

MAURICE JONES

Interview 209a

August 20, 2010, at The History Center, Diboll, Texas

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ABSTRACT: In this interview with Patsy Colbert, Temple High School graduate and Diboll native Maurice Jones discusses his school years attending Diboll's segregated schools, playing football and basketball, and race relations in town. Mr. Jones talks about the integration process that began as he was finishing school and the issues he and his fellow athletes dealt with during that time. He mentions his brother Johnnie and his sister Minnie Faye, two star athletes who integrated into Diboll High School. He also discusses growing up in a segregated, but harmonious town. Mr. Jones mentions Coach Seals, Mr. Massey, and Coach Simmons, as well as the last Temple Tigers football game against Wiergate.

Patsy Colbert (hereafter PC): Today's date is August 20, 2010. I'm Patsy Colbert and I'm here at the History Center with Mr. Maurice Jones and we are going to do an oral history interview today about the H. G. Temple High School and the Temple Tigers. Mr. Jones if we could just begin by telling me when and where you were born.

Maurice Jones (hereafter MJ): I was born in Lufkin, Texas in 1947.

PC: Okay, and who are your parents?

MJ: Vera and Marcellus Jones.

PC: Okay, and what did your father do for a living?

MJ: He worked at a dry cleaners.

PC: He was the owner of that at some point wasn't he?

MJ: He worked at a dry cleaner when he got out of the army up until '69 or '70 when he built his own cleaners.

PC: Okay, and what was the name of his business?

MJ: Diboll Cleaners.

PC: Okay, and so what year did you start to school?

MJ: I started school in...had to be 1950...had to be '54.

PC: Okay, and did you start to school at the Diboll Colored School, or the Temple School?

MJ: Yes ma'am, the Temple School.

PC: Okay, you were born in Lufkin but have you lived in Diboll most of your life?

MJ: All my life.

PC: All your life, okay. Did your mother work?

MJ: Yes, she worked during the earlier part of the year she did babysitting and housework then later on she hooked up with Temple and started working for Temple.

PC: Okay, and what year did you graduate?

MJ: In 1966.

PC: And, you graduated from H. G. Temple High School?

MJ: Yes.

PC: And, what activities did you participate in at H. G. Temple?

MJ: I played football, basketball and ran track.

PC: Okay, and we know from a photograph, and we are looking at the 1966 H.G. Temple Tigers football team and you were on this team. This was the last year of the Temple Tigers before integration.

MJ: Right.

PC: Tell me, you graduated in '66 and so, you played under... which coaches did you play under?

MJ: I started out up under Herbert Allen. Matter of fact, when I was in the seventh and eighth grade I played on the high school team, but I couldn't suit up. They used me for practice bait.

PC: Okay, okay.

MJ: When I got to be a freshman in high school I played first string line backer.

PC: Okay, well we know from the records that the Temple Tigers were a great team. They had an outstanding record. So, tell me just a little bit about your football days at H. G. Temple?

MJ: Well, I started out in the seventh and eighth grade as practice bait. But, the practice bait they used to call us the chain gang, you know, that was the name they called us. That is just what we were, we were the chain gang. We would work on the first teamers. We would hit them so hard that we had the coach, Coach Allen, jumping up and down “don’t hit Don Deberry like that” you know, because Don was the star athlete back then. But, boy we would put his ankles where his ears supposed to be. (laughing) We were some hard hitting little rascals. (laughter)

PC: Okay.

MJ: But, the coldest part about it is that we had to play forty-eight minutes. We didn’t come out of the game, couldn’t come out of the game. See what I’m saying?

PC: You played straight.

MJ: Both ways.

PC: For that amount of time?

MJ: Yes, all the way through.

PC: Was that because you didn’t have any relief players, or enough to make the team?

MJ: No relief players or enough guys to make the team. That is the way we had to do it.

PC: Now, you mentioned Herbert Allen being the coach when you first started.

MJ: My first coach.

PC: And, we know in 1962 that Coach Allen resigned from H. G. Temple.

MJ: He resigned in ’62, right.

PC: Can you tell me anything about that situation, why he resigned?

MJ: Because, I tell you why, because the team that we had in ’61-62 they went to the semi finals in football so, Coach Allen thought that the team that was coming up the next year wasn’t going to be as good as the team that he had before. So, he left us and he went to Anahuac and Coach Willie Chris and Coach Archie Seals came in to coach us and we went ten and one.

PC: That was in that ’62-63 year?

MJ: Yes, we lost out to Mineola in the bi-district but during regular season we went 10 and 0.

PC: Okay, now were these the same coaches until through '66, that last year?

MJ: No ma'am, Coach Chris he left us, he coached two years. He coached in '62 and '63 and he coached in '63 and '64. Coach Early, Coach Samuel Harvey came in '64 and '65.

PC: Coach Harvey?

MJ: Coach Samuel Harvey.

PC: Okay, '64 and 65. Now tell me his first name again.

MJ: Samuel.

PC: Okay.

MJ: Samuel Harvey.

PC: Okay, where did he come here from do you know?

MJ: He came here from Prairie View.

PC: Okay, and was he just here that one school year?

MJ: That one year, and then my senior year Coach Seals and Coach Early Overstreet coached us.

PC: And that was?

MJ: 1965 and '66.

PC: Okay, and also Coach Willie Ross was his assistant in '62 and he left at the same time.

MJ: He left the same time Coach Allen left. He left and he went to Dunbar.

PC: Okay, were they just offered better positions at other schools or was there any particular reason that they left pertaining to H. G. Temple?

MJ: I was thinking, my perception on that was they left because they didn't think we was going to be as good of a team and they took better positions elsewhere.

PC: Okay.

MJ: He went to Anahuac and Coach Ross went up here to Dunbar. Of course, Coach Ross got a couple of state championships up under his back, under his belt up there at Dunbar up under Coach Elmer Redd.

PC: Right. Now, you started to school around, you said 1954, and we know the school, they built a new school building in 1953, did you start to school in the new school building?

MJ: I started to school in the new building.

PC: Okay, well I guess that was a pretty big deal to be...for them to get the new school and that was your first school year. So, you got to go...had it already been there or was that the first year of the new school, your first grade or had it already been there one year?

MJ: It had already been there one year.

PC: But it was still a brand new school when you started. Anything particular you remember standing out in your mind about the school then?

MJ: Yes, the first day of school I can remember my mother fixed me my lunch to take to school and she gave me an apple to give to Mrs. Massey, the first grade teacher. So, on the way out of the house my grandmother always had a strap. And, I took the strap, grandma's strap and I took it to school with me and when I got to school I gave Mrs. Massey the apple and I told Mrs. Massey I say, "Here Mrs. Massey here you a strap so you can whoop these little bad kids with." By the time we went out to recess and came back in I was the only one that got a whooping with my own strap. (laughter) That was the first day of school.

PC: You got a whooping the first day of school with your own strap.

MJ: I got a whooping with my own strap.

PC: Now, that is quite a story.

MJ: Okay, now check this out though. So, after school I went to Mrs. Massey, everybody leave out of school, I went back in Mrs. Massey's room and I guess you would call it stealing, but I went in that drawer and I got that strap out of there and instead of me taking the strap and maybe just throw it away I took it back home. My first cousin, Marva Summer, we both were in the first grade, so she done went home and told grandma I got a whooping with her strap at school on the first day of school. And when I got back home I was going to take the strap and just throw it down. Grandma was sitting there playing like she was asleep and when I took the strap out of my shorts to put it down she seen me. And I got another whooping.

PC: For taking her strap to school. (laughter)

MJ: For taking her strap. (laughter)

PC: So, you were under Mr. Massey the principal then and what do you remember about him that you can share with me?

MJ: Mr. Massey was one of the finest math teachers you could ever want to run across and he taught us math all the way through elementary all the way through high school. He was a fine man! He really was.

PC: Okay, now do you remember anything about the school colors changing?

MJ: When I got there...when I was in the seventh and eighth grade they had five green jerseys and they had three purple jerseys. So, by me being in the seventh grade the guys in the eighth grade say, ya'll going to get the purple jerseys. They thought they was going to make the first team, be on the first team in basketball 'cause we in the seventh grade. But, myself and Wayne Gordon we made the first team, elementary basketball team in the seventh grade. So, I never wore purple and white.

PC: We know in the early years the school colors were green and white after they acquired accreditation in '42 or '43.

MJ: It was purple and white.

PC: They were green and white first.

MJ: They were? Then they changed it?

PC: Then at some point in the sixties we think the colors changed to purple and white.

MJ: No, that ain't correct there. They was purple and white like when my mother and father were going to school the school colors were purple and white. And then somewhere along in there they changed it to Kelly green and white. We finished in Kelly green and white.

PC: Okay, you were green and white when you graduated?

MJ: It was green and white when I graduated; it was green and white when I started in '59 and '60.

PC: Do you know why the colors changed?

MJ: From what I gather Mr. Massey gave Herbert Allen permission to get some new uniforms and, the uniforms that Mr. Allen chose and picked out that is how the green and white came in. Because right now you got for say Jim Ligon, J. L. Rhone and all those guys back there they don't wear green and white. They wear purple and white because when they finished with Temple that is what the school colors were then. So, one year we

was making purple and white for older Tigers and the new Tigers we wore the green and white.

PC: So, when you graduated in '66 what color were y'all?

MJ: Green and white.

PC: Green and white, okay. What is your educational background after graduation?

MJ: I did three years at Texas Southern University.

PC: Okay, and then you came back to Diboll?

MJ: Yes.

PC: And have you been here ever since?

MJ: Ever since.

PC: Were you living here in Diboll at the time of full integration in '68?

MJ: Yes, I was.

PC: Okay. We know Freedom of Choice began in 1965 and then the athletics were integrated, the senior boys came over to the white school and then fall of '67 the H. G. Temple High School was integrated and then fall of '68 was full integration. Were you living here during those few years?

MJ: Yes ma'am.

PC: Now, what race relations did you experience growing up in Diboll as far as before integration your experience of being around the white community?

MJ: We was like stars. We were like professional football players to some of the white kids. When we would come to the white football players, they played on Friday night and we played on Saturday nights at Lumberjack stadium, and when the Temple Tigers would come to the football field the little white kids would come up to us and ask us for our autographs in high school or they would want to tote our helmets and stuff like that.

PC: Because you were popular because you had a good record?

MJ: We were popular and we had a good record, very good record.

PC: Okay. So, your saying on Friday night the lumberjacks played, the white football team and y'all would go to the football game on Friday night?

MJ: Right.

PC: And, you were received well?

MJ: Received well, never had no problems.

PC: And then on Saturday night you are saying the Temple Tigers played on the same field.

MJ: On the same field.

PC: And then would the white community come to watch your games?

MJ: If they wanted to see some good football they would be in the stadium, they would be there.

PC: Okay, and did everybody get along?

MJ: Everybody got along. Never had no racial problems or nothing, I never experienced any kind of racial problems here in Diboll. All my life I never had a racial problem. And one of the main reasons that the racial...they had a problem one time in '67 when they first started, '67 or '66 and my brother Johnny Carl they had a riot at the white school and my brother Johnny Jones, he calmed everything. He come in between everybody and he settled it out, settled it out, you know.

PC: Well, we know he was one of the first black students to attend the Diboll white school. That was the year they integrated the athletic program which was the year after you graduated. So, you were on the last Temple Tiger team. So, you are saying that he helped to calm the situation down.

MJ: He calmed it down. He come in between all of them and got everything squared off and everything. That was the only racial, really racial problem they had in the beginning and he stopped it from getting out of hand. They had a big write up one time in the paper about that.

PC: Okay, okay. Well, how did you come to know about integration?

MJ: How did I come to know about it was in '65 when Coach Seals didn't come to coach us and that is when we knew that you could go on your own to the white school. But, after we found out that we had to go six weeks without playing football then we backed up and went back to the black school where we could play football.

PC: Okay.

MJ: Because if we would have integrated in '65 we had to go to school for six weeks and then if you passed you would be able to play sports. So, we didn't take that

opportunity, we didn't take that chance so we just went on back to the black school. Then we went six-three and one.

Digital recorder ran out of memory, had to switch recorders.

PC: Okay we are picking back up now with Mr. Maurice Jones. You were sharing with me about the football team and mostly about your brother Johnny Jones and his experience that first year with integration. And that what few problems they had he was able to help. He was more the peace maker is what you are saying.

MJ: He was; that is right.

PC: How did you feel personally about integration? You know, you were in school in 1965 you were a junior I guess. In the fall of '65 you were a senior when they first did the Freedom of Choice and even though you graduated before full integration, how did you personally feel about the schools integrating?

MJ: I wanted to play with the white boys for the simple reason we didn't have enough black guys to make a whole team, you know because we didn't have substitutes or nothing like that, you know. If I got hurt or something like that I had to play hurt, you know, regardless of what. I never forget we was playing Dayton one night and a guy hit me and bust my eye wide open, I couldn't even come out the game. Coach had to come on the field and they had that spray on bandage then, back then they sprayed my eye and taped it up. Had to stay in the game, they taped it up and couldn't come out.

PC: Well that leads to one of my questions. In a Free Press article dated August 25, 1966 Mr. Massey had told the school board that he only had 13 boys for football for the upcoming season, which would have been the year after you graduated. And that was not enough to play an adequate schedule but that the program was needed to prevent further drop outs from the school. Do you know why the number of athletes had dropped so low? Because the previous year, your last year, according to this photograph here there is 20 football players here.

MJ: Okay.

PC: And, then the next year he reports to the school board that there are only thirteen. Do you have any idea of why there was such a drop in the numbers?

MJ: Okay, it was only three seniors on the sixty-six team.

PC: Okay.

MJ: It was only three seniors and a couple like James Jones here, the next year he moved away, he moved to Houston. A couple more guys moved away that is why it dropped down to thirteen.

PC: Okay.

MJ: A lot of other guys that were playing they were only playing because we encouraged them to come play, you know. A lot of these guys, these little bitty small guys here they couldn't get in the game 'cause they was too small. We just used them for, just to have substitutes on the sideline, you know. They couldn't fight the fire, you know.

Note: (looking at the 1966 Temple Tiger football team photograph)

PC: Okay, well due to that the school board voted to integrate the athletic program in the fall of '66 and that is when the senior boys, including your brother Johnny, went over to play at the white school. I was just curious if there was any reason for the drop in numbers. That is really the reason they integrated the football team was due to Mr. Massey's being concerned about not being able to have the football program. So, that was just an interesting fact I thought, the numbers dropped he just didn't have enough for the team.

MJ: That is right.

PC: But with your experience playing y'all had low numbers too. You really didn't have enough to fill in if someone got hurt.

MJ: Right, we had to play forty-eight minutes.

PC: Now, was there a time in school where in any of your classes that you took the numbers were low and they had to combine classes or bring students to make enough to have a certain class? Do you remember anything about that?

MJ: Yes, our senior year we had six boys and six girls, so we had 12 seniors my senior year.

PC: Okay and you graduated in '66?

MJ: Yes.

PC: Can you name your graduating class?

MJ: Yes I can, the boys was Maurice Jones, Wayne Gordon, Leonard Teal, Jimmy Lee Hunt, James Ligon, and Roosevelt Young. Those were the six boys. The six girls were Lois Davis, Betty Jo Jackson, Eunice Ann, Glenda Gambrell, Annie Pearl Daniels, there is one more girl, one more girl. I can't think of her right now.

PC: Okay, well maybe you'll think of her. We are able to compile a list of the graduating classes, you know, so we will have that for the record so. Okay, well how did your parents feel about integration? You had younger siblings in school and so just being at home even though you were graduating and, you know, was there any talk at home

about the next school year with the high school integrating. Because your sister Minnie Faye went to high school at the white School her senior year so, what was the talk at home about how your parents felt and how your brothers and sisters felt about integration taking place?

MJ: Well it was something that I felt they never did talk that much about it because it was a new experience. When Johnny, see Johnny came first, see when Johnny integrated in '66 Minnie was still at Temple, you know. But, Johnny he was always a super student and he was a super athlete. Once he got over there and they watched him go through the transition, the transactions that he had to go through then everything just smoothed out.

PC: Okay.

MJ: Because after that first ruffle that the white kids and the black kids started at the riot and Johnny just come in between them and got all the black guys back and got the white guys back and he stood in there between them and he just squashed everything. After he did that just seem like integration in Diboll went smoother here than I know anywhere else.

PC: Okay. I guess the reason I'm asking the question is because of the fact that you did have an older brother at the white school, and then you and your sisters were still at Temple School so, you know, I'm thinking of the evening when everybody came home from school, you know. Johnny was going through integration already so I was just curious to what the conversation was at home that night if there were any big issues that he was concerned about or shared with integration. That was my reason for the question since your family had children in all of the situations that were going on. So, he pretty much set the stage and y'all really didn't have any fears about it?

MJ: No, sure didn't.

PC: Okay, okay, now you graduated in '66 and I wanted to ask you anything particular you want to share with me about a specific football game that is very memorable to you during your H. G. Temple Tiger days?

MJ: The Wiergate game, the Wiergate game.

PC: Okay, tell me about that.

MJ: That is the last game that was ever played for the H. G. Temple High School.

PC: Oh okay.

MJ: And, we went to Wiergate and when we got off the bus at Wiergate, Wiergate football team came over to the bus. You know how when you pull in they want to come size you up and everything so, Wiergate football players they all came over to see us get off the bus. And, when they seen us, there wasn't but 16 of us at this game got off the

bus. The sixteen guys got off the bus the Wiergate football players they came over and they asked us they say, "Where is y'all football team at?" You see what I'm saying. They say, "Where you football team at?" And Coach Seals said, "This is us." They started laughing, they laughed at us, started grinning. They thought they had a piece of cake. We didn't have not one man on this team here, this the last of us, nobody on this team weighed 200 pounds. You feel me? Wiergate had 25 men weighed 250 pounds or more and together they had 35 people on their football team. We only had 16 and when we come off the field the score was 20-20. And, why this game is so memorable to me, I never knew when the game was over this guy said, "Man we beat y'all, we beat y'all." I say, "Man, how you beat us when the score is 20-20?" I didn't know that I was talking to Ernie Holmes, Ernie Holmes of the Pittsburg Steelers with two super bowl rings. After the game was over we always, we could eat steaks, chicken or whatever we wanted after the basketball game. All we had to do was just tell them what we wanted. But since we was in...that was in Diboll but when we was at Wiergate we liked hot dogs. We liked to eat hot dogs after the football game. You see what I'm saying. We just wanted hot dogs. We didn't want no steaks and chicken so, I went to the window to see what they was serving so, they was serving spaghetti and ground meat, you know. I got my plate. He say, "Oh man we don't eat no stuff like this." Not knowing Ernie Holmes and not knowing he know me. Now, Ernie Holmes he was 265 pounds and you know what he called me? He said "Big Jones, Big Jones, give me your plate." And I walked over to Ernie Holmes and I held my paper plate and I dumped them spaghettis off in his plate. He said, "Thank you, thank you Big Jones." I weighed 175 pounds and he weighed 265 and he calling me a big man.

PC: And that was after the Wiergate game?

MJ: That was after the Wiergate game.

PC: And that was a football game and the score was 20-20. So, they left it a tie?

MJ: 20-20, they left it a tie. We could have kicked the extra point and won the game but the cross bar was so high up it was like a homemade goal post. We couldn't kick the extra point to beat them. It went down as a tie.

PC: Now, what was one of the Temple Tigers best year in the record during the days that you played?

MJ: My freshman year we went ten and one, we were bi-district champs.

PC: Okay, bi-district champs. Was that as far as you could go then?

MJ: No, we lost out in the bi-district game.

PC: Okay, in the district game.

MJ: Yes.

PC: So, you didn't know you were playing against a professional, future professional player?

MJ: Never knew it.

PC: Now, growing up here in Diboll and again we are talking about the years of integration, did you ever experience any race related incidents within the community?

MJ: No, I tell you what, what brought Diboll together as far as integration and experiences and stuff like that is when the sawmill burned down. I wished I knew exactly what year the sawmill burned down.

PC: I believe it was 1968 or '69.

MJ: Okay, that year there Diboll showed their true colors. When the blacks and the whites came together everybody was racing around out there around that sawmill trying to save it and help put the fire out. That is when the true colors really came out in Diboll.

PC: Okay, well the men working in the sawmill, the sawmill was pretty much integrated anyway.

MJ: Right, right, but when the fire, when the mill burned down and you seen the whites and the blacks and Spanish people wasn't hardly here then. You see what I'm saying.

PC: Right, so what you're saying everybody just came together and worked together as one and you just remember that from the sawmill fire. Everybody working together it really made an impression on you.

MJ: Right, right.

PC: Okay.

MJ: I mean that is when Diboll, we never did...well we had the Pine Bough here and we knew that when we go to the Pine Bough we knew we had to go to the back to give our order.

PC: Right.

MJ: We knew when we went to the picture show here we knew we had to go upstairs, you see what I'm saying.

PC: You just knew that was the normal and everybody was fine with that.

MJ: That was the normal way and everybody was fine with that.

PC: Okay.

MJ: We had a Dairy Queen in Diboll before Dairy Queen become Dairy Queen.

PC: Yes, it was the Dairy Kream.

MJ: The Dairy Kream, yes okay, the Dairy Kream.

PC: Yes, it was over there by the old Monk Warner station.

MJ: Right, right. Well we knew that the whites go around to the front window and we knew the blacks go around to the side window. So, there wasn't no problem with that.

PC: Okay, okay.

MJ: You see what I'm saying.

PC: Right.

MJ: So, we dealt with what we had to deal with.

PC: Okay. Now, you were probably too little I guess since you were born...

MJ: In '47.

PC: In '47, you don't ever remember going to the commissary store I guess?

MJ: Yes I do!

PC: Oh, you do?

MJ: Yes, the commissary store right here, the big office.

PC: Well, it became the office later.

MJ: Yes, but that was the commissary store. We used to go in there, you know, sure did.

PC: What businesses do you remember going to as a young child in the black community?

MJ: In the black community we had a café and a store nearly on every corner.

PC: Had a lot of them huh?

MJ: I could name five, we had Mr. Mitchell's Café, we had Mrs. Marcellus she had a hamburger stand, we had the church cafeteria, we had Mr. Gene Clark, he had a little candy store, Mr. Pap Mathis had a hamburger stand. Mr. Joe Diamond on the pipeline he had a café, Mr. Artie Dewberry he had a little old store you go in and buy candy and so

forth. Mr. Charlie King had a café and Mr. Rodgers had the café and the hotel. Then Mr. Mitchell, that is about eight or nine and right now it's 2010 and it's not one store or anything over there. But, back then we had plenty of places to go to buy different things, items and stuff like that.

PC: Right, now you mentioned the Rodgers Café and it was a skating rink at one time too, so you remember that?

MJ: Right.

PC: But, you mentioned about it being a hotel and I was not aware of that until another recent interview. So, what do you remember about the hotel part of that?

MJ: The café was at the bottom and they had rooms that they rented out to people that wanted to live up there. They had about eight or nine rooms upstairs and they would rent them rooms out to people to live in.

PC: Okay, as a young child and going back just a second, you might have talked about this a little earlier, what experience did you have as a young child being around the white community?

MJ: My mother kept the Farley boys, so she would like babysit and she would bring Jimmy and his brother over. Jimmy Farley and what's the other boy... Tommy, Jimmy and Tommy Farley. You would read about them in the Diboll paper playing football. They was real small and mother would always bring Tommy and Jimmy to the house, you know and we would play with them. We never did have no problems or nothing like that.

PC: Okay.

MJ: Like going across the tracks or something like that. We never did be bothered or nobody never tried to mess with us.

PC: Okay, so you had white friends growing up?

MJ: White friends, yes.

PC: So, after integration what changes do you remember that maybe stand out the most to you, you know, that you...something you were able to do after integration that you had not been able to do before integration?

MJ: To go in the front doors, and especially at the Dairy Queen [Kream].

PC: Okay.

MJ: Because you know who owned the Dairy Queen don't you?

PC: The Dairy Kream?

MJ: The Dairy Kream.

PC: At that time, who was that?

MJ: Mr. Jay Boren.

PC: Okay. (laughter)

MJ: Mr. Jay Boren was one of the badest men that has ever come through Diboll.

PC: And he owned the Dairy Kream at that time.

MJ: Yes, and he was the law.

PC: So then you were able to go to establishments and go in the front door.

MJ: Right.

PC: And, that is what you remember the most?

MJ: Yes.

PC: Well that would be pretty memorable.

MJ: Yes, and then you know, just because of integration we used to go and we liked sitting upstairs anyhow because you got a better view upstairs. But, just because it was integration we went downstairs, but after you get downstairs that really wasn't where we wanted to be. We just went downstairs because we could but if I had to go to the show now if it was over there across the street and I paid to go in there I would rather go upstairs.

PC: Okay, you're talking about the picture show.

MJ: The picture show, yes.

PC: Well do you have a favorite school memory you want to share with me?

MJ: Oh let's see, there is so many of them.

PC: I guess football is your favorite thing but, we talked about that a lot but anything else you remember?

MJ: Basketball, basketball that was my heart and soul.

PC: Okay.

MJ: My junior...in basketball, well matter of fact, I didn't play on the second team of nothing. I don't even know what it feels like being on the second team or coming off the bench.

PC: You were always first team.

MJ: Always first team.

PC: Even in your junior high years.

MJ: When I was in the seventh and eighth grade I was on the first team.

PC: So, you really enjoyed basketball more than football?

MJ: Well, mostly it was a combination of both, you know, because I was good in both of them.

PC: Okay.

MJ: Minnie was better but, I was good.

PC: Did y'all have competitions between each other?

MJ: No, 'cause she could just out shoot me. (laughter) She could go, she was really...now my little 25 or 30 points I hit a game, it wasn't nothing about her 40 point average. She averaged 40 points.

PC: Yes, we've read that in the newspaper. She had quite a record. She put Diboll on the map as far as girl's basketball.

MJ: That is right and when she hit that 73 points I think the most I ever hit in one game was 35. (laughter) When she hit that 73 that took the cake. That game there was the most memorable game and it was against Groveton and back then, you know, we had the kind of clock in basketball that go to 99.

PC: Now, are you talking about Minnie Faye's game that she scored all the points in?

MJ: Yes, all the points.

PC: Okay.

MJ: They played first, okay. The girls always played first and we played the second game. So, they put up a hundred...that is when she hit the 73 points but after the

scoreboard went to 99 they started keeping the score on paper. So, we both broke the clock on Groveton.

PC: Okay, so y'all actually traveled together because you were in high school and she was in high school.

MJ: Right.

PC: So, the boys and girls basketball they would travel to the same school for out of town games, but the girls played first and the boys played second?

MJ: Right.

PC: Okay.

MJ: That is the way it went. See like now I think the girls...I don't know if they do that like that now. I don't know if the girls go their way and the boys go their way but, everything we did was always the girls played first and the boys played the last game.

PC: Okay, I see. Now, when y'all traveled to out of town games, and this is your...you graduated in '66 so schools were not fully integrated, but when you traveled to out of town games were any schools already integrated?

MJ: No.

PC: No. All the teams that y'all played were still segregated black teams, all black teams?

MJ: Right.

PC: Now, we know you graduated in '66 but in a conversation we had earlier you mentioned Coach Simmons so were you ever under Coach Simmons in any way?

MJ: No ma'am.

PC: Okay, he came after the year you graduated?

MJ: No, he was here. Remember when I told you we came over and he said we couldn't integrate, we could play football but you got to go to school for six weeks.

PC: Okay, he was here at the white school as a coach but you were still at H. G. Temple and the athletic program was not integrated at that time but, you did have conversation with Coach Simmons and you knew him?

MJ: Yes ma'am.

PC: Tell me what you knew about him because he was the coach at the time, the next year when they integrated the football team.

MJ: Right, he was there before they integrated.

PC: Right, but I mean he was the coach of that first integrated team.

MJ: Yes, but when we tried to integrate he told us said, “Y’all can’t do it like that, you got to go to school the first six weeks and then if you pass then you’ll be able to play.” But, if we missed six weeks, the first six weeks we done missed six football games ‘cause our season would be just about over so that is why we backed up.

PC: So, you just went ahead and played with the Temple Tigers.

MJ: Just went on back and was the Temple Tigers that year.

PC: That first year before they integrated the athletics?

MJ: Right.

PC: Okay, got you! Well, is there anything you would like to share with me that I haven’t asked you about today?

MJ: No, it’s been a pleasure for you to have me here and bring back up all these good memories because if I had a wand that I could turn back the hands of time that is where I would go back to.

PC: Your Temple Tiger days.

MJ: My Temple Tiger days.

PC: Well, it seems from all the interviews that y’all certainly had a good time at school with your football teams and basketball teams so.

MJ: We sure did. I’ll never forget, we weren’t really big on track and in ’65 and ’66 it was about two weeks before track, before the district track meet and we hadn’t even practiced for no track or nothing. So, Coach Seals came up to us and he said, “Hey, y’all want to go to the district track meet?” We say, “What?” He say, “Yes, the district track meet is in two weeks.” So we got out there and we practiced track for two weeks. After we practiced track for two weeks and went to the district track meet we won second place in the district and we sent two people, my brother Johnny Jones and Harold Phipps. Harold went to state in the open quarter and Johnny went to the state in broad jump and we hadn’t practiced but two weeks.

PC: And, what year was that?

MJ: That was in '66.

PC: '66, your senior year.

MJ: Yes, my senior year. We sent two...practiced two weeks and sent two people to the state.

PC: Well that is wonderful, that's wonderful. Okay well Mr. Jones I really appreciate you coming today and participating in this interview and helping us gather the history of the H. G. Temple School and that concludes our interview.

MJ: Okay, thank you, that's all right!

END OF INTERVIEW