

*Interviewer:* Okay, Mr. Amass, if you would be so kind as to tell me about your first memories of arriving in Carroll County. I know you said that you first came out for a camp.

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*Mr. Amass:* Yes, I was born in Baltimore City, a part of Baltimore called Holland Town, east Baltimore, and we were members of St. Paul's Methodist Church at Mitamit and Lyndwood in Baltimore, and my very first memories of Carroll County are when I came out here for Methodist Youth Fellowship Camps, MYF, at then Western Maryland College, and I was probably twelve or thirteen years old at the time, and they'd send all the kids out here to the camp for a week or two, and I came out her to the camp a couple years in a row, and we also had our Sunday School picnics at Cascade Lake, which is located over near Hampstead in Snydersburg.

And, so I fell in love with Carroll County and I decided then that I was gonna go to college there, and eventually when I graduated from high school, I came up to Western Maryland College and enrolled as a freshman.

*Interviewer:* Now, tell me a little bit about some of the things that you did at the camp. What was college campus like then, and what kind of activities –

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*Mr. Amass:* Well, the campus was – the main buildings of the campus, which are still there, like McDaniel Hall and Alumni Hall, and so forth, Albert Norman Ward, they were there then, but also there was Old Main, which was located where Big Baker Chapel is now. Old Main, and there were two dormitories on each end of that, and then there was a dining hall which was in what's called Hall Hall now, but since that time, of course, the college has built a lot of new, many, many more new buildings, but it was a very, very small campus.

Student-wise, there were probably only six or seven hundred students there, and everybody knew everybody very well, and everybody ate together three times a day, and in fact, part of my scholarship as a Methodist scholarship was I had to work as a waiter in a dining hall, so for three meals a day, seven days a week, I worked in a dining hall waiting on tables, and, in fact, when summer was here, I stayed and worked at Old Baltimore Camp training camp as a waiter for the Baltimore Colts, which was a real hoot, because they got better food than the students did, Mr. Rice,

who ran the cafeteria, prepared very good meals for them, but it was a real trip to see how much they ate.

You know Mark Getty and Artie Donovan and those guys always had a eating contest when they could see who could eat the most pieces of chicken, or who could eat the most ears of corn, and so forth, and it was a real trip to see all this taking place, and see all the people who eventually became great stars in the National Football League, like Raymond Berry and Art Donovan and Lenny Moore and Wade Bubank and John Unitus and Jim Parker and these guys were big, big celebrities and they were – and also they did a lot in coming down.

They used to got to the movies in Carroll County, I mean they'd go down to the Carroll Theatre and see the movies. It was interesting when they went in there because they were so big that they would sit with a seat in between 'em, you know. They'd sit in one seat, empty seat, and a guy would sit in the next seat.

Then there was a place, maybe we shouldn't talk about this, but there's a place out on the end of Main Street called "Oz and Jenny's" which is now stables, which was quite a hangout, and a lot of the Colts would hang out there in the evening and drink beer and shoot pool and shuffleboard and it was quite a reputation out there with them, but a lot of fun.

*Interviewer:* Did they tip well?

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*Mr. Amass:* Did they what?

*Interviewer:* Did they tip you well?

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*Mr. Amass:* No, you mean waiting on the tables? They didn't tip us at all. We got paid, of course, and at the end of the training camp, John Stedman was the PR director for the Baltimore Colts who was also a great sports writer and is in the Sports Hall of Fame for his writing, was a great guy, and he would give us a gift at the end of the year, both monetary and then some Colt memorabilia, which actually I still have a pair of gold cufflinks that he gave me, which I guess if you're a sports memorabilia fan are probably worth a lot of money now.

*Interviewer:* Yeah, that's cool. Now, you were also telling me a little bit about you met your wife here in Carroll County and you were married here at the campus. Talk to me a little bit about that.

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*Mr. Amass:* Yes, well actually, what happened was I came here in 1950 to go to college and then the Korean War broke out and I was drafted into the army for the Korean War and eventually wound up in the army medical corp. and was in a MASH outfit in Korea, and then when I got out of the service, I came back to Western Maryland College to finish my college career and get a degree, and that's when I met my wife, whose maiden name was Patricia Richter.

And a lot of people in the county would know her, because her father and her mother were very active in – had careers themselves in education, and Pat was actually born in Manchester, Maryland, eventually moved to Westminster, Maryland when her father became Principal of Westminster High School, which he was for many years, and many people remember him as Gerald Richter, and Pat grew up here, of course, then, in Westminster, and we met on the campus, and eventually decided to marry and we graduated in 1957 and then were married – that was June of '57, and we were married in December of '57 in what is called Little Baker Chapel on the campus and a lot of people who met at Western Maryland College got married in that chapel and we did also in December of 1957, and this is being filmed in November of 1957, so one more month from now we'll be celebrating our fiftieth wedding anniversary.

*Interviewer:* Well, congratulations.

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*Mr. Amass:* Thank you very much.

*Interviewer:* Now talk to me a little bit about your in-laws. You said that you father-in-law went on to become superintendent?

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*Mr. Amass:* Yes, he was principal of Westminster High School for many years, then he became Supervisor of High School Education in Carroll County, originally, you know, a lot of the communities had high schools like Manchester and Taneytown and Sykesville, and then they started consolidating the high schools and they built Francis Scott Key, I think that was the first one, and then Taneytown, New Windsor and Union Bridge joined in and that became the Francis Scott Key High School and then they built the Liberty High

School, or South Carroll High School, excuse me, first and Sykesville and that whole group moved into South Carroll High School.

So he was Supervisor of High School Education and then eventually became Superintendent of Schools for Talbot County and so he moved down to the eastern shore with Mrs. Richter, his wife, for a number of years and they were down there as Superintendent. Eventually he retired, moved back here to Carroll County and was very active in the Historical Society and the Westminster Rotary Club and the Chamber of Commerce, so a lot of people here have very fond memories of Mr. Richter, and also Mrs. Richter.

She started her career as actually a French teacher at Westminster High School when she graduated from Western Maryland College, then stopped teaching to have Pat, and raise Pat, and then went back to teaching as an elementary school teacher, and she taught the second grade at Westminster Elementary, which was located on Green Street, Green and Center Street, where the Westminster Inn, as people know now, that building, which originally started out as the Westminster High School, Westminster Elementary School.

She taught second grade, and when my wife, Pat, went into education, she taught third grade in the same building, rooms next to each other, so the poor children had the mother for the second grade and the daughter for the third grade, so they went from mother to daughter. But they both were very excellent teachers and people speak very, very fondly of both of them.

A lot of people come up and say to my wife "Do you remember me? You taught me in the third grade?" Same thing happened to my mother-in-law. An interesting thing happened to my father-in-law a few years ago before he died, people used to come up and say "Oh, Mr. Richter, you were principal of Westminster High School when I was there." And he would always say "Well, what year did you graduate?"

So, one time we were at a wedding here at a big church in Carroll County and somebody came up and said "Oh, Mr. Richter, you were principal of the high school when I was there." And he said "Oh, what year did you graduate?" and this gentleman said "Oh, I didn't graduate, you expelled me." (*Laughter*)

So there was this long silence, and then finally the guy said "But that was the best thing that ever happened to me. I joined the

Marines and became a man." He said "Eventually, I got my GED and everything is fine." But a little touchy there, you know? But anyway, and then I decided to become a pharmacist, and I went to pharmacy school in Baltimore and commuted from Westminster all the way into Baltimore, downtown Baltimore to go to pharmacy school while my wife taught school here, and then I went to work for Reed's Drugstore, which a lot of people will remember.

And Reed's was located on Main Street in Westminster here, right across from where the Carroll County Public Library building is now, in those days it was St. John's Church, and we used to, for example, on Saturday nights, we'd stay open until 11:00 at night, because all the farmers in Carroll County would come in to shop late on Saturday nights, after they had done all their chores on the farm, and so you stayed open late to accommodate your customers and we were there on Main Street for many years, or Reed's had been, and eventually the Westminster Shopping Center was built, which was the shopping center at Ingler Road and 140, and Reed's moved out there, and that was the very first shopping center on 140, and a lot of people said "Oh, my Gosh, you guys are gonna go broke out there, because nobody is gonna travel all the way out there to do business, I mean they aren't gonna go from Main Street all the way out to Ingler Road and 140.

Well, of course, that didn't happen, we did very well out there. By the way, when I first came to Carroll County, you know, as I was talking about coming up to MYF camps and so forth, 140 as a dual highway, ended on 140 where the Royal Farm Store is down on Bethel Road now. That's as far as it was built, and you had to go on Bethel Road over to Main Street or Baltimore Boulevard or whatever it's called now and come all the way into town. That's how that has changed, but then eventually it was built all the way up to where it is now, like 140 is now.

But we went out there to the shopping center, and then eventually Carroll Plaza was built across the street, and Wampler's Furniture Store came where the BB&T Bank building is now, and so a lot of changes started to take place.

*Interviewer:*

And what happened to the location where Reed's had been, after they moved out to the shopping center? What went in there?

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*Mr. Amass:*

Right now, I think that's the entrance to Sherwood Plaza or Sherwood Mall, whatever they call that, on Main Street, where you go in and Roten's Barber Shop is on one side and I think there's a

tuxedo store on the other and so forth. If you go in this little incline and you walk up, that used to have on the terrazzo floor, it used to say "Reed's". I think they've covered that up now, but that was the entrance to Reed's Drugstore there.

Then there were a number of drugstores on Main Street in those days, there was Smit's Rexall Drugstores, which was also just a few doors away. It's moved down to the other end of town now. There was Rizynski's Drugstore, Judge Mark Rizynski here in the county now, that was his Father, Rizynski's Drugstore.

Then on the corner of John Street and Main Street was another drugstore called Bickler and Guild, they had two different gentlemen, one named Bickler and one named Guild, owned that store, so there were a number of drugstores on Main Street in those days. And there were, of course, many doctors in the county who did house calls. They didn't have a hospital, either, by the way. There was no hospital, and eventually there was a hospital built and it opened in 1961 and I was the very first pharmacist for Carroll County Hospital, Dr. Dan Welliver came to me and said "We don't have any pharmacy services. How about you coming and setting up the pharmacy services and being the pharmacist?"

I agreed to do it, I actually did it on a part time basis, can you imagine a hospital having a part time pharmacist? But that's the way it opened in 1961 and we worked that way for about six or seven months and then they decided they needed a full time pharmacist and I didn't wanna be a hospital pharmacist and so they found one and I went back to being just a full time retail pharmacist.

*Interviewer:* And you were still at Reed's at that point?

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*Mr. Amass:* Yes, I was still at Reed's Drugstore in those days.

*Interviewer:* Now, you were talking a little bit about when you attended Western Maryland, that you used to catch or actually hitchhike –

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*Mr. Amass:* Yes, of yeah, absolutely, and I was talking to somebody else about that the other day and they said they did the same thing. If I wanted to go home, I didn't have a car, in those days, and if I wanted to go home to Baltimore, I'd just go out on Main Street down to 140 and I'd stick out my thumb and you'd be there maybe ten minutes or fifteen minutes, somebody'd pick you up, they knew

you were a college student or a student and they'd take you all the way down to Reischerstown. If you got to Reischerstown you could get on a streetcar and go the rest of the way, or if they were going all the way into Baltimore they'd take you all the way into Baltimore, and I'd have to come back on Sunday nights, because Western Maryland College has compulsory chapel at that time.

All the students had to go to chapel, be there at 7:00 on Sunday nights, it was required, and so I'd have to come back. Well, I'd get a streetcar out to Reischerstown, get off and walk up 140, stick out my thumb and somebody'd pick me up and bring me all the way back up. And most the time, they'd say "You goin' to the college?" I'd say "Yeah" and they'd drive you right up to the college, whether they were goin' that far or not, and it wasn't hard to do. I mean, you'd be picked up inside of fifteen minutes, easily, and get a ride and it was not a problem.

People didn't have the hesitation they have today about pickin' up hitchhikers and so it was easy to do, and you could also, if you wanted to, up until about 195- I think 1 or 2, maybe 3, the Western Maryland train actually ran passenger service to Baltimore and you could get a train to Reischerstown, I think it was seventy cents, or seventy-two cents to ride the train, it was like a dollar and something to go to Baltimore, downtown Baltimore, so you could go back and forth on the train if you wanted to.

*Interviewer:* Now where did you get on?

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*Mr. Amass:*

You got on right where the train crosses Main Street right now, Railroad Avenue and Main Street where Joe Hansen's restaurant is, right opposite that on the corner was where the train station was. And it was there until about 1955 or '56 when they tore it down and that red brick building was built where it was a bank, Baltimore Federal Savings Bank, and now I think it's a law office, but they tore down the train station which was a real shame because it was a beautiful, beautiful train station.

In fact, I have a hobby of model trains and one of the parts of my layout is old Main Street, and I have a replica of that train station in my train layout, and I also have a replica of Main Street. I have the building on the corner, which was the yellow building where the Sam's Bagels is now. That is there, it was the Acme Store. On the first floor it was a hotel, actually, and I have the old Rexall Drugstore. I have Harry's Lunch, which was in one of those buildings farther up there. Not the way they were exactly, but

replica. I have Mather's Department Store, which was Coffey's Music Store right now, and a couple other buildings that were on Main Street. I have St. John's Church which is where the public library is, and I have the fireman's building, and all of those things are in my layout to represent the Westminster, as it was in those days.

It's really Westminster in the 1930's, but people come in and they look at it and they say "Oh my goodness, the train station is there, as well as what was the freight building, the Western Maryland Freight shed, which is a little farther down on Railroad Avenue, towards Manchester, behind Johansen's, the building that was Baumgartner's Stove and Furnace Store, that was the Western Maryland Freight Shed, where people picked up their freight.

*Interviewer:* And Main Street was pretty much the only place for shopping at that time.

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*Mr. Amass:* Oh, absolutely. I mean, you had a shopping area in the small towns, like Manchester and Sykesville, but not nearly as much as Westminster. They were the shopping hub. Now, at Christmas time and holiday times, Easter and so forth, a lot of people took the train and went into Baltimore and shopped at department stores in downtown Baltimore, Stewarts and Hershel Cones and Hustlers and places like that, or if they had cars they would go up to Hanover and shop up there. Sometimes, to Frederick, but primarily people went into Baltimore to do their big shopping, yeah.

*Interviewer:* So when you first came out here and you fell in love, what was it about Carroll County that really inspired you?

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*Mr. Amass:* Well, I loved the rolling hills, I loved the scenery, and I loved the people, which I still do. The people of Carroll County were unbelievably friendly and nice and just was a wonderful place to live, I realized that from a very, very early age, and I still believe that. I still love going around, my wife and I go to the church suppers, to the pancake breakfasts at the churches and the fire halls that are still held and it's a real treat. I go on Wednesday mornings and lunchtime down to Petoskey Methodist to the lunch they have down there every Wednesday and it's just a wonderful treat to meet the people, to talk to them. There's still a lot of "real Carroll County people" around, and a lot of people moved out here because of that, and have adopted that philosophy and that way of

life and being kind to each other, and treating each other well and doing what I consider the right thing, and I think they do too. And I think that's the beauty of Carroll County, not only the scenery and the beautiful rolling countryside, but the beauty of the people who live here, and the people who wanna like here and live a lifestyle which is very pleasant.

My wife and I have traveled all over the world, east and west and just about everywhere in the world, but every time we come back, it's interesting, we always say the same thing, it's sort of a family joke, we're in the car and we come back, and whenever we cross the line, no matter which way we're coming into Carroll County, we say "Ah, home again." It's great to be back in Carroll County, whether we're comin' in from the Pennsylvania side, the Frederick County side, the Baltimore County side, it's just great to say "Ah, we're home again." We love it.

*Interviewer:* Now, are there any changes that you're not particularly fond of? Are there things that have changed about Carroll County that you would prefer not to have changed?

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*Mr. Amass:*

Well, I guess it's the old story about people move out to Carroll County and they wanna build a fence and don't let anybody else come, you know, keep all the strangers out and so-called progress, keep Carroll County rural and so forth. Well, I don't think that that's possible. It would be nice if we could keep it as pleasant as it has been and the way that we want it to be. I think that there's still tremendously beautiful areas in the county which are open and rolling and so forth, if you can ride some of the back roads of Carroll County, rather than just the main highways, you would see still beautiful rolling hills, beautiful farmland, and gorgeous things, and I would hope that it would stay that way.

I think we probably have more crime than we had years ago, but that, I guess, comes with the increase in population. For example, I was on the school board for many years, eight and a half years president of the school board. I went on in 1971, I believe, and the school system, in those days, I think we only had fifteen school buildings, and now, I think there are close to forty school buildings, so the education system has enormously increased, as has the population which is in proportion, so that's growth, and just look along 140 itself. When we moved from Main Street as Reed's Drugstore out to Westminster Shopping Center, the only thing located on 140. There was nothing else all the way into Reischerstown.

Well, look now what you have out there. I mean, you have car dealerships everywhere, W.H.Davis, I think, was the first car dealership that went from Main Street all the way out to 140. but the police barracks wasn't there, none of that stuff was there, and so it's just enormous, the growth along there, and that's what I think people who've been around here many years miss and lament the fact that that growth is there.

But I don't see any way of stopping it, but let's just hope we can manage it and control it and keep it the way we want it to be.

*Interviewer:* Now when you were on the school board, you were one of the people who made the visionary decision to buy all the land.

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*Mr. Amass:* *(Laughter)* Yeah, that was a big controversy. We bought seventy acres here on Washington Road to put the Westminster High School out here, the new Westminster High School. Now, we got a lot of flak from a lot people for buying that seventy acres, first off because who wanted a school all the way that far out of town. You're gonna build an auditorium out there and nobody's gonna go out there late at night, you know, that's so far out of town. Well, of course, that's crazy because the Westminster High School auditorium, you cannot find a night, weekend, day, afternoon, when it's not in use. People are constantly out here, but also, in that seventy acres, look now what is located on that seventy acres.

You have the Westminster High School, you have the Carroll County Vo-Tech Center, you have the fire and safety training grounds, you have the Robert Boten Elementary School, you have this television station, and you have Carroll Community College. All of it located on that seventy acres that we bought back in 1971. Where in the world would the county be if they tried to go out and buy that ground now to do those things, or even in the last two years to try to do it. The money was so well invested in buying those acres for that educational complex.

*Interviewer:* Now, were there any other pieces of property that you did similar?

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*Mr. Amass:* Yes, we did. We bough a piece of property out on Uniontown Road, which was where the Westminster Elementary School eventually moved to and still is out there. The sad thing about that is, we bought the ground all the way up to Bell Road, which was supposed to be for expansion of a Westminster Middle School,

new Middle School. Well, unfortunately, the county commissioners traded that ground for a piece of ground out at the Carroll County airport to extend the runway, which I thought at the time, and I still think, was a bad deal. I don't think they should have done that. They should have held onto that piece of ground and bought the ground out there for the airport, if it really needed to be expanded, because that was a great piece of ground for a middle school, and they shouldn't have given that up.

We bought the ground for the North Carroll High School, which was bought from the hospital. It actually was a piece of ground owned by the Carroll County Hospital that had been deeded to them by a very nice family. When they died, they left it to the hospital. The hospital turned around and sold it to the Board of Education for North Carroll High School. And that was a wonderful purchase, too, because that school just sits perfectly where it should be, and would fit very well in that community.

I think, when I went on the board, I think we had fifteen school properties, fifteen school buildings, and I think when I went off we had twenty eight. So it had grown that much in eight years, the county school system, and it continues to grow, and we have a very good school system, we have an excellent school system. Dr. Ecker, who is the superintendent now, does a magnificent job and the people try to do very well by the school system.

*Interviewer:* Now, tell me a little bit more about the airport. Have you seen changes in the airport since you've been here?

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*Mr. Amass:*

Oh, sure. When I first came here, the airport was out there on 97, where it still is, but it was simply a grass piece of ground. There was no paved runway, it was just a grass strip, and there was a little wooden shack by the side of the road, literally, about the size of a garage, and no hangers, and people just pulled up their little private planes and flew in and out of there. I don't think there were any lights of any sort and so forth, and then eventually somebody paved it and it became a small runway out there, and then it grew up and the Economic Development Commission in the county decided to make that whole area out there the Carroll Industrial Park and so they bought a lot of ground and then they moved the airport back from 97 back to where it is now, and they started building the buildings in front of it, for the Carroll Industrial Park, then I think the runway's been extended two or three times, maybe more than that. The hangers have been built, the parking areas for the airplanes and been paved and so forth,

lights have been put in and all those sort of things, it's been turned into a pretty decent airport.

A number of years ago, I'm a member of the Westminster Rotary Club, and a number of years ago, myself and another gentleman by the name of Bill Gavin, we chaired a Westminster air show, Air Spectacular, and for two years we ran an air show out there where we brought in WWII planes and we actually had fighter planes and bomber planes and we reenacted the bombing of Pearl Harbor tura tura tura, had explosions and pyrotechnics that were spectacular and we had hundreds of airplanes, aerobatic things, wing walkers and aerobatics in the air, and all kinds of things. Actually had one act where a little plane came down and landed on top of a pickup truck, and it was quite a air show. In the two days that it ran the first time, a Saturday and a Sunday I think we had probably twenty five or thirty thousand people there, and then the next year we run it again on a Saturday and Sunday and then that year I think we had some weather problems, but we still had some twenty five thousand, but it was a tremendous success and people really loved it. It was great.

*Interviewer:* Why did you stop it?

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*Mr. Amass:* Well, a lot of things happened. We had problems with the permits, a lot of people got involved and they wanted different kinds of permits, and the FAA with the planes and the pyrotechnics and so forth, so it got to be such a problem that we just backed away from it. The Rotary Club did. Now some other people took it over and tried to run it for a few years, and they were not very successful at all, unfortunately, and I felt sorry for them, but the Rotary Club, we just backed out of it.

*Interviewer:* Now, were there other activities or events that have been popular for years or decades here in Carroll County?

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*Mr. Amass:* Oh, quite a few. The Farm Museum, you know, Fall Harvest Days and things like that. The Rotary Club, we used to have a food stand out at Fall Harvest Days at the Carroll County Farm Museum and sell crab cakes. We haven't done that for a few years, but that whole Fall Harvest Days has grown tremendously. The Steam Shows at the Farm Museum has just become tremendously popular. So, the wine tasting wine festival that they have, I've seen that grow from a very small event when it first started to now being a wonderful celebration when people come from all over the

east coast, actually, to it. It's advertised very well and done very well.

The fireworks display at the Farm Museum, which the Rotary Club now sponsors each and every year on the fourth of July has become a big event and well populated and enjoyed by everyone. The Rotary Club has to raise a lot of money every year. Thanks to a man called Joe Leggey, he does it. He's been the chairman since the inception, and it's a tremendous event for the county, so we've been involved in that, and then about the last five or six years, a gentleman I named before, Mr. Bill Gavin and I, we have a hobby of model trains, which were always big in Carroll County. A lot of people are into model trains, and we build a four foot by eight foot layout every year.

And we sell raffle tickets for the Rotary Club to raise money for things like nursing scholarships at Carroll Community College and so forth, and we take it around to various train shows, to Mistletoe Mark, and eventually we take it out to the mall, it's there for three weeks, and we sell raffle tickets and then on December the 22nd, we raffle it off and deliver it on December the 23rd, and it's pretty exciting when we deliver that train layout to different people's homes. They get very excited about it and really enjoy it.

*Interviewer:*

Now you said a lot of people here in Carroll County like model trains. Were there a lot of model train shops, or how did that interest –

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*Mr. Amass:*

Well, we used to have model train shops. There aren't so many anymore. We have one down in Sykesville, Perky's, and we have one on Liberty Road. I can't think of the name of that one, but years ago we had Bobby's Hobby Lobby on Main Street in Westminster and that was a very, very popular train store, sold model airplanes and things like that. And they used to have a model train layout right in the center of the store and you could go in and press a button or two and the trains would run and different kind of animation and course in November and December they were very busy selling train parts and also Millers Electric which was located on Main Street and Anchor Street where the Rexall Drugstore is now, he sold Lionel model trains which were very, very popular and he had a display in there, Mr. Miller, and everybody went there to see his display and to buy parts and to buy trains from him and so forth.

There were a lot of hardware stores that sold trains in those days, like Western Auto stores, and each little community had a hardware store, like in Manchester and Hampstead, Sykesville and these folks that were dealers for Lionel and American Flyer trains and October, November and December they would be very busy selling trains and there's an association called Train Collectors of America and, which if you're a hobbyist you belong to, and I think one of the highest concentration of members in that association, which is a nationwide association, actually come from Carroll County.

There's a lot of people in this county who have model train layouts or collectors and really enjoy 'em.

*Interviewer:* I know that's true in Mount Erie.

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*Mr. Amass:* Mount Erie has a store now, I believe. And, of course, most people in Carroll County want Western Maryland trains, you know, because Western Maryland ran through here, and this was the home of the Western Maryland Railroad, it's Maryland Midland now, but it was based over in Union Bridge and so most people in this area wanna run either Western Maryland trains or B&O trains, Baltimore & Ohio.

*Interviewer:* Now when you were in college, and a young married person, what did you do for fun? Where did you go?

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*Mr. Amass:* Oh, well, we didn't have very much money. Very little, in fact, so a big night was actually, this doesn't sound right, but a big night was getting a pizza and a six pack of beer and sitting in an apartment somewhere or at your house with some friends and enjoying it, maybe watching television if you had one.

Or going to the movies. We would go to the Carroll Theatre. There were two movies in Carroll County, in Westminster, at the time. One was Carroll and one was the State Theatre. The State was located on the opposite side of the street where the Carroll Theatre is now, at John and Main Street. There was a JC Penney's Department store there and the State Theatre was next door. So those were the two movie theatres that you could go to. So we would go to movies.

We would go out to Frock's which was located on Liberty Street. There's a retirement community there now, but Frock's was a

banquet hall, and they would have dances out there. In fact, when we went to Western Maryland, a lot of the fraternities had fraternity parties out there, and dances, but that was another form of recreation for young people.

We'd go out to Frock's for dances, the Lion's Club and the Rotary Club the Kiwanis's Club, the Optimist's would have these affairs and you would go out there. Then, there was a theatrical group in Carroll County called the Carroll Players and they used to put on productions – plays – and they would have dinner theater where you could go out to Frock's, your ticket price was you got a dinner and then they'd put on a show. And they put on pretty decent shows, you know? Comedies, usually. What's the old show? Sunshine Boys, I guess, had Walter Matthau and so forth in when it was on Broadway and in the movies.

But anyway, shows like that. And they were very, very entertaining and good things to do. So those were the types of things that we did.

*Interviewer:* Were there any popular bands, like local bands?

0:40:56.7

*Mr. Amass:* Oh, yes, and that's another thing. You would go out to Frock's, they would have these dances would have – bands would come and play and you'd go out there and have a dance.

*Interviewer:* Do you remember any of the names of the groups?

0:41:12.9

*Mr. Amass:* That's what I'm trying to think of some of the names of the bands. I can't pull 'em up right away. Gene Frock himself had a band, and a number of different people played in that. No, I can't, right off the top of my head, think of any of 'em. But some of 'em were more popular than others, and, of course, in the early fifties, it was still the swing era, so they were the big bands, you know, with the twenty one pieces and everybody did the swing and the jitterbug and things like that, and then eventually it became rock and roll and dancing involved, but I guess a lot of people are going back to the swing now.

*Interviewer:* So when you were in college, where did you live?

0:41:54.3

*Mr. Amass:* I lived on campus, in the dorms. I first lived in a dorm called McKinstree Hall, which was attached to Old Main, which is the

building I told you that was torn down. Eventually, when I came back from Korea, I came back to school, McKinstree Hall had been torn down, and I moved into a dorm called Albert Norman Ward Hall then. So we lived on campus at this time, and most students did. Now, some of the students who were married lived in a place called Vetville, and Vetville is still exists, it's down, if you know where the car wash is, Duke's Car Wash off of 140, the one story flat buildings behind that are what was Vetville, and those buildings were actually built for military personnel who were trained at Western Maryland College during the second World War.

And after they left, the college took over the property and turned 'em into apartments and returning veterans from the second World War and the Korean War who were married lived in those little small apartments there. Then eventually they were sold, and they're still there as apartments and people live in those buildings, but those buildings go all the way back to the second World War.

*Interviewer:* Oh, that's interesting.

0:43:25.8

*Mr. Amass:* And, so married students lived down there. And that's what I was talking about when I said if you had a married friend who lived in Vetville, that's when you got the pizza and the six pack of beer and you went down and played cards with them on a Saturday night or something like that, just sat around.

*Interviewer:* You weren't allowed to do that in your dorm?

0:43:42.9

*Mr. Amass:* Oh, no, no, no, no! Never! Remember, Western Maryland College was a Methodist school, and there was to be absolutely no alcohol on campus whatsoever, so, well, no, you weren't allowed to have beer or anything in the dorm, wine or anything of that sort. Boy, that was instant expulsion if you were found with any of that. And when fraternities held their dances in Gill Gymnasium on the campus, even then there were no alcoholic beverages.

I mean, they just served punch or coke or soft drinks, but no alcohol at all. The girls had to be in the dorms at 10:00 at night. And I think the freshman girls hadda be in even earlier than that, and I think on weekends, Saturday nights, they could stay out til eleven, and the dorms were strictly – they were not co-ed dorms as they are now – they were strictly segregated dorms. Girls and boys in different dorms, and they had house mothers and monitors.

Guys could go into the lobby of the dorms and ask for your date and they would phone up to the floor, and the date would come down. But you couldn't get past that lobby. No way in the world was anybody gonna let you get past that lobby. Not at Western Maryland College, no way. It was pretty straight laced.

*Interviewer:* Now, you were telling me a little bit about you wife was born in Manchester. How has Manchester changed?

0:45:28.6

*Mr. Amass:* Oh my goodness. Well, she was born in Manchester and most people who knew her from Manchester call her Patsy. She was Patsy until she came to Westminster, and then she decided her name was gonna be Pat. Her name's really Patricia. So anytime we see anybody from Carroll County and they say "Hi, Patsy!" we know that they know her from Manchester, not from anywhere else.

But Manchester was a very small community, much smaller than Westminster, and Manchester, where Manchester Elementary School is now, that was – they only had one school – and it was first grade through the eleventh grade. The whole school system was in that one building, and Mr. Richter was principal of the whole thing. So you went to school in the first grade, and you stayed in the same school until you graduated in eleventh grade. They only had eleven grades in those days.

And I think they changed over to a twelfth grade system around 1951 or '52, somewhere around there, and so eventually, as I said, Mr. Richter came to Westminster to become principal here when my wife was nine years old, so she grew up the rest of her life her in Westminster.

But Manchester was a very small community, they had on the corner of, I think it's Main and York Street, which is the center of town where the red light is, they still got a red light there. Carr's Department Store, which was like a one floor department store, and they had Miller and Mauer Meats, which is still there. The fire department, the big entertainment there was the fire department would do things like they put on little theatrical plays, and they had dinners and they had dances and so forth.

But I think if you wanna look for a really religious, strict community, Manchester was probably the epitome of that in Carroll County. The old German Lutheran Dutch type of living.

Manchester was the center for that. The rest of the communities in Carroll County were very conservative, always had been conservative, but Manchester was the center of that. New Windsor and Union Bridge were pretty conservative. Taneytown, where I had a drugstore for many years, was also a very conservative community. But all these communities were very close knit, and people who, for example, went to New Windsor High School still have reunions. They had a class maybe of twenty six, or a class of eighteen, and they're still meeting. They still have a loyalty to the school.

Same thing with Taneytown, they had a High School. And that's wonderful. That's some of the charm and greatness of Carroll County.

*Interviewer:* Now, were there very many minorities, or were minorities kind of congregated in certain areas?

0:49:04.2

*Mr. Amass:*

They did congregate in certain areas, but there were not many minorities. I think maybe two to three percent black, African-Americans and that's about it. They had their own schools up until 1953 or '54. The black community had it's own school, Robert Moten School, which was a High School and located on Center Street. The building is still there. The Health Department is in that building now on Center Street. But when the elementary school was built out here on Washington Road, Mr. Richard Dixon, who was a delegate in the Maryland House of Delegates, and is black, had gone to Robert Moten Elementary and he lobbied for this school to be named Robert Moten Elementary to continue that name, which was a very appropriate thing to do, and I'm very pleased that we did do it, and in fact I understand that once a year, I guess it's during black history month, the children in that school are told why that school was named Robert Moten Elementary.

Robert Moten was a very distinguished educator and that's why it's named after him. Speaking of Robert Moten, I think those folks, for example, still have a reunion every year, of Robert Moten graduates, and they try to keep the spirit alive. They even give out scholarships, they have a Robert Moten scholarship fund, which is a wonderful thing to do for minority students.

But minorities have always been a very small percentage of Carroll County for a number of different reasons, but a very close knit group of folks. They have intermarried, a lot of them, they know

each other very well, and wonderful, wonderful people. When Reed's moved from Main Street out to Westminster Shopping Center, I mentioned before, we had a couple minority black people who worked with us. One as a waitress, and I think she was one of the first black waitresses in a white environment in Carroll County.

Unfortunately, we did have some people who were upset about that, and protested, but we had a store manager by the name of Elwood Whitaker and Elwood said "I don't care if you don't ever come in this store again, she's a good waitress and she's gonna stay a waitress." And he stuck to it, and we never really lost any business, and it was a wonderful thing.

And we had a couple people working for us, one as a porter, Bernard Milberry, who has since passed on, unfortunately, but I remember one time Bernard came to us and said he had to have Wednesday afternoon off, and we said "Why do you have to have Wednesday afternoon off for?" and he said "Well, I gotta go to Frederick to get my hair cut."

And we said "Bernard, you gotta go to Frederick?" and he said "There aren't any barbers in Carroll County that will cut black hair." And so, you know, it was a different way of life, and this was in the fifties, and so things have radically changed, thank goodness, for the better, but there were few of them here, and it was a shame some of the things that they had to put up with.

Actually, the Robert Moten School that was on Center Street was a very inferior building, when eventually the school board took it over, when I was on the school board, and we took that building over and tried to do some things with it, well, it didn't have proper insulation, it didn't have proper wiring, and so forth. It had been built as a substandard school building and it had to be upgraded, so when the school were integrated in Carroll County and the blacks were moved into the white building, it was a good thing as far as the facilities being available to them.

*Interviewer:*

That's interesting, yeah. Now, tell me a little bit more, too, about – I wanted to ask you a little bit about when Reed's went out of business. You were saying that it was over in the shopping center, and then what happened with that?

0:54:09.7

*Mr. Amass:*

Yes, well, the entire Reed's drug chain, which encompassed most of Maryland, was sold to Rite Aid, and the Rite Aid Drug Company came in and took over all of the Reed's Drug Stores, not

only here in Carroll, but everywhere else in the state. And across the street, in the meantime, was another shopping center called Carroll Plaza, which is still there, of course, and there was a drug store on the corner which was owned by the Drug Fair Corporation, which was a very large corporation in Maryland and Virginia, and they were at first bought out by Sherman Williams, the paint people, and then eventually sold two or three times, and they became Rite Aid also.

So Rite Aid bought out both Drug Fair and Reed's drugstores, so that's what happened to them. They disappeared as a result of the corporate buyout.

*Interviewer:* So when you look back at Carroll County, what most stands out in your mind? What's some of your most favorite memories of the county?

0:55:19.0

*Mr. Amass:*

Well, the people. The people that I've lived and worked with all these years. I still go, as I say, to some of these church suppers, and dinners, and pancake breakfasts, and people come up to me all the time and say "Hey, Doc, remember when we were at Reed's?" or "Remember when we were here?" and "Remember when you had your store in Taneytown?" or "You had your store in Finksburg? What a good time we had."

Or "I used to work for ya." You know, I look around in the county and some of the people who started out as just kids workin' in my stores have gone on and had great successful careers. Todd Herring, who is a physical therapist and owns a wonderful rehabilitation business here in the county.

Wayne Glover, another pharmacist who worked for me. Oh, the names just go on and on and on. Bruce Callen, who was supervisor of athletics in Carroll County School System – all these people started out as fifteen-, sixteen-year-old kids, workin' in my drugstores.

Lotta women come up, you know, work as a soda fountains and so forth, and then other people I worked with in the community organizations I belong to – Rotary and bein' on the hospital board, and the cancer society and things like that. It's just been wonderful, working with these folks, and enjoying them and having these friendships, over all these years.

*Interviewer:* Great. Thank you very much, Mr. Amass.

*[End of Audio]*