

KK-CD-012-068

Eunice Parker and Lottie Rogers

Interview with Carrie Kline; also present photographer Doug Yarrow April 29, 2008 at the home of Eunice Parker

Lottie Burnette Rogers, born 1928, opens this interview with recollections of life in a one-room school, along with the Pleasant Grove Colored School and Martins Chapel Church, where she was baptized in 1942 and has been singing in the choir for about 50 years. Rogers sings a solo rendition of "Give Me That Old Time Religion."

Eunice Burnette Parker, Rogers' younger sister, was born 1931 on the Caswell County line near Martins Chapel Church where these two sisters' father was a deacon and their mother was church mother. Their father was in the choir at its founding 62 years ago. The family moved around some, as their father was a sharecropper. Parker tells a poignant story of her husband having a cerebral hemorrhage two and a half years into their marriage, after which he became partially paralyzed. Nonetheless, both he and Eunice Parker worked. He raised the children, changing diapers with one hand. Mr. Parker died of a massive heart attack in 1982, having lived just long enough to see his youngest son graduate.

The sisters give a riveting performance of a Primitive Baptist hymn "We Will Work 'Til Jesus Come" with Parker lining out the words. Rogers describes "fellowship hands" wherein people sang songs such as this one while greeting others and shaking hands. Rogers also discusses Martins Chapel's tradition of foot washing in church. Then they sing the song that concluded the old time church services, "Amazing Grace," with Rogers exclaiming "We had church then" and lamenting those days. Parker describes the process of "giving out a hymn" in the old days and singing at a more leisurely pace than today. The sisters illustrate this with a modern rendition of "Amazing Grace." People still sing in the old time manner and have fellowship hands at the first Saturday of the month prayer meetings, which take place at homes in the community. Rogers recalls walking to weekly Saturday night prayer meetings with her father and being saved at one of these meetings at age 14. Next Parker and Roger sing "My Soul Could Not Rest Contented" which brings Rogers to testify for the Lord. She expresses the deep woe of learning to live once her mother died, but with the help of God and her close siblings, she's "on the right road now." Parker explains that both she and Rogers are cancer survivors and Parker volunteers with Relay for Life.

Photos by Doug Yarrow include portraits of the sisters separately and together, along with photos of their family pictures. Carrie Kline photographed the sisters with Doug Yarrow enjoying looking at pictures of themselves in Yarrow's camera. Kline also photographed the sisters outside of Parker's home.