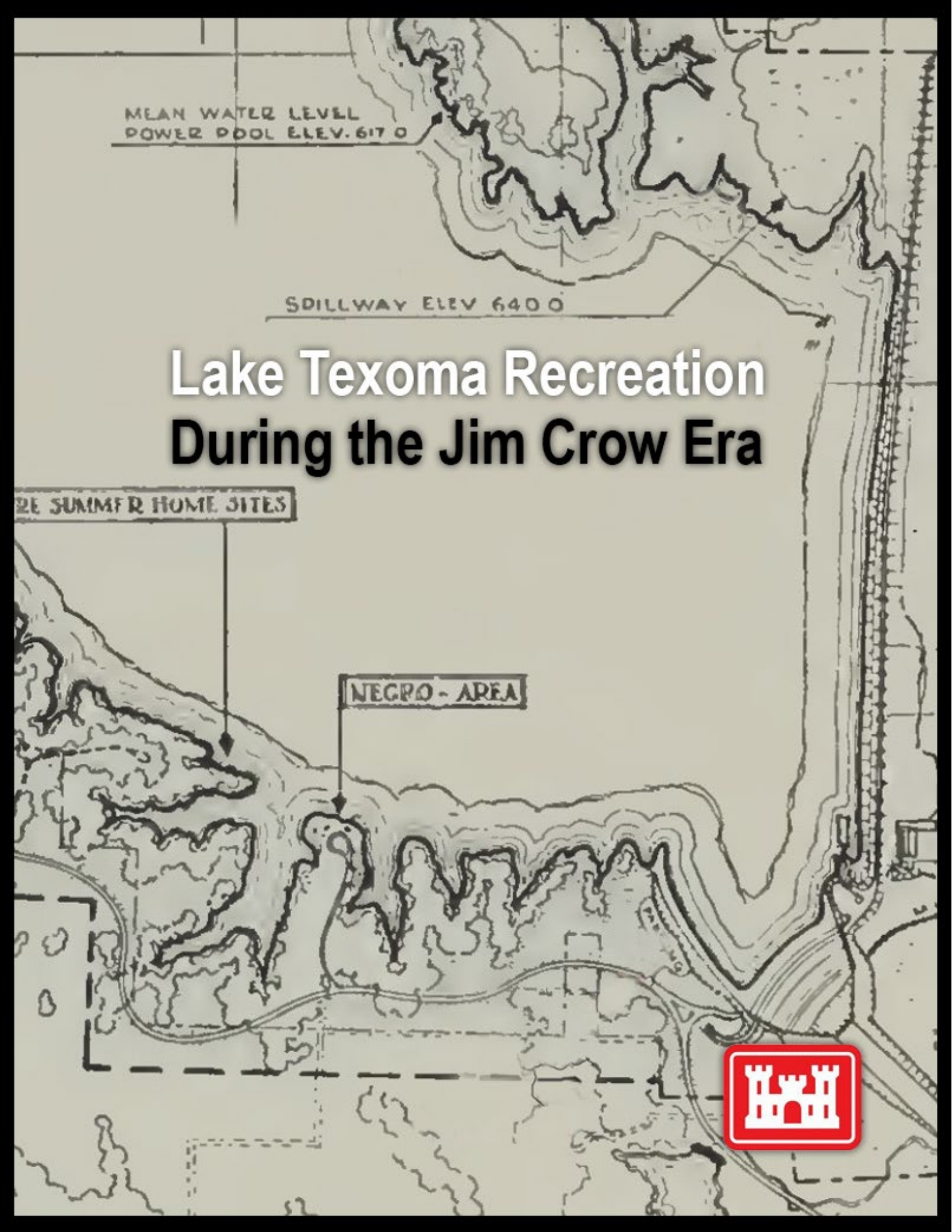

Lake Texoma Recreation During the Jim Crow Era

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The completion of the Denison Dam and Lake Texoma brought outdoor and water recreation to the area during the Jim Crow Era of segregation in America (1877-1965), where there were separate public facilities for white and Black visitors. The Overlook Restroom, built in 1949 and demolished in 2018, was the last remaining physical evidence of segregation at Lake Texoma. This 195-page document examines the effects of Jim Crow era legislation on the development of recreational facilities for Blacks at Lake Texoma and serves as mitigation for the loss of the historic restroom.

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Lake Texoma Recreation during the Jim Crow Era

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Abstract

The completion of the Denison Dam and Lake Texoma project by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) brought outdoor and water recreation to northeast Texas and southeast Oklahoma along the Red River in 1938. During the era of Jim Crow segregation, separate facilities were developed for both white and Black visitors to the park. The Overlook Restroom, built in 1949, was the last remaining physical evidence of segregation at Lake Texoma before the 1964 Civil Rights Act was enacted. The condition of the building was deteriorating, and it had been abandoned, so the USACE proposed demolition as the only economical option. Its demolition in 2018 required a Section 106 review under the National Historic Preservation Act. Consultation between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Texas Historical Commission concluded that the building is historically significant, and that mitigation of its loss is necessary. The following document, presenting the effects of Jim Crow era legislation on the development of recreational facilities for Blacks at Lake Texoma, serves as one element of mitigation for the loss of the Overlook Restroom.

Even though properties like Lake Texoma operated under federal authority and no legal mandate requiring separate facilities on federal property existed, segregation was upheld in several national parks that operated throughout the country. Local, state, and federal agencies debated the utility, feasibility, functionality, and liability at stake should federal mandates require integration. A case study of segregated public facilities between 1938 and 1964 at Lake Texoma reveals the complexity of the debate on integration during the same era. To strike down Jim Crow laws, public servants and private citizens alike had to grapple with internal fears and anxieties about race relations in America. The likelihood of vigilante violence, race riots, and loss of property and life punctuated the discussion. Nevertheless, between 1938 and 1964, measures were taken to desegregate public sites, including transit, school, and recreational facilities. The desegregation of the Lake Texoma recreational areas serves as an excellent example of the challenges facing Grayson County citizens, Texas residents, and federal employees working for the National Park Service and the USACE.

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Introduction

The completion of the Denison Dam and Lake Texoma project by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) brought outdoor and water recreation to Northeast Texas and Southeast Oklahoma along the Red River in 1944. During the era of Jim Crow segregation, separate facilities were developed for both white and Black visitors to the park. Even though the property operated under federal authority and no legal mandate requiring separate facilities on federal property existed, segregation was upheld in several national parks that operated throughout the country. Local, state, and federal agencies debated the utility, feasibility, functionality, and liability at stake should federal mandates require integration. A case study of segregated public facilities between 1938 and 1964 at Lake Texoma reveals the complexity of the debate on integration during the same era. To strike down Jim Crow laws, public servants and private citizens alike had to grapple with internal fears and anxieties about race relations in America. The likelihood of vigilante violence, race riots, and loss of property and life punctuated the discussion. Nevertheless, between 1938 and 1964, measures were taken to first uphold segregated public sites and then to integrate facilities such as transit, schools, and recreational facilities. The desegregation of the Lake Texoma recreational areas serves as an excellent example of the challenges facing Grayson County citizens, Texas residents, and federal employees working for the National Park Service (NPS) and later the USACE.

Methodology

The researchers accessed primary and secondary sources at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), local libraries, museums, and private collections to shed light on the history of segregation at Lake Texoma. Memorandums and finance reports between the superintendent at Lake Texoma and the NPS office in Washington D.C., along with maps, letters, telegrams, newspapers, photographs, and oral histories all contributed to reconstructing this history. Searching for historical documentation on African American life in the Lake Texoma region revealed the bias within the archive. The 1930 lynching of George Hughes in Sherman, Texas, and the subsequent racial terrorism against the Black community's business district was well documented in the newspapers and the collective memory of the town. However, the local libraries and museums had limited information on the contributions or dynamic social history of the Black community in Grayson County, Texas, and Bryan County, Oklahoma. The repositories that yielded the most source material for this project were the National Archives at Fort Worth, Texas, and at Denver, Colorado. Unfortunately, none of the documents at either facility was digitized. Consequently, researchers planned trips to Fort Worth and Denver to recover the historical record. COVID-19 protocol required the researchers to book an appointment with the

repositories. Additional administrative and logistical hurdles included community organizations that refused interviews (such as the Lake Texoma Historical Society), the disorganized archive at Frontier Village that inhibited productive research, and the refusal by Sherman Museum to allow researchers to visit its archive warehouse. The archives pertained mainly to the history of construction of the Denison Dam and the creation of Lake Texoma. While those aspects were integral to our research, they did not offer insight into the history of the African American community and its involvement with Lake Texoma.

Oral histories, therefore, became an essential component of our methodology. Though small in sample size, the three oral histories (they involved four interviewees) were conducted with African American families that lived in Sherman, Texas, in the early to mid-twentieth century. Complete transcripts of the interviews are presented in Appendix A.

The scholar, Mirelsie Velázquez, reminds us that,

> *As communities often denied a sense of belonging, historically, even the archives work to exclude our contributions and realities. For scholars of color or even those working to reclaim the past for these very communities, piecing together what history has worked to exclude becomes a central and critical theme in our work…Oral histories allow us to paint a vivid picture and created a narrative of situations and occurrences that have long been forgotten and ignored, and whose documenting may force others to acknowledge their indirect or direct culpability in creating inhospitable spaces for those relegated to the margins.*[1]

During our interaction with interviewees, it was stressed several times that Black residents felt overall that local African American history is not regarded as significant to the general history of the area. Thus, there was a degree of reluctance on behalf of community members to come forward and share their stories. Once comfortable, they started to recommend family members and friends

[1] Mirelsie Velázquez, "Lessons from the Past: Listening to Our Stories, Reading Our Lives – the Place of Oral Histories in Our Lives," *Springer International Handbooks of Education,* 2020, pp. 863-875, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-2362-0_51, 864.

as interviewees for further study. There was also a consensus among the interviewees that a focus on local African American history was long overdue.[2]

Background

In preparing this report, researchers examined the social and cultural climate of Grayson County, Texas, to better understand the history of segregation in recreation in the area. In doing so, the research revealed there was historically a division between white, Black, and Indigenous residents of the area. The institution of enslaved Africans and African Americans solidified these divisions as did the frontier wars waged on the Indigenous communities of northeast Texas and across the state. To further the institution of slavery, the government upheld it during the Republic era of Texas (1836-1845) and during early statehood (1845-1865). During Reconstruction (1865-1877) and the Industrial era (1877-1910), Black Codes and later Jim Crow Laws sustained many of the social, political, and economic limitations of freedmen and their descendants. The following section briefly outlines these changes.

1836-1845

Texas entered the Union in 1845 as a state that legally supported and protected the institution of slavery.

> "By the end of 1845, when Texas joined the United States, the state was home to at least 30,000 enslaved people. After statehood, in antebellum Texas, slavery grew even more rapidly. The census of 1850 reported 58,161 slaves, 27.4 percent of the 212,592 people in Texas, and the census of 1860 enumerated 182,566 slaves, 30.2 percent of the total population. Slaves were increasing faster than the population as a whole."[3]

[2] Something else that was commonly mentioned was that the Black community does not trust local repositories with safekeeping the African American community's historical artifacts that have been collected and guarded by local families. Perhaps, that distrust is a contributing factor as to why local archival repositories do not have much information regarding African American life.

[3] Randall Campbell, "Slavery," TSHA (Texas State Historical Association, January 1, 1996), https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/slavery.

Slavery as an institution was so prominent in Texas that laws protecting the institution were written into the constitution. For example, in 1861 Texas adopted a constitution as a new state in the confederacy. Article VIII solely dealt with Slaves and stated the following ["**SEC. 1.** The Legislature shall have no power to pass laws for the emancipation of slaves."]; ["**SEC. 2.** No citizen, or other person residing in this State, shall have power by deed, or will, to take effect in this State, or out of it, in any manner whatsoever, directly, or indirectly, to emancipate his slave or slaves."]; ["**SEC. 3.** The Legislature shall have no power to pass any law to prevent immigrants to this State, from bringing with them such persons of the negro race as are deemed slaves by the laws of any of the Confederate States of America; provided, that slaves who have committed any felony may be excluded from this State."];["**SEC. 4.** In the prosecution of slaves for crimes of a higher grade than petit larceny, the Legislature shall have no power to deprive them of a trial by jury, except in cases arising under the laws concerning insurrection of slaves."]; ["**SEC. 5.** Any person who shall maliciously dismember, or deprive a slave of life, shall suffer such punishment as would be inflicted in case the like offence had been committed upon a free white person, and on the like proof; except when such slave has committed, or attempted to commit, a rape on a white female, or in case of insurrection of such slave."]; ["**SEC. 6.** The Legislature shall have power to pass laws which will oblige the owners of slaves to treat them with humanity."][4]

From 1845 to 1860, Texas operated as a part of the southern economy, exporting cotton, timber, and sugar to other states in the Union. The systemic racial hierarchy that the institution of slavery created in northern Texas along the Red River was held in place through violence and dehumanization of enslaved African Americans. The few Indigenous tribes still occupying north Texas at this time made Grayson County diverse in comparison with other counties in Texas that held to a predominantly white or Black-white demographic. The tribes along the Texas-Oklahoma border supported the institution of slavery or remained complacent in the fight for liberation for Black people, thus making Indian territory of Oklahoma an equally dangerous place for self-liberated enslaved people (fugitives in the eyes of the law) to seek refuge. In fact, despite the proximity to Indian territory, there is little evidence to suggest that enslaved Africans and African Americans sought freedom by fleeing north to Oklahoma.

[4] Constitution of the State of Texas 186, Article VIII: Slaves. Tarlton Law Library. https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/slavery.

Comparatively, Oklahoma's racial demographics were primarily a white-Indigenous binary. For example, the area known as Blue County, later known as Bryan County and where Sunset Camp would eventually develop, was known to most as Indian territory between 1836 and 1845. In fact, as Texas entered the Union as a slave state, Oklahoma remained allocated territory for Indigenous tribes removed from the southeastern United States under the Indian Removal Act of 1830. The Chickasaws and Choctaws were the prominent tribes in the area. In 1837, "an estimated 6,000 Chickasaws traveled by various routes to lands purchased from the Choctaw Indians. This journey became known as the "Chickasaw Trail of Tears.'"[5] The territory was also home to the prominent mixed-blood Choctaw Robert M. Jones, who owned as many as six plantations and more than 20 trading stores along the Texas and Arkansas borders. He is documented as "the wealthiest slave-owner in Indian Territory with as many as 500 slaves in the antebellum period."[6] The freedmen's town of Oberlin, Oklahoma, was established sometime after the Civil War and was largely made up of formerly enslaved African-Americans from his sprawling 6,000-acre Lake West plantation.[7] Jones stands as one example of a biracial Indigenous person who aligned himself with the Confederate cause and encouraged assimilation amongst the Choctaw people.

1845-1865

From 1845 to 1865, prosperous families in Grayson County held the majority of land, political power, and property (including enslaved Africans and African Americans). Some of these families were not always white. One account of a bi-racial Indigenous man who owned Colbert's Ferry is recounted by journalist Waterman L. Ormsby from the *New York Herald* in 1857. "Mr. Colbert, the owner of a station and of the ferry, is a half breed Indian of great sagacity in business tact…He owns about 25 slaves and says he considers them about the best stock there is, as his increase in about four per year." The ownership of enslaved people by Mr. Colbert suggests a similar level of complexity to the racial hierarchy in Grayson County before the Civil War, as it was in Indian territory (now Oklahoma) north of the Texas border. It also suggests that enslaved labor contributed to the success of businesses in Sherman, Denison, and the surrounding areas. Finally,

[5]Fisher, Bernard. "Chickasaw Trail of Tears Historical Marker." Historical Marker. The Historical Marker Database, June 16, 2016. https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=77936.

[6] Jeffery Fortney, "Robert M. Jones and the Choctaw Nation: Indigenous Nationalism in the American South, 1820-1877" (dissertation, The University of Oklahoma, 2014), pp. 1-338.

[7] Jason Voight, "Oberlin Historical Marker," Historical Marker (The Historical Marker Database, May 9, 2021), https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=172950.

though there is little evidence that describes the everyday life experiences of enslaved African and African Americans in Grayson County, there are accounts from white settlers that provide a glimpse into enslavement in the Red River Valley. Sites such as Preston Bend on the Red River provided the river transport necessary to move goods across the region and lucrative opportunities for those in a position to prosper. Coupled with Preston Road, which extended south to Austin, travelers could extend their journey into the interior of Texas by way of Denison and Sherman.

Confederates fought the American Civil War (1861-1865) to maintain the institution of slavery and by unionists to preserve the Union. At the onset of war, many Texans were divided on the subject. Attitudes toward secession in Grayson were divided, with 901 to 463 voters electing to stay with the Union during an 1860-1861 county vote. Secession did come to Texas, however, on February 2, 1861, with slavery the central reason for withdrawing from the Union. The Texas Declaration of Secession, stated, "negro slavery" is "a relation that had existed from the first settlement of her wilderness by the white race, and which her people intended should exist in all future time." At the time of secession, Grayson County's enslaved population accounted for 16 percent of the individuals.[8] It is unclear how the enslaved population engaged in the war, or how the war may have caused additional division between Black people and local whites. Texans found various ways to support the Confederacy including levying taxes, sending men and boys to fight, or traveling with their property to the interior of the state to prevent Union forces from confiscating their captive enslaved people.[9] Despite these efforts, the Union won the Civil War when Confederate forces surrendered at the Appomattox Court House in Appomattox County, Virginia, on April 9, 1865. Though slavery was already abolished through the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, Texas's enslaved population would not experience the thrill of freedom until June 19, 1865, when General Orders No. 3 were read in Galveston, Texas, by General Gordon Granger. The date of this proclamation is celebrated today as "Juneteenth."

1865-1910

The era of Reconstruction (1865-1877) and the Second Industrial Revolution (1870-1910) brought rapid change to the southern United States. The railroad industry expanded throughout the state, and small towns in Grayson County became rail stops for people and industry. These expansions

[8] https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1860/population/1860a-34.pdf
[9] Oral history testimony, anonymous informant at Frontier Village, April 23, 2022.

predominantly affected white citizen's capital, but some opportunities also spilled over into the African American communities in the county. For example, jobs affiliated with the rail industry or cattle driving increased in the area. African American schools, churches, restaurants, pharmacies, and funeral homes all emerged in Grayson County. Black-owned and -operated schools and businesses provided the foundation for Black social life, while the Black churches grounded the communities in their faith.[10] African Americans saw advancements politically, socially, and economically, particularly as opportunities arose from Reconstruction era Republican policies. However, radical vigilante groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, political obstacles, and state-sanctioned violence prohibited upward mobility or challenges to the racial status quo.

A discussion of segregated spaces and the social, cultural, and geographical boundaries of racism is necessary to fully understand the social and cultural processes of African American marginalization. Several scholars emerging from these fields explore the ways in which social, cultural, and legal discourses become embedded into the politics of segregated spaces all over the United States, and particularly within the South. The nineteenth century white control of spaces created a cultural landscape of exclusion, domination, and containment that affected the ways marginalized groups lived, worked, and played. Particularly in rural or frontier spaces such as the Red River valley along the Texas-Oklahoma border, ethnic and racial containment was enforced through laws, violence, terror, and socialization. Native Americans, freedmen, and poor white people who inhabited the area were economically connected through trade and commerce in towns like Denison and Sherman but socially separated by class, race, ethnicity, culture, and access to political power.

Black Codes provided the legal precedent to continue to limit African American citizenship. Targeted violence against African Americans, institutionalized racism, establishment of the all-white primary, literacy tests, and poll taxes were part of the everyday experiences during the era of Jim Crow laws. The Library of Congress defines the term "Jim Crow"' as coming from "a song in a minstrel show in the 1830s. Blackening his face to resemble an African American, a performer sang and danced a routine making fun of a silly black person, called 'Jim Crow.' Gradually this character's name came to stand for segregation and discrimination against African Americans in the late nineteenth century. The 'Jim Crow' laws deprived African Americans of their civil rights

[10] Churches in Denison included Mt. Olive Baptist Church (organized in 1888); Antioch Baptist Church; and Mount Zion Baptist Church. Churches in Sherman included Harmony Missionary Baptist Church; Progressive Missionary Baptist Church; Friendly COGIC; Saint James United Methodist Church; and Payne Chapel AME Church.

and defined blacks as inferior." Jim Crow then, is an intersectional system of political, social, cultural, and economic laws and practices that held white supremacy in place from 1865 to 1964. For example, an 1866 Texas law included a series of codes that allowed political power to remain in the hands of white people. Historian Miriam Williams writes,

> *"The bulk of Texas Black codes promoted unfair labor contracts between white Texans and freed Blacks, which provided little legal protection for employees of freedmen; vagrancy laws, which served as a means of forcing unemployed freed slaves into unfair employment contracts, and the worst of the codes—apprentice codes—that forced Black children into 'guardianships' with white Texans to serve as a cheap source of labor 'Black codes coyly and intentionally left out mentions of race but, as Crouch further illustrates, 'the content of the codes were indeed written to regulate the activities of Blacks and were borrowed from the 'harshest of code from those that had been previously legislated by the five other states."*[11]

The necessity for Black community cohesion was especially critical during a time when attempting to integrate public spaces could cost someone their life. Many of these stories are retold through the framework of first-person experience or shared knowledge passed down in African American families through oral tradition.[12] The residual effects of nineteenth and early twentieth century African American marginalization are still, in many areas of the county, sketched on local physical and cultural landscapes. The next section will further demonstrate the challenges that African Americans faced during the Jim Crow era. Particularly, the examination of African American leisure travel and the Lake Texoma Negro Areas provides a snapshot into the Jim Crow society from 1930 to 1964.

African American Travel and Recreation, 1930-1964

The precedent setting *Plessy vs. Ferguson* Supreme Court decision in 1896 fundamentally shifted the trajectory of African American civil rights activism in public facilities and accommodations. During the first half of the twentieth century, "separate but equal" accommodations meant that the federal government would uphold each state's ability to determine *how* race would structure citizen

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[11] Miriam Williams, Black *codes to Recodification: Removing the Veil from Regulatory Writing, page 16.*

[12] See separate document at https://www.swt.usace.army.mil/Locations/Tulsa-District-Lakes/Oklahoma/Lake-Texoma/History/ for complete oral histories.

experiences in public spaces. *De facto* segregation already established *when* and *where* segregation would be strictly upheld versus subversively opposed in public spaces. Taken together, *de facto* (by custom) and *de jure* (by law) segregation defined the life experiences of both Black and white citizens in the South. When challenged by Black people, the results could be devastating.

In Grayson County, the lynching of George Hughes, a farmhand from the neighboring town of Honey Grove, on May 9, 1930, generationally traumatized African American citizens. The lynching and the subsequent destruction of the Black business district fundamentally changed the ways Black people in the community engaged with white people. The agency African Americans once held through business ownership was stripped away from the community because of the mob violence. Still, some Black people who remained in the community found ways to regain agency through political means such as voting, petition, or protest, and others sought freedom through more nuanced avenues such as carving out recreation and leisure opportunities outside of Black spaces.[13]

Evidence discovered in the Sherman Museum and Sherman Library revealed vibrant African Americans communities in Sherman and Denison. Sanborn maps, generated for insurance companies across the nation in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, provide images of schools, businesses, and churches that chronicle these gains. (Figure 1).

[13] School or church sites and masonic lodges all served as places where African Americans congregated for leisure. Juke joints and restaurants also offered respite for members of the Black community.

Sherman Texas, 1930

George Hughes (Figure 2), a local African American man in Sherman, was burned alive, his body lynched and dismembered on May 9, 1930. The event took place 23 miles from what would become Lake Texoma. An angry white mob, accusing Hughes of raping a white woman and shooting at a deputy sheriff, burned down the Sherman courthouse before Hughes could stand trial. It took just under 3 hours for the fire to burn down the courthouse, leaving only the two-story vault with Hughes imprisoned inside. After a few short hours of continual bombardment with dynamite and acetylene torches, the mob emerged with his lifeless body. Tying ropes around the cadaver and fixing them to the back of a truck, the mob followed the vehicle, body dragging behind, to the Black section of town. At its height, the mob reached nearly 5,000 spectators in a town where only 15,713 people resided. In the final stage of their frenzied ritual, the body was hung from a tree and a bonfire lit underneath.

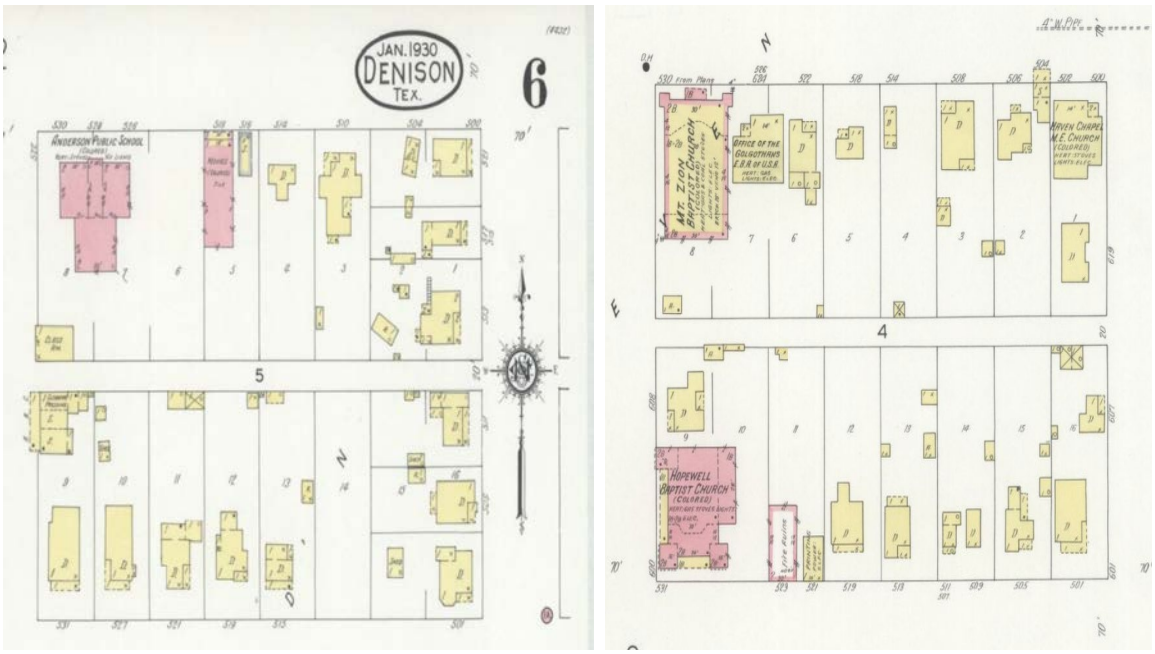

Figure 1. Two snapshots of a1930 Sanborn Map of Denison, TX. The areas selected reflect the black section of town and shows a school, movie house, and three churches.
(Library of Congress"http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4034dm.g4034dm_g084981930")

Figure 2. George Hughes and Sheriff (Dolph Briscoe Center for American History/University of Texas at Austin).

Hughes's body remained hung in plain sight for the mob to see, as if to serve as a prized motivation to continue the night's terrors. In sum, it was estimated that the Black business district lost its hotel, drug store, movie house, restaurant, barber shop, and two undertaking parlors. Many Black residents fled Sherman that night and in the coming weeks, abandoned their property and many possessions for fear that the mob could strike again. The governor declared martial law in the days after the lynching, but the order came too late. Hughes's murder had rocked the community, and forever changed the racial dynamics in Sherman. Area residents still recall the event and shared conflicting stories about the details of the lynching and private property destruction of the Black business community in Sherman. Some white residents in Sherman retold the same thread-bare argument that suggests Hughes's own actions resulted in his death. However, there is no documented evidence to support the claim that Hughes allegedly shot at an officer, was armed and on the run, and was already dead when the mob pulled him out the courthouse vault. The rumor replaced the truth, and George Hughes's murder forever changed the Black-white relationship in Sherman, Texas.

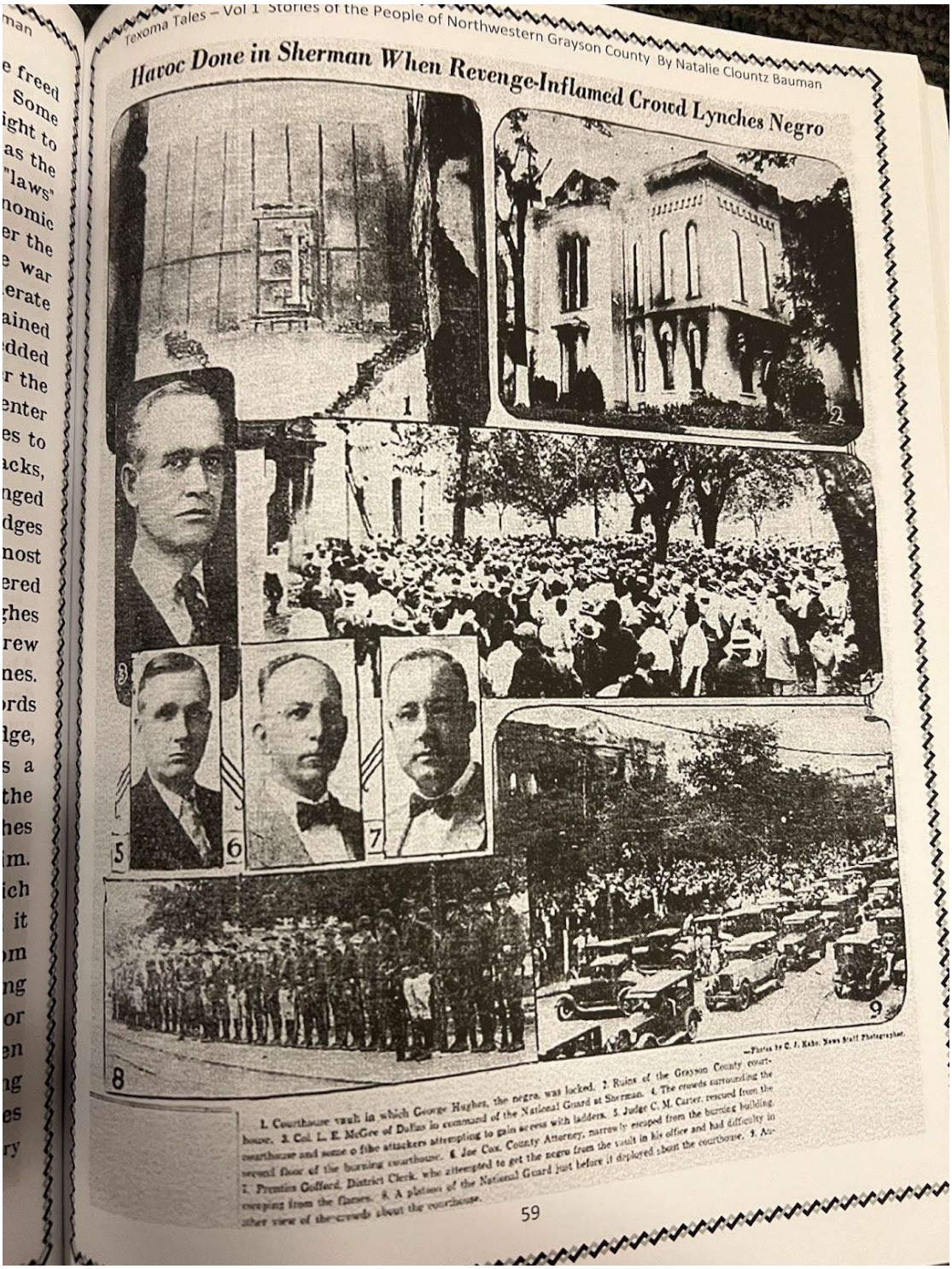

Figure 3. Reprint of newspaper in Texoma Tales, Vol. 1 by Natalie Clountz Bauman.

Storyteller, educator, and activist Dr. Njoki McElroy reflects on the memories passed down from her youth and immediate family including her mother and grandparents. She writes,

> As Mother was finishing cooking an announcer with urban bulletin interrupted the song on the radio: 'The trial of George Hughes, Negro farm hand accused of assaulting a white woman, has been interrupted in the Grayson County Courthouse by an angry mob. The Negro was placed in the courthouse vault for protection from the mob. It was rumored that if the mob could not get Hughes they were going to go after every Negro in Sherman and burn their houses down.[14]

McElroy's account details what the African American community likely circulated about the event for generations. The intergenerational retelling of the trauma experienced in Sherman as well as Hughes's home community of Honey Grove illuminated the division between Black and white in Grayson County. The murder and spectacle lynching of George Hughes and the property destruction of Sherman's Black business district irreparably changed the cultural climate and racial dynamics of the area. As such, traveling for outdoor recreation was of a lower priority for African Americans in the community because of the traumatic, generationally haunting experience of racialized violence in the area. Both Black and white citizens discussed such events locally, nationally, and internationally. The story ran in the newspapers (see Figure 3) for weeks and included coverage of George Hughes' alleged crimes, the court case, the moments leading up to the mob forming, the murder and lynching, the burning of Black businesses and terrorizing of Black citizens, the martial law that followed for 2 weeks, and the trial of mob perpetrators.

Witnesses who knew Hughes said he visited Drew Farlow on May 9, 1930, to retrieve money that was owed him. As a farmhand, Hughes worked on Farlow property and was owed payment for labor that was already completed. Farlow's wife Pearl accused Hughes of sexually assaulting her, but oral history accounts recall it was known that "George Hughes and the woman were lovers and that the woman liked colored men. She produced the story that George Hughes raped her because she was afraid her husband would find out about her love affair with a Black man."[15] As is the case with many lynchings, Hughes's murder was brought about by the *claim* he had assaulted a white woman. The *Denison Herald* published the rumor, stating, "Hughes left but allegedly

[14] McElroy, Njoki. 1012 Natchez: A Memoir of Grace, Hardship and Love. Dallas: Brown Books Publishing Group, 2009, 100.
[15] Ibid., 100-101.

returned shortly with a shotgun, forced his way into the home and subsequently raped the young farm wife."[16] No evidence was ever produced to support this accusation, including a medical examination of Pearl Farlow.

Only a handful of the 5,000 people that participated in the mob violence were ever brought to trial and convicted. Racial attitudes of the time shaped the coverage. For example, *The Hopkins County Echo* relayed details of the mob's aggression toward Texas Rangers and offered a scathing review of the mob for "burning down the 60,000-dollar courthouse." The value of the three blocks of Black-owned property was included only as an afterthought to the courthouse loss. *The New York Times* ran a two-page story of the lynching, with heavy emphasis on the mob's horrific activities, demographics of the mob, and a list of those injured while taking part in the mob. Hughes's background as well as the evidence presented in the accusation of rape are absent from the coverage. Internationally, papers across the globe also reported the horrors in Sherman. *The Times of India* picked up the story in early June, and ran the story under the headline, "Negro Baked Alive in Prison Cell: Mob destroys Court."[17] Black newspapers painted Hughes more humanely and examined the events leading up to the lynching with more scrutiny. Roscoe Dunjee of the *Black Dispatch*, the only Black newspaper in Oklahoma City at the time, covered the lynching for the Negro Associated Press. Dunjee's reporting casts light on the inconsistencies of the narrative, both retold by white "eyewitnesses" and reported in white newspapers.

One such retelling is relayed to interviewer Diana Hernandez by Pastor Jerry Worthy in April 2022.[18]

> *But you know what, Diana, let's rewind, back when I lived in that house...that shack that we lived in...it was...I mean (chuckle)...I mean...we all bunched up in one room, you know what I'm saying? It was just a little house. We just all slept in one general area. But moving forward from that, from that point, when we would go to town occasionally...after growing up some...especially when I can get around on my*

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[16] *Denison Harold*, 119.

[17] NEGRO BAKED ALIVE IN PRISON CELL: MOB DESTROYS COURT. (1930, Jun 05). *The Times of India (1861-2010)* Retrieved from http://ezproxy.rice.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy.rice.edu/historical-newspapers/negro-baked-alive-prison-cell/docview/314113560/se-2?accountid=7064

[18] Oral History, Pastor Jerry Worthy. Interviewed by Diana Hernandez, 2022.

own...we would go into town...and you know...there was a place...you know...that was the 1960s you know....segregation, it was the Jim Crow laws were put there in place, unlike in Mississippi or Alabama, they was accustomed to live in...like that...you know...I mean, they didn't have to put laws in place for Black people to recognize that this is what they...this is how they are to live...this is what they have to do and what they're not to do. But we had to have laws and not to do certain things such as we had to drink from different water fountains in the courthouse. There would be a water fountain that read "whites only" and then there was a... the other one would read "Blacks only" the same with the restroom...we use different restrooms. This was in the downtown Sherman area. something... We also had to go...we couldn't go through the front doors of a restaurant. We had to...of course...we want anything from a restaurant there...we had to get...go to the back doors there...that I can remember. So, it was a very segregated...segregated town. Now there was. there was a riot back in 1930 in Sherman, Texas where a Black man was murdered...brutally murdered at the county courthouse for an alleged crime that he was...supposedly had committed and it never got to court...you know...to trial because there was about 5,000 people involved...that burned the city...the Grayson County Courthouse down...and got to this man...and he was already dead, but they tied him to a bumper and drug him to the Black Business Section of the city...of the town...and (incomprehensible)...a big man...just brutally...just brutally...just destroyed his body...you know...with fire...you know... hung him from a tree...he was lynched...you know. So, the Black businesses were burned down. And so...you know... they did quite a bit that stifled the progress of Blacks in that...in that town and is yet to recover.[19]

The importance of the lynching in disrupting Black life in Grayson County is immeasurable and the emotional toll unquantifiable. Many Black people did not return to Grayson County, and those who remained had to live with the aftermath of racial violence in the public everyday landscapes they navigated for generations. Some records suggest Black businesses were slow to recover and relatively stagnant until the 1980s.[20] More generally, African Americans who had no familial connection to Grayson County were likely reluctant to travel to the area. African Americans across

[19] Oral History, Pastor Jerry Worthy. Interviewed by Diana Hernandez, 2022.
[20] Ibid,

the nation recognized the trials they faced when traveling for leisure during the 1930s and 1940s and often avoided towns that had a history of mob violence or state-sanctioned vigilante property crime.

African American Recreation and The Green Book

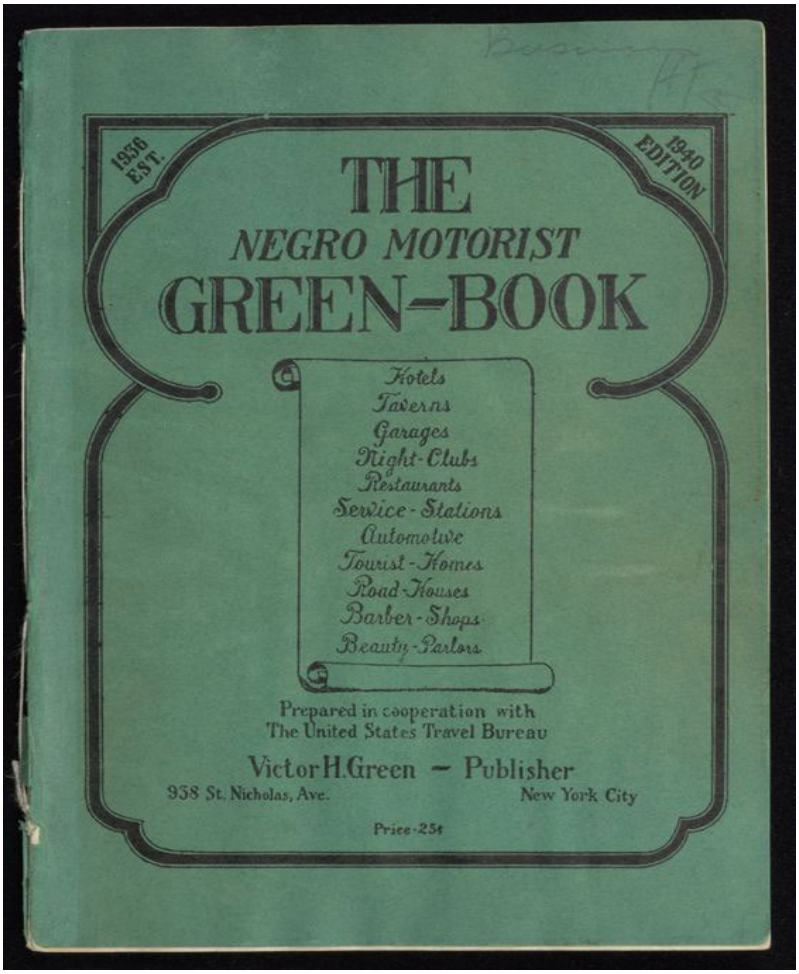

Figure 4. Front Cover of The Negro Motorist Green Book, 1940

The Green Book (Figure 4) offered a guide for travelers to navigate the racial terrain of the South from the mid-1930s until 1964. The Green Book was a Jim Crow-era travel guide created by a Harlem, New York, postal carrier named Victor Hugo Green. It was first published in 1936 and

was in existence until its last edition in 1966.[21] During a period of institutionalized discrimination and segregation, the guide provided African Americans with safe routes for travel and accommodations throughout the United States. The Green Book was particularly vital in the South, where anti-Blackness was codified and institutionalized as Jim Crow laws shortly after Reconstruction in the late 1870s.[22]

Jim Crow laws were in existence and strictly enforced until the 1964 Civil Rights Act was enacted.[23] While they were traveling, it was important for African Americans to know which places were safe to stop at, especially with the prevalence of Sundown Towns where African Americans were prohibited from staying in or passing through after dusk.[24] Stopping at the wrong locality was a matter of life and death for African American families; thus, the African American community depended on the sites and lodgings listed in the guide. Providing a lens into the geography of racial discrimination, access to non-discriminatory establishments was not uniform across the United States.[25] The Northeast had the largest number of Green Book establishments, and the West had the fewest. Additionally, the Midwest had the largest number of establishments per Black resident and the South had the least.[26] The original publication listing African American-friendly establishments in New York City in 1936 was so successful that coverage was expanded throughout the Northeast and nationally in subsequent years.[27]

Hackley and Harrison's Hotel and Apartment Guide for Colored Travelers was published 6 years before the Greens Book in 1930.[28] Lawyer Edwin Henry Hackley and secretary of Connecticut's New London Negro Welfare Council Sarah D. Harrison collaborated on the creation of this travel guide.[29] Hackley died soon after its publication, so it was published only in 1930 and 1931.[30] An

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[21] Francis Ludlow et al., "'Please Mention the Green Book:" The Negro Motorist Green Book as Critical GIS," in *Historical Geography, Geoscience and Textual Analysis: Landscapes of Time and Place* (Springer, 2020), 51.
[22] Ibid., 52.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Lisa D. Cook et al., "The Green Books and the Geography of Segregation in Public Accommodations" (NBER Working Paper Series, March 2020), http://www.nber.org/papers/w26819, 3.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid., 5.
[28] Candacy A. Taylor, *Overground Railroad: The Green Book and the Roots of Black Travel in America* (New York: Amulet Books, 2022), 60.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.

additional Black travel guide, *Grayson's Travel and Business Guide*, was published in 1937.[31] Shortly after, the Roosevelt administration released the Directory of Negro Hotels and Guest Houses, in partnership with the National Park Service.[32] Almost simultaneously, the Department of the Interior released its own directory of Black lodging.[33]Several other Black travel guides followed, but none had the reach and following of the Green Book.[34]

As of 1939, the Green Book contained more than 1,000 listings and almost 10,000 businesses were advertised while the guide was published.[35] It must be noted that publication of the Green Book halted from 1942 to 1946 during America's involvement in World War II.[36]

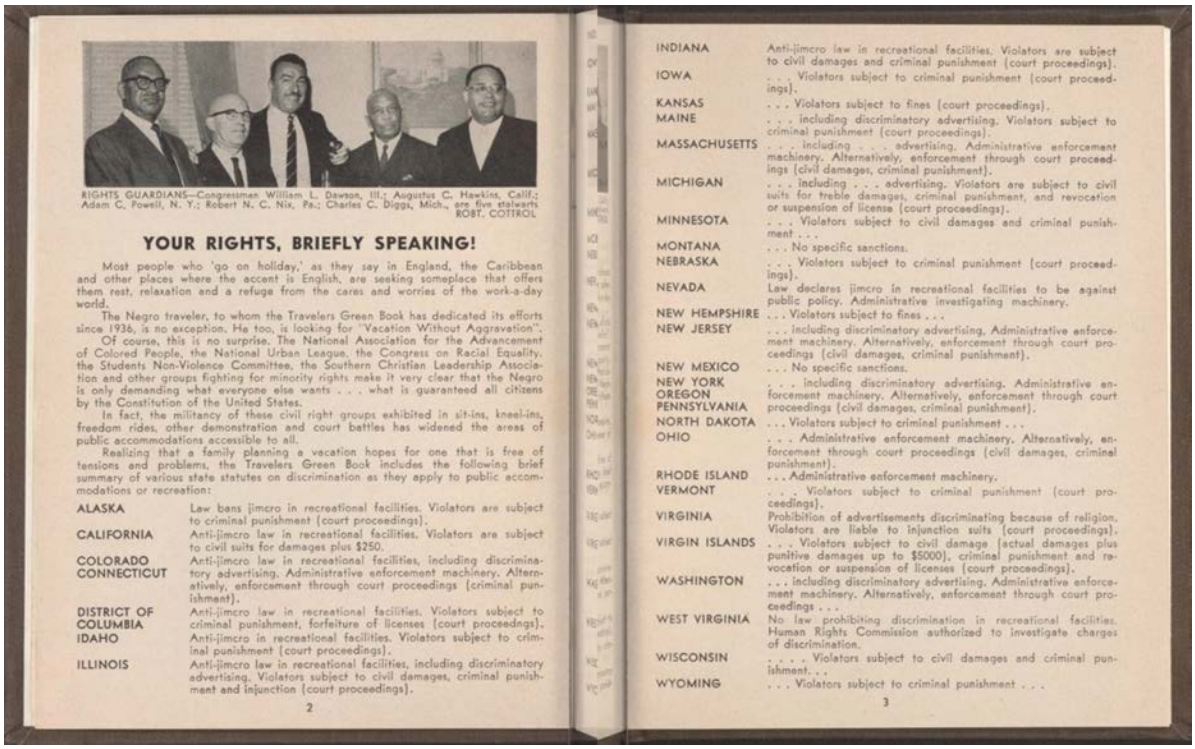
Green took great care in deciding what businesses were listed in the guide. He was known to personally inspect several of the places listed in his guide.[37] One of the challenges Green faced was that he could not employ enough agents to help verify listings. His solution was to turn to crowdsourcing information from the guide's readers. He encouraged patrons to promote the Green Book to local businesses to persuade these localities to then ask to be included in future editions of the travel guide.[38] One of the collaborators for the 1940 edition of the Green Book was A.R. McDowell, a representative from the U.S. Travel Bureau's Division of Negro Affairs. Like Green, McDowell's mission was to assist Black travelers in finding roadside services.[39] In fact, the 1940 Green Book contained a statement indicating that the guide had been "prepared in cooperation with the United States Travel Bureau."[40] Green also encouraged readers to submit personal anecdotes about their travel experiences. By 1940, he was compensating featured writers $5 per submittal.[41] Narratives included in the guidebook covered topics such as airline and railroad travel

[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] As Candacy Taylor notes in her book, *Overground Railroad: The Green Book and the Roots of Black Travel in America*, *Smith's Tourist Guide* was published in 1940; the *Go Guide to Pleasant Motoring* was in existence from 1952-1959; and *Travel guide* was published from 1947-1963.
[35] Candacy A. Taylor, *Overground Railroad: The Green Book and the Roots of Black Travel in America* (New York: Amulet Books, 2022), 62.
[36] Lisa D. Cook et al., "The Green Books and the Geography of Segregation in Public Accommodations" (NBER Working Paper Series, March 2020), http://www.nber.org/papers/w26819, 5.
[37] Candacy A. Taylor, *Overground Railroad: The Green Book and the Roots of Black Travel in America* (New York: Amulet Books, 2022), 62.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid., 63.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid., 64.

and National Parks.[42] Furthermore, if a business listed in the Green Book did not meet the standards of "professional customer service," African American patrons had the ability to report that establishment and consequently have the business removed from the ads in the travel guide.[43] This ability was a way for the African American community to exercise their consumer power. Armed with a substantial readership and increasing mainstream appeal, the travel guide had a significant national reach.[44] This reach is evident through the increasing recognition of the guide by white-owned businesses.[45]

The Green Book continued to evolve with its audience, expanding to international destinations and including white establishments that welcomed Black patrons. The book also kept track of nationwide statutes on discrimination so that travelers could safely and intelligently navigate U.S. interstate travel. In Figure 5, the 1963-1964 version includes a concise list of statutes across the country. Note that only the southern states (Virginia and West Virginia) and the District of Columbia that upheld anti-discrimination are included.[46]

[42] Ibid.
[43] Michael Ra-Shon Hall, "The Negro Traveler's Guide to a Jim Crow South: Negotiating Racialized Landscapes during a Dark Period in United States Cultural History, 1936–1967," *Postcolonial Studies* 17, no. 3 (March 2014): pp. 307-319, https://doi.org/10.1080/13688790.2014.987898, 314.
[44] Ibid., 315.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library. "Travelers' Green Book: 1963-64 International Edition" New York Public Library Digital Collections. Accessed October 22, 2022. https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/672eed00-82ee-0132-81f8-58d385a7bbd0



RIGHTS GUARDIANS—Congressmen William L. Dawson, Ill.; Augustus C. Hawkins, Calif.; Adam C. Powell, N. Y.; Robert N. C. Nix, Pa.; Charles C. Diggs, Mich., are five stalwarts. ROBT. COTTROL

YOUR RIGHTS, BRIEFLY SPEAKING!

Most people who 'go on holiday,' as they say in England, the Caribbean and other places where the accent is English, are seeking someplace that offers them rest, relaxation and a refuge from the cares and worries of the work-a-day world.

The Negro traveler, to whom the Travelers Green Book has dedicated its efforts since 1936, is no exception. He too, is looking for "Vacation Without Aggravation".

Of course, this is no surprise. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Urban League, the Congress on Racial Equality, the Students Non-Violence Committee, the Southern Christian Leadership Association and other groups fighting for minority rights make it very clear that the Negro is only demanding what everyone else wants . . . what is guaranteed all citizens by the Constitution of the United States.

In fact, the militancy of these civil right groups exhibited in sit-ins, kneel-ins, freedom rides, other demonstration and court battles has widened the areas of public accommodations accessible to all.

Realizing that a family planning a vacation hopes for one that is free of tensions and problems, the Travelers Green Book includes the following brief summary of various state statutes on discrimination as they apply to public accommodations or recreation:

ALASKA	Law bans jimcro in recreational facilities. Violators are subject to criminal punishment (court proceedings).
CALIFORNIA	Anti-jimcro law in recreational facilities. Violators are subject to civil suits for damages plus $250.
COLORADO CONNECTICUT	Anti-jimcro law in recreational facilities, including discriminatory advertising. Administrative enforcement machinery. Alternatively, enforcement through court proceedings (criminal punishment).
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	Anti-jimcro law in recreational facilities. Violators subject to criminal punishment, forfeiture of licenses (court proceedngs).
IDAHO	Anti-jimcro in recreational facilities. Violators subject to criminal punishment (court proceedings).
ILLINOIS	Anti-jimcro law in recreational facilities, including discriminatory advertising. Violators subject to civil damages, criminal punishment and injunction (court proceedings).

2

INDIANA	Anti-jimcro law in recreational facilities. Violators are subject to civil damages and criminal punishment (court proceedings).
IOWA	. . . Violators subject to criminal punishment (court proceedings).
KANSAS	. . . Violators subject to fines (court proceedings).
MAINE	. . . including discriminatory advertising. Violators subject to criminal punishment (court proceedings).
MASSACHUSETTS	. . . including . . . advertising. Administrative enforcement machinery. Alternatively, enforcement through court proceedings (civil damages, criminal punishment).
MICHIGAN	. . . including . . . advertising. Violators are subject to civil suits for treble damages, criminal punishment, and revocation or suspension of license (court proceedings).
MINNESOTA	. . . Violators subject to civil damages and criminal punishment . . .
MONTANA	. . . No specific sanctions.
NEBRASKA	. . . Violators subject to criminal punishment (court proceedings).
NEVADA	Law declares jimcro in recreational facilities to be against public policy. Administrative investigating machinery.
NEW HEMPSHIRE	. . . Violators subject to fines . . .
NEW JERSEY	. . . including discriminatory advertising. Administrative enforcement machinery. Alternatively, enforcement through court proceedings (civil damages, criminal punishment).
NEW MEXICO	. . . No specific sanctions.
NEW YORK OREGON PENNSYLVANIA	. . . including discriminatory advertising. Administrative enforcement machinery. Alternatively, enforcement through court proceedings (civil damages, criminal punishment).
NORTH DAKOTA	. . . Violators subject to criminal punishment . . .
OHIO	. . . Administrative enforcement machinery. Alternatively, enforcement through court proceedings (civil damages, criminal punishment).
RHODE ISLAND	. . . Administrative enforcement machinery.
VERMONT	. . . Violators subject to criminal punishment (court proceedings).
VIRGINIA	Prohibition of advertisements discriminating because of religion. Violators are liable to injunction suits (court proceedings).
VIRGIN ISLANDS	. . . Violators subject to civil damage (actual damages plus punitive damages up to $5000), criminal punishment and revocation or suspension of licenses (court proceedings).
WASHINGTON	. . . including discriminatory advertising. Administrative enforcement machinery. Alternatively, enforcement through court proceedings . . .
WEST VIRGINIA	No law prohibiting discrimination in recreational facilities. Human Rights Commission authorized to investigate charges of discrimination.
WISCONSIN	. . . . Violators subject to civil damages and criminal punishment. . .
WYOMING	. . . Violators subject to criminal punishment . . .

3

Figure 5: The 1963-1964 International edition of The Green Book includes a list of states that protect Black travelers facing discrimination. Photo courtesy of New York Public Library.

With an impressive run ending in 1964, the Green Book served as a testament to a "period in US cultural history where skin color served to signify those bodies permitted to freely move around the country and vice versa."[47] The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prompted Green to continue publishing the guide under a modified name. In fact, in 1966, Victor H. Green Co. published the travel guide under the name, *Traveler's Green Book: International Edition*.[48] The omission of *Negro Motorist* in the title reflects the company's response to the 1964 Civil Rights Act.[49] The 1966-67 editions also included international offerings, specifically: Canada, Europe, Africa, South America, and the Caribbean.[50] Thus, the Green Book whitewashed and internationalized its scope while at the same

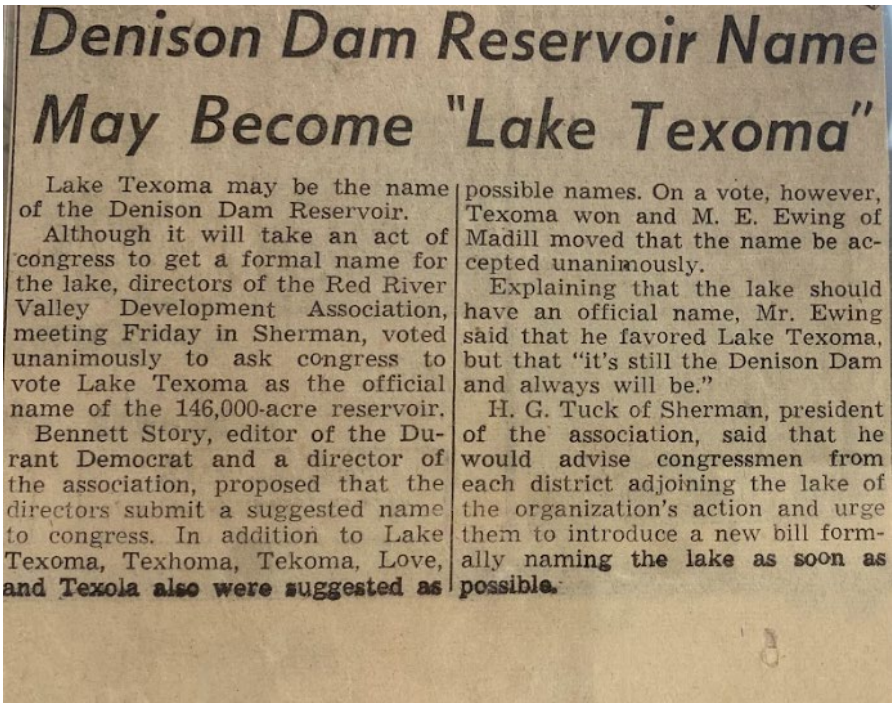
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid., 316.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.

time adhering to its mission of securing the safety of African American travelers both in the U.S. and abroad.[51] Moreover, the Green Book served as a litmus test for the evolving state of race relations in U.S. cultural history circa 1936-1937.[52]

Lake Texoma: a Case Study of Segregation in Recreation

Lake Texoma was created by the construction of Denison Dam from 1938 to1944.[53] Early on, one selling point of the Denison Dam Reservoir, (later Lake Texoma, as seen in Figure 6) was the recreational benefit of the lake itself, but the area was not marketed as a site of leisure for all citizens. African Americans were routinely left out of the planning and marketing strategies for the project and were excluded from additional opportunities to participate in other federally funded employment opportunities developed during the Great Depression. This calculated decision was facilitated by the U.S. Department of the Interior and the National Park Service. For example, the Director of Emergency Conservation Work, Robert Fechner, would declare African Americans would account for "no more than 10 percent of the total enrollment in the program because blacks [sic] constituted roughly that portion of the total U.S. population."[54] Even as Black youth found some limited opportunity in the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC), the National Park Service's attitude "toward racial segregation was that state laws and local customs would be followed in the matter of segregation. Thus, the southern camps remained segregated while some of the northern camps were integrated."[55]For example, in 1933-1935 CCC companies across Oklahoma and Texas were photographed for the *Civilian Conservation Corps, Oklahoma District: Pictorial Review* Booklet. Company 857, stationed in Denison, Texas, was exclusively white. They are documented

[51] Ibid., 317.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Heather Goodson et al., *The History of the Denison Dam, Bryan County, Oklahoma and Grayson County, Texas.* Prepared for Swift River Environmental Resources, LLC and the USACE Regional Planning and Environmental Center. July 2022.
[54] John Paige, "The Civilian Conservation Corp and the National Park Service, 1933-1942 An Administrative History ," The Civilian Conservation Corp and the National Park Service, 1933-1942 An Administrative History § (1985), pp. 98.
[55] Ibid., 99.



Denison Dam Reservoir Name May Become "Lake Texoma"

Lake Texoma may be the name of the Denison Dam Reservoir.

Although it will take an act of congress to get a formal name for the lake, directors of the Red River Valley Development Association, meeting Friday in Sherman, voted unanimously to ask congress to vote Lake Texoma as the official name of the 146,000-acre reservoir.

Bennett Story, editor of the Durant Democrat and a director of the association, proposed that the directors submit a suggested name to congress. In addition to Lake Texoma, Texhoma, Tekoma, Love, and Texola also were suggested as possible names. On a vote, however, Texoma won and M. E. Ewing of Madill moved that the name be accepted unanimously.

Explaining that the lake should have an official name, Mr. Ewing said that he favored Lake Texoma, but that "it's still the Denison Dam and always will be."

H. G. Tuck of Sherman, president of the association, said that he would advise congressmen from each district adjoining the lake of the organization's action and urge them to introduce a new bill formally naming the lake as soon as possible.

Figure 6. An undated newspaper article from the Sherman public library vertical files. Photo by the author, March 23, 2022.

as "grading roads, erecting fences, repairing and erecting telephone lines... and... erecting a Dam in Grayson County Park."[56] These CCC workers are identified by last name and first and middle initials (example Smith, W.P.). Images included in the Denison, Texas, section show the barracks, progress on the dam project, a priest blessing the communion, and members of the Company 857 baseball team (Figures 7 and 8).

Another source, an article in the *Junior Historian* in 1938, provides an overview of the function of Denison Dam, highlights the added benefit of the recreational area being built, cites the population density within a 75-mile and 200-mile radius, and notes the "first class accommodations soon to come. Lake Texoma is already a popular recreational area and when fully

[56] U.S. Department of Interior, "Civilian Conservation Corps, Oklahoma District: Pictorial Review ," Civilian Conservation Corps, Oklahoma District: Pictorial Review § (1935), pp. 35.

developed will be even more attractive."[57] Newspaper articles and NPS records support this claim. During the latter part of the Great Depression, construction of the Denison Dam and Lake Texoma did bring industry and jobs to the Texas-Oklahoma border (Figure 9).

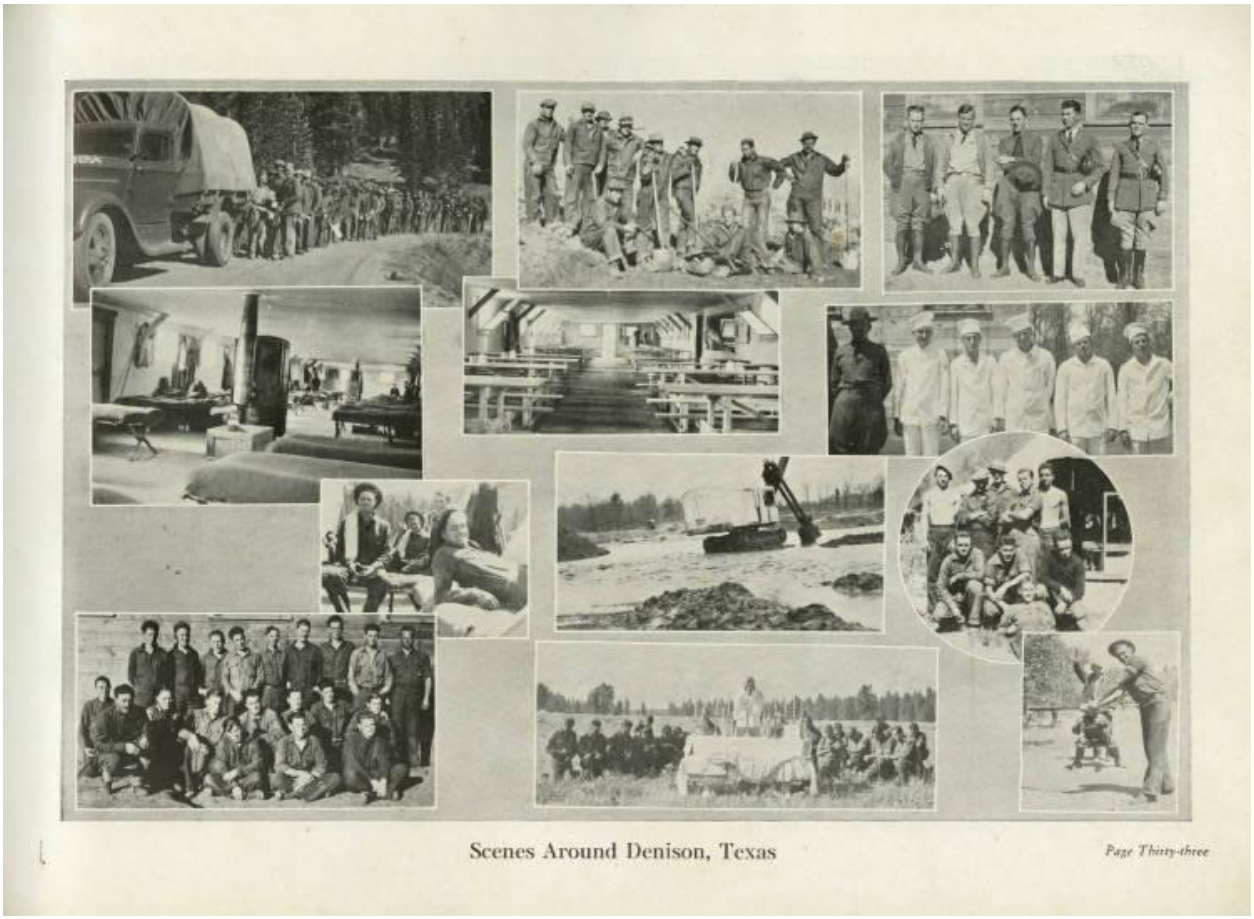
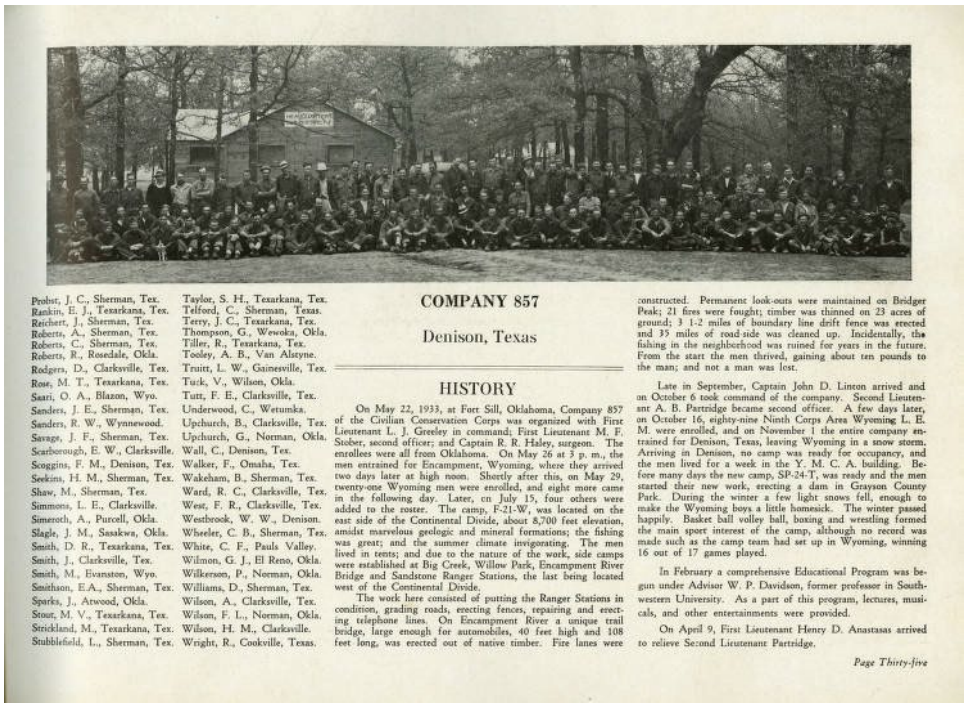


Figure 7. Photographs of CCC Company 857. (https://digitalprairie.ok.gov/digital/collection/culture/id/7198).

[57] Texas State Historical Association. The Junior Historian, Volume 8, Number 4, January 1948, periodical, January 1948; Austin, Texas. (https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth391365/: accessed May 12, 2022), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, https://texashistory.unt.edu; crediting Texas State Historical Association.



Probst, J. C., Sherman, Tex.
Rankin, E. J., Texarkana, Tex.
Reichert, J., Sherman, Tex.
Roberts, A., Sherman, Tex.
Roberts, C., Sherman, Tex.
Roberts, R., Rosedale, Okla.
Rodgers, D., Clarksville, Tex.
Rose, M. T., Texarkana, Tex.
Saari, O. A., Blazon, Wyo.
Sanders, J. E., Sherman, Tex.
Sanders, R. W., Wynnewood.
Savage, J. F., Sherman, Tex.
Scarborough, E. W., Clarksville.
Scoggins, F. M., Denison, Tex.
Seekins, H. M., Sherman, Tex.
Shaw, M., Sherman, Tex.
Simmons, L. E., Clarksville.
Simeroth, A., Purcell, Okla.
Slagle, J. M., Sasakwa, Okla.
Smith, D. R., Texarkana, Tex.
Smith, J., Clarksville, Tex.
Smith, M., Evanston, Wyo.
Smithson, E.A., Sherman, Tex.
Sparks, J., Atwood, Okla.
Stout, M. V., Texarkana, Tex.
Strickland, M., Texarkana, Tex.
Stubblefield, L., Sherman, Tex.
Taylor, S. H., Texarkana, Tex.
Telford, C., Sherman, Texas.
Terry, J. C., Texarkana, Tex.
Thompson, G., Wewoka, Okla.
Tiller, R., Texarkana, Tex.
Tooley, A. B., Van Alstyne.
Truitt, L. W., Gainesville, Tex.
Tuck, V., Wilson, Okla.
Tutt, F. E., Clarksville, Tex.
Underwood, C., Wetumka.
Upchurch, B., Clarksville, Tex.
Upchurch, G., Norman, Okla.
Wall, C., Denison, Tex.
Walker, F., Omaha, Tex.
Wakeham, B., Sherman, Tex.
Ward, R. C., Clarksville, Tex.
West, F. R., Clarksville, Tex.
Westbrook, W. W., Denison.
Wheeler, C. B., Sherman, Tex.
White, C. F., Pauls Valley.
Wilmon, G. J., El Reno, Okla.
Wilkerson, P., Norman, Okla.
Williams, D., Sherman, Tex.
Wilson, A., Clarksville, Tex.
Wilson, F. L., Norman, Okla.
Wilson, H. M., Clarksville.
Wright, R., Cookville, Texas.

COMPANY 857

Denison, Texas

HISTORY

On May 22, 1933, at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, Company 857 of the Civilian Conservation Corps was organized with First Lieutenant L. J. Greeley in command; First Lieutenant M. F. Stober, second officer; and Captain R. R. Haley, surgeon. The enrollees were all from Oklahoma. On May 26 at 3 p. m., the men entrained for Encampment, Wyoming, where they arrived two days later at high noon. Shortly after this, on May 29, twenty-one Wyoming men were enrolled, and eight more came in the following day. Later, on July 15, four others were added to the roster. The camp, F-21-W, was located on the east side of the Continental Divide, about 8,700 feet elevation, amidst marvelous geologic and mineral formations; the fishing was great; and the summer climate invigorating. The men lived in tents; and due to the nature of the work, side camps were established at Big Creek, Willow Park, Encampment River Bridge and Sandstone Ranger Stations, the last being located west of the Continental Divide.

The work here consisted of putting the Ranger Stations in condition, grading roads, erecting fences, repairing and erecting telephone lines. On Encampment River a unique trail bridge, large enough for automobiles, 40 feet high and 108 feet long, was erected out of native timber. Fire lanes were constructed. Permanent look-outs were maintained on Bridger Peak; 21 fires were fought; timber was thinned on 23 acres of ground; 3 1-2 miles of boundary line drift fence was erected and 35 miles of road-side was cleaned up. Incidentally, the fishing in the neighborhood was ruined for years in the future. From the start the men thrived, gaining about ten pounds to the man; and not a man was lost.

Late in September, Captain John D. Linton arrived and on October 6 took command of the company. Second Lieutenant A. B. Partridge became second officer. A few days later, on October 16, eighty-nine Ninth Corps Area Wyoming L. E. M. were enrolled, and on November 1 the entire company entrained for Denison, Texas, leaving Wyoming in a snow storm. Arriving in Denison, no camp was ready for occupancy, and the men lived for a week in the Y. M. C. A. building. Before many days the new camp, SP-24-T, was ready and the men started their new work, erecting a dam in Grayson County Park. During the winter a few light snows fell, enough to make the Wyoming boys a little homesick. The winter passed happily. Basket ball volley ball, boxing and wrestling formed the main sport interest of the camp, although no record was made such as the camp team had set up in Wyoming, winning 16 out of 17 games played.

In February a comprehensive Educational Program was begun under Advisor W. P. Davidson, former professor in Southwestern University. As a part of this program, lectures, musicals, and other entertainments were provided.

On April 9, First Lieutenant Henry D. Anastasas arrived to relieve Second Lieutenant Partridge.

Page Thirty-five

Brown C. C., Evanston, Wyo.
Heard, J. W., Norman, Okla.
Johnston, M., Encamp., Wyo.
Paul, R., Ardmore, Okla.
Reid, G. E., Graham, Okla.
Rodda, S. J., Hanna, Wyo.
Standefer, H.J., Greybull, Wyo.
Stoner, L., Norman, Okla.
Thomas, T., Rock Spgs. Wyo.
Whetstine, G., Thermopolis.
Buckles, H. H., Denison, Tex.
Chapman, J. E., Rock Springs.
Davis, C. C., Denison, Tex.
Douglass, J. C., Denison, Tex.
Dowell, B. C., Yukon, Okla.
Dugas, J., Rock Spgs., Wyo.
Farikoff, E., Crosby, Wyo.
Garritson, L., Big Piney, Wyo.
Haynes, S., Denison, Tex.
Kennaday, J., Saratoga, Wyo.
Morgan, J. C., Saratoga, Wyo.
McCarthy, D. B., Thermopolis.
Motichka, A., Rock Spgs., Wyo.
Mullendore, J., Thermopolis.
Oliver, A., Sundance, Wyo.
Smith, J. B., Evanston, Wyo.
Starkey, M. N., Denison, Tex.
Abbitt, C., Choctaw, Okla.
Allen, J., VanAlstyne, Tex.
Allen, L., Jenks, Okla.
Allgood, B., Ardmore, Okla.
Ameson, E., Mt. Pleasant, Tex.
Arnold, G., Clarksville, Tex.
Aycock, W., Whitesboro, Tex.
Aydelotte, S., Avery, Tex.
Baker, C., Gordonville, Tex.
Baker, W., Howe, Tex.
Banks, R. L., New Boston, Tex.
Barry, J., Texarkana, Tex.
Bass, F., Cookville, Tex.
Battle, C. H., Sherman, Tex.
Beane, B., Hagerman, Tex.
Belcher, H. L., Sherman, Tex.
Belsher, W. W., Sadler, Tex.
Bidwell, H., Whitesboro, Tex.
Biggerstaff, G., Sherman, Tex.
Bingham, E. G., Denison, Tex.
Bishop, G. L., Council Hill.
Black, Fred, Talco, Tex.
Blackburn, F., Van Alstyne.
Blanton, C., Whitewright, Tex.
Bobchalk, G., Superior, Wyo.
Boren, F. H., Howe, Tex.
Bowen, P., Dorchester, Tex.
Brown, B. F., Detroit, Tex.
Burgin, L., Bixby, Okla.
Cabiness, J. C., Mt. Pleasant.
Cartwright, R., Eberman, Tex.
Carroll, K., Norman, Okla.
Castor, L. W., Vici, Okla.
Champion, D. L., DeKalb, Tex.
Chance, J. L., Texarkana, Tex.
Chandler, R., Whitesboro, Tex.
Chumbley, J. H., Whitewright.

ROSTER COMPANY 857

Capt. John D. Linton, Commanding
Lt. Henry D. Anastasas, Second in Command
Capt. R. R. Haley, Camp Surgeon

Clift, R. M., Denison, Tex.
Cockrell, D., Dennison, Tex.
Cody, L., Texarkana, Tex.
Collins, O. H., Pottsboro, Tex.
Coffman, L., Whitewright, Tex.
Conroy, R., Mt. Pleasant, Tex.
Cook, F. T., Sherman, Tex.
Cook, L., Mt. Pleasant, Tex.
Couk, R., Whitesboro, Tex.
Cowan, M., Tioga, Tex.
Crain, C. H., Clarksville, Tex.
Crook, F., Hagerman, Tex.
Crump, J. A., Texarkana, Tex.
Curry, A. R., Ft. Worth, Tex.
Davis, B. C., Collinsville, Tex.
Day, Bill, Wewoka, Okla.
Delese, A. C., Bagwell, Tex.
Dempsey, J. C., Texarkana.
Dermid, J. T., Lexington, Okla.
Donaldson, J. J., Sadler, Tex.
Dozhier, L., Lexington, Okla.
Durbin, J., Denison, Tex.
Elliott, C., Purcell, Okla.
Elliott, H., Mt. Pleasant, Tex.
Elkins, W. W., DeKalb, Tex.
Ellis, W., New Boston, Tex.
Estes, F., Sherman, Tex.
Evans, A., Purcell, Okla.
Fant, R., Texarkana, Tex.
Feuerborn, J. E., Purcell, Okla.
Fielder, F., Tioga, Tex.
Flynn, B., Lamar, Okla.
Fraley, J. W., Sadler, Tex.
Franklin, T. R., Sadler, Tex.
Fowler, G., Rock Springs, Wyo.
Fry, W., Talco, Tex.
Funderburk, S., Texarkana, Tex.
Gainer, J. B., Sherman, Tex.
George, R. M., Nash, Tex.
Gilstrap, S., Texarkana, Tex.
Glover, L. L., Bogata, Tex.
Golden, R. K., Denison, Tex.
Graves, B., Woodland, Tex.
Green, J., Negley, Tex.
Griffen, M., Yukon, Okla.
Griffen, M., Guthrie, Okla.
Grimes, L. C., Whitesboro, Tex.
Haggard, E., Sherman, Tex.
Hall, M. E., Whitewright, Tex.
Haldeman, R., Texarkana, Tex.
Hallman, J. W., Texarkana.
Handwerk, J. R., Moore, Okla.
Hatcher, M., Texarkana, Tex.
Hays, J., Mt. Pleasant, Tex.
Hawkins, N. E., Broken Arrow.
Heath, R., Texarkana, Tex.
Henson, C., Purcell, Okla.
Hilton, E. R., Sundance, Wyo.
Hiner, J. G., Carmen, Okla.
Holland, W., Pottsboro, Tex.
Hopkins, C., Van Alstyne, Tex.
Horsley, J., Byars, Okla.
Huffaker, D., Whitesboro, Tex.
Hunt, E. L., Sherman, Tex.
Ireland, F. D., Van Alstyne
Irving, P., Wynnewood, Okla.
Johnson, D., Sherman, Tex.
Johnson, H., Denison, Tex.
Johnson, R., L., Sherman, Tex.
Jones, F. N., Dixon, Wyo.
Jones, J. G., Denison, Tex.
Jones, O. B., Negley, Tex.
Jones, S. P., Texarkana, Tex.
Kaiser, H., Sundance, Wyo.
Karlagan, B., Rock Spgs., Wyo.
Keeland, W. H., Sherman, Tex.
Kenemore, V., Sulphur Springs.
King, C. E., Yukon, Okla.
Kozola, A., Denison, Tex.
Kozola, Martin, Rock Springs.
Kretsinger, J. C., Denison, Tex.
Lafoy, C., Sherman, Tex.
Langford, N. R., Clarksville.
Lee, V., Norman, Okla.
LeMay, L. K., Bonham, Tex.
Lindsey, W., Sherman, Tex.
Long, O., Texarkana, Tex.
Lytton, H., Sherman, Tex.
Madden, B., Holdenville, Okla.
Marland, A., Frontier, Wyo.
Maxwell, J., Gebo, Wyo.
McAnulty, J., Texarkana, Tex.
McCulley, B., Holdenville.
McDonald, B. A., Texarkana.
McMurtrey, A. L., Bells, Tex.
Mlinar, J. J., Rock Spgs., Wyo.
Moore, H., Mt. Pleasant, Tex.
Monroe, V., Norman, Okla.
Moulton, A. L., Bogata, Tex.
Musser, R., Whitewright, Tex.
Myska, A., Rock Spgs., Wyo.
Nance, T., Sulphur Springs.
Nelms, R., Pottsboro, Tex.
Newcomb, F., Denison, Tex.
Oliver, E., Texarkana, Tex.
Odom, H., Texarkana, Tex.
Page, H., Sherman, Tex.
Parish, J., Van Alstyne, Tex.
Paroline, N. A., Texarkana.
Pasley, J. O., Texarkana, Tex.
Peacock, W. E., Clarksville, Tex.
Proctor, C., Texarkana, Tex.

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Figure 8: Image taken from the Civilian Conservation Corps, Oklahoma District: Pictorial Review depicting the Denison, Texas CCC Company, 857. Photo Courtesy of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries.

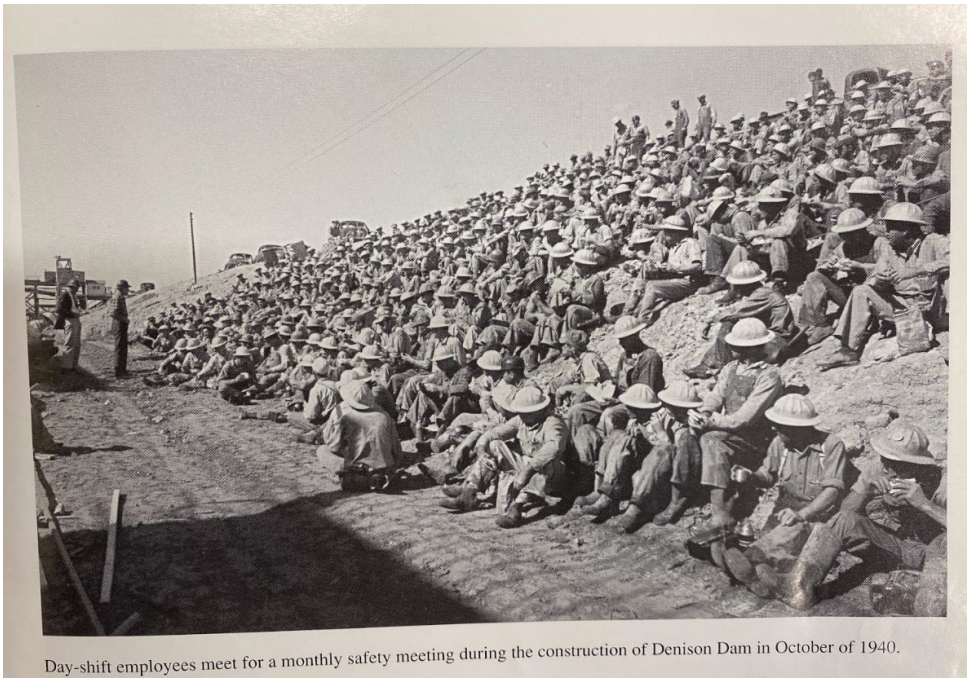

Figure 9. Photograph of day-shift employees working on the construction of Denison Dam.

A section for African American leisure was also included in site planning as early as 1938, when plans for Denison Dam were designed by the USACE. These recreational sites were planned, built, and operated by the NPS until 1949. At that time, the USACE took over the recreation area's operations. A 1949 Lake Texoma Recreational Area Plan created by the USACE depicts the areas of administration, including Carver and Sunset camps (Figure 10). The Carver "Negro Área" was a segregated enclave for camping and recreation on the Texas side of Lake Texoma on a small peninsula west of Denison Dam (Figure 11). Sunset Camp, about 125 acres, was situated to the north in Oklahoma (Figure 12). The designated areas were small in comparison to the other development plans exclusively for white areas. For example, the Preston Bend Peninsula was approximately 1,000 acres, whereas "The Negro Areas" were a tenth that size. Though small in acreage, they did offer designated areas for African Americans to enjoy the lake shore, swim, fish picnic, camp and dock their boats.[58]

58

The Carver "Negro Area" (No. 46) (Figure 11) listed in the 1943 NPS report, Recreational Resources of the Denison Dam and Reservoir Project, was described as:

> *An area of approximately 100 acres located about 2 miles west of the dam was selected to serve the Negro population. The site is a point bounded on the east and west by suitable bays and can be made accessible by a short spur road connecting with a proposed park road. It is admirably suited for recreational developments.*

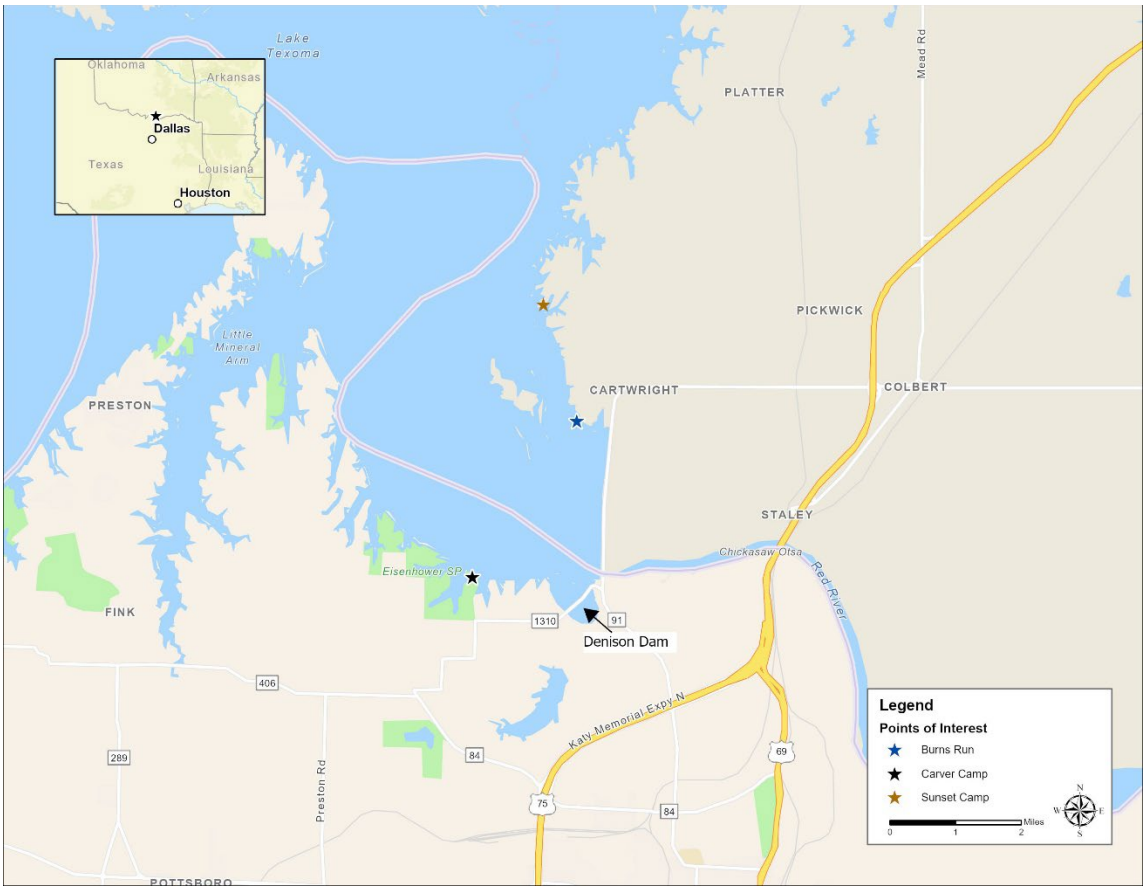

Figure 10: The two Negro Areas, Carver and Sunset camps, and the popular Whites-only recreation area, Burns Run, are shown in relation to each other on Lake Texoma. Map courtesy of Eyes of the World Mapping.

Figure 11. 1943 plan drawing of the George Washington Carver "Negro Area." (NARA, Denver Archives).

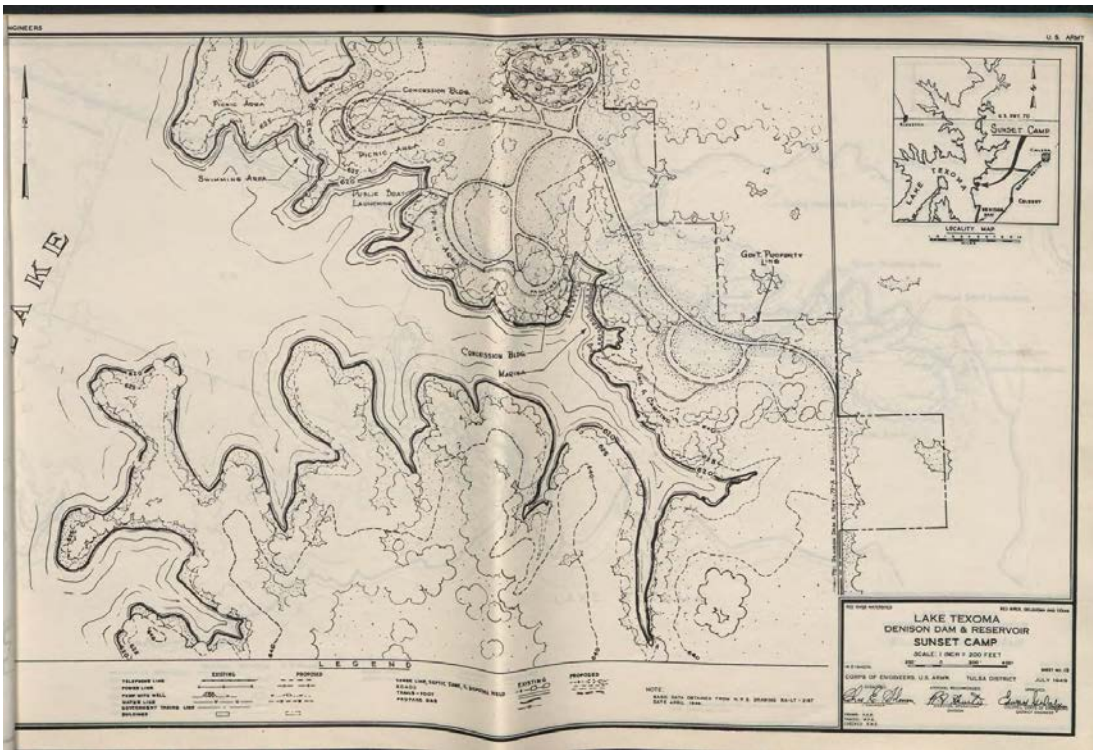

Figure 12. 1949 plan drawing of Sunset Camp (NARA, Denver Archives).

The area was selected because it was just 1 mile west of a major thoroughfare and near the heaviest concentration of African Americans living in the area.[59] Activities in "The Negro Area" would be free of charge to visitors, and the establishment of concessions to generate revenue would be available through a bid process for interested investors. Special services such as "restaurants, lodges, cabins, bathhouses, boats, golf courses, riding stables, and stores where fishing equipment may be obtained" were all included in a list as potential investment opportunities at Denison Dam.[60] There was anticipation that Lake Texoma would bring thousands of families to the area for recreation during the day, on weekends, and as a vacation destination. Another Recreational Resource report illustrates the potential for foot traffic at the lake by examining the 1940 census record (Table 1). African Americans are shown to make up 13.1 percent of the population within a 75-mile radius of the lake. An additional 8.3 percent of the population is added when the radius extends by two counties adjoining the reservoir. This information suggests that the Department of the Interior considered proximity to the lake. The two major cities, Denison and Sherman, are included in the population statistics.[61] Dynamic and diverse socioeconomic members of the African Americans communities regularly visited the lake once it was completed, and the "Negro area" was established. In fact, the sheer strength in numbers meant the Department of Interior had to include a "Negro area," and to develop a strategic plan in courting African American visitors to the park. The Indigenous population also contributed sizable numbers at 63,125 but was counted as part of the white population in recreational planning and held separate recreational facilities on the Reservations. The Hispanic population is not documented in the census as "Hispanic" in 1940, so there is no way of knowing if there was a substantial Latino population in Grayson and Bryan Counties without going into the granular data at the census block level. Conversely, the foreign-born populations in Texas and Oklahoma are documented in the 1940 census (Table 2) and demonstrate the rigidity of the white-Black binary in each state. Both Texas and Oklahoma each held minimal representation from foreign born "Negros" (69), Chinese (112), Japanese (57), Filipino (38), Hindu (17), and All others" (13). As evidenced in the 1940 census and the NPS report, "the Negro is the only racial group having sufficient numerical importance to require special consideration in planning recreational facilities for the Denison Dam Recreational

[59] Ibid., XI.
[60] Ibid., XII.
[61] Ibid., 40.

Area…ample day use facilities and limited overnight accommodations and organized group camping facilities also should be included in the development"[62]

Curiously, whites in Grayson and Bryan counties were kinder and gentler with German prisoners of war (POWs) encamped in Tishomingo and Powell, Oklahoma, who built the Denison Dam. Only non-war related work could be performed by POWs according to the Geneva Convention – such as clearing trees for the proposed lake and light construction. Construction projects performed by the prisoners included lining drainage ditches around the dam with concrete slabs, which are still present today."[63] A *New York Times* article from May 31, 1943, illustrates the treatment of German POWs in the camps (Figure 13).

The treatment of the German POWs accentuates the idea that the white-Black binary was also held in place against foreign enemies of the state. In this regard, whiteness trumped Americanness when comparing treatment of Black and white people in Grayson and Bryan Counties. This fact serves as a blistering example of how deeply white supremacist ideas were embedded in society.

Returning to the discussion of Texoma, the federal government initially committed to administration of the area through the Department of Interior and the National Park Service, including "The Negro Area," under the following guidelines:

> "The responsibility of the Federal administering agency would oversee: (1) that the entire area is provided with fire and police protection; (2) that health, safety, and other regulations are enforced; (3) that roads, trails, and utilities are protected and maintained; (4) that facilities such as picnic grounds, campgrounds, playfields, and museums are provided; (5) that an interpretive program is furnished; and (6) that private boat docking facilities are properly controlled.[64]

[62] Ibid., 43.
[63] https://www.swt.usace.army.mil/Locations/Tulsa-District-Lakes/Oklahoma/Lake-Texoma/History/
[64] DOD Documents, Recreations Resources of Denison Dam and Reservoir Project, 1943 (11)

Table 1. National Park Service report denoting regional population densities in 1940.

(NARA, Denver Archives).

State	Total Population	Negro Population	Percentage Negro Population	Farm Population	Percentage of Farm Population
Population Zones 1940— 200 Mile Radius					
Texas	2,768,521	506,899	14.7	1,117,300	40.0
Oklahoma	2,076,160	164,407	7.9	811,035	39.0
Arkansas	522,980	96,693	18.5	289,142	53.4
Louisiana	279,573	128,929	46.1	106,209	38.0
Total	5,647,234	896,928	15.9	2,323,686	41.1
Population Zones 1940— 75 Mile Radius					
Texas	1,104,448	145,207	13.1	298,222	27.0
Oklahoma	324,931	19,497	6.0	164,128	50.5
Total	1,429,419	167,704	11.5	462,350	32.3
Six Counties Adjoining Reservoir					
2 counties in Texas	94,408	7,817	8.3	37,921	39.1
4 counties in Oklahoma	77,915	2,425	3.1	46,827	60.0

Table 1. National Park Service report denoting regional population densities in 1940.

(NARA, Denver Archives).

Population Zones 1940— 200 Mile Radius

State	Total Population	Negro Population	Percentage Negro Population	Farm Population	Percentage of Farm Population
Total	172,323	10,242	5.9	84,748	49.0

Table 2. Nonwhite population by race for Texas and Oklahoma -- 1940

West South Central Division and State	Total Nonwhite Population	Negro Total/ Native/Foreign Born	Indian	Chinese Total/ Native/ Foreign Born	Japanese Total/ Native/ Foreign Born	Filipino	Hindu	All Other
Oklahoma	222,206	168,849/168,780/69	68,125	112/64/48	57/41/16	38	17	18
Texas	967,279	924,891/924,019/372	1,108	1031/506/525	458/291/167	219	73	4

AFRICA CORPS MEN BUILD DAM IN U. S.

Youthful Germans Busy on Denison Reservoir Project in Texas

FIRST PRISON CAMP HERE

Guards Say the 'Beautifully Trained' Soldiers From Tunisia Work Well

By The Associated Press.

DENISON, Texas, May 30—Former members of Hitler's crack Africa Corps, captured in North Africa, have substituted crosscut saws for rifles and an axeman's swing for the goosestep as they help clear lands for the Denison Dam Reservoir in this country's first war-prisoner project of its type.

These youthful German soldiers, in keeping with international law, which the United States is observing to the letter, are contributing to the American way they set out to destroy. Their use is necessary because sufficient labor is otherwise not available to clear land in the dam basin ahead of the water, which is due to start rising in June.

The first contingent recently occupied one of two internment camps in the Oklahoma Reservoir area. Together the installations form the Madill Provisional Internment Camp, under the command of Lieut. Col. H. E. Fischer.

Pay Is 80 Cents a Day

Under international law, enlisted prisoners of war must work, and are paid accordingly. Those in the clearing camp volunteered to work before being brought in. Their pay, according to agreement, is 80 cents a day. Each prisoner is allowed 10 cents a day in canteen credits for purchases at the canteen. Allowances will be repaid by the German Government after the war.

They work a five-day, forty-eight-hour week. After adjusting themselves to the routine, their work will be the same as done by regularly hired workmen elsewhere in the reservoir area.

When they computed their pay in terms of German marks and discovered it compared favorably with what they drew while gambling with death in Hitler's regiments they were happier about the whole set-up.

The demeanor of these captured fighters may have a far-reaching influence on an internment program certain to expand as the war progresses. They appear resigned to making the most of the situation. To date there has been no untoward incident and no threat of any. Their background of intense military training makes for good workmen. Guards concede that they are "beautifully trained" soldiers.

Reward for Good Behavior

The nearest to a "beef" from the prisoners was about their camp garb, with "P. W.," for prisoner of war, in large red letters across the seats of trousers and backs of jumpers. They took it in better spirit, however, when told they would be allowed to wear their German uniforms on Sundays if they earned the privilege.

The prisoners eat, sleep and play in a compound consisting of mess hall, 60-man barracks, camp canteen and other facilities, enclosed by a sturdy barbed-wire fence with elevated guard towers at each corner. Outside are facilities of United States Army personnel in charge of the camp.

Discipline is enforced, in part, through noncommissioned officers of their own group. The German senior officer is a veteran of the First World War, and probably around 45 years old, who held in the German Army a rank somewhere between the United States master sergeant and warrant officer. The others range in age from 17 to 28 years, with the emphasis on youth. No commissioned officers are at the camp.

Through international channels, and under terms of the Geneva Convention, cards recently were mailed to their families in Germany announcing they were safe in America as prisoners of war.

The prisoners have been told that they are respected as German soldiers and that they are expected to conduct themselves to merit that respect. They further understand that certain rights are granted under the terms of the Geneva Convention, but that other privileges must be earned. As a group they appear to be bent on winning these privileges, and are quick with vengeance against any of their group who would spoil their chances.

Figure 13. New York Times article, May 13, 1943.

Carver Camp (No. 46) and Sunset Camp (No. 43) were the segregated Black recreation areas at Lake Texoma and fell under the authority of NPS and subsequently the USACE in 1949. Local Blacks growing up in the area recall the camps vividly. Bishop Larry Goodman of Denison, Texas, discusses his experiences at Lake Texoma, stating,

> *Larry Goodman: But there were times that we may have gone to Lake Texoma to what we call Sunset for picnics and holidays. And now the other people would swim, but I would just walk the banks and enjoy what I could…*
>
> *Diana Hernandez: Do you know if Sunset was a segregated section of the lake?*

> *Larry Goodman: Yes, it was. Yes, it was. And that's where we went, the blacks went to Sunset. And we basically stay there afterwards. Later in the years. It opened up freedom or people's even their finances changed to where they could buy boat slips and they had boat slips. Sometimes even then you still had to run into that segregation thing. Because some people didn't think that you need to be there, or you should be there or that you had any right to be there regardless of your income or and then of course you would become uppity in their sights.*

Goodman's oral history reveals that, even after segregation laws were lifted, many Blacks continued to frequent the formerly segregated areas. Safety and familiarity with a site that held community memory and cultural significance were factors in the continued use of the "Negro areas." A second factor is that enactment of a law in 1964 did not mean immediate acceptance by the majority population.

The administration of Lake Texoma by the federal government meant that some aspects of recreation would be offered that may not even be available to Black people in their hometowns and communities. African Americans did not have access to public park space in Texas and Oklahoma unless it was on the site of Black schools, a designated "Negro Area" at municipal parks in Oklahoma City and Dallas, an organized camping area at a designated site such as Lake Murray, or through the efforts of private citizens.[65]These segregated facilities, and lack of other amenities in recreational spaces, did not go unnoticed by Black patrons. Protests led by local citizens and legal pressure from the NAACP kept revisiting the *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision throughout the first half of the twentieth century. This political pressure may have helped the Negro areas be a consideration from the early stages of the planning project for the Denison Dam. Renderings of the area from the 1943 Recreation Resources report show areas designated as campgrounds, overnight accommodation, concessions and swimming, a picnic area, a site for boating and fishing, as well as an organized camp area with cabins. The two "Negro Areas" on Lake Texoma were under the administration of the National Park Service at the Department of the Interior. Records from the Department of the Interior to regional superintendents, annual reports, staff

[65] Once such effort took place in 1872 in Houston. Influential Black businessmen, pastors and local families generated $800.00 of funds to purchase 10 acres of land from the city. In commemoration of the Juneteenth, June 19, 1865, they named their new park Emancipation Park. Juneteenth was first celebrated by Black Texans. The day commemorates the official end to slavery in Texas. More information about the holiday can be found in Annette Gordon Reed's book *Juneteenth* or Clint Smith's work, *How the Word is Passed*.

correspondence, maps, photographs, and incident reports all create a clearer picture of the landscape of the Carver Camp. A 1944 newspaper article suggested the Denison Chamber of Commerce was courting boat manufacturing as a postwar business opportunity to bring to the city, citing that "6,000,000 people live within a 200-mile radius of the lake."[66] Building a plant that could service the community of boating enthusiasts and local vacationers would cut the freight costs nearly in half. The city saw the lake as an opportunity to increase recreation in the area during the postwar period. In fact, the same paper reported that a 4-acre tract of land was purchased on Highway 84, formerly known as Highway 91, for the purpose of building a tourist camp and boat shop. *The Denison Press* later reported that a much-needed improvement to the roadways and an additional road would lead to the segregated recreational areas around Lake Texoma. The article states, "120 building sites for whites and 50 building sites for negroes" are being contemplated by a Mr. F.O. Babcock, who was assigned to the project. The new road would connect to the one already erected by the government and would provide an all-weather route to the building sites.[67]

Lake Texoma's "Negro Area" was marketed as a federally run site for recreation and refuge, and it also was embedded in the racial politics of Texas and Oklahoma. As a result, African Americans on the Texas-Oklahoma border had few safe places to participate in outdoor leisure with their families, particularly because segregation laws in both Oklahoma and Texas prohibited Black and white people from sharing recreational spaces. For example, in Oklahoma, a law was passed that "the [Conservation] Commission shall have the right to make segregation of the white and colored races as to the exercise of rights of fishing, boating and bathing."[68] In Texas, laws prohibited miscegenation — the practice of intermarriage between Black and white citizens. Therefore, social and cultural spaces for interracial interaction were also heavily regulated. Black and white people could not learn together in school, sit together on a bus or railcar, or seek medical care together.

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[66] Bauman, Natalie. "Pottsboro Texas and Lake Texoma, Then and Now, Volume Two: The Texas Nursery, the Texoma Floods, and Pottsboro in the News." CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform (2015), p. 275

[67] Anderson, LeRoy M. The Denison Press (Denison, Tex.), Vol. 17, No. 11, Ed. 1 Friday, August 31, 1945, newspaper, August 31, 1945; Denison, Texas. (https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapth328735/m1/1/?q=Lake%20Texoma;%20Negroes: accessed March 14, 2022), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, https://texashistory.unt.edu; crediting Grayson County Frontier Village.

[68] Jim Crow Museum, "Examples of Jim Crow Laws - Oct. 1960 - Civil Rights," Ferris State University, January 1, 2022, https://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/jimcrow/links/misclink/examples.htm.

These legal statutes created a landscape of racial segregation and hierarchy where white people received access to more resources, economic opportunities, and social capital. These customs cut across racial and class lines and were extended into national parks in the South. One citizen wrote to Interior Department's Secretary Harold L. Ickes after visiting a park in Virginia, remarking, "This is a National Park and should show no race separation at all. I think we have a right to know whether we may expect your department to condone this practice or not."[69] The commonly held practice of NPS was to follow the social customs of the state. Moreover, the contradiction — NPS offering federally sanctioned segregated facilities while also creating policies that provided more equitable access for all Americans — serves as a stark reminder of the missed opportunity for the federal government to hold firm to creating a more just landscape for its citizens. For Black people, access to the American Dream meant opening opportunities that had previously been denied to them. The federal government has always played a key role in extending access (such as the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments, and the Civil Rights Act of 1866) to Black people. The gains made at the state level during the Republican-controlled Reconstruction era also bolstered access to opportunity for Black people. However, after *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) and until the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the landscape of Jim Crow and the expectations associated with a racist hierarchically structured system made life for Black people unimaginably difficult to navigate.

Particularly when examining the experiences of white and Black people during the Jim Crow era, it becomes increasingly evident that separate and unequal also extended into all forms of life. This extension is why Black towns became so sacred to Black people during the era of Jim Crow. Black towns provided safe refuge from the racist outside world and created a space where Black people could practice full citizenship through property ownership, voting, and local legislation. Places like Redbird and Boley, Oklahoma (still in operation), Oberlin, Oklahoma (now a ghost town), Independence Heights, Texas (Grayson County), White Rock, Texas, and Siloam, Texas, serve as reminders of the importance of Black towns in protecting Black lives during Jim Crow, but also providing sites of fully extended citizenship to Black people. Figure 14 illustrates three Black towns in Oklahoma, Oberlin, Macedonia, and Wiley, and the Black economic districts and communities in predominantly white towns like Denison and Sherman, Texas. Each of these sites serve as an important reminder of the challenges Black people faced just trying to live and work

[69] Terrence Young, "A Contradiction in Democratic Government": W. J. Trent, Jr., and the Struggle to Desegregate National Park Campgrounds." Environmental History, October 2009, Vol. 14, No. 4 (October 2009), Oxford University Press on behalf of the Forest History Society and try American Society for Environmental history. pp. 651-682.

in Northeast Texas during the Jim Crow era. Figures 15 through 17 represent some examples of the opportunities created in Black towns such as home and business ownership, leadership, and education.[70]

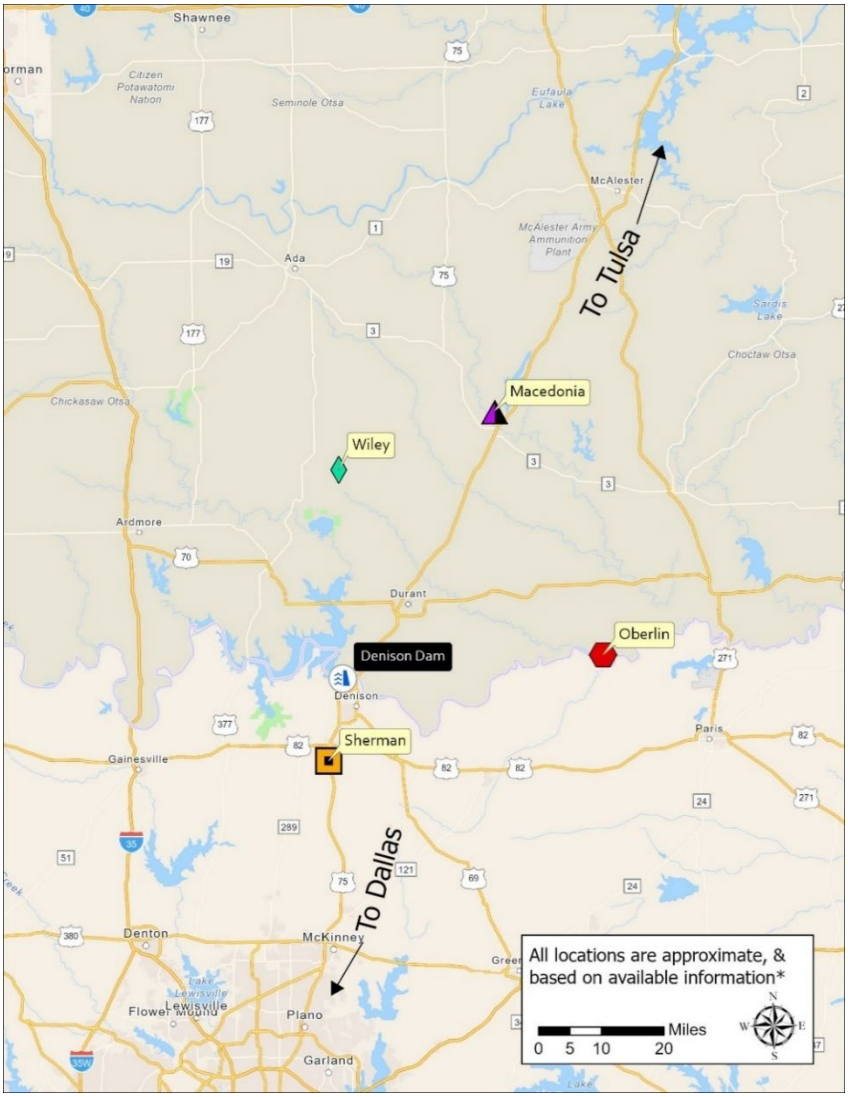


Figure 14. Select historically all-black towns near Denison Dam.

[70] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Redbird, Oklahoma

Figure 15. Advertisement for the establishment of Red Bird, Oklahoma.

Figure 16. View of Main Street, Red Bird, Oklahoma.

Figure 17. Marker noting the historical significance of Oberlin, Oklahoma.

Prosperity abounded and, despite the landscape of exclusion, many Black people found ways to build networks of opportunity and knowledge bases despite disproportionate resources distributed by the state and federal governments. Revisiting the example of the Green Book, the significance of the word-of-mouth local network to safe travel for African Americans becomes evident. As an example, Lake Texoma existed during the time the Green Book circulated, but there is no mention of the site as a destination spot in the guide. Moreover, none of the Black towns and business districts in proximity to Lake Texoma are listed in the book as verified destinations safe for African Americans to travel or stop. In fact, the closest properties that are identified as safe refuges are Dallas, Texas (nearly 90 miles to the south of the lake, with a population of 294,734 in 1940), and Tulsa, Oklahoma (a nearly 200-mile trek from the lake with population 142,157 in 1940). If motorists were traveling from Tulsa to Dallas along Routes 75 or 69 between 1947 and 1956, they would find no listings of safe restaurants or hotels between the two destinations until they arrived in Dallas at the Lewis Hotel at 30246 North Central Street in Dallas.[71] In this way, development of the "Negro areas" at Lake Texoma fell outside the purview of the travel guide and were not marketed in Black media outlets as a desirable destination.

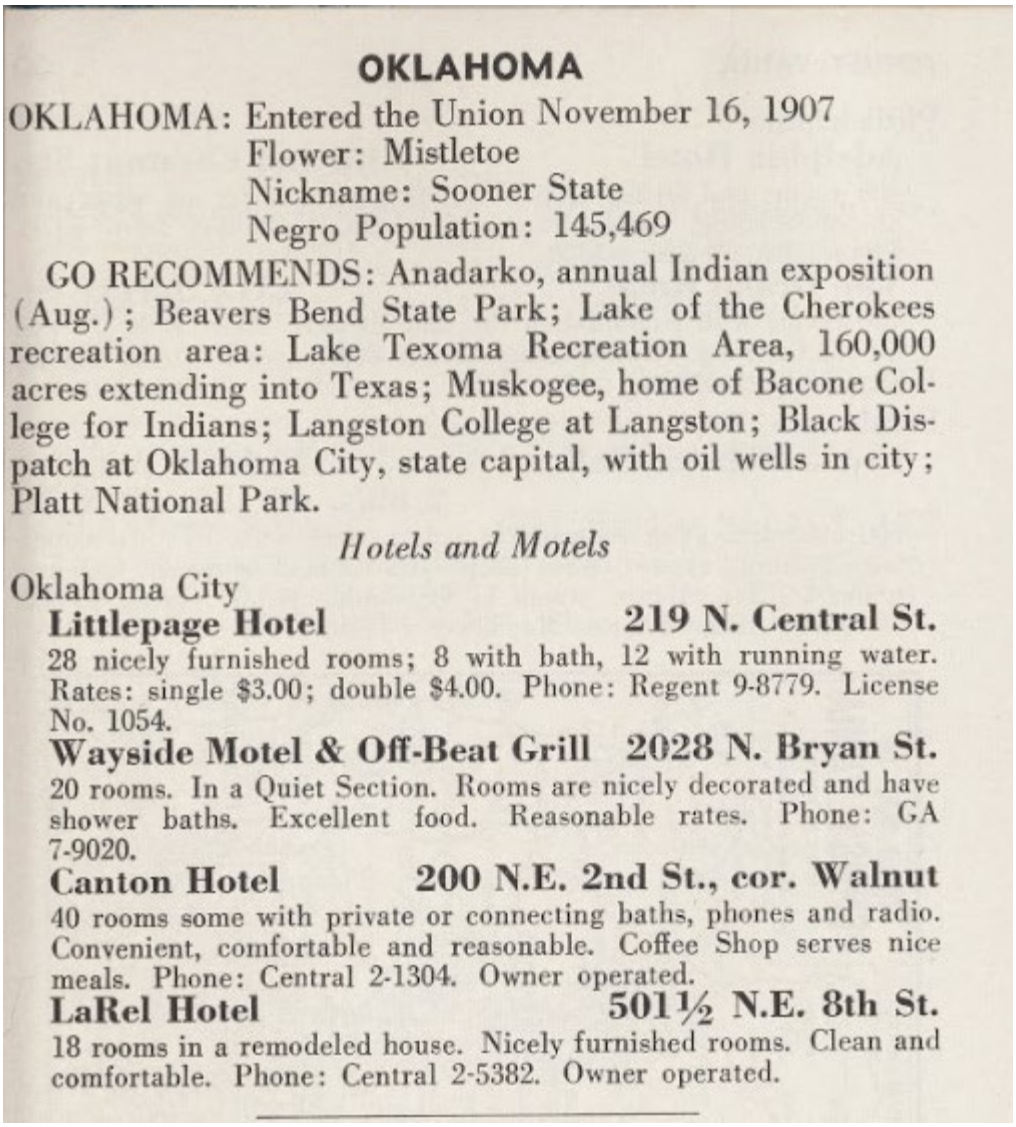
It is likely that the Black travelers who came to Lake Texoma were local or visiting family or friends who lived in the area and had a personal or direct communal connection to the site. In this regard, travelers who found themselves near Lake Texoma by way of transport between Dallas and Tulsa on Routes 69 or 75 or those connected into local knowledge networks would likely use either the Carver or Sunset camps. These sources reiterate the everyday reality for Black people traveling in northeast Texas and southeast Oklahoma during the era of Jim Crow. Safe passage in the South was a matter of life and death and required a keen knowledge of local, state, and regional laws and customs. Most evidence available suggests that Carver and Sunset camps were visited by African Americans from the surrounding counties and those in close driving proximity to the lake (200 miles or less) between 1938 and 1964. Even though the written policy was that "no racial discrimination is authorized on any property owned by the federal government," African Americans were directed to the Negro Areas at Lake Texoma.

[71] Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library. "The Negro Motorist Green Book: 1951 Railroad Edition " New York Public Library Digital Collections. Accessed October 28, 2022. https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/51514e90-856e-0132-01a0-58d385a7b928

Regarding Lake Texoma (and more broadly speaking, national parks across the South), the gravity of the missed opportunity by NPS is evident in hindsight. On a superficial level, the lake, as well as other national parks across the United States, could advertise as safe passage points for travelers. Advertising in the Green Book bolstered visitation to national parks across the nation, thereby bringing diversity of patronage to the system as early as the 1930s (Figure 18). However, NPS continued to build and operate segregated facilities in national parks across the South. The weight of the missed opportunity lies within the federal government's unwillingness to enforce integration, even though it had the authority and legal authority to do so. As such, Lake Texoma, which offered two "Negro Areas" by 1947, provided recreation and respite for thousands of Black visitors each year, but also served as a powerful and painful reminder that the federal government would not "trouble the waters" in the segregated South.

As these areas were being developed, the funds allocated for their construction and maintenance lagged behind the white areas significantly. In the South, where segregation was enforced through local laws and social constructions, the result was segregated facilities in national parks with a disproportionate number of resources directed toward whites-only facilities. For example, in 1946, the Oklahoma Colored Bath Areas were discussed as a funded project of the National Park Service. For an estimated $4,700.00, a swimming area would be developed in Oklahoma "on the lake shore at a point two miles north of Colbert, Oklahoma, a public bathing area for the use of the colored residents of Colbert, Calera, and Durant, Oklahoma."[72] This proposal suggests that, as late as 1946, African Americans on the Texas-Oklahoma border had few safe places to swim with their families, particularly because segregation laws in both Oklahoma and Texas prohibited Black and white people from sharing recreational spaces. For example, In Oklahoma, a law was passed that "the [Conservation] Commission shall have the right to make segregation of the white and colored races as to the exercise of rights of fishing, boating and bathing."[73]

[72] U.S. Department of Interior, "Lake Texoma Recreational Area: Memorandum for the Director," *Lake Texoma Recreational Area: Memorandum for the Director* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Interior, 1946), pp. 14.
[73] Jim Crow Museum, "Examples of Jim Crow Laws - Oct. 1960 - Civil Rights," Ferris State University, January 1, 2022, https://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/jimcrow/links/misclink/examples.htm.



OKLAHOMA

OKLAHOMA: Entered the Union November 16, 1907
Flower: Mistletoe
Nickname: Sooner State
Negro Population: 145,469

GO RECOMMENDS: Anadarko, annual Indian exposition (Aug.); Beavers Bend State Park; Lake of the Cherokees recreation area: Lake Texoma Recreation Area, 160,000 acres extending into Texas; Muskogee, home of Bacone College for Indians; Langston College at Langston; Black Dispatch at Oklahoma City, state capital, with oil wells in city; Platt National Park.

Hotels and Motels

Oklahoma City

Littlepage Hotel **219 N. Central St.**
28 nicely furnished rooms; 8 with bath, 12 with running water. Rates: single $3.00; double $4.00. Phone: Regent 9-8779. License No. 1054.

Wayside Motel & Off-Beat Grill **2028 N. Bryan St.**
20 rooms. In a Quiet Section. Rooms are nicely decorated and have shower baths. Excellent food. Reasonable rates. Phone: GA 7-9020.

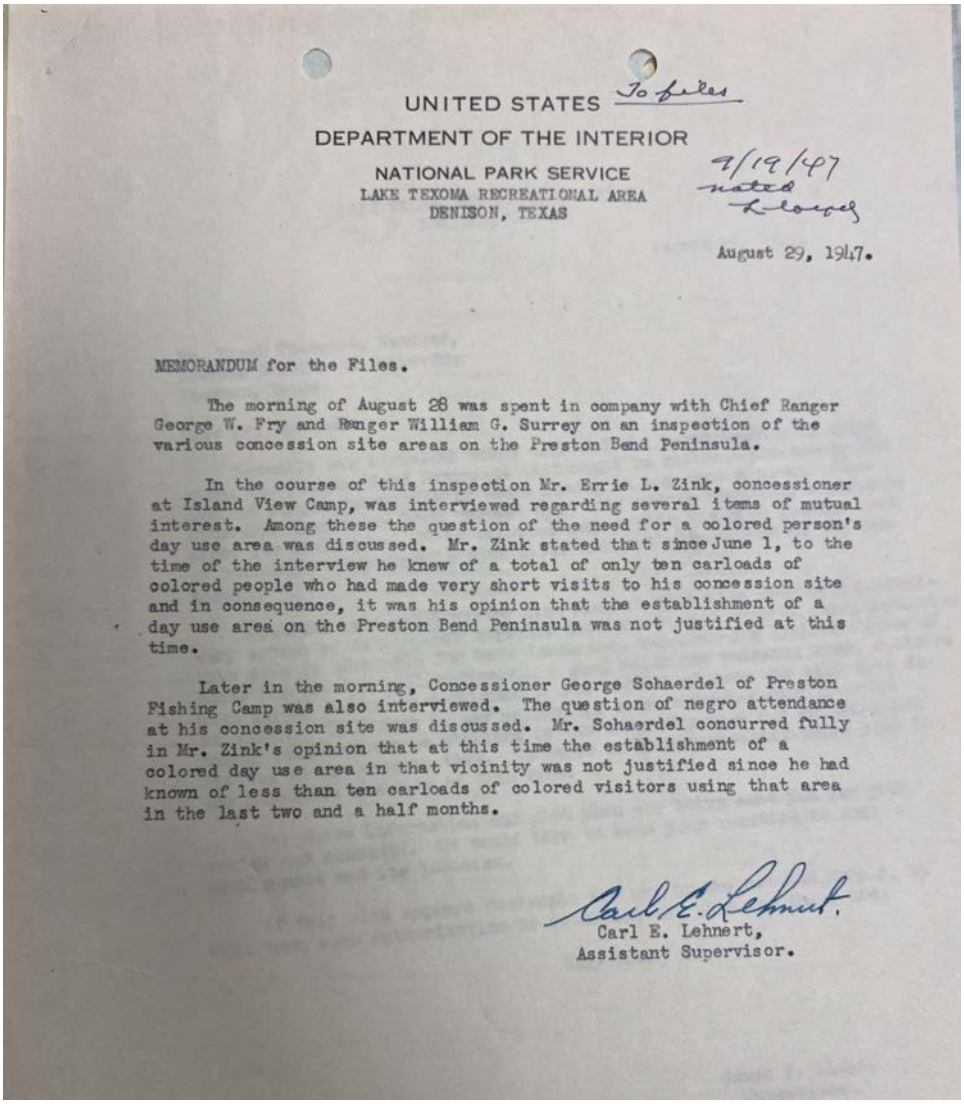
Canton Hotel **200 N.E. 2nd St., cor. Walnut**
40 rooms some with private or connecting baths, phones and radio. Convenient, comfortable and reasonable. Coffee Shop serves nice meals. Phone: Central 2-1304. Owner operated.

LaRel Hotel **501½ N.E. 8th St.**
18 rooms in a remodeled house. Nicely furnished rooms. Clean and comfortable. Phone: Central 2-5382. Owner operated.

Figure 18: A page from the Green Book illustrates how Lake Texoma was advertised as a place of interest for Black travelers. Photo courtesy of the New York Public Library.

The separate swimming area is another example of how segregation in public spaces where Black and white people would share intimate space casually was politically and socially taboo during the Jim Crow era. Though Black people often used the concession areas in white areas before options were created in Carver and Sunset, and there was little complaint from the business owners who benefitted from being one of the few options for concessions on the lake, white patrons demanded a more rigorously enforced divide. There are, however, examples of intermingling at concession sites on the lake. Perhaps, the pursuit of financial gain allowed cracks to emerge in the color line

on a case-by-case basis in the South, or because by the 1950s music and foodways were already breaking down color barriers among the teen culture. In either case, Black and white people intermingled at concession areas until options were created in the Negro areas. In 1947, NPS began to inquire about the concession usage of Blacks in white areas to assess the necessity for building a separate concession site (Figure 19).



UNITED STATES To files
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
LAKE TEXOMA RECREATIONAL AREA
DENISON, TEXAS

9/19/47 noted L Lloyd

August 29, 1947.

MEMORANDUM for the Files.

The morning of August 28 was spent in company with Chief Ranger George W. Fry and Ranger William G. Surrey on an inspection of the various concession site areas on the Preston Bend Peninsula.

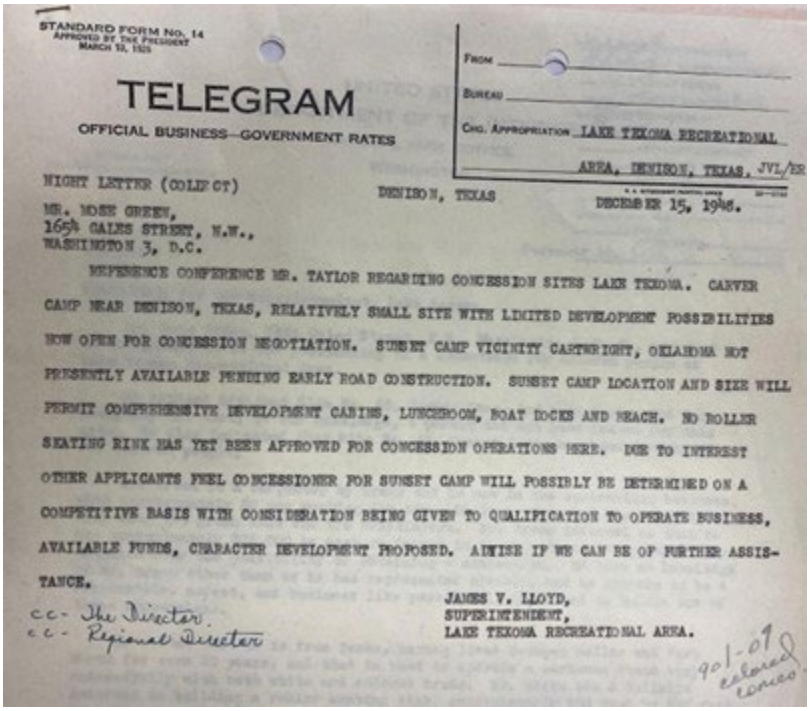
In the course of this inspection Mr. Errie L. Zink, concessioner at Island View Camp, was interviewed regarding several items of mutual interest. Among these the question of the need for a colored person's day use area was discussed. Mr. Zink stated that since June 1, to the time of the interview he knew of a total of only ten carloads of colored people who had made very short visits to his concession site and in consequence, it was his opinion that the establishment of a day use area on the Preston Bend Peninsula was not justified at this time.

Later in the morning, Concessioner George Schaerdel of Preston Fishing Camp was also interviewed. The question of negro attendance at his concession site was discussed. Mr. Schaerdel concurred fully in Mr. Zink's opinion that at this time the establishment of a colored day use area in that vicinity was not justified since he had known of less than ten carloads of colored visitors using that area in the last two and a half months.

Carl E. Lehnert.
Carl E. Lehnert,
Assistant Supervisor.

Figure 19: NPS Rangers interviewed white concessioners to inquire about the total number of Black people who frequented their facility for concessions during the 1947 summer season. Photo courtesy of NARA, Denver office.

Legally, NPS had authority over the areas, as the parks were not maintained by funds from the states, but by "congressional appropriations derived from the taxation of all the people."[74] As a result, the federal government could legally offer integrated facilities, regardless of what the local customs demanded of white and Black citizens. Whereas state parks followed the state regulations, federal parks were supposed to uphold the laws of the federal government, which meant no racial discrimination on federally held lands. Even so, NPS extended the practices of white supremacy into federal lands by promoting segregated facilities in its parks. Many Black entrepreneurs were eager to become permitted to offer concessions in the Negro areas at Lake Texoma (Figure 20).



STANDARD FORM No. 14
APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT
MARCH 10, 1925

TELEGRAM

OFFICIAL BUSINESS—GOVERNMENT RATES

FROM
BUREAU
CHG. APPROPRIATION LAKE TEXOMA RECREATIONAL AREA, DENISON, TEXAS, JVL/ER

NIGHT LETTER (COLLECT) DENISON, TEXAS DECEMBER 15, 1948.

MR. MOSE GREEN,
165½ GALES STREET, N.W.,
WASHINGTON 3, D.C.

REFERENCE CONFERENCE MR. TAYLOR REGARDING CONCESSION SITES LAKE TEXOMA. CARVER CAMP NEAR DENISON, TEXAS, RELATIVELY SMALL SITE WITH LIMITED DEVELOPMENT POSSIBILITIES NOW OPEN FOR CONCESSION NEGOTIATION. SUNSET CAMP VICINITY CARTWRIGHT, OKLAHOMA NOT PRESENTLY AVAILABLE PENDING EARLY ROAD CONSTRUCTION. SUNSET CAMP LOCATION AND SIZE WILL PERMIT COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT CABINS, LUNCHROOM, BOAT DOCKS AND BEACH. NO ROLLER SKATING RINK HAS YET BEEN APPROVED FOR CONCESSION OPERATIONS HERE. DUE TO INTEREST OTHER APPLICANTS FEEL CONCESSIONER FOR SUNSET CAMP WILL POSSIBLY BE DETERMINED ON A COMPETITIVE BASIS WITH CONSIDERATION BEING GIVEN TO QUALIFICATION TO OPERATE BUSINESS, AVAILABLE FUNDS, CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED. ADVISE IF WE CAN BE OF FURTHER ASSISTANCE.

JAMES V. LLOYD,
SUPERINTENDENT,
LAKE TEXOMA RECREATIONAL AREA.

cc- The Director.
cc- Regional Director

90-09 colored camps

Figure 20. Telegram from James V. Lloyd, Superintendent, to Mr. Mose Green regarding potential development of Carver and Sunset camps. Mr. Lloyd notes that interest in concessions will likely be determined competitively. Photograph courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration, Denver Office.

Additional source material collected by NPS in 1948 references the Negro area as "Carver Camp," and that the area was a desirable location for investors to establish concessions. The federal

[74] Ibid., 15.

government provided guidelines to the Regional Director of Region Three, where Lake Texoma is located. Concessioners in the white areas had already established businesses, and under the newly proposed guidelines, new concession sites would be established through bids.

> "let on a bid basis and award to the concessioners who are best qualified and most likely to provide the most desirable facilities and render the best service to the public. Monetary consideration to the government should be a percentage of gross receipts. A concessionaire should have only one site. Term of lease should be dependent on the type of facilities provided by the leasee at his own expense."[75]

One investor, Mose Green of Washington D.C., expressed interest in seeking a permit to develop concessions at Carver Camp in Texas and Sunset Camp in Oklahoma. He is described in a December 13, 1948, Memorandum to the Superintendent at Lake Texoma as "a carpenter by trade and owner of a construction business with 25 men employed; the head of a family of six whose two grown sons worked as bricklayers; and that he appears to be a responsible, modest and business-like person."[76] Perhaps most importantly, the memorandum states he has $25,000 in cash to invest in the project and desires to expand the recreational offerings to include a roller rink. Though it is stated explicitly that he would take either site, Carver Camp (No. 46) or Sunset Camp (No. 43), he was partial to Carver Camp because he was a resident of Texas between Dallas and Fort Worth for some 20 years.[77] Mr. Green ultimately settled on concessions at Sunset Camp on the Oklahoma side of Lake Texoma.[78] A handwritten correspondence from April 28, 1949, indicates that the NPS completed the road improvement project and wrote to Green to advise him to visit Sunset Camp and meet with the Army Corps of Engineers. Sunset Camp, the Oklahoma "Negro Area" equivalent to Carver Camp on Lake Texoma, was ready to add concession sites, but

[75] Box 146, Folder 901-07, Correspondence Relating to CCC, ECW & ERA Work in National Parks, Forest, Monuments and Recreation Areas, 1933-1948, Applications and Inquiries Concessions (colored), Letter. 1948, National Park Service to James V. Lloyd, National Records and Administration, Southwest region—Denver office. Accessed May 6, 2022.

[76] Box 146, Folder 901-07, Correspondence Relating to CCC, ECW & ERA Work in National Parks, Forest, Monuments and Recreation Areas, 1933-1948, Applications and Inquiries Concessions (colored), Telegram. 1948, James V. Lloyd to Mose Green, National Records and Administration, Southwest region—Denver office. Accessed May 6, 2022.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Box 146, Folder 901-07, Correspondence Relating to CCC, ECW & ERA Work in National Parks, Forest, Monuments and Recreation Areas, 1933-1948, Applications and Inquiries Concessions (colored), Telegram. 1948, Mose Green to Superintendent at Lake Texoma, National Records and Administration, Southwest region—Denver office. Accessed May 6, 2022.

Green was not the only vendor contacted by Superintendent Lloyd on April 28. (See Appendix A for documentation of vendor interest in Carver and Sunset camps.)

Memorandums from NPS identify several improvements necessary for the beach to be functional and ready for public use, including the necessity to "clear brush and stumps both in the water and on the shore line over a limited area as well as grade, level and smooth the shore line prior to sanding."[79] In 1947, the area roads leading to the camping area were improved, and some land was acquired from adjacent property owners to widen the roads leading to Carver.[80] Traffic congestion may have caused undue burden for residents near Lake Texoma, as several improvement projects to roads were planned and completed between 1938 and 1952. Another correspondence documents the construction of a boat dock road on August 25, 1947. Richard Pile, Resident Engineer on the project, writes to the supervisor of the National Park Service Lake Texoma Recreation Area that the materials used to build boat dock road (including dirt and rock from the borrowed area) would be apportioned based on the need of the project. He goes on to dictate that "It is requested that a representative from your office go over the site and work with our Mr. Roberts and outline any development you have planned for this area."[81] In fact, there are documented requests for improvements to the roads, camping areas, concessions, and boating ramps in 1947, 1948, and 1949. Sunset Camp, the "Negro area" along Lake Texoma in Oklahoma, was being considered for improvements by Oklahoma's state planning and resources board. In 1952, the board had approved architectural plans for "swank lodges and cabins" at Lake Texoma, Sequoya, and Quartz Mountain (Figure 21). These improvements, reported by the *New York Amsterdam News*, a Black newspaper, speak to the national recognition the region had earned through travel networks. However, there is no evidence that "swank lodges and cabins" were ever built at Lake Texoma. There is no remaining evidence of any of the mid-twentieth improvements to Sunset Camp.

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[79] Ibid.

[80] A February 7, 1947, memorandum found at the NARA Denver office states the president of the Citizens Bank, Mr. Webster, and local farmer, Mr. Sam Young, to allow Grayson County to "construct a new approach road to the Carver area." To secure the 30 feet requested for the project, Mr. Young asked that NPS secure 30 feet of land right-of-way from the farmer adjacent to his property. Additionally, Mr. Young "requested permission to keep his personal boat in the bay of the Carver Area and was promised this would be authorized by the Park Service." This statement suggested that the current roadway leading to the Carver camp was insufficient to handle the volume of visitors at the camp, and that the county, private industry, Grayson County officials, and private citizens collaborated to address the problem.

[81] Letter, borrow area at station 46-00, 1947.

Plan $500,000 Lodge
New York Amsterdam News (1943-1961); Sep 6, 1952;
ProQuest Historical Newspapers: New York Amsterdam News
pg. 21

Plan $500,000 Lodge

The state planning and resources board of Tulsa, Okla., plans to spend $500,000 for a Negro lodge at Sequoyah in its $5,000,000 park improvement program, to get under construction about December, according to a recent report released by the board.

Architectural plans for the three swank lodges and cabins to be located in Sequoyah, Lake Texoma, and Quartz Mountain have already been approved by the board.

The 4,000 acre park is an elevated point slightly less than three miles south of SH 51 at the confluence of Fourteen-Mile Creek and Grand River.

The lodges may be opened by April 1, 1954.

Figure 21. Announcement of Funds for Negro Lodge at Sequoyah Park.

A memorandum for the files report completed by James V. Lloyd, superintendent at Lake Texoma, on April 8, 1948, reads,

> "the Service planned to develop a road on Federal property and to make some initial limited beach improvements so that this large area would be available for colored people for swimming, boating and general recreation. It was also contemplated that a concession would be established in this area… [and], it was also hoped, in time to afford some facilities in the area during the coming summer."[82]

NPS recorded a steady progression of visitors from 1947 to 1952. An example of this is seen in a draft letter written to the Sherman Chamber of Commerce manager Frank M. Thompson from James W. Lloyd, Supervisor of the National Park Service at the United States Department of

[82] Box 146, Folder 901-07, Correspondence Relating to CCC, ECW & ERA Work in National Parks, Forest, Monuments and Recreation Areas, 1933-1948, Applications and Inquiries Concessions (colored), Memorandum. 1948, James V. Lloyd, National Records and Administration, Southwest region—Denver office. Accessed May 6, 2022.

Interior. A handwritten note in the top right corner notes, "not sent but believed worth filing for future reference."[83] This draft letter provides a rare glimpse of an early discussion to develop a second Negro Area at Lake Texoma. Lloyd writes, ""our problem now is to develop more than one area for colored people, although this thought did not seem apparent in 1943 when the Master Plan report for Lake Texoma was issued."[84] Figure 22 is an excerpt from the letter that describes the need for a second colored area in Oklahoma.

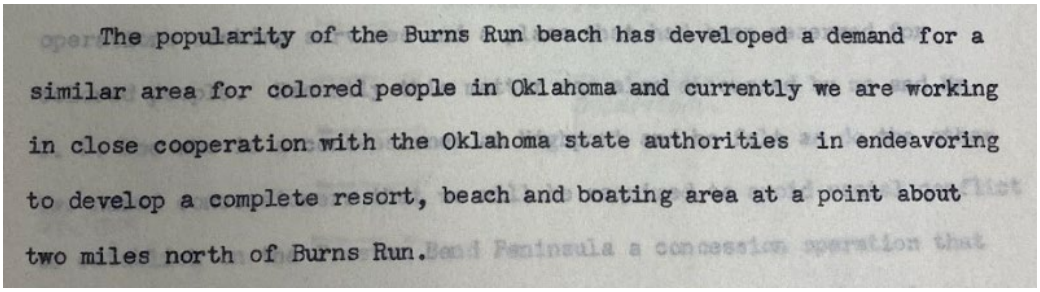
The popularity of the Burns Run beach has developed a demand for a similar area for colored people in Oklahoma and currently we are working in close cooperation with the Oklahoma state authorities in endeavoring to develop a complete resort, beach and boating area at a point about two miles north of Burns Run.

Figure 22. Excerpt from letter to Sherman Chamber of Commerce manager Frank M. Thompson from James W. Loyd, Supervisor of the NPS. The site referenced is that of Sunset Camp.

Similarly, local newspapers such as *The Sherman Democrat, The Denison News*, and *The Denison Press* touted the popularity of the lake, and requests for various improvement projects suggested that Lake Texoma was a popular destination for recreation. As the popularity of the lake grew, so too did pressure from the local African American community, which sought out improvement projects to benefit colored visitors at the park. For example, prominent African American residents of Denison, Willie and Lonnie Bunkley, requested permission to set up concessions at Carver Camp. Documentation between the National Park Service and the Bunkley family illustrated the continued interest in the investment opportunity at the Carver Camp. As proprietors of Hollywood Gardens, the Bunkleys were well suited for the business; locals recall their restaurant drew crowds from all over Grayson County. The popularity of Hollywood Gardens and the persistence of the Bunkleys in attempts to secure a concessions contract at Carver Camp suggests the park was highly trafficked and generated steady revenue during the busy season. C B. Bunkley partnered with Mr. Pronsell Woods to inquire about the concessions offered at Carver and the potential improvements that would benefit the colored people in the vicinity of Denison. Like his brother Wille Bunkley,

[83] James Lloyd (Washington, DC, n.d.).
[84] Ibid.

C.B. recognized the financial possibilities a well-managed and regularly visited recreation site for the Black citizens of Denison. Woods and Bunkley wanted to establish concession sites at Sunset Camp in Oklahoma.

Lloyd also wrote a letter to Richard Pile, resident engineer at Lake Texoma, updating him on the progress of C.B. Bunkley's bid proposal. Lloyd writes, "Tentative negotiations have been under way for some time with Mr. C.B. Bunkley and a group of associated colored people of Denison Texas, who appear interested in developing this concession site."[85] It appears that the Carver and Sunset concession inquiries were high enough in number that NPS developed a rubric to assess the qualifications of the African American investors. A 1948 telegram from James Floyd provides further detail. Potential investors would be compared across the following categories: qualification to operate business, available funds, and character development.

Despite all these advancements to improve the "Negro Areas" at Lake Texoma, the creation of the lake and impending recreation areas created a "bristle of problems," according to the Annual Report of the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior (1946-1950).[86] First, maintenance and administration changed hands, causing a delay in construction of some recreational facilities at Lake Texoma, including Carver and Sunset camps. An annual report of the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior from 1946-1950 outlines the transfer of administration from the NPS to the Army Corps of Engineers:

> On June 30, 1949, administration of the Lake Texoma Recreational Area, in Texas and Oklahoma, was assumed by the Corps of Engineers of the Department of the Army, which had constructed the Denison Dam on the Red River, thus creating the lake. Termination of the arrangement, under which the National Park Service took over responsibility for the development and management of the lake and the lands surrounding it for recreational use in 1946, was requested by the Department of the Interior.[87]

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[85] James Lloyd (Washington, DC, n.d.).

[86] Annual Report of the Director of the National Park Service to the Secretary of the Interior (1946-1950). Page 47 (https://archive.org/details/annualreportofdi4650nati)

[87] Ibid., 55.

Additionally, the report provided some insight into Lake Texoma's visitation numbers as compared with other lakes managed by NPS.

> To the group of impounded lakes on which recreational use is managed by the National Park Service for another Federal agency, Franklin D. Roosevelt Lake, created by the Grand Coulee Dam, was added during the past year. The extent of responsibility involved in the development and *management of the recreational areas is indicated by the 1,171,736 visitors to the Lake Mead (formerly Boulder Dam) Recreational Area during the last travel year and by a recent estimate of the supervisor at Lake Texoma that the total recreation-use visitation there this year will be as much as 650,000.*[88]

This comparison is valuable because it demonstrates the popularity of Lake Texoma and suggests that, of those 650,000 guests, some may have also used the two "Negro Areas." To date, no source material has emerged that reveals the yearly totals for Black patrons at Lake Texoma. Furthermore, no data denoted the flow of Black tourism compared with white tourism at the lake. Instead, the total estimate for yearly visitors is all that remains to determine how busy the lake was during the Jim Crow era. This data, if siloed in a discoverable collection or embedded in a different, yet-to-be discovered source, would provide additional insight into the travel patterns of Black people who sought outdoor leisure activities in the South. Another observation included in the report suggests that the use of recreational areas outpaced development.

> ...[In] the newer areas, several of which are large and offer complex problems of development, are receiving heavy use before even the most simple facilities are provided, yet by no means as much as would be the case if they were properly developed. Olympic National Park is inadequately developed, and Kings Canyon but little better. Public use is pushing far ahead of provision for it in Big Bend and

[88] Ibid., 63.

> Everglades National Parks, in Lake Mead, Millerton Lake, Coulee Dam, and Lake Texoma recreational areas...[89]

One wonders what types of "complex problems of development" surfaced as Carver and Sunset camps developed — particularly related to access to resources, visibility of the site from the road, and juxtaposition of these camps to other "whites only" areas on the lake. For example, in 1947 the Sherman Chamber of Commerce wrote to Supervisor James Lloyd at Lake Texoma to address the creation of a "Negro Area" (Figure 23). They identified the need to develop a "Negro Area," but cautioned putting it near white cottages and recreation areas. Similarly, the question of access to the "Negro Area" also raised concerns from white residents who worried about intermixing of traffic leading to recreation sites on the lake.

These arguments echo other anti-integration public discourse that circulated in segregationist circles during the Jim Crow era. For example, Allan Shivers, who served as the governor of Texas from 1949 to 1957, is famously quoted as saying, "Segregation in Texas will continue as long as I am governor."[90] In fact, under Shivers's governorship, four segregation statutes, one constitutional amendment, and one amendment to the penal code were passed. The statutes included requiring separate washrooms for white and Black people in coal mines (1949), separate facilities for white and Black people in state parks (1950), a miscegenation law that carried a mandatory sentence of 2 to 5 years (1951), and establishment of separate tuberculosis hospitals for white and Black people (1950).[91] In 1951, Texas passed an amendment to its constitution to require all voters to pay a poll tax, and in 1953 the state amended the penal code to prohibit public carriers from transporting Black and white people together.[92] Taken together, these laws facilitated a system of racial hierarchy and separation between Black and white people in Texas.

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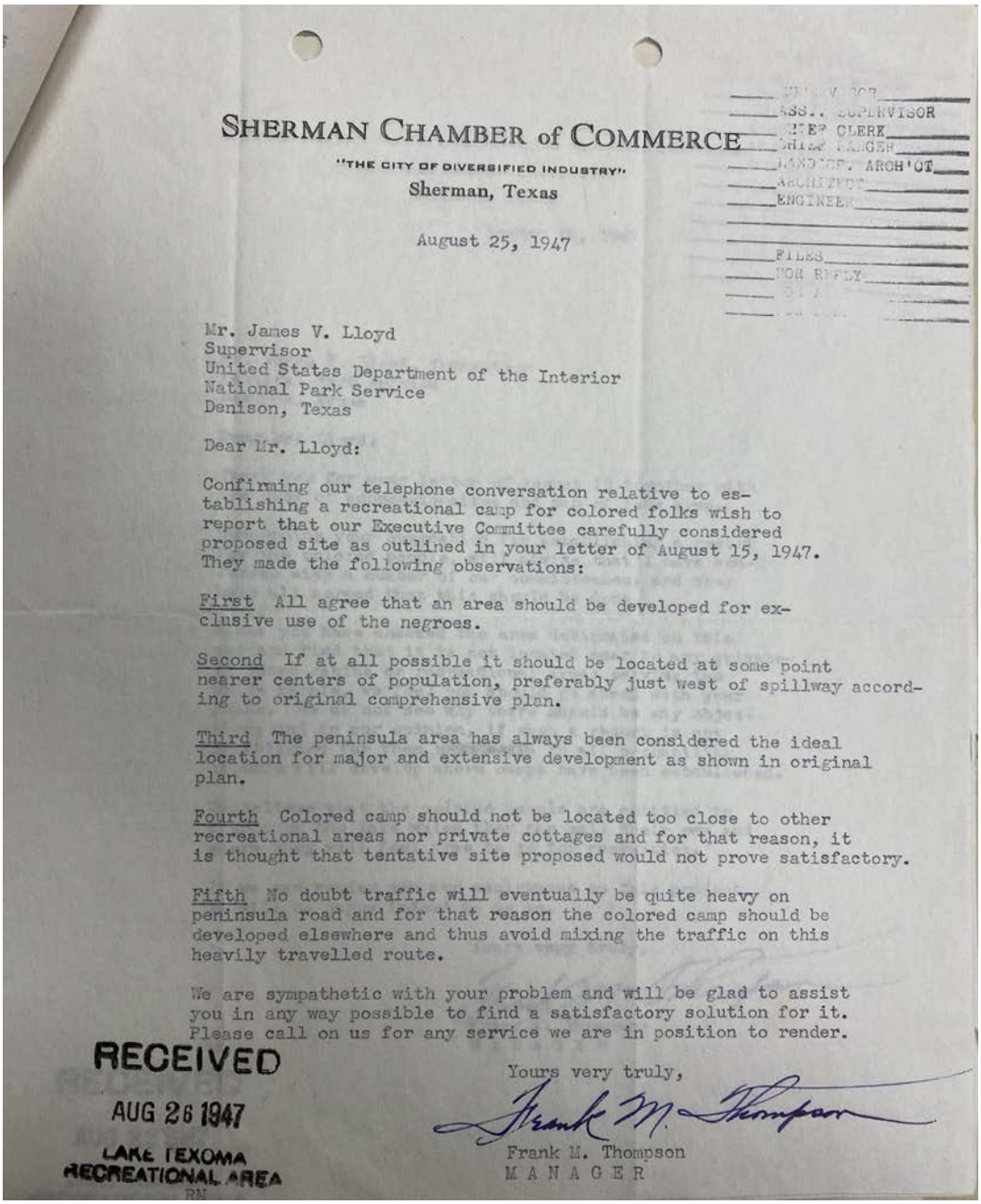
[89] Ibid., 88.

[90] Des Moines (Iowa) Tribune, "Desegregation Moves Ahead Slowly," September 9, 1954

[91] Bringing History Home, "3 Segregation Texas Jim Crow - Bringing History Home," Texas Jim Crow, Jim Crow Laws: Texas Close (Bringing History Home, January 1, 2005), https://www.bringinghistoryhome.org/assets/bringinghistoryhome/3rd-grade/unit-2/activity-5/3_Texas_Jim%20Crow.pdf.

[92] Ibid.



SHERMAN CHAMBER of COMMERCE

"THE CITY OF DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRY"

Sherman, Texas

August 25, 1947

Mr. James V. Lloyd
Supervisor
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Denison, Texas

Dear Mr. Lloyd:

Confirming our telephone conversation relative to establishing a recreational camp for colored folks wish to report that our Executive Committee carefully considered proposed site as outlined in your letter of August 15, 1947. They made the following observations:

First All agree that an area should be developed for exclusive use of the negroes.

Second If at all possible it should be located at some point nearer centers of population, preferably just west of spillway according to original comprehensive plan.

Third The peninsula area has always been considered the ideal location for major and extensive development as shown in original plan.

Fourth Colored camp should not be located too close to other recreational areas nor private cottages and for that reason, it is thought that tentative site proposed would not prove satisfactory.

Fifth No doubt traffic will eventually be quite heavy on peninsula road and for that reason the colored camp should be developed elsewhere and thus avoid mixing the traffic on this heavily travelled route.

We are sympathetic with your problem and will be glad to assist you in any way possible to find a satisfactory solution for it. Please call on us for any service we are in position to render.

RECEIVED
AUG 26 1947
LAKE TEXOMA
RECREATIONAL AREA

Yours very truly,

Frank M. Thompson

Frank M. Thompson
MANAGER

Figure 23: A letter from the Sherman Chamber of Commerce sheds light on the extent to which local residents were willing to enforce segregation. NARA, Denver office. Photo by the author.

In comparison, Oklahoma's long history of racist policies extends beyond the Choctaw mixed-race secessionist Robert M. Jones of the Civil War era and into the twentieth century, when the territory became a state. The first bill the state legislature passed in 1907 was to enforce racial segregation on railcars. The Oklahoma Historical Society acknowledges the far-reaching effects of that bill, writing:

> Once Oklahoma had Roosevelt's approval [for statehood] and was safely in the Union, the first legislature wrote segregation into law with Senate Bill Number One after first defining all people with any degree of African ancestry as black. The solons banned interracial marriages and miscegenation, both of which became felonies. State law also targeted ministers who performed ceremonies for mixed couples; they, too, could be charged with felonies. The legislature banned interracial schools at all levels. Many public facilities along with common carriers were segregated. Some 540 railroad depots in the state had to be altered to fit the new separate waiting rooms requirement, and new coaches also had to be added to the lines. Over time, legislators segregated hospitals, housing, cemeteries, and restaurants. In 1915 Oklahoma made national history by becoming the first state in the Union to segregate public pay telephone booths.[93]

Through these examples, it is clear in both Texas and Oklahoma, segregation in public facilities was a common practice that often became embedded in the political and economic structures of the state. Moreover, the social practices developed while experiencing everyday life during the Jim Crow era made moments of confrontation potentially deadly. In this context, the "complexity of development" for the Black areas at Lake Texoma was entangled with the social politics of the local community as well as the larger trends around race enforced throughout the states. A second complexity of development appears on the administrative side. The complacency of NPS, and later the USACE, to address the race issue head on prolonged the progress of integration, albeit gradually, that could have occurred at sites such as Lake Texoma, where jurisdiction of the land fell under the federal government.

Finally, "complexity of development" is revisited once the "Negro Area" is approved and under construction. Some of the logistical obstacles NPS identified in constructing Carver and Sunset

[93] https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=SE006

camps are included in Figure 24. A memorandum for the supervisor at Lake Texoma discusses the survey conducted during the summer of 1947 to prepare Sunset Camp for patrons. They note the Sunset site was a "desirable beach site" that required less work in clearing stumps and brush along the shoreline than Burns Run, another local "whites only" site. Also, an assessment of the 2-mile road leading to Sunset Camp was described as at best a "very poor truck trail" that would require a "minimum of work clearing, grubbing, the disposal of trees and brush, grading and drainage." There was a recommendation to widen the road for two-lane traffic and mention of a possible fencing expense that would require a total estimate of $5,300.00. Another 0.9 mile of government land would also require $2,500 for cleaning, grubbing, grading, and drainage work, and a parking lot that could hold up to 25 cars was proposed for an additional $300.

Taken together, the complexities of Jim Crow race relations, the complacency in enforcing federal policy by NPS and USACE, and the logistical challenges of building the Negro Areas in general .suggests the establishment of these areas caused significant debate in local and federal circles. Nevertheless, the areas were established and the NPS made improvements to both the Carver and Sunset camps in 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949, and 1950 (Figure 25)

Between 1947 and 1950, $33,000 of improvements were made at Carver Camp compared with $25,500 at Sunset Camp.[94] The improvements included pit toilets, grills, picnic tables, garbage containers; picnic clearings and beach improvements; comfort stations, landscaping funds for grading, sodding, and planting. The comfort station, built in 1949 (Table 3), served as the largest investment by NPS to Carver Camp at Lake Texoma. These investments, along with the other improvements noted previously, suggest there was a steady increase in African American patronage of the area.

[94] Box 117, Folder 901-07, Correspondence Relating to CCC, ECW & ERA Work in National Parks, Forest, Monuments and Recreation Areas, 1933-1948, (Untitled Material) Maps, Drawings, Master Recreation Plan, Modification. Cost Summary. 1947-1950, James V. Lloyd to Mose Green, National Records and Administration, Southwest region—Denver office. Accessed May 6, 2022.

7/31/47

UNITED STATES

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

LAKE TEXOMA RECREATIONAL AREA

DENISON, TEXAS

files —

July 14, 1947.

MEMORANDUM for the Supervisor.

On July 9 in compliance with your request, we made a joint inspection of the proposed Sunset Camp Area. This area is located about two miles north of the Oklahoma end of Denison Dam in a section of the lake which has become known as "Platter Flats". The purpose of this survey was to determine the following:

1. Suitability of the area for development as a public day use and concessioner operated area.
2. Condition of the present county section line road leading to the area and the amount of road that would need to be reconstructed by the state to provide suitable access to the area.
3. In the event that it would become necessary for the National Park Service to improve the section line road, what would be entailed in terms of cost and work.
4. How much road construction would be needed within Government owned land and the approximate cost of same.

For your general guidance in judging some of the points discussed herewith, a tentatively proposed layout of facilities within the area and a vicinity map are attached.

Suitability of the Area for Development.

A goodly portion of the area is above the 640 Ft. elevation (m.s.l.) and there is enough ground at and above 645 Ft. elevation to provide suitable space for permanent type structures. However, these higher elevations are well removed (with one exception) from the waters edge at normal power pool, meaning that beach structures would need to be movable or floating.

Roughly 10 percent of the area is heavily wooded. The remaining area is made up of formerly cultivated fields or open pasture. Much of this latter area is showing pronounced signs of tree growth recovery.

All soil in the area is very sandy. Apparently the "loose sand cover" is even deeper than in the Burns Run Area. In several places along the shore the sand has been washed clean and deposited under water and along the shore in such a manner as to invite the establishment of beach areas. On the date of the survey, the lake level was 617.2 (m.s.l.) and with one minor exception, there were no evidences of instability of the sandy shoreline. This is indicative of desirable beach sites. However, in the development of a beach on any chosen point on the shore line it would be necessary to remove some stumps and brush. With a few exceptions the general clearing of stumps and brush in the water area would not be as great as it was at Burns Run.

There is one small cove that would provide protected shore anchorage for a number of small boats. The large bay is capable of handling larger boats in considerable numbers. Primary exposure in the large bay is from the west and from the south in the small coves.

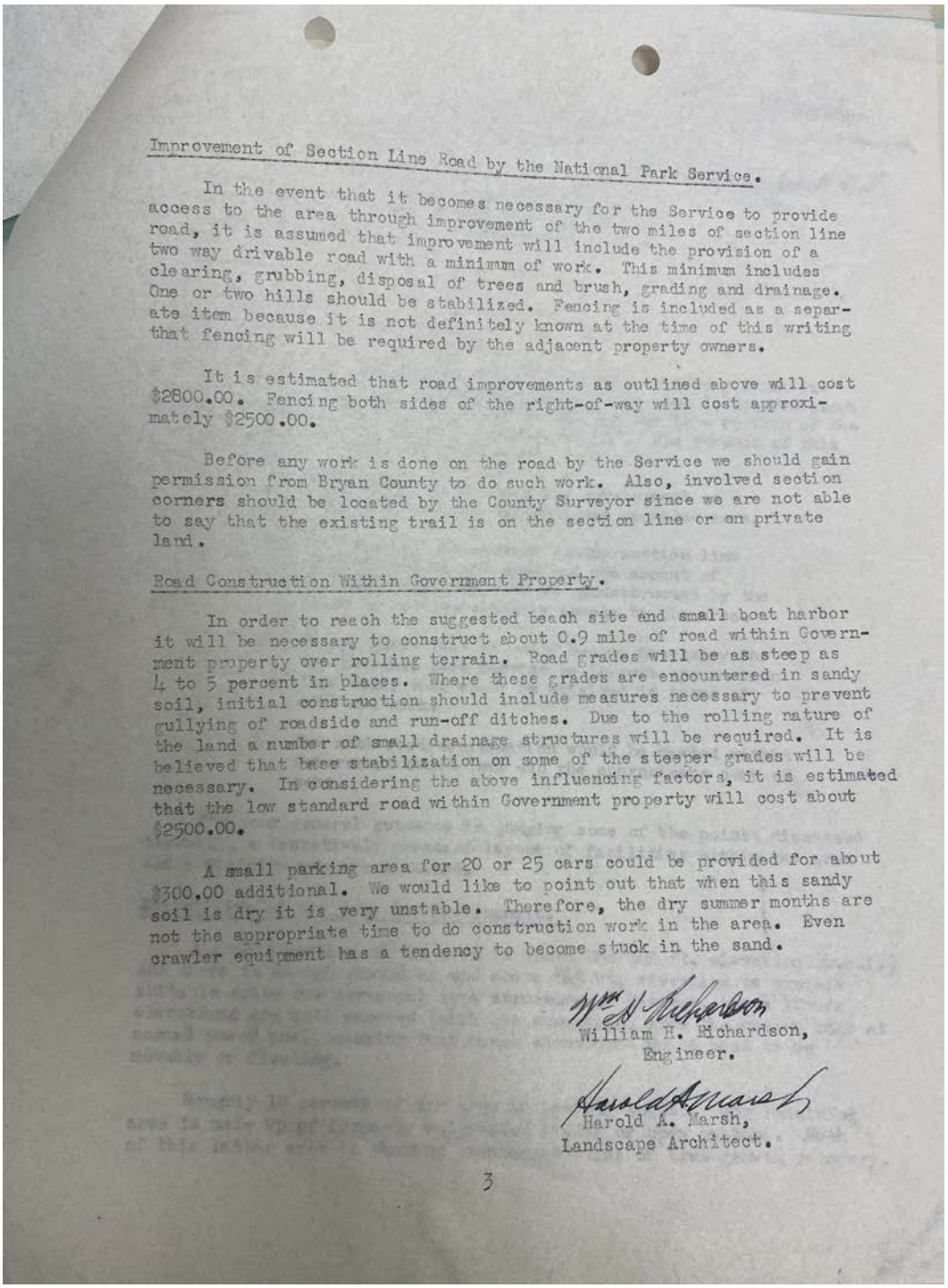
Condition of the Present County Section Line Road.

From an intersection with Highway 75A at the north end of Denison Dam there is a section line road leading to the area. At the present time this road is nothing more than a very poor truck trail. In a number of places, the road departs from the section line and encroaches on farmers' fields or woods to avoid impassable rough places and mud holes when the rainy season comes. There is only room for one way traffic on the trail and when passing another vehicle it is necessary for one of them to pull out into a field or back up some distance. During dry weather the car pulling out is subject to becoming "stuck" because of the sand. Tree, brush, weed, and vine growth is heavy along the roadside and considerable clearing would be necessary in widening the road for two lane traffic.

It is two miles from the Dam to the point at which the National Park Service road would leave the section line. In case improvement of this two mile length of road should be undertaken by the state, we feel that the following minimum work would be involved:

(a) Survey to establish the right-of-way along the section line.
(b) Clearing, grubbing, grading and draining including drainage structures.
(c) Fencing both sides of right-of-way.
(d) Due to the instability of the sandy soil when dry, it is believed that some form of driving surface stabilization should be provided.

Harold L. Hurd,
Landscape Architect.



Improvement of Section Line Road by the National Park Service.

In the event that it becomes necessary for the Service to provide access to the area through improvement of the two miles of section line road, it is assumed that improvement will include the provision of a two way drivable road with a minimum of work. This minimum includes clearing, grubbing, disposal of trees and brush, grading and drainage. One or two hills should be stabilized. Fencing is included as a separate item because it is not definitely known at the time of this writing that fencing will be required by the adjacent property owners.

It is estimated that road improvements as outlined above will cost $2800.00. Fencing both sides of the right-of-way will cost approximately $2500.00.

Before any work is done on the road by the Service we should gain permission from Bryan County to do such work. Also, involved section corners should be located by the County Surveyor since we are not able to say that the existing trail is on the section line or on private land.

Road Construction Within Government Property.

In order to reach the suggested beach site and small boat harbor it will be necessary to construct about 0.9 mile of road within Government property over rolling terrain. Road grades will be as steep as 4 to 5 percent in places. Where these grades are encountered in sandy soil, initial construction should include measures necessary to prevent gullying of roadside and run-off ditches. Due to the rolling nature of the land a number of small drainage structures will be required. It is believed that base stabilization on some of the steeper grades will be necessary. In considering the above influencing factors, it is estimated that the low standard road within Government property will cost about $2500.00.

A small parking area for 20 or 25 cars could be provided for about $300.00 additional. We would like to point out that when this sandy soil is dry it is very unstable. Therefore, the dry summer months are not the appropriate time to do construction work in the area. Even crawler equipment has a tendency to become stuck in the sand.

Wm H Richardson
William H. Richardson,
Engineer.

Harold A Marsh
Harold A. Marsh,
Landscape Architect.

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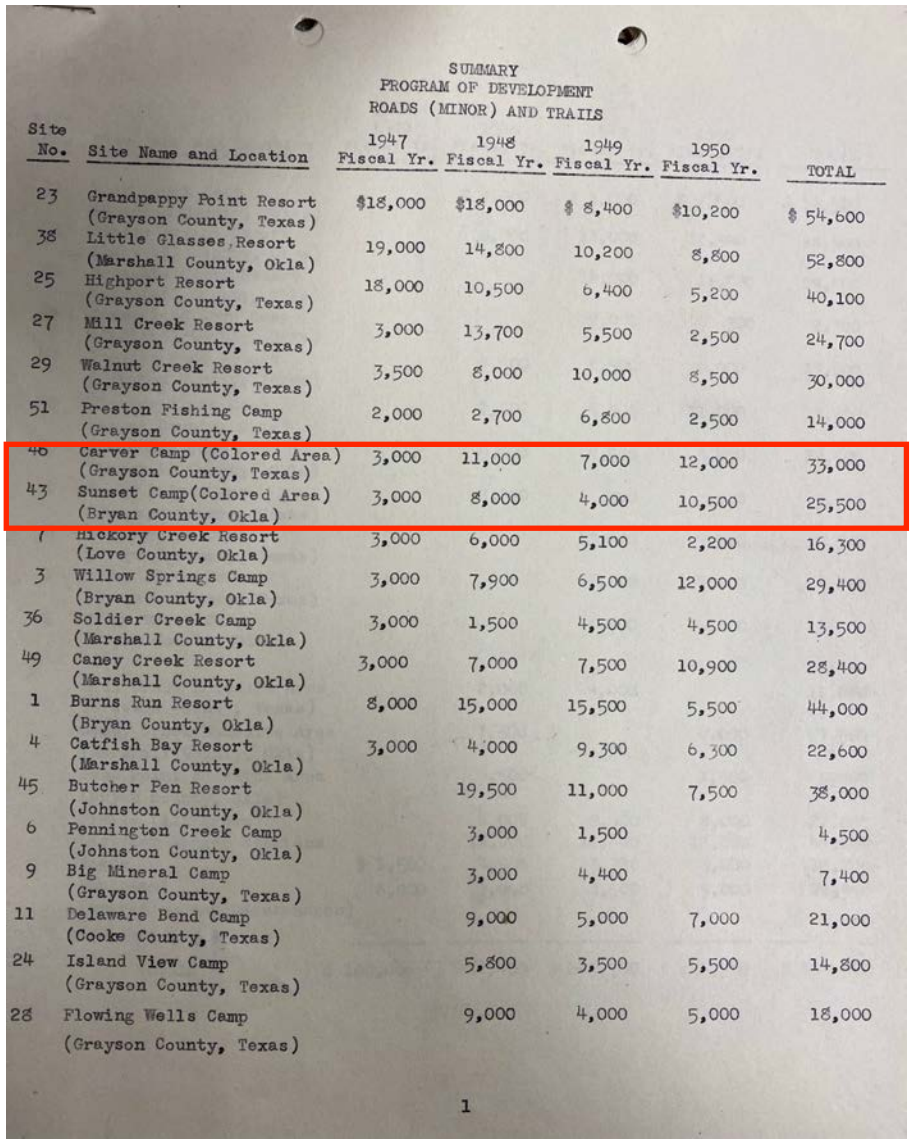
Figure 24: A letter from the Engineer and landscape architect detailing the survey conducted at Sunset Camp. NARA, Denver Office. Photo courtesy of the author.



SUMMARY
PROGRAM OF DEVELOPMENT
ROADS (MINOR) AND TRAILS

Site No.	Site Name and Location	1947 Fiscal Yr.	1948 Fiscal Yr.	1949 Fiscal Yr.	1950 Fiscal Yr.	TOTAL
23	Grandpappy Point Resort (Grayson County, Texas)	$18,000	$18,000	$ 8,400	$10,200	$ 54,600
38	Little Glasses Resort (Marshall County, Okla)	19,000	14,800	10,200	8,800	52,800
25	Highport Resort (Grayson County, Texas)	18,000	10,500	6,400	5,200	40,100
27	Mill Creek Resort (Grayson County, Texas)	3,000	13,700	5,500	2,500	24,700
29	Walnut Creek Resort (Grayson County, Texas)	3,500	8,000	10,000	8,500	30,000
51	Preston Fishing Camp (Grayson County, Texas)	2,000	2,700	6,800	2,500	14,000
46	Carver Camp (Colored Area) (Grayson County, Texas)	3,000	11,000	7,000	12,000	33,000
43	Sunset Camp(Colored Area) (Bryan County, Okla)	3,000	8,000	4,000	10,500	25,500
7	Hickory Creek Resort (Love County, Okla)	3,000	6,000	5,100	2,200	16,300
3	Willow Springs Camp (Bryan County, Okla)	3,000	7,900	6,500	12,000	29,400
36	Soldier Creek Camp (Marshall County, Okla)	3,000	1,500	4,500	4,500	13,500
49	Caney Creek Resort (Marshall County, Okla)	3,000	7,000	7,500	10,900	28,400
1	Burns Run Resort (Bryan County, Okla)	8,000	15,000	15,500	5,500	44,000
4	Catfish Bay Resort (Marshall County, Okla)	3,000	4,000	9,300	6,300	22,600
45	Butcher Pen Resort (Johnston County, Okla)		19,500	11,000	7,500	38,000
6	Pennington Creek Camp (Johnston County, Okla)		3,000	1,500		4,500
9	Big Mineral Camp (Grayson County, Texas)		3,000	4,400		7,400
11	Delaware Bend Camp (Cooke County, Texas)		9,000	5,000	7,000	21,000
24	Island View Camp (Grayson County, Texas)		5,800	3,500	5,500	14,800
28	Flowing Wells Camp (Grayson County, Texas)		9,000	4,000	5,000	18,000

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Figure 25. Summary Program of Improvement, 1950. National Archive, Denver Branch. Image 7019.

Table 3. Infrastructure improvements to Carver Camp, 1947-1949			
Improvements	1947	1948	1949
Toilets	2 pit type	2 pit type	-
Grills	4	16	-
Picnic Tables	12	48	-
Garbage Container	4	16	-
Picnic clearing/beach improvements	$1,500	$5,400	-
Comfort station and utilities	-	-	$15,000
Grading, sodding, and planting	-	-	$ 2,000

Earlier in 1946, the USACE planned a $99,000 project to construct office space for engineers above the Denison Dam powerhouse, as well as construction of an overlook station and parking area at the south end of the dam. In 1947, the USACE designed the overlook station to include an information center, ranger headquarters, restrooms, and space for concession facilities.[95] See Figure 26 for the floor plan of the proposed overlook station, which was designed with segregated facilities for "white" and "colored" people.[96] See Figure 27 for a zoomed image of the restroom section of the floorplan showing the segregated facilities. Once again, political and social pressures of the Jim Crow era prevented integration of such public facilities. In May 1947, the Chief of Engineers approved construction of restrooms, sewage disposal system, electrical distribution system, exterior utilities, grading, and paving, rather than the entire overlook station plan, at the south end of the dam. The result was construction of the dam overlook parking lot and a stand-alone, segregated restroom in 1948 (Figure 28).

[95] "Engineer Offices Above Powerhouse Planned," *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, April 19, 1946, www.newspapers.com; United States Army Corps of Engineers, Tulsa District, *Plans for Construction of Overlook Shelter & Parking Area, Red River, Denison Dam,* May 1947, available at available at the United States Army Corps of Engineers Texoma Lake Office.

[96] United States Army Corps of Engineers, Tulsa District, *Plans for Construction of Overlook Shelter & Parking Area, Red River, Denison Dam,* Sheet DRC-104.

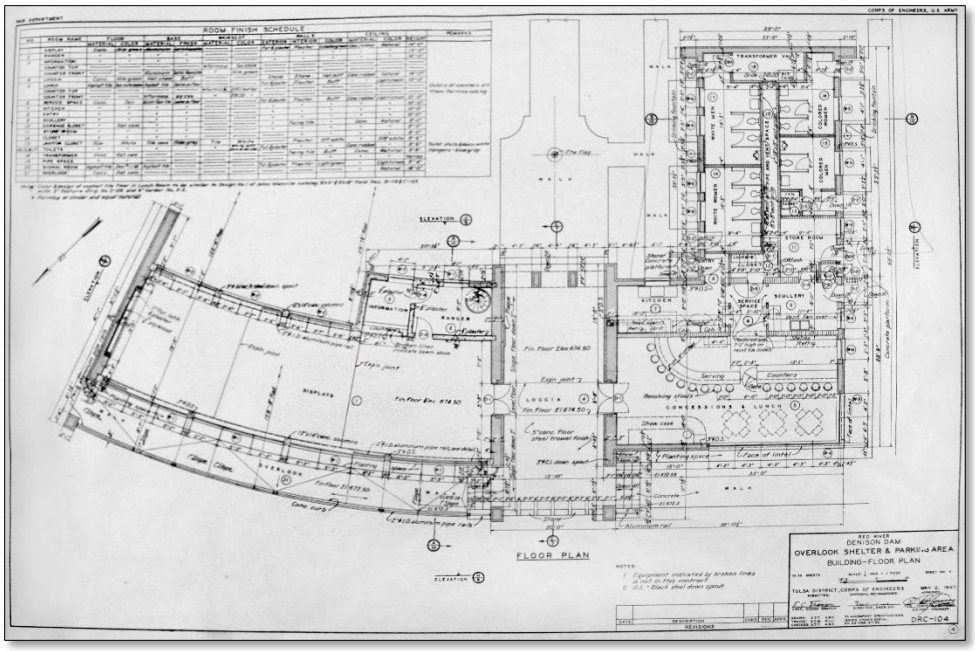

Figure 26. Overview of 1947 floor plan for the proposed overlook station (Goodson et al. 2022).

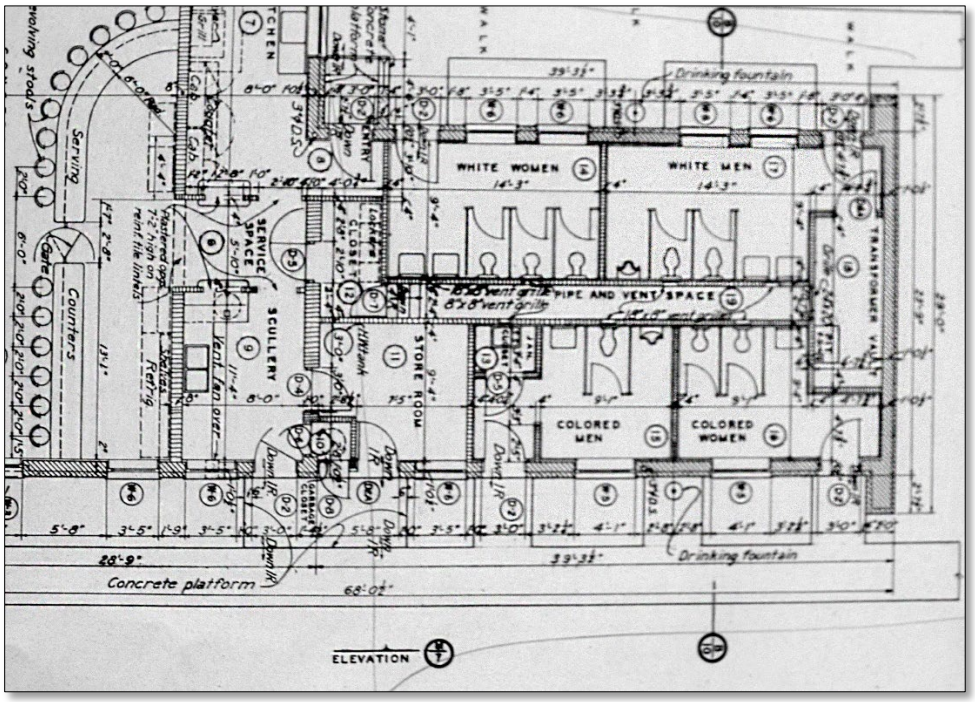

Figure 27. Excerpt of 1947 floor plan for the overlook station showing the restroom section of the proposed building (Goodson et al. 2022).

The construction of the Overlook Restroom is of concrete block with a flat, concrete roof. The building was divided into four areas, one each for white men and women, and one each for "colored" men and women. The signs associated with each entrance were likely removed in the mid-1960s after the 1964 Civil Rights Act was enacted. While the structure is not historically significant for its design, the USACE, in consultation with the Texas Historical Commission, concluded that the structure is significant because of its association with Denison Dam. More importantly, the Overlook Restroom represented the last physical evidence of segregation in recreation at Lake Texoma. No physical evidence of the improvements to either Carver Camp or Sunset Camp remains today. The area of Carver Camp, which was incorporated into Eisenhower State Park in the mid-1950s, has been completely renovated. The restroom, the last structure representing the Jim Crow era at Lake Texoma, was demolished in September of 2018.

Figure 28. Segregated restroom at Lake Texoma Dam Overlook. Demolished in 2018 according to USACE records.

Oral history accounts recall the Negro areas on Lake Texoma at Sunset Camp in Oklahoma. Residents interviewed were Odessa Howard and Gwendolyn Braxton.[97] Howard was born in 1931, and her niece, Braxton, was born in 1965. When asked to recall memories from her childhood, Howard reported the following:

Ms. Howard: *We could go out to Lake Texoma. But there was a... a area where it was only for Blacks and then the other part was for whites...we couldn't go over there on that side. And like I said the school was segregated.*

Interviewer: *And when you said...you said that when you went to the lake there was a designated section. How did you know it was designated did it have a sign?*

Ms. Howard: *It didn't say "Black," or anything like that, but we knew that wasn't for us.*

Interviewer: *So, like through word of mouth?*

Ms. Howard: *Yes.*

Ms. Howard: *Then it was a... a restaurant out there...it was a Black restaurant out there on the lake. We would go. After we got old enough, we'd go to that restaurant that was out there.*

Interviewer: *What was it called?*

Ms. Howard: *What was that guy's name? Lived in... from Copper, Oklahoma. Had that beer joint...we called it a beer joint. It was two brothers that had a... had a place. But that was open to...it was just open to the public.*

Interviewer: *Where on the lake was it?*

Ms. Howard: *It was on the lake...not too far from...not too far from...what's the name of that...?*

Ms. Braxton: *Eisenhower State Park or Denison Dam? Burns Run?*

Ms. Howard: *It wasn't too far from Sunset.*

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[97] Their family goes back seven generations in Texas.

Another account from Pastor Jerry Worthy suggests that Lake Texoma was visited only on special occasions.[98] When talking about specific memories regarding Lake Texoma, Mr. Worthy stated the following:

Interviewer: *And did you ever visit Lake Texoma as a child?*

Pastor Worthy: *Oh, we did. We did. We had...we had little...little barbecues out there...they take some. Yeah, we did those kinds of things.*

Interviewer: *Tell me more about...tell me more about your experiences at Lake Texoma.*

Pastor Worthy: *Oh, fun! We had a lot of fun, close family ties. You know, we'd go out there...we'd run around playing and then we'd eat! We had fun...you know...talked about...the grown folks did their thing...you know...and the children did their thing. So, yeah, I remember Lake Texoma.*

Interviewer: *What kind of food did y'all prepare?*

Pastor Worthy: *Oh, barbecue chicken, hamburgers, hotdogs, those kinds of things. Potato salad, watermelon, sodas, pork and what you call it…baked beans. You know those kinds of things.*

Interviewer: *And what kind of activities would y'all partake in at the lake?*

Pastor Worthy: *Just run around and play. We didn't do like any volleyball. I didn't know nothing about volleyball then or baseball. (Chuckle). Until later on...until later...what I remember in the neighborhood...playing volley...uh, baseball...probably...I remember baseball more than I do by volleyball...but...as children we just run around. We just ran around and played all over the place...you know, we just ran at Lake Texoma and was told not to go near the water.*

Interviewer: *So, you didn't swim?*

Pastor Worthy: *Oh, Lord knows, no! (Chuckle). No way! I don't swim...I mean...I don't like swimming now. Oh Lord no! (indiscernible). No, I don't like swimming. You know? I just...we didn't swim in Lake Texoma, no ma'am.*

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[98] Diana M. Hernandez, Interview with Pastor Jerry Worthy Regarding His Life in Sherman, Texas. Personal, October 22, 2021.

Interviewer: *Did anybody swim or just?*

Pastor Worthy: *No, it was just a family gathering. Just eating and talking. And children playing. Drinking...those that drink would drink and listen to music; you know? That kind of thing. Just celebrating Fourth of July or some...or Juneteenth...and you know stuff like that.*
Interviewer: *How often would y'all go out to the lake?*

Pastor Worthy: *Only during like holidays you know? Family reunions. It wasn't like a weekend thing. You know, we just like loaded up the car and went to Lake Texoma on a weekend. It wasn't like that.*

Interviewer: *Okay. So, it was more for like, major celebrations. Did y'all ever have a negative experience at Lake Texoma?*

Pastor Worthy: *No, not at all.*

The memories shared during these oral histories operate in and around both physical and socially imagined boundaries. Oral testimony from Grayson community members and corroborating archival evidence suggest that African Americans experienced various forms of segregation and regulated public space during the mid-twentieth century. Another excerpt from an interview with Pastor Jerry Worthy, who grew up in Sherman, Texas, during the 1950s and 1960s reveals how segregation and racism were understood during his childhood.

Pastor Worthy: *Again...again...I never had...I didn't understand racism then...growing up. You know, I never did. So, I didn't start...you know what...when I started feeling...started feeling like that was when Martin Luther King started marching and how they...you know what happened with them...you know how the marches were...you know, the police and the dogs and the water hoses and stuff like that...that's when I started feeling all this stuff. Considering all that, you know, it started coming into vision then, for me, you know. The Civil Rights Movement is what opened my realities to racism. Not growing up in Sherman, Texas because...again...I didn't know anything about the 1930 Riot that had took...that had taken place that night...you know...during the 1900s. I didn't know about that. Maybe...maybe if there had been a historical marker or something on the Grayson County Courthouse lawn at that time...I probably would have seen and knew about what took place there. But it wasn't, unfortunately. You know, because I was always downtown, as I said, selling newspapers...and also at the courthouse...you know...selling my papers.*

These oral histories highlight the harsh realities of segregation and highlight the resiliency of the African American community as they navigated a complex set of racist social customs and norms.

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1950s and 1960s Travel and Recreation

Pauli Murray, an African American activist and lawyer. published a volume in 1950 titled, *States' Laws on Race and Color*. This book, as well as the court cases, editorials, protest movements, and books written after it was published, point to the depth of the white supremacist system embedded into the laws during the Jim Crow era. Murray's publication also sheds light on the multifaceted way racism became everyday practice within society through the creation of laws that held it in place. In *States' Laws on Race and Color* Murray listed all the laws that were passed in the United States that were related to segregation and discrimination.[76] For the purpose of this report, we will focus on laws pertaining to Texas. One of the statutes included defines "negro" in the following manner:[99]

> **Art. 2900.** [2897-8] --... The terms 'colored race' and 'colored children,' as used in this title, include all persons of mixed blood descended from negro ancestry. [Acts 1905, p. 263.]
>
> {**Note:** This definition is found in the statute relating to separate schools.}
>
> **Acts 1947,** 50th Leg. Ch. 29, pg. 36, Sec. 12-- [Defines 'colored person' to mean 'a negro or person of African descent.']
>
> **Penal Code** [1943 Supp.] Art. 1661.1, Sec. 2. 'Negro' Defined. --The term 'Negro' as used herein includes every person of African descent as defined by the Statutes of the State of Texas, and all persons not included in the definition of 'Negro' shall be termed 'white person' within the meaning of this Act…[Acts 1943, 48th Leg., p. 651, ch. 370.]
>
> {**Note:** Relates to Motor buses.}
>
> **Penal Code, Art. 493.** [484] [347] [327] 'Negro' and 'white person' -- The term 'negro' includes also a person of mixed blood descended from negro ancestry from the third generation inclusive, though one ancestor of each generation may have been a white

[99]Murray, Pauli, States' Laws on Race and Color: and appendices containing international documents, Federal laws and regulations, local ordinances and charts, Cincinnati: Women's Division of Christian Service, Board of Missions and Church Extension, Methodist Church, 1950, 443.

person. Any person not included in the foregoing definition is deemed a white person within the meaning of this law. [[Penal code 1911, Art. 484, Acts 1887, p. 37.

Furthermore, it lays out the Ordinances for Segregation in the following manner:[100]

Art. 1015b. Ordinances for segregation of races.

Sec. 1. --That the power and authority is hereby conferred upon the Cities of Texas to provide by suitable ordinance for the segregation of negroes and whites in any such city and to withhold permits to build or construct a house to be occupied by white people in negro communities inhabited by negroes as defined by ordinance and to withhold building permits to any negro to establish a residence on any property located in a white community inhabited by white people as defined by ordinance.

Sec. 2. --That it shall be lawful for negroes and whites to enter into mutual covenants or agreements concerning their respective residence and the power and authority is conferred upon the governing body of any city to pass suitable ordinances requiring the observance of any such agreement.

Sec. 3. --That the governing authorities of any such city shall have the full power to define the negro race, negro community, white race and white community.

Sec. 4. --That the governing authorities of any such city shall have full power to enforce the observance of any ordinance passed leading to or providing for the segregation of the races and to require the observance thereof by appropriate penalties.

[Acts 1927, 40th Leg., p. 154, ch. 103.]

{**Note:** This statute is unconstitutional, yet it remains in the Texas statute books. The United States Supreme Court has declared ordinances that sought to segregate the races in residence to be invalid as violating the Fourteenth Amendment. See *Buchanan v. Warley* (1917) 245 U.S. 60, *Harmon v. Tyler* (1927) 273 U.S. 668; *Richmond v. Deans*, (1930) 281 U.S.704.}

[100] Ibid., 452-453

Issues of segregation on the road continued to be a concern for African American travelers during the 1950s and 1960s. More than ignorance or poverty, legal segregation and the threat of violence limited the desire of African Americans to explore the outdoors freely. Scholar William Obrien uncovers the gradual integration practices of State Park services across the South in "State Parks and Jim Crow in the Decade Before Brown v. Board of Education." He writes:

> "Legal action over exclusive state parks began in the late 1940s in Virginia and Texas and expanded to additional states through the 1950s and early 1960s (see, for example, adw 1948; cd 1949; sh 1956; cdd 1961). Even where suits were not filed, the threat spurred action in state park agencies across the South, accelerating efforts to construct additional state park facilities to produce some semblance of equalization. Equalizing the parks was a daunting task for state agencies, however, because it required a dramatic expansion of facilities in terms of both quantity and quality. Beyond budget limitations and political will that often hindered such action, also working against further success was the ever-present problem of local white resistance to site proposals, which remained a seriously difficult constraint in all corners of the South."[101]

Similarly, in 1949 the NAACP branch in Texas sued for the right for Black citizens to attend and use the 14 state parks.[102] This suggests that the Black population in Texas was, at least in part, concerned about the availability of safe public spaces to congregate. In both Texas and Oklahoma, efforts were made during the late 1940s to build segregated facilities to accommodate Black travelers. O'Brien notes between 1937 and 1941, park planners added a ''negro area'' to a nearby whites only, and often larger, park facility. "Parks of this type included Lake Murray and Roman Nose in Oklahoma."[103] A 1952 article in the New Amsterdam News discusses that Oklahoma's State Park Board had approved a $500,000 budget to build separate facilities to accommodate Black travelers. The plans stated that Sequoyah State Park near Lake Gibson, would have a luxurious "Negro Lodge" by 1955 (see Figure 21; Figure 29).

These improvements, reported by the *New York Amsterdam News*, a Black newspaper, speak to the national recognition of state and national parks for recreation options for Black travelers. Additionally, the report from the *New York Amsterdam News* suggests the travel networks among

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[101] O'Brien, William E. "STATE PARKS AND JIM CROW IN THE DECADE BEFORE BROWN v. BOARD OF EDUCATION." *Geographical Review* 102, no. 2 (2012): 166–79.
[102] "Texas Negroes Sue To Open All State Parks To Negro Citizens Claim Negroes Are Denied." *Arkansas State Press* (Little Rock, Arkansas), December 30, 1949:
[103] Ibid., p.169.

Blacks prior to legal integration included sites along Highway 75 in Texas and Oklahoma and Route 66 in northern Oklahoma.

Fate would have a different direction—the Negro lodge was never built because of the Brown v. Board Supreme Court decision in 1954. Ending separate but equal accommodations in public schools created a legal deterioration of all separate but equal precedents. *The Oklahoma City Times* ran an article on the front page on May 24, 1954, with the headline "Supreme Court Hits Segregation More Blows: State Negroes Threaten Suit to Tie Up New Park Lodges." The Oklahoma NAACP executive committee chairman, Roscoe Dungee, was quoted in the article arguing "If it's illegal to separate the races in schools, it's also illegal to separate them in public parks, and on trains and other facilities operated or regulated by the government."[104]. With the NAACP lawsuit looming in 1954 and the Brown v Board of Education decision decimating the Jim Crow practice of separate but equal, the 26-room "Jim Crow tourist setup" was never built. Instead, the Western Hills Guest Ranch was completed in 1956, which, now known as Sequoyah Lodge, still stands today (Figure 30). Though the Western Hills lodge was technically integrated, there are very few indications that the lodge was a welcoming space for Black patrons.

Therefore, in both Texas and Oklahoma, patrons of Lake Texoma had to adhere to local laws and regulations but were also required to navigate these spaces with the knowledge that their actions

[104] Gaylord, E. K. Oklahoma City Times (Oklahoma City, Okla.), Vol. 65, No. 91, Ed. 2 Monday, May 24, 1954; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

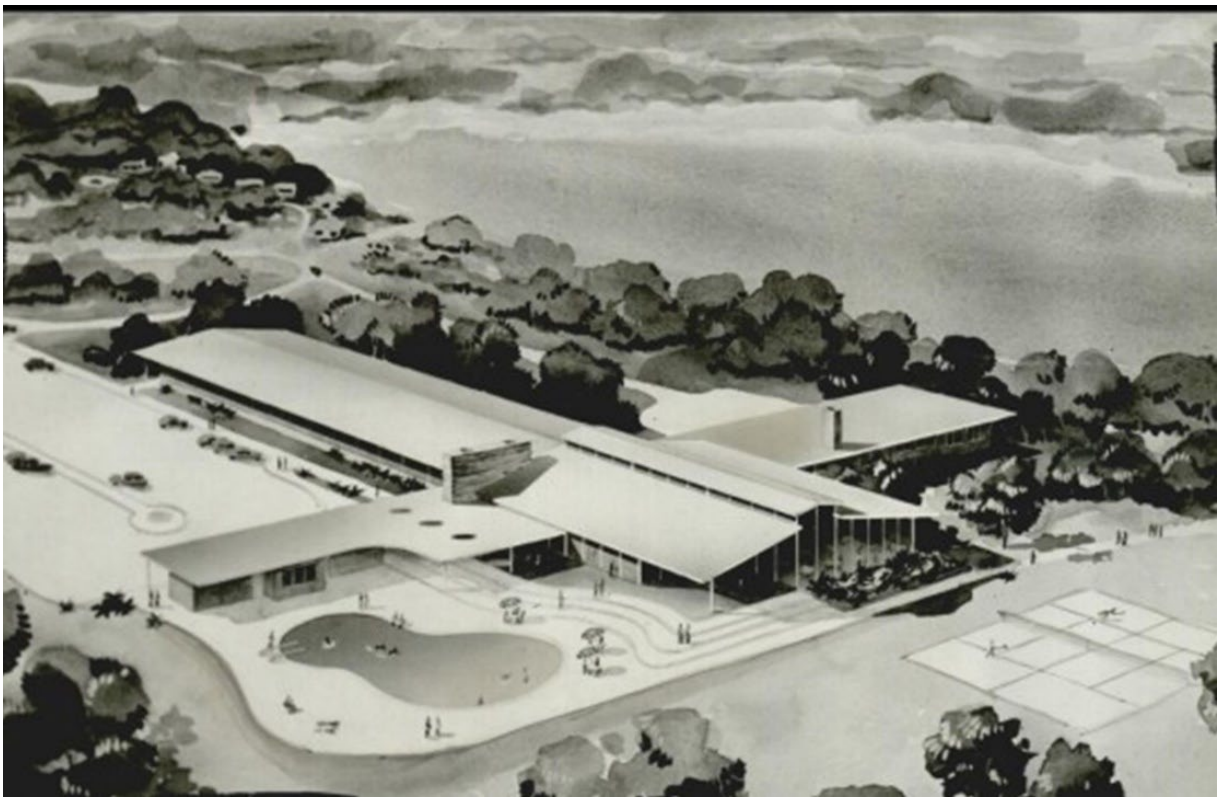

Figure 29. Concept plan of "A luxurious resort lodge planned for Negroes and to be constructed in Sequoyah state park" published in Daily Oklahoman newspaper. (Photograph 2012.201.B1006.0259; The Gateway to Oklahoma History)

could get them killed. could get them killed. For example, in Texas in 1950 a statute was passed that stated, "Separate facilities required for white and Black citizens in state parks."[105]

[105] Murray, Pauli, States' Laws on Race and Color : and appendices containing international documents, Federal laws and regulations, local ordinances and charts, Cincinnati: Women's Division of Christian Service, Board of Missions and Church Extension, Methodist Church, 1950, 452-453.

Figure 30. Photograph of Sequoyah Lodge (formerly known as Western Hills Guest Ranch).

Texas Senate Bill No. 19, sponsored by Democrats Warren Swann McDonald, Crawford Collins Martin, and George O. Nokes from the Senate and Bill Daniel and Albert Martin Jones from the House, also required the state "to close any part of facility or facilities or areas in the state park where separate equal facilities for white and negro races cannot be furnished, and to reopen them once such facilities are available."[106] The bill was passed during a special called session of the 51st legislature under Governor Allen Shivers, also a Texas Democrat.

The O'Brien article suggests there is a need to improve the Black recreation areas because they are highly visited. However, a 1962 report to the President and Congress titled, "Trends in American Living and Recreation," identifies African American communities as a community to plan for in the future. Based on the report, the factors contributing to low numbers of African Americans visiting outdoor recreation sites included "poverty, ignorance, and segregation."[107] The report failed to include a reference to the threat of vigilante violence from groups like the Ku Klux Klan.

[106] Journal of the Senate of Texas, First Called Session, Fifty first legislature, 148. Accessed July 24, 2022, https://lrl.texas.gov/scanned/interim/51/51_EqualFacilities.pdf.
[107] Ibid.

The changing landscape of legal and social segregation in the 1950s and 1960s meant African Americans could travel more openly across the country. However, it would take a federal effort to integrate public accommodations with the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The federal legislation did not outlaw racism, but only segregation of public facilities, and this distinction created a situation in which the visitors to integrated public facilities and accommodations would need to prove discrimination for the law to apply. Directing African Americans to segregated accommodations after 1964 would be against the law, but creating an environment where Black patrons felt unwelcome was not. As a result, Blacks who sought to integrate facilities continued to face threats of physical violence and emotional trauma. Some chose to continue to patronize Black spaces.

Taken together, these sources point to a changing racial landscape at national parks and more generally among African American travelers. More opportunities to travel freely in the U.S. and abroad, upward social mobility, and the closing of Negro only areas after 1964 prompted Black travelers to reevaluate their plans to drive across country. As air travel and other built environment recreational opportunities emerged, African Americans spent less time on leisure outdoors, choosing instead to travel internationally to major cities or to northern destinations.

Conclusion

To strike down Jim Crow, public servants and private citizens alike had to grapple with internal fears and anxieties about race relations in America. The likelihood of vigilante violence, race riots, and loss of property and life punctuated the discussion. Nevertheless, between 1938 and 1964, measures were taken to create segregated recreation areas for Black people at Lake Texoma, and later to provide integrated public sites including transit, schools, and recreational facilities. The history of the Carver and Sunset recreation camps at Lake Texoma serves as an excellent example of the challenges facing Grayson County and Bryan County citizens and federal employees working for the NPS and the USACE. It demonstrates the ways federal policy and state laws intersected on federally held properties like Lake Texoma. Finally, it serves as a reminder of a bygone era in American history when federal funds were allocated to uphold white supremacist institutions that separated citizens by race and class during the first half of the twentieth century.

The most challenging aspect of the Jim Crow era is the generational scars the experience of living under a racially authoritative and oppressive system leaves on Black people. For instance, each of the oral history interviewees had trouble recalling the era of segregation, and it was not because of failing memory or that they lived a life impacted by Jim Crow. Instead, each interviewee struggled to relive the memories that were so painful and traumatic in the first place. In asking to interview some potential informants, some Black people declined, citing "that something I don't care to remember." Moreover, as one informant noted, if you did not know how to swim or had tragedy in your family because of lake visits (Mr. Goodman recalls a small cousin drowning at the lake when he was a child), you are less likely to open yourself up to those conversations or experiences again. The loss of information that is bound to occur as informants die off, records in private collections are lost, and the residuals of the Jim Crow landscape as demolished (as evidenced by the demolition of the segregated restroom at the overlook) suggest these portions of our American history are on the brink of erasure. No physical evidence remains of the segregated facilities at Lake Texoma.

Similarly, the scattered, often overlooked, and mislabeled source material about the Negro areas at Lake Texoma illustrates that even in the archival record of county, state, and national repositories these stories are further marginalized. What is evident from the sources obtained is that Carver and Sunset camps held special significant meaning to those who visited the camps. That these spaces offered respite for the weary traveler, the adventurous Black outdoorsmen, and even Black families, churches, and civic organizations. The segregated areas, though comparatively inferior in quality, did facilitate the physical and psychological space for Black people to enjoy nature and commune together in the natural environment. Both NPS and USACE had to grapple with their agency's role in perpetuating segregation on federal land. Further research could establish the variations in enforcement of segregated facilities across the South, particularly in Texas and Oklahoma.

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APPENDIX A

TRANSCRIPTS OF ORAL INTERVIEWS

(Transcribed by https//otter.ai)

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Bishop Larry Goodman Interview

Thu, Oct 20, 2022, 11:00PM • 41:49

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Sherman, Texas, people, sunset, moved, remember, bales, prejudice, bishop, dad, lake, bethel, Diana, blacks, talking, integration, deal, area, Douglas

SPEAKERS

Diana Hernandez, Bishop Larry Goodman

Diana Hernandez 00:07
Did it did you? I think it sends you like a little alert that its recording. Did you get that?

Bishop Larry Goodman 00:12
This meeting is being recorded by the host or participant. So, I guess I'd need to press "Got it."

Diana Hernandez 00:19
Uh huh. Okay. Wonderful. Well, today is Tuesday, September 20th, 2022. My name is Diana Hernandez. And I'm with Bishop Larry Goodman. And we are conducting an interview of his family history in Sherman, Texas as part of an oral history project. Welcome Bishop Goodman. How are you today?

Bishop Larry Goodman 00:45
I'm doing well. And you?

Diana Hernandez 00:48
I'm doing fine. Thank you, a lot of schoolwork. But other than that, I'm fine. So, I guess let's ease into this. I wanted to start with your childhood. Where are you from originally?

Bishop Larry Goodman 01:03
I was born in Whitewright, Texas. At two I moved to Childress, Texas, up in the panhandle. And at 12 I moved to Sherman, Texas.

Diana Hernandez 01:18

Okay and what year were you born?

Bishop Larry Goodman 01:22
Well, I was born in the year 1953.

Diana Hernandez 01:28
Okay and so you were 12 when you arrived in Sherman?

Bishop Larry Goodman 01:36
Yes, I was.

Diana Hernandez 01:37
Okay. And do you recall what neighborhood you lived in?

Bishop Larry Goodman 01:43
I lived in what we called, "North Sherman." North Sherman on College Street. Right in front of the High school Frederick Douglass High.

Diana Hernandez 01:56
Okay. And tell me about the house that you grew up in?

Bishop Larry Goodman 02:02
Well, it was a normal house setting for our neighborhood. three-bedroom, one bath, kitchen, living room, dining room and we had a patio. Yeah.

Diana Hernandez 02:19
Okay. And so, you were 12. That means and you were in middle school. What was the school? What was the name of the school that you went to?

Bishop Larry Goodman 02:28
The school that I went to was Carver Elementary in my sixth-grade year. When I moved to Sherman at 12, I was in the sixth grade. I went to school there. It was stationed at Fred Douglas, but it was still considered Carver Elementary. Then in the seventh and eighth grade, my junior high school I was at Fred Douglas. Fred Douglas, encompassed 7 through 12. So, I was in the seventh and eighth grade at Fred Douglas. At total integration in the state of Texas, I believe that was 19- probably 68. I was relocated to my last year of junior high school at Piner Mill at Piner junior high, which used to be the old old Sherman High School. Yes.

Diana Hernandez 03:38
So What grade were you in when they integrated?

Bishop Larry Goodman 03:42
They totally integrated in the ninth grade.

Diana Hernandez 03:46
when you were in ninth. Okay.

Bishop Larry Goodman 03:47
That was total. Some of the students had choices to make, whether they wanted to go early because we knew integration was coming and most some of them, a few of us decided to go and do the integration thing in the seventh grade, I believe. No, I'm sorry. Eighth grade. Yeah. But I chose to stay at Douglas. I liked it there. And I didn't go until forced, we call it forced integration. In the ninth grade. That's when all of the schools were forced to come together Integrating.

Diana Hernandez 04:37
And I guess I'm wondering, how did the adults in your life explain to you that integration was coming?

Bishop Larry Goodman 04:46
In my household, they just did not explain. We just if we talked about it, it was very little I cannot remember talking about it. My wife had gone over earlier than what I had. And I think maybe her parents may have talked to her. But she basically followed her older sister at that time. And they both went early for integration. But the rest of the school, kinda decided most of the kids decided to stay as long as they could at Douglas. Yeah. My dad may have told me, hey, it's coming, you got to deal with it. And I didn't realize what it was going to entail. A lot of it, I did not.

Diana Hernandez 05:49
Do you mind talking about your experience with integration?

Bishop Larry Goodman 05:54
My experience with integration was kinda caught in the middle somewhat. I did not understand what we call, "prejudice." So much. But I think a lot of the students were injured as we integrated. And I'm talking about the black students. Because the teachers

that were at our school, I don't think understood, where these new students were and the pressures, they were abundant. As a matter of fact, some of them were still up under the idea that we can say or do what we need to do with these new students and it's okay, I was not a real radical at integration. So, I just kind of stayed in the middle. But I did keep my eyes open. Diana and I understood that all people were not considered equal in our schools. In my ninth-grade year, I remember vividly in English class to where I was one of two blacks in the class. And we had to recite poems in in our English class. I remember the teacher, I won't call her name. But I do remember a poem that was being read in front of the class. And we had to listen to the poem. And I was kind of a peacemaker maybe? I had one other person in the class with me, and it was a young lady. And the jest of the poem was, that the person was going to get a blue gum n***** to sing her the blues. So, we had to listen to that poem. And I remember my fellow student was totally upset and angry. And I'm saying just be cool we can make it through several incidents like that happened throughout our school years, not just the ninth grade, but even in the 10th 11th and even the 12th grade. I dealt with prejudice in a very strange way. And my way of dealing with the pain that we went through, was first to find why I had so much pain. And surprisingly enough, I had to be honest with myself, and realize that I carried with me the same seed that some of them carry with them and until I dealt with my seed of prejudice, I couldn't handle things. If I did, then it was going to be in a very negative way. I remember watching a movie MLK, and in this movie that that he was playing, and going through the Civil Rights Movement. It was one part that sticks with me to this day. And he told one of his fellow workers, "I had to deal with what's in me, before I can go through being Fire hosed, put in jail, called out of his name." and all of those things. So, when he said that it stuck in my mind, and that's where I got to the point of realizing that I first had to deal with my issues. And where I was, before I could deal positively with them. Some of the seeds of prejudice are so hidden and so overlooked that in school, we may or not have seen ‘em In Choir I sung in the choir. In our choir class, there was a song that we sung. And it started out with all work on the Mississippi, all work, while the white man play, but what was scratched down on that paper was n***** all work on the Mississippi, n***** all work, while the white man play, those were the hidden things that was covered up. And no one talked about those things. No one. And until a classmate found the book with that song written in it, we never even thought about what was being said or what was left off. So a lot of things were covered up in my bringing up in my growing up and in the time of 60- In the 60s, there was a lot of prejudice outbreaks, in Sherman sitting on our patio, on college street in front of the high school, there was a night of getting dark car pass by and a brick came out and was thrown at us on the patio. Of course, there was some things said as they went by. So yeah, I did come up in a very volatile area. And when I look at what's

going on in America today, I'm saying we really have not come a long way baby, we're still stuck, where we were on in. the basic thing for me Diana, is it Deanna or Diana?

Diana Hernandez 12:41
Diana

Bishop Larry Goodman 12:42
Diana is that, hatred is an evil. And evil will be with us forever. All of the days of our lives on this earth, it will be there. And you and I will probably be tested as if we- do we have our monster under control? Have we gone far enough in realizing that this is something that will be before us all the days of our lives, as long as there's differences of skin color nationality, language, you name it, if there's a difference, it's going to be there. So I look at it entirely different have we made strikes? Yes. Will it rise again? Yes. Will we know how to handle it? That's a question you we have to answer ourselves. Okay, that's what it was kind of like for me, in the 60s. And even in the 70s After I graduated from high school.

Diana Hernandez 14:06
So, trying to go back to a little bit more about your childhood. As a child, what do you remember most about Sherman? Would you say that that violence is what you remember most or something different?

Bishop Larry Goodman 14:23
I had good times in Sherman. As a matter of fact, the bad times the violent times probably grew me up into manhood more than anything else. So yeah, I had good times. I remember watching I was a kid. So I used to love sports, and I used to go and watch, at that time the Sherman Brackets, play football, and I remembered a young man named Jimmy Childs. I met Jimmy Childs some years later in his father's furniture store. And he introduced himself and I'm saying your Jimmy Child's you're the guy that did this in the game against Denison our arch rival. And he said, Man, you remember that? I said I sure do. I was in the stadium when you ran three touchdowns in about three minutes. Jimmy Childs was a white brother. So yeah, I had some good things, and then I had the bad things. But none of us are well rounded if we never have bad times. So, I'm looking at Sherman as a place that I basically grew up and became, or am becoming a man, because I still go through the test. Okay,

Diana Hernandez 16:02
Yeah. That makes sense now, about your parents. What are your parents' names?

Bishop Larry Goodman 16:10
My father's name is Ivey Goodman. My mother's name is Josie May Barker. Mother was born in Whitewright, Texas. My dad was born in a little city in between Sherman and Whitewright called Bethel Bales. It was Bethel Bales, because in Bethel Bales is where the blacks congregated. Mostly. That was their area of town. It's a little country town. Bethel Bales probably does not exist anymore. Because everybody grew up, moved to Sherman moved to Denison moved to Denton moved all over America. So, there's very little of Bethel Bales left. There may be one family left in Bethel Bales. That's an original family. Only one I believe.

Diana Hernandez 17:19
So how far how far does your family go in this area? How far back in Texas?

Bishop Larry Goodman 17:26
In Texas? I was just thinking as I read through your questions. One of my grandfather's probably originated in Oklahoma from the Barker side. But then he has family in Texas, Whitewright East of Whitewright . Small towns. His wife probably originated in-within Texas. small city community. They got married moved to Whitewright. Our family grew up. My mother was there. She eventually moved to Dallas. My dad moved to Childress. My dad originated in Bethel Bales his mom probably some of her kin is in Oklahoma, right across the border from Sherman Denison. So, we've been in this area for years,

Diana Hernandez 18:46
Many generations. Now what were your parents like?

Bishop Larry Goodman 18:52
My dad was a mechanic. My mom was a engineer in the households. We call them housekeepers. She did everything in other people's houses. As a matter of fact, later in her years, she became a caretaker for older people. Yeah. So that's kind of what they did.

Diana Hernandez 19:23
Okay. And I guess trying to return back to your experiences in Sherman. Was there a point while you were growing up where do you like, do you recall your parents specifically explaining what segregation was?

Bishop Larry Goodman 19:45

No.

Diana Hernandez 19:50
How do you think? I don't know. I'm just trying to like how do you think that you figured it out? Like if your parents didn't explain it to you?

Bishop Larry Goodman 20:01
Well, well, when I say they didn't explain it, the best explanation that they could probably give is, this is the way things are, this is the way things have been. Be careful of what you do and what you say and where you go. And who you hang out with. That was basically and, of course, I believe that people over a period of time settle into, this is what we're supposed to do and be. So that's probably how they explained it better than anything else. I always looked for the better. I always looked for different, deeper, better answers. And, like I said, I had to get rid of all of the hatred and stuff in myself, because of things that I saw, and things that I went through as a young black man, but I don't think I was poisoned to the point of the radical I could have been, I was probably that close. But I wouldn't consider myself a radical. Now I am a radical thinker, I think differently. Or I tried to, I tried to then. In my younger days in Childress, I was a member of St. John Baptist Church. And in that church, I actually surrendered to Christ at six. But in that church, I remembered the Bible scriptures so vividly in my heart, that those are the things that guided me, through hard times. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. God loves everybody. The song we're used to sing Jesus loves the little children. All of that played a part in my development as a person. Too bad now that this younger generation of people, I'm not just saying blacks, but of people no longer have the base, the foundation background that people my age and older had. I look at the younger generation, and they complain about what they're going through. And as I sat and pondered about the past, I thought about my dad, my granddad, and probably their dads. How great men they were. Because they went through three times more hatred, disparity of jobs. Disappointments than we ever can imagine. Yes, I go through them. But when I look back, they had to be greater men than myself.

Diana Hernandez 23:50
Do you recall if there were certain areas of town that you were prohibited from going to or certain towns to avoid?

Bishop Larry Goodman 24:05
Just a few years ago, I was talking to a friend of mine and he said there was a city that he went to that they told him that he probably needed to be out before dark. He was

telephone inspector for GTE. And on his job at this place, he was told that he needed to be gone before the sunset. This was about probably 12 years ago.

Diana Hernandez 24:42
Oh, wow.

Bishop Larry Goodman 24:44
Oh, yeah. Oh, when I tell you that evil will always be around. Pockets of evil will always let me say it again, will always be prevalent in in these United States of America, you cannot go anywhere. isolated places that you don't run into. You will run into it somewhere. So, there were- go ahead.

Diana Hernandez 25:20
You remember the name of that town?

Bishop Larry Goodman 25:24
Well, I won't call it if I can keep from it. Because it's still there. And I, I do look at that. As a matter of fact, I go to that town sometimes. And I hang out in that town sometimes. Is it still there? Yeah. Will you run into them? Yes. Am I careful about when I'm there? Yes. Because you never know when you're going to run into that evil or from Who.

Diana Hernandez 25:30
Right

Bishop Larry Goodman 25:30
But the first thing that I do anywhere I go anytime I'm out, is deal with myself. And I don't there is a thing that says "and the peace of God that passes all understanding, show God our hearts and our souls." So, I try to make sure that wherever I am, I have that peace of God. That way, if I run into a situation, I can handle it in a way that I'm not full of hate. Okay. The same hate that's been it toward me.

Diana Hernandez 25:30
Okay. Now to switch it, switch it a little bit. I wanted to talk about some of the pastimes for you and your family. So, what did you and your family do for fun?

Bishop Larry Goodman 27:00
I can remember Friday night, Friday night boxing. In Childress, Texas, was the time that we all spent watching. Emile Griffith. All of those guys box, Sonny Liston. My dad was a

boxer. So, we kind of gathered around and had popcorn. And I can remember the fun that we used to have just as family, especially in the rainy season was my sister, sisters, and brother and I would sit on the porch and we would just sing. But I was kind of a active young guy. And I probably started learning my trade as a young boy because I would put together bicycles. I don't know how I would do it. But I would come together with this thing and I'd make it work. Or I would make me a spinning top wheel or I would ride horses. We would do barbecues on the weekends. We spent a lot of time as family doing work. And the work that we did benefited the table that we ate from because we would do gardens. We'd go hunting with my dad who raised Greyhound dogs. Yeah. Basketball football with the neighbors. I do remember. In our neighborhoods in West Texas, we would have family gatherings to where we all came together the adult spoke, kids play. And just the normal things that we did. We weren't water people. When we didn't do the lakes. I didn't do the lakes. Probably because I had a cousin to drown when he was young. So water sports was not my favorite thing. Anything else man, I was into it. But we did the normal things that families do. Of course, we didn't have the boats. We didn't have all of the extra stuff that people have today. So we just did what we could. One thing that we did do as a family is I remember dad would always get off work and we would always sit down to eat. And we didn't do much talking, but we would sit down and eat. And we talk about some things maybe, but that was about it.

Diana Hernandez 30:17
So, then you never visited Lake Texoma as a child?

Bishop Larry Goodman 30:19
Yeah I did. Mainly fishing with my grandmother from Whitewright she was a fisher lady. She loved to fish and she would fish at Lake Texoma she would fish, little private ponds, private lakes. So, I would kind of go out with her there. But there were times that we may have gone to Lake Texoma to what we call Sunset for picnics and holidays. And now the other people would swim, but I would just walk the banks in enjoy what I could. Yeah, we did, but I'm not a lake lover.

Diana Hernandez 31:02
Yeah. Do you know if Sunset was a segregated section of the lake?

Bishop Larry Goodman 31:14
Yes, it was. Yes, it was. And that's where we went, the blacks went to Sunset. And we basically stay there. Afterwards, later in the years It opened up freedom or people's even their finances changed to where they could buy boat slips and they had boat slips.

Sometimes even even then you still had to run into that segregation thing. Because some people didn't think that you need to be there or you should be there or that you had any right to be there regardless of your income or and then of course you would become uppity in their eye sights.

Diana Hernandez 32:13
So, what kind of amenities did Sunset have?

Bishop Larry Goodman 32:18
I was so young and just running around it had the same things that everybody else had. Just probably weren't is as good you know, weren't built as well, but yeah, they had the same things.

Diana Hernandez 32:39
Someone else that I interviewed told me that there was a restaurant there. But they forgot the name of it. Do you remember seeing a restaurant there?

Bishop Larry Goodman 32:46
That - oh, there was a place in Colbert, Oklahoma called Sam's it was a barbecue restaurant. If that's the same one they're talking about. There was also as you went over the dam to go to Sunset there was a fish-- a fish restaurant there and everybody ate there.

Diana Hernandez 33:13
Yeah, that's what they were talking about the fish restaurant.

Bishop Larry Goodman 33:15
Yes, and good fish. What was it? I'm trying to think of the name of it. The lady moved from there to Denison on spur 503 I think she moved back to that place and finally closed down but it was good eating...I don't I remember going in there to eat and even we ate recent I would say in recent years. In the 90s we ate there and good food, good people hardly know any problems. No problems.

Diana Hernandez 34:05
Is it still there?

Bishop Larry Goodman 34:06

The restaurant is still there, but I don't know if they do fish anymore. As a matter of fact, we go to another place over in Colbert kind of hidden downtown. We go over there to eat, but I think this place is closed now.

Diana Hernandez 34:27
And how did you get to some the Sunset part of the lake from your home? Do you remember like what route you took?

Bishop Larry Goodman 34:38
The best I can remember you cross the lake on the bridge and you made a left turn.

Diana Hernandez 34:49
Okay.

Bishop Larry Goodman 34:49
Right about the restaurant and then you went back. Which way was that ? that would have to be go back west, I guess. I don't know. But you made a left turn as you crossed the bridge, and you had the sign for sunset. That's the best I can remember. It's been so long since I've been there. Like I said, I'm not a lake person. I think my wife's dad used to take them riding and maybe they went to Sunset a lot. But I didn't go to sunset that much.

Diana Hernandez 35:30
Did your family or anyone that you know have ever had ever have a negative experience at the lake?

Bishop Larry Goodman 35:39
Not that I know of. Not my family that I know of. Now, usually, grandmother may go to the lake, but she didn't go by herself. So, she may have had negative experiences, but she was always prepared.

Diana Hernandez 36:03
I was gonna ask you was the lake an area that y'all knew somehow to avoid when, like in the when it got dark, or people are comfortable going there at night or?

Bishop Larry Goodman 36:20
People stayed at Sunset as long as they felt okay. And like I said, I was just there for picnics or whatever. And then usually we would leave coming home ‘course you got work next day or church the next day or whatever else. But that was always something

negative. If you had the right spot at the right time or the wrong spot at the wrong time but I can't think of any specific incidents.

Diana Hernandez 37:04
Okay. Now, I guess let's move on a little bit to your adult life. What do you do for a living?

Bishop Larry Goodman 37:13
I was a powerhouse mechanic. I worked at Savoy, Texas at the Valley power plant. For 38 years before I retired. I worked as a butcher, a sacker of stocker, and a checker at a grocery store while I was in school. And immediately after school, I started to work at a powerhouse in Savoy I've never seen the power house in my life. And I became a senior mechanic there. Machinists and stopped working there. 38 years, I was 55.

Diana Hernandez 38:07
And when did you become a bishop?

Bishop Larry Goodman 38:10
I became a bishop. About 20 years ago, I was ordained a bishop and the NDGF affiliation that's non-denominational, non-denominational gospel fellowship formed in Fort Worth, Texas, under the prelate Bishop Shavon Hamilton, and I became a bishop fan.

Diana Hernandez 38:44
And are you married?

Bishop Larry Goodman 38:46
Yes, I have a wife of 52 years.

Diana Hernandez 38:50
Wow.

Bishop Larry Goodman 38:53
Thank you.

Diana Hernandez 38:54
That's admirable. Seriously. Do you have children?

Bishop Larry Goodman 38:59

I have three children, two daughters, a son. And I have three grandchildren. two grandsons, one granddaughter, and I have two great grandsons also,

Diana Hernandez 39:21
Big family.

Bishop Larry Goodman 39:23
Not really. I actually was hoping that I'd have more. So, I can, yes, I have always wanted more grandkids and where I can spoil them and send them home.

Diana Hernandez 39:42
And do they all live in the same area as you? or are they-

Bishop Larry Goodman 39:45
All. All of them live in the same area except for my daughters My daughters. One daughter lives in Houston. The other daughter lives in Arlington, my son stays here in Sherman. All of my grands and my greats are here in Sherman as of now, but they're young and they may be gone any time. Oh, that's good. I mean, Houston is not that far either, well, when you say, well, we're still in the state of Texas.

Diana Hernandez 40:23
Yeah

Bishop Larry Goodman 40:24
Yeah, we're still in the state of Texas. But Texas is a big state.

Diana Hernandez 40:28
That's true.

Bishop Larry Goodman 40:30
It's almost - Well, when I go to the east coast and visit family there, I can go an hour and be in Philly. I can go 30 minutes and be in New York or I can go in an hour. I can be anywhere. In Texas, you can drive all day long and you will not get out.

Diana Hernandez 40:52
Yeah. Yeah, I think it's about 10 hours to get out of the state.

Bishop Larry Goodman 40:57

Yes, it does. Yeah.

Diana Hernandez 40:59
Yeah. Well, I think that's those are all the questions I have for you today. Thank you again, for agreeing to meet with me. I had a wonderful time talking with you and hope that you enjoyed it as well.

Bishop Larry Goodman 41:13
I enjoyed it. I hope that I said something to you that will help you in your studies.

Diana Hernandez 41:20
Yes. Great interview. Yes.

Bishop Larry Goodman 41:23
Well,

Diana Hernandez 41:24
Primitive.

Bishop Larry Goodman 41:25
Yeah. Well, good and listen up blessed and we'll see you again. If you're ever in the city of Sherman and Denison give me a call. Okay?

Diana Hernandez 41:36
Thank you so much.

Bishop Larry Goodman 41:38
We would love to meet you. Yes.

Diana Hernandez 41:41
Thank you.

Bishop Larry Goodman 41:43
Thank you.

41:44
Bye

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Braxton and Howard Interview

Fri, Nov 04, 2022, 12:13PM • 1:22:48

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Denison, lived, lake, NAACP, mom, played, black, called, knew, Terrell, year, friends, remember, Sherman, grandmother, sister, area, walk, home, born

SPEAKERS

Odessa Howard, Gwen Braxton, Computer, Diana Hernandez

Gwen Braxton 00:01
Her name is?

Computer 00:01
This meeting is being recorded.

Gwen Braxton 00:03
She's asking your name.

Diana Hernandez 00:05
My name is Diana Hernandez. And today is the first of April. I'm with two other researchers, Portia Hopkins and Genessis, her research assistant, and we're conducting an interview of community members in the Grayson County area that have had experiences at Lake Texoma. And so, can we start by you, by you two stating your names, please?

Odessa Howard 00:42
My name is Odessa Howard.

Gwen Braxton 00:47
And I'm Gwen Braxton. And I'm her niece.

Diana Hernandez 00:50

Wonderful. Thank you so much. So I guess we're gonna start off by talking about your childhood. We're going to we're going to talk to miss Howard first. Now, please tell me where are you from? Miss Howard.

Odessa Howard 01:07
Denison Texas.

Diana Hernandez 01:09
And what year were you born?

Odessa Howard 01:12
1931.

Diana Hernandez 01:15
So, do you recall what family members were the first to arrive in that area?

Odessa Howard 01:26
Say that again.

Diana Hernandez 01:28
What? Like who? Who were the out of your family? What gener- how many generations back Do y'all go? Starting with you?

Odessa Howard 01:40
I've...seven?

Diana Hernandez 01:41
Yeah,

Odessa Howard 01:42
I have Aunt Joe. Yeah. and Mom and then rest of 'em seven

Diana Hernandez 01:49
So seven generations total now. And then. Your family has always been in Texas?

Odessa Howard 01:57
Yes,

Diana Hernandez 01:57
Yes? Okay. What neighborhood in Denison Did you grow up in?

Odessa Howard 02:07
North town.

Diana Hernandez 02:09
North town. Perfect. Yes. Tell me a little bit about the house that you grew up in. What was it like?

Gwen Braxton 02:18
She's laughing

Odessa Howard 02:21
It was it was a little three-room house. Back in back in that time, they call that a shotgun house. We had a living room and a bedroom and seven of us live in that slept in that bedroom. And a kitchen.

Diana Hernandez 02:40
Yeah. And what elementary school did you attend?

Odessa Howard 02:46
I started out at Anderson Elementary School. And then we went to Terrell Elementary school and that was a new school. It went from elementary all the way up to high school.

Diana Hernandez 03:01
What was your experience like at those schools?

Odessa Howard 03:06
Oh, it was this regular all-black school. And we had football teams and just things that activities that schools normally have.

Diana Hernandez 03:23
Were you involved in any extracurricular activities?

Odessa Howard 03:26
I was in the chor - in the choir.

Diana Hernandez 03:29
Okay.

Odessa Howard 03:31
And we'd always have, we had several plays. And especially at the end of the year, we'd have a lot of plays. And I was in those plays, acting different. You know different characters and things like that.

Diana Hernandez 03:48
What was your favorite play?

Odessa Howard 03:52
The one where I was my brother's daughter.

Gwen Braxton 03:57
Wow. Yeah.

Diana Hernandez 04:01
Do you remember the name of the play?

Odessa Howard 04:03
That's what I'm trying to think of the name of that play.

Gwen Braxton 04:10
So your Uncle Bob’s daughter or uncle James daughter?

Odessa Howard 04:13
Clark's Daughter. I can’t think of the name of that play.

Diana Hernandez 04:18
It's okay.

Odessa Howard 04:19
But that was really fun.

Diana Hernandez 04:21
It sounds fun. What year did you graduate high school

Odessa Howard 04:26
1948 Okay. So as a child, what do you remember most about the area you grew up in? Oh, I remember how we black people were not allowed to go to the to the movies like the white people did. There would be a black movie like "Stormy Weather" and "Imitation of Life" and like that. Showed at this theater called the Realto. And in order for us to see that we'd have to go at night after at 12 o'clock we were allowed to go to the movie. So we would sleep all day in order to be awake. So we could go to see that movie at night with our aunt

Diana Hernandez 05:12
what was the name of the theater?

Odessa Howard 05:15
Realto.

Diana Hernandez 05:18
Realto? Okay.

Odessa Howard 05:19
Yeah. Realto Theatre

Gwen Braxton 05:21
It's still in downtown Denison right now they're not they don't show and have any shows but it's the building is still standing. It's still on main street downtown Dennison, and it probably recently closed. Excuse me. Last year, I think, because they had a different owner. As a matter of fact, Christmas 2020. Our family my nieces and I, we went down there. The owner had, he was showing "Purple Rain." So we went in myself with my nieces and my great nieces. And we that's what we did. You know, it was COVID. So it was a family thing for us. Never. They'll probably only about 25 people in in there at all. But yeah, the Realto. Its still there.

Diana Hernandez 05:29
Oh, wow.

Odessa Howard 06:05
Also, downtown Dallas City at the Greyhound bus station. If we needed a ride to Sherman, we would take the bus there. And we would have we could not sit in the front port. We'd have to sit in the kitchen where they cooked the food and it would be super hot.

Diana Hernandez 06:24
Wow.

Odessa Howard 06:26
It was really terrible.

Diana Hernandez 06:28
Sounds like it, especially in the Texas heat. So then the town itself was segregated...

Odessa Howard 06:38
Yes it was, black water and white water, that type thing.

Diana Hernandez 06:45
You remember seeing those signs?

Odessa Howard 06:48
Yes

Diana Hernandez 06:49
Wow. That's intense. Let’s talk a little bit about your parents. What are your parent’s names?

Odessa Howard 06:58
Pearl, Pearl Robinson. Now What's Mr. Wild's name?

Gwen Braxton 07:03
Goodman, but they didn't get married.

Odessa Howard 07:08
Pearl Bryant and Nestor Clark. But my mom and dad divorced when she was carrying me. And he was Nestor Clark. So I had a stepfather, Earl Bryant. The picture I showed you, yeah.

Diana Hernandez 07:23
And were they from Denison and as well?

Odessa Howard 07:26

My mom was born in Wewoka, Oklahoma, I believe that was the name of the town. But then they came to Denison later on in life.

Diana Hernandez 07:38
Okay, so both your mom and your dad were from Oklahoma?

Odessa Howard 07:43
No. I think my, my stepdad was originally from Den- from Texas.

Diana Hernandez 07:52
Okay. And what were your parents like?

Odessa Howard 07:57
They were they were good parents. And I was kind of split up. I lived with my grandmother for a while. And I lived with my aunt for a while. But they were all good. I remember going to work with my aunt. And that was also during segregation. She, she was a maid. For these for these people and she would cook and clean. And when it was time for lunch, I would have to sit on the back porch and eat I could not go in the house and sit at the table and eat. But overall, they were good. My mom worked really hard. She was a maid. She was a lot of housekeeping from white people. They always gave her nice clothes for us because we couldn't afford the clothes that we really wanted.

Diana Hernandez 08:51
What did your stepfather do?

Odessa Howard 08:58
He worked at a gas station.

Diana Hernandez 09:01
Okay. And you will see I wanted to go a little bit to go back until a little bit more about your experience during segregation. We've talked about the transportation and the movie theater. Were there other aspects of your life where segregation had an impact on you

Odessa Howard 09:34
We could go out to Lake Texoma, but there was a area for that was only for blacks and then the other part was for whites we couldn't go over there on that side. And like I said, the school was segregated.

Diana Hernandez 09:55
And when you said you said that when you went to the lake there was a designated section. How did you-How did you know it was designated did it have a sign?

Odessa Howard 10:06
It didn't say it didn't say black or anything like that. But we knew that was for us.

Diana Hernandez 10:17
So, like through word of mouth.?

Odessa Howard 10:20
A part Yes.

Diana Hernandez 10:22
Your word of mouth y'all knew. Okay.

Odessa Howard 10:24
Yes.

Diana Hernandez 10:25
Um you recall what activities you partook in when you went to the lake?

Odessa Howard 10:37
We just got in the water.

Diana Hernandez 10:41
So y'all swam?

Odessa Howard 10:42
Those that could swim they swam, but others that couldn't swim just played around the edge of the water.

Diana Hernandez 10:51
Did y'all have picnics?

Odessa Howard 10:53

Yes, we did. We have picnics at the end of the year at the end of the school year, every year, we'd go to Waterloo Lake or to Munson park, or where else did we go? Those are the only two I believe that we could go to

Diana Hernandez 11:14
Not Lake Texoma? Y'all didn't have picnics at Lake Texoma?

Odessa Howard 11:17
Not school picnics. But we just went there on our own and had picnics.

Diana Hernandez 11:22
on your own. Okay.

Odessa Howard 11:24
Yes.

Diana Hernandez 11:26
You said that the other two were the only two that y'all could go to. What do you mean by that?

Odessa Howard 11:32
What?

Diana Hernandez 11:33
You mentioned that the other two parks were the only two parks that y'all could go to because they were segregated?

Odessa Howard 11:45
You know, Munson Park we were allowed to go to Munson Park. and Waterloo Lake, it wasn't anything out there indicating that they were. It was for blacks only and, you know, like it was like I was telling you about in the bus station where it showed Black water and White water, but we just knew how far to go and how far not to go. Because our parents had told us.

Diana Hernandez 12:22
Okay, so it was passed down.

Odessa Howard 12:25

Right that we're not supposed to go there.

Gwen Braxton 12:27
Right.

Odessa Howard 12:27
Where not to go.

Diana Hernandez 12:33
What were?

Odessa Howard 12:34
It was kind of like having to talk. Right? Don't go out there 'cause, you know?

Diana Hernandez 12:41
It was a talk that the family had to have when y'all were growing up.

Odessa Howard 12:45
Right.

Diana Hernandez 12:46
Do you recall your parents having that talk with you?

Odessa Howard 12:50
Sure, my grandmother had that talk. Little boy lived next - the white boy live next door and she told me Do not go over there because he wasn't allowed to play with me.

Diana Hernandez 13:07
Do you remember how old...

Odessa Howard 13:10
She's she said that was Coal oil and matches. (inaudible) Name at first. Coal oil and matches.

Diana Hernandez 13:22
Can you repeat that?

Gwen Braxton 13:24

She said that her grandmother called it Coal oil and matches.

Odessa Howard 13:30
Like they would burn black people. You know if they catch him messing around with black folk.

Diana Hernandez 13:35
Okay.

Gwen Braxton 13:36
She thought that was his name for a long time.

Diana Hernandez 13:41
Oh, wow.

Odessa Howard 13:42
That's coal oil and matches you cannot go over there.

Diana Hernandez 13:47
And do you remember how old you were when that when you had that talk?

Odessa Howard 13:50
Probably about eight, nine and 10 in that area.

Diana Hernandez 13:55
Okay. And I guess, yeah.

Odessa Howard 14:00
I stayed with her for several years. And then I went back. Her portion of that was called The West end. And it was three black families that lived out there and the rest of them were white. So after I got to be a little bit older, my mom wanted me to come home because she was dressing me too old fashion.

Diana Hernandez 14:25
And I had a question. It's, it's escaping me right now. But your family? Well, you were born in 38. Right? You said 38?

Odessa Howard 14:40

31.

Diana Hernandez 14:41
31, So you were in 31. That was shortly after the 1930 Sherman riot. Do you remember hearing about that riot.

Odessa Howard 14:53
I did hear about that.

Diana Hernandez 14:56
What did you know about it?

Odessa Howard 14:59
I really didn't know anything. I just know that that had happened. And then I had a girlfriend her dad was a doctor, and they burned down his office.

Diana Hernandez 15:10
And do you remember?

Odessa Howard 15:12
But they moved to Denison

Diana Hernandez 15:13
Okay. Do you do you recall? Where the because they I've, from what I've read, there was a black, a black district in business like a black business district in Sherman that was burned down during the riot. Do you remember its location? Like where? What part of Sherman it was located in?

Odessa Howard 15:40
You know, I live in Sherman now, but I don't remember that. Okay. I could probably find out.

Diana Hernandez 15:47
Oh, yeah, that'd be great. So, I guess out of curiosity, if you didn't respect those unspoken laws of not staying in within your designated space, what what kind of consequences were that? Were that would they be?

Odessa Howard 16:13

My grandmother would give you a whippin'.

Diana Hernandez 16:19
But would you get in trouble with the police? Like if you were in a white area?

Odessa Howard 16:23
No, it didn't go that far. No.

Diana Hernandez 16:28
Okay. But if someone did do that, what, what how would they be punished? What would happen to them?

Odessa Howard 16:36
You know, I really don't know.

Diana Hernandez 16:40
So there was just this natural, I guess fear, right? It was a natural fear of not going into whitespaces.

Odessa Howard 16:51
Right

Diana Hernandez 16:51
And do you remember when integration started?

Odessa Howard 17:03
No, when you started school it was. after that it was already integrated when I started school.

Gwen Braxton 17:08
So you? You said you moved to Wichita Falls after you graduated? Right?

Odessa Howard 17:13
Yeah I moved to Wichita Falls when I was about 22 years old.

Diana Hernandez 17:16
Okay, so you experience

Odessa Howard 17:16
I left Denison, the Denison area.

Diana Hernandez 17:24
Okay, so, integration when integration happened in the 60s, you were in Oklahoma.

Odessa Howard 17:30
Out in Wichita Falls,

Diana Hernandez 17:31
I'm sorry, in Wichita Falls, Wichita Falls. And then what year did you come back?

Gwen Braxton 17:31
Wichita falls,

Odessa Howard 17:40
I didn't I just lived there. And I got married and my husband was in the Air Force and we just traveled from place to place in the Air Force and then umm living in Colorado Springs the longest we lived the Air Force Academy for four years. And then after that, I moved downtown Colorado Springs and I stayed there for 50 years. And then I moved back to Denison in 2010 because of a respiratory problem that I have. The altitude in Colorado was too much for me. So I stayed in Denison a year and then I moved to Sherman. And that's where I live now.

Diana Hernandez 18:25
Okay,

Odessa Howard 18:26
In Sherman, Texas.

Diana Hernandez 18:30
Going back to leisure activities as a child what did you and your family do for fun?

Odessa Howard 18:43
We played cards because be it with, dominoes.

Diana Hernandez 18:56
Well, you mentioned the movies so that was one going to the movies.

Odessa Howard 18:59
Oh Yeah, we went to the movies. When I lived with my Aunt, we'd go to the movies.

Diana Hernandez 19:06
And I know that you mentioned Lake Texoma and you mentioned two other parks. Other than those three sites. Are there any other state or local parks that you visited as a child?

Odessa Howard 19:20
that parks or their shoot I can't think of the name of that park. It was another one but I can't pick up the name of it

Gwen Braxton 19:31
Once at a time. Rocky Hill, East town, North town?

Odessa Howard 19:35
Where Joe goes fishing now, but I can't think of the name.

Gwen Braxton 19:38
Joe goes fishing on Hagerman. That's

Odessa Howard 19:42
This wasn't it. This was more or less all

Gwen Braxton 19:44
carpenters bluff?

Odessa Howard 19:47
Eisenhower what park is that

Gwen Braxton 19:50
The Eisenhower State Park

Odessa Howard 19:52
The Eisenhower State Park.

Diana Hernandez 19:54
Okay. And what was your experience like there?

Odessa Howard 19:59
We didn't have any problems.

Diana Hernandez 20:01
Okay. So pretty, like pretty positive experiences.

Odessa Howard 20:06
Right.

Diana Hernandez 20:07
Okay. And at Lake Texoma, you would say that you had positive experiences as well?

Odessa Howard 20:16
I remember when I was in high school and we were up there at night, and the police would tell you, you had to leave. You couldn't be out there at night.

Diana Hernandez 20:28
You were there with your friends?

Odessa Howard 20:30
Yes.

Diana Hernandez 20:31
And what would y'all do?

Odessa Howard 20:34
We would leave,

Diana Hernandez 20:35
But what were y'all doing there at night where y'all like, dancing or

Odessa Howard 20:41
Drinking beer and

Gwen Braxton 20:45
(Laughing)

Odessa Howard 20:50
We were sitting up there drinking. We couldn't drink. (Laughter) Yeah, telling jokes and just having fun.

Diana Hernandez 21:01
Being typical teenagers.

Odessa Howard 21:03
That's exactly right.

Diana Hernandez 21:05
I'm surprised. I don't know. I'm surprised y'all weren't scared of being out there in the dark.

Odessa Howard 21:14
No, cuz it was boys and girls.

Diana Hernandez 21:17
Okay.

Odessa Howard 21:23
Used to go to prayer view. Then it was a restaurant out there. It's a black restaurant there on the lake. We would go. After we got old enough. We go to that restaurant that was out there.

Diana Hernandez 21:35
What was it called?

Odessa Howard 21:36
That guy's name? live in the country from Carver, Oklahoma had that we We call it a beer joint.

Diana Hernandez 21:36
Okay.

Odessa Howard 21:49
It was two brothers that had had a place that was open to- It was open to the public.

Diana Hernandez 21:59

Where-where on the lake was it?

Odessa Howard 22:01
It was on the lake not too far from not too far from a what the name of that place?

Gwen Braxton 22:10
Eisenhower state park? Not the Dam…burns run?

Odessa Howard 22:15
It was still wasn't too far from sunset.

Diana Hernandez 22:18
Okay. Wow. That's a lot. That's a lot to live through. You went through you went through a lot in your life

Odessa Howard 22:31
When you have too much.

Diana Hernandez 22:34
And how many children

Odessa Howard 22:36
and I'm sorry. Beg your pardon?

Diana Hernandez 22:38
How many children did you have?

Odessa Howard 22:40
I had three.

Diana Hernandez 22:43
And do- where were they born?

Odessa Howard 22:48
They were born at military installations in California and Wichita Falls

Diana Hernandez 22:55
What year?

Odessa Howard 22:59
What year were they born?

Diana Hernandez 23:00
Mhm.

Odessa Howard 23:01
54,56 and 59.

Diana Hernandez 23:06
And where do they live now?

Odessa Howard 23:07
Two of them are deceased and then one is in. listen, my daughter that's alive lives in Iowa, Bonaparte, Iowa

Diana Hernandez 23:15
Oh, wow. She's far.

Odessa Howard 23:22
About a twelve hour drive from there to here.

Diana Hernandez 23:25
Okay. And what did they do for what did they do for a living?

Odessa Howard 23:32
What does my daughter do for a living? She works for the Department of Public Safety DPS Department of Public Works in Department of Public Safety.

Diana Hernandez 23:48
Okay. Do you have grandchildren?

Odessa Howard 23:52
I have two granddaughters that live in Tacoma, Washington, and I have another granddaughter that lives in Atlanta. I have a grandson that lives in Las Vegas another one that lives in Colorado Springs. And the other one lives in Japan. I have three- four grand, great grandsons that live in Washington. And another one that lives in ..where is that boy,

Diana Hernandez 24:12
Oh wow.

Gwen Braxton 24:29
Jacory?

Odessa Howard 24:30
Jacory is in Washington now he's.. Jacory's my great grandson. This. Oh, he's-he's kind of a professional basketball player. Get he's working toward that.

Diana Hernandez 24:47
Okay. Wow, they're all over.

Odessa Howard 24:53
They sure are.

Diana Hernandez 24:55
Do y'all ever have reunions?

Odessa Howard 24:59
No, we haven't had a reunion we just talked about it. Before I retired, I used to go out there to visit all the time. But then after I got to where my respiratory problem was kind of bad. I just didn't go out to visit

Diana Hernandez 25:19
Because how did how did the that one grandson or grandchild end up in Japan?

Odessa Howard 25:25
He was a professional kickboxer. And he lived excuse me, he lived in Tacoma, Washington. Then he went to Japan. In fact, it was a Japanese guy who got ‘em into kickboxing. So, he really had a lot going for himself in Tokyo. I have pictures of him on the side of the city bus. He was a big boy until he did really well at that he retired in 2014.

Diana Hernandez 26:08
Okay. And then he just decided to stay over there.

Odessa Howard 26:13

He's back and forth. He has a home in Seattle, Washington and then one in Japan so he's just back and forth.

Diana Hernandez 26:21
Okay. Well, thank you, Miss Howard for agreeing to speak with me. I really enjoyed you sharing your history with me. And I think I would like to now go on to miss Braxton. If that's okay.

Odessa Howard 26:21
Yeah, sure. Sorry I couldn't tell you more.

Diana Hernandez 26:48
No, that was more than enough. Thank you for sharing that. Miss Braxton. Where are you from?

Gwen Braxton 26:55
I am from Denison, Texas.

Diana Hernandez 26:58
And what year were you born?

Gwen Braxton 27:00
1965.

Diana Hernandez 27:04
So do you recall what neighborhood you grew up in?

Gwen Braxton 27:08
We lived, we started out on the w -. We started out on the-I remember when I was younger. Well, when I was three, we lived on the West end. And then we moved about half a mile or a mile away from the West End. And then we moved to Tower Lane, which is a projects and I was actually born in Tower lane. But at some point I guess we moved. But when I was eight years old after moving three times, we finally went back to tower lane and lived in number three tower lane.

Diana Hernandez 27:46
What was that-What was that like?

Gwen Braxton 27:51

Well, that's not- It's the warmest place in the winter. So, we knew that and then. It was my brother, he said that we didn't know it, but we were living in condominiums all the time. People kinda you know, shunned, us because it was the projects. It was probably the only reference to the "ghetto" that people knew back then. But But that's where we lived and you couldn't tell us that we weren't living in condomini- condominiums and that it was you know, it was the right place. So, it was it was fun. All of my childhood friends from then we're still childhood friends now. We I mean, we're still friends as adults. We celebrate each other, we support each other. In 2012. They had a Tower Lane reunion, but she was from she was she lived in Tower Lane also at some point. So, in 2012, all the people all the families that lived out there we had our last Tower Lane reunion. And we lived in number three, which was on the corner. So, number one and number three were the first two when you would come in, and right off the main street, which was Armstrong there stood the standpipe which was the water tower. And that was we knew that there was a streetlight there. So, we were playing outside. We knew to watch that streetlight so that if it got dark, you know it was time to be in the house. And my grandmother lived on Parnell Street so my mom who worked very hard raising us she would work until 1030 at night but when she would while she was at work, or she told us "hit the heel" and we knew that when she said "hit the heel" that meant to go to our grandmother's house. And that's what we did but as kids in Tower Lane we grew up like I said supporting each other we all went to the same elementary school which was central Elementary. From there and Central. I think they were desegregated in in I think it happened in Six - I went to church, I go to church with two, with twins. And they were the first two ladies to be part of that desegregation process over on our side of town. But growing up in Tower Lane, I loved it. You know, I remember, we were in class in our junior High's, and teacher, our history teacher was, we were assigned, we would line up, and he would give us a term and we would have to give the um.. describe, define what the term was. And I remember once the word was ghetto, and one young man who lived on the other side of town, which was on the east side of town, the teacher says, okay, define "ghetto" And the guy says, Tower Lane, you know, and it was like, wow, and I kind of came back at him. And I told him, because even though it was deemed the proj- the ghetto, or whatever, the projects our house was spotless, I remember my older siblings, friends come by, and they were like, older, older, older, but they would talk about how their parents would say that they could come to our house and almost eat off the floor, because it's just gonna be that clean. And I'm number 10, of 11. You know, and for someone to say that, that meant something. So, when he made the comment about it being the ghetto, I was like, well, at least it's clean. We have food, we, you know, all these things that were the positive aspects of what I knew, because that was all I knew about it, you know? And everybody raised everybody.

All right, we respected every parent, there was not one. Yes, we had our individual parents, but if we crossed the line, we knew that there was going to be a consequence. And anybody could do that. They could all chastise us and we had that reverence and respect. Even to this day, you know, all of the families, like I said, that live there, their parents that are still here. You know, we reverence them. You know, the best we know how, because that's how we were raised.

Diana Hernandez 32:07
So, when you were going to school, you already were going to integrated schools. Right? What was that like? Even though it was integrated? Was there still racial tension?

Gwen Braxton 32:21
There was some all of my older siblings actually had gone to Terrell school. So there were, Pokey was born in 61. Were all stairstep. But they all went to Terrell, the biggest thing that I recall, well two things. One was it was not when I was in junior high seventh grade mode, my sister was in ninth grade. And something jumped off where one guy made a comment about with the N word. And it was terrible. I mean, there was that day, just there were just so many fights and I see this one guy, and I saw him a couple of weeks ago. And he's been in and out of jail and stuff. But to my recollection, that event that happened at school that day, is what started his whole path, spiraling down as far as getting in trouble with the law and stuff, because they, you know, they called the police and they took them to jail. And, but it was, I mean, they fought, they fought, fought. And it was like, I like I said, I was in seventh grade. But my sister and the rest of them that were in ninth grade, they were all fighting, you know, blacks and against the whites. But, you know, that was that thing. And then the other thing is, when I I can't remember exactly what year it was, but all of my siblings, they're all athletic. They all and they all played played softball or baseball, they played some kind of ball and there was a softball game or slowpitch game one night. And after the game, they would all disperse, but they you know, they go get beer and they do whatever they do. And there was a local corner store right by the projects. And so one of the guys and his girlfriend had gone up to the store to get their beer, and apparently there was a motorcycle gang there. And something was said and they were antagonizing the guy, his girlfriend. And I don't know if the guy's buckle got caught. Something happened that the white guy on the motorcycle ended up dying. And I remember the police coming through Tower Lane and because I had older brothers and they they played ball and they all had the same uniform. I remember him coming to our house and telling my mom they were looking for my brothers and because anybody in the uniform that was Black was basically they were saying that they were guilty of that crime. And so, I just remember them coming in and and, you know, waking us up and

everything and just that accusation of everything that happened. So that was one of the biggest things. And that's when we still live in Carolina at the time.

Diana Hernandez 35:11
And what what happened at the end like,

Gwen Braxton 35:14
well, they finally got the guy, they finally arrested him. They. And my sister, she tells me that they had her mixed up with his girlfriend because they were classmates and they all they looked like they had short hair. And you know, the, I say they were perfect built, they were built. They were, they were really nice-looking girls and stuff. But anyway, so they kind of lumped them into block them into one category of looking a certain way and being capable. And so, she said that they had even pulled her down over that night and question them, but ultimately, they got the culprit. But he actually, he did some time and stuff. But he was exonerated, I believe for self-defense and everything. But you know, other things continue to happen his life as well.

Diana Hernandez 36:02
Wow. That's intense and scary.

Odessa Howard 36:07
It is.

Diana Hernandez 36:09
How old were you when that happened?

Gwen Braxton 36:11
I was probably. Well, I would say I met him. Since Angie was in high school. That means I would have been... I was probably in seventh or eighth grade again, six or seven somewhere in there. Preteen and thirteen adolescent.

Diana Hernandez 36:30
Yeah. Wow. So, like, as a child, what do you remember most about your town?

Gwen Braxton 36:42
I remember we would walk from Tower Lane to Munson Park because at that time we had this swimming pool was at Munson Park. And that was our pastime, especially during the summer. And we would, you know, I talked to you about as I mentioned, and how we

would walk down to my grandmother's house. If we pass the standpipe. Well, that was our direction, the route that we took go into the swimming pool. And there were so many, what I remember is the plum trees, the peach trees, the apple trees, and we would go through especially on our way back home, we would eat so many green fruits and and we knew we were gonna get in trouble. And so, we say my mom says you don't eat, don't you eat those green plums because it's gonna break your stomach, as she tells me we're gonna have worms. And so we kind of believed it, but we really didn't, because by the time we walked back from the swimming pool, we were so hungry that those green plums and pears and all of that stuff was just, you know, it was like, okay, the forbidden fruit, for sure. But I would eat it anyway. But we had so much fun going to, to Munson pool, and we would swim. And we would take our- It started out 25 cents, and we would take our 35 cents. And it was so funny because our mom would tell us tell us while she was at work, She'd tell us "you better not go swimming, you better not go out to the pool". And so, it was like, Okay, we get our money together. And we would go anyway. And we would get back home. And my one sister, she's five years older than I am. She's- I tell her she's crazy. It's just our represent still, but we would get back home and we would wash our hair. And then she would you know we didn't have a dryer. So, it pretty much we wash it at the pool, but try to get back home and let it air dry. So that she could press it with a straightening comb and get it all dolled up and that and we'd be like, well, she just wanted to do our hair. But that was the furthest thing from the truth. But we would do that week in, week out and get in trouble every single time. But you know, we'd still live to do it all over again. And that was the most fun. And when they closed Munson pool, we had to walk to Waterloo pool, which was on the far, far, far side of town. And we had to walk and we walk out there and we walk back but when we first started going out there, they we get into a pool, the white kids would get out or they would just they would shun us and they'd say things but again my sister was crazy so she had her way of retaliating and we've we've had so much we did we just laugh I mean because you know that's all that's all we really were able to do was go swimming and play in the backyard or the projects and play softball and then we would if we weren't playing in swimming, we would just walk through the woods and we would walk from the wooded area all the way to the highway, which was almost to a sometimes on a Saturday we may walk all the way to the Dam, you know, as far as we could get on foot through the woods, that's what we do. And we will come back and, you know, we, we had, we had fun, we had fun when we got older, we uh.. I was a member of a youth group and one of my best friends, he was a DJ. But then we started having every- for Juneteenth, and then probably one other time through the year, they would allow us to have a party down in a boulevard, it's what we call it, a circle. And so, we'd have opportunity to go down there, and we'd do that. But then also the community center, which is where they had been having dances and parties forever.

That's where we would go, you know, we go to the center, and I would have to make sure that the house was clean. My little sister was in the bed, and homework done and everything just to be able to go and a lot of times I have to say, can I go to the center? Or we would say, can we go to the center and our moms say, "yes, to the center of the bed." And that was it was wrap, you know, you don't, you don't talk about, you didn't talk back and all that stuff. And there was three of us who were close in age. And anytime something happened to one, we all got it. And they would hold me I was the runner, I would hide and run. And she'd whip us and stuff and we got whoopins with belts or whatever it was in in line, arm's reach and in line of sight. That's what we get.

Diana Hernandez 41:30
When we're, what were your parents' names.

Gwen Braxton 41:34
My mom and my dad were not together. But my mom is Lily Walford. She was Lily Mae Clark, which was her older sister.(Mrs. Odessa's) And so she was great. Yesterday, it was 12 years since her passing. But I was telling my brother at the nursing home yesterday that what day it was and I told him, You know, I said we had a great mom. And he said, No, we still have one because we're still here. You know? to talk about her. And she was she was a single parent, but most time and we would um.. right where she's- my aunt Glossy said that they went- my great grandmother, I remember her because we had to go there. And we would walk what out to the West End, we wrap up our laundry into a sheet, in a sheet. And we leave her house and go to the laundry mat and then walk back. And so those are railroad tracks, and we cross the tracks. And even today, my oldest sister, she lives in a house that she had put back on that same lot. And then my oldest brother lives next door, which is where our grandfather's brother lived. And so they still live right there in that area. But my mom, she was she was awesome. She took a lot. And we really didn't understand it. And it was hard. I remember one time living in Tower Lane in my old one of my older sisters got into it at school with some other girls. And one of them wasn't even their mom or their aunt came to our door. She was knocking on the door. My mom was still at work. And she knocked on the door and she kind of called us some names and everything that weren't kind, you know, no one wants to hear talk about your siblings, let alone your mom. And as I mentioned, we respected them even though you know, so we had to have that level of respect. But our mom, she didn't she just took way too much. She was the person. She was so humble. And you people walked all over this way the way it looked to us. And so, for when we told her that the lady had been there and cussing and all that stuff. She said that's all right. That's all right. And she asked my sister, what did she do and she was guilty. And she said, you know better than that. You

know better than that. And, you know, so she got my sister got the rough end of that. But she was just that she was so giving and loving. And you know, she all my life. She was always giving back. She was an Eastern Star for years and years and she was a heroine in Jericho. And then she was the NAACP Secretary forever and ever and ever. It seemed. She had this black briefcase that she kept everything in all her she kept immaculate, I mean, meticulous notes for the NAACP, and she would keep all that stuff in that black briefcase. I just gave my one of my nieces that briefcase last year. She still has it. Yeah, I gave it to her because I kept it and I'm the keeper of the artifacts and stuff and so I brought aunt Glossy I have kids Because of my great grandmother, my grandmother, my uncles, and, you know, it's just, it's, that's what I do. And I keep all this stuff because I remember, you know, when my grandmother died in 1978 I think she was born 1816 or 1818 I can get her deal. But our our my great grandmother, but you know, my mom having so many kids, they all help raise us, as they would say they all help rear us. We were reared by all of them.

Diana Hernandez 45:39
What do y'all plan on doing with the briefcase? Or do y'all plan on donating it to a museum?

Gwen Braxton 45:44
I just gave it to my niece and told her because she's, she's a realtor. And she does a lot of stuff. And so I just, I just gave it to her. I tried to make sure that we all have a piece of the family in history and my mom and my grandmother. And, you know, whatever they do with it, they don't hold on to it like I do. Or like I have my mom's been gone. 12 years, my grandmother's been going on, since 1993. And I still have all this stuff. my great aunt gone since 2009. But I still have it and I , I share. So, I hope they would hold on to it like I did.

Diana Hernandez 46:27
That's wonderful. Yeah, definitely. That's, that's history. You know, valuable history. What did your mom do for a living?

Gwen Braxton 46:37
She worked in manufacturing. She worked at Levi Strauss. And she worked for Boise Cascade or Conoco and then in 1987 or eight, 1987 she had to take early retirement because her health started failing. she started, she had kidney disease. So, she, she took early retirement, and then she went on dialysis in 1993.

Odessa Howard 47:08
17 years,

Gwen Braxton 47:09
She was on dialysis for 17 years, was the longest person in our area at that time who had been on dialysis.

Diana Hernandez 47:17
And she was originally from Denison?

Gwen Braxton 47:20
Yes.

Diana Hernandez 47:21
Okay. And I know your your father wasn't involved, but was he also from Denison?

Gwen Braxton 47:30
He was from originally from Oklahoma. I'm sorry, he was there, Oklahoma, which is Hendricks, Oklahoma, but that's only about what 12 miles from Denison is that? Yeah, it was, you know, it's just it was it's Oklahoma, but it's close enough to Texas. And so that's where he was from. And he and his family had three sisters and two brothers. So, there were six of them. And they were two of them, my dad and one sister with my complexion. And then the other four were albino. And so there was a lot of passing. And I remember before he passed probably in about six or seven years ago, because he passed away in 2017. No, two, yeah. 2017. But we were doing some handling some paperwork. And he and I had gone over to the courthouse in Sherman, to get a copy of his sister's, one of his sister's birth certificates. And it was funny because they had her on there as white. They had white down, as a race, you know, and he just kind of said, Look, your daughter, they did that. So and so back then. But my grandmother, his mom lived, she was 104 when she passed away 1994 I think she's 104 Yeah, but she was she was my complexion. But his dad was really, really, really white looking, and I never met him. And I met his mom and I always knew his siblings and stuff, but and I always knew my half siblings and everything. but um, he was cool He was a mortician and he was a preacher. He was he was everything.

Diana Hernandez 49:29
a mortician? oh wow.

Gwen Braxton 49:31
Yeah, well, he wasn't like.. he worked in funeral homes or something like that.

Diana Hernandez 49:37
But you did have a relationship with your father?

Gwen Braxton 49:40
After I got older, yes, he was he was my best friend. After from my from like 30 to 34 He was my best friend.

Diana Hernandez 49:53
Okay.

Gwen Braxton 49:55
He was my buddy.

Diana Hernandez 49:59
And uhh, what else? So, um, so tell me as a child, other than… well, you mentioned a little bit about swimming. Were there any other family activities that y'all took that y'all did for fun?

Gwen Braxton 50:11
Well, we, I was one of our cousins, which would be her first cousin. They when she would come in from Riverside, California, we would always wait. My uncle lived in Tower Lane also. And so when she would come into town, they would always take us up to Sunset, we would always go up to the, to the lake and just go and we just played, we'd just go and run around and get in the water as we were, and even then, we weren't supposed to. And we did that again, and we could get in trouble about it. And then we would, we would walk to the carnival. From Tower Lane, everywhere we went, we walked. We walked to the carnival. And then they had a skating rink called "Curly's Skating Rink." And so when I was old enough to start skating and going, that's what we'd do. We walk down to Curly's on Friday night. And we'd go skating on the hardwood floor and then we'd come back home and I think I was in the ninth grade was the first time I went to the Realto. I remember going to see Think it was. "Endless Love" was Brooke Shields in "Endless Love."? you probably too young to know. I think it was "Endless Love." And that was my first time I don't know if my friends and everybody knew that. That was my first time being at the Realto. But that was the first time and then we, well it's either that or it was when the first Jason movie. What was it Halloween?

Diana Hernandez 50:11
Oh, yeah. Yeah, Halloween.

Odessa Howard 50:23
Well, we should do it after 12 o'clock.

Gwen Braxton 51:44
Well, we could at least go before 12 We had to be back home by 12 or 10:30. But yeah,

Odessa Howard 51:50
No offense, you didn't have to take her to the movie.

Diana Hernandez 51:53
That's wow, wow, that's amazing. I can't believe it. I still think that it's amazing that that theater is still there that- I'd like to see it myself.

Gwen Braxton 52:06
Come to Denison and get a flier and maybe even something on that chamber of commerce page.

Odessa Howard 52:12
Where are you?

Diana Hernandez 52:14
I'm in Houston.

Odessa Howard 52:16
Okay.

Diana Hernandez 52:17
Yeah, I'll have Yeah, I'll have to go to Denison and meet y'all in person. I would love to.

Odessa Howard 52:22
I went to Praireview for a year. That's close. Not too far from Houston.

Diana Hernandez 52:26
Yeah, that's pretty close. What did you study?

Odessa Howard 52:31
Physical Education the year that I was there, but then the next following year I got sick and I didn't get to go back. So, I just didn't go back at all. That was really crazy with this the way it happened. My appendix bothered me. I was getting…getting ready to go back to school. A few days before that and my appendix had problems with that and had to go to the hospital and never didn't go back to school.

Gwen Braxton 53:01
But your classmates went to school down there didn't they?

Odessa Howard 53:03
Oh, yeah. Rabbits. Yeah, a lot of fish down there.

Gwen Braxton 53:08
And then the women that had the band that played in the band.

Odessa Howard 53:13
Yeah.

Gwen Braxton 53:15
Miss Helen Cole.

Odessa Howard 53:16
Cole and Clora Bryant. Red sharp.

Gwen Braxton 53:19
You know, Clora D. Bryant? The famous jazz musician? the famous jazz musician from Denison Texas.

Odessa Howard 53:28
(Over lapping) She probably didn't know them, she's too young to know that.

Diana Hernandez 53:29
Okay,

Odessa Howard 53:30
Did you ever go to Bryan, Texas?

Diana Hernandez 53:33
No, I haven't been there.

Odessa Howard 53:35
Because my girlfriend put together a museum there for – What's the black ladies name? Mary McLeod Bethune.

Gwen Braxton 53:46
Mary McLeod Bethune

Diana Hernandez 53:48
Oh, really?

Gwen Braxton 53:50
So there

Diana Hernandez 53:51
I've heard her name.

Gwen Braxton 53:53
Okay, she's, she's saying that her friend there in Bryan which is probably about two hours from Houston.

Odessa Howard 53:58
She's from Denison Yeah.

Gwen Braxton 54:00
Was she really?

Odessa Howard 54:01
Mel because Mel Ruth

Gwen Braxton 54:02
Oh, Mel Ruth, Miss Dyson, sister. Okay. They did a lot of good stuff across Texas.

Diana Hernandez 54:09
Wow. So, they have a museum in Bryan.

Odessa Howard 54:13
Yeah.

Diana Hernandez 54:15
That's, that's like I'll have to go visit. So then, I guess trying to go back a little bit to Lake Texoma. What are your mem - What are your memory specific memories about Lake Texoma?

Odessa Howard 54:30
Goin' out there fishing.

Diana Hernandez 54:33
For Miss Howard and Miss Braxton and Miss Howard, for both of you.

Gwen Braxton 54:38
Well, mine was just going out there and then my mom. anytime she got in the car. She wanted to go to the dam. She wanted to ride up on the lake. And one of the things we were reminiscing about yesterday at because we go visit her grave and everything so we were out there and So one of my oldest sister was telling my younger sisters friend that she said, yeah, and cause I looked at the clock and say, well, about this time she was transitioning. And she said, yeah, and right after that, they took her up on the lake that they drove her up to the lake in the hearse. And he's like... And we did, they did, the guy from the funeral home, knew that that's what we do. And so, when they took her from the hospital, before bringing her back to Sherman, her remains back to Sherman. We had a convoy from the hospital in Denison, out to the lake. And we went and we circled the dam and, and then they took her daughter back to Sherman. Because that's what she did. And she, my mom lived with me. And she was my she was, she was my friend too. So she did dialysis. But everything else we did together. and on Wednesdays when I wasn't working, or when I would work. But on Wednesdays, it was like a given we were going to ride and we were going to do everything. And then on Sundays also till I take her up on Lake and she, she just loved it. She just go and we go and we'd sit, we'd park and we'd drive. And she would always reminisce about when they were younger. And when they would go up there. And then she always inevitable. She was always gon' tell the story about some of her friends who were driving and who would skip school and didn't do what they were supposed to do. And they just drove off into the lake in because they're, you know, their father's checking. But that's the I remember that story. And I remember taking her all the time I that. That's it. That's what my nieces and nephews, that's what they remember

about granny we're going up there camping this weekend. But everybody knew that granny wants to go to the lake. And that's when she gets in the car, when she got in the car with you. That's what you did. You take her to the lake and you take her to get some fish. Or you take her to give her some barbecue and after she had gotten on dialysis and you take her to get everything she didn't eat. You know that I remember it in like I say when our cousin would come from Riverside, California during the summer, we just go up there and we just play in our friends and Tower Lane we had, we didn't really have a car per se. But our friends who lived in number seven, they had a car and we would pile up and they would let anybody that could whose parents said it was okay pile up with them. And we'd go to the lake with them. And we would play and even now they still do the same thing as family, with their families. But we would go and we just we just played. We just did what kids would do. And we played and we played and we played and we weren't, we weren't latchkey kids per se. Well, I guess we were because we couldn't do anything other than go to if we were in Tower Lane and we go to the back porch. And we just pray that somebody was during the summer that somebody was going to the lake or we were going to have permission to go or that we could go and walk to the swimming pool. But you know, Lake Texoma was Burns Run and East Burns Run. So even after I graduated high school my friend that was a DJ. And we would occasionally go up there and he would just throw parties up there and we go up there and we we'd have parties and we do just what they were doing. We would drink and dance and we would have so much fun dancing and then we would come back home meet, care for you and get back home.

Diana Hernandez 58:40
So, all positive experiences?

Gwen Braxton 58:42
Yeah, all positive experiences. It was you know, we, we made our own fun. We knew that there's sometimes there were things out there, but we were we looked out for each other. That was the thing that I remember and I remember my a lot of my friends, my classmates, particularly one of them, hers, her mom and my mom were best friends in school. And so, I remember just the stories from that. And then after getting older we have both talked about it and stuff but yeah.

Diana Hernandez 59:16
I guess I wanted to ask, Was there ever like Was there ever any Klan activity in that area? Any Klan activity?

Gwen Braxton 59:28

There was but you know, we weren't really exposed to it except for I remember when our city councilman who just passed away or Late City Councilman and he- can't remember it was when he first became when he was elected to the City Council the first time. Alright, some put- no, they moved into the neighborhood. They moved into the neighborhood on the west side of town and they moved into this big white house on the corner which of the Main Street On the west side, he moved on Tone Avenue. And they burned a cross in his yard that, you know, that was it and he was a he ended up being becoming one of the NAACP presidents and then also being one of our city councilman. He served several terms on city council.

Diana Hernandez 1:00:23
Why did it upset them that he got a house there?

Gwen Braxton 1:00:26
Because it we are not supposed to live a certain kind of way. I mean, it was a big white house on the corner, you know, and everybody that went anywhere had to pass there. And you know, we lived in Tower Lane at the time. But after that, my junior year, we moved to block up the street from where they lived. And it was not like that, you know?

Diana Hernandez 1:00:57
Yeah. You Miss Howard. Do you? Do you recall any Klan activity?

Odessa Howard 1:01:03
No, I don't remember anything happening back then.

Diana Hernandez 1:01:11
So, it's like, they were there. But they but y'all didn't see them?

Odessa Howard 1:01:15
Right. It's probably more just

Diana Hernandez 1:01:17
like it was known that they existed, but y'all didn't real didn't see them.

Odessa Howard 1:01:23
No, we didn't see that. Anything like that.

Gwen Braxton 1:01:26

And I don't know. I remember one of my classmates. We were in ninth grade. And he they lived on the he lived in Rock Hill sugar bottom, which would have been what? Aunt Glossy what is that like in the southwest side of town.?

Odessa Howard 1:01:33
Sugar Bottom?

Gwen Braxton 1:01:33
Well, no, they actually they lived in- not Brownsville, the Brownsville over by iron ore. Anyway, he, he would use different groups. And so he was a very, very dark young man. But he all his friends were white, white guys. And so, they had something happened. And they had gone somewhere. And he came up dead.

Odessa Howard 1:01:33
Oh wow!

Gwen Braxton 1:01:33
under- under the barrack, which was on the other side of town. And no one really knew what happened. And the guys claimed it was an accident or whatever. And his his dad went on the news and he just said that, "you know, if you- you kill a mule, you buy another one, you kill a n*****, you hire her another one." And that was just, you know, it kind of just went away just like that.

Diana Hernandez 1:01:36
What year was that?

Gwen Braxton 1:02:31
So, I was in ninth grade so.(phone ringing)

Odessa Howard 1:02:44
I'm trying to turn it off

Gwen Braxton 1:02:45
So, that's her 92-year-old cousin. Calling from originally from Riverside. The one that I told you that we would go to the lake with.

Odessa Howard 1:02:54
(On telephone) I'll call you back.

Gwen Braxton 1:02:56
But so, I was in ninth grade. So

Diana Hernandez 1:02:59
So, you, we're like 14 or so? 14

Gwen Braxton 1:03:01
I was definitely 14. And that should have been 79 or 80. It may have been 78 or 79.

Diana Hernandez 1:03:07
Wow. What was the boy's name?

Gwen Braxton 1:03:11
His name was Ari Parker.

Diana Hernandez 1:03:13
Ari Parker. That's so sad. And so, I guess he died under suspicious circumstances is what everyone believes.

Gwen Braxton 1:03:28
Yeah, yeah. They had their own reason. Or their own explanations of it. And you know, we did and I guess the other thing is that some stuff you didn't question you know, we had our.. Even then things like, I guess we would stay in our lane. And then grown people you didn't or with adults, you didn't have certain conversations anyway. You know, there was discussions you weren't in the room when they were being at other than and we already knew is like, like what she said, we knew that we walked a certain route home. We knew that we had to be home at a certain time. And we just knew there was the unspoken things that we knew to do. We knew how to I guess it was a code of conduct that was under unwritten maybe.

Diana Hernandez 1:04:23
Yeah

Gwen Braxton 1:04:24
That we do. We all along we knew.

Diana Hernandez 1:04:27

Wow. And growing up did you hear about the Sherman riot?

Gwen Braxton 1:04:34
I heard most about the Sherman riot. Probably when I became an adult, just to be honest with you, and then just more so recently,

Diana Hernandez 1:04:50
Okay,

Gwen Braxton 1:04:51
I used to work with one of the I think she's a cousin so I kind of knew some stuff because the Hughes's were real popular which that It was because of Mr. Hughes it all that happened. But I wasn't aware. I wouldn't. Yeah, I wasn't really aware of everything that had gone on until just so I started reading more and understanding more and listening and then being a part of signing the petitions I didn't get to go to, in the commissioner's meetings and stuff to hear a lot of the testimonies and stuff firsthand. But, you know, I went back, I understand the work that was being done by Ms. Till I think that was her name Melissa, Melissa, Till, in a group that was working on it. So, you know, and, and when I did hear, the thing that really got me was it was always thinking about, just for several years, I've been wanting to go back to Tulsa, on Greenwood and go, and then I realized that right here in Sherman had a similar area in for black people. And it's just, it's kinda, it's crazy. But I also I attended Denison leadership, which is a nine-month program where you learn about a lot of you learn about local, state, government and everything. And so, there was, there are some records of some things that I found shocking after I completed it, that even stuff about Lake Texoma, about the contr - contributions of African Americans had, you know, to the railroad stuff, a lot of that stuff. They didn't, they didn't even share it. As part of, you know, when we talked about the history of a particular Denison, in in Grayson County, but I what I do remember, and what reason I'm going that way, is that they brought us over one of our visits was at the county courthouse, and it talked about all the different records and stuff that are on file. And it blew my mind to know that there was so many families owned by slaves, and so much sharecropping and all that stuff right here in Grayson County it was stuff that I never knew, you know, that I really didn't. Didn't know. And it's just, you know, so I always try to try to find out more, because I, you know, I think that if we're not always learning, and if we don't know, we don't know where we came from, we sure as heck don't know where we're going. And the path to getting there will be sometimes when we know that will lessen the struggle, you know, the path but I do know that in this area, we stand on the shoulders of giants, my mom being one and then the ladies that attended a Praireview that graduated from Terrell

and there was just so many people that Terrell school and I grew up hearing those stories, that there's just so many people, you know, one of the guys that played on Sanford and Son was from Denison Clora D. Bryant here, you know, there's just so many out there. Oh, yeah. But oh, and then, you know, just, you know, we have a lot of we have a rich history. Oh, yeah. And Mr. Butler, he would just go Hold on one of those pictures. I have a picture. But one of his brothers graduated with my mom, I'm sure. But you know, we have rich history in Denison.

Diana Hernandez 1:04:51
Yeah.

Odessa Howard 1:08:15
Yeah. That guy thst got put on the wall. Last week

Diana Hernandez 1:08:33
And you mentioned you mentioned slavery, you said that there were a lot of families that own slaves.

Gwen Braxton 1:08:41
I believe. So. If I recalled some of the information that I read on those books, then I don't. There was property and stuff for sure. And so, I don't know which families were who because I graduate I get went through that course in 2015 2016 is when I finished, but there are you know, the old records, then where they transfer land and everything where they hand it all down.

Diana Hernandez 1:09:11
Wow. That's a lot.

Gwen Braxton 1:09:14
Area was over there where the Wilson and Jones hospital is. I think Wilson and Jones hospital somewhere in that area where the some of the deeds to some of the properties over there that were that dated way back.

Diana Hernandez 1:09:29
Okay. Are there any-

Gwen Braxton 1:09:33

And I don’t, I don't want to make up anything or fabricate anything. I'm just trying to recollect the information that I've gathered.

Diana Hernandez 1:09:40
Yeah.

Gwen Braxton 1:09:41
But it's in the book. It may not be in the books in the books, but I know those huge, huge books are over there at the county courthouse, and they have all that information, just like okay, what do you call the roll records? Is what mention it.

Diana Hernandez 1:10:01
Other than the school that y'all mentioned, Terrell, are there any other historic sites that relate to the African American community?

Gwen Braxton 1:10:16
Well, it's, they call it Legacy Park now. But it was Hopewell Baptist church stood there for years and years and years. And then it's a we have a historical landmark for it. Thurgood Marshall actually visited with he was with the NAACP, and he had come to Denison and so they were at Hopewell And so, and growing up we went to Hopewell we did our Easter speeches there. I think everybody, everybody, at some point went to school. I mean, went to church at Hopewell or some of those churches because that's back when you had those ministers that were your direct connect to what was going on in the in society, you know, they were the liaisons per se, with all the officials and stuff. And so, you had a group. And I remember we had when I was young, we had the federated choirs, and a lot of those old ministers that were in place when I was coming up with a teen. They were the ones that were ministers with my mom then so they were old, but they were still, you know, still preachers. So, I remember Reverend, the name Reverend Fennel, and Reverend Fennel’s daughter, her name was Geraldine Fennel she was I think like the first one of the first NAACP presidents and what her dad may have been. But she there is so much and I have articles at home, about the desegregation and everything in the role that they played. And I was reading somewhere because I was looking at Frontier village looking for some information. And I found something were in the state of Texas when they were talking about trying to get an NAACP branch. How they wouldn't let him do it. And they were saying that how the NAACP was basically a threat, and all that craziness. And I'm like what? , and I always really bought into the fact that the NAACP was exactly what it said, which was a National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. And that's the way our mom raised us. I mean, we, we had we have all of my life. We've had

interracial couples and families in our life that just the way we were. I- you know, and so when, for people to say that it was all that. I mean, I didn't know. You know, I didn't know. But you do know that stuff exist. And but our history, you know, you talked about the areas so the school, I went to McDaniel, which was desegregated, and I went to Central and I went to Denison High School. But a lot of my friends had to be bussed over to Hughes, which was predominantly white on the on the west side. And then some of them were very fortunate enough to have the Terrell experience they went to went to Terrell for junior high before they put it put us all at McDaniel. And then after they done that they did away with that school. So now there is a McDaniel but it wasn't the same one that we grew up in, you know, going to an attending. So, there was a black daycares and we went to Ole Miss mama loopers. And so they had several miss, we miss Weaver, several daycares and all the kids went to you know, and that's where we were reared in my See, so Miss Miss Fennell, she was in NAACP president and then her step, granddaughters were actually the two young ladies that I talked about being the first to to integrate the school, integrate central Elementary School here in Denison Texas back in the early would have been 60 So they were born in 56. So, they were in the second grade when they went to Central under desegregation. So, they were Virginia, and Regina Hunt. And they were twins. The articles and some articles with when they first went. And then the other thing is that our boy scout troop, Mr. D.D. Mcknight. He was really instrumental in everything for for our community. And then he left Boy Scout but he was also a teacher, a math teacher, and his wife was an English teacher in Denison. They told everybody he still would. No, I still think he still at the nursing home,

Diana Hernandez 1:15:01
What's his name again?

Gwen Braxton 1:15:03
D.D. Mcknight

Diana Hernandez 1:15:05
D.D McKnight?

Gwen Braxton 1:15:07
Yeah, if you talk to Gracie with a Gracie, highlighted him as one of our Hometown Heroes about two years ago.

Diana Hernandez 1:15:19
And how do you spell Fennell?

Gwen Braxton 1:15:22
F e n n e- I always add an extra L I'm not sure if I correct. Yeah.

Diana Hernandez 1:15:32
Okay. So double N N double L. Okay. Yes. And then DD is just to two Ds, DD and then McKnight MC or MA.

Gwen Braxton 1:15:46
MC K ni ght.

Odessa Howard 1:15:52
Anything else ma'am?

Gwen Braxton 1:15:53
She was the first African American school board member? No, she wasn't. She was first female. And she served for 20 some odd years. But Mr. Howard was the first one. Yeah, he served on school board and city council. And then Bill Parker. I met with him yesterday.

Diana Hernandez 1:16:15
And Terrell still is still standing. Right?

Gwen Braxton 1:16:18
Well, it's the new one. They tore the old school down.

Odessa Howard 1:16:21
They tore us (overlapping)

Diana Hernandez 1:16:22
They tore it down. Awe.

Gwen Braxton 1:16:24
There's a historical marker there at the corner, but they tore it down.

Diana Hernandez 1:16:29
What happened to all the records?

Odessa Howard 1:16:32

Who knows?

Diana Hernandez 1:16:35
That's sad.

Gwen Braxton 1:16:36
I if it's at Frontier village, it's out there in a container. Okay. They're either there or maybe they send them to North Texas, Denison. I mean, North Texas UNT.

Diana Hernandez 1:16:51
Well, because I know there's a Terrell Alumni Association, right.

Gwen Braxton 1:16:54
I gave you that information didn't I? for Ali Buckner.

Diana Hernandez 1:16:59
Yes. Yeah, I have to reach out to him still.

Gwen Braxton 1:17:04
So, when you come to Denison we still we do a lot of our family stuff at the at the center. Because I, I just like staying connected. I was in Washington Street Youth Club, I was in junior Black Chamber of Commerce. And all those things were centrally, we did everything centrally out of that building. And it's really the only thing that we own in the black community. That's the only thing that we can say that belongs to us now. And it was deeded to the black citizens of Denison by the Munson Family on two different occasions. So, some of those records get convoluted and stuff. But that's really the what, that's what we have. And the old hospital, which was Madonna Hospital, which is where everyone was born. They tore it down, I think maybe four years ago, central elementary school, they torn it down, you know, all of the schools that were on the other side of town, they're gone. You know, but the center is still there. And Marvin Smith, who's the president or the chair of the chamber, a Black Chamber of Commerce, he, he does what he can to keep it going. And then the we I mean, that's where we have our NAACP meetings and stuff. On the fourth Saturday, so you know Oh I remember seeing a deed that had Oh, gosh, date on it. That was 1902 but the stuff the records and stuff. And that may have been the original one now the building that’s there. Now they say that I think it was 1954 or 56 or something like that. But right next door to the center is a daycare. And it's been daycares forever, right? And it's been

Diana Hernandez 1:18:54
How old is the center?

Odessa Howard 1:18:59
For some reason it's closed now.

Gwen Braxton 1:19:02
It's closed because the director was having surgery and they closed, I don't think the board chose to close it, or putting somebody in, it's an interim director

Diana Hernandez 1:19:15
And that daycare has been there longer than the center.

Gwen Braxton 1:19:17
It's been they've been there at the same time. So, the same thing about one property. And the condition is that they get to lease that building from the center as long as they remain a daycare. But if it's anything if any of that changes then if they become you know that it reverts back to the Black Chamber or the community center by itself.

Diana Hernandez 1:19:39
Okay, well, I'd like to see those places. Someone else mentioned the daycare that there's some records related to the daycare somewhere I forgot. I think it was Mr. Gess who said.

Gwen Braxton 1:19:55
Wait, oh, it's Jack and Jill Daycare. It was mama Loopers when I was a kid You know, the different had a different name when I was going there And I was Yeah.

Diana Hernandez 1:20:07
Is there any association to that? And that and the organization Jack and Jill?

Gwen Braxton 1:20:13
No, I think it was just a name you know? Yeah. That was when they had gotten that name, I think when they were actually they used to get some funds from United Way to make change and stuff. So.

Diana Hernandez 1:20:25

Wow. Well, I think that concludes our interview. I wanted to just thank you all for taking the time to speak with me. I really enjoyed what y'all shared. And this concludes our interview.

Gwen Braxton 1:20:44
Look, I was going to show you my great grandmother. So, I just showed him Aunt Glossy too. So I don't know if you can see. This one. Here is my grandmother.

Diana Hernandez 1:20:57
Can you can you lift it up a little bit more? Okay. Yeah, right there.

Gwen Braxton 1:21:00
Okay, so this is my grandmother. This is Aunt Glossy's grandmother. This is my grandmother's sister. And I don't know, I think this is another one of their, who is it? In the picture, but I told her. So, all this time, I've had this picture. And I had a small black and white picture of my grandmother, and all of them, but it was like at a wedding what you just do with that picture? But anyway, I realized it, the picture is from September 1961.

Diana Hernandez 1:21:30
Oh wow.

Gwen Braxton 1:21:30
So I didn't know that. But it's the other picture is everybody congregating around the kitchen table. And, you know, so I have all I have a lot of different stuff. So that's two generations and then she makes third. And then my, so I and I'm fourth. And then my niece and her kids are five, six and seven. You know, so

Diana Hernandez 1:22:00
Y'all have any pictures at Lake Texoma?

Gwen Braxton 1:22:03
I have, I told her I have pictures of her. When she came home. The spillway was open. What was it? must have been 10 or it may have no it was in-

Odessa Howard 1:22:14
Maybe it was before then? (overlapping)

Gwen Braxton 1:22:14

It was eight 2008

Odessa Howard 1:22:16
Yeah. It was my favorite.

Gwen Braxton 1:22:18
She was up and she wanted to go up there and watch the spillway when it went over with the dam. And that was the last time I was with her, but I have pictures on my mom at the Lake when we'd drive over and stuff like that. I don't have them with me.

Diana Hernandez 1:22:34
I'd like to see those.

Gwen Braxton 1:22:35
Recent ones.

Diana Hernandez 1:22:36
Okay, wonderful. Thank you for sharing that. Well, I think that I'm going to stop recording. Okay?

Worthy Interview

Fri, Nov 04, 2022, 12:10PM • 1:03:54

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

Sherman, neighborhood, Diana, lived, whites, children, airman, moved, people, town, grew, experience, father, remember, mother, Black, Dallas, crack cocaine, school, Texas.

SPEAKERS

Jerry Worthy, Diana Hernandez

Diana Hernandez 00:01
Okay, and I will begin. Today is the 22nd of October 2021 and my name is Diana Hernandez. I am with Mr. Jerry Worthy. And we are conducting an interview of his personal experience in Sherman, Texas as part of an oral history project, so Mr. Worthy. Where are you from?

Jerry Worthy 00:37
I was originally born in Plainfield, New Jersey. My father was an airman and then subsequently, my my mother ended up moving as a result of him being transferred out of the country or something of that sort. decided to move back to Texas with her where her family was residing in a place called Sherman. It will be Sherman, Sherman, Texas. And so, I started schools there actually Kindergarten there, Diana on up through high school, so I lived there for most of my young adult life.

Diana Hernandez 01:20
And what year were you born?

Jerry Worthy 01:24
1952.

Diana Hernandez 01:25
Okay, so then what, do you remember what year you arrived in Sherman?

Jerry Worthy 01:34

Ah, it had to be around 58,57. 58 'cause I was still a youngster. But you know, I was in kindergarten, I started kindergarten, so I had to be around at that time.

Diana Hernandez 01:52
Okay. And can you tell me about the neighborhood that you grew up in?

Jerry Worthy 01:59
Well, the town is that neighborhood itself was it was segregated from, you know, the rest of the town. Because it was constantly, you know, this is why all whites went there, uhh all the blacks went to school in that particular area. At that time, in the late 60s, near somewhere in the 60s. And most of the black kids was bused to the high school from another part of the town, oddly walked into the high school. But I believe that that town was specifically set aside to segregate blacks, as were many other surrounding towns in that area.

Diana Hernandez 02:57
Was there a particular name for that part of town?

Jerry Worthy 03:02
We called it North Sherman.

Diana Hernandez 03:04
North Sherman. Okay. And what was your house Like? Can you tell me about the house that you grew up in?

Jerry Worthy 03:12
Well, I lived in several houses in Sherman, Texas but the first one that that I remember living in was a shack-like house wooden frame shack-like house we had, of course we didn't have any inside facilities. Like we do today. We had the outdoors, outdoor toilets, and we had to bathe, and you know, heat up water boats by Bailey stoves and the little tin tubs is how we took our showers. You know, well, actually our baths. So yes, it was, it was rather than an experience. Yeah,

Diana Hernandez 04:02
Sounds like it. It reminds me of it reminds me of Mexico, because whenever we went to visit my grandparents in Mexico, as a child, we would have to use the outhouse and heat the water to bathe. And so, it reminds me of that experience.

Jerry Worthy 04:23
You know A little bit about that kind of.

Diana Hernandez 04:26
Yeah. And now, so what elementary school did you attend? Well,

Jerry Worthy 04:35
I started kindergarten there. A little house on the corner of the neighborhood on one of the corners in the neighborhood, which wasn't far from our home. I started kindergarten there. And then we went on to I went on to the first grade. And what now, used to be and probably still is. The school is still Fred Douglass but there's no it's not a high school anymore but it was Fred Douglass High School. That was in that area areas where I started elementary startin' the first grade. And then that went to elementary school. There's a place called and its building still stands there. I was just there recently and yes, it's still there its Carver Elementary School, Carver Elementary School.

Diana Hernandez 05:33
Okay. And you said that for kindergarten, you went to a little house?

Jerry Worthy 05:38
It was a house in the neighborhood.

Diana Hernandez 05:40
And that's where all-.

Jerry Worthy 05:42
Yes, I still remember the teacher's name. The name was she's no longer with us but her name was Miss Roberta. We called her Miss Roberta. Yes. That's where the neighborhood kids would start kindergarten at, that went to kindergarten.

Diana Hernandez 05:55
Okay. How many kids? Were in your class? Do you remember?

Jerry Worthy 06:05
No, I don't maybe, maybe. I really don't- maybe 20-25. If that, or more.

Diana Hernandez 06:13
What was? What was Miss Roberta? Like?

Jerry Worthy 06:16
She was a good teacher. She was really really - she was wonderful. I mean, all the children loved her, we really loved her, she was very, she was a very nice lady that I could remember of her, today. I've never had any problems with her. (laughs)

Diana Hernandez 06:34
So, it seems like you had a pretty positive experience in elementary school.

Jerry Worthy 06:38
Well, George Washington Carver was the school name. Washington Carver. This was a black man. Yeah. So was Fred Douglass named after a black man. So yes, I did enjoy school very much so. We were all close-knit family in that neighborhood Diana. Very close-knit family, which is why I have such sentiments for the community now. Today, because there's nothing like it was when we were growing up, even though we were segregated. You know and today it's nothing like it was, you know, a lot of what was what is considered history to me is no longer history there to me.

Diana Hernandez 06:47
Yeah.

Jerry Worthy 06:47
So, because a lot of the things that were there in that neighborhood is gone, you know, the pinnacle and where I grew up at, went to attend it is not- no, no, longer there. Growing up there in the neighborhood, there's a community center, they're that we all, you know, went to for for functions and parties and, you know, things like that, you know, high school dances is no longer there. I don't know why they didn't reserve those buildings, those places that those also neighborhood swimming pool there. There's no longer I don't know what happened. You know, when I did go back to Sherman to the neighborhood that's only to find... The swimming pool had been, you know, filled in... dirt filled it. a pavilion put over it, you know, people still go there today to have little functions right there. Just under that pavilion in that general area. There's a park there too, as well. But what I do ministry, Diana, I'm a pastor evangelist out in Jacksonville, Florida. And in fact, I just got through with an event there at the park. They call it the Martin, Martin Luther King Park is where his statue is right now. But a lot of the people that celebrated a lot of neighborhood function, school functions, holiday celebrations, those kinds of things used to take place on that park, but it no longer is use that park for those services, they go elsewhere. So when there's a place called Pecan Grove that the city put in place in this but most of the

people that used to cele - in that neighborhood where I grew up at, they used to celebrate June 17, which was a black holiday celebration, Fourth of July, and you know, things like it's celebrations like that and other things that we did, we used to do at that park, which is no longer done. So that's why I go there and now to do ministry at the same place, you know,

Diana Hernandez 09:43
Yeah, that's beautiful. You still go back to the park and try to

Jerry Worthy 09:51
Restore

Diana Hernandez 09:52
organize activities.

Jerry Worthy 09:54
Yeah.

Diana Hernandez 09:56
To kind of, like, honor the past yeah,

Jerry Worthy 10:00
Yeah, but you know what Diana? let's, let's, lets's rewind, back when I lived in that house, that- the shack that we live in was. I mean, I mean, we were all bunched up in one room, you know what I'm saying? It was just a little house, we just all slept in one general area. But moving forward from that, from that point, when we will go to town occasionally after growin' up at the grownups- especially when I can get around on my own. we would go into town, and you know that that was placed, you know, that was the 1960s You know, segregation, it was the Jim Crow laws were put there in place, unlike in Mississippi or Alabama, they was accustomed to livin' like that, you know, I mean, they didn't have to put laws in place for black people to recognize that this is what they this is how they have to live and this is what they had to do, and what not to do. But we had to have laws and not to do certain things such as we had to drink from different water fountains in the courthouse, there will be a water fountain that read white. On the end, it wasn't the other one would read blacks only in the same with the restroom, we use different restrooms. This is in downtown Sherman area. We also had to go we couldn't go to the front doors of a restaurant we had to, of course, from the- we want anything from a restaurant, we had to get go to the back doors there. That I can remember. So, it was it was a very

segregated, segregated town. Now, there was there was something there was a riot back in 1930 in Sherman, Texas where a black man was murdered, brutally murdered at the county courthouse for alleged crime, but he was supposed to have committed. And he never he never got to court, you know, to trial, because there was about 5000 people mob based that burned the city, the Grayson County Courthouse now and got to this man, and he was already dead but they tied him to a bumper and drug him to the Black Business section of the city of the town and then missed a big man, it just brutally just brutally just destroyed his body, you know, it fried and they hung him from a tree. He was lynched. You know, and so the black businesses were burned down. And so, you know, that did quite a bit that stifle the progress of blacks in that in that town. And it's yet to recover. Yeah. That's the Sherman Race Riot, right? Yes. 1930.

Diana Hernandez 12:59
Yeah. Yeah. So, I wanted to go back to what you were saying about your experience as a child. And going to downtown Sherman and how y'all have separate facilities? What kind of impact did that have on you? Like, do you recall as a child, how you interpreted those things? Like what kind of feelings came up? When you encountered whites only signs or? Yeah, I just kind of wanted to know what kind of an impact that had on you.

Jerry Worthy 13:32
Well, Diana, I thought that's the way it was supposed to be. That was life as usual. You know, of course, I didn't know about the lynching at that time. The whole time. I lived in Sherman, Texas, I didn't know a thing about the lynching. But I figured just that was the way of life.

Diana Hernandez 13:55
Right

Jerry Worthy 13:56
You know, you just you're not to drink from a white water, whites only water fountain, or used restaurant.

Diana Hernandez 14:06
Is that like a conversation that your parents had with you as a child like to explain those, I guess, customs?

Jerry Worthy 14:15

Never, it never my parents never, never explained that to me, Diana. They never did and I basically mostly stayed with My grandma basically raised me and my siblings No, in fact, I didn't. Again, I wasn't even told her about the 1930 Riot, I didn't know nothing about that the whole time. I lived in Sherman Nothing. you see, so but hey.

Diana Hernandez 14:23
Okay So, it's just something that the community experienced and they kind of just didn't want to talk about it.

Jerry Worthy 15:00
I've never-I don't- you know, I really don't know. And because it was never, it never was brought up in my, in my circle, you know. I have, I have an Auntie that's right now she's eighty years old. Now I was just with her the other day. And she told me her- her mother, which was my grandmother told her about it. But guess as far as it went, it never got down to, to us, you know. So, I didn't know anything about it again, you know, that's where we were supposed to be. And that's the way we live. That's, that's the way it was a way of life at the time. You know? We didn't know anything about the difference between segregation and integration and, you know, until the fourth and until Martin Luther King started coming out with the civil rights movement, and all of that, and so then, you know, and then the schools in Sherman became integrated. And we started going from, to the white schools.

Diana Hernandez 16:02
Were you part of the integration movement like you as a student?

Jerry Worthy 16:08
Oh, yes. Yes, I believe I remember the school that we, we were segregated to Fred Douglas and Carver Elementary School, that's the school we went in the kindergarten. That's the we were confined to just that area. I mean, in walking distance, it was on a walking distance. And the kids that lived a little bit ways off. They, they will they walked to school, like, like south of where I lived there in North Sherman where the schools where they walked from the South side of Sherman to the schools that I attended on the North side of Sherman. And then, subsequently, when integration arrived, and we moved out of that area to schools, like Tyler Junior High in Sherman, is and Tyler is still there. and then on to Sherman High School.

Diana Hernandez 17:12
And that was integrated?

Jerry Worthy 17:14
Yes.

Diana Hernandez 17:15
And how did you experience integration?

Jerry Worthy 17:25
It was something different. It was something then it was something new in my life, you know. That was around seventh grade, I believe it was that we went to- we moved out of the neighborhood for schools concern, to the white schools, which is like probably at that time, was downtown. Somewhere on the other side of downtown. I don't even remember now where it was been so long ago, but it was, it was somewhere where we didn't go before. Even in those communities that that I can remember. It was an experience. It was a different There was there was some of my friends that had you know, feelings about it, you know, that we're you know, for no reason, all probably walk up and hit a white first and just walk up and hit 'em you know. I don't know how, like most people, you know, the country that we live in Diana is not a racist country its people. It's people that are racist and that are hate you know, that hate. That kind of thing. So I couldn't understand why they would do- my friends that I knew of that I grew up would do stuff like that, because I didn't have that I didn't have those feelings in my life and I didn't feel like that at all, regardless of what I went through growing up in- during the Jim Crow era, or at the end of it.

Diana Hernandez 19:06
So, you would say that it- you had a more or less, neutral experience with integration?

Jerry Worthy 19:14
Yes.

Diana Hernandez 19:15
Okay.

Jerry Worthy 19:16
I did. I never had hate in my heart at all.

Diana Hernandez 19:23
But you never- Sorry. Go ahead.

Jerry Worthy 19:26
Again. Again, you know, I figured that that was a way of life for- for us. That's the way they just who we are and it's the way we live. We didn't see I didn't see many I don't remember seeing many white folks, because I didn't go to town that much. You know, oh, but do I do remember when I did go to town you know I used to sell papers from the Sherman Democrat there. It's still there. I used to sell papers. All over downtown Sherman definitely this way I experienced it. You know, the whites only this, the whites only that, those kinds of things because I was going around selling newspapers.

Diana Hernandez 20:12
Okay, how old were you when you were selling newspapers?

Jerry Worthy 20:16
Um, was it a young man that was in my so between 10 and 12, somewhere in there, 13.

Diana Hernandez 20:34
And you never had a negative experience in downtown Sherman.? I mean, other than the seeing the signs?

Jerry Worthy 20:43
No, I've never had a negative experience no.

Diana Hernandez 20:47
Okay. Well, I'm gonna switch it up a little bit. I want to know more about your parents. What were your parents' names?

Jerry Worthy 20:55
Well, my parents, my father again was in the Air Force. So, he wasn't around a lot only when he came home on leave or something like that my mother was around. My father was Cozer Worthy, he's deceased now. Cozer Worthy. He's deceased now and my mother's name was Gladys Worthy. She is also deceased now. That little neighborhood was a close-knit little neighborhood you know that we all everybody out up and it was a lot of airman's around at that time. There was a base called Parent field, it was very active during those days. And the airman's will come into town, you know, to the community center that I was telling you about, you know, and to dances and stuff like that. So, all the little neighborhoods, I don't know if you could imagine what that was, like, you know, airman's coming into a little town in DC and gone to dance and stuff like that. So, my

mother was, she was always out and about, you know, it was basically my grandmother that raised us.

Diana Hernandez 22:17
And where were your parents originally from?

Jerry Worthy 22:21
My father was from Chester, South Florida, and my mother was from Denison, Texas.

Diana Hernandez 22:32
Okay.

Jerry Worthy 22:33
This is not far from Sherman, Texas.

Diana Hernandez 22:37
Right. Do you know how far back your mother's family goes back in that area?

Jerry Worthy 22:47
Mom my my mother's family. My mother's my mother's father was a fisher and he lived in Denison Texas. I don't know nothing about them. My mother's mother. Her family's was from Bolin, Oklahoma. Bolin, Oklahoma. Indian descent.

Diana Hernandez 23:15
What kind of descent?

Jerry Worthy 23:17
Indian.

Diana Hernandez 23:17
Oh okay. Do you know what? What specific affiliation they had? Like, what native- What Native American tribe?

Jerry Worthy 23:33
No, not really. But I always thought it was Apache Way I thought but I don't really know. I don't know. See those parts Diana, we wasn't, you know, those kinds of things wasn't talked about around us. We wasn't taught this stuff about our ancestors and you know our families and things like that. It just it just wasn't done. It just wasn't done. Sad, It's sad to say it's sad to say, but we just didn't know. You know? again, that we us again, where

we were. We were just children and we just, you know, we were just children and things that we did and was accustomed to doing and was around. That was a way of life to us. It was supposed to be that way.

Diana Hernandez 24:24
Yeah.

Jerry Worthy 24:25
You know, we didn't know nothing about racism then and hatred then between blacks and whites. We I didn't know anything about all that.

Diana Hernandez 24:33
And-

Jerry Worthy 24:37
Except for the separation of our you know, the facilities downtown. The downtown experience that's about it for me.

Diana Hernandez 24:49
Yeah, and you will you explain that, you saw that as that's just the way things were. You never, you never felt that it was unfair?

Jerry Worthy 25:00
What ma'am?

Diana Hernandez 25:02
So, you mentioned as a child that you would see those signs, separating whites from blacks and that you just interpreted that as that's just the way things were.

Jerry Worthy 25:14
I never feel that I've never felt threatened by

Diana Hernandez 25:18
You ever felt that it was unfair?

Jerry Worthy 25:21
No.

Diana Hernandez 25:21
That's just the way you saw it.

Jerry Worthy 25:25
Again, again, I never had I didn't understand racism then. I never did. So I just thought, you know what, when I started feeling, started feeling like that was with Martin Luther King, started marching and how they, you know, what happened to them, you know, have them marches where, you know, the police and the dogs in the water hoses and stuff like that. That's when, I started feeling all this stuff. Considering all that, you know, it started coming into vision and for me, you know, the civil rights movement is what opened my realities to racism. Not- not growing up in Sherman, Texas, because again, I didn't know anything about the 1930 riot that had took - taken place that night, you know, during the 1930s. I didn't know about that. Maybe...Maybe if there had been a historical marker or something on the Grayson County courthouse lawn that time I probably would have seen and knew about what took place there. But it wasn't, unfortunately, you know, because I was always downtown, as I said, selling newspapers, and also at the courthouse, you know, selling my papers.

Diana Hernandez 26:41
Right. I wanted to go back to your parents. Can you describe what your parents were like personality wise?

Jerry Worthy 26:49
My parents were very nice people. They were very loving people. I love my father and my dad, he thought the world of his children, he made sure that we were- we were provided for you know? and every time that he would come to town. He I mean, we were glad we were glad for him to see him because he did. He was very, very giving. You know? He didn't talk about stuff like that. It was always just, you know, he just maybe just teaching us how to live right. You know, when we saw him, you know who around him when he would come home on leave. My mother again, by the same token, my mother was doing that time. Diana ,again, the airman's will come in from this. My I assume? My mother met my father, you know, when the airman's will come in the Parent field, and they will come into town, to the black neighborhood, per say and party. So, my mother was more of a partier. You know, not that she didn't love us, you know, it's just that she was hey she was doing that time in that close knit neighborhood. It wasn't a whole lot to do understand, you know, there was other sections of town, that blacks weren't then allowed. So, we were segregated to those communities in more leisure, you know, having a good time and, you know, stuff like that it took place right there in that community. You know, and it

was one building that existed that's not there today is where everything happened at. Is where everything took place at parties, dances, all kinds of stuff, you know. So, she so she wasn't as marked again. It was my grandma that really was a disciplinarian, in our lives, not my father and not my mother.

Diana Hernandez 28:52
So, your mother was more of like a social butterfly?

Jerry Worthy 28:54
She was social butterfly. She was yeah, as pretty she was. She was Yeah, yeah, she was a beautiful woman. Sometime I think that even maybe her father was white, you know, because of the way she looked real and had the real good. Real nice hair real good hair. And real. You know? Real, real light skinned. You ever watched "Imitation of life."?

Diana Hernandez 29:25
Yes.

Jerry Worthy 29:27
So, she was sort of like that young lady that played in that movie.

Diana Hernandez 29:31
Okay.

Jerry Worthy 29:32
That could pass for white.

Diana Hernandez 29:34
Mhm

Jerry Worthy 29:36
Yes.

Diana Hernandez 29:37
Wow. And what did your dad look like? physically?

Jerry Worthy 29:41
He was he was a he's almost- you know what a Geechee is? Even his dad. Even just that like Geechee I'm not gonna lie to you. Out of south Gullahni, he was from south Gullahni.

Diana Hernandez 29:54
Oh yes, uh huh.

Jerry Worthy 29:56
Yeah, so he wasn't- He was a he was a man that was laid back, you know, very nice man and was nice to people until he was rubbed the wrong way. He didn't, you know, he didn't get angry like that a lot. But he wasn't never angry with us like that, you know, he was again, he was very nice to us. He's very. He taught us when he was around us, he taught us, you know?

Diana Hernandez 30:33
Did your dad ever share his experiences as an airman?

Jerry Worthy 30:38
No.

Diana Hernandez 30:38
He never talked about his career?

Jerry Worthy 30:40
No, he was always away.

Diana Hernandez 30:44
Yeah.

Jerry Worthy 30:44
He was always gone out there. I was, I was born on a base an army base, when he was stationed at uh- It is not. I can't remember the name of the base now. Fort Kiwa or um something like that. It's now Job Corps Center there in Edison, New Jersey. In fact, the town wasn't called Edison it during that time. It was a it was a service mans town in New Jersey, where that base was where I was born. And we traveled around for the most part a little bit. Up until the time it was time for us to leave and go to Texas. We lived in Maine for a while. I mean, we had a good life. My dad was- good we had good times with my dad and mom. During our early years. It was me and my three siblings, my three sisters, I was the only boy. We had a good time while we was with our dad. My dad was a very jealous man. My mother, I remember that. She was a pretty woman, you know, he was very jealous of her.

Diana Hernandez 32:03
What would he do or say?

Jerry Worthy 32:05
Well, he would get mad if she if she just if she was just talking to the neighbor. I mean, I remember they would get in heated arguments in the- Overstuff like that. Yeah, yeah. But for the most part, he took care of us very well.

Diana Hernandez 32:21
Okay. Now I wanted to talk about your leisure activities. What you already mentioned that you go into the community center for dances. Well, I assume the children were allowed to go to those dances? Yes?

Jerry Worthy 32:38
No, not at times, no.

Diana Hernandez 32:40
Okay, so y'all had a stay at home?

Jerry Worthy 32:42
Oh, yes of course. Yeah. I mean, those airman's those those, those young people, you know, maybe I don't know, in the 18s 20s, early 20s, I guess, you know?

Diana Hernandez 33:00
So then, as a child, what did you and your family do for fun then?

Jerry Worthy 33:04
Well, you know, Diana, my, my, grandmother was very strict on us. You know, we had to, we've didn't participate in stuff like most children in the neighborhood, we had to be in the house at eight before dark, you know? I mean, if we were out somewhere, we had to be in the hou - be back home before dark. We had to, especially school nights, we had to, we couldn't drink water after eight o'clock. And we had to be in bed by nine. And that was the routine for my for me and my siblings growing up, you know, even into junior high, almost well, just going into junior high. It gotten a little bit less straingent, stricter when we got into our junior high years. But during our elementary years, we were very confined to home and not just out and about running around. That, we didn't do that growing up.

Diana Hernandez 34:21
By the way, what was your grandmother's name?

Jerry Worthy 34:24
Grace Austin,

Diana Hernandez 34:26
Grace Austin. And do you know around what time she was born?

Jerry Worthy 34:33
I couldn't tell you that. My mother was born in 1925 1925. So

Diana Hernandez 34:40
Oh okay.

Jerry Worthy 34:41
So, it had to be, I don't know, early 1900's or somethin'.

Diana Hernandez 34:48
Yeah, for sure. Yeah. And did you ever visit Lake Texoma as a child?

Jerry Worthy 34:57
Oh, we did. We did. We had we had little barbecues out there, they take some. Yeah, we did those kinds of things.

Diana Hernandez 35:07
Tell me more about tell me more about your experiences at Lake Texoma.

Jerry Worthy 35:10
Oh, fun.We had a lot of fun, close family ties. You know, we'd go out there, we run around and play and eat. We had fun, you know? Talked, the grown folks did their thing. You know? and the children did their thing. So, I remember Lake Texoma.

Diana Hernandez 35:37
What kind of food did y'all prepare?

Jerry Worthy 35:39

Oh, barbecue chicken, hamburgers, hotdogs, those kinds of things. Potato salad, watermelon. sodas. Pork and what you call it? Baked beans, you know? Those kinds of things.

Diana Hernandez 36:02
And what kind of activities would y'all partake in at the lake?

Jerry Worthy 36:06
Just run around and play didn't do like any volleyball. I didn't know nothing about volleyball or baseball. Until later on, until later, what I remember in the neighborhood. playing baseball, prob-. Probably I remember baseball more than I do by volleyball. But as children we just run around. We just ran around and played all over the place you know, just ran at Lake Texoma

Diana Hernandez 36:35
Yeah.

Jerry Worthy 36:36
And was told not to go near the water.

Diana Hernandez 36:39
So, you didn't swim?

Jerry Worthy 36:40
Oh, lord knows. No. No way I don't swim. Well, I mean, I don't like to swimming now.

Diana Hernandez 36:40
Oh, you don't?

Jerry Worthy 36:48
I do not, like my momma , no, I don't like swimming. You know? I just, we didn't swim in Lake Texoma. No ma'am.

Diana Hernandez 37:02
Okay. Did anybody swim or just?

Jerry Worthy 37:04
No, it was just a family gathering.

Diana Hernandez 37:07
Just a family gathering?

Jerry Worthy 37:08
Just eating and talking and children playing. Drinking and the elders those that drink would drink and listen to music, you know? That kind of thing. Just celebrating Fourth of July's or some of our Juneteenths as you know, stuff like that.

Diana Hernandez 37:26
Right. And was there a specific part of Lake Texoma? That y'all went to?

Jerry Worthy 37:33
I don't remember.

Diana Hernandez 37:34
You don't remember? Okay.

Jerry Worthy 37:35
Oh, all i remember is it was Lake Texoma.

Diana Hernandez 37:38
Okay, okay. Are there any other state or local parks that you visited as a child?

Jerry Worthy 37:47
I didn't remember seeing any whites around.

Diana Hernandez 37:51
You didn't see? Okay.

Jerry Worthy 37:53
I don't remember seeing any whites around. Where we were. So, i assume it was specific parts.

Diana Hernandez 38:00
Right. that's like a segregated part.

Jerry Worthy 38:01

That we could go though. Yes. Before…before integration.

Diana Hernandez 38:09
Yeah. Before integration. Are there any other state or local parks that you visited as a child?

Jerry Worthy 38:17
No.

Diana Hernandez 38:18
That was the only one? Lake Texoma.

Jerry Worthy 38:20
Yes.

Diana Hernandez 38:21
Okay. How far is like Texoma from- How far was it from your house?

Jerry Worthy 38:26
Oh, well. Route about 30. 30 minutes to 45 minutes.

Diana Hernandez 38:37
So, it was pretty close.

Jerry Worthy 38:39
Yes. Oh, yeah.

Diana Hernandez 38:42
How often would y'all go out to the lake?

Jerry Worthy 38:45
Like holidays you know

Diana Hernandez 38:46
Holidays?

Jerry Worthy 38:48
Family reunions.

Diana Hernandez 38:50
Okay.

Jerry Worthy 38:53
It wasn't like it wasn't it wasn't like a weekend thing. You know, we just like loaded up the car and went to Lake Texoma on a weekend. It wasn't like that.

Diana Hernandez 38:59
Okay. So, it was more for like, major celebrations?

Jerry Worthy 39:05
Yeah.

Diana Hernandez 39:06
Okay. Did y'all ever have a negative experience at Lake Texoma?

Jerry Worthy 39:11
No, not at all.

Diana Hernandez 39:13
Okay. Do you know if your parents visited Lake Texoma As children?

Jerry Worthy 39:22
No.

Diana Hernandez 39:23
Before they- before they had children?

Jerry Worthy 39:25
No.

Diana Hernandez 39:27
Okay, because they weren't living there. That's right. They weren't living in that area as children.

Jerry Worthy 39:31
Right, right.

Diana Hernandez 39:34
Okay. What else? Now, let's go on to your adult life. What do you what? I know I know you're a pastor now but what have you done for living like throughout your life?

Jerry Worthy 39:52
Oh, I mostly worked in restaurants. I never. I work in mostly I've worked in, worked in mostly restaurants in hotels for most of my life. I never I made an attempt to go to college and or some trade schools and like that, but I was never successful at it. I did my part and given it my best shot, but I was never successful at it. I was that kind of person that always when I started something, I just didn't finish it.

Diana Hernandez 40:36
Okay.

Jerry Worthy 40:39
Because I was raised so tight and so, you know, raised so tight and me being so my, again, my grandma's very strict, you know, that when I did get loose, I got loose. You know? my early 20s. Of course, we moved out of Sherman, my family, my sisters, and I, we moved out of Sherman around ‘round 1969.

Diana Hernandez 41:14
Okay. Do you remember why?

Jerry Worthy 41:17
Yeah, we moved to Dallas, my mother. My mother was living in Dallas, so she came in guidance from my grandmother.

Diana Hernandez 41:25
How did she end up in Dallas?

Jerry Worthy 41:27
Her and my father had an altercation when he- when he retired from the Air Force and he came home and found that she wasn't as a loyal wife as she should have been. And a lot of a lot transpired. And in fact, he, when he came home, he had a brick home built, we're building a home scape of communities of brick homes at that time. So, when he came when he retired and came in from -came home, he had one built, but at the time, he had it built while he was having to built. Actually, he had finished building it, because I remember going into it. Going to see it. We never moved in that house. Because he and

my mother, again, it was a close knit- it was a small town, that neighborhood is small the people talk, you know, things got back to him. That wasn't very pleasant. And they again, you know, they got into an altercation, you know, some problems. And so, they separated. My mother had to leave Sherman and go stay with her brother in Dallas to get out of my father's way. So that's how we ended up in Dallas.

Diana Hernandez 42:51
Okay.

Jerry Worthy 42:52
My father stayed in Sherman while we were in school. During the time we were there until he left. I don't remember the time that he left but he did leave. But while he was there, we had access to his home you know, keys- left keys for us to get in and out of his home while he was at work. He took very good care of us even though we were living with our grandmother.

Diana Hernandez 43:21
Okay, and either, didn't either of them remarry?

Jerry Worthy 43:25
No. Neither them remarried. No ma'am.

Diana Hernandez 43:33
And when your dad moved out of Sherman, where did he go?

Jerry Worthy 43:36
He went to- back to the Carolinas. Charlotte, to be exact. I think it was…it was Charlotte, North Carolina.

Diana Hernandez 43:43
Okay.

Jerry Worthy 43:45
Well, that's where I last saw him at. You know, because I visited him well, I hadn't seen my father. When he moved. I hadn't seen him. I hadn't seen him until he was on his sick bed, and I got word and then I got word that he was sick and so I flew and saw my dad for the first time in many, many years.

Diana Hernandez 44:08
What did he pass from?

Jerry Worthy 44:11
A heart. Congestive heart failure.

Diana Hernandez 44:14
Oh okay.

Jerry Worthy 44:15
Kidney, kidneys all y'all that play all this together. You know? Hypertension, heart failure, kidney failure, that kind of thing. I think he was a diabetic. (inaudible)

Diana Hernandez 44:29
What year did he pass?

Jerry Worthy 44:30
70. 78.

Diana Hernandez 44:32
Oh okay, and what about your mother? When what year did she pass?

Jerry Worthy 44:40
Oh 2006

Diana Hernandez 44:43
Oh, she lived a long life.

Jerry Worthy 44:45
Oh, yes, she did. She really did. And she was a good woman to she was a Christian when she passed. Yes, he had. You know she had rejuvenated her life as she became a Christian woman she was in church all that good stuff.

Diana Hernandez 45:05
And so, she lived the rest of her life in Dallas?

Jerry Worthy 45:09
Yes.

Diana Hernandez 45:09
Okay. And do you know what she passed from?

Jerry Worthy 45:14
She had she, renal- renal issues.

Diana Hernandez 45:21
Okay.

Jerry Worthy 45:22
Plus she was she was on dialysis. He had kidney issues too as well.

Diana Hernandez 45:28
Okay.

Jerry Worthy 45:29
I think she was a diabetic too if I'm not mistaken. Okay.

Diana Hernandez 45:35
Now, are you married?

Jerry Worthy 45:37
I am married to a beautiful woman in Jacksonville, Florida.

Diana Hernandez 45:41
Okay, and what year did y'all meet?

Jerry Worthy 45:45
We met in 2000.

Diana Hernandez 45:47
Okay.

Jerry Worthy 45:49
Yes, ma'am. I left Dallas in 1991 and I went to stay with my uncle in New Jersey. That's the first time I've been back to New Jersey since I left when I was a young boy, before I started kindergarten, so I decided to go back and see what my original home place was

like and I asked him if I could live with him for- you know, until I got a job. That thing, so I can care of myself. He agreed to it. So, I left Dallas in 1991. And I spent 10 years there and then I moved to Florida. That's where I met my wife.

Diana Hernandez 46:37
Why did you move to Florida?

Jerry Worthy 46:40
It was just a spontaneous move.

Diana Hernandez 46:42
Okay. You wanted to explore?

Jerry Worthy 46:47
Go ahead.

Diana Hernandez 46:48
Oh, you wanted to explore?

Jerry Worthy 46:51
Well, to be honest with you, I had met a girl in New Jersey. I met a girl in New Jersey and I had a child by her and she knew of some friends that lived in New Jersey, that moved to Florida. So that was the connection. Yeah, so she…we decided to move there because she knew those friends that was there. But it was spontaneous still. I wasn't looking to move to Florida.

Diana Hernandez 47:29
Right.

Jerry Worthy 47:31
So, my life. I haven't always been a pastor Diana, Haven't always been a preacher, pastor evangelist. I lived a very bad. I'm not always- listen, I've always- based on the way I was raised, I've always had a good heart. Well, as I said, previously, I- when we moved to Dallas, I got loose, like after being raised as strict as I was raised without a father and a mother. Again, it was my grandmother that raised us, and so when I- when I got to Dallas, I just I mean, you know, the world opened up to me. And I just ended up in places that I should have never ended up and doing things I should have never been- should have never shouldn't never have done. So, I was married once before now. I had a child, really,

I had four by my first wife and then I had four by a mistress at the time and then I had the one child that I met when I when I left Dallas and moved to New Jersey. I had that child. So, I had nine children all together, by you know? by three different women.

Diana Hernandez 48:54
Okay. And so, you have nine children, and do you maintain close contact with them?

Jerry Worthy 49:01
Oh, yes. Oh, absolutely. We are a close-knit family. They, yes. In fact, we're getting ready to. To gather on this Saturday, all of my grand- All of my children, my grandchildren, I got about 20, Maybe 26 grandchildren and I have three great, I have three great- No, I have five great grandchildren.

Diana Hernandez 49:32
That's a big family.

Jerry Worthy 49:35
So, I was very blessed, so I was very blessed that my children that we all stayed together and stayed closely. You know? we were intimate. We were...we are close knit. Father in- you know, father and children we're very, very close. Very close.

Diana Hernandez 49:53
That's a blessing.

Jerry Worthy 49:55
Yes, I had six boys and three girls.

Diana Hernandez 49:58
Wow. So, then you still live in Jacksonville, Florida?

Jerry Worthy 50:04
I do.

Diana Hernandez 50:05
Okay. Oh, so when you came to Sherman, it was you were flying from Jacksonville?

Jerry Worthy 50:12
Oh, yes. Since 2011.

Diana Hernandez 50:14
Wow.

Jerry Worthy 50:16
I've been coming back to Sherman.

Diana Hernandez 50:19
Do you go- like do you go back to Sherman often? How often do you go back to Sherman?

Jerry Worthy 50:23
Every- my off time is the fall and winter. In spring, I go back in the spring and I work through the summer, work through spring and summer. 'Till the next the next fall. So, I've been doing this since 2011.

Diana Hernandez 50:45
Okay. Working in the ministry.

Jerry Worthy 50:48
Yes.

Diana Hernandez 50:49
Okay. Wow. Okay. And why do you go back? Why do you go back to Sherman so often? as opposed to Dallas for example?

Jerry Worthy 50:58
Because I love the neighborhood that I grew up in. We were all you know, all of my friends and classmates and neighbors and we all knew basically each other. For the most part, you know, those that were in my circle. I loved North Sherman. That's why I have so much- I feels so- I feel, I don't know. I don't like when I did go back to come back to Sherman. I only to find that it wasn't the way I left it. You know what I mean? It wasn't the way it was when I left. You know? it's not the same and the more things- I mean, it's just not, you know? Most of my houses are not there anymore. That was there. A lot of the communities just changed. You know? things were taken away that, you know? that- It's like that part of my life was, you know? erased. And so that's why I go back to Sherman that's why I keep going back. I think crack cocaine in the 1980s was the start of the fall of that neighborhood. When the crack cocaine went through there,

Diana Hernandez 52:34
Yeah.
Jerry Worthy 52:36
And then the city it started focusing on the west side of 19- of the city focused mostly on- on the west, on the west side of highway 75. Also in old 75 and new 75 it started to focus on the west and build up the west side which was basically woods when I was growing up, for the most part. Well, if you go there now, you know? it's grown tremendously, you know? Sherman has grown tremendously okay. (Inaudible background) that's my sister, she was saying something. I'm sorry.

Diana Hernandez 53:24
It's okay.

Jerry Worthy 53:26
My baby, it's my baby sister.

Diana Hernandez 53:29
Okay. What's her name?

Jerry Worthy 53:32
Her name is Daris , Daris. Her name was Daris Walker

Diana Hernandez 53:39
Daris okay.

Jerry Worthy 53:40
Yeah. Where was I?

Diana Hernandez 53:46
We were talking about how Sherman isn't the same and they focus more on developing the west side.

Jerry Worthy 53:53
Yeah, I didn't- I didn't like what it happened to Sherman. North Sherman. I didn't like that. I just didn't like it. To me. It's like, what was there, Is not there anymore. You know?

Diana Hernandez 54:07
Right.

Jerry Worthy 54:08
I mean, Austin College has has purchased most of that area. You know? You know, about Austin college?

Diana Hernandez 54:18
No

Jerry Worthy 54:19
Austin College has been around there for years for eons well, they purchased most of most of the real estate there Yeah. And so that bought out the chain it bought out you know, they bought a lot of the land back off and a lot of homes that that was there that I used to go around to friends and it you know, they're not there in those homes are not there anymore. Also college now reserved those those properties over there. So in that area

Diana Hernandez 54:58
are they trying to make like me Sherman a college town or

Jerry Worthy 55:02
This, this I don't know, now well. They do have dorms and stuff like that, you know. I mean, I don't know if they trying to make it a college town, but it's always been that part is- they have always been there. And it's very big.

Diana Hernandez 55:22
Okay, I have to-

Jerry Worthy 55:25
Now whether they try to make it the college town. I have no idea. I haven't looked into that.

Diana Hernandez 55:32
Okay. I'm gonna have to visit so I can see these places. Now because I've never been to that part of Texas.

Jerry Worthy 55:40
Oh, never?

Diana Hernandez 55:42
Never.

Jerry Worthy 55:44
Well, out of the Dallas metroplex area, you know? coming north from north of Dallas North of metro place, you know? You know, there's a tremendous growth that's taken place.

Diana Hernandez 55:56
Yes.

Jerry Worthy 55:57
Going out 75 north, you know? I mean, it's, it's it has grown tremendously. All the towns there between Dallas and Sherman, that grown tremen - what used to be little hick towns. You know, thriving little places, thriving towns. Yeah. And prosperous places and so all of that's moving in Sherman's direction.

Diana Hernandez 56:23
Oh okay.

Jerry Worthy 56:24
So, Sherman’s right there smack in the middle of growth.

Diana Hernandez 56:27
Right.

Jerry Worthy 56:27
And my thing is this why, you know? That now, I want to try and reach the black culture and say, hey, look, I mean, this is what's get-This is what's happening. Why don't you do something about it? You know? I mean, this is where we grew up and this is, this is where we lived. For those of us that haven't passed on, there's still some of us that are there. And I want to see- I want to see, I want to see North Sherman come back up. But I want to see it come back up with me being a part of it and some others that I've loved and that grew up there. You know what I'm saying?

Diana Hernandez 57:14
Yeah,

Jerry Worthy 57:14

So, and that's why I go there with ministry. I'm what I want to reach. I want to reach there, because what used to be the swimming pool, Diana, is now a place where people go hang out and party and drink and you know, start all kinds of stuff. So.

Diana Hernandez 57:32
Yeah.

Jerry Worthy 57:33
I want to see, I want to see change in that, specifically, because that wasn't our neighborhood.

Diana Hernandez 57:40
Right.

Jerry Worthy 57:42
That was not our neighborhood.

Diana Hernandez 57:44
You want to-

Jerry Worthy 57:45
I don't know what good I can do.

Diana Hernandez 57:48
Right.

Jerry Worthy 57:49
But I'm gonna give it my best shot.

Diana Hernandez 57:51
Of course, that's very admirable and I'm glad that you're doing that because it's important to preserve these histories.

Jerry Worthy 58:04
Yeah, I mean, we can't bring back the community center. We can't bring back the daycare center that was there or the swim pools there- that was there because they built other swimming pools that are now integrated versus being segregated. Because that was the black swimming pool. You know? that's where all the blacks went to swim. I mean, I don't

even know if they had any other. While I'm almost sure that they did have swimming pools in other places, but it was for whites, if that existed, but I only know of- knew of, the swimming pool that was there, there in our neighborhood that the city put there. You know? and it was- it was it was good for the neighborhood. You know? and it's not there anymore, in most a lot of blacks, sad to say have moved out of that neighborhood. Some moved out of Texas, as I have. You know? Right now, the percentage of blacks in that town is very, very low percent, you know. It's only like 38 to 40,000 people there. I mean, growth, it's coming, but the percentage of it is more- is more whites and Hispanics that are there, then there are Blacks now, in that in that sector. You see what I'm saying?

Diana Hernandez 59:29
Yeah. What do you think is the cause for that? That so many African Americans are leaving?

Jerry Worthy 59:37
Well, again, crack cocaine in the nine- in the 80s. Early 80s was one of the reasons that the Sherman end they-you know, a lot of the homes Diana, that their parents, and it's sad to say. that their parents worked for and pay for and left. You know? and left. But when crack cocaine hit the- you know? the spectrum. People started, you know what? I don't know if you know what crack cocaine would do to people? It destroys, it destroys people's lives. You understand? And so, and you just don't care about nothing when you're on crack cocaine. I mean, I will- My last drug of choice was crack. But I never got to the point to where I- it, it controlled me because it was more recreational for me. It didn't- it didn't hold me captive. But I know what crack cocaine will do to people, because I've seen it, because I got a little taste of it myself, cause I lost things because of crack cocaine. I lost a lucrative business behind crack cocaine. You know, and so, so I know what it's like to be out there. And when crack cocaine hit Sherman, Texas in the early 1980s, people didn't, you know, they lost jobs, I assume, because they obviously did. If they if they, you know, there was-, there wasn't money to pay for property taxes on their homes that these parents had left to them. And so, you know, by not being able to pay property taxes, the city took their properties. So, they lost those homes.

Diana Hernandez 1:00:10
Yes, right.

Jerry Worthy 1:00:47
That their parents worked so dearly and hard for. You know? I mean, it's sad to say, but it is, I mean, but again, you know, I've been in that lifestyle, so I know what it what it can

do to an individual that is hooked on it and so and so, Okay, so Austin College, buying up all the properties and all these places, and, and then I have nothing against Hispanics, you know, but they start moving in its more, it's a lot of Hispanics in there now. You know, they come in and bought properties they bought the properties, building houses, and then there's other houses being built these little homes that they built, the city builds or whoever it is, it's buildin' them, you know. Where I grew up at is nothing like it was when I grew up there. Yeah, it was, it was loving. It was - it was loving. It was a loving neighborhood. You know? It was a family neighborhood.

Diana Hernandez 1:03:02
Right.

Jerry Worthy 1:03:02
It's what everybody it's just what everybody, you know? I mean, if you see my child and happened to be misbehaving, then you deal with it, then let me know about it. That's the way it was. It was the village that worked together in growing in the rearing of children in a close-knit neighborhood like that.

Diana Hernandez 1:03:28
Right. Wow. I mean, thank you again for agreeing to meet with me. I had a wonderful time talking with you. And I hope that you enjoyed the conversation as well.

Jerry Worthy 1:03:43
I did

Diana Hernandez 1:03:44
Thank you so much. This. This concludes our interview. I'm gonna stop recording now. Real quick.

Jerry Worthy 1:03:51
Okay.

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APPENDIX B

Documentation of Communication between Blacks Interested in Developing Concessions at Carver and Sunset Camps and the National Park Service

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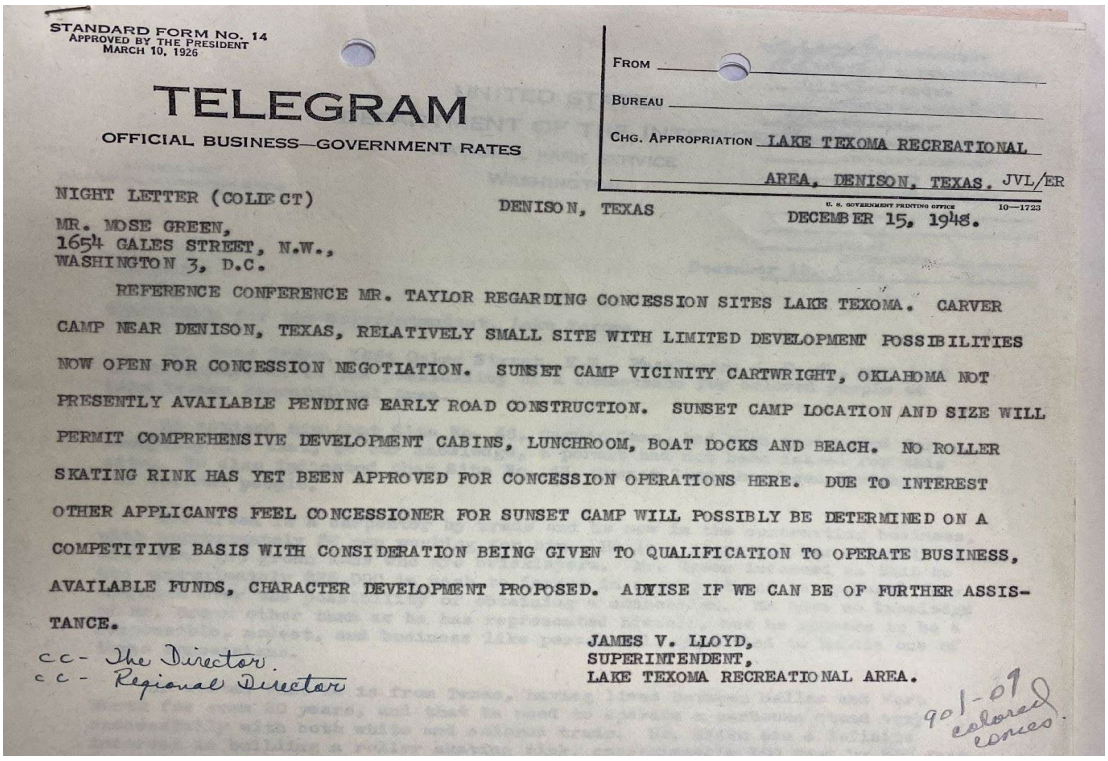


STANDARD FORM No. 14
APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT
MARCH 10, 1926

TELEGRAM

OFFICIAL BUSINESS—GOVERNMENT RATES

FROM

BUREAU

CHG. APPROPRIATION LAKE TEXOMA RECREATIONAL AREA, DENISON, TEXAS. JVL/ER

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 10—1723

NIGHT LETTER (COLLECT)

DENISON, TEXAS DECEMBER 15, 1948.

MR. MOSE GREEN,
1654 GALES STREET, N.W.,
WASHINGTON 3, D.C.

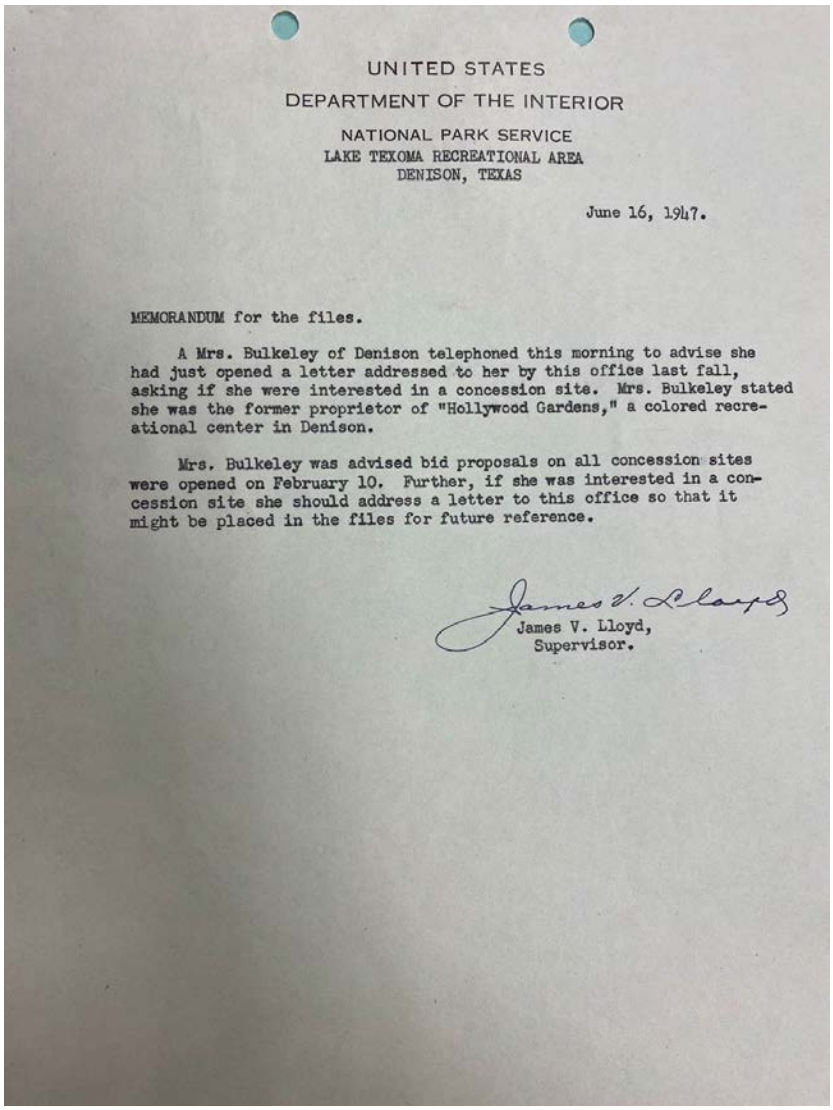
REFERENCE CONFERENCE MR. TAYLOR REGARDING CONCESSION SITES LAKE TEXOMA. CARVER CAMP NEAR DENISON, TEXAS, RELATIVELY SMALL SITE WITH LIMITED DEVELOPMENT POSSIBILITIES NOW OPEN FOR CONCESSION NEGOTIATION. SUNSET CAMP VICINITY CARTWRIGHT, OKLAHOMA NOT PRESENTLY AVAILABLE PENDING EARLY ROAD CONSTRUCTION. SUNSET CAMP LOCATION AND SIZE WILL PERMIT COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT CABINS, LUNCHROOM, BOAT DOCKS AND BEACH. NO ROLLER SKATING RINK HAS YET BEEN APPROVED FOR CONCESSION OPERATIONS HERE. DUE TO INTEREST OTHER APPLICANTS FEEL CONCESSIONER FOR SUNSET CAMP WILL POSSIBLY BE DETERMINED ON A COMPETITIVE BASIS WITH CONSIDERATION BEING GIVEN TO QUALIFICATION TO OPERATE BUSINESS, AVAILABLE FUNDS, CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED. ADVISE IF WE CAN BE OF FURTHER ASSISTANCE.

JAMES V. LLOYD,
SUPERINTENDENT,
LAKE TEXOMA RECREATIONAL AREA.

cc- The Director.
cc- Regional Director

901-07 colored cases.

Box 146, Folder 901-07, Correspondence Relating to CCC, ECW & ERA Work in National Parks, Forest, Monuments and Recreation Areas, 1933-1948, Applications and Inquiries Concessions (colored), Telegram. 1948, James V. Lloyd to Mose Green, National Records and Administration, Southwest Region — Denver office. Accessed May 6, 2022.



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
LAKE TEXOMA RECREATIONAL AREA
DENISON, TEXAS

June 16, 1947.

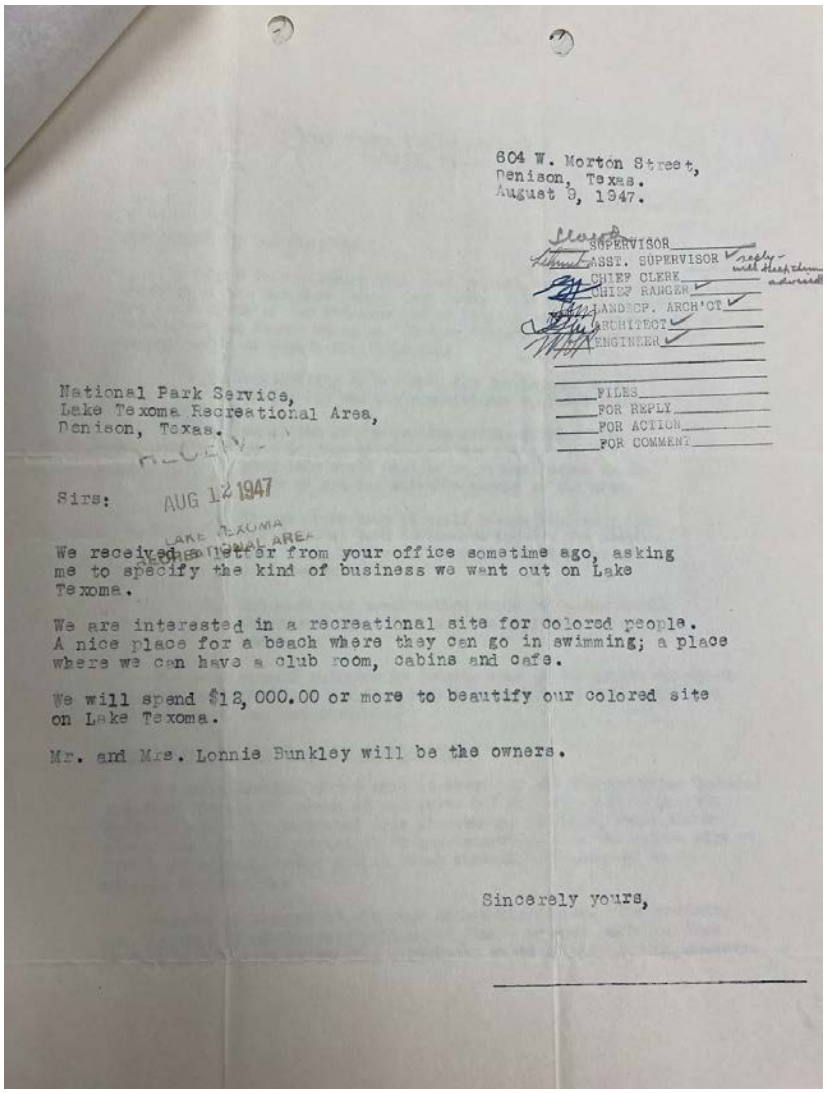
MEMORANDUM for the files.

A Mrs. Bulkeley of Denison telephoned this morning to advise she had just opened a letter addressed to her by this office last fall, asking if she were interested in a concession site. Mrs. Bulkeley stated she was the former proprietor of "Hollywood Gardens," a colored recreational center in Denison.

Mrs. Bulkeley was advised bid proposals on all concession sites were opened on February 10. Further, if she was interested in a concession site she should address a letter to this office so that it might be placed in the files for future reference.

James V. Lloyd,
Supervisor.

Box 146, Folder 901-07, Correspondence Relating to CCC, ECW & ERA Work in National Parks, Forest, Monuments and Recreation Areas, 1933-1948, Applications and Inquiries Concessions (colored), Letter. 1947, James V. Lloyd to Lonnie Bunkley, National Records and Administration, Southwest region — Denver office. Accessed May 6, 2022.



604 W. Morton Street,
Denison, Texas.
August 9, 1947.

SUPERVISOR
ASST. SUPERVISOR
CHIEF CLERK
CHIEF RANGER
LANDSCP. ARCH'CT
ARCHITECT
ENGINEER
FILES
FOR REPLY
FOR ACTION
FOR COMMENT

National Park Service,
Lake Texoma Recreational Area,
Denison, Texas.

RECEIVED
AUG 12 1947
LAKE TEXOMA
RECREATIONAL AREA

Sirs:

We received a letter from your office sometime ago, asking me to specify the kind of business we want out on Lake Texoma.

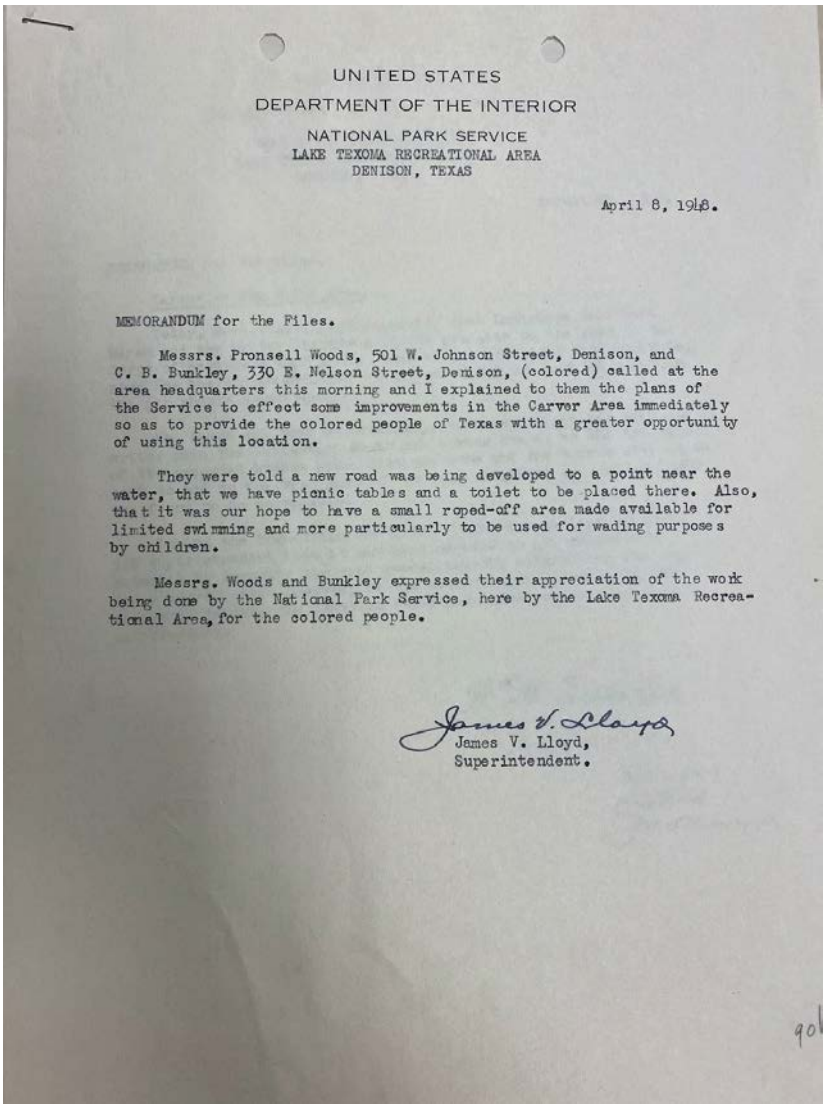
We are interested in a recreational site for colored people. A nice place for a beach where they can go in swimming; a place where we can have a club room, cabins and cafe.

We will spend $12,000.00 or more to beautify our colored site on Lake Texoma.

Mr. and Mrs. Lonnie Bunkley will be the owners.

Sincerely yours,

Box 146, Folder 901-07, Correspondence Relating to CCC, ECW & ERA Work in National Parks, Forest, Monuments and Recreation Areas, 1933-1948, Applications and Inquiries Concessions (colored), Letter. 1947, William & Lonnie Bunkley to National Park Service, National Records and Administration, Southwest Region — Denver office. Accessed May 6, 2022.



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
LAKE TEXOMA RECREATIONAL AREA
DENISON, TEXAS

April 8, 1948.

MEMORANDUM for the Files.

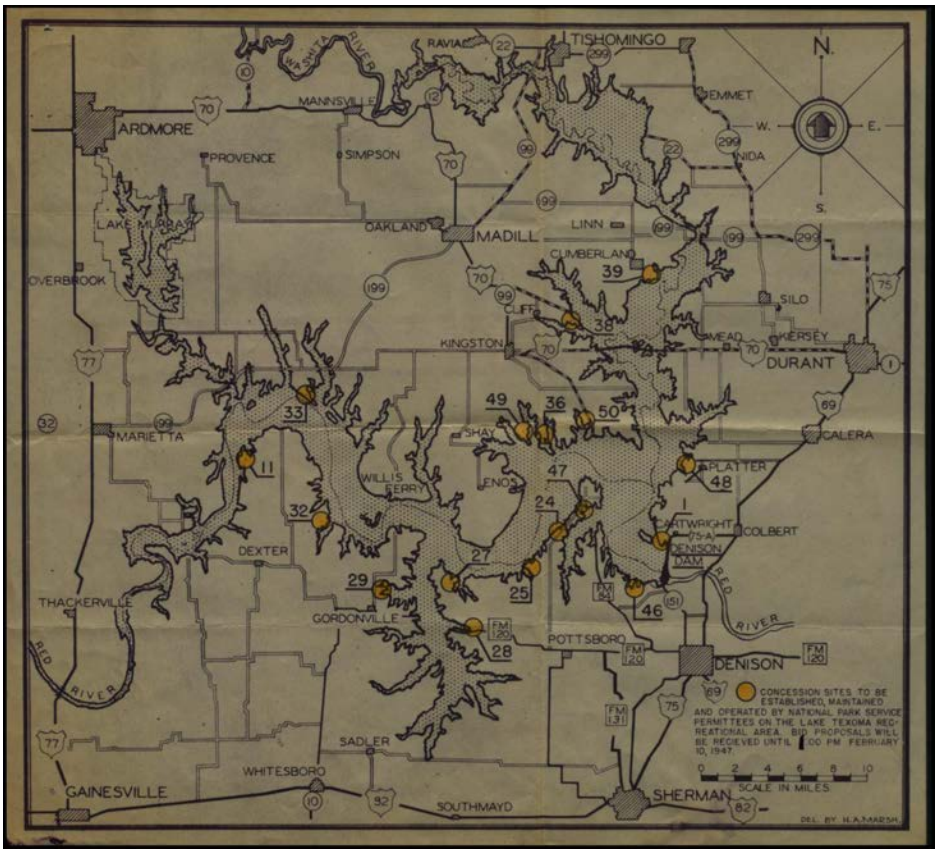
Messrs. Pronsell Woods, 501 W. Johnson Street, Denison, and C. B. Bunkley, 330 E. Nelson Street, Denison, (colored) called at the area headquarters this morning and I explained to them the plans of the Service to effect some improvements in the Carver Area immediately so as to provide the colored people of Texas with a greater opportunity of using this location.

They were told a new road was being developed to a point near the water, that we have picnic tables and a toilet to be placed there. Also, that it was our hope to have a small roped-off area made available for limited swimming and more particularly to be used for wading purposes by children.

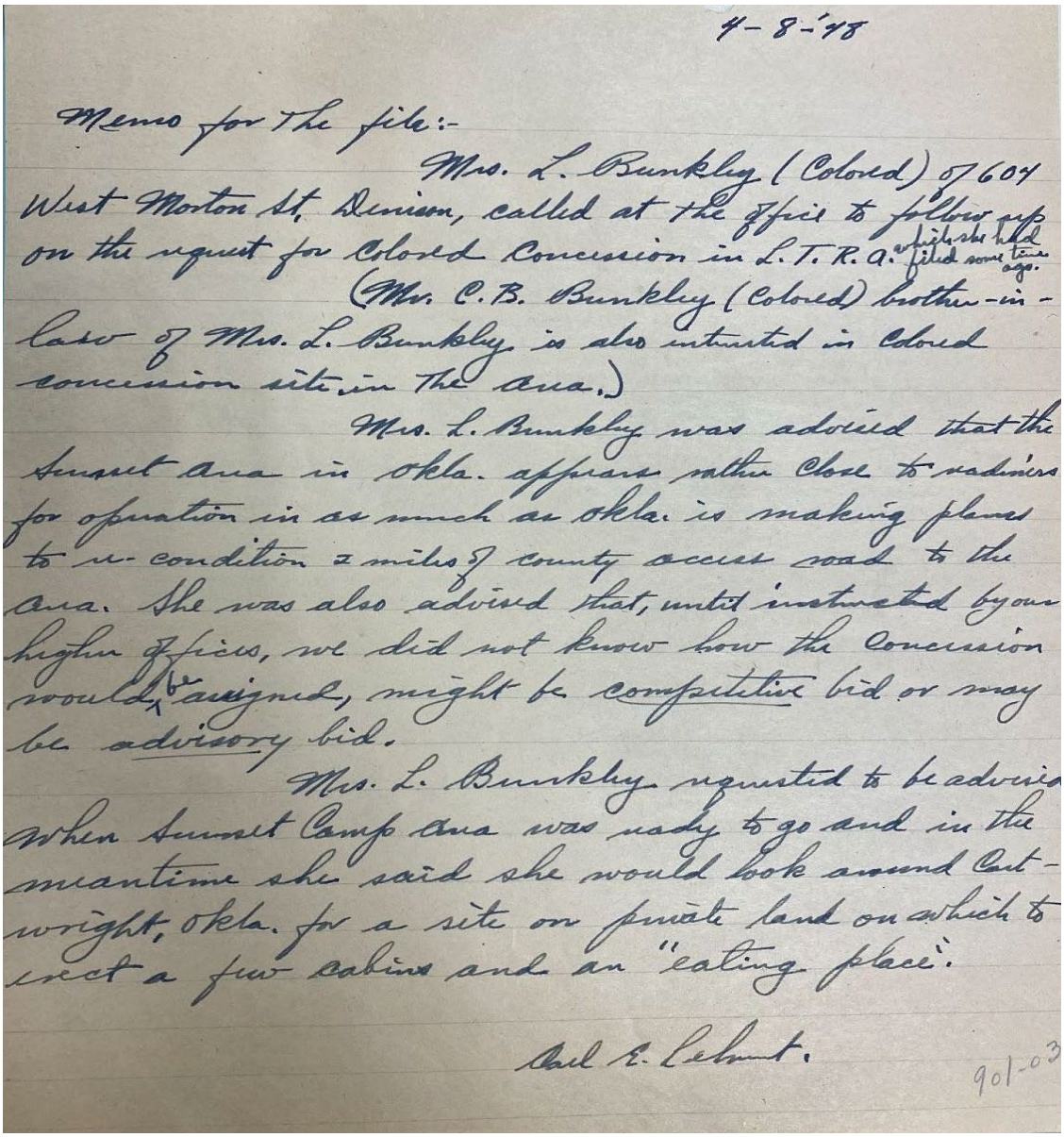
Messrs. Woods and Bunkley expressed their appreciation of the work being done by the National Park Service, here by the Lake Texoma Recreational Area, for the colored people.

James V. Lloyd,
Superintendent.

Box 146, Folder 901-07,Correspondence Relating to CCC, ECW & ERA Work in National Parks, Forest, Monuments and Recreation Areas, 1933-1948, Applications and Inquiries Concessions (colored), Memo. 1948, documentation of discussion between James V. Lloyd and Pronsell Woods and C.F Bunkley, who were interested in the Carver Camp concessions. National Records and Administration, Southwest Region — Denver office. Accessed May 6, 2022.



Box 117, Folder 901-07, Correspondence Relating to CCC, ECW & ERA Work in National Parks, Forest, Monuments and Recreation Areas, 1933-1948, (Untitled Material) Maps, Drawings, Master Recreation Plan, Modification. Map. 1947, National Records and Administration, Southwest Region — Denver office. Accessed May 6, 2022.



4-8-'48

Memo for the file:-

Mrs. L. Bunkley (Colored) of 604 West Morton St. Denison, called at the office to follow up on the request for Colored Concession in L.T.R.A. which she had filed some time ago.

(Mrs. C.B. Bunkley (Colored) brother-in-law of Mrs. L. Bunkley is also interested in Colored concession site in the area.)

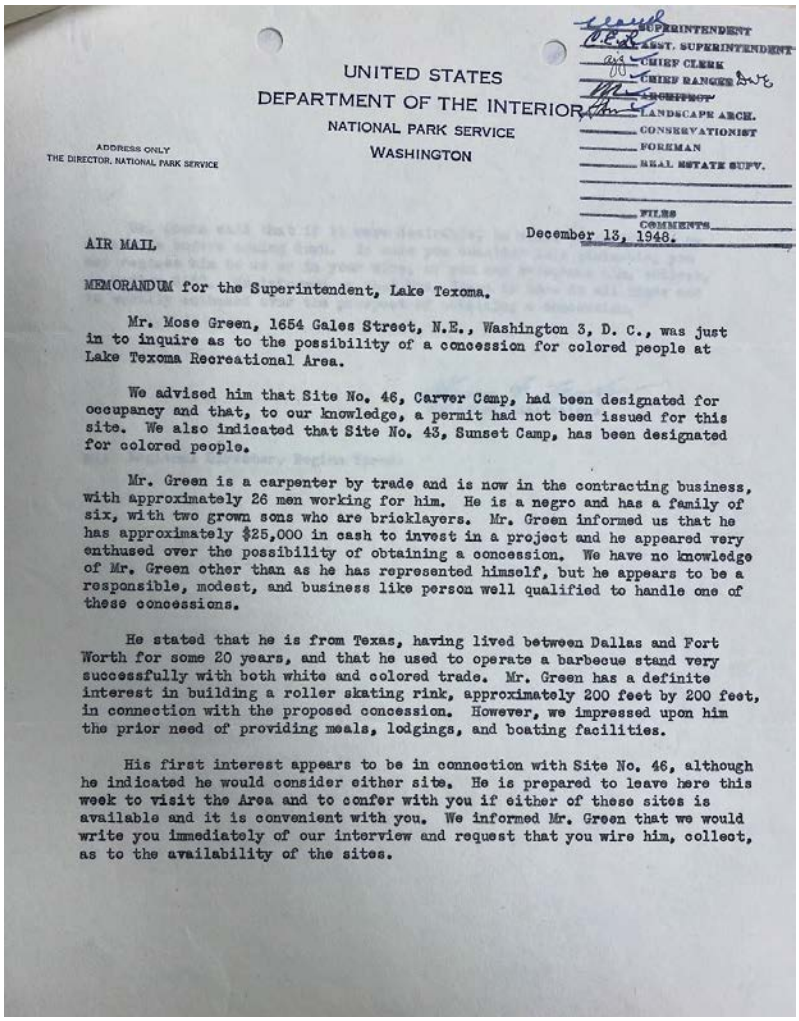
Mrs. L. Bunkley was advised that the Sunset area in Okla. appears rather close to readiness for operation in as much as Okla. is making plans to re-condition 2 miles of county access road to the area. She was also advised that, until instructed by our higher office, we did not know how the concession would be assigned, might be competitive bid or may be advisory bid.

Mrs. L. Bunkley requested to be advised when Sunset Camp area was ready to go and in the meantime she said she would look around Cut-wright, Okla. for a site on private land on which to erect a few cabins and an "eating place".

Earl R. Lebaut.

901-03

Box 146, Folder 901-07, Applications and Inquiries Concessions (colored), Letter. 1948, Memo of phone conversation with Mrs. L. Bunkley, National Records and Administration, Southwest Region — Denver office. Accessed May 6, 2022.



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON

ADDRESS ONLY
THE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

SUPERINTENDENT
ASST. SUPERINTENDENT
CHIEF CLERK
CHIEF RANGER
ARCHITECT
LANDSCAPE ARCH.
CONSERVATIONIST
FOREMAN
REAL ESTATE SUPV.
FILES
COMMENTS

December 13, 1948.

AIR MAIL

MEMORANDUM for the Superintendent, Lake Texoma.

Mr. Mose Green, 1654 Gales Street, N.E., Washington 3, D. C., was just in to inquire as to the possibility of a concession for colored people at Lake Texoma Recreational Area.

We advised him that Site No. 46, Carver Camp, had been designated for occupancy and that, to our knowledge, a permit had not been issued for this site. We also indicated that Site No. 43, Sunset Camp, has been designated for colored people.

Mr. Green is a carpenter by trade and is now in the contracting business, with approximately 26 men working for him. He is a negro and has a family of six, with two grown sons who are bricklayers. Mr. Green informed us that he has approximately $25,000 in cash to invest in a project and he appeared very enthused over the possibility of obtaining a concession. We have no knowledge of Mr. Green other than as he has represented himself, but he appears to be a responsible, modest, and business like person well qualified to handle one of these concessions.

He stated that he is from Texas, having lived between Dallas and Fort Worth for some 20 years, and that he used to operate a barbecue stand very successfully with both white and colored trade. Mr. Green has a definite interest in building a roller skating rink, approximately 200 feet by 200 feet, in connection with the proposed concession. However, we impressed upon him the prior need of providing meals, lodgings, and boating facilities.

His first interest appears to be in connection with Site No. 46, although he indicated he would consider either site. He is prepared to leave here this week to visit the Area and to confer with you if either of these sites is available and it is convenient with you. We informed Mr. Green that we would write you immediately of our interview and request that you wire him, collect, as to the availability of the sites.

Box 146, Folder 901-07, Correspondence Relating to CCC, ECW & ERA Work in National Parks, Forest, Monuments and Recreation Areas, 1933-1948, Applications and Inquiries Concessions (colored), Memo. 1948, documentation of conversation with Mose Green to Superintendent at Lake Texoma, National Records and Administration, Southwest Region — Denver office. Accessed May 6, 2022.