Interview Transcription

Interviewee: Dian Tapscott

Interviewer: Brian Clark

October 3, 2007

General Location: Dian's current home at 1019 Sherwood Ave., previously the home of her grandparents.

Editor's Note: Most of the repeated words, ums, you knows, and false starts have been omitted from this version of the transcription to allow for ease of reading. I ask the reader to treat this transcript as a 'summary' of sorts of the interview. For any specific questions or interests, refer back to the audio recording for a more accurate portrayal of the interview. Time stamps are given periodically in the transcript to refer back to the recording. BC

The interview took place at a small table in the kitchen, towards the back of the house. Dian's husband Tom wandered through a couple of times, as did their dog.

Interview Intro:

0:00:00.0

BC: This is an interview with Dian Tapscott, at her home on Sherwood Ave., Roanoke, VA on October 3rd, 2007 for the Neighborhood Oral History Initiative with Roanoke Public Library, interviewed by Brian Clark.

0:00:17.8

Interview start

0:00:00.0

BC: Ok. Well, I know you had some stories that you wanted to tell, Dian-

DT: Um hmm.

BC: You mentioned the car wash and Main Street and stuff,-

DT: Yeah.

BC: So I'd be curious to start with that and see what you think.

DT: Ok, alright, I was just going to tell you that the reason I ended up in this neighborhood is my grandparents, they used to live in Old Southwest in the 1920s and they adopted a child and so they decided to move- This was the suburbs. The road [Main St.] ended right here at the intersection [at Sherwood Ave. or Brandon Ave.]. That's where the paved road-

BC: And that's Main Street, that you're talking about?

DT: Yeah, yeah, it- Main Street ended right at the intersection [with what is now Brandon Ave.], and that was all just a dirt road from there on out, so this was the farthest out- This was like moving out to Roanoke County back in those days. And so my grandfather bought this whole block and then he sold off all the lots over the years to all these neighbors, but um-

BC: That's from-

DT: From this whole-

BC: From Main Street-

DT: This whole, this whole block. This whole, this whole, ...all...Windsor, up there. This, just, just this little block right here. [referencing the block between Main St., Sherwood Ave., Windsor Ave., and Brighton Ave.] So that's when they first moved, they built this house and then they moved here with my mother who was just a few months old. Or she wadn't very old at all. And then they

[Roanoke City or County] eventually, a few years later, built Wasena [Elementary] School. I think that was- This house was built in nineteen twenty-four, I believe, or five. And then Wasena School was built in 1928 and my mom was supposed to go to Virginia Heights but then when they built that school, my mom got to go to Wasena, and instead of having a cafeteria, they all just, all- It was just neighborhood kids, they all came home for lunch, like they'd just let 'em out and they'd come home. So that's how we ended up in this neighborhood. And then my grandfather saved that lot right up behind this house [on Windsor] and they gave it to my mother for a wedding gift in the 1950s and she built the house that I grew up in. And now, they're all dead and I'm back in my grandmother's house. This is my grandmother's house, so anyway, I've kind of, you know- We've had two families, you know, my grandparents and my mother both living in the neighborhood for a long time. I'm trying to think of things to tell you about it-

BC: Do you have any other family still living around in the area?

DT: Just my sister who lives with us, yeah.

BC: Ok, so you don't have any attachment to that house back there? [referencing the one she grew up in which is visible out the back window from where we sit].

DT: No, I don't have- No, no. It's sold many times since then.

0:01:58.3

BC: What's it like living in your grandparent's house looking out your back door at your, the house you grew up in?

DT: Well, because my parents got divorced when I was a little kid, this was as much my house as that. I was one of the original latchkey kids, I guess, but not true latchkey cause I just came home to my grandmother's house everyday. So, I mean, you know, my mom was a single mother, so I was always back and forth. They're both, they're- I consider both my houses, but it is weird, looking at my own, old bedroom window sometimes, but it just- Because they're all gone, it's really nice to, to remem- to have the memories, you know, cause I mean I can just think of so many things I did in both houses with 'em, so-

BC: When you were a kid, you were in this house with your grandparents a lot. What are some of those memories that you-

DT: Well, I was- I had the memory of when Kennedy was killed, you know, when he was shot. We were at Wasena School and they just closed school down and of course my mother worked, so we had to walk home and I remember just sitting in the living room and watching that all day long on television, black and white TV. We just had two channels, 7 and 10, and 13 could come in- That was Lynchburg. 13 was ABC, would come in if you used, you know, you had really good equipment like what, antennas and everything to put on top your television set.

BC: And now we have cable.

DT: Yeah, so that's really a really strong memory of being in this house. And then my mother was in this house, had come home from church in the 1940s and was upstairs listening to the radio when Pearl Harbor was bombed, so she always talked about that, how she'd just come home from church and no one could believe and they turned on their radios, you know, cause that's all they had, and they all just stayed by it all day long listening to that. So-

BC: Is your family the only one that's ever lived in this house, your grandparents, parents-

DT: No one has ever, ever lived in here but our family, and actually, next door neighbors, Breslin's, that's almost the same thing, um- They're four generations next door, now they're moving so we're really sad. Yeah-

BC: Connie had said that they were moving across town.

DT: Yeah, they're doing- They're not going to be far away but it is weird cause they're, right- There's never been a time that I can remember there wasn't a Breslin in that house, so that's going to be kind of sad.

BC: Now, now James [Settle] gave me, made copies of all of the old literature that he has collected, or someone has collected from the Wasena Neighborhood Forum, over the years, and I coincidentally ran across the old newsletter where you had written a short piece about Wasena Elementary-

DT: Awhhh-

BC: And so I was really glad that I ran into that before this-

DT: Yeah, it was a great school.

BC: But, it sounded like you really had a lot of good memories associated with that. What were some of those?

0:4:19.3

DT: Well, see like I remember when I, when I, you know, I have the memory of my son going there, that's what I wrote the article about, but when I was a little kid and we went there, what was the funniest thing is the... The first memory I have of it is, I lived right there [pointing to the house on Windsor that she grew up in] and, when I went away to school I'd just been with my mother up until that point because my parents weren't divorced yet then and she stayed home with me, so when they let me out for recess, I came on home. I just left. [laughing] I was real shy back then and I just thought that- I remember that cause I was embarrassing when she had to take me back up there and tell the principal that I had left the, the playground, and I remember that, and I also remember that we had a real dangerous jungle gym when I was there. They don't have those anymore, those things you climb on, and this boy fell off the very top and I was underneath and he flattened me and knocked the air out of my lungs but the teachers always said I saved his life and I always remember that. [chuckle in her voice] But it was just a good school. We had to line up in the mornings outside, it didn't matter if it was six o'- You know, like six degrees, we had to stay outside. They didn't let you in the school before they rang this hand bell. They, they'd ring it and then you could all go in single file line. And all the teachers had um, teased hair, you know, bouffant hairdos, with gla- They always wore glasses and uh- I just remember that- They weren't, they weren't like Mr. Sayers (laughing) [referencing a mutual friend, Andy Sayers, who teaches at Breckinridge Middle School in Roanoke City]

BC: He's a little different. (laughing)

DT: Yeah, that, and then we had such good cafeteria meals. I always remember that, those really fresh made buns with, smothered in butter, and really good like, country style steak and mashed potatoes with gravy, I mean the school lunches were fabulous back then. So I remember that. You'd buy a lunch ticket if you were going to get your lunch for the whole week and they'd use a little hole puncher and punch out that you, you know, had gotten your meal. But then when my son went there, well that's, that's pretty recent, but it's just still a really good school I think.

BC: That's what it sounded like in the article.

DT: Yeah. Yeah, we really loved it.

BC: That's great. It is a beautiful school, inside and out.

DT: Yeah it is. They did a good job remodeling it, so- But that's, that's my memory of Wasena [School], just good teachers- We always, you know, we were proud to go to school there.

0:06:16.1

BC: What were the summers like, growin' up?

DT: Um, the summers when I was growin' up here were just about the best you can imagine. Believe it or not, this neighborhood was- I mean it still is hopefully safe, but it was *very* safe then. See, we never locked our house, the whole time- I lived there eighteen years and I went away to college. We never had a key to that house. We'd go away on vacation for two weeks, leave it open. (chuckling) Right? It was- And it was a lot of back door neighbor, friends, then. People, like, this, you know- Connie's husband's grandmother would come over here to my grandmother's back door and go, 'You hoo?' And they, that's the way they always greet each other. And then in our backyard, there was a chicken house. This apartment complex wasn't here, so that was my grandmother's

orchard, her gardens- She had everything, everything. She didn't hardly go to the grocery store, I mean, she canned everything down in our basement-

BC: So they were very much, kind of growing their own, storing it-

DT: It was still kind of suburban here, even though by the time I was growing up in the fifties, I mean, most families did have a car and everything in the neighborhood. A lot of people still used the bus. The bus- Even a lot of executives in the neighborhood would even catch the bus to go work at N&W, Norfolk and Western- But usually the mothers kept the car because they needed it during the day and the fathers took the bus to work still back then. And that's why these streets are so crowded with cars right now because back then, of course, they- Everybody just had- No one dreamed we'd own all these cars. But the summers were great cause there was kids, you know, it was the fifties and sixties and it was the population explosion. All the baby boomers were born, I mean, every house was loaded with kids. And we had summer camp at Lakewood Park [off Brandon Ave. at Brambleton intersection], we-

0:07:52.7

BC: Was that right down here?

DT: Um hmm.

BC: Ok. Right across the street? [across Brandon Ave.]

DT: Yeah, we- We had all sorts- We'd do lanterns and basket weaving in the creek, I mean, you know, you never, were ever alone, I mean, sometimes you wanted to be alone, but there were just so many kids that would come by and sit outside, drink Kool-Aid on the porches, I mean you know, most- I was the only kid in this neighborhood that I know of, 'cept maybe way down the street on Windsor, I mean most of the mothers were home back then. And most everyone was still married. I mean, it was, you know, not- Hardly any- I always felt weird because my parents were divorced cause nobody else's were. I remember that. But yeah, the summers were great (chuckling). I mean, we owned the neighborhood. And there was a few crabby neighbors and we'd have, we'd camp out at night in our tents and stuff and we'd do stuff to their houses at night. (laughter in her voice) We were bad.

BC: Like what? Like pranks and stuff?

0:08:40.1

DT: Well, there was this guy right up here, that we called him Jip out James (??). He was a big- He was a millionaire, but he was really, he was eccentric and everything and he, he was just- He lived like a pauper, but he would always put signs up, or glass in his yard, and he'd put glass- 'No kids in the yard.' And of course that just made us want to go in the yard, so sometimes we'd take his tomatoes (laughing) out of his garden. We'd- We rolled his car once, but don't put that in there- (both laughing) We used to do stuff, I mean you know, we were good kids, but we were pranksters too. I mean, we- I think most all the kids around here were good. We didn't have any crime. We didn't have like the kids now are- You hear about all these incidents at the Neighborhood Forum of kids in the summer, there's more crime in the neighborhood. It wasn't like that back then.

BC: When I was reading over some of these older articles from the paper, and I'm talking back when the neighborhood was built, early 1900s when they sold the Wasena Farm, or not the Wasena Farm, but that's what it ended up being. They were talking about the bridges down there where the boys would walk across the steel beams when they would actually- They didn't have a bridge platform, so everybody was just roaming all over the place. Were you- Did you experience any, any of that when you were growing up?

DT: No, cause uh- By the time I was growing up, all the bridges were done and everything. The only thing that really is even that different- Like when I was first born, of course, Towers wasn't there. It came in the early sixties and I remember that was such a big deal, like I mean, the mothers were all excited and my mom still was home with us and they weren't divorced yet, my parents. And she would take my sister and I over there a lot. Like I would- She'd put me in my stroller, I was like three

or four and my sister would walk, my older sister, and we'd go over there and they had a Woolworth's and a Peeple's Drugstore, the old fashioned soda fountains over there, where you know, it was really- And they had the Roanoker Restaurant, that's where it moved to. I think it started downtown, then it moved to Towers, then it moved to- So-

BC: And now it's up on Colonial.

DT: Um hmm.

BC: Ok.

DT: So the Roanoker and all that was a big thing when Towers went in, cause that was the first big, you know, suburban mall I think...

BC: Do you remember what was at the Towers location before Towers Mall went in?

DT: No, cause I was too little to remember. Unh unh.

BC: One of the things in that article was that Towers was the first automobile mall in the valley-

DT: Yeah, yeah. I mean it really was.

BC: Did you kind of notice that?

0:10:46.4

DT: Yeah, yeah. I mean, I re- It was a big deal when it went in. Everyone was really glad it went in our neighborhood and stuff. So- But then the other thing I was going to tell you about is, right at the corner, like when you walk down Windsor Ave. where Mrs. Padgett's Grooming School and all that stuff is, that used to be the little, you know, where you, you see where you can pull in underneath? That was a gas station. It was called Mr. Dyerly's (??) Gas Station, and so you could pull in and be protected while you were pumping your gas, and then inside it was a kid's paradise cause he had this old glass candy counter with all the jar, penny candies you can imagine. And then he had the old fashioned drink boxes with the glass bottles of Dr. Pepper and Coke, I mean it, it was like a dime for a drink back then, I think. And then the penny candy, and we just went ballistic with- You get these little brown paper bags and fill 'em up and he'd tell you how- I mean that was always where the kids were. And then where the car wash is, the reason the kids were always around his- That was an old foot- Like a- It was, looked like a football field and every night the boys would be out there playing football and the girls would be sittin' on the sidelines just talking and everything and then you could always go over to Mr. Dyerly's (??) for a drink, and stuff. So that was really neat.

BC: That's quite a bit different now.

DT: Oh yeah. And I mean- And see, I wish I knew more about the little Main Street Village that's right down near the Wasena Bridge, cause that I remember had a beauty parlor and it had like a corner um, like bar, actually, like a little pub. And it had some businesses back then, but I- The only two I can remember for sure are the beauty shop and the little, like, you know- Like you'd see, um, what's the- Community Inn, sort of like a Community Inn [current business in Grandin Village] was down there.

0:12:17.7

BC: When were you born, Dian?

DT: Fifty-seven.

BC: Fifty-seven?

DT: Yeah, so I saw- I saw a lot over the years, but it's- I'm just trying to think of anything that really-

BC: And, you were born here, in-

DT: I was born in Roanoke Memorial Hospital-

BC: Yep.

DT: and then I moved- I moved- They already had the house built, so-

BC: Now in that article, it mentioned that you lived around the States-

DT: Yeah, I lived all over, yeah. I was a gypsy (smiling).

BC: A gypsy? (laughin) What uh, what made you come back here?

DT: Well, it uh, I had to come back because my mom passed away when I was forty, ten years ago, and see my sister's mentally challenged. You've probably seen her before. She had- She has some physical problems too, but she was supposed- My mom- We knew my mother was dying. She had cancer, and my sister was always supposed to move to Florida and Tom and I had this little mother-in-law house in our back yard that we were going to fix into an apartment for her. So after my mother died, she came down there and she hated Florida. She cried, cause see she's always lived right in this neighborhood. And we knew, she just was adamant she would not live down there. So she came back up here and she really couldn't take care of this house, I mean it was just, it was a nightmare. And so we knew we had to do something and my son was almost five, and we were going to have to send him to private school in Florida anyway. The schools are real bad in Florida because it's mostly older people, you know, it's retired people in Florida, so they don't vote a lot for education. So we knew we had to send him to private school, and we thought, I thought, 'Well the schools are always so good in Roanoke when I was growing up there, and she wanted, she [sister] didn't want to move to Florida so we just decided to come up here and try it. And we, you know- He worked for his dad's business, we always knew we could back if it didn't work out. So we've loved it, we've loved being- But that's- I really ended up back here because of my sister.

0:13:54.1

BC: Ok

DT: Yeah.

BC: What, what did it feel like coming back?

DT: Well, I was ha- I had mixed feelings about it, because he rea- He really wanted to move here, my husband believe it or not. Everybody thinks it's the other way around, but I felt like I was going backwards and stuff. Cause I- I really loved growing up here, but when I left after I got out of Roanoke College, I was really ready to leave cause I- This was all I had ever known, and I really wanted to travel. And I just, I thought it was like going backwards, to me, but once I got back home I just, you know, I've just been- I've, I've loved it here. There's, you know- Once I actually made the move, and said, 'We're gonna do it.' But it was a little weird at first. Cause, um, it's not- One, one thing about Roanoke is it doesn't have very good jobs, you know how it is. And it- We were living in a very affluent area in south Florida, so that it was really hard to get used to the poverty. And you know, I work with poverty kids all day long, I mean it's just sad to see. You know, cause there's, there's just a lot more affluent places in the world and Roanoke, you know, drags a little behind on the income level and standard of living and all that sort of thing. Southwest Virginia overall. But then there's the beauty, and the nice people. I mean, I- It always is outweighed by all the positives, but- That's something you really notice if you're not here all the time, and you've just gone away, when you come back, you really notice it.

BC: I was going to ask you what specifics were that you would of, that you noticed, but that?

DT: Yeah, that's it. Even when I just went away this summer to New England for awhile and came back I noticed it again. You know, you don't notice it when you're here, but you do when you travel some, to other places. You just don't see it as much, of the poverty.

BC: What's made you stay?

DT: Here?

BC: Um hmm.

DT: Well, you know, I just really um, you know, because of my sister I mean, she's- I, I'm- I'm gonna stay because of my sister, but I just like it, I love it anyway. It's beautiful, um, the, the neighborhood would make me stay. This neighborhood, I can move somewhere else. I like it because it's close to everything. And I like my neighbors a whole lot. You're, you're one of 'em. And um, I like it that I'm near Fresh Market, Ukrops, Kroger- I mean, I'm really close to everything. I mean,

people laugh at me in Florida because they can't believe how little mileage I put on a car, but you know, everything I need is like- I could even be walking more places than I walk, I mean, you know. The movies are right out at the Grandin Theater. I've got the- I mean, there's so many good things about this neighborhood, you know. You can walk through the cemetery and that's, even though it's a cemetery, it's still tranquil and pretty. You can walk through it and be at all those different places, the health foods store, Norberto's which I love, all the restaurants out there. I mean, it's just, it's an ideal neighborhood for, for anybody that just doesn't want to be going to the gas tanks, you know going to the gas stations all the time.

0:16:26.7

BC: Now, was um, I know it's not in Wasena, but what was Grandin Village like when you were growing up?

DT: It's exactly the same, I mean, it's just got more stuff now, I mean more neat, like cooler stuff, but back then, where Surf n' Turf is, that was Garland's Drugstore, and Mr. Garland was a long time, kind of famous person here. Maybe he was on City Council, I don't know what his, why he- You, you heard his name a lot. I don't know if he was politically active or if he was a city councilman, but he ran People's, I mean, Garland's Drugstore and that was another soda fountain out there you could go to. The movies were always there, um, I'm trying to think what else was out there. They're not as- It wasn't as cool as it is now, but it was just nice. It was the 1950s version of what it is now.

BC: Was Wasena park here at that time?

DT: Oh yeah, it's a really old park, and back then it was a really nice park, but already then it was having a few little problems, like it still does sometimes, you know, they're always having, saying that there's a lot of cruising going on down there, and back then, there were some unsavory people that would hang out at Wasena Park and the kid- The mother's would always- Sometimes like when Wasena School was gonna do a field trip, they would always urge them to use Lakewood Park instead of Wasena Park, but I think actually Wasena Park is better now than it was back then. Cause it just, I don't know if it- Being a little kid you don't, they didn't tell you exactly what it was, but it might have just been homeless people. I don't know, but our parents sometimes would- Didn't want us to go to Wasena Park, I remember that. They'd say, 'Why don't you just go down to Lakewood and play basketball, or go to the tennis courts at Fishburne Park, don't go-' They didn't want us down there that much, and the skate park wasn't there, and there's just- It wasn't patrolled as well by the police I don't think, and it was so- You know how it's kinda off to itself and it has the river as one of- Its, its border is the river and that I think there were homeless, more homeless people living by the river back then. I think that's what it was, they just were scared to, for us, cause we, there wasn't the police going- Now I think they go in there all the time, the police, they're really on that park.

BC: There's a lot more people living around there too, it seems like.

DT: Yeah, that's probably what it is.

BC: Yeah.

DT: Yeah.

0:18:32.4

BC: What um- If- If you can think back to when you were, say 10 or so, living around here-

DT: Um hmm. In 1967.

BC: Was there a specific walk that you really enjoyed, or a specific place or spot that you really liked to go to?

DT: Well, we, you know, my best friend, and she's still my, one of my closest friends, I mean, she lived right across the street from me. We usually did a lot of stuff at each other's houses, but when we- We had a bike trail that we used to do, but it went up into Raleigh Court. Again, sometimes our parents back then didn't want us going that way as much as that way.

BC: Down towards the park [Wasena Park], but you could go to Raleigh Court. Ok

DT: Yeah, again, they wanted us to go, you know, and that's, that's kind of sad because that is truly Wasena down that way. But um, they always tried to steer us up this way and we had a little bike path that we did up to Grandin Road and back. And then we used to walk- See, we, we used to walk all the time through the cemetery to go to Garland's, cause we'd get Cokes and French fries there. See you could do anything back then. Nobody worried that much, like about- You know, now you have to worry about these kids and these streets are real busy. It was just a real pedestrian neighborhood back then because you didn't have all the cars. And then we would walk to Towers constantly as kids, and then, there was a big ol' tree, it's gone out of Wasena School now, but it was just this huge old tree and they had built a wooden platform around the bottom of it for people to sit on, and we always used to like to go and congregate there sometimes in the evenings, the kids. There were more kids out then. I mean this was a, just kids everywhere. It was- It's really different now, in that regard. So-

0:20:05.2

BC: I see a bunch of 'em around, but not, apparently, like it used to be.

DT: Yeah, they're not- Yeah, yeah. And, you know, these kids are all so electronic, you know. They don't get outside like they used to. And see, remember, we didn't have air conditioning back then, so in the summer, you didn't want to be in the house. You wanted to be outside because it was actually probably cooler outside than it was in your house. So-

BC: That's true. (chuckles)

DT: Yeah, I mean it was hot, and then- And like I say, the mothers were all home. They didn't want all the noise in the house- All the mothers would say, "Y'all get outside. You're not allowed to play inside. Get outside." So we were much more athletic and outdoorsy than the kids are now. This is what- You know, you see the obesity in the schools. They're just- We were outside. You probably were like that too, your, your generation was out more.

BC: Yeah, definitely. My, my people that I hung out with were definitely outside more.

DT: Yeah, well you know they're not anymore. (laughing ruefully)

BC: And you would know, because you are working in the school system.

DT: Yeah. Oh yeah. They don't- They were all- And my son's the same way. He loves his computer, all his games. So- But he's running track, cross country tonight, so he's outside running.

BC: Do you, do you feel that that's a loss—the kids kinda moving inside as opposed to being outside like they were when you were growing up?

0:21:09.4

DT: Well you know it's hard to say because um, they say all these, you know, all this next generation, you know, like- You know how technology's going to take off in the next hundred years, I mean, they're gonna be pioneers and all that and I won't know how to do any of it, but yeah, I think they're losing a lot by not being with Nature. Cause you know, those, those little people they're playing with on computer can never take the place of real relationships and stuff, so yeah, I think it's kinda sad.

BC: Have you, have you seen that impact the neighborhood in any way? Just in general?

DT: Because there's not really that many kids in our neighborhood anymore, you know, no. Our neighborhood now, it's just- It's a lot of young, newly married people like yourself, and like Brooke, and Kim and Jeff. You know, there's not, there's not a lot of kids in this neighborhood anymore when you really think about it, so, but most of the kids today are, if they're, even when they are not on the computer, they're very scheduled anyway, so I don't know that I've really seen how, what effect, or maybe put it in the- You just don't see kids out playing, like- You can go by that school a million times and never see people playing basketball there, whereas when we were kids, there- That school at night was loaded with activities, you know. We used to go off, and, or at least- It was modeled differently years ago. We would hit our tennis balls against the school cause it just had this one wall of brick and we could just practice our tennis like crazy up there, and you just always saw kids, you

know, everywhere and I just think it's not so much that they're all on computers, its just there really is not that many kids right around here. Or like there used to be. I could be wrong about that. Maybe they're all hidden.

BC: (Chuckles) I wanted to ask you too- I made an interesting discovery of sorts, I figured out where the, is it Wasena Hills? The house where Welton and Floyd come in, the big old house up there?

DT: Yeah, that's- That's really neat.

0:22:56.5

BC: What was that like when you were growing up? Was there any difference?

DT: That was- No. You know what that was, when I was growing up, and it still might be, is um, oh it's a Catholic organization, the Knights of Col- the Knights of Columbus. It was where the Knights of Columbus met, but it was very scary. Like when we- I had a friend who lived a few doors down, you know, it's kind of- If you, have you ever really been up there and looked at it-

BC: Just walking by.

DT: It's um- When we were little kids, you know, it was like a big old haunted place cause there was never- You know they were only there at certain times and then it was just this big vacated area, so we always thought, were like- Told ghost stories about it and things like that. But yeah, it is pretty wild to find that up there.

BC: I was surprised.

DT: Um hmmm. Yeah.

BC: I was very surprised.

0:23:34.8

DT: Yeah, and one other memory I was going to tell you about this neighborhood is see, Tech used to play all their home games at Victory Stadium, and that was always neat when we were little cause we could, you could hear over the loud speakers, you could hear in this neighborhood the games and you'd see all the people come in their cars with the Tech flags and the ladies always wore corsages, you know, everyone dressed up for the football games, so you'd see all these dressed up people coming to town. Yeah, they, they really went all out to get ready for those games.

BC: I just can't imagine Tech coming from Blacksburg to here for a game.

DT: They did. They didn't have their stadium then. And the biggest game was always every year when VMI and Tech played. They used to play back then and that was a big rivalry. Yeah, that's a strong memory, is the Tech games being over there at Victory Stadium.

BC: Did you ever attend one?

DT: No. No, I don't think I ever did. You know, I attended all the football games in high school. The- It was great having Victory Stadium. I mean I understand why they needed to get rid of it, I guess, but it was a fun stadium. Like I was a cheerleader in high school and it was a great stadium to cheer at and stuff, so-

BC: Well, is there anything else that, uh, I haven't asked you about that you-

DT: I think that's good, Brian. I, I wish I could tell you more. I mean it's just-

BC: I- This has been amazing, I mean, you have-

DT: Well. Well, and I don't really-

BC: a huge grasp of the history of the neighborhood here.

0:24:48.8

DT: Well not really, not really, but I wish I could remember more. My best memory, though, of being a kid is that- This back porch [on the house she is living in currently, her grandparents' house], see, we've got it enclosed now. But that was a screened back porch and my grandmother, she was a Victorian. She was born in the 1800's and everything. She had an old featherbed out there and it was a real quiet neighborhood back then cause like I told you, it was just, you didn't hear all this noise at

night like you do now. And we- Every night in the summer she and I slept out on that featherbed. That is my best memory of being a kid.

BC: No kidding.

DT: And when I moved back here it as still a screen porch, and I said, 'Tom, we've gotta get a bed and put out there. It's so much fun.' We didn't even make it through the first night. Cause we got- We put the bed out there- There was so much noise, cause see that apartment complex wasn't over there. That was an orchard. So the first thing that happened is this lady that rented this apartment was up all night having a party or something, and in- People in and out the driveway, and I was like, 'Well, we're not getting much sleep. We might as well go upstairs.' And then we just, we realized it could never be like that again. It's just too many cars and- Cause every time a siren, you know, every time a ambulance comes to this intersection they have to sound their siren so- (laughing)

BC: It gets noisy.

DT: They didn't used to do that back in the old days, so- I don't even think they did the sirens at night back then, so- I don't remember them.

BC: Well, I wanted to thank you a lot-

DT: Oh, you're welcome, Brian.

BC: Cause this has been, this has been wonderful.

DT: I wish I could have told you more, I really do, I just- I can't- You know, if I think of anything else, I will let you know.

BC: Well, I do appreciate it and I thank you very much.

DT: You're welcome, Brian. Thanks for taping-

[End of interview]