

Marshall Public Library – Oral Histories Project
Carol Stanfield Halloran
Interviewed by Damian Macey April 24, 2015

Transcribed by Doug Duzan – April 2017

D: Today I'm visiting with Carol Halloran in her lovely home on the west side of Marshall, and with that, we'll hear from Carol.

C: I'm very nervous about doing this but we'll see how it goes because it's been a good life in Marshall. I was born in Robinson, Illinois in 1938. My Mom and Dad were Thelma and Percy Stanfield. My Dad was twenty years older than my Mom and I was the first child. So when I was born my Dad was 42 and my Mom was 22. I have a brother, Don Stanfield who was born two years later, and then in ten more years my sister Patty was born. We lived in West Union for the first four years of my life, then we moved to Marshall to north eighth street, so I've lived in Marshall off and on for a very long time. During my married life my family lived in West Union and my children went to school in Marshall and I taught school at Marshall. I taught kindergarten and loved every bit of it. This is my home. This is where I really love to be able to go to the store or for a walk on the street and I know people and people know me and there are so many good people here, it's just nice to be a part of that. I lived on the north side of town and we had several children in my neighborhood, the Forsyth's, Jerry, John, Jeanne....Damian (interviewer) was actually part of the neighborhood for a while...Allen Lee, Charlie Brill at one time, we had a good childhood I think. During the time we were young the Marshall Pool was built so that opened a lot of doors that hadn't been there before. My Dad thought if I went to the pool everyday that people would think that I didn't have enough to do at home, so I had limited access to do that. My parents were Christians, they did actively belong to a church, but there was a Mrs. Beard, I don't remember her first name, that lived where Terry and Maryanne Stepp live now (808 Spruce St) that started me when I was five years old going to the Methodist Church (corner 7th and Plum St), so I went on my own and she took me to church and that really became a church home for me and I loved it there too. In junior high school Carol Curran Sullivan became my dearest friend, I told her that's she's influenced my life more than anybody I know and she lived on a farm where the current Wal-Mart is located on the east side of Il Rte 1 between the Pennsylvania railroad tracks and Interstate 70. We used to ride horses all over the place. I loved to go and milk cows, I'd go and help put the milking machines on, I even liked to wash the buckets. Her Mom made the best angel food cakes, it was just a wonderful place, the Curran's made me feel like I was one of them. One of the things that I remember about the horses, is that the day that we had baccalaureate Carol and Ray Greenlee, Jerry Chunsun, Dorothy Reedy, and I rode horses all day. We all came back with sunburns. I hadn't ridden horses as much as the rest of them and so my legs were just a little bit sore. It was baccalaureate that night and Ray Greenlee and I, the ceremony was at the Methodist Church, and Ray Greenlee and I were the first two to come in. When we sat down, thank heavens for the gowns because my legs were hurting so bad. They would start to spread a little bit, and I'd push them back. Those of you who might know Ray, he was a great guy. He came from a big family and he had every gift that a person could have. He was a person who lit up the room when he came into it, he was intellectual, he was athletic, a sense of humor...he'd nudge me and wanted to bust out laughing (at my predicament). He was another good friend. Let's see, I like to read a lot, I always did. One of the pastimes when I was young, oh I'm going back and forth and I apologize for that, I was out of school for six months in the third grade and I was supposed to stay in bed. Back then we had paper dolls and it seemed like I cut out a thousand paper dolls and their clothes. I had a friend, Theda Thompson who would bring my homework to me everyday and play with me everyday. I'm sure there are places where you wouldn't have friends who would do that for you. I left Marshall to go to college at Eastern Illinois University to become a teacher. At the end of my college education I had met somebody from Edgar County, Bernie Halloran, and we fell in love and got married so I lived in Paris for three years. Then we came back to West Union because of an opportunity to farm. There in West Union we raised five children that are my joy. But I was still involved with Marshall because my children came to school in Marshall and

I taught school in Marshall, so I am not getting away from Marshall that's for sure. My Kindergarten work was wonderful and my daughter followed in my footsteps and she is still teaching kindergarten.

We're going through some of the questions here, I think I told you that Carol Curran Sullivan was such a big influence in my life, so I would give her a lot of the credit for a lot of that (teaching). We were in high school in the 1950s, the teachers that we had were such a good influence. They weren't necessarily our "buddies" but they were people that you wanted their respect. I think I can remember almost every teacher that I had while I was in school here. They are all gone now but I still have very fond memories of them.

D: Is there a situation in high school that you remember vividly, you mentioned baccalaureate obviously being a very memorable time, how about other things in high school or college?

C: I remember Mr. Hornbrook as being such a positive person and the camera science club that we had then and how much that he taught some of us. One of the things that I remember about high school is that in comparison to now, and each age has its own thing, in that particular time things were more practical. Clothing was more practical, what we did for recreation...a lot of us played card games when we got together. We got together a lot out at the grove where (Harvey) Hurst lived east of Marshall, I kept telling them that they shouldn't cut down some of those trees because we used to have weiner roasts out there in the grove. There was a teacher at the high school that taught Spanish, Mr. Holler, and Mr. Holler lived across the street. We would do this of an evening and he would come over and tell "ghost" stories. He was a wonderful storyteller, he had gone to William & Mary College out in Virginia. He always directed our school plays and when he thought that the plays that were picked out didn't have enough characters in them he would write, off the cuff, additional characters for the plays. In Spanish class we would take down what he was saying so that we would have a script ready when he got done. I always seemed to get his "extra" character! I'm not much of a "ham" so that's what I should have gotten! Isn't it interesting, I think all my kids are "hams" I really think they are, and I'm not, I really wish I were, (chuckle)

D: Where were those plays held at that time?

C: They were held at the American Legion. And now of course the school is so much bigger, the enrollment is so much bigger than it was then, you wouldn't be able to hold a play at the American Legion now because it wouldn't accommodate such a large attendance.

D: As you were growing up, did you have particular duties around the home, chores that you were asked to do?

C: Well, I know I helped out, but as to a routine I'm not sure. I know I kept busy all the time, there was always something, I helped, I'm sure of that. I don't remember particularly specific duties. I know one of the advantages that I had over my children is that we lived a block from the front door of the high school so I could be there for everything and I was so I kept busy like that. Something that I think that...um, you were, were you (Damian) in Martinsville at the time of the tornado?

D: No, that was right when we moved. Because we lived just a block and a half from the high school and were moving at the time that the tornado hit.

C: Was your home hurt?

D: The windows were all damaged on the west side and the roof, but no real structural damage.

C: I don't know, we were straight east of the high school only a block and I don't know that we had any damage.

D: We were a little north on Cypress Street and it seemed like maybe that was kind of the tail end of the line of damage. I remember the beautiful towers on the front of the high school were damaged and of course the auditorium was completely destroyed. So I remember seeing the devastation there afterwards.

C: I think the whole town was there afterwards. I was just reading here in Bob Tapscott's book, it said that day they had gone to the...there was a theater uptown at that time, and that it was Good Friday and they had gone to the theater and were sitting through a Roy Rogers movie and came out and all the devastation they had to go through to get home. So they evidently sat through the movie and were oblivious of what was going on. Do you remember going to the theater there?

D: Oh my, yes!

C: I loved Roy Rogers, he was a cowboy actor and Dale Evans was his wife and Trigger was his horse...but that was just the thing you did on Friday night or Saturday afternoon, everybody in town went to the movies.

D: And there was Hopalong Cassidy, Gene Autry and Smiley Burnett, and as I recall the cost of a ticket for youth or student was nine cents! So I went about everytime I could.

C: There was a man that his wife was a relative of my Dad that worked for me and it's Diane Strohm's grandfather, Willie Bounds' Dad, Tim Bounds was his name, and to me he looked JUST like Roy Rogers...he had those eyes that crinkled up when he smiled and I just loved him because he looked just like Roy Rogers! We never saw any movies like they have now, there weren't any aliens it was pretty straight forward.

D: Well you remember too, and that was the Strand Theater, that on Friday night and maybe Saturday too, there was a serial, it ended and left you "up in the air", so you just had to come back the next week to see what happens next.

C: Absolutely! One of the others things that we did as teenagers, and they don't do it now, we are so fortunate to have the City Band and have them play the summer concerts, and when I go there now there's hardly ever any teenagers there. It was the place to go and the thing to do to walk around the courthouse square, we all did, on Friday evening, listen to the music and visit, get a Coke at the Candy Kitchen, maybe some ice cream at Rademaker's, a soda at Keefer's, I guess it was just a much simpler time. Sometimes now I feel bad for the kids, it seems now that it's necessary to go to Indianapolis or someplace to hear a music concert.

D: I always enjoyed the City Band, I played in that for 35 years straight and I retired a few years ago, I decided it was time to leave it to the next generation. You're mentioning some things that were around town, and I remember that your Dad had some businesses in town, could you tell us about those?

C: Sure, Dad was a businessman, he sold Studebaker cars...and Allis-Chalmers tractors...and he had a furniture store and clothing store that were together...and he was the person in town that sold and built National Homes and I see National Homes in Marshall, Paris, Terre Haute, Robinson and I think I can spot them. They would be very much a beginner home or for retired folks, they were a very basic economy home. He has some farm acreage, he was the business part, he wasn't the one on the tractors, he had the acreage. What we did most Sundays and anytime he got you in the car with him, we were running from field to field, that's just what we did.

D: You might say where those businesses were.

C: The furniture store and the clothing store were located where the library is today (north side of Archer Ave between 6th and 7th Streets) and the Allis-Chalmers/Studebaker dealership is where the Dollar General Store is now (southwest corner of Il Rte 1 and Locust Street). And at one point in time he had an interest in the Keystone (café)

and Tom's Restaurant for just a short while. He was on the Board of Directors of First National Bank and he was Mayor of Marshall, but I don't remember very much about that.

D: And the CityHall and Library at that time were right across from Tom's Restaurant, ie: on the north side of Archer Ave just east of 7th Street. You remember that, I know. I enjoyed going upstairs to the library, I liked reading and mother was a teacher so I made regular trips up there. When you think about it today, it was a small antiquated library.

C: Well, this isn't Marshall, but when I was at West Union I was on the board of the library there...I love our library here in Marshall, it is absolutely gorgeous, it is, I love it! ...the West Union library where I was on the board before, they were more of a struggling library with limited space and so forth, but the people that work there, it's as much a community center as it is a library. Libraries are a great place as long as they have those books! I'm not much into the electronic gadgets, I want my book where I can turn the pages!

D: You haven't gotten into the "ebooks" then apparently.

C: No I haven't, I've fought that, and if you'd see the bookshelves here you'd understand that, I've got a pile of books, I have so many books in there to read that I...

D: We're the same way, in fact Eleanor has starting weeding out some of our books, we've given over 300 books to the Friends of the Library for their sale, I think we've got another 200 in boxes!

C: Sometimes I'm not sure how the new bookstores make it almost, because...I'm on the board out at the Food and Clothing Bank, that's another great place that Marshall has, but there are so many books there that people have donated and donated books at the library that, uh...my problem would be sorting out because I like them all!

D: I'm sure we still have 1500 books on shelves, I'd much rather read than watch television...over the span of quite a few years that you've mentioned, is there a particular hobby you've had, in addition to reading?

C: Well, I love to walk...and...I used to sew but I don't do that anymore, unless my kids give me something to mend...I love to walk and I need to get back into the habit, time has been against me here a little bit. Lots of times I walk just zig zagging all across Marshall, but I have some other favorite places in Vigo, Crawford and Clark Counties, the parks and so forth. I like to travel when I can.

D: Is there a particular person or an event that has really changed your life?

C: I think the most important thing that's changed my life is my five children, because I never knew how much love there could be...I think I was spoiled as a child. But when you get married...we had our children pretty close together...it wasn't about "things" anymore. They just added to my life.

D: Some of them live here in Marshall and some of them are away.

C: Well, not too far away...Laurie is near Martinsville, Bernie is in Terre Haute, Kathy is in West Union, she built a house where we raised the children, Mike lives at Bloomington, Illinois, and Karen lives down by Hutsonville. I have eleven grandchildren, and I have three great-grandchildren. Laurie's stepdaughter has three children. I think I have the best of all worlds because what they've added to my life and teaching kindergarten...there's so many perks to that job, I just can't tell you. It's a lot of work, it's very physical, but the children that have grown up that I have had, and the caring and appreciation they have shown me...when a 6'5" man walks up to you and gives you a big hug...and that's just an example of some of the perks. Now my last kindergarten class has graduated last spring so I don't have so much of a tie...but I go back to help Kathy sometimes.

D: Is there a historical event somewhere in the world that influenced your thinking in your life?

C: Ummm...let me think on that just a minute...I think, and maybe for most of us, the destruction in New York City (Sept 11, 2001) changed the whole world. I feel like...our world in the 1950s...we need to cherish every minute that we have. The hatred that's here sometimes...you need to think positively...you can be frightened sometimes about what our children and grandchildren will have to deal with.

D: Well, you and I both grew up in what was kind of the end of World War II, there was the aftermath of that. But I think you hit a key point that, we really lived through a great time, people were positive they were upbeat, good economic conditions...it seems like now we've kinda put it in reverse with all the problems in the world and ISIS and all that...my gosh, where are we going?

C: Yes, it's scary.

D: I suppose we've all got a favorite invention, there has sure been a lot changed in the world, is there a particular appliance, a particular invention that you'd say, "my goodness I couldn't live without it"?

C: Well, I'd have to say number one my car...I do like to put the miles on it and just take off...I love to take off and drive off down through Southern Indiana, I like the rolling hills and everything. After that it would be my washing machine and clothes dryer, those are my personal favorites.

D: You mentioned your Dad and I remember his Studebaker dealership, have you ever had a particular love for a Studebaker?

C: Just that it's associated with my Dad, that's the biggest thing. You don't hear about them much anymore but when I do I kinda...in fact it was kind of a nickname in high school...Studebaker, (chuckle). When I hear of them it makes me think of my Dad, we used to sing in the car..."Daisy, Daisy"... "I want a girl just like the girl that married dear old Dad"...a lot of those old songs that we sang while we were going from place to place. I think I mentioned that my Dad started his family when he was 42, so when we started having our family he just thought that was just really something. He liked to come down when I was getting things all ready for the day, he really enjoyed that. I wish he'd lived longer and I'm glad my Mom did. My kids would have been spoiled I'm sure!

D: I do remember your Dad pretty well, and I remember my parents, when he had the furniture store, bought a Kelvinator refrigerator. We were in the store and my Dad had parked out in front and the meter maid came along and put a ticket on our car because the meter had expired. Your Dad said, "Oh, don't worry about that, we'll take care of that", he went out and took care of it right on the spot with the meter maid.

C: Young people today can't really relate to Archer Avenue having parking meters, right!?

D: You mentioned that you like to travel, is there a place you've been that really caught you and maybe you'd like to go again someday?

C: Hmmm...well, after my husband passed, I wanted to do something special with my grandkids. I wanted to take them two at a time, on a trip. Kathy's daughters, Kasey and Kory decided that they wanted to go to New York City. So we went to New York City and we did get to see the center (World Trade Center) but we couldn't see much because so much of the building is below ground level. We went on the bus tours around the city, and to Central Park and rode bicycles, we went out to the Statue of Liberty. So the next year when it was the next two's turn, they wanted to go to New York City too! So five years in a row, last year was my last, we've gone to New York City, so I've got to see the tower after it's completion. I loved that, we've gone to a Broadway show each year, we eat cheap and see a lot, I just love those bus tours around the city. B. J. Livingston, he was in my son Mike's class in high

school, was a performer in the Broadway show “Mama Mia” and we saw him in the production of “Our Town”. We did that play in high school English class. Those trips to New York were just the absolute wonderful trips that I’ve ever taken. As to where I might like to go, someplace far away, Hawaii is the furthest I’ve ever been, maybe Ireland, I think I’d like to go there. Oh, and I’ve been to the southern part of Michigan and I’d like to go further north there, I’ve heard it’s beautiful.

D: Carol, it’s been great visiting with you, I remember your parents and of course the rest of your family, and you’ve been a big part of St. Mary’s Church too for a number of years. If you were traveling to one of the places you mentioned, say Ireland, and you were talking to someone there and you were telling them you were from Marshall, Illinois, knowing they’d have no idea, what would you tell them about Marshall.

C: Well, I’d tell them that Marshall is a small town, it’s a very beautiful town I think, it has a lot of caring people, I think for the most part we have a good education system, we have a wonderful library, we have good music programs, in the schools there are programs that are beyond anything that we did when I was a student. This is a wonderful place to live.

D: It’s been a pleasure visiting with you and you’ve certainly filled us in on some things that your family has been involved with over the years, your family’s businesses, selling Studebakers and I think that is about where the Dollar General Store is located now (Southwest corner at 7th and Locust). We appreciate you participating in our oral history program here through the Marshall Public Library, thank you very much!