

Lawrence Brooks

DINO ROBINSON: January 24, 2001, interview with Larry Brooks.

LAWRENCE BROOKS: My name is Lawrence Brooks. Then it was Larry Brooks. I have a middle name of Barry, so people call me Larry Barry. So get that out of the way too.

DR: Where were you born?

LB: I was born here in Evanston at Illinois Community Hospital, 19-- February 28, 1944.

DR: And what are your parents' names?

LB: My mother's name is Effie Brooks and my father's name is Fred L. Brooks, Senior.

DR: And where were your parents born?

LB: Good question. My mother was born -- I believe born in South Carolina. Don't quote me on this. I believe my father was born in Georgia. And I believe my mother and my father migrated to South Carolina or my mother migrated to Georgia, one of the two. But they got together and here I am somehow. I don't know exactly where. As a matter of fact, my -- what did my mother have to have? She had to get an Illinois ID and she and the -- where her birth certificate was at, the place burned down. So it was kind of -- she was kind of nonexistent. So there was a birth certificate on me, so that's how they figured it out, where

she was from. She knows. (laughs) We rarely have ever talked about it.

DR: Do you know why your parents came to Evanston?

LB: To be honest with you, no. I really don't. I think they probably came to Evanston -- it was just a speculation, is that they wanted to get out of the South. They probably saw what the lifestyle was there. I saw it because my mother took me back there in 1955, and was the back of the bus. I mean it hadn't changed since the Civil War, I believe. There was still outhouses and people -- it was a -- it was different. I mean it was -- it was a racist kind of society in the South. It was two different worlds: the North and the South. Because I remember going down there. We were on a -- the train was integrated, and whites and the blacks, we were all mixed together. And then when we came back, we were all herded into the colored portion of the train station, and the white folks was herded into the white train stations. And the black folks was put on a car with all the black folks, and then all the white folks was put on -- going back to Chicago, which is -- that existed in all the airports, the bus stations, and everywhere.

DR: While you were growing up in Evanston as a kid -- probably the stages as a kid, as a teen, teen to young adult, and as -- and now, what is and was your impression of Evanston?

LB: Well being that obviously I'm black, you figure that at least 50, 60 percent of your life was around black people, and black people in Evanston. It was probably a ghetto but on a higher level, if that's what you're asking for. It was different from the minimum wage Chicago. The homes were very nice. We had lawns and stuff like that. It was a nice environment to grow up in. I mean it really was a nice environment. That's probably one of the reasons my parents came here. They had relatives here. It was a nice environment to grow up in. I mean I have my opinions about what's going on today, but you have me -- we're talking about what it was for me growing up then. And that went for everybody, for all the black kids that grew up here in Evanston. It was kind of a nice place to grow up in. You didn't have all of the conflicts that you would have in Chicago. You wouldn't have it here then. [00:05:00]

DR: What about what you did for fun with you and your buddies as a kid? What did you do? What kind of stuff did you do?

LB: Gosh, it was primarily getting on our bikes and just riding all over the place. We played sports. Of course, I wasn't any good. I mean I loved to play; I thought I was half good. But you played through football, and with your buddies, and all of that kind of stuff. That was kind of for fun. And we had our seasonal deals when football

season would start and baseball season would start. So we played in -- we were out a lot, even out when it was dark. And parents talk today about not letting their kids go out after it's dark. It was -- I kind of think back. Wow. Has it gotten that far? For fun. That's kind of -- for fun, I mean, are you asking all the way up through high school or all...

DR: Even up through high school. Just kind of take me through it. Take me through it.

LB: Well that was when I was really young. I wasn't really big into high school. I really wasn't a high school kind of person, maybe because I was -- I was a shy person, and trying to get over that was kind of a -- it was just something that stuck on my mind, why I was -- why I was that way. It was probably how I was growing up maybe was a transformation between foster and going to white schools or something. I never could pinpoint it, but I never was a big high school thing. I really didn't have any girlfriends because I was -- when I was in high school, I was a little, skinny kid. I was -- I can't remember, but I think I was around my same height, five-ten. I must have weighed about 130 pounds. I don't weight that now, but -- because I have a medical condition and stuff like that so it's -- but I probably weigh about 20 or 30 pounds more

than that, although I've been up to 200 pounds. And that was growing up in Evanston. After high school, I kind of hung around. I went to Columbia becau-- are you still asking about that?

DR: Yes, go for it. (inaudible)

LB: I didn't know how far you wanted me to go in Evanston because in growing up in Evanston, I wanted to get out of Evanston. I wanted to leave Evanston because Evanston was a community that was just -- everybody knew what everybody else was doing and that stuff, and I didn't want everybody to know what I was doing. So I got up and when I was probably old enough, we kind of moved back and forth, and then permanently moved into Chicago, and I lived Chicago for about -- well first -- no, I went into the army after -- well wait a minute. Wait a minute. I'm trying to get this all together now. I went from high school and I stayed out of high school -- I mean stayed out of college for maybe a couple years, did work, had to get a job, and then it was the draft. They were drafting people and they said they're going to draft you and you had to get either a deferment so you wouldn't be drafted, so that's when I said, well, it's my time to go to college. Maybe I can beat that. So I went to college for four years, Columbia College. And because I was fascinated with visual media,

being photography, television, and film, and that's what I -- I was really fascinated in doing and wanting to tell stories. So primarily then for four years, I went to Columbia College and studied filmmaking, although I don't know if you were -- how aware that Columbia College was a little, tiny place during the '60s. It was a little, bitty school, so everybody in the school knew each other. And most of the people who went there then are running production companies and -- in relationship that I did when I -- my film, *The Innovation of the Foster School*, [00:10:00] the guy who narrated it was Bob Ciroc, who is a name right now in the media for himself. And also at that time, I knew Pat Sajak, and Pat was a very quiet guy. As a matter of fact, he sat next to me in a number of classes during that period of time. So he took off. I mean he only went there for about three years and he joined the army because everybody knew him, and so everybody said, "Where's Pat at?" "Oh, he joined the army." OK. So he -- I was aware that -- because his name would periodically pop up that he was doing -- he was a deejay in Vietnam, and I don't know whether they based a movie around that, that Robin Williams movies, or they based on the story around -- with Pat. I don't know. But Pat was a -- one of the people that I knew. There were a number of other people.

There were very -- wasn't very many black people, just like (inaudible). They were going there, and one of my good buddies is -- he was a photographer for the *Tribune*; his name is Brent Jones. So growing up in Evanston, wow. I really didn't -- I grew up here physically, but spiritually and mentally, I guess I did all my thing in -- when I was in Chicago. When I was there, I -- we -- I was interested in television and the film helped me get a job at Channel Seven.

DR: *The Foster School Project?*

LB: Yeah. It helped me get a job there, and then I was the stage manager there for a while, and I worked in their film department, and then after that, I don't know. It's just like any other tel-- any other job that you get at a station. You're there for so long, you're welcome -- you're not welcome there, and it was like being on a football team. It's time to go. So from there, I used to freelance a lot. I used to freelance with all the television stations. I had Channel Five -- I was at Channel Five for a couple years with -- I was -- let's see -- Linda Yu when she first got here. I was her first stage manager here. You know what? You could see the pictures of Walter Jacobson, Bill Curtis -- there was a number of people in the media, the news media, because that's how

television was. I mean television here was an entertainment situation. Although, I always say it's show business, news or not. I did a lot of news things, (inaudible), and I started directing more, television directing more at Channel 32 when I was there. When was it? Middle '80s. And then I got a couple of corporate video contracts, and I said, "I don't want to work here. These people are crazy." That was -- I should've stayed because when you're black, you don't get very many projects, I mean substantial kinds of monies, I mean and the hundreds and thousands of dollars, and stuff like that. Excuse me. I got to get (inaudible).

DR: Did you encounter any type of racial barriers here in Evanston? What kind -- if so, what kind?

LB: I remember once an incident somehow -- it was a public golf course. I don't know how old I was, but I know I was really young. I must've been about nine or 10 years old and I -- we used to always go with a bunch of -- me and my buddies, and we used to drag the canal for golf balls and sell them back to the kids. And I know one day I went over there and -- by myself, and low and behold, this guy comes out but he also has a rifle and points it at me. He said, "Nigger, what are you doing out here? You belong on this golf course." I mean what are you going to do? So he ran

me off of the course, and prodded the gun in my back, and stuff like that. You're just a kid; you're scared to death. I remember -- and this is -- I never [00:15:00] mentioned this to my mother or father because we weren't supposed to be over there anyways. But (inaudible) happened, and I remember once at Nichols School a couple incidents happened by accident. A guy called me a nigger but he immediately apologized. Immediately apologized, which is kind of surprising. And I'm sure there were other things. But those kind of -- those two incidents stick out the most. Probably when you leave, some more things will pop up. They always do. When you're stretching back over that time -- because I've had a lot of racial incidents happen to me in my lifetime. You asked specifically here in Evanston. But those two incidents specifically stick out in my mind. I know -- being chased out of stores because we were suspected of stealing and stuff like that. And that could've been construed as racial. Those racial incidents -- but beyond that, most of the white boys that I knew, they were cool. They were cool. They were pretty cool. But I guess there are always going to be racial incidents in anybody's life if you're a person of color. You're always going to run into some sort of incidents.

But again, that was the two that stand out in my mind the most.

DR: What schools did you attend in Evanston?

LB: Well Foster School.

DR: And how was that?

LB: And that was -- that was cool. I mean I established a lot of friendship, a lot of friends there, and I still -- we still run into each other on the streets. We still talk and stuff like that, saying, "Well who's not and who ain't here?" And most of my friends who knew me then knew me as Lawrence. They always called me Lawrence. When I got to Nichols School, I was started to call Larry, which I like much better. I like the flow better because there's -- Foster, it was a bunch of kids getting together, black kids, living in a black world.

DR: Were the teacher or the staff there pretty diverse or was it...

LB: Well you know what? I can't even remember. I don't remember any of my teachers. The only one I remember was the one at Nichols because she was such a bitch. Her name was O'Brien. I never could remember. She was always on me because I was never a student. I wasn't really a bright student. I was -- later on in life, I always considered myself a space cadet. My mind was always drifting

somewhere else. I mean I have -- I believe I have a pretty intelligent mind, but I -- my focus isn't really -- was really never focused on one thing. I mean I could start reading something, and my mind will start drifting, and I'll never get all the way through it. So I mean that was a problem I had probably had when I was at Nichols. I wasn't really a great student. I just probably -- in that point in life, I wanted to have -- just like any other young kid, I just wanted to have fun. And especially school at that point in time, get it over with. And you never realize then that that was probably some of the best times in your life. Nichols -- I went from Foster, to Nichols, to Evanston High School, and...

DR: Were you involved with anything at Evanston High School or just really stayed quiet?

LB: I was in the -- I was always fascinated with television so I was involved in the television club. But it took me about two or three years just to get in that because I was black and they didn't have black kids just like that. I remember once going to -- I think it was DeVry and I wanted to study -- they were a more technical school and I figured they were television school. And I remember the guy saying they just don't hire colored people to do these kinds of jobs in the industry. And right there, saying no, it's got

to change. So it drove me to [00:20:00] go to find another school, probably in the area, to go to to study TV. I don't know how I got -- something mentioned Columbia College to me. I don't know how I got to Columbia College. I really don't. But getting back to high school and all that kind of stuff, I was primarily involved in that. I wanted to get involved with sports but I just wasn't that good. So I knew where my coming was. I got involved in photography. I remember even one of the photography -- the guy, he was this -- he ran the photography department at Evanston. You had to be in -- you had to have great classes, which I wasn't in great classes and stuff like that. He put his judgment somewhere else. That's another probably -- thing -- and he probably didn't want any black kids in there anyway. You're handling a camera here. You never know what -- you don't know how to run a camera. It takes brains. You're not -- you don't have the kind of brains to run a camera and all that kind of stuff. So it was kind of like when (inaudible) that was another two or three year that I really wanted to get into photography. And I finally did, getting to learn more about photography, about printing in the dark room, and all that kind of stuff. So I was always into the visual, the film, and video. I was never an artist. I couldn't -- I can't draw.

I have horrible handwriting. So that's the extent of it. But I like visuals. I like putting stuff together, and pictures, and taking (inaudible) that kind of stuff from films. I like telling stories with films. So that's where I was in high school. That was the Evanston portion. I'm kind of -- here again, that was nine -- I graduated in 1962. That's almost 40 years ago. And I have -- I don't know. I guess it's -- you only see -- when you get older, you forget things. You know what? There are just a lot of things in my mind right. I just cannot remember. And I didn't think you'd ever get to your life because I'm 56 now -- that I get to my life that you can remember a lot of things, and names, and like you're saying, you can remember all those things behind Foster Field and all that kind of stuff. (inaudible) I just couldn't remember. It's been a long time ago. When you think about -- you think about it a lot. You think about times here in Evanston. It's kind of hard, obviously. Things come back in your mind when you're younger, people you know, all of that, what you did, and you're trying to search your mind to find these things. But we're in the schools. Where do you want me to go? I mean I was in Columbia College. I got -- we're out of Evanston. Where do you want me to go?

DR: You're at Columbia College. You did touch on that, and then you got -- then you started working so you got a job.

LB: Yeah, I have a job there and then I...

DR: So how did you want to go -- or talk about maybe your career on how you kind of see your career as a...

LB: Well I don't know. My career actually -- really you could probably say it started off in Evanston High School, getting involved in television. I always wanted to take it as far as I possibly could, regardless of what all of the racial situations were during that time, and they were there. They were hard to overlook or ignore. But I was always fascinated and I said I'm going to tele-- to do what I wanted to do in my lifetime, regardless. And so I -- the first thing I said to myself when I was at that age: I have to do something and I have to do something spectacular. So I said, "Why not make a film?" That's when I was in Columbia College. That's not Foster -- Innovation Foster School came about. I said, "I'm going to make a film." I didn't have no knowledge about making film without studying it, but it wasn't on a level of what you think you can do. I mean I just didn't know what I was doing so I employed a lot of people just like George W. Bush does. A lot of people around you who knew what they were doing. So I kind of watched what they were doing because most of the people

who taught at Columbia College were in and out, and they couldn't give you that much kind of time to tell you how to structure a film or which film structure was. So I made it myself, and I was always fascinated by people's lives, and documenting people's lives, and documenting situations. So I just went off and said make the film. I wanted to even [00:25:00] make a film on the -- one of the gangs in Chicago, and -- oh, that's OK -- one of the gangs in Chicago, which was the Black Stone -- P. Stone Nation or whatever it was. That's when they were the Black Stone Rangers. And -- or the integration of Foster School, so I decided to -- well they were acting crazy anyway. They didn't want to be photographed or anything like that. So I said, "Forget it. Let me do the thing on Foster School." And I said -- well I went there, and it was just a fascinating thing what they were doing. They were doing the reverse bussing because I always knew Foster School as being black, and this was in the '60s wasn't it? Yeah, this was in the '60s. And I think it was Mike told me that when the school burned down, that's when they had to start bussing black kids around to the other schools because Foster didn't exist. And it had never dawned on me where those kids were going. I was out of the school; I was out of high school and stuff. Was that high school? No, I was

in high school in '59. And it was just something that I thought would be interesting to document because it was so different for that time period because usually it was black kids --

DR: Being bussed?

LB: Yeah, going to hike some -- I always remember Little Rock and all the rest of the schools in the South and we -- all of this integration stuff started and King was pushing for it. And we can't have these Jim Crow laws that have been going on for over 100 years. So I -- it became a fascinating thing. And so I mean I didn't know what I was doing and I took two years to put 20 minutes together because I didn't. And the people that I was getting to assist me, well they always were finding things to do at the time when I needed -- so sometimes -- a lot of the times, that's where I learned how the cameras worked and all of that kind of stuff because they weren't around to be found. And in a sense, that's why a lot of the film looks kind of choppy and stuff like that. And again, it was like a student film, and it was my first film, and I wanted to do something spectacular to -- so I did that and it came out. It was aired on one of the two stations and they interviewed me. I think it was Channel Seven when I made it or something like that, and it kind of led to me getting

the job there. From there, I was there for five or six or something like that.

DR: What was your position there?

LB: Well I worked in the film department and I also was a stage manager, which means I gave the cues to the talent. But then again, that was a lot of politics, which I wasn't accustomed too. It was a very political job. The guy who hired me no longer -- they -- television, like any of those advertising businesses, they're coming in, and they're coming out, and the guy that hired me -- when he's gone, I'm gone. (laughter) So I don't know if you know how that works, but it was all politics.

DR: I was in advertising for a while and it was the same kind of thing.

LB: Well yeah, you persevere (inaudible). So I was there, and then I finally -- I was finally dumped, and I started working at the other stations, freelancing at the other stations, because I had a union card and they hired union directors. And so I had an opportunity to bounce around all those stations. And I went to -- and I ended up permanently at NBC for about two years, and probably another two years at WFLD, which has a directors union. WGN has a union at the directors guild. And so I mean I was doing that and I was freelancing. I was working pretty

-- quite a bit. And I also -- during that part of time, I became the Department of Health's -- I headed their photography and video department in the early '80s for a couple years. And it was done under the Jane Byrne administration. I met [00:30:00] Jane Byrne prior to -- she always remembered me because I told her I'd vote for her. She was running during a big snowstorm in the weather and she was -- I mean she had some very interesting things and I told her I'd vote for her. And when I went over to NBC, she say me when she was mayor and she said, "Oh, thanks for voting." She hugged me and people were looking at me. Who is this guy? Kind of shy. I don't want to be center of attention that much. It's probably the wind blowing (inaudible) we're getting back to that. But I also -- I did a lot of sound work on the *Ebony/Jet Celebrity Showcase* where I must have -- I don't know -- I recorded every -- it seemed like every black entertainer that came through for a company called Film [Tape Works?]. I did a lot of work for them for *Ebony/Jet*, and -- oh my gosh. Look at that. That's where -- Isaac Hayes. Oh man. There are so many people. Isaac Hayes, Luther Vandross. I remember them. Gladys Knight. I remember her. I did two or three days with her. Who was it? Those guys are from Minnesota, Prince's boys. Billy...

DR: Time?

LB: No. Did I do something with that? I think I did. Morris Day I think I did. Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis. They produced Janet Jackson. There were just -- that was just tons of folks there. And I had to set sound mixes and stuff, but I did a lot of sound mixing and stuff. I was talking a lot about sound. (inaudible) all visual but sound effect is very important in productions. Then I started -- ended up doing corporate videos, and I've done -- I used to -- I've done it for Meritag, Motorola, Ford. This -- then I used to represent a company. I was a -- what they called a field producer for a company called Worldwide Television News, and they would have foreign -- they represented a lot of foreign broadcasters, so I was the field producer here in the Midwest where they send in a reporter and it was my job to get everything that the reporter needed to do their job. And that's what basically field producers do because all of the talent or something -- the news talent, they have to have a -- what they call a producer. They'll work with -- a producer's really nothing more than a brilliant gopher. (laughter) That's all they are. And then I did a lot of videography for -- I used to shoot for -- this stretching back all these times, trying to remember all these things. And then I probably skipped

over a whole bunch of things because I got some music videos I know you said you wanted to see. I'll have to show you those. I've done those. *Journeys with Jazz* was probably my last project that -- I figured that I wanted to develop a television series. I got involved with a man in Europe who became my business partner. We're no longer partners or anything like that. He went one direction; I went another direction. So that's why *Journeys with Jazz* is -- I'm looking to do it as to be a television series. And I don't think I told you, but I -- I've got the host -- who is it -- Ted Lange. He used to be on *The Love Boat* and (inaudible) black one. He used to be on the TV to co-host the show. I mean I -- they're aware of it. I talked to him occasion. I haven't talked to them since last summer, but they're going to be the host of the show raising money, which I'm going to be trying to do. So that's probably one of my last projects. But I've -- in between the *Integration of Foster School* and up until now, there's been a lot of things. And I have a company called -- well the *Journey of the Jazz* is called JWJ Productions, that's the corporation. And I have another company called Brok Comm Communications -- Brok Comm Multimedia. B-R-O-K, C-O-M-M, Brok Comm Multimedia, which is another company, which I do videos. JWJ is strictly for *Journeys with Jazz*.

[00:35:00] So I mean as you can see -- I mean like I said, I got a ton of walls of folks, and this probably about 10 percent of stuff that I've done. The guy right here in the picture. You know who that is? White guy.

DR: No, I don't know.

LB: It's John Connally, the guy who got shot with Kennedy. He was a -- was one of them -- he's dead now. And I don't know whether he went to jail or not, but yeah, that's him. He was former vice president. Wasn't Connally vice president? Well he was the governor of Texas. He was one of the governors of Texas and he was n one of the cars that -- when Kennedy got shot, he got shot. So that's who that is.

DR: Well that's familiar now.

LB: The celebrities, they ran through here, and the people they ran through, it's -- it's like for the time and era, there were so many of them. It's...

DR: What -- kind of going back now to your profound -- your personal life. As you were growing up, what church did you belong to?

LB: Well I went to Friendship Baptist Church. Reverend Williams was there. I don't attend that much anymore. As a matter of fact, I haven't attended in years. I'm just not -- it has nothing to do with the church or anything

like that. It's just that I'm one of those people who cannot sit down for probably no more than 15 or 20 minutes when I have to get up and leave. That's why I'm glad they took movies out of theaters and put them on videos so I can stop it. Just say wait a minute, go back and see what they do with the story structure, or to get it in the shot, or the sound or something. They did something like bad school direction or something like that. Some craziness. Wait a minute. Didn't that person (inaudible) but became this one anyway? That's -- I guess I kind of like that out of that clip. That's my explanation for not going to church. OK. (laughter)

DR: I already asked that question. Maybe reflecting back now and where you are now in your life in Evanston, what are you likes and dislikes about Evanston today?

LB: Likes and dislikes. Boy. I mean that's a lot of silence, isn't that? I'm trying to -- likes and dislikes.

DR: Well you know who -- you're indifferent.

LB: The dislikes, I mean my -- I don't know. I guess one of the likes I like: sometimes running into the old -- into old friends. I know that's kind of a fascinating thing to run into the people I really went to school with here. That's kind of a like. I enjoy talking old times and people that we went to school with. I ran into a friend of

mine the other day. I (inaudible). Have you ever met Horace Holmes?

DR: No, I haven't meet Horace.

LB: He's an actor now. I would ask my mom but he's -- I -- he's been on *Star Trek* as somebody. I can't think of his name. Oh jeez. I'll come up with his name some day.

DR: You'll find it when Leave.

LB: Yeah, it -- but this happens all the time when I'm talking to people and then I can't remember the names and stuff like that. When people leave, oh yeah, that's right. That's what that person's name is. But he even has a commercial out right now. My dislikes. I don't know. I don't really think I have that much dislike. The only thing I really don't like are the rappers coming around playing music. I don't like that at all. That's kind of a personal thing, but I don't like them. That's maybe the change [00:40:00] of Evanston. I mean because kids are always going to be kids at that age and they're going to dis you or whatever it is. But that's -- I'm just trying to find dislikes and likes. One of the things I like about it -- when I moved back here, it was seeing green lawns from Chicago. When I was there, I lived there almost 20 years. It was always cement, but it was like when you got here, it was like wow, the trees, and grass, and stuff like

that. And at the time, it was much quieter. But you never really realize that until you've been away from something for a long time, and then you come back, and you see it. Although periodically you come back, but you really never pay that much attention. But when you got to live around, you saw the beauty of it. And it's just the homes in Evanston. There's a lot of nostalgia. That's probably one of the likes. There are times when I go back into my old neighborhood. I mean I don't do this often, but I know I've done it a couple times in my life. I just -- as kids, we would play out in the alleys, and I'd occasionally -- I mean maybe I've done this two or three times in my life. I've gone back and walked that route where -- between the house at -- where we used to live at 1928 Foster to the small store through the alleys. It was just going back and seeing memories, and some of my friends, and where are they now, and that kind of thing.

DR: So that's been a place you used to live at, 1928 Foster?

LB: Yeah.

DR: What other places did you live in Evanston?

LB: This is the only other place. I moved from there and I -- it was five folks. But there are folks that have been here when I was in school and now are here all their lives. So

running into them, they always do the, "Hey man, you see the such and such?"

DR: My final question for you today is while you were growing up as a kid to young adult, who was -- just outside of your family, who was what you consider a major influence in your life?

LB: I knew you would come up with that. A major influence outside of the family here in Evanston. Evanston...

DR: Or even if there was many that played a part.

LB: I'm trying to think one of many who constantly pop up in my head. Here we go. We're stretching it back. Gosh. Dead silence going to take me (inaudible). Who in the world? Now I hate to just come up with a name that influenced me. Remember we were talking about the photographer? His name was Bunny Hutchison. Does that name pop up in your head?

DR: Hutchison is familiar to me.

LB: His name was Bunny. I just -- that just came to me because I could remember what was up in my head and I'm thinking -- trying to think of who was my influence and I said oh, that was that guy's name. I believe his name was Bunny. I just -- it was somewhere in there. But he might -- because I knew he took a lot of pictures for -- here in Evanston. A lot of stuff. So he might still have stuff.

DR: Is he still around today or (inaudible)?

LB: I really don't know. You might have to do some detective work on it. But I'm curious as to where he's at myself because...

DR: Did he have kids, do you know of? Or...

LB: Man, good question. Good question. I don't know. But I don't -- I remember him. He taught me some things about photography when I was -- looked up. Wasn't an influence because he was -- we kind of touched on each other. It wasn't that I was kind of hang up kind of a situation. But I just can't think of anybody who was kind of like an influence here in Evanston. I had influences outside of Evanston. [00:45:00] But here in Evanston, I can't...

DR: Who was your out -- who was your influence outside of Evanston?

LB: There was a guy who worked -- did a film and I put his name on the film, and his name was Red Brown. His name was Haley Red Brown, but his -- he had a very colorful name. He -- John Coleman, he was always in my corner when I was having problems. The weather man, Channel Seven. I don't know if you remember John. Do you remember John? Weather man at channel -- he was always on my -- he was always an influence. He always encouraged me. Who else? I have friends who were real close, but him -- who's -- who was black? Was anybody black? Here again, it was the Bunny

Hutchison syndrome. I remember somebody. (laughter) I said, "Oh yeah, that's right. I took a gig for the matinee." I -- you're hitting me with these. I can't remember.

DR: Usually I try and prepare people beforehand -- before I interview. I would've sent this over to you earlier, but (inaudible) about that.

LB: That's no problem. I'm used to having interviews anyway because I've interviewed people. But I just can't -- right off of the top of my head, I can't remember.

DR: So now you run your book production companies and working on the International Jazz Festival.

LB: Yeah, well -- yeah, *Journeys with Jazz* is -- International Jazz Festival was something completely different. That was something the guy in Europe was doing. *Journeys with Jazz* is going to be following -- going to a -- doing jazz cruises, going to concerts, looking at the whole aspect of jazz music, not so much as a -- in a club kind of scene, but what's the music like today, yesterday -- yesterday, today, and what's it going to be like in -- tomorrow and all of that kind of stuff, and looking at the particular groups and the artists that are out here today, and just making it kind of an entertainment. Because jazz at times is kind of stiff. So we're trying to make it a little more

entertaining. That's where *Journeys with Jazz* is right now. And of course, since I stumbled across the version of the *Integration of Foster School*, there's a lot of -- it's seems like there obviously is a lot of interest in it.

DR: I think there is.

LB: A lot of interest in it. The people who I've given it to are surprised because a portion of that history doesn't exist because like you said with Foster School, you don't have any -- I just -- you have pictures of the stuff in Foster School.

DR: Yeah.

LB: But to have something like that to a show a portion of the history, that's -- I don't think there was very films done about -- or anything to do with Foster.

DR: That had a lot of historical significance. Photographing people that have done a lot of positive things in the community and are exist-- or are passed away or near passing away, and nothing is written or documented about their actions, alive or historically written, or whatever. I think what impressed me about the Foster School thing is that as soon as -- there was a teacher you were interviewing, a black teacher, who was talking to a student, doing some linguistic studies --

LB: Yeah, with the white kid?

DR: Yeah, and Lisa. She did a lot. I mean she had her own publishing company.

LB: Oh, she did?

DR: Yeah, and she wrote a book of poetry. She even wrote her own textbooks to teach to her children.

LB: She'd dead.

DR: Yeah, she'd died. But that was really interesting just to see her in action and see her talking very closely about the process.

LB: Now I can understand where you would come from. Excuse me. I hope I didn't take (inaudible) or anything.

DR: No, that's OK. We're pretty much done.

LB: But to see that -- I couldn't -- when she was -- I don't remember her name because I didn't get a lot of these people's names. I just -- I (inaudible). That is something. I didn't know she [00:50:00] did all of that. I mean she was there when I was there (inaudible). And she did all that? I didn't know.

DR: It was her [Seven Set?] Publishing and I think she had another one called Jean Dell or -- I believe, Jean Dell Publishing.

LB: Do you have any of the publications?

DR: I just have her book of poetry, but I'm looking for her textbooks and any business literature on her, any business

cards, or letterhead, or any type of stationary that showed her company. So I mean it was incorporated. She incorporated actually twice: once in the late '60s and then again in the early '90s right before she passed -- or late '80s I should say, before she passed.

LB: So you never interviewed her?

DR: Never interviewed her. I never had the opportunity to. She had passed away shortly after she initialized her company again. And then her daughter didn't live too far from her, just right on the corner. Just down the street a little bit on Gray. But their -- they moved.

LB: So you don't know where they moved to?

DR: They had boxes of her books still that I guess they were trying to sell, but it's just sitting there in the box doing nothing. I want to thank you for this interview.

LB: Oh, any time you want to come back and talk some more, I mean I -- I'll probably hopefully try to remember a lot more. I can't -- I feel kind of embarrassed that I can't remember a lot of things that -- a lot of questions that you asked me about people and things. I'll remember. Because I was always a slow thinker anyway. But I'll probably remember more when you leave -- when you left.

DR: I'll probably come back to you anyway because I do want to write an article for the *Shorefront*, and we'll need

pictures like -- I'm an eying a couple pictures up there I already see that would be a great...

LB: I got some more pictures. I got -- I think I got a smaller one of that one. Yeah, you can take them or borrow that. I can -- whatever you want to do with them.

DR: I would bring them right -- I mean this might've...

END OF AUDIO FILE