

T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

ABSTRACT

INTERVIEWEE NAME: Ronald L. Hatter

COLLECTION: 4700.0719

IDENTIFICATION:

Ronald L. Hatter is a member of the South Baton Rouge community.

INTERVIEWER: Michael Goods

PROJECT: McKinley High School: African American Businesses

INTERVIEW DATES: July 17, 1996

FOCUS DATES: 1950 - 1996

ABSTRACT:

T1046, Side A.

Introduction; born in Galveston, Texas, on September 17, 1950; parents are retired; father previously worked in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and later moved to Galveston to work as a cotton feeder; father met mother in Galveston and married her; has two brothers and a half-sister on his father's side; he and his two brothers work for the school board, his sister works out of town; has lived in the South Baton Rouge neighborhood since he was twelve years old; lists several businesses in South Baton Rouge upon his arrival, including Neighborhood Grocery, Jay's Grocery, Allan Bates Night Club, ABC Cleaners, Smily's Meat Market; attended Reddy Street Elementary School and McKinley Junior High School; recalls shopping at Howard Grocery, the Hill Store, and Musso's; recalls the street fair that came into town and set up on Highland Road and Terrace Street; bought clothes at J.C. Penny's in downtown Baton Rouge and TG&Y on Nicholson Drive; family doctor was James T. Bernard; recalls more businesses, such as Dot's Grocery and Ms. Greena's Grocery; recalls the two-story house Ms. Greena lived in before it burnt down; recalls when Dr. Butler bought Ms. Greena's property after it burnt down and rebuilt it; recalls Johnny's Liquor Store and Imperial Grocery, which closed and later became a day care center; believes the decline of the area's businesses came around the time of racial integration when tensions between white and Black people were high; reflects on changes in the community, such as people moving out and old gravel roads getting blacktopped; describes his typical day in the neighborhood as playing outside and riding bicycles; recalls watching construction of the interstate in South Baton Rouge, which started downtown by the Governor's Mansion around 1950 and reached South Baton Rouge around 1960; recalls the interstate construction forcing some people to move out of the neighborhood, which was disruptive and cut people's roots; lists a potential interview subject; end of interview.

TAPES: T1046

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 17 minutes

PAGES TRANSCRIPT: 14 pages

OTHER MATERIALS: Correspondence

RESTRICTIONS: Copyright is retained by the interviewer and their heirs.