

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

MARIETTA HOUSING AUTHORITY SERIES

INTERVIEW WITH GEORGE H. GREEN

CONDUCTED BY THOMAS A. SCOTT, RAYMOND C. BUDAY, JR., AND

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Kennesaw State University Oral History Project  
Marietta Housing Authority Series  
Interview with George H. Green  
Conducted by Thomas A. Scott, Raymond C. Buday, Jr., and Heather Oswald  
Edited by Thomas A. Scott  
Thursday, 27 October 2011  
Location: Green residence, Marietta, Georgia

Mr. Green was executive director of the Marietta Housing Authority from the late 1960s until his retirement in 1986. Mr. Buday is the current executive director.

TS: Mr. Green, I'm just going to start asking you some questions and we'll just see where you want to take it. I always start by just asking people to talk a little bit about where they're from, when they were born, where they were born, where they went to school and just a little bit about your background before you got involved with the Housing Authority.

GG: Well, I'm 88 years old; if I make it to April I'll be 89. I was born and reared in Cobb County. We lived way out in the county over on Sandy Plains Road, and that's way out in the county when I was a kid.

TS: How far out on Sandy Plains?

GG: It was five miles from the center of Marietta to my house. That's a short distance now.

TS: So about where Sprayberry [High School] is now?

GG: It's just south of Sprayberry. My old home place, my dad had a forty acre farm there. He had a community store and a corn mill and ground corn for the farmers and had a potato warehouse. He stored their potatoes in the wintertime. He was kind of a community leader I guess you would say. They had trustees of the school system when I was coming up, and he was a trustee of the Mountain View school system.

TS: So you went to Mountain View?

GG: Right. He even drove a school bus, and after my father died, my brother continued to drive the school bus for several years after that. So I'm a native Mariettan.

TS: So 88, that's like 1923?

GG: [Born in] 1923, that's correct.

TS: So you would have been going through school there in the '30s I guess primarily.

GG: Right.

TS: I was trying to think, I did an interview with Dorsey Dodgen and Carolyn Dodgen Meadows.

GG: Oh yes, I've seen all of them.

TS: They all went to Mountain View. They were probably a little bit after you? I don't know, it's been so long since I've interviewed Dorsey. He was probably a little bit after you, wasn't he?

GG: Well, he was in the school, I remember him very well, I sure do.

TS: So your father was one of the trustees.

GG: Right, of the school system.

TS: Did you feel like you got a good education at Mountain View?

GG: Well, education then was not like it is today because we had mostly farmers that lived in that community, and the kids had to participate in gathering the crops for the farmers because they didn't have anything to eat.

TS: So what months did you go to school? Did you take off in the fall for people to pick cotton?

GG: That's right. I don't remember the exact dates.

TS: So you went summertime to school and then—did you go in the summer and then take off a month in October or something like that?

GG: Well, now, I can't tell you, I can't recall that, I sure don't.

TS: Then go back in the wintertime? Do you remember how many months you went?

GG: I believe it was nine months, if I'm not mistaken.

TS: And so after Mountain View did you go on to high school in Cobb County?

GG: Well, unfortunately, I came to Marietta, but I only went to Marietta [High School] for a year, and I finished through a correspondence school, my high school, and then I went to the University of Georgia Atlanta Division.

TS: Which would be Georgia State.

GG: And now it's Georgia State. It was in an old garage in Atlanta. I guess the garage has been replaced now, but we used to have to walk up the ramp to go to different classes.

TS: Right. They renovated the garage.

GG: Exactly.

TS: Is this before World War II or after?

GG: That was after World War II.

TS: So if you were born about '23, you were right in the middle of things when World War II broke out.

GG: Yes. I went into the military in '43 and got out in '45.

TS: Did you go overseas at all?

GG: Oh yes. I served in two wars and only had ten months in the States out of both wars.

TS: So you've got the Korean War also?

GG: Right. I went to World War II in Europe and the Korean War in Japan.

TS: So were you there for the Normandy invasion?

GG: Right. D plus 6.

TS: You went in on the sixth day.

GG: Yes.

TS: So you fought your way across France to Germany. Did you hit the Battle of the Bulge?

GG: Right, sure did. There was a lot of snow, there sure was. In fact, it was so bad the Germans were kicking a lot of the paratroopers out of the airplanes in the snow drifts; they didn't have parachutes for them.

TS: So they just jumped and landed in the snow?

GG: They landed in the snow. They landed right in the snow banks. They had some terrible deep snow over there.

TS: What was your rank by the time you got out?

GG: Well, I was a corporal in World War II, and then in the Korean War I got a commission, and I retired as a lieutenant colonel.

TS: Fantastic. So you probably went to college on the GI Bill.

GG: Yes, I did. I got three and a half years in. I was still involved in the military, and then the military sent me to the Squadron Officer's School over in Montgomery, Alabama. I stayed over there for three months in that school, and then when I graduated from there, I came back. I just couldn't get started back into school again, so I lacked six months finishing my degree.

TS: You said earlier you didn't care for accounting before we started the interview, so what did you major in?

GG: Just business.

TS: Which was about all you could do, I guess, at the Atlanta Division.

GG: Correct. Yes, they didn't have that much to offer back then.

TS: I was just reading the history of Georgia State the other day and there were actually some scandals about the GI Bill and the amount of money that they were collecting. Do you remember that?

GG: Oh yes.

TS: What do you remember about it?

GG: Well, I just remember that, I didn't know anything about the particulars of it, but there was a scandal going on.

TS: What I read is that they were collecting from the federal government an out of state tuition for everybody that was on the GI Bill whether they were from out of state or not.

GG: I can't remember, I just knew there was some scuttlebutt going on about that.

TS: So they had just renovated that old garage I guess when you were down there.

GG: They sure did.

TS: Which actually looked like a pretty nice building.

GG: Well, it was a nice building.

TS: For having been a garage.

GG: We walked up and down a lot of ramps, I'll tell you that.

TS: Was that Ivy Street?

GG: Yes, Ivy Street.

TS: Ivy Street Garage.

GG: Ivy Street Garage.

TS: Okay. So you went back to school after World War II. Then you got caught up with the Korean War.

GG: Yes, in 1950.

TS: And then you make a career of the military, I guess.

GG: Well, I was in the Air National Guard. That's when I was called back into the Korean War was while I was in the Air National Guard.

TS: By that time we've got a separate Air Force.

GG: Right, exactly. That would be '47 is when it converted to the Air Force.

TS: What were you doing during the Korean War?

GG: I was in administration.

TS: After the Korean War what did you do?

GG: Well, of course, I came back, and I was a technician, what they called an air technician in the Air Guard and worked at Dobbins for about ten years as a technician.

TS: Oh, so you came back here for Dobbins?

GG: Yes. After I got back from the Squadron Officers School in Montgomery, after about three months I was told that I didn't have a job any longer. I got caught in the squeeze of the military funding in 1958.

TS: They were cutting back in '58?

GG: Yes, they sure were.

TS: That was Eisenhower; well I guess he was trying to get more bang for the buck about then.

GG: Well, money was kind of getting tight.

TS: Yes, there was a little recession. We'd probably love to have that recession right now compared to what we've got.

GG: Exactly. So I was out of work for three months, and then I went to work for the Housing Authority in July of '58.

TS: All right. So that got you to the Marietta Housing Authority. Heather and I were wondering on our way here today just exactly where was the headquarters for the Housing Authority at that time.

GG: It was at Clay Homes.

TS: In Clay Homes?

GG: Which is no longer there.

TS: Yes. The first housing . . .

GG: The first housing project—132 units, 10-1-R. Originally designed for, I believe, 100 units and then they revised it and made it 132, and they called it 10-1-R.

TS: Was the R for revised?

GG: Revision.

TS: When they go from 100 to 132, do they increase the square footage or do they make the units smaller?

GG: No, the same thing. It's the same size unit, it's just the number of units is all it was.

TS: So they just created more units. Okay. I was trying to remember, I used to drive by Clay Homes. Were the offices right on Waddell Street?

GG: Yes, right on Waddell. We had a central office there.

TS: So you go back to what used to be the voter registration office.

GG: Yes, behind the voter registration was the central office, if you face the old buildings that were directly behind the voter registration.

RB: It became a warehouse, is that right George?

GG: Yes, it was a warehouse, and in fact they used it as a school for a long time.

TS: How big was the staff when you started there in '58?

GG: Oh gosh, I don't remember exactly.

TS: Who would have been director at that time?

GG: Harry Williams. Jackie Enterkin was the accountant and she ran the Authority. She was your Girl Friday.

TS: She ran it?

GG: Oh, absolutely. She knew the Authority up and down. She retired the same day I did. After I was voted as executive director—and I don't remember the exact date, '68 to '69, somewhere along in there—then I voted her to assistant director of the Housing Authority, and then I told her I was going to retire. I said, "Do you want to take the Authority over?" She at first said yes and then later decided she wouldn't, and she retired exactly the same day I did. She had over forty years with the Housing Authority.

TS: What year did you retire?

GG: 1986, 31 of December, 1986.

TS: So from '58 to '86 would be twenty-eight years. How many years did she have?

GG: She had over forty.

TS: So she was almost from the beginning.

GG: Right, of the Housing Authority. I don't know when she was hired, but she almost started with it.

TS: Had the headquarters always been in Clay Homes from the beginning?

GG: Right.

TS: Did they stay in Clay Homes until you moved over on Cole Street?

GG: No, I built a new office on Lawrence Street. There's quite a story behind that, but I finally talked them into letting me build a central office there. In the beginning of housing you had a manager of each project, and you had a maintenance man at each project. Well, I got the idea that we could save money by consolidating and having a central office and a central maintenance. I finally convinced HUD of that. They said that they didn't have any money to build a central office, and I got to digging in the law and found out that if you built a housing project in the past and had any money left over, that you could go back and open that development and take that money out. So when I approached HUD about it in Atlanta, they said, "No, we're not going to let you build; you don't have any money for it; you don't have any funding." I quoted that section of the law and told them I was going back and opening up all the developments I had any extra money left in, and I was going to build a central office, so they finally agreed to let me build it.

TS: So they probably had already spent the money or was this in the bank, that money, or what?

GG: No, no, they just went ahead and increased the amount of money for the development. I think it was 10-7—Branson Homes—that I built it with. They just increased the funding to give me enough money to build it. They didn't want to go back and open all those fund issues.

TS: So the money actually comes from HUD, but, theoretically at least, it's in a fund where you didn't spend all on Branson Homes.

GG: That's correct. Yes. See, they allocate so much money for a project when you start to build it, and then if you don't use it all and after you go through the bidding and all and finish construction, if you've got money left over then that's the money that's left in that project. So you can go back at any time and open it up. You could even go back today and open it up, I guess.

RB: We'll check on that.

GG: According to the law.

TS: But they thought, wow, that's our money now.

GG: Exactly.

TS: That's interesting. I'm coming from great ignorance to this topic, this relationship between HUD and the Housing Authority, but it sounds like they call a lot of the shots—that you've got to report to them and get their permission before you do things?

GG: Exactly. Absolutely.

TS: So it doesn't matter what the local politicians think, if HUD doesn't agree to it then it's not going to happen.

GG: Then you don't do it, right.

TS: There was a HUD headquarters in Atlanta, and so that's where you really report to?

GG: Exactly. I think the Housing Authority was created in 1938. Of course, the Authority was created, and the mayor appoints the board members of the Authority, but the Authority is not beholden to the city except through the political route. They're totally independent in the operation of the city. The city cannot tell the Housing Authority anything that they're going to do.

TS: That's interesting.

GG: Yes, it's kind of a strange political process, but that's the way it is.

TS: The city doesn't really provide any money to the Housing Authority?

GG: No, in fact, the Housing Authority provided money to the city. I'll get into that back in Marietta Place when we get down to that.

TS: I cut you off earlier when you were talking about the size of the staff when you started. You mentioned Harry Williams and Jackie.

GG: Harry and Jackie, and there's a Jim Higginbotham, and I was the one that took his place. He started Urban Renewal. We had a cashier, and that was it. I think there were four people there. I think that was all.

TS: So Higginbotham started Urban Renewal. Is that late 1940s?

GG: No, that was in 1958. We had three Urban Renewal projects, Georgia R-16, R-69 and R-106. He moved over out of the Housing Authority and started operating Urban Renewal.

TS: Where were the Urban Renewal projects?

GG: The first one, Georgia R-16, getting back to the numbers again, was over where the YWCA is now.

TS: So that's Henderson Arms?

GG: Henderson Arms, and there's a little story about that too. I'll tell you about it. We got all that area in there that was just totally slums where the YWCA is.

TS: Was that Louisville?

GG: Louisville, that's right.

TS: So that was a black neighborhood.

GG: That was black primarily, but there were a lot of businesses in there too. We got over into Powder Springs Street. Where the CVS Pharmacy is now—that was about the southern end of it. We ran from Page Street [now the North Loop] over to where the CVS Pharmacy is. That was called Clay Street then. Clay Street is now the South Loop.

TS: Which is where the CVS is?

GG: That's right.

TS: So that would be the south end of Louisville.

GG: Right.

TS: And then how far north does it go?

GG: We went to Page Street.

TS: To Page Street?

GG: Yes.

RB: George, can I interrupt you?

GG: Sure.

RB: Might the area where the park and the school—now the charter school—[are located] over toward Griggs Street—would that have been part of it?

GG: Yes, that is part of it.

RB: Okay, where Johnny Walker Homes is.

GG: Johnny Walker Homes. That's correct.

TS: Which would already have been there by this time, right, by the time Henderson Arms was built?

GG: No, Henderson Arms was later. I don't remember the exact date that Henderson Arms was built.

RB: Henderson Arms was '80. Johnny Walker, that's a good question, when was that built? Was it built while you were there?

GG: Oh, yes. I built it. Gosh I don't remember the date, I really don't. It had to be in the 1960's.

TS: When did you become director?

GG: I think it was '68 or '69, I'm not sure.

TS: Would Johnny Walker have been built before you were director?

GG: No, I built Johnny Walker.

TS: Okay, so it's got to be after '68.

GG: Right. Oh, yes. I was going to tell you about the ribbing that we got in....

TS: Yes, we were talking about the Urban Renewal.

GG: Yes, in R-16 Urban Renewal, we designed a street in the Urban Renewal plan from Page Street over to Clay Street, which was the south end. We built part of the loop that's around Marietta right now from Page Street to Clay Street.

TS: Right, because Page would be the North Parkway and Clay would be the South Parkway.

GG: Right. And we got criticized for building the shortest freeway in the world.

TS: The road is the [west side of the] Loop, is that what you're saying?

GG: Yes, it is the Loop. That's correct. We built it from Page Street to Clay Street, and that is the Loop now. Then that gave us a leverage to get the state to provide money to build a whole loop around the city. We built the underpass under the railroad. We couldn't go under the railroad, but we had another Urban Renewal project, R-69, which is on the other side, and it started just on the other side of the underpass right now.

TS: Other side of the underpass?

GG: Yes, and ran to Fairground Street, so we had the right-of-way for the state highway to build it from just a little bit west of Cherokee Street all the way through to Fairground Street.

TS: Oh, so that's where people got moved out [of Baptist Town] or moved over to James Street.

GG: That's correct. I'm going to tell you about that too. After we cleaned out R-16, which was over in the Louisville Project, and a lot of people were relocated, and, of course, [we] had to buy up everything, then we got into R-69, and that was this section we're talking about. It's over in Baptist Town. Then we found out that we didn't have any place for the black people to relocate, so we started looking around for some property, and we found Hardage Dairy Farm which is right up there on Kennesaw Avenue.

TS: Yes, I've got a picture of that.

GG: That's Hardage Dairy Farm. We bought the Hardage Dairy Farm and put in streets and utilities and subdivided it into lots and sold the lots to the people that were being relocated out of R-69.

TS: Okay, so Hardage Dairy Farm would be Kennesaw Avenue at about Tower Road?

GG: That's correct. James Street runs off of Tower Road, and James Street takes you into this development that we built in there. We sold all that off for housing because we had to instill part of their property on the front side of Kennesaw Avenue that ran about from Tower Road up through those little office buildings or whatever they are, just about to Grace Church, I guess it was. We had this strip of property, and I forget the acreage. We sold that to O.C. Hubert, our strongest critic of the Housing Authority here in Marietta.

TS: Okay, so let me see if I understand this. You own that property, but you sold it to Hubert, and then he developed it?

GG: No, no, no, we just sold the front part on Kennesaw Avenue to O.C. We developed all the lots from James Street.

TS: You developed the lots but then you sold them to....

GG: To people who were being relocated out of R-69.

TS: Right. So the Housing Authority built the houses?

GG: No, no. We just sold the lots, and the individuals built their own homes.

TS: So you put in the streets?

GG: Utilities.

TS: You put in just the utilities and the city put in the streets or were the streets already there?

GG: No, that was part of our development too.

TS: Okay, so you put in the streets and the utilities and marked all the lots and then sold lots to private individuals.

GG: Correct.

RB: How did you fund that development?

GG: We had money out of Marietta Place. I'll get into Marietta Place too.

TS: Okay. Well, we need to talk about that. At any rate, you said there were three of these Urban Renewals, and one was R-16, and one was R-69.

GG: Yes, and there was R-106 which was downtown. We got the east side of the Square and the old Cobb County Courthouse. We got it on down to, I guess, it was, Lemon Street. Then it went back east over to where the fire station is now. Basically, that was the area.

TS: So the Housing Authority owned all that property?

GG: We bought, yes.

TS: You bought it from the county?

GG: Oh no, we bought it through Urban Renewal funds.

TS: Who did you buy it from?

GG: Different owners, different people owned the properties.

TS: That's right, you've got the courthouse, and then you've got all those businesses [on the east side of the Square], and then you've got businesses down Lawrence Street as well, which was the black businesses.

GG: That's right.

TS: So the Housing Authority bought all of that with Urban Renewal money?

GG: Correct. We bought the old hospital, that was part of the deal too, Marietta Hospital.

TS: Yes, which would be where the county parking deck is.

GG: Correct, exactly. The Ford Agency was in that area too, and we bought them out.

TS: How did the county get all that property back? Oh wait a minute, the bank had it and then the county bought it from them didn't they?

GG: That's right. The way it developed, we had planned in Urban Renewal to build a parking garage where the county administration building is now. People just got up in arms. They didn't want a parking garage in Marietta, didn't have any need for it. We had a banker that worked day and night against us in building that. We finally decided to sell it, so we sold it to the person who developed it for the First National Bank. He developed and sold it to the bank, and then the bank sold it to the county.

TS: Who was the banker?

GG: Well, First National Bank was the one who bought it.

TS: Yes.

RB: I was trying to think, this guy was the president of that bank for years.

GG: Bill Beasley.

TS: Oh Beasley, I was thinking the one before him.

GG: Massey.

TS: Yes, yes, but was Beasley the one that gave you the hard time?

GG: No, no, no, it wasn't him at all. It was a banker from the Marietta Commercial Bank which is down on Roberts Street. His name was Graham.

TS: Marietta Commercial was right at South Avenue, I believe.

GG: Right, exactly. Bill Beasley is a good friend of ours.

TS: But at any rate, we got the parking deck later. Maybe, it would be a good time to start talking about Marietta Place. It is very interesting itself because that was built during World War II for the Bell Aircraft workers. Then, let's see, the county had it.

GG: No, the county never did have that.

- TS: When Southern Tech was built, somebody owned the Southern Tech property. Obviously the state wanted the property for Southern Tech, and, I believe, there was a property exchange that involved Marietta Place.
- GG: Well, I can give you the story behind that.
- TS: Please do.
- GG: Marietta Place was built in two developments, 500 units in each one. We called them 9180 and 9172 were the number designations of the two—9180 was 500 units built out of terra cotta block; 9172 was built out of a pre-fab board—I don't know what the official name was.
- TS: Oh, okay, so those were what people called the cardboard places.
- GG: Absolutely.
- TS: Cut out of pre-fab board. I always thought that that first unit was built out of concrete?
- GG: No, it was terra cotta block.
- TS: Good night. Well neither one of them was actually built to last forever were they?
- GG: No, no, they were built just for temporary housing. At the end of World War II they were supposed to have been torn down. Well now, the property that Marietta Place was on was leased from several owners, I guess, I don't remember exactly. The deeds are still up there in the safe [at the Marietta Housing Authority] unless somebody has thrown them away. The government leased the property from the owners and built the housing, and it was to be torn down at the end of World War II. As you said, it was for Bell plant employees. At the end of the War the government agreed to transfer the housing to the Marietta Housing Authority, which the Marietta Housing Authority accepted. I don't remember the exact date. Ray, maybe you can figure that out. But it was transferred, and the proceeds from the units were to go for the use of the Housing Authority and for public use. We rented them for several years until they got in terrible shape.

Well, Harold Willingham, who was one of the strongest legislators that's ever been from Cobb County, got Marvin Griffin to agree to move Southern Tech from DeKalb County to Cobb County providing Cobb County would furnish the land. Cobb County didn't have any money to buy the land. They didn't have any land they could get. So who do they come to? Marietta Housing Authority. Marietta Housing Authority bought the land for \$150,000.00 for Southern Tech and gave the property to the state so that they could relocate Southern Tech. Harold Willingham put all this together. He was a brilliant individual. He was an attorney, CPA, and he was a very brilliant individual. His pet name for me was

Georgy. Every time I went in his office he'd say, Georgy this and Georgy that, and what an office he had. You had to step over reams of paper and folders. You just had to pick your way into his office.

TS: Where was his office?

GG: It was in the lawyers building now, it's on....

TS: Near the old bus depot?

GG: Right. He had other offices, but that was the last one I remember him being in. He could go in and pick out anything you brought up to him, if it was in any of those folders, wherever they were. He knew everything exactly where it was. What a mess he kept in his office.

TS: Okay, so you all bought the property, I forgot who owned the property but I've got the name somewhere.

GG: [Mrs. Grace B. Housely and William Augustus Housely]. We just gave them the money to buy it.

TS: Okay, so you bought the property, so how does the Marietta Housing Authority figure into this?

GG: We just gave them the money to buy the property. We didn't get involved in the purchase of it other than providing the money for it.

TS: So it didn't have anything to do with the Housing Authority?

GG: No sir.

TS: How about Marietta Place?

GG: Well, Marietta Place got involved. We made units available for students at Southern Tech. It was then Southern Technical Institute, and now it's Southern Poly. We made units available for them to rent. I think we charged them \$50.00 a month or something like that.

TS: You weren't around when Georgia Tech students lived in Marietta Place, were you?

GG: Oh yes.

TS: How long did that last?

GG: Oh gosh I don't remember. It was primarily during the peak period right after the War but even one of Marietta's mayors, C.W. Bramlett, lived in Marietta Place when he was going to Tech.

TS: Is that right?

GG: He sure did. And we had a lot of students that lived in Marietta Place because it was cheap room. I think, as best I remember it was \$50.00 for one bedroom, \$55.00 for a two and \$60.00 for a three. I'm not positive about those figures, but I think that's what it was.

TS: Were these all married students from Tech that were living there?

GG: No, some of them were married and some were single.

TS: Really? Just so they could pay the rent.

GG: Exactly. Marietta Place was originally built where they had to use coal to heat the place. After the Housing Authority bought it, they put gas lines in. And they had a grocery store over there which we didn't own. We leased it out to an individual. They had a laundry mat that was over there. It had a gymnasium, and Southern Tech used the gymnasium for a classroom while they were building it.

TS: Right. Well, when Kennesaw Junior College started, that first quarter before the campus was completed they used the library in Marietta Place.

GG: Right, I remember that.

TS: We kept books on reserve in there. I think the recreation center as well, they did something in the recreation center, maybe some offices.

GG: Yes, that was part of it. Southern Tech used it also; yes, they sure did.

TS: How long do those cardboard houses last?

GG: Well, we kept them going some way, we kept them together. Well, it finally got to the point that they couldn't be maintained, so the Authority decided to sell the property. I had a guy call me one day. His name was Bob Kern. He called me, and he was a developer. He was looking for property, and somehow he heard that we were thinking about destroying that and selling the property. He called me one day, and he found out I was a golfer. He liked to play golf too, and he belonged to the Atlanta Country Club, so he invited me out for a round of golf with him at Atlanta Country Club. We struck a deal on the sale of Marietta Place right there on the golf course.

RB: Gosh! (laughter)

GG: So don't knock golf totally because it's not always bad!

TS: So you sold all of Marietta Place?

GG: Yes sir. We sold all of Marietta Place except the north side which was Clay Street. We didn't sell that, but we sold all the south side of it.

TS: I remember the more modern units you had on Clay Street for a long time where the....

GG: After we sold [the rest], we built—that was 86 units.

TS: Oh, that's after you sold it that those were built.

GG: Correct.

HO: What year did you sell it?

GG: I don't remember. I just don't remember the year.

TS: Well, where the transfer station is for the CCT, that's where those units were.

GG: Exactly. After we tore those down, we sold the property then to the county for the bus station. Those 86 units, and the lease program that you were talking about, the Housing Authority, we sold bonds and built the development of the 86 units. Then HUD leased all of the units and paid us a monthly rental, and we rented them the same way we did the others. The family paid 30 percent of their income, and then HUD paid us the difference of the fair market value.

RB: These 86 units were located where the bus station is?

GG: Exactly.

RB: Okay, because I thought Marietta Place ran to there.

GG: Well, it did, but of course we had torn it down by then.

RB: Okay, same property, but that was not sold to Mr. Kern.

GG: No, no.

RB: Right.

TS: Okay, let's see. You worked there about ten years before you became the director. Did the Housing Authority grow in size in those years or did it stay a small operation?

GG: Oh, yes. The first development I built after going to the Authority, I think it was 1960 we opened it, was 10-5, which is Branson Homes, 25 units of elderly housing. That was the first elderly housing, or the first housing developed primarily for the elderly, in the southeastern United States. We even had the secretary of HUD come down for the dedication of the 25 units.

TS: Is Branson Homes where Branson Walk is today? Is it the same place?

RB: Yes.

GG: There are two sections of Branson Homes—twelve units are on Victory Drive and thirteen are on Aviation Road, I believe. I may have it [backward].

TS: What are those houses when you're going into the back of Sam's?

GG: That's part of Branson Homes, but that's the addition. Branson Homes' addition is 10-7.

TS: That fifty unit group.

GG: That's fifty units.

TS: When was that built?

GG: You got me. Ray will have to dig that out for you.

TS: We'll find it, but at any rate the original twenty-five were part Victory and I can't imagine where any are on Aviation.

GG: There's a church up there.

TS: Okay, I know where the church is.

GG: You know where the Red Cross is?

TS: Yes.

GG: Just past the Red Cross office.

TS: That would be Victory Drive.

RB: Victory Drive.

GG: Victory Drive, yes.

TS: But the Aviation is what I was trying to figure out. Oh, these would be on Clay Street.

RB: Correct. It's Aviation at Lake.

TS: Yes, yes, yes.

GG: When we started to build 10-7 we bought the rest of the property which went on down Aviation to Clay Street, which is now the South Loop, and it went down Clay street and back up....

TS: Now, are those still elderly units?

GG: Yes.

TS: I didn't realize that. Just driving by, I guess elderly people and somebody that's not so elderly could live there together.

GG: I had quite a story about that.

RB: That's a good point.

GG: When I built those units over there, I went to HUD and told them I wanted to build a garden spot in the back of each unit. They said, "What do you want to build that for?" I said, "So that the elderly people can grow vegetables."

TS: Those are actually very attractive yards with those units, from what I can see.

GG: So they raised sand about it and said I couldn't build them because they'd wind up being expensive grass beds. I said, "Well, I'm going to build them anyway." I put them in, and I made a bunch of pictures and sent them to HUD, and I said, "These are your expensive grass beds." There were tomatoes and green beans and things growing all over the place.

TS: Fantastic.

GG: You have to get bull-headed sometimes with HUD to do things you want to do.

TS: How did you become the director? Of course, the board has to choose the director, right?

GG: Yes. Frank Melson was the director and he killed himself with salt.

TS: What?

GG: He died from a heart attack, but it was caused from salt.

TS: Frank Melson?

GG: Yes. He'd order a steak, and you think I'm fibbing about this, but it's the God's truth, he would take a salt shaker and the top of that steak would be absolutely white with salt. That's the way he ate, and it finally killed him.

RB: He was a young fellow.

GG: Yes, he sure was.

TS: Did Melson replace Harry Williams?

GG: Yes he did.

TS: So it was Williams, Melson and then you.

GG: Right.

TS: You stayed from about 1968 or 1969 to 1986, so you were director for seventeen or eighteen years.

GG: Right. I was the oldest director of the Housing Authority.

TS: Oldest in chronological age or in time?

GG: In time served. The politics got the rest of them.

RB: Except for the salt guy.

GG: No, they didn't get him!

TS: So the politics is that you've got to keep three out of five of your board members happy?

GG: That's about it, yes. I had the most compatible board. We never had a disagreement, and that's hard to say, but we never had disagreements. I never had any problems with the board at all.

TS: Who were some of the board members while you were serving?

GG: Dr. Al Colquit was one of them, and Louis Sohn.

TS: Yes, I knew Louis Sohn.

GG: You did? Oh, yes, Louis was one of my Georgia buddies—big [University of Georgia] Bulldog fan. Let's see, Dr. Luther Fortson. Let's see, Dr. Luther Fortson.

TS: He was my physician.

GG: Is that right? He had a heart attack.

TS: Well, he died right after he retired.

GG: Yes, right. There's quite a story about him. He wanted to get into the Guard, and he had a little problem. He came to me and asked me if I'd write a letter of recommendation for him. He even went into the reserve first. I said, "I'll give it to you if you'll promise me you'll come into the Guard as one of our doctors after you get a commission in the Reserve." He said, "I'll promise you that." So I wrote him a letter and he got the commission in the Reserve and he kept his word. He transferred down to the Guard, and we sent him off to Flight Surgeon School. He loved to fly, that guy, I'm telling you, you couldn't keep him out of an airplane, loved to fly.

TS: I didn't know that.

GG: Oh yes, he dearly loved it. He was an excellent flight surgeon. I don't know when he got out of the Guard. He was one of my favorite board members. He was a good man.

TS: I didn't realize he had been on the board. He was a wonderful physician.

GG: Yes. I went to his son too, gastroenterologist. He's now moved down to—well, both of them, he had two [sons], and they both moved to Columbus.

TS: Fortson and who were some of the others?

GG: I was trying to think. George McGill. I don't remember where George lived. He was not quite in my camp when he first came on the board, but I finally switched him over. Flo Bedenfeld. I have a lot of memories. There was an Edwards on there. You can go back through the minutes and find them, a lot of the old board members.

TS: Now, when you say you had to bring McGill around, what kind of controversies would you have had or differences of opinion?

GG: Well, it emanated from the political side. In fact, and I had no way to prove it, but I always thought that [former mayor] Dick Hunter got a little bent out of shape with the Authority, and I always said that he put Flo Bedenfeld on the board to get rid of me. The next thing I knew she was one of my best commissioners. So I swayed her over I guess. I have no proof that he did that, but the way things led themselves it just appeared that was the case.

RB: I was going to say, that would not be unprecedented in the state of Georgia.

GG: Oh no, absolutely not!

TS: What would Dick Hunter's problem be with the Housing Authority? Did he not like something that you all were doing?

GG: Yes, he had some hang up, and I can't recall now just what it was.

RB: Usually, that sort of thing had to do with where you wanted to build some housing.

GG: That had a lot to do with it. Oh, yes, now that reminded me, that's exactly what it was. He had a brother named Stanley Hunter that lived over in Whitlock Heights. His house backed up to Johnny Walker Homes, and his brother was dead bent against building Johnny Walker Homes, and that's exactly where it came from.

TS: He thought it was going to lower property values.

GG: Yes, absolutely, so that's exactly what it was.

TS: Okay. But getting rid of some slums doesn't sound like it would have been a bad thing to do.

GG: That's what we tried to tell him. Of course, we had some property between him and his home anyway, his property lot, so it didn't bother me.

TS: Later on it became an issue with sociologists that maybe Urban Renewal wasn't such a good idea in that oftentimes—and the argument was that even though they might be poor neighborhoods, they may have a sense of community that would get lost where people would be moved out of those places. Did you have any opinion on that?

GG: No, not really. Just generally housing is bad, public housing, and people didn't like it and they say....

TS: Isn't that why the county didn't have a Housing Authority?

GG: Well, no. They didn't want one.

- TS: Okay. I guess what I'd heard, and I don't have any basis to back it up, was that they really didn't want poor people living in the county.
- GG: That's not really it. The county didn't want a Housing Authority. Section 8 housing was first allocated to Cobb County, and for some reason HUD sent us the letter about the housing. So I went up to Ernest Barrett, who was the commission chairman at the time, and told Ernest that I had a letter from HUD, and it was authorizing some Section 8 housing for Cobb County. Ernest and I were very close friends. He said, "George, Cobb County doesn't need a Housing Authority. Will you operate it for us?" I said, "I'll be glad to." That's the way that we got into the housing business. Later on, HUD authorized some Section 8 housing for the City of Marietta. I got that letter also, and I carried it to Jack Crane who was the city manager and told Jack that I had a letter from HUD authorizing some Section 8 housing for Marietta. I said, "Do you want me to run it for you?" He said, "Let me think about it." So he thought about it, and they had a fellow named Jack Griffin that got a hold of it, and he wanted a job. That's the way he got a job with the city. So he said, "No, we're going to operate this." I said, "Okay, have at it." So that's why there are two Section 8 housing operations in Cobb County.
- TS: I've heard different opinions about Jack Crane. What did you think of him?
- GG: He was a weirdo. He was intelligent, but he was very dogmatic in everything he did. He would insult for nothing. With some of the Marietta [Place] proceeds we bought a lot of furniture for the city of Marietta. He'd jump on my case, and I said, "Well, Jack, you better be careful. I bought that desk that you're sitting behind." He said, "You want the damn desk?" I said, "No, you can keep it; I've got one myself. I just want you to know that we contributed some money to your benefit up here." Marietta Place spent—there's a list up there some place; I don't know if you've seen it. I guess that we spent for Marietta buying different things—we bought automobiles for the police department, we bought bull dozers for the city, and we built bowling alley lanes in the old Bell Auditorium—where the Cobb Civic Center is now. Of course, part of that was where the old Bell Theater was, and there's a laundry mat and the theater and restaurants in this corner of Clay Street and Fairground, and we got that cleaned out over there. The Housing Authority spent a million dollars for the city's benefit.
- RB: Did some of that money go to the Glover Park renovation?
- GG: Oh, yes, we renovated Glover Park. We sponsored a lot of little league ball clubs. Mrs. Annie Dorsey always had—that was Jasper Dorsey's mother.
- RB: How much proceeds are we talking about? That sounds like a lot of money.
- GG: Oh it was tons of money. It sure was. I don't remember. Gosh, I don't know what the estimate would be, but we had many million dollars.

TS: Now, the renovation of Glover Park—would that have been about the time that your tenure was ending, I guess?

GG: No, it was before that. I don't remember exactly when it was, but I remember Glover Park being part of it.

TS: There was a renovation about 1986. Maybe there was an earlier one.

RB: We have a plaque over the thing down there at the park where the bell is. It has the Housing Authority on there. There'll be a date on that. It has the Housing Authority listed on it.

TS: I know when the Downtown Marietta Development Authority was created you got some kind of federal money for the city at that time. Do you remember anything about that? It would have been about '71.

GG: No, I never had anything to do with the Development Authority. I don't think we were involved in that.

TS: Why don't you talk a little bit about the Housing Community Development Act in '74?

RB: That was the Nixon reform.

TS: That's Section 8?

RB: That's when Section 8 came in—1974.

GG: The only thing we had that concerned that was the Section 8 housing. I don't remember anything else that we had anything to do with that.

TS: Okay. Maybe what I was thinking of in '71 had to do with Urban Renewal money possibly. Did you have anything to do with that?

GG: Well, we of course, we controlled all the Urban Renewal money for the three projects in Marietta.

RB: Let me interject here. In '74, I guess the two big reforms, one was to shift public housing to Section 8; the second was to shift the Urban Renewal activity, which was competitive. You had to compete. You had to fill out a big application, tons of paperwork, and move from that to a block grant. There was some transitional thing, hold harmless is what they called it, but that was the other big shift.

GG: Well, really if you look at it in the strict sense, public housing was also an Urban Renewal program because the law required that you demolish one substandard

- housing unit for each unit of public housing you built. Really, in essence, that was Urban Renewal. If you're going into a hundred units of public housing, you had to destroy a hundred units of substandard housing in the city. We never did have a problem with that because of Urban Renewal. We demolished many more than what we ever built. That was a requirement of housing. Gosh, it's probably been changed by now.
- TS: How did it work out when the city has their 700 vouchers or so and the Housing Authority has its vouchers? Did that work out well or was it just a duplication of efforts?
- GG: It certainly was a duplication of efforts because we had people that were issued vouchers in the city, and we also issued them to people in the county. Of course, the city, at the beginning could not go into the county because we had the vouchers for the county, but later I think they kind of dropped those barriers, and you could go any place and lease Section 8.
- TS: It's a duplication of efforts but otherwise it worked all right. You didn't have any problems with it?
- GG: Correct. No, Jack Griffin had—like I said, he made him a job.
- RB: Tell us about Jack Griffin. I've not heard that name before.
- GG: Well, I don't know what he did with the city if anything before that started because I think he came to the city about the same time that Section 8 started. Jack was a weirdo. He tried to stick his nose into everybody else's business, and he ended up tearing down Marietta Place. He started going over there telling people what was going to happen to them, and I got over to Jack Crane and said, "Jack, you've got to get him out of there. That's none of his business, what he's doing." So Jack wrote him a pretty stinging letter and sent me a copy of it and told him to keep his hands off of Marietta Place, that he didn't have any business over there. But Jack left here and went someplace, city manager of some little town somewhere. I don't know where it is.
- TS: What are you proudest of of your twenty-eight years with the Marietta Housing Authority?
- GG: All of it. I don't have any one thing I don't think that I'm really proud of over anything else. I'm just proud of everything I did there.
- TS: Do you think you provided an important service for the city?
- GG: Oh, yes, there's no question about that. One thing, you may not know this, we were the only public body that ever paid taxes to the city.

TS: Really?

GG: Yes. It's a pilot payment which Ray is familiar with.

TS: This would be like property taxes?

GG: No, it wasn't a property tax. It was a pilot—payment in lieu of tax—and we paid the city 10 percent of the net rent, which I pointed out is the gross rent minus utilities. See, we already paid the city for the utilities, so naturally we didn't have to pay them 10 percent of what we'd already paid them. So our fiscal year was 1 October to 30 September and about the first day of October we got a call from the city wanting to know when they'd get their pilot check.

RB: The city right now is not much aware of that, but there's one guy that keeps an eye on when they get the pilot check. Can you guess which city council member does that?

TS: I know—no doubt about it! [Philip Goldstein]

RB: Yes. And I usually try to make a little bit of ceremony because it's not as much money as it used to be. We don't have anything in it, but I carry that check over there, hand-deliver it. It's \$30,000-something.

GG: We used to run around \$200,000 or \$180,000 to \$225,000. It was of course based on the rent insurance.

TS: It was significant.

GG: Oh yes, it certainly was back in those years. I don't know of any other body that ever paid a government agency any payment towards the taxes.

RB: Imagine all that money, all the inventory of all that Marietta Place money that was spent. I knew about the tax, but I don't think I knew about the amount.

GG: Well, somewhere up there there's a list. We kept getting a hard time from somebody on the council about the Housing Authority not doing anything for the city, and I went back and developed a list—gosh, this was years ago—I've been retired twenty-five years—but I developed a list, and there was almost a million dollars of money that we had spent on the city. It was less than a million, but not a whole lot less, and anytime that a politician had something he wanted to do, and he didn't have money in the city to do it, he would come to the Housing Authority and try to talk the Housing Authority out of the money. That's the way we got Southern Tech's property. Harold Willingham came to the Authority and asked them if the Authority would buy the property for Southern Tech. Fortunately, we had the money, and the board thought it was a good idea, so they bought it.

TS: Has it always been the case that there's one of the tenants of the housing units on the board?

GG: No, that's only a recent occurrence. Not recent, like I say, I've been retired twenty-five years, but that occurred just at the time I was leaving, retiring. It was authorized, but it hadn't gained any steam. We never did have a tenant on the board as long as I was in there.

TS: Who makes that decision? Is it the city council?

GG: Yes, well, the mayor does.

TS: The mayor just decided, we're going to put somebody, a tenant on the board?

GG: I don't know how that happened. I guess HUD really started the push on that.

TS: HUD?

RB: I think that's correct.

GG: I was thinking the year I was president of the Georgia Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. It was after that.

TS: Did you all have any trouble collecting rents from tenants?

GG: Oh, yes, that was always a problem. Right, Ray?

TS: So still a problem?

GG: Not with all of them. You had some that were just as religious, as soon as they got a check they'd beat it to the office, that's the first thing they'd pay, but you had some that just would drag it out. We'd have people get drunk and go spend all their money and didn't have anything to pay rent with.

TS: I guess you had some kind of list of rules that you could get kicked out of housing if you did such and such and so on?

GG: Oh, yes. We sure did.

TS: Is it hard to actually kick somebody out of public housing?

GG: Much harder now than it was years ago, yes. It was much easier years ago.

RB: George, let's see, you came here in '58. My understanding is you didn't get any money from the federal government to operate the property; you paid all your operating expenses?

GG: Oh, yes, and we used to have money left over. When I came to the Authority, at the end of every year we'd have money left over, and we'd send it to HUD. Yes, we paid all our expenses and had money left over, and we'd send the excess to HUD.

TS: This is what, Ray, you were telling me on the phone that Senator [Edward] Brooke [of Massachusetts] got a change in the law to limit the rent to 25 percent of one's income?

[Cell phone ringing and tape turned off briefly]

RB: They said well, no, we can't charge but 25 percent.

GG: Right. Originally it was 30.

RB: It's 30 now.

TS: That cut down greatly on the amount of rent you all collected?

GG: Oh, yes. Well, see, you developed your budget where you estimated the rent you were getting, and you cover your expenses for the year in your budget. Of course, you'd have to do the best estimation you could of the rent you collect, and sometimes you turned out all right, and sometimes you didn't, so we had to go back for revisions to HUD. Yes, when I went to the Authority, we made excess money every year, and we'd return the funds to HUD.

TS: By the time that you leave, how much of a gap is there between the amount of rent you collect and the amount of money you have in your budget?

GG: Oh, considerable. I don't recall just what it was, but our rents wouldn't come anywhere near meeting the budget. We'd have to get a subsidy from HUD.

TS: Have tenants changed over the years?

GG: Well, yes, I think so, because people back in the 1940s and 1950s had a different outlook on life than what they have now.

TS: So you're not saying it's just the tenants; it's society in general?

GG: Yes, that has a lot to do with it because back then people were happy to have a decent place to live at a reasonable rent they could afford to pay, but now, they could care less. You throw me out, that's all right, I'll go some place else and get something else. They don't care now. Or that was the trend it was getting to when I got out.

- RB: Now, something that is in the machinery now that maybe changed their outlook is that we are so automated. We have so many cross checks that you can't escape, and the big leverage is if you don't pay the rent, and you're evicted, or you do drugs and are evicted, you can forget about living in any subsidized housing anywhere in the country because everybody that applies, they could apply in Portland, Oregon, check them out, bingo, name comes up on the list back to owing money. So it's a little easier now because of that.
- GG: Right. We didn't have that, of course, when I was there.
- TS: I know a few years ago there was a crime problem around Lyman Homes. Was crime a problem ever in housing projects when you were director?
- GG: Oh, yes. Gosh, yes. Lyman Homes is the worst area, and primarily it was drugs and alcohol. It was quite a problem there. No question about that. It didn't occur so bad in Clay Homes and Fort Hill and Boston Homes, but Lyman Homes was the biggest culprit of that.
- TS: I guess it was back in the 1990s that they put the barricade up to keep people from going whatever it was, I guess onto Freyer.
- GG: Right, stopping them. People were complaining that lived up on Freyer Drive.
- TS: So you think that in general tenants were easier to deal with when you started than they were when you finished?
- GG: Oh, absolutely.
- TS: What about the societal attitudes toward public housing? Did that change at all while you were director?
- GG: Well, yes, it started easing up, I think, because we quit building housing, but I don't know, before we got located 10-6, which is Johnny Walker Homes, which is now torn down, there's no telling that the locations that we looked at, and people were just opposed to it. So then we finally went over and put in Urban Renewal. It started getting better, and, I think, primarily because they got into Section 8, and people kind of liked the idea of releasing from private enterprise. It started easing up after we quit doing so much housing. Elderly housing never had any problem with that. No problem at all.
- TS: What's your feeling about the trend toward eliminating all the public housing projects and mainstreaming everybody?
- GG: Well, I don't really—I've thought about it quite a bit, but it's good and it's bad, I guess, is the best way to put it. You've got people that have to be, you know, you don't want to say....

[Tape off briefly]

GG: People that you have to help along with living conditions, you take a person like that that has to be helped and put them in private enterprise, that's the worst thing in the world you could do because they're lost. They've got nobody to help them, and public housing—we always sympathize with people like that and help them out. I guess the social end of it was the main part of our operation.

TS: So you'd be talking about people that maybe have low IQ or something like that?

GG: Absolutely. Low IQ, health problems—Mrs. Annie Dorsey, she's hauled thousands of tenants to doctors' appointments, picking them up and bringing them back, things like that. You don't get that kind of service out of private enterprise.

TS: Was Mrs. Dorsey on the board?

GG: No.

TS: She was an employee?

GG: Yes. She was an employee. Wonderful lady.

TS: I think she started the lunch program at Marietta High School before they had a cafeteria over there. She did a lot of good things.

GG: Yes, she was working at the Episcopal Church.

TS: So when she was taking people to the doctor she was doing that out of the goodness of her heart?

GG: Absolutely. She spent her own money, her own gas; she didn't want to get reimbursed for it.

TS: She had a lot to do with the start of the Fort Hill Library, which would be the Hattie Wilson Library. Any other people like that that you can think of?

GG: Well, Hattie Wilson. She served on the board for a long time.

TS: I knew she was on the board. So she did things like taking people to the doctor and what-have-you.

GG: Well, I don't know if she did that, but she helped with a lot of their activities. If they needed stuff, she'd go out and get it for them—a good worker in the community. She sure was.

TS: I did an interview with her and a couple of my students did interviews with her, probably about the time you were retiring in the 1980s.

GG: Is that right? How long have you been with the college?

TS: Since '68.

GG: Oh good Lord!

TS: I interviewed her in '86, Hattie Wilson. I've interviewed her daughter since then, Felecca.

GG: Small world, isn't it?

TS: I guess so.

TS: I'm about out of questions. Ray, what have we left out?

RB: I have found this utterly fascinating. We should have brought a couple of people with me today; the urban renewal is something that is quite a story that we haven't really touched on except until today. I don't know where the records are on this. I tried at city hall one time, but we're going to see if we can pull out some more on that. Do you remember the city of Elizabeth?

GG: Oh, yes.

RB: You were with the Housing Authority then.

GG: I sure was. They threatened us.

RB: I picked up in that anonymous history that we had that after the Georgia Supreme Court upheld the incorporation of the city of Elizabeth—we got news articles, "The Supreme Court Upholds"—and I wasn't quite sure what happened after that. We didn't build any housing out there. I guess, the settlement must have led to the development of the subdivision on James Street. Is that what happened?

GG: Well, no.

RB: The Housing Authority decided not to build the housing?

GG: No. Of course, it just died down after that. There was no activity about incorporating the city, but I don't know if it was Supreme Court or the Court of Appeals that ruled that the charter was still good even though it had never been activated, but it could be activated at any time. It just kind of phased out after we didn't build anything up there. We didn't hear any more from it.

RB: Tom, I think you covered it in your discussion of the county Housing Authority. I don't know if there's any substance to this, but I heard talk about folks didn't want, to this day even, rapid transit in Cobb. I heard that at one time a municipality was somehow incorporated along the banks of the Chattahoochee--Chattahoochee Plantation.

GG: Oh, yes. That was a MARTA situation. Joe Mack Wilson was in the legislature, and that's the way that got started. MARTA was trying to move into Cobb County and so....

RB: That was in the late 1960s?

TS: Well, and also it was a question of annexation. It was to keep Atlanta from annexing into Cobb County. If you had a city that ran all the way along the Chattahoochee—it was something like 16 inches wide or something like that.

RB: On the maps too.

GG: That's right.

TS: That was Joe Mack.

GG: Joe Mack created that to keep....

TS: He was going to put crocodiles in the Chattahoochee or whatever he was going to do!

RB: It's fascinating. You must have had a good sized staff, to have to handle all the Urban Renewal stuff. We had hired consultants, is that how we did it?

GG: Well, we did in the development of the programs. We hired consultants to develop the program, but once it was approved by HUD, then we had a staff that operated it. We had a full staff for Urban Renewal that handled nothing but Urban Renewal.

RB: The way that worked, Tom, is the government would give you two-thirds of the cost, and you had to match it. You could be pretty liberal about what you matched it with.

GG: Yes, what you matched it with. It didn't have to be cash; it could be services.

RB: Right. It was an arduous process and everybody wanted that money.

GG: The details of laying out the area, you know, you took this property, and you didn't take that property, and the board for the Urban Renewal project was horrendous.

RB: Oh yes, the HUD people looked over your shoulder all the time, didn't they?

GG: Oh, yes, absolutely.

RB: So that's what I'm thinking, you must have had a good deal of a number of people.

GG: Yes, I don't remember the staff on that Urban Renewal, but we had quite a few.

TS: I guess we're just about through the interview then. Have we left out anything Mr. Green that you think we ought to talk about?

GG: Yes, we did leave out something. Marietta Housing Authority started the senior citizens program in the county. Well, it was really started as a senior citizens group for Marietta, and we operated it for some time, I don't remember exactly how long. The program just started expanding like all programs do, and it kept getting larger and larger and larger with adding new things, and finally it started inching out into the county and certain county people. Finally, it got so large that I just decided that it needed to be in the county rather than in the city, so I approached the county manager Jim Miller and told him about the program had gotten so large, and we were serving so many people in the county, and it looked like it was going to continue to expand, and it was just more than the city needed to be handling. When he found out it wasn't going to cost him anything, he said that he'd take it, so I transferred it over to him.

TS: It's a great service.

GG: Yes, the woman that I started it with, her name was Cheryl Schramm. She was a go-getter. Her husband was an attorney in Atlanta and she left me and went to, I forget now, but she transferred into the state department that was handling the senior citizens. I've forgotten what they called it. But she was quite a lady. She really worked hard and had some excellent ideas, good manager, she did well.

RB: They probably evolved into the Cobb Senior Services Center.

GG: That's exactly what it is.

RB: I did not know that; today's the first day I've heard that.

GG: Yes, Marietta Housing Authority started the program, first time it was ever done.

RB: We're carrying it on. I enjoy helping those seniors. Like you said, HUD takes the money, and we bought a couple vans.

GG: We didn't cover Henderson Arms. Of course, you know all about Henderson Arms.

TS: I was wondering if we said everything you need to say about Henderson Arms. When did that begin?

GG: That was a HUD program, private enterprise partnered with it.

TS: I know Bill Kinney was involved with that.

GG: Yes, Bill had some property over there at Henderson Arms, or his mother did. I don't remember exactly the connection there because a fellow named [Bill] Hamby [was involved], and we subsidized the rents for them, of course.

TS: So it was privately built, but the Marietta Housing Authority subsidized rents for a certain percentage of people?

GG: Right. He managed it himself and operated it. We didn't have anything to do with the management of it.

TS: Do you know about what the percentage was that had subsidized rents?

GG: No, it was all developed.

TS: All of it was subsidized?

GG: Yes. I don't remember when the Housing Authority bought it from Hamby.

RB: It was built in '80. It wasn't but just a few years later, about '85 or '86.

GG: About the time I pulled out. I think I remember Larry Thompson telling me that they were buying it from him.

TS: Who replaced you when you retired?

GG: Larry Thompson.

TS: He stayed a long time then.

RB: I came in 2005, and Larry was there nineteen years. Did he work with the Housing Authority before he became executive director?

GG: No, he was director of personnel for the city.

RB: He went directly from that to the Housing Authority, okay.

TS: There haven't been that many directors of the Housing Authority.

GG: No. I don't recall all of them, but the first one was Paul Gregory. I don't remember the guy's name that was after him, and we had Ed Baskin, and Harry Williams took over from Ed Baskin. Baskin always thought that Harry got him fired, so Baskin got on the board, and he got Harry fired. That's just the way it went.

TS: So Harry would be number four and you would be number five?

GG: No, Frank Melson was five and I'm six.

TS: So that would make Ray number eight—only eight in seventy years. That's interesting. Did you move out here [on Atwood Drive] when this area was developing for the first time?

GG: No, not in the beginning. I lived over in east Marietta on little Stoney Brook Drive right behind Town and Country shopping center. I originally bought a house down in Fair Oaks, a small house in '49, and I was activated in the military in '50. So we stayed there and moved back there after I got out. I rented it to a captain out at the base while I was in the military. He moved out, and we moved back in, and then the family started growing, so then I bought the house over on Stoney Brook from a friend of mine, and we moved here in '64.

TS: In '64 was this area pretty established by then?

GG: Oh yes, it was. This was one of the last lots. I think the last one was the one on the opposite corner, and it was built after we bought this one.

TS: So you're the only one that's ever lived here.

GG: Yes. Warren Morgan built this house himself, and then his wife decided she didn't want a two-story house, so he put it up for sale, and then he moved up the street on St. Anne's and built another house, a tri-level house. So I had the house over there, and he advertised this for sale, and we came over and looked at it, and I told him we liked the house, but I had one to get rid of. He said, "Well, I'll give you 90 percent of the appraised value of your house and take on this." That's what he did, and we closed the deal. We paid \$34,000.00 for it.

TS: Well, thank you very much for the interview.

## INDEX

- Barrett, Ernest, 24
- Baskin, Ed, 36
- Beasley, Bill, 14
- Bedenfeld, Flo, 22-23
- Bell Auditorium and Bell Theater, 24
- Bramlett, C.W., 17
- Brooke, Edward (Senator), 29
  
- Chattahoochee Plantation, 33
- Colquitt, Al, M.D., 21
- Crane, Jack, 24, 26
  
- Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), 8-9, 18-20, 24, 28-29, 33-35
- Dobbins Air Reserve Base, 5
- Dodgen, Dorsey, 2
- Dorsey, Annie, 24, 31
  
- Enterkin, Jackie, 7
  
- First National Bank of Cobb County, 14
- Fortson, Luther, M.D., 22
  
- Georgia State University, 2-5
- GI Bill, 4
- Green, George H.
  - Childhood, 1
  - Father, 1-2
  - Brother, 1
  - Education in rural Cobb County, 1-2
  - College, 2-5
  - Military service, 3-5
  - Hired by Marietta Housing Authority (1958), 6
  - Appointed executive director, 7, 20-21
  - Service as executive director, 7-36
  - President, Georgia Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, 28
  - Residences in Cobb County, 36
- Gregory, Paul, 36
- Griffin, Jack, 24, 26
- Griffin, Marvin (Governor), 15
  
- Hamby, Bill, 35
- Hardage Dairy Farm, Marietta, 12
- Higginbotham, Jim, 9
- Housing Community Development Act (Section 8), 25-26

Hubert, O.C., 12  
Hunter, Dick, 23  
Hunter, Stanley, 23

Kennesaw Junior College, 17  
Kern, Bob, 17  
Kinney, Bill, 35

Marietta Commercial Bank, 14  
Marietta High School, 2  
Marietta Hospital, 13  
Marietta Housing Authority (MHA)  
    Original headquarters in Clay Homes, 6  
    Housing projects  
        Clay Homes, 6-7, 30  
        Branson Homes, 8, 19-20  
        Johnny Walker Homes, 10-11, 23, 30  
        Marietta Place, 13-18, 24, 26  
        Lyman Homes, 30  
        Fort Hill Homes, 30  
        Boston Homes, 30  
    Central office on Lawrence Street, 8  
    Board members, 9, 21-22, 28, 31  
    Urban renewal projects  
        Louisville community (R-16) and Henderson Arms, 9-11  
        Road from Page to Clay Street (part of Marietta Loop), 10-11  
        Baptist Town community (R-69) and James Street, 11-13  
        R-106 in downtown Marietta, 14  
        Urban renewal staff, 33-34  
    Section 8 housing, 24-26, 30  
    Glover Park renovation, 24-25  
    Payments to City of Marietta, 26-27  
    Operating expenses through rents and HUD, 28-29  
    Changes in tenants over time, 29-31  
    Court case involving incorporation of City of Elizabeth, 32  
    Start of Cobb Senior Services with MHA, 34  
McGill, George, 22  
Melson, Frank, 20, 36  
Miller, Jim, 34  
Morgan, Warren, 36  
Mountain View School (Cobb County), 1-2  
  
Schramm, Cheryl, 34  
Sohn, Louis, 21-22  
Southern Polytechnic State University (Southern Tech), 15-17  
Squadron Officers School, Montgomery, AL, 5

Thompson, Larry, 35

University of Georgia, Atlanta Division, 2-5

Williams, Harry, 7, 21, 36

Willingham, Harold, 15-16, 27

Wilson, Hattie, 31

Wilson, Joe Mack, 33

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