

## Oral History of Black Wheeling, WV

**Recorded: 2-27-25**

A collaborative history project with the Ohio County Public Library, YWCA Wheeling, and Wheeling Heritage.

### **Speakers include:**

*Thomas Miller*  
*Darlene Stradwick*  
*Ron Scott*  
*Sean Duffy*

**Summary:** This oral history conversation focuses on growing up as a member of the Black community of Wheeling, WV, reflecting on everyday life under segregation, the slow shifts of integration, and the tight-knit nature of their neighborhoods from the mid-20th century onward. Thomas Miller and Darlene Stradwick share memories of being barred from restaurants, theaters, swimming pools, skating rinks, and playgrounds except on designated days or in inferior spaces (like a coal-dust-covered playground by railroad tracks) while also recalling community resilience through church groups, family networks, and local gathering spots. They discuss how urban renewal projects and new construction displaced much of Wheeling's historic Black community, the limited but meaningful presence of Black-owned businesses and boarding houses (including places listed in the Green Book), and the role of schools like Lincoln in fostering strong community ties before integration brought both opportunity and new experiences of racism. A key takeaway is how recent this history is, and how deeply it shaped identity and community life.

00:00:00:00 - 00:00:15:22

Thomas Miller

My name is Thomas Miller, and I'm here at the Ohio County Public Library on February the 27th, my brother's anniversary, when he married his wife twice.

00:00:16:00 - 00:00:20:05

Thomas Miller

Both times, February 27th.

00:00:20:07 - 00:00:24:21

Thomas Miller

You can cut out that part.

00:00:33:03 - 00:00:34:17

Thomas Miller

Yes, yes. You know.

00:00:34:19 - 00:00:37:21

Ron Scott

Twenty cents? Twenty cents got you what?

00:00:37:23 - 00:01:11:12

Thomas Miller

It got you a hot dog, you know. But if you were black, though, you know, you couldn't sit inside at the booths. And if you remember Marvellas Webb? You remember "Cool Shake." Cool Shake was his brother in law, you know, you know, so Marvellas Webb, at the point that he had gone to Wheeling High School, you know, after they integrated Lincoln and he was part of a group that they went to Louis and they were going to

00:01:11:15 - 00:01:18:06

Thomas Miller

protest, you know, so that you could get a hot dog and sit down in there, you know.

00:01:18:08 - 00:01:31:05

Ron Scott

What I'm trying to figure out is in my head, when I think of that, I think of, like a lot of hostility. Did the people like in Louis, did they even think anything of it, or was it just the way it was?

00:01:31:05 - 00:01:37:08

Thomas Miller

Well, Ronnie, it was it was kind of one of those things that it's just how it was.

00:01:37:08 - 00:01:39:06

Ron Scott

Okay.

00:01:39:08 - 00:01:52:03

Thomas Miller

You know, and his group, you know, decided, well, then, that's how it was, and we'll see if we can affect some change, you know? Yeah.

00:01:52:05 - 00:01:55:05

Ron Scott

You know, were they angry at Louis when they did that? Or were they..

00:01:55:07 - 00:02:02:16

Thomas Miller

No, nope. You know, because we did want a hot dog, you know.

00:02:02:18 - 00:02:16:05

Thomas Miller

And what are you gonna do, you know? Yep. And it was, Marvellas, Stuart Catlin, Jimmy Cyrus, my sister "fuzzy" Margaret.

00:02:16:06 - 00:02:47:09

Thomas Miller

And that was around, I would say, in the 1960's. You know, but it wasn't the only place, you know, because if you know where the office lounge was on 12th Street. Well, at one time that was a movie theater, you know, and my dad's sister in law, Miss Naomi Miller.

00:02:47:11 - 00:03:06:13

Thomas Miller

She played the piano. And you couldn't go in there to see a movie, you know? But she would go upstairs on the top floor where the piano was, and she would play the piano during the silent movies. Yep.

00:03:06:15 - 00:03:29:21

Thomas Miller

And my dad even took my brother and me over to, Bridgeport, to the movie theaters, you know, because at that point, you know, we... Well, my dad's generation couldn't go to the movies, you know? In Wheeling. But we could. Darlene, now you probably went to the double features at the Liberty Theater?

00:03:29:23 - 00:03:31:01

Darlene Stradwick

See I don't remember the Liberty.

00:03:31:02 - 00:03:31:17

Thomas Miller

Oh, really?

00:03:31:18 - 00:03:35:02

Darlene Stradwick

It was Court and Victoria when I was...

00:03:35:04 - 00:03:35:13

Thomas Miller

You know,

00:03:35:18 - 00:03:36:10

Darlene Stradwick

when we went.

00:03:36:10 - 00:03:50:10

Thomas Miller

And there was a Sunday school group, that we were a part of, and we would meet on a Saturday evening, you know, at various members houses. Do you remember Miss Gertrude Dixon?

00:03:50:12 - 00:03:51:10

Darlene Stradwick

I don't know that name.

00:03:51:10 - 00:03:52:18

Thomas Miller

Oh, okay nevermind.

00:03:52:20 - 00:04:16:02

Thomas Miller

I bet your sisters would, you know? So anyway though, now we would either, go to someone's house to meet, and this one time they were going to treat us, so we went over to the Capitol Theater, on the top floor, and they had a bowling alley there, you know? I think it's still there. You know, the bowling lane.

00:04:16:04 - 00:04:16:14

Sean Duffy

I don't know.

00:04:16:14 - 00:04:19:11

Thomas Miller

You know, and we had a bunch of kids...

00:04:19:13 - 00:04:20:08

Ron Scott

It is there.

00:04:20:09 - 00:04:22:12

Ron Scott

They talked about it and I didn't believe them.

00:04:22:14 - 00:04:27:00

Thomas Miller

And they wouldn't let our Sunday school group bowl there. You know,

00:04:27:02 - 00:04:44:07

Thomas Miller

so, you know where the Independence Hall is? Well, then, to the left of it, there used to be another bowling lane right there. And we went there, and they let our Sunday school group bowl there. You know?

00:04:44:09 - 00:04:45:07

Thomas Miller

Yep.

00:04:45:09 - 00:05:00:09

Ron Scott

Well, I had an idea for a project. I was like, I'm going to retroactively go back and I'm gonna protest all these stores that practiced the Jim Crow stuff and all that. But I realized that was all of them.

00:05:00:10 - 00:05:02:08

Thomas Miller

All of 'em were.

00:05:02:10 - 00:05:07:21

Ron Scott

Like that, that that's hard for me to imagine. I always thought the 1 or 2 stores that were like...

00:05:07:23 - 00:05:16:20

Thomas Miller

Well, Ronnie, now you know where, Lincoln Detention Center is, you know, and that's where we all went to school.

00:05:16:22 - 00:05:35:14

Thomas Miller

in the back where there's parking. There used to be a basketball court back there and one of those, walk in kind of swimming pools, you know, that they had at the playground with the pipe, you know, that kind of went over there with the water that sprayed down, you know?

00:05:35:15 - 00:05:38:12

Thomas Miller

that was our swimming pool.

00:05:38:14 - 00:05:39:20

Sean Duffy

Was that called the Wolf Playground?

00:05:39:22 - 00:05:43:02

Thomas Miller

The Wolf Playground, yep. Oh, so you're familiar with it?

00:05:43:04 - 00:05:44:15

Sean Duffy

I heard about it the last time we did this.

00:05:44:19 - 00:05:46:04

Thomas Miller

Okay. Okay.

00:05:46:04 - 00:05:48:00

Ron Scott

Mr. Sean Duffy here!

00:05:48:02 - 00:05:50:15

Thomas Miller

Okay.

00:05:50:16 - 00:06:05:01

Thomas Miller

And then, Center Wheeling, now they call it South Wheeling, but it's actually Center Wheeling. Down there where the sewage treatment plant is now, that's where the black playground used to be. You know, that was the 27th Street playground.

00:06:05:04 - 00:06:14:15

Darlene Stradwick

That's what I was telling them last time, but most people couldn't remember, except me. I

remember when we moved to 26th Street, that that was the playground we had to go to because we weren't allowed at 26th Street.

00:06:14:15 - 00:06:31:04

Thomas Miller

But you remember though now where the Wilson playground was? Now the I-470... Not not I-470. I think that it was like, I-70 south kind of took it out, you know?

00:06:31:06 - 00:06:34:16

Darlene Stradwick

Seems like I remember Wilson Playground, but I just don't remember that one.

00:06:34:18 - 00:07:11:01

Thomas Miller

Because they had the playground in there. And your brother Lee used to go down there and play all the time, you know? So somebody was telling me recently, though, you know, that your brother Reuben, he would always play baseball down there because he was a very good player, you know. So this one, friend, you know, invited him to go swimming down there, you know, and his friend didn't quite understand, you know, that he couldn't go swimming there, you know, he could play on the ball field you know, but he couldn't go to the swimming pool.

00:07:11:03 - 00:07:17:12

Darlene Stradwick

And basically, like, I was telling them last time, our brothers kind of integrated the playgrounds because of sports.

00:07:17:12 - 00:07:18:07

Thomas Miller

They did.

00:07:18:09 - 00:07:23:04

Darlene Stradwick

Because we weren't allowed... We had the 27th Street playground. That's one I was telling them about.

00:07:23:06 - 00:07:28:01

Thomas Miller

You know, and the playground was right there by the railroad tracks, you know?

00:07:28:04 - 00:07:29:09

Darlene Stradwick

Yes.

00:07:29:11 - 00:07:32:08

Thomas Miller

And not a blade of grass.

00:07:32:08 - 00:07:34:00

Darlene Stradwick

No. I thought it was...

00:07:34:00 - 00:07:34:23

Thomas Miller

Not a blade of grass.

00:07:35:04 - 00:07:35:19

Darlene Stradwick

I remember.

00:07:36:01 - 00:07:52:18

Thomas Miller

But it was right there next to the railroad tracks, you know. You know, so my sisters though now, when they get home from up from the playground, they would be covered by coal dust. Yeah. And it's just how it was. Yes.

00:07:52:19 - 00:07:55:14

Ron Scott

That's all you got though? I guess it's okay.

00:07:55:16 - 00:08:07:09

Darlene Stradwick

Yeah. And the only playground, and behind Pavlack's, I was telling them that Pavlack's was there, and I think that's why the railroad tracks were there. Because they were delivering supplies to Pavlack's. That was, it was...

00:08:07:11 - 00:08:13:17

Thomas Miller

But that later became. No, no, before that, that was actually Moore's Lumber.

00:08:13:19 - 00:08:14:13

Darlene Stradwick

Moore's Lumber.

00:08:14:17 - 00:08:14:20

Thomas Miller

Moore's Lumber.

00:08:14:20 - 00:08:16:08

Darlene Stradwick

I remember Moore's also.

00:08:16:10 - 00:08:16:22

Thomas Miller

Yes.

00:08:16:22 - 00:08:22:03

Darlene Stradwick

But there was two different places. There was Moore's and Pavlack's. I think they were there

at the same time.

00:08:22:05 - 00:08:23:23

Thomas Miller

Yes, yes.

00:08:24:01 - 00:08:38:09

Darlene Stradwick

Because, because Pavlack's was a wrecking... It wasn't, Moore's is what was the place that sold wooden stuff. Pavlack's was, not destruction, was where they tore things apart.

00:08:38:09 - 00:08:39:07

Thomas Miller

Yes.

00:08:39:09 - 00:08:41:01

Sean Duffy

You can sit here.

00:08:41:03 - 00:08:46:15

Darlene Stradwick

So, but yeah. So. And I remember that playground even when I was little.

00:08:46:15 - 00:08:49:15

Thomas Miller

Let me tell you this, you know, but also though,

00:08:49:17 - 00:09:14:15

Thomas Miller

If there was a circus in town, you know, then the trains, they would pull over right down there, you know, down at 27th and Main Street, you know, and, and then they would offload the animals, you know, like, and then they would run up, walk the animals up Main Street and then across the bridge to the stadium, you know, for the circus, you know?

00:09:14:17 - 00:09:18:18

Ron Scott

That's all right, maybe it is a good reason to have the playground there, for once. Geeze.

00:09:18:22 - 00:09:22:03

Darlene Stradwick

Well, it wasn't about the playground. That's where the railroad tracks were.

00:09:22:04 - 00:09:22:17

Ron Scott

Oh.

00:09:22:19 - 00:09:23:01

Thomas Miller

Yes.



00:09:23:05 - 00:09:33:18

Darlene Stradwick

So they that they would pull up on the railroad tracks with the animals, and then they would unload them there and march them through town. It was kind of a little parade, it was an event, it was an event.

00:09:33:19 - 00:09:46:08

Thomas Miller

And I worked for the fire department, you know? So this one particular day though, when they were walking the animals up Main Street, you know, there was a fire in South Wheeling, you know, so we had to drive past there with the sirens on.

00:09:46:09 - 00:09:47:14

Ron Scott

Oh, wow.

00:09:47:16 - 00:09:58:03

Thomas Miller

And they did all that they could do just to keep the animals from going wild, you know, because because the sirens were like driving 'em crazy. Yep.

00:09:58:05 - 00:10:09:22

Ron Scott

in my head I'm like nobody's going to put a playground by train tracks and stuff? But do you think they just didn't care back then because it was the black playground? Or did they just not care about kids back then?

00:10:09:23 - 00:10:32:12

Thomas Miller

And that was it. Exactly. You know, because that was the black community. Now that's what they refer to as South Wheeling you know? But it wasn't South Wheeling, it was Center Wheeling, and where the post office is down there now? When they built the post office and put the trucking centers down there, that, that basically wiped out the black community, right?

00:10:32:14 - 00:10:53:00

Darlene Stradwick

Yeah. We were up a little, we were up a little further. We moved southern, south. We were up, 23rd Street because our playground was the center market. It wasn't closed in. It was the open air market. And that's where we rode our bikes and everything inside, inside there before they closed it up. But we lived on 23rd Street.

00:10:53:00 - 00:10:54:02

Thomas Miller

23rd Street, okay.

00:10:54:06 - 00:10:59:14

Darlene Stradwick

And we moved south. We moved to 26th Street because they had taken all that area...

00:10:59:16 - 00:10:59:19

Thomas Miller

Yes. Right.

00:10:59:22 - 00:11:12:05

Darlene Stradwick

for the same, for urban renewal or whatever projects they were going to do. And that's where all, a lot of the black families lived. We lived around a lot of black families, but my dad worked in Moundsville.

00:11:12:07 - 00:11:13:01

Thomas Miller

I didn't know that.

00:11:13:05 - 00:11:15:13

Darlene Stradwick

So we moved south. That's why we moved south.

00:11:15:14 - 00:11:15:19

Thomas Miller

Okay.

00:11:15:22 - 00:11:22:16

Darlene Stradwick

Because he worked in Moundsville in the coal mines. And but everybody else moved more towards East Wheeling.

00:11:22:18 - 00:11:24:07

Thomas Miller

Yep.

00:11:24:09 - 00:11:47:17

Darlene Stradwick

So we were the only family, the, the closest, probably, Candy Gardner and them were still about 23rd Street or so. They lived closer to the river, so they were still down that way. A few streets over. You might have found the Mann's lived a few streets over. And the Wood's lived right behind us.

00:11:47:19 - 00:11:49:11

Thomas Miller

Yes.

00:11:49:13 - 00:11:53:22

Darlene Stradwick

In the street where you remember the, Clemens and the...

00:11:54:00 - 00:11:54:10

Ron Scott

Yeah.

00:11:54:10 - 00:12:05:02

Darlene Stradwick

Rosses and all of them? They all lived behind us. We lived on 26th and Chapline, and then lived 26th and Logan. And someone recently put a picture out of that.

00:12:05:04 - 00:12:13:20

Sean Duffy

I have a question. If you lived in Center Wheeling, were there black-owned businesses there, like on Chapline Street?

00:12:13:22 - 00:12:14:19

Thomas Miller

Well...

00:12:14:19 - 00:12:15:14

Darlene Stradwick

Were there any?

00:12:15:15 - 00:12:30:05

Thomas Miller

Hold up now, you were getting ready to say no, you know, but but I just found this out recently, Ronnie Johnson's family, they told me that that his dad had a black gas station.

00:12:30:07 - 00:12:30:21

Darlene Stradwick

Oh, really?

00:12:30:21 - 00:12:31:13

Thomas Miller

Down there.

00:12:31:13 - 00:12:31:23

Darlene Stradwick

Didn't know that.

00:12:31:23 - 00:13:20:03

Thomas Miller

You know, down around 25th and Main Street, you know. So when I graduated from from high school in 66, I got a job at the, at the AMP on 29th Street, you know? And since our family never had a car, you know, I never been that far south before, you know? You know, somebody told me recently, well, somebody could have told you, that that was California. Hey, I wouldn't have known any different. I wouldn't know any different, you know, because. Because back then, your neighborhood was your world, you know, and you didn't have to stray far from there.

00:13:20:05 - 00:13:33:06

Ron Scott

You know what that makes me think of. When you packed us all up that one time and put us in your truck and took us to Barkcamp. I thought that was the beach. Like I thought we were at the ocean.

00:13:33:08 - 00:13:33:19

Thomas Miller

Ronnie.

00:13:33:19 - 00:13:35:02

Darlene Stradwick

Nope.

00:13:35:04 - 00:13:43:02

Thomas Miller

Ronnie, that was the beach to me, too. I never been to the beach before.

00:13:43:03 - 00:13:46:14

Ron Scott

I was blown away. There's sand and everything. I'm like, this is amazing.

00:13:46:19 - 00:13:48:02

Thomas Miller

And, Ronnie, you know what?

00:13:48:05 - 00:13:49:10

Ron Scott

Can I surf or something?

00:13:49:12 - 00:14:02:08

Thomas Miller

Now, that was no fancy pickup truck. That was a king cab. You know, like all of that, you know, because I remember having either 4 or 5 kids in the front with a seat belt across 'em. All of 'em.

00:14:02:10 - 00:14:07:02

Ron Scott

Yeah, there was a lot of us in that truck.

00:14:07:04 - 00:14:09:09

Thomas Miller

Oh, boy. You know, yep.

00:14:09:10 - 00:14:10:01

Ron Scott

Now,

00:14:10:03 - 00:14:19:15

Ron Scott

is that something that you can remember being conscious of though, black businesses, then?

00:14:19:17 - 00:15:12:10

Thomas Miller

Actually, no Ronnie, you know. Because, I remember when when, Robert Hall opened up out in Elm Grove, you know, and that was a clothing store, you know, and then there, right there. As you get off of the Elm Grove exit, you know, like it was right there. Yeah. And then, until then, you know, I'd never been out in Elm Grove, you know, and right there where the, where the McDonald's is, that's where the AMP used to be out in Elm Grove, you know? So if I wanted to, to make extra money, you know. So I would get on a bus and ride out there and work at the, at the AMP on Krueger Street.

00:15:12:12 - 00:15:23:04

Thomas Miller

you know. Darlene, now do you remember when your brother Ben worked at Industronics? That was on, what, Chapline Street?

00:15:23:06 - 00:15:23:15

Darlene Stradwick

It was on Market Street,

00:15:23:16 - 00:15:29:10

Thomas Miller

You were right across the street from, Black Stereo.

00:15:29:12 - 00:15:29:19

Darlene Stradwick

Yeah.

00:15:29:21 - 00:15:30:19

Thomas Miller

Yes. Yeah.

00:15:30:19 - 00:15:34:11

Ron Scott

Now was that a black person? Cause I do remember Black Stereos, but...

00:15:34:13 - 00:15:34:20

Thomas Miller

No.

00:15:34:20 - 00:15:35:14

Ron Scott

I never knew if they was black or not.

00:15:35:14 - 00:15:36:15

Thomas Miller

No no no.

00:15:36:15 - 00:15:39:02

Ron Scott  
Just his name. Name was Black.

00:15:39:04 - 00:15:45:23  
Thomas Miller  
But there was a black family though, now Darlene went to prom when one of them.

00:15:46:01 - 00:15:46:10  
Ron Scott  
Bobby Black.

00:15:46:10 - 00:15:47:22  
Thomas Miller  
Bobby Black.

00:15:48:00 - 00:15:50:05  
Darlene Stradwick  
Oh, we not gonna talk about that. Okay.

00:15:50:07 - 00:15:52:14  
Thomas Miller  
Cause there was Bobby Black,

00:15:52:16 - 00:15:54:01  
Darlene Stradwick  
That does not need to be recorded.

00:15:54:07 - 00:15:56:14  
Thomas Miller  
Bobby Black. Major Black.

00:15:56:16 - 00:16:00:08  
Ron Scott  
Major Black! That's an amazing name. His name was Major Black.

00:16:00:08 - 00:16:02:06  
Thomas Miller  
Ronnie, Ronnie, Blue Black.

00:16:02:08 - 00:16:04:17  
Ron Scott  
That was his name?

00:16:04:19 - 00:16:08:02  
Thomas Miller  
That's what they call him.

00:16:08:04 - 00:16:08:10  
Darlene Stradwick

That wasn't his real name.

00:16:08:10 - 00:16:09:20

Thomas Miller

That's what they called him.

00:16:09:22 - 00:16:10:10

Ron Scott

That's crazy.

00:16:10:15 - 00:16:13:06

Thomas Miller

Yes. Yep.

00:16:13:08 - 00:16:26:09

Darlene Stradwick

Yeah. That's, I'm trying to think. See, I don't know if Sam Woods was that a real bar or was that just something that. Right behind us. The Wood's lived behind us?

00:16:26:11 - 00:16:26:16

Thomas Miller

Yes.

00:16:26:20 - 00:16:32:17

Darlene Stradwick

And Sam Woods was the father and I think there was a bar in there.

00:16:32:19 - 00:16:34:11

Thomas Miller

The Ebony Bar.

00:16:34:13 - 00:16:35:08

Darlene Stradwick

Was it called that?

00:16:35:12 - 00:16:36:13

Ron Scott

Oh, it has to be black then.

00:16:36:13 - 00:16:42:08

Thomas Miller

There was the Ebony Bar, the Silver Rail, I think. You know.

00:16:42:10 - 00:16:44:22

Sean Duffy

Silver Rail, there's still a place called that.

00:16:45:00 - 00:16:45:11

Ron Scott

Yeah.

00:16:45:13 - 00:16:45:23

Thomas Miller

Okay.

00:16:45:23 - 00:16:49:22

Darlene Stradwick

Yeah. It's owned by a black person now. I don't know if it was owned by a black person then.

00:16:50:03 - 00:16:53:08

Ron Scott

Where was the Ebony bar at?

00:16:53:10 - 00:17:15:18

Thomas Miller

Ronnie, you know, at the time, I really wasn't old enough, you know, to go to bars and everything, you know, and really, I wasn't even allowed to walk past those bars down on Main Street, you know. My family told me, stay on Chapline Street now, you know like I did, turn right on 27th Street and that'll take you right to the playground. You know.

00:17:15:18 - 00:17:18:21

Darlene Stradwick

There was a lot of stuff. But I remember...

00:17:18:23 - 00:17:20:01

Sean Duffy

These lights flicker sometimes.

00:17:20:03 - 00:17:22:07

Darlene Stradwick

Yeah, I remember. Yikes,

00:17:22:08 - 00:17:22:20

Thomas Miller

Yikes?

00:17:22:20 - 00:17:23:15

Darlene Stradwick

Yikes.

00:17:23:17 - 00:17:26:00

Thomas Miller

Darlene, Yikes Lukondis.

00:17:26:04 - 00:17:26:15

Darlene Stradwick

Yes.



00:17:26:21 - 00:17:27:08

Thomas Miller

Yes.

00:17:27:09 - 00:17:45:01

Darlene Stradwick

And he owned a lot of that kind of... Bought the stuff that was there. I just remember, I don't where, was that the Ebony Bar? I don't know. I'm gonna lie and say that I but I remember a lot of that and we kind of stayed on Chapline as well.

00:17:45:03 - 00:17:46:12

Thomas Miller

Your sisters would remember.

00:17:46:14 - 00:17:49:23

Darlene Stradwick

Yeah. And we played on Logan Street that was like our playground.

00:17:50:01 - 00:17:50:10

Thomas Miller

Yes.

00:17:50:10 - 00:17:59:15

Darlene Stradwick

You know, instead of going to the railroad tracks we had, we'd find old tires and, and, and hurdle over tires and, and you've seen those pictures of the black and white pictures

00:17:59:15 - 00:17:59:18

Ron Scott

Oh yeah.

00:17:59:18 - 00:18:46:22

Darlene Stradwick

they have of us standing in the alley, me with my long neck. And, but we did. I mean, that was where we played all the neighborhood kids and stuff and, you know, and we were close. There was there was issues when we moved south. You know, I remember the next door neighbor telling my mom that, her husband told her not to mess with people like us. You know, but, but then we became friends, I'm Facebook friends with all the daughters. We never played together when we were kids. I mean, they were right next door. We never played together as kids. And I think they went to Catholic school. I don't think they went to Webster or Wheeling High. I think they went to Central and St. Al's, but but mostly it was a friendly neighborhood.

00:18:47:00 - 00:18:52:02

Thomas Miller

You know, my dad, he was raised on the Island, you know.

00:18:52:02 - 00:18:52:20

Darlene Stradwick

I didn't know that.

00:18:52:21 - 00:19:20:13

Thomas Miller

Well, for a while, you know, because my dad was kind of raised, without a father, you know, because his dad got in some trouble and then got sent to the penitentiary, you know? And my Aunt Eileen, if you remember this one, Lunch with Books down here, that they had one time about Mrs. Miller from Warwood. The teacher?

00:19:20:13 - 00:19:51:09

Thomas Miller

You know, well now that was my dad's sister. You know, and she was one of the teachers at Lincoln School, you know, and back then, you know, they just lived, like, a couple blocks, from the school. You know, everybody had known Miss Miller for forever, you know, and since my dad's, mom had had to work, you know, when my dad and his brother would go to Lincoln School, you know?

00:19:51:15 - 00:20:18:18

Thomas Miller

Well, my aunt, she was just a little kid, you know, so their mom would say, well, then take her to school with you, you know, and then, so the teachers, all knew her, you know, like, and then instead of, having a babysitter, you know, they would just take her from class to class, you know? You know, but you could do that then, you know. Like you could do that. Yep.

00:20:18:20 - 00:20:32:07

Ron Scott

that would be the theme, I would love to get a group of people to talk about stuff like, well, you could do that "then." Because I feel like there's so many things that were so different then, as opposed to now, and is there anything like that you could think about?

00:20:32:09 - 00:21:05:00

Thomas Miller

Well, Ron. You know, I kind of started my project, you know, because it seemed like my, my older sister's generation was different, you know, and it seems like the school system turned out a stronger person than they're, than they're turning out right now. From my perspective, you know, from my perspective, you know, and they all kind of, kind of feel like, that's because,

00:21:05:02 - 00:21:51:14

Thomas Miller

Lincoln School's teachers not only knew you as a family, you know, but they, but they knew your your entire family, and they were all concerned about you doing well, you know, and when. Well, and then after integration, we didn't get that, you know, like, we didn't get that, you know, you know, because now we went to Clay School and not everybody at Clay School was happy to have us there, you know, and some teachers would hide it and some teachers wouldn't, you know, and then often it, it was based on color, you know. Darlene, now you probably know what I'm gonna tell you, you know, so when we went to Clay

00:21:51:14 - 00:22:27:07

Thomas Miller

School, I was in the third grade, you know, so there was this one little girl, and, you know, and she was kind of cute, you know, she had the pigtails or whatever it was, you know, you know. So she asked me, was I white or colored? You know, because then I'm thinking, well, I don't know, I never heard that conversation, you know, in our house, you know, you know, so when I got home that day, during dinner, you know, now that's when the family all sat down together, you know, for dinner.

00:22:27:07 - 00:23:00:22

Thomas Miller

And so it was my parents, and my two and my two older sisters and my sister Margaret and my brother and me. You know, you know, and then, and then after dinner, you know, we were sitting there for a while, you know, so I finally worked up enough nerve, you know, to ask 'em, you know, so I says, mama, are we white or colored? You know.

00:23:01:00 - 00:23:34:10

Thomas Miller

And just like Fred Sanford, you big dummy, you're colored, you know? And that was the first time, you know, that I was actually, you know, really aware of the issues, you know? Yeah. So I started crying, you know, because because just by the way that she had asked me, you know, I knew that the next day if I told her I was, you know, that I was colored. It was over. Oh, boy. Yeah.

00:23:34:12 - 00:23:38:17

Thomas Miller

So that was my introduction to racism.

00:23:38:19 - 00:23:42:07

Ron Scott

Now what grade would you say that was?

00:23:42:09 - 00:23:43:15

Thomas Miller

I was in the third grade.

00:23:43:21 - 00:23:47:23

Ron Scott

Mine was in the third grade, too. They were telling jokes.

00:23:48:01 - 00:23:52:06

Thomas Miller

Well, then, you know, so I hope you came out better than I came out right.

00:23:52:08 - 00:24:00:01

Ron Scott

But I would assume it would get pushed back further. You know, maybe they wouldn't get the introduction till they were senior. Maybe, or, but no.

00:24:00:03 - 00:24:00:07

Thomas Miller  
Yeah.

00:24:00:09 - 00:24:21:01

Darlene Stradwick

It must be when you just started noticing that because I remember, I don't remember if it was Zach or Justin, came out and said that they were, that they were orange. What? You're orange? Who told you you were orange? I don't know, and it was like they come home and they asked you about that. It's like one of them, orange, am I orange?

00:24:21:06 - 00:24:37:15

Ron Scott

That's how I did, because they told a joke. They said, I still remember the whole thing. They said, why, and I thought it was hilarious, but I didn't understand it. They were older kids told me the joke and they all started laughing, so I started laughing. They said, Why is Stevie Wonder always smiling? Is it because he doesn't know he's black?

00:24:37:17 - 00:24:47:15

Ron Scott

And I was like, that's hilarious. I remember telling my mom and them that, and she, and saying that's not funny. Oh, well, they thought it was hilarious on the bus.

00:24:47:17 - 00:24:47:22

Thomas Miller

Yep.

00:24:48:00 - 00:24:48:20

Darlene Stradwick

Yeah.

00:24:48:22 - 00:25:25:22

Thomas Miller

In the neighborhood that I was raised in, which was Eoff Street. There were no white people that lived, you know, say from, so, you know, where the, where the Samaritan House is? You know, well, then, that's that's where our street stopped, you know, like we lived on Eoff Street. And and then from that point up, like, up towards Lincoln, it was all black, you know?

00:25:26:00 - 00:25:51:20

Thomas Miller

So we played on, Eoff Street, Monroe Street, Chapline Street, Palo Alto Street. You probably don't know where that is, you know, but the t-shirt that you had up there, like, about, Lawyer Jones. He lived up on Palo Alto Street, you know, but, you know, where the Nelson Jordan Center is?

00:25:51:20 - 00:25:52:09

Ron Scott

Yeah.

00:25:52:10 - 00:25:57:19

Thomas Miller

You know, and you know, the steps, you know, from the from the Samaritan House, you know.

00:25:57:21 - 00:26:00:23

Ron Scott

Yeah, them long steps. Geeze.

00:26:01:01 - 00:26:55:21

Thomas Miller

Well, then, well, then those steps. Well, I have a photo that I'll have later on, you know, in the photograph, like it's actually a combination of these three photos that I put together, you know, to kind of show you the way that Eoff Street used to be, you know. And in 1971, when I started on the fire department you know, during my probationary period, so, you know, when they were tearing down those houses for the, for the for the Booker T. Washington Apartments, you know, or just for, or just for urban renewal, you know, if you remember, Warrick Moseby, you know, Warrick Moseby's house, you know, that

00:26:55:23 - 00:27:19:23

Thomas Miller

that was the last house standing up there. I actually have a photograph of that, you know, because it kind of shows you Luau Manners and in the background, like it's got Warrick Moseby's parents house sitting up there all by itself, you know, because his mother held out to to the very last, you know. Yep. You know.

00:27:19:23 - 00:27:22:13

Ron Scott

Is he still living? Is Warrick still living?

00:27:22:15 - 00:27:38:10

Thomas Miller

That's a question that everybody's asking, you know, because, he had a stroke and then they took him to a nursing home out near St. Clairsville, and I haven't heard anybody else speak about it since then. You know,

00:27:38:12 - 00:27:39:23

Darlene Stradwick

I haven't seen his obituary or anything.

00:27:40:01 - 00:27:40:19

Thomas Miller

You know.

00:27:40:21 - 00:27:42:04

Darlene Stradwick

Does he still have family?

00:27:42:06 - 00:27:42:15

Thomas Miller

Pardon?

00:27:42:15 - 00:27:44:08

Darlene Stradwick

He still have family local?

00:27:44:10 - 00:27:56:23

Thomas Miller

Yes. Yes. Well, well, I'm pretty sure that that his sister is still alive and she comes down here sometimes, but I think she lives in Washington, Pennsylvania. Yep.

00:27:57:01 - 00:27:59:22

Ron Scott

Aunt Tizzy still here?

00:28:00:00 - 00:28:30:00

Thomas Miller

And his wife, she was one of the first black nurses here. And she went to the nursing school at the O.V. And after she graduated, I think she worked here for a short time. And then they moved out to, out near Sacramento, California, you know, and then she passed away out there. And that's when he kind of came back this way.

00:28:30:02 - 00:28:36:17

Ron Scott

Wow. I never knew that. I thought it was always just him and Tizzy. I didn't know he had a wife before that.

00:28:36:19 - 00:28:46:09

Sean Duffy

I have a, kind of off the record question. The first black police officer in Wheeling was William Turner?

00:28:46:11 - 00:28:52:03

Thomas Miller

Well, now, let me tell you about William Turner.

00:28:52:05 - 00:29:20:18

Thomas Miller

Where we moved to, you know, to the YWCA's building up on 12th Street. Then you had this family named Shannon. And her maiden name was Turner. And her husband was the black policeman. Yep.

00:29:20:20 - 00:29:22:20

Ron Scott

Old Bill Williams. William?

00:29:22:23 - 00:29:26:07

Sean Duffy

William. Yeah. And she ran a.

00:29:26:09 - 00:29:27:19

Thomas Miller

She had a boarding house.

00:29:27:21 - 00:29:28:10

Sean Duffy

A boarding house?

00:29:28:12 - 00:30:07:17

Thomas Miller

She had a boarding house, you know, because when I delivered newspapers, you know, back then, nobody locked their doors. You know, you know, and then on Saturdays and Sundays when I deliver morning papers, you know, they didn't want you to just drop it off at the front door. You know, she said, now just go to the middle door, you know, like, come up the stairs, you know, and then bring the newspaper to my bedroom, I'll be asleep, you know, just put it on the chair next to her bed, you know, which I hated to do, you know, because her feet didn't smell too good.

00:30:07:19 - 00:30:13:01

Sean Duffy

Are there any relatives still around, of his?

00:30:13:03 - 00:30:18:05

Thomas Miller

But her son never had kids. No.

00:30:18:06 - 00:30:25:08

Sean Duffy

Because I found out where their grave is in the Peninsula Cemetery, where he's buried. And they have no marker.

00:30:25:10 - 00:30:54:03

Thomas Miller

Oh, I didn't know. Well, you know, I was just a, Well, her son, Mr. Shannon, he was an older man back when I was a kid, you know, you know. So. And then before that, I never, ever heard anybody, you know, talking about her maiden name or anything. You know, I just knew her by Miss Shannon.

00:30:54:05 - 00:31:08:08

Thomas Miller

You know, but also though, if you were a black male and came to Wheeling, you know, and you couldn't stay in the hotels, you know, then the men would stay at Miss Shannon's house.

00:31:08:10 - 00:31:09:06

Sean Duffy

Yeah.

00:31:09:08 - 00:31:15:19

Thomas Miller

And the women, they would stay at the YWCA, you know.

00:31:15:21 - 00:31:16:22

Thomas Miller

At our house.

00:31:17:00 - 00:31:23:10

Sean Duffy

It was in the Green Book. You know, so the people know African American people know to go there.

00:31:23:15 - 00:31:42:07

Thomas Miller

Well, do you know, I told them when I was, hearing people talking about that Green Book, you know, and, at one time, you could still buy them at, WalMart you could buy, like old copies of 'em, you know, you know, but, if we were going out of town or something.

00:31:42:07 - 00:32:14:06

Thomas Miller

You know, we were always so, so excited. You know, because our, parents, now they would get together, you know, like and then pack a big picnic basket and everything, you know? So we all look forward to that, you know, having no idea that the reason why they did it, you know, was it was that if you're traveling on the road, you know, like, there's a lot of places you went that, that you couldn't go in to the restaurants or anything, you know, never even thought about it.

00:32:14:08 - 00:32:24:20

Thomas Miller

Yep. We were young and naive and just as happy as could be.

00:32:24:21 - 00:32:28:02

Darlene Stradwick

It was easier if you were a kid, then you didn't have to deal with a lot of this stuff.

00:32:28:03 - 00:33:06:16

Thomas Miller

Well, that's true, you know, that's true. You know. Because before I started on the fire department, I was a janitor at the city building, you know, and my dad worked across the street at the phone company as a janitor, you know, and I think that the the, like, all the generators in, in the building were black, you know, and my dad, I never really appreciated this until much later, you know, but but after my mom and dad got married and my dad, wanted to live in Columbus, you know, where his aunts and uncles lived.

00:33:06:18 - 00:33:57:08

Thomas Miller

And they had really, really nice jobs. You know like, some of them worked for Boeing, you know, and places such like that, you know, and, well, my dad was, was in the service, you know, like my mom moved back to Wheeling, you know, and my dad was also, well, he was



also upset about that. You know, you know, because, well, you know, to go from working, at some of these major, you know, plants and corporations, you know, to come back home and be a janitor you know, I mean, that's kind of devastating to your pride, you know? You know? So my dad always hated that.

00:33:57:10 - 00:34:26:18

Ron Scott

I didn't... I didn't really think about that. Like, what kind of pressure that, like the going out, like the cross country trip or whatever that you were talking about where you have to get the picnic bag, I don't know what it must be like for the adult to plan it. Because you have to really be conscious of all that stuff. You gotta make sure, we know we're on this road and we got this much food, and we got this much time, gets dark around this time.

00:34:26:19 - 00:34:28:16

Darlene Stradwick

You don't want to hit a sundown town.

00:34:28:16 - 00:34:29:16

Thomas Miller

Well Ronnie,

00:34:29:18 - 00:34:31:23

Ron Scott

Oh no. We staying home.

00:34:32:01 - 00:34:40:01

Thomas Miller

So, did you ever go, skating at the, at the market house?

00:34:40:01 - 00:34:40:05

Ron Scott

No.

00:34:40:05 - 00:35:03:08

Thomas Miller

Well, now, we went. Well, last time that you did a, black history, thing here. You know, it kind of confirmed to me, some things that I experienced, you know, on the top floor, on the top floor of the market house auditorium...

00:35:03:10 - 00:35:37:23

Thomas Miller

there was a skating rink, you know, and we would go skating on Monday evenings, you know, and I never really thought about it, you know, until much later. But that was the only night that we could go skating, you know, was on was on Monday evenings. If you were black, you know. And what I sort of remembered, it was it also if you were black in Wheeling and you went to Wheeling Park, you could only go swimming on Wednesday afternoon.

00:35:38:00 - 00:35:53:09

Thomas Miller

You know, and after, finding out, you know, that that was the case, I thought that maybe that was just local, you know, but apparently that was a national policy. You know, it kind of shocked me a little bit, you know.

00:35:53:09 - 00:35:59:06

Ron Scott

The same day nationally? Like it was Wednesdays, or the separation thing?

00:35:59:08 - 00:36:29:22

Thomas Miller

Well. I'm pretty sure that no, white families went with women, you know? And what makes me think about that, you know, is because I remember reading a couple years ago, is that, at one community, they kind of slipped up and they let a black family go swimming. You know, on a day other than Wednesday, they drained the swimming pool.

00:36:29:22 - 00:36:31:00

Ron Scott

Geeze.

00:36:31:02 - 00:36:49:02

Thomas Miller

You know, I'm thinking, oh my goodness, you know, do you realize how much that cost you? It might take three days to drain that swimming pool. You know, and then another three days to fill it back up, you know? Yeah.

00:36:49:04 - 00:36:50:07

Ron Scott

That's just wild to me.

00:36:50:07 - 00:36:59:02

Darlene Stradwick

And people think it's so, it was so long ago. And it really if you think about it, it wasn't that long ago that these things happened. It's like we were talking about the playgrounds...

00:36:59:03 - 00:37:01:13

Thomas Miller

I'm only 62 myself, Ronnie. You know.

00:37:01:15 - 00:37:10:17

Darlene Stradwick

No, he's not. He is not 62. You don't get to be younger than me.

00:37:10:19 - 00:37:29:10

Thomas Miller

All right, all right. But Ronnie, you know, I used to think that I was younger than your dad, you know? And recently, when I was, when I came across his obituary, I was actually two, two weeks older than your dad. Yeah.

00:37:29:12 - 00:37:41:18

Ron Scott

So draining in the pool? Was that 40 years, 50 years ago or not even that long?

00:37:41:20 - 00:37:45:23

Darlene Stradwick

It would be, it would still have been the 60s, wasn't it?

00:37:46:01 - 00:37:48:05

Thomas Miller

I don't know exactly.

00:37:48:06 - 00:37:52:01

Ron Scott

Because that isn't long, if you think about that, that's the age of...

00:37:52:01 - 00:37:53:18

Sean Duffy

Almost my lifetime.

00:37:53:20 - 00:38:02:02

Ron Scott

Yeah, I know, people like people that see this, that they could know people living that were around when this happened.

00:38:02:02 - 00:38:04:02

Thomas Miller

How old are you guys?

00:38:04:08 - 00:38:05:06

Sean Duffy

I'm 58 years old.

00:38:05:08 - 00:38:09:18

Thomas Miller

58? I would love to be 58.

00:38:09:20 - 00:38:12:00

Darlene Stradwick

Me too!

00:38:12:02 - 00:38:13:10

Sean Duffy

Well, my point is, this stuff..

00:38:13:12 - 00:38:14:08

Thomas Miller

I'd love to be 68.

00:38:14:08 - 00:38:18:07

Sean Duffy  
was going on, just a few years before I was even born.

00:38:18:09 - 00:38:20:03  
Thomas Miller  
So where were you born?

00:38:20:04 - 00:38:21:16  
Sean Duffy  
Here. Wheeling.

00:38:21:18 - 00:38:22:16  
Thomas Miller  
Here, where?

00:38:22:18 - 00:38:23:21  
Sean Duffy  
Well, Pittsburgh, actually.

00:38:24:01 - 00:38:26:15  
Thomas Miller  
Okay.

00:38:26:17 - 00:38:27:05  
Sean Duffy  
Yeah.

00:38:27:07 - 00:38:28:10  
Darlene Stradwick  
What part of the city were you raised in?

00:38:28:11 - 00:38:30:23  
Sean Duffy  
I'm from Warwood. Grew up in Warwood.

00:38:31:01 - 00:38:35:06  
Thomas Miller  
Oh, yeah? Do you remember my aunt, Mrs. Miller?

00:38:35:07 - 00:38:39:02  
Sean Duffy  
Eileen Miller? Yes. I don't remember her, but I know all about her, because I've read about all about her.

00:38:39:07 - 00:38:47:04  
Thomas Miller  
Oh, really? You know, I have some of her yearbooks, you know, I'm gonna have to look you up, you know, and then,

00:38:47:06 - 00:38:49:22

Sean Duffy

Yeah, I think she's great.

00:38:49:23 - 00:39:20:04

Thomas Miller

Well, the day that you guys talked about her here and, you know, I started just to mention some things, you know, about that, you know, but I kind of stopped myself, you know, because, I knew that she wouldn't want some of these negative things brought up. You know, you know, but when Lincoln School closed, she was just a young teacher

00:39:20:04 - 00:39:58:12

Thomas Miller

then. And and, she had a lot of difficulty finding a job locally, you know, and I think, you know, that that the older black teachers, you know, like, maybe, maybe got some of the openings you know. And she was getting ready to go apply for a job up in Pittsburgh. And this, and this local guy, that was a family friend, you know, apparently he knew someone, and told her, hold up.

00:39:58:14 - 00:40:27:13

Thomas Miller

You know, so he spoke to somebody on the board. And they kind of told her, you know, that it might be an opening, in Warwood, you know, now, there was an opening in Warwood, you know. But they couldn't tell her that at that point, you know, but but, you know, after she went through the interview process and everything.

00:40:27:15 - 00:41:10:15

Thomas Miller

The last stipulation was that the staff working there at the school had to vote on whether or not, she could come teach there, you know, and not just the teachers, you know, but the cooks, the janitor and everything. You know, you know, and she told me that there was one lady that was a holdout, you know, and I'm not going to mention her name, you know, because her family's very well known locally, you know, and she says, you know, that the that for the 30 or 40 some years that she taught there, you know, that this teacher never did accept her, you know, her being there. Yeah.

00:41:10:17 - 00:41:20:12

Sean Duffy

Amazing. All I know is when we did that program and put it online every, every, a lot of people knew who she was.

00:41:20:13 - 00:41:21:22

Thomas Miller

Oh my goodness. Yes.

00:41:22:00 - 00:41:30:12

Sean Duffy

And I was concerned. I thought somebody might say something mean. But every comment was, well they loved her. She was beloved.

00:41:30:15 - 00:41:34:04

Thomas Miller

Yes, yes.

00:41:34:06 - 00:41:42:00

Darlene Stradwick

It was rare that you have a black teacher. Because I think in, I went to Webster and the only black teacher there was Miss Green.

00:41:42:02 - 00:41:43:19

Thomas Miller

Oh my goodness, Miss Green.

00:41:43:21 - 00:41:45:08

Darlene Stradwick

I knew he was gonna say Miss Green.

00:41:45:08 - 00:41:46:06

Thomas Miller

Oh my goodness.

00:41:46:11 - 00:41:57:14

Darlene Stradwick

But that was the only black teacher I knew my entire from. Let's see, it goes from 61 to 74. And that was the only black teacher...

00:41:57:16 - 00:41:58:20

Thomas Miller

Oh Miss Green.

00:41:58:22 - 00:42:08:02

Darlene Stradwick

But Mr. but Mr. Borem did come as an as an, assistant principal at Wheeling High before I left.

00:42:08:05 - 00:42:08:17

Thomas Miller

You know.

00:42:08:19 - 00:42:09:07

Ron Scott

Mr. Borem?

00:42:09:09 - 00:42:15:15

Darlene Stradwick

Mr. Borem, and he was the he was assistant principal under Miss Benicki before I left in 74...

00:42:15:15 - 00:42:17:13

Ron Scott

I must be thinking of a different Mr. Borem, though right?

00:42:17:15 - 00:42:20:18

Darlene Stradwick

Not Mr. Borem. What is his name? Holmes. Mr. Holmes

00:42:20:19 - 00:42:21:14

Ron Scott

Oh!

00:42:21:14 - 00:42:22:02

Darlene Stradwick

Mr. Holmes.

00:42:22:04 - 00:42:24:18

Ron Scott

I was like, I had Mr. Borem, and that dude was black the whole time?

00:42:24:20 - 00:42:28:03

Darlene Stradwick

No, Mr. Borem was, the bane of my existence.

00:42:28:05 - 00:42:29:06

Ron Scott

He was rough!

00:42:29:08 - 00:42:38:14

Darlene Stradwick

He was the worst teacher. He was, and that's what brought him back to me. But. Yeah, but, but, yeah, in in all those years, like I said, Miss Green at Webster.

00:42:38:14 - 00:42:39:03

Thomas Miller

Oh, my goodness.

00:42:39:05 - 00:42:41:11

Darlene Stradwick

and Mr. Holmes. That was it.

00:42:41:16 - 00:42:43:19

Thomas Miller

She was a disciplinarian, you know.

00:42:43:19 - 00:42:44:03

Darlene Stradwick

Oh, yeah.

00:42:44:07 - 00:43:16:03

Thomas Miller

You know, I remember one Christmas, you know, I got this plaid like cowboy shirt, you know, so those little string ties, you know, that kind of come around here, and they had, like, a little steer. You know, that thing went through, you know. So the first day after Christmas, you know, I go to school, you know, got my new plaid shirt on, you know, to get my cowboy boots on.

00:43:16:05 - 00:43:39:16

Thomas Miller

So they had breaks that when you would line up at the, water fountain, you know, out there in the hallway, you know. So, I kind of lost my head, you know? So I acted up a little bit. Now she was a first grade teacher. You know, and she swooped down on me like a hawk. She grabbed me by my throat.

00:43:39:18 - 00:44:09:13

Thomas Miller

I never did find that steer. Oh, my goodness. You know, what they did. Later on, now somebody asked me, what was the, what was the, policy like about discipline? You know, and I said, well, then, not only do they permit corporate punishment, but they encourage it. Oh but, oh boy, you know.

00:44:09:15 - 00:44:10:15

Darlene Stradwick

Don't say that cause they're trying to bring that back.

00:44:10:19 - 00:44:12:22

Thomas Miller

You know, but, I'm gonna tell you what though, you know,

00:44:12:22 - 00:44:15:00

Darlene Stradwick

You're trying to get somebody hurt, because...

00:44:15:02 - 00:44:39:12

Thomas Miller

Straightened me up, right then, you know? She never had not one ounce of trouble, from me afterwards, you know. And my Michael, my son Michael, you know, back when he wound up at the children's home for a while, you know, so we used to have meetings up in Lincoln on the second floor, you know?

00:44:39:14 - 00:45:14:20

Thomas Miller

So, this one meeting, you know, he comes in there, all cocky and everything. You know like, he's got, he's got all these psychologists. You don't know what they mean, and everything, you know. I got the whole side by myself, you know, like and he's over there, you know, with, with all these experts, you know, that surround him and everything you know, and he put his foot up on the desk, you know, and I'm thinking I'd love to see Miss Green come down here and snatch him, by the throat, you know, after that, everybody else, they can all go home.



00:45:14:22 - 00:45:20:12

Thomas Miller

That's all he needs, you know, like just one time. Yeah.

00:45:20:14 - 00:45:22:19

Sean Duffy

You know, I think we should stop now.

00:45:22:21 - 00:45:23:14

Thomas Miller

Oh my goodness.

00:45:23:14 - 00:45:23:23

Ron Scott

Right.

00:45:23:23 - 00:45:25:16

Sean Duffy

We're gonna come back at two, right?

00:45:25:18 - 00:45:27:15

Ron Scott

Yeah. Can you come back at two, unc?

00:45:27:17 - 00:45:28:19

Thomas Miller

No I'm not.

00:45:28:21 - 00:45:32:02

Ron Scott

What!

00:45:32:04 - 00:45:32:09

Darlene Stradwick

He has nothing to do.

00:45:32:13 - 00:45:33:05

Thomas Miller

I'll be back.

00:45:33:07 - 00:45:35:15

Ron Scott

That's right. You got stuff to bring..

00:45:35:17 - 00:45:35:22

Darlene Stradwick

Yeah.

00:45:35:23 - 00:45:41:00

Sean Duffy

You mind if we scan your pictures? I have a scanner. Is that all right?

00:45:41:04 - 00:45:43:14

Thomas Miller

Well, now you know what though? I'm going to tell you...

00:45:43:20 - 00:45:45:00

Sean Duffy

You can say no.

00:45:45:02 - 00:45:58:01

Thomas Miller

Well, hold up now, hold up now. You know what? Back when I first started doing this project, you know, and my project was documenting in photographs, you know, like the old black neighborhoods, you know?

00:45:58:01 - 00:45:58:21

Sean Duffy

Yeah.

00:45:58:23 - 00:46:14:20

Thomas Miller

And it's devastating, you know, to know how many photographs left here, you know, you know, and then if a family leaves, you know, as their family gets older, you know, they don't care nothing about it. Out.

00:46:15:02 - 00:46:22:10

Thomas Miller

You know, like, they throw that stuff out. So, sure, you know, I'm gonna let, I'm gonna let you scan one or two.

00:46:22:12 - 00:46:24:18

Sean Duffy

Okay. Hey,

00:46:24:20 - 00:50:33:23

Unknown

So.

00:50:34:01 - 00:50:39:15

Thomas Miller

Man. You know, I think Sicily. Yes, yes. You know.

00:50:39:17 - 00:50:42:19

Ron Scott

Twenty cents? Twenty cents got you what?

00:50:42:21 - 00:51:25:03

Thomas Miller

It got you a hot dog, you know. But if you were black, though, you know, you couldn't sit inside at the booths. And if you remember Marvellas Webb? You remember "Cool Shake." Cool Shake was his brother in law, you know, you know, so Marvellas Webb, at the point that he had gone to Wheeling High School, you know, after they integrated Lincoln and he was part of a group that they went to Louis and they were going to promote protests, you know, so that you could get a hot dog and sit down in there, you know. Yeah.

00:51:25:05 - 00:51:39:04

Ron Scott

Now, What I'm trying to figure out is in my head, when I think of that, I think of, like a lot of hostility. Did the people like in Louis, did they even think anything of it, or was it just the way it was?

00:51:39:04 - 00:51:45:07

Thomas Miller

Well, Ronnie, it was it was kind of one of those things that it's just how it was.

00:51:45:07 - 00:51:47:05

Ron Scott

Okay.

00:51:47:07 - 00:52:00:02

Thomas Miller

You know, and his group, you know, decided, well, then, that's how it was, and we'll see if we can affect some change, you know? Yeah.

00:52:00:04 - 00:52:03:04

Ron Scott

You know, were they angry at Louis when they did that? Or were they..

00:52:03:06 - 00:52:10:15

Thomas Miller

No, nope. You know, because we did want a hot dog, you know.

00:52:10:17 - 00:52:57:16

Thomas Miller

And what are you gonna do, you know? Yep. And it was, Marvellas, Stuart Catlin, Jimmy Cyrus, my sister "fuzzy" Margaret. And that was around, I would say, in the 1960's. You know, but it wasn't the only place, you know, because if you know where the office lounge was on 12th Street. Well, at one time that was a movie theater, you know, and my dad's sister in law, Miss Naomi Miller.

00:52:57:18 - 00:53:18:12

Thomas Miller

She played the piano. And you couldn't go in there to see a movie, you know? But she would go upstairs on the top floor where the piano was, and she would play the piano during the silent movies. Yep.

00:53:18:14 - 00:53:22:07

Ron Scott

And so they allowed her to do that, but that was it?

00:53:22:09 - 00:53:45:15

Thomas Miller

And my dad even took my brother and me over to, Bridgeport, to the movie theaters, you know, because at that point, you know, we... Well, my dad's generation couldn't go to the movies, you know? In Wheeling. But we could. Darlene, now you probably went to the double features at the Liberty Theater?

00:53:45:17 - 00:53:46:19

Darlene Stradwick

See I don't remember the Liberty.

00:53:46:20 - 00:53:47:11

Thomas Miller

Oh, really?

00:53:47:12 - 00:53:50:20

Darlene Stradwick

It was Court and Victoria when I was...

00:53:50:22 - 00:53:51:07

Thomas Miller

You know,

00:53:51:12 - 00:53:52:04

Darlene Stradwick

when we went.

00:53:52:04 - 00:54:06:04

Thomas Miller

And there was a Sunday school group, that we were a part of, and we would meet on a Saturday evening, you know, at various members houses. Do you remember Miss Gertrude Dixon?

00:54:06:06 - 00:54:07:04

Darlene Stradwick

I don't know that name.

00:54:07:04 - 00:54:08:12

Thomas Miller

Oh, okay nevermind.

00:54:08:14 - 00:54:31:20

Thomas Miller

I bet your sisters would, you know? So anyway though, now we would either, go to someone's

house to meet, and this one time they were going to treat us, so we went over to the Capitol Theater, on the top floor, and they had a bowling alley there, you know? I think it's still there. You know, the bowling lane.

00:54:31:22 - 00:54:32:08

Sean Duffy

I don't know.

00:54:32:08 - 00:54:35:05

Thomas Miller

You know, and we had a bunch of kids...

00:54:35:07 - 00:54:36:02

Ron Scott

It is there.

00:54:36:03 - 00:54:38:06

Ron Scott

They talked about it and I didn't believe them.

00:54:38:08 - 00:55:00:12

Thomas Miller

And they wouldn't let our Sunday school group bowl there. You know, so, you know where the Independence Hall is? Well, then, to the left of it, there used to be another bowling lane right there. And we went there, and they let our Sunday school group bowl there. You know?

00:55:00:14 - 00:55:03:02

Thomas Miller

Yep.

00:55:03:04 - 00:55:05:03

Darlene Stradwick

I remember that bowling alley.

00:55:05:05 - 00:55:20:05

Ron Scott

Well, I had an idea for a project. I was like, I'm going to retroactively go back and I'm gonna protest all these stores that practiced the Jim Crow stuff and all that. But I realized that was all of them.

00:55:20:06 - 00:55:22:04

Thomas Miller

All of 'em were.

00:55:22:06 - 00:55:27:17

Ron Scott

Like that, that that's hard for me to imagine. I always thought the 1 or 2 stores that were like...

00:55:27:19 - 00:56:04:13

Thomas Miller

Well, Ronnie, now you know where, Lincoln Detention Center is, you know, and that's where we all went to school. And, in the back where there's parking. There used to be a basketball court back there and one of those, walk in kind of swimming pools, you know, that they had at the playground with the pipe, you know, that kind of went over there with the water that sprayed down, you know? So that was our swimming pool.

00:56:04:15 - 00:56:05:21

Sean Duffy

Was that called the Wolf Playground?

00:56:05:23 - 00:56:09:03

Thomas Miller

The Wolf Playground, yep. Oh, so you're familiar with it?

00:56:09:05 - 00:56:10:16

Sean Duffy

I heard about it the last time we did this.

00:56:10:20 - 00:56:12:05

Thomas Miller

Okay. Okay.

00:56:12:05 - 00:56:14:01

Ron Scott

Mr. Sean Duffy here!

00:56:14:03 - 00:56:17:07

Thomas Miller

Okay.

00:56:17:09 - 00:56:18:14

Darlene Stradwick

We talked about that last time.

00:56:18:17 - 00:56:41:21

Thomas Miller

You know, so we had that playground, the Wolf Playground. And then, Center Wheeling, now they call it South Wheeling, but it's actually Center Wheeling. Down there where the sewage treatment plant is now, that's where the black playground used to be. You know, that was the 27th Street playground.

00:56:42:00 - 00:56:51:11

Darlene Stradwick

That's what I was telling them last time, but most people couldn't remember, except me. I remember when we moved to 26th Street, that that was the playground we had to go to because we weren't allowed at 26th Street.

00:56:51:11 - 00:57:08:00

Thomas Miller

But you remember though now where the Wilson playground was? Now the I-470... Not not I-470. I think that it was like, I-70 south kind of took it out, you know?

00:57:08:02 - 00:57:11:12

Darlene Stradwick

Seems like I remember Wilson Playground, but I just don't remember that one.

00:57:11:14 - 00:57:47:21

Thomas Miller

Because they had the playground in there. And your brother Lee used to go down there and play all the time, you know? So somebody was telling me recently, though, you know, that your brother Reuben, he would always play baseball down there because he was a very good player, you know. So this one, friend, you know, invited him to go swimming down there, you know, and his friend didn't quite understand, you know, that he couldn't go swimming there, you know, he could play on the ball field you know, but he couldn't go to the swimming pool.

00:57:47:23 - 00:57:54:08

Darlene Stradwick

And basically, like, I was telling them last time, our brothers kind of integrated the playgrounds because of sports.

00:57:54:08 - 00:57:55:03

Thomas Miller

They did.

00:57:55:05 - 00:58:00:00

Darlene Stradwick

Because we weren't allowed... We had the 27th Street playground. That's one I was telling them about.

00:58:00:02 - 00:58:04:21

Thomas Miller

You know, and the playground was right there by the railroad tracks, you know?

00:58:05:00 - 00:58:06:05

Darlene Stradwick

Yes.

00:58:06:07 - 00:58:09:04

Thomas Miller

And not a blade of grass.

00:58:09:04 - 00:58:10:20

Darlene Stradwick

No. I thought it was...

00:58:10:20 - 00:58:11:19

Thomas Miller

Not a blade of grass.

00:58:12:00 - 00:58:12:15

Darlene Stradwick

I remember.

00:58:12:21 - 00:58:29:14

Thomas Miller

But it was right there next to the railroad tracks, you know. You know, so my sisters though now, when they get home from up from the playground, they would be covered by coal dust. Yeah. And it's just how it was. Yes.

00:58:29:15 - 00:58:32:10

Ron Scott

That's all you got though? I guess it's okay.

00:58:32:12 - 00:58:44:05

Darlene Stradwick

Yeah. And the only playground, and behind Pavlack's, I was telling them that Pavlack's was there, and I think that's why the railroad tracks were there. Because they were delivering supplies to Pavlack's. That was, it was...

00:58:44:07 - 00:58:50:13

Thomas Miller

But that later became. No, no, before that, that was actually Moore's Lumber.

00:58:50:15 - 00:58:51:09

Darlene Stradwick

Moore's Lumber.

00:58:51:13 - 00:58:51:16

Thomas Miller

Moore's Lumber.

00:58:51:16 - 00:58:53:04

Darlene Stradwick

I remember Moore's also.

00:58:53:06 - 00:58:53:18

Thomas Miller

Yes.

00:58:53:18 - 00:58:58:23

Darlene Stradwick

But there was two different places. There was Moore's and Pavlack's. I think they were there at the same time.

00:58:59:01 - 00:59:00:19

Thomas Miller



Yes, yes.

00:59:00:21 - 00:59:15:05

Darlene Stradwick

Because, because Pavlack's was a wrecking... It wasn't, Moore's is what was the place that sold wooden stuff. Pavlack's was, not destruction, was where they tore things apart.

00:59:15:05 - 00:59:16:03

Thomas Miller

Yes.

00:59:16:05 - 00:59:17:21

Sean Duffy

You can sit here.

00:59:17:23 - 00:59:23:11

Darlene Stradwick

So, but yeah. So. And I remember that playground even when I was little.

00:59:23:11 - 00:59:54:19

Thomas Miller

Let me tell you this, you know, but also though, If there was a circus in town, you know, then the trains, they would pull over right down there, you know, down at 27th and Main Street, you know, and, and then they would offload the animals, you know, like, and then they would run up, walk the animals up Main Street and then across the bridge to the stadium, you know, for the circus, you know?

00:59:54:21 - 00:59:58:22

Ron Scott

That's all right, maybe it is a good reason to have the playground there, for once. Geeze.

00:59:59:02 - 01:00:02:07

Darlene Stradwick

Well, it wasn't about the playground. That's where the railroad tracks were.

01:00:02:08 - 01:00:02:21

Ron Scott

Oh.

01:00:02:23 - 01:00:03:05

Thomas Miller

Yes.

01:00:03:09 - 01:00:13:22

Darlene Stradwick

So they that they would pull up on the railroad tracks with the animals, and then they would unload them there and march them through town. It was kind of a little parade, it was an event, it was an event.

01:00:13:23 - 01:00:26:12

Thomas Miller

And I worked for the fire department, you know? So this one particular day though, when they were walking the animals up Main Street, you know, there was a fire in South Wheeling, you know, so we had to drive past there with the sirens on.

01:00:26:13 - 01:00:27:18

Ron Scott

Oh, wow.

01:00:27:20 - 01:00:38:16

Thomas Miller

And they did all that they could do just to keep the animals from going wild, you know, because because the sirens were like driving 'em crazy. Yep.

01:00:38:18 - 01:00:54:14

Ron Scott

Now, do you think that the, in my head, in my head I'm like nobody's going to put a playground by train tracks and stuff? But do you think they just didn't care back then because it was the black playground? Or did they just not care about kids back then?

01:00:54:15 - 01:01:17:04

Thomas Miller

And that was it. Exactly. You know, because that was the black community. Now that's what they refer to as South Wheeling you know? But it wasn't South Wheeling, it was Center Wheeling, and where the post office is down there now? When they built the post office and put the trucking centers down there, that, that basically wiped out the black community, right?

01:01:17:06 - 01:01:37:16

Darlene Stradwick

Yeah. We were up a little, we were up a little further. We moved southern, south. We were up, 23rd Street because our playground was the center market. It wasn't closed in. It was the open air market. And that's where we rode our bikes and everything inside, inside there before they closed it up. But we lived on 23rd Street.

01:01:37:16 - 01:01:38:18

Thomas Miller

23rd Street, okay.

01:01:38:22 - 01:01:44:06

Darlene Stradwick

And we moved south. We moved to 26th Street because they had taken all that area...

01:01:44:08 - 01:01:44:11

Thomas Miller

Yes. Right.

01:01:44:14 - 01:01:56:21

Darlene Stradwick

for the same, for urban renewal or whatever projects they were going to do. And that's where all, a lot of the black families lived. We lived around a lot of black families, but my dad worked in Moundsville.

01:01:56:23 - 01:01:57:17

Thomas Miller

I didn't know that.

01:01:57:21 - 01:02:00:05

Darlene Stradwick

So we moved south. That's why we moved south.

01:02:00:06 - 01:02:00:11

Thomas Miller

Okay.

01:02:00:14 - 01:02:07:08

Darlene Stradwick

Because he worked in Moundsville in the coal mines. And but everybody else moved more towards East Wheeling.

01:02:07:10 - 01:02:08:23

Thomas Miller

Yep.

01:02:09:01 - 01:02:32:09

Darlene Stradwick

So we were the only family, the, the closest, probably, Candy Gardner and them were still about 23rd Street or so. They lived closer to the river, so they were still down that way. A few streets over. You might have found the Mann's lived a few streets over. And the Wood's lived right behind us.

01:02:32:11 - 01:02:34:03

Thomas Miller

Yes.

01:02:34:05 - 01:02:38:14

Darlene Stradwick

In the street where you remember the, Clemens and the...

01:02:38:16 - 01:02:39:02

Ron Scott

Yeah.

01:02:39:02 - 01:02:49:18

Darlene Stradwick

Rosses and all of them? They all lived behind us. We lived on 26th and Chapline, and then lived 26th and Logan. And someone recently put a picture out of that.

01:02:49:20 - 01:02:58:12

Sean Duffy

I have a question. If you lived in Center Wheeling, were there black-owned businesses there, like on Chapline Street?

01:02:58:14 - 01:02:59:11

Thomas Miller

Well...

01:02:59:11 - 01:03:00:06

Darlene Stradwick

Were there any?

01:03:00:07 - 01:03:14:21

Thomas Miller

Hold up now, you were getting ready to say no, you know, but but I just found this out recently, Ronnie Johnson's family, they told me that that his dad had a black gas station.

01:03:14:23 - 01:03:15:13

Darlene Stradwick

Oh, really?

01:03:15:13 - 01:03:16:05

Thomas Miller

Down there.

01:03:16:05 - 01:03:16:15

Darlene Stradwick

Didn't know that.

01:03:16:15 - 01:04:04:19

Thomas Miller

You know, down around 25th and Main Street, you know. So when I graduated from from high school in 66, I got a job at the, at the AMP on 29th Street, you know? And since our family never had a car, you know, I never been that far south before, you know? You know, somebody told me recently, well, somebody could have told you, that that was California. Hey, I wouldn't have known any different. I wouldn't know any different, you know, because. Because back then, your neighborhood was your world, you know, and you didn't have to stray far from there.

01:04:04:21 - 01:04:17:22

Ron Scott

You know what that makes me think of. When you packed us all up that one time and put us in your truck and took us to Barkcamp. I thought that was the beach. Like I thought we were at the ocean.

01:04:18:00 - 01:04:18:11

Thomas Miller

Ronnie.

01:04:18:11 - 01:04:19:18

Darlene Stradwick

Nope.

01:04:19:20 - 01:04:27:18

Thomas Miller

Ronnie, that was the beach to me, too. I never been to the beach before.

01:04:27:19 - 01:04:31:06

Ron Scott

I was blown away. There's sand and everything. I'm like, this is amazing.

01:04:31:11 - 01:04:32:18

Thomas Miller

And, Ronnie, you know what?

01:04:32:21 - 01:04:34:02

Ron Scott

Can I surf or something?

01:04:34:04 - 01:04:47:00

Thomas Miller

Now, that was no fancy pickup truck. That was a king cab. You know, like all of that, you know, because I remember having either 4 or 5 kids in the front with a seat belt across 'em. All of 'em.

01:04:47:02 - 01:04:51:18

Ron Scott

Yeah, there was a lot of us in that truck.

01:04:51:20 - 01:04:54:01

Thomas Miller

Oh, boy. You know, yep.

01:04:54:02 - 01:05:07:00

Ron Scott

Now, when you were asking that, is that something that you can remember being conscious of though, black businesses, then?

01:05:07:02 - 01:06:01:11

Thomas Miller

Actually, no Ronnie, you know. Because, I remember when when, Robert Hall opened up out in Elm Grove, you know, and that was a clothing store, you know, and then there, right there. As you get off of the Elm Grove exit, you know, like it was right there. Yeah. And then, until then, you know, I'd never been out in Elm Grove, you know, and right there where the, where the McDonald's is, that's where the AMP used to be out in Elm Grove, you know? So if I wanted to, to make extra money, you know. So I would get on a bus and ride out there and work at the, at the AMP on Krueger Street.

01:06:01:13 - 01:06:05:09

Ron Scott

What kind, what was the time period of the 20th man speech?

01:06:05:11 - 01:06:07:05

Sean Duffy

1936.

01:06:07:07 - 01:06:27:10

Ron Scott

Okay. Because 36. There was a speech that I get to work with the library on called the 20th man. And this guy made this speech about, Wheeling in 1936 and the businesses and stuff that he talked about then, it seemed like it was so thriving, like there were so many black professionals and businesses and...

01:06:27:15 - 01:06:46:09

Thomas Miller

Well, There were lots of businesses, you know, but not necessarily black businesses, you know. Darlene, now do you remember when your brother Ben worked at Industronics? That was on, what, Chapline Street?

01:06:46:11 - 01:06:46:20

Darlene Stradwick

It was on Market Street,

01:06:46:21 - 01:06:52:15

Thomas Miller

You were right across the street from, Black Stereo.

01:06:52:17 - 01:06:53:00

Darlene Stradwick

Yeah.

01:06:53:02 - 01:06:54:00

Thomas Miller

Yes. Yeah.

01:06:54:00 - 01:06:57:16

Ron Scott

Now was that a black person? Cause I do remember Black Stereos, but...

01:06:57:18 - 01:06:58:01

Thomas Miller

No.

01:06:58:01 - 01:06:58:19

Ron Scott

I never knew if they was black or not.

01:06:58:19 - 01:06:59:20

Thomas Miller

No no no.

01:06:59:20 - 01:07:02:07

Ron Scott

Just his name. Name was Black.

01:07:02:09 - 01:07:09:04

Thomas Miller

But there was a black family though, now Darlene went to prom when one of them.

01:07:09:06 - 01:07:09:15

Ron Scott

Bobby Black.

01:07:09:15 - 01:07:11:03

Thomas Miller

Bobby Black.

01:07:11:05 - 01:07:13:10

Darlene Stradwick

Oh, we not gonna talk about that. Okay.

01:07:13:12 - 01:07:15:19

Thomas Miller

Cause there was Bobby Black,

01:07:15:21 - 01:07:17:06

Darlene Stradwick

That does not need to be recorded.

01:07:17:12 - 01:07:19:19

Thomas Miller

Bobby Black. Major Black.

01:07:19:21 - 01:07:23:13

Ron Scott

Major Black! That's an amazing name. His name was Major Black.

01:07:23:13 - 01:07:25:11

Thomas Miller

Ronnie, Ronnie, Blue Black.

01:07:25:13 - 01:07:27:22

Ron Scott

That was his name?

01:07:28:00 - 01:07:31:07

Thomas Miller

That's what they call him.

01:07:31:09 - 01:07:31:15

Darlene Stradwick

That wasn't his real name.

01:07:31:15 - 01:07:33:01

Thomas Miller

That's what they called him.

01:07:33:03 - 01:07:33:15

Ron Scott

That's crazy.

01:07:33:20 - 01:07:36:11

Thomas Miller

Yes. Yep.

01:07:36:13 - 01:07:49:14

Darlene Stradwick

Yeah. That's, I'm trying to think. See, I don't know if Sam Woods was that a real bar or was that just something that. Right behind us. The Wood's lived behind us?

01:07:49:16 - 01:07:49:21

Thomas Miller

Yes.

01:07:50:01 - 01:07:55:22

Darlene Stradwick

And Sam Woods was the father and I think there was a bar in there.

01:07:56:00 - 01:07:57:16

Thomas Miller

The Ebony Bar.

01:07:57:18 - 01:07:58:13

Darlene Stradwick

Was it called that?

01:07:58:17 - 01:07:59:18

Ron Scott

Oh, it has to be black then.

01:07:59:18 - 01:08:05:13

Thomas Miller

There was the Ebony Bar, the Silver Rail, I think. You know.



01:08:05:15 - 01:08:08:03

Sean Duffy

Silver Rail, there's still a place called that.

01:08:08:05 - 01:08:08:16

Ron Scott

Yeah.

01:08:08:18 - 01:08:09:04

Thomas Miller

Okay.

01:08:09:04 - 01:08:13:03

Darlene Stradwick

Yeah. It's owned by a black person now. I don't know if it was owned by a black person then.

01:08:13:08 - 01:08:16:13

Ron Scott

Where was the Ebony bar at?

01:08:16:15 - 01:08:38:23

Thomas Miller

Ronnie, you know, at the time, I really wasn't old enough, you know, to go to bars and everything, you know, and really, I wasn't even allowed to walk past those bars down on Main Street, you know. My family told me, stay on Chapline Street now, you know like I did, turn right on 27th Street and that'll take you right to the playground. You know.

01:08:38:23 - 01:08:42:02

Darlene Stradwick

There was a lot of stuff. But I remember...

01:08:42:04 - 01:08:43:06

Sean Duffy

These lights flicker sometimes.

01:08:43:08 - 01:08:45:12

Darlene Stradwick

Yeah, I remember. Yikes,

01:08:45:13 - 01:08:46:01

Thomas Miller

Yikes?

01:08:46:01 - 01:08:46:20

Darlene Stradwick

Yikes.

01:08:46:22 - 01:08:49:05

Thomas Miller

Darlene, Yikes Lukondis.

01:08:49:09 - 01:08:49:20

Darlene Stradwick

Yes.

01:08:50:02 - 01:08:50:13

Thomas Miller

Yes.

01:08:50:14 - 01:09:08:06

Darlene Stradwick

And he owned a lot of that kind of... Bought the stuff that was there. I just remember, I don't where, was that the Ebony Bar? I don't know. I'm gonna lie and say that I but I remember a lot of that and we kind of stayed on Chapline as well.

01:09:08:08 - 01:09:09:17

Thomas Miller

Your sisters would remember.

01:09:09:19 - 01:09:13:04

Darlene Stradwick

Yeah. And we played on Logan Street that was like our playground.

01:09:13:06 - 01:09:13:15

Thomas Miller

Yes.

01:09:13:15 - 01:09:22:20

Darlene Stradwick

You know, instead of going to the railroad tracks we had, we'd find old tires and, and, and hurdle over tires and, and you've seen those pictures of the black and white pictures

01:09:22:20 - 01:09:22:23

Ron Scott

Oh yeah.

01:09:22:23 - 01:10:10:03

Darlene Stradwick

they have of us standing in the alley, me with my long neck. And, but we did. I mean, that was where we played all the neighborhood kids and stuff and, you know, and we were close.

There was there was issues when we moved south. You know, I remember the next door neighbor telling my mom that, her husband told her not to mess with people like us. You know, but, but then we became friends, I'm Facebook friends with all the daughters. We never played together when we were kids. I mean, they were right next door. We never played together as kids. And I think they went to Catholic school. I don't think they went to Webster or Wheeling High. I think they went to Central and St. Al's, but but mostly it was a friendly neighborhood.

01:10:10:05 - 01:10:15:07

Thomas Miller

You know, my dad, he was raised on the Island, you know.

01:10:15:07 - 01:10:16:01

Darlene Stradwick

I didn't know that.

01:10:16:02 - 01:10:43:18

Thomas Miller

Well, for a while, you know, because my dad was kind of raised, without a father, you know, because his dad got in some trouble and then got sent to the penitentiary, you know? And my Aunt Eileen, if you remember this one, Lunch with Books down here, that they had one time about Mrs. Miller from Warwood. The teacher?

01:10:43:18 - 01:11:14:14

Thomas Miller

You know, well now that was my dad's sister. You know, and she was one of the teachers at Lincoln School, you know, and back then, you know, they just lived, like, a couple blocks, from the school. You know, everybody had known Miss Miller for forever, you know, and since my dad's, mom had had to work, you know, when my dad and his brother would go to Lincoln School, you know?

01:11:14:20 - 01:11:42:13

Thomas Miller

Well, my aunt, she was just a little kid, you know, so their mom would say, well, then take her to school with you, you know, and then, so the teachers, all knew her, you know, like, and then instead of, having a babysitter, you know, they would just take her from class to class, you know? You know, but you could do that then, you know. Like you could do that. Yep.

01:11:42:15 - 01:12:01:02

Ron Scott

Now, I know it's only you two right now, but I always imagine that would be the theme, I would love to get a group of people to talk about stuff like, well, you could do that "then." Because I feel like there's so many things that were so different then, as opposed to now, and is there anything like that you could think about?

01:12:01:04 - 01:12:33:19

Thomas Miller

Well, Ron. You know, I kind of started my project, you know, because it seemed like my, my older sister's generation was different, you know, and it seems like the school system turned out a stronger person than they're, than they're turning out right now. From my perspective, you know, from my perspective, you know, and they all kind of, kind of feel like, that's because,

01:12:33:21 - 01:13:20:09

Thomas Miller

Lincoln School's teachers not only knew you as a family, you know, but they, but they knew your your entire family, and they were all concerned about you doing well, you know, and

when. Well, and then after integration, we didn't get that, you know, like, we didn't get that, you know, you know, because now we went to Clay School and not everybody at Clay School was happy to have us there, you know, and some teachers would hide it and some teachers wouldn't, you know, and then often it, it was based on color, you know. Darlene, now you probably know what I'm gonna tell you, you know, so when we went to Clay

01:13:20:09 - 01:13:56:02

Thomas Miller

School, I was in the third grade, you know, so there was this one little girl, and, you know, and she was kind of cute, you know, she had the pigtails or whatever it was, you know, you know. So she asked me, was I white or colored? You know, because then I'm thinking, well, I don't know, I never heard that conversation, you know, in our house, you know, you know, so when I got home that day, during dinner, you know, now that's when the family all sat down together, you know, for dinner.

01:13:56:02 - 01:14:29:17

Thomas Miller

And so it was my parents, and my two and my two older sisters and my sister Margaret and my brother and me. You know, you know, and then, and then after dinner, you know, we were sitting there for a while, you know, so I finally worked up enough nerve, you know, to ask 'em, you know, so I says, mama, are we white or colored? You know.

01:14:29:19 - 01:15:03:05

Thomas Miller

And just like Fred Sanford, you big dummy, you're colored, you know? And that was the first time, you know, that I was actually, you know, really aware of the issues, you know? Yeah. So I started crying, you know, because because just by the way that she had asked me, you know, I knew that the next day if I told her I was, you know, that I was colored. It was over. Oh, boy. Yeah.

01:15:03:07 - 01:15:07:12

Thomas Miller

So that was my introduction to racism.

01:15:07:14 - 01:15:11:02

Ron Scott

Now what grade would you say that was?

01:15:11:04 - 01:15:12:10

Thomas Miller

I was in the third grade.

01:15:12:16 - 01:15:16:18

Ron Scott

Mine was in the third grade, too. They were telling jokes.

01:15:16:20 - 01:15:21:01

Thomas Miller

Well, then, you know, so I hope you came out better than I came out right.

01:15:21:03 - 01:15:28:20

Ron Scott

But I would assume it would get pushed back further. You know, maybe they wouldn't get the introduction till they were senior. Maybe, or, but no.

01:15:28:22 - 01:15:29:02

Thomas Miller

Yeah.

01:15:29:04 - 01:15:49:20

Darlene Stradwick

It must be when you just started noticing that because I remember, I don't remember if it was Zach or Justin, came out and said that they were, that they were orange. What? You're orange? Who told you you were orange? I don't know, and it was like they come home and they asked you about that. It's like one of them, orange, am I orange?

01:15:50:01 - 01:16:06:10

Ron Scott

That's how I did, because they told a joke. They said, I still remember the whole thing. They said, why, and I thought it was hilarious, but I didn't understand it. They were older kids told me the joke and they all started laughing, so I started laughing. They said, Why is Stevie Wonder always smiling? Is it because he doesn't know he's black?

01:16:06:12 - 01:16:16:10

Ron Scott

And I was like, that's hilarious. I remember telling my mom and them that, and she, and saying that's not funny. Oh, well, they thought it was hilarious on the bus.

01:16:16:12 - 01:16:16:17

Thomas Miller

Yep.

01:16:16:19 - 01:16:17:15

Darlene Stradwick

Yeah.

01:16:17:17 - 01:16:54:17

Thomas Miller

In the neighborhood that I was raised in, which was Eoff Street. There were no white people that lived, you know, say from, so, you know, where the, where the Samaritan House is? You know, well, then, that's that's where our street stopped, you know, like we lived on Eoff Street. And and then from that point up, like, up towards Lincoln, it was all black, you know?

01:16:54:19 - 01:17:20:15

Thomas Miller

So we played on, Eoff Street, Monroe Street, Chapline Street, Palo Alto Street. You probably don't know where that is, you know, but the t-shirt that you had up there, like, about, Lawyer Jones. He lived up on Palo Alto Street, you know, but, you know, where the Nelson Jordan

Center is?

01:17:20:15 - 01:17:21:04

Ron Scott

Yeah.

01:17:21:05 - 01:17:26:14

Thomas Miller

You know, and you know, the steps, you know, from the from the Samaritan House, you know.

01:17:26:16 - 01:17:29:18

Ron Scott

Yeah, them long steps. Geeze.

01:17:29:20 - 01:18:24:16

Thomas Miller

Well, then, well, then those steps. Well, I have a photo that I'll have later on, you know, in the photograph, like it's actually a combination of these three photos that I put together, you know, to kind of show you the way that Eoff Street used to be, you know. And in 1971, when I started on the fire department you know, during my probationary period, so, you know, when they were tearing down those houses for the, for the for the Booker T. Washington Apartments, you know, or just for, or just for urban renewal, you know, if you remember, Warrick Moseby, you know, Warrick Moseby's house, you know, that

01:18:24:18 - 01:18:48:18

Thomas Miller

that was the last house standing up there. I actually have a photograph of that, you know, because it kind of shows you Luau Manners and in the background, like it's got Warrick Moseby's parents house sitting up there all by itself, you know, because his mother held out to to the very last, you know. Yep. You know.

01:18:48:18 - 01:18:51:08

Ron Scott

Is he still living? Is Warrick still living?

01:18:51:10 - 01:19:07:05

Thomas Miller

That's a question that everybody's asking, you know, because, he had a stroke and then they took him to a nursing home out near St. Clairsville, and I haven't heard anybody else speak about it since then. You know,

01:19:07:07 - 01:19:08:18

Darlene Stradwick

I haven't seen his obituary or anything.

01:19:08:20 - 01:19:09:14

Thomas Miller

You know.

01:19:09:16 - 01:19:10:23

Darlene Stradwick

Does he still have family?

01:19:11:01 - 01:19:11:10

Thomas Miller

Pardon?

01:19:11:10 - 01:19:13:03

Darlene Stradwick

He still have family local?

01:19:13:05 - 01:19:25:18

Thomas Miller

Yes. Yes. Well, well, I'm pretty sure that that his sister is still alive and she comes down here sometimes, but I think she lives in Washington, Pennsylvania. Yep.

01:19:25:20 - 01:19:28:17

Ron Scott

Aunt Tizzy still here?

01:19:28:19 - 01:19:58:19

Thomas Miller

And his wife, she was one of the first black nurses here. And she went to the nursing school at the O.V. And after she graduated, I think she worked here for a short time. And then they moved out to, out near Sacramento, California, you know, and then she passed away out there. And that's when he kind of came back this way.

01:19:58:21 - 01:20:05:12

Ron Scott

Wow. I never knew that. I thought it was always just him and Tizzy. I didn't know he had a wife before that.

01:20:05:14 - 01:20:15:04

Sean Duffy

I have a, kind of off the record question. The first black police officer in Wheeling was William Turner?

01:20:15:06 - 01:20:20:22

Thomas Miller

Well, now, let me tell you about William Turner.

01:20:21:00 - 01:20:49:13

Thomas Miller

Where we moved to, you know, to the YWCA's building up on 12th Street. Then you had this family named Shannon. And her maiden name was Turner. And her husband was the black policeman. Yep.

01:20:49:15 - 01:20:51:15

Ron Scott

Old Bill Williams. William?

01:20:51:18 - 01:20:55:02

Sean Duffy

William. Yeah. And she ran a.

01:20:55:04 - 01:20:56:14

Thomas Miller

She had a boarding house.

01:20:56:16 - 01:20:57:05

Sean Duffy

A boarding house?

01:20:57:07 - 01:21:36:12

Thomas Miller

She had a boarding house, you know, because when I delivered newspapers, you know, back then, nobody locked their doors. You know, you know, and then on Saturdays and Sundays when I deliver morning papers, you know, they didn't want you to just drop it off at the front door. You know, she said, now just go to the middle door, you know, like, come up the stairs, you know, and then bring the newspaper to my bedroom, I'll be asleep, you know, just put it on the chair next to her bed, you know, which I hated to do, you know, because her feet didn't smell too good.

01:21:36:14 - 01:21:41:20

Sean Duffy

Are there any relatives still around, of his?

01:21:41:22 - 01:21:47:00

Thomas Miller

But her son never had kids. No.

01:21:47:01 - 01:21:54:03

Sean Duffy

Because I found out where their grave is in the Peninsula Cemetery, where he's buried. And they have no marker.

01:21:54:05 - 01:22:22:22

Thomas Miller

Oh, I didn't know. Well, you know, I was just a, Well, her son, Mr. Shannon, he was an older man back when I was a kid, you know, you know. So. And then before that, I never, ever heard anybody, you know, talking about her maiden name or anything. You know, I just knew her by Miss Shannon.

01:22:23:00 - 01:22:37:03

Thomas Miller

You know, but also though, if you were a black male and came to Wheeling, you know, and



you couldn't stay in the hotels, you know, then the men would stay at Miss Shannon's house.

01:22:37:05 - 01:22:38:01

Sean Duffy  
Yeah.

01:22:38:03 - 01:22:44:14

Thomas Miller  
And the women, they would stay at the YWCA, you know.

01:22:44:16 - 01:22:45:17

Thomas Miller  
At our house.

01:22:45:19 - 01:22:52:05

Sean Duffy  
It was in the Green Book. You know, so the people know African American people know to go there.

01:22:52:10 - 01:23:11:02

Thomas Miller  
Well, do you know, I told them when I was, hearing people talking about that Green Book, you know, and, at one time, you could still buy them at, WalMart you could buy, like old copies of 'em, you know, you know, but, if we were going out of town or something.

01:23:11:02 - 01:23:43:01

Thomas Miller  
You know, we were always so, so excited. You know, because our, parents, now they would get together, you know, like and then pack a big picnic basket and everything, you know? So we all look forward to that, you know, having no idea that the reason why they did it, you know, was it was that if you're traveling on the road, you know, like, there's a lot of places you went that, that you couldn't go in to the restaurants or anything, you know, never even thought about it.

01:23:43:03 - 01:23:53:15

Thomas Miller  
Yep. We were young and naive and just as happy as could be.

01:23:53:16 - 01:23:56:21

Darlene Stradwick  
It was easier if you were a kid, then you didn't have to deal with a lot of this stuff.

01:23:56:22 - 01:24:35:11

Thomas Miller  
Well, that's true, you know, that's true. You know. Because before I started on the fire department, I was a janitor at the city building, you know, and my dad worked across the street at the phone company as a janitor, you know, and I think that the the, like, all the generators in, in the building were black, you know, and my dad, I never really appreciated this until much later, you know, but but after my mom and dad got married and my dad,

wanted to live in Columbus, you know, where his aunts and uncles lived.

01:24:35:13 - 01:25:26:03

Thomas Miller

And they had really, really nice jobs. You know like, some of them worked for Boeing, you know, and places such like that, you know, and, well, my dad was, was in the service, you know, like my mom moved back to Wheeling, you know, and my dad was also, well, he was also upset about that. You know, you know, because, well, you know, to go from working, at some of these major, you know, plants and corporations, you know, to come back home and be a janitor you know, I mean, that's kind of devastating to your pride, you know? You know? So my dad always hated that.

01:25:26:05 - 01:25:55:13

Ron Scott

I didn't... I didn't really think about that. Like, what kind of pressure that, like the going out, like the cross country trip or whatever that you were talking about where you have to get the picnic bag, I don't know what it must be like for the adult to plan it. Because you have to really be conscious of all that stuff. You gotta make sure, we know we're on this road and we got this much food, and we got this much time, gets dark around this time.

01:25:55:14 - 01:25:57:11

Darlene Stradwick

You don't want to hit a sundown town.

01:25:57:11 - 01:25:58:11

Thomas Miller

Well Ronnie,

01:25:58:13 - 01:26:00:18

Ron Scott

Oh no. We staying home.

01:26:00:20 - 01:26:08:20

Thomas Miller

So, did you ever go, skating at the, at the market house?

01:26:08:20 - 01:26:09:00

Ron Scott

No.

01:26:09:00 - 01:26:32:03

Thomas Miller

Well, now, we went. Well, last time that you did a, black history, thing here. You know, it kind of confirmed to me, some things that I experienced, you know, on the top floor, on the top floor of the market house auditorium...

01:26:32:05 - 01:27:06:18

Thomas Miller

there was a skating rink, you know, and we would go skating on Monday evenings, you know,

and I never really thought about it, you know, until much later. But that was the only night that we could go skating, you know, was on was on Monday evenings. If you were black, you know. And what I sort of remembered, it was it also if you were black in Wheeling and you went to Wheeling Park, you could only go swimming on Wednesday afternoon.

01:27:06:19 - 01:27:22:04

Thomas Miller

You know, and after, finding out, you know, that that was the case, I thought that maybe that was just local, you know, but apparently that was a national policy. You know, it kind of shocked me a little bit, you know.

01:27:22:04 - 01:27:28:01

Ron Scott

The same day nationally? Like it was Wednesdays, or the separation thing?

01:27:28:03 - 01:27:58:17

Thomas Miller

Well. I'm pretty sure that no, white families went with women, you know? And what makes me think about that, you know, is because I remember reading a couple years ago, is that, at one community, they kind of slipped up and they let a black family go swimming. You know, on a day other than Wednesday, they drained the swimming pool.

01:27:58:17 - 01:27:59:19

Ron Scott

Geeze.

01:27:59:21 - 01:28:17:21

Thomas Miller

You know, I'm thinking, oh my goodness, you know, do you realize how much that cost you? It might take three days to drain that swimming pool. You know, and then another three days to fill it back up, you know? Yeah.

01:28:17:23 - 01:28:19:02

Ron Scott

That's just wild to me.

01:28:19:02 - 01:28:27:21

Darlene Stradwick

And people think it's so, it was so long ago. And it really if you think about it, it wasn't that long ago that these things happened. It's like we were talking about the playgrounds...

01:28:27:22 - 01:28:30:08

Thomas Miller

I'm only 62 myself, Ronnie. You know.

01:28:30:10 - 01:28:39:12

Darlene Stradwick

No, he's not. He is not 62. You don't get to be younger than me.

01:28:39:14 - 01:28:58:05

Thomas Miller

All right, all right. But Ronnie, you know, I used to think that I was younger than your dad, you know? And recently, when I was, when I came across his obituary, I was actually two, two weeks older than your dad. Yeah.

01:28:58:07 - 01:29:10:13

Ron Scott

So draining in the pool? Was that 40 years, 50 years ago or not even that long?

01:29:10:15 - 01:29:14:18

Darlene Stradwick

It would be, it would still have been the 60s, wasn't it?

01:29:14:20 - 01:29:17:00

Thomas Miller

I don't know exactly.

01:29:17:01 - 01:29:20:20

Ron Scott

Because that isn't long, if you think about that, that's the age of...

01:29:20:20 - 01:29:22:13

Sean Duffy

Almost my lifetime.

01:29:22:15 - 01:29:30:21

Ron Scott

Yeah, I know, people like people that see this, that they could know people living that were around when this happened.

01:29:30:21 - 01:29:32:21

Thomas Miller

How old are you guys?

01:29:33:03 - 01:29:34:01

Sean Duffy

I'm 58 years old.

01:29:34:03 - 01:29:38:13

Thomas Miller

58? I would love to be 58.

01:29:38:15 - 01:29:40:19

Darlene Stradwick

Me too!

01:29:40:21 - 01:29:42:05

Sean Duffy

Well, my point is, this stuff..

01:29:42:07 - 01:29:43:03

Thomas Miller

I'd love to be 68.

01:29:43:03 - 01:29:47:02

Sean Duffy

was going on, just a few years before I was even born.

01:29:47:04 - 01:29:48:22

Thomas Miller

So where were you born?

01:29:48:23 - 01:29:50:11

Sean Duffy

Here. Wheeling.

01:29:50:13 - 01:29:51:11

Thomas Miller

Here, where?

01:29:51:13 - 01:29:52:16

Sean Duffy

Well, Pittsburgh, actually.

01:29:52:20 - 01:29:55:10

Thomas Miller

Okay.

01:29:55:12 - 01:29:56:00

Sean Duffy

Yeah.

01:29:56:02 - 01:29:57:05

Darlene Stradwick

What part of the city were you raised in?

01:29:57:06 - 01:29:59:18

Sean Duffy

I'm from Warwood. Grew up in Warwood.

01:29:59:20 - 01:30:04:01

Thomas Miller

Oh, yeah? Do you remember my aunt, Mrs. Miller?

01:30:04:02 - 01:30:07:21

Sean Duffy

Eileen Miller? Yes. I don't remember her, but I know all about her, because I've read about all

about her.

01:30:08:02 - 01:30:15:23

Thomas Miller

Oh, really? You know, I have some of her yearbooks, you know, I'm gonna have to look you up, you know, and then,

01:30:16:01 - 01:30:18:17

Sean Duffy

Yeah, I think she's great.

01:30:18:18 - 01:30:48:23

Thomas Miller

Well, the day that you guys talked about her here and, you know, I started just to mention some things, you know, about that, you know, but I kind of stopped myself, you know, because, I knew that she wouldn't want some of these negative things brought up. You know, you know, but when Lincoln School closed, she was just a young teacher

01:30:48:23 - 01:31:27:07

Thomas Miller

then. And and, she had a lot of difficulty finding a job locally, you know, and I think, you know, that that the older black teachers, you know, like, maybe, maybe got some of the openings you know. And she was getting ready to go apply for a job up in Pittsburgh. And this, and this local guy, that was a family friend, you know, apparently he knew someone, and told her, hold up.

01:31:27:09 - 01:31:56:08

Thomas Miller

You know, so he spoke to somebody on the board. And they kind of told her, you know, that it might be an opening, in Warwood, you know, now, there was an opening in Warwood, you know. But they couldn't tell her that at that point, you know, but but, you know, after she went through the interview process and everything.

01:31:56:10 - 01:32:39:10

Thomas Miller

The last stipulation was that the staff working there at the school had to vote on whether or not, she could come teach there, you know, and not just the teachers, you know, but the cooks, the janitor and everything. You know, you know, and she told me that there was one lady that was a holdout, you know, and I'm not going to mention her name, you know, because her family's very well known locally, you know, and she says, you know, that the that for the 30 or 40 some years that she taught there, you know, that this teacher never did accept her, you know, her being there. Yeah.

01:32:39:12 - 01:32:49:07

Sean Duffy

Amazing. All I know is when we did that program and put it online every, every, a lot of people knew who she was.

01:32:49:08 - 01:32:50:17

Thomas Miller  
Oh my goodness. Yes.

01:32:50:19 - 01:32:59:07

Sean Duffy

And I was concerned. I thought somebody might say something mean. But every comment was, well they loved her. She was beloved.

01:32:59:10 - 01:33:02:23

Thomas Miller

Yes, yes.

01:33:03:01 - 01:33:10:19

Darlene Stradwick

It was rare that you have a black teacher. Because I think in, I went to Webster and the only black teacher there was Miss Green.

01:33:10:21 - 01:33:12:14

Thomas Miller

Oh my goodness, Miss Green.

01:33:12:16 - 01:33:14:03

Darlene Stradwick

I knew he was gonna say Miss Green.

01:33:14:03 - 01:33:15:01

Thomas Miller

Oh my goodness.

01:33:15:06 - 01:33:26:09

Darlene Stradwick

But that was the only black teacher I knew my entire from. Let's see, it goes from 61 to 74. And that was the only black teacher...

01:33:26:11 - 01:33:27:15

Thomas Miller

Oh Miss Green.

01:33:27:17 - 01:33:36:21

Darlene Stradwick

But Mr. but Mr. Borem did come as an as an, assistant principal at Wheeling High before I left.

01:33:37:00 - 01:33:37:12

Thomas Miller

You know.

01:33:37:14 - 01:33:38:02

Ron Scott

Mr. Borem?

01:33:38:04 - 01:33:44:10

Darlene Stradwick

Mr. Borem, and he was the he was assistant principal under Miss Benicki before I left in 74...

01:33:44:10 - 01:33:46:08

Ron Scott

I must be thinking of a different Mr. Borem, though right?

01:33:46:10 - 01:33:49:13

Darlene Stradwick

Not Mr. Borem. What is his name? Holmes. Mr. Holmes

01:33:49:14 - 01:33:50:09

Ron Scott

Oh!

01:33:50:09 - 01:33:50:21

Darlene Stradwick

Mr. Holmes.

01:33:50:23 - 01:33:53:13

Ron Scott

I was like, I had Mr. Borem, and that dude was black the whole time?

01:33:53:15 - 01:33:56:22

Darlene Stradwick

No, Mr. Borem was, the bane of my existence.

01:33:57:00 - 01:33:58:01

Ron Scott

He was rough!

01:33:58:03 - 01:34:07:09

Darlene Stradwick

He was the worst teacher. He was, and that's what brought him back to me. But. Yeah, but, but, yeah, in in all those years, like I said, Miss Green at Webster.

01:34:07:09 - 01:34:07:22

Thomas Miller

Oh, my goodness.

01:34:08:00 - 01:34:10:06

Darlene Stradwick

and Mr. Holmes. That was it.

01:34:10:11 - 01:34:12:14

Thomas Miller



She was a disciplinarian, you know.

01:34:12:14 - 01:34:12:22

Darlene Stradwick

Oh, yeah.

01:34:13:02 - 01:34:44:22

Thomas Miller

You know, I remember one Christmas, you know, I got this plaid like cowboy shirt, you know, so those little string ties, you know, that kind of come around here, and they had, like, a little steer. You know, that thing went through, you know. So the first day after Christmas, you know, I go to school, you know, got my new plaid shirt on, you know, to get my cowboy boots on.

01:34:45:00 - 01:35:08:11

Thomas Miller

So they had breaks that when you would line up at the, water fountain, you know, out there in the hallway, you know. So, I kind of lost my head, you know? So I acted up a little bit. Now she was a first grade teacher. You know, and she swooped down on me like a hawk. She grabbed me by my throat.

01:35:08:13 - 01:35:38:08

Thomas Miller

I never did find that steer. Oh, my goodness. You know, what they did. Later on, now somebody asked me, what was the, what was the, policy like about discipline? You know, and I said, well, then, not only do they permit corporate punishment, but they encourage it. Oh but, oh boy, you know.

01:35:38:10 - 01:35:39:10

Darlene Stradwick

Don't say that cause they're trying to bring that back.

01:35:39:14 - 01:35:41:17

Thomas Miller

You know, but, I'm gonna tell you what though, you know,

01:35:41:17 - 01:35:43:19

Darlene Stradwick

You're trying to get somebody hurt, because...

01:35:43:21 - 01:36:08:07

Thomas Miller

Straightened me up, right then, you know? She never had not one ounce of trouble, from me afterwards, you know. And my Michael, my son Michael, you know, back when he wound up at the children's home for a while, you know, so we used to have meetings up in Lincoln on the second floor, you know?

01:36:08:09 - 01:36:43:15

Thomas Miller

So, this one meeting, you know, he comes in there, all cocky and everything. You know like, he's got, he's got all these psychologists. You don't know what they mean, and everything, you know. I got the whole side by myself, you know, like and he's over there, you know, with, with with all these experts, you know, that surround him and everything you know, and he put his foot up on the desk, you know, and I'm thinking I'd love to see Miss Green come down here and snatch him, by the throat, you know, after that, everybody else, they can all go home.

01:36:43:17 - 01:36:49:07

Thomas Miller

That's all he needs, you know, like just one time. Yeah.

01:36:49:09 - 01:36:51:14

Sean Duffy

You know, I think we should stop now.

01:36:51:16 - 01:36:52:09

Thomas Miller

Oh my goodness.

01:36:52:09 - 01:36:52:18

Ron Scott

Right.

01:36:52:18 - 01:36:54:11

Sean Duffy

We're gonna come back at two, right?

01:36:54:13 - 01:36:56:10

Ron Scott

Yeah. Can you come back at two, unc?

01:36:56:12 - 01:36:57:14

Thomas Miller

No I'm not.

01:36:57:16 - 01:37:00:21

Ron Scott

What!

01:37:00:23 - 01:37:01:04

Darlene Stradwick

He has nothing to do.

01:37:01:08 - 01:37:02:00

Thomas Miller

I'll be back.

01:37:02:02 - 01:37:04:10

Ron Scott  
That's right. You got stuff to bring..

01:37:04:12 - 01:37:04:17  
Darlene Stradwick  
Yeah.

01:37:04:18 - 01:37:09:19  
Sean Duffy  
You mind if we scan your pictures? I have a scanner. Is that all right?

01:37:09:23 - 01:37:12:09  
Thomas Miller  
Well, now you know what though? I'm going to tell you...

01:37:12:15 - 01:37:13:19  
Sean Duffy  
You can say no.

01:37:13:21 - 01:37:26:20  
Thomas Miller  
Well, hold up now, hold up now. You know what? Back when I first started doing this project, you know, and my project was documenting in photographs, you know, like the old black neighborhoods, you know?

01:37:26:20 - 01:37:27:16  
Sean Duffy  
Yeah.

01:37:27:18 - 01:37:43:15  
Thomas Miller  
And it's devastating, you know, to know how many photographs left here, you know, you know, and then if a family leaves, you know, as their family gets older, you know, they don't care nothing about it. Out.

01:37:43:21 - 01:37:51:05  
Thomas Miller  
You know, like, they throw that stuff out. So, sure, you know, I'm gonna let, I'm gonna let you scan one or two.

01:37:51:07 - 01:37:54:14  
Sean Duffy  
Okay. Hey, this for the future.

