

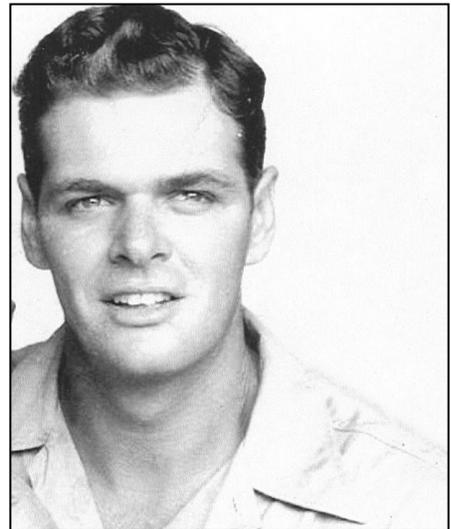
# Eules

Historical Preservation Committee

**William Samuel Gay, Jr.**  
*With Ofa 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>)

**William Samuel Gay Jr.** started his teaching career in 1950 at The Eules School (currently South Eules Elementary School) in Eules, Texas. He continued to work in the Hurst Eules Bedford School District for a total of thirty-one years, retiring from LD Bell High School in Bedford, Texas in 1981.



**Ofa Faiva-Siale** works for the City of Eules. At the time of this interview, she was a liaison to the Eules Historical Preservation Committee.

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**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I'm here on behalf of the Historical Preservation Committee for the City of Eules. Thank you for giving us your oral history accounting. Bill Golden told me that you are about ninety years old. Is that correct?

**Bill Gay:**

Ninety Two

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Wow, you look fantastic. This is an oral history release form and this is something you'll need to fill out and sign and return to us giving us permission to use your oral history recording. We'll transcribe your recording and post it on the City of Eules website so people can read your accounting about your life and how life has been for you. Having someone on the project that is ninety-two years old is fantastic! That's a lot of experiences.

**Bill Gay:**

Is it a history of my teaching experience?

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Yes, and your family and how you got to the area and your teaching experiences; whatever you would like it to be. Bill Golden said you were in the education system for a long time.

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, about 52 years.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

That's a lot of experiences to share...

**Bill Gay:**

*(Laughing)* Yes but I forgot a lot of them! The old mind is not what is used to be...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

This will be just an informal conversation, whatever you recall and want to discuss and whatever you can remember, we'll just talk about whatever you would like; this will be your oral accounting of life in the area.

**Bill Gay:**

Is this in cahoots with the museum in Eules? I gave them all my annuals, the school annuals; I gave them all of those.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

*Do you mean to Betty Fuller... member of the Eules historical committee?*

**Bill Gay:**

Betty Fuller was in the teaching system for quite a while, but I don't remember who I gave them to.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Tell me your name and spell it.

**Bill Gay:**

William Samuel Gay Jr.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Do you know why you were named that, were you named after somebody?

**Bill Gay:**

I was named after my father, I am a junior.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And your parent's names were...

**Bill Gay:**

My mother was Hildred Vashti Gay.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Do you know what nationality that is?

**Bill Gay:**

*(Laughing)* I have no idea where that came from.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And your dad's name was William.

**Bill Gay:**

William Samuel Gay Sr.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Do you know where your mom came from? Was she always in this area?

**Bill Gay:**

She was born Ironton, Missouri.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Can you remember her mom and dad; your grandparents' names?

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, I didn't know her daddy, he had a saw mill. He was burned pretty bad in a fire that started when he tried to use coal oil to fire the wood stove at his house. Instead of coal oil, the can had gasoline and the fire blew out on him. He lived only a year or so after that.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I see. Where was that at? *When/where did this happen?*

**Bill Gay:**

Oh Lord....I could look that up.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

What about Hildred's mom, your grandma, what was her name?

**Bill Gay:**

Her name was Lilly Dale Maus but I and all the kids just called her Bombee. She had five children and each one of them had two or three children.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Where did they live, your grandparents?

**Bill Gay:**

My dad's parents lived in Little Rock, Arkansas.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And our dad's mother and father's names were?

**Bill Gay:**

George R. and Olga Shidt Gay.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And they were from Little Rock and your grandparents from your mom's side of the family, where were they from?

**Bill Gay:**

Ironton, Missouri.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Do you have any brothers or sisters?

**Bill Gay:**

I have one brother, no sisters. His name is Ellery Page Gay.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Is he older than you? He's younger than me by 22 months.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And is he still alive?

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, he's retired from the Letourneau in Longview.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Does he have children; do you have any nieces or nephews?

**Bill Gay:**

He has one son through his first marriage and two daughters through a second marriage.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

What about yourself, were you married?

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, my wife passed away two years ago November 16, 2010 with Alzheimer's.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I'm sorry to hear that. What was her name?

**Bill Gay:**

May Elizabeth (*Wade*) Gay.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And how long were you married?

**Bill Gay:**

We were married 48 years.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And was she from this area?

**Bill Gay:**

No, she was from Mud Dig, TX (*laughing*) where she attended Hope School (*also called Sweatbox School*) with her two brothers; it was right outside of Greenville, TX. It was called Mud Dig and she went to a one room school house her first years of school.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Did you two have children?

**Bill Gay:**

I have two boys; I live here with one of them.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

What is your birthday?

**Bill Gay:**

February 19, 1921.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Can you tell me where you were born?

**Bill Gay:**

I was born in Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Where did you live when you first moved here?

**Bill Gay:**

We moved to Gladewater in the oil fields, my dad was an oil man. I don't remember what year but I was in junior high when we moved. We went to school in wooden barracks in Gladewater.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

When did you move here to the HEB area?

**Bill Gay:**

I started teaching in 1950 in Euless, at the Euless School. There were 75 in the high school, counting the seventh and eighth grade (*laughing*). I was hired as a coach and then I taught biology. *The current location of South Euless Elementary School.*

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

What did you coach?

**Bill Gay:**

I coached boys and girls basketball, football.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

A one stop coach?

**Bill Gay:**

*(laughing)* right, a one stop coach.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

How long did you teach at The Euless School?

**Bill Gay:**

For ten years before we consolidated with Hurst, Euless and Bedford ,before they made one big school district.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I want to back up just a little bit and ask you about your schooling and what was school like for you lets say when you were in elementary school.

**Bill Gay:**

I went into the service and when I got out I started my graduate work at North Texas *in Denton, Texas*. I majored in Business Administration. I have a business degree. When I got out of the service it was hard to get in to a school. We had to take what was open. At first I got a degree in business, just twelve hours, in all kinds of business work, business office machines, typing, business letter writing, and all the GI's (*GI = Government Issue; service men returning from WWII*) were going to school then and it was hard to get in, you had to take what they had to offer.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And did you guys live on campus or did you travel?

**Bill Gay:**

I wasn't married at the time; I rode a bicycle back and forth from way over on the other side of Denton.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Was it co-ed classes; did both male and female attend class together?

**Bill Gay:**

Yes.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

What about when you were in elementary school do you recall what classes were like then?

**Bill Gay:**

My elementary schooling was in Little Rock, AK. My dad had gone to Gladewater, Texas to join the oil boom there and I lived with my mother, grandmother and grandfather in Little Rock until my dad could get settled and move us to Gladewater as well. The elementary school was right across the street from my grandparent's house so I didn't have a problem getting to school. I guess I stayed at that school until we moved to Gladewater.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Was it a big school?

**Bill Gay:**

Little Rock was, maybe about four to five hundred.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Did everyone eat lunch on property; did they have lunch rooms on property like they do now?

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, they did but I was so close I'd just run across the street and get a sandwich.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I know you got your business degree and you taught...

**Bill Gay:**

And I got a, Bachelor of Science in Education degree *as well*. Then I got my masters in Physical Education and Recreation Education the summer after I began teaching in Eules.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Who was the principal when you hired on at the Eules school?

**Bill Gay:**

Mr. O. B. Powell was the Superintendent and he made me principal, it was just in name I didn't get any money for it (*laughing*). It was a very poor school system then. Of course when they consolidated with Hurst Eules and Bedford...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Was Betty Fuller a student there? She might remember.

**Bill Gay:**

(*Laughter*) She will know everything I think she was teaching in the Eules School before I got there. She must have resigned before I got there. In fact I took the teacher's position that had previously been filled by a *'roaming teacher/-coach* and who was also a preacher at the Methodist Church (*laughing*). Boy what a deal it was. I was teaching everything that I wasn't qualified to teach and they said "do you want the job" I said, I sure do and they said you'll have to keep keys...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

So you coached the boys and the girls' basketball and football and you preached at the Eules Methodist Church?

**Bill Gay:**

No, I didn't preach; I taught Sunday school at the Eules Methodist Church regularly and my wife played the organ. She played the piano and organ and later became the full music director at the church with both children and adult choirs.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Did you guys live in Eules at that time?

**Bill Gay:**

We bought a little four room house and moved up to 406 S. Main Street. Back then Eules was just farms and dairy farms. People lived out in the country. My experience with the school board was like this, Mr. Pope *I'm not sure what position he held with the district, was with the electrical company* and I had to climb a pole to talk to him. Now Mr. Mills who was head of the, or president of the school board, he had a little fruit stand. I was talking to him and he excused himself saying he'd be back in a while. I didn't know what to think. Customers were coming in there and so I started waiting on people. I'd say to them, "Mr. Mills is not here and *one of them* said he'll be back one of these days". I said, "Well I hope he comes back today". (*Laughing*) Finally he showed up around four-o'clock in the afternoon and I'd just about sold out of his produce. He said, "You just come back". I said, "Mr. Mills, I need to talk to you about getting this job" and he said, "oh yeah". I said, "You are the president of the school board aren't you"? He said, "That's what we call it". (*Laughter*) Well they were just getting ready to close down the schools, they didn't have enough students and they were getting students from a little place close to Irving called Sowers. The kids used to go to Irving schools but they wanted a high school that they could

go to and be bussed so they chose Euless and they were the ones who saved us from having to close out because for lack of accreditation.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

*(Laughter)* Wow, do you know about what year that would've been?

**Bill Gay:**

That was the year 1950 as I remember. They were having trouble with the colored folks and their little school in Mosier Valley because it had no inside restroom facilities at all. On the first day of school the colored people came up to the school. The farmers and dairy men also came and they had shotguns. They were on one side of me and these little ole kids with their little tablets were on the other side. I was scared to death. Even though I had been in the service flying bomber missions in the Pacific; even having that I was still scared of that first job and the kids trying to get in the school.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

They were consolidating the schools?

**Bill Gay:**

They did consolidate the Euless and Hurst schools ten years after that. But it was not until the 1960's that integration was done. I was there at the Euless School ten years before they consolidated. You probably noticed a little school up in Hurst off Hwy 183, its still there. That's where kids go to school to learn cosmetology. It was a junior high and a high school at one time. They used it as a school for kids that don't do very well in their schooling. KEYS, they called it that after I retired. We used to call it something else but I forget what we called it. It was where kids learned car mechanics and girls learned cosmetology and they had other subjects but I don't remember what the subjects were. Oh, hair dos and barber shops, the girls learned how to do their hair and finger nails *there*.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

A beauty school?

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, a beauty school. A large school now, it's tremendous right now. *It's called KEYS now.* It's been...I retired in '81.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

So you were there on that first day when the kids from Mosier Valley, the colored kids, came?

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, the very first day. We used the next week to talk about it. There was no teaching at all in that little school the first week.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Was it a difficult thing to do at the time, for the colored kids to *attend school at the Eules School*?

**Bill Gay:**

Oh yeah, but the Superintendent went out there and I could see his hand waving. I couldn't hear exactly what he said to them.

**Ofa-Faiva-Siale:**

Was that Mr. Powell?

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, O.D. Powell. And in just a few minutes, they turned around and started back up to Mosier Valley and the men and women down here with the shot guns...boy talk about, that was really something. That was an experience. I thought I was back fighting the Japanese.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I guess it's safe to say that they weren't welcomed at the time. So about ten years later...

**Bill Gay:**

We consolidated with Eules and Hurst about 1960 and the high school was called Hurst-Eules. That was just for one year and then Bedford came in and we called Hurst-Eules-Bedford and I think they still call it that. The new consolidated district high school was under construction and when Bell Helicopter furnished the school library, the new facility opened as L.D. Bell High School.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

*Tell us of your* experiences in the Eules school, we are very interested in that school...

**Bill Gay:**

Oh it was good. You know, you knew every kid in the school and you didn't only have them there but you had the same kids in Sunday school.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I understand there were a Methodist Church and a Baptist Church at that time in Eules?

**Bill Gay:**

They were right across Eules Main Street from each other.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Over at the Eules School how was the teaching? Do you think it was different than...?

**Bill Gay:**

We had four teachers teaching all the high school subjects. I taught seventh and eighth grade and sophomores' biology and the senior's civics and then health to seventh to eighth grade. And I drove the bus, had to, we had about hundred dollars a month and I made \$50

driving the bus. I'd drive it to Sowers (*now part of Irving*) and bring those kids down to Euless.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Was there a difference, do you think there was a difference in how kids were taught back then in comparison to how they're taught now?

**Bill Gay:**

Well it was real funny; kind of strange that the kids coming from Sowers had been through the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade but in Euless they had double promotion. Some of those kids went from the 7<sup>th</sup> grade; they just went *straight* to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. *They* just skipped the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and that was hard on the kids. I was coaching basketball with kids who should have been in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade but were in the 9<sup>th</sup> and they were just little young kids, it was a hard deal.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

So you had to make do with what you had and try to get them the education that they needed?

**Bill Gay:**

And I had been in touch during my schooling with the coaches in the colleges like TWC, North Texas, SMU, and TCU. Euless School didn't even have a basketball when we first started. I asked the Superintendent if we could buy one and he said, "I don't know, I guess you'll have to go buy one". So I took my first check and bought the first basketball.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

You used your own money?

**Bill Gay:**

Yup, I used my own money. As I recall I never got it back. But you know, with kids like that who lived out on the farms and the Dairies, they were a good bunch of kids. It wasn't like it is now; I wouldn't want to teach now. It's just a fight. I wouldn't want to be a principal, or a vice principal; in fact I wouldn't want to teach. You don't have authority anymore and these kids (*from the 50's*) you know, they'd appreciate anything you could teach them. The families and the kids were all real good kids, but that double promotion was bad. I don't know how long they were having that. But to get enough kids in the high school to accredit the high school they had to do that.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Do you recall any students in the area that you taught?

**Bill Gay:**

You know, these same kids that I taught in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade (*in the 50's*), we still meet at Christmas over at one of their homes in Arlington, Texas. One of the boys who played football and basketball married a girl whose father was the preacher in Sowers. They're still married now and have 5 children. Their name is Barton, Anne (*Biggs*) and Elvis Barton. We

meet at their house on a Saturday or they just pick a day before Christmas and we still meet there. I'm not sure I'm going to be able to meet this next time (*laughing*). It's been a long time.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I'm guessing then your friends are around the same age. The ones you ran around with, probably Betty Fuller?

**Bill Gay:**

Betty I think graduated from Eules before I got there; I believe Betty married Horace Fuller.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Yes she *married James Horace Fuller*. What about Jimmy Peyton, Billy Byers, Troy Fuller...?

**Bill Gay: Jimmy.**

I bought my four room house from Troy Fuller. He was going into the service and I was coming out and I bought that little four room house and then his dad (*Warren Fuller*) sold me a piece of property up there at 406 South Main Street. I'm sure you've passed it, it's a big pink brick house; it looks like it's been added on to. I used to have that whole front covered with decorations at Christmas time. It's on the right side, heading south towards the old Eules School (*Now South Eules Elementary School*). I think I got all the stone for the house from Arlington. They made the stone in Arlington and we were the only ones that had a stone house like that. Now I think there are quite a few.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Yes *quite a few now*. How about Iva and Robert Nail? *Do you recall them?*

**Bill Gay:**

I went to summer school with Robert Nail. In the summer time I went with him and his wife. I think it was economics we had together.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I heard you were inducted into the hall of fame of the HEB-ISD?

**Bill Gay:**

Yes I was. I don't know why, but I was (*laughter*). I had more luck with the girl's basketball team. I had girls coming from Sowers who had been through the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. They were full fledged, you know, they were adult girls. But the kids who were there in Eules were a year behind them. Once those girls came in and played we won the district. In fact we lost it one year by one point and the next year we won it and that's how we got in the hall of fame.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Wow. Did you travel a lot with the basketball teams?

**Bill Gay:**

Then, Grapevine wasn't a very big place, Lake Worth, Everman, Masonic Home, we played at all of those and they were much bigger than we were. We didn't win many games but we had a lot of fun.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I've seen pictures of girls in their basketball uniform *from the Eules during that time.*

**Bill Gay:**

I've got pictures upstairs of the whole bunch. And then we (*original girl's team*) met right after that hall of fame induction. I had eight girls that won the district that year. Of course they were all mature women by then, all of them have children. It was really interesting to see those kids again.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Betty Fuller maintains the photo albums for the Eules Historical Preservation Committee. If you ever have photos you'd like to include in our records, we can scan them for you *and give you back your originals?*

**Bill Gay:**

She has all of my annuals anyhow from 1950 to 1981.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Great, I'm sure they will use those. Is there anything else that you think of, as far as what school was like in this area that you would like to talk about?

**Bill Gay:**

Well I'll tell you one incident that happened, since I was teaching biology, I called the health department wanting to take some of the kids to see how some of the people acted who were on drugs. Well they got it mistaken, the first time we went, they sent us to a farm and all these kids had been living on farms and dairies *their whole life*. They sent us to this little farm and I said, "Well I want to teach kids to see people on dope." And they said, "Well, ohhh, well that's something else." I said, "I just have eight students," and they said, "Well that's in your favor since it's not such a big class," well so they took us to a group of women that, you know, had lost their minds and were on dope and the kids got real tickled at me because some of the women were coming around feeling on my head (*laughter*). They got real tickled over that.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Where did you take them to, to see this?

**Bill Gay:**

It was in Fort Worth, to a rehabilitation facility.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

What was the process for being able to take the kids from school over there? Did you have to get permission...?

**Bill Gay:**

No, I just loaded them on a bus and took them; of course they had to get permission from their parents.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Well, *I'm sure* things were different back then?

**Bill Gay:**

*Yes it was.* The teachers and faculty were completely in charge of everything; not strict regulations, rules and guidance like it is today. I did just about anything I wanted to in teaching them. We'd go down to Grapevine Lake and get the water out of the lake and then put it on the microscope and see the different little animals; we called them animals (*laughter*) under the microscope. We didn't have much of a science department but I did have a microscope. I started a skating rink in our gym ... we had a very short gym; it was about 10 foot shorter than a regular gym. I bought a lot of skates and just opened up skating to the kids all in the area, and we made quite a bit (*of money*) out of it. We charged them 50 cents or a dollar to skate, we made quite a bit, opening on Saturdays. That little ole gym was just full of kids all day long. We made enough money out of it that I could buy *teaching materials*. Are you familiar with phylum's in biology? The name of all the animals, the scientific names metazoan, protozoa, polytheism, I bought a lot of little jars with little animals in there, you know what we called a practical? The kids would go around and look at that little animal and then they'd have to put it in a phylum. They would identify them. I gave tests that way. I'd put on a little piece of paper saying, name the phylum, name the animal and then I bought another real good microscope, I had two microscopes.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

So when you bought the microscopes you bought them with money?

**Bill Gay:**

The money that we made out of skating paid for them.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

So the Superintendent thought this was a great idea? So a lot of things you brought into the school you had to figure out a *way to acquire them yourself including* how to earn the money to buy the materials? Right?

**Bill Gay:** Yes.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

You mentioned you had a bus?

**Bill Gay:**

It was a county bus. The county paid me to drive that bus and then I used it for the basketball games and anywhere we needed to take a bunch of kids to we could use that county bus.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

*That's interesting that you were using the district bus to take the Euless kids on field trips.* Now a day when we take a group of students from the school *on field trips*, we have to make sure permission slips are signed, there are liability issues and all sorts of possible scenarios for people to sue the school district. I wonder if it was little different back then?

**Bill Gay:**

Oh yeah; it was different; I just had to get parents' okay.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I understand that some of the ladies cooked in the cafeteria there.

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, some of the local ladies. There was one lady name Ms. Standard, she had four boys that played ball for me. You know, we didn't have an athletic fund or anything like that, and she would come down on the nights that we played and open the soda pop stand, candy and things like that, and the money that we made from that we'd have to use to pay the officials. It was really a problem trying to get \$10 to that official.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

*(Laughter)* Was there a Willie Mae Byers *that used to work there?*

**Bill Gay:**

You know in Euless all those people were kin! They had kin for *(laughter)*, you know you couldn't talk about anybody because you would've been taking about their family. Euless was really something.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And everybody was related like the Huffman's, the Byers, the Fullers, *(laughter)* Payton's, Cannon, etc.

**Bill Gay:**

Yes they were all related, there was Jimmy Payton and Jerry Payton. Jimmy was out of high school when I got there, he was already going to college when I first went there.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Did you have a lot of parents volunteer for the school, to do stuff?

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, we had an active PTA but you know the same people we were teaching at school and in the churches; they were all the same people or they had family teaching at Sunday school and at school, the same people did the volunteer work, they were all in the PTA.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:** So about church and school. Back in those days, were you all able to have prayer *in the school*?

**Bill Gay:**

Oh yeah, we had prayers and every day at noon, when we came back from lunch we did the pledge of allegiance and we had the flag there and we'd gather around the flag and did the pledge of allegiance before we went back into school after lunch. Now and then we had morning prayer, we always had prayer whenever we played ball, we always had ah, my teaching was not to pray to win the ball game but to keep us safe and secure during the playing of the game and stuff like that.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Wanted to ask you what you would consider a very important invention during your life time? Something new that you might consider important, useful?

**Bill Gay:**

*I can't think of anything.*

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

What did you think about rock and roll or the music of the time?

**Bill Gay:**

You know all the kids were brought up Baptist and Methodist Churches, they didn't believe in dancing, we didn't have any school dancing. But I took the boys and girls, you know in basketball, we moved like that (*indicated with hands side to side movements*) and I taught them dancing in that and I got in trouble because they didn't believe in dancing. I related to it in my basket ball teaching and it didn't come off without a lot of problems (*laughter*).

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Would you say it was more the Methodist or Baptist faith that didn't believe in dancing or was it both churches equally?

**Bill Gay:**

Well I think both our churches were against dancing. And when I first went there, and after they first consolidated with Hurst and Bedford, then they had school dances.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Were there certain things kids weren't allowed to do at school?

**Bill Gay:**

Well there were kids that were brought up by drinking families generally. They knew nothing of that, of course they learned, but when I first went there, they knew nothing of drinking and smoking cigarettes. I just didn't bother about that with the kids when I first went there, but they learned about it and I caught some of mine smoking corn silk.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I'm not sure I know what that is but it sounds awful...

**Bill Gay:**

Well you know the brown soft, silk on the ends of it well they take that and rolled it up in paper and smoked it (*laughter*).

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Oh my goodness...must've been a good buzz (*laughter*). Ok, how about dress codes? Were there any?

**Bill Gay:**

We had no dress codes then *when I first started teaching*. After those ten years and we consolidated then we had to have a dress code. The skirts were so long, they might have started below the knees but they worked their way up (*general laughter*) until now, where they hardly wear anything.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

(*Laughter*) I know, you're so right. So the female students wore long skirts?

**Bill Gay:**

The teachers did, they weren't allowed to wear blouse, tight blouse, or short skirts. The boys had to wear a shirt and blue jeans. Yeah, they wore blue jeans mostly.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

*What kinds of research materials did kids use to have back then?* Now a day, kids have access to information at the tip of their fingers due to technology, kids have iPods, computers, cell phones, etc.

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, they have everything now, computers. Where we used to buy World Books and Book of Knowledge, now they have computers and television.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

What was the Book of Knowledge?

**Bill Gay:**

It was a set of books, like the World Books, they had different volumes on different subjects and the kids used them for research. We'd buy one set at a time and put in the library when

we were in Euleess; then when we consolidated and there were enough students, we bought more copies.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Were there other major changes that occurred while you taught at the Euleess School?

**Bill Gay:**

We *got to where* we had too many students to allow them all to compete in Athletics and such. We had to cut down the number of students that we let in there so we had to make a ruling that you had to be a certain physical person to be in football and in basketball and all that. We would no longer just take any student that we had into athletics’.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Okay...I remember when I was in junior high and I had to research something for a book report or something, I’d have to go sit *in the Library* and dig through the Almanacs or the..., the...I haven’t used the word in so long, I’m drawing a blank on what they were called?

**Bill Gay:**

Were they Index? There was a book called the Index...or Encyclopedia? That’s what the World Books were.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Yes! Encyclopedia. I hadn’t said that word in so long I forgot it.

**Bill Gay:**

Well that’s what the World Books were; they were Encyclopedias...and the Book of Knowledge that was a set of the same types of books. In fact, one summer I tried to sell a set of World Books to augment my salary because we didn’t get paid in the summer time (*by the school*). We just got paid for nine months. Our salary was divided into nine months.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Aw, so when you were off in the summer you...?

**Bill Gay:**

No I worked at Red Ball Freight. I don’t even know if they still have them anymore. That’s where they had those big trucks and they hired us to fill (*load*) those trucks, go to different towns in the area. They were called Red Ball Trucking; I believe is what they were called. I don’t remember ever seeing Red Ball anymore. I don’t remember seeing that at all, I think they probably call it something else now but I know the trucks are still on the highways.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And you used to load for them during your three months summer break from school?

**Bill Gay:**

Yes we'd load them all night long. We were hired, there'd be a man come around with a scoop (*fork lift*) and there were packages that went to certain towns *so they went* to certain trucks and he'd pick them up. And if we didn't join the union, you know they had unions then; if we didn't join the union well they'd throw all that stuff on you and you had a whole truck load on you all at once, then you went and paid your dues and joined the union.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Oh, so you had a choice but not really a choice?

**Bill Gay:**

Right, right.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Did you like working under the union?

**Bill Gay:**

No, I did not! No, didn't like the union; you know you made better money. And I worked at the high school, what was the name of that high school. Well we were building it, and I got in the union and ah, they gave me a little card and you made so much money for whatever union you were; Carpenter union or Plumbing union or whatever?

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Did majority of the people you knew like working under the union or no?

**Bill Gay:**

Well they liked it because their salaries were kept level and they didn't have to do anything. And you know we'd close down at 4 p.m. but we didn't get off work until 4:30 p.m. well you'd start putting your coat, your tools away, and I'd say, well it's not 4:30 p.m. yet and they'd say well we're closing down.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

This is how we do it!

**Bill Gay:**

Yeah. It wasn't very good to me, because I was working in the school system and working long hours and teaching lots of subjects, but there it looked like they were taking advantage of the work.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Of the company?

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, of the company. And they'd loaf around and...but...if anyone complained, the union would always make it right...bad...I didn't like that at all...I did like the money coming in, in the summer time.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Did you have summer school ever?

**Bill Gay:**

We didn't at that time. I think we probably started summer school in the two churches, they held summer school, bible school, I believe they called it.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Very interesting. When you were a teenager what would've been a big difference between when you were a teenager to when you were principal at the Eules School? *Was discipline among students any different?*

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, discipline wasn't a problem then (*when I was a teen ager*). You know, what you got now? The last year I taught at Bell High School, a boy brought a rifle up and was in the class room. He was after a boy that had gotten on top of his car and trompled (*trampled*) on it. He had a motive, a good motive to get a hold of that boy but I didn't want him to shoot him. They called the police and the boy was holding me at large with the rifle. When the police got there, I don't even remember the kids name now, but he was a kid that they'd had problems with, his family had had problems with him and he was just a bad customer.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And that was at LD Bell? About what year was that?

**Bill Gay:**

That was at LD Bell shortly after we consolidated, around 1960 or 61.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Now, having a weapon, did people have easier access to weapons at that time?

**Bill Gay:**

Well, that same kid brought one of those big ole knives to school, was threatening everybody, he was just a bad customer.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And you mentioned he held you at large? What do you mean by that?

**Bill Gay:**

Well he was holding the gun on me, he could've shot me right in the stomach (*laughter*) he had it pointed right at my stomach!

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

You're kidding me!

**Bill Gay:**

Yeah! I was trying to coach him into giving me his rifle and he said, "No Mr. Gay, I'm not after you, I'm after that boy that tore up my car". I said, "Well son, why don't you just put the gun, the rifle down." I said that this police man is here and he could shoot you if you gave him a lot of trouble.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Wow...

**Bill Gay:**

And he finally said, "Well I'm not going to give you any more trouble" and he laid it down and an officer kicked it, you know out of the way, then he grabbed him, threw him down on the floor, which I didn't particularly like...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

You didn't!? He was holding you at gun point.

**Bill Gay:**

He could've shot me but he...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Were you the principal at Bell?

**Bill Gay:**

I was the vice-principal. That was after we consolidated. Hurst, Eules. Yes, it's up there where that same building is still there but they've added to. What they call KEYS. (*KEYS High School on 1100 Raider Dr., Eules*).

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

When you left the Eules School it was called that, the Eules School?

**Bill Gay:**

Yes. It was called the Hurst Eules, that's when we consolidated. Then when Bedford came in, they called it, Hurst Eules Bedford. The funny thing about it is, it was called Hurst Eules then we had a school song, then when they called it Hurst Eules Bedford, then they changed it and added another song, well they changed it again when they called it Bell High School. There were three different school songs by three different people (*laughter*).

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I got it...So you basically taught at two locations? You taught at the Eules School and you taught at LD Bell?

**Bill Gay:**

Well of course when we consolidated, they made me a vice-principal, and I dropped all my coaching, all the extra work. I was paid a salary as an educator, a vice-principal. In fact they called me “in charge of discipline”. I was in charge of discipline of all the girls and boys.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And what did that entail?

**Bill Gay:** Oh, that was a pain. It was ah (*general laughter*) the girls were worse than the boys. I had more trouble with the girls than all the boys.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Oh I don't believe that for a second!

**Bill Gay:**

(*General laughter*) There was this one lady that came in one day. She said, “I want that daughter of mine spanked!” I said, “Well maam, we don't spank them, we give them an alternative to be spanked or do detention.” And she said, “Well I don't want her doing detention, I want her spanked.” I said, “Well now are you going to sit here and watch me spank her?” And she said, “I sure am,” so I didn't know how to spank a girl, so I drew back and did it like that (*indicated a light or soft spank*) and she said, “Oh hell, give me that paddle” and boy (*laughter*) she cracked (*hit*) her with that paddle and knocked the girl clear across the room. I said, “Well maam, she wasn't in that much trouble.” We don't beat em to death? (*General laughter*).

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Oh, that's a funny story. So spanking, was a part of the *education* system?

**Bill Gay:**

Well, we could still spank them, “licks”, that's what we called them...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I graduated from Trinity High School, in the late 80's people were still getting licks when they got in trouble. I moved to Texas from California only two years before and there were no such things as spanking in the California schools then.

**Bill Gay:**

With BJ Murray *principal*?

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Yes, BJ Murray. I remember he used to give “licks” to my friends. When I was there, they were just doing away with “licks” for the girls. The girls had no choice, they had to do detention. The boys still and most of my friends preferred taking the “licks” rather than going to detention.

**Bill Gay:**

Yeah, I didn't like to give "licks". I was known to be too easy, and I was always afraid they'd put their hands back there and I'd break a finger or something. I couldn't take that.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

So when you were going to school, did they have physical discipline?

**Bill Gay:**

Oh yeah, we had "licks" and in fact I had an English teacher every time we used wrong grammar, well he'd give us a "lick". He'd say, front and center, ah, what did he call that? Oh, assume an angle (*laughter*), and he'd whack us one time with that stick (*laughter*). Well we thought it was more a game, it didn't hurt, and it stung a little while...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Assume an angle? And did that mean?

**Bill Gay:**

(*General laughter*) Bend over, I remember him using that term.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And that would've been in the late 1930's or so? When you were around 10 years old or so?

**Bill Gay:**

That would've been around, before 1938, I graduated in '39.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Okay. That's funny. In the late 70's when I went to elementary school in Tonga, the island where I'm from, they were still doing that. The teacher could come up, sometimes we'd have surprise finger nail inspections, the teacher would announce the nail inspections, they'd say, put out your hands, and everyone would line up and hold your nails out and if your nails were dirty, whack, you'd get the ruler. *If you got in trouble in class you got a whack, if you didn't study for your exam, you got a what, if you fought in school you got a whack or you had to pick weeds in the yard.*

**Bill Gay:**

Yeah, I had an English teacher; she'd bend your hand over like that (*indicated the palm up*) and take that paddle and just (*laughter*)...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

(*Laughter*) just whop it...

**Bill Gay:**

(*Laughter*) yeah and boy, that hand would be just hotter than fire...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

*(laughter)* oh I know it, I remember those and coming from a different culture too, that was very acceptable back there...and so, that would be one way to do to your hand, just hold it up *(palms up)* and repeatedly *(noise of palm being hit in the background and laughter)*...

**Bill Gay:** *(laughter)* and your hands would be on fire...and you'd want to pull back and you couldn't *(laughter)*.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And then one would be to assume an angle?

**Bill Gay:**

I remember her, Ms. Easterly, her name was Easterly and she was a big tall woman. She could take that paddle and paddle it just like it was a boat paddle *(general laughter)*.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

*And heaven forbid if mom and dad found out you got in trouble at school. They'd add their own two whacks in for good measure.* Well, I know we have to wind down here so *you can go to your doctor's appointment in 10 minutes. One more question, were you teaching in the area when Trinity High School was already in existence?*

**Bill Gay:**

Oh yeah, I did a lot of substituting at Trinity. I had retired and of course I knew BJ *(Murray)* and when he had an opening for biology or PE, well he'd call on me *to come sub.*

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Did you guys dissect animals whenever you were principal at the Eules School? Dissect frogs and other small animals?

**Bill Gay:**

Yeah, we, in fact I got a whole pig that was expecting and we operated on it...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

You're kidding me! *(Laughter)*

**Bill Gay:**

The kids really enjoyed that...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

They liked it!?

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, they liked it *(general laughter)*...yeah that was in the little school.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

You mean, at the little school, the Euleless School?

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, the Euleless School.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Annd, you all got a mother pig? (*Laughter*)

**Bill Gay:**

Yeah, we got a bunch of little pigs (*laughter*)! We dissected it like a mother, like a mother would have a C-section. Both of my boys were born that way.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

C-sections, both your boys were born that way. So the students got a nice learning experience (*laughter*)?

**Bill Gay:**

It was nice for me (*laughter*). I had never seen an expectant pig operated on, I never even got to see that in college.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

That's so interesting, the times sure have changed and how much the normal at different times changes. What an experience. When I went to Trinity High School we dissected frogs and earthworms...

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, earthworms, frogs and crawfish...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Yes we did that and you know that was the most disgusting thing to me!

**Bill Gay:**

(*Laughter*)

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Frogs are very foreign to me and where I grew up so touching them was absolutely disgusting...

**Bill Gay:**

Frogs were clean. And of course the kids had to name all the parts.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Yes that's what we had to do too.

**Bill Gay:**

And of course the human body, they had to name all the parts.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Okay, when I was in junior high, that's when we had to learn about the female and male systems. I had a male teacher and that's where I learned about the female workings of the body and I had to learn it from this man and that was so embarrassing. I was so embarrassed, that was in the 80's.

**Bill Gay:**

Of course they made us teach that in Biology. I didn't particularly like that area of teaching! But we had to teach it, it goes along with the subject of Biology.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

When I was young and I had to take that class, they separated the female students to a different class room and the boys went to a different room and we were taught differently, we weren't together when we were learning about the female body. How was that dealt with?

**Bill Gay:**

Well, I didn't have to teach that but a couple of years after we consolidated. That's when the rules changed and of course there's a lot of difference when you had seventy-five in a high school, counting 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. I think I had eight seniors that first year and I had four juniors and I had put them together and made one class.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And you had to talk about the...I'm thinking these things weren't discussed back then like it is now?

**Bill Gay:**

Yeah, it wasn't like it is now. There were some things you just didn't mention.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Yeah, that's what I would think and I'm curious about...I wondered how that was dealt with.

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, you got in trouble if you did. I always went to the Superintendent and asked him what he would do in each case. I'd keep out of hot water that way, rather than going and doing it and then living through it.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Got it, I understand. Just one final question Mr. Gay, about integration, that's a very interesting topic to me just because I wasn't here, I've only ever heard about it and I wasn't in this country so...you mentioned that the kids came up and there were shot guns and everything, and they were told to go away and you said that about ten years later,

integration took place in the HEB area where, the black or the colored kids were able to go to school together with the white kids. How was that?

**Bill Gay:**

Aww, it was bad right at first, there were a lot of fights and ah...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

A lot of white people didn't like that, I hear?

**Bill Gay:**

Oh yeah, yeah, they didn't like it at all...but they...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Did a lot of the teachers too, maybe they didn't want to teach the colored kids?

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, it was when you had a colored teacher to teaching white kids that's when you had trouble. You ran into trouble then...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Ohhh, got it.

**Bill Gay:**

I was vice-principal at that time at Bell. I spent most of my time at Bell. I spent seventeen years down at Euless Junior High. I was Principal down there. After my high school experience they made me Principal at Euless Junior High. I lived down there and I knew the kids, it was just easy for me.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

And so when the colored kids came to the school you were already at Bell. And the problem was whenever there was a black teacher? Now there was a black teacher from the Mosier Valley area, and I remember Betty Fuller talked about her a lot, they were friends...

**Bill Gay:**

Johnson, ah...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Yes, Vada Johnson...I heard that she was a school teacher at Mosier Valley?

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, Vada Johnson. She's a real fine lady, real fine lady.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

I understand she was the first black teacher in the HEB district. I think that's what I've heard.

**Bill Gay:**

In fact, my wife and I and her went on a summer vacation together.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Interesting, that's great. And I know she never married.

**Bill Gay:**

No she never married. I think Vada had her; she finally got her Master's degree.

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

It took her a long time; I remember reading *about* that somewhere?

**Bill Gay:**

Yes, she had a real hard time getting it, because she had to write a thesis. When I got my Master's, we had to take extra hours, advanced hours in all the subjects and we didn't have to write a paper. I had a professor who was a basketball coach at North Texas and I made a mistake in trying to tell him how I wanted to write (*chuckle*) defensive plays and offensive plays and he was coaching at the time at North Texas and *one day* I came over one day for him to check it and he just tore it up. So I went to the teacher that was teaching muscles at North Texas, she taught PE but she was instructing the subject of muscles. You wouldn't think a half a year could be spent on muscles but it could be. And she said she had something to do with heading up PE for girls and she called me honey, I was up there complaining about the football coach tearing up my paper, and she said, "Well he does a lot of things like that, but you just wait a little while, it won't be long till you'll be doing extra hours instead of writing a thesis" and that's what I did to get my Masters. Her name was Beulah Harris and the basketball coach's name was Pete Shanes and he taught health or something...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

*That's very interesting.* So do you *still* remember the first day the black kids went to school with the white kids?

**Bill Gay:**

Yeah, it was a bad day. We had mostly fights and it was a real big problem. I had parents in the office for two to three weeks at a time...

**Ofa Faiva-Siale:**

Difficult time I'm sure...Mr. Gay, thank you so, so very much for taking the time out to do this interview. The final version of this will be a part of the Euless Historical Preservation Committee's files and a written copy of this will be included in the City website under the Oral History page. Thank you for your time.

**November 9, 2011**

**Interview conducted at the residence of Mr. William Gay in Colleyville, Texas.**

# William Samuel Gay, Jr.

## IMMEDIATE FAMILY TREE

