THE ALEXANDRIA ORAL HISTORY CENTER
OFFICE OF HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA
CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

Oral History Interview
with
Bubba Johnson

Interviewer: Kerry Reed
Narrator: Bubba Johnson
Location of Interview: Lloyd House, 220 N Washington St, Alexandria, VA 22314
Date of Interview: 2024
Transcriber: Dr. Donna M. DeBlasio

Summary:
Mr. Bubba Johnson discusses the Johnson family's history in Northern Virginia and the extensive genealogical research conducted to build the family tree

Notes:
The interview was part of the Douglass Community History Initiative. Mr. Michael Johnson and Mr. Bruce Ware were assisting Mr. Bubba Johnson and also contributing their memories of the Johnson family.

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General	Family reunions; researching family history; military service; segregation; Industrial Bank; Urban renewal; Displacement
People	Johnson, Peyton; Johnson, Jack; Elder, Lee; Chamberlain, Wilt; Graham, Otis; Clark-Lewis, Elizabeth; Lloyd, Earl
Places	Alexandria, Arlington; Washington, DC; Seminary; Mud Town; The Dip; The Berg; Cross Canal; Gum Springs; Culpepper; Douglass Cemetery; T.C Williams; Parker-Gray; Hollis Hall; Green Valley

Michael Johnson [00:00:00] Jefferson.

Bubba Johnson [00:00:00] Jefferson T.

Michael Johnson [00:00:02] Jefferson T. Johnson. I remember seeing his name on the list.

Bubba Johnson [00:00:03] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:00:04] I remember seeing his name on the list. The family list.

Bubba Johnson [00:00:06] Yeah. That's him right there.

Michael Johnson [00:00:07] Do you know who that is? That's my great grandfather. That's Warner Johnson. He's Peyton's oldest son. That's my great grandfather. Then my father was named after him.

Bubba Johnson [00:00:10] Warner.

Michael Johnson Warner. You never met my father, called him Shaggy Boy.

Michael Johnson [00:00:12] Yeah, he was a rough customer back in the day. You knew Carrie, my aunt's sister? Carrie.

Bubba Johnson [00:00:20] Somebody there in Alexandria used to come up to the house all the time.

Michael Johnson [00:00:25] Was it a man or woman?

Bubba Johnson [00:00:26] Man.

Michael Johnson [00:00:27] Jack?

Bubba Johnson [00:00:28] In Arlington; I lived in Arlington.

Michael Johnson [00:00:29] That must be Jack. Uncle Jack? Was it Uncle Jack?

Bubba Johnson [00:00:32] Was it Jack?

Michael Johnson [00:00:32] It was Jack.

Bubba Johnson [00:00:33] Yeah.

Bruce Ware [00:00:35] Who are you talking about, Jack?

Bubba Johnson [00:00:35] The only one I knew of down here in Alexandria.

Michael Johnson [00:00:38] Yeah, well, what you had down here was Sam, yeah, Sammy Johnson. You had Henry Johnson. You had Lillian Johnson. Then you had, let's see it was five over there. It was-

Bubba Johnson [00:01:01] [inaudible] at family reunion we just had.

Michael Johnson [00:01:05] Right. I'm the one put that together.

Bubba Johnson [00:01:08] Huh?

Michael Johnson [00:01:08] I'm the one who put that together. When I met you, remember? That was the first time meeting you.

Bubba Johnson [00:01:12] Yeah, they were talking then, and I never knew nobody but the one fellow who…

Michael Johnson [00:01:26] Jack Johnson. Yeah, Uncle Jack.

Bubba Johnson [00:01:27] Yeah, Jack! Jack Johnson, yeah. He was the only one I knew.

Michael Johnson [00:01:30] Now, Jack had, his brother was Albert Johnson. Let me make a note. I'm sure of this. Yeah, it was Uncle Jack. I wish I would have brought his other brothers. Uncle Jack, Uncle Sammy, Uncle Henry, Aunt Lily, and I'm missing somebody, it's going to come to me. Oh, Aunt Effie! And they lived three blocks up here, what they called Cross Canal.

Bubba Johnson [00:02:02] [inaudible]

Michael Johnson [00:02:03] They grew up in the Berg. The house that Warner Johnson, my great grandfather owned, and Albert Johnson, his son, who's my grandfather, they lived what they called Cross Canal. And then Henry Johnson and them moved down by the water. And Albert Johnson, my grandfather, lived on a boat. So, he had, like a little, whatever they call, a houseboat for a while. Yeah, but they come from what they call "Cross Canal." So, it was it was five or six Johnsons here, you know, that were direct descendants of Peyton Johnson because your father, your grandfather, right?

Bubba Johnson [00:02:50] No, my father.

Michael Johnson [00:02:51] Your father. Oh, your father and my great-grandfather were brothers.

Bruce Ware [00:02:55] See, so here it is right here. There's Warner. Then it was Anna, Calvin, Albert. Sorry, I'm going to scroll down.

Michael Johnson [00:03:03] Oh, you mean the first kids that they had?

Bruce Ware [00:03:05] Right.

Michael Johnson [00:03:05] Yeah.

Bruce Ware [00:03:06] And then from there Roland, you remember Roland, right? Remember, Roland stayed with us up in New Jersey for a while?

Michael Johnson [00:03:15] See, I never heard Roland's name.

Bruce Ware [00:03:17] Yeah because Roland can be exhausting. He['d] always say, "Sho, sho sho. Sho, sho sho." That and the women. But Roland was off of the—oh, that's okay, and this goes back to what we were talking about again, that's the whole Charles Johnson branch of the family, so a different branch of the family. But the Warner's, so it was Warner's children were Anna, Calvin, Albert, Henry. No, wait a minute. Yeah, Warner is Anna, Calvin, Albert and Calvin had Ruth Corley?, and Michelle Corley? Albert had Carrie Donegan, Mary Ceruti?

Michael Johnson [00:03:57] No, Carrie Donegan is Mary…Mary, that's Carrie's daughter.

Bruce Ware [00:04:08] Right, so what I'm showing, what I got, I got Albert and then the children, Carrie, Mary, Marie-

Michael Johnson [00:04:13] No, Marie was his granddaughter.

Bruce Ware [00:04:16] Okay. Okay. So, I got that. I got to flip that back. Then Fannie-

Michael Johnson [00:04:21] Fannie.

Bruce Ware [00:04:21] Calvin.

Michael Johnson [00:04:23] Uh huh.

Bruce Ware [00:04:23] And then Warner-

Michael Johnson [00:04:24] My father.

Bruce Ware [00:04:24] Your dad-.

Michael Johnson [00:04:25] Right.

Bruce Ware [00:04:25] And then Lutrecia.

Michael Johnson [00:04:27] Lutrecia is my father's oldest daughter.

Bruce Ware [00:04:29] Okay. And then Andrew Phillip.

Michael Johnson [00:04:32] Andre.

Bruce Ware [00:04:33] Okay. Andre Philip.

Michael Johnson [00:04:35] He passed.

Bruce Ware [00:04:36] Okay then Gregory.

Michael Johnson [00:04:38] Greg, he's in New Mexico.

Bruce Ware [00:04:38] There's you.

Michael Johnson [00:04:38] Then me.

Bruce Ware [00:04:38] Mike, Stephanie, there was Steven, Stephanie, Jeffery.

Michael Johnson [00:04:42] Yep.

Bruce Ware [00:04:43] And then I think that's it unless I'm missing someone.

Michael Johnson [00:04:47] Now, what happened for Mary is my daughter Dawn is the first one, out of my father's side, grandchild and my daughter married, and that's why we got to update it because now she has five boys.

Bruce Ware [00:05:00] Right, right.

Michael Johnson [00:05:03] Right? And my son has three girls. But the last time that we did this, none of them was on; Dawn might have been on.

Bruce Ware [00:05:09] Right, right. So, what I'm going to do is, all of the information, because when I sent this out, Eleanor sent me a bunch of information which I have not put on a spreadsheet.

Michael Johnson [00:05:19] Okay.

Bruce Ware [00:05:19] I'm going to put it on here and I'll send it to you and then you can update the rest of them.

Michael Johnson [00:05:24] Okay, yeah, yeah. So, Bubby, when were you born?

Bubba Johnson [00:05:29] Hm?

Michael Johnson [00:05:29] When were you born?

Bubba Johnson [00:05:32] October 7, 1930.

Michael Johnson [00:05:35] 1930. See, my father Warner was born 1923. Henry Johnson was born in 1917. Now, your cousin Henry Johnson is the one that helped him with the history here of the Berg, the Berg area down here? He's the one that helped them call it that. He died at 104.

Bubba Johnson [00:05:56] Yeah, you know…

Michael Johnson [00:05:58] He rode a bike.

Bubba Johnson [00:06:01] I never, ever came to Alexandria to see any of the Johnsons. Now my mother, she was from down here in Gum Springs

Michael Johnson [00:06:11] Okay. Oh, you just brought up [something] very interesting because my dad used to always talk about your mother, whoever down there in Gum Springs.

Bubba Johnson [00:06:19] That's right!

Michael Johnson [00:06:19] Because his brother Calvin had their one son. I told you, I only went to see him one time. I don't know where he at, but he's buried in Gum Springs. Sure of that. Sure of that. As a matter of fact, I came to take the guys down, that was when my brother Andre was living because Andre lived down there when he came out of the military. And the cousin that you're talking about, their son and Andre used to hang out together.

Bubba Johnson [00:06:45] Yeah, now when we moved down here from Washington to Arlington, there was somebody that used to come by our house in Arlington all the time and he stayed up there with us for a while and never came down here. When Pop was over here.

Michael Johnson [00:07:11] Oh, you know who you're talking about--Paul McGrady right over here. You know I showed you where our house at? Paul McGrady's house sat right across the street-

Bubba Johnson [00:07:18] The theater.

Michael Johnson [00:07:20] The theater? You talking about King's Palace on Queen Street?

Bubba Johnson [00:07:23] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:07:24] Or was it the Elks Home?

Bubba Johnson [00:07:27] [laughs] I can't [remember]. All I know…

Michael Johnson [00:07:28] All right, are you talking about…

Bubba Johnson [00:07:30] On the corner.

Michael Johnson [00:07:30] On the corner, you're talking about King's Palace, it was a movie theater.

Bubba Johnson [00:07:33] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:07:33] Right.

Bubba Johnson [00:07:34] And somebody back in here, Doctor something.

Michael Johnson [00:07:47] His house right around the corner, you talking about, Doctor Durant? Durant Oswald, Black doctor?

Bubba Johnson [00:07:53] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:07:54] His house right here. Next block over.

Bubba Johnson [00:07:56] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:07:57] Yeah. Because he served everybody late at night, whatever time of day as long as you get to him.

Bubba Johnson [00:08:02] And how did that think go? We used to come up King Street going to Washington, what street is that?

Michael Johnson [00:08:13] That's Washington here, King Street.

Bubba Johnson [00:08:15] But it would be down in that area right in there somewhere; somebody we knew in there.

Michael Johnson [00:08:22] There might have been, that had to be Aunt Effie.

Bubba Johnson [00:08:27] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:08:27] Or Lily because, yeah, they lived in here first and then Aunt Lily must have got married and she moved on the south side where my office is at.

Bubba Johnson [00:08:36] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:08:36] And Effie and Lily lived together for a long time, but Jack worked for the Ice House. The Ice House here. But he used to go all the way to Arlington all the time.

Bubba Johnson [00:08:47] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:08:48] We don't know how he got there because he didn't have a car.

Bruce Ware [00:08:51] That was him! That's what I remember. He would just show up.

Michael Johnson [00:08:54] He would just show up.

Bruce Ware [00:08:54] And he would ring the doorbell out of nowhere.

Michael Johnson [00:08:55] And I don't know how.

Bubba Johnson [00:08:56] And he would stay up there.

Michael Johnson [00:08:58] Right and that's what he would do at our house. He would just pop in and you might see him again on Monday and you might not see him again.

Bruce Ware [00:09:03] Yeah. Yeah. He'd be there like a day, two days and poof he's gone.

Michael Johnson [00:09:07] And when he passed, he's buried at Douglass Cemetery.

Bubba Johnson [00:09:12] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:09:13] You know we don't have a headstone for him but those were one of the ones where we have a record of where he was buried at. But that's with Jack because that's how I started eating ginger snaps. And he would always bring ginger snaps and he'd have two bottles of wine. He had one in his coat pocket, one in the other, and he used to come to the house, and he'd drink so much wine he'd pass out. So, I would always take the other bottle and he would wake up and give me that little smile like you're doing now, like "Huh, boy I know you got my wine." Right? And I said, "I ain't got nothing." Right? But no, yeah Jack…

Bruce Ware [00:09:43] Hold up. So that's funny. So, Jack was Warner's brother?

Michael Johnson [00:09:47] Yeah.

Bruce Ware [00:09:47] Yeah, yeah, yeah. Because now I got the appendix down here. Yeah, because Henry, Ella, Ethel, Samuel, Jack, and Lily.

Michael Johnson [00:09:57] Right.

Bruce Ware [00:09:57] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:09:57] That's right. Yeah, yeah. Sure was. My Uncle Jack.

Bubba Johnson [00:10:02] I can remember spending more time in Gum Springs.

Michael Johnson [00:10:06] Than you did in Alexandria-

Bubba Johnson [00:10:08] Than in this area.

Michael Johnson [00:10:09] Right. And now they call Gum Springs part of Alexandria. You know that, but it's really Fairfax.

Bubba Johnson [00:10:14] The drive-in movie was across the highway right there.

Michael Johnson [00:10:17] Well, how about the neighborhood that you grew up in? How was that?

Bubba Johnson [00:10:20] In Arlington?

Michael Johnson [00:10:21] Or D.C, either one.

Bubba Johnson [00:10:22] Well, both neighborhoods, I guess. I was raised on New Jersey Avenue and P. And that was just up the street from Armstrong and [inaudible]

Michael Johnson [00:10:38] Wow.

Bubba Johnson [00:10:40] And Reverend Halloman? was a neighbor of ours and his church was Third, off of New Jersey Avenue, North Capitol.

Michael Johnson [00:10:58] I don't know much about D.C. I go in it.

Bubba Johnson [00:11:00] Well you take me in this area, I spent more time up--What is it? What do you call it? Up here where the Cadillac dealer is at.

Michael Johnson [00:11:14] Lindsay Cadillac? Oh, Seminary!

Bubba Johnson [00:11:16] Seminary, yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:11:16] Yeah, oh they used to call it Mud Town!

Bubba Johnson [00:11:19] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:11:19] Oh yeah?

Bubba Johnson [00:11:20] Yeah, I used to know a lot of people in Seminary.

Michael Johnson [00:11:24] Oh yeah? Cause I was just talking about how our relatives still live at Seminary.

Bubba Johnson [00:11:26] Yeah, well…

Michael Johnson [00:11:27] The Terrells, the Wanzers?

Bubba Johnson [00:11:29] The Wanzers?

Bruce Ware [00:11:31] I know the Wanzers?, Conchita, and, yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:11:34] Yeah. Some of them still there.

Bubba Johnson [00:11:38] I had more fun in Seminary than I had in Arlington.

Michael Johnson [00:11:51] Because they was real close there.

Bubba Johnson [00:11:51] They believed in togetherness.

Michael Johnson [00:11:51] Yeah, they did.

Bubba Johnson [00:11:51] Looked like, see?

Michael Johnson [00:11:52] Yeah.

Bubba Johnson [00:11:53] Because they didn't say, "Well we're going down with Jimmy. And I'm going to play baseball."

Michael Johnson [00:11:57] Sure didn't.

Bubba Johnson [00:11:58] And you'd all get together and go down there, you know, and we're Alexandrians [Laughter].

Michael Johnson [00:12:05] So, where did you work at? So, what kind of work did you do?

Bubba Johnson [00:12:08] Post office.

Michael Johnson [00:12:08] Post office? How long did you work there?

Bubba Johnson [00:12:09] I went in the post office in, what year was it, [19]55 or something like that.

Michael Johnson [00:12:17] Oh, right before I was born.

Bubba Johnson [00:12:18] Something like that.

Michael Johnson [00:12:20] Right.

Bubba Johnson [00:12:20] And I think it might have been four Blacks in the post office when I went in Arlington.

Michael Johnson [00:12:26] Okay.

Bubba Johnson [00:12:27] And, basically, we moved to Arlington in 1939, and [inaudible] I went to work at the grocery store as a little kid. And I thought that I could ride the bicycle. And they told me I was too young to ride the bicycle. I could pull the wagon, delivering groceries. So that area, it was all right. Good area, you know. And as I came along, then started doing other things and going to similar areas.

Michael Johnson [00:13:11] What school did you go to? Did you go to Jackson or…?

Bubba Johnson [00:13:14] No, I didn't go to school. What happened to me, we moved to Virginia and I was still going to school in Washington.

Michael Johnson [00:13:26] I didn't know that.

Bubba Johnson [00:13:26] And I was going to Francis and there I was, everybody's just slamming lockers going home. And I would call a little girl "Fats" (?). And this teacher came along and I never, to this day, understand why or where she's coming from with that, but she grabbed my nose and shook my head and had me in there writing on the blackboard and all that. So then somehow or another she found out I moved to Virginia. So, this is June. I got to get out of the District school and go to Virginia.

Michael Johnson [00:14:12] Wow.

Bubba Johnson [00:14:17] So they transferred me to Hoffman-Boston.

Michael Johnson [00:14:23] I know about [that], yep.

Bubba Johnson [00:14:24] And.

Michael Johnson [00:14:25] Hoffman-Boston.

Bubba Johnson [00:14:26] Come September, my uncle, Louis Johnson, he had all contacts with Howard University because he was a big contractor.

Michael Johnson [00:14:37] Contractor, yeah, that's right. Yeah.

Bubba Johnson [00:14:38] So he got me back into Washington schools. I went to Phelps. And the first semester at Phelps I was studying agriculture. And the next semester I'm in drafting and I learned all about drafting, architects, see. When I went in the service, I was an architect.

Michael Johnson [00:15:07] You know…

Bruce Ware [00:15:08] Wait a minute. So, this is on a personal note for me. So, he was always at my grandmother's house. He was always drafting these plans. He was always--"If they'd let me do this house. I would redo this house." And I was always like, "Where is he getting all these ideas and stuff from?" And so, it's just, if you could see the evolution of that house from what it was, which there are some documentation, to what it is now because it's sold for, I think, over $1 million.

Bubba Johnson [00:15:39] Yeah, that's what happens, you see? I got married twice. The first one…

Michael Johnson [00:15:46] You almost outdid your grandfather Pete.

Bubba Johnson [00:15:47] My first marriage was to Rose Harper.

Michael Johnson [00:15:54] Rose Harper.

Bubba Johnson [00:15:54] Rose Harper. And she married Lee Elder, the golfer, and took off with him, see? After we broke up, then she went to Florida where Lee was living, thinking she going there. Because that's what she feels, I have money.

Michael Johnson [00:16:09] Lee Elder, the golfer?

Bubba Johnson [00:16:10] Yeah, yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:16:10] Okay.

Bubba Johnson [00:16:11] So she married Lee Elder, see? So, her lawyer called me, and he asked me, he said he was filing for divorce and he was trying to figure out how much to get out of me and whatnot.

And I told him, I said, "Well, I kept the empty apartment for years, the whole [inaudible]. And, so I talked to him and he said, "Well, forget it. Don't worry about it." And they went on and got her divorce and whatnot and she married Lee Elder, and I think she married Lee Elder with the same intention.

Michael Johnson [00:16:49] Because of money.

Bubba Johnson [00:16:50] To get some money out of it. And that didn't work.

Bruce Ware [00:16:53] Well, I don't know, because, on a side note, what's funny, I have a friend who was at Howard at one point in time, and she got an internship one year and she said, "It's not making any money, but we working for this woman that has this company." And I Said, "Well, who?" She said, "Rose Elder." I said, "Rose Elder?! She used to be married to my uncle!" [Laughter]

Michael Johnson [00:17:16] Rose Elder. I knew that lady-

Bruce Ware [00:17:18] Yeah, it was just [laughing]-.

Michael Johnson [00:17:18] As a kid growing up. Now, I want to back up a little bit because Louis Johnson, he's one of the founding members of the Industrial Bank.

Bubba Johnson: Yeah.

Michael Johnson: An all-Black bank.

Bubba Johnson [00:17:25] Well, he had stock in the bank stock.

Michael Johnson [00:17:27] Yeah, stock in the bank.

Bubba Johnson [00:17:28] So I think I think what it was, I know my Uncle Ment had stock in the bank.

Michael Johnson [17:35]**:** That's right, that's right, that's right, yeah. He did, too, yeah.

Bubba Johnson [00:17:40] And, something, you know, they were the original people with the Industrial Bank.

Michael Johnson [00:17:46] Right. Yeah. Originally. I think on his death certificate—I got his death certificate--and it was saying that he was one of the founding members of the Industrial Bank.

Bubba Johnson [00:17:56] Well I look back at it and I remember going to the bank because I was given stock in it, see? And I still got stock in the Industrial Bank.

Michael Johnson [00:18:07] I had an account with Industrial Bank when I was running this group called the Untouchables. We opened up an account with them that's [inaudible] and then my uncle, Calvin Johnson, actually worked at that bank.

Bubba Johnson: Yeah?

Michael Johnson: And we used to go to DC on K Street, around State Street. H or G?

Bubba Johnson: No, no.

Bubba Johnson: [00:18:28] No, it was…

Michael Johnson: Off 14th.

Bubba Johnson: It was 11th and U.

Michael Johnson [00:18:34] Okay. Not that far, though. Right. When I went over there was like, you know.

Bubba Johnson [00:18:39] New York Avenue.

Michael Johnson [00:18:41] Okay. It was--I remember it was off 14th Street, right? I remember going to 14th Street.

Bubba Johnson [00:18:47] But I look back at it and think about it. And right now, I'm still have stock in the bank and I ain't heard nothing negative. Yeah you know you better check back with them in New York; somebody else is running it. It's no longer the Industrial Bank, whatever it is.

Michael Johnson [00:19:10] What type of friends—who did you hang with growing up?

Bubba Johnson [00:19:14] Yeah so, I look back at all that.

Bruce Ware [00:19:18] Okay, wait a minute. So, let me just bring this full circle for today. Again--and I don't know if I was telling you or not--but when I'd come down here in the summer and hang out with my friends, their friends, had no idea who I was. But when I'd say I was Bubby Johnson's nephew. "Bubby Johnson! He's your uncle?" I mean, this is crazy, right?

It's what I'd hear all the time. So, we went to a funeral today. I think more people recognize him than he recognized people. So, he didn't. He didn't know--but they knew him. But they're like, yeah. So, it's just funny. So, he knew a lot of people. Like I said, I would go places you wouldn't imagine.

Michael Johnson [00:20:04] And I'm watching your facial features. Before I broke my nose playing football, I had the same hump that my other brothers still had--a little peak right there. They just think it was Indian or mixed with Indian you know; we've all come here we Cherokee or Black; we just make up something. Yeah but I broke my nose and that's why mine isn't….

Bubba Johnson [00:20:24] Played football for who?

Michael Johnson [00:20:25] T.C. Williams.

Bubba Johnson [00:20:28] T.C. Williams.

Michael Johnson [00:20:32] I went to Parker-Gray. The old Parker-Gray was the elementary school. I went to the new Parker-Gray; then I went to T.C. Williams.

Bubba Johnson [00:20:41] But now see, when I come along, living in Washington. The Redskins were at Griffith Stadium.

Michael Johnson [00:20:49] Right.

Bubba Johnson [00:20:50] And I used to play hooky from school and go up there and hang out. I became good friends with the Sammy Baugh, Steve Bagarus. What was the boy's name? Steve Bagarus. And we all became good friends and I was just up there hanging around.

Michael Johnson [00:21:15] Now some of your friends in Arlington--I know you know the Moore's.

Bubba Johnson [00:21:37] Which Moore?

Michael Johnson [00:21:39] James Moore.

Bruce Ware [00:21:22] Okay, so time out. So, I'm telling him about, I'm telling him about. We're looking at the pictures, last night, right? Then all of a sudden, he said "Oh yes. You mean Jim Moore." Who did you think I was talking about?

Bubba Johnson [00:21:36] The Moore's—let me get this right, now. A lot of those come from up Culpeper earlier. This is how I guess my parents and the Moore's got together. In my time, I hung with a lot of people, like I said, here in Alexandria. It's on my mind and I have to get into that and thinking about it.

Bruce Ware [00:22:18] See, because he knows he knows the area like when people like Elgin Baylor, Willie Woods…All of them were around from this area and they all were running in the same circles and what not. And somehow, he ended up hanging out with Wilt Chamberlain.

Michael Johnson [00:22:33] And my wife's father went to school with Chamberlin--Oberlin.

Bubba Johnson [00:22:42] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:22:43] In Philly. He ran track for Oberlin.

Bubba Johnson [00:22:46] In Philly, I knew people, you know. I hung in Philly and I have had this 94 years of being okay with people, see, and I have met a lot of people and I looked at this picture here and I said "yeah" and somehow or another I can remember something; that was my father's thing there.

Michael Johnson [00:23:19] This is my great grandfather.

Bubba Johnson [00:23:20] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:23:22] Guess how I identified him.

Bubba Johnson [00:23:24] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:23:26] My Aunt Lily had a picture of him and their mother, Ellen, in her house, and I was only 19 years old.

Bubba Johnson [00:23:39] So we ran across each other some way, man.

Michael Johnson [00:23:43] Yeah. So, then Livy, my cousin, Livy Johnson. [inaudible] She said, "Michael, who's this?" I gave her the picture book. And I looked, "this is my great grandfather, Warren." I had that picture when I was younger. When Aunt Lily died, we got that information in a little metal pictures that they had--and I don't know what happened to it. But I remember him because he scared me when I took a picture of him, you know. And she was telling me how, it was strict. You had chores to do and a whole lot of other stuff you better get done before he got home.

Bubba Johnson [00:24:28] [inaudible] Somewhere along the way.

Michael Johnson [00:24:34] How did you get there? By bus? How did you get to Culpeper?

Bubba Johnson [00:24:37] I don't know. All I know is we would go over and I was given the property up there and basically, I had some roomers, some people renting it. And my uncle when he gave it to me, he said they weren't paying no rent.

Michael Johnson [00:24:59] Who gave it to you?

Bubba Johnson [00:25:00] My uncle Memphis.

Michael Johnson [00:25:01] Memphis, Memphis Johnson.

Bubba Johnson [00:25:02] I told him, you know, "I'll check on it and see." And I went up and talked to the people and I told them, "I'll have to start charging rent, because I'm paying taxes." Right? "So how much you going to charge me?" I said, "I don't know. I'll get back to you." I went back up. They were gone. So, I got a letter from a lady. She said she saw my property was empty and would I like to sell it? I said, "Make me an offer and put it in the mail." So, I've gone through some things like that, like you said. In Arlington, when my parents died, and I got married. The second wife, she finally gets the property. So, I thought it was still fine. I think just recently I found a letter from the lawyer and the lawyer said he couldn't get it, couldn't do nothing for her. And I met her in Richmond—no, I met her in the neighborhood rooming with the [inaudible] Do you know the [inaudible] you know, Harold [inaudible] And they're related to the Thompsons and Mr. Thompson was the big real estate man in Arlington.

Michael Johnson [00:26:27] And I heard his name before.

Bubba Johnson [00:26:29] He lived right there on Glebe Road and Shirlington Road. And they took his house and tore his house down and built apartments in there.

Michael Johnson [00:26:37] Yeah, I remember that.

Bubba Johnson [00:26:38] And, you know, so I said, now fighting with this woman about the property and that the real estate people—not the real estate people--the builder, he told us, " Bubba, you've got to borrow some money. See where you will borrow money to do this." So, I called [inaudible] three or four times. I said, "Look. You can have it." I think in the last month, the properties sold for a million dollars. So, I look back at it and I said I couldn't carry it with me. And she didn't get nothing. And I haven't seen or heard from her since she left, and we went to court. The judge hit the thing; the divorce is final. You got nothing.

Kerry Reed [00:27:34] Mr. Bubby, I was curious. What were your parents' names? What were your parents' names?

Bubba Johnson [00:27:40] My parents were Jefferson T. Johnson.

Kerry Reed [00:27:43] Jefferson T. Johnson. Okay.

Bubba Johnson [00:27:46] And the Berkeley's from Alexandria. The Berkeley's.

Bruce Ware [00:27:54] But Irene was your mother. Your father was Jefferson. And Irene was your mother.

Bubba Johnson [00:28:02] Berkeley. Yeah. Yeah. But again, you know, you look back at it and you go through life like I said. I've hung in a lot of places. And I've had a lot of friends. See? And like I said again,

nine years old, I was working in the grocery store thinking I could ride a bicycle. The man told me, he said. "you can pull a wagon, but you can't ride no bicycle, you aren't big enough." So, they stayed in business until they sold the business. And I went up the street to another store up there because of the pastor's wife at St. John's. She worked in the grocery store and the Gantz fellow worked in the grocery store. And so, I got the job in the other grocery store working and helped deliver groceries. And those people treated me just fine. On the weekends, they gave me a big bag of groceries to carry home for free. See? And I look back at it and said, you know, I never been created to be violent or hate people. And when I went in the service, we did something.

Michael Johnson [00:29:48] What branch of the service?

Bubba Johnson [00:29:50] Air Force. When we were there. I went down to join, because we went down to the draft board, see, and we were going to beat the draft.

Michael Johnson [00:30:04] World War I or II?

Bubba Johnson [00:30:05] It was the Air Force

Michael Johnson [00:30:07] What war? Was it World War I, World War II?

Bubba Johnson [00:30:12] The Korean War. So, I went down and we all went down. Put our names on the waiting list because they weren't taking no boys. I said, "the Air Force has a waiting list." I'll be on the waiting list; not drafted. The next thing I know, the Air Force is calling me. And I went to Texas.

Michael Johnson [00:30:40] Lackland or…what base is in Texas?

Bubba Johnson [00:30:48] What is it?

Michael Johnson [00:30:49] There's another one down there. My brother Greg went into the Air Force as well.

Bubba Johnson [00:30:53] The one in San Antonio?

Michael Johnson [00:30:55] In San Antonio.

Bubba Johnson [00:30:59] Well, well, I stayed down there and waiting on them to tell me where I'm going. And I think they couldn't figure out what I could do, see. Because I dropped out of high school and so they sent me to Fort Belvoir. And there I am in Fort Belvoir, there ain't a damn thing to do about it but go home at night. So next thing you know, they cut orders for me to go from Fort Belvoir to a base and figuring that I was from Washington, they sent me to Washington. Seattle, Washington. Now, in Seattle, I had nothing to do. And I'm sitting around and sitting around, playing sports and whatnot.

Michael Johnson [00:32:04] What were some of the sports that you played? What sport did you play?

Bubba Johnson [00:32:08] Football. Baseball. I was then supposed to serve [inaudible] because they didn't know what to do. I'm a high school dropout.

Michael Johnson [00:32:17] Okay.

Bubba Johnson [00:32:18] So sitting in Seattle, Washington, and I came home from leave. When I went back, they were going to ship me out. And they're going to ship me to Japan. I had to go to Japan. What

would I do in Japan? [inaudible] I did well. I got my time cut by volunteering to go to Okinawa. I went to Okinawa, organizing baseball, whatnot. And I went out to play baseball. And the pitcher said, "What signal do you want?" I said, "When I put my glove up, you try to hit the glove." He pitched; I put the hand up for the ball and broke my hand. You know, I volunteered to go back to the States. And I come back here to South Dakota and did nothing. And four years in the Air Force and I ain't done a damn work. And I enjoyed it. But, you know, the whole thing and this thing about the Johnson Family Reunion we just had, and I went to it and whatnot.

Michael Johnson [00:33:57] Yeah. It was my first time there.

Bubba Johnson [00:33:58] Yeah, well, nobody that I knew—nobody

Michael Johnson [00:34:01] You're the oldest one.

Bubba Johnson [00:34:04] The only Johnson.

Michael Johnson [00:34:05] And, you know, you're the oldest one

Bubba Johnson [00:34:07] The only Johnson…there ain't no more Johnsons

Michael Johnson [00:34:10] I'm a Johnson.

Bubba Johnson [00:34:13] Huh?

Michael Johnson [00:34:16] I'm a Johnson. I've got five brothers that carry the Johnson name.

Bruce Ware [00:34:20] Yeah. You're not the only Johnson. You are the oldest Johnson.

Michael Johnson [00:34:24] The oldest Johnson.

Bubba Johnson [00:34:25] The oldest Johnson. Well, all I knew…

Michael Johnson [00:34:29] You're the oldest living Johnson.

Bubba Johnson [00:34:30] I tell them I'm the oldest living Johnson.

Michael Johnson [00:34:32] Yeah, well, I do have five brothers, and that's something that Livy brought up because we weren't really included in those family reunions.

Bubba Johnson [00:34:39] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:34:39] And I met her when she was teaching at Northern Virginia and that's when she realized that we were connected in some kind of way.

Bruce Ware [00:34:49] What year was that?

Michael Johnson [00:34:51] That was in 1979.

Bubba Johnson [00:34:52] Did you go to this reunion? The reunion we just had.

Michael Johnson [00:34:56] I'm the one that put it together.

Bubba Johnson [00:34:58] No. The one they just had.

Michael Johnson [00:34:59] Yeah. Yes, I'm the one who put it together.

Bubba Johnson [00:35:02] And the newspaper said you're going away to a different country.

Michael Johnson [00:35:06] You're talking about the one next year. They're going to Ghana. They said they're going to Ghana.

Bubba Johnson [00:35:12] Ain't no way in the world I'm going.

Michael Johnson [00:35:14] The say they're going to Ghana. There's something totally different for me too.

Bubba Johnson [00:35:18] Well, you know.

Michael Johnson [00:35:19] Bruce might go.

Bubba Johnson [00:35:21] This family reunion, there was nobody.

Michael Johnson [00:35:27] Well, people knew you. You just didn't know them.

Bubba Johnson [00:35:30] I didn't know nobody there.

Michael Johnson [00:35:31] Right.

Bruce Ware [00:35:32] And even so, it was funny. Florence's son comes by and he goes, "Who is this?" And I go, "This is Bubby." And he goes, "Bubby? Like Bubby, Bubby?" Like Bubby, Bubby, Bubby?" And I was like, "Yes." He went around taking a thousand pictures.

Michael Johnson [00:35:52] I know. We have to stay where we take you. Yeah, yeah.

Bubba Johnson [00:35:56] Yeah. Well, again, you know, he come on as a kid. You know. My sister and they moved…

Michael Johnson [00:36:04] I met your sister. I met your sister. And that's how I knew about them. We were at the reunion in Silver Spring.

Bubba Johnson [00:36:12] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:36:13] And she said, you know, you got cousins in Reston, Virginia, living in Reston.

Bubba Johnson [00:36:17] It was Uncle Louis in Silver Spring.

Michael Johnson [00:36:19] Right? That's right.

Bubba Johnson [00:36:20] And when he moved to Silver Spring from Georgia Avenue or 11th and Irving and went out there with the hog farm across the highway from him. And next thing you know, the hog farm and all that's gone. And they put a swimming pool and all that in the back yard and whatnot.

Michael Johnson [00:36:42] I know. [inaudible]. So, looking at how things have changed, I mean, you still know the general area, but do you think things are drastically changed where you can't identify any of the places you used to go when he was a kid?

Bubba Johnson [00:37:00] Yeah. Well, you know, 7th and P and like I said Reverend [inaudible] Third Street Baptist Church. His daughter—I had, I think, three daughters and a son. And I hadn't started

school. One of his daughters took me to see the teacher. Shaw; she took me up to Shaw to School, before I even stared. And next thing I know, she's down at Dunbar. And she took me down there to the swimming pool, and I jumped in the water and couldn't swim. And that [inaudible] they were good friends. And like everybody on that side of the street, P Street, when I was living there and we were all the kids, we were all friends all up and down the street and never nobody would be fussing and fighting over nothing. And I do remember though that I built a skateboard. And these girls were turning the rope and I'd come down the street on a skateboard and they'd start twirling faster

Michael Johnson [00:38:20] Tried to hang you.

Bubba Johnson [00:38:22] You know, it's been a good life. And in 94 years, I've enjoyed every bit of it.

Michael Johnson [00:38:29] So you didn't really know that you had relatives buried here at the famous Douglass Cemetery in Alexandria?

Bubba Johnson [00:38:36] No.

Michael Johnson [00:38:37] Yeah. I mean, y'all would be then, I guess, first cousins, right?

Bubba Johnson [00:38:42] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:38:46] In a sense. Well, him and my father were related. You and my dad now would have been first cousins.

Bubba Johnson [00:38:54] Yeah, I used to come down here to Alexandria; especially to the movies.

Michael Johnson [00:39:01] The [inaudible]

Bubba Johnson [00:39:02] You have to go.

Michael Johnson [00:39:03] Four blocks back. Yeah. The building is still there. But now it's a church.

Bubba Johnson [00:39:08] [inaudible] Parker-Gray there. They built the new one up Seminary.

Michael Johnson [00:39:15] Right. Right. Well, T.C. Williams, the new school

Bubba Johnson [00:39:18] And. Yeah, and I enjoyed coming [inaudible]. Lived in Green Valley. And it just was more fun and [inaudible]

Bruce Ware [00:39:35] And see what's so funny to me, though. And what I'm hoping maybe we can get from you today is kind of like what Mike is saying. But here is how my summers used to go. I'd come down here for the summer--my parents would send me down to Virginia. I'd maybe…And I'm just stating the facts, this is not being critical because he has a tendency to kind of twist it sometimes. But I think from that I got a lot of my work ethic because what happened was that at maybe a week, two weeks in, at some point he says "Alright, boy, be ready tomorrow. We got work to do." I'm thinking, how do <u>we</u> got work to do?" But okay. And I don't know how early he was doing his mail route, but he would finish. He would come by the house by 8:00, load up the van. By 9:00, we'd be in the District. We'd be in Alexandria; we'd be in Arlington. We'd be somewhere and we would work for probably the next 12 hours. And this would go on six days a week.

And everywhere we went, it was always a history lesson because he'd say. “Over there, there used to be so-and-so. It ain’t there no more. You don't know the things that used to, you know.” I’d hear the history of this area. I don’t care where we went--the District, Alexandria. I mean I was just telling them earlier; we went through Burton one time; we were riding through Burton. He said all this used to be Black folks. He said, “You think I’m joking; Black folks used to own all this land. Who owned this here? We were talking about [inaudible] and all these other families that were very well known in the area. There was a book came out a few years ago by a guy, Otis Graham, and it was called *Our Kind of People.* I think it was *Our Kind of People*. And in this book, it goes into the history of a lot of black families, specifically families in this area. And I was amazed because he and my mother, my mother, I gave the book to my mother. I just thought it was fascinating history.

My mother reads the book. She goes, “I knew all these people” and I'm like, “you’re kidding?” And then they got to sitting down talking one day and they are discussing the accuracies or the inaccuracies in the book in terms of the people in this area and who they were and what they were about and all that kind of stuff. So, he's got a lot of history in him. It's just a matter of picking, of tugging the right strings. Because he made--if you listen to him, it was just a very simple life. He grew up. He became a man. He got married and had a lot fun along the way.

Bubba Johnson [00:42:28] Now I’m 94 years old.

Bruce Ware [00:42:30] But he has seen a lot, knows a lot. You know, we talk about the riots in D.C. in the [19]60s and how all that went down in this area and everything. So just the whole, the whole chronological history of the United States. He has points of reference for all of that. And it's just about but you know, if you listen to him tell him it.

Michael Johnson [00:42:58] The house you live in now in Arlington. How long have you been living there?

Bubba Johnson [00:43:01] A year.

Michael Johnson [00:43:03] One year.

Bubba Johnson [00:43:03] Like I said…

Michael Johnson [00:43:06] But before that, where did you did you live back in Arlington?

Bubba Johnson [00:43:09] Around the corner, a block from there.

Michael Johnson [00:43:14] Right. Okay.

Bubba Johnson [00:43:15] [inaudible] country road.

Bruce Ware [00:43:16] Right across the street from Our Lady Queen of Peace.

Bubba Johnson [00:43:19] And the people, like I said, when I moved in the neighborhood.

Michael Johnson [00:43:26] Did you know the Bellamys? The Bellamys?

Bubba Johnson [00:43:29] Sam. Eddie—the whole family.

Michael Johnson [00:43:31] [inaudible]

Bubba Johnson [00:43:33] Yeah, they were good friends, you know? Sam was a Bellamy and Hetty, I think she was, she was…Hetty. Hetty, Hetty, Hetty. I can't think of Hetty's maiden last name. But the kids and all, see. As I said, friends are something that I've treasured all my life. I didn't look at people to see enemies; they were friends. And, Sam, his family or whatever, all these brothers, the Bellamy family…

Michael Johnson [00:44:24] One of them played professional football is a big deal to have.

Bubba Johnson [00:44:27] In my book, they were alright. You see, because I think one of Sam's oldest brothers had opened up a shoeshine parlor on the corner right there at St. John's [inaudible] Lomax. Then right across the street from the church was the West family. Stephen West. Them people.

Michael Johnson [00:44:53] Yeah. yeah.

Bubba Johnson [00:44:54] Now behind them was a family—the Johnsons, who are not related to me. We all became friends. And I look back at it and…

Michael Johnson [00:45:13] Yeah, I guess I've heard Bruce talk about this. Is where that the connection of the Johnson family really fell off because you're ten minutes away--I mean, by driving. Back then it might have been 45 minutes--but to have so many first cousins that you never even knew about, you never met.

Bubba Johnson [00:45:34] Right, right, right.

Michael Johnson [00:45:37] And I grew up--1321 is where we first lived. It's Queen Street right here. Thirteen twenty-one—you know where the movie theater was? I'm going to tell you this and it's going to mess you up. You know that movie theater you were going to? My father lived two blocks down on Queen and West. A little old one-bedroom house.

Bubba Johnson [00:46:01] And I've seen you. Somewhere along the way. I've seen you.

Michael Johnson [00:46:06] I've been to a couple of reunions.

Bubba Johnson [00:46:08] I keep looking at you. And I keep—somewhere I've seen this turkey. Somewhere I've seen you.

Michael Johnson [00:46:18] I try to get all of you [inaudible]

Bubba Johnson [00:46:20] Like I said…

Michael Johnson [00:46:23] But didn't know. You know.

Bubba Johnson [00:46:24] I come to Alexandria with friends and whatnot. All over this place I've been.

Kerry Reed [00:46:35] Mr. Bubby, when was the first Johnson family reunion that you remember attending?

Bubba Johnson [00:46:40] The first family reunion?

Kerry Reed [00:46:41] The first one ever.

Bubba Johnson [00:46:44] That I went to? Well, that was at the old homestead and I owned it, you know, whatever. And I think it was a little discussion about who owns it and they wanted to do it again, I think or something. But they were young, young, younger people than me. It might have been the first family reunion.

Kerry Reed [00:47:16] When about was that? What year?

Bubba Johnson [00:47:17] In Culpeper. I can't remember the year. So many things have happened to me in my years.

Kerry Reed [00:47:27] That was on the family property out in Culpeper though. That was on the homestead out in Culpeper. So, then that's the one you sold later on, right?

Bubba Johnson [00:47:43] Yeah, I'd say.

Bruce Ware [00:47:46] So when did they start to see, you know--again, I remember going to Culpeper like in [19]70, I want to say [19]73 or [19]74. It was we all got to get together. Those are the ones you had the black and white pictures of.

Bubba Johnson [00:48:01] Yeah, you see.

Bruce Ware [00:48:02] But remember my question is, when did they start having them at Uncle Louis'? Because I can remember going to at least two.

Bubba Johnson [00:48:11] Uncle Louis' wife was from Culpeper.

Bruce Ware [00:48:15] Okay.

Bubba Johnson [00:48:19] They lived on--what street is it, going out of Culpeper?

Michael Johnson [00:48:21] I don't know. I just drive down and I'm trying to find the exact property.

Bubba Johnson [00:48:28] Right across the street from where she come from was the school. And that's going out of Culpeper or coming into Culpeper—about a block or so. Quite a big school out there. And see, I used to go to Culpeper with my father when they had the horse races. That was a big thing—the horse races in Culpeper. And it looked like everybody from Washington came up there for the horse racing. That particular time we had the horse races. And then out from Culpeper was the Black horse races. We had some neighbors in Arlington that had horses—the McCain's.

Kerry Reed [00:49:21] Wow.

Bubba Johnson [00:49:22] And my father said he was going take them to Culpeper to meet the people with horses that were racing.

Bruce Ware [00:49:30] Wait a minute. Time out. This is interesting to me from the perspective that we had this conversation once before. You were saying how your father, Uncle Louis, and Uncle Ment. They were all sportsmen. They were hunting, fishing, all that. I remember—What I vividly remember of your father was he raised those, he had those English Setters, the Irish Setters. They were purebred Setters, I believe. And then, as a matter of fact, there was a story about whoever the famous gangster was that wanted to buy one of the dogs, and he said he wasn't going to sell the dog to the man under any condition. But how was it that he got so involved with horses? Because I've seen pictures of him riding

horses, grooming horses; look like he was very much into horses. But where was it? Do you have the reference of that growing up?

Bubba Johnson [00:50:28] Uncle Louis at that time that was his main thing. Uncle Ment was very religious with Vermont Avenue Baptist Church. He was very religious. And Uncle Louis, he was--I don't know, [inaudible] and all that kind of stuff. And then with my father, he was a sportsman. He believed in dogs and his dogs were field dogs. And the one thing about it, they would go hunting and they wouldn't be out there like, say, the brothers, the brothers go hunting. They got to go grab a gun and kill the rabbits. And my father and them would go out hunting. And the dogs were trained to freeze and stand and point, freeze and don't move—they tell them to do it--or the birds would fly right off. Well, the way I look back at it is they spent a lot of money on dogs. And the dogs were thoroughbreds.

Kerry Reed [00:51:51] And your dad raised the dogs?

Bubba Johnson [00:52:21] Yeah.

Kerry Reed [00:52: 22] Okay. Interesting.

Michael Johnson [00:51:57] So this is a picture my dad, Warner Johnson, who's named after his grandfather.

Bubba Johnson [00:52:04] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:52:06] Right. And he lived, like I said, two blocks down from where the movie theater was. And then I had a picture of my mom somewhere in here, and he used to go pray. But I don't know why he don't really associate with the Johnsons. That's my mom; she's coming out of [inaudible]

Bubba Johnson [00:52:27] Uh-huh.

Michael Johnson [00:52:29] Did you ever go to the Dixie Pig Restaurant?

Bubba Johnson [00:52:31] What?

Michael Johnson [00:52:32] Dixie Pig. It was on Route One—a restaurant called Dixie Pig.

Bubba Johnson [00:52:53] Where was it located?

Michael Johnson [00:52:56] As if you were going to Gum Springs on Route One.

Bubba Johnson [00:52:39] Going to Gum Springs? No, I don't know.

Michael Johnson [00:52:42] And she cooked there for like 40 years.

Bubba Johnson [00:52:43] Yeah, but now, one of my, I guess relatives, they had the first store out there; it was the only store they had out there.

Michael Johnson [00:52:56] Right. But I'm trying to think of the name because I met the guy.

Bubba Johnson [00:52:59] Wait a minute; I'll tell you in a minute.

Bruce Ware [00:53:03] You mean in Culpeper?

Bubba Johnson [00:53:04] Archibald Grace, Grace. I think his last name was Grace because his daughter was Gussie Grace.

Michael Johnson [00:53:09] I seen this guy just...

Bubba Johnson [00:53:11] He had a daughter; he had a daughter. If you go to Alexandria now, it's the street that comes out to Route One. Right back in there where the church is.

Bruce Ware [00:53:29] Alfred Street Church?

Bubba Johnson [00:53:30] Whatever the church is back in there; the Black church.

Michael Johnson [00:53:34] Right.

Bubba Johnson [00:53:35] And the store was right in back in there in that area.

Michael Johnson [00:53:40] Yeah. It was a store there. Yeah. Wow. I got to look through the transcript they gave with Henry Johnson. It's in there.

Kerry Reed [00:53:52] It's in there.

Michael Johnson [00:53:53] He recalled the name [inaudible] That's why I say I wish I brought it.

Bubba Johnson [00:53:56] I wish I could remember the last name; the store was great.

Michael Johnson [00:54:00] It was because…

Bubba Johnson [00:54:01] [inaudible]

Michael Johnson [00:54:03] They'd give you credit there. You go could go there, you know with, 50 cents or whatever, get meat.

Bubba Johnson [00:54:10] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [00:54:12] Fat back meat. I remember them saying something about fat back meat.

Bubba Johnson [00:54:16] You know, you go through all the things and then start your mind is going to another one and another one. And it's like I keep looking at you, I keep saying, "I seen you somewhere." And then it hit me; somewhere it me that we've come in contact. I spent a lot of time in Seminary.

Michael Johnson [00:54:37] Yeah

Bubba Johnson [00:54:38] I spent a lot of time up Seminary. I spent a lot of time up there. What were the people's names?

Michael Johnson [00:54:53] You had Adams, you had Atkins, you had Casey's. Terrell's. The father Cal Terrell still lives there.

Bubba Johnson [00:55:07] They lived there right by the school.

Michael Johnson [00:55:08] By the school. That's right; still there.

Bubba Johnson [00:55:11] Edward and I went to practice together and that was amazing that he come from Seminary to go to Washington schools.

Michael Johnson [00:55:21] What a lot of them here if you had a little bit of money and transportation, a lot of them went like to Dunbar, Coolidge, Cardozo, because Parker-Gray only went [to eighth grade].

Bubba Johnson [00:55:31] At that time, Dunbar and Armstrong—they got a lot of the kids from Alexandria. I don't know; and you just look back over it and think about it.

Bruce Ware [00:55:49] Well, let me ask you this. This may be off topic to a degree. But I guess my question is, when did you become aware of the Harrisburg folks?

Bubba Johnson: [00:56:20] Who?

Bruce Ware: [00:56:22] The Harrisburg folks in Pennsylvania. And when was your interaction with them? And the reason I say that, and I was telling Mike just, you know, one of the reasons I said that, because I was telling Mike this last night because for years I would go to reunions and Bruce Chivis and Charles Chivis, they would always ask about you and they would always say, "You got to get him back here." I mean, it was like not just like you need to get it was almost like, "don't you show up without bringing Bubby with you." And I don't know what that, I don't know what that bond, you know, what that connection is, especially with them being…I know you would go to Harrisburg on occasion.

Bubba Johnson [00:56:50] But Harrisburg, see, Harrisburg, they were cousins in Harrisburg and Steelton; Harrisburg and Steelton.

Michael Johnson [00:57:03] And it was.

Bubba Johnson [00:57:05] I would I would go up there.

Michael Johnson [00:57:07] My mother was a Stilson?. There is a street named after them up there, in Harrisburg, Stilson, something like that. And a cemetery there.

Bubba Johnson [00:57:14] But we used to go up there in and it was because the [inaudible] family sent me.

Michael Johnson [00:57:20] My mother was a Johnson, but Stilsons? was up there, because I went to a gravesite with Kathy and there were Stilsons? she said were relatives.

Bubba Johnson [00:57:31] But you see now in my case, those were my cousins up there and I used to go up and always go, you know, you're welcome. And then something happened, and I met family in Richmond, and I started going to Richmond. And the Richmond crew started owning me so I didn't go back to Harrisburg, you know. But I look back at it and both families were great people in my book, and I felt welcome in Washington, Arlington to go in anyone's house. [inaudible] I look at it and it's been it's been a good life.

Kerry Reed [00:58:31] Mr. Bubby, do you have any brothers or sisters?

Bubba Johnson [00:58:35] I had a sister--his mother. And we were the only two.

Kerry Reed [00:58:44] Only two in that. Okay.

Bubba Johnson [00:58:46] And she was a musician. She played piano. I didn't play nothing. And I used to get a big kick out of her and her cousin, sitting there at the piano together. And they would be hitting notes, and whatnot. It was really a joy.

Kerry Reed [00:59:09] Absolutely.

Bubba Johnson [00:59:11] I feel I was raised the right way.

Kerry Reed [00:59:14] Yeah.

Bubba Johnson [00:59:14] See, in all my days, never no violence. But there were plenty of violence out there.

Kerry Reed [00:59:28] Yeah.

Bubba Johnson [00:59:29] But never no violence in my family. And I was raised on P Street between New Jersey Avenue and Fifth. I think it is, up in that area, there was a beauty parlor. What was the school across the street from me? What's the school at New Jersey Avenue and P?

Michael Johnson [01:00:02] New Jersey Avenue and P.

Bubba Johnson [01:00:03] Right behind the liquor store, right up on the corner.

Michael Johnson [01:00:08] High school—it was Coolidge. Because over here, elementary…

Bubba Johnson [01:00:12] No. On P Street and they took it, tore down houses and built that school there.

Michael Johnson [01:00:23] Yeah. A bigger school now. Elementary school now.

Bubba Johnson [01:00:32] But I went over there for a semester.

Michael Johnson [01:00:36] Elementary school.

Kerry Reed [01:00:38] It's not Walker Jones. I'm trying to find it.

Bubba Johnson [01:00:43] As well as I know that school. Matt Bundy. Is it Bundy? I think it is Bundy.

Michael Johnson [01:00:56] They probably tore it down.

Bubba Johnson [01:00:58] There's still a school there, because Armstrong and Dunbar are down the street too. And then there were about three other elementary schools in that area.

Michael Johnson [01:01:09] Yeah. Yeah. It's right there together too.

Bubba Johnson [01:01:14] [inaudible]

Michael Johnson [01:01:16] They came into Florida Avenue or Ninth Street--whatever it is, going back to 295. It's a couple blocks over. It is. But I can't remember the name of it. They got a new Dunbar now that they built. They built a new Dunbar; but there's a new school right up the street from it. There was an elementary school.

Bubba Johnson [01:01:42] [inaudible] Dunbar.

Michael Johnson [01:01:44] But it is; they built a new one. They tore the old one down to build a new one.

Bubba Johnson [01:01:50] I didn't know that.

Michael Johnson [01:01:52] Yeah. And then they just recently—there's a museum there

Bubba Johnson [01:01:56] Well, maybe I do know it. Yeah.

Michael Johnson [01:01:58] They got a museum in there and an indoor pool. But the elementary school you're talking about is literally right across the street from Dunbar.

Bubba Johnson [01:02:06] Dunbar used to get the bourgeoise and Armstrong would get the athletes or whatever.

Michael Johnson [01:02:16] I think it's Ninth Street—Dunbar?

Kerry Reed [01:02:18] Ninth Street. Dunbar or Bundy?

Bubba Johnson [01:02:21] Dunbar…

Michael Johnson [01:02:22] Near New York Avenue, I think it is.

Bubba Johnson [01:02:24] New York.

Michael Johnson [01:02:26] Yeah.

Bubba Johnson [01:02:26] But it's actually on O street. It's got to be O because P; I lived on P, and it's a block over.

Michael Johnson [01:02:37] I'm trying to think of the school, but it is an elementary school. The name escapes me. I'm going through D.C.

Bubba Johnson [01:02:46] Well, again, you look back at that time and what we've come through. World War II, see, that changed a lot of things. And, you know, like they're talking right now about the stadium. I don't know what good the stadium is. When they build the new thing [inaudible] So, then they went to Maryland.

Michael Johnson [01:03:22] But they really come back, you know.

Bubba Johnson [01:03:24] They're talking about coming back.

Michael Johnson [01:03:26] Have you ever seen these pictures?

Bubba Johnson [01:03:28] Oh, yeah. That's…who is that?

Michael Johnson [01:03:32] That's Peyton. Peyton Johnson.

Bubba Johnson [01:03:33] Peyton Johnson. Yeah; that's my grandfather.

Michael Johnson [01:03:36] Yeah. My great-great-grandfather. That was your grandfather.

Bubba Johnson [01:03:39] Yeah. Wow. Somebody was living in the house.

Bruce Ware [01:03:52] Time out. So, let me ask you a question real quick, because this is--and I think this is Mike and I both have this same concern. I say concern--just questions in your mind. So, you know, we're a couple of generations removed from Peyton. But in your, in your interactions with, you know, your father, Uncle Louis, Uncle Ment--anybody, what was your sense of who Peyton was and what he was all about?

Bubba Johnson [01:04:25] Peyton Johnson.

Bruce Ware [01:04:26] I mean, this is your grandfather we're talking about. I mean, and I know you didn't know him. But just like for me, I know I'll always, you know--like on my dad's side, I hear about and this was like my…Someone was telling me. No, I was telling you the fact that I was trying to find out information about my father and I'd ask one of his sisters, you know, like, what was he like and all that. And what she told me was the complete opposite of the man I knew because he was very, you know, hardcore, very strict. She was "Oh no, your father was very nice. He was always very [inaudible]." He was so unlike my father. And when she described her father, it sounds like she would describe my father. So it was, I thought, like he got it honest, I understand. But so, in terms of, you know, I would just say, if you look at the family, one thing I think is very constant is there was a high work ethic in everybody. Still, they all practiced in a variety of different ways, even you.

Because again, like I said, he would he would go do the mail. I don't know what time he did it, but then we were on the road. We were nonstop, twelve hours a day, 6 days a week, and he'd tell me a story I never forget, you know, I couldn't wait till Sunday came because like "alright boy, get some rest." My one day of rest. And he's I'm like--I always say, but he's working twice as hard as me. He's killing me. And how is he doing this? And we're going somewhere one day and we're in the car, pulled up at a light and a guy goes, "Hey, man, what time did you leave that party last night?" He said, "I don't know." He said, "I didn't leave until 2 and you were still there. He's, "I don't know; I guess." I said, "Wait a minute. Two? You were at a party after 2. At some point you did you did mail that morning, came and got me and ate something. And worked me twelve hours and dropped me off, you know. And then we did it again. Hey, how did you do that? And to this day, I just marvel at it because that's, you know, no small feat. But you don't get that. Like you say about my father. He didn't just evolve. He got that from somewhere. He got that.

So that's kind of my question to you is what was your sense of those children, what they got from that family, whether it was Peyton or whether it was Eliza? Because the common thread is that all everybody had this steely resolve. They knew that if they were going to accomplish anything, they had to work not just hard, but they had to work above and beyond to get the things that they were trying to get. That's why I, to this day, you know, it was always like, "Stop crying about working. You know, you got a job to do, do it, you know? The job's done when the job is done. Get the job done." Where did it come from? You didn't just wake up one morning and say, "Okay, I guess this is how I'm going to do." You have to, I feel, like you had to see that in your father. You had to see that in you know, Uncle Louis; you had to see that, you know, in Uncle Ment. Uncle Ment was fire and brimstone. And so, my question is, did they ever give you any sense of what that was? What was it that they gained from their father, the father of 33 children?

Bubba Johnson [01:08:01] I never heard nothing like it.

Bruce Ware [01:08:03] No. Nothing.

Bubba Johnson [01:08:06] But did you go to the first family reunion they had up in Culpeper?

Michael Johnson [01:08:14] Nope.

Bubba Johnson [01:08:16] You didn't go there.

Michael Johnson [01:08:18] Didn't even know about it.

Bruce Ware He didn't even know about it?

Michael Johnson [01:08:19] Were you born in Culpeper?

Bubba Johnson [01:08:21] No. No. It went up—the first one I ever went to. And I was sitting there looking [inaudible] the same time of this, it couldn't have been, no, because the property…

Bruce Ware [01:08:40] Okay. Just not to cut you off so. Right; this is the house. That's Uncle Louis. You took this picture. Do you have any memory of what that was about?

Bubba Johnson [01:08:51] At that time, nobody was living in the house.

Bruce Ware [01:08:56] And this is the house they grew up in.

Bubba Johnson [01:09:01] I'm sitting here thinking. A lot of little things I learned growing up there. They had, in the ground, like where you keep food cold, or something was there in the ground. We went up one time, there were some animals in there. Something was in there.

Michael Johnson [01:09:29] I went up to a plantation in New Orleans. And they had what looked like a chamber pot, but it wasn't. That's where they kept the meat and all in that because it kept it cooler. I think I have a picture of it when I was there.

Bubba Johnson [01:10:03] It was underground.

Michael Johnson [01:10:05] It was underground. Yeah, because it fascinated me. I'm like, wait a minute. It actually happened.

Bubba Johnson [01:09:51] We went down and the snakes were in there.

Kerry Reed [01:09:53] The snakes were in there.

Bubba Johnson [01:09:54] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [01:09:55] That's a picture of the plantation.

Kerry Reed [01:09:56] This is the Culpeper house.

Bubba Johnson [01:09:58] Yeah.

Kerry Reed [01:10:00] Okay. That's amazing. Mr. Bubby, what do you remember about your grandfather, Mr. Peyton Johnson?

Bubba Johnson [01:10:12] Some grand part of it, I think I did. But somebody was in the house when I was a little kid, at the time, we were growing up in Culpeper.

Michael Johnson [01:10:29] Here it is, right here, this is where they used to keep food in the little thing in the ground.

Bubba Johnson [01:10:34] Yeah.

Bruce Ware [01:10:34] See right here, that's Uncle Ment.

Michael Johnson [01:10:40] This is the one in New Orleans. That's how they kept the food cold.

Bubba Johnson [01:10:42] [inaudible]

Bruce Ware [01:10:47] He [Uncle Ment] was a deeply religious guy.

Kerry Reed [01:10:50] So, that's Uncle Memphis.

Bruce Ware [01:10:52] He was always known as Ment.

Kerry Reed [01:10:55] They called him Memph?

Bruce Ware [01:11:11] Ment; M-e-n-t.

Kerry Reed [01:11:15] M-e-n-t, Uncle Ment. Okay.

Bruce Ware [01:11:20] Now, is this Liza or no?

Bubba Johnson [01:11:22] No.

Bruce Ware [01:11:23] Lord, you're killing me, man.

Michael Johnson [01:11:07] Because we have another Eliza Johnson.

Bruce Ware [01:11:09] It's obviously related to us. It looks like all of them.

Bubba Johnson [01:11:18] And I looked this morning at the people in church. I didn't know nobody in there. Nobody.

Bruce Ware [01:11:24] Who is this? Who's that? Do you know who that is?

Bubba Johnson [01:11:34] It looks like Fred.

Bruce Ware [01:11:36] You know, these are pictures that I'm finding in your artifacts.

Michael Johnson [01:11:40] Let me see that picture.

Bruce Ware [01:11:42] Who are these people? These are people of your time.

Bubba Johnson [01:11:52] I don't know none of them people.

Bruce Ware [01:11:58] Okay, okay. We agree this is Uncle Ment, though. Right?

Bubba Johnson [01:12:02] I guess it is.

Bruce Ware [01:12:04] Oh, man, oh man. You're killing me; you're killing me.

Michael Johnson [01:12:09] Let's see that other picture you had, Bruce, of the house.

Bruce Ware [01:12:12] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [01:12:12] Yeah; I could blow them up.

Bruce Ware [01:12:15] No, see, this is what I'm saying. It's a series of photos he got here in front of the house.

Bubba Johnson [01:12:19] The man said I was going to charge him rent.

Bruce Ware [01:12:20] That's Uncle Ment. I'd know him anywhere.

Michael Johnson [01:12:24] Yeah, I guess he's able to live in it free long enough. He come in with a little bit of money and said, "I'm gone."

Bruce Ware [01:12:30] That's Uncle Louis walking on the property.

Michael Johnson [01:12:32] [inaudible] But you said, "I'm going to charge you some money here or I'm done."

Bubba Johnson [01:12:40] I went back over there, and I didn't go back to charge him no rent. I just went back up there and they were gone.

Bruce Ware [01:12:47] So, Mike, this is an abstract, do you recognize that person? See if you if you can figure out who that is.

Michael Johnson [01:12:56] It looks like a woman. I'll put my little light on here. Who is that?

Bruce Ware [01:13:02] That's Patty Jo Keyes. That's Florence's sister. The guy with his back to the bush, that's Kenny Potter; that's Kit Potter's brother. That's Sonny Potter's, son. And then that's Kat and that's me. He [referring to Bubba Johnson] took this picture.

Bubba Johnson [01:13:30] Let me see it.

Bruce Ware [01:13:33] This is what kills me. He's the one taking all these pictures.

Bubba Johnson [01:13:41] This was taken where?

Bruce Ware [01:13:44] I want to say that was probably at Culpeper. I'm pretty sure that's when we went down and sat around the property and Libby read that whole thing she had written up about Peyton Johnson.

Bubba Johnson [01:13:56] This looks like the back of a school yard or something.

Bruce Ware [01:13:59] No. I think this might have been later on in the day when we had gone…No, no, no. There's a whole bunch of pictures. There's a whole bunch of pictures you took at the restaurant. You think so?

Bubba Johnson [01:14:14] I know so.

Bruce Ware [01:14:15] How do you know so?

Bubba Johnson [01:14:15] Look where it is.

Bruce Ware [01:14:19] Looks like a bus in front of it, too; like a bus.

Bubba Johnson [01:14:26] I don't know if that's the basketball court.

Bruce Ware [01:14:28] No, no, no. I'm going to show you; I'm going to show you why I'm saying what I say. Look, I said my memory's better than yours--the memory of the guy that took the pictures. But I guess I'm a little, you know.

Bubba Johnson [01:14:41] Well, I guess I'll have to get you into the house and show you what I got there. That's an album of mine, ain't it?

Bruce Ware [01:14:49] Yes. All these are yours. I said I got a few of your photos is what I told you. My gosh. Go ahead. Yeah, this is all your work. This is all your stuff.

Bubba Johnson [01:15:03] Yes.

Bruce Ware [01:15:05] Man. That's Uncle Ment; older Uncle Ment. Not only did you take the photos, you put the photos in these books.

Bubba Johnson [01:15:20] This is what it is. See? And that's when you came out to our house.

Bruce Ware [01:15:38] This is the picture killed me. This is the young Bubby Johnson.

Kerry Reed [01:16:04] Young Mr. Bubby.

Bubba Johnson [01:15:47] And yeah, I think.

Bruce Ware [01:15:50] Of course, he was young. He was the cock of the block.

Bubba Johnson [01:15:54] I mean, it's Joan.

Bruce Ware [01:15:58] Yeah. Come on. You know, Joan, better than I do. There's Joan again. This was Adrian. Adrian who…What was the woman's name that had been married to?

Bubba Johnson [01:16:] That's Bubby Johnson.

Bruce Ware [01:16:] Yeah, that's Bubby Johnson. [Laughter]

Bruce Ware [01:16:] You guys will appreciate this. When I was a kid, he was larger than life; he was larger than life. And he always had like the sports cars. He had an Austin Healey. He had an M.G. Cute. He had a Tornado. Had a Corvette. He had the Corvette. He had the Corvette with the big mufflers on the side, big slicks, and you could hear him a block away.

[Note: all speakers present talking over each other and comparing their lack of hair]

Bubba Johnson [01:17:34] That's my mother, right there.

Bruce Ware [01:17:26] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [01:17:32] That's your mother there?

Bubba Johnson [01:17:34] [inaudible]

Bruce Ware [01:17:37] Of course it's your mother; you know your mother. Yes, that's your mother!

Michael Johnson [01:17; 38] Where was your mother from?

Bubba Johnson [01:17:40] [inaudible]

Michael Johnson [01:12:55] Where was your mother born at?

Bubba Johnson [01:17:58] Montgomery.

Michael Johnson [01:17:59] [inaudible]. You did say [inaudible]

B Johnson They worked in the place called Harlan Hall? She met my father; that's how they got together; I think. He was a chauffeur or driver. And she worked in the house.

Kerry Reed [01:18:03] Mr. Bubby, are all these your photos; the ones that we're looking at now?

Bruce Ware [01:18:10] Except for the older photos like of the, you know, older people at a younger age, then the photos and all these books. These are all photos he's taken.

Bubba Johnson [01:18:21] These are all family people

Bruce Ware [01:18:25] And as I was telling Mike, see, you know we take it for granted in today's world because now everybody has a camera phone. But back in the day, not a lot of people were running around with cameras, you know, and he was one. As a matter of fact, he was the one that got me into photography because I was always, like, envious, the fact that he had a camera, he could document the world as he saw fit. And I just had to live it through my imagination or whatever I saw or whatever, you know? So again, I was like one day I, too will have a camera and I, too will, document the world as I see it.

And just the fact that, you know, it's in today. So, I would say, you know, easily from the mid-1990s on everything has pretty much been documented on the Internet, you know. So, everybody now the fact that you know what's it used to be you had to have a website to be able to even you know put your thoughts in the world and everything. Now with all the different platforms, Facebook, you name it, everybody can do whatever, however they want. So, it's great for that generation on but I feel where a disservice gets done is everybody from there back. Like, how do those stories get told? How do those memories get preserved, you know, which is where I feel like we're at now because it's like everything didn't start with the dawn of the Internet, you know, it was a lot of things.

Bubba Johnson [01:19:56] Did you know where the Kirkland's farm was?

Bruce Ware [01:19:59] But that's what I'm trying to get this.

Bubba Johnson [01:20:02] Get the album from him. [Note: Mr. Bubba Johnson is pointing at photos in the album] And they lived in that house. We were going to buy that house. Then my father saw that house for sale up the street, he bought the one up the street. He didn't want that one. Alvin, Janice, and Melvin were little kids at that time. And Alvin, he grew up [inaudible] was in motorcycle accident and got killed.

Bruce Ware [01:20:43] But so case in point, if you just go if you go through that album, that's the only documentation we have, or at least that I am aware of, of the family being at the family property in Culpeper at that time, you know?

Michael Johnson [01:21:00] And because they were talking about Louis Johnson, he had a letter there, he wrote to Roosevelt. Right, Bruce?

Bruce Ware [01:21:08] Yeah. Yeah.

Michael Johnson [01:21:10] That's the letter. He had the letter.

Bruce Ware [01:21:13] And this is, again, another funny story. Same thing. Because he, you know, as he will tell me--and I take him at his word. But he reads the daily newspaper front to back every day, right. And so, one particular day, he calls me up on the phone and he goes, “Hey, boy, you know, your people in the paper.” “My people are in the paper. Which people?” “Your people.” I'm like, “oh, well, that explains everything.” He said, “Have you seen the article?” I'm like, “What article?” About the bank?” And, I'm like, “No, but now I got it. I go through it. And sure enough, there's an article about the Industrial Bank of Washington. And in the article, it states how my Uncle Louis, who was Peyton Johnson's son, had written a letter to Franklin Roosevelt stating that it was imperative that there be a bank, a bank, a banking institution of color to help the community.

To which that just floored me because I never thought, you know, I knew a lot of things about my Uncle Louis. I would have never thought he would have: 1, not just have written the President. But 2, that the President actually wrote him back saying, “we hear what you're saying, and we will work to try to make this happen,” which is how the Industrial Bank came to be. So, yeah, he was one of the first—what’s the word I’m looking for--contributors to the bank, but he was also one of the people that pushed the government to help have the Industrial Bank become a reality. And so, there's a book on the Industrial Bank and there's a letter from the secretary stating that he received the letter that was sent to the President. The President had read the letter and would get back to him. But I don’t know what the letter said, you know. And that's what just kills me. I would love to get a copy of that letter, which I do not have.

Kerry Reed [01:23:25] Have you tried looking at the Roosevelt Library?

Bruce Ware [01:23:27] I have not.

Kerry Reed [01:23:09] Because most stationery and letters written by presidents, they would be kept at their libraries. So, I'm not sure. There's a good chance that they would have it or at least know of it because they copied everything. I'm not sure if it would be available to the public though. That's the only thing. Because they digitize and publicize.

Bruce Ware [01:23:52] No, but that in and of itself is a fantastic lead just to look up on, you know what I mean. I didn’t even think about that--Presidential archives, Roosevelt Library. Yeah. Yeah. Now that is definitely something to pursue.

Kerry Reed [01:24:05] So how big was the property in Culpeper, Mr. Bubby?

Bubba Johnson [01:24:15] Five acres.

Kerry Reed [01:24:20] Five acres. Okay. And so, like, these photos right here show a lot of farm equipment, right? So, when was the last time you remember the place being worked on and farmed and things like that? Do you remember that?

Bubba Johnson [01:24:29] [inaudible]

Kerry Reed [01:24:33] Okay.

Bubba Johnson [01:24:34] See? I don’t know.

Michael Johnson [01:24:35] Because on the deed, I thought I saw an original deed when Peyton Johnson first bought it. I think it was about 30 acres. It was some land, because most of his children, he gave part of the property to. You can read it in the deed. And then some of them migrated to DC. But he had most of living right on his own property. And you can look at it because I got a deed from Culpeper.

Kerry Reed [01:25:07] Yeah, yeah.

Michael Johnson [01:25:08] Blake [inaudible]. You know, the guy I met outside. He's the one who gave it to me.

Bubba Johnson [01:25:17] I can't imagine where them shots come from.

Kerry Reed [01:25:21] Which shots are those?

Bruce Ware [01:25:22] They're your shots. You're the one that shot them; you're the one shot them. These are your photos.

Bubba Johnson [01:25:28] I don't think so.

Bruce Ware [01:25:29] You put these photos in the book. These are your photos. And I remember asking you because I've known these albums; not like I just discovered you got them.

Bubba Johnson [01:25:42] Five acres. Five acres is almost a level piece of property. And you had you did what they did…

Bruce Ware [01:25:53] But you told me the story about this guy. I can't remember the story. Yeah, you told me the story about this guy. I can't even remember. I don't even remember the story now.

Bubba Johnson [01:26:04] They were building something.

Bruce Ware [01:26:07] Or something. Or he was paid to cut the land or something.

Bubba Johnson [01:26:21] This fellow right here, he's a doctor.

Michael Johnson [01:26:25] What's his name?

Bubba Johnson [01:26:26] Banks Richmond. But he's up in Arlington right now. He's in the hospital. He called the other day and said he had a heart attack. I went to see him.

Michael Johnson [01:26:40] You aren't still driving, are you? You still drive?

Bubba Johnson [01:26:43] Me? [inaudible]

Bruce Ware [01:26:45] [inaudible]

Bubba Johnson [01:26:51] I have had like 14 cars or something like that; sports cars, Corvettes, MGs.

Michael Johnson [01:27:02] The first car I learned to drive a stick shift on was the MG.

Bubba Johnson [01:27:08] I was given a van and it was the original converting van. And I just put seats in it and it everybody gave me hell because I didn't put no windows in it.

Michael Johnson [01:27:28] The visual thing, you got there?

Bruce Ware [01:27:30] Yeah, I got this.

Michael Johnson [01:27:33] But, this is right. Yeah.

Bubba Johnson [01:27:38] This was a reunion shot. Yeah.

Bruce Ware [01:27:40] Yeah, I know.

Bubba Johnson [01:27:42] That right there. That was a family reunion shot. You should be in that one.

Michael Johnson [01:27:47] I'm not in that one. you know.

Bubba Johnson [01:27:48] You should be.

Michael Johnson [01:27:50] The first one I went to was in the [19]80s over in Louis Johnson's house. He was not the first. My aunt, Sister Carrie Donaghy? and Lily are the ones that made me--my father made me drive them over there. Because, you know, I never been around the Johnson family. And me and my sister and brother then went over to the one in Maryland, Silver Spring. We didn't meet them. Jack knew about them; the rest of us didn't know about them.

Bubba Johnson [01:28:19] Is that Silver Spring?

Michael Johnson [01:28:21] This is in Culpeper--got to be. That's not Silver Spring is it?

Bruce Ware [01:28:25] Yeah, that's Silver Spring.

Michael Johnson [01:28:27] We came after that. I went to the one with the pool and all that. I was in this one. I'm not in the picture, but I was at it—the one in the mid-[19]80s. It's the first one I ever went to.

Bubba Johnson [01:28:43] But I remember. Somewhere in Alexandria or something.

Michael Johnson [01:28:57] Yeah, this shows the first one we ever here—the one that I [inaudible].

Bubba Johnson [01:29:00] [inaudible]

Michael Johnson [01:29:02] Up by Seminary.

Bruce Ware [01:29:04] So is this Korea? Where was this? Where was this photo taken?

Bubba Johnson [01:29:11] It might have been San Antonio, Texas. Not San Antonio; in Japan. That might

Kerry Reed [01:29:23] Can I see? That looks like it would be Japan.

Bubba Johnson [01:29:27] Yeah.

Kerry Reed [01:29:29] It's hard to do this.

Bruce Ware [01:29:31] That's how I'm thinking this, that's probably where it is. But again, I don't know because I wasn't there. So, I'm asking the guy was there; hope he remembers.

Kerry Reed [01:29:40] So, Mr. Bubby, why did you like sports cars so much?

Bubba Johnson [01:29:44] Well, you know, I started out, somebody that lived right up the street up here, before you get to Seminary? We were all into drag racing.

Bruce Ware [01:30:02] Another thing too; I forgot about it

Bubba Johnson [01:30:04] And the thing about it, you know, you take converted cars and drag race. You can't drive them up and down the street without getting a ticket. So somewhere along the way, my father had bought my sister a four wheel. That's when I came home from the service. [inaudible] was up on U Street--at the end of U Street. And I went up there and they had MGs and I bought one because it was the only little two seat car I had ever seen.

Kerry Reed [01:30:52] Yeah.

Bubba Johnson [01:30:53] So then I, I don't know. I kept on buying and just fell in love with sports cars. And that was it.

Kerry Reed [01:31:06] Where did y'all drag race around here? Or was that in D.C.? Y'all had the drag races.

Bubba Johnson [01:31:15] Oh, in Manassas.

Kerry Reed [01:31:16] Manassas.

Bubba Johnson [01:31:17] Yeah. Manassas. That's what I'm saying. A fellow lived up there, across the street from the school [inaudible] Seminary. I don't know if you knew anybody up there or not. I think [inaudible] he lived right there. I used to come up Seminary more than I would go anywhere, and that was a big hit.

Kerry Reed [01:32:03] Did you play baseball when you came out to Seminary? Did you play baseball? When you came out to Seminary?

Bubba Johnson [01:32:12] In Seminary, we would get together. And we'd go down to Fredericksburg with some of the group who played baseball. That's what I liked about them. You know? They were athletes. You know, they were Parker-Gray kids. And we'd get together and go down there and play baseball.

Kerry Reed [01:32:37] What position did you play?

Bubba Johnson [01:32:41] Any one on the team. Like I said, it started in the Air Force. I was in personal services, organizing baseball. And I'll never forget it. The pitcher--he wanted to know what signal he'd give me. I said, "Here, hit my glove." I put my hand up. And when he threw the ball, I went to catch it with my other hand and broke my hand. I'll never forget.

Kerry Reed [01:33:08] Catcher. That's funny. That's funny. So, I was talking to Bruce, and he said that you took a lot of these pictures and these photo albums.

Bubba Johnson [01:33:20] There's a whole lot of bunch of them; a whole lot of stuff I took.

Kerry Reed [01:33:26] Did you carry around the camera; did you carry around the camera?

Bubba Johnson [01:33:30] I got one on me now.

Kerty Reed [01:33:33] Really?

Bubba Johnson [01:33:34] Yeah. I got one. He had to help me this morning. In my phone, I can take pictures [holds up smart phone] And with this one [holds up small camera] I can take pictures. And I can take your picture. [takes picture of Kerry Reed]

Bruce Ware [01:33:53] He did not realize that you could take photos with your phone and text them.

Bubba Johnson [01:33:58] Yeah, exactly.

Michael Johnson [01:34:00] I got a little camera.

Bubba Johnson [01:34:01] Yeah. It's alright, see. It's my habit.

Michael Johnson [01:34:10] You have grandkids?

Bubba Johnson [01:34:11] Grandkids? I got no kids.

Michael Johnson [01:34:14] You didn't have any kids?

Bubba Johnson [01:34:15] No kids.

Michael Johnson [01:34:17] Neither did Jack.

Bubba Johnson [01:34:19] It was a thing

Michael Johnson [01:34:21] My father didn't like kids, come to think about it.

Bubba Johnson [01:34:24] I had a young lady who said…I was in the service.

Bruce Ware [01:34:32] And so a side note: that's one of the Corvettes of his. Either his or hers or my mother's. I'm not sure which. That's my mother outside the house.

[NB: Michael Johnson and Mr. Bubba are talking over each other as Bruce Ware is speaking]

Michael Johnson [01:34:44] I know the Coates. I know Ms. Viola Coates.

Bruce Ware [01:34:45] That's him outside the house. And this is my best friend's father and my grandmother. And we just buried his wife today. And that's him, outside the house.

Bubba Johnson [01:35:00] Yeah, in Arlington, there was a boy named Rudy Jackson.

Michael Johnson [01:35:04] I heard of Rudy Jackson.

Bubba Johnson [01:35:07] Yeah. And he felt that I was a better source to [inaudible] money. And I was in the service, and I went back to service. And I told my roommate, I said "Read this letter."

Bruce Ware [01:35:23] This one's got a date on it, that's1958. So, I guess that's his. I'm assuming that's his car.

Bubba Johnson [01:35:29] [inaudible] hadn't come home.

Bruce Ware [01:35:32] This is a very interesting room. [points around room]

Bubba Johnson [01:35:39] I said "Rudy, hey Rudy, read this letter." [Inaudible] His name was Grant Coates.

Bruce Ware [01:35:55] I'm not going to stop him [asks for directions to restroom]

Michael Johnson [01:36:00] Now let me see. Okay.

Bruce Ware [01:36:02] Please continue on, sir.

Bubba Johnson [01:36:04] So I came home, and what not, and she was living with her aunt in Washington. And so, the next thing you know, our friendship ends. I'm riding down the street and she's in the truck with somebody else. And I started laughing, I said, "That ain't my woman; it's yours." So, again, this girl right here, I married her. Four times, five times, I came home, she done took everything out. The last time, I said, "That's the end of that." I had enough.

Michael Johnson [01:36:55] So, a lot of the Johnsons didn't have a lot of kids because my father's sisters and brothers didn't have any kids. Carrie had one. My uncle [inaudible] had a son. But my father had the most. Every time around Thanksgiving and Christmas, they would come around to the house, because we were the only kids in the family.

Bubba Johnson [01:37:20] But again, you know, saying that if you feel that my Uncle Louis had three or four kids. And then, [inaudible] them people, they might have only had one kid. See, you wonder about the marriages. Where did the husbands go during their time? Now [inaudible] she was a [inaudible].

Michael Johnson [01:37:54] Okay.

Bubba Johnson [01:37:55] The other aunt, she was up at 18th and Columbia Road. I mean, 18th and U. And she had one boy, see. I can't think of his name, but she had one boy. Aunt [inaudible] she had, I think, one daughter. And who else could I think of? My parents had two kids. Uncle Walter, Walter Johnson had one boy.

Michael Johnson [01:38:37] Walter Johnson had one boy.

Bubba Johnson [01:38:38] Had one boy. So, those people left the country and a couple of them came into the city. They didn't have a whole lot of kids.

Michael Johnson [01:38:52] And I guess they couldn't afford them.

Bubba Johnson [01:38:55] Well, then at the time you look at it and say, come off of a farm, full of horses and cows and all of that. And now they're in the city as maids and butlers and so forth.

Michael Johnson [01:39:07] Libby wrote a book called *Living in and Living Out* about that history. Libby Clark-Lewis.

Bubba Johnson [01:39:18] Yeah. But I look back and like I said, you know, what the poet did not tell us. I'm serious, you know. [inaudible] I'm trying to think of who this woman was. That was a Chivis.

Michael Johnson [01:39:51] They would have the Chivis Johnson Reunion instead of the Peyton Johnson reunion.

Kerry Reed Chippers?

Michael Johnson Chivis, C-h-i-v-i-s.

Bubba Johnson [01:40:01] I went to Pennsylvania; I was a school kid.

Michael Johnson [01:40:10] The guy, A.J.? On the 6:00 extra. He's our cousin too. His mother was a Johnson, until she got married. He didn't come to this one.

Bubba Johnson [01:40:29] We moved to Virginia near the Hawkins's. I don't know if you knew the Hawkins.

Michael Johnson [01:40:34] I know some Hawkins. I know some Hawkins that live in Alexandria and had relatives in Arlington.

Bubba Johnson [01:40:41] And I'm trying to think who lived in Alexandria.

Michael Johnson [01:40:44] I know Gloria Hawkins.

Bubba Johnson [01:40:47] No, no.

Michael Johnson [01:40:47] The mother is Gloria.

Bubba Johnson [01:40:51] The only Hawkins's that I knew, they were out at the Maryland racetrack.

Michael Johnson [01:41:00] Rosecroft.

Bubba Johnson [01:41:02] Rosecroft. Is it Rosecroft?

Michael Johnson [01:41:04] Where they bring the horses.

Bubba Johnson [01:41:05] No. The motorcycle thing.

Michael Johnson [01:41:08] You're talking about Budd's Creek.

Bubba Johnson [01:41:18] Is it Budd's Creek?

Michael Johnson [01:41:34] Budd's Creek, down [inaudible]

Bubba Johnson [01:41:35] This is near Westfield, out in that area. You come out northeast and get to Berlin, [inaudible] Road. [inaudible] into [inaudible] Road, out in there. Most of the track. They left [inaudible] Valley and went out there. It's been, to a degree, it's been…Bruce, he took my album here [referring to photo album].

Michael Johnson [01:42:08] There you go.

Bruce Ware [01:42:09] You left the album with me.

Michael Johnson [01:42:20] What about the guy who moved out to Reston? [inaudible] out to Reston.

Bruce Ware [01:42:25] That must have been like the early [19]80s. Okay. I think; so right about that time.

Bubba Johnson [01:42:30] They were Pennsylvania people.

Bruce Ware [01:42:34] No, no, New Jersey. They were from New Jersey. I don't know if this session will--is there any fruit from this session or not? It's a fascinating conversation. What's funny is I told Mike the same thing. I said, you know, some time I'd sit down, and I'll ask him, "Tell me about that." "What's to tell, what's to tell? There's nothing to tell." I'm like "What?" And then sometimes, like all of a sudden, out of nowhere, he says, "What you don't know. What you don't know." And he just goes. And he could go, go, go. Two hours later, you'd still sitting there saying, "I wish I had a pen on me, I wish I had a recorder." All the stuff you really want, you never have any way to document it, like I said. He can remember half of it. Then, when you say, "Tell me about it."

Bubba Johnson [01:43:25] There's a shot taken [inaudible]

Bruce Ware [01:43:27] And we looked at we looked at some of these last time

Michael Johnson [01:43:30] [inaudible]

Bruce Ware [01:43:35] But again, it's what I'm saying is what's fascinating is that I think he was one of the few people there--if not the only person there--with a camera taking them pictures.

Michael Johnson [01:43:47] He was taking the pictures.

Bruce Ware [01:43:49] Again, it's like he is like he's documented the history of the world but can't tell you what happened when he when he did it.

Bubba Johnson [01:44:05] Did you look through the book? Take the book and look at it.

Kerry Reed [01:44:07] Okay.

Bubba Johnson [01:44:08] You may be able to figure out who we're talking about.

Kerry Reed [01:44:13] I can probably recognize you, but aside from that. Mr. Bubby, where did you go--did you go to church growing up? Did you go to church growing up?

Bruce Ware [01:44:23] Did you go to church growing up? Did you go to church growing up?

Bubba Johnson [01:44:31] I would say yes.

Kerry Reed [01:44:33] What church?

Bubba Johnson [01:44:36] Belmont Avenue, Fifth and P, Mt. Olive in Arlington.

Michael Johnson [01:44:45] And Alfred Street, right?

Bubba Johnson [01:44:45] Oh yeah. Reverend Macklin was the pastor, and they come from Culpeper, too. Reverend Macklin was a young boy preaching in Culpeper. And he had to stand on a box to see up over the pulpit.

Kerry Reed [01:45:10] These are great.

Bubba Johnson [01:45:14] But all them pictures are my gang. The people there was close to me coming along.

Kerry Reed [01:45:21] Absolutely.

Bubba Johnson [01:45:23] Yep. Somewhere, I keep trying to think of them back then, what was he? A doctor?

Michael Johnson [01:45:35] Not to cut you off. There was in Gum Springs a last name of Stokes. It was some Stokes. Stokes--came out of Gum Springs, Stokes.

Bubba Johnson [01:45:47] I know of some Stokes.

Michael Johnson [01:45:49] I can't think of the guy's first name, but his last name is Stokes.

Bubba Johnson [01:45:54] But he used to come down here to go to church, see? And my parents, they grew up. I mean, they met or whatever it is at the Hollin, what is it? Gum Springs, Hollin Hall.

Michael Johnson [01:46:19] Hollin Hall.

Bubba Johnson [01:46:20] Yeah, that's where they both worked, see. The house was right there. My mother's house was right there by the project, the farmland. And her father, he worked the [inaudible]

Kerry Reed [01:46:49] Was this your dog? Was this your dog?

Bubba Johnson [01:46:52] That's my dog.

Kerry Reed [01:46:53] What was his name? Her name? This one, right here.

Bruce Ware [01:46:57] Yeah. Which one was it? There were so many.

Michael Johnson Well, I don't know.

Bruce Ware [01:47:01] You would know better than me.

Bubba Johnson [01:47:02] What was that dog name's name? He was a German shepherd. And my father was raising pointers and setters.

Kerry Reed [01:47:07] Yeah.

Bubba Johnson [01:47:08] And he comes along and…

Kerry Reed [01:47:13] Yeah. Yeah.

Bubba Johnson [01:47:14] See? And he come along.

Bruce Ware [01:47:16] And what? Okay, so what was the Doberman's name? You got that Doberman. So, you went from Dobermans to Chihuahuas.

Michael Johnson [01:47:32] I'll tell you why, because I did the same thing—big dog to a small one.

Bruce Ware [01:47:36] Well, no, no, but no, because when I was a kid, the funniest sight ever was his little Chihuahua named Mousey. And you see Mousey sitting in his Corvette, they little head over…he said, "C'mon Mousey, dit, dit, dit." The dog jumped in the Corvette; little Mousey dog take off in that Corvette—it was the darndest thing you ever did see. There were two Chihuahuas, I think.

Bubba Johnson [01:48:04] You look back at it, a dog was real pet. And you look at dogs today, and I think people got them more for security.

Bruce Ware [01:48:15] Magnum, Magnum was the Doberman's name. Magnum.

Bubba Johnson [01:48:20] Yeah. But, you know, this, it's all part of life and having things and now I look at people. In the morning I go out, and there's somebody walking down the street with their dog. The dog was out being nosey. There was an article in the paper yesterday—or the day before yesterday—about the dog being nosey. Dog do everything with his nose.

Kerry Reed [01:48:51] That's funny. So, Mr. Bubby, where are your parents buried? What cemetery are your parents buried at?

Bubba Johnson [01:49:01] What did he say?

Bruce Ware [01:49:02] He said, "What cemetery are your parents buried at?"

Bubba Johnson [01:49:07] Where are they buried?

Kerry Reed [01:49:08] Yeah.

Bubba Johnson [01:49:15] Culpeper; over in Culpeper, right? Mother and father.

Michael Johnson [01:49:22] I guess I was right

Bubba Johnson [01:49:23] And your mother is in Maryland, right?

Bruce Ware [01:49:27] Yeah. Lincoln. Lincoln.

Michael Johnson [01:49:28] Lincoln Cemetery.

Bruce Ware [01:49:30] Right next to Trixie.

Bubba Johnson [01:49:34] But Culpeper, the whole family…Well, they had a grandmother, grandfather, mother, father. They are all in the plot. And it's the thing is in all things are right together. And I think the grandparents might be buried somewhere.

Michael Johnson [01:50:02] Culpeper; Peyton Johnson; yeah, they're buried right there.

Bruce Ware [01:50:07] [inaudible]

Bubba Johnson [01:50:08] [inaudible]

Bruce Ware [01:50:09] And so, look. I've been down there. The first time I went down and we went looking for it. We'd gone there once before, years ago. Right? To go find Peyton's tombstone. I think there was a reunion coming up. But we go back again, and we must have walked for an hour going through the cemetery.

Michael Johnson [01:50:37] No, but I wanted to, and we went back. Yeah, we were at the very end.

Bruce Ware [01:50:40] We had passed it five minutes in, five minutes in. We walked right past it. And did the whole thing.

Michael Johnson [01:50:48] I did the same thing, went past it, went around it. I said "wait a minute. It wasn't this long of a walk." Came out around the chapel and ran right into it.

Bubba Johnson [01:50:58] So many things had changed.

Bruce Ware [01:51:00] [inaudible]

Michael Johnson [01:51:01] They expanded it. The one part was for coloreds; the other part was white.

Bubba Johnson [01:51:06] Because the house is closer to the plots.

Michael Johnson [01:51:11] Right, that's how I found out. I hadn't walked this far. When we went to the last reunion down there—the one you did--we walked out the door it was like we went right to it. And I went back down there. I said, "Wait a minute, this ain't right." I walked around the whole cemetery; something ain't right. Well, then I'm going to give it up. And I walked back and was right there in front of me.

Bruce Ware [01:51:35] He and I did same thing. We, said, "Okay, we give up" and darn if we didn't like stumble right into it. I said, "I thought you said, you knew…" "I did know where it was." I said, "Oh man, you're killing me."

Bubba Johnson [01:51:47] They changed it around. You come in and you could walk right over to the plot. [inaudible]

Michael Johnson [01:51:56] Once they put a new parking lot in. They built a new chapel, whatever they called it. Yeah, yeah. And it threw me off.

Bruce Ware [01:52:02] It was just funny.

Kerry Reed [01:52:03] When did you last go down to Culpeper, Mike?

Michael Johnson [01:52:05] I went down there back in June of this year.

Kerry Reed [01:52:08] Okay.

Michael Johnson [01:52:09] Yeah. We had gone out [inaudible] a couple of years back, right before Covid, I think it was.

Bruce Ware [01:52:15] Yeah. 2019.

Michael Johnson [01:52:16] Right. And then I went down the right way. We didn't walk this far, and I kept walking around, I said, "I'm going back home." I'll find it when i come back. And as I was walking back, it was right in front of me. I made sure I took a picture, so I know exactly where it is you know. But you're right. [inaudible] told me, the road is where they walkway used to be. But they built their house and then you'd come out of the chapel or whatever, you know, it would throw you off. The road used to turn up right up in here, then they built the chapel back here. You'd come into the chapel. We went in the chapel and then walked through, and I kept saying, "This is too long of a walk."

Bubba Johnson [01:52:55] Yeah. So. Yeah.

Kerry Reed [01:52:59] So you put together the last Johnson reunion. When was that?

Michael Johnson [01:53:04] That was July of 2024.

Kerry Reed [01:53:06] July of 2024. Did Mr. Bubby attend?

Michael Johnson [01:53:08] They came.

Kerry Reed Okay. [01:53:14] What was the one before that? Was that the one you put on Mr. Bruce?

Bruce Ware [01:53:15] No, that was. Virginia Beach.

Michael Johnson [01:53:18] Virginia Beach. I was at that one.

Kerry Reed [01:53:21] Where was that one?

Michael Johnson [01:53:22] That was Virginia Beach; that was like 2015, [20]16, [20]17? You did [20]19.

Bruce Ware [01:53:33] You know, I think mine was [20]18, now I think about it. Because Covid…

Michael Johnson [01:53:37] Okay.

Bruce Ware [01:53:38] Right. So, mine would have been 2018; Chuck's would have been 2019. And then we skipped Covid. So, yours was the first one since Covid.

Michael Johnson [01:53:50] And I was voluntold to do it.

Bruce Ware [01:53:54] Oh man, I'll never forget that. Libby Clark-Lewis said, "I think Mike Johnson needs to run the next family reunion." And I said, "Well, I hope Mike Johnson knows that he's running the next family reunion."

Kerry Reed [01:54:09] This is really interesting to me that y'all have so many close together because I've only ever been to one family reunion when I was four years old and I didn't know a damn soul there. Right. So y'all having all these…

Michael Johnson [01:54:23] But the first one for me was in 1980-something.

Bruce Ware [01:54:28] And so it's interesting side note…

Bubba Johnson [01:54:31] [inaudible] funeral. If you can believe me, I didn't know anybody in there.

Bruce Ware [01:54:42] Except half the people there knew who you were.

Bubba Johnson [01:54:44] And then her husband. He was different.

Bruce Ware [01:54:52] So again, this speaks volumes. So again, the funeral we went to, this was my best friend's mother who basically lived next door. I know, we've known each other all our lives. He knew his mother growing up. Right. And so, I go over to see him and he goes, "My brother. My other brother." Right. And his first question is "Where's Bubby?"

And I said, "Well, Bubby's over there, right in the pew." He says "Well, the Bubba does not come to see the people. The people go to see the Bubba." And I said, this ain't nothing. And here it's this man's mother's funeral. He gets up and goes and walks over to Bubba, to go great him. He's supposed to go great them. And he gets up to go see the Bubba. I said, "What does that say? What does that say?" I say, 'Okay, he's going to greet the Bubba."

Bubba Johnson [01:55:59] It might not be family, but it's all friends; lifetime friends.

Michael Johnson [01:56:05] Louis Johnson was in Congress; he had a big house. It had a pool. A son or somebody had one of the only one hundred Mercedes made or something

Bruce Ware [01:56:19] Reggie, yeah, inherited it.

Michael Johnson [01:56:20] I was working for the power company at the time and when he found that out, he was like, "Look, you need to come work for the Johnson Electric" or something like that. I was like, "Huh?" "I've got a company and you've got to come work for me." And that was the last time I saw him; the last time I saw him. He passed.

Bruce Ware [01:56:39] Right. Not long after.

Bubba Johnson [01:56:42] But the one who came up to the Johnsons from here, would come up to our house. Jack, Jack Johnson. And I never met nobody connected to him. [inaudible] downtown.

Michael Johnson [01:57:01] The thing was he would always try to like, get us to travel with him on the [inaudible] bus and go to DC because my father knew that you might not see him for 3 or 4 weeks. He said, "I don't take my kids with me." He used to always grab me and my brothers and sit us down. And the way he shut us up was—he'd drink his wine, cheap wine and we'd have ginger snaps, right? But he was always trying to take us somewhere with him. And my father was "No, no Jack." If my father wasn't home, he could just answer, "Jack," and just leave. He always talked about Arlington. We thought he had kids or a wife in Arlington because that's where he'd always go.

Bubba Johnson [01:57:40] He'd go to Arlington and stay for days.

Bruce Ware [01:57:42] It's funny because this is one of the few common memories the three of us have. My memory of Jack is—and I'm a little kid, but what I remember was like—and this is the family. Sometimes we'd come down for the summer and Jack would already be there, already be there. But he wasn't there long. Just as soon as you saw he was gone. Or I'll never forget. I hear the front doorbell ring. I go look at the front door. And it's Jack. And I knew to let him in. It was Jack and I just opened it and my grandma said, "Who's that?" I says, "Jack." She goes, "Jack." And then, you know, and then he come in and he just would, he'd sit down, whatever.

Michael Johnson [01:58:23] The only thing that I remember, like my great grandfather Warner Johnson--it was that Jack's hair would turn like, it was white, silver or something. And I was like, "Where did you get that hair from?" And it was straight, straight.

Bruce Ware [01:58:37] It was white, straight, straight out. Right.

Michael Johnson [01:58:40] And then when I look at my great grandfather Warner Johnson, that's where he got it. And because they were brothers, I mean, Albert and my Uncle Jack were brothers. But Warner, that's where he got it from. He'd go to DC; I don't know how he got to DC. He'd be in Arlington all the time because he'd talk about…he had this little weird way of talking because he had these teeth ground down and I had it too, because I inherited it. He was [inaudible] and had no teeth, you know. Well, he had a couple of teeth. But he'd always say, "I'm going up to Arlington." [inaudible]

Bruce Ware [01:59:25] And you're right. it was so hard to understand him or something. I just gave up. And I'd ask him something, he'd tell you something. And I didn't understand him. [NB: Bruce and Michael were talking over each other]

Michael Johnson [01:59:38] He worked at the Ice House, that was up here by the McDonald's, when he could get work. Then the one there that one of the guys just turned into ice cream factory?

Kerry Reed [01:59:47] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [01:59:48] Down on the side street. What is it…[NB: Commerce Street]. He used to work there, too, because we used to run over there. And that's when they sold blocks of us. You could get a block of ice. He used to be there working by himself sometimes.

Kerry Reed [02:00:02] So, for clarification. This is your Uncle Jack.

Michael Johnson [02:00:04] My great uncle.

Kerry Reed [02:00:05] Your great uncle Jack, which is Warner Johnson's son? Okay. And then that would be your great uncle as well.

Bruce Ware [02:00:12] Yeah, I would say yes.

Michael Johnson [02:00:18] Yeah, because they came on the same first batch. That's right.

Kerry Reed [02:00:19] What was your relation to Jack, Mr. Bubba? To Jack, the one who would come by the house?

Bubba Johnson [02:00:25] Yeah. Jack.

Kerry Reed [02:00:26] Who is he to you? Is he your cousin or….

Bubba Johnson [02:00:29] He was supposed to be a cousin

Michael Johnson [02:00:32] Your cousin, a kind of a first cousin.

Bubba Johnson [02:00:36] And he was the only one that I knew of here in Alexandria, as being in Alexandria. It was the only Johnson I knew of, you know. And, I guess I look back at it and I say, "if I had known, I'd have come down here." See, I came down here, but I didn't know no relatives or nobody.

Bruce Ware [02:00:59] See, that's what's so funny to me. I, too, knew of Jack from—I want to say, "Where has he been in Alexandria?" And that was like, "Oh, well, that explains it all. He's from Alexandria." [NB: Bruce and Michael are talking over each other.]

Bubba Johnson [02:01:17] He'd come by the house any time.

Michael Johnson [02:01:19] He'd always say he was going to Arlington. I never get that. And one occasion he's going to Washington, DC to see some family members.

Kerry Reed [02:01:26] So it seems like Uncle Jack or Cousin Jack knew the entire family.

Michael Johnson [02:01:29] He knew everybody there.

Bruce Ware [02:01:31] That's what I'm saying. And that's why, to me, it's amazing.

Michael Johnson [02:01:37] I thought he didn't have any kids.

Bruce Ware [02:01:41] Yeah. Yeah. Right. And that's why I thought it was just Jack from Alexandria. Not knowing that there was this whole other family in Alexandria.

Michael Johnson [02:01:49] Yeah. That's how he was.

Kerry Reed [02:01:50] So, Bruce, when did you meet Mike for the first time?

Bruce Ware [02:01:55] That would have been at Reggie's. The reunion. Yeah, that was…And you probably know the story better than I do, because what was so bizarre about that because I never forget, my brothers showed up.

Michael Johnson [02:02:26] John and Paul.

Bruce Ware [02:02:11] They said, "we met him at the gas station." "What?" "Yeah, we found out we were related." I mean, you met him at the gas station and found out you was related. Yeah, I'm like, okay, guys, I'll go with that. And that was the first time.

Michael Johnson [02:02:24] And your mother had told us about y'all, but we had never really physically met them.

Bruce Ware [02:02:28] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [02:02:29] All she said was, "I got some boys. I want you boys to meet your all cousins." And we're like "Where are they at?" She said "Reston." "Reston?" Like that.

Bruce Ware [02:02:38] And I think it was just a passing conversation. Yeah. They were like, "We were all headed to this reunion, you know, blah, blah, blah." I said, "Who? I just saw people." And so, they all showed up. You know what's even funnier about this? It was kind of like this weird thing, like you all would kind of come in and you'd go out.

Michael Johnson [02:03:01] That's because people weren't keeping in touch with us.

Bruce Ware [02:03:04] I know; agreed. And now I'm living in Africa at the time, and I remember…. And so, they would come up with these little Facebook groups for the family. And they were public. And then, I will never forget. So, I'm part of this group and I see from Mike Johnson and he says, "I think I'm related to you all" and I said, "You are." And that's when he and I really started. Because I was like, "Mike, yes, I will make certain we…" Even the reunion--not the one that I did--but the one prior to that.

Michael Johnson [02:03:39] We went to one in Ocean City. But that was because my aunt's sister, we took her over there--me, Jeffrey, and her son. It was raining. I never forget it was raining. And before, remember I told you that I went to Harrisburg.

Bruce Ware [02:03:53] Right, Right. And then it was the one that…Did you go to the Poconos?

Michael Johnson [02:03:59] No, we didn't go.

Bruce Ware [02:04:01] And that was the one where I was like, I remember because he was like, "Wow! Nobody said nothing to us about the Poconos." And I was like, "You know what? I will make certain," and I made it my mission that everything…And that's when we started the tree again because I was like, I need to know who's what, who and that whole thing. And I think we've been like, good ever since. But yes, it's just been bizarre. And then seeing it again, we get this whole other block of relatives up in New York that have just kind of started trickling in a little bit. And I'm just…Like we need…I know that story. But again, it's like if you let certain people tell it, you think that the family story is one way and these other stories are like something else. But I'm like this. We know that there's a far bigger tapestry of this family. And that's what the goal, our mission is, to try to pull that all together. Yeah.

Kerry Reed [02:04:56] I'm curious. So, does that tapestry, does that start with Walter Johnson or who is that?

Michael Johnson [02:05:02] It starts with Peyton.

Bruce Ware [02:05:03] Peyton, Peyton. But then Peyton's got all these.

Michael Johnson [02:05:06] So Peyton was married three times with thirty-three kids.

Kerry Reed [02:05:07] He had thirty-three kids.

Bruce Ware [02:05:09]. Right.

Michael Johnson [02:05:10] But we're from the first set, Eliza.

Bruce Ware [02:05:12] But Mike is from the Warner Johnson tree. Then it was Henry Johnson who only had one child. There was Matty Phillips who had two children.

Michael Johnson [02:05:24] Henry Johnson's not the same one I'm talking about.

Bruce Ware [02:05:26] Right.

Kerry Reed [02:05:27] It was a different Henry Johnson?

Michael Johnson [02:05:28] Right. The same side of the page of the family.

Bruce Ware [02:05:31] But that was that was the other thing, too, because the names got recirculated a lot in the family.

Bubba Johnson [02:05:36] Were you at the family reunion [inaudible] school up there.

Michael Johnson [02:05:42] Yeah, I did that. That's the one I put together.

Bubba Johnson [02:05:46] I didn't see you.

Michael Johnson [02:05:46] Yes you did.

Bruce Ware [02:05:47] Oh no, man.

Michael Johnson [02:05:50] No, no, no. I'm going to tell you what happened. No, no, no. You're right. I'm going to tell you where I'm at. He came up and Liv or somebody said…I think it was Cathy said, "That's Bubby Johnson, right? I said, "I heard his name, but I never met him." So, when I walked up, everybody was around me. But I'm saying, "I'm Michael Johnson." But you probably didn't hear me.

Bruce Ware [02:06:11] Yeah, I know, because I told him you'd seen him.

Michael Johnson [02:06:15] You did really great because everybody was just amazed to see him. He's the oldest Johnson. He's the oldest one. He's the oldest one there.

Bubba Johnson [02:06:22] Well. You know, I never heard that. Yes, absolutely. And all I can think of was I'm the oldest Johnson here.

Michael Johnson [02:06:30] Well, and that's what Libby had told him because Libby, somehow…well, I guess through my great uncle, Henry Johnson, Jack Johnson's brother, because Jack had a brother that rode a bike here. And I told you he died at 104.

Bruce Ware [02:06:46] Which is right.

Michael Johnson [02:06:47] Henry Johnson.

Bruce Ware [02:06:48] Yeah. Right. Because it was, it was Jack, Lillian, Samuel, Ethel, Ella, Henry. And then Warner, Calvin, Fanny, Marie, and Carrie.

Michael Johnson [02:07:02] Marie is Carrie's daughter, Marie [inaudible] is Carrie's daughter.

Bruce Ware [02:07:07] Okay. I got to shift that over. I've got it listed as a child.

Michael Johnson [02:07:16] She's Carrie's daughter.

Bruce Ware [02:07:18] Okay. And look, how amazing is this? We got this fricking spreadsheet with the fact that we finally got to the point where we got a spreadsheet here and we can get it documented and it's still only what, maybe 70%, flushed out. You still [inaudible] easily. Yeah.

Michael Johnson [02:07:33] Try to redo it would be a great thing.

Bruce Ware [02:07:36] But then like I said, he's got all these other kids and then it was Charles Johnson, that's Sonny's people.

Michael Johnson [02:07:45] Who did the first document? Because somebody did the first--they didn't have all the names, but…

Bruce Ware [02:07:53] I know the one you're talking about too. I have that and I got that one from Sonny.

Michael Johnson [02:07:57] Okay.

Bruce Ware [02:07:57] And that's where it came, right? Yeah.

Michael Johnson [02:07:59] And my father had that.

Bruce Ware [02:08:00] Right.

Michael Johnson [02:08:02] [inaudible]

Bruce Ware [02:08:03] Yeah, it's very crude, but you've got to really break it down to understand it. And that's why I set up the spreadsheet--breaks it down a lot easier. I used that to create this. And then from that, then the stuff that other people started sending me and I was able to put it together. But like a lot of them didn't have kids like Senator. Did you know Senator?

Michael Johnson [02:08:24] Senator; I heard that.

Bruce Ware [02:08:26] Uncle Ment, Uncle Hunter. I remember meeting Uncle Hunter. Did you meet Uncle Hunter? Okay. And Rina, who I know nothing about, and then Walter Johnson. That's a whole other right there. Because that was Joseph, Joseph and Edna and Anna Mae. And that was Libby Campbell's father. Right?

Michael Johnson [02:08:47] And Libby's mother was a Johnson, right? Libby and her mother.

Bruce Ware [02:08:51] Right. Yeah, right. And then Mary Sprow?, who had no children.

Michael Johnson [02:08:56] Right. Mary Johnson Sprow?.

Bruce Ware [02:08:57] Right, right, right. And then Amy…yeah, Mary Johnson Sprow?, Then Amy Bundy, who had Wilmer and Hester. Hester was Trixie's mother.

Michael Johnson [02:09:07] Right. [inaudible] Bruce, our cousin Michelle. Mary Johnson Sprow's? Bible had listed who was working on the plantation, what their job was. We went to Richmond for the dedication, same day as Arthur Ashe--we changed the name and I met John Lewis. He was there in the museum with us, when they had that dedication to our cousin.

Bruce Ware [02:09:36] What was funny is when you hit Katie Johnson Chivis, boom. That's when this whole thing—that's where the Hearse's, the Findlay's the Keyes's, the Clark's—all of them came out of that one tree. It's crazy. And so, from that Big Bang—sort of eclipsed the rest of it. Sam Chivis, Amy, Mary Keyes—you know, all of them.

Michael Johnson [02:10:06] You know, it was like, I was telling the first family reunion I went to. I don't know how we got your information, but we got it. So, we go up to Harrisburg, right? No, the first one was in Silver Spring and there weren't that many people there. The first one I went to. The next one we went to was in Harrisburg. And they say, "do an introduction." You put a name tag on. But we just had our first name. And so, when they got around me and my brother, I say, "I'm Michael Johnson." They look. He says, I'm "Steve Johnson." And they looked again. "I'm Jeffrey Johnson." I said, "What do you mean? You can't all be Johnsons." "No, we're Johnsons." I said, "Right.' They didn't think there were any other Johnsons; all they knew was him [points to Bubba Johnson] who was still living [inaudible] I think it was.

Bruce Ware [02:11:00] So, let me ask you if you remember this. I was telling someone the other day. I don't remember where it was at—it might have been Harrisburg. But do you remember we were lobbying to have the reunion in Culpeper? And we were like…This little group, we got together. We said "We need to go back to Culpeper. right?" And they said, "Okay, we're going to take a vote. We'll see. Anybody want to go to Culpeper?"

So, Culpeper won, right? We're like, "Yes, we did it!" And then they come back later. They said, "it changed." Yeah. They said, "We know the date, but you have to take into consideration the older folks and we're going to go back to Harrisburg." We're like "But it was a fricking vote." It was like democracy had been usurped.

Michael Johnson [02:11:50] Harrisburg was pretty much dominating the reunions.

Bruce Ware [02:11:51] Yeah, Yeah. Because again, that's where most of them were. So that's why I felt it was imperative that when we finally did get to Culpeper--decades later.

Michael Johnson [02:12:00] When you say Culpeper, definitely. Yeah.

Bruce Ware [02:12:02] Yeah. So, it's just funny. But, you know, what's fascinating about this is, I think from Mike and I-- I don't want to put words in his mouth--I feel like for all the information we have,

there's so much missing. And yet when we talk to people outside the family of what we're trying to do, they are amazed at the amount of information we have. They're like, "You have all this information on your family." They're like "I don't even know…" like they can't even go maybe one or two generations back. "I know I had some people, somewhere that's, you know," and it's kind of like, wow, you almost feel for them in a way because it's like we've been fighting this struggle like all our lives to, you know, continue.

Michael Johnson [02:12:51] And then the amazing thing about Peyton Johnson, for me which I'm trying to find out is it's Colonel Bragg, who was a Confederate officer, who they believe was Peyton Johnson's father, because he made sure Peyton was taken care of when he passed. Peyton's mother Winnie, we know, came from Kentucky at the age of four years old or something like that, they say. And that's why they want to go to [inaudible] because that's what she had been originally from. So, I'm trying to tie in that because when I looked at Peyton Johnson's death certificate, they had an unknown father, unknown mother. So that's a red flag for me when you look at old documents. You know what I mean? I mean it you're the child of a slave the master didn't want to acknowledge. So, I'm still working on Colonel Bragg.

Bruce Ware [02:13:49] Yeah, because that's what Sonny Potter and I used to talk about all the time because he was like, "What was the significance of this man?" in that he was able to have all these children, you know, and they [inaudible]

Michael Johnson [02:14:07] [inaudible] on the whole east coast. So, he used to get passes to go places like Baltimore used to say we you know there might be some more jobs.

Bruce Ware [02:14:15] He never told me what he was doing to and from wherever.

Michael Johnson [02:14:19] He had thirty-three kids.

Kerry Reed [02:14:21] That's incredible. Yeah.

Michael Johnson [02:14:23] So there's more work to be done. We just like I say, we got to share the information and get more information than like Bubby being here. Like, you know this as close as I could get to touch Peyton Johnson.

Kerry Reed [02:14:38] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [02:14:39] You know, because this ties me into my family, because me and my brothers and sister shared it with Bruce last night. We only knew my mother's side because my father's side it was only his sisters and his brother. And we thought we were the only Johnson boys. I was the only kid with the name Johnson you know. [inaudible]

Bruce Ware [02:15:00] And that's why I and again, that's why I was kind of heartened to really see Mike be so adamant about it because again, I'm like, I know they out there, you know, But it's like does anybody, you know, give a rat's crap that we get these loose connections? We need to bring them all back into the fold, you know. So, when he's reaching out saying. "Hey," I'm like, "No, I am with you. I am there. Let us get together and bring even more." Because in that way, it diffuses this whole misconception of who we are as a family. And, you know, at the end of the day, it's only but so big of a deal. But when you see this revisionist history taking place and you're saying, "You almost like exing us out of existence," you know. Again, the tree is like this, but you're trying to tell it like this, like you

started here. And we're like, no, it started over here and works like this. So, we're going to tell the story of you talking about being truth tellers. Then let's tell the truth the way the way it needs to be told.

Michael Johnson [02:16:05] What fascinates me is that, you know, we do have relatives in Pennsylvania at the university, but just the love for history that I see and so many them, you know, it's like there is a teaching or novelists like we are, you know, I'm like, wow, you know? And I'm like, where did we get that from? Because. I've played sports, but I never really loved sport. I could do a lot of other things, but I don't really love it as much as history.

Bruce Ware [02:16:37] Because that's, you know, and then not to take it too deep, but that's what you do. You know, even as a kid, that's what used to get me was, you know, and again, I love literature. I'm like where are the stories about people that look like me? I just figured, well, we never really got around to telling it. Then you find out. No, they've been told for years. You've just not been privy to it. And then you find all this documentation. Again, Frederick Douglass was the first one who I was like, "oh my gosh, you got to be fricking kidding me." And then you find out all these other people when they had the opportunity, they told their stories.

Michael Johnson [02:17:11] Now, let me tell you this, four months before Frederick Douglass died, he spoke right there on King Street at the old Alexandria Opera House. So, after he died four or five months later, the people that was owning the property, Howland?, well, that's where the cemetery is now, I could take you there when it's not raining and daylight, I'd take you there. They named it after Frederick Douglass. And then when I found out through my mother, because she's always—I was taking her to the doctor. She said, "So you got people buried over there." I said "I ain't got no damn body buried over there. Not in that cemetery, right?" And she kept saying, "Yes, you do." So, when she passed, something just pulled me over there. Then, everything started to come together for me. I mean, like, "this is my people." Then I started checking funeral home records, church records, burial records, stuff like that, death certificates. These are my people.

[inaudible; Bruce and Michael talking over each other}

Bruce Ware [02:18:13] And this is like I said, this is so fascinating to me because again, when I first started trying to compile like, you know, all of the family tree stuff back together, Florence's mother emailed me one day. Every now and again I'd hear from her. But, but in this particular--she emailed, she said, "Where is everyone buried?" And it struck me like a thunderbolt because I was like I knew of, I had an idea that, you know, the people in Culpeper. But I knew Uncle Louis wasn't buried in Culpeper. I knew this [inaudible] wasn't buried in Culpeper. Where are these people buried?

Michael Johnson [02:18:52] I think Lincoln was a prestigious place for affluent Blacks to be buried in its day, in its heyday. I think that's why a lot of them chose it.

Bruce Ware [02:19:02] Yeah. That's why, like, again, when I had the time to go through, you know, it would be interesting because, again, my mom is buried in Lincoln. Trixie's buried in Lincoln. Trixie's mother's buried in Lincoln. I'm sure I wouldn't be surprised to find others buried in Lincoln. But again, the fact that we can say with 100% assuredness where our relatives are buried, to me, that, like that gnaws in me, you know, because we should know, you know, and that's it. And that goes back to the whole thing of knowing your history.

Michael Johnson [02:19:34] We have [inaudible] and others buried in that cemetery. And we have Coleman Cemetery, which is down the highway a way, you know. That's another one, you know. And Johnsons buried there, Fanny—Fanny Johnson Rigby, she's buried there. Carrie [inaudible] is buried right in front of my parents there in Mount Comfort; she was cremated. So, we put a bench there and took a capsule of her cremation and put it in there. And she was a Scientologist. She was—and that was like, weird, yeah.

Bruce Ware [02:20:13] That is weird.

Michael Johnson [02:20:14] But she worked for the Library of Congress for like 40 years.

Bubba Johnson [02:20:18] But have we got a cemetery there?

Michael Johnson Yeah. We got two.

Bubba Johnson I'm trying to think. [inaudible] cemetery.

Michael Johnson [02:20:26] Yeah, that's why I say, if I show you Douglass, you might have been there when it was just a dirt road

Kerry Reed [02:20:32] Mister Bubba, did you ever come to any funerals here in Alexandria at all? Did you ever attend any funerals down here in Alexandria? Or anything like that?

Bubba Johnson [02:20:41] Not that I can remember.

Kerry Reed [02:20:43] Okay.

Bruce Ware [02:20:44] But see what's funny--And not to be morbid, but as I was telling Mike the other day--growing up as a little kid because the family was so big, I come down here in the summertime and it wouldn't be uncommon to go to at least two funerals a summer. And then they'd say, "Oh, so-and-so passed away." I'm like, "Oh, no, now we got another," you know, just as a little kid, all the things you can think to do other than stand around in a cemetery mourning somebody you barely knew, you know. But there were just tons of funerals. And again, can I say where they all were, were they at Lincoln? Do you know where Uncle Ment was buried? Do you remember where Uncle Ment was buried? Because I remember going to Uncle Ment's funeral. That much I remember.

Bubba Johnson [02:21:32] Was he buried in Arlington Cemetery?

Bruce Ware [02:21:34] I don't know. That's why I'm asking you.

Bubba Johnson [02:21:36] And I think he was.

Michael Johnson [02:21:38] Where was he living in when he passed?

Bruce Ware [02:21:40] D.C.? Pretty sure. D.C.

Michael Johnson [02:21:44] Libby knows the guy that runs the [inaudible]

Bubba Johnson [02:21:53] Uncle Ment is buried in Arlington Cemetery.

Michael Johnson [02:21:57] What if he died and lived in D.C.? That was [inaudible]

Bubba Johnson [02:22:02] I think that was…

Bruce Ware [02:22:03] You know. You know what?

Bubba Johnson [02:22:04] I think it was a veteran's administration [inaudible]

Bruce Ware [02:22:08] Okay. So, wait a minute. I might actually have the answer to that and don't really know it. Is there Wi-fi in here? If not, I got a hot spot. I can do a hot spot. Easy to do a hot spot than Wi-fi. So, this goes back to what we were talking about the other day.

Michael Johnson [02:22:24] What time do you need to get back?

Kerry Reed [02:22:27] It's at six. So, we're good.

Bruce Ware [02:22:29] So, what I would do is, you know, I'd get these papers from people and a lot of them would be the programs from the funeral.

Michael Johnson [02:22:42] And very important to keep those.

Bruce Ware [02:22:44] Yeah. And I and I re-did. Like I said, I found myself reimagining them because the photos like the ones of Uncle Ment it was awful, it was terrible and I said, no, he deserves better than that. And so, I redid it with what I thought was a good picture of him. But all the information is in. I'm thinking if he if he is, it'll be in here. And I just want to see if I can pull it up easily because I know I know where it's at. Well that's what I'm saying. It's like we don't, we don't. It's like when I get with somebody like Mike and I feel like he's got the same passion that I do for this family stuff. Then I get psyched about it because most of the time I feel like nobody gives a rat's crap about why. Yeah. Other than me, I like it. But I know Mike is out there now, so now I feel a little better about pursuing it because I'm like, he's got the same, same passion, same goal. And again, it the fact that we are sitting here, and this is not to disparage Libby, because I think if not for Libby, we, neither one of us would have this passion. But the fact that we are trying to do this for someone that does this professionally for a living, yeah. I'm like, "Why? Why are we the ones?" You know, I would think your passion would be just as great, if not even more so.

Michael Johnson [02:24:06] But what I learned about her was that when you get close to something that you're looking for, she started giving you answers. It's pretty much making us work for it ourselves. But in doing that, we're going to revise some of the things that she may have missed. Well, that's the good thing about it, you know, and that's why those who might come behind us, might see something different. That's why I told her I want to meet—what's his name? The one who wrote the book about debtors?

Kerry Reed [02:24:46] Yeah. Kissinger?

Michael Johnson [02:24:48] I never met the man, but the conversation I had with him, he said, "I'm hoping that you can shine a light on the things that I missed because I only used the technology that was available to me back then." And I'm like, Wow. You know, I thought he'd be like, "Well, my book is the legal document." And he never did that. "I'm hoping that you can shine a light on [inaudible] Douglas, because you've got more avenues to research then I had." Wow. So that's why I wanted to go down to meet him. Just interview him just like we're doing. Just talk to him. He's written several books, you know, and I think you get a lot from them. I always would sit around the around older people, right? And my dad would be playing cards, [inaudible], whatever. And his brother [inaudible] all the kids outside playing. And he used to tell me, "Michael, go outside and play." I used to get mad.

Kerry Reed [02:25:46] Like listening to the stories.

Michael Johnson [02:25:47] Yeah. And they didn't like it. [inaudible] and I'd just like sit there and "Whoa," you know. Like one time, it was a conversation about sex. Who was getting the most sex? And my father rose to say, I've got Michael J. here." And I had to be like 12 years old you know and didn't know nothing about sex. And my father said, "He's probably ignoring you anyway." You know, I remember those types of conversations with the family

Bruce Ware [02:26:20] Found it.

Kerry Reed [02:26:22] Found where Uncle Met's buried?

Bruce Ware [02:26:23] Yeah. Well no. I found what I said about him, so I'm trying to look at the program to see if it identifies. So, give me one second; I'm going to pull this up.

Bubba Johnson [02:26:33] You know the graves in Arlington?

Michael Johnson [02:26:35] Yeah.

Bubba Johnson [02:26:36] [inaudible]

Michael Johnson [02:26:37] Yeah. Whole lot of graves. I met and older gentleman—as a matter of fact, he and his brother. He worked in Alexandria for a long time.

Bubba Johnson [02:26:50] [inaudible] On 19th Street. Well, Connie, Connie is supposed to be Joe's daughter, I think. It's what I'm saying, see?

Michael Johnson [02:27:12] You stayed there?

Bubba Johnson [02:27:13] Not on 19th Street, but on 17th Street.

Michael Johnson [02:27:16] I'll have to come over one day. Because I know where the [inaudible], the Gantz. I didn't know that. I was telling Bruce this just last night. What's the name of that church?

Bruce Ware [02:27:27 Our Lady Queen of Peace.

Michael Johnson [02:27:31] I came over there one time.

Bruce Ware [02:27:33] Okay. How good am I? How good am I? {Bruce picks up laptop to show Michael.] I'm going to show you in a second. See, that's not the original. I redid the whole program, because that was the picture of Uncle Ment. It was him as an older man. And it was black and white. And I felt like he deserved better than that. He deserved to be memorialized as the man that I knew. But it says right there, internment, Lincoln Cemetery.

Bubba Johnson [02:27:58] Yeah.

Speaker 4 [02:28:00] How good am I? How good am I? Look at that! So, this is what I'm saying. So, I just took the original program, just redid the type and everything, put the photo on there, but it has it right there. He's in Lincoln Cemetery.

Michael Johnson [02:28:11] Yeah. What was the—Our Lady what?

Bruce Ware [02:28:13] Our Lady Queen of Peace.

Michael Johnson [02:28:15] Queen of Peace. Yeah. So, we would go there for the dance. You'd have a band.

Bubba Johnson [02:28:19] That's where they had those dances.

Michael Johnson [02:28:21] So, [inaudible] grabs the mike because I was messing with one of the Bellamy girls. He said, "You ladies from Alexandria I've got five minutes to leave and you all going to fight." So, me and my and my cousin and my other buddies looked at each other, "We can't break in five minutes." [inaudible]

Bubba Johnson [02:28:44] I used to live on the other side of the church, coming up 9th Street, just before you bought the house right beside the church. On the other side, there's a little street right there with my house.

Michael Johnson [02:28:57] Okay. What's the little—you know, down by the market, down by Green Valley. It was like a little…. I don't know what it was. [inaudible] you could buy food. I can't tell you the man's name who used to run it. Right where that market's at. Same building, but it was a community center, or something right there. People used to come there to get food. There was a pharmacist, too, right?

Bubba Johnson [02:29:22] On the corner.

Michael Johnson [02:29:24] On the corner.

Bubba Johnson [02:29:25] Yeah. And a drugstore.

Michael Johnson [02:29:26] Yeah.

Bubba Johnson [02:29:27] Tom Meese, he was Tom Meese. He was a Jew, a Jew. Actually, when they got ready to build the Pentagon, you had to move, and he came and built the store in there. So, then it was three stores in Green Valley, and you know, those people stayed in the store all day long. They lived there. And got up in the morning and went downstairs and open up the store.

Michael Johnson [02:29:51] Gantz lived three doors up from the store. And funny you said that because my grandmother, Albert Johnson's wife, Carrie Booker Johnson, was the first Black custodian, one of the first Black custodians in the Pentagon.

Bubba Johnson [02:30:09] It was a Johnson. You're familiar with the Westins. The Westins lived on [inaudible] Road. Dudley Westin. And up behind him was Johnson, Pookie Johnson

Michael Johnson [02:30:33] No. They're no kin to us, no kin to us because I dated one of the girls.

Bubba Johnson [02:30:38] [inaudible; Michael speaking over Mr. Bubba]

Michael Johnson [02:30:40] From Queen Street over there. From Ballston.

Bubba Johnson [02:30:45] Yeah.

Michael Johnson [02:30:46] And we go to there. He knew I was a Johnson, but he thought I was a kid and [inaudible] I worked for the power company, too. And that was our main route in Arlington, so I

started meeting people. In my high school, I met a couple of people because they went to Wakefield, right? And I was at T.C. We used to play each other.

Bubba Johnson [02:31:12] Yeah, well I got put out of the Washington school, like I said, in June. In September, I was back in Washington in school, see. And it was a thing that you look at it and you can say it was segregation. You can see it was just racial things, see?

Michael Johnson [02:31:40] But I'm going to get him to take a picture of what occurred today.

Bubba Johnson [02:31:45] Yeah. And Dunbar, which was Dunbar High School. It was segregated because the kids went across the street to Armstrong and they didn't associate with us kids.

Michael Johnson [02:31:59] And from what I understood, a guy named Mr. Munroe about Dunbar. They had some very, very smart Black kids.

Bubba Johnson [02:32:11] That's what they say.

Michael Johnson [02:32:12] That's what they say. That was their pitch. They had the brightest Black minds in the city.

Bubba Johnson [02:32:18] And it's actually what they came from.

Michael Johnson [02:32:24] Right. Exactly.

Bubba Johnson [02:32:25] And you look back at it and you think about it, you say, well, [inaudible]

Michael Johnson [02:32:30] I know they were just right. It was just disinformation.

Bubba Johnson [02:32:35] Out here, now, kids from out here would come out here to go to school to play football.

Michael Johnson [02:32:40] Yeah.

Bubba Johnson [02:32:41] Parker-Gray; Parker-Gray used to come over.

Michael Johnson [02:32:43] You heard of Earl Lloyd, the first Black player. He used to eat dinner at our house. Never said anything about him being a professional basketball player. His brother and my father was like that. Most people thought that we were family. As a matter of fact, his kids…His nephew now to this day, when they see each other, he says "What's up cuz?". We're not even kin. We used to be at each other's house during Thanksgiving and Christmas. And he grew up right by Parker-Gray. The old Parker-Gray. Earl Lloyd. My dad went to Parker-Gray but he only went until the sixth grade. If he was still living, he'd be 101.

Bubba Johnson [02:33:23] All the boys up there on Seminary--I knew everybody up there. See? And that's where I spent a lot of time up on Seminary.

Michael Johnson [02:33:34] Yeah. And I remember they took them people's land to build that school, T.C. Williams. Did you know that Bruce?

Bruce Ware [02:33:43] What's that?

Michael Johnson [02:33:44] Where T.C. Williams is right now. City High School. They took them Black people's land, built the school and then told all of them they would let them come back in, but didn't because that's where Terrell and them—there's some Johnsons up there, as a matter of fact. [inaudible] Every time they say "Johnson," I be checking up on them. [inaudible] the Johnsons up there**,** the Terrell's, the Adams, the Cases. Those five families were the original five families that were living on Seminary. You've got about six minutes, Kerry.

Bruce Ware [02:34:34] So just to show you--and I meant to print this out and I forgot. And I think you might have been cc'd on this, Mike. But so ironically, this was when Bruce Chivis passed, right? I sent this out because, one, I felt like it was important to tell the story between Uncle Bruce and the Bubba. But the whole thing is--so there's the Bubba, right?

Bubba Johnson [02:34:59] Who is that?

Bruce Ware [02:35:04] That's you. That's you. And it's because they knew him, this is the Bubba they knew. That's the youngest I've ever seen a picture of Uncle Bruce. And is that not Yvonne, Bubby?

Bubba Johnson [02:35:16] Yeah.

Bruce Ware [02:35:16] Right. And just how ironic.

Michael Johnson [02:35:19] I think that was up in Seminary when that picture was taken.

Bruce Ware [02:35:21] Right. So that tells me he was at Arlington at some point. They come down from Harrisburg. He was at Arlington. And this is the woman whose funeral we just had today, which again, is one of the youngest pictures I've ever seen of her. And then here's the…because I was mentioning how they were both named after Uncle Ment. Memphis [inaudible] and Memphis Bruce. They both named for Memphis and then there's the picture of all of them together. So, there's Mary Alice Chivis Keyes. That's Uncle Bruce's wife. I can't think of her name. Uncle Bruce. Uncle Sam and the Bubba. All of the first cousins. It was the first time y'all have been together in, like, forever. Forever. Forever.

And when he came in the door. I knew it was going to be like a bomb went off. This was my uncle Bruce's birthday, right? And they all went to the restaurant. And, you know, I'd shown up myself before in the past. But again, like I said, when I show up, they're like, "Where's Bubba? Where's Bubba? You need to bring Bubba." So, I walk in the front door and he just standing nonchalant behind me. And they all froze. They all just like they'd seen a ghost. And, Uncle Bruce said, "I don't believe it. I don't believe it." I mean, it just stopped the whole proceedings. And he said, "Boy, you done one hell of a job."

Again. I don't know what impact he had on these people, but the fact that that whole room stopped, it's like the time stood still and they all just you know it's just amazing. And like when I said this after, there's a lot of people in family commented about it. [inaudible]. So, I apologize for not sharing this with you until this minute. But that's something else I will share with you, sent to you. I sent that out right after Uncle Bruce had passed because I felt like he was he was the one that kept pushing me to get you back because I couldn't come to a family function anymore unless I brought you with me some kind of way. So anyway, so I just put that out.

Bubba Johnson [02:37:31] Well I still say, I'm proud of my nephew. No, no. You know, got to go through your stuff, boy. And I'm learning. I'm learning.

Bruce Ware [02:37:47] What do you do? Do you remember that when he had them glasses on? Because this was from that. That's the one I took you to was when he had them crazy looking had them crazy looking glasses on and he's running around with them crazy glasses. And I said…it I'll come back. What would I do with it? I just got to figure out what to do with it. Hang, on I just pulled it up again. [NB: Bruce is looking for something on his laptop]

Kerry Reed [02:38:18] So, we've been talking now-- Well, I guess I've been fortunate enough to listen to you talk for the past two hours and forty minutes.

Bruce Ware [02:38:27] I don't know what you got out of it.

Kerry Reed [02:38:29] I got a lot. Listen, I think one of the most interesting part about the Douglass Initiative and really this is the core of what we're trying to do is we're trying to, like, reconstitute, help reconnect as many families as we can. Right. So, this is this is the Johnson family here that tonight that we've been trying to reconnect to and talk about and learn as much as we can about the family, about your experiences, Mr. Bubba just about everything. And so, this family dynamic here is like that--at least in my opinion. That's sort of like the core of the Douglass Restoration Project, the Douglass initiative, right. Respecting those who have been interred at Douglass and then making sure that their memories, their stories aren't forgotten and that, you know, they're treated respectfully since they haven't been in the past. But I was hoping I could ask you all because it seems a lot of our conversations tonight have been centered around the photo albums that you took, Mr. Bubba. And I was curious if I could ask all of you, what was it like to see these photos either again for the first time?

Michael Johnson [02:39:33] For me, seeing them with Bruce. I never really laid eyes on the farm and where our great grandfather, Peyton Johnson, lived, And I was telling Bruce that when I look at pictures of my parents' relatives, I try to put myself in that time and place. And what were they thinking? What were they going through, you know? How was their life? You know, because that's a missing piece. They are a missing piece of my story. With Bubba being here now ties a lot up, you know. Bruce being here. They got pictures on my wall because my dad used to say, if you're not in the picture, you can't be framed. But he only said that like if somebody got in trouble. So, one of the neighbors said, "Well, I saw your son, Michael. He was stealing watermelons off Mr. Wilbur's truck," right. It means that I was in that picture. For the pictures that they have. I mean, it's archival for me.

Kerry Reed [02:40:37] So, Mr. Bubba, what was it like looking at all these pictures that you took again tonight? What was it like looking at them?

Bubba Johnson [02:40:45] Well, he got them from me, but I still got a lot of slides and whatnot, you know. I was telling them; I'd like for them to go through them and see what they find in there

Bruce Ware [02:41:06] Well that's what I said because this is just this little cooler is just the tip of the iceberg of what this guy had. I just. I just, like I said, and I just grabbed…

Because, again, it just this whole thing was very organic. My best friend's mom had passed, and I said, and I hadn't really, I said, well, I feel bad, but, you know, that's like eight hours up the road. I don't really know if I got that kind of time. And then as a couple of days went on, I just like, I literally felt like I have to go, you know, have to go. Because again, I said I knew he would want to go. And I said, let me go. Actually, I wasn't going to go unless he said he wanted to go. He said, "I'll go." So, then I was like, okay, then I'm headed up the road

Did it hit me like a thunderbolt? Mike and I had been having conversations about doing this. We'd had it several times. The reunion, the same thing. Mike was like, “The next time you come up, we need to get the Bubba together.” And I just said, “okay, when will that be?” I don't know. So, I called Mike. I said, “How soon? Like, how much time would you need? I don't know if we can do it, but if we can do it, let's do it.” He said, “We can do it.” And I said, “Boom.” So now, I’m like all excited and literally, I'm packing to go. And then I was like, “Oh man, the photo album!” Now I’m running through the house, trying to find where I got all the albums. I grabbed the ones I knew. I knew I knew where they were because those were the ones and I put them in the cooler and then I headed up the road. And as I said, I did not know what would come out of any of it, but I said, the fact that we have got this far. And again, just Mike and I going through the albums last night, I told him, if we got no more than that out of this, that was great. But the fact to have him going back, looking at what he [Mt. Bubba] did, which again, he has probably documented far more than most. In fact, I got my understanding is Uncle Bruce probably shot a lot of photos too, but I haven’t seen them.

But I look at these photos and I see history. I see time standing still. And what I get is a greater appreciation of who these people were because these are the people that they gave up for whatever. They are the ones that gave us are our influence. They are the ones that, for whatever achievements we may garner in life, we are not self-actualized. We got this from them. And the more I look back and get an appreciation of who they were as younger people, I understand why these older people are sitting there lecturing me. I used to get--because he got lectures, too. But I would get these lectures from these like--case in point. My Uncle Louis, the one that started with the Industrial Bank. Right. This was always…this played out time and time again. He would come out to the house in Arlington. He'd be getting ready to leave and he'd say, “Young man, do you have any money?” I say, “No, Uncle Louis.” “Young man, you should. You should. Young men should always have money.” I said, “Yeah, but I don't. Uncle Louis, I'm too young to have a job.” And he said, “Young man, here's a dollar.” And I grabbed the dollar. And as I go to pull it, he was holding onto it. He said, “Now, young man, if you spend this dollar, where will you get more money?” He said, “So, you have to think about spending this money wisely. Because if you don't have other income coming in, then this is all the money you got.” And it was just like one of those things was like, now, in my mind as a child, like, you killed my buzz. I got a dollar. I'm thinking of all the things. I can spend a dollar on. But now it's like. Okay, my mother would usually say, “I will hold on to the dollar for you,” you know, and I'll just be like that.

But even at that early age, he was trying. to impart lessons to us that we just, you know, you took for granted. And you look back later. All the things—Uncle Ment, oh my gosh. He was like you said he was Mr. Fire and Brimstone. You felt like you'd done something wrong and you didn't. He's just preaching at you like, you know. Like, what did I do? Like, what am I like? Have I done something? But it was like, “You got to follow the straight and narrow. You got to stay the course. You can’t allow yourself” --I mean, what have I done now. Doesn’t it make you think that it didn't matter? He's trying to tell you. He's trying to tell you now. To me, it's looking at these photos is akin to when you may watch a movie you haven't seen in a long while, again, for the first time. And it takes on a whole new context. You know, you see things that you didn't notice the first time you’re noticing this time around. Just like the fact I'm sitting here looking at how amazing is it that you and I are sitting here looking at a picture of Uncle Bruce sitting next to the woman whose funeral we just went to today, you know. And if we didn't even you know what I mean, if we wouldn't have happened.

Bubba Johnson [02:46:31] The Hawkins'. Do you go to the Hawkins'?

Michael Johnson [02:46:32]. Yeah, I know some of them.

Bubba Johnson [02:46:36] Leon, David, Kenneth.

Bruce Ware [02:46:38] There's a whole bunch of them.

Michael Johnson [02:46:42] There's a whole lot of them. Some of them live over in Alexandria.

Bruce Ware [02:46:43] Yeah. Yeah, exactly. But that's what I'm saying. It's like, again, had we not come together that would not have even transpired the way it did. So yeah, so and again, I guarantee you, a year from now I will look at these same photos again. And I was just like, we were talking about our cousin Lou, you know. I looked at that photo like a million times and it didn't register. And then one day I looked at I said, oh, my gosh, that's Lou. You know what I mean? I was like, who else could it be? You know? And then again, I look at them. I look at I look at pictures of Cat who I didn't even equate as the same person. I look back now, I realize that. All I knew, she was part of those millions of Harrisburg relatives.

But then I look back now that I have a better relation with them. I look at these photos, I go, "There's Cat, there's Pam, there's Eddie." They were just those abstract bundles of cousins. And now I have these fully formed memories of who they are now as adults. And this was us mingling together as kids, you know? And I feel like that's just this, there's no amount of--it's priceless. You know, because of what it what you gained from it in terms of your own self history.

And as Mike and I have said, you know, it's like that I think is one of the things that's so lacking—and not just for our family, but I say people is in general. Because, you know, in today's world, people you follow celebrities, you follow all this other stuff. But what do you know of yourself? What do you know of how you came to be as to who you are? I feel like the more you and I feel like it's self-serving because the more you dig into it, the more you learn about yourself and it inspires you to move forward. Like we've said, there have been times where just like the darkness of the world and you're like—No; but then you look back and you like people that, you know, have come through far worse than this. And so, you really are not going through very much at all. And when you look at in that context, you're like, "No, no. I can I can do this. I am good."

That's what I get from this, every time I do this, every time I look at these photos and sometimes it can be gut wrenching, you know what I mean? You pull out, you start looking at some of the people that you knew--like I look at pictures of Uncle Sam, Odessa. You got photos of--they think of Lucy. But then you don't even hear Odessa's name being mentioned. I'm trying to think of all his children's names. You, know what I mean? But she was the mother of all these children. He'd been with Lucy for the longest time; you didn't even think about it. But I mean, Leonard. And what's the other one's name? Because I think he worked for Uncle Louis as well.

Bubba Johnson [02:49:46] But you see what he's saying, though. The way I look at it and I think about part of the family that's in New York. I was dating in New York and my cousin, I'd go by and see, and you know, it was just, you know, the [inaudible] otherwise. [inaudible] He didn't come down here and nobody down here went up there. I was glad to see him going through these—and you [Michael].

Bruce Ware [02:50:37] So your legacy will live on. Your legacy will live on.

Michael Johnson [02:50:42] And now you know, there's some Johnsons, besides you.

Bubba Johnson [02:50:47] Like I said, I thought those were in Harrisburg.

Michael Johnson [02:50:50] Your grandkids.

Bubba Johnson [02:50:51] I stopped going to Harrisburg.

Michael Johnson [02:50:54] Oh, you stopped going.

Bubba Johnson [02:50:55] I met family and neighbors from Richmond. And I started going to Richmond. And I've made to feel as welcome as hell in Richmond. The Harrisburg group kind of died out on me. And I don't know of anybody in Harrisburg today.

Bruce Ware [02:51:15] There's no shortage of people in Harrisburg.

Michael Johnson [02:51:18] And I always say if you look that way, stop in. Sometimes, I'll go up to Westchester to see my wife's mother and I ain't no hurry to cross the [inaudible] Bridge. I route all the way around, come to Harrisburg and come through town that way. I always do that.

Bubba Johnson [02:51:41] It should be kin, a family attachment and that's something that's rewarding.

Bruce Ware [02:51:53] Yeah, we try to go.

Bubba Johnson [02:51:56] When Bruce calls about going to the funeral, I'm thinking that prior to it of going to see her because I heard she'd been sick. So, then a girl called me and said that they'd taken her to the hospital. I said to her son, "he shouldn't worry about calling me." When Bruce called and said about the funeral. And I had heard about the funeral being Friday. And he said he was going to come to get me, I was tickled to death.

Michael Johnson [02:52:42] You don't care if it rains, snows or whatever. I heard that.

Bubba Johnson [02:52:48], And, again, it showed the relationship of people. See.

Michael Johnson [02:52:56] And everything is a relationship when we deal with people; everything. I tell people that all the time.

Bubba Johnson [02:53:02] And now I'm staying with the Grays, you know? And she is married. I'm trying to think now, [inaudible]

Bruce Ware [02:53:18] No, Butch is your guy. I don't know him.

Bubba Johnson [02:53:20] She's been married three times.

Michael Johnson [02:53:24] So. Doing the ones you don't want to marry.

Bubba Johnson [02:53:26] And, I was working in the house and the builder, he told me, "Bubba, come get your stuff out of here, because they're moving in tonight" I live right down the street and I looked up the street and I saw a moving van moving in. I come out, I look up and there's another truck up there. That was the husband moving out. Then she married another fella and you probably knew him, too. Freddy. Do you know any Freddys?

Michael Johnson [02:54:05] What's his last name?

Bubba Johnson [02:54:07] I can't think of it. But she married a Freddy. So, the marriage with Freddy didn't last but a little bit. So, she married this boy here now. He's supposed to be from somewhere down in Virginia or somewhere, Butch.

Kerry Reed [02:54:35] Well, I'm terribly sorry to cut you off, Mr. Bubba, but we've been talking now for almost three hours, and I have to be somewhere at 6:00, so I'm really sorry, but it has been an absolute pleasure listening to all of you guys to talk this evening. And I'm so glad that Mike called me, and we got the opportunity to do this. It's been absolutely fantastic.

Bruce Ware [02:54:58] I mean, my hope was hopefully something significant comes up. Again--and I don't know, maybe I had overblown expectations. I was worried for him to go places that I had never seen or heard before. And I went, whoa. But I'm but again, I guess because I heard a lot of it before. But if you feel that this was a significant.

Kerry Reed [02:55:20] Absolutely. It was fabulous. And so again, I want to thank you guys so much.

Bruce Ware [02:55:22] No, no, no, no. Thank you. Thank you for taking to taking the time. This has been great.

[Recording ended]

Michael Johnson [02:55:27] I'm just going to have to go. Right? Yeah, I'll just shift is your place.

Kerry Reed [02:55:32] And it's on.

Bruce Ware [02:55:33] The one on the back here.

Kerry Reed [02:55:35] Yeah. So, the signature they had another participant.

Bubba Johnson [02:55:38] I think they're like, Well, I'm good to have you help him.

Kerry Reed [02:55:43] Mr. Bubba, It's been. It's been fantastic. I've had something like this all the time. Almost, almost as a joke. But I could be the Johnson family historian now. Yeah, I.

Bruce Ware [02:55:55] I believe it. I can.

Michael Johnson [02:55:56] Only my.

Kerry Reed [02:55:57] Brothers, all other all the down the Johnson family here in Alexandria.

Bruce Ware [02:56:00] That's too funny to.

Kerry Reed [02:56:03] Not have a conversation with Mr. Bubba here. And you, Mr. Bruce.

Bruce Ware [02:56:07] I know that that is that is just. That's hysterical.