

# An Interview with Rachel Coleman

An Oral History Conducted by Claytee D. White

July 24, 1996

The Boyer Early Las Vegas Oral History Project

Oral History Research Center at UNLV  
University Libraries  
University of Nevada Las Vegas

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## Interview with Rachel Coleman

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in Las Vegas, Nevada  
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# Preface

Rachel Coleman was born in Fayette, Mississippi. When she was twenty, she moved to Las Vegas with her first child, to join her husband who moved out four months earlier. Her first job in Las Vegas was washing glasses at the Tropicana. Low wages and poor working conditions drew Rachel to join the culinary union.

Rachel worked on and off in hotels at such as the Hacienda, the Tally Ho and the Sahara and Tropicana to name a few. In 1969 she was promoted to executive housekeeper at The Hacienda. In 1973 Rachel became a representative for the Culinary Union 226 and in 1981 she became department head of the union. Her ascent in the Culinary Union culminates in her running for president in 1987.

Through her employment in the hotels, going out on Jackson Street, working for the Culinary Union and raising a family, Rachel recalls the atmosphere of Las Vegas in the 60s, 70s, and 80s. By framing a narrative of living and working in a city ever changing in race and labor relations, Rachel Coleman's story peels back the veneer of Las Vegas and shows the world beyond the bright lights of the Strip.

**It is July 24th, 1996. I'm interviewing Rachel in her office at the Union Plaza hotel.**

**How are you this morning, Rachel?**

I'm fine. Thank you. And you?

**Good. Thanks. Rachel, is it true that you've given me permission to use this information for educational and research purposes?**

Yes.

**Thank you. I want to get started with just a little bit about Vicksburg, Mississippi. Now, tell me what kind of — how old were you when you left Vicksburg?**

Twenty.

**Now, did you work prior to coming to Las Vegas?**

Yes, I did.

**What kind of work did you do in Vicksburg?**

Well, I worked in a home of Dr. and Mrs. Martin.

**The last name is?**

M-a-r-t-i-n.

**Okay. So that was domestic-type work?**

Yes.

**Is that what most of the black women did in Vicksburg?**

Mostly, yes.

**What other jobs were available for black women?**

When I was there, there was a few restaurants there. They worked there. But most of them did work in the homes there.

**How much money were you earning?**

Eight dollars a week.

**Eight dollars a week.**

Yes.

**How many days did you work in the home?**

I worked six days a week.

**So now, tell me what you did.**

Well, I was supposed to be looking after the kids and cleaning house. But we grew up together because I started working when I was going to school. My sister worked for them first. When she graduated then I started working. So I worked in the afternoon. And then I worked there until I graduated and got married and moved here.

**So now, you worked there while you were still in high school?**

Yes.

**Did you do any cooking?**

Yes.

**Oh, you did cooking as well. How many kids did they have for you to take care of?**

We grew up together. Her two kids, a boy and a girl.

**When you say "grew up together," meaning that you were about the same age as the kids?**

Yes.

**But they expected you to take care of kids your age?**

Well, we fought. We did a little of everything together. They was good kids, though. I was treated most like one of the family.

**Okay, good. Now, tell me about your family. How many brothers and sisters did you have?**

Two. Just my sister and myself, just the two of us.

**Oh, the two of you. What kind of work did your parents do?**

My daddy worked on the farm. My mother didn't do that much work. He did most of the work and hired people to come in and they did the work for them. But my mother and daddy separated when I was like six years old.

**I see. So now, did you grow up on a farm or in the town of Vicksburg?**

I was born in Fayette, Mississippi. Then I moved to Vicksburg when I was six years old. So I call that my hometown.

**Now, tell me how close is Vicksburg to Tallulah, Louisiana?**

It got to be about 22 miles.

**So then Vicksburg is probably just north of Tallulah?**

I'm bad on direction. Probably, yeah.

**I'm going to have to look on a map, but I think that's pretty good.**

**Now, who in your family -- of your sister, yourself, your mom, who came out first?**

I did.

**Now, what made you decide to come to Las Vegas?**

My husband had a brother here. So he sent for his brother. And then I come with my husband.

**Now, how old were you when you got married?**

Nineteen.

**So now, this was after high school and everything?**

Yes.

**Did a lot of people from Vicksburg migrate to Las Vegas?**

After that we have quite a few here because we have a Vicksburg Club now that have family reunions here.

**Now, Vicksburg Club has a branch in Las Vegas?**

Yes.

**Any other cities with branches of the club?**

Los Angeles and Chicago.

**So how many people are in Las Vegas from Vicksburg?**

I really don't know. It's quite a few of us.

**So now, are you a member of the club?**

Yes. I'm the vice president.

**Oh, wonderful. You're going to have to invite me to a meeting. So how many people usually attend your meetings?**

About six of us.

**I'll be really interested in meeting some of those. Are most of them women?**

We have womens and mens. I don't know really exactly how many men. I'm sure -- it's Brady, his brother and my brother-in-law and Ann's son -- there's about seven men and about five or six women.

**So do you have an annual get-together with the other branches, Chicago and Los Angeles?**

Chicago have it in March of every year. Mississippi have it in July every year. We often with California -- California have it one year and we have it the next year. This year coming -- that will

be '97 -- it's our year to have it in May.

**That's wonderful. So every March you go to Chicago?**

Yes.

**So how many people are in the Chicago branch? It must be kind of big.**

Ooh, about 600 or more.

**So now, with all these people migrating out of -- how big was Vicksburg at this time?**

I really don't know. I can't say.

**So you don't know if there were 5,000 or 6,000 people?**

No.

**Or if was larger than that?**

No. Yeah.

**So a lot of black people must have been leaving then, migrating to the cities.**

Yeah, Chicago, most of them went to Chicago. And then they started coming here. They heard about Las Vegas and they started coming here.

**What kind of things did you hear about Las Vegas?**

I really had never heard of Las Vegas until my brother-in-law called my husband and said he was here. And then my husband said he was going to Las Vegas. And I said see ya. So four months later I followed him.

**Now, how did he come out?**

By car with a friend.

**Now, did you have people driving back and forth bringing people to Las Vegas?**

Well, I came out with a brother of the guy that brought my husband out. So I guess most of them that did get here come by car at that time.

**Were the people driving those cars moving to Las Vegas themselves or were there people who were just driving back and forth bringing people?**

Going back and forth bringing people. Yes.

**Do you remember the name of the person that you came out here with?**

McNeil.

**And he drove back and forth often?**

No. I don't know how often. But his brother was the one that brought my husband out. Then he was coming back to visit and my husband told him to bring me back. Yes.

**Now, did you have children at that time?**

One.

**You had a child at the time?**

Yes.

**And you were the one who brought the child out?**

Yes.

**Was it a girl or boy?**

Boy.

**So your husband had been here for four months. What kind of living arrangements did he have for you?**

Trailer. Everybody lived in a trailer.

**Do you remember where your trailer was located?**

Madison Street.

**Is that on the west side?**

Yes.

**And there were a lot of trailers right around?**

A lot of trailers. It was the Madison Trailer Court.

**Now, can you remember how big that trailer was?**

Well, it had a living room, a kitchen and a bedroom.

**So it was all separated rooms?**

Yes.

**So you had a big trailer?**

Yes.

**So just the three of you lived there?**

Yes. My brother-in-law lived there and he would come in and out because at that time, you know, the couch would let out into a bed. So, yes.

**Now tell me about your sister. Did she ever come to Las Vegas?**

When her husband retired from the army, they moved here.

**So which year did you move?**

I moved here in '57.

**Now, when did your sister move?**

'64.

**Rachel, what kind of work did your husband find when he came?**

He worked at the old Royal Nevada. The Stardust was the Royal Nevada then and that's where he worked.

**What was it called?**

Royal Nevada.

**Would you spell that first word?**

R-o-y-a-l.

**So the Royal Nevada was in the same location that the Stardust is in now?**

Yes.

**You're the first one that's told me that.**

Maybe they don't remember.

**So now, did the ownerships change or did they just change the name?**

The ownership evidently changed because then they changed the name. So, yes. And then they built the Stardust.

**Now, what did he do there?**

Kitchen worker.

**So now, do you remember any of his actual tasks that he had?**

He washed dishes and cleaned stoves and stuff like that.

**Now, how long did he do that?**

Well, then he left that and went to the Trop when the Trop opened up. He worked at the Tropicana for like -- it had to be five or six years.

**What did he do at the Tropicana?**

Same thing. Then he left there and he went to construction. He turned into be a marble maker. He you used to build marble.

**Oh, really? Now, that sounds interesting. Was that a lot more money?**

Yes.

**How much at this time, 1957, how much was he earning at the Royal -- what was it called?**

Nevada. Like seven dollars an hour or something -- a day. Seven dollars a day. It was pretty cheap.

**And when he went to the Tropicana, do you remember what he was earning?**

The wages was the same because, you know, they were always union. The wages were just about the same.

**And when he went into the construction, do you remember a big jump?**

Oh, a big jump. Like nine or ten dollars an hour there.

**From seven dollars a day to nine or ten dollars an hour?**

Yes.

**Wow. Now, tell me about you when you first got here in '57.**

I started at the Tropicana. I went to the Tropicana with my husband. And I was a glass washer.

**Now, was this your first job?**

Yes.

**So you didn't work for about how long?**

About a year.

**So about a year you didn't work?**

Yes.

**Tell me about most of the black women in your area there living in the trailer park. Did most of them work?**

Yes, they did. But I didn't know too many of them at that time. Just a minute.

**So we were talking about the other women there in the trailer park where you live.**

Yeah. I didn't know them.

**You were telling me that you didn't know that many other women.**

No.

**But most of them were going back and forth to work?**

Yes.

**What did you do during the day that first year?**

I worked graveyard. So I slept during the day.

**But that first year when you didn't work what did you do during the day?**

Stayed home with the kid. Taught myself to drive.

**So you didn't drive a car until you came here.**

No.

**So did you and your husband own your own car?**

Yes.

**So you taught yourself to drive.**

Yes.

**Now, how old is your son at this time?**

He'll be 40 next month.

**And at that time when you moved here in 1957, he was how old?**

Vincent was born in August. We come here in April. He was about six months old.

**So he was a tiny baby at that time.**

Yes.

**So you start at the Tropicana about a year later. So this is 1958; is that about right?**

Yes.

**Tell me what you did.**

I was a glass washer. I used to wash the glasses.

**Did they have just a person just washing glasses?**

At that time.

**So were you in the kitchen or were you at a bar or --**

I was in the kitchen.

**So you were washing the glasses by hand.**

They had a machine that used to wash them. It was by hand, but it was a machine.

**Now, how much money were you earning then?**

About five dollars a day.

**A day?**

Yes.

**But this was more than Vicksburg, correct?**

That was eight dollars a week there. Oh, I thought I was in heaven.

**That's good. Now, I need a really honest answer. Now, at this time in 1958 that you started to work there, black people really cannot have fun and go out on the gambling floor and gamble.**

No.

**How did you feel about that?**

Well, I had just left Mississippi. So it didn't really bother me that much because I was there and, you know, you had your places. The blacks had to go to their places. They're white. Then when you come here it didn't really bother me that I didn't go because Jackson Street at that time was like a strip. They had jumping places on Jackson Street. So that's where we would go. So it didn't really bother me that much.

**Thank you so much for that answer.**

**Now, how long did you continue to work in the kitchen at the Tropicana?**

Not long because I didn't really like kitchen. Then I went to maiding. Then I went to a maid job.

**Still at the Tropicana?**

No. I worked different places. At that time I didn't really have to work. So I work, quit, go back, work and quit and go back.

**So tell me when you got the first job that you really took seriously.**

I stayed at the Hacienda as a maid for three years. Then I got pregnant.

**So now, when did you go to the Hacienda? Do you remember the year?**

In '59.

**So '59, you're kind of serious by this time.**

Yes.

**So you stayed there for three years. What kind of work did you do as a maid? Did you have a certain area that you cleaned, a certain -- what do you call it?**

Station. Yes. A certain station we would go to every day. And we cleaned and maintained the guests rooms. At that time it was nice maiding because tips was good. You know, that's when

they had the silver dollars. Tips was really good because they didn't seem to mind leaving the tips at that time.

**Give me an idea of how much you could earn in tips in a week.**

Oh, sometimes you go in the room you had ten dollars, five dollars. You could earn good money in tips at that time.

**And how many rooms were you cleaning per day?**

Fifteen.

**Was that a lot?**

No, not really.

**Now, do you have somebody helping to do some of the heavier work?**

They had housemen [at the hotel] that helped the maid. They would keep up with the trash. Well, at that time the housemen would help maids do beds because they would get tips from maid. They will come in and make beds for you. If you run across a good houseman, you would tip them good if you got tipped. Yeah, they helped with that a lot.

**So give me an example of a good week in tips for you.**

I made as high as \$50.

**And how much would you give a good houseman out of that?**

If I liked him I would give him five or ten dollars to make beds for me.

**And that was good. He would make all of them for you?**

No. Just some.

**That's good. So now, at this time the union is really just getting started here in Las Vegas, the Culinary Union.**

The Culinary had been in for quite a while then. But they wasn't as strong as they got later.

**Now, did you join the union as soon as you went to the Tropicana?**

Yes, I did.

**Was your husband in the Culinary Union as well?**

Yes.

**Now, we're talking about Culinary Union Local 226?**

Yes.

**When you said it wasn't as -- it got stronger later, explain that to me.**

Well, the membership -- well, you have to remember we had a strong black woman there. Her name was Sarah Hughes. And she was really involved. And then she started going from hotel to hotel getting the maids and everyone really involved. They would attend meetings. And they really listened to Sarah a lot.

**Now, what position did Sarah hold?**

She was a BA, business agent, at the Culinary at the time.

**She actually worked for the union?**

Yes.

**Now, did she work for the union her entire career or did she start in housekeeping someplace?**

She started in housekeeping someplace. I think it might have been at the Desert Inn. I don't know really where Sarah started at, but I think it was the Desert Inn.

**Was she a steward first?**

No. When I started working Sarah was -- in fact, Sarah started with the Culinary. She and Irene and Al at that time and Ruth Gus and then -- I can't think of his name right now -- Sylvester. They all was working there at the time. They just about started when the union started.

**So now, the people that you just named, is Sarah Hughes the only African-American in that group?**

No. Sylvester was.

**Now, Sylvester is a first name?**

Uh-huh.

**Do you remember his last name?**

No, I don't.

**It's really strange because I was talking to somebody the other day and they gave me the name Sylvester and they couldn't remember the last name either.**

No. I can't remember.

**So they sort of started to help the union grow?**

Yes.

**So Sarah Hughes became a business agent. And she sounds like she was a very good one.**

She was.

**Now, is she one of the reasons that you got involved in the union?**

Yes, she was. But a lady named Ernestine Howard was really more my — she would push me a lot because she used to work for me when I was maiding. She helped me a lot. And she used to tell me, You're going to be more than a maid; you're going places. And I used to just shoo her on and say, oh, yeah, right. But she was really a force behind me. She was a nice lady.

**Now, tell me how long you're at the Hacienda for three years.**

Yes.

**And you stopped and had a baby.**

Yeah.

**Now, so when you came back into the workforce again, when was that?**

Oh, well. The hold was Yvette. I told you I worked off and on a lot. I left there and I went to the because I had a housekeeper Margaret Williams I used to follow all the time. After I had her Margaret Williams was at the Thunderbird. I left that and went to the Thunderbird.

**So Margaret Williams was a housekeeper?**

Yes.

**So that means that she was actually in charge of the entire housekeeping department?**

Yes.

**Now, is Margaret Williams an African-American?**

No.

**She's a white lady?**

Yes.

**Now, what about Margaret Williams did you like so much?**

She was fair.

So I went to the Thunderbird. I had another baby. So I left there. And when I left there I went back -- Margaret Williams was at another place. I can't even remember where she was. Oh, the Tally Ho. And I went to the Tally Ho that now is the Aladdin.

**Wonderful. I have some questions to ask about the Tally Ho. So Margaret Williams -- do**

**you remember which year then you went to the Tally Ho?**

It had to be in '62 because they closed down and renamed it in '64. It had to be '62.

**So you were there in '62 before it became the Aladdin?**

Yes.

**Can you tell me who owned the Aladdin in 1962?**

Pearlman.

**The last name was Pearlman, P-e-a-r-l-m-a-n?**

I think so. Yes.

**Now, who ran it? Who did the day-to-day running of the hotel? Do you remember?**

No, I don't. My sister would know, but I don't.

**Well, do you ever remember a time when there were nuns running the Tally Ho?**

No.

**You never remember when there were nuns?**

Huh-uh.

**So now, at the Tally Ho there was no casino; am I right?**

No, there wasn't.

**So it was just a hotel?**

Yes.

**How many rooms were you -- how much has the salary increased by 1962 for maids?**

Oh, it was up to like 13 or \$14 a day then I think.

**And how much -- 13 or \$14 a day? That was it in '62?**

Yes. I think so. I'm not sure. But it probably was.

**How many rooms were you cleaning at the Tally Ho?**

I was promoted at that time.

**Oh, wonderful. You were promoted to?**

Inspectress.

**So now, the inspectress is above the maids, just below the housekeeper?**

Yes.

**Tell me what kind of work an inspectress does.**

The inspectress checks behind the maids and make sure the work is done and just make sure everything is done right.

**Now, were you ever a maid at the Tally Ho or were you an inspectress?**

I went in as an inspectress.

**Oh, great. So Margaret Williams — this was your friend that got you in at that position?**

Yes.

**Now, did you actually go to the union hall to get the job or did you just got directly to the Tally Ho?**

I went directly to Tally Ho to Margaret Williams because I followed her everywhere.

**How did you keep up with her?**

Oh, she always kept up with me. She always had my telephone number. I was a good maid and she always kept up with me.

**Oh, that's wonderful. Now, I want to for this second oh, did you know Essie Jacobs while you were at the Tally Ho?**

Yes.

**Okay, good. Did you and Essie -- were you friends outside of work as well?**

We associated outside of work, but not friends, no.

**I want to go back and find out about entertainment. A few minutes ago you mentioned Jackson Street. Now, you and your husband are really a young couple when you first come here. So do you go out on Jackson Street?**

Yes.

**Tell me some of the clubs that you used to enjoy over there.**

What was the name of it then? Town Tavern. I can't think of all of them. I remember the Brown Derby because the Brown Derby was the last place everybody went. It was the dirtiest place there, but that's the last stop you always made.

**Wait a minute. What do you mean the dirtiest?**

It was always just filthy.

**Really?**

Yes.

**Well, why did you enjoy going there?**

Because it was like you just let your hair down I guess. I don't know. But that was always the last stop you made before you went home.

**So now, you could park your car and walk from club to club?**

Yes.

**They were close enough to do that?**

Yes.

**Did the Brown Derby remind you of clubs back in Vicksburg?**

No. Because I always went to The Blue Room in Vicksburg and it was really nice.

**Now, tell me about The Blue Room. This is back in Vicksburg, Mississippi?**

Yes. The Blue Room was the place that they brought all the entertainers like B.B. King, Bobby Bluband -- what's the guy name used to sing "Saturday Night Freak Fry"?

**He must be a blues singer.**

Yeah. Because they brought all the good singers in there.

**Yeah. I remember Bobby Bluband. So Vicksburg was large enough then to have really nice places that you could go and they brought in big-name entertainment.**

Yes.

**See, I'm thinking that Vicksburg is little like Fordyce and Tallulah.**

Oh, no.

**So we're talking about a major city?**

Yes.

**So getting back to Vicksburg again then, tell me how big your high school was just to give me a sense of the size of the city.**

Well, we only had two. Well, you had a Catholic school. Then you had Bowman High, which was the elementary school. You went there from first through fifth. Then you're left there and went to . And you went from McIntire from fifth through eighth. Then you went back to Bowman High. So everybody that was in Vicksburg usually went to those two schools.

**Now, these are for the black children?**

Yes.

**So you attended those schools back and forth depending upon where those grades were taught?**

Yes.

**How big was your graduating class?**

Oh, god.

**I'm just trying to get a feel for --**

It was everybody that was there. So it had to be over a hundred.

**So that gives me a good idea. Were churches important in Vicksburg, going to church on Sunday?**

If you didn't go to church, you wouldn't go anyplace else. Trust me. Sunday school, church, if you didn't go, forget it.

**Now, were you Baptist or Methodist?**

I was Baptist.

**Tell me about now the change coming to Las Vegas. Did you continue to go to church when you got here?**

Yes. I never strayed away from church.

**Now, a Baptist church here as well?**

Yes.

**Which one?**

Pleasant Grove.

**Now, was Pleasant Grove on the west side at that time?**

Still is.

**Because I know some of the churches like Lucille Bryant's church -- she goes to Zion I think.**

Yeah. Mine is just down the street from Lucille's church. Yes.

**Because her church used to be located downtown and they had to move it.**

Did it?

**Yes. The Horseshoe's parking lot is where her church used to be.**

I didn't know that.

**Yes. And they had to relocate the church.**

**So that's really interesting about the entertainment and about the Brown Derby. Do you remember who owned some of those black clubs over there?**

No, I don't.

**Do you ever remember them being owned by blacks or Chinese or whites?**

I think the Brown Derby was owned by blacks. Yes.

**But you never heard of the ownership of any of the others?**

No.

**One of the major things I wanted to talk about today was -- now, after the Tally Ho you continued at the Aladdin when the Aladdin opened?**

No.

**What happened?**

I had another baby.

**How many children do you have?**

I have four. I was a baby boomer.

**But you only have four children?**

Yes.

**So now, this is the last one, right?**

Yes. Or did I have the baby before I went there? Maybe I did because when I left there, I did because I stayed home for a while.

**So after the Tally Ho closed in 1964, you stayed home then?**

Then I went to the Sahara.

**Now, which year did you go to the Sahara?**

I went to the Sahara in '68.

**So 1968. This is after the last baby has been born?**

Yes.

**Okay. You go to the Sahara. Now, how long did you stay at the Sahara?**

Three years.

**Now, tell me about the Sahara. Were you an inspectress?**

Yes.

**You started off as that?**

Yes.

**Was Margaret Williams there?**

No.

**So you and Margaret Williams parted company at the time?**

Yeah, we parted company there.

**Now, did she remain at the Aladdin?**

No. She went back to the Hacienda.

**Now, was that because of the change in ownerships of the Aladdin?**

No. She evidently got a call and she went back to the --

**So you were saying that Margaret was still at the Hacienda.**

Yes.

**So now I want to know -- you just talked about your children. Tell me their names.**

Desi Arnaz.

**I'm sorry?**

Desi Arnaz, Desiree, Xavier and Tangela.

**And what is your husband's name?**

Curtis.

**Was Desi Arnaz name — did you like the I Love Lucy Show?**

Yes. My favorite show.

**Now, did you name them in the order of their ages? Is Desi Arnaz the baby?**

Yes. No. He's the oldest.

**I'm sorry. The oldest; that's what I meant to say. That's interesting.**

**We just talked about Jackson Street for a few minutes. Could you compare Jackson Street for me when it was in its heyday, at its peak, compare it with either the Strip or downtown.**

Well, when it was in its heyday I'd prefer Jackson Street to the Strip, really.

**Tell me why.**

I always felt like I didn't have to mingle with different peoples to dress. I dressed to go around my

kind of people. I didn't worry about the rest of them. And I just enjoyed being around them.

**When you say dress, that's really important. Now, at this time we're talking about back in the late 50s, early 60s.**

Early 60s.

**How did people dress in the casinos on the Strip and downtown?**

I really don't know. We didn't go in.

**But you didn't ever see them?**

No.

**But I think they were probably a little more formal than they are today.**

Oh, yes. Well, that was the excuse they said they didn't want us in the casino at first because they said we were always overdressed. Well, you know, black love to dress and you're going to dress. And that was the excuse for a while. We were always overdressed. But if a black person goes in, you can bet they were dressed.

**When you said, "they said" that we were overdressed, did you know where that was coming from? Was that coming from the hotel ownership or where do you think that was coming from?**

Probably the hotel ownership. I'm not sure.

**Well, at that time supposedly some of the hotels --**

**(End Tape 1, Side A.)**

**Talking about that early hotel ownership, supposedly it was owned by the mob. Did you hear that?**

Yes.

**Do you think there was any—was that valid do you think?**

I think I think so because when the mob did own it, it was a better place to work in my way of thinking.

**Give me some examples.**

Well, the tips was better. They treated the employees different. And now they really don't care. You're just an employee.

**Give me an example of what they did for employees at that time that is not done anymore.**

I really can't put my finger on it at that time. But it was just that you went to work. Didn't anyone bother you. You did your work. You went home. Now every time you look around, someone is bothering the employees. It's just a different clientele, everything now.

**Did the hotel owners ever do anything for employees and their families, entertainment like Easter parties or anything like that?**

I remember they used to give the employees Christmas parties at that time. They always had Christmas parties for the employees. At one time they was always giving them a gift at Christmastime. Not anymore.

**So that could be an example of what you mean?**

Yes.

**Did they ever include family members of employees in any activities?**

In the Christmas party, yes.

**So that was for the entire family?**

Yes. For your wife -- or your spouse rather.

**Tell me about race relations in Vicksburg first.**

I never had problems with relations in Vicksburg to be honest with you because I was, you know, like I told you I worked for Dr. and Mrs. Martin. We was mostly like family. Well, I had to ride the bus to work. But Benson always got on the bus before me because they got to his school first. So he was always sitting in the back where the blacks was sitting. When I get there he'd get up and say I saved a seat for you.

**So now, this is the white boy?**

Yes.

**-- of the people that you worked with?**

Yes.

**And he would save you a seat on the bus. Now, is this a school bus or is this a city bus?**

City bus.

**Oh, I see. He took a city bus to school?**

Yes. And he would always save me a seat. And they used to ask him why do you go back there?

And he said, well, she can't sit up here. So I'll sit back there until she gets on. And then when I get on, he get up and he'd say you can take my seat. And I'd say thank you.

**So the attitude of that family, was that unusual?**

Probably. It probably was because they was — I can't say they was a prejudice family at all because they was just down to earth.

**It sounds like that he was taught to be just a fair-minded person.**

Yes.

**Now, of course you know the kinds of things that I've heard about Mississippi. When it comes to race relations I've always heard that Mississippi -- now I grew up in North Carolina. But we always heard that Mississippi was worse than anyplace else in the country.**

I'm pretty sure it is. And it probably still is. They live where they want. But I'm still sure some of it's there. And I'm sure it was there then. But at that time I went to school and I did my thing. They did their thing. And I guess, when I got big enough, like old enough for where it would really matter, I was out here.

**Now, tell me about race relations when you first came to Las Vegas. You told me a few things already and you've been very clear and I really appreciate that. I think you've probably given me more examples than anyone else when it comes to dressing, the casino and things like that. Can you think of any other examples to give me to tell me what race relations were like in early Vegas?**

No.

**When the union got stronger in the hotels, what kind of differences did the employees see?**

Well, at that time when it got stronger -- at one time you had to take your own lunch, buy your lunch or whatever. Then when it got stronger, they started giving them a sandwich. So at one time we went down and you had to get your sandwich. And we had -- I never heard of it before -- peanut butter and jelly and bologna mixed together.

**All in the same sandwich?**

Yep.

**Did you eat it?**

No.

**Now, who fixed these sandwiches?**

They would fix them in the kitchen and send them to us. And then as the years went by, then that's when they started giving hot meals. And as the years went by they started giving maids -- maids used to get cheaper wages than anybody. But thank God to the cocktail girls and the food service. I guess they felt sorry for us back there slaving and they gave up their raise so we could get a bigger raise.

**When was this?**

'73 or somewhere along in there.

**They gave up their raise?**

To give us a raise.

**Now, I had heard someplace that they gave up one of their three meals so that you could have one meal as well. Did you ever hear that?**

No. But they did give up their raise (indiscernible).

**Wow. I think that's wonderful. So that was all negotiated through the union contract?**

Yes.

**Now, earlier when you mentioned the four people you were mentioning -- Sarah Hughes and the four names that you had mentioned, the early people who got the union going -- you mentioned Al. Now, was that Al Bramlet?**

Yes.

**Now, I have heard such great things about Al Bramlet. Tell me about him.**

You can never say enough about Al. He was fair. He always thought of the employees first. He was just a fair man.

**Give me an example of how he used to operate. Now, he was secretary-treasurer.**

Yes.

**Secretary-treasurer is really the person who runs the day-to-day —**

Base of the union.

**So he runs the union?**

Yes.

**Give me some examples of what he used to do, just what you heard about him and what you**

**saw him do.**

I didn't hear. I worked for the man.

**Good. I'm going to ask you about that in a few minutes. Tell me how he operated.**

Well, his door was always open to you. And if you had a problem, you'd take it to Al. And Al would bring in whoever was your agent at that time. And he would say you take care of it. No matter what it take, you take care of it. And you took care of it.

**Now, tell me something you're saying that then if I were a maid in one of the hotels, I could walk into Al Bramlet's office?**

Yes.

**And talk to him?**

Yes.

**Okay. Now, you got involved with the union. Were you a union steward?**

No.

**You were never a steward?**

No.

**Right now we're at the Sahara, 1968.**

Then I went back to the Hacienda. I told you.

**So you went back where Margaret Williams was?**

No. She had left at the time.

**You went back to the Hacienda in about -- what year are we now, around 70 --**

No. It was '69 because I was at the Sahara. Then I left there. It was about '69.

**And you went back to the Hacienda?**

Yes.

**Now, what position do you hold at the Hacienda this time?**

I was inspectress for a year and then I was promoted to executive housekeeper.

**Now, you said executive housekeeper that time. Before we just used the term housekeeper.**

**What's the difference?**

Well, I just used the term housekeeper. But executive housekeeper is what Margaret Williams was also.

**So is that the official term for a housekeeper, an executive housekeeper?**

Yes.

**Tell me the functions, the duties of an executive housekeeper.**

She hires, she fires. She checks rooms. She just over it all.

**Now, is she also in charge of the housemen?**

Yes.

**Who else is she in charge of?**

Linen room. At the time I was at the Hacienda I was in charge of the casino, also.

**What does that mean, "in charge of the casino"?**

I was inside in charge of the casino porters. We have porters working in the casino also.

**Oh, the casino porters do what?**

They clean the casino.

**The people I see walking around emptying the ashtrays and --**

Casino porters.

**So now, the executive housekeeper is in charge of casino porters.**

Some places.

**You're in charge of the housemen.**

Yes.

**The maids. The inspectresses.**

The linen room.

**The linen room help?**

SEMA. Seamstress.

**Seamstresses where?**

They back there.

**You have seamstresses in the linen room?**

Yes.

**Doing what?**

Sewing uniforms, clothes, whatever they have to do.

**Just making repairs?**

Yes.

**That's the first time I ever hear of that job. So can you think of other positions that were under the housekeeper?**

At one time they had what you call big powder room girls. We was over that also.

**Oh. So you have a big staff.**

I'm not over the casino here.

**But at the Hacienda you really had a big staff where we are right now at the Hacienda?**

Yes.

**So now, you're not earning tips any longer?**

No.

**So how much money at this time? We're in the late 60s, early 70s. 1969 is when you start.**

Yeah. In the early 70s.

**How much money did you earn at that time?**

I went to 1500 plus bonus.

**So was that a good income?**

Yes.

**Now, at this time your husband is already in construction. How much is he earning?**

He's bringing home like a thousand a week.

**So that was really, really good.**

Yes.

**That's even good for today.**

Yeah.

**At first you were reluctant to come to Las Vegas, remember?**

Yeah. I told him see ya.

**Right. Now, how do you feel now about this? We're in the early 70s. How do you feel?**

Oh, I'm glad I changed my mind. Let's put it that way.

**Now, did your husband and you -- did he enjoy Las Vegas as well?**

Yes.

**When you left that trailer, the second trailer that you told me about -- now, you told me**

**about the first trailer. Did you tell me about a second?**

No.

**How long did you stay in that first trailer?**

About two years.

**Where did you move to after that?**

Our own house.

**Was it on the west side?**

Yes.

**Which street over there?**

On I Street.

**Describe that first house to me.**

Well, my husband and his brother built it. So he built like an apartment. There was one in the back and one in the front. I lived in the front and my brother-in-law lived in the back.

**So a one-story building?**

Yeah.

**Both of them?**

Just one building. Well, it was really a house, but we made it like an apartment. It had one bedroom -- I had one bedroom, a living room and a kitchen. And the next one was the same thing.

**So his brother lived in one and you lived in the other?**

Yes.

**So now, by the time that the four children come along, where are you living?**

In the home I'm in now.

**You and your husband purchased that together or did he build it?**

No. We bought it together.

**So now, you have -- where are we now? We're at the Hacienda now. Yes. We're back at the Hacienda, right?**

Yes.

**And you are the executive housekeeper. Tell me at what point you began to work -- so now, how did you get involved -- you told me a few minutes ago that you worked with Al Bramlet.**

**How did that happen?**

I left the Hacienda and went to the union.

**What motivated you to make such a big move?**

I don't know. Just I got tired of being a housekeeper. And I told Sarah Hughes one day, I said I think I want to be a union rep. She said you really want to be a union rep? And I said yeah. So Ernestine Howard called me because she was on the executive board. And she said they're hiring union reps at the union. I said, okay, I'll go apply. So I marched into Al's office and said I want to be a union rep, just like that. He said I don't think so. I said, okay, I'll see you. So the next two days Sarah called and said Al said you've got guts; he's going to hire you.

**Oh, wonderful. Now, is a union rep the same as a business representative?**

Yes.

**Oh, this is great. Now, did you know him prior to this?**

No. I just saw him in meetings.

**So you were attending meetings now?**

Yes.

**You had started attending --**

Oh, we always did attend union meetings. Yeah.

**Did most of the maids and most of the housekeepers attend union meetings?**

Yeah. It used to be packed.

**Oh, really?**

Yes.

**Why?**

Because they believed it. When Al was living everybody believed in union.

**So now, you walk into his office and said you want to be a union rep. And he called you a couple of days later and you were a union rep. So tell me which hotels were you a rep for?**

I had 18 hotels. I had the Caesars. I had the Aladdin. I had downtown, all downtown. And when some of the girls go on vacation, I help open up the MGM at the time. It's the Bally now. And that's --

**Wow. That sounds exciting. Now, you had that many hotels. How many union reps were**

**there?**

There was about 36 of us.

**But how could you have that many hotels and there were 36 of you?**

You'd be surprised. See, at that time we was only representing -- I represented the housekeeping department. We have some in the kitchen. You have some in the casino.

**I see. Okay. So when you say that you had 18 hotels, there were also other reps in those same hotels?**

Yes.

**What kind of training did you have to become a rep?**

I didn't have any. Sarah trained me about two or three months. Then she said you're on your own.

**Wow. Did you enjoy working with Sarah?**

Oh, yes.

**Everybody that mentions her name -- Al Bramlet and Sarah Hughes I hear nothing but good things about. So is that why the union was so successful?**

Yes.

**Who were some of the other officers at that time when the two of them were there?**

Ben Smooty.

**What position did he hold?**

President. And then Jeff McCall was the assistant secretary-treasurer. I ended up working for him because he ended up being the secretary-treasurer. Joe Hayes was department head at the time.

**Now, what was the department head?**

He's over the business agent. He was my department head. Then I end up replacing him.

**So how long were you a union representative or a business agent?**

I was a business agent from '73 to '81. Then I was promoted to department head.

**So now, Joe Hayes was a department head and you became a department head. You took Joe Hayes' place?**

Yes.

**Did he quit at that time?**

He became the president.

**Oh. So in 1981, you become department head and Joe Hayes becomes president?**

Yes.

**First tell me the duties of a business agent.**

A business agent at that time, we like collected dues and we fought grievance. We just go in the hotel and make sure everything's running smoothly. And you check for anything that's going wrong. You're there for the members mainly.

**So let's say that it's a Monday morning and you go into Caesars Palace. Do you go over there for a special reason or do you just go over to look around?**

A lot of times you just went to look around.

**Now, give me a scenario of someone coming up to you now and -- do they come up to while you're there on the property and in the hotel?**

Sometimes, yes.

**Tell me how it works.**

Well, usually you go in at lunchtime. You mingle with them on their lunch or you come in early in the morning. You sit here when they're checking in in the morning. And if they've got problems, they give them to you. And if it's a big problem, you have them come down and fill out a grievance. If it's a small problem, you take care of it right then.

**Give me an example of a small problem.**

Let's say like, well, they're changing my station with no reason at all. Then you say, well, okay, why they changing your station? I don't know. So you come in and talk to the housekeeper to find out why they're doing it.

**So you just go straight to the housekeeper?**

Yes.

**Now, give me an example of a bigger problem, one that you handled when you were an agent.**

What would be the biggest -- all of them are big problems when they come around to them. I can't remember --

**Give me an example of — now, most of the women at this point — well; we're in the 70s now, aren't we, because you're an agent, 1973? Are all of the maids are still black women?**

At that time most of them was black women, yes.

**When other nationalities became maids, were there any problems with race relations on the job?**

No. You have to remember that after the money start to be pretty good, everybody wanted to be a maid. Like you used to go out and you'd see nothing but black on the tractor. When the money become big, everybody wanted to be. The garbage truck used to be black men. The money is good now. It's white, Mexican, everything out there. That's what you have to remember. The money factor is what got more people involved.

**So now the maids are making more money. So that's when other nationalities start becoming maids.**

Yeah. And then blacks don't really want to be maids anymore. They want to be other things, which I don't blame them. They wanted to move up. And that's the way it is.

**Have you come up yet with an example of a bigger problem?**

I'm sure I had a lot of problems.

**Suppose somebody's fired. Can you remember an example of when somebody's being fired and they don't think it's justified?**

Oh, I had one from the DI [Desert Inn]. I can tell you about this one. Two people got to fighting on the job.

**Fist fighting we're talking about here?**

Yeah. They fired both of them. So my lawyer had me laughing about this. He said I'll do anything to get people back to work. So anyway, we were going to arbitration because I thought the one was fired unjust because one said the other one hit first. And I didn't think this. So anyway, this young man was supposed to have been in a coma or something that the other one hit him. So I said, well, this man testified that it was really this guy's fault. And so we had the arbitration going. We waited and waited until he got better. So he died. So they had to put the guy back to work because we didn't have a witness. So my lawyer called and said guess what? I have seen people win cases. But you go to any length to win. I said what you mean? He said this guy died and they're putting the other guy back to work. I remember that case the whole time. Phil Bole said I cannot believe you'll go to any length to get them back to work. I said, Phil, I

wouldn't do that, but he got to go back to work. So they put him back to work.

**Now, the man did not die as a result of a fistfight did he?**

No.

**Okay, good. So that shows me what kind of a union rep you were.**

**Al Bramlet is killed in 1977.**

Yes.

**Tell me about that period. He has so much power and so much influence and people just love him so much. What was that like around the union hall?**

Oh, it was a sad time around the union hall at that time. And it was really sad until they found his body. And when they found his body and we found out he was definitely dead, it was really sad.

The day of his funeral was really sad.

**How big was the funeral?**

It was big. It was about 2,000 there.

**Blacks and whites?**

Yes.

**Can you tell me anything at all about his murder, things that were said?**

Well, I still — cut the tape off.

**So now, another thing I had asked you about earlier was that you told me about the duties of a business agent. Tell me that new position that you got in 1981 —**

Department head.

**Tell me what a department head does.**

Well, the department head is over all the business agents in her department. I had 15 at that time under me. I think it was 15 under me because I was over housekeeping and housemen, rep. So I would have to go out -- when they take grievance I would go out and I would be the one make the decision to put them back to work or go to arbitration on them.

**But now, in most cases as that department head, though, are you in the office down at the union hall most of the time or are you out in the field most of the time?**

I'm in the office unless I'm out on grievance. I usually set my grievance up in the morning because I like to keep a -- I always kept trouble in the union in the evening. I got in trouble in the

evening because I was --

**Now, what does that mean? Give me an example. What is that?**

I was always running around finding out the gossip in the office.

**I see. So now, you worked for the union for how many years?**

About 14, from '73 to '87.

**That's wonderful. Were you a department head until '87?**

Yes.

**Tell me just a little bit about Joe Hayes, only because I've heard that name so often now.**

**What kind of person was he?**

Fair.

**Now, is this a black man or a white man?**

A white. Fair. Very soft spoken, but he got the point over. It wasn't too many people in this town really didn't love Joe Hayes. He didn't care what color you was. If you was white, black, blue or green, if he felt like they was wrong, he got your job back for you.

**Well, tell me how were you lucky enough to have Al Bramlet and Joe Hayes at the same time? I mean that's --**

Just luck. It really was. It was luck.

**Tell me how the atmosphere on the job changed when those two men left the union or were no longer with the union.**

I left by the time Joe Hayes left. So we left together.

**Oh, in '87, both you and Joe Hayes left?**

Yeah. We left together.

**Tell me the changes that you saw, though, after '77.**

Well, you got Ben Smooty in after that. Ben Smooty was a nice guy, but he wasn't a leader. And we got along okay. It just was never the same. We worked and we kept him in office because let's face fact we knew him and that's the best thing we had going for us at the time. But you have to remember I went against Ben Smooty when Jeff and Joe ran for president.

**Now, Smooty becomes the secretary-treasurer after Al is murdered?**

Yes.

**And when are the next elections?**

Well, he won the next year. We was going against him, but it was too late. So in '81, that's when we decided we was going to put him out and put someone else in. That's when Joe Hayes and Jeff McCall taken over.

**So McCall was running for which position?**

Secretary-treasurer.

**And Joe Hayes was running for?**

President.

**Tell me what happened in that election. Tell me why if you guys were so behind these two men how did Smooty win?**

They voted him out. Well, he made his first mistake. He fired me.

**Who fired you?**

Ben Smooty. And naturally I went public. I went TV, I went radio, and I went newspaper. I went everywhere.

**Tell me this. Tell me about this. What were you saying? What were you doing? I never heard this before.**

I was just doing my thing.

**And what kind of things were you saying? Since it's on TV, I'm sure that you can say it on tape.**

Oh, I was just telling him how no good he was and how they didn't need him and stuff like that.

**And you were saying that because he was not a good leader.**

No.

**And you were saying it would be better to have Joe Hayes and this other person because they were --**

Better.

**So did people listen to you?**

Yes.

**How did the membership feel at the membership meetings? What kind of response did you get at membership meetings?**

After he terminated me they had a meeting and naturally I showed up. And we had over 200 people at that meeting. And he pissed me off and I got up and walked out and said I'm leaving. And they followed me.

**All 200 people left the meeting?**

Yes.

**Now, tell me something. How can he win an election?**

He didn't that year. Jeff and Joe won. That's when we out him, that year when he fired me. That's when— see, he turned me because he discovered that I was on — well, what happened is I was on his side all along. But Joe told me he needed me there; don't get fired because he resigned. So he said don't leave; we need you there and we'll tell you at the time to come out. So then I went and filed charges in court so he wouldn't fire me. He fired me anyway. So I took him to court and I won. And I was reinstated with back pay. And that got a lot of publicity.

**But Joe Hayes became president. And who is the person who became secretary-treasurer?**

Jeff McCall.

**So what happened to them?**

They resigned and I ran for the president. And Dennis run for secretary-treasurer.

**You're going too fast for me. Why did they resign?**

He was tired. Jeff was tired and Joe was tired.

**They retired in which year?**

'87.

**So they stayed in office until 1987. So at that time now they resigned and who ran?**

I did.

**You ran for which position?**

President.

**So you ran for president. And who ran for secretary-treasurer?**

Dennis Michael.

**Now, tell me about Dennis Michael.**

Well, I made a mistake by running with Dennis because didn't anybody really like Dennis. If I had run with anybody but Dennis, I would have won. But Dennis to me at that time was the best

person for the job. And then George Williams run with the ones in the office now, Jim Arnold. I used work with Jim Arnold. I trained him to be a business agent.

**You trained Jim Arnold?**

Yes.

**So now, Jim Arnold at the time was running against you?**

No. He had quit the union at the time.

**Okay. Jim Arnold had quit the union.**

Yeah. He come back later and he ran for president -- secretary-treasurer in '87, him and George Williams. And George Williams was a very likable person, but weak. He stayed the term, but he wanted to quit before then. But he stayed the four years and he left, three years and he left.

**In your election who defeated you?**

George Williams.

**George Williams became president. And who became secretary-treasurer?**

Jim Arnold.

**Okay. Jim Arnold became secretary-treasurer at that time.**

Yes.

**So now since you have lost an election, what does this mean with your relationship to the union?**

I quit.

**So you had to quit at that time?**

No. I could have stayed and let him fire me. He said he wasn't, but I'm sure he would have.

**Okay. Because you ran against him.**

Yes. So the last — see, Jeff and Joe was going out when they had taken over in June, June 2nd. So I told Jeff I said, well, you know, we've all been here together. So I think it was ten of us quit at —

**(End Tape 1, Side B.)**

**The election is over and you've decided to leave. And how many of you are leaving at the same time?**

Ten of us.

**So about ten of you are leaving. You're resigning from the union.**

Yes.

**Now, today you're still a union member, aren't you?**

No. I resigned from the union also.

**So you don't have to be a union member anymore?**

Not to be -- I changed code. I work for management now.

**Now, which year is this that you resigned?**

'87.

**Now, tell me in 1987 what did you decide to do at this point?**

Well, Jackie Gaughan and I had been friends for years because I had all these hotels downtown then. And he always told me -- he used to tell Jeff if I ever resigned from him he would hire me. Jackie wouldn't sign a contract one time because I was on vacation. I had to come off vacation for him to sign a contract, believe it or not. So anyway, I told him I was quitting. He said when are you quitting? I said June 2nd. He said take two weeks of vacation and come work for me June 15th. So I did.

**That's wonderful. And you've been with Jackie Gaughan ever since?**

Yes.

**Now, getting back to your work at the union, tell me about the strikes that you remember that you participated in either as a maid, inspectress or union employee?**

Well, the first strike was in, what, '72? I think it was. That one didn't last that long because they locked all of us out. But the big strike was in '76. And I was in the middle of that one.

**Tell me how.**

It was funny because I was over the Circus Circus. Circus Circus was mine. So it was funny. They would always watch me. The security guards wanted to watch me. So if I wanted the maid to do something on this end, I'd go that way so the security guard would follow me. Then the maid would do their dirt down there.

**Give me an example of what you mean by dirt.**

If they wanted to throw eggs at somebody or something. So they could do it. But it was fun, the

strike was. I always had fun on the strike line.

**So now, when a strike happens they send the business agents to a certain hotel to run that hotel?**

To run that line, yes.

**So tell me what you did to run a line.**

I would just sit out there and supposed to keep the peace. But I didn't keep the peace. Supposed to keep the peace and make sure things steady walking, they got food, then they got water and whatever they needed I make sure they got it.

**Okay, good. See, I didn't understand how a strike really worked. So each business agent went to a different hotel.**

Yeah. They had their own hotel. They maintained the line.

**Now, tell me is a line maintained for 24 hours since this is a 24-hour city?**

Yes.

**So you're working in shifts just like you're on the job.**

We work 12-hour and 16-hour shifts. Some nights we worked 48 hours. I'd go home and take a shower and go right back out. And you did what you had to do until the strike was over.

**Now, do you remember how long the strike lasted in 1976?**

Sixteen days.

**Now, some people tell me that they're -- what do they call it? When all the lights go out on the Strip -- a blackout. Is that what they called this when there was a strike?**

The one that they call was the blackout I guess was the one --

**You were telling me about 1972 I believe.**

The one when they locked everyone out.

**Now, tell me why would a hotel owner lock his own doors?**

I guess they -- it didn't last but a couple days. I guess they thought that was hurting the members. I don't know what they thought to be honest with you. It only lasted five days. But the Circus Circus stayed open. Then Riviera never did go on strike because the Riviera always said whatever the other hotels signed that they would always sign. So they never closed their doors. And the Circus Circus stayed open. Circus Circus went on strike again in '76. But after that he never did

begin either because Bennett was always -- after that I guess we made a believer out of him. He was always a union man after that.

**What was his name?**

Bennett.

**And by the way, that last telephone call, the person gave us the correct name of the owner of the Aladdin?**

Yeah.

**And what was that correct name?**

I forgot.

**That's okay. I'll talk to your sister and get the correct name.**

**The 1976 strike closed the Strip down for how long?**

Sixteen days.

**And that was bad for business I'm sure.**

Oh, yeah. It was very bad.

**So now, did the hotels remain open?**

Yes, they did.

**How could they remain open without the Culinary Union staff, without the maids and —**

Well, you had some people that stayed in. They hired people. You know, you're always going to have some that cross the picket line.

**What did the union members try to do to stop people from crossing the picket line?**

They threw eggs at them and they cursed them out. They did a little of everything. But you had some, not that many, but you still had some that crossed the line.

**Was it enough to keep the hotels going?**

Not enough, but they said it was. But, no, they was never full.

**Now, I've always heard that 1984 was the big strike.**

It was the longest.

**Why was that one so long?**

I really don't know. But it was a bad one because that was the election year for us, and then the strike. And it really worked us to death that year. That's the year we really worked 24 hours a day

most time. My husband didn't even know what I looked like for six months. I didn't go on the picket line that time. I stayed and got everybody out of jail. I stayed in office. I worked a graveyard shift from six to six in the morning. So I got everybody out of jail.

**Why were so many people going to jail?**

Because they was taking them. I got hundreds of people out of jail every night.

**What did you have to do to get them out of jail?**

Someone would call and give me the name and I'd call the bail bondsman. I became friends with good old friendly bail bondsmen after that. Even Jeff and Joe went to jail. I'll never forget that. They called me one day and said, Rachel, all your bosses are going to jail; call the bail bondsman. So I called David and I said, David, guess what? He said don't tell me they're going to jail. I said, yeah, they're going too.

**What did they do that they had to go to jail?**

They crossed the picket line and was going up to the — they knew they was going to jail. They said they were going up and talking. They took them to jail.

**So the ownership of the hotel did not want them on their property?**

Yes.

**And the police could arrest them because they were on the property?**

Yes.

**Are there any other things about strikes that you think -- coming from my point of view not knowing anything about it, somebody doing some research, what about strikes should the public know?**

Well, you know, by me being a union person because I was union all my life and my husband is on disability now with his union check and his Social Security check, I can live pretty good with that. I don't think anyone should cross a picket line because that really don't help the person that's walking that picket line. And, you know, union set the -- most people say, well, union don't do nothing. Union sets the wage scales that everybody that's working. If we was going to get minimum wages, then imagine the big wheels not going to get much more than we get. So I don't think anyone should cross the picket line. And I am management. I shouldn't be saying that, but I am. But, no, I don't think anyone should cross a picket line. I have never been into a hotel -- and I

haven't been union now since '87, but any hotel that once was union and went nonunion, I have not been in that hotel. And I will not go in that hotel.

**Tell me from your point of view with the kind of experience you've had with the union tell me why the Frontier strike is so long.**

I think most of the hotels have been banking -- this is my thought -- banking the Frontier hotel and that's why they can afford to stay out so long. They are testing the waters.

**So what do you mean by other hotels backing them?**

Because if they can stay out and get out of the union, then another hotel would try until they break the union completely.

**So how do you think other hotels are backing the Frontier?**

I think they'll give them the money.

**So you think maybe they're giving the ownership money to stay in business?**

Yes. Just my thoughts.

**I appreciate that. I really appreciate that. The information you've given me is just so good.**

**I know that when I go home and listen to this I'm going to have a few more questions and I might have to come back and take some more of your time.**

Oh, you can just feel free to call me if you like.

**Okay, good. There is one more thing I want to ask. You and your husband used to go out when you first got here, go to clubs and all of that other on the west side.**

Yes.

**Do you remember the Moulin Rouge?**

It was closed when I got here.

**That's right because you came in '57. It was closed in '55.**

That's my straight-through number on there.

**Wonderful. Thank you so much. Thank you so much for this interview.**

You're welcome.

**(End Tape 2, Side A.)**

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