

**Oral History of Billy Lee Byers**

**With**

**Betty Fuller**

***And Ofa “Mary” Faiva-Siale***

**Eules, Texas** was first settled in about 1867 as a small farming community in North Central Texas. The City is located midway between Dallas and Fort Worth Texas, just west of DFW International Airport. It was incorporated in 1953 and at the time of the 2000 U.S. Census had a population of 46,005. The City of Eules encompasses approximately 16.3 square miles. (42.1 KM<sup>2</sup>).

**Billy Lee Byers** (January 3, 1927- current) was born and has lived in Eules, Texas his whole life. He is a descendant of one of the founding families of Eules—the Fullers. At the time of this interview, he was a member of the Eules Historical Preservation Committee.

**Betty Fuller** is a long-time resident of Eules, Texas. At the time of this interview she was a member of the Eules Historical Preservation Committee. She was Chairperson of the Eules Historical Preservation Committee from 2005-2010.

**Ofa (Mary) Faiva-Siale:** is a resident of Eules, Texas. At the time of this interview she was working for the City of Eules as a liaison to the Eules Historical Preservation Committee.



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**Betty Fuller:**

Today is Friday, October 5, 2012. Where are we at Ofa Mary?

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

We're at 1314 Royal Parkway, The Parks and Community Services Administration building.

**Betty Fuller:**

What would you like to be called?

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Mary or Ofa, either one is fine.

**Betty Fuller:**

Today's date is Friday, October 5, 2012. We're at the Parks and Community Services Administration Building with Mr. Bill Byers, whom I'm going to interview. Ofa Mary, the Projects Coordinator for the City of Euless is with us as well. She is also the Secretary for our Historical Preservation Committee. She does an outstandingly fine job. The purpose of our meeting today is to interview a very prestigious person who was born in Euless and he's going to get to talk in a minute and tell us about himself. My name is Betty Fuller and I am representing the Euless Historical Preservation Committee. For our records, Mr. Byers, can you please give us your entire name including where you live, address and all of that?

**Bill Byers:**

My name is Billy Lee Byers. I live on Shadow Lane, Euless, TX 76039.

**Betty Fuller:**

Okay and how long have you lived there?

**Bill Byers:**

I moved in, in 1966 so that would be 46 years.

**Betty Fuller:**

And if my memory serves me correctly, your mother lived across the street?

**Bill Byers:**

Right.

**Betty Fuller:**

And who was your Mother? Tell us about her. Tell us where and when you were born?

**Bill Byers:**

I was born in the basement of my Grandfather's house on January 3, 1927. It was probably, as far I know, the only house with a basement in Tarrant County.

**Betty Fuller:**

And that would be your Grandfather's on your Mother's side of the family?

**Bill Byers:**

Yes, that would be T.P. Huffman.

**Betty Fuller:**

You've talked about that home before. I think that house was very interesting in several ways. It's mode of providing lighting for the house; can you tell us some things about that and where it was located?

**Bill Byers:**

Well, it's on Airport Freeway about a quarter mile east of Highway 157. It was a large house built about four foot off the ground and the basement was about six feet deep underground. It was a two story house *with* wood shingles built about 1907. I can remember when I was about three or four years old the painters' came and painted and mixed linseed oil and white lead paint to make the paint real thick and when it cracked it cracked real hard. I lived there until 1953 when I built *my own* house.

**Betty Fuller:**

If we were speaking in generalities, isn't it across from where Eules Junior High School is *today*? I mean in that area?

**Bill Byers:**

It's right West of Eules Junior High. It's right across from what is now the Acme Brick Company. The property directly behind it was the First Baptist Church.

**Betty Fuller:**

I want to know about the lighting system because I am intrigued by that.

**Bill Byers:**

Well, the house was plumbed with one quarter inch black pipe and it was hooked up to a carbide plant that was just a big container of probably 150 gallon size out beside the house. It was probably 60 or 80 foot away from the house. And you'd put carbide as well as I can remember, lime, and it had an impeller on the top and you'd have to go out and turn the impeller which had a paddle and it created gas. The gas would go in the pipe and each room in the house had one gas jet in the center of the ceiling and had a big hook up there and took a fixture from room to room and plugged it on to the gas with a rubber hose and it made a brilliant light like a Coleman lantern. That worked for several years and finally that thing rusted out and eventually we used it for a septic tank. But then we went to coal lamps which were quite a contrast.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Can I ask what were "carbide" and an impeller?

**Bill Byers:**

Carbide was a powder that when you put water in it, it turned into gas. The coal miners used to use carbide lamps when mining coal. They strapped them on their heads. I still sold them at the lumber yard all the way until 1998. Impeller was another way of mixing and creating the gas.

**Betty Fuller:**

There's another Huffman house that I love. Out of all the houses in Eules, it's probably the oldest. When I interviewed your Mother, she told me about that home.

Tell me how that person in that house is related to T.P. Huffman and the house that you grew up.

**Bill Byers:**

He owned that farm across and up the street from the house where my Mother was born in.

**Betty Fuller:**

And her name was?

**Bill Byers:**

That was Willie Huffman. The house was right south of the present location of the City Hall complex. The Bedford Euless Road was really the main road to Fort Worth. It went through Bedford and then North Richland Hills, and hit Highway 26, which was then the Grapevine/Fort Worth Highway.

**Betty Fuller:**

And while we're on that subject, *can you* talk about how you got to Dallas from there. That was another mess.

**Bill Byers:**

Dallas. You had to go Pipeline and then down to Shady Grove and **Sowers**, cross over a wooden bridge on County Line Road and turn back through Irving, and you could go on Industrial Boulevard and sometimes you could down to Singleton Boulevard.

**Betty Fuller:**

It was quite an ordeal, but I love that house. Tell us where that house, the one where your Mom was born in?

**Bill Byers:**

She was born in that house.

**Betty Fuller:**

Where is it located now?

**Bill Byers:**

It's located on Vine St.

**Betty Fuller:**

And do the Porters still live there?

**Bill Byers:**

*It's at the 400 or 500 block of Vine. I had traded a pool hall for that house and the Porters bought that house.*

**Betty Fuller:**

*(Laughter)* What pool hall? Where was it located?

**Bill Byers:**

The pool hall that Jimmy Payton and I had in Euless. It was originally located at the corner of Vine Street and Hwy. 10. They tore it down to build a Safeway store.

**Betty Fuller:**

When did you have that pool hall Mr. Byers?

**Bill Byers:**

Oh gosh, I think it was in the 80's. When the highway came through in 1966 they moved the house down on Vine Street and I ended up with it. I then sold it to Glen & Helen Porter. She lives there now.

**Betty Fuller:**

Unfortunately, we can't get a State Marker for this house because anytime you move a house or make any significant changes *to it*; the State Historical Commission is not allowed to give you a State Marker. We can give you a Local Marker, but that's the extent of it. Hopefully you could *get* a Local Marker because that is the oldest house *around here*. When do you think it was built?

**Bill Byers:**

*Well, they built a new house about 1907 or 1908.*

**Betty Fuller:**

That's the carbide lamp house?

**Bill Byers:**

Yes, that's the T.P. Huffman house and he was the County Commissioner of Precinct 3.

**Betty Fuller:**

I represent Precinct 3 on the Tarrant County Historical Commission. Were they the same then *compared to now*?

**Bill Byers:**

I believe so. I think that's the one thing that's remained constant. It was the North East quadrant of Tarrant County.

**Betty Fuller:**

So *when do* you think that other house was built?

**Bill Byers:**

It was built sometime in the 1800's because it had logs as floor joists, after *then the* saw mills came to the area.

**Betty Fuller:**

Now, I know your Mother told me the connection on how the T.P. Huffman house on your Mother's side *of the family*, how that family *member*, that man who was

Postmaster of Eules, who is your Great Grandfather? Tell us the lineage of how it got from there to you. Would you mind for historical purposes?

**Bill Byers:**

Well T.P. Huffman married Cynthia Fuller and they had two sons and three daughters, I believe. Three of them passed away early that was John, Seth and then Ruth, *who* passed away at 17. Then there was Steve Huffman, Blunt Huffman, Hattie Himes and Emma Fuller. I guess that *was* it, I guess there were four kids *that lived to adulthood*.

**Betty Fuller:**

Steve was Tubby Huffman's *father*. I was baptized in the First Baptist Church of Eules since my Mother was Baptist and he was sometimes the Song Director *together* with Mr. Tillery way back in the 1940's, and was very active in the Baptist Church.

**Bill Byers:**

*He* was very active in the Baptist Church.

**Betty Fuller:**

Now, I wanted to go back now to *you* Mr. Byers. *Did* you tell me that you were born in that home with the carbide?

**Bill Byers:**

Yes.

**Betty Fuller:**

You weren't born in the hospital, right?

**Bill Byers:**

*I* was born in the basement, *been* trying to get up ever since (*laughter*).

**Betty Fuller:**

Do you have any brothers or sisters?

**Bill Byers:**

I have one sister, Mary French. She lives in Millsap, *Texas*. *She's* younger *than me*.

**Betty Fuller:**

West of here?

**Bill Byers:**

Yes, *near* Mineral Wells.

**Betty Fuller:**

And you've told us about your Mother's Mother and Father, is there anything else you want to add to that?

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Is T.P. Huffman and Cynthia your Mother's parents?

**Bill Byers:**

Yes, T.P. Huffman and Cynthia Elizabeth I believe. I always call her 'Mamie'.

**Betty Fuller:**

Fuller, she was a Fuller. Oh, and we want to add this. That her father was the Postmaster of Eules in the 1890's and his name was?

**Bill Byers:**

William, Thomas William Fuller.

**Betty Fuller:**

We'll look it up *to make sure that's* correct. This is what I have here. Thomas Fuller was Postmaster of Eules from 1895-1910 and both he and my Husband's Great Grandfather came to Texas from Coffee County, Tennessee in the early 1870's. As a matter of fact, Maude Fuller's name was the third name on the Methodist Church list when it was initially formed. In 1996, I was responsible for doing the history of the church and I found in an old file cabinet upstairs the actual list and signatures of the original members of the church and his name was number three on the list along with some other Fuller's and some other people.

**Bill Byers:**

Do we have a copy of that in the *Eules* Museum?

**Betty Fuller:**

Yes we do, and I have a copy at home too.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

We, did we talked about his Father's parents already?

**Betty Fuller:**

No, we did not; but we need to.

**Bill Byers:**

I never knew my father's parents. They both *passed away* I believe *in* 1926, six or eight months before I was born. I think he died and then she died 90 days later.

**Betty Fuller:**

Let's get to your father's family. I know less about his father's family than I do about the Fuller's side, of course.

**Bill Byers:**

They came out of Georgia. I think their families drifted down from Virginia and Tennessee and ended up in Decatur and Atlanta. They left around the 1800's. My Dad's folks, his Mother and Dad, came to Dallas when he was pretty young. Probably around ten and he went to work for my Grandfather.

**Betty Fuller:**

I didn't know that, for your Grandfather Huffman?

**Bill Byers:**

Yes.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

His name was?

**Bill Byers:**

Willie Lee Byers.

**Betty Fuller:**

That's who your mother was named after, her Father?

**Bill Byers:**

No Daddy's name was Willie Lee; *my mother's name* was Willie Mae.

**Betty Fuller:**

Willie, she had *his first* name.

**Bill Byers:**

Willie, Willie and Billy.

**Betty Fuller:**

*(Laughter)* I think that's funny. Now tell us that again so that we have it right.

**Bill Byers:**

Dad's name was Willie Lee and *my mother's name* was Willie Mae.

**Betty Fuller:**

Willie Byers volunteered to be P.T.A. Chairman for the class that *Billie's* sister Mary was in. My husband, *James Fuller* and Bill Byers' sister started first grade together at *the* Euless School and finished twelve grade *together*. They went through twelve years and all twelve of those years, Mrs. Byers was their P.T.A. Mother.

**Bill Byers:**

She was my P.T.A. Mother too.

**Betty Fuller:**

She was a very busy lady. In her biography she tells about how she loved to play the piano and every time James and I had school reunions, Willie Byers was always there. She always came to James' class reunions and played the piano. Glada Horton and Rose *were also* in the *same* class. She's still alive and still lives on Main Street. But anyway, where else did *your mother* play the piano?

**Bill Byers:**

*She played* at the church. I guess from the time she was twelve to fifteen, I guess, she was a pianist at the First Methodist Church in Eules, until she died in 1990. She was still banging on that thing.

**Betty Fuller:**

And tell us *about* when they moved the piano *from one location to the other location*?

**Bill Byers:**

Yes, her dad T.P. Huffman had bought an old piano and she had learned to play it. She couldn't read music *ever but* played by ear. She'd hear a song one time and beat it out on that piano *and* when they moved in *to* the new house in 1907, I think, which is about quarter of a mile *away*; *she played the piano in the back of the wagon to the new house.*

**Betty Fuller:**

And you have not lived anywhere except Eules. Is that not correct?

**Bill Byers:**

I was born in that house and lived there until 1953 when we built our house (right west of there).

**Betty Fuller:**

Tell us some highlights of your childhood. You may include going to school. I remember in our school room in our new *Eules* Museum, we have a picture that I hope Bill Golden put up in there, there's a *picture of* you boys *stacked* as a pyramid *back in* high school. *Can you* include that in your story about going to school in Eules? Would you tell us some things about going to School in Eules?

**Bill Byers:**

I started school under Martha Jones in the first grade and finished in the eleventh grade.

**Betty Fuller:**

There were only 11 grades of school then when I started.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Only 11 grades of school?

**Betty Fuller:**

*There were only 11 grades at the school. It's where South Eules Elementary School is located today, that was "THE" School. Was it a one story or a two story building?*

**Bill Byers:**

*It used to be two stories.* I think they took that top floor off *around* 1917 or 1918. I don't remember when it was, when the top floor was taken off.

**Betty Fuller:**

By the way, it was built in 1913. Who saved the cornerstone?

**Bill Byers:**

*My mother got the cornerstone when they were going to throw it away when Airport Freeway took us out around 1963. Let me get my thoughts here. School started in that little frame building that started between the auditorium and the school and eventually became the shop where they taught woodworking and wood carving. I think I went to first and second grade in that school and then when I was in the third grade they built the new high school in 1936, the W.P.A. Building.*

**Betty Fuller:**

See that's the first time that we've gotten this information.

**Bill Byers:**

We went through the 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades in the *Eulless* High School.

**Betty Fuller:**

And there were only eleven years of school?

**Bill Byers:**

Yes, graduated in 11 years.

**Betty Fuller:**

Let's see, I was in 1<sup>st</sup> grade in 1939 and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade in 1940/41. *After that year they added a 12 grade.*

**Bill Byers:**

No, no it was 1945 or 1946.

**Betty Fuller:**

I didn't go to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. I skipped 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

**Bill Byers:**

I graduated in 1944.

**Betty Fuller:**

Yes, but see I skipped 3<sup>rd</sup> grade because they added 12 grade that year. I went to 1<sup>st</sup> grade with Mrs. Ashley and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade with Mrs. Easter and then I went to 4<sup>th</sup> grade. I never went to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

**Bill Byers:**

Well I graduated in 1944. They might have changed it in 1945 or 1946.

**Betty Fuller:**

While you all were in Tarrant County I skipped 3<sup>rd</sup>. I had to be taught handwriting in 3<sup>rd</sup>. I want to go back to the school. Tell us who's in that picture that we have? I want you to tell a little bit about athletics?

**Bill Byers:**

Well, Troy Fuller, Thad Himes, Bobby Eden, Tommy Fitch and I *all* started in 1<sup>st</sup> grade together along with Jacqueline Mills and *others*. There were nine *total* in my graduating class. I believe *there were* seven of us *who* started in 1<sup>st</sup> grade *that* finished in 1944.

**Betty Fuller:**

Started when? I was born in 1932. He started 1<sup>st</sup> grade the year I was born, how about that? What are some of your favorite memories about attending *the* Euless School and we'll talk about athletics too?

**Bill Byers:**

Well, it really wasn't much of a school. All my times were very enjoyable. I wasn't a brain, I made average grades. It was enjoyable. Everybody was in the same boat. Not destitute, but poor like everyone else.

**Betty Fuller:**

I only attended high school there. I started at a little old school *at* Sower School. It was a smaller school.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Who was Principal at that time?

**Bill Byers:**

Mr. House was Principal when I first started and Mr. C.E. Lyles came in about the 5<sup>th</sup> grade and he was not too bashful about using the paddle. If you ever got called to his office, he would sit there and stare at you as a punishment for any wrongdoing. But uh, he was not bashful about using that paddle. He never paddled me but he did some of *my friends*.

**Betty Fuller:**

Say what year Bill did we get that State Marker for our School? You saved the cornerstone but the School had been rebuilt. The School that was originally built in 1913 was the two story school. The bottom floor was still there even when I attended school there. But they completely demolished it *later*. You were on the School Board later talking about schools. Tell us about that now.

**Bill Byers:**

I built my home in 1953 and I was working at Consolidated Aircraft in Fort Worth. I took a vacation and my Uncle Steve Huffman and one other guy built *my* home right west of our own home place. We had 110 acres at the corner of what is now Airport Freeway and *Highway 157 that* extended a half a mile North of Trinity High School. First Baptist Church of *Euless* was right off of *Highway 157* and my home was across the street where La Quinta Inn is now (*south of Highway 183*). In 1953 I took my two weeks vacation and Uncle Steve, Raymond Limber and I poured the foundation *in* one day, we stripped the forms and finished that house in two weeks. *Right after we finished the* house and just moved in, Waldo Fitzgerald came and asked if I'd run for

the School Board and I did. I was elected. That was *at* the house on Airport Freeway, it was gone by 1965, and we built our house on Trail Wood.

**Betty Fuller:**

Who was the Superintendent when you built that house?

**Bill Byers:**

Johnny Edwards was the Superintendent. We had been trying for several years to consolidate Bedford, Euless and Hurst, *we kept trying to consolidate but* Bedford would always throw a wrench in it. They'd get mad and get up and walk out of the meetings at the old auditorium in Euless. In 1953 after Bell Helicopters came to Hurst, *Hurst* started growing pretty rapidly and Euless had *been* growing pretty good *too* because of *the* Greater Southwest Airport.

**Betty Fuller:**

Tell us about who initiated that Great Southwest Airport so people who don't know *would know*.

**Bill Byers:**

Amon Carter was the driving force. They appointed Bill Fuller (*William Gardner Fuller*) who was *then* appointed the Director of Aviation for the City of Fort Worth.

**Betty Fuller:**

Who lived here, by the way?

**Bill Byers:**

It was supposed to be the airport for Dallas and Fort Worth. Meacham Field was not too large. American was flying out of *Meacham Field* and Love Field in Dallas so they built; I guess *they intended* it as an airport to serve as Love Field and Meacham Field. Dallas was in it for awhile and then they pulled out. They finished the airport in 1953. I had taken two weeks vacation *to build my house* but I'd already gotten a job at the airport as an electrician doing the field lights, runway lights, beacon street lights, *etc.* It was a nice airport, *of course* it was nothing like DFW *Airport now*, but *when* the architect drew the plans *for the Airport*, *it* showed the entrance on what is now *Highway 360*. *Highway 360* wasn't there at that time but it went out from *Highway 183* to Fort Worth, *the architect* fancied that and *he* put trees down the center of the highway towards Fort Worth but nothing was mentioned, *in fact* just *showed* a dirt road *toward* Dallas. So when Dallas saw that, Bill Fuller told me that he was in *the* meeting and when *the Dallas folks* saw all that fancy drawing going towards Fort Worth and nothing towards Dallas, he said, that stopped Dallas' participation in the airport. They didn't like Amon Carter.

**Betty Fuller:**

Was that the same Bill Fuller that had that Austin stone house and was the Mayor of Euless? Do you remember the year that he was the Mayor? He lived out here. He knew Charles Lindbergh who flew across the ocean. He and Lindbergh had known each other years before.

**Bill Byers:**

J.S. Anderson was the Mayor when I went on the Council and Bill Fuller became Mayor after that.

**Betty Fuller:**

Talking about the airport, during *the* war I lived on Bear Creek Road next to Roy Cannon and Oma Cannon, and they had cement runways.

**Bill Byers:**

Arlington built the Airport and it was just a practice field.

**Betty Fuller:**

And they'd go buzzing by our house in WWII. They'd buzz by and play like they were going to land.

**Bill Byers:**

They'd just shoot touch and goes.

**Betty Fuller:**

That's where they practiced their air flying talents *and* skills. It was before it was even an airport. It was just runways. Mr. Byers *can you go back and talk about* when you were on the School Board? How long *did* you serve and who *was* the Superintendent during that period of time? What schools were built? May I inject something before we start? Euless was the only *one* of the three cities (*Hurst, Euless, and Bedford*) that had a High School. We had a High School. I was very proud to attend it, because I had Polio from swimming in the creek and I'd gone to school in Dallas and stayed with my and mother a year because I needed the swimming, and the School in Dallas had an indoor swimming pool and that was my Athletic/P.E. course to swim in that hot warm pool and it was supposed to be good therapy for me so I stayed with my Grandmother. I loved *the* Euless school.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Where did Hurst and Bedford kids go to High School?

**Betty Fuller:**

That's what I was going to tell you. Since I was with the school business, Bedford kids went to school at Carter Riverside.

**Bill Byers:**

Most of them came to Euless.

**Betty Fuller:**

Oh I'm sorry. I'm wrong; *the* Bedford kids went to Northside High School. The one's that went *to high school that is*, like the Fitches; John Fitch *went to Euless high school*.

**Bill Byers:**

*Some went to Northside and some went to Riverside.*

**Betty Fuller:**

Aha, the Hurst *kids* went to Riverside, but the *kids* that went to high school *in Bedford* either came out here *to Eules* or they went to Northside, Jack Mayfield and that bunch.

**Bill Byers:**

The majority of them, I know *for example*, Bedford only had *an* Elementary School and they'd always send their kids *here to school in Eules* because they didn't want to pay school taxes over there. *After* about six to eight months after I was elected to the School Board, *we* would have another meeting and Bedford would get mad and walk out. By that time Bell Helicopter came and Hurst *started* growing and they had just gone to an Independent School District. Joe Humphries was Superintendent over there. So we got *together and formed the Hurst and Eules School District*.

**Betty Fuller:**

What year was that Bill?

**Bill Byers:**

1954. *At that time*, Hurst had a seven man School Board and Eules had a seven man School Board so four of us resigned, we stepped down.

**Betty Fuller:**

Who stepped down? Do you remember?

**Bill Byers:**

Waldo Fitzgerald, Tubby Huffman...the ones that stayed were Billie Huffman and Web Cromer, I don't remember who the other one was, but three *people* from Eules and four *people* from Hurst. *We stepped down so we can form the Hurst, Eules Independent School District*.

**Betty Fuller:**

Went in to combine all three (*Hurst, Eules and Bedford*) but *only* combined two.

**Bill Byers:**

We were at that point *the Hurst Eules School District*. That was in 1954 and in 1956 or 1957 they had an election and I ran again, and was elected to the Hurst Eules Board and at that point, Bell High School had been built.

**Betty Fuller:**

Tell us where it was initially built.

**Bill Byers:**

It was built between Hurst and Eules on Raider Drive, Lawrence D. Bell bought the land in *exchange for* naming the High School L.D. Bell (*currently Central Junior High School and K.E.Y.S*). He bought that land on Raider Drive and built that school and I ran for the School District in 1957 and was elected. I served six yrs.

**Betty Fuller:**

There were several schools *that were built* and you got a free *architectural* plan and so *you all* built another *school* just like it. Tell us which schools were built on your tenure on the board.

**Bill Byers:**

At that time, the growth really changed and we were building *a lot of* junior high and elementary schools. We were building elementary schools *using* the same *architectural* plan. North Eules and Eules and I guess Wilshire.

**Betty Fuller:**

Wilshire had a slightly different plan but those E-shaped buildings were *all alike*.

**Bill Byers:**

Pipeline Road, Precinct Line Road was West Hurst. See West Hurst, Oakwood Terrace, North Eules and I believe Bell Elementary not Bell but right north of Bell Helicopter. What's the name of that school?

**Betty Fuller:**

Bellaire *Elementary*?

**Bill Byers:**

I think there's one more on the north side of Hurst, yes, Bellaire *Elementary too*. We built all five schools off of one set of plans because the architect couldn't produce the plans for different *styles*.

**Betty Fuller:**

And they didn't have to pay *him* and that was one other advantage. *They just* bought one set of plans and built all those schools. I taught at two of those schools so I ought to know.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Can I ask something? I know you guys know, but why was Bedford so mad, so against combining with Hurst and Eules?

**Bill Byers:**

*They* didn't want to pay school taxes. They'd always sent their kids to Eules and Birdville, Riverside and Northside if they had vehicles. Very few people had vehicles in those days so the majority of them came to Eules.

**Betty Fuller:**

Let's see Jack Courtney, Jack Mayfield, those didn't go to Eules.

**Bill Byers:**

No, they went to Northside.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Would you say that the folks over there and you all here knew each other *well*?

**Bill Byers:**

Everybody knew each other; they just didn't want to pay school taxes. When *my* mother went to school down there they did the same thing.

**Betty Fuller:**

And I've got to tell you something, Bedford is named Bedford *after* his (*Bill Byers*) great-grandfather on his mother's side, *he* came *from*...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

From Bedford, Tennessee, I remember that.

**Betty Fuller:**

Well, actually it was Bedford County Tennessee. In 1836, *Bedford* County was so big that they cut it in half and named *one* half Coffee County after General Coffee from the Revolutionary War or they would have never gotten enough recognition. The Fuller's that came to Eules happened to live right over the line in Coffee County. *There were also* people from Bedford County and so Bedford, Texas is really named *after* Bedford County, Tennessee, even though the Fuller's *that* came *here* were from the new county (*Coffee County*) that was formed in 1836 just before the Civil War. Some of those people lived in one county and some lived in *the other county*. I found that interesting.

**Bill Byers:**

Continuing on, we were still growing at a rate where the schools were growing faster than *we* could build them. So we put a \$500 tuition per semester on the Bedford kids. By this time Bedford was growing a bit and eventually grew out of Walter Fitch's influence. New people were coming in *who* were not as beholden *to* *Walter Fitch* because *he* ran a credit business, and if you didn't vote the way he wanted you to vote, you got your credit cut off to buy groceries.

**Betty Fuller:**

James graduated with a Fitch boy.

**Bill Byers:**

So, they finally overpowered him and had a vote and elected to join *the* Hurst and Eules School *District* to get out from under the \$500 *tuition we* charged. When they came to *our* School Board, they said if you would pay our grocery bill for the cafeteria we'll come into the school *district*. As well I remember, it was \$8,500 because they hadn't paid their grocery bill in five years.

**Betty Fuller:**

Now he was on the School Board so he knows.

**Bill Byers:**

So we agreed to pay their grocery bill and *we* became *the* Hurst Eules Bedford *Independent School District*. It was probably 1958.

**Betty Fuller:**

Now did we tell everything that you wanted to tell about the picture in the School Room at *the Euleless Museum*?

**Bill Byers:**

That was the five boys in the senior class. *There weren't any other boys.*

**Betty Fuller:**

Mr. Byers we didn't really finish talking about school years at *the Euleless High School*.

**Bill Byers:**

My school years were very enjoyable. In 1941 with the attack on Pearl Harbor, I guess I was a sophomore in school. During the war we were saving everything *including* toothpaste tubes. When I was a junior in 1943 we had a large open space between the street and the school and the sophomores, juniors and seniors would call that *the scrap grass*. We'd get out and go all over the community, *we'd see* a plow sitting out in the field *or* an old car sitting out *somewhere*, *we'd* pulled it to school. Each class had a pile of scraps and *each class*, would *try to see who got the biggest pile of scraps*. We won, but there weren't any prizes. We had a great time and that's why I didn't learn anything in high school (*laughter*).

**Betty Fuller:**

Bull corn! You learned a whole heck of a lot.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And scraps were used for?

**Bill Byers:**

For the war.

**Betty Fuller:**

To build airplanes.

**Betty Fuller:**

Ofa Mary, you can't believe what it was like growing up during the war years! We couldn't get any tires for our cars. You had to have stamps for sugar. We had stamp books. Tell us about stamp books and tires Bill.

**Bill Byers:**

During my school years, which were very enjoyable, it was just a good time; you had to have stamps for shoes, sugar, tires, gas, *etc*. You had to have a whole collection of stamps.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Where'd you all get them, the Government?

**Betty Fuller:**

Tell where you had to go to get them. Daddy got ours so I don't know.

**Bill Byers:**

I don't know, (*pause*). You had to go to the Rationing Board and apply for them, depending on your occupation. Some people, if you were working in the Defense Plant you could get gas but most of the people around Euless were either Dairy*men* or farmers.

**Betty Fuller:**

May I add something right there? My Momma worked at Meacham Field or L.T.V. and she *helped* build airplanes. I have a picture of her and she riveted everything in an airplane. They had ladies because the men were in the Army so they hired women. Of course the minute the War was over, the women lost their jobs. That's when Momma was making more money than she'd ever made and we got stamps because Mother was building airplanes for the Army. It was the Air Force then; it was the Army, Air Force.

**Bill Byers:**

If you were in a Defense job you got preference and got more stamps than someone who *didn't have a Defense job*.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

So the Dairy*men* and Farmers of Euless would use their stamps to purchase from groceries from the grocery stores?

**Betty Fuller:**

Yes.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And how were the *stamps* monitored?

**Betty Fuller:**

You got stamps in a book, and once you used all your stamps you couldn't buy any more.

**Bill Byers:**

When I was a junior and senior *in school*, we'd go to Arlington and maybe a Drive In, and when it was come time for our junior and senior banquet at the end of the year,

we'd get a little sugar out of the sugar shaker at a restaurant and wrap it up and everybody would bring it back to the school in order to bake a cake for the Junior / Senior Banquet (*general laughter*).

**Betty Fuller:**

When I was in school, the Superintendent of Schools was a Church of Christ. The two big churches were Baptists and Methodists. Now, I was a Baptist because my Momma was raised in *the* First Baptist Church of Dallas. My husband was a Methodist and at that time the two churches were across the street *from each other*. The Baptists didn't dance and the Church of Christ *definitely* did NOT dance. We did not have dances. We had Junior / Senior Banquets. Tell us about those Bill?

**Bill Byers:**

Well, it wasn't very; it was kind of dumb, *because* everybody would have parties at someone's house.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Did the Baptist kids dance over there?

**Betty Fuller:**

We didn't dance. Well, I never danced in my life.

**Bill Byers:**

Still don't as far as I know (*laughter*). I didn't dance. I didn't know how.

**Betty Fuller:**

We didn't dance in Euless. We were generally a farming community.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Was it frowned upon?

**Betty Fuller:**

The Baptists didn't dance and the Church of Christ wouldn't have had a dance. O.D. Powell, *the* Superintendent of Schools, was a Church of Christ *member* and why, "fiddle-dee-dee" they hadn't had dances before him and sure weren't going to have them *during this time*.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And banquets would that have been when y'all were legally allowed to dance?

**Betty Fuller:**

No, you didn't dance.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Oh, you just sat there and did what?

**Betty Fuller:**

We had them at the school and you had dates and you'd wear long dresses. One time I went with Jack Courtney and the Mothers were the cooks. Tell us about it Bill.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Did you have girlfriends in high school?

**Bill Byers:**

Oh yea (*laughter*).

**Betty Fuller:**

Didn't your Momma cook?

**Bill Byers:**

Oh yes, Jenny Payton and Jessie Cannon's mother, Miss Younger and the women ran the cafeteria when we got the cafeteria. That was the last three years. We could go to Fort Worth and pick up carrots about that long and that big around and cheese, very little, but we could go up there and get a hundred pound sack, when I was a senior.

**Betty Fuller:**

I don't want to overlook the cemetery and your service. I don't want to forget about Trailwood because we really haven't *talked* about that and I don't want to forget about the Lumber Yard and how you acquired it. I want to do your five years as Euless Historical and the Windmill and the Well and what you did for the Barn and what you and Gary *Parker* did inside when we built the *Euless* Museum. You and Gary *Parker* did the Kitchen Porch and the Chalkboard that Gary *Parker* got that's in the School Room. What other projects did you do? Include all that Bill. Don't let me forget any of that though.

**Bill Byers:**

We just had a banquet in the school and that's all about all there is to it.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

We did an interview with Helen Gleghorn and she talked about how you used to pick them up in a beat up old ride and y'all used to drive around *the area*. Was that normal for student's to have a car?

**Bill Byers:**

Oh no. Some of the teacher's didn't *even* have a car.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Oh.

**Betty Fuller:**

Not during the War.

**Bill Byers:**

The teachers would room with somebody, some family. Warren Fuller had Miss Allman and Miss Bradford. They were my teachers and the men might have a car, *some of the* married men. School ground didn't need a parking lot because no one had cars.

**Betty Fuller:**

Something that needs to be included that we haven't talked about is that there was a *home* built for the Superintendents. We were what were called an Independent School District which meant we had grades one through eleven or one through twelve depending on what year we were in. When did they build that house for the Superintendents?

**Bill Byers:**

Just right north of the Auditorium, I don't know the year.

**Betty Fuller:**

In the 1930's would you say?

**Bill Byers:**

I'd say 1930's because as well as I can remember, it was always there when I started school. It was just a small little house in between the auditorium and Horace and Annie's house.

**Betty Fuller:**

When he says Horace and Annie's *house*, *he means* Horace and Annie Fuller's *house*. His Uncle Steve Huffman helped my father-in-law build the house that he lived in on Main Street which is still there *today*. It was next to the school but James (*Betty Fuller's husband*) and I sold it in *the* 1990's, I don't know *the exact date*. His dad died and his mother lived in it until she died and *then* his sister lived in it until it was falling in on her and then we *finally* sold the property. But their house (*Horace and Annie Fuller's*), Steve Huffman, his uncle (*Bill Byers'*) I have to tell this, his uncle and my father-in-law, they built that house in 1932. There was a creek between where we live now and Horace and Annie Fuller's house on Main Street, and there were these great huge sand rocks. You know *rocks like* y'all have in the parks (*City of Euless Parks*) they pulled them *sand rocks* up with mules by sledge. Steve Huffman and Horace

Fuller, *pulled those out of the creek around 1932 or 1933*. That's the foundation that that house still sits on *today*, those sand rocks that his uncle and my father-in-law pulled *out of the creek* that was next to the *house for the Superintendent*. And, I don't know when it was built.

**Bill Byers:**

Well, I'd suspect about the same time.

**Betty Fuller:**

Well I do know one thing, because I still have the paper for the first electricity to the school because James' Grandpa owned everything including where Fuller Brother's Grocery Store was, because the two Fuller brothers, first it was Homer Fuller, he *had Polio or something* and he was crippled and he couldn't farm cotton anymore so his Uncle, James' Grandpa, who owned that corner there and the house was just right next to it and he said, "aw heck, I'll give you half an acre or an acre and you come, we need a grocery store *in Eules*." They talked about it and they called James' Grandpa, Uncle Amp *and* Uncle Amp said, "You can pay me," because Weldon Cannon did an Oral History on him and we have it in writing, *Uncle Amp said*, "You can pay me \$100 whenever you get a little money, you can pay me. You can have that corner for \$100." The community pitched in because Homer Fuller was crippled in one leg and they built this little wooden building. Well, it turned into something else because he got the rights for the serge milking machine to be sold at his *store* out there in the back; there were more Dairies here than you could shake a stick at. Paul Horton had a big stainless steel truck and he'd pick up milk. He made boo coos of money on just feed and serge milking machines but anyway...James' Grandpa, owned the land from there to the *Eules* School, from where we think of *today* as Highway 10 and *Highway 183 is*. I have the paper from when he sold the rights to the Electric Company to run a line over his property down to the school to get electricity to the school.

**Bill Byers:**

We didn't get electricity until 1942 at our house. They got it in downtown Eules a lot quicker.

**Betty Fuller:**

That was downtown Eules but that was before 1942.

**Bill Byers:**

We lived three quarters of a mile west of Eules and that was a long way.

**Betty Fuller:**

Okay now let's get back to school and finish school.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I have a question. About the black kids, were they in school or were they not in school at that time with y'all?

**Bill Byers:**

Eules being an I.S.D., had a black school in Mosier Valley way back when Mother was going to school down there and they always, during the summer before school started *again*, they'd always go over there and paint it and replace the broken windows, *etc.* because they were always broken. They did that every year. Send somebody over there and they only had one guy, Ocie Arnet, I guess you'd say *he was the* custodian and he swept the floors and picked up the trash *and so forth.* *Anyway*, they would hire somebody and send them over to the Mosier Valley School and put the windows in before school started and paint it and clean it up but I think in 1946, *the* NAACP was very active and one day they went over there before school started, painted and put all the windows back in and sometime before school started all the windows got knocked out and this is right in the beginning of NAACP *and* they ended up at the Eules School.

**Betty Fuller:**

That was the year after I graduated.

**Bill Byers:**

Everybody got their guns and went down there *to the Eules School* and it was a lot of pandemonium, I'd guess you could say. They probably herded them in the auditorium and somebody wanted to burn it down. Of course there were reporters and everybody was out there and George Brown was a big ole cowboy and football player, *he* had gotten out of the Army and *was living* on Ray Woods' place and Audie Murphy had stayed. It was very confrontational, but it finally settled down, Eules was known, I guess, as the first school that they tried to integrate *in this area.* *It* got hate letters from all over the country.

**Betty Fuller:**

Can I add one thing? We made front page of the New York Times newspaper.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Because of that?

**Betty Fuller:**

Yes, because there was no integration in the United States at that point in time.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

At that point...

**Betty Fuller:**

And, it got written up that in Eules, nobody knew where Eules, Texas was, but it was written up.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

When did integration happen? I'm fuzzy on that.

**Betty Fuller:**

Oh well, it was a long time after that. I graduated from Eules High School in 1950. I started college in Sept of 1950, fall of 1950. I started college and that's when they all appeared down here. I missed the whole thing.

**Bill Byers:**

I missed it too. I don't know what I was.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

So that was way before integration?

**Betty Fuller:**

Oh, oh.

**Bill Byers:**

That was really the beginning and I don't even know when that started coming to Bell High School.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I heard that the Principal there came out with a shotgun.

**Betty Fuller:**

Mr. O.D. Powell.

**Bill Byers:**

It was a lot of shot guns, rifles, pistols.

**Betty Fuller:**

That School still exists (*Mosier Valley School*). There was a State Marker for it.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

The one that's the Beauty Salon now, *in Hurst*?

**Betty Fuller:**

Yes, the Beauty Salon. It's still there and it's on Bedford Eules Road.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Those photos are on display at the library too. Ok. Interesting and what kind of interaction did you have with the Mosier Valley folks when you were growing up?

**Bill Byers:**

We always played ball against them, always got beat.

**Betty Fuller:**

I didn't know that.

**Bill Byers:**

When you're thirteen or fourteen years old and they were seventeen and eighteen years old, some of them twenty probably, *you'd usually get beat*. We'd go over there or they'd come over here and *we'd* play ball.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Did they work for y'all? Like farming?

**Bill Byers:**

Well, a lady over there was the maid for Edith Fuller. Ned Nelson had been a slave and he'd always come to school and talk about the slave days. He was OLD.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Oh, a Black man? He was allowed to come and talk at the school?

**Bill Byers:**

Oh yes. Yes, they were friends; it was just the way things were.

**Betty Fuller:**

Can I interject one thing? There was a lady named Vada Johnson and the reason this is important is that she was a member of *the* Euless Historical and Preservation Committee until she died. She was a teacher at the Mosier Valley School. Her Grandma's picture is on the second floor of the Tarrant County Courthouse. I've got to tell this because it's so important and I've never told it and I don't ever want to be interviewed about this because I didn't grow up here. When the War was over, Texas didn't get the message for a long time. The Emancipation Proclamation said that every slave will get 40 acres and a mule. There were two plantations over in the Mosier Valley *area*. The Mosier Plantation and the Lee Plantation and I think, but I don't know, they were relatives of Robert E. Lee but I don't know *that for sure*. I've asked everybody I can ask but I don't know. Vada Johnson's Grandmother was a slave. She obviously was the product of the owner of the plantation. She had the highest cheekbones like an Indian and the lightest skin. She got her 40 acres and a mule and

the man she married was on the other plantation and he was so resentful about being a slave that he refused his 40 acres and a mule. And I loved Vada Johnson. I would even pick her up as she got older and bring her over to our meetings. She taught school, first grade at Wilshire *Elementary* when I was teaching sixth grade there. She and I were teaching in the same school here in H.E.B. Anyway, she said her Grandmother never let her Grandfather forget that he had turned down the 40 acres and the mule because they would have had a lot more land. They could have later sold that land for a pretty good price. Was right there, tell her where it was Bill.

**Bill Byers:**

The end of Raider Drive before it hits Trinity, right in there.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Weldon Cannon as a young kid mentioned *to me* that they had somebody on the property *who was their housekeeper?*

**Bill Byers:**

Arch Cannon may have. I don't know.

**Betty Fuller:**

He had that big two story house right across the street from the *Eulless* School.

**Bill Byers:**

And he had the *Eulless* Nursery, probably had some of the people from Mosier Valley working.

**Betty Fuller:**

Now we have to get back to you getting out of high school and meeting your future wife. You want to tell us about that?

**Bill Byers:**

We started going together when we were fourteen and break up and go together again. Break up and go together again.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I bet she's the one that did all the breaking up.

**Bill Byers:**

Yes (*general laughter*).

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And what was Boyce's maiden name?

**Bill Byers:**

Cook, Boyce Cook and she moved up here about I guess *when* I was fourteen. We were both about the same age. I was a little bit older than she was. She moved in with the Conway's and that was her aunt. Her mother and dad were divorced. She moved up here from Kilgore and we went together, more or less, all through high school. I drove a milk truck, a pick up, and my dad drove a truck over to Grapevine and Smithfield Dairies, picking up milk and we *used to* raise hogs to eat. We had an old sow that had a bunch of pigs and after they'd get about that high, they were real cute, so I was driving the milk truck one day and I got one of those pigs and took it down there and gave it to Boyce at the Conway's. She said, "and, what do I do with it?" I told her, "Take it and feed it, raise it, then kill it and have bacon." She said, "What do I feed it?" I said, "Get it some shorts." She thought shorts were *to wear (laughter)*.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I'm sorry; she thought they were what *to wear*?

**Betty Fuller:**

Underwear.

**Bill Byers:**

So she made it some underwear. *(Laughter)* Shorts it's what you feed them.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

*Is that spelled, S-H-A-R-D-S?*

**Bill Byers:**

*(Laughter)* Shorts, S-h-o-r-t-s. It's just a ground up meal that you mix with water and it ferments and you can feed *it to the pigs together* with their slop and scraps.

**Betty Fuller:**

Can you talk about when you got married?

**Bill Byers:**

After high school, I went to work for American Airlines at Meacham Field. We got married in 1944. I was seventeen and she was sixteen. She went to live with her mother in Tulsa and we went up there and I went to work for Spartan Aircraft, building tail bones for P-38's. David was born up there. Then we moved back here and I just kicked around and one day we were out of wood. *Now*, Mr. Blackwall had moved off of the airport *property on over to* Harwood Road in Bedford, *he* told my Dad that he was going to clear out a field if we wanted some firewood just to cut those trees down. So, I drove the tractor pulling a four wheel wagon and we went over there *and* sawed the trees down and cut it up and split the wood. After we got the wood loaded up, my

Uncle and I came down Harwood Road to Main Street in Euless because we needed some gas in the tractor. *We* came south on Main Street to Euless and stopped at Reese Fitch's store. It was right across the street from the Exxon Station.

**Betty Fuller:**

Yes it was McGuinness'.

**Bill Byers:**

Leon McGuinness bought it from Reese Fitch. Reese was buried on April 17<sup>th</sup>, the day I went into the Army. Anyhow, we drove by there and got some gas and I was going across the street to get on Bedford Euless Road and there was a big stack of big timbers, twenty to thirty foot long *logs* that were hauled in overnight *and* just dumped off the truck, they were just sticking every *which* way. *Some were* sticking out in *to* the road. There was a guy standing there, looking at them and we drove by in the wagon and asked *him* what happened? And he said, "I'm going to build a lumber yard here." This was in 1945; he had gotten word that they *were* going to build the airport, *the* Great Southwest Airport, from some of his friends in Fort Worth. So, he came out to build a lumber yard and right next to it was a fig patch. He said, "You know anybody that I can hire to get this stuff out of the road?" I said, "Yea we could help you, we'll go and unload and get some chains and come up here and get them off the road for ya." So we *went and* unloaded the wood and got some chains and went back up there and we said, "What are you gonna do? Where you gonna put em?" He said, "We'll put them down between these fig roses, there's enough room to drive a tractor." I said, "Well what are you going to do with the fig bushes?" He said, "Well we'll have to get them out and get rid of them." So I said, "Why don't we pull the fig trees up? It would be a whole lot easier to pull the trees up and put them in a pile and burn everything then." There wasn't any ban against burning, so we started yanking those fig trees out of the ground and piled *them* up in a pile to make the base of the lumber yard. We left one fig bush right at the end of the bin where the lumber bins were going and built a two story building there. Of course this was during the war and you couldn't get any lumber but he bought some, in the black market lumber (*general laughter*).

**Betty Fuller:**

Illegal...(*general laughter*).

**Bill Byers:**

*The lumber* came out of East Texas and was loaded with gum. Of course I didn't know anything about gum *but anyhow*, we stretched the timber and they were black and oil was running out of them. They had been, they had put the fells out at Ranger in 1920 and they didn't know how to make a conical tank, so they just made a round tank and then put a post right in the center of it and then put 2 x 6's and metal on top of them to keep the rain out of the oil tanks. And they'd been standing there soaking that oil up

from 1920 to 1944. And then we got the cross cut saw and cut them up into a bunch of 2' deals and put them in the ground and put the 6 x 6's on top them, bins were 20' deep. And then built the two story building and then built the lumber bins on top of that. We were working *for him* when my wife and David was a baby and they were going to Whitney to see her grandmother for Thanksgiving. I remember them going around the corner and waving at us because I was working. After we got the lumber yard built, David Hawes, had about thirty colored rent houses in Fort Worth, so Steve Huffman and I went up there and we'd take the chimneys out and patch the roof because at that time they were using kerosene heaters instead of wood stoves in Fort Worth.

**Betty Fuller:**

This was for the black people, that's what he means colored *rent houses*.

**Bill Byers:**

And I worked there for him until I went in the Army in 1945.

**Betty Fuller:**

And we still have one of the Fig bushes right next to the Fuller House.

**Bill Byers:**

We sold *the business* in 1998 and the City came and dug that Fig bush up and took it down to Parks *Maintenance*. It was the summer *time* and very hot. They took it down there and nursed it and got it growing and it's now down at the Fuller House at Heritage Park and growing.

**Betty Fuller:**

Bill used to let me go down when he had an office where the Lumber Yard used to be. Do you still own that piece of property there? Yes, he still owns it and he had an office there and there was still a fig bush *there* and he used to let me go...

**Bill Byers:**

Kentucky Fried Chicken is there now and I own the property next to it.

**Betty Fuller:**

...and there was a fig bush there and he'd use to let me go pick figs there.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

There's also another cutting over at the Preserve at McCormick Park.

**Bill Byers:**

Yes there is one there too.

**Betty Fuller:**

Now Bill, will you tell us anything of importance that you'd like to share with us about your Army life. What branch of the *military*?

**Bill Byers:**

I was inducted at the old Post Office in Dallas.

**Betty Fuller:**

When you were 'inducted', you were drafted?

**Bill Byers:**

Yes, I tried to join the Navy in 1944 and went to Dallas and took the physical. The guy that did the physical said, "I don't know, but you've sure got flat feet." So the doctor giving physicals was somewhere else, *he wasn't in*, but they said, "If he gets back in time, I'll let him look at you." So after we got our physicals, we went to *another* office and they said, "The train is going to leave Union Station for San Diego at 6 o'clock. You all just wait in this office." There were about four of us, and just about the time we picked up our bags to go meet that train, the guy came in the door and it was the doctor and this Corpsman there said, "I want you to look at this guy's feet." This was in November of 1944.

**Betty Fuller:**

The war was over in 1945, by the way.

**Bill Byers:**

So he said, "Take your shoes off and stand on one foot, hop around and then stand on the other foot, hop around on the other." I was hopping all over the place. He said, "Son, they don't need to send you to San Diego, they'll just send you right back." He said, "You just go on home." So I hitchhiked out to traffic, didn't drive, and caught a ride back to Euless with my head hanging down.

**Betty Fuller:**

But you finally got in the service. How'd you get in?

**Bill Byers:**

I was 17 at that time and after I turned 18 in January, they drafted me immediately. I went in the Army. I went to Fort Sam Houston stayed about four weeks down there waiting on a pair of shoes. I wore 11AAA and they didn't have any triple A's, they never did get 'em. So, finally I got some that didn't fit, and then I went *ahead* to Camp Hood in Killeen, Texas and trained as tank destroyers.

**Betty Fuller:**

It's called Fort Hood now.

**Bill Byers:**

Then I went and finished my basic training, and then they sent us down to Fort Ord, California and then to Seattle. We shipped out of Seattle; I guess it was about November. It took us twenty-seven days. By this time the War was over. They dropped the two Atomic Bombs, they didn't even have any orders *yet* so they just shipped us. We shipped out on a little old Troop Carrier, forty-five hundred people and it took us twenty-seven days to get within sight of Japan and then having no orders they didn't know what to do *with us*, so we headed south and finally anchored in Nagasaki Bay. We were probably a half mile off shore when the second atomic bomb hit. We were there about three days and the Captain came on the horn and said that we have to steam back toward Tokyo and if we don't have orders by the time we get there, we *had* enough food to get back *to the States*. It takes a lot of food *to feed* forty-five hundred people plus the ship's crew. You don't ever volunteer for anything in the Army, but they asked for volunteers for people that could type. I volunteered not knowing what I was going to get into. We published a little single sheet newspaper on a Mimeograph Machine on an old?

**Betty Fuller:**

Crank... been there done that...

**Bill Byers:**

You had to type it on a kind of a...?

**Betty Fuller:**

It's a long blue thing that the typewriter cuts little indentations in it and you put it on this machine that has a drum and solution inside there *and* then you turn it and put your paper and stuff leaks through where the little cuts are and that's printing.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

*Do you mean* kind of like carbon copy or something like that?

**Bill Byers:**

You can run it on a Mimeograph Machine and it'll turn out and we probably put out a thousand of them and one guy would read it and pass it on to the next guy. We were working with the Chaplain and a transportation officer. The Chaplain would go around and get tidbits of news and a guy would get his name in the paper. Everybody was glad to get the paper. Took us twenty-seven days to get across and I was sick for twenty-six of them.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

You just barely missed all of that.

**Bill Byers:**

Yea because the War was over because Japan had surrendered but had it not been for those two Atomic Bombs they were gonna invade Japan. We were just Cannon fodder. I was talking to a guy that was in Australia and he had ordered 500,000 body bags and they figured that they *would* order 250,000 more. They figured 750,000 people getting killed invading Japan because they had all these shortened sticks and everything.

**Betty Fuller:**

When you got back to the States, where did you go? Did you get out of the service right away?

**Bill Byers:**

I was over there for I guess, maybe a year and a half. We headed back towards Tokyo and went into Nagoya and got off in Nagoya. *Then* we went to Takarazuka and that's where they had these famous dancers. We were just replacements, we'd replace somebody and then they'd send them home and all those guys that fought all the way up through the islands were glad to see us and yet they resented us *too* because they'd been fighting for four years and here we *were* floating in and not doing anything and the only reason that they were glad to see us *was* so that they could come *back* home. They sent me to Kobe in the 33<sup>rd</sup> Division and I was in G-2 and they again asked for volunteers for a typist and I volunteered again and they sent me to Koshien Stadium which is between Kobe and Osaka. It was the biggest baseball stadium, the biggest place I'd ever seen; *there was* nothing in Eules that size. We were under the stadium and I was in a room and it had a column sticking out and there was *enough* room for a cot and a barrack's bag at the end of it. On the edge of the steam was a swimming pool. It was a school *and* they had coaches from all over the United States who played basketball, football and baseball for prestigious schools and they were trying to do get a sports program started to keep everybody off the street.

**Betty Fuller:**

To keep the troops occupied in their free time?

**Bill Byers:**

Yes, keep them occupied. They brought people in from everywhere, from all over the South Pacific. There was division boxing, boxing was pretty big. So they'd train them and then they'd go back and coach each company or division team.

**Betty Fuller:**

How long did we, occupy Japan, more than a year?

**Bill Byers:**

Yes, we were still in Korea in 1950. That was six years.

**Betty Fuller:**

The reason for having these teams is that they were going to be there for a while, kill time.

**Bill Byers:**

General McArthur's headquarters was in Tokyo, but I spent about five or six months there, then they sent us back, but this time the 33<sup>rd</sup> Division was deactivated so all of us that was in G-2, which was about six people, we were in charge of turning in all the trucks, jeeps, weapons carriers, *etc.* back in to the deal. We were stationed in a girl's school, *in a* three story *high* gymnasium in Kobe. It was a seaport and they had long quarter mile piers with buildings on them and you could drive trucks down there and that's where we had our motor boat. I was on guard duty on New Year's Eve.

**Betty Fuller:**

You were in Japan how long?

**Bill Byers:**

A little over a year, maybe a year and a half. I was on guard duty down there and one of the Sergeants' got drunk and got a 50 caliber machine gun. He set it up on top of our building *and* you could go out *on* the roof and see his Tracers coming out. I got in the back of that warehouse and got in the cab of a truck, till they finally got him settled down. He wasn't shooting; he was just shooting over the warehouses with the 50 caliber machine gun.

**Betty Fuller:**

When did you get to come back to the states and where were you? Were you discharged the minute you got back?

**Bill Byers:**

The 33<sup>rd</sup> Division closed up and they sent me to Yokohama. I was in Sixth Army Headquarters there and we were writing orders to get, when Japan surrendered they took everything that pertained to war, riffles, sabers, and everything and put them in several warehouses in Tokyo and they'd back up a barge up to those warehouses and load everything in those 80 ft by 40 ft wide barges, they'd *load* them up with rifles, binoculars, radios, sabers, field cannons, mortars and everything, take them out about 30 miles and dump them in the ocean. Day after day, I wrote orders to get rid of that stuff. Then I came home in, I don't even remember the year it was, whether it was at

the end of 1947. I came back into San Francisco and then went to Sam Houston and got discharged *there*.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

As teenagers were ya'll anxious, why did ya'll want to join the army when it was almost sure death?

**Bill Byers:**

Well, it was just something you did. I don't...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Did everybody at your age, young men, want to be...

**Bill Byers:**

After the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, there was a line a mile long at the recruiting station. It's just to protect the country and it carried through all the way. Of course everyone knew they were going to get drafted. I wanted to get in the Air Corpse but by that time the war was coming to *an* end and they just quit accepting everyone. It was just the right thing to do.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

How did you and Ms. Boyce communicate during the war?

**Bill Byers:**

At that time, instead of stamping your letter you just put free on it. You didn't have to pay for *mailing your* letters and airmail. Yeah, we got to writing hot and heavy. *(Laughter)* We had mail call every day.

**Betty Fuller:**

When did you return to the lumber company? After you returned from the service?

**Bill Byers:**

I worked for Tracey Arnett.

**Betty Fuller:**

Tracey was married to James' first cousin, who was a Fuller. Her house was built by Tubby Huffman on Dickey *Drive* and then Bubba helped build a house across the street from us. It was her husband he is talking about.

**Bill Byers:**

My dad was a dairy man. Tennessee Dairy was built and everyone around here took their milk there in ten gallon milk cans. Of course my dad drove a dairy truck the same as Tracey Arnet for nineteen years, seven days a week. They'd get up at 4

o'clock in the morning and milk. He and mother milked thirty-two cows. *After that* he'd get on the truck, he had, I guess about twenty-five customers and depending on the size of the dairy, some of them would have four, ten gallons of milk cans. He'd pick them up and take them to Dallas and they'd weighted *the milk* and graded it. You had to be a grade a A dairy to get top prices. They had inspectors that would come around to the barns and checking them for cleanliness. They had milk boxes that were as long as this table (*approximately 8 ft.*) and they stood up about this high and you had to pull those ten gallons of milk, weighing about 110 pounds out of the water, there was water to cool...

**Betty Fuller:**

Do you know who owned those processing plants?

**Bill Byers:**

Metzgers Dairy. They were out there on Moore and Dallas. My dad drove it nineteen years; I think he missed one day in nineteen years. And then he'd get it down off his back and he'd just have to walk with his hands on his knees. And then he'd still have to roll it out and then roll it back to his truck which was this high off the ground and then he'd have to get on there and stack it because it was a pretty tall truck. The trucks then weren't as big as they are now. You'd have to roll them in, stack them and every can had a number of the dairy on it and sometimes you'd stack them three high then when he had to unload them. He'd have to unload them. You'd have to go around and put the cans back in the truck again. Then he'd have to come through Irving and get two to three-hundred pound blocks of ice that were about five foot long, about that wide and about that tall. Some of the little dairies didn't have milk boxes so we'd have to ice them down so they'd stay cold.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Milk boxes were like what?

**Bill Byers:**

Like refrigerators. Some guys may be had only a gallon or two, they'd have to ice their milk down.

**Betty Fuller:**

That was big business here, I mean big business. What was really modern was when Paul Horton built that house there on Hewitt around the corner from us. He had a stainless steel truck, now that was less work.

**Bill Byers:**

They milked and put it in cans and he just siphoned *the milk*, sucked it out with a pipe.

**Betty Fuller:**

Now that was half the work his daddy did, when Paul Horton did it.

**Bill Byers:**

Tracey did the same thing too. I think Tracey sold out to Paul when he had that Texaco station and that's when Paul got those tank trucks.

**Betty Fuller:**

When Tennessee Dairy came, now you know then that's why Homer Fuller, who brought Warren Fuller in with him made so much money because he got the rights to the surge milking machines for all these dairies. My daddy never had a milking machine. He just did this (*indicating milking by hand*). You had to have electricity down to the barn.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

So when Tennessee Dairy came here then people didn't have to go all the way to Dallas anymore.

**Betty Fuller:**

That's right.

**Bill Byers:**

Yes and they had trucks that hauled it to Dallas. They had a strike here one time. People wanted to get more for their milk. You'd go to unload your milk and these guys; I guess *you could say* hot heads who wanted more for their milk *would* grab that milk and pour it out in the street. Daddy was still milking cows when I came back. Myrtle Fitch, Reece Fitch had died at that little grocery store and service station up there and she was trying to sell out and I think she sold it to Leon McGinnis and she had thirty acres right across the street from our place and she said, "I want to make you a deal, I'll sell you at thirty acres at \$5,000 and you could pay me...you could get you a herd of cows..." that's where Home Depot, Denny's, La Quinta *Inn*, Acme Brick and that wooded area that's in there *is at now*, she had thirty acres and she said, "I'll sell it to you for \$5,000 and you could pay me as you make it. You could put you a herd of cows over there and when your dad gets through milking you could drive them over there and use his barn and then drive your cows back across the street." My dad was running a milk route and I had a pickup and I would pick up the dairies between here and Hurst, small dairies, *they*, might have two *to* five cans about thirty gallon cans *each and* come back and park the pickup and when my dad came back through here he would load them off the pickup into his truck and take it on to Dallas. I'd do that before I went to school. I'd have milk splashed down my overalls to last me a lifetime. I didn't want to have anything to do with cows. That was seven days a week. *After that* I went to Chance Vaught *where* I worked as a tool grinder, *I* worked over there about six months and then I got laid off *and* went to *work for* General Dynamics...

**Betty Fuller:**

That's in Fort Worth. The aircraft place *is* in Fort Worth.

**Bill Byers:**

I started working out there January the 3<sup>rd</sup> in 1950. That's when they were building B-36's, I went there to work. A lot of people went there to slough off; I went to work for \$.90 cents an hour in 1950 and then they moved me up on the line when they used some of them B-36's to take coal into Germany. That's when the coal war was going on over there in Russia, they had to feed them and heat them and clothe them and those B-36's were hauling coal, then they would come back in and we'd have to modify some stuff on them. A lot of the time, I'd go in at 2 o'clock in the afternoon and worked till 7 in the next morning because they were trying to get the planes back out. Then, they opened the Greater Southwest Airport in 1953 and I hired on over there as an electrician. That's when I took the two weeks' vacation and built my house. That was the week before I started to work on my house *and* I needed another week to finish my house, that's the only job I ever got fired *from* (*general laughter*) because I didn't go back. I didn't go back that one week and they sent me a telegram told me to come get my tools. I was fired (*laughter*). That was called *the* Greater Southwest Airport—Amon Carter Field. I went to work down there in April, and that was about two weeks before it opened.

**Betty Fuller:**

By the way when you write it up, put Greater Southwest Airport dash Amon Carter Field, it's sort of like one big long title.

**Bill Byers:**

And I'd work down there and I'd go to the Lumber Yard and get stuff. He tried to get it to kind of work for him after I got out of the army.

**Betty Fuller:**

*You mean* Mr. House.

**Bill Byers:**

They had a retired Colonel up there that was grouchy. So I went in there one day and he said, "I want to hire you," I said, "I got a pretty good job." He said, "I know, I know but I need you." So anyhow, I quit down there, went to work for him and there was a lot of building going on and he was financing all the builders down there in Cedar Hill. We built across from the school, *the* South Eules School; I guessed he financed ninety percent of those houses, not the Cedar Hill in Dallas, but the one in Eules. His wife was a big bridge player; they'd call him the master. The cruise company, this is in 1953, they'd take cruises to Europe about eighteen to twenty day cruises. So he

started going home one day and he said, "My wife is going to pick me up, here's the keys to the pickup you drive it." I said, "Where are you going?" He said, "I'm going on a cruise with my wife, we'll be gone about twenty-eight days." The cruise liners hired her to teach bridge, and he went along for the ride. I had been working there about six months I guess, everything went pretty smooth. *When* he got back and he said, "You know, I might take another trip in a month or so." and he did. I guess he liked what I was doing. He decided to incorporate in sales stock, I didn't have any money, he said, well I'll buy \$5,000 worth of stock and the whole thing was about 21,000. I said, "Well I'll buy \$6,000 stock," the guy that was working for me had sold some property and he bought \$5,000 of stock.

**Betty Fuller:**

What was his name?

**Bill Byers:**

Web Cromer. So *one* day and he said, "I'm going to turn it over to you," this was late 1950's. So anyhow, he said, "Well I'm getting tired of working I want to do something else, you just take it and run it." So we did, we were still doing quite a bit of business. I had to meet in Dallas; I guess it was in '59. So Bob Fuller, Jared, and Jimmy Payton, some guys from Dallas, Mike, *they* were looking for a piece of property to put into Trail Wood. We went to Dallas *and* had dinner, and Bob Fuller and I was getting back on *Highway* 183 as we were on the freeway, we had a few drinks, it was pretty good *and* all we could see when we pulled up the hill was a fire truck and red lights. I said, "Well they had a wreck right in front of the lumber yard," so we slowed down there *by the* insurance office over there on Martha Street and he said, "Do you want to stop?"

**Betty Fuller:**

Oh excuse me, when he says there insurance company he's talking about Bobby Fuller, and Jimmy Payton, were co-owners of Fuller Payton Insurance.

**Bill Byers:**

Bobby Fuller was Iva (*Nail's*) brother. So we slowed down about 20 mph and Boyce was standing out there in her night gown holding all of them company ledgers. Back then, they still had ledgers, all my records were in ledgers, she was holding all the books. He said, "You going to stop?" I had said, "Hell no, go on." Fire trucks were *all* around it, about 6 o'clock that evening, *here* came a thunder storm through there, and I had an old pipe Threader that *was* sitting out there outside the window with the car running through it plugged in. About 6 o'clock, lighting and wind *had come* and the lighting had hit that pipe. The electric cord was where I put all my nail sacks and they don't burn too good but they got caught on fire. This was about 1 o'clock in the morning and it didn't burn the building down, it just built up in smoke and heat, and I had all my hardware and plastic bags hanging on the wall, *well* they just sagged. The

ones on top got hot enough and it just got enough that it heated everything up; the ones *that were* on top would melt and drop. The ones a little further down, I still got the pictures of it, they get so hot and sagged a whole bunch *that* the one's a little bit further down would sag a little bit *and* the one's *further down from those above* was just smoked *up*. I went back up there *when* they had the fire out; *it* had totaled everything in there, so I called the next day and was told lightening had hit the lumber yard and the fire had burned everything up.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And so you had the insurance company right across the street. Took care of the fire? When was that fire?

**Bill Byers:**

I said, "1959", but seems like it was...? Anyhow, I called Dave and he came out the next day. It was a pitiful mess. Insurance people were there. They told *me* it was a total loss. Dave said, "Bill let's just close it up." I said, "Dave, this is my livelihood and I don't want to do that. I'd rather have something to do." At this time, a guy that had his shop next door to me called me about 11 o'clock one night. He was over talking to Web Cromer and he talked him (*Web Cromer*) into selling his stock to him. Nothing down, pay me when you can and he called me at 11 o'clock *at night* and I was dead asleep. He said, "Bill do you mind if Web sells his stock to me?" And I was asleep and I didn't have sense enough to tell him that I needed to talk to *Web first*. I don't know why he came to me. Anyhow, I said, "No, I guess not," so he bought *Web's share*, and I assume signed a note. Web never did get any money out of it. I said, "Well do you intend to work there?" He said, "Yea, my shop is right next door and I can work both of them." I said, "That's not really what I need. I need somebody there all the time." Web came to work the next morning and Duane walked in and said, "We don't need you anymore." There I was *with* my Uncle and I running the Lumber Yard.

**Betty Fuller:**

What was your Uncle's name?

**Bill Byers:**

Blunt Huffman. He worked there from 1944 to 1985. He'd already quit. He drove a truck. Anyhow, things went on and Duane moved to Justin, *Texas* and he came in and work half *a day* and then take off, so I lived with that as long as I could. Everybody told me I was crazy and *the* banker said, "Get him out of there." So I borrowed the money and paid Duane off and got him out.

**Betty Fuller:**

How many years did you own the Lumber company by yourself? When did it close?

**Bill Byers:**

1998. About 40 years, I was there in 1954.

**Betty Fuller:**

He was still there when we had him contract to build a separate garage for us. I'm like a packrat. We had a two car garage but I converted part of it. Didn't you build one for Jimmy Payton too?

**Bill Byers:**

Uh huh. But that was after I closed up.

**Betty Fuller:**

When did you build ours? After you closed up? He and Glenn Gleghorn *built it*.

**Bill Byers:**

Then I rented or leased twenty year lease on the property on the corner at Byers Street and Highway 10 and built a metal building in 1969 then operated it as a two story deal.

**Betty Fuller:**

What did you operate out of there?

**Bill Byers:**

The Lumber Yard. Then I built a 50' by 60' building on that corner lot, brick and metal building, and operated out of there until 1997. I sold the property in 1998.

**Betty Fuller:**

Now you never finished about Trailwood and you were going to talk about something else that you did. We need to talk about Calloway Cemetery and other things you did.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Can I ask who owned Tennessee Dairy?

**Bill Byers:**

Tennessee Dairy was the company. It was a big outfit in Dallas. Tennessee Dairies.

**Betty Fuller:**

Who did you and your Dad do business with?

**Bill Byers:**

They sold when Tennessee Dairies was in operation.

**Betty Fuller:**

Who did?

**Bill Byers:**

Dad.

**Betty Fuller:**

Uh yea, and then?

**Bill Byers:**

Well, I don't remember what year that it closed. I think Cromer and Laverne Horton built that house down there on Main Street probably 1953 or 1954, maybe 1955.

**Betty Fuller:**

Cromer and Laverne were Horton's. *The Horton's* came here from East Texas, a bunch of them.

**Bill Byers:**

He was Manager, I guess, of Tennessee Dairies.

**Betty Fuller:**

His niece still lives down there on Main Street. She's the one that graduated *with* Glada Horton. Rose started first grade with James and finished 12<sup>th</sup> grade. She's still here.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Are we kind of wrapping up with the Lumber Yard?

**Bill Byers:**

Yes, I sold it to Kentucky Fried Chicken in 1998. About Trailwood, we talked about having a nice addition in Eules. The only nice upscale Addition at that time was Morrisdale.

**Betty Fuller:**

And it was considered "THE" thing *back* then.

**Bill Byers:**

*Even though* Morrisdale is in the City of Eules it was oriented towards Hurst. We wanted a nice addition so Bob Fuller and his brother Billy Joe Fuller, who's a Dentist in Arlington, Gerald Scott *who* was an insurance guy in Arlington and Jimmy Payton talked to Earl Ash and made a deal on that property out there.

**Betty Fuller:**

Where Oak Drive is, where Jimmy Payton lives. Who was Aida Ash?

**Bill Byers:**

Aida Ash was Gus, his (*Earl Ash's*) Daddy.

**Betty Fuller:**

And he owned where all those old trees are off of North Main Street. He owned all that property.

**Bill Byers:**

We bought eighty-five acres and had it planned. We had to run the sewer and water there at our cost. In fact, they had to build a sewer plant down there at Bear Creek Bridge to serve it.

**Betty Fuller:**

Was Wisenbaker still on with the water company back then? This guy from east Texas came and I don't know if Warren Fuller or who brought him here?

**Bill Byers:**

I think Warren did.

**Betty Fuller:**

Warren Fuller because they were working on Midway Park, but he owned our water company, there was not a City owned one.

**Bill Byers:**

After I served on the school board until I believe 1959, I ran for the City Council. Was that before 1969, it maybe in 1959?

**Betty Fuller:**

Who was the Mayor when you ran for City Council?

**Bill Byers:**

J.S. Anderson.

**Betty Fuller:**

Oh Mr. Anderson.

**Bill Byers:**

1959, maybe 1960.

**Betty Fuller:**

Jimmy Anderson was in James' graduating class. That's the Mr. Anderson that he's talking about.

**Bill Byers:**

The only building we had was the old Fire Station on Highway 10 and the Lumber Yard and we made a cement block jail house right behind it. No A/C, no water, no heat, just had a bucket. There was a room about this size and we'd have Council meetings in there. Mr. Kinnard lived down in Tarrant as the City Secretary and muddled along with it and then we had decided that we wanted to build a new City Hall. In 1963 we decided to buy the property where *the current* City Hall area is *now*. I don't remember how many acres but we bought that property and then the highway started buying property in probably *between* 1960 and 1965.

**Betty Fuller:**

That was for the new highway that replaced *Highway* 10.

**Bill Byers:**

They started in 1963. I forget what we paid for the property but we sold them a 300' strip off the front of it for the highway. We got the same amount or a little more for the whole, I believe it was, 20 acres. So then, I'd have to look on the cornerstone, there's a plaque on the City Hall.

**Betty Fuller:**

Current City Hall (*201 North Ector Drive*) where it sits now.

**Bill Byers:**

We hired some architects out of Dallas to draw up the plans for the City Hall which included the Library, and a Rec Center.

**Betty Fuller:**

Who'd the City get that property from?

**Bill Byers:**

Bought it from Cromer Horton.

**Betty Fuller:**

Cromer Horton was another one of the Horton's that came from East Texas. We didn't say that and that's probably important.

**Bill Byers:**

He was one that ran Tennessee Dairies. So we cleared the land.

**Betty Fuller:**

When he's talking about "we" he's talking about the City.

**Bill Byers:**

We had the architects draw the plans and everybody thought we were crazy for building such a grand *facility*, and it was *grand*, it's nice now and it was nice at the time.

**Betty Fuller:**

It was a big deal.

**Bill Byers:**

I think those three buildings were \$279,000 for all three and I think they spent \$1,000,000 redoing each one of them. The three buildings were City Hall, a Rec Center and a Library. Our Fire *Headquarter* was built later.

**Betty Fuller:**

For a while the Library was in a different building. You know where that *Building A* is there?

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Uh huh.

**Betty Fuller:**

The Library was there before the new Library was built.

**Bill Byers:**

Anyhow, we built it and it was the best at that time, still the best as far as I'm concerned. *Compared to* any of our neighbors *at the time*, including Irving. We got a good deal.

**Betty Fuller:**

He did good. I was just teaching school. Maybe I was already in the Administration Building by then. What about Trailwood? How many houses did you build there?

**Bill Byers:**

I don't even remember.

**Betty Fuller:**

Between fifty and a hundred?

**Bill Byers:**

More than that.

**Betty Fuller:**

Between one-hundred and two-hundred? I don't know how many houses are down there.

**Bill Byers:**

I suspect that it was the same amount as the number of lots. I don't remember how many lots there were.

**Betty Fuller:**

A lot, and Bobby Fuller lived there but Jimmy didn't because he still lived around the corner from us. Bill lived there. Bill's mother lived there. I don't know, I'm just thinking of the people involved in the enterprise.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

*Are you getting tired?*

**Betty Fuller:**

We gotta finish. We gotta do Calloway Cemetery. What other Boards and Commissions have you served on before we get to Calloway Cemetery? How long were you on City Council?

**Bill Byers:**

I think eight or nine years.

**Betty Fuller:**

Was Anderson, still the Mayor the whole time?

**Bill Byers:**

J.S. Anderson, Bill Fuller, Peter Krause and I don't remember if I was there when Harold Samuels was Mayor or not.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Any other major events that happened that you can recall while you were a Council Member that you want to make a note of?

**Bill Byers:**

We built a complex and at the time I went on the Council, Midway Park was owned by Midway Park and run by the people who lived there. *There* were always problems. I don't remember, somebody drowned in that pool?

**Betty Fuller:**

They drowned Coach Pennington. My daughter *Debbie* was taking swimming lessons from Pennington in his backyard and Coach Pennington was electrocuted down there by Arch Tan where South Euleless Elementary is and that's why they named it Pennington Field because he was the Coach. He was the head of the Athletic Department in the H.E.B. School District.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And when he died?

**Betty Fuller:**

And on the side he made extra money by teaching people in the neighborhood swimming at night and when he picked up a lamp he was electrocuted.

**Bill Byers:**

When we built that swimming pool we didn't have lights hooked up so we just had a lamp like in your living room. Stand up lamp, he reached up and set it and his feet were wet.

**Betty Fuller:**

Thank goodness it wasn't the night that Debbie was taking swimming *lessons*. I had been taking her down there for swimming.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

So Midway Park...

**Bill Byers:**

Midway Park was run by a Committee.

**Betty Fuller:**

Who was it?

**Bill Byers:**

Oh, Hershel Morgan and I think he was the main one that I remember. They were constantly having arguments and offered it to the City. I don't think any money changed hands. At that time we didn't even have a Police Department. Well, we had Blackie (*Sustaire*). I guess Blackie and Jack Bullard.

**Betty Fuller:**

Blackie started out at the Airport.

**Bill Byers:**

When the Airport closed up in 1957, we hired Blackie as the first Police Chief. Jack Bullard was the second one.

**Betty Fuller:**

Talking about the Library, tell them what the first Library was.

**Bill Byers:**

It was a garage on Fuller Street.

**Betty Fuller:**

Donated by what Club?

**Bill Byers:**

Lion's Club.

**Betty Fuller:**

It was a one car garage at a Paul Horton's house and that was our first *Library* and the second *library* was when they moved out of Mrs. Armstrong's *house*. *She* was the first Librarian.

**Bill Byers:**

Yes, across from the Lumber Yard.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And what else would you like to share?

**Bill Byers:**

The thing that I'm most proud of was while I was on the Council, when I first went on the *City Council*, anybody could petition the City but we could only annex ten percent area of the City. We could get ten percent and then they changed it and you could go down the road and set your City limit boundaries and annex the land inside of that.

**Betty Fuller:**

What did you all annex while you were *on City Council*?

**Bill Byers:**

We annexed to the County Line Road (*northwest Euless*).

**Betty Fuller:**

The County Line Road that would have been where I lived.

**Bill Byers:**

And went north to County Line *Road* and back across to about even with *where* Hall-Johnson Road is and all the way across to Glade Road. There was a turkey farm out there *at* what is now Heritage Drive.

**Betty Fuller:**

That was a Fuller married to a...?

**Bill Byers:**

Cheek Sparger Road used to come and turn and go north. Then later on they put in Midway and named that Heritage on the backside of what they're building up now.

**Betty Fuller:**

One thing I want to clarify. Edna Fuller married Bill Deacon and he owned the Feed Mills in Grapevine and they annexed where they lived but his business was in Grapevine. The reason I know so much about it is *because* they were the ones that brought my mother-in-law who was a Hall (Hall Johnson Road) to church with them because her parents weren't taking her to church so they brought this little blonde girl with their boys to the Methodist Church. That's how my mother-in-law got to be a Methodist, because her brother Jess Hall ran the Baptist Church. He was a Deacon in the church when he got older. The *mother* was a Deacon/Fuller and she brought her to church every Sunday cause that's where she lived. Sorry I had to add that. But that's who the Deacon's were. Had the turkey farm and the Feed Mill and he was pretty wealthy. Wouldn't you think he was?

**Bill Byers:**

Yes.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And were those the city limits then?

**Betty Fuller:**

Where Target is today.

**Bill Byers:**

And of course when the airport came in, DFW Airport, they took one third of the Eules land.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

They paid for that? They paid Eules?

**Bill Byers:**

No they didn't pay Euleess. They just bought the land out there but it's in Euleess and so is the Car Rental outfit.

**Betty Fuller:**

Amon Carter got that and that's why we can't own Calloway Cemetery which is the Euleess Cemetery.

**Bill Byers:**

Which is very good for the City.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

You were talking about your most proud moment?

**Bill Byers:**

The Annexation of *that* land! And I took a lot of grief *for it*. I was only the one in business that people could get to. The McCormick's and *some others out there*, they have *a lot of* acreage back in there. They didn't want to pay City taxes. They didn't have any city utilities and didn't want to pay any taxes. The Deacon's out there and the Herrington's *too*.

**Betty Fuller:**

They were really Grapevine people but they came to the Methodist church. The Deacon's did. The Herrington's didn't.

**Bill Byers:**

And they formed what they called the NCPGPOA. North Chapel Pleasant Glade Property Owner's Association and they fought it and fought it and as I said, I was the only one in business *on the Council*. Everyone else worked outside the City *limits*. They'd come into the Lumber Yard and take it all out on me. *Where* Mrs. Herrington lived, it's still undeveloped now, and when they put in *Highway 121*, it came right up to their house.

**Betty Fuller:**

But you liked Sam.

**Bill Byers:**

But that's a different Herrington. Her name was Hoket. She came into the Lumber Yard one Saturday morning, and I always had a lot of business on Saturday. Stayed open until noon and she waddled her way up to the counter and *her husband* was a good customer. Bought a lot of stuff from me but he was very quiet. Later, I found out that he was beat down. She came up griping about *the annexation* and I said, "Mrs. Hokit, you're going to be in Bedford, you're gonna be in Colleyville, you're gonna be in

Grapevine or you're gonna be in Euless and if we don't take any action *on that land*, you might even be in Grand Prairie. Grand Prairie comes right up to Highway 10, right by Bear Creek."

**Betty Fuller:**

It's like *how* Arlington owns Calloway Cemetery.

**Bill Byers:**

I said, "You're gonna be in some City whether you like it or not." She said, "Well I want to be in Grapevine." And I said, "Well Grapevine doesn't want you. If they wanted you they would have already annexed you because they can annex more than we can". At that time we were a relatively small community. She said, "Mr. Byers, the Bible tells to be aware of transgressors and you're transgressing on our property so you're going to hell." (*General laughter*)

**Betty Fuller:**

Where did that lady go to church?

**Bill Byers:**

Probably Church of Christ. She had a little boy over in the corner that said "Tell him Mama, TELL HIM." *The old man never did say anything.*

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Where was Miss Boyce?

**Bill Byers:**

She was probably at home. She would *have* been vocal about it. But I got a lot of grief and lost a lot of good customers. But that was the only thing that they could take it out on. But if there was one thing that I ever did that benefited Euless, that was probably it. In this short length of time, it probably brought in \$100 Million *to Euless now.*

**Betty Fuller:**

If you think of Target and Lowe's and Staples.

**Bill Byers:**

What I was talking about was rental outfits. Everything adds up. We bit the bullet and did it and I am proud of it.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale**

That's very interesting.

**Betty Fuller:**

We want to talk about the *Calloway* Cemetery and what *Bill* did for the Eules Historical and Preservation Committees. How many years Bill did you serve as Chairman of the *Eules Historical Preservation Committee*?

**Bill Byers:**

Five years. Before we get into that, in the late 70's Blackie *Sustaire* was the City Manager, *the* first City Manager. He came to me and asked if I'd serve on the Hurst Eules Hospital *Board*. I was to be on the Board of Trustees as a liaison between the Hospital and the City. Bedford and Hurst had people just to know what was going on. Of course the Hospital went bankrupt. They were just operating. Blaze Tibet had several checks in his desk drawer that ...

**Betty Fuller:**

Tell who that was because she (*Ofa Faiva-Siale*) won't know.

**Bill Byers:**

He was the President of First State Bank. He was a big name in it *and* Troy Fuller had been a big worker in it. He was actually holding checks of his in his drawer that they didn't have funds for.

**Betty Fuller:**

Wasn't that the offshoot of the First National Bank of Eules on Main Street?

**Bill Byers:**

It was. And I served on the Hospital Board for about 23 years. I was appointed to the Tarrant County Convention Center Board. I was on there, I guess, about three or four years.

**Betty Fuller:**

Now that was the one that controlled the whole Convention Center Board?

**Bill Byers:**

Just the Convention Center.

**Betty Fuller:**

That was a big deal in those days.

**Bill Byers:**

It was a big deal. They had all those big concerts. Everybody that was anybody came to Fort Worth and performed there.

**Betty Fuller:**

We even had teacher's meetings *for* Region 11 in that Convention Center for all of the teacher's in Region 11. It was a big deal.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Anything else about the Hospital?

**Bill Byers:**

No, I'm just really proud about the Hospital. Now it's Texas Health and it's a fine hospital and a credit to the community.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I was out there one day and I noticed there's a room named for you and Boyce?

**Bill Byers:**

In the Women's Wing, Boyce and I donated the furniture for it, in the Birthing Room.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I saw yall's names on a plaque at the hallway.

**Bill Byers:**

I never have seen it.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

It's got your name on it and Ms. Boyce's name.

**Bill Byers:**

I've had two or three ladies that have had babies in there call me *and* say that they really appreciated it and how nice it was.

**Betty Fuller:**

How many years *did you serve on the Board?* From when to when?

**Bill Byers:**

Twenty-three years, from 1970 to 1993. The Hospital came out with a deal that you could serve eight year terms. I was off for one year and then went back on it for eight more years.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I have a question about the Council.

**Betty Fuller:**

How many years were you on the Council?

**Bill Byers:**

Probably nine years. I also joined the Masonic Lodge in 1953.

**Betty Fuller:**

And where was it in 1953 Bill?

**Bill Byers:**

It's right on Valley View. It's at the corner of Valley View and Royal Lane.

**Betty Fuller:**

Was that in the Estelle Community?

**Bill Byers:**

Yes. Estelle Masonic Lodge, it was a two story building *that was* built in 1886.

**Betty Fuller:**

How long were you all there before you moved over to where you are at Midway Park School?

**Bill Byers:**

1886 to 1958. I was a Worshipful- Master in 1957 and 1958. During that time, we had moved and had been trying to raise money and collect money to move because the majority of the people that had lived over on the Prairie, at Grapevine Prairie, a lot of the old ones had died *by that time*. The majority of the younger people were from Euless so we had to get permission to change Districts. That was very political. In the year 1957 and 1958 we decided to move to Euless. Moved to Euless and built a new building right there about 110 Main Street on the East side of the street. Built a new brick building and the guy that we hired to do the work had the slab poured and it was going to be metal door jam and he set the door jams on a Saturday. Friday he set the jams and had to be attached and set brick to it. It only had two doors in it and no windows. Set the jams on Friday and on Saturday he had a heart attack and died. I was the Worship-Master in both places and it fell back on me to finish the building.

**Betty Fuller:**

Now when you say finish it does that mean you supervised finishing it or you helped finish it?

**Bill Byers:**

Well, we had brick layers to lay the brick and put the roof on it. I did the electrical in it. Then when the Highway came through, Airport Freeway in 1963, we'd only been there for five years. We bought *property* right north of the City Complex.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

You all built that Building *too*?

**Bill Byers:**

I was on the Building Committee of that building. The first one that we built, I was pretty involved in.

**Betty Fuller:**

How long has that Masonic Lodge, did you initially form it over there in Estelle or was there group that became Members over there on the Prairie that had already gotten going?

**Bill Byers:**

It was formed in *the 1800's*.

**Betty Fuller:**

Before your time?

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Grapevine Prairie, where was that?

**Bill Byers:**

Over by the Airport, *that was* Grapevine Prairie.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Was that just something that you all called it?

**Betty Fuller:**

It was just east of where our property line stopped, where County Line Road ran across. When I went to Sower School, I rode the County School bus that brought me down County Line Road. Let me out back down there and I walked as far as our property line and came on home. That's when I was still going to the Elementary School.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Business dealings, *are we done with that topic now?*

**Bill Byers:**

Well, at about 1970, the *Calloway* Cemetery was a weed patch. We reorganized *this* was probably the third or fourth time Warren Fuller, Bobby Eden, Johnny Floyd Eden, Fullers out of Arlington; I don't remember his name...

**Betty Fuller:**

Oh, it was William Jefferson Fullers descendent, I don't remember either. Sorry...

**Bill Byers:**

And I was elected as Trustees *of Calloway Cemetery*.

**Betty Fuller:**

One of those Fuller brothers that we're talking about, his Great Grandfather and James' Great Grandfather had a son named William Jefferson Fuller. One son was James' Grandpa but the *other* one went to Arlington and had a bunch of kids *there and* married a Blessing. Blessings Creek was over there and that was his offshoot.

**Bill Byers:**

I forgot what his name was?

**Betty Fuller:**

I don't know.

**Bill Byers:**

But anyhow, to take care of *the cemetery*, we cleaned it up and had a guy mow it. He charged \$65 for mowing it and then all of them (*the other trustees*) died off *except* me and Johnny Eden.

**Betty Fuller:**

Johnny went bankrupt. He's a worse hermit than my husband.

**Bill Byers:**

He's withdrawn from everything except the Museum. So, I was more or less left with *taking care of the cemetery*. Boyce was Secretary and we took care of it until she got sick in 1998. We were homebound, really homebound.

**Betty Fuller:**

Who took over in 1998?

**Bill Byers:**

Jimmy *Payton* did. Boyce died in 1998.

**Betty Fuller:**

I didn't realize that. What's really important and I wish that Bill would tell this but everyone who settled Euless in those days is buried in Calloway Cemetery.

**Bill Byers:**

Calloway is no relations...

**Betty Fuller:**

I have a copy of the document that's in my notebook called the Calloway Cemetery Notebook. He knows I have ring binders all over my house (*laughter*). When Mrs. Calloway was getting old, *she* gave Mood Fuller who was the head honcho *at the time* and two *or* three other guys, *the* running of that Calloway Cemetery. I know that Mood Fuller was one of those guys because it's written at the top and he was the presiding officer.

**Bill Byers:**

That was their property down there and they gave two acres *or* two and a half acres and Buck bought some from Ferris...

**Betty Fuller:**

Yea, he bought that stretch at the end.

**Bill Byers:**

Bought about a quarter of an acre *or* a half an acre *and added it to the Cemetery*, but anyhow we've kept it up pretty good.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And you sold me some plots out there.

**Betty Fuller:**

You ought to be glad that you bought them when you did. How much are they selling for now?

**Bill Byers:**

\$1,250.

**Betty Fuller:**

I don't know what you paid (*to Ofa Mary*) but I know a long time ago they were selling for cheaper. \$300 and \$500 I think. What did you get for them?

**Bill Byers:**

Started out at \$125. Well a lot of people are buried there.

**Betty Fuller:**

I'll tell you one nice thing, the man at the school administration building that came out to mow for us, worked five days a week. Harold Palmer was his name, and he was so respected that the Superintendent of School's would even let him take the money bags to the bank. On Saturday's he would mow for us and his son was in the military and he lived in a trailer park and he found his son dead on the sofa. Poor Harold didn't

have any money and that's why I felt sorry for him. I think Bobby Eden was in charge then and I went to him and I said, "Bobby, we have a dead soldier here and he needs to be buried and his daddy doesn't have any money." *Anyway*, he's buried there *now*. His daddy is dead *now too*. His name was Harold Palmer. It has a marker and a cross on it, it says Service. We don't know *how he died* but it nearly killed Harold. And he had been in the service.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

That's nice. People were able to be buried over there and not even *pay*?

**Betty Fuller:**

I took up money over there in the Administration Building for the marker. You know people that came back from Vietnam had traumatic things *happen*.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

How long did you take care of the Cemetery?

**Bill Byers:**

Twenty-eight years.

**Betty Fuller:**

We're going to do *Bill's* service to the Euleess Historical *Preservation Committee* because that's very important. Bill when were you Chairman of the Euleess Historical *Committee*?

**Bill Byers:**

I don't know.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

We can look it up if you want.

**Betty Fuller:**

What are some of the things you got *for Heritage Park*, *like* the Windmill?

**Bill Byers:**

Well Diane Crawford used to come into the Lumber Yard buying various things and talked about the heritage of Euleess and said, "We really need to have a Historical Society." And I said, "You're right, we're about a generation too far past but we gotta start somewhere." And she said, "Let's just start one." And I said, "Well let's do it." We talked to the Mayor Mary Lib to see what she thought about it and that's how it started. We kind of brought in our base and got people interested in it.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And who was this?

**Bill Byers:**

Diane Crawford.

**Betty Fuller:**

You know where I live (*east and in back of South Eules Elementary School*)? There's a circle down there called Iron Bridge and that bridge that's down there crossed the Trinity River and that's in Arlington. And then it was at North Main *Street* and then they moved it down there.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Who was she?

**Betty Fuller:**

She was a big P.T.A. President for South Eules, Big, BIG *very* active.

**Bill Byers:**

She was a Community Activist.

**Betty Fuller:**

She's just two houses away from where we live. She lived around the corner from us with two boys.

**Bill Byers:**

Her and her husband both worked for American Airlines and she was *the* First Chairman and I think they started with six or eight people.

**Betty Fuller:**

I was one in 1992?

**Bill Byers:**

I think it was 1990.

**Betty Fuller:**

It was right when I retired and I retired in 1991. So maybe it was 1991 because I was a Charter Member.

**Bill Byers:**

I thought I was looking at the Plaque *in the Fuller House* the other day and it said 1990 was when it was chartered.

**Betty Fuller:**

Actually 1991 was my first year in retirement, so maybe I did retire in 1990.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

So you all formed a committee and...?

**Bill Byers:**

Started.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

That was before Heritage Park.

**Bill Byers:**

Yes, and then they gave us the Fuller House. The Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Elementary Schools tore off the bricks and *chipped off the* mortar and stacked them on paddocks *for moving to Heritage Park*. We stripped the bricks off and Taco Bell gave us the Fuller House. Cleaned *the bricks* and then re-laid them when we moved them *to Heritage Park*. We moved the house over there twenty-two years later and worked on it and just *recently* got the new *Euleless* Museum opened.

**Betty Fuller:**

In the meantime, Evelyn Himes had been telling us, my daughter *attended* Euleless Junior High School *and* behind *the school* right along the fence line was the house that was owned by Elisha Adam Euleless. None of us knew that *but* around *the house*, Andrew Jackson Himes, Evelyn Himes' father-in-law had bought the property and *lived in it*. *Over the years he* built around it, *expanding his home and protecting the Log House within*. Where the chimney was, there was a door and he put a room on that side. Where the front door was he put a room on that side *too*. She kept telling us, and Alma knew what she was talking about. She was a cook at Wilshire.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And you didn't know at that time? Nobody knew?

**Betty Fuller:**

Evelyn knew.

**Bill Byers:**

It was a Log House and in *the* early 1900's when the Saw Mills got to Texas, whatever year *that was*, they could saw boards *and* they covered it (*the Log House*) up. As long as I *can* remember, it was covered up. I used to go over there for family reunions with my cousins. I knew that it was a Log Cabin but it was covered up.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

*Did* everybody generally knew it was there?

**Bill Byers:**

Yes, and when sheet rock came in right after the war they sheet rocked it *and* boarded it up.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

But Evelyn knew.

**Betty Fuller:**

She kept telling me that you could go up to the roof and see all the logs in the attic.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

So did the house go in to disrepair?

**Bill Byers:**

No. Everybody died and they?

**Betty Fuller:**

Shirley Himes was their daughter.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Was Evelyn born there or did she live there?

**Betty Fuller:**

No she married the man who?

**Bill Byers:**

Andrew was born there.

**Betty Fuller:**

Her maiden name was Whitener, Evelyn Whitener. *She was Weldon Cannon's* cousin. Old man Whitener with the whiskers, used to live in the old house on the hill next to the school. She was a Whitener which was a Cannon.

**Bill Byers:**

Anyhow, after we got the Fuller House over *to Heritage Park* then we got the Log Cabin and got it moved *too*. Then Willie May McCormick gave us the Barn *that was built with wood from Camp Bowie, during WWII*.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

That happened when you were Chairman. I remember that.

**Betty Fuller:**

Bill have I ever told you about the huge honcho at the Stockyards? He's a big "muckety muck" and he's got money. He's on the Tarrant County Historical Commission. He says "Y'all have a piece of *property* that came from Camp Bowie?" And I said, "Yes. The McCormick family *barn is made of lumber from Camp Bowie*. When Mack, Willie Mae's husband (*who eventually donated the Barn to the City*), she was a Mayor Pro-tem of Euless, when her Husband was a kid, they told everybody in Tarrant County that whatever was left *when WWII was over*, they could come over there and get it. And that was not a part of Fort Worth *at the time*. Camp Bowie Boulevard went way out there. It was isolated in those days. So they (*Willie Mae's husband Mack and his dad*) went out and *hailed the lumber on horse and buggy to Euless and built their barn with it.*"

**Bill Byers:**

Yes, and then we got the Barn and then we got the old Church of Christ *building which was later known as the Ruth Millican Center and made that into the Euless Museum.*

**Betty Fuller:**

Tell us *about* that well that's there. He dug and dug and dug and put that little roof on it. The pulley, what do you call it? Across the creek there is a well and we had to close it when James sold the property. *We had to put a steel plate over it because there's still water in it. You could drop a rock in that little hole to the well that's still over there. Everybody had wells and he built a well for the house.*

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Y'all had running water, right? When you were younger?

**Betty Fuller:**

My Father-in-law's well was still there, until Wisenbaker came, there was no City water.

**Bill Byers:**

Everybody had wells, pumps of some kind. Not a Windmill. The Windmill *that's* down there *at Heritage Park*, I did some work for Raymond Waecaster, who was a guy in Tarrant *that lived* at the old Dr. Rhodes' house.

**Betty Fuller:**

Can I tell her real quickly about Dr. Rhodes? He came when the railroad was brought in. He was brought from Tennessee, believe it or not. He was brought in as the Doctor for people who were injured building the cross ties and the railroad. He lived in Tarrant. They put a Depot down there so he had a house *down there (the area generally known today as south Euless, south of Trinity Boulevard)*.

**Betty Fuller:**

You and I went to that house over there by Tarrant Depot (*speaking to Ofa Mary*). Yes it's been torn down now, and he had a cellar like my father-in-law.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

You said something about Waecaster?

**Betty Fuller:**

Waecaster. They were in school when I was in school. Some of them but they were way behind me. I hope I spell this correctly W-A-E-C-A-S-T-E-R. For some oddball reason, I think there was an "E" in there. He (*Bill Byers*) keeps talking about typing. There weren't enough subjects to be taught so everybody in school took typing. You didn't get an option. That's why in the service he could type. My husband typed. When he got in the service and was shipped out to Germany he typed because everyone in Eules took typing. Boys took it. I took typing. James took typing. Bill took typing.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

They must have not had enough typists because they kept asking for volunteers.

**Bill Byers:**

We had six typewriters at the school and they weren't electric.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

You had to really press *down hard on those old typewriters*. So, *what about the windmill? Where did you get it? Are you talking about the north or the south windmill?*

**Bill Byers:**

The steel one (*north*). Waecaster lived there *at the old Doctor Rhodes' place* and he needed some work done. I *did the work and* didn't charge him for it. He was living on social security. I told him when he asked me how much I want *and* how much he owed me and I said, "You don't owe me anything but I'd like to have that windmill out there." Oak trees had grown around it and if you didn't know it was there you wouldn't know *it was there*. He said, "Ok, but I want you to leave it here as long as I am *here*" which I did. He passed away I guess probably *in* 1995, somewhere around there. The kids got in a big squabble and I told the son at the funeral, "I don't know if you're aware of it or not but Raymond told me when I did some work for him that I could have that Windmill for the Historical Society." He said, "Yea I know about it. He told me about it and he said that all the kids *would have* a little money *but* there wasn't any money. All he had was the house and he said, "I'll let you know when you can *come* get it." He called me on Christmas Eve and said, "You need to go down and get that windmill NOW." So I got a guy, Christmas didn't mean much to him, so we got it on Christmas

Eve. Put it up after the first of the year but they hauled it in there and put it on the south side of the fence.

**Betty Fuller:**

Now tell us about the outhouse.

**Bill Byers:**

The Outhouse came from Harvey Little.

**Betty Fuller:**

Harvey? How is he? Is he dead or alive? He gave me a dozen eggs just before he had that heart spell.

**Bill Byers:**

He's home. I don't think he's doing any good.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I've heard Harvey Little's name as long as I've been *working with the Historical Committee*. That's about ten years *now* and I've never met him. I've never seen him.

**Betty Fuller:**

He is the sweetest man you've ever seen in your life. His first Wife died. She was a sweetie pie too. My husband's Great-Grandfather was a very aggressive *and* outgoing *person* but my husband's Grandfather and all his brothers and sisters were like my husband. *They* took care of his own business and that's all *my husband's Grandfather* wanted to take care of. Uncle Amp, he wasn't a busy- body, was he?

**Bill Byers:**

Nope.

**Betty Fuller:**

And then that's the kind of personality he had. My husband's father was the same way. Did you ever see Horace trotting around?

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Harvey Little was related?

**Betty Fuller:**

No. I'm digressing to the property. Harvey had all this junk where James' Grandpa's property was. A lady from SMU in Dallas was *working on* her Ministry Degree and she was an old maid school teacher and she knew the preacher out here *in Euless*. She was sent out here and he (*the new Preacher*) told her that she could survey everybody *that lived* in Euless. Well James' Grandpa and his Grandma had liked the Methodist

Minister that they'd had *before* and they didn't want him to go. But in the Methodist Church, not like the Baptist, they get transferred *periodically* and they *took* him away. They were pouting about it.

**Bill Byers:**

As I understand they ran him off...

**Betty Fuller:**

And so he had been taken away and James' Grandpa is this quiet little man but he was pouting and wasn't going to church. So she was going to survey everybody in Eules and *when* she went to James' Grandpa's house he probably might not *have* even let her in because he was mad *that* the old Preacher had to leave. He got better reviews than some of his brothers *though* because *of* Osie Belle (*his wife*), her name was Osie Belle Lindsey Fuller; she *also* had artificial flowers and *she* (*the surveyor*) said it was it was the most cheerful, the neatest, cleanest house that they had been in. *Osie Belle* was fussing at *James' Grandpa* because these flags, they used to call Iris' flags, the Iris plants were called flags *back then* and Bill knows that, *well* he was supposed to cut the branches; *Osie Belle* was a meticulous little lady, and there were a couple of weeds coming out of the front of the house. *She had* the most open and beautiful little curtains. That's the way *Osie Belle* was and she was so nice to *her* and *the lady who did the survey had* said, "I was told that they might not even let me through the front door." And she said she was nitpicking for the weeds in the flags in the front yard. James is like his Grandpa. The house was neat, neat, neat. Well, when Harvey Little got the property, he had all this junk all over the place. James' Grandpa died in the 1940's and Harvey had all this stuff for years on that property.

**Bill Byers:**

Anyhow, so I asked Weldon, "Harvey needs a place to stay and it's got big old Cedar trees on the north side and you can't see it. I said, "You're having to keep it mowed. What do you think about Harvey taking care of it? Clean it up and keep it clean?" And he said, "Well that would save me from mowing it or having it mowed. And Harvey does the mowing."

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

How old is Mr. Harvey Little?

**Betty Fuller:**

I have no idea but he's so sweet he used to give me eggs.

**Bill Byers:**

86 years old in January.

**Betty Fuller:**

So Mood Fuller, who was a big wig and liked to run the Methodist Church, James' Great Grandpa, and here he was the Grandpa of all those kids he had, *and* then my father-in-law

and here's this meek and mild, man, I mean you didn't see Horace doing much in Eules, did ya?

**Bill Byers:**

No.

**Betty Fuller:**

No. He took care of his own business and he didn't care about anything else. I have a husband just like that. My husband's like his Daddy, like his Grandfather. Momma and Daddy would put me on the train and send me off to New Braunfels when I was six years old. They'd give me to the conductor during WWII and I'd talk to every soldier, *on the train*, there were several bases in San Antonio. I'd talk to everybody and they'd give me goodies and stuff and I talked to everybody. They say opposites attract, James and I are very opposite. I was very gregarious. I liked people, I just liked people.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

That's like Bill and Miss Boyce.

**Betty Fuller:**

I just had to add that because people don't even know who James Fuller is. Please tell us about your involvement with the food pantry at the church.

**Bill Byers:**

We just went and got groceries every Thursday and Friday, brought them back to the church and stocked it.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

What do you do with the groceries?

**Bill Byers:**

Give them to poor people.

**Betty Fuller:**

How do they come?

**Bill Byers:**

One by one (*general laughter*).

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Were you there *at the Eules First United Methodist Church* when the Tongan community *first started meeting there*? We did that interview with the first pastor from the Tongan community and they called it the Fakatahataha Church. The Pastor said they met there at the beginning.

**Bill Byers:**

They *met there for* I think three or four years when they first started. I don't know what year it was.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

1979 or 1980 maybe, somewhere around there?

**Bill Byers:**

Late 70's, early 80's, until they *moved to* their own church.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

They moved into *a couple of buildings before their current location on South Pipeline Road.*

**Bill Byers:**

*The one off of Vine and Pipeline, up on top of the hill. They built several churches.*

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

*There were two churches that was built from the ground up. The Free Church of Tonga and The First Tongan Assembly of God Church. The other denominations became members of existing local churches. I remember attending the Fakatahataha Church when I first moved here in the mid 80's.*

**Bill Byers:**

I don't remember the first preacher that was there. Who was he?

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

His name is Reverend Sione Haisila, he was one of the *few* older gentleman that was here at that time. *At the beginning of the Tongan people's migration here to Euless, most of them were young and single or newly married men looking for a new start in life.* They first migrated here to work and *earn money, get set up and then* brought their families here, so there were a lot of *young men.* Sione Haisila was one of the *few* older gentlemen *at the time* and so they elected him to be the leader of the Church. I believe that has a lot to do with why the Tongan people settled in Euless, *to be near that first church and the airport, of course.*

**Bill Byers:**

He's still over here on the Pipeline?

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

He's still here, not *at* the corner of Pipeline and Main Street *but* the church west of *there.*

**Bill Byers:**

Up on the hill?

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Yes, I guess *so, up the hill; I notice that area is often referred to as the hill by the original residents of Euless.*

**Betty Fuller:**

Well, we don't have many hills in Euless *anymore.*

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Yes, he (*Sione Haisila*) still *attends church* over there. They have a Pastor now that is assigned from Tonga.

**Betty Fuller:**

But you all have a diversity of religious groups. You really do, more than any other.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

We have two Mormon Wards.

**Betty Fuller:**

Mormons? Where?

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Over on Fair Oaks Boulevard by Albertson's. Two Mormon Wards, a Catholic Church, there's three Methodist Churches, *there's a Pentecostal Church, a First Assembly of God Church, The Free Church of Tonga, The Church of Tonga and the Tokaikolo Church.*

**Betty Fuller:**

What other volunteer work do you do at the Methodist *Church Bill*? I know you do the food pantry. What else do you do?

**Bill Byers:**

Nothing. Just a member.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Thank you so much Mr. Byers for sharing your life and knowledge with us today. And thank you Mrs. Fuller for the interview.

**Note to the Reader:**

\* *Italicized words are added for flow. Words enclosed in (parenthesis and in italics) are added for clarification.*