US 278
CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS
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Appendix M

Traditional Cultural Property Report

June 2021

FIRST STEP ON HOME SOIL: A PRELIMINARY TRADITIONAL CULTURAL PROPERTY EVALUATION OF THE STONEY COMMUNITY

BEAUFORT COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

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FIRST STEP ON HOME SOIL: A PRELIMINARY TRADITIONAL CULTURAL PROPERTY EVALUATION OF THE STONEY COMMUNITY

Beaufort County, South Carolina

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ABSTRACT

New South Associates was tasked with researching and evaluating Hilton Head's Stoney community in Beaufort County as a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP). Proposed improvements to U.S. Highway 278, which cuts through this historic Gullah community, triggered the initiation of the study. The work was completed on behalf of KCI Technologies under contract with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Oral history interviews with longtime residents, archival research, and historical landscape analysis were carried out to better understand the Stoney Community's significance as a TCP and to evaluate its eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Stoney is one of Hilton Head Island's historic and socially connected Gullah communities, which also include nearby Squire Pope, Spanish Wells, Jonesville, and Jarvis. Study of Stoney and the surrounding historic Gullah communities that are located along Jarvis and Skull creeks in Northwest Hilton Head Island, along with oral histories provided by knowledgeable residents, suggest that Stoney remains central to Gullah identity through its long history of Black landownership; as a cultural gateway to the island; and as a place of progress, prosperity, and education for the island's Black community. It is thus recommended eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as a TCP and a site boundary has been created.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

New South Associates would like to thank those people who assisted in gathering information about the Stoney Community and other historic Gullah communities of Northwest Hilton Head Island for this report. A special note of gratitude is due to all who took the time to share their first-hand knowledge and stories of growing up in the Stoney Community: Venita White Barnette, Thomas C. Barnwell, Jr., Alexander Brown, Jr., Emory Campbell, Arthur Champen, Murray Christopher, Louise Cohen, Ben Driessen, Dan Driessen, Edna Driessen, Pamela D. Driessen, Palmer Simmons, Isabel Stewart, John F. Stewart, Sarah Stewart, and Linda Washington. A special thank you to Luana Graves Sellers for her assistance in identifying people in other Gullah communities on the Island to interview. Thank you also to Grace Cordial with the Beaufort County Library, Pamela Baxley with Beaufort County Register of Deeds Office, and Susan Dobbs with the Hilton Head Heritage Library for their assistance with archival, deed, and map research of the Stoney Community. Finally, our appreciation to Jeffery Belcher and Pamela Foster, with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA); David Kelly and Craig Winn, with the SCDOT; and Heather Robbins, and Phil Leazer, with KCI Technologies.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) is proposing improvements to a 4.1-mile section of U.S. Highway 278 from Moss Creek Drive to Squire Pope Road in Beaufort County, South Carolina. This segment of the highway extends between Bluffton and Hilton Head Island. The highway began in 1956 as an unpaved road, evolved into a two-lane highway, and is now a four-lane highway with a central median turn lane. Between 2013 and 2017, total traffic growth along the corridor on the Island increased by eight percent, which equals an average of 56,300 vehicles per day. Planned modifications would include widening U.S. 278 to six lanes as well as other improvements.

The proposed improvements on Hilton Head Island will directly impact the community of Stoney, where African American residents, who self identify as Gullah, native islanders or simply islanders[1], have owned land since the 1890s (South Carolina Department of Transportation 2019). The Gullah culture developed in coastal South Carolina where significant numbers of West Africans enslaved as plantation laborers with limited interactions with whites, formed their own creole culture now known as Gullah. The historic Gullah community of Stoney is located in the northwest section of the Island, just east of Jenkins Island (Figure 1). The Town of Hilton Head Island recognizes two separate neighborhoods within the larger community for planning purposes, Big Stoney and Little Stoney, but interviews with several longtime residents revealed the community has historically been known by the collective name of "Stoney." Stoney contains a mix of commercial and residential development, and it is roughly bounded by the tidal marshes of Skull, Jenkins, and Jarvis creeks to the north, south, east, and west. A heavily traveled section of William Hilton Parkway/ U.S. 278 bisects the southern end of the community. Other major roadways in the study area include Squire Pope Road, Old Wild Horse Road, Wild Horse Road, and Spanish Wells Road.

New South Associates, Inc. (New South) completed this Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) evaluation of the historic Stoney Community on behalf of KCI Technologies to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. TCPs are defined by the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as landscapes and sites that are culturally significant for the meaning they bring to a community's beliefs, values, and sense of identity. This TCP study is one of an array of cultural resource studies completed in advance of proposed transportation improvements along U.S. 278. Unlike the other studies, which had defined project areas structured by Section 106 parameters, the present effort was tasked with researching Stoney to provide a developmental history of the Hilton Head community, establish its historic geography, and to provide an initial evaluation of its potential as a TCP or for another potential historical designation for project-planning purposes.

This report is divided into six chapters, including this Introduction. Chapter II presents the methodology used during the project, and Chapter III contains the historic context for the study area. Chapter IV discusses the landscape analysis of the Stoney Community, while Chapter V presents the oral history research conducted for the project. Chapter VI presents the synthesis and conclusions. A list of references cited appears after these chapters. The interview transcriptions are appended to the report (Appendix A).

1 For this study we will use Gullah but note that in the oral history sections and quotes, the terms islanders and native islanders are used interchangeably.

Figure 1.
Stoney Traditional Cultural Property Study Area

Source: Bing Maps Hybrid

II. RESEARCH METHODS

Preliminary research on the Stoney Community focused on a number of research avenues to understand if the community is a historically significant site eligible for the NRHP, and if so, did it have significance for the Gullah residents of Hilton Head as a TCP. These included oral history interviews; a review of ethnographic literature; archival, deed, and census research; and a landscape analysis using historic maps, aerial photographs, and field reconnaissance of the study area. After research was complete, the study area was evaluated for NRHP eligibility. Specifics for these research areas and the criteria for evaluation are outlined below.

ORAL HISTORY/ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY REVIEW

To understand the history of Stoney, New South historians interviewed three families and one individual in the first phase of this process who were landowners most directly affected by proposed improvements of U.S. Highway 278. These individuals were identified by SCDOT project members. The family members represented two generations. Some were born before construction of "the bridge" (the James F. Byrnes Bridge that connects Hilton Head Island to the mainland) in 1956 and spoke of the changes since the island became more accessible by automobile. Interviewees were asked about places, buildings, or long-standing traditions that identified or sustained the culture of the Stoney Community. Interviews were conducted March 10, 2020 at the Hilton Head Island Library. This initial study focused on the Stoney Community and its significance as a former Gullah commercial district on the Island.

This first round of interviews were held after family members met with SCDOT and the developers of the proposed highway improvements. Interviewees shared their memories of growing up on the Island, of moving away to attend college or to experience new adventures, and of returning to see the changes on Hilton Head Island. The oldest interviewee was in her early 80s. She was born on the Island, in the Squire Pope community, and raised her family here. Over the years, she had seen the community disappear with the expansion of William Hilton Highway/U.S. 278. Interviewees added that in Stoney, "they did not see color" and had a great relationship with a white family next door, nor did they make distinctions in the community between "Big Stoney" and "Little Stoney."

Interviewees were very aware of their family lineage and the history of Stoney. They spoke of hunting and fishing as youth, of women working in the oyster factory, of Charlie Simmons — who provided transportation from the Island to the mainland, and of places of business and entertainment. Life changed in 1956 with the opening of the James F. Byrnes Bridge. A generation of young people left the Island, while developers came to the Island—each group seeking opportunities. For a time, as the gateway to the island, Stoney benefited from the increased traffic. However, the widening of the highway to accommodate traffic also led to the demise of the commercial section, as historic buildings were demolished to make way for new development.

In response to the first draft of this report, Heather Hodges, Executive Director, Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission, 2020, and the Gullah community came back and asked for additional

research and that a larger geographic area needed to be included as Stoney encompassed much more than commerce.

> Stoney became a convenient location of Native Islanders to site necessary business and services but they served to support the larger collective, traditional culture that flourished on the island. One that reflects historically rooted beliefs. Specifically, in collective land ownership and economic self-sufficiency as necessary predicates for freedom of religious expression, retention of African cultural practices and the transmission of language , stories, customs and beliefs. The very existence of Stoney is an expression of these cultural values. —Heather Hodges

Respondents felt that Stoney needed to be considered in a larger context which would demonstrate that Stoney was a community that upheld the Gullah traditions of landownership, living off the land and water, family values, and early Gullah entrepreneurship. One Island resident who read the preliminary report, responded:

> "... only other thing I'd add is I know that the South Carolina Department of Transportation has gone and hired someone to do a study at Stoney that, I guess [who wasn't] living here. And the finders are coming back then because Stoney is so broken now so the historic significance is not necessarily there, right? And that seems deliberate in my mind, okay, particularly since you got so many Gullah descendants that you... Mitchelville came out of some of these plantations. And like you asked me the question before, are they tied together? Yeah. They're really tied together. This Gullah culture on Hilton Head is tied to the historic community and they're all still significant [although] fragmented to a degree. You're not going to be able to trace back the types of families' lineage, the land, and many other places in America, right? —Alexander Brown, Jr., personal communication

In response to Islanders' concerns and to a better understanding the influence and importance of Stoney to the entire Island of Hilton Head, New South expanded its scope of interviews to include persons born or raised on the Island. Ms. Luana Graves Sellers, a member of the Board of Directors of Lowcountry Gullah, identified nine additional residents of Hilton Head who could give the history and cultural connection of Stoney to the island's other Gullah communities.

New South then reached out to the nine Islanders. Of this group, six agreed to be interviewed; however, one, because of her busy schedule, suggested another Islander who agreed to participate. Two interviewees could not be reached; one person declined.

Due to the pandemic, oral interviews were conducted via telephone, between November 3, 2020 and November 7, 2020. These interviews are added to previous personal communication with Stoney residents conducted in March 2020.

All interviewees will receive transcript copies of the audio interviews. A copy of the interviews will also be deposited with SCDOT and made available for public access.

In addition to the oral history conducted for the project, project historians reviewed important primary and secondary ethnographic and ethnohistorical sources that are available on Gullah culture. One challenge was that since so many interviews were done over the phone, we did not have access to historic photographs curated by the families. Future research may turn up a photographic record for Stoney which would be an important contribution.

LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

For the landscape analysis, maps and photography were obtained from a number of sources and repositories. A digital copy of the Preliminary Chart of Calibogue Sound and Skull Creek, created by the U.S. Coast Survey in 1862, was attained from the Library of Congress website. Copies of the 1898 Coast Chart Map of Hilton Head Island; the 1920 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the 1945 U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Bluffton Quadrangle maps; the 1938, 1959, 1970 and 1978 South Carolina Department of Transportation Beaufort County road maps; and the 1968 aerial photograph of the Island were acquired both online and in person from the South Carolina Department of Archives and History (SCDAH) and the Thomas Cooper Map Library at the University of South Carolina.

Historic aerial photographs of the study area, dating from 1994 to the present, were collected via Google Earth. Copies of the circa-1864 Direct Tax Commission map, the 1950 U.S. Bureau of Mines map, and sections from Virginia C. Holmgren's book *Hilton Head: A Sea Island Chronicle* were collected from the Heritage Foundation Library archives.

ARCHIVAL, DEED, AND CENSUS RESEARCH

Preliminary research of available online sources was conducted at the outset of the project to gather information on the culture and history of the historic Gullah communities located along Jarvis and Skull creeks in the northwestern section of Hilton Head Island.

Ms. Grace Cordial, Historic Resources Coordinator with the Beaufort County Library, provided assistance with onsite research of several published and unpublished histories of various individuals and families associated with the Gullah communities on Hilton Head Island and other sources of information related to the Stoney-Fairfield Plantation site housed in the library's Beaufort District Collection.

Research of historic property deeds and plat records associated with the Stoney Community was conducted at the office of the Beaufort County Register of Deeds and online through the county government's search-engine portal and digitized records collection.

U.S. Census records were viewed online through Ancestry.com, while digitized copies of historic newspapers were searched through Newspapers.com and the Library of Congress at chroniclingamerica.loc.gov.

A search for cultural resource studies available online yielded two relevant archaeological reports, *Archaeological Survey of Hilton Head Island, Beaufort County, South Carolina* and *Archaeological Testing*

of Six Sites on Hilton Head Island, Beaufort County, South Carolina, which were published by the Chicora Foundation and made publicly available as digital downloads on the organization's website at Chicora.org.

FIELD RECONNAISSANCE

New South Associates historians Velma Fann and Patrick Sullivan conducted informal field reconnaissance that included examination of the landscape and the historic resources located within the study area on March 9 and March 12, 2020. The fieldwork involved an examination of transportation networks, settlement patterns, contextual photography of specific historic resources such as the Amelia White/Graham Cemetery and several commercial buildings and dwellings located along the William Hilton Parkway/U.S. 278, Squire Pope Road, Old Wild Horse Road, and Wild Horse Road corridors that appeared to be 50 years of age or older. Notes describing the locations or names and position of photography for all surveyed properties were also taken.

NATIONAL REGISTER EVALUATION

Information collected as described above was used to develop a preliminary collective assessment of the NRHP eligibility of the Stoney Community.

In order to assess for significance as a TCP, it must first be determined if the resource is a historic property that is eligible for the NRHP. Cultural resources are evaluated based on criteria for NRHP eligibility specified in the Department of Interior Regulations 36 CFR Part 60: National Register of Historic Places. Cultural resources may consist of sites, objects, structures, buildings, or districts. These resources can be defined as significant if they are 50 years of age or older, "possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association," and

A) are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of history;

B) are associated with the lives of persons significant in the past;

C) embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or,

D) have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

If the resource is determined to be a site, building, district, structure, or object that can convey historic significance by one or more of the criteria above, and if it possesses the necessary integrity to convey that historic significance, then it can be said to be eligible for the NRHP. Eligible properties are then examined for their possible significance as a TCP.

TRADITIONAL CULTURAL PROPERTY

According to the National Park Service, a location, property, or neighborhood may be eligible for the NRHP as a TCP because of its associations with the cultural practices, customs, or beliefs of a living community that have been passed down through generations. In many cases, locations with religious associations may be eligible as TCPs; however, natural landscapes, or settings, and historic built environments that are strongly associated with a community's cultural identity may also qualify. While integrity of a site is less critical than the property's cultural associations when evaluating eligibility for the NRHP, eligible TCPs must be rooted in a community's history and continue to play an important role in maintaining the cultural identity of the community (Parker and King 1998:1).

The National Register Bulletin *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Traditional Cultural Properties* provides the following three steps to follow when determining a property's eligibility for inclusion in the National Register as a TCP (Parker and King 1998:9—11):

1) Ensure that the entity under consideration is a tangible property and if it can be classified as a site or location, object, structure, building, or district. Natural resources or settings with no observable evidence of human activity require sound documentation or oral evidence of the property's association with traditional cultural activities, customs, or events.

2) Consider the integrity of the relationship between the property and the beliefs, customs, or practices that may give it significance as well as the integrity of the property's physical condition and its setting.

3) Evaluate the property with reference to the National Register Criteria set forth in the National Register regulations (36 CFR Part 60) as discussed above.

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III. HISTORIC CONTEXT

> From Reconstruction to the Depression, the Gullah lived in isolated coastal settlements on the Sea Islands along the southeastern US, including Hilton Head Island. During this time, they established a rich culture with authentic West African components including a distinctive language, history, economic system and artistic traditions. —Hilton Head Island website: https://www.hiltonheadisland.org/gullah/

Stoney is one of the numerous Gullah communities on Hilton Head Island that evolved after Reconstruction and its history is intertwined with its neighboring communities on the island. Its origins date back to the antebellum Stoney/Fairfield plantation near Skull Creek on the north end of Hilton Head Island. By the late 1890s and into the early 1920s, African American residents, many formerly enslaved, began purchasing property on and near the former Stoney Plantation, establishing strong family ties to the newly acquired land that last today.

A self-sufficient people, the Gullah made their living as farmers and fishermen and in the 1930s supplemented their income by working in oyster factories. By the 1940s, several industrious community members owned small businesses in the community, and Stoney became the commercial district on Hilton Head Island. Located directly across from Jenkins Island, Stoney has served since the nineteenth century as the gateway to Hilton Head Island for boats and cars. The opening of the bridge at the entrance to Hilton Head Island in 1956 and the development of U.S. Highway 278 brought increased traffic and business to Stoney, although subsequent widenings of the highway during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have caused the loss of much of the twentieth-century historic built environment along the corridor.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE HILTON HEAD ISLAND PLANTATION SYSTEMS, 1700—1860

Named after Captain William Hilton, who was credited with first charting the landmass in 1663 during his exploration of the Carolina Lowcountry and the Port Royal Sound area, Hilton Head Island was part of the Raphoe Barony granted by the colonial Lord Proprietors of Carolina in 1698 to John Bayley of County Tipperary, Ireland (Smith 1988:110—111). Indigo was first introduced on Hilton Head Island in 1740 to help meet England's demand for the product, and, along with rice, it soon became a primary cash crop within the slavery-based plantation system economies of the Georgia and South Carolina Sea Islands. By the 1760s, Hilton Head was owned by 25 white planter families (Foster 2016; Jelatis 2019). When the English market for indigo declined after the Revolutionary War, local planters soon turned to growing cotton. In 1790, William Elliott II of Myrtle Plantation grew the first successful strain of long staple Sea Island cotton on Hilton Head Island. High prices for the cotton paid by the English textile markets spurred widespread cultivation of the crop and the consolidation of 26 plantations on the Island under the control of 15 wealthy families by the mid-nineteenth century (Trinkley 1988b:23—24; Holmgren 1959:67).

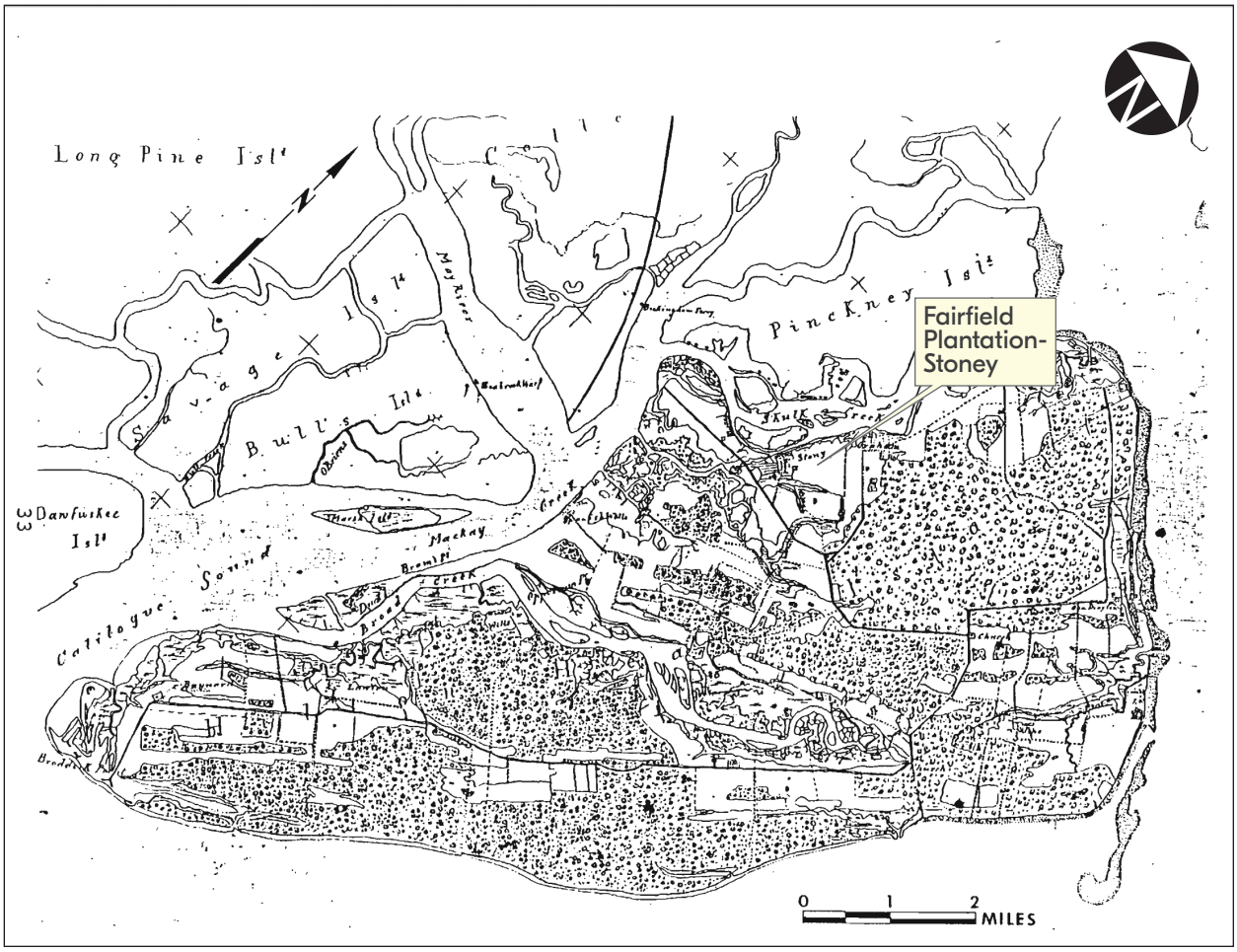
According to an 1861 map titled Map of the Country Surrounding Port Royal and the 1862 coastal chart of Skull Creek and Calibogue Sound (Figures 2 and 3), a string of prominent antebellum plantations that once lined Skull Creek in the northern section of Hilton Head included Jenkins Island, Fairfield (also known as Stoney),Cotton Hope (also known as Squire Pope and Skull Creek Plantation) and Seabrook. Jenkins Island Plantation (alternately known as John's Island and Hog Island) takes its name from Issac Rippon Jenkins, whose family owned tracts on other parts of Hilton Head during the eighteenth century. The 1800 census showed Isaac Jenkins operated a plantation on the Island through the forced work of 100 enslaved people (Peeples 1967). The Stoney surname on Hilton Head Island dates back to John "Captain Jack" Stoney (1749—1821), an Irish-born planter who arrived in South Carolina with his wife in 1774 (Postar 2007). Stoney amassed a fortune operating as a privateer during the Revolutionary War and used his money to purchase 1,000 acres of land on Hilton Head Island in 1776. In the post—Revolutionary War period, the Stoney family was among the biggest landowners on Hilton Head Island, owning more than 5,000 acres in total, including the 350-acre Fairfield Plantation (Heritage Library Foundation 2020; Trinkley 1988b:32). The Popes were another major landowning family like the Stoneys and controlled five different plantations on the Island. William E. Pope took control of 1,250-acre Cotton Hope Plantation during the early nineteenth century. Parts of Cotton Hope were also once associated with the adjacent Seabrook Plantation to the east, a 1,600-acre plantation that was cobbled together by planter William Seabrook from three older estates (Trinkley 1988b:30, 33; Barnwell et al. 2020:7, 16). Further inland and south of Jarvis Creek, was the 1,000-acre Honey Horn Plantation, which was purchased by mainland planter, William Graham from members of the Stoney family in the decades before the Civil War (Holmgren 1959:64—65).

White planter ownership and operation of Hilton Head Island, like the rice, indigo, and cotton plantations on other Sea Islands in Carolina and Georgia, was largely absentee in nature. Most plantation owners maintained their primary residences on the mainland and limited their time living on Hilton Head to the cooler planting and harvesting seasons in order to avoid the Island's hot climate and threat of contracting malaria and yellow fever. As a result, the Island's enslaved population residing in the isolated plantation communities greatly outnumbered whites, which provided a measure of independence and allowed for many to retain their West African cultural and community traditions associated with language dialects, foodways, oral history, religion and tool making (Cross 2008:16—17; Barnwell et al. 2020:5—6).

THE CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION, 1861—1877

The tranquil and prosperous life of Hilton Head Island's wealthy planter class ended abruptly with the start of the Civil War, when 1,200 Union troops captured Port Royal on Hilton Head on November 6, 1861. Over the course of the war, Hilton Head Island served as the base for the Union blockade of the Confederate port cities of Savannah and Charleston. Under the command of General Quincy Adams Gillmore, the U.S. Army also established the Department of the South headquarters on the island, which functioned as a military operations command center and infantry training ground for Black men who enlisted or were impressed into the Union army (Town of Hilton Head Island 2013).

Figure 2.
1861 Map of Hilton Head Island Showing the Location of the Fairfield-Stoney Plantation

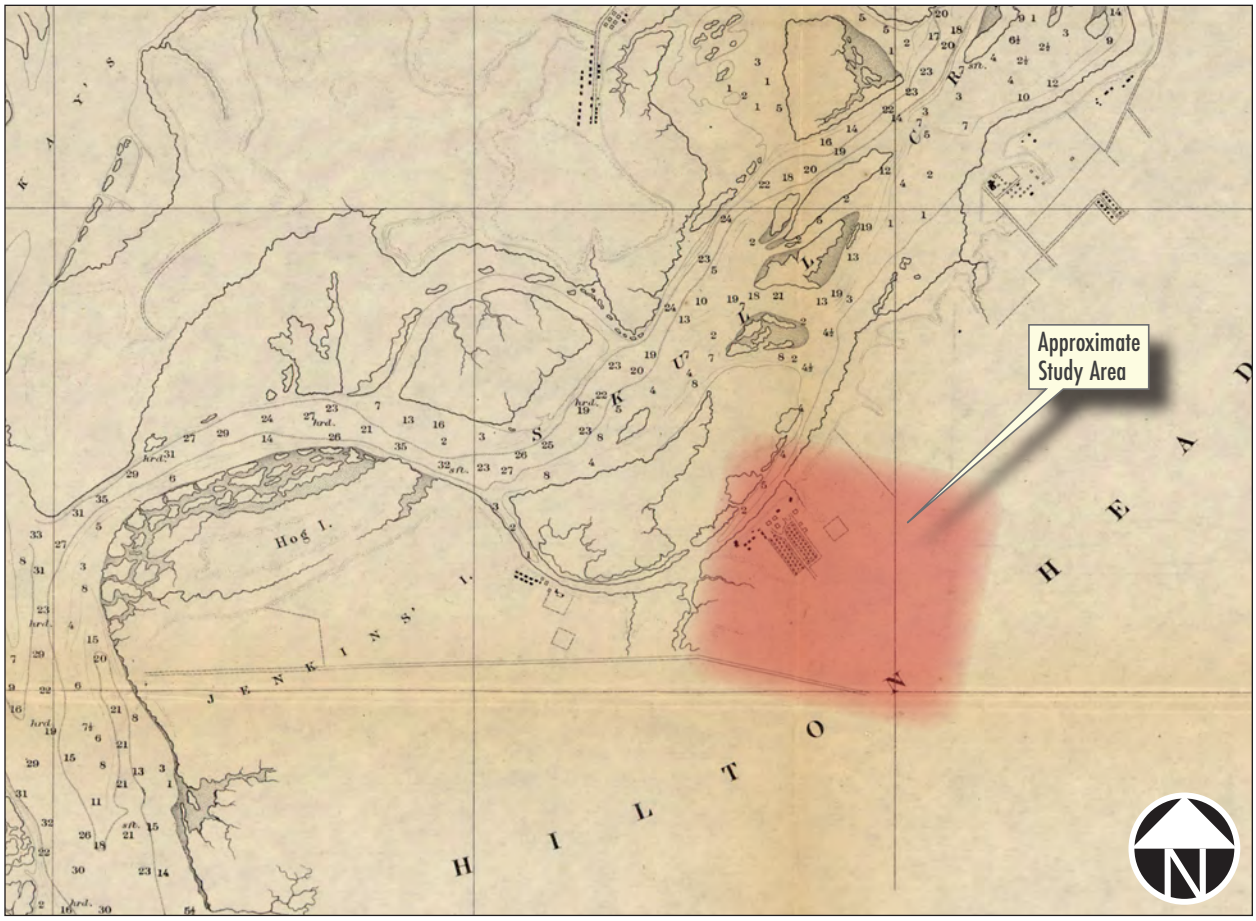


(Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 77, Map 128-1)

Union forces began surveying the area soon after gaining control of Hilton Head Island. Stoney/Fairfield and Squire Pope/Cotton Hope were among the first plantations seized under the U.S. Confiscation Acts of 1861 and 1862, which permitted the federal government to seize all property in southern states, including enslaved people, that could be used to support the Confederacy (U.S. Senate Historical Office 2020). The coastal chart of the Calibogue Sound and Skull Creek, created during the war by the U.S. Coast Survey, provided detailed depictions of the Jenkins, Stoney, Cotton Hope, and Seabrook plantation settlements, which were generally comprised of main houses (or in the case of Jenkins Island, a possible overseer's house), associated rows of housing for enslaved people, support buildings, access roads, and surrounding grounds (see Figure 3).

Following Union occupation of Hilton Head Island, many of the former plantation houses were converted into lodging for Union officers or used as makeshift schoolhouses for northern teachers and missionaries

Figure 3.
1862 Map Showing Fairfield Plantation Main House, Slave Dwellings, and Orchards



(Source: Preliminary Chart of Calibogue Sound and Skull Creek, U.S. Coast Survey, Library of Congress, 1862)

who sought to educate the newly emancipated children and adults (Figure 4). According to historian Virginia Holmgren, Reverend Thomas D. Howard, a young New England preacher associated with the New England Freedmen's Aid Society, and a Mr. Strong were assigned to "the Widow Stoney's house," which also accommodated officers of a Pennsylvania regiment. Both Howard and Strong were involved with the Port Royal Experiment, a philanthropic program financed and operated by Northern abolitionists that assisted the Sea Island's African American communities in establishing economic and political self-sufficiency. Howard, following his arrival on Hilton Head Island in 1862, preached to newly freed individuals in a small chapel on Graham's Honey Horn plantation and taught classes in the converted parlor of the Cotton Hope plantation main house, while Strong was tasked with superintending cotton production on the former Stoney property (Holmgren 1959:99–101; Rowland 2016).

A section of the 1864 Direct Tax Commission Map of Hilton Head Island, prepared by the U.S. Department of the Treasury to assess real-estate values of tax-delinquent plantation owners, identified Frank Pope on Jenkins Island (Figure 5). Fairfield/Stoney Plantation property was depicted within sections 16, 21, and 22 and occupied by George Strong. It is unclear if this George Strong is the same person Virginia Holmgren

Figure 4.
Freedman's School at Nearby Port Royal, South Carolina, on Retreat Plantation, circa 1860.

Source: Low Country Digital Library

identified as the farming superintendent on the Fairfield Plantation property or Brigadier-General George C. Strong, a brigade commander who was critically wounded in the Federal assault during the Second Battle of Fort Wagner, on July 18, 1863, and died from his wounds 12 days later (Bjornstad 1998). The Cotton Hope Plantation is shown next to the "Seabrook Place" and straddled sections 14 and 15, while Honey Horn extends north into sections 22 and 23 and was still associated with the Graham family according to the map.

The Monthly Report of Lands for South Carolina, produced by the Direct Tax Commission and contemporaneous personal accounts by individual Union soldiers, provided detailed descriptions of the former plantation settlements in Northern Hilton Head Island after the Civil War. Between 1865 and 1867, the American Missionary Association used the Stoney/Fairfield Plantation grounds for the Hope and Fairfield Schools for the education of African American adults and children. *The Monthly Report of Lands for South Carolina*, also produced by the Direct Tax Commission, recorded 150 people living on the former Fairfield

Figure 5.
1864 Map of Fairfield Plantation and Surrounding Area

(Source: Direct Tax Commission Map of Hilton Head Island, c.1864, National Archives and Records Administration, RG 58. Courtesy of the Heritage Foundation Library, Hilton Head Island)

Plantation property, which consisted of a "mansion, quarters, & schoolhouse" along with 350 acres of cultivated land, 500 acres of wooded land, and an additional 150 acres of uncultivated cleared land (Trinkley 1988b:32–33).

A representative with the Freedmen's Bureau provided a similar report for Cotton Hope in 1867, noting it consisted of 1,250 acres, of which 400 were actively cultivated, and remnant slave quarters. The main house, which was converted into the Cotton Hope freedmen school and one Union soldier described as a "fine old southern mansion" that contained "two spacious libraries...filled with books," was conspicuously left out of the Freedmen's Bureau report. The smaller Jenkins Island Plantation was recorded as 500 acres in size and with a population of 130 Native Island residents. Of the four major plantation settlements along Skull Creek, the Seabrook Plantation was the most widely improved and used by occupying Union forces during and after war, serving as military headquarters and major landing site, an naval shipyards and machine

shop, as well as a freedmen school operated by the American Missionary Association. A March 1867 report, noted the former Seabrook Plantation consisted of 1,050 acres, including "350 acres of cultivated lands, 400 acres of woodlands, and 300 acres of cleared lands" and supported a population of 374 residents (Trinkley 1988b:30—33, 40; Barnwell et al. 2020:16—17).

DEVELOPMENT OF THE STONEY COMMUNITY, 1880—1910

Following the war, antebellum plantation owners who paid delinquent taxes owed to the U.S. government sought to reclaim their former holdings on Hilton Head Island. The U.S. government retained other lands, selling them to the highest bidder or to freedmen who had remained on the Island. In the late 1860s, the government began leasing or selling off several small plots to African American buyers with the balance of 350 acres of the former Fairfield Plantation sold to R.C. McIntire at public auction for $530 in December 1875 (Beaufort County Deed Book [BCDB] 10:140—141). According to Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Tax Assessment Lists, McIntire was the owner of R.C. McIntire and Company, an auction house and retail business on Hilton Head Island at the close of the Civil War (Internal Revenue Service, U.S. Department of the Treasury 1866). In 1873, he was the acting postmaster on the Island (Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census 1873) (Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census 1873). In February 1885, the heirs of R.C. McIntire sold their 350 acres of land, identified as Fairfield in the deed, to Frederick R. Kliem for $2,000 (BCDB 14:396—399).

Frederick Kliem (sometimes also spelled Kleim) was born in New York City in 1832. He was probably very familiar with Hilton Head at the time of his purchase. Having enlisted in the military as a private in 1862, he was stationed at Hilton Head Island with Company C, 1st New York Volunteer Engineers, commanded by Colonel Edward W. Serrell, from May 1864 until mustering out as a sergeant in April 1865 (Historical Data Systems, Inc. 2009). Kliem was listed in the 1870 census as a bricklayer living in New York. He returned to Hilton Head Island by the time of the 1880 census enumeration, where he was recorded as living with Priscilla Wallace, a 30-year-old "mulatto" servant, and working as a farmer (Budell 2020; U.S. Census Bureau 1870, 1880, 1890).

In November 1876, during "Gullah Statesman" Robert Smalls's re-election fight for Congress against George Tilman, a Democrat and former Confederate, Kliem's relationship with the African American community soured. According to John McFall's testimony to the House of Representatives in 1877, Kliem and R.C. McIntire were both outspoken Democrats and were reportedly threatened at the Port Royal polling place by Black men who swore that "no damn Democrat should vote" and threatened "to kill any that voted" (U.S. Congress 1877:48). Frederick Kliem later married Adelaide C. Ide (1836—1908) of New York and eventually returned north. He died in 1906 at the age of 74 and is buried in Bridgeport, Connecticut (Strasser 2012).

EARLY AFRICAN AMERICAN LANDOWNERS

Deed research shows that Frederick Kliem began selling a number of small plots (25—60 ac.) in the former Fairfield/Stoney plantation to African American buyers during the 1890s and early 1900s (see Table 1).

According to the 1870 and 1880 census records, landowning families in the early Stoney Community were largely freedmen and women who were born and raised on Hilton Head Island. Several of the men were veterans of the Civil War, having served in U.S. Colored Troop (USCT) regiments, and later made their living as farmers. Occupations for female residents primarily included "farm labor" and "keeping house." Most of the older residents (20—30 years of age) could not read or write (U.S. Census Bureau 1870, 1880).

Amelia White (1850—1926) purchased 60 acres from Kleim in 1892 (BCDB 18:150). Her husband, Corporal Richard White (1850—1894), served with Battery G, 2nd Light Artillery USCT for three years during the War. Both Amelia and Richard were listed as farmers in the 1870 and 1880 censuses. Amelia White's property (later referred to as the Amelia White tract) encompassed much of the former Fairfield/Stoney plantation settlement area (see Figure 3) and was passed down through the heirs of her son, Joseph White (Beaufort County Tax Assessors Office). A portion of the land was reserved for the Amelia White/Graham/Stoney Cemetery, where several members of the Stoney Community are buried, including her husband. Prior to her death, Amelia White appeared in the 1920 census as living in the nearby Squire Pope community and caring for USCT veteran Matthew (Matt) Jones, who grew up on the Stoney plantation and was her husband's cousin (Barnwell et al. 2020:137—138; Honoring Our Ancestors 2011; U.S. Census Bureau 1920). Ironically, Amelia White's name is not recorded among those buried in Stoney Cemetery.

Other notable early landowners included Simeon Grant (1840—1917), a farmer who served in Company E, 21st USCT infantry as a musician during the Civil War, and another veteran, Joseph Riley (1850—1917), who served with Richard White in Company G, 2nd Light Artillery, USCT (Figure 6). In the 1910 census, Riley was

Table 1. Land Sales to African Americans in Stoney, 1889—1902

Grantor	Grantee	Property Description	Consideration	Date	Beaufort County Deed Book/Page
F.R. Kleim	Benjamin Walters	48 acres	$480/Deed	1889	16:213
F.R. Kleim	Amelia White	60 acres	$600/Deed	1892	18:150
F.R. Kleim	Lucy Bryan (aka Rosa Riley?)	25 acres	$250/Deed	1893	18:392
F.R. Kleim	Simon Grant	40 acres	$320/Deed	1894	18:569
F.R. Kleim	Joseph Riley	58 acres	$575/Deed	1894	18:610
F.R. Kleim	Cato Simmons	25 acres	$250/Deed	1895	18:761
F.R. Kleim	Matilda Smith	25 acres	$250/Deed	1900	24:61
F.R. Kleim	Louisa Williams	25 acres	$250/Deed	1902	24:433

recorded as married farmer who owned his own home (U.S. Census Bureau 1910). After his death, his widow Emma, "who lived alone in a little cabin in a lonely spot," tried eight years to receive a widow's pension. She died two years after receiving it (Barnwell et al. 2020:135). The 1910 census recorded Matilda Smith (b.1840) as a widow who owned her home and had her "own income," while Louisa Williams (b. 1855) lived with her

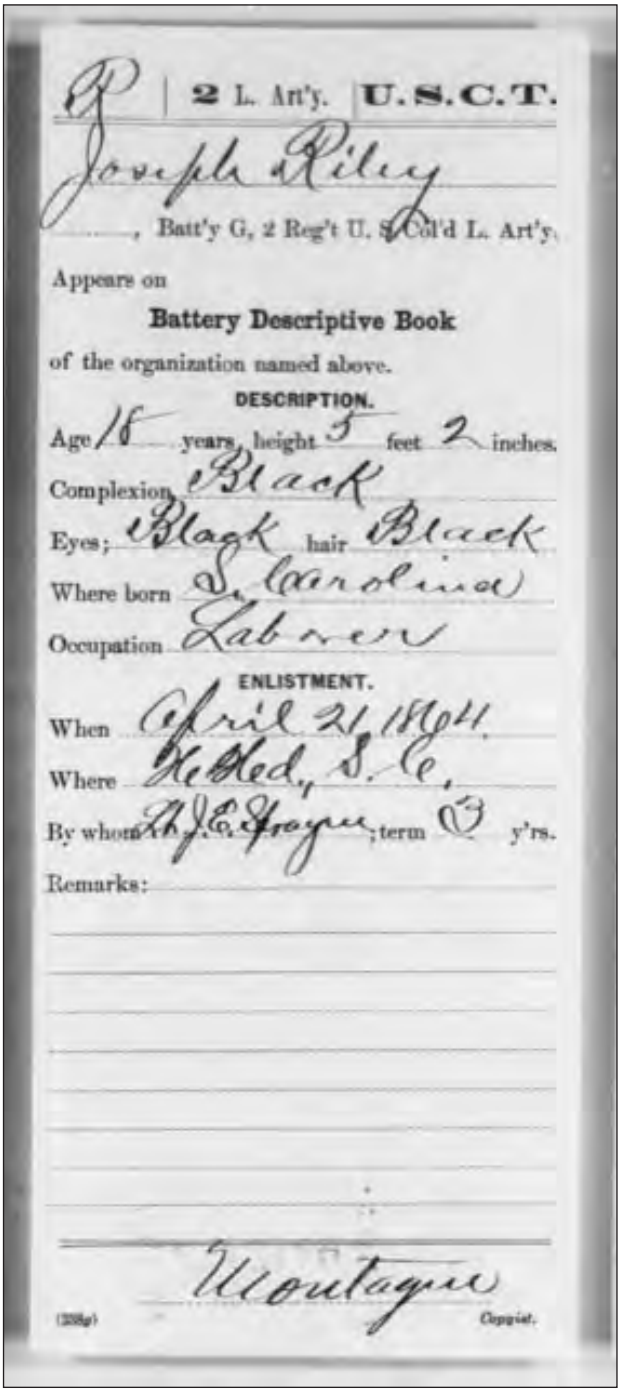
family, including grandchildren, next to Amelia White in Stoney (U.S. Census Bureau 1910).

THE STONEY COMMUNITY IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY, 1910—1940

The federal censuses from 1880 to 1910 identified the island as Hilton Head Township or Hilton Head Island, with no street or road names (U.S. Census Bureau 1880, 1900). With neither telephone service nor electricity, and with only limited accessibility by ferry, islanders were isolated from the mainland during the early twentieth century. Families continued to make a living in the early twentieth century as they had since freedom—from the land and sea. Islanders either farmed their own land or worked as wage laborers. They grew vegetables and continued to raise the Sea Island cotton that had made Hilton Head Island famous. Most residents also fished and collected oysters in Jarvis and Skull creeks to supplement their diets and to sell at public markets (Sumpter 2019; Telfair Museums 2018).

Stoney and other names associated with the antebellum plantations on Hilton Head Island began to appear as designated street and place names in the 1920 and 1930 censuses. A section of the 1920 U.S. Geographic Survey topographic maps depicts the historic settlements in the northwest section of Hilton Head as well as the major road through the Stoney community (identified as Hickory Bluff on the maps) that connected the ferry landing at the western edge of Jenkins Island to the interior of the Island (Figure 7). In 1920, 24 heads of household and their families resided in Stoney, while 15 heads of household and their families were enumerated in Stoney during the 1930 census (U.S. Census

Figure 6.
Joseph Riley, Compiled Military Service Record, 2nd Regiment USCT, Hilton Head, April 24, 1863



2 L. Art'y. U.S.C.T.

Joseph Riley

, Batt'y G, 2 Reg't U. S. Col'd L. Art'y.

Appears on

Battery Descriptive Book

of the organization named above.

DESCRIPTION.

Age 18 years, height 5 feet 2 inches.

Complexion Black

Eyes; Black hair Black

Where born S. Carolina

Occupation Laborer

ENLISTMENT.

When April 24, 1863.

Where Hilton Head, S. C.,

By whom Lt. J. E. Hague; term 3 y'rs.

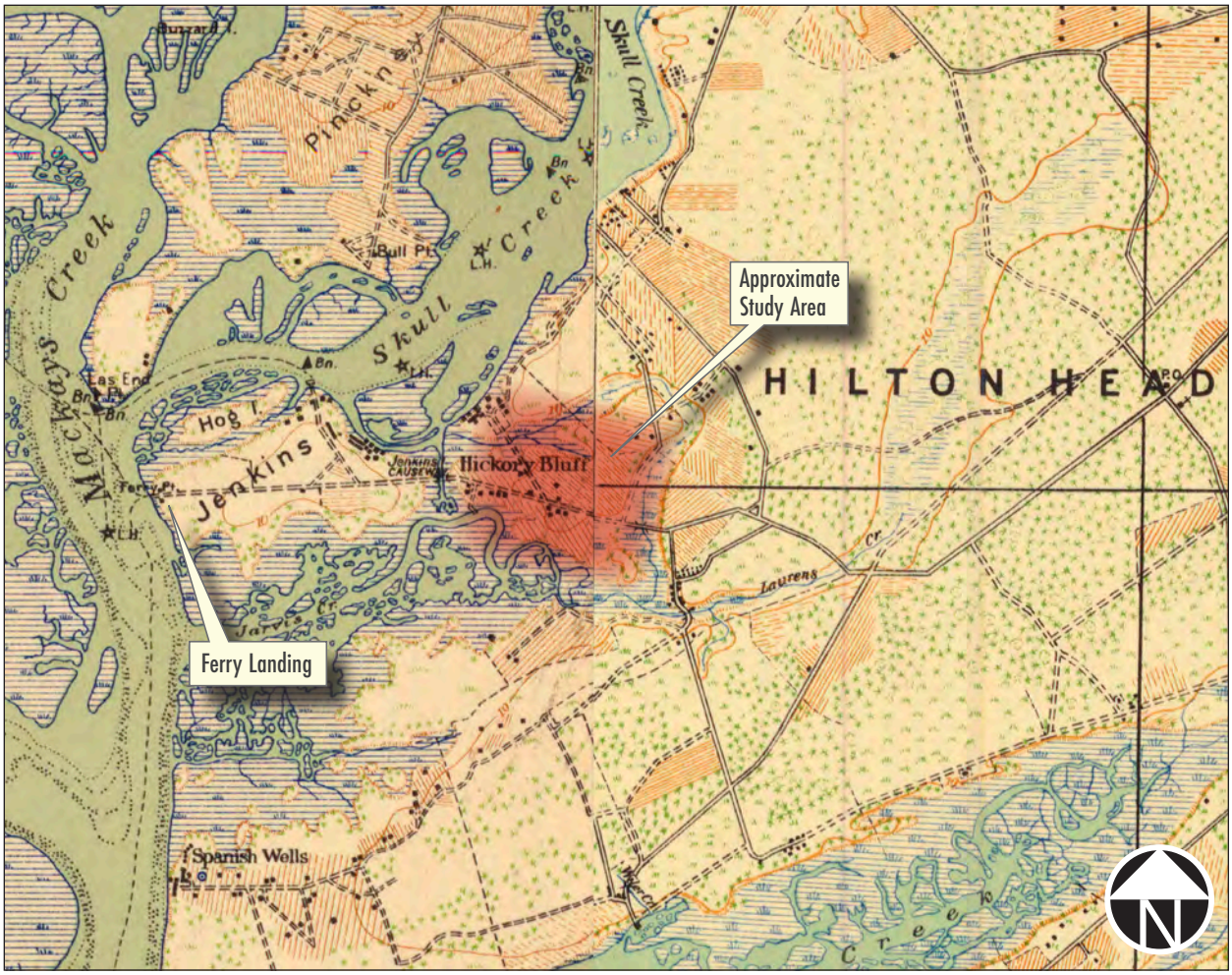
Remarks:

Montague

(238p) Copyist.

(Source: Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780s—1917, Record Group 94. National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.)

Figure 7.
1920 Map of the Stoney Community



(Source: Bluffton Quadrangle (1920), Hilton Head Quadrangle (1928), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, University of South Carolina, Government Information and Maps Department)

Bureau 1920, 1930). A review of the census rolls from 1920 showed that most residents were African American and all made their living farming their own land or as farm laborers (U.S. Census Bureau 1920).

EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL LIFE, AND EDUCATION

Life changed for all residents on Hilton Head Island following the invasion of the boll weevil in 1919. As island resident Johnny White recalled to an interviewer, "[t]hat was the end of cotton." With the drop in cotton production, islanders turned to the oyster industry for jobs and supplemental income. By the time of the 1930 census, most males in Stoney worked as oystermen and most women as oyster shuckers (Figure 8). S.V. Toomer and members of the Hudson family owned the two primary oyster factories in the area. James Ransom Hudson's seafood business was located in Squire Pope. It was later inherited by his son James Benjamin ("JB") Hudson, who also worked as a local judge and postmaster on Hilton Head. The former

Figure 8.
African American Women and Children Shucking Oysters, Bluffton, South Carolina.

Source: Low Country Digital Library, Lewis Wicke Hine, 1874-1940.

seafood processing factory is now the site of Hudson's Seafood House on the Docks restaurant (Jason 2019; U.S. Census Bureau 1900). Toomer's operation was located in Stoney, as was his store. At Toomer's store, which "faced the dirt road that is now U.S. 278," islanders could get "everything from a pump washer to a dose of castor oil" (Marscher 2005:153).

Shucking oysters was grueling, repetitive work. Waist-high tables on concrete factory floors accommodated up to 15 workers. Women stood on benches to avoid both the concrete floor and the oyster shells that fell to the ground while they worked. Men brought in barrows of oysters, dumping them on the tables, while women, wearing gloves if they had them, picked up the oysters, banged them against metal poles, and popped open the shells with knives. The meat was swiped into steel pails and the shells fell into baskets on the concrete below. Oystermen then shoved the shells into an empty wheelbarrow and brought in more oysters. An independent worker recalled making two dollars a gallon for shucking raw oysters. The money

was divided between him and the female worker. During the Depression, workers were paid in script money, used to purchase items at the store owned by the oyster factory owners (Barnwell et al. 2020:166).

A Stoney resident from a later generation recalled,

> I admired my mother and the other women that lived on Hilton Head, and not only Stoney, but the other Gullah communities . . . because of their limited opportunities they had for work, they'd work at the oyster factories and the crab factories. I remember my mother going to work in the dark and coming back home in the dark. . . . So you were there all day . . . shucking this oyster and putting it in a can. You have to weigh it. And you get paid by the can. I think it's — I don't know, five cents, ten cents or whatever. . . . So you can imagine what their day was like in both the oyster factory and the crab factory trying to make a living. —Champen and Driessen families, personal communication, March 2020.

The Gullah communities on Hilton Head Island depended upon the wisdom of the elders and home remedies to cure most ailments. The life everlasting flower (*Helichrysum stoechas*), an indigenous herb prized for its healing qualities, grew throughout the island during the summer, but could also be dried for year-round used. Regina Perry Chaplin, born in 1906, recalled, "You just dry 'em and boil 'em and make a little tea. Then you put a little lemon in it. You take it and go to bed, and the fever will sweat out" (Marscher 2005:67). Sarah Stewart and her mother, Isabel Stewart, the oldest resident of Stoney, also recalled the value of life everlasting tea:

> Life everlasting tea? That would be for flu. You would boil that down with lemon. And sometimes they would put a little liquor, alcohol in there to sweat, to run that sweat out. — Stewart Family, personal communication, March 2020.

Midwives practiced on Hilton Head until the 1950s, when transportation to hospitals and doctors on the mainland became easier. Midwife Adrianna Ford of Stoney was held in high regard and would walk to wherever she was needed. Ford is believed to have delivered scores of babies between 1930 and the early 1960s. She sought to improve her skill and knowledge and secured a public health nurse to come to Hilton Head twice a month to train her. Granddaughter Gardenia White remembered it was common to see Miz Adrianna walking along the road in her proper white uniform that was always, "just so." Her little black bag contained conventional medicines and roots and leaves for home remedies passed down on the Island (Barnwell et al. 2020:303).

Work, however, did not consume their lives. Islander residents joined family and friends at churches and schools. The first religious institutions were praise houses used during slavery. Praise houses — simple one-room wooden structures — were located in Cherry Hill, Squire Pope, and Chaplin. There was also a praise house in Stoney, but no additional information about it has been found. These meeting places, approved by plantation owners, allowed the enslaved community to bear the harsh realities of slavery by leaning on each other and God. The people would gather in the meeting places during the week, as Sunday was reserved for church service, held under the watchful eye of a white minister or overseer (Barnwell et al. 2020:263).

Religion remained a cornerstone of the community. In 1862, freedmen and women established the First African Baptist Church in the Mitchelville community. As the oldest church on Hilton Head, it is considered the mother church of all African American churches on the island. In Northwestern Hilton Head Island is Mount Cavalry Baptist Church, which was founded in 1914 on Squire Pope Road. It began as a praise house and later expanded into a two-room church. Mount Cavalry continues its tradition of performing baptisms for congregants in nearby Skull Creek (Barnwell et al. 2020:258–260).

Education was also valued among residents, although schooling was often limited. The first school building on the island was built in 1863, in Mitchelville. Following Reconstruction, early community schools were established in the Squire Pope, Jonesville, Baygall, and Chaplin communities. Local churches also often doubled as schools. Classes were typically held from November to February to accommodate the planting season—after crops were harvested in the fall and before new ones were planted in early spring. A person was often considered to have done well if he or she completed the third year of education, according to Charlie Simmons, Jr., a resident of nearby Spanish Wells, who remembered the difficulties associated with attending school:

> I didn't get to school the first day because my mother told me it was too far to walk. At least three miles... And I stand up on the porch and watch all them fellas going to school. Boy I hated that. They must have had two kinds of primers, beginner and advanced, because you used the same book must be about two or three years and then you get another book. And then we got to the place where we had two and three books. Oh, we thought we were big wheel then (Barnwell et al. 2020:282–289).

Although largely self-sufficient, Islanders needed to travel to the mainland to purchase some goods and to sell their livestock and produce. From Stoney, small boats took people to and from Savannah and Bluffton for shopping and sometimes for jobs. Islander Charlie Simmons, Sr. envisioned an opportunity to provide better service for his neighbors, and in the 1920s, he purchased the first locally owned motorboat. Simmons transported Islanders to the mainland and carried children to the Penn Center for education on nearby St. Helena Island. His service earned him the respected title of Mr. Transportation (Barnwell et al. 2020:192). Stoney native Pamela Driessen remembered the bus trips Mr. Simmons once organized for island residents to do their Christmas shopping in Savannah:

> We would get dressed up and we would get the bus. I mean, you know, get on the bus to go to Savannah to shop. And not only did we shop for food, we shopped for clothes and school supplies and all this kind of stuff. The interesting thing about this transportation that Mr. Charlie had was that he not only transported people, he transported produce, seafood, chickens. Everything was on that bus. And he stopped on every little, every little nook and cranny until he got to Savannah. So, you had other people on the road waiting for Mr. Charlie to get on this bus and go to Savannah to shop. Because they didn't have supermarkets or department stores either. —Pamela Driessen, personal communication, March 2020.

A businessman, Simmons also owned one of the most popular stores in the Stoney community. It opened to great excitement in the 1940s and was considered so grand that people referred to it as Big Star, after a well-known grocery store in Savannah. Stoney's "Big Star" sold a variety of items, from blue jeans to wood-burning stoves to rice and turpentine, providing people with goods they could not find on the island (Barnwell et al. 2020:233).

ARRIVAL OF FINANCIERS, CLUB MEN, AND SPECULATORS

Hilton Head Island's natural beauty attracted wealthy businessmen and groups during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and their presence would later transform the Island's economy and environment. Several were northerners who purchased plantations to use for resorts, entertainment, and hunting. Others saw Hilton Head as a tremendous opportunity for clearing timber and selling smaller lots. Stoney and the nearby plantation on the north end of the island, including Honey Horn, which also was once owned by the Stoney family, changed hands several times between the late 1880s and the 1950s. In 1889, W.P. Clyde of New York, owner of Clyde Shipping Company, purchased 9,000 acres from the former plantation owners. Roy Rainey, a northern industrialist, purchased the holdings from Clyde in the 1920s, although sources indicate Clyde may not have sold all of his land on Hilton Head at that time. Rainey also purchased 450 acres at Possum Point and some unidentified land in Stoney (Barnwell et al. 2020:162; Vivian 2018:53).

Rainey lost his fortune in the 1929 stock market crash, forcing him to sell his holdings on the island. New York financiers Alfred L. Loomis and his brother-in-law, Landon K. Thorne, stepped in and purchased Rainey's and Clyde's holdings, paying cash for nearly 20,000 acres, including Honey Horn, at $6 an acre. Loomis and Thorne had previously bought land on Hilton Head Island, including Coggins Point and the former Confederate installation, Fort Walker. With their purchase of Clyde's holdings, Loomis and Thorne owned two-thirds of the island. They transformed Honey Horn into a resort, a hunting preserve, and a meeting place for the wealthy. Their goal, according to one source, was to buy more property and make Hilton Head their private island (Barnwell et al. 2020:160—162).

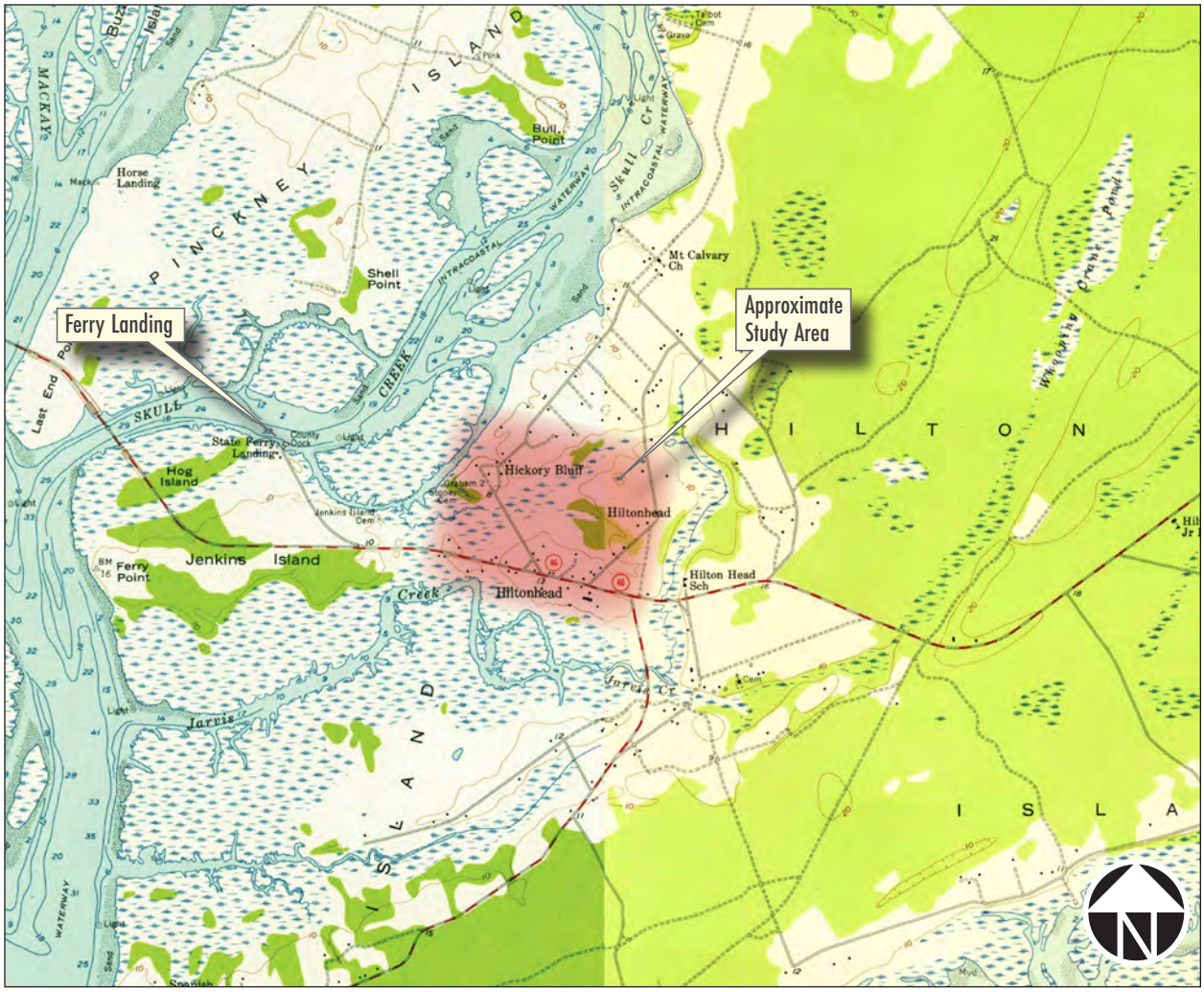
Private ownership of large tracts directly affected the Gullah communities. In 1915, the South Carolina General Assembly adopted the Ziegler Bill, requiring hunters to purchase licenses and receive written permission from landowners prior to hunting or fishing on their lands. The bill also gave wardens the authority to enforce the law and directly affected the African American community, the largest population on the Sea Islands. Since totally restricting islanders from hunting was impractical, as they knew the land, hunting locations, and typography, landowners would often rent tracts to islanders and allow them hunt to feed their families. On the Honey Horn Plantation, Loomis and Thorne hired local islanders to staff the resort and hunting preserve. Islanders trained horses and hunting dogs and served as groundskeepers, cooks, and housekeepers for guests (Barnwell et al. 2020:156; Vivian 2018:58—59).

TOURISM AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE U.S. 278 BRIDGE, 1940–1960

Gullah residents in Northwestern Hilton Head and throughout the Island witnessed significant changes on Hilton Head in the decades after World War II. In the 1940 federal census, references to community/plantation names did not appear, and the area was again identified as Hilton Head Township. While the island had a network of roads, there were only 15 registered vehicles. Census records that year indicate that most residents of the Stoney community and the island continued to make their living through farming (Barnwell et al. 2020:195–198; U.S. Census Bureau 1940).

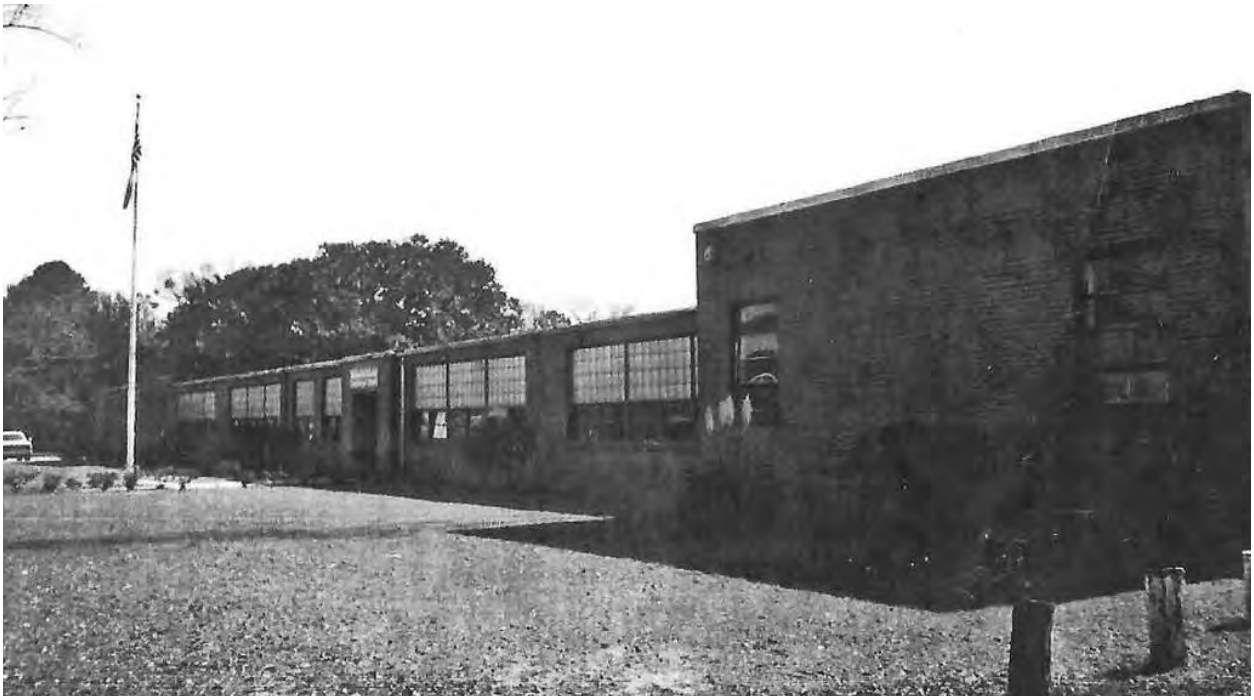
By 1950, Hilton Head had just over 1,000 residents, and 90 percent were Black (Danielson 2015). Among the notable developments in the Jenkins Island, Stoney and Squire Pope communities at the start of the decade was the establishment of an automobile ferry service that docked on Skull Creek (Figure 9). Improvements

Figure 9.
1956 Map of the Stoney Community and U.S. 278 Bridge



Source: Bluffton Quadrangle, Hilton head Quadrangle, U.S. Geological Survey, 1956).

Figure 10.
Hilton Head Elementary School, 1954



Source: *The Island Packet*, 28 February 2011.

were also made to Stoney Road, to accommodate the increased traffic during this decade (Town of Hilton Head Island Planning Department 2003:2–3). Several of the older school buildings in the Gullah communities were closed in the early 1950s and replaced by Hilton Head Elementary School, which was built in Stoney in 1954 for the island's African American students (Barnwell et al. 2020:195–198) (Figure 10).

After World War II, outside corporations involved in tourism and real estate development began taking an interest in Hilton Head Island as well. In 1949, Alfred Loomis and Landon Thorne announced they would sell 8,000 acres of the land on the Island. Joseph Fraser of the Hinesville Lumber Company in Hinesville, Georgia, sent his business partner, Fred Hack, to investigate the offer. T he two men organized the Hilton Head Company and eventually purchased nearly 19,000 acres of pine forest on Hilton Head Island for timber harvesting, at $60 an acre (Barnwell et al. 2020:195–198; Danielson 2015).

To facilitate automobile access from the mainland to Hilton Head, the James F. Byrnes Bridge, a two-lane swing bridge, was built in 1956 at a cost of $1.5 million. Named after a Beaufort congressional representative, but known simply as "the bridge" to the island's native African American residents, the new transportation corridor brought more tourism, business, development, and traffic to Hilton Head over the following decades (Sellars 2019). Those in Stoney, nearby Squire Pope, and in other Gullah communities expressed mixed emotions about the bridge. Most were optimistic, as it offered convenience and the easy ability to leave and return to the island. However, Arthur Frazier, a store owner in Stoney, recalled that his father

Figure 11.
Hilton Head Company Directory Sign, 1960.

The sign shows all the development areas during the mid-twentieth century development boom. Stoney is located at Areas 3 and 4 on the map. Source: Low Country Digital Library, Lucille Hasell Culp, 1921-2007

did not welcome the bridge for fear that people would get the islanders' property "for little or nothing" (Barnwell et al. 2020:209, 214).

For businessmen associated with the Hilton Head Company and other real estate developers, tourists from the mainland represented a welcome new market. In 1957, Charles Fraser, the son of a founding member of the Hilton Head Company, purchased his father's interest and formed the Sea Pines Plantation Company, which began developing the southern portion of the island into a recreational resort community for the affluent (Figure 11). Sea Pines was unique in its sensitivity to the environment, with beaches, golf courses, resorts, and shopping complementing an inviting nature preserve. The new resort community also provided employment opportunities for both islanders and mainlanders (Shannon 2016).

The bridge also brought increased commercial business to the Stoney community, which, due to its location near the bridge and along both sides of Stoney Road (later William Hilton Parkway/U.S. Highway 278),

amplified its role as a gateway to Hilton Head Island. According to interviews with several longtime residents, "Downtown Stoney" became the pride and joy of the Gullah people on the island, while the development of several businesses along U.S. Highway 278 during the 1950s and 1960s served the needs of locals and visitors alike:

> Charlie Simmons brought the mail from Savannah to the post office... Gullah people rode their marsh tackies into Stoney to get their mail. The new elementary school increased the number of people coming and going to Stoney. Kinley's, a combination neighborhood store and juke joint, kept people coming weekdays and weekends... A barber shop cut hair, roadside stands sold home-grown produce and other items, and the small wooden houses of Gullah people dotted the roadside (Barnwell et al. 2020:210).

Other businesses in the Stoney community the islanders patronized included the Pine Top Restaurant, Arthur Frazier's Mini Mart, John Patterson Mini Mart, Shell Station, Richardson's supermarket and laundry, Kinley Drayton Mini Mart, Fairfield Mini Mart, Steward Paradise Club (now site of a palm reader), Arthur's Seafood, a health clinic, and a magistrate office (Stewart family, personal communication, 2020). Palmer Simmons, grandson of Charlie Simmons, Sr. described the importance of Stoney as a commercial hub for African Americans throughout Hilton Head Island during that period:

> You know, the grocery stores and just being able to walk back and forth between. There was my grandfather's store. Then, later on, there was a couple of gentlemen, one by the name of John Patterson, another gentleman by the name of Arthur Frazier, who had stores directly across from each other in the Stoney area. And, you know, it was a treat to be able to walk and go to any of those stores for the young people, and then, in the middle of that, there was... Mr. McKinley Drayton [who] had a store as well. It became a very intricate part of the Stoney area because then people didn't have to walk as far. So, it gave young people, families... more choices, and, of course, there was an elementary school in the Stoney area... So, everybody that lived over there eventually came to Stoney for some reason, whether it was school, shopping, or otherwise. You, you, most of Hilton Head came to Stoney — Palmer Simmons, personal communication, 2020.

GROWTH AND CHANGE IN STONEY, 1960S TO THE PRESENT

Construction of the James F. Byrnes Bridge in 1956, improvements to the island's network of highways and roads, and the development of vacation resorts all contributed to increased tourism and population growth on Hilton Head in the latter decades of the twentieth century. The Island's population, which stood at just 1,000 residents in 1950, more than doubled by 1970, to 2,546. The number of residents exploded over the next two decades, as travel to the island became easier with the opening of the Hilton Head airport in 1967 and the replacement of the original two-lane swing bridge with a four-lane bridge in 1982. By 1980, Hilton Head's population had jumped to 11,336 residents, and more than half a million tourists visited the island

each year. In 1990, Hilton Head Island residents numbered 23,694 (Danielson 2015; ExploreHiltonhead.com 2017).

While Hilton Head experienced unprecedented commercial and population growth in the decades after the bridge's construction, the proportion of African American residents on the island dropped precipitously, from more than 90 percent in 1950 to less than 9 percent just 50 years later (Danielson 2015). Many from the younger generation left during the 1960s and 1970s, in search of increased educational and employment opportunities in other parts of the country, traveling north to New York or west to California, or travelling across the globe as members of the armed forces (Stewart Family, personal communication, 2020).

The loss of residents in Stoney was also attended by losses in the community's historic built, environment, as successive widenings of U.S. 278 resulted in several buildings being removed from the corridor from the 1980s through the first decade of the twenty-first century, including several houses, commercial buildings, and the former Hilton Head Elementary School, which was demolished circa 2005. Although the population of Hilton Head Island increased from 33,862 residents in 2000 to 37,099 residents in 2010, the population increase for the census tract containing the Stoney Community was more modest, growing from 2,780 to 2,928, or just over 5 percent, during this same period (Town of Hilton Head Island 2017:36—37; Town of Hilton Head Island Planning Department 2003:2).

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IV. DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORY AND MAP ANALYSIS

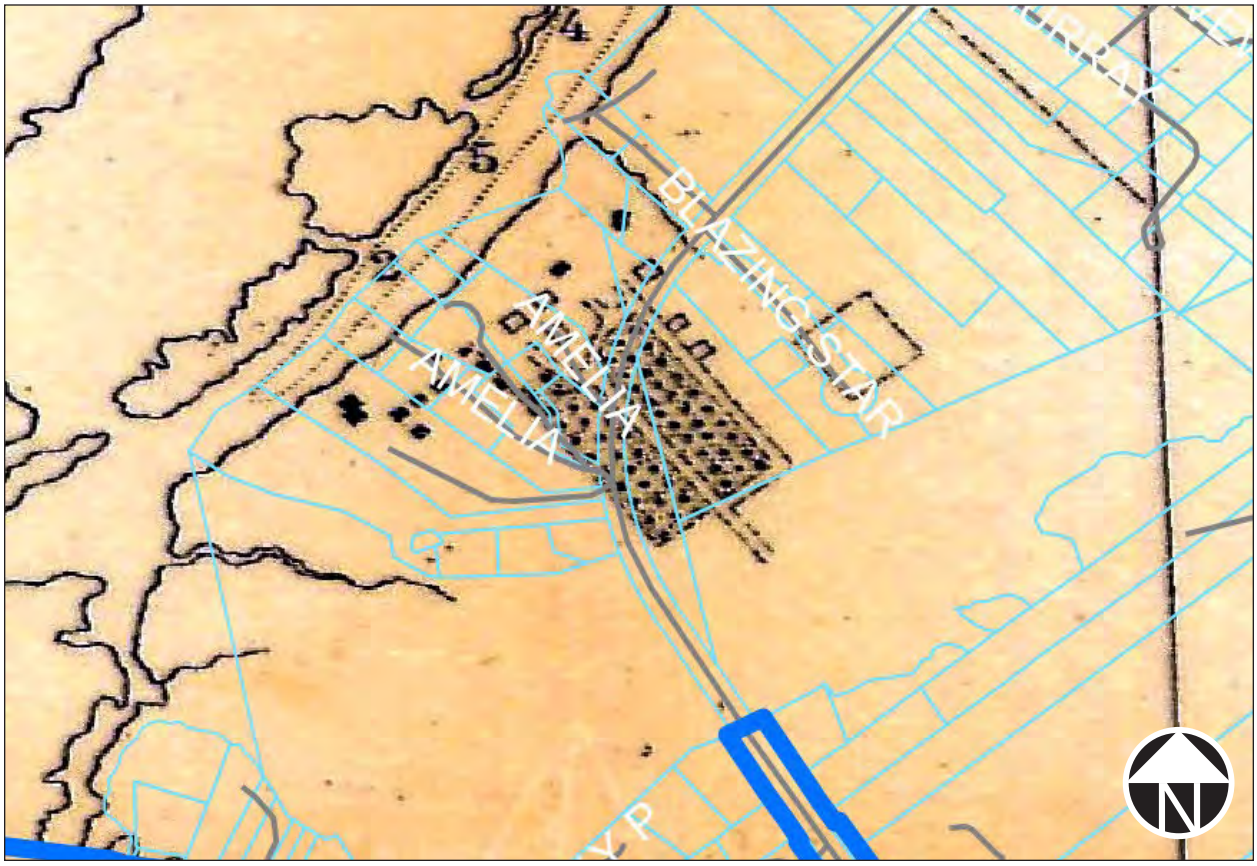
The settlement and development patterns of the Gullah communities in the northern section of Hilton Head Island were originally influenced by their proximities to Skull and Jarvis creeks whose waters have historically have been a primary source of food and jobs for local residents and served as important religious and traditional symbols involving death and rebirth. The water has also provided both means of travel and connection to the mainland while also functioning as a barrier to outside influence, which allowed a local and distinct Gullah culture to develop in the African American communities on Hilton Head Island from the earliest arrival of enslaved Africans through the present. The origins of Stoney, Squire Pope and nearby Jonesville in Northwestern Hilton Head Island are rooted in the antebellum, slave-based plantation system of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Emancipation and the development of economically self-sufficient Gullah communities during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries established new overlays of settlement, land use, and business that were less reliant on the water. In the past 50 years, African Americans neighborhoods in Northern Hilton Island have experienced even more changes to the built environment resulting from the construction of the bridge to the mainland and the William Hilton Parkway/U.S. 278 corridor. A visual analysis of historic maps and aerial photographs, tax parcel data, and an informal field reconnaissance reveal both a continuity of land use among Gullah residents in Stoney, Squire Pope, Jonesville, and Jarvis, as well as historic and non-historic impacts to the agricultural landscapes and building fabric in those communities. This chapter will chart the developmental history for Stoney with a focus on the William Hilton Parkway/U.S. 278 corridor and its impact on the community.

REMNANT PLANTATION AND FREEDMEN SETTLEMENT PATTERNS, 1860—1890

Historic primary sources, map analysis, and deed research reveals that the Stoney, Squire Pope and Jonesville neighborhoods, like several other historic Gullah communities on Hilton Head Island and throughout the Georgia and South Carolina Sea Islands, are examples of Remnant Freedmen Communities in which the families of African American freedmen and women gradually accumulated parcels of land over time on former plantation sites (Ciomek et al. 2016:65—66, 71; Trinkley 1984:11). The origins of these neighborhoods may be traced back to the antebellum slave-based plantations systems or early emancipation periods of the nineteenth century. This connection is apparent in the retention of the Jenkins Island, Stoney, and Squire Pope place names, which are derived in part from the surnames of a prominent planter families that once owned much of Hilton Head Island (Trinkley 1988a:32). Others, such as Jonesville, are named after the Jones family and their extended relatives, whose members began to acquire land in the area after the Civil War (Barnwell et al. 2020:233).

Figure 12.
Overlay of Current Beaufort County Tax Parcels on the 1862 Map of Fairfield Plantation



(Source: Beaufort County Assessor's Office and Preliminary Chart of Calibogue Sound and Skull Creek, U.S. Coast Survey, Library of Congress, 1862)

The Direct Tax Commission Map of Hilton Head Island, prepared by the federal government around 1864, depicted the general extent of the Stoney family's Fairfield Plantation holdings as well as the adjacent plantations of Cotton Hope to the northeast (now the Squire Pope community) and Honey Horn to the south (see Figure 5). The historical and spatial relationship between the nineteenth-century antebellum plantation settlement pattern and the current built environment is best illustrated in the historic Stoney community with the overlay of a current Beaufort County tax parcel map on a georeferenced copy of the 1862 Preliminary Chart of Calibogue Sound and Skull Creek (Figure 12). The superimposed mapping reveals that the modern cluster of parcels lining Amelia Drive, Amelia Court, and Amelia Common closely adheres to the location and general shape of the former plantation settlement that once occupied the south bank of Skull Creek and consisted of "a main house, orchards, a row of slave houses, and associated support buildings and structures" (Trinkley 1988a:33). The Amelia White Cemetery (also known as Stoney Cemetery or Graham Cemetery) (Figure 13) and the prehistoric Green's Shell Enclosure midden, both of which are immediately west of the settlement cluster, were not depicted on the 1862 chart map or 1864 Direct Tax Commission map.

Figure 13.
Views of Amelia White Cemetery

10a. Amelia White Cemetery and Sign, Facing West

10b. View of Amelia White Cemetery Grave Markers, Facing Northwest

The former Jenkins Island, Fairfield, and Cotton Hope plantation sites were among the six areas where the Chicora Foundation conducted archaeological investigations in the 1980s. Various nineteenth-century artifacts likely associated with the Jenkins Island Plantation slave row (38BU871) and the Jenkins Island Cemetery, a 1.86-acre burial ground that dates to the 1700s, were both recommended eligible for the NRHP. A partial shovel test investigation of the former Fairfield Plantation settlement site (recorded as site 38BU1166) revealed intact tabby chimney footing just northwest of existing house lots on Amelia Court, which may have been part of the plantation's slave row. Citing a "strong likelihood that subsurface remains will be found at this site," the Chicora Foundation recommended the tabby chimney and a 4.4-acre area that included part of the adjacent NRHP-listed Green's Shell Enclosure Site (38BU63) and the Amelia White Cemetery (38BU841; Figure 10) be eligible for listing in the NRHP. Two features on the former Cotton Hope Plantation site, a tabby structure that may have been the foundation of the main house (38BU90) and various architectural and kitchen artifacts that may have been associated with the plantation slave row houses (38BU96) were also recommended for listing in the NRHP (Trinkley 1987:67, 1988a:47–54, 72–73).

ORIGINAL LAND SALES AND LOT DISTRIBUTION, 1890–1910

According to author Virginia C. Holmgren (1959:133), a few small parcels of the U.S. government–confiscated plantation lands were sold to African American buyers in the late 1870s. However, deed research of the Stoney Community indicates wholesale subdivision of the former Fairfield Plantation property and lot sales to African American Gullah families began in the late 1880s, with the bulk of transactions taking place during the 1890s and continuing into the early 1900s (see Table 1). Comparison of the 1898 coast survey map of the Northern section of Hilton Head Island with the earlier 1862 coastal map appears to confirm this chronology, showing few changes during the course of a 36-year time period, with settlement remaining largely concentrated in the historic locations of the former Jenkins Island Plantation adjacent to Skull Creek and former Fairfield/Stoney Plantation in the general area along the contemporary roads of Amelia Drive, Amelia Court, and Amelia Common (Figure 14).

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Island's Black residents began building their own measure of autonomy and economic self-sufficiency through the purchase and distribution of land, farming, fishing, and the establishment of locally-owned businesses and institutions that served both local residents and those from historic Gullah communities on other parts of Hilton Head Island. Land-use and land-distribution patterns that are identified as "critical elements of Gullah landownership" also appeared during this period. These features included the development of family compound settlements, the inclusion of traditional burying grounds within the community, the retention of access to nearby waterways for fishing and wooded areas for hunting or use of nontimber forest products, and a reliance on heirs' property, whereby land is conveyed and held "in common" by the descendants of the original deed owner (Brabec and Richardson 2007:153, 157; The Center for Heirs Property Preservation 2016).

A review of recorded land sales to African Americans in the Stoney community from the 1890s through 1910 shows most parcel sizes typically ranged between 25 and 60 acres. According to the deed research, the current tax parcels of the group of residences located on the former Fairfield Plantation settlement were

Figure 14.
1898 Map of the Former Fairfield Plantation Settlement Area

(Source: Port Royal Sound & Savannah River Map, U.S. Coast Survey, Library of Congress, 1898)

subdivided from an original 60-acre plot of land that was sold to Amelia White (namesake of the various streets and the cemetery) in 1892 for $600 (see Table 1; BCDB 18:150 and 24:433). While the cadastral pattern of land distribution on the old Fairfield Plantation settlement generally dates from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century and largely remains under the ownership of longtime Stoney residents and families, county tax assessor data and reconnaissance survey indicate that most dwellings occupying the current lots are non-historic (Figure 15).

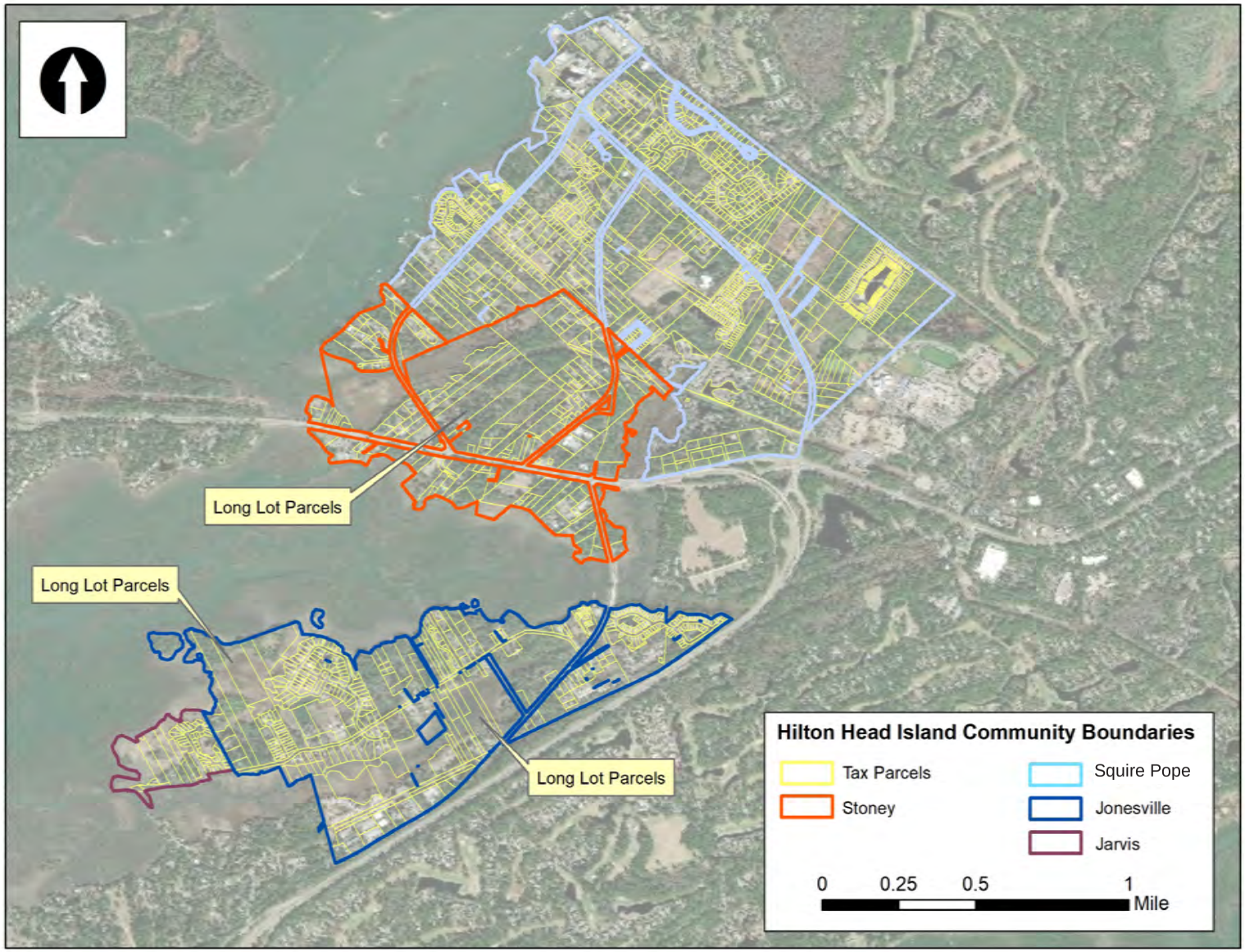
Examination of current Beaufort County tax parcel maps shows that other land surrounding the Stoney Community and the adjacent communities of Squire Pope, Jonesville, and Jarvis was commonly subdivided into distinctive long-lot farm parcels. This cadastral arrangement is still relatively well preserved in large sections of those neighborhoods, revealing a larger landscape that is visible across the northwest section of Hilton Head Island and is commonly associated with historic and traditional land use patterns under Gullah ownership (Figure 16). Also referred to as ribbon or strip parcels, and common to parts of tropical West Africa, Central Europe, Japan, and South America, long-lot parcels are a simple and informal method of land subdivision consisting of long, thin, and deep lots (usually 10 times as deep as they are wide) that maximize frontage to a road, waterway, or both, if available. Historically, dwellings tended to be placed at the ends

Figure 15.
Non-historic and Historic Dwellings on Amelia Drive and Amelia Common

12a. Cluster of non-historic residential development on Amelia Drive, Facing Northwest.

12b. Historic house on Amelia Common, Facing West.

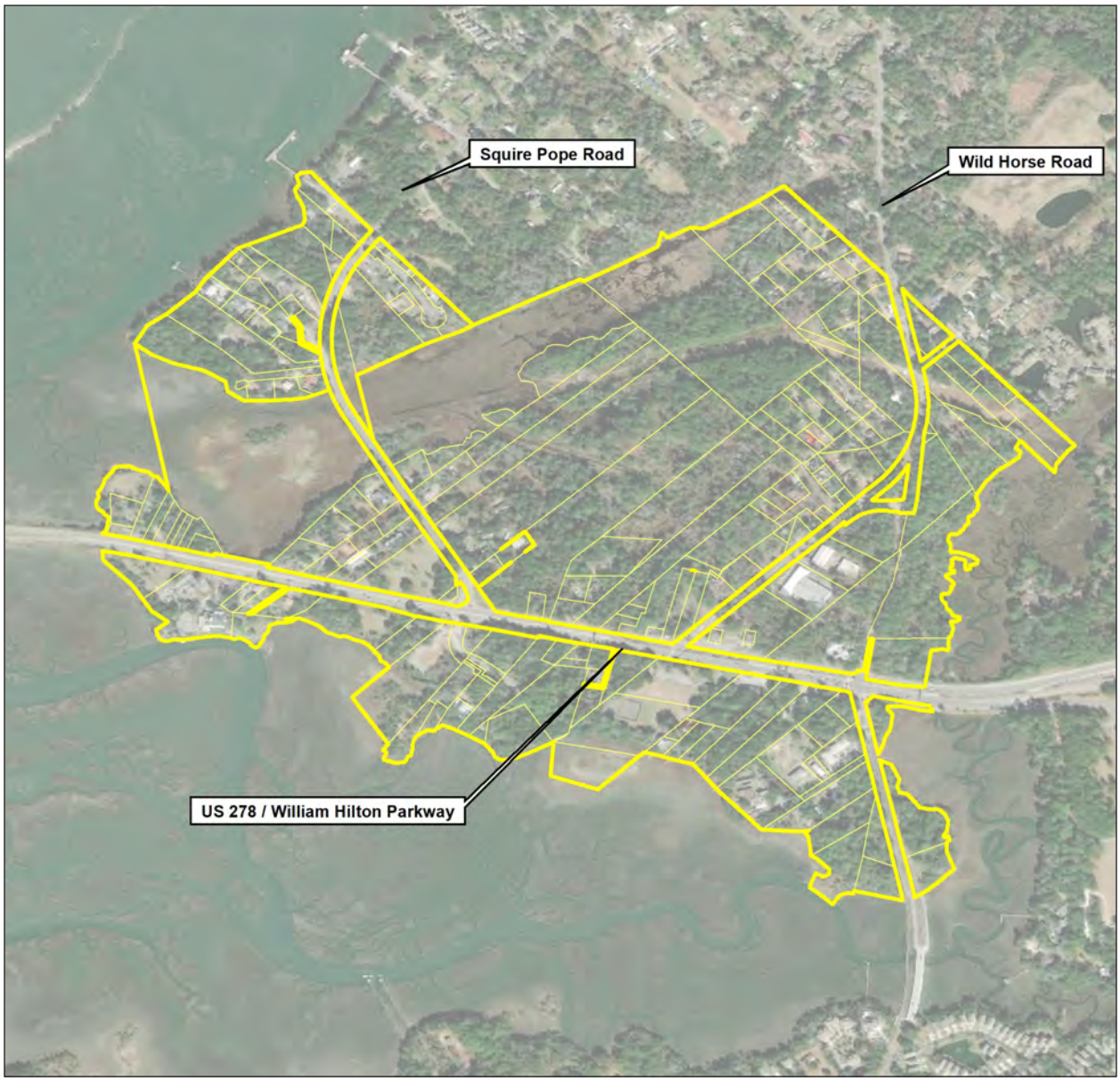
Figure 16.
Current Parcel Map of the Stoney, Jonesville, Jarvis and Squire Pope Communities



(Source: Beaufort County, 2020;
Bing Maps Imagery 2018)

of the lots, nearer to roads, which promoted socialization within the community and reduced the distance required to travel between farmsteads. Subdivided land is often split in half, segmented along the length of the parcel, or both, contributing to the organic quality of a concentration of the lots (Barnes 1935:298). A focused look at the parcel strips in the Stoney Community reveals the long-lots are not consistent in size, ranging from 1 to over 40 acres, and are generally arranged in two perpendicular groups extending from the interior of the neighborhood to frontage along Skull Creek in the northwest or Jarvis Creek southwest, indicating an emphasis on the importance of access to water (Figure 17).

Figure 17.
Current Parcel Map Showing Long Lot Parcels the Stoney Community



(Source: Beaufort County, 2020; Bing Maps Imagery 2018)

SHIFTING DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS, 1900–1950

The 1920 USGS Bluffton quadrangle map shows new commercial and residential development within the Stoney Community becoming increasingly concentrated along the north and south sides of the current William Hilton Parkway/U.S. 278 corridor, along the southern edge of the neighborhood, and on the east and west sides of Squire Pope Road (see Figure 7). The 1938 county highway map confirms the changing development patterns in Stoney during the early twentieth century (Figure 18). William Hilton Parkway/U.S. 278 is depicted as a "graded and drained road," and a commercial building is present on the south side of the corridor, just to the east of the current causeway bridge. Squire Pope Road is shown as an unimproved "primitive road" primarily lined with single-family dwellings, while the Hilton Head School building sits at the eastern periphery of the neighborhood. Old Wild Horse Road and Wild Horse Road are not depicted. The general shift in development from areas adjacent to Skull and Jarvis creeks to the William Hilton Parkway/U.S. 278 corridor, along with increased commercial activity along the road, was likely due to the presence of a ferry landing at the western terminus of the road on Jenkins Island and increased automobile transportation on the Island. Construction of a steamship landing and later, an oyster-packing plant on the northeast corner of Jenkins Island, also contributed to this growth.

Figure 18.
1938 County Road Map Showing the Stoney Community

(Source: Beaufort County, South Carolina Department of Transportation, University of South Carolina, Government Information and Maps Department, 1938)

The 1945 USGS Bluffton quadrangle and 1950 Bureau of Mines maps of Hilton Head Island show that commercial and residential development continued along the William Hilton Parkway/U.S. 278 corridor through World War II (Figures 19 and 20).

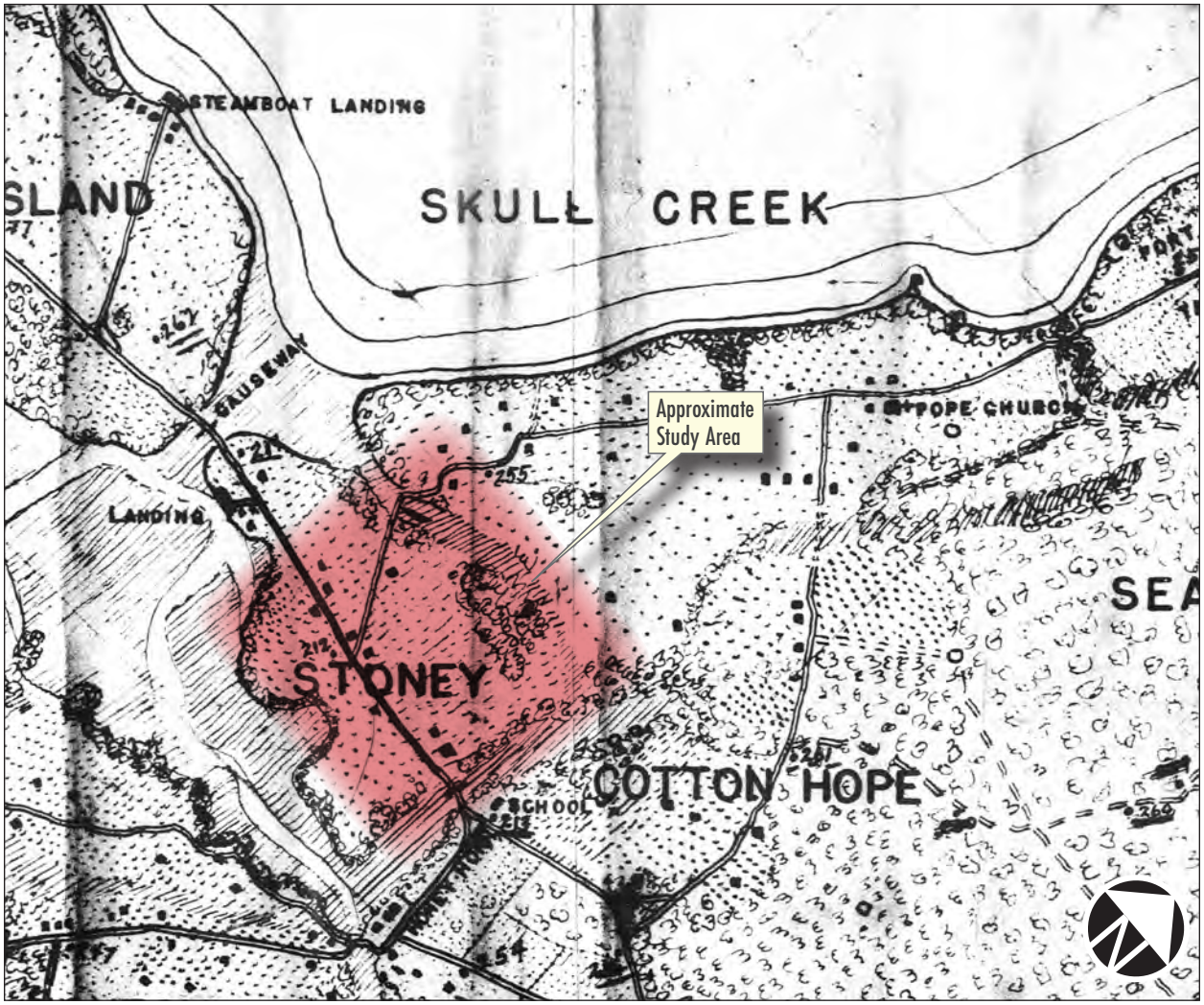
INCREASED COMMERCIAL GROWTH, 1956—1980

The connection of Hilton Head Island to the mainland in 1956, with the construction of the a two-lane toll-swing bridge, formally known as the James F. Byrnes Bridge, and the development of U.S. 278 (now William Hilton Parkway), was a watershed moment in the Island's history. It ushered in a new period of profound economic and social changes for its native Gullah residents. No longer geographically isolated, the Island's Gullah communities' traditional reliance on subsistence farming, fishing, and hunting began to give way to a tourism-based economy on Hilton Head. With the highway and tourism came increased automobile traffic, commerce, demographic changes, and new development that put pressure on residents of Stoney and other historic Gullah communities on the island.

Figure 19.
1945 Partial Map of the Stoney Community

(Source: Bluffton Quadrangle, Hilton Head Quadrangle, U.S. Geological Survey, 1945)

Figure 20.
1950 Map of the Stoney Community and Surrounding Area



(Source Drill Holes, Hilton Head Island, U.S. Bureau of Mines, 1950. Courtesy of the Heritage Foundation Library, Hilton Head Island)

Figure 21.
1959 County Road Map Showing the Stoney Community

(Source: Beaufort County, South Carolina Department of Transportation, University of South Carolina, Government Information and Maps Department, 1959)

The 1959 county highway map illustrates the changes that the construction of the bridge and highway a few years earlier brought to northwestern section of Hilton Head Island (Figure 21). The William Hilton Parkway/ U.S. 278 corridor, Squire Pope Road, and Spanish Wells Road are all shown as bituminous two-lane roads. Old Wild Horse Road and Wild Horse Road are depicted for the first time as an asphalt-paved road and an unimproved street, respectively. Rows of dwellings are shown along the north and south sides of William Hilton Parkway and the west side of Wild Horse Road. A new cluster of single-family houses are also shown on the south side of William Hilton Parkway, between the current Viola and Darling roads, while a post office and commercial building occupy the opposite (north) side of the corridor.

A 1968 aerial photograph provides additional information about the character of the Stoney Community during the mid- to late-twentieth century (Figure 22). The majority of commercial, institutional, and

Figure 22.
1968 Aerial Photograph of the Stoney Community

(Source: USGS)

residential development was concentrated along William Hilton Parkway/U.S. 278 between Squire Pope Road and Wild Horse Road/Spanish Wells Road. This included the (no longer extant) Hilton Head Elementary School building, on the south side of the road; a gas station (no longer extant, and currently the site of Parker's gas station), at the northwest corner of the intersection of U.S. 278 and Wild Horse Road; the twin office buildings, at 155 and 157 William Hilton Parkway; and the frame commercial buildings, at 113 William Hilton Parkway (formerly Stewart's Paradise Club), and 149 William Hilton Parkway (currently Willie Young's Upholstery; Figures 23 and 24). In contrast, very little residential development occurred in the northwest corner of the neighborhood at Amelia Common (Amelia Drive and Amelia Court are not visible in the photograph) or along Squire Pope Road (Figure 25). Most notable, however, was how many parcels within the Stoney Community remained cleared, indicating that, into the late 1960s, residents continued to use a significant amount of land for agriculture.

Figure 23.
Commercial Office Buildings at 155 and 157 William Hilton Parkway

23a. Commercial office building at 155 William Hilton Parkway, Facing Northeast

23b. Commercial office building at 157 William Hilton Parkway, Facing Northwest

Figure 24.
Commercial Buildings on William Hilton Parkway

24a. Commercial building at 113 William Hilton Parkway (formerly Stewart's Paradise Club)., Facing East

24b. Commercial building at 149 William Hilton Parkway, Facing West

Figure 25.
Views of Squire Pope Road and Old Wild Horse Road at William Hilton Parkway

24a. View of Squire Pope Road intersection at William Hilton Parkway, Facing Southwest

24b. View of Old Wild Horse Road intersection at William Hilton Parkway, Facing Southwest.

DEVELOPMENTAL IMPACTS ALONG THE U.S. 278 CORRIDOR, 1980–2015

The 1968 aerial photograph and 1970 county highway map both show William Hilton Parkway/U.S. 278 as a bituminous two-lane road (Figure 26). By 1978, the section of the corridor spanning Jarvis Creek and entering the western edge of the Stoney Community had been expanded into a divided highway. William Hilton Parkway/U.S. 278 remained an undivided multilane section of road traversing the Stoney Community before reverting to being a divided highway just east of the intersection with Wild Horse Road/Spanish Wells Road (Figure 27).

Figure 26.
1970 County Highway Map of the Stoney Community

(Source: Beaufort County, South Carolina Department of Transportation, University of South Carolina, Government Information and Maps Department, 1970)

Figure 27.
1978 County Highway Map of the Stoney Community

(Source: Beaufort County, South Carolina Department of Transportation, University of South Carolina, Government Information and Maps Department, 1978)

The section of William Hilton Parkway/U.S. 278 bisecting Stoney was widened into a four-lane divided highway by the early 1990s, as shown in a 1994 aerial photograph of the area. The cleared and cultivated lands visible in the 1968 aerial image had become reforested, but much of the commercial and residential development within the community largely remained extant at that time (Figure 28). By 2005, the eastern section of William Hilton Parkway/U.S. 278 had been widened to a six-lane divided highway, and the intersections at Squire Pope Road and Old Wild Horse Road were re-aligned (Figure 23). In addition, the former gas station at the intersection of William Hilton Parkway/U.S. 278 and Wild Horse Road was redeveloped as the current Parker's service station (Figure 29), and some properties on the south side of the highway were demolished and cleared, including the former Hilton Head Elementary School (Figure 30).

Examination of a 2012 aerial photograph area shows additional commercial and residential properties along the highway corridor were demolished, most notably the cluster of houses and outbuildings northwest of the William Hilton Parkway/U.S. 278 and Squire Pope Road intersection (Figure 31) and a few houses on the opposite side of the highway (Figure 32). The widening of William Hilton Parkway/U.S. 278 during the 1990s and 2000s also resulted in families and individuals along both sides of the corridor selling property; now, half of the parcels sited along the highway within the Big Stoney neighborhood (n=24 of 48) are publicly owned by the Town of Hilton Head Island (Beaufort County, South Carolina 2020).

Figure 28.
1994 Aerial Photograph Showing Widening of the William Hilton Parkway/U.S. 278 Corridor

(Source: U.S. Geological Survey, 1994).

Figure 29.
View of William Hilton Parkway/US 278 at Wild Horse Road, Facing West

Figure 30.
2005 Aerial Photograph of the Stoney Community

(Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency, 2005).

Figure 31.
View of the Cleared, Publicly Owned Parcel at the Intersection of Squire Pope Road and William Hilton Parkway, Facing Southwest

Figure 32.
2012 Aerial Photograph of the Stoney Community

(Source: Google Earth, 2012)

Figure 33.
Setting along William Hilton Parkway/US 278

33a. View of setting along William Hilton Parkway/US 278, Facing West

33b. View of setting along William Hilton Parkway/US 278 near Squire Pope Road, Facing West

Figure 34.
Residence at 108 William Hilton Parkway, Facing Southwest

SUMMARY

The origins of the historic African American Gullah communities in Northwestern Hilton Head Island are rooted in the antebellum plantation settlements and succeeding freedmen's community on the site in the decades after the Civil War. During the early twentieth century, residential settlement began shifting from concentrations along the Jarvis and Skull creeks to the current William Hilton Parkway/U.S. 278 corridor as a result of increased commercial development in the area. This trend intensified with the construction of the bridge connecting Hilton Head Island to the mainland in 1956 with Stoney emerging as a commercial center for the island's Gullah communities during the late twentieth century. Widening the highway to accommodate increased traffic demands on the island has resulted in the loss of much of the historic built environment lining the commercial corridor at the southern edge of the Stoney Community over the course of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Despite such developments, the next chapter will demonstrate that Stoney's overall and lasting significance continues in its patterns of landownership and settlement and its unique geography.

V. ORAL HISTORY SUMMARY

INTERVIEWEES

The following persons shared their memories of life on the Island with an emphasis on Stoney as an integral part of Hilton Head's Gullah history, commerce, and heritage. Members of families with property along US 278 in Stoney, as well as individuals whose families have lived in other Gullah communities on Hilton Head since slavery or the end of the Civil War, were interviewed.

Emory Campbell, 4th generation Islander, native of Spanish Wells Community, noted scholar of the Gullah culture, and co-author of *Gullah Days: Hilton Head Island Before the Bridge, 1861 — 1956*.

Venita White Barnette, came to the Island at age eight, is daughter of Perry White, former president of the NAACP, Hilton Head Island chapter.

Thomas C. Barnwell, Jr., 85 years old, 3rd generation Islander, Squire Pope Community, and co-author of *Gullah Days: Hilton Head Island Before the Bridge, 1861 — 1956*.

Alexander Brown, Jr., 7th generation Islander, Big Hill Community, and newly elected town council person for Ward 1, Hilton Head Island.

Arthur Champen, member of the Champen-Driessen family, a legacy land-owing family with property along US 278 in Stoney.

Murray Christopher, family dates back to 1843 on the Island, Chaplin Community, and grandson of John Blake, and past resident of Stoney.

Louise Cohen, 5th generation Islander, Wild Horse Community, and founder of the Gullah Museum on Hilton Head Island.

Benjamin Driessen, member of the legacy-land-owning family with property along US 278 in Stoney.

Dan Driessen, member of Champen-Driessen, legacy, land-owning family with property along US 278 in Stoney.

Edna Driessen, member by marriage of the Champen-Driessen family, a legacy, land-owning family with property along US highway 278 in Stoney.

Linda Washington, member of the Champen-Driessen, legacy, land-owning family with property along US highway 278 in Stoney.

Pam Driessen, member of the land- owning family with property along US highway 278 in Stoney.

Palmer Simmons, Spanish Wells community, grandson of Charlie Simmons Sr., an early and successful entrepreneur with businesses in Stoney.

Isabel Stewart, a legacy, land-owning family with property along US 278 in Stoney. Mrs. Isabel Stewart, the family matriarch at age 81, has lived in Stoney for 65 years. She is the granddaughter of Amelia White, who deeded land to the Amelia White Cemetery in Stoney

John Stewart, member of the legacy, land-owning family with property along US 278 in Stoney, son of Mrs. Isabel Stewart.

Sarah Stewart, member of the legacy, land-owning family with property along US 278 in Stoney and daughter of Mrs. Isabel Stewart.

UNDERSTANDING HILTON HEAD'S HISTORICAL CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Foremost, all interviews reinforced that Stoney was and is part of a larger cultural landscape that was developed by the Gullah communities and that a history of Stoney must be placed within this larger context. The interviews suggest that these communities were webbed together by their cultural beliefs and practices and that boundaries between them were recognized but not with hard lines. Waterways and marshes formed permeable boundaries through which Gullah communities communicated and shared their culture.

Communities on Hilton Head evolved from the island plantations, where enslaved family groups and friends toiled and lived together. Identity perhaps was forged in part based on plantations, as in freedom Gullah people saw no need to change the name of some plantations they had lived on, choosing instead to keep the names but drop the word "plantation." They were tied to communities where they grew up, forged relationships and buried their loved ones.

Stoney was one of the communities that retained its pre-Civil War name. At times it was referred to as Fairfield, but overtime the name Stoney prevailed. Despite which community one lived in, shared experiences governed their lives. As community members, people extended a hand across community boundaries. They engaged in social activities, attended church, competed in sports and married across community lines. Stoney residents and other islanders spoke of the taking care of others, making sure everyone had food, clothing, shelter, whatever they needed.

> "Before the bridge Highway 278 was almost a playground for us because there was no cars except when the ferry came. We were all farmers. I lived with my grandmother... And we farmed. We would go fishing, you know, lived off the, off the land and the river and just basically did what we wanted to do. When the bridge came, things started to change, but before then, life was great. It was life was very simple, you know? We only had just a few stores on the island. One was right there by my—right across the street from where my grandmother lived at was owned by Mr. Charlie Simmons." —Arthur Champen, p. 2-3

> "The one thing that I absolutely will always [remember] is every Gullah community was close-knit. It was, it was beautiful because family lived close together. We shared history. We shared values. We shared traditions. It became a part of who I am today. The values

and the teachings and the lessons and the traditions; just, just see how our parents make a living with not many opportunities. It's amazing to me that they became who they became. And who they were made me become who I am today." —Pamela Driessen, p. 4

"... Hilton Head was pretty much a self-contained community. Everything was provided, and you really didn't have to go outside of the community for a whole lot other than to buy clothing, supplies, clothing, and stuff from Savannah. But otherwise everything else was pretty much provided by the community itself." —Murray Christopher, p. *5*

"Stoney had... It was just a fun family. The Green's, yeah, let's just say there was a family reunion, and you were driving down Stoney. You could, because it was understood that they read the announcement in church, that anyone can go to the family reunion. It wasn't just because it's our family you can go. Everyone went to everyone's family reunion." —Venita Barnette, p. 7-8

"What do I miss about Stoney? The people, and just being able to stop by and stuff. If you see all these cars in the yard, you just join and not join. Sometimes it's like, "This person passed." We're all gathering, oh, food, small town. But just the openness, the relationship with the families there, just like you said, the sense of community." —Venita Barnette, p. 7-8

"Stoney now as it's being threatened with change and, actually, destruction, we have to remember that it weakens the culture because the culture has been always connected. It has always been a network of neighborhoods. And not only the memories, but the skills that these particular neighborhoods had is what we relied on. And still to this day, those same families have interest in those skills. You go to Stoney now and you find the same families that are shrimpers." —Emory Campbell, p. 8

"It's the people. It's what Stoney stood for. Stoney stood for community. Stoney was one of the strongpoints. I mean, like I said, come back to it once again. People liked to come to Stoney from all over. Stoney was a mainstay for a lot of people for a long time because, you know, you had to come to Stoney to get goods and services." —Palmer Simmons, p. 11

THEMES

Several themes arose during interviews with residents of Stoney and neighboring communities that helped shape the TCP evaluation and analysis. They are Gullah landownership; Stoney as a cultural gateway; and progress, prosperity and education. Each is discussed below, with excerpts from interviewees.

OUR PEOPLE HAD TO WORK AND BUY THEIR LAND: LAND OWNERSHIP

The interviews show that Gullah people on Hilton Head cherish their land. For "legacy" families, land has been in their possession since the early 1860s. They can trace land ownership, the loss of land, and the

division of land over time. Family-owned land allowed persons to build on their property as they needed. It gave individuals and families a start in home ownership without the burden of a mortgage. Historically, families stayed together on the land with several generations on the same acreage. Street roads bear the names of landowners. Many of these quotes show a tie to land that lies beyond a purchase price. To them, land is a binding thread from the past to the present and the future.

> "You know when President Lincoln died, everything was reversed. All those promises about the 40 acres and a mule and all that stuff, we on Hilton Head, we didn't get anything. They didn't get the land nor the mule, not even one. Our people had to work and buy their land." —Louise Cohen, p. 10

> "So they, you know, I just feel that property is very sacred, because, you know, my grandparents, they worked so hard for this property. Shuck oysters, picked oysters and did, you know, work in the field to buy this. And that's why it's so sacred to us because, think about it, you don't want to just give up property that any—People sell property every day, but that property means something to us... So, you know, property—if you have property, you're rich, especially on Hilton Head. I mean, especially on Hilton Head. And you just don't want to see that just, just go, because taxes here, extremely high. But, you know, we'll do whatever we can to keep it in the family. Which we don't want the road to come either, but, you know, we know something's going to be—something's going to happen. We don't know what." —Sarah Stewart, p. 15

> "...I'm going to say this. The town has made an effort apparently to purchase a lot of the land owned by African American people in that corridor of Highway 278." —Thomas Barnwell

> "And you've seen it very clear in the book that I give reference to, 1955, that the plan was to relocate all the residents who had property in that corridor, since 1955. This was in the plan since 1955. And I used to share it with the planning commissioner of the town, and that same question came up." —Thomas Barnwell

> "And I said certainly traffic, we need to make improvements over a period of time for the safety. And certainly, the bridges that people travel to and from this island, including me and my family. And certainly, in saying this, my family is benefited economically, and we appreciate that." —Thomas Barnwell

> "We should take a look, a serious look. Because this is the last effort that exists for the Stewart family, the Driessen family, the Frazier's family, and the Simmons' family and several others that live as well as own property in that corridor." —Thomas Barnwell

> "And it appears to me that there's no way that the state, the county or the town will be able to find an appraiser to appraise the properties that's owned by the persons that live and own property on that US Highway 278. To allow them to have the dollar equivalency that those families will have benefits coming to them." —Thomas Barnwell

"Not just for one year, 2 years, 3 years, 10 years, but in perpetuity. There's no appraiser that will say that he can find comps. That's what they call them in that language, comps. Because... they just don't find people who have properties that's contiguous for highway, as well as a waterfront, and Marsh front that you will find there in Stoney." —Thomas Barnwell,

WHERE THE WORLD SEES HILTON HEAD FIRST: STONEY AS CULTURAL GATEWAY

Pulling on its heritage and its unique location, the Town of Hilton Head describes Stoney as the "gateway to the Island" (Town of Stoney 2000) for its location at the entrance of Hilton Head from the mainland. This moniker works well from a heritage tourism perspective, anchoring the past in its future as people pass through on their travels. To the Gullah, however, the gateway that Stoney represents has always possessed cultural significance, conveying a significant message. In the words of one interviewee: "It was the first step on home soil" "Where we connected with the other part of the world." It remains a tangible reminder of the end of one world and the beginning of another. Its role as the cultural gateway precedes the Byrne Bridge and the highway. In the early twentieth century, the Gullah traveled from Stoney to the mainland by bateau or by ferry often piloted by Island native, Mr. Charlie Simmons. Gullah residents leaving or returning to the Island touched Stoney, where they boarded for the Savannah or returned to their communities.

"Stoney was... it was the gateway. Eventually, Stoney became the debarkation point to get to Savannah. And it had a main dock there where people had transport boats dock there. And you would go to Stoney down to the dock and get on a boat that would take you across the water to what is now Buckingham, which is the mainland." —Emory Campbell

"When you cross that bridge coming into Stoney] you always were coming home. When you cross that bridge and see that waterway you just feel so elated. It was the first step on home soil." —Emory Campbell

"Well, Stoney is historic. It's what I just described. It is a place where we gain service. It was a place where we connected with the other part of the world. And it was and still is the place where the world sees Hilton Head first..." —Emory Campbell

"Stoney as the gateway resonates today with Islanders. It is a source of pride and tangible evidence of Stoney's as an important site and community on the Island." —Louise Cohen

"It is very important. It's very important because Stoney is the gateway to Hilton Head Island. You can't get to Hilton Head any other way, or unless you traveling by boat, but by road you have to come through Stoney. That is the gateway. That is a historic area..." —Louise Cohen,

STONEY AS PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY

By 1900s Stoney was filled with business-minded people who assisted in transforming the community in the commercial area of the Island. Some people referred to it as "downtown Hilton Head" (Barnwell et al. 2020:232). The move to business ownership echoed the growth of the Gullah community. While

many continued to earn their living by land and water, others saw the need to create businesses on the Island, providing convenient shopping for Islanders and perhaps circulating dollars within the community. Between ca. 1900 and the 1950s, stores, gas-stations, restaurants, places of entertainment, a post office and more emerged. Islanders came to Stoney for everyday needs. It was a source of pride to shop with black businessmen and women on the Island.

"When you think of Stoney you thought of progress for Gullah people." —Emory Campbell

“I'm going to continue to tell you that Stoney grew as the real center. The stores grew up. A man named Peter Drayton was one of the persons that had a small store in Stoney. A store or confectionery. We called it a store then because he had many different things there that people would need and they could buy. Then later as time went on, Arthur Frazier developed and built a store in the Stoney area." —Emory Campbell

"And then across the highway from that... Arthur Frazier even had a service station. Gas. He sold gasoline. And then John Patterson who had gotten involved with transportation on and off the island over the years had a store there." —Emory Campbell

T"hey too had a gas pump right next to the house where they lived. Their home was there and then the building next to that. And then later, Charlie Simmons opened a store there that was called The Big Star, in Stoney. And that store had things that no other store on the island had. It had clothing, shoes, it had trash burner heaters, stovepipes, all.” —Thomas C. Barnwell

“There are several stores that were there. The Patterson Store, which is now a upholstery shop, is just down the street from the intersection of Old Wild Horse and 278. And then there's the Frazier Store that's right across the street from the upholstery shop. Those are the two buildings that were a part of that community that still remains to this day. There was another store just as you enter the Hilton Head community from Jenkins Island, which was the Simmons. They had a gas station on one side of the street and a convenience store on the other. So those two buildings are now gone.” —Murray Christopher

“Big Stoney was, was the happening—it was the town. Honestly, that’s where every—Because I sat down last night. I was just writing the different—You wouldn’t believe that all of this was in that area, all these different was in the area. You come on Hilton Head, you’ll say, this—I mean, especially if you new to the area you know.... Memory Matters. You know, Memory Matters there. There’s a little shopping center that you really can’t—you really can’t see. If you’re flying on Hilton Head, you, you won’t see, because everybody try to get to their destination. Hilton Head. And you know, you’ll miss—you miss a lot of it.” —Sarah Stewart

Livelihoods

For generations, Stoney and other Island residents made their livelihood through farming and harvesting oysters, shrimp, fish and crab. Narrow land parcels on Stoney allowed residents to benefit from the road and the waterways. Women and men worked in the seafood industry from catching to shucking to canning.

> "And so, they worked in this oyster factory. So, the process was the men would go out in the river and get oysters. And then they would bring it back to the factory, put it on this counter, and then the women had to shuck it. And so, the women shucked the oysters. Put it in these gallon cans. And there's a whole history of who owned the factories and all this kind of stuff, right? But that's a whole different story. But that's what my mom and the other women did. And they did this for a while. And so, you're in this, you know, you're in this, this factory where it's cold. But I supposed they had a heater in there somewhere." —Pamela Driessen

> "Right. So, you're there all day doing this tedious work of shucking oysters, putting them in a can, which was weighed. And you get paid by the can. I think it was five cents, 10 cents, or whatever..." —Pamela Driessen

> "And I used to open oyster, go to work in the morning, come back in the afternoon. I would cook enough to take to work, and Sarah would take the children to school. I mean, to next door to the mama house, grandmamma house. And then we'd go on to school, and after coming go fishing and leave our house to go the Crazy Crab. And you'd go fishing around 3:00, 4:00 o'clock with the tide, you know. And Sarah take care of the house while we gone." —Isabel Stewart

> "And then we'd come back in the evening time sometimes 11:00 o'clock I in the fish house. I be in the house right now. I'm putting the fish and shrimps, separate them, icing them down. Arthur got to go to bed and rest because he got to carry the boat up the river. And as he going up the river, Arthur tell me hold the bow straight on out on our way... I'm staying the wheel. I got to keep the boat on that white mark right until he done do what he's got to do. And we go on up there. While's he letting the net overboard, I'm the reel holder, steer boat, too." —Isabel Stewart

> "And that's when we were making our living, and when we come from fishing, anybody come along to the dock. We was a nice island of people on Stoney, very nice to each other. And to see how Stoney going down, how time how Stoney's going down. There's no family to Stoney no more. No family. We got nobody next door to anybody... And I the only one really, I the oldest one." —Isabel Stewart

> "For some families catching crab and oysters continues as part of their tradition on Stoney. The shrimp culture suffered over time due to overseas competition and regulations affecting the shrimping business." —Thomas Barnwell

"Now the other part of Stoney, there were several members of the Stewart family that bought and owned their own shrimp boats. And they built a dock and they started operating their shrimp boats out from that area as well." —Thomas Barnwell

"On the Arthur Stewart, Benjamin Stewart property and their brother, I can't think of his name. His name slipped me right now. But the three brothers are deceased, but their children still own the property and the dock is still there... "—Thomas Barnwell

"The shrimp culture went out of existence because of several reasons. One, the import from Japan and number two, the turtle excluder requirements that the state came out with several years back." —Thomas Barnwell

"That required the shrimp boats to put turtle excluders in their shrimp nets in order that the turtles would be able to get out of the nets once they were trapped. And when the turtle got out it allowed a high percentage of the shrimps to escape from the shrimp nets as well." —Thomas Barnwell

EDUCATION

Stoney was an early site of a school for freedmen. Still all on the island could not take advantage of a formal education. For many families, working to feed the family took precedence. Yet school remained important, and families strived to ensure that children received an education.

Following Reconstruction and disenfranchisement and Jim Crow laws, funding for public education for Black children in the county shrank. Children attended school for three months a year—from November to February, allowing for time to harvest and plant new crops. In many communities, praise houses for worship served as schoolrooms. In the early decades of the twentieth century, community members banded together to build their own-one-room schoolhouses. Community schools were built in Chaplin and Squire Pope. A public school opened in Spanish Wells. Students studied at Robinson Jr. High School, from 1949 to 1961, marking the first time students did not have to leave the island for an education beyond the sixth grade. "It's validation that education was alive and well on Hilton Head Island long before the bridge," remarked Murray Christopher at the unveiling of the historic marker at the site in 2017 (Lauderdale 2017).

Stoney again played a significant role in the education of all Gullah children. In 1954 Stoney was chosen as the site for Hilton Head Elementary School, the first consolidated public school for all Black children on the Island. It served the communities until 1974, when a new integrated school was constructed on a new site.

"...there was an elementary school in the Stoney area that most of the young people that, if you didn't go to one of the one-room schools, you went to that elementary school that was in the Stoney area. So, everybody that lived over there eventually came to Stoney for some reason, whether it was school, shopping, or otherwise...most of Hilton Head came to Stoney." —Palmer Simmons

SUMMARY

This chapter provides excerpts from the interviews conducted for this study in a topical manner. They are arranged by themes that have bearing upon the TCP evaluation. Readers are referred to the full transcripts that touch on other themes and history of the island and Stoney and are placed in Appendix A of this report.

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VI. SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUSIONS

To Stoney residents and the Hilton Head Gullah community, Stoney has played a significant role in the development of Gullah communities and culture on the Island, the economy, and the education of their youth. Self-determination though Black-owned business became a reality, living off the land and the water, an everyday reality. As the gateway to Hilton Head, Stoney demonstrated to outsiders and reinforced the communities' belief in the importance of the culture and the resiliency of the Gullah people. Traveling US 278, Stoney was their first impression and last reminder of Gullah life on the island. Equally important to Gullah residents, crossing the bridge and seeing Stoney on the horizon reminded them that they were home.

The Gullah residents fear for the loss of their integral community places, like Stoney, from impacts caused by the widening of the highway and as development continues on Hilton Head. Stoney is only one of a number of interconnected Gullah communities on the island:

> "Now, I bet if the Crazy Crab was closer to the road, we wouldn't be having this conversation because that's white owned. I guess this is how they think they're going to get rid of us. You know what? Ain't no getting rid of." —Louise Cohen

> "Stoney, at the moment, is at risk of being just completely destroyed and that land ownership goes away, the land goes away, your opportunity to take advantage of supplying Hilton Head with the culture, which is ours, that's going to go away also. All right? That's why the protection and tying all the communities together is so greatly important because I'm in Stoney today with this road that's been coming through, but it'll be Chaplin tomorrow, right?" —Alexander Brown, Jr.

NRHP EVALUATION

The Stoney Community was evaluated for the NRHP as a historic site under Criterion A for Ethnic Heritage, Community Planning and Development, Commerce, and Education.

According to the National Park Services' technical bulletin *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation,* a site is defined as "the location of a significant event, a prehistoric or historic occupation or activity, or a building or structure, whether standing, ruined, or vanished, where the location itself possesses historic, cultural, or archaeological value regardless of the value of any existing structure." The community of Stoney can be evaluated as a site because it represents a place on Hilton Head Island that is a discrete part of an interconnected web of communities established by the Gullah inhabitants of the island from the mid 1700s to the present. Within this place, people have settled and earned a living off the land while continuing their traditional cultural practices, established businesses and schools to serve the community, and have passed down ownership of their land through the generations. Within Stoney, transportation networks, place and road names, settlement patterns, and methods of land use and property distribution have been retained and evolved with a community that continues to strongly identify as Gullah.

ETHNIC HERITAGE

The Stoney Community was first evaluated for significance under Criterion A in the area of Ethnic Heritage. The Gullah culture on Hilton Head Island is well documented ethnographically. It can be traced to the antebellum plantation period beginning circa 1750 with the cultures of enslaved Africans, who brought to the South Carolina coast traditional cultural practices from their homes in West Africa. Through resiliency, they continued to use their languages, live in family compounds, practice their religion, and use traditional foods, tools, and medicine. These practices were transferred and sometimes adapted to the unique coastal island environment of Hilton Head and then passed along to future generations. Today, Gullah residents continue to promote their culture, stressing holding on to family land, and promoting, practicing and sustaining Gullah culture through their food, community programs, heritage tours, storytelling, the Gullah Museum and the annual Hilton Head Island Gullah Celebration. The Stoney Community is already recognized as a Gullah community on Hilton Head Island. The Stoney Community is a site significant for its Ethnic Heritage association with the Gullah community who has lived on the land since the mid 1700s and owned land there since the late 1860s and as such is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A for Ethnic Heritage.

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Stoney Community was also evaluated for significance under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development. The community's Gullah cultural heritage is expressed in the ownership and distribution of the land along with the patterns of settlement on the property. Purchase of acreage from the former Stoney Fairfield Plantation lands by Gullah freedmen and women began in the decades after the Civil War and most of the property within Stoney is still owned by their descendants. Many lots have been conveyed over the generations via the 'heirs' property method of familial ownership, whereby multiple heirs to the original grantees hold ownership of the parcels. Land-use features and patterns that have been identified as "critical elements of Gullah landownership," are also still present in Stoney, including the retention of historic homesites and continued development of family compound settlements, the presence of the Amelia White/Graham Cemetery within the community, and the preservation of access to water and woodlands among residents. While much of the land in the Stoney Community, which was historically used for farming and foraging during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, has reverted to woodlands within the past 50 years, evidence of historic land subdivisions remain visible in the current parcel patterning of remnant long-lots that extend to Skull Creek in the North and Jarvis Creek to the West. Long-lot parcel subdivisions, which sought to maximize access to roads and waterways for agricultural purposes via long, thin lots, is a historic and traditional method of land distribution found in many parts of Asia, Africa, Central Europe, and South America. Long-lot subdivisions are also common in the surrounding Gullah communities of Jonesville, Jarvis, and Squire Pope and throughout the Sea Islands. The Stoney Community is recommended eligible under Criterion A for Community Planning and Development.

Stoney's unique geographic location created its identity as a gateway to Hilton Head. In contrast to the descriptions of the island community boundaries that are described by the Gullah as almost permeable, the

hard boundary between the world beyond the island and the island was drawn sharply by water. Stoney community acted as a boundary for the Gullah where both the first step and the last step occurred. It was the point of transition between cultures and it remains so as interviewees have attested in their words describing Stoney as their home soil. In the twentieth century, Black Stoney families would capitalize on its location developing a strong hub for local commerce. While this commercial fluorescence faded by 2000, its role as a gateway remains. Stoney appears to be a cultural gateway with historic significance that relates to Hilton Head's Gullah community's identity and heritage. For this reason, it is also recommended eligible under Criterion A for Community Planning and Development for its role as a gateway.

COMMERCE

When evaluated for significance under Criterion A for Commerce, the Stoney Community's commercial center was key to the economic growth and economic independence of the Gullah communities. Continuing their tradition of self-help (skills developed by individuals that benefited all and resulted in an "everything we needed is here on the Island" philosophy), Stoney instilled pride as members could point to one of their own as being a successful businessman and woman. Residents in every Gullah community came to Stoney to shop for clothing, food, leisure and for services. Stoney reduced the need to spend dollars in Savannah, keeping a portion of economic wealth in the community and on the island. Stoney was the place to go for commercial goods. Perhaps best of all, the "place to go" was still on the island doing business with neighbors, family and friends. While Stoney remains a gateway for Hilton Head and retains that status for the Island's Gullah residents, there has been a notable loss of integrity in the commercial establishments that once existed in the community. As a result, Stoney no longer retains the historic integrity to convey its significance for Commerce.

EDUCATION

The Stoney Community was evaluated under Criterion A for significance in Education. Between 1865 and 1867, Stoney was one of the first sites to be used as an early educational facility on Hilton Head. Following the Union Army's occupation of the island, the American Missionary Association used buildings on Cotton Hope (Squire Pope) and Fairfield/Stoney plantations as makeshift schools for the education of newly emancipated children and adults. The first purpose built school building on the island was erected in 1863, in the Gullah community of Mitchelville. Following Reconstruction, other early community schools were established in the Squire Pope, Jonesville, Baygall, and Chaplin communities. Education was valued among Gullah residents, although schooling was often limited. Local churches also often doubled as schools. In the mid-twentieth century, Stoney again played a significant role in the education of all Gullah children. Stoney was chosen in 1954 as the site for Hilton Head Elementary School, the first consolidated public school for all Black children on the Island. One of several equalization schools built in South Carolina between 1951 and 1960, it served the communities until 1974, when a new integrated school was constructed on a new site. While the original school buildings are no longer extant (although the former school Hilton Head Elementary School property remains at least partially undeveloped), the historical memory of the Gullah community views Stoney as historically significant for Education.

INTEGRITY

Location: The Stoney Community retains integrity of location. With its beginnings in the Stoney Plantation (Fairfield), it has been a recognized place on Hilton Head since the for more than 250 years.

Setting: The Stoney Community has always consisted of two settings. The first stretches along the entry road to the island, serving as the gateway from the boat landing, then ferry and then bridge, along the road to the rest of Hilton Head. This transportation corridor has seen the development of a commercial landscape throughout the twentieth century. The second setting for Stoney, which is located immediately north of 278, is a predominantly wooded residential area characterized by rural one-lane roads and traditional Gullah patterns of family settlement. Through its setting, Stoney can convey its historic significance as both a community and a gateway for the island's Gullah population.

Design: With its still largely intact pattern of long narrow parcels, fronting water and roads, Stoney retains its setting of design. Through the residential area, many historic Gullah families retain ownership of family plots and still have family compounds.

Materials and Workmanship: While integrity of materials and workmanship is most often used in discussing integrity of the built environment, when examining the Stoney Community, it is argued that this aspect has less weight for determining the ability of a site as a TCP to convey its significance. Preliminary fieldwork did not seem to indicate that there were a substantial number of extant historic homes, commercial buildings, or institutions dating from the early twentieth century. Many of the buildings in Stoney appear to have been constructed within the last 50 years. However the ability of residents to improve or replace historic housing, thereby decreasing integrity of workmanship and materials, does not diminish the historical importance of Stoney as a site important to the Gullah community. What is more important from a cultural standpoint is the placement of the houses on their lots and in relationship to one another an this has retained the historic pattern.

Feeling: Today, Stoney retains integrity of feeling, both as a gateway to Hilton Head and as a residential area, bounded by water and marshes.

Association: Both within its retention of traditional landownership and land use patterns and in its relationship to the Gullah people of Stoney and Hilton Head, Stoney retains integrity of association as an original island community.

INTEGRITY OF RELATIONSHIP AND CONDITION

In order to convey its traditional cultural significance, a place needs to retain its integrity of relationship and integrity of condition to be considered a TCP.

The Stoney Community retains a strong integrity of relationship and this integrity is best expressed in the community's own words:

"The one thing that I absolutely will always [remember] is every Gullah community was close-knit. It was, it was beautiful because family lived close together. We shared history. We shared values. We shared traditions. It became a part of who I am today. The values and the teachings and the lessons and the traditions; just, just see how our parents make a living with not many opportunities. It's amazing to me that they became who they became. And who they were made me become who I am today." — Pamela Driessen

"It's the people. It's what Stoney stood for. Stoney stood for community. Stoney was one of the strongpoints."— Palmer Simmons

Integrity of Condition

While individual historic commercial establishments may no longer present in the US 278 corridor, the corridor remains what it has always been — a gateway to the island. Likewise, based on a preliminary examination of historic residences in Stoney, many of the homes are not yet 50 years of age, but they represent newer and improved housing that was built utilizing existing settlement patterns on family land as the Gullah community has continued to work to improve their economic condition.

Stoney residents appear to have accepted the widening of US 278 as inevitable. Concerns of loss of their land is coupled with the fear of loss of culture, history, and a way of life. Physical structures that made up the commercial aspect of Stoney are no longer extant. Islanders from all parts of Hilton Head remember the road as one that brought welcomed traffic to Stoney, that connected Stoney to the mainland and the services it offered, yet the years later brought about a demise of the business section that it once supported. Islanders fear a ripple effect that with Stoney "gone" other Gullah communities will be next. As motorists traveled US 278, Stoney was their first impression and the last reminder of Gullah life on the island.

"When I crossed the bridge I felt close to home. I'd say to myself, "There's Stoney."— Venita Barnette

"These people are trying to wipe out our history, and why? That Stoney area went from one road, because one time it used to be just one road coming through, and then when the bridge came, then two-lane it, then they four-lane it. Why in the heck do they need more than four lanes? You've got four lanes. If you're going to continue to expand, what you trying to do? We only have but so much land, so are you trying to wipe us out? — Louise Cohen

NRHP PROPOSED BOUNDARY

A proposed boundary is illustrated in Figure 35. The boundary follows the study area and includes the land south of US 278 including the shoreline, running from the end of the bridge on Hilton Head to just west of Wild Horse Road at Jarvis Creek. The western boundary is defined by the water and marshes of Skull Creek and to the north by its boundary with Squire Pope. Jarvis Creek and its marshes form the eastern boundary.

CONCLUSIONS

> "Stoney now as it's being threatened with change and, actually, destruction, we have to remember that it weakens the culture because the culture has been always connected. It has always been a network of neighborhoods. And not only the memories, but the skills that these particular neighborhoods had is what we relied on. And still to this day, those same families have interest in those skills. You go to Stoney now and you find the same families that are shrimpers." — Emory Campbell

Oral history and research suggest that Stoney meets the criteria for a TCP as a site with significance in the areas of ethnic heritage, community planning and development, commerce and education. Under the first, Stoney's identity as a Gullah community is well established. To justify significance and integrity under community planning and development, the patterns of African American land ownership established in the nineteenth century are visible in the twenty-first both on the ground and from current and historic aerials. In addition, Stoney's role as a gateway to the island and its Gullah communities remains strong and in place. The areas of commerce and education have significance , however, in the case of commerce, only two buildings associated with Stoney's once commercial fluorescence are extant and both historic schools have not survived. We recommend that SCDOT consider in their project planning Stoney's historic significance and help promote measures that lead to the preservation and understanding of Black landownership on the Island and the unique circumstances that are reflected in those patterns. We also suggest honoring Stoney's role as a gateway to the island in project planning in a creative manner. Finally, while tangible remains of Stoney's history associated with commerce and education are no longer extant, the memories of them are and should be captured and interpreted for those who enter the gateway and want to learn about Hilton Head's Gullah culture and its communities.

Figure 35.
Proposed TCP Boundary

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

Venita White Barnette

This interview was conducted in conjunction with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) regarding the proposed improvements to a 4.1-mile long section of U.S. Highway 278 between Bluffton and Hilton Head Island, from Moss Creek Drive to Squire Pope Road in Beaufort County, South Carolina. The proposed improvements on Hilton Head Island will impact the community of Stoney, where African Americans have owned land since the 1890s. Interviews were conducted with members and descendants of the Stoney community to provide a developmental history of the community, establish its historic geography, and to provide an initial evaluation of the Stoney community's potential as a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) or other potential historical designation for project planning purposes.

This interview was conducted November 7, 2020. VF, New South Associates, conduced the interview. **We are waiting for the signed release form. This transcription is being submitted for the draft report.**

Velma Fann: This is VF with New South Associates. We are conducting interviews with residents of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina in conjunction with the US 278 Quarter Bridge Relocation Project. We would like to interview you about Hilton Head Island's traditional communities with an emphasis on Big Stoney and Little Stoney on US 278. Do we have your permission to interview you and to use your interview for this project?

Venita Barnette: Yes.

VF: Thank you. Today is November the 7th, 2020. Please state and spell your name for us.

VB: Venita W. Barnette, V-E-N-I-T-A W. Barnette, B-A-R-N-E-T-T-E.

VF: Thank you, Ms. Barnette, and thank you for your time and we can begin, okay?

VB: Yes, you're welcome.

VF: Can we begin with you just telling us a bit about yourself and your connection to the Island?

VB: Yes, my name of course, VB, but my father is Perry White, who was a native Islander, born, raised here. He was in the Air Force. And then he retired from the Air Force back in Hilton Head in 1974, no '73. And I was in the eighth grade, and we relocated here. And so from eighth grade until after I graduated from college, got married, I've been on Hilton Head. And now that I'm divorced, I've been back to Hilton Head about 15 years. So I'm considered a native myself. It just depends on who you're speaking to.

VF: Okay, so I'm sure-

VB: Still family there, I guess I should say.

VF: Family here, okay. Let me go back a little bit. Your father's first name again?

VB: Perry, P-E-R-R-Y.

VF: Okay, great. Thank you. And was he a native of Hilton Head?

VB: Yes, he was, native activist, former president of the NAACP Hilton Head chapter. The man who led the lawsuit against Hilton Head and building an airport on behalf of the NAACP. He lost it, but that was the big thing that Hilton Head ... Well, I should say people in Hilton Head known him for is that lawsuit. He was totally active in Heir's property made of Islanders on the NIBCAA organization. He was one of the founding members, and a member of the American Legion for Hilton Head, active member of the Town Council and the City Council, County Council, and of the Town Council of Hilton Head, active member of the Native Island Business Association, active member of [inaudible 00:03:01]. So there's Perry White, and from that you have me.

VF: Okay, you mentioned one organization. NIBCAA?

VB: NIBCAA.

VF: Could you tell us what this stands for, so when we transcribe it, it'll be clear.

VB: Okay. Native Island Business Association, NIBCAA. I skipped the letter. I'll get that, corporation, very active, still active, NIBCAA.

VF: Native Island ...

VB: Hold on, please. I'm changing locations. Sorry, just can you hit your pause button?

VF: Yes. Okay, Ms. Barnett, I'm not sure how old you are, but between you and your family, if we were to travel back 50 or more years in time to the Island, what would we have seen? What did it look like physically in terms of settlement patterns, family groupings, housing, the role patterns?

VB: If you traveled 50 years [inaudible 00:04:13] this Island wouldn't be developed. That bridge that exists today was no longer ... would not be there. It would be a two-lane highway on Highway 278, a lot of dirt roads. The airport wouldn't be so big. You would see more brown families around. Fifty years, you would see, at the end of Beach City Road, a baseball field where on Saturdays and Sundays African American families were watching different towns from Beaufort County play baseball against each other, and softball against each other. You would see two schools. It just was not developed. It was a quiet piece of life. You would see quiet, and you would see freedom on the beaches. You would see a club owned by blacks on the beaches, on the northern side of the Island. You would see traffic lights. You wouldn't see all the bikers. It's just, the development wasn't here.

VF: Okay. You mentioned Beach City Road. What community is that in?

VB: That's Mitchelville. That's where my family ... That's where we are.

VF: Okay, and that's where the baseball field was?

VB: Yes, it was family property.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative), is it still there, still being used for games?

VB: Yes, well, it's not used for baseball. Now, it's the family property. It's just family. You have to have permission to use it.

VF: Oh, okay.

VB: And yeah.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative), Are you familiar with how the communities evolved? I know there's several with different names.

VB: Yes. Well, can I go back to NIBCAA, and give you the name?

VF: Yes, ma'am, mm-hmm (affirmative).

VB: Okay. Native Island Business & Community Affairs Association, NIBCAA.

VF: Okay, thank you.

VB: You're welcome. It is what it is.

VF: Yeah, that's okay. So our communities ...

VB: [crosstalk 00:06:41].

VF: The names of our communities, and the boundaries of communities, are you familiar with how they may have evolved?

VB: Evolved, meaning? Can you clarify that?

VF: Yeah. So we have Spanish Wells, where the name have come from, and Stoney, and Baygall. I don't know if I'm ever saying it right.

VB: No, you're definitely not saying that one right.

VF: Baygall, okay.

VB: It's Bay, B-A-Y.

VF: Baygall, okay.

VB: That's where Nadine is, yeah, her family, Baygall, Stoney, The Big Hill, all of those, the Native Island places. You're asking for a lot.

VF: Oh, okay. Well, I can do some research.

VB: No, no, no. You're going to put me at the spot where I have to get back to you on the information. It's because after speaking with ... Are you paused? Put me on pause, please.

VF: Sure, mm-hmm (affirmative). Can you share with us a little bit of the history of some of the communities on the Island?

VB: I'll try my best. The first one I can talk to and speak on is the Baygall. In Baygall, you have the

community of Grassland, Big Hill, Mitchellville, Fish Haul, and Baygall.

VF: Okay, did people relate by communities, or did you see yourselves as one big island?

VB: No, communities or families. So, some people when speak to them, you speak about their community, and others would speak from their family, it just depends.

VF: We were looking in particular at the Stoney area. Did you visit it when you were growing up? I know you came back to the Island. Do you recall it in your youth?

VB: Yeah, when you think of Stoney, you know that you can't get on the Island or off the Island without going through Stoney. And so then Stoney, I think 15 years ago, Stoney was that two years. I mean, sorry, two lanes, two-lane highways where you knew the families there. You knew ... It was Stoney. That's not what you want, but that's the truth. Yeah, if you put me on pause, please, I'll tell you what I have.

VF: Yes, Ms. Barnett, please continue.

VB: Okay. In 1999, the town of Hilton Head Island adopted the Ward One Master Landings plan as part of the comprehensive plan. This plan identified the Stoney neighborhood as an area needing further attention due to several unique factors, such as unusual parcel configuration, its gateway location, and special development opportunities. The Stoney Initiative Area Plan was created to prove a gap in the Ward One Master Landings plan. It focuses on land use, density, and infrastructure needs for the Stoney neighborhoods, and recommends strategies to guide future development and new development opportunities.

VF: Okay. And tell me where you're sharing this information from, if you ...

VB: I sure will. I am sharing this information ... sorry, [inaudible 00:10:41] come on. Pause please, while I find page one.

VF: Okay.

VB: Oh, okay. I'm sorry, the Stoney Initiative Area Plan, April, 2000, 1st. It is an addendum to the town of Hilton Head Island Comprehensive Plan. What I have is a draft that was prepared by the Hilton Head Island Planning Department, and I have a copy of Perry White's copy.

VF: Okay, okay. So, if you were to speak from ... You have the addendum to the plan?

VB: Yes.

VF: If you were to speak in addition to what you know, if you'd speak in addition to your experience of what your father may have told you about Stoney, can you share that with us?

VB: Well, I'm going to read a quote from this Stoney Initiative area. So if I read it to you, only because it makes sense and I'm not going to reinvent the wheel, it's the gate ... It says, "The Stoney Initiative Area is the gateway to the Island, located just east of Jenkins Island and extending to the tidal creek just east of the Spanish Wells Road intersection. William Hilton Parkway traverses the neighborhood, carrying every vehicle

entering or exiting the Town. Nearly surrounded by tidal marshes, it is one of the most beautiful areas on the Island, yet is very difficult to develop due to the traffic and other unique conditions in the neighborhood."

VB: In 1999, the land uses were primarily residential mixed with some commercial businesses. One, and here's my quote, "One of the most important aspects of Stoney is a strong sense of community, and the understanding that the residents want to remain on their land and utilize it themselves as opposed to selling to other people to develop. This is their family land, it provides ties to their culture, and plays an important role in their lives." This statement is only partially true, because a quick review also shows that the Stoney public has a sizable document of land that was ... sold. [inaudible 00:13:23] just quoted that ... Can I put you on pause for a minute?

VB: So, what I read to you, and the importance of reading about Stoney is what I miss about stuff. Because that's not what Stoney looks like now. And Stoney doesn't look like that now, because family members have sold their property. Family members have built it about [inaudible 00:13:49]. Family members have settled for less than what they could have got for it. Family members are frustrated. Family members have moved from their land. And it saddens me, between families losing property [inaudible 00:14:09].

VF: You're breaking up.

VB: Oh, they couldn't pay the taxes. They couldn't come together to decide how to sell it, and they lost property. And then some sold property. And that's the sad part of Stoney, because Stoney used to be a fun place. There used to be a club there, and just, we knew the families.

VF: So you said there was a club there. What was the name?

VB: Yeah, it was Croager's. It was called Croager's, because it was the Drayton. The Drayton family had that little club, and it was Croaker's. We called it the Croager's.

VF: Spell that for us please.

VB: Well, do I spell Drayton family, or do I spell ...

VF: Kroger's. [phonetic]

VB: It's not like Kroger. I can't because I've never seen Kroger write his name.

VF: Okay, okay. So, this-

VB: We called it Kroger's. That wasn't his name.

VF: Oh, okay. Was he a Drayton?

VB: He was, yeah.

VF: Okay. So, he's part of the Drayton family, and he had a club there?

VB: Yeah. Yes, he did.

VF: Okay.

VB: Club/store. In the day time, it was a store.

VF: Okay.

VB: See how I'm giggling?

VF: Yeah.

VB: I needed to laugh. You needed to make me giggle at my own self. Then also ...

VF: Yes. Tell us what else was there at Stoney.

VB: Stoney had the school. Yeah, and there was ... The elementary school was there. A library was there.

VF: A library? Okay.

VB: Yeah, one little store was there.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative), and let me ask you. The library, was that separate from the school?

VB: Yes.

VF: Okay. I never heard there was a library there, okay.

VB: And watch me be a liar, and that wasn't a library, and it have been a church or something. In my vision, it was the library. And I stand to be corrected, too. And I'm not ashamed of that, but I don't know. I want to know. On the side of the school was a place where the softball team ... because I played softball. We practiced there, and there was a tennis court there, and about a basketball player. I don't mean basketball player, a basketball court. School, then after that, post office. A small post office there. I'm still trying to think was that the library or not. Put a question mark by that library. I don't see it right now. I saw it, but I don't. Yeah, can I go back to the families ...

VF: Sure.

VB: ... for just one more second? I want to include that families wanted to subdivide the before financing. It's just the whole [inaudible 00:17:05] about land.

VF: Ms. Barnette, I'm getting a lot of static. I need you to repeat that, please.

VB: Okay, I need to change. I just wanted to go back and finish. I kept saying that families wanted to sell, but one word I didn't use was that families wanted to subdivide, and that's when other family members could not afford to keep up with the taxes and things. They'll lose property. I needed to say that. Stoney had ... It was just a fun family. The Green's, yeah, let's just say there was a family reunion, and you were driving down Stoney. You could, because it was understood that they read the announcement in church, that anyone can go to the family reunion. It wasn't just because it's our family you can go. It's, everyone went to everyone's family reunion. And they had a good one, because when you finished there, you could go right onto the club.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative), okay, all right.

VB: Yeah, yeah.

VF: And I understand different communities have people with different skills. Now, Stoney, Squire Pope, I think, was that more the fishing and the oystering?

VB: Yeah, yeah, because there's a ... I don't know if you've heard of the Bryant family. Ms. Libby Bryant used to make the casting nets.

VF: Oh.

VB: And yeah, my dad used to get his from her all the time. And she would repair them. And of course the Stewart family with the fishing, Stewarts Family Fishing, Jones ...

VF: Is anyone still making those nets now?

VB: Not that I'm aware of, because I asked the people who want one, and they my father's. I'm like, "I don't think so."

VF: So what does community mean to you? When we talk about community, what feelings does the word community evoke?

VB: It is family, gatherings, laughing, loving, opened. If there was a need, there was quietly support. It wasn't like, "Oh yeah, they need $500. I'm going to loan it to them." It's just quietly helping others. Church, just a kindness, helping each other when needed, or helping each other because you want to, having a good time, just because.

VF: What do you miss about Stoney?

VB: What do I miss about Stoney? The people, and just being able to stop by and stuff. If you see all these cars in the yard, you just join and not join. Sometimes it's like, "This person passed." We're all gathering, oh, food, small town. But just the openness, the relationship with the families there, just like you said, the sense of community.

VF: Are any of the structures, the buildings, or the stores still there in Stoney?

VB: No. They have some stores that are there now that weren't ... They're not part of the story I'm telling, but they've been there a while. I don't even know what they are right now, what they're called, yeah.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Now when you were growing up on Island, let's just talk about you and them. What did your day look like? What did your school day, your church day?

VB: You said growing up?

VF: Yes, ma'am.

VB: Well, my school day was getting up early, of course. I walked down the road to catch the school bus, and then go to Bluffton, South Carolina, because there was no middle school or high school on Hilton Head. So, and I had a younger sister who went to school on the Island, because the elementary school was

here. And so, I was in the band and I played basketball, so my day, I would get home like 6:00, 7:00 in the morning ... I mean, evening, because I had to wait. If my father worked at Beaufort, on his way home from Beaufort, he would pick us up if we didn't have a ride. And oftentimes the people going to Hilton Head, we knew them, so we would hitchhike. And it was no biggie. And they would just ... The hardest part of our day would be, "I can't put five of you in the car. Tell your daddy to pick all y'all up," but so, that kind of thing.

VB: And over the summer, helping my grandmother in her field. It wasn't a garden. It was a field. You would help with picking corn and beans, and shucking it, and those types of things. Going to the beach, down the road from the house, escorting her, because she was older, she couldn't do but going crabbing and fishing, and just enjoying the water, learning how to read the tides, understanding different pockets in the South where you shouldn't be, because of the danger, just appreciating the land, and the value of what the water meant, too, to the family. Because-

VF: What did the water mean? What about these creeks I hear a lot about, Skull Creek, Broad Creek?

VB: Yeah, and I'm Port Royal Sound, so they call it Mitchelville. So, we had Kogan Creek. So in Kogan Creek, as according to my father, there were secret pockets where they had the best trout, the best bass, shrimp that everybody on the Island didn't know about. So it was the fish story, but it was for real. Because he was like, "No, no, he doesn't." but he would. But the thing about it is, and this is what I miss, too, he would catch all these fish.

VB: And for example, mullet. Well, our household, we were taught not to like mullet. We didn't eat mullet, but he didn't throw mullet back. He would go and give it to different members of the community. And they still talk about how they miss him. Once he caught his quota of, it could be anything, he would deliver it to the people in the community the Baygall community, our area, they would all ... And they say they miss him. It's fishing season right now, and so they miss him. So, the trout, bass, flounder, [inaudible 00:23:42], he would give it to them. He didn't want money. That wasn't, that it was about, it was just sharing. And from the garden, his garden, he did the same. Yeah, so that kind of thing, the sense of community, is a good word. We'd use that all afternoon.

VF: Right. So, Mitchelville is on one end of the Island. And if I recall, Stoney is on the opposite end. Am I correct?

VB: Well, Mitchelville is the area where the airport is. Stoney is considered the mid island.

VF: Okay, you're mid island, okay.

VB: Yeah.

VF: Did you have the opportunity to go to Stoney often, or need to go to the Stoney often?

VB: Well remember, to go on or off the island, you had to go through that way. So, yeah, softball practice was at the elementary school. So that was an everyday thing.

VF: Can you give us some years that you went to school, just to put ... to get a timeline, if you don't mind telling us your age?

VB: Say that again.

VF: Can you give us a timeline maybe when you went to elementary school, or you're, if you don't mind telling us your age, so we can kind of put this in perspective.

VB: Okay, sure. I'm 61.

VF: Okay, so then, you were going to the school. This is first grade-

VB: I was going to Bluffton to McCracken. And the scary thing is that McCracken is now on Hilton Head. So I went to Bluffton High School. No, I went to H.E. McCracken High School. So that's where we went to middle school. You didn't go to the elementary school. And so my sister, when she moved out, when we moved here, she went to the elementary school here. So, yeah.

VF: But by that time, were you in middle school or elementary school?

VB: I was in, yeah, eighth grade.

VF: Oh, okay, all right.

VB: So, middle school.

VF: So, you're in middle school. So you just went straight to the Bluffton area?

VB: Yeah, to Bluffton High School.

VF: Okay, okay. I see it now, all right.

VB: Okay.

VF: Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about the Island, if there are any praise houses still left?

VB: You know what? Another big thing is the churches. That was the support system, the churches. If you didn't know, through your community, then in the churches, you would know who's getting married, who had a baby. So the churches were a big communicator for the community. Some good, some bad information, but factual. If you want to know, that's where you go. And you still can do that.

VF: Yes.

VB: Yeah.

VF: So are there any places that people still gather, let's say, a generation later?

VB: My father's family, they still gather. People still have their family reunions, it's just quiet now. It's not as inviting and open to everyone. So family reunions still exists. Well, prior to COVID-19. And where else do I see? And just different outings, but not the same sense of community as before now. I don't care what anyone says. Going to the ... Well, families having their communities. Barbara, at least has it within their own families, big outings and gatherings. They still do that. Some families, yeah. Off the record, pause.

VF: So can you describe for us family compounds, how they may have looked, or how families

determined who was living with whom. If you gotten married, did you come back to the father's side of the family, or the mother's side, or would you go off somewhere by yourself and build your home?

VB: Well, I noticed that I could go from my own family, is that if you want to live on Hilton Head, the family gives you some land that they have. They ask you to pay to get it surveyed. They asked you ... but you have to finance your own part, but they give you the land. They don't like, "I'll sell you." That's what I've noticed about all the families. And if you moved back in, speaking from my own family, my aunt came home from New York to take care of her sick parents, my grandparents. And my grandfather asked my father to make sure that my aunt receive the family house, that kind. So, for different reasons. And I'm seeing that in different families. I was told that, so families come back. We come back home. Families take care of you.

VB: First, they want you to heal, because when you come back, sometimes you're wounded puppies. So, you live at home, you do what you do. If you can help pay a bill, you do. If not, get back on your feet. So, it's like a recovery process. And they help you get on your feet, "Oh, call this person. Call that person. Get that from them." And so, the community is there, but if they don't know you need them, they don't help. But if they know you need something, and I'm speaking from personal experience, they're right there. My father, the activist that he was, once he passed, my mother and I are living together in the house.

VB: But the group of men whose lives he touched, they always surround us with support. The fishermen, they still drop off fish to us. The guys who garden, they drop off produce and vegetables to us, because that's what my father used to do for their families. Plumbing, they call the plumber for ... It's there. It's just a different kind of thing. Where things that people would do for free before, you now pay people. And you say, "Oh, for your time," they take it, or they even have a price. So, that is different. But you recognize that those are different. And people have ... you brought your truck, yeah, you need gas. So, you honor that. So, I see that. And so, when the compound comes and they support you, they expect you not to pay them for it. They want you to pay it forward, give back. When you see that next sibling, that cousin, that uncle, don't talk about them, be about them, help them, guide them, direct them. Now, everybody doesn't receive it, but it's there. Yeah, some of it's tough love, but we are who we are.

VF: Yes. Is there anything else you'd like to add about life on the Island over time, Stoney, over time?

VB: Stoney, Stoney? So, in Stoney, who was that who made the good deviled crabs? I mean, we all have our own Stoney memories, but I just want you to know, because the games are at the cities, and in Stoney, the softball team practice, the Stoney community came out and supported us. They cheered us on even practicing and playing against each other [inaudible 00:31:28]. When we moved here, it was a softball ... not that my sister and I were all that, but when we came, we thought we could play a little softball. But these grown women and teenagers, they used their hand. No one had a glove. So, we introduced them to the mitt and the glove. These folks could catch a ball just as well as I could with a glove with their hands. Yeah, and my sister and I looked at each other, like, "They catch the ball with their hands?" And we tried, of course we couldn't.

VB: But we didn't look down on them, because they could hold their own. But it was like, "Hey, use a glove, guys. Let me teach you." And instead of judging them, we helped them, and they showed us some

strategies of how to catch a ball with our hand, when you know you're going to miss it with your glove. I miss that support, that fun, that innocent fun. And yeah, you didn't grow up all the way on Hilton Head, but you're one of us. I remember we didn't know all these people. We just knew our first cousins, and we went to school. Everybody was our cousin. We couldn't believe it.

VB: And so, we didn't know anything about this thing called community, but it was fun to notice that we had all these cousins. And so now, I look at all these cousins, and when I could help all these cousins that, yeah, maybe you didn't go off to college, that's okay. Maybe you do need $10 for a movie, that's okay. I see the sadness of them, and these are some people in Stoney, too, that no longer live in Stoney. And when you ask them where they live, they put their head down. And so, it hurts me to see some people that used to live in Stoney, that no longer live in Stoney, and they're hurt. And you can see that what happens when families get caught up in the money. And that's all I have.

VF: Okay. Well, I thank ...

VB: How's that?

VF: Okay. Well, I thank you so much for your time.

VB: Oh, you too. And what if I want to read what you're going to write? Or there's really nothing that you're writing, and it's more for the record, where's the record?

VF: So, what I'm going to ...

VB: OH, just a minute please, airplane. My father's biggest fight on Hilton Head, everybody's [inaudible 00:34:09] airport. He was fighting this for so long and it's still the battle he lost. But he went down fighting.

VF: Well, I had to ...

VB: So, I'm sorry.

VF: I have your address, so we will send you a copy of the transcript.

VB: Okay, that's good.

VF: And yeah. So, I do thank you for your time.

VB: Okay, and I thank you.

VF: Alrighty. And you have a wonderful-

VB: And thank you for your tolerance for me not having it all together.

VF: That's okay.

VB: I'll put it out there.

VF: Alrighty, no problem.

VB: Okay, all right. Have a great weekend.

VF: You too, Ms. Barnette.

Thomas C. Barnwell, Jr

This interview was conducted in conjunction with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) regarding the proposed improvements to a 4.1-mile long section of U.S. Highway 278 between Bluffton and Hilton Head Island, from Moss Creek Drive to Squire Pope Road in Beaufort County, South Carolina. The proposed improvements on Hilton Head Island will impact the community of Stoney, where African Americans have owned land since the 1890s. Interviews were conducted with members and descendants of the Stoney community to provide a developmental history of the community, establish its historic geography, and to provide an initial evaluation of the Stoney community's potential as a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) or other potential historical designation for project planning purposes.

This interview was conducted November 3, 2020. VF, New South Associates, conduced the interview. **We are waiting for the signed release form. This transcription is being submitted for the draft report.**

Velma Fann: I would like to talk with you and see if we have your permission to interview you for this big Stoney, little Stoney US 278 Highway Project. Do we have your permission to tape you, sir?

Thomas C Barnwell, Jr.: Yes, you do. Yes, ma'am. [crosstalk 00:00:20].

VF: All right, thank you. I might need you speak up just a little bit, okay?

TB: All right, okay. How's that?

VF: I think that's better.

TB, Okay. I have you on speaker because I have a hearing impediment.

VF: Okay.

TB: So that's why I have you on speaker.

VF: All right. Well, we can get started. So, just first off, could you tell us a little bit about yourself and how you're connected to Hilton Head Island?

TB: Well, I was born on Hilton Head June 2, 1935. In a section of Hilton Head known as Squire Pope. And my mother was born on Hilton Head, and my father was born on Hilton Head, as well as my grandfather on my mother's side, as well as my grandfather on my father's side.

VF: Okay, so you're Hilton Head through and through.

TB: Yeah, and their parents were born on Hilton Head.

VF: Wow, so that should take us back right to Early Freedom in 1900s?

TB: Yes, ma'am.

VF: Wow, okay. Do you know if they were on any other plantations?

TB: [inaudible 00:02:13] Well, that goes back to Mitchellville back in the 1860s.

VF: Okay. So, that was one of the first settlements then?

TB: Yes, it was. And I'm going to jump fast forward to tell you that I happened to have been the first Chairman of the Board of the Mitchellville Preservation Project. But go back to Stoney now. [inaudible 00:02:48].

VF: All right.

TB: Okay?

VF: Okay. So, Mr. Barnwell, if we were to travel back 50, 60 years, what would the community of Stoney look like? What would Squire Pope look like? What did the island look like before the bridge?

TB: Well, before the bridge, we had one major paved road on the island that ran from Jenkins Island, all the way down to an area called Leamington where the lighthouse was at that time. The old lighthouse was there.

TB: And all of the residents on the island were connected in some ways. Either by water way, or by traveling the dirt roads by walking, or traveling on horseback, or traveling in a buggy or a wagon. And many years ago, Jenkins Island was the place where people would come down to pick up their mail.

TB: That's where the old post office was located. A man named Parks was operating the post office. There was an oyster factory at Jenkins Island that did raw oysters as well as steamed oysters.

TB: There were several oyster factories on the island, incidentally, in various communities. One in Squire Pope, one in Stoney. Stoney had an oyster factory also that operated steamed as well as raw shucked oysters. Stoney had one, as well as there was one in Gardner, oyster factory that operated.

TB: Stoney happened to have grown because after the many years moving forward [inaudible 00:05:55], I don't remember the exact year, the post office was moved from Jenkins Island up to Stoney. So people then came up to Stoney to pick up their mails. They rode the horses, or walked, or came in wagons.

TB: And then a guy named Matt Jones, who was a part of Mitchellville went to the war and he bought land in Stoney. As a matter of fact, there should be a picture of him in the book. On land that he owned in Stoney.

VF: Yes. Did he fight? In which war?

TB: I don't remember.

VF: I remember his picture. It's a beautiful photograph.

TB: Yeah. But that's in the book as well. I'm trying to give you the overall analysis of, you said, what was the areas like. Now to give you a point [inaudible 00:07:24] of reference the book, Gullah Days: Hilton Head Islanders Before the Bridge 1861-1956, by Emory Campbell, Carolyn Grant, and Thomas Barnwell.

TB: There are several pages that give an analysis of communities on Hilton Head. What the areas was like. It give a synopsis of all of the areas. So those persons that have a desire to take the time and read the details. And it gives indications that the areas were along the Atlantic Ocean or Broad Creek or Skull Creek. It gives the general boundaries of the areas. So I'm not going to try to get into all of that. Okay?

VF: Okay.

TB: I'm going to continue to tell you that Stoney grew as the real center. The stores grew up. A man named Peter Drayton was one of the persons that had a small store in Stoney.

TB: A store or confectionery. We called it a store then because he had many different things there that people would need and they could buy. Then later as time went on, Arthur Frazier developed and built a store in the Stoney area.

TB: And then across the highway from that... Arthur Frazier even had a service station. Gas. He sold gasoline. And then John Patterson who had gotten involved with transportation on and off the island over the years had a store there.

TB: A man named Charlie Wiggins had a store there. And even before that Ramphil Robinson had a store there. The building that was used as the schoolhouse down in Seabrook when Tuskegee [inaudible 00:11:10] Institute had what my grandmother called was like a college.

TB: And when that school closed the Robinson, Mark Robinson family bought that building that was used as a school building and transported it on their property in the Stoney area. And they had a store even before Peter Drayton's store. Okay?

VF: Okay. May I ask you a question here?

TB: Yeah, go... Hey this is your interview [crosstalk 00:12:07]. I'm not blocking.

VF: Okay, so the building where-

TB: Am I getting to some of the things that you need to hear?

VF: Yes, sir.

TB: All right, go ahead.

VF: So the schoolhouse that was in Seabrook, when the school closed they moved that building to Stoney?

TB: Yes, that's correct.

VF: Is that building still there?

TB: No, ma'am.

VF: Okay. And when they moved it to Stoney it served as a store then?

TB: Yeah, it was then turned into a store.

VF: Okay.

TB: And then after the Robinson's... Florence Robinson was Dr. Thomas Robinson's mother. After they then closed the store, later on, the building was redone and it was used as a residence. Okay?

VF: Okay.

TB: And so then later, the Stewart family, Benjamin Steward opened what we call a piccolo [inaudible 00:13:37] joint. A place where he had music and sold seafood and sandwiches. He started it out on weekends and then it gradually grew. And then after Peter Drayton died, his son operated in that same location.

TB: They too had a gas pump right next to the house where they lived. Their home was there and then the building next to that. And then later, Charlie Simmons opened a store there that was called The Big Star, in Stoney. And that store had things that no other store on the island had. It had clothing, shoes, it had trash burner heaters, stovepipes, all.

TB: I mean it had some of everything. It had nails. It just had things that families would need. So Stoney became the island connector hub, as people would come down to the post office to get their mail. Now the other part of Stoney, there were several members of the Stewart family that bought and owned their own shrimp boats. And they built a dock and they started operating their shrimp boats out from that area as well.

VF: Do you think, sir, the dock is still there?

TB: Yeah, one of the docks is still there.

VF: Okay.

TB: On the Arthur Stewart, Benjamin Stewart property and their brother, I can't think of his name. His name slipped me right now. But the three brothers are deceased but their children still own the property and the dock is still there.

VF: Oh, okay.

TB: All right?

VF: So how many people still have their own shrimp boats? Is that still going on?

TB: No, that is not going on any longer. The shrimp culture went out of existence because of several reasons. One, the import from Japan and number two, the turtle excluder requirements that the state came out with several years back.

TB: That required the shrimp boats to put turtle excluders in their shrimp nets in order that the turtles would be able to get out of the nets once they were trapped. And when the turtle got out it allowed a high percentage of the shrimps to escape from the shrimp nets as well.

TB: Then the fuel prices that I said, went up and the turtle excluder... And the price of shrimp from

Japan drove this area or US area small shrimpers' sort of out of business.

VF: Okay. I know when we talk about Stoney, people sometimes say big Stoney, little Stoney. Is that a new idea or how did the communities define themselves?

TB: Well, the big Stoney happened to be on where 278 is. From the beginning or from the end of Jenkins Island up to where you would today come to the first red light or spotlight on Hilton Head, would be big Stoney. And as you turn... Well, no. Let me rephrase that. Let me correct that because now the first light was at Spanish Wells Road. That's where Stoney ends at Spanish Well Road, okay?

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

TB: All right. Now I have to stop and think because the first light is at Squire Pope and 278. Now, as you turn left at the first stoplight on Hilton Head, that is the beginning of little Stoney. And it comes all the way down to where the old fishing Co-Op used to be on Squire Pope Road. And you'll see a sign where it says Squire Pope Community. Okay?

VF: Okay.

TB: In other words it's where the Rowing and Sailing Center owned by the town. That's where a little Stoney would start in that area. Okay?

VF: All right. And as I was reading in the book that a lot of the community names came from the plantations. Is that correct? They just held on to the same names, Squire Pope and...

TB: Yeah, all except Jonesville. Jonesville was named after Cesar Jones, who is a black former slave. Cesar Jones, I don't remember the year. But he bought over 200 acres of land in a section called Jonesville. And Cesar Jones happened to been a relative of Louise Cohen. He also was a distant relative of mine.

TB: My grandmother was a part of that family as well. Let me specifically say, my grandmother on my father's side. My grandmother... Mother, whose name was Katie Miller. Okay? Was a part of that Cesar Jones family. Okay?

VF: All right.

TB: Now, where we go from there? The name... And Cesar Jones allowed many of the families like the Riley's and the Frazier's and several others that needed land to farm on. By whatever number of acres at that time they could afford to purchase. But he originally had... And there's still families that are living up at the point [inaudible 00:24:40] in Jarvis, that are holding on to that land today. And have plans for some of that land to stay in the family in perpetuity.

VF: Okay. That's very interesting. Yes.

TB: One of the families, they married into a family named Green, [inaudible 00:25:14] Green. But their ancestors are Frazier's. Yeah. Okay. I'll pause so you can [crosstalk 00:25:25]. Am I boring you?

VF: No, sir. You definitely are not. So when we look at the family land, did people just stay with their

families? If you got married, would you come back to the family compound and live or did folks start to scatter out?

TB: Now say that for me slow.

VF: Okay. When you look at the family land, did families seem to stay together in one area?

TB: Yes. In many cases, yes. That's the way it was before the bridge, to a great extent. Because before the bridge and all of the regulations came to Hilton Head, people had... Families had the opportunity of building their houses on the land that they owned, at the pace and the opportunities that their economic conditions will allow them to build their houses as their families expanded. Am I making sense to you?

VF: Yes, sir. So you would add a room as you needed a room?

TB: There you go. That's exactly right. I'm trying to say...

VF: Did they have a particular layout? Was it circular or did everybody's house face the road or?

TB: Well, it depends on how the road was configured at that time. It depends on the community and the land and so forth. Other than Mitchellville. Mitchellville was the only place that, while we were doing the research, we were able to find that it was a plan laid out community.

TB: Mitchellville had that. Now, General Ormsby Mitchel had the engineering department from his military unit to layout the lots on the houses in Mitchellville.

VF: Oh, okay. So I know there are a lot of communities on Hilton Head. Did you see yourself in terms of, I'm from Squire Pope, I'm from Jonesville, or did you see yourselves as Hilton Head?

TB: Well, you see yourself from Hilton Head but a part of the Squire Pope community. You see yourself as a Hilton Head person but a part... Grassland, Spanish Well, Chaplin, Gardner as well as Baygall, Big Hill.

TB: Now it's interesting you say that because you would find many years back, the Squire Pope area, and you'll find this in the book as described in the communities. Squire Pope was a combination of fishing and farming as well as sailing boats from Hilton Head to Savannah to take the produce as well as people.

TB: For example, my first trip to Savannah was on a sailboat with a man named Elijah Jones, going to the dentist. Just the two of us with butter beans, chickens, turkeys, watermelon, you name it. And my job was to operate the pump. Okay? And the pump was to keep the water down that came in from the high seas on the boat. And this was a sailboat, had no motor at all.

VF: Well, you had a sailboat with all that going on ...

TB: That's right. And people from Little Stoney, Big Stoney, other places, would send their produce with Mr. Jones to Savannah. Until later during the years as Charlie Simmons started the service of a regular transportation with a motorboat out of Broad Creek. That went to Savannah so many days a week and came back.

TB: And in between there, there were sailboat builders. In the Marshland area, there were people

named Green. The Green family and the Christopher family were fantastic carpenters. As well as members of the Campbell family were fantastic boat carpenters. And, for example, a part of the Jonesville area there was a blacksmith named James Frazier.

TB: He would fix all the wagon wheels and the spokes, the hubs, and he would do the anchor shoots for the boats. People had special skills. The former residents of Hilton Head had special skills and they worked together as a team consistently. Okay?

VF: Right. That's beautiful.

TB: And in Spanish Wells, people looked at that area for transportation later, as well as farming. And many of the people from Spanish Wells had jobs on the dredge in Savannah. In Baygall, people were very well known for catching a fish that was called drum fish.

TB: When that fish was caught wherever the sailboat would go from would take those fish to Savannah. After they were cleaned, salted, and they were sent over to Savannah and sell them. For example, back in those days, people made baskets.

TB: A man named Cesar Jones was well known for making outstanding baskets. He could make baskets that would fan the rice, baskets... Different type baskets. Okay?

VF: Right. Yes.

TB: And those baskets would be sent to Savannah for selling, people would bring the money back to him. And not only their baskets and the fish, but people from the Baygall area as well as the Chaplin area, were known for catching all kinds of larger fish. And turtle eggs were popular for sale back then, back in those days you could do that. There were no restrictions back in those days. Okay?

VF: Wow. You talked about two creeks. You mentioned Broad Creek and Skull Creek. What did people do at Broad Creek and what was important about Skull Creek?

TB: Skull Creek area had opportunities, for example, during the summer months the crab boats would come from Port Royal, South Carolina. And so men had throttle lines that would go out... They would put Bull Nose. Bull nose was a bait that was put on the throttle lines down for many miles. And you're going to dip that.

TB: And you have two people in bateau with a large drum. And when I say drum, I'm talking about a metal drum now. Okay?

VF: Right. Okay.

TB: And you would catch the crab. And I believe you'd get five or six cents, a pound or whatever for the crab. At one price for the male crime and another price for the female crab. So Skull Creek was a place that had that opportunity, was a place that also had oyster lease land by LP Maggioni. That had, not only the oyster lease for the factories here on Hilton Head, but he had a fleet of sailboats that would come from Lady's Island.

TB: He had several men that knew how to sail sailboats and they would go to Lady's Island and bring a sailboat down and anchor it out. And they would have several bateaus. Bateau is a small boat. And they would load the boat with oysters. So, that was another part of the industry for the Skull Creek area and a portion also of Spanish Wells because the crab boat would go all the way down to Calibogue Sound. Okay?

VF: Okay.

TB: Then turn around come back. And so many days a week the crab boats would do that. And the crab boats would do that in the summer. Then during the winter months when oysters were being harvest, that would be the activities that go on then. Now in Broad Creek, sailboats were made in Broad Creek. Okay?

VF: Okay.

TB: Broad Creek is that section, that slough, that come up in the middle of the island between where Palmetto Dunes area is and on the Spanish Wells hill side. They were fish in that area as well. And people would catch fish in that area of marketing in Savannah.

TB: Now, it's interesting you mentioned that, I haven't seen one in years, but people used to cast as well. You use cast nets. And you could catch mullet fish. In the East coast. Some of them would have had the roe. Roe mullet would be a big mullet as well as the regular mullet fish.

VF: Wow. And that's a row mullet? R-O-W?

TB: That's right. A row mullet, yeah. And then... Go ahead. Let me stop so you can ask questions.

VF: So I know, I think it was Skull Creek. One of the churches still conducts a baptismal. Is that correct? Are they still baptizing in Skull Creek?

TB: Yeah. That's Mount Calvary Baptist Church. Yeah, it's down by Hudson's Seafood. There are several restaurants down there now.

VF: Are the locals still fishing in either Skull Creek or Broad Creek?

TB: Not as much as they used to. But people now go to the Rowing and Sailing Center on Squire Pope Road at the docks to fish a great extent now. Because the fishing regulations have changed tremendously. Now, let me pause and ask you a question. Are you going to talk with Emory Campbell?

VF: Yes sir, I am. I'm going to talk to him on Thursday.

TB: All right, very good.

VF: Yes. And who else am I speaking with? Miss Louise Cohen, I'm going to talk to her on Friday.

TB: All right.

VF: I think I have the big three here now, huh.

TB: All right. I just thought I 'd better get that in.

VF: Yes. Well, I just have a few more questions for you. What old or historic buildings might still be standing near Stoney or in Stoney or on the island? Any historic building still standing?

TB: Now, when you say historic building, Miss Fann, I need you to give me a little more information. Because when you say historic building does that mean a building that the state of South Carolina has put a marker on or on the land? Well, how do you classify historic?

VF: Well, if you would look at a building that's been up for at least 50 years that they may or may not have. It might be someplace in the community that's important to the community and these builders may not have yet been identified. Maybe some old churches or praise houses or even places where people used to gather.

TB: Well, Arthur Frazier's store is still standing on Highway 278. I saw in the newspaper where the lady who operated her fancy clothes store was going to have to relocate because of the highway. That's one of the buildings that's been there for many years.

VF: Was that the store that Arthur Frazier had, that building?

TB: Yes, ma'am.

VF: And that's in Stoney. Am I correct?

TB: Yes, ma'am. That's right in the middle of Stoney, downtown Stoney. Yes, ma'am. That's the one that I can think of that's still there. Now, the Stewart's family, Arthur and Ben Steward, their residence still exists.

TB: As well as Arthur's brother house, which is a newer house, still exists on the right side of the road as you're coming into Hilton Head. On the opposite side of the road, Arthur brother house is there. Benjamin house is there. It is my understanding... Let me pause right there so that you can ask your questions because I go down bunny trails sometimes.

VF: Okay. I'm thinking that's about it. Someone had mentioned a beach that African Americans would frequent. And I can't quite remember the name of it? Was there a certain beach?

TB: Yeah. Singleton Beach, [inaudible 00:47:30] Collier Beach, and Burkes Beach. All three of those.

VF: Can we still identify those beaches? Are they still there by name?

TB: Well, the roads are still there. The ownership of the land has been changed many years gone by. Okay?

VF: Okay. All right. I hear you on that. I think that's about everything. Were there places on the islands where people would gather for big events, community events? I know you had an Odd Fellows Temple there, Odd Fellows Lodge, a while back?

TB: Yeah, that was an area close to Queen Chapel Church. That was gone many years ago. That was my late uncle Benjamin White. Now, Miss Fann, I'm going to say this. The town has made an effort apparently to purchase a lot of the land owned by African American people in that corridor of Highway 278.

TB: And you've seen it very clear in the book that I give reference to. 1955, that the plan was to relocate all the residents who had property in that corridor, since 1955. This was in the plan since 1955. And I used to share it with the planning commissioner of the town, and that same question came up.

TB: And I said certainly traffic, we need to make improvements over a period of time for the safety. And certainly the bridges that people travel to and from this island, including me and my family. And certainly, in saying this, my family is benefited economically and we appreciate that.

TB: We should take a look, a serious look. Because this is the last effort that exists for the Stewart family, the [inaudible 00:51:01] Driessen family, the Frazier's family, and the Simmons' family and several others that live as well as own property in that corridor.

TB: And it appears to me that there's no way that the state, the county or the town will be able to find an appraiser to appraise the properties that's owned by the persons that live and own property on that US Highway 278. To allow them to have the dollar equivalency that those families will have benefits coming to them.

TB: Not just for one year, 2 years, 3 years, 10 years, but in perpetuity. There's no appraiser that will say that he can try and [inaudible 00:52:48] comps. That's what they call them in that language, comps

TB: Because, Miss Fann, they just don't find people who have properties that's contiguous for highway, as well as a waterfront, and Marsh front that you will find there in Stoney. Now I know you're going to do a good job. And that's what you're going to talk to everybody about. But the younger people don't have the same feeling [inaudible 00:53:39] that I have because I used to work on Arthur Stewart boat, the Sea Ranger as an interim captain. Did you hear what I said?

VF: Yes, sir. You worked on his boat. Wow.

TB: Okay?

VF: Yes, sir.

TB: Ma'am, all I can say to you, I thank you for the opportunity of reading the book. I thank you for your professional opportunity of reaching out. I saw in writing somewhere that it appears that the state wants to put a park or something up in memory of people. Well, the first thing I say to that is, that's fine.

TB: Whatever they put up, is going to be put up by people that's not African American to begin with. Monuments are normally designed and created by people who do that as a business and don't have the feeling as well as the experience of living the experience of the people. And how are they going to come up with capturing all of those names that I mentioned to you?

TB: There's Charlie Simmons, the Driessens [inaudible 00:56:38], the Arthur Frazier's, the Arthur Stewart's that had the boat named the Sea Ranger, his brother that had a boat named the Betty P., the other brother had a boat named Miss Albertha [inaudible 00:55:50]. A shrimp boat I'm talking about.

TB: How are you going to get all that culture into something... How can you put that on a piece of

paper or on a mural or whatever you call those things. How can you fit that on a monument? These people need to have something different, better and more meaningful. It's three o'clock and somebody just rung my doorbell.

VF: Okay. Well, we're going to end here I thank you so much.

TB: Thank you.

VF: This is Velma Fann. I've been talking to Mr. Thomas Barnwell, and today is November 3, 2020.

TB: Thomas Cortus Barnwell Junior from Hilton Head Island.

VF: That's right. Thank you so much, sir.

TB: 85 years old. Okay.

VF: All right.

TB: Thank you.

VF: Thank you.

TB: Bye-bye.

VF: Bye-bye.

Alexander Brown, Jr.

This interview was conducted in conjunction with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) regarding the proposed improvements to a 4.1-mile long section of U.S. Highway 278 between Bluffton and Hilton Head Island, from Moss Creek Drive to Squire Pope Road in Beaufort County, South Carolina. The proposed improvements on Hilton Head Island will impact the community of Stoney, where African Americans have owned land since the 1890s. Interviews were conducted with members and descendants of the Stoney community to provide a developmental history of the community, establish its historic geography, and to provide an initial evaluation of the Stoney community's potential as a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) or other potential historical designation for project planning purposes.

This interview was conducted November 4, 2020. Velma Fann, New South Associates, conduced the interview. **We are waiting for the signed release form. This transcription is being submitted for the draft report.**

Velma Fann**:** This is Velma Fann with New South Associates. I am conducting interviews with residents of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina in conjunction with the US 278 bridge corridor replacement. We would like to interview you about Hilton Head Island's traditional communities with an emphasis on Big Stoney and Little Stoney on US 278. Do we have your permission to interview you and to use this interview for the project?

Alexander Brown, Jr.: Yes, absolutely.

VF: Thank you. Today is November the 4th, 2020. Mr. Brown, could you please state and spell your name for us please?

AB: Alexander Brown, Jr Sure. Alexander Brown Jr. A-L-E-X-A-N-D-E-R-B-R-O-W-N-J-R.

VF: Great. Thank you. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and your connection to the island and the community?

AB: Sure. I am a Gullah descendant, born and raised on Hilton Head. Family's been here over seven generations. My great-great-grandfather was actually enslaved on Hilton Head, able to fight in the Civil War and use pension from the war to purchase land that he was once enslaved on, which we still hold in our possession to date. I've been a community activist for most of my life. Got a passion for youth. Find myself coaching here locally, youth leader and trustee chair at my church. And just as of last night, newly elected as a town council person for Ward 1 on the town of Hilton Head.

VF: Congratulations.

AB: Thank you very much. In my real job, I'm a vice president of operations for a local, retail organization called Camp Hilton Head, where I'm responsible for five stores and over 50 employees. That's my story in a nutshell.

VF: Great. You mentioned your family. What was the person's name? Was it your great-grandfather?

AB: Yes, Prince Brown.

VF: Okay. And he served in the Civil War?

AB: Yes.

VF: One of the troops there on Hilton Head?

AB: Yes.

VF: Great. And which community do you represent, sir?

AB: I'm in the Chaplin community.

VF: Very good.

AB: Chaplin was once Chaplin plantation named after one of the slave owners. We still refer to it as the historic neighborhood of Chaplin, just dropped the plantation.

VF: Okay. Well, if someone were to travel back maybe 50 years or so in your community, what would they have seen? How did it look physically? What were the family patterns, the settlement patterns? How did the houses look? Things of that nature.

AB: Okay. Well, if we're going back 50 years-

VF: Or before the bridge.

AB: What you going to learn from me is what I've heard, okay, because I'm only 46.

VF: All right then.

AB: All right? But I've seen a lot of changes in my 46 years also, all right? But when I was growing up, Hilton Head was not nearly as developed as it is now. Matter of fact, my grandfather was still farming the land and I tell folks all the time that when... When I got out of school in the afternoons, before I could do my homework, my granddad would have me come help him tend to the fields. Okay? Once dark headed and we got done out there, then I could go in the house and do my homework. Very early on, I was taught a good lesson in work ethic. Basically, just work, work, work all the time is what I learned. But those are some of the values within the Gullah community. Using our land for sustainability economically was just something that I was just born into, okay?

VF: Right.

AB: And it hasn't hasn't changed much as far as that's concerned. But what has changed is instead of me riding around with my granddad with a station wagon full of watermelons to the local supermarkets trying to sell them, that just doesn't cut it anymore. Instead, our land is being used for what Dr. Emory Campbell calls a new crop, which is people, right? In a lot of cases, you see folks that have ownership of land in historic neighborhoods using it for housing. Hilton Head definitely has an affordable housing crisis.

The historic neighborhoods have taken on that challenge with very little assistance from the municipality. We've also, in cases, used our property to house our businesses, okay? More of a, I guess a home occupation type environment and what I mean by that as an example, I mean, if someone's a seamstress, they have that gift, they're having folks come into their home in order to provide the service. Okay?

AB: Same with hair salons. A lot of cases, hair salons are just an extension of the home, right? Yeah, and many of us, Hilton Head's a service-driven place, not just tourism. We got a lot of landscapers here on Hilton Head. That's what these folks are using their property for housing of their equipment and whatnot. The Gullah culture has sustained itself but I think a lot of times folks are confused because they associate culture with fishing, farming, us singing and dancing and that sort of thing, right? That's definitely a part of it, but the biggest part of it is survival.

VF: Okay. Let's talk about that. If I may back up, now you said when you were younger you would go in the fields.

AB: Right.

VF: What was your family growing at that time?

AB: Oh, just about everything. Peas, beans, corn, watermelon, potatoes. Whatever season it was, we had something in the ground.

VF: Okay. And did your family live in a family compound were people in the family living in the same area on the same land?

AB: Still do. Absolutely.

VF: Okay. All right.

AB: You'll find that consistently throughout all of the historic neighborhoods on Hilton with the exception of the cases where folks have, and I'm going to use the word, lost their property, okay? And some may argue it because in some cases we may have sold it, right?

VF: Right.

AB: But I always beg the question, did we sell it because we wanted to or do we sell it because we had to? All right. And I'll give you a little bit of background here. I'm not sure how much had been shared with you so far in your other interviews. But back in the 80s, when the town was first incorporated, okay, and the reason that the town was incorporated, Hilton Head was being developed by a series of big developers that had purchased a lot of lands and master planned what they wanted these planned unit developments to look like. All right?

AB: And then now today, in some cases, refer to as plantations. Okay? They set out, they put an infrastructure, they've divided the lots, they sold the lots off, they built homes, and their own little community type atmosphere. And the infrastructure and the maintenance and all that stuff was all built into that separate planned community, you follow me, right?

VF: Okay.

AB: Okay. Now at that time, the county was responsible for the rules and regulations on Hilton Head, as far as development is concerned. What these planned unit developers did was they created their own covenants so they can operate under their own rules. You got me?

VF: Yes.

AB: They were able to control. The problem was, or what some deem as the problem, was what was not within these planned unit developments, which was mostly our areas, the historic Gullah community areas, was still being governed by the county, and the rules were very lax. Okay? You started to see some development on Hilton Head that these plantations didn't feel as if were in the characteristic of what they were trying to accomplish as a vision of people coming to Hilton Head. There was a conflict. There was a decision made to then incorporate Hilton Head into a town and the reason for that was to control the development. All right? They incorporated then what they called the limited service government. Initially, they're not going to provide any infrastructure. They're not going to provide any public safety, no fire and rescue, so on and so on, right?

AB: And as the community grew, we started to take on some of the responsibilities from the county. For instance, now we have our own fire and rescue department, which is a huge portion of our budget. But long story short, through all of that, the Gullah landowners in the 80s inventoried about 3,500 acres okay? We just took another inventory about two years ago and it's less than a thousand. Okay?

VF: Okay.

AB: A lot of what has happened is, from a property tax standpoint, as you can imagine, if you have lots of development around you, timeshare development, single family development of very expensive homes, the property tax assessment starts to creep up, okay? A lot of cases, individuals are not necessarily able to keep up with that increase, okay? They may have lost their land to tax sale because they couldn't keep up with the taxes. In a lot of cases, you got development going on around you. There's so much pressure for your land to be developed. And unfortunately, most Gullah folk don't have the capital or the connections to develop their property.

AB: Next thing you know, developers are buying it up, okay? And one of the main culprits of our land loss has actually been in the town of Hilton Head. They bought a lot of property within our communities with the intent of control and develop. In some cases, the idea was the municipality would buy it before a developer buys it and we'll just keep it as an open space. With all of those things coupled, we've seen a grave decrease in the land ownership, which for us, means a grave decrease in the opportunity here in Hilton Head as far as sustaining the culture.

VF: When you look back, because I know you're a young man, but your family has been there seven generations, if I remember, what did they tell you about Hilton Head and the various communities and how people interacted?

AB: More of a barter system than anything else, okay? Cash wasn't necessarily that important because if I had beans and the stores had fish, we would just trade. Okay? Yeah. Yeah, and those that had mechanical skills and that sort of thing, there was a trade off there also. My dad built my grandparents' house off of used lumber that was ferried over here from a nearby city called Savannah. Okay? And he and others had the skillset of building houses so they just did. There wasn't any cost involved in building the house, right? It took them a couple of years to get it done because they were just borrowing favors. But the point is, you didn't have that mortgage hanging over your head, right?

VF: Right.

AB: Yeah, a very, very simple way of life that's changing very quickly with the development of Hilton Head and the rush of the tourists and people moving here. It was just a totally different environment.

VF: Did they talk to you about any places where communities would gather, socialize?

AB: Yeah, absolutely. Church, of course. Once upon a time, there was only one African-American church on Hilton Head, the First African Baptist Church. It came actually out of Mitchelville. And out of convenience and they started to branch off and have churches in other areas on Hilton Head. But they tried to keep the one church, I guess, idea alive because although there were several different sister churches, those churches would only be open for service one Sunday out of the month. Okay? Everybody was still gathered at say, First African Baptist on first Sunday, and then they move on to Crossroad Church on second Sunday and so on, right?

VF: Okay.

AB: Okay, but now that's all going away. Everybody's having service every Sunday at different churches. That would be one way to do together. Family reunions and those, in some cases, they're still fairly big on Hilton Head. Families, at least once a year, get together to celebrate their families. And the beach was another place, where there was a congregation of folks. They used to call, I guess it was Memorial Day, would be the official date that the beach opened, so to speak. I never knew what that meant growing up. You had a key to get to the beach because they always told," It's closed until Memorial Day." But that was just the official time when people really started to travel and come over from surrounding areas. And for a long time, the beaches on Hilton Head that were within the communities where some of the only beaches that were not segregated, okay?

VF: I've heard Singleton Beach. Do you recall some of the names of the beaches?

AB: Yeah, Singleton Beach, Burkes Beach and Bradley Beach.

VF: Okay. Do people still gather there now?

AB: Singleton Beach no longer has public access because the property was sold by the Singleton family and they're million-dollar homes sitting down there that you would normally park to go to the beach. Burke's Beach still has public access and Bradley Beach also. Those beach accesses are owned by the town and in both cases, those properties were also owned by native island Gullah families.

VF: Okay. When we talk about that, I hear a lot about Skull Creek and Broad Creek. Are you familiar with those creeks and how important were they to the island and to the communities?

AB: Well, one of our family plots is on Broad Creek, okay?

VF: Okay.

AB: And Broad Creek is titled. My grandfather used to go out and fish in Broad Creek and there's still a lot of folk on the other side of Broad Creek that used the water for economic purposes. I just had one of my buddies donate oysters to...

VF: Are you still with me? Yes, I think we lost connection. We're reconnected now.

AB: Okay.

VF: We were talking about-

AB: I'm not sure where I lost you.

VF: We were talking about Broad Creek.

AB: Yes. Yeah, Broad Creek is... I don't know if you got me, but one of our properties is on Broad Creek, okay, and my grandfather, of course, he used Broad Creek to go out and fish and crab. The Mitchell family, which was across the creek from us, still to this day use the creek for economic purposes. One of them just donated bushels of oysters at one of my campaign events last week. They're definitely still depending on the creek. And Skull Creek, which is mainly in the Stoney area, and they can talk about that a lot better than I can, but that was very prominent shrimping boat industry in that area for a long time. And they had access to deep-

VF: Oh, okay.

AB: Yeah, they had access to deep water on Skull Creek.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative). When you were growing up or when your parents and grandparents, did people relate more to their own personal communities or the island in general?

AB: Well, when you say your personal communities-

VF: Would they identify like "I'm from Stoney. I'm from Squire Pope?"

AB: Oh, absolutely not. Absolutely not. That. Yeah. Yeah, folks would mingle quite often. As you could imagine, with the neighborhoods normally made up of family compounds and people started to get married, in a lot of cases, they was married outside of one of the neighborhoods of course, right?

VF: Right.

AB: That's when you would definitely see a lot of intermingling of the residents and in-laws and that sort of thing. And then of course, the Stoney neighborhoods had their whole identities. Chaplin of course, was where the beach was. We're known as the party part of town. All right? Everybody will come down there to

have a good time. Yeah.

VF: That's good. Good. Tell me, were you familiar with Stoney? I know you may have been young at the time, but did you ever go to Stoney as a child and what did Stoney offer or what have you heard about Stoney and what it offered the island?

AB: Yeah. Well, the way that I remember Stoney, it had a lot of essential businesses, okay, when I was young. For instance, post office was in Stoney. All right? Everybody had to go there if they needed to deal with mail services. Old man Charlie Simmons, who was nicknamed Mr. Transportation, because he had one of the first means of transportation from Hilton Head to the mainland before the bridge was built. He had his own ferry system. All right? But of course, the bridge was here when I was born, but he still had a little grocery store in the Stoney area, right? He had a gas station attached to it so we'd frequently visit that place when we were leaving the island. And of course, like I said, the shrimp boat industry was he was there. We was always going down there and buying stuff off of the shrimp boats. And then so on, I guess this was in the 90s, they opened up Gullah Flea Market [inaudible 00:24:17] also.

VF: The-

AB: But this provided for a little bit, okay? It was somewhat early and the town didn't really embrace that at the time, okay, because the Gullah culture at that point, wasn't viewed the way as it is now, okay? And what I mean by that is Hilton Head is definitely known for its beaches and its golf. They built the brand around that, right?

VF: Right.

AB: But now, you start to see a decline in golf, okay, well, a couple of reasons. One, Tiger Woods isn't as good as he used to be, right? And secondly, the younger generation, which is instant gratification, they're not as into golf because golf takes a long time. You know what I mean? The new visitor isn't as, I guess, crazy about golf as they were when Hilton Head was first being developed. Hilton Head it is somewhat redefining itself to a degree. You have to find the means of attraction and because the history and the culture rests on Hilton Head, there's a need to try to sell that now, okay? Had it been the same situation where the Gullah Flea Market was alive, we probably would do tremendously well there. Folks being able to come and sell their goods, whatever skillset they may have if it's [inaudible 00:26:00] crabs and making sweetgrass baskets or whatever it is because that's coming. That is coming.

AB: There's a master plan being put together to develop Mitchelville as a museum, as an interactive park. The fact that Hilton Head is home of the first Freedman's town in America, and we got nice beaches and nice hotels, people will come for that, right?

VF: Right.

AB: Me, being a young person and calling myself an entrepreneur and of course wanting the generations behind me to be able to survive another seven generations, we have to be looking at that. The main reason that we have in this conversation is because Stoney, at the moment, is at risk of being just

completely destroyed and that land ownership goes away, the land goes away, your opportunity to take advantage of supplying Hilton Head with the culture, which is ours, that's going to go away also. All right? That's why the protection and tying all the communities together is so greatly important because I'm in Stoney today with this road that's been coming through, but it'll be Chaplin tomorrow, right?

VF: I'm sorry, repeat that. You're breaking up a little bit.

AB: I said, in Stoney today, the states with the challenge of potentially widen the road and losing property, which losing property, you also lose opportunity. But it could any of the historic neighborhoods tomorrow, right?

VF: Right. Well, my last question, then if you would like to add anything, that'd be great. What does community mean to you? You're the seventh generation. Is the eighth generation as tied to the land as you are?

AB: Oh, absolutely. The typical trend in folks that live here, they raise the children here. And once the kids get out of school, they go off to college, they go off and find a career, and then they come back to Hilton Head, right? That's sums the normal trends. Some of us choose to just stay and grind it out here. But that sense of wanting to come back home is very huge. Okay? Folks are looking forward to that. All right? And of course, those that are here have a connection to the land. It depends on if they lived on it or if they're trying to have some economic gain by using their property for businesses and whatnot. Yeah, there's definitely a strong connection to the property at the moment. The challenge is the town is having a vision. Okay. Velma?

VF: Okay.

AB: Like I said, the culture is a very, very, laid back culture. Let us have our way. Do leave us alone. We'll be all right, okay? I've been harvesting pecans here for last, I don't know, six weeks or so. And pecan trees normally bear the same time that property taxes are due. A lot of them [inaudible 00:29:51] pecan trees, that's them paying their property taxes on harvesting the pecans. I mean, we've been [inaudible 00:29:59] pecans in ten years to pay for one-year taxes now it's more than that. Just having that vision of this is not going to work anymore. We got to do something different, that's challenging because the Gullah culture was not by any means built around capitalism. It was built more so on stay to yourself on the land that you have. The land's going to give you a certain amount and that's what you do to live, right? That's the critical piece that we have to do better at or else someone is going to come in and show us how to do it.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative). In terms of land now, are people in the community keeping land within the families? Is that something that you're seeing or are they selling outside of the families?

AB: Well as of lately, we've done a pretty good job with holding on to properties, okay?

VF: Okay.

AB: We've got a group that's been put together to stay on people about paying their property taxes and if people get in trouble, there's assistance there. And if there is any selling a property going on, we trying

to keep it within [inaudible 00:31:19] Island hands. You see it as much selling out in the... There's a lot less properties out there too, right? Not as much, but in some cases it happens. The town just bought another piece of Gullah-owned property a few weeks ago in Stoney and grabbed that property so they can have more opportunity for the road to come through, right? But my argument is...

VF: Okay. I'm losing you. I lost you again. Are you there?

AB: [inaudible 00:32:05]. Is that better?

VF: Yes. You were talking about land in Stoney.

AB: Yeah, the towns have bought more property a few weeks ago, which displaced two Gullah-owned businesses. And I know that the reason they bought the property is so they can have better opportunities to expand the road right on the corner and they need that property to, I guess, improve the intersection, so to speak. Right?

VF: Okay.

AB: But my argument is, since the town owns much property in that area already, they could have very easily done some type of land swap deal for those businesses just to keep them alive because they're a fabric of the community also versus them just being bought out and going away, right?

VF: Do you know which businesses they were? Were these older buildings, these businesses?

AB: Yeah, the businesses were older. The property was ex-owned by one Gullah family and the business owners were leasing the buildings from them. Okay? And one was a fresh seafood and produce stand owned by Campbell and the other was a mechanic shop owned by Simmons' family.

VF: Mechanics shop owned by the Simmons. Okay.

AB: Uh-huh (affirmative).

VF: And the Campbell's owned which now?

AB: It was a seafood and fresh produce stand.

VF: Okay. And both of those are on Highway 278?

AB: Right in tune. Yes, absolutely.

VF: Okay. All right. Is there anything else you'd like to add? The importance of Stoney to the island and the history of it and the culture?

AB: Yeah, I guess the only other thing I'd add is I know that the South Carolina Department of Transportation has done and hired someone to do a study at Stoney that, I guess [inaudible 00:34:27] living here. And the finder's are coming back then because Stoney is so broken now so the historic significance is not necessarily there, right? And that seems deliberate in my mind, okay, particularly since you got so many Gullah descendants that you... Mitchelville came out of some of these plantations. And like you asked me the

question before, are they tied together? Yeah. They're really tied together. This Gullah culture on Hilton Head is tied to the historic community and they're all still significant [inaudible 00:35:12] fragment of it to a degree. You're not going to be able to trace back the types of families' lineage, the land, and many other places in America, right?

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Here you can tie the land back to the family?

AB: Oh yeah. That store is the seventh generation of the commissary's right here on Hilton Head. I mean, throughout the Gullah Geechee [inaudible 00:35:41] corridor, as a matter of fact.

VF: Very good. Alrighty. Well, I thank you very much.

Emory Campbell

This interview was conducted in conjunction with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) regarding the proposed improvements to a 4.1-mile long section of U.S. Highway 278 between Bluffton and Hilton Head Island, from Moss Creek Drive to Squire Pope Road in Beaufort County, South Carolina. The proposed improvements on Hilton Head Island will impact the community of Stoney, where African Americans have owned land since the 1890s. Interviews were conducted with members and descendants of the Stoney community to provide a developmental history of the community, establish its historic geography, and to provide an initial evaluation of the Stoney community's potential as a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) or other potential historical designation for project planning purposes.

This interview was conducted November 2, 2020. Velma Fann, New South Associates, conduced the interview. **We are waiting for the signed release form. This transcription is being submitted for the draft report.**

Velma Fann: This is Velma Fann with New South Associates, and we are conducting interviews with residents of the Hilton Head Island in South Carolina in conjunction with the U.S. 278 Corridor Bridge Replacement project. We would like to interview you about Hilton Head's traditional communities with an emphasis on Big Stoney and Little Stoney on U.S. 278.

VF: Do we have your permission to interview you and to use your interview for this project?

Emory CampbellYes, you do.

VF: Thank you. [Today is November 2, 2020.]

VF: Would you state your name for us please, and spell it?

EC: Emory, E-M-O-R-Y. S, the initial. Campbell, C-A-M-P-B-E-L-L.

VF: Okay. Thank you so very much, I guess I would like to start by asking you a bit about yourself and your connection to Hilton Head Island.

EC: Well, I'm Emory Campbell. I grew up here, born in 1941 when there were just colored people living here, a few exceptions. And grew up farming and fishing in a family of 12 siblings, and a mother and a father in a frame house.

EC: So I've watched Hilton Head from the time it only had one or two cars, to now, many, many cars, and a lot more people, up from 1500 people to about 40,000 now.

VF: Wow. Are your parents from the island as well?

EC: Yep. I'm fourth generation islander.

VF: Okay.

EC: My parents were born here as well.

VF: All right. So if we were to travel back... and you've touched on this a bit, 50 or maybe 60 years ago, and we were on the island, what would we see? How did it look physically in terms of where people live, settlement patterns, the houses? Did people live near the road or the waters? What would we have seen?

EC: Well you would have seen about 10 neighborhoods scattered throughout a forest of trees. Hilton Head was almost like a conservation district 50, 60 years ago. Lots of animals and birds, and these neighborhoods of colored people that settled here after the civil war.

VF: And how did they live? Did they live housing settlement patterns with family members, or did everybody just kind of scatter after the civil war and find a place?

EC: Well, these neighborhoods were settled pretty much by extended families who had come to Spanish Wells where I grew up, and just, I guess, virtually, everybody was family, kinfolks. I also say that colored people know their 15th cousin. And then you lived in that neighborhood of brothers and sisters, and mamma and daddies and grandparents and cousins. So these neighborhoods were pretty much extended families.

VF: Okay. And how did the community... I'm sorry, how did the communities get their names?

EC: Well most of them were extended from the plantation days. Spanish Wells was a plantation where I grew up. Chaplin was a plantation; Stoney was a plantation. And these names were people who owned the plantation, except Spanish Wells was named for the waterway.

EC: But during the plantation days, these owners... well what the plantation were named after, their owners. And so you have, with few exceptions like Spanish Wells... and nowadays, let's see, Spanish Wells is probably the only one that doesn't have an owner name, former plantation owner's name.

VF: And the islanders retained those names? Did they have any other little smaller community names within communities?

EC: No. They had some sub-neighborhood names, I guess, like in Spanish Wells you had Broad Creek, and Stoney, you would have had Little Stoney. But other than that, the broad community kept the name, everybody referred to the broader name.

VF: Okay. Mr. Campbell, how did people earn a living, let's say, before the bridge and afterwards?

EC: Well, these were self-sustaining neighborhoods, they pretty much planted what they needed to eat, went into the river to get the seafood, which added to the food supply. And very little cash was available or needed, except folks would sell the surplus from the subsistence farming, and then from the seafood, they would sell the surplus down to Savannah.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

EC: Savannah had this marketplace and that was an outlet for your surplus where you would get your cash that you needed for baby shoes or some other items that we couldn't make ourselves.

VF: Right. Okay. And we look at land ownership in the past and land ownership over time, how has that changed?

EC: Tremendously. Land was the only thing we had, and it was important because it was a really important resource. You planted the land, you lived on the land. You raise your animals on the land, because everybody had a couple of cows and a horse, at least one, because they did the work. And had some pork as well.

EC: And so land was important for living. So when it changed, it changed because people had another option to get cash. And so, they kind of left the land and went to work in service jobs.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative). So when people were on the land even more so, where did they gather? Where did they socialize? Any particular places that people still gather out of tradition?

EC: Church. We had six churches, and those churches, membership rotated every Sunday. Every church didn't have their own service every Sunday, they rotated to other churches, so as to fellowship, as well as to share, in some cases, share the pastor.

EC: And so church was a big gathering place, a very important place. And other than the regular service, you had some programs, ancillary programs for children also, or just for the gathering, or to honor the mothers, or to honor the fathers, or even to honor the children.

EC: So the church was very important, was important gathering. And you had, also, picnics, you had neighborhood picnics, and sometimes one picnic would be... And Spanish Wells would be a large picnic where people from Stoney would come, and vice versa. We would go some other place for a picnic.

EC: And once or twice a year, we'd have church picnics on the beach. Churches would sponsor an outing to the beach. And the beech, that was a big event, like a church picnic on the beach.

VF: Wow.

EC: [inaudible 00:08:30]. And the one or two trucks that you had, or one or two cars, you piled into those and folks would shuttle you to the beach. And you spend a day on the beach either on 4th of July or Labor Day, or some other designated time.

VF: And which beaches were these, and are they still being used by the native islanders?

EC: Yeah, the main beach that we used at the time would be what is now Bradley Beach, but we called it Folly Field at the time. And I guess we used that then because it was most accessible. And as I recall, when I was a boy, there was a pavilion there, kind of a shelter from the sun. We didn't need a whole lot of suntan. So people would go under that pavilion. And two of us would go into the beach and swim. But it was just an outing to watch the beach and enjoy the breeze.

VF: Ah, yes. So how did people move about on the island? Was it mostly by boat or by land or on foot? How did you get from Mitchellville to Stoney?

EC: My father used to call it Bill and Dale. He said, "Take Bill and Dale." "What do you mean?" "It means walk."

VF: So Bill, B-I-L-L, and Dale, D-A-

EC: Yeah. D-A-L-E. I Don't know why he called them Bill and Dale, it must have been an old saying.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

EC: But, "I don't want to get that daddy," Bill and Dale. Walk! Two or three mile walk is nothing. And usually walk pairs, or a few of you would walk together. And no matter how hot or how cold, you take your walk until you get to the post office, or till you get to wherever you were set to pick something. Because the horse was like a car, sparingly used. If you have a car nowadays and you're poor, you don't burn the gasoline just because there is a car there.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

EC: A horse, you didn't use that horse just leisurely to do unnecessary thing because it had to work. And if you used it, you didn't rush it. You were sent out on an errand on a horse, that was luxury. And your father would check that horse out when you come back to see if it's sweating. If it was sweating, that mean that you really ran that horse, that's abusive use.

EC: And so, occasionally they would let you take the horse on an errand, if you went from Spanish Wells to say, Jonesville, or Toucan or to Chaplin. If you had to get back pretty quickly, they would let you take the horse, otherwise you walked.

VF: So the roads that people walked, are they still there? Are they overgrown? Have they been paved, or are they still used by the islanders?

EC: They've been paved. These neighborhoods back then were separated by dirt roads, wagon roads I call them, because they were rugged, they were sand. And you got a lot of sand between your toes, because most of us when we were kids, you didn't use your shoes except to go to church or some other formal occasion. You went barefooted.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative). I hear a lot-

EC: If the sand got hot, you just made sure you walked on the grassy part.

VF: That makes sense. Yes.

VF: I hear the importance of the waterways. Some people talk about them, two creeks, Skull Creek and Broad Creek. How important were they to the past and to the present?

EC: Well, they were very important to the past, you use the waterway to travel. If you're going to Daufuskie or you're going to Savannah, you took the Broad Creek route past Daufuskie and then eventually get into the Savannah river.

EC: But in the Skull Creek area, that was the oystering and fishing, because oystering was a big operation during the winter months, that was a source of a dollar. But the waterways were used for gathering food and for traveling,

VF: Are people still using them now?

EC: Today they're recreational. They use skiing and jet skiing, and sailing and yachting. And folks who visit the island would come in their yacht. We have more marinas around here now than we have parking lots. It's where they park their boats.

VF: Wow. I must see that. So when we look at the churches, what's still standing? Any praise houses or stores that are part of the community?

EC: The only landmark that's still standing are the few frame houses that were on the land of... in these neighborhoods. And you have the churches that have now been changed, been transformed into more modern buildings. But they are essentially in the same locations.

EC: The praise houses are gone; you don't have them anymore. They use the churches now for Bible studies, and they have cars that they can go to longer distance to the church. The praise houses were pretty much located in the neighborhoods where people could walk and have service two, three times a week in the evenings.

VF: Did you ever attend a praise house service?

EC: Oh yeah.

EC: Yeah, we attended praise house service until we got of age that we didn't have to.

EC: They were pretty much mandatory when you're young.

VF: Can you describe what the building looked like and what the service was like?

EC: Well, the praise house that I attended also doubled as a schoolhouse. I went to school there in the day, and then we had to prepare for the praise house service in the evening. These school children would move the benches so that they could have prayer meeting. And the benches for the prayer meeting, you would have your benches without the desk, lined, just like you would line pews in a church.

EC: And they had a little podium there that you would put in place. And so the praise house service would begin with songs and then scripture reading, and songs again, and more scripture readings, songs again.

EC: And then you had these mourners' bench where somebody will pray for you if you were not a member of the church, and you were being prepared to join, and coerced to join, they would pray for you. And they had a bench there that they would call the mourners' bench.

EC: Some people have done monologues about mourners' bench. I didn't know it was that important to a culture until I'm seeing some Broadway people... not Broadway people, but national prayers chatting about mourners' bench.

EC: So the children, the younger people who are not members of the church would kneel to the bench and get prayed for. And hopefully you would make up your mind to become a member of the church, which is another ordeal.

EC: But that's the way it went. And after the last song you shook hands... with a kind of a shuffle while the songs are going on. And that would be the end of that prayer meeting. It last about hour, hour and a half.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative). And where did you attend school?

EC: Every time we had prayer meeting they would call you with a bell, six o'clock, quarter to six, every time we had... mainly like on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings were the prayer meeting time in most of these neighborhoods, and they would have a cow bell. In our neighborhood they had a cow bell where the designated sexton would ring the bell.

EC: In those days you could hear a cow bell anywhere on this island, just about. But anywhere in Spanish Wells... it's a wide area, you could hear that bell ringing. And whatever you were doing, you just quit what you were doing and get prepared to go.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

EC: It's like an African village.

VF: Uh-huh (affirmative). Very good. We talk about Stoney. How important was and is Stoney to the island and to the culture? What made this community different than other communities on the island?

EC: Stoney was... it was the gateway. Eventually, Stoney became the debarkation point to get to Savannah. And it had a main dock there where people had transport boats dock there. And you would go to Stoney down to the dock and get on a boat that would take you across the water to what is now Buckingham, which is the mainland.

EC: And by the time I grew up in the mid-forties, they had connected a highway to Bluffton and to Savannah, so people could have a way of riding to Savannah by car. Stoney became a very important neighborhood then, and even more important than it was before. It always had little shops. It always contained the post office. It also had a... that's where the health lady would come to provide you with the healthcare, get vaccination or whatever.

EC: So Stoney was the central, what you might say, the commercial part of the island, where all the public service would be rendered.

VF: And why-

EC: Nowadays, it's still a gateway to the island, it's a pass through, that's the first neighborhood you get to. And when the bridge and the ferry boat first came, it was considered an eyesore because these were Gullah families living along the highway, and they wanted to disband that. And I remember back in the early 50s, just before the bridge came, they had proposed at the state legislature to zone the island so that they could have some restrictions on what happened at Stoney.

VF: Wow. Okay. So when you think about Stoney now, why should we remember Stoney?

EC: Well, Stoney is historic. It's what I just described. It is a place where we gain service. It was a place

where we connected with the other part of the world. And it was and still is the place where the world sees Hilton Head, first.

EC: And you've got families there that have deep roots. You have some of the old shrimpers who grew up in Stoney. Some of your most ardent politicians were in Stoney. Arthur Frazier, still have building built... he's gone now, but he was one of the two people who left here and went to the march in 1963 in Washington, D.C. Another man lived on Stoney that was very political and promoted citizenship was a man named Sonny Brown, he lived down Stoney.

EC: So when you think of Stoney you thought of progress for Gullah people.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative). And what does community mean to you today? When someone speaks of community from what you knew growing up and what you see today?

EC: You mean any community?

VF: Your community. Spanish Wells communities on the island?

EC: Oh, it means our culture, to me. When I think of people on this island, I think of those neighborhoods, because those people involved from those neighborhoods, everybody who's anybody that's got roots in these neighborhoods, no matter where they are.

EC: You had Dan Driessen to play major league baseball, went all the way to Cincinnati and played major leaguers, but he's back home. And we think of Dan as coming out of Stoney.

EC: The same as Darryl Perry who was a baseball player. The same as the football players who left here. So everybody has roots in these neighborhoods.

VF: Okay. Is there anything that you would like to add in regards to Stoney in particular, and also the island in general?

EC: No. The only thing I want to add is Stoney now as it's being threatened with change and, actually, destruction, we have to remember that it weakens the entire culture, because when we lose one neighborhood, it weakens our culture because the culture has been always connected. It has always been a network of neighborhoods. And not only the memories, but the skills that these particular neighborhoods had is what we relied on.

EC: And still to this day, those same families have interest in those skills. You go to Stoney now and you find the same families that are shrimpers. You go to [Carden 00:00:24:57] and the same families are port builders.

VF: And that's important, connecting the past with the present.

EC: Very important. You don't go too far into the future without remembering your past.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative). And people still holding on to those skills.

EC: Absolutely.

VF: Oh, very good. Well, I thank you for your time.

Champen_Driessen Family

This interview was conducted in conjunction with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) regarding the proposed improvements to a 4.1-mile long section of U.S. Highway 278 between Bluffton and Hilton Head Island, from Moss Creek Drive to Squire Pope Road in Beaufort County, South Carolina. The proposed improvements on Hilton Head Island will impact the community of Stoney, where African Americans have owned land since the 1890s. Interviews were conducted with members and descendants of the Stoney community to provide a developmental history of the community, establish its historic geography, and to provide an initial evaluation of the Stoney community's potential as a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) or other potential historical designation for project planning purposes.

This interview was conducted March 20, 2020. Velma Fann, New South Associates, conduced the interview. Patrick Sullivan, New South Associates, was also present, adding technical assistance.

Velma Fann: I am Velma Fann with New South Associates. And today is March 10, 2020. And we are here with the Champen family. Is that correct?

Linda Washington: Well, it's Arthur Champen.

VF: Okay.

LW: Linda Washington.

VF: Okay. Ms. Washington, spell your name for us so we can make sure we have that correct.

LW: L-I-N-D-A and Washington, W-A-S-H-I-N-G-T-O-N.

VF: Okay. And we'll start here with this gentleman.

Arthur Champen: Arthur Champen, A-R-T-H-U-R, C-H-A-M-P-E-N.

VF: Good, good. And sir?

Dan Driessen: Dan Driessen: D-A-N, D-R-I-E-S-S-E-N.

VF: Okay. Are you all related?

LW: Yes.

DD: Yes.

VF: Cousins, family, spouses, everything?

LW: Cousins.

AC: Cousins.

VF: Oh, cousins. Okay.

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative]. Well, my uncle and—

VF: And the uncle.

DD: Yeah, my niece and cousins.

AC: A niece and, yeah, first cousins.

VF: Oh, okay. Well, I want to start off with was anybody here before the bridge?

AC: Yep.

VF: Oh, okay.

DD: I was.

VF: Tell us what Stoney was like before the bridge, as we—

DD: Before the bridge?

VF: That was like 1956, I'm hearing.

DD: The bridge came in '56, right?

AC: Yeah. Before the bridge Highway 278 was almost a playground for us because there was no cars except when the ferry came.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: We were all farmers. I lived with my grandmother, well, our grandmother.

DD: Yeah.

AC: And we farmed. We would go fishing, you know, lived off the, off the land and the river and just basically did what we wanted to do.

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: When the bridge came, things started to change, but before then, life was great.

VF: Yeah.

AC: It was life was very simple, you know? We only had just a few stores on the island. One was right there by my—right across the street from where my grandmother lived at was owned by Mr. Charlie Simmons.

LW: Hm-hm [affirmative].

AC: And almost all of the areas on the island where the black people lived, there was a almost like a general store there for them. But it was great living here then. We, at that time, when you would get baptized, yes, you used to go in the river. They would baptize you in the rivers.

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: But—

VF: Could they still do that now? Which river was that? No?

AC: Depending on where the church you went to was at, some, like Squire Pope Road, Mount Calvary would baptize you in the—in Skull Creek.

VF: Uh-huh [affirmative].

AC: Some of the other churches would baptize the people in Broad Creek.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative]. What about the rest of you? After the bridge, what was life like?

DD: Well, it became a, a little bit more complicated. What seemed like way back in the early days—I'm, I'm a little bit younger than Mr. Champen.

VF: Okay.

DD: And they—we had—on Stoney, we had Arthur Frazier's store and John Pattern's store and—

LW: In fact, they were right across from each other.

DD: Right across from each other.

??: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: And we went to the local elementary school and were in the high school. And, and that was right next—right behind—

LW: Frazier's.

DD: Arthur Frazier's—

LW: Arthur Frazier's store.

DD: ...store, yeah.

AC: Yeah.

VF: And what school was that?

DD: Hilton Head [overlapping 00:04:08].

VF: Hilton Head. Okay. That was the first school here or one of the first, an early school?

DD: Well, there was one before that.

VF: [affirmative].

AC: Yeah, but they were in different areas.

DD: Yeah.

AC: That was the first elementary school combined in one area for the entire island.

VF: Ah, oh, okay.

AC: Yeah.

DD: And I remember growing up, and my brother—my older brothers would go hunting.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: And I couldn't wait till I got older so I can go with them. And they also went in the, in the what we called the creek, the rivers to catch fish and stuff. And, yeah, I just fell in love with that type of stuff.

VF: Right.

DD: And, and, in fact, and as of today, we—I still do that type of stuff.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: I like to hunt, and I like to fish. And it seems like back then, we knew just about everybody on the island on a first-name basis.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: And then all of a sudden, somebody let the secret out. And it got a little bit more complicated. And yeah, but we also went down to—in the Chaplin area they had Singleton Beach.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: You know? And a lot of the time what they call motorcades would come from Savannah, especially on the weekends, and everybody local would go down there and, and have, you know—do their dancing and partying. But it was a, it was a stressful time.

VF: So were there any big, big acts that came down there to that particular place to perform or any—

AC: Yeah. There was a couple down on Bradley Beach once. It was Ike and Tina Turner had their review here.

VF: Ah.

DD: Yeah.

AC: Ray Charles came here once at the same pavilion.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Brother Ike came.

VF: Oh.

AC: Yeah. So that, that was when after Ray Charles came and Ike and Tina, that's when I departed and went—I went into service.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: And went to California. But, you know, growing up, even like before the bridge, believe it or not, we used to—there was no, no lights here. And we had everything was done by kerosene lamp.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: And to get wood, we used to go in the wood—go across to James Island to get wood just so we could heat and cook with.

DD: Yeah.

AC: Yeah. And that was fun because we would, we would go hunting and stuff like that...

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: ...during the time we would go in the woods to kill. You know?

VF: Yeah, that's something. What do you remember, ma'am?

LW: Well, I'm the young girl of the bunch.

DD: Well, yeah.

LW: When, when I came along, Highway 278 was two lanes. We had a drawbridge. And by that time, I did go to the elementary school for my first year, first grade at the school that they mentioned.

VF: Uh-huh [affirmative].

LW: We had a elementary. And I remember the, the two stores being across the street from each other, and I always said one had one side of the street and one had...

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: ...had the other. And I also remember we, we had a supermarket. We had the—

DD: Richardson.

LW: Richardson—

DD: Richardson.

LW: ...Supermarket. And with that supermarket, they at least allowed you if you didn't have the funds, you could run a credit in the store and pay it, you know, within a certain time. We, we had those type of times.

DD: Yeah.

LW: And but one thing I'm noticing that we all fail to mention, Gullah was speaking fluently here.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: And I remember as a child up until maybe the fourth grade, I spoke fluent Gullah. But now you'll never guess that I'm from Hilton Head. And, and, and, and I bring that up essentially to say I remember and I think back often how happy I was. We had fun here.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: We can, we can—we were so creative. We had farming on, on my grandmother's land. You were able to grow rows of corn, all your vegetables. I remember we used to have, what, the farmers to come over and pick tomatoes.

DD: Yeah, the—yeah.

AC: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: They used to—

DD: Bill Taylor had a, a big tomato farm—

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: ...that he farmed most of Hilton Head Plantation.

AC: Yeah.

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: And—

LW: And, and I, I'll tell you, there's nothing like fresh-grown tomatoes...

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: ...the kind you would just wash off and salt, and put—sprinkle that salt and pepper on. Those were the times that we had on Hilton Head, and, and like my uncle mentioned, hunting.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: You were able to hunt on Hilton Head. And, you know, there was plenty wildlife.

DD: Yeah.

LW: You wouldn't dare think about the wildlife that's going around just munching your flowers now. We, you know, I mean, we, we thought venison, you know, that was—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: ...a tasty meal.

DD: Yeah.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah, hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: We did our doves. Remember, you would, you would hunt your doves.

DD: Yeah.

LW: And we would be eating them.

DD: Quails, yeah.

LW: And quails, squirrels. It, it—they weren't—

DD: Yeah.

LW: ...my favorite, but we did things like that, and especially the seafood.

VF: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

LW: Because it was, it was fresh, and you had fishermen really literally everywhere.

DD: Guys would be doing the shrimp boat. They owned shrimp boats. And-

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative]. They own their own shrimp boat.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: It was a—

DD: An oyster factory—

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: ...where the—where some of the ladies would go and shuck the oysters.

LW: And shuck the oysters.

VF: Right.

DD: Yeah.

LW: And let me tell you, I tried that once. It didn't happen. I said I would've starved to death because—

VF: Hard working.

LW: ...they, they—they way they, they, you know, took the head off those shrimps—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: ...just by, like, you, you know, would pull a trigger...

VF: Oh, man.

LW: It would be—

DD: Yeah, yeah.

LW: ...that and shucking those oysters.

DD: Yeah.

LW: It, it was craft. It was a art.

AC: Yep.

LW: I did try, I will say. But I would've starved to death rather than rely on it. But we, we, we would also have baseball games that, you know, certain—because we had different areas—

DD: Yeah.

LW: ...on the island. And I guess they would play against one another.

DD: Yeah, Spanish Well had a team. Chaplin had a team. Hilton—Stoney had a team.

LW: And that was a big Saturday or Sunday event. We would all get together. We would go down to [overlapping 00:11:10]—

VF: Yeah, where would you play? Where would you play?

LW: Well, we—first we would practice in the field because—

DD: Yeah.

LW: ...got, you know—

DD: Yeah.

LW: ...all this land.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: You know, you—my uncle who became a professional—

DD: Yeah.

LW: ...we, we—he would cut the—you remember how you used to cut those rubber balls?

DD: Yeah. [overlapping 00:11:28] ball.

LW: That's how we got your, your viper [overlapping 00:11:28].

DD: Yeah, yeah.

LW: He would cut the—and we would play baseball right in the yard.

DD: Yeah.

LW: That, that was, I mean, a given. We thought we would always be that type of [overlapping 00:11:38].

VF: Yeah. Now, are you Little Stoney, Big Stoney, just Stoney?

LW: We were just Stoney.

DD: Stoney, period.

VF: Okay. Uh-huh [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

LW: There was no separation. We were just known as Stoney.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

??: [overlapping 00:11:48]

VF: So who made the separation? When did that come about?

DD: [overlapping 00:11:50].

LW: That's what we're wondering.

AC: We don't know.

DD: Today is the, today is the first day I ever—

AC: I heard of it.

DD: It was—

AC: And today is really the first day I heard of it. You know, she's talking about the baseball games. We used to play in Chaplin, and believe it or not, at one time, one team was all family members, all first and second cousins—

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: Brothers.

VF: Uh-huh [affirmative].

AC: Yeah.

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

AC: It was him. It was Dan, Bill, and Jack.

DD: Yep. [overlapping 00:12:21].

AC: And it was me and who else? I can't think of—

DD: [overlapping 00:12:27].

AC: ...the rest of them right now. But everybody was very close kin.

DD: Yeah.

VF: Right.

AC: On one team.

DD: Yeah.

LW: But, but we, we would do things like that, and, and also, you know, raise chickens.

VF: Uh-huh [affirmative].

LW: You know, we didn't have to worry about going to the store to find our, our pre-packaged chickens, I mean, your, your—what would you, you say, your home-raised, your---

DD: You had—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: ...home-grown stuff.

AC: Real chicken.

LW: Your, your yard chicken—

VF: Yeah.

DD: Yeah.

LW: ...had a wonderful taste.

DD: Yeah. It was—

LW: It doesn't compare to what you find now.

DD: No steroid.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: No steroids. We raised our own hogs.

DD: Yeah.

LW: Remember?

AC: Yeah, we had—

LW: We had our, our own hog pin.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

LW: We—they were—and I remember that. We had—and, and we had outhouses. I remember the outhouses.

DD: Yeah.

LW: That was, that was something else.

DD: Yeah, that, that was... Yeah, them [overlapping 00:13:17].

LW: That—yeah.

DD: Yeah.

LW: That was something else. And...

AC: We used to have to pump our own water out the ground [overlapping 00:13:24].

LW: Had to—

VF: Uh-huh [affirmative].

LW: And, and that water-

AC: Yeah.

LW: ...used to be sweet.

AC: Sweetest water in the world—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: ...and come from the ground, nice and cool.

LW: And cool.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

AC: And—

LW: You didn't have to tell me to drink water. My belling was full...

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Uh-huh [affirmative].

LW: ...with, with water. But and, and we used to be able to go in the fields. You remember the, the raspberries and the blackberries?

AC: Yes.

LW: Because they used to make—

AC: They'd grow. They used—

LW: ...blackberry dumplings.

AC: They grew wild.

DD: Grapes.

LW: Yes.

VF: In the Stoney area?

AC: All over.

VF: All over.

LW: Yes.

VF: Yeah.

LW: Yes.

DD: [overlapping 00:13:52].

AC: Believe it or not—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: ...every, every family had a lot of fruit trees.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: Plums, it grew wild here on the island.

VF: Yes, yes.

AC: Okay?

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: Just like pecans grew wild—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: ...all over the place.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: All that stuff is gone. You know? I mean, like she was telling you, it was nothing like now. The minute springtime hit, blackberries—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: ...everybody—blackberries grew wild.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: And you go walk around, pick blackberries for to make wine—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: ...or to make dumplings.

DD: The dumplings.

LW: Dumplings.

AC: Oh, yeah.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: And, like, our grandmother, Grandmother had a peach tree in her old house that I never used to have to go outside to pick peaches. I used to just push the windows up and, and, and pick fresh, big fresh—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: ...peaches on that tree.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: And Grandmother was—most of us, all of her grandkids, she'd have to chase them away because, remember—

DD: Yeah.

AC: ...Dan, how we used to go to hide. Grandmother would be in the—we'd be in the tree.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: [overlapping 00:14:54].

AC: Grandmother would be fussing at us. She would, she would get her peaches. Well, she would can them.

VF: Right.

AC: The okras and, and tomatoes, she would can all the stuff to have while it would fresh.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: And the one thing I loved about being on Hilton Head, what we grew, my grandmother grew, she would share with other family members. And if she didn't have, and either just friends, one thing, she would share with them because they didn't have something that she grew.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: And visa versa.

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: And hey would share with her.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

AC: You'd go in—you would go in the river and catch fish, shrimp, and all this stuff. Nobody would go lacking. Grandmother would make me carry that stuff and share with, with—Aunt Alice, and her, her nieces and nephews—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: ...with everybody. So we never went lacking for anything.

LW: Hm-hmm, hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: You know?

DD: They say if you kill a hog—

AC: Oh, yeah.

DD: ...everybody got a piece of it.

AC: Everybody got a piece of it.

DD: [overlapping 00:15:54].

AC: If somebody went out and caught a deer—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: ...everybody in the family got a piece of it.

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

AC: So we—that was the one thing: We were a, a community.

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: But in the community, in our area, I would say almost 75% of us, we were all relatives.

LW: Uh-huh [affirmative].

AC: So everybody shared with every. And that was before the bridge. Even after the bridge, we still-

LW: Yeah.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: ...did all that. You know?

DD: Yeah.

AC: But it made a big difference.

VF: Yeah.

AC: Yeah.

VF: So are families still living together now in Stoney, or...?

AC: A lot of us. Her and I live right next door to each other.

VF: Okay.

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Right.

LW: But there—with the change that has come about the island has brought a change among us. We don't get together and do the things that we-

AC: No.

LW: ...used to do anymore. It's like now we're living in the city, "Oh, you were home?" I could live next door to you, you'll never now it, huh?

AC: Yeah. Give you an example: One time she was gone. I didn't know when she came back. "You know, somebody was here looking for you. Where were you at?" "Oh, I was gone out of town." "Oh, okay." You know? And visa versa.

DD: Yeah, yeah.

AC: We left one time, and I came back, and she was looking for me. She said, "You know, a couple days ago I was looking for you. Where were you at?" "I was in California."

DD: Wow.

AC: So—

LW: But, but we used to have that camaraderie, camaraderie. But it, it's like with this—all this change and how fast-paced we've come—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: ...it seem like we've gotten away from that.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: And we've gotten away from that...

VF: If you were to do, any of you, a walking tour of Stoney, what would you point out? Either what is there, used to be there, or a place, maybe not a building, but a place? What would you point out?

LW: Hm.

DD: I would point out, well, where our elementary school was.

LW: Hm-hmm, hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: And, and where Arthur Frazier store was.

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Or still is, but it's not the same anymore.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: And where—

LW: Charlie Simmons' store.

DD: Charlie Simmons' store.

LW: Charlie Simmons used to be Mr. Transportation.

DD: Yep.

VF: I've heard about him, yeah.

LW: Hm-hmm, hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

LW: And, in fact, I used to catch rides with him when I needed to do my shopping for my school clothes.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

LW: I had to get up at 7:00 in the morning.

DD: Yeah.

LW: The bus didn't go more than 25 miles an hour to Savannah. The stores didn't open till 10:00.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: And I had to be on the bus by noon.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: [overlapping 00:18:25] so, so but, Charlie, you needed to get there—

DD: Yeah.

LW: ...then he was the one to take you there.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

AC: Yep. If you had to go to Savannah, that was the man.

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

AC: Because most—a lot of us did not have cars on the island. I know growing up, as a little kid, you could count the number of cars in certain areas.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: Like, in Stoney, there was only two cars. There was Mr. Simmons and Peter Draden [phonetic 00:18:59], only ones had cars.

DD: Yeah.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: Okay? You go in the Chaplin area, Uncle Henry, and Mr. Whitaker, and I think the Grants had a car.

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: You would go in to play golf. What's Mr.—you know, his brother. It was only about three or four cars down in—I think about three or four cars.

DD: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: And in Squire Pope, I think it was only two.

DD: Yeah.

AC: And that was it.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: And, you know, believe it or not, before the bridge, the thing that I loved more than anything, the whites that live on the island, they stayed—most of them stayed in the black community. And everybody got

along with everybody.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: The, the Toomers [phonetic 00:19:49] lived right across the street where the Crazy Crab is right now. The Toomers lived over there. And my grandmother, we used to live right across the street from them. On the corner of Squire Pope and 278, the Hudsons that owned Hudson's Seafood, that's where they lived at. And the rest of the white people only lived right there in Honey Horn. There was nobody else on that island at the time when I was a kid growing.

VF: Wow.

AC: That was it.

DD: Yeah.

LW: But, but it seemed—well, at that time, it seemed like there was more self-sufficiency in the, in the community. Um, it, it, really, if you take a look at our community, it's like we're struggling. We don't have the, like the businesses and, you know, like we used to have that was flourishing. And it, it's just so different.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

LW: Just so different. I mean, that's my opinion.

AC: Hm-hmm [affirmative]. You're right.

VF: So how is, how is like the natural landscape? You—we talked about the different fruit trees. Are they still in the Stoney area? Or are they...?

AC: Very few people—

DD: Yeah.

AC: ...today have—

DD: Not so much, yeah.

AC: ...have fruit trees, one or two. But the, the majority of people don't have fruit trees anymore. Everybody rely on the stores.

DD: Yeah.

AC: It's all gone. You, you couldn't go to a house as a kid growing up where they didn't have peach—

DD: Yeah.

AC: ...peach trees, plum trees, pear trees, persimmons.

LW: Pears.

AC: Yeah, we had pears. Some of the people had grapes.

LW: Figs.

AC: And believe it or not, grapes used to grow wild—

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: ...here on the island.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: I mean, because as a kid, right there by where we live at, there's a, a big oak tree. And right now if you saw the grape vines that go—that was in those trees, they're, they're, they're, from the ground, they're this large—

VF: Wow.

AC: ...going up and spreading all over. Well, as kids, our grandmother used to fuss at us about being in the tree.

DD: Being in the tree.

AC: It, it's—

LW: But those, those are like, like those vineyards. I mean—

DD: Yeah. And we would just grab a lot.

LW: And, yeah.

AC: And it was good. I mean, but they grew wild, you know?

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: You know?

VF: So give me an idea where that is in relationship. What, what—278 where, where—

AC: That's on Squire Pope Lake.

VF: Oh, Squire Pope. Okay.

AC: ...on Squire Pope Road—

VF: Oh, okay.

AC: ...and also on 278 by the Crazy Crab—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: ...you see the oak trees used to wrap all the way around.

VF: Right.

AC: The grape trees all—the grape vine all over the place.

DD: But—

AC: It grew, just grew wild.

DD: But—

VF: And it's—all that's gone now?

DD: No [overlapping 00:22:29].

AC: No, I mean, it, it's still there, but nobody here can really go and pick them [overlapping 00:22:33].

DD: If, if you go down 278 towards Windmill Harbor on the right—

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: ...you'll see a bunch of grapevines; it's the right side of the road.

AC: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: It seem like Hilton Head was the ideal place to grow grapes.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: Yeah.

DD: Because when I bought—I bought some land, and there was a bunch of grapevines on it.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: But I didn't feel like climbing them.

VF: You, you mentioned Gullah, nobody really speaks it any—you don't really speak—

LW: Mm-mm [negative].

VF: Do you hear it on the island?

LW: No.

DD: [overlapping 00:23:05].

LW: Well, I, I have my cousin not, not really speaking fluently.

VF: Right.

AC: No.

LW: My cousin Louise Cohen [phonetic 00:23:11]—

DD: Yeah, Louise Cohen.

LW: ...she, she keeps it alive—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: ...you now, by telling her stories and stuff. But even—I took notice that when they had the commercial for the Gullah Festival, I Am Gullah, but no one's speaking the language. I said, "Well"—

AC: Mm-mm [negative].

LW: ..."could we say a word and then reflect or what, the next person can reflect on it?" I Am Gullah. I am Gullah and no Gullah.

AC: Well, you know, like, growing up, the black teachers and them used to make us speak English correctly. And they made it a point to stop us from speaking Gullah.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

AC: I mean, because we grew up speaking Gullah. Now, me, not so much because my mom lived in Miami. And I would go and spend time in Miami and come back.

LW: That's when I had to get rid of mine—

AC: Yes.

LW: ...when I went to Miami.

AC: So they made us—they made—but the teachers and them made us speak English correctly.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: Now, I can't—I can speak it, but I have to think about it.

VF: Yes.

AC: Now, I can read it.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: Okay? Because I've been practicing reading it and to get it, to be familiar with it when I read it. But today it's really, like she just said, it's, it's-

LW: It's a struggle.

AC: ...it's a lost—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: It's something that's a lost language

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: But growing up, that's all the people spoke.

LW: And if—they were happy. They were happy people.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: Yep.

LW: And they spoke it fluently, and they, they had this—in fact, when I moved to Miami, my girlfriend, because I still kind of was struggling with it, she said, "It used to sound like you're singing because you spoke so, so fast."

AC: Yeah.

LW: Fast. She said, "It sound like you're singing." And I would say "orange juice," and you—I would say "orange juice." She thought I was saying "oysters." You know?

VF: Ah.

LW: It was just that, it was just that—

VF: [overlapping 00:25:13].

DD: [overlapping 00:25:13].

LW: ...fa—but to me, it wasn't fast.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

LW: And I remember feeling like I was, you know, as, as I had to concentrate because it was a misunderstood language just like, like any form of language you would hear. You'd just have to listen carefully to understand what the person is saying if you really wanted to listen. But it was so misunderstood. It was thought to be ignorant.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: Yep.

LW: But we were self-sufficient people, and we were able—this was a island. And as I would learn over my years to, to, you know, respect it, you—we were a free land. So we made it a point of, of being self-sufficient. We created our own language.

DD: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: We had to, we had to communicate. So I thought that was quite smart of my ancestors—

DD: Yeah.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: ...to be able to continue to function—

DD: Yeah.

LW: ...with the self-sufficient way that they were. And I remember my heart ached that I couldn't speak that language because I remember how happy I was.

DD: Yeah.

LW: And then I started sounding like what's, what's the actress, Betty—I used to watch Betty Davis. I think I watched Betty Davis so hard until I got her spirit. You remember when they used to say "Betty Davis eyes"?

DD: Yeah.

LW: Because I said I was determined this, this language that was such a—had such a, a, a form to people, I had to get rid of it.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: And people thought I was from New York, and I've never been, never set foot in New York, but I had to get rid of it. So I can only say that's, that's what I miss so dearly, that we weren't able to hold onto our heritage more dearly—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: ...to, to receive that respect. I understand that you needed to progress as progression come. And, and now it's, it's being respected, and I lost it.

VF: Yeah.

DD: Yeah, when I, when I first left home, you know, to play baseball—

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: ...we had, we had a time down in Florida with those folks. "I can't understand what he's saying."

AC: They couldn't understand you?

DD: [overlapping 00:27:21]. And they, they didn't ever fool with us.

VF: Now, did you play ball professionally, semi-professionally?

AC: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Professionally.

LW: Hm-hmm, hm-hmm [affirmative].

VF: Okay.

AC: He played for the Cincinnati Reds.

VF: Oh.

LW: He was a third baseman.

DD: Yeah, I was good.

VF: Oh, okay.

DD: Yeah.

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: But, yeah, they—those guys, "I can't understand what you're saying! You talking like you got a mouth full of marbles." And I had to up my [unintelligible 00:27:50].

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: Yeah, you had, you had to, you had to up it.

AC: Yeah.

LW: So, so that said, it seemed like when that change came about, then that's when we really start seeing a change on that island because we were losing who we were.

DD: Yeah.

AC: Yep. We lost our, our identity.

LW: Our identity.

VF: Hm-hmm, hm-hmm [affirmative]. Sometimes we, we speak of, um, making the nets—

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

VF: ...and the baskets. Did anybody in your family ever do any of that?

LW: No. I have a respect for it—

VF: Uh-huh [affirmative].

LW: ...of course.

DD: We seen some people [overlapping 00:28:23].

AC: Uncle Teddy used to be the one.

DD: Yeah, but—

AC: Teddy made nets.

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: He would make cast nets and stuff.

VF: Uh-huh [affirmative].

DD: Linda Brian did it [overlapping 00:28:31].

LW: Lindy Brian.

AC: Yeah, Linda Brian—

LW: Linda Brian and then her husband.

AC: ...also made cast nets—

LW: Hm-hmm, hm-hmm, hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: ...and stuff. And they—

LW: And they were off of Squire Pope Road.

AC: Yeah.

VF: Okay. Uh-huh [affirmative].

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

VF: Is anybody still doing that now on the island?

LW: Again, no.

DD: None of them.

VF: Or at least Stoney area?

AC: There is some people that still do it, but you have to, if you order it, they will make it for you.

VF: Ah.

LW: Here on the island?

AC: Uh-huh [affirmative].

LW: Okay.

DD: Yeah.

LW: Well, that's good to know.

AC: Yeah.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: Believe it or not, Marty Christopher can still make it.

LW: Oh, okay, yeah.

AC: Because his mother also made nets and stuff.

LW: Oh, okay, okay.

AC: Yeah.

DD: That lady in Spanish Well, the—what's her name Huff or whatever his name is.

AC: Who?

DD: Huff. Is it Huff, down there in Spanish Well or—

AC: It might me somebody down in Spanish Well but—

DD: Because that lady goes in the creep. She still go in the creek by herself. And she—

LW: Wow.

DD: Well, she was I don't know if she's still alive.

AC: Wow.

DD: Up until a couple years ago—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: Uh-huh [affirmative]

DD: ...she would and, and then pick oysters, and do whatever she wanted, fish.

AC: Yeah.

DD: Yeah.

LW: And whatever.

DD: Throw the cast down and everything.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: And-

VF: So are people still going to the creek now just independently to, to fish or, or just—

AC: Yeah.

VF: Okay.

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

VF: Yeah.

AC: A lot of the young people today go fishing all over the place.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: Every once in a while, I get a chance to go. I, I'll go out there and go fishing. I still go casting.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: But not that often anymore.

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: I done got up in age, and I hurt more now, so—

LW: And crabbing.

DD: Crabbing.

LW: Remember how we were—

DD: Oh yeah.

LW: ...able to independently go-

DD: Yeah.

LW: ...crab—I could—I have to say, I haven't been crabbing. I, I can do it.

VF: Uh-huh [affirmative].

LW: But since I've been back home, I haven't done it.

DD: Yeah.

AC: Yeah.

VF: Yeah.

DD: That—

LW: But, but that used to be like a ritual.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: Came—

DD: And way back when, they used to, instead of going in a boat—well, they went in the boat too, but they used to walk through the—

AC: The river

DD: ...when the tides was low.

VF: Oh, uh-huh [affirmative].

AC: Yeah.

DD: They used to walk through the water and—

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: ...and see the crabs in the—

AC: We—

DD: They just—they can catch them.

LW: Okay. Exactly.

AC: Big horses, clams.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: All that stuff. And we would—we didn't have no—when we would go fishing, we didn't have no reel and rod. That—we didn't even know what that was. We used to have lines, a hook, two hook lines, sometime three, and, you know, and wait on it. I remember once my cousin Willie and Robert, you interviewed them, Ben Driessen.

VF: Yes, uh-huh [affirmative].

LW: [overlapping 00:30:51].

AC: His older—his two older brother—

VF: Yeah.

AC: ...and myself, we went, "Aye, let's go, let's go fishing." "Oh, okay." And we walked through the river and go down to Jenkins Island. And we saw this—these two white guys. They had this reel and rod. And we sat there and looked at them, said, "Man, look at these guys. They have fancy rigs and got all this stuff." So we walked up there, and we asked the guys, said, "What you guys doing?" "Oh, we're fishing." "Oh." "So what are you guys here for?" "Oh, we come here to fish too." Well, they want to know, "Where's your reel and rod?" "What, what reel and rod?"

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: We broke out our line—

DD: [overlapping 00:31:28].

AC: ...out of our back pocket and went down there and caught some filla crabs [phonetic 00:31:32], came back, and we went fishing. And we caught a bunch of sheepsheads and stuff like this. And those guys was, "We're, we're going home now," says, "You guys caught anything?" Yeah, they caught a couple of stingrays, some dogfish. I mean, that's the simple thing.

DD: Yeah.

AC: And if we got in a boat, it was high tide, we would get in a boat and go casting for shrimp—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: ...and fish, or we'd be out there and pick oysters and, and bring it back.

DD: A lot of times they didn't have motors for the boats, they would row.

AC: Rowboats, yeah.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: So we had—we used—

LW: We definitely, we got plenty of exercise.

DD: Yeah.

AC: But you—I kid you not. Today—I mean, back then, if you had a engine to put in a boat to actually to go out and do that type of stuff—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: ...hey, you a big, you a big man. Most of the time, even crabbing, speaking of catching crabs, we used to actually, we had to set a line out...

DD: Yeah.

AC: ...maybe 200 yards. And they had a boat that used to come from Beaufort. And the bait that we used to have it was they called it bull nose because it, it was from the bull. They would cut off the, the, the nose and stuff like that, the fleshy part, bring it, and have it sawed down to keep it from smelling so bad.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: Even though it still smelled.

DD: Yeah.

AC: But you would get out there and put it on the line at a certain point to set it out, a sinker, and have a buoy. And you would set it up. And then you'd go sit and eat lunch or whatever or go to sleep and come back. One person would row the boat and handle the boat. And the other person would—

DD: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: ...pull the line in...

DD: Pull the line in.

AC: ...and dip the crabs out. And we'd have baskets or either a big tub that we would put the, put the crabs and stuff in.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: And the boat would come from Beaufort every day in the evening time. And he would actually weigh your crabs and, and pay you straight, pay you right then for it.

VF: Wow.

AC: And that's where—I mean, now, she mentioned about shrimping. My stepfather had a shrimp—had his shrimp boat.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: And we used to go out there and it was nothing with when we'd catch the shrimp, sit there and head all the shrimp.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: I, I used head, head shrimp. My wife, from California. And she asked me, says—

LW: Hm.

AC: She went out fishing with us one day, and she said, "I'll help you." And she says, "Can I have a knife? You know, I want to cut the head of the shrimp." "No, honey, that's okay." You know?

VF: Yeah.

AC: All these things we did.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

AC: And we—to us growing up, it was freedom.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: Today they—since the whites have—the white man has come here and the island's grown, they have put restrictions on everything.

VF: Okay.

AC: Okay? The whites have come here. They've overfished the, the ground. They've polluted—from the golf course, they have polluted all the ground water and all the ocean, and half the ocean around us. So

everything's changed. Before, like she said, you could pump your own water, and that water was so good...

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: ...so tasty.

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: And—

DD: But before, most of us who lived on the island back then, when the, the, the mothers didn't go to the hospital to have a baby.

VF: Right.

LW: We had midwives.

DD: We had the midwives.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: And these—in fact, it seemed like all of my mother's kids were delivered by Ms. Hannah Barnwell.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: Exactly.

DD: By Hannah Barnwell.

AC: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

VF: Hannah Barnwell?

DD: Yeah.

LW: Yeah.

DD: Yeah, Tom Barnwell's—

LW: Tom—

DD: ...mother.

LW: Mother.

DD: Yeah.

AC: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: None of them was delivered by Ms. Adrianne Ford?

DD: No [overlapping 00:35:55].

LW: And, and, and med—and medicines, we'd, we'd go out and we'd get our special herbs.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: We, you know, we still had our, you know—

DD: Yeah.

LW: ...ancestors still had our African ways, you know, with us.

DD: Yeah.

VF: Right.

LW: So yeah, we had our special herbs.

DD: Or, and if you had, if you had—if you caught a cold, you would have the tea that you—the weed.

AC: Oh, blackberry molasses.

LW: Black, blackberry molasses.

DD: Black [overlapping 00:36:17] tea.

AC: Yeah.

LW: Yeah.

DD: If you pour a little—

LW: Which I still have, and I wish they would show up.

DD: Pour a little—

VF: I'm, I'm hearing about this tea.

AC: Yeah.

LW: I wish they would show up.

AC: And believe it or not, today they've outlawed it, so we can't use it.

DD: Yeah. But yeah.

LW: [overlapping 00:36:34].

DD: And I was hunting down in [unintelligible 00:36:37] one time. And we, we, we were in this field—

LW: You, you run across it, yeah.

DD: There was this field. And it was just full of that stuff. And those guys from Savannah had a truckload [overlapping 00:36:46].

LW: Okay. You-

AC: [overlapping 00:36:47].

LW: ...could go and buy it in Savannah, but you can't buy it over here. Seriously.

DD: Yeah.

LW: They have a natural food store? And I'll just go right on up there.

AC: Yeah.

VF: In, in closing, what would you each like people to know about Stoney, how it was and what may be a legacy that's how it is? Did anything transfer over through the generations that...?

LW: Well, I would like for it to—if it's only gone away because we've allowed it, it's really on us. For me, for us to bring it back, yes, we can bring it back more in the modern way. But it doesn't need to die out.

DD: Yeah.

LW: I think we need to focus more on fine-tuning it and bringing it back to the, the new transition—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: ...that we have experience.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: But don't let it die out.

VF: Okay.

LW: [overlapping 00:37:44].

DD: And make it a point to, to teach the kids, your kids-

LW: Yes, yes.

DD: ...so they can tell the story when we're not here.

LW: Exactly.

DD: [overlapping 00:37:51].

LW: Just, we've just got to work on reviving it.

VF: So when you say "it," what do you mean by the...?

LW: Just the, the fishing that we—you know, the way we used to—

AC: Yeah.

LW: ...fish.

DD: Yeah.

LW: The, the seagrass-

DD: Yeah.

LW: ...that we—knitting, you, you—what do you call it? The basket weaving.

AC: [overlapping 00:38:07].

DD: Basket weaving and quitting.

LW: Basket weaving, quilting.

DD: Yeah.

LW: I am bringing that back because my, I remember my great-grandmother and, and grandmother—

LW: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: We have—

LW: ...I have been collecting little pieces, and I said, "I'm going to do quilting."

DD: Yeah.

LW: Because I, I still have quilts—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: ...from when they used to make quilts.

VF: Wow.

LW: So that, that is something, and that's another thing that's coming back—

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: ...everywhere else. It was here.

DD: Yeah.

AC: Yeah.

LW: So to bring things back like that, let's have us where we could do our faming again.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: So much restriction.

DD: Yeah.

LW: Yeah. And they, they're, they're trying to do it a little. Even Sea Pines [phonetic 00:38:45] has a little area.

DD: Yeah, that you could farm, yeah.

LW: Yeah. And, you know, there's—and there's certain people that still do grow, grow their greens if you want to, you know, get fresh-grown here on the island. But everybody used to have something.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

AC: Yeah.

DD: Yeah.

LW: Everyone used to have something.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

LW: But just not make it so commercialized

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

LW: Because even, even some white people that I've heard remember how we used to have big fun on Singleton Beach.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

LW: That's gone now. All you see is the big, massive houses there.

DD: Yeah.

LW: But we would get together on Sunday, and we would have dancing. And they had, what, three, three or four different little clubs there.

DD: Clubs, yeah.

AC: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

LW: And they would come by the busload.

VF: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

DD: Yeah.

LW: And, but they say it's not like it used to be. Yes, it's a lot of people here now, but everybody's—it's

just too commercialized.

DD: Yeah.

LW: It's just so commercialized.

VF: Yeah. Anything else you all would like to add?

DD: No.

AC: Nope.

VF: Then we're good?

AC: Nothing.

VF: All righty. Well, I thank you all so very much...

AC: You're welcome.

VF: ...for sharing your stories, so—

LW: [unintelligible 00:39:56].

VF: Thank you.

DD: Amen.

LW: [overlapping 00:39:57].

Murray Christopher

This interview was conducted in conjunction with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) regarding the proposed improvements to a 4.1-mile long section of U.S. Highway 278 between Bluffton and Hilton Head Island, from Moss Creek Drive to Squire Pope Road in Beaufort County, South Carolina. The proposed improvements on Hilton Head Island will impact the community of Stoney, where African Americans have owned land since the 1890s. Interviews were conducted with members and descendants of the Stoney community to provide a developmental history of the community, establish its historic geography, and to provide an initial evaluation of the Stoney community's potential as a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) or other potential historical designation for project planning purposes.

This interview was conducted November 4, 2020. Velma Fann, New South Associates, conduced the interview. **We are waiting for the signed release form. This transcription is being submitted for the draft report.**

Velma Fann: These interviews are being held in conjunction with US-278 quarter bridge replacement project. And we're interviewing people on the Hilton Head Island, particularly those with the traditional communities, with an emphasis on Big Stoney and Little Stoney. Mr. Christopher, do we have your permission to interview you and to use this interview for the project?

VF: Okay. Do we have your permission to interview you and to use this interview for the project?

Murray Christopher: Yes.

VF: Thank you. So today is November the 4th, 2020. Sir, would you say and spell your name for us, please?

MC: Murray, M-U-R-R-A-Y, Christopher, C-H-R-I-S-T-O-P-H-E-R.

VF: Okay. And there's a little glitch in what I'm hearing. We didn't get the spelling of your first name.

MC: M-U-R-R-A-Y.

VF: Yeah. So do you hear any background? All right. Thank you. Mr. Christopher, could you tell us a little bit about yourself and your connection to the island?

MC: I can trace my family heritage back to 1843, lived on the island most of my life.

VF: And which community are you part of?

MC: Chaplin Community.

VF: Okay. So if we were to travel 50 years or more back in time, I'm not sure how old you may be, but what would the island have looked like?

MC: The development of the island had begun. So you would have found the 278 corridor. And the old communities would be probably pretty much the same with the only difference was that you had single-lane

highway -- two-lane highway instead of four. And there would have been houses on the Stoney community side, which is now the entrance to get me into the Hilton Head just before the cross island turn. But it would be pretty much pretty quiet.

VF: Pretty quiet,?

MC: Pretty quiet, yeah.

VF: So, your family has been here for several generations. How do people make a living, can we say maybe before the bridge, and how are they making a living today?

MC: [inaudible 00:02:52] then was farming, fishing, and whatever you could find out at the... and hunting. That would have been the way things were done in the past. Now, it's mostly tourism related. There are some professional people that are working in professional jobs, government, the nursing medical field, teaching.

VF: Okay. So when we looked at how families live together, did family stay in group patterns do you think in each community? Or did people just spread out or did they stay together in their family groupings?

MC: It would have been what was called family compound, because each family's owned anywhere from 5 to 10 acres or more. So if you were a part of my family, we were all living on that same tract of land, and that's the way it is even today.

VF: Okay. Do people prefer to live or build near roads or waterway or which ones?

MC: They preferred to build away from the water, because they were farming. So there wasn't any houses at all that native families owned on or near the beach until after about 1950s, mid '50s.

VF: And in the communities, where do people gather and socialize? Where were some of the gathering places, and are they still there today?

MC: Mostly at the churches, and they are still active today.

VF: Okay. And what were some longstanding churches there on the island?

MC: The oldest is the historic First African Baptist Church that was established around 1862. Then, near the Mitchelville community is the St. James Baptist Church. And just down the street about a quarter mile from St. James is the Queen Chapel AME Church. And on the North end is the Mount Calvary Baptist Church. And around mid island is the Central Oak Grove Baptist Church. So those are the five churches that were at use during the early days, and they're still here as of today.

VF: Okay. Very good. And how did people move about on the island? Were there a lot of people driving? Was it mostly through the waterways or on foot? Or how did people move about from one community to the next?

MC: Mostly horseback, wagons. There was two or three cars on the island at the time, but it was mostly horses, wagons, and they walked.

VF: Ah. Are there still any of maybe the roads that the native islanders would know about, and new people may not know about the shortcuts?

MC: [inaudible 00:06:21]

VF: Oh, you're breaking up.

MC: ... I said that most of the shortcuts or the road that was used back then have now been paved.

VF: Okay. They're paved roads that people are still using now?

MC: Still using...

VF: Okay. Very good. Sometimes I hear a lot about the waterways about Skull Creek and Broad Creek. Can you tell me about the creeks and why they were important to the communities?

MC: Because of seafood gathering, oysters, fish, shrimp, crabs, whatever came out of those two waterways.

VF: `Very good. And is one of them near the Stoney community?

MC: [inaudible 00:07:11] near Stoney community.

VF: Skull Creek, I understand there were some baptisms taking place there. Are they still doing that?

MC: Not anymore. That's been discontinued because there are commercial areas now that are along Skull Creek, and those areas are being used all throughout the day. Now, most of the churches have their indoor baptismal pools now.

VF: Okay. So when you were growing up, did you visit Stoney at any time? Were you familiar with the community?

MC: Very, very little. My grandfather lived in Stoney community, so we would visit him occasionally.

VF: And his name, sir?

MC: John Blake.

VF: Blake, okay. And what did his house looked like, and what did his community look like?

MC: Well, his house was a single story A-frame with porches surrounding the house, and the community was a farming community.

VF: Okay. All right. Now, they said Stoney had a lot of businesses.

MC: Well, they had a few, not a lot. Just like most of the other areas, whatever the community needed, there was a store to provide the items that they could not get from the creek and waterways, that they couldn't find from their hunting. There were stores that supplied the community with the necessities that they couldn't get anywhere else.

VF: Oh, okay. So what does Stoney give to the community? What made the Stoney community different and important to the island?

MC: Stoney community, it had the consolidated elementary school that was built in 1954 that consolidated all of the neighborhood schools. All of the native islander neighborhoods, they all went to school in the Stoney community. That was the collection point after they closed all of their neighborhood schools.

VF: Okay. That must have been very important then. So everybody came to Stoney to go to school?

MC: Yeah, from grades one through six.

VF: Okay. Alrighty. People mentioned that there may have been a post office, I don't know if that predated you, and some other establishments in the community.

MC: Well, the post office, it's at the corner of Wild Horse. Right now, it's a law office. So the building is still there, and that was right across the street from the elementary school.

VF: Okay. So that building is still there. Okay.

MC: It's still there.

VF: Any other buildings still there from the Stoney community?

MC: There are several stores that were there. The Patterson Store, which is now an upholstery shop, is just down the street from the intersection of Old Wild Horse and 278. And then there's the Frazier Store that's right across the street from the upholstery shop. Those are the two buildings that were a part of that community that still remains to this day. There was another store just as you enter the Hilton Head community from Jenkins Island, which was the Simmons. They had a gas station on one side of the street and a convenience store on the other. So those two buildings are now gone.

VF: When you think of community today, when you think of Hilton head, what is the same as when you were growing up? What has changed?

MC: Well, we've got more traffic. That's probably the biggest change. And we have lost a lot of those old businesses that was in place when I was growing up. Most of those businesses are now closed. That's the big change, because Hilton Head was pretty much a self-contained community. Everything was provided, and you really didn't have to go outside of the community for a whole lot other than to buy clothing, supplies, clothing, and stuff from Savannah. But otherwise everything else was pretty much provided by the community itself.

VF: Right. Were you ever on any of the... I guess the transportation's by water going to Savannah? I hear a lot about Mr. Simmons and-

MC: That kind of predates me.

VF: ... Okay. Yeah. Did your family talk about it at all? What memories did your family leave with you?

MC: Well, I know my dad, he used to go over to Savannah to take some of his crops for sale in Savannah. And a memory that he told us was that they would leave on Saturday, in a sailboat really, and they would sail to Savannah. And they would stay overnight and come back the next day.

VF: Wow. So that was an overnight trip. Okay.

MC: It was an overnight trip.

VF: Okay. Is there anything else you'd like to add about Hilton Head, the communities, and Stoney?

MC: Not really. I think a lot of what's been said and the effect that the road project has on Stoney has really been aired out over the last 20 or 30 years. That's the four-laning of 278. That had a great impact on a lot of those businesses that were in that community, because they were right on the right of way of the two-lane road. So when they four laned, a lot of those businesses was directly affected because they were now closer to the highway. So they weren't used very much. Plus, during the four-laning process, there was a lot of other businesses from people that had moved to the community that were new, modern facilities. So that kind of cut into the foot traffic for the native island businesses.

VF: Do you think it's still important to remember Stoney community?

MC: Oh, yes. Absolutely.

VF: Tell me-

MC: Absolutely.

VF: ... Tell me, why?

MC: Because it's part of the historical part of Hilton Head, just like all of the other native island communities. Those communities were started right at the end of the Civil War. After the Mitchelville project was wound up, most of the people moved to other areas. And those are the areas that they have moved to, the native islanders, that are there now.

VF: And when I look at some of the communities, are they named after people? When I look at Chaplin and [Baygall 00:15:49] and Jonesville-

MC: Well, Chaplin was a part of a plantation in the area that I live in. And in the early 1888, there were seven Black men that bought Chaplin plantation and the Marshlands plantation, which was about 600 acres that was purchased and divided up between those families.

VF: Do the Black families still own pieces of the land or much of the acreage?

MC: Well, some of it, not all of it-

VF: Sure.

MC: ... But they're still on some of it. There are still families that are living on... Well, they didn't sell all of it. Some of them have sold half of it or a part of it. But there are still families that own land. Because like I

said earlier, my great, great, great-grandfather purchased 20 acres in January of 1888, and we are still living on that land today.

VF: Wow, that's something. All right. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

MC: No, that's it.

VF: Okay. I appreciate you.

MC: Alrighty.

VF: Thank you. Have a great day.

MC: All right. You, too. Bye.

VF: Bye-bye.

Louise Cohen

This interview was conducted in conjunction with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) regarding the proposed improvements to a 4.1-mile long section of U.S. Highway 278 between Bluffton and Hilton Head Island, from Moss Creek Drive to Squire Pope Road in Beaufort County, South Carolina. The proposed improvements on Hilton Head Island will impact the community of Stoney, where African Americans have owned land since the 1890s. Interviews were conducted with members and descendants of the Stoney community to provide a developmental history of the community, establish its historic geography, and to provide an initial evaluation of the Stoney community's potential as a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) or other potential historical designation for project planning purposes.

This interview was conducted November 6, 2020. Velma Fann, New South Associates, conduced the interview. **We are waiting for the signed release form. This transcription is being submitted for the draft report.**

Velma Fann: This is Velma Fann with New South Associates, and we are conducting interviews with residents of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, in conjunction with the US 278 corridor bridge replacement project. We wish to interview you about Hilton Head island's traditional communities with an emphasis on Big Stoney and Little Stoney on US 278. Do we have your permission to interview you and to use the interview for this project?

Louise Cohen: Yes, ma'am, you have.

VF: Thank you. Today is November the 6th, 2020. Ma'am, could you please say and spell your name for us?

LC: Okay. My name is Louise, L-O-U-I-S-E, Miller, M-I-L-L-E-R, Cohen, C-O-H-E-N.

VF: Thank you. Can we begin with you telling us a bit about yourself and your connection to the island?

LC: Okay. I am a native of Hilton Head Island. I'm a member of the fifth generation of my family here. My mother and my father are both native islanders, so I have family that I'm connected to on my dad's side and my mother. I'm one of those natives who couldn't leave. I had to stay here now. Now I am the age I am, now I know why. If you had asked me when I was a child, where do I want to go when I grew up, I would tell you New York City.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

LC: Uh-huh (affirmative), yeah, but that wasn't for me. Of course, I had an invitation to go to New York and babysit for my aunt, who promised that she would buy my school clothes for the next school term, but that couldn't happen. Momma, who raised me from nine months old, told me that I couldn't go, and I just asked her why. She said in her Gullah language that [inaudible 00:02:15]. The [inaudible 00:02:19], that's the burglars, was going to break in the house and the burglar would kill me and the children.

VF: She didn't trust New York, huh?

LC: She did not trust New York. See, she was the reason for that, because if that had happened, I probably would have liked New York and probably would want to stay or, after school, I would want to go back. But that didn't happen because I had to be here to be a keeper of this Gullah Geechee culture.

VF: Very true.

LC: Yes, ma'am. When mama died, she had made her will out before she died, and her will stated that when she died I was to pay off any debt she might've had and, after that, everything she owned belonged to me. So I inherit everything she had, and of course with that we are keeping the Gullah culture alive on Hilton Head Island today; all those scriptures and artifacts and stuff that she had and left with me, and the appreciation of what you had and how to share.

LC: Back in the day, when they used to have big farming going here on Hilton Head, when those migrant workers would come to the island to harvest tomato, squash and cucumber, and flowers and stuff like that, those people needed a place to stay, and she had provided that for them. She left all that with me. Of course, growing up I saw what she did and how she did it, and I tell you what, she was just a great woman, because all this was done in my presence.

VF: Wow. That's beautiful.

LC: So here I am today, carrying on.

VF: Well, you sound like a great person to depart information and to share your wisdom. If one person was to travel, let's say maybe 50—60 years back, I don't know how old you might be, but maybe stories your mother may have shared with you, what did the island look like? How did it look physically? Were there settlement patterns? Family groupings? How did the houses... how were they constructed? Things of that nature. Physically, what would we see?

LC: Okay. Well, back in the day, you would see houses, small, like the Gullah Museum that we have at number 12 Georgianna Drive, the houses would be built like that. There were two styles: A-frame, and then there was the kind of slant top. Wasn't all together flat; it would slant so the water could drain off. Both of those style of houses is on the property; is on the Gullah Museum site. That's how those houses used to look back in the day.

LC:

In fact, everybody's house probably start off with being the three rooms: the kitchen, and of course your living room and a bedroom. As children came into the family, then they would add rooms on, and eventually they would have a big house, but mostly everybody house start off small. What I grew up with is I grew up in a five-room house, but same style of the little house that is on Gumtree Road.

LC: Back in the day, that was the style of their houses. People live in clusters because when our ancestors was given the opportunity to purchase land, they purchased acres of land, and of course the land, that was for the children. So, mostly, everybody kind of build around each other. As you travel through Hilton Head Island today and you see Christopher Hill or Dewey Hill, the hill really represented the family

unit. Okay?

VF: Okay.

LC: The cluster of houses was really built on the land that our people purchased.

VF: Oh. Okay.

LC: Yeah. There was farming going on because that's all we had back in the day. You farm the land, and seasonal. In the spring, summer and fall. Then, those other months, then people would go in the creek. They could build their own bateaus, which is a handmade, slat wood-bottom boat that they would take in the creek, and they call them bateaus. If you come to our site, you going to find a bateau.

VF: Ah.

LC: Oh yeah, because the bateau is a special story. The bateau helped our people to escape from a lot of the plantations. Of course, during the Civil War time, when Mitchelville was established, our people escape in those little bateaus and they rowed for many, many miles to get to Hilton Head Island so they could be free.

LC: My great-great-grandparents was among those people. Caesar and Mariah Jones escaped from Rose Hill Plantation by the way of the creek that was behind the plantation. I think it's called Sawmill Creek.

VF: I'm sorry. Say it again. The name of the creek.

LC: Sawmill. Sawmill Creek.

VF: Okay. Uh-huh (affirmative).

LC: Today, when I look back at the distance that they rowed the boat... there were no motors back in the day, they rowed the boat all that way, and it must've been hard, but our people was determined and they had a vision: they wanted to be free.

LC: That was a critical journey for my great-great-grandparents because when he, Caesar Jones, when he decided to escape along with his wife and three children, it was a challenge because one of the children was a toddler between two and three years. She must have felt the uneasiness, and even though she was that young she knew it was something unusual going on. She started to cry, so he decided that he was not going to let this child whining and crying come between him and his family trying to become free.

LC: He ordered his wife, who was Mariah, he said, "Mariah, throw that girl overboard." Thank God that she did not obey her husband. She did not throw that baby overboard. She put that baby in her bosom and the baby's mouth to her chest. That's what muffled the baby's cry, and they made their journey from Rose Hill Plantation to Mitchelville. When I think about that today, had she obeyed her husband, and you know God said, "Wives, obey your husband," had she obeyed her husband, I would not be speaking with you today because that baby is my great-grandmother, Amy June Miller.

VF: Wow.

LC: Yes, ma'am.

VF: The Rose Hill Plantation, was that on the mainland or the island?

LC: The mainland, yes. Yes, the mainland.

VF: Uh-huh (affirmative). Right. [inaudible 00:10:20].

LC: Yes, ma'am. It's before you get to Hilton Head, and if you're coming to Hilton Head, you're going to see Rose Hill Plantation. It's before you get to [Kroger's 00:10:25] and all them. It will be on your left side of the road coming to Hilton Head.

LC: He rowed all that way, and people talk about the tide, that Port Royal Sound tide, how difficult it is, because they say two tides meet and how rough it gets sometime. But God gave him the strength to row that little old boat all that way at all, as strong as the current was. He was determined to be free.

VF: You mentioned how people made their living farming. What were the early occupations then? About the boat, the bateaus, are people still making those now? Is that a lost art?

LC: We got one man that's still making them that I know of, that I knew of now, and that's Mr. Frank Kidd. He is a native of Bluffton, South Carolina.

VF: Uh-huh (affirmative).

LC: Yeah.

VF: That's good. Great. How did people earn a living on the island in the earlier days?

LC: Okay. Well, they earned their living from farming, and that's what I said: the land and the rivers. That's how they made a living because they plant their land. Farming was big on Hilton Head, and there with who had a big amount, acres of land, that farmed their land. Butter beans and watermelon was the big crop, but they grew everything here on Hilton Head, corn, beans, okra, tomatoes, because we had to live, so we live off the land. They grow those produce and that's what they ate over time, and then they would sell.

LC: They would sell their produce, their okras, and they sold those okras by the bushel. They used to fill those bushel baskets up with okras, and they would have... Mr. Charlie Simmons was one of the main transportation guy here on Hilton Head. They would take their horse and wagon and carry their produce down to the water, to the boat, and he would carry it to Savannah, Georgia, or wherever, for it to be sold. They would carry loads and loads of watermelon, and they did it by water because back then they didn't have trucks and stuff on the highway like you have now. You've got fast trucks. Loaded watermelons and stuff. It was different back in their day. They had to use the water.

VF: When we talk about the water, I often hear two creeks mentioned: Skull Creek and Broad Creek.

LC: Right.

VF: Can you tell me what took place on those creeks, why they were important to the community and the island?

LC: Well, I think that was the main waterway that led from Hilton Head to the destination where they was taking the produce and stuff. They would load it here on Hilton Head and unload it across the water. Across Broad Creek, on the other side of the water, would be Buckingham Landing. If they was going to take it to that spot, that's where they would take it, or if they were taking it further on to Savannah.

LC: Now, a lot of times you would find the boys would know more about the water because they would be out there with their granddad and with their dads and all that. The girls was mostly on land with their moms and grandmothers. So the men will probably tell you more. If you talk to Tom Barnwell, Emory Campbell, or some of them, they could tell you more about the water.

VF: Because they were on those bateaus and boats.

LC: Yeah, because they was more out there with their granddad and with their dad.

VF: Uh-huh (affirmative). That makes sense. When we look at the community, what structures are still there? What's still standing? Any praise houses, any stores, any recognizable gathering places?

LC: Well, on Hilton Head, we have destroyed all the praise houses. We have no original praise houses standing. No original place of gathering that's... Well, let me see now. The old fishing camp that was owned by Mr. Charlie Simmons senior, passed on, and then junior, and now [Palmer 00:15:23] probably owns that. I think that's leased it out to... some company got that lease out. I haven't been there, so I don't whether that structure... It is probably still standing, and they probably have renovated it some kind of way, but if it is still standing, that would be an original structure. That's one of our old stomping grounds where we used to... Back then, they had the Piccolo jukebox. That was back in the day. When we would go out, that's where we would go. I think that is still there. In fact, I will probably drive down there and check it out, but I think that structure is still there.

VF: Which community might that be in?

LC: That's Spanish Wells.

VF: Spanish Wells. Uh-huh (affirmative).

LC: That's Spanish Wells. On here where I live is a called Squire Pope. We do have the little blue house. The Gullah Museum is an original building. It was built in 1930 for my Uncle Dewey. His name was William Simmons as well, but we called him Uncle Dewey. Bubba Dewey is what we called him, really, but that's an original house. We just had it restored, but it's still in the same spot where it was built in. We got pictures of it being all rundown and like, "Gosh, I'm almost gone," but then the touch of the master's hand [inaudible 00:17:05].

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative), made it brand new.

LC: Yes, ma'am. Amen. Amen. I know those two houses, those two structures that's original, and I hope I'm not forgetting any other. There is another structure, and that's considered as Chaplin. I think that's Murray Christopher [inaudible 00:17:31] house, and that house is still standing. That's an original building that's still

standing.

VF: Oh, okay. I know there are different names for different communities. How did the names come about, and did people kind of identify with their communities or did they identify as islanders?

LC: Well, we identify as islanders from such and such community. Now, I don't know how the names got established. I don't know, because when I came the names were here.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

LC: Uh-huh (affirmative), so I knew it was named by our people.

VF: Right.

LC: Uh-huh (affirmative). We are all native islanders, but we identify as the area that we live in; the community. We have several communities like Stoney. That's as you come on the island. That's the one that they're trying to destroy. Then you have Little Stoney, that's off of the 278, and then you have Squire Pope. Where I live is considered Squire Pope, and then you got all these roads and stuff in and out the communities.

LC: There are several communities in Jonesville, and then from Jonesville, Spanish Well, and people are connected to their community, like the Cohens. I married into that family. They're connected with Jonesville, but Jonesville, that name actually originated from my great-great-grandfather who bought over 100-and-some acres in that community. The community is named after him: Jonesville.

VF: Wow.

LC: Yeah. Then, as you go through Jonesville then you come to Spanish Wells and then they're a different community in Spanish Wells. [inaudible 00:19:33], but that whole chunk of land in there, that's Spanish Wells community. Then, from Spanish Wells, then you got Gardner and then you got Marshland. So you see, all these communities. Then you got Chaplin, and you got Big Hill and Baygall I'm missing one. I can't remember what that... Big Hill, and that's where... my mother is from that area. My great-grandmother lives in that area, and then my grandfather lived in that area. So, you've got all these, and the Fish Haul. Fish Haul, that is in the Baygall community. So, you got all these communities that make up the native island section of the island.

VF: How important was and is Stoney to the native island? We're talking about Stoney.

LC: It is very important. It's very important because Stoney is the gateway to Hilton Head Island. You can't get to Hilton Head any other way, or unless you traveling by boat, but by road you have to come through Stoney. That is the gateway. That is a historic area, and why would people want to tear it up? But that's how they plan to get our land. They're always coming through with, "Well, what we need..." and improvement and all this, but why would you take away a historic neighborhood? [Inaudible 00:21:23] that's what make Hilton Head unique. But to us, I guess. The other people, all they see is money; bring more people here. [inaudible 00:21:34] Hilton Head, it's either 5 by 12 or 6 by 12, because I saw both figures. An

island this small, you want to bring six lanes in here, and talking about how unique it is? Well, you taking away the uniqueness. You destroying it.

VF: Goodness.

LC: With the Black people owning land, as you come on Hilton Head, I guess that must be too good for us. That should not be us. If we were white people, the conversation would never come up. So it is very important because you have to go through this community to get to the other part of Hilton Head that they call Paradise.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative). What does Stoney offer the community? What was in Stoney?

LC: Well, in Stoney, we had stores. We had community stores. In all our community, there was stores. When you get off of that bridge and you got... it's a little creek there on both sides. Immediately, when you pass those two little creek [inaudible 00:22:54] with marshes and stuff on both sides, you are immediately into Stoney. Mr. Charlie Simmons, who was Mr. Transportation for Hilton Head Island... you would immediately see Mr. Charlie Simmons' store on... It used to be on the right side of the road as you come onto Hilton Head, and it used to be on the same side where Crazy Crab is, and then... Gosh. Oh, [Big Star 00:23:24]. That used to be the name of that store, was Big Star. Then he moved and built on the other side of that road because he owned the land there. He owned the land.

LC: Now, you also drive a little bit further after you pass Crazy Crab road, there was... Mr. [Kinley Drayton 00:00:23:45] had a little store there. Then, when he died, his son Errol Drayton carried on. We call him [Croaker 00:00:23:54]. We used to say Croaker's Store. If you want smaller items, you could go to Croaker's Store or you could go to Mr. [Starling 00:00:24:03].

LC: Now, Mr. Starling's store, when you say going to Big Star, oh, that was the big-time store because you could find clothes there. Men would go and by their overalls there. You could go there and got shoes and all this stuff. Mr. Charlie was Mr. Transportation, so if you needed a pair of shoes and you happened to go [inaudible 00:24:28] say, "I'm going to Mr. Charlie's store for a pair of shoes," you wear size eights, Mr. Charlie probably was out of that size, he would ask you what size you want, you tell him, and tomorrow or the next day you could go back and pick up your shoes.

VF: Wow.

LC: That was the main store that had the overall things that you could go and buy pieces for the pump or any other thing you need. That was like the big-time store.

VF: Wow.

LC: Yes ma'am. So you really had two stores in Stoney. Then you drove a little bit further, after you get through the first traffic light on the island, there was Arthur Frazier's store. That's the one that's on the attack right now. See, Mr. Charlie's store is no longer there. Croaker's store, the Draytons, are no longer there. The one on the attack now is Arthur Frazier's building, but that's [inaudible 00:25:23] Tressa Govan. Her blue shop, the Gullah... I forgot what Tressa call it. But anyway, her shop is in that building.

LC: That store, when we got the first... this is like cement brick and stuff school, is at the Hilton Head Elementary School where I went to school during my sixth grade time here on the island. Arthur Frazier's store was there, so the kids, in the morning, if you wanted to get something sweet or a soda or something before school, you could run over to the store. I distinctly remember there was certain boys that if you want something, you give them the money, you send them to the store. They would run over to Arthur Frazier's store and run back to the school before school got started. That has a lot of historic values for us. They tore the school down, that's gone, but anyway, Arthur Frazier's building is still there.

VF: What businesses in that now?

LC: Who, Arthur Frazier's store?

VF: Yes. Uh-huh (affirmative).

LC: Well, Arthur Frazier actually had a church there. There was a church there, and then where Tressa Govan... that's her store. She got a little clothing store.

VF: A clothing store?

LC: I just forgot the name that Tressa call it, but it's Gullah Girl Boutique. I think that's the name of it.

VF: Okay.

LC: Gullah Girl Boutique. Yeah.

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative). As they transcribe this interview, how would we spell Tressa, her name, her first and last name?

LC: I think Tressa name is spelled T-R-E-S-S-A. Tressa Govan, G-O-V-A-N.

VF: Okay. Great. Thank you.

LC: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

VF: That building is still there?

LC: That building is still there, and directly across from it is another little store that was owned by [Alec Patterson 00:27:37]. That one is still there, and Willie James Young has his upholstery business in that building. I think that one is on the list to be destroyed. These people are trying to wipe out our history, and why? That Stoney area went from one road, because one time it used to be just one road coming through, and then when the bridge came, then two-lane it, then they four-lane it. Why in the heck do they need more than four lanes? You've got four lanes. If you're going to continue to expand, what you trying to do? We only have but so much land, so are you trying to wipe us out?

LC: Now, I bet if the Crazy Crab was closer to the road, we wouldn't be having this conversation because that's white owned. I guess this is how they think they're going to get rid of us. You know what? Ain't no getting rid of.

VF: When you think about your community, when you look back, what does community mean to you? People may say, "Why all the fuss?"

LC: All the fuss is that we are a people who have gone through so much. Our ancestors on whose shoulder we are standing on, they went through hell and high water, through slavery, in spite of all those hundreds of years not getting paid for their service made everybody else rich, they had nothing, but still they had a desire. They had a vision that one day they're going to be land owners: "This gives me a chance." That chance came when they were free. Even if they had looked back, they couldn't think about earning a penny, all the money that they earned [inaudible 00:29:49] a penny, even a penny that they saved because they didn't get paid. But still they had the desire, "One day I'm going to be able to buy some land," and God was with them. They bought the land, and did just what the word of God said. Proverbs 13:22 say, "A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children."

LC: That's what our people did. That's what the land means to me. I inherit this from my great-grandfather. The land to me that's on Gumtree Road was purchased by my great-grandfather William Simmons. When he left Mitchelville, that was an experience that lasted from 1862 to, I think, 1868. Of course, I can be corrected with the dates, but when they left Mitchelville, when, during the Civil War and the Union Army left Hilton Head, then what? These people were left to themselves on their own, and the Gullah term is [inaudible language 00:31:04]. Okay? You have to look out for yourself.

LC: You know when President Lincoln died, everything was reversed. All those promises about the 40 acres and a mule and all that stuff, we [inaudible 00:31:20] on Hilton Head, we didn't get anything. They didn't get the land nor the mule, not even one. Our people had to work and buy their land. As I read about my great-grandfather, William Simmons, in his deposition he told the story. He saved the money, he got $13 a month from being a soldier. Okay?

VF: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

LC: He saved that money, and the money, when there was a lot allowed to build their houses in Mitchelville, that land wasn't theirs. Even if it was given to them, then it was taken away. So they built their house there, and the plot was big enough for them to plant their little gardens. They'd raise their little produce and stuff, and they sold those things. All that helped them to generate some money that they would have the money to buy their land.

LC: He said in his deposition that he bought 15 acres of land on Gumtree Road at $1 per acre. That land is still in the family today. Well, of course, some have been stolen and stuff like that, taken away from one of my cousins. That's where the little house is. That's the land that was purchased by my great-grandfather after the Civil War.

LC: So for me to inherit what my great-great- and great-grandparents left, it means the world to me. It tells me that they did just what God said. A good man leaving an inheritance to his children's children, that tells me that they were thinking about me long before I got here. Actually, they were making a way for us. They were making provisions for us so we would not have to go through what they went through.

LC: It means the world to me, and there is no price tag on my land, no price tag at all, because I want it to be passed on to the next generation and the next and the next. I have four children, five grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. I want my land to be here so their children and their children's children will be able to stand, build, appreciate, sing, shout, dance and whatever on this piece of land that was purchased by their ancestors way back when. That's what it means to me.

VF: Yes. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

LC: Well, I guess that's about it.

VF: Oh, yes. Well, I thank you so much for your time, for your information and for your passion, and for keeping the stories alive.

LC: Okay. Thank you, ma'am. You know what? If you would just email your name and stuff to me, I would greatly appreciate that. Like I said, it's hhistoryteller@aol.com.

VF: Okay.

LC: I thought, when I listened to your message and you said Velma, I thought you were saying Fann, and then I think I read some Fann, so I said, "Wait a minute." This is why I like email, so I can get it right.

VF: So you can get it right.

LC: Yes, ma'am.

VF: I will do that. We're going to end the interview, but if you'll just stay on the line for me, okay?

LC: Okay. Yeah, all right.

VF: All right. Thank you.

LC: Mm-hmm (affirmative). You're welcome.

Pamela Driessen and Family Interview

This interview was conducted in conjunction with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) regarding the proposed improvements to a 4.1-mile long section of U.S. Highway 278 between Bluffton and Hilton Head Island, from Moss Creek Drive to Squire Pope Road in Beaufort County, South Carolina. The proposed improvements on Hilton Head Island will impact the community of Stoney, where African Americans have owned land since the 1890s. Interviews were conducted with members and descendants of the Stoney community to provide a developmental history of the community, establish its historic geography, and to provide an initial evaluation of the Stoney community's potential as a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) or other potential historical designation for project planning purposes.

This interview was conducted March 20, 2020. Velma Fann, New South Associates, conduced the interview. Patrick Sullivan, New South Associates, was also present, adding technical assistance.

Velma Fann: I am Velma Fann with New South Associates and today is March 10, 2020. And I am here with members of the Stoney community. Would you tell me your name please and spell it for us?

Pamela D. Driessen: My name is Pamela Dakota Driessen, P-A-M-E-L-A, D-A-K-O-T-A, D-R-I-E-S-S-E-N.

VF: Okay.

Edna Driessen: My name is Edna Driessen. That's E-D-N-A, D-R-I-E-S-S-E-N.

Benjamin Driessen: My name is Benjamin Driessen. B-E-N-J-A-M-I-N, D-R-I-E-S-S-E-N.

VF: Okay. Thank you for coming.

PD: You're welcome.

VF: We want to find out a little bit about the Stoney community and what's important to you all, some of the traditions, some of the important places, whether there's a building on there, or maybe it just be someplace in the neighborhood where people have gathered for generations. Something you wouldn't want to lose. Something that says, 'Wow, this is who we are.' So, I guess we want to start by just a little history of the Stoney community. I hear there's a Big Stoney and a Little Stoney. And I'm wondering what the difference may be.

BD: I... Wooh. I really don't, I really don't know the, the difference. Well, I, I think it was just the area because, you know, where we live, we had a last thing off of the island. That was, that was, that was Stoney. That was, that was Stoney. And if I'm not mistaken, the Little Stoney was something on Squire Pope Road. It's been a long time. And I think, I think that would be Little Stoney. And... But they'd never used Little Stoney too much. Just Stoney. That's it. Stoney. And where Little Stoney used to be, well, they said, you don't-, we live in Pope.

VF: Pope. P-O-P-E?

BD: Yeah. That, that was the name of that area, Pope. And then later on they start saying Squire Pope.

And but where we were coming up, it was just Pope. Stoney, Pope, Spanish Wells, you know, whatever. And that, that was, that, that was it. So...

VF: Now, are you a native of this area?

BD: Yes.

VF: And how, may I ask how old you are or how long you've been here?

BD: I've been here, oh, boy, umpteen years. I'm, I'm, believe it or not, I'm 73. [Laughs]

VF: Oh, my goodness.

BD: Yeah. And but I live, I, I lived in Connecticut for 12 years. And I came back in '79. Left in '67. Came back in '79. And, you know, I've been here ever since. So... And I've seen a lot of changes.

VF: I was going to ask you, between '67, you left and when you came back, what was different? What did you see different?

BD: Well, I'll go in, in six-, in '67, you know, the two-lane, was a little two-lane road. And I think 270 was actually 46. It was, it was 46. And, and, as a matter of fact, it didn't have a bridge here. I'm sorry. You have to, you have to date the bridge. The bridge came in about '58.

VF: Oh. '57, '56. Okay.

BD: Yes. I'm sorry.

PD: Came the year I was born.

VF: Ah. Okay.

BD: '56. And, and you know where the two-lane road in, in, in... I'll tell you, the best thing I, I liked about Hilton Head, when, when 278 was 46. And it ended at, what you call this thing? What you call it? Jenkins Island. The road ended, ended there. And that, that was it. And then from there, the ferry took over and took the cars to the mainland.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

BD: And it's, you know, I, I, I'll tell you. I, I love—I'll never forget those things. I mean, those things are like, etched in your memory, you know? So...

VF: Somebody else can jump in. Tell us about Stoney, what you know, what you might remember.

ED: Well, I don't remember that much because I wasn't born and raised on Hilton Head. But when we moved back in 1979, I thought Hilton Head was just country. It was like, this two-lane little road, you know? And I said, oh, wow. What, what have I, what happened to the single from, you know, Connecticut. And it was just, just different. Different. Different. I didn't like it. But I grew to love it. And now I love it. So... But it's just, I love the culture of the island. It was different because I didn't grow up around water, boats, or fishing. And all of this was quite prevalent on the island. You know, you go out in your backyard, you catch

fish, catch crab. You catch, you know, you do all these things. And I thought that was really interesting. I learned a lot. And it's just, it was just a different time. Different type of place. But I love it.

VF: You loved it.

ED: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: I've got a question. How long is this interview going to take?

VF: Oh, maybe 45 minutes. Tell me how much time you have.

PD: I have a lot of time. But the things that I remember will take more than 45 minutes.

VF: Okay. Well, we'll, we'll move it along as quickly as we can.

PD: Well, I guess the question is can we do it at another time? I mean, does, does it have to be today, or can we set it up for another time? Because 45 minutes is not going to do it justice. There's the things—because I was born here.

VF: Okay.

PD: I'm 64 years, or I will be in a few weeks. So, I was born and raised here until I was 22. So, from 1956 to when I was 18, I guess. Because after 18, I left the island and went to school in Orangeburg. I went to South Carolina State University. So, for all intent and purposes, I stayed here for 18 years and then went away to school for four years. I came back and forth like everybody. You know, because two hours away was Orangeburg. And then I got married and left in '78. And from '78 until about, a little over a year ago, I moved back. And so, Ben talked about changes that he's seen. I've seen a whole different way of life—

VF: Share that with us.

PD: ...as soon as I came here.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: The one thing that I absolutely will always [remember] is every Gullah community. is was close-knit. It was, it was beautiful because family lived close together. We shared history. We shared values. We shared traditions. It became a part of who I am today. The values and the teachings and the lessons and the traditions; and the just, just see how our parents make a living with not many opportunities. It's amazing to me that they became who they became. And who they were made me become who I am today. So, 45 minutes is not going to cut it for me. I need a long time to discuss what I saw on Hilton Head when I was a kid before what it became or what it is now.

VF: You mentioned traditions. What were some of the traditions that you grew up with? And are they still being carried out now?

PD: Living off the land.

VF: Okay.

PD: My daddy was a farmer. And a lot of the native islanders, men, they worked, they farmed the land. That's how we lived. I didn't know what a canned good was until I became a teenager, pretty much, because everything that we ate came from what my daddy planted. And one of the other beautiful things that I remembered and loved and would always value is that we shared. If a family didn't have—because first of all, we lived across the field from my grandmother. That was my daddy's mom. And so, we shared everything. If my grandmother didn't have something, then we shared it with her, and vice-versa. And that included everybody that lived in those communities. That's how we, that's how we survived.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: So, you had my daddy who was a farmer, and then you had my uncles and other relatives who were fishermen, or [farmers]. So, we lived off the land and the sea. Some people still do today, but not as much, most people don't make their livelihood now off the land. This is Hilton Head we're talking about. So, I'm talking about Hilton Head in 1956 through when I became 18 years old to what it is now. It's just a whole different, way of life.

VF: Right. Did any of that transcend from any generation? Let me give you an idea. Like, with the shrimping.

PD: Hm-hmm. [affirmative] Yes

VF: Or, or making the sweet grass baskets or the nets, or the berries you may have picked for—

PD: Right. My parents didn't make baskets but everyone picked berries (mostly black) because they were everywhere and we had abundance of peaches, plums, grapes.

VF: ...for, for medicinal purposes, is any of that still alive?

BD: Very little.

PD: There—yeah, very little. But there are some people who still get fish and shrimp from the rivers. But very little. I think one of the, the main reasons for preserving the culture is to try to pass it to the next generation. But somewhere along the line, those traditions, kind of, skipped the generations. And I think one of the reasons it did, was because there, there was a little embarrassment for being who we were when we were growing up. And I'll give you for example. And I didn't even notice it until I went away to school, when I went to South Carolina State University. I don't know if anybody remembers speech class, but you had to go up in front of the class to make a speech or talk. I can remember it just like it was yesterday—okay. So, my sophomore year in my speech class and I had to get up in front of the class. And as soon as I said the first sentence, I heard giggling. From the giggling came, 'She talked funny.' Now, I was still young, but not as young as a six-year-old. I was about 19 or 20 at this point. When someone says, 'She talks funny', I don't hear funny. I hear different. And I hear less than. So, that became almost a complex. And, and to be honest with you, I flunked that class because I could not get up again in front of that class and make another speech. Because if I did, every eyes would be on me. And if I were to look at these, face while I'm giving a speech, I'm hearing, 'She talks funny.' 'She doesn't sound like us.' That means she's not as smart

as I am—I'd never even heard the term dialect until I started traveling. Right? So, I really didn't know we were different until I went away to school. A lot of my classmates were from the cities. So, we were like... I mean, the, the south in itself has this stereotype—people look upon southerners as not being very smart. I don't know if it's so much today. But as soon as a southerner opens his or her their mouth, it's like, we're less than because of the way we talk, or the way we live. It was an eye-opener. So, once I got away, and as soon as and someone asked me where I was from, I panicked. I didn't panic like, oh, my gosh, you know what I mean? It's like, this little voice came back. Because if I said where I was from, then I'm hearing, oh, "She's from the South. She's got this dialect. So, that means she's less than. And so, I didn't start really appreciating, who I am and the way I talk and where I came from until other people started validating my culture, my way of speaking. Because it went from, 'You sound funny' to, 'Oh, that's very colorful.' 'It's very interesting.' But those weren't people that were from this area. Those were other people who . And I think it-, that started when the whole preserving the Gullah culture, culture started. And then everybody started hearing about it. It was just, it was just... I think it, it came about because of roots. And then there was an interview on 60 Minutes. I don't even remember who it was that did the interview. And it started talking about preserving the Gullah culture. And that's when the whole, I guess, movement to preserve the Gullah culture and appreciate it for the people in this area and the contributions they've made and the traditions that they're trying to hold onto that people started to appreciate.

VF: So, when, when we think about this particular area, when we hone in on, on Stoney—and I do understand what you're saying.

PD: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

VF: Trust me. What do, what do you want to keep? Were there, were there rivers that people were baptized in that they're still being used for that? A lot of times we talk about what used to be.

PD: Right.

VF: With the traditional cultures, we want to know what still is that stemmed from what used to be.

PD: What you-, well, personally, what used to be where we live was behind our property on 278. We had our own little beach.

VF: Okay. Did it have a name? What—give—

PD: No. They never named it.

VF: What's it near? If we could find it on a map, where, where would it be?

PD: It, it's still on where they lived. It's on—

BD: It's behind [unintelligible 00:17:09]

PD: ...278 behind the [unintelligible 00:17:10].

VF: Okay. Okay.

BD: Yeah. We had our own private place.

PD: Right. We had our own beach. But we didn't call it a beach. We called it a water hole. Or, or, or a swimming hole.

VF: Okay.

PD: It's still there, but it's, it's brought up. I mean, there are marshes, there are more marshes there now than beach sand or, you know, the whole, like, the conventional beach, I guess—

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative].

PD: ...for lack of a better term.

ED: And you know what I really miss, if we had to give this up a part of culture is my husband being able to go out and fish, go out on the little dock and fish or whatever. Doesn't even have to be a little dock. What do you call that little thing you sit on to fish, to catch the crab? You know, all of that will be taken away. You know, that's part of the culture that they grow, grew up in.

BD: Yeah.

ED: In the, what they call it, bogging?

BD: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And, yeah. Yeah. Oh, yeah, yeah, I knew, I mean, it's, it'll be lost because, I, you know, I can, I can, when the tide is up, you know, you can have high tide, low tide. When the tide is up I can, I'm cutting my lawn. I can put my fishing pole in the damn bucket and if the pole is laying down, I got a, I got a fish.

VF: Ah. You can still do that today.

BD: Well, now, not, you know, and if you have to, if you have to leave from here, I mean, where am I going to have, where—I would never be able to do that again. Probably that's, it's a once in a lifetime thing.

VF: Are there any particular meeting places where you all say, well, whenever something's getting ready to happen, we're all going to go down to this place, because everybody knows where it is? And that's where we've always started. And—

BD: You mean, now or then?

VF: Now.

ED: Now.

VF: We need to connect the present to the past.

BD: I think that's, that's—

[simultaneously speaking 00:18:42]

BD: Yeah. Because, because, see, long time ago, long time ago, if I'm-, the people, the people that are,

that, that live in the, in the area... You know where the Crazy Crab is at?

VF: Yes. I saw the sign. Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

BD: And, yeah, okay. Then, then across the street, I mean, across from the Crazy Crab used to be, what's the name of that? Used to be the Pelican restaurant. You don't remember that?

ED: [unintelligible 00:19:04]

BD: But it's a, it's a, it's just a piece of land now because I think the, the town bought it. Well, across the road from us used to be a, a black-owned store. And that was the biggest store on the island. I mean, it was like a, you know, that's where everybody congregate on the weekends to buy their stuff and, and all of that. And then, then, and, and, and also, that's where everybody got their information. You know, somebody would, would—if somebody, somebody in our community or where people in Hilton have died, do you know how we got the message across? Somebody would get on a horse and ride to a pope. And then the guy, on pope, he got up on his horse and took it to Spanish Wells. That, that's how you'd gone on. I mean, you know, and to me, I miss [unintelligible 00:19:55]. But it's, it's, it was good interesting.

PD: And, yeah. And the other, the other thing, she talked about a meeting place. All the communities had community stores. They had stores. Because where my brother and sister-in-law live now on 278, right there at—it's gone now. Unfortunately, it's gone.

ED: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: Right? Because Mr. Charlie Simmons owned that store.

VF: Okay.

PD: Everybody heard of Charles—

VF: I've—

PD: ...Simmons.

VF: ...heard of that man, yeah.

PD: Okay.

VF: Just doing my research. Yes.

PD: Right.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: So, he owned that store. Now, he owned two stores. One was actually across the street, right, the first one that he owned.

BD: Yeah. The first, the first store was across the street and he had to move it because the family decide that they was going to do something probably. So, he move across the road where we lived at. And also,

he had a little store in Spanish Wells.

PD: So, right. So, each community had a store.

BD: Yeah.

PD: And we didn't have supermarkets on Hilton Head when I was growing up. We, we actually, Mr. Charlie Simmons had—this man was the—who, who would I compare him to? He was a jack of all trades, okay? So, when my brother was growing up, he had boats. I, I don't know what you call them. But he, he did—before he got his bus. He used to have a bus. That was his, for back, lack of a better term, his taxi service.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: So, before his boss, taxi service happened, he had boats. And he would, these boats used to be for delivery. So, he would go to—

BD: Daufuskie, Buckingham, Jenkins Island. And also, he was a meal carrier. And my dad built boat products. My dad was a meal carrier for him.

PD: Right. So, after, when I was a kid, when Mr. Charlie had the store right there at the head of our road where it's going down. But so, he had the store, the little convenience store. And he sold everything. He sold from clothes to food, gas. He had, he had a gas pump right there where the store is. And so, folks came there and got gas. And it, it was, he had, it, it was like, where you got the news. It was happening in the community. Happened at Mr. Charlie's store because everybody knew everybody. So, with this transportation that Mr. Charlie had, this bus, because my family didn't own a car. So, he provided transportation to Savannah because that was our shopping hub. Because we didn't have department stores on Hilton Head. I mean, Hilton, at the time, it was rural. There wasn't anything there. The only supermarket that happened on Hilton Head, and I don't know when they built it, was, it was red and white at the time. But it was on the south end. And we lived on the north end. And because we didn't have a car, we couldn't drive from where we lived to go to the supermarket on the south end. So, on Saturdays, we would get dressed up. And people dressed up back in the day to go shopping. So—

VF: Not like today—

PD: Right.

VF: ...in their pajamas.

PD: Exactly.

VF: In their paja-, yeah. Okay.

PD: Yeah. So, we would get dressed up and we would get the bus. I mean, you know, get on the bus to go to Savannah to shop. And not only did we shop for food, we shopped for clothes and school supplies and all this kind of stuff. The interesting thing about this transportation that Mr. Charlie had was that he not only transported people, he transported produce, seafood, chickens. Everything was on that bus. And he

stopped on every little, every little nook and cranny until he got to Savannah. So, you had other people on the road waiting for Mr. Charlie to get on this bus and go to Savannah to shop. Because they didn't have supermarkets or department stores either. So, you're looking at Bluffton. He picked up folks from Bluffton, Pritchardville—

BD: Hardeeville.

PD: ...Hardeeville, Levy, those area. And then... Right. And so, he would take us to Savannah to get our supplies. So, and he had this particular spot once he got to Savannah. There was this lady named. Miss Lucy. So, Miss Lucy had a, a, a produce stand. And so, Mr. Charlie would park his bus there and we would disperse from Miss Lucy and we would do our shopping, food, clothes, or whatever. Come back there at a certain time in the afternoon, put our stuff on the bus, go back home. And that was our shopping for that week.

VF: What, what were some of the traditions that the women did? Was quilting a big thing? Was—

PD: My mother didn't quilt.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: What—

VF: Making the baskets. Sometimes I know the men—

PD: Uh-uh. [negative]

VF: ...made baskets.

PD: She didn't do that either.

VF: Okay.

PD: My mother did dabble a little in, during the traditional healing.

VF: Tell us a little bit about that.

PD: I don't know if it was, I don't know what she did before I was born because I'm, I'm the, the, the youngest of 10 kids.

VF: Okay.

PD: My mom had 10 kids. But one of them died when she was very young. So, by the time I, I could understand what the heck was going on—because, again, we didn't have a doctor on Hilton Head. So... Stomachache. I don't know exactly what it was my mama concocted.

BD: I know everything because I was probably about eight.

VF: Are you two related? Are you, you're brother—

PD: He's my brother.

VF: Okay. So, you're older. So, you can jump in, right? Because you know what mama did?

BD: Well, yeah. And, and also, I, I'm going to have to—I've got this guy kind of waiting on me. But I mean, it's getting kind of interesting, but I've got to, I've got to, kind of, kind of go. But, but we, we, we didn't have doctors. We had our own remedy. And believe me, it worked. I mean, it, it worked. And, and, and let me say this, then I got to go. Okay? I, I had a, I have a, I have a stick that went up my-, a splinter. A big splinter that went up in my, in my arm right here. We couldn't get it out. And it was, what mama did, she got okra blossom, big fat bag meat and a, and a, and a penny. And she put it on there and wrapped it. And, and in three days she, she took it off. Preface it came out. I'd never seen it before. But, I mean, I mean, we had our own, we had our own. I mean, we, we never—I, I didn't, I never seen a doctor until I think I was about 25 years old. So, we had, you know, we had everything.

VF: Your baptisms, were they in a particular creek or anything when you all were growing up?

PD: We didn't get baptized in a river.

VF: Okay. Did you have the pool in the church?

ED: Pool?

PD: [Laughs]

VF: Where did you get baptized? Let me ask that.

PD: I didn't.

VF: Okay.

PD: I didn't get baptized.

VF: What are, in the community, do you know that churches had baptisms and where they may have taken place?

ED: Not, we never had any rivers. So, that's the only one—

VF: Mt. Calvary?

PD: Right, right, Mt. Calvary.

BD: You know, I can remember a long time ago, when I was small they used to say, well, we're going to baptize. But I never knew what a baptize meant. Nobody did it in a bucket, in a pool of water. Put the head down there. But I, but I didn't know. I, I, I never, we call-, I'd never been to a baptism.

VF: Okay. Now, the cemeteries, I know they're still some traditional Gullah cemeteries. Are some of those traditions still alive where you would, you would place the, facing a certain way, you'd put certain things on top of the—

PD: No. No.

VF: Maybe the—

PD: And pass the baby across the—

VF: Right, right, right.

PD: ...grave [unintelligible 00:28:19]. No. Uh-uh. [negative]

ED: They never do it, don't do it anymore.

PD: No. But the, the stomachache, my mother made this—it wasn't mint. It was, I just remember it tasted, it was disgusting. It was bitter.

ED: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: And we had, you know, she gave us, I don't know how many, a couple tablespoon or whatever.

ED: It used to be, there used to be a, a, a plant that grow in the ground you call ginseng.

PD: Oh, she did gen-, oh, it was ginseng.

ED: Yeah. It was nasty. You'd put it up. And then she'd got some, and you washed the root because the root was white. You wash it. And then you, you, you chop it up. And then she got some peach tree leaves. Okay? And then if the winter time, if the tree didn't have leaves on it, she'd break the branches off and break it up and put it in there. And Lord have mercy, it was bitter and, and nasty.

VF: So, are the ginseng plants still, still around? Are they being grown? Are they wild?

ED: You know, no because, you know—

PD: [unintelligible 00:29:22]

ED: ...[unintelligible 00:29:22] I can, I can, I can tell you about some, some stuff he's had on there. But it's not more. It don't grow anymore because, you know, everything is all, you know, it's, everything is gone.

PD: Right. And even the herb, Life Everlasting.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: Now, some people still do that, but it's not in this area anymore because of the development. So, you have to go out. But some people still get it. But so, we get, we had that. And then what my mother did for our cough or a cold, especially if you had indigestion, I mean, not indigestion. I'm sorry.

VF: That phlegm that—

PD: Yes.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative] Mucus.

PD: Right. You had to—this is the most disgusting thing I—you had to swallow a tablespoon of castor oil. And my mom put lemon it is to think what it does is make it taste any better. I mean, actually, it's worse

now because you've got this oil and this, kind of, water thing looking. So, it looked like fish scale. When you put lemon juice and ol-, and castor oil, it looks like fish scale. But you had to drink this thing. But trust me, it worked because you, all that stuff came up. Right? One of the things that I admired my mother and the other women that lived on Hilton Head, and not only Stoney, but the other Gullah communities. Because of their limited opportunities they had for work, they'd work at the oyster factories and the crab factories. So, they would—I, I just remember as a kid, my mother going to work in the dark and coming back home in the dark. And the Oyster Factory was where the Crazy Crab is. So, it was, I mean, it wasn't far. It's just that it was hard work.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: And so, they worked in this oyster factory. So, the process is the men would go out in the river and get oysters. And then they would bring it back to the factory, put it on this counter. And then the women had to shuck it. And so, the women shucked the oysters. Put it in these gallon cans. And there's a whole history of who owned the factories and all this kind of stuff, right? That's, that's a whole different story. But that's what my mom and the other women did. And they did this for a while. And so, you're in this, you know, you're in this, this factory where they heat-, I guess they had a heater in there somewhere.

BD: Yeah. They had, they had a little bit for a little bit.

PD: Right. So, you're there all day doing this tedious work of shucking this oyster, putting it in a can. You have to weigh it. And you get paid by the can. I think it's, I don't know, five cents, 10 cents, or whatever. And so, for there, they went to the Crab Factory where, where is it now? Hudson?

BD: Yeah.

PD: I guess it's Hudson Seafood now. So, I don't know if anyone in here has ever picked an oy-, a crab.

Male: Yeah. It, get your fingers out of the way.

PD: It's not only that. It's just the work itself in trying to get that meat from between those crab shells to say it's tedious is an understatement. And so, and then when you finally get to the meat, there's not a lot of meat. So, you have to pick a lot of crab to get a pound in this tin can. Right?

VF: Right.

PD: So, you can imagine what their day was like in both the oyster factory and the crab factory trying to make a living. And that went on for quite some time.

VF: So, if someone would say what, what is still Gullah in Stoney? What has survived? What would we say?

PD: To be honest with you, I, I really can't tell you.

BD: I, I, I couldn't, I couldn't tell you what, what is Gullah anymore.

PD: Not anything tangible.

BD: Yeah.

PD: I—

BD: But—

PD: The—I can only, I can only speak for me.

BD: Yeah.

PD: The values are still there.

BD: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: Now, I know people talk about the Gullah culture and a lot time when people talk about culture, they talk about dancing and eating and—

VF: The language that you mentioned.

PD: ...the language, all that.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: And, you know, they're, they're afraid that the culture is going to go away. Culture, to me, is something that you keep for the rest of your life. Culture to me is the values that my parents instilled in me to become who I am. So, that never, that, that's never going to go away. That's part of the culture that I see it. So, I may come and go, move from one place to the other, but that follows me around for the rest of my life. But I know when they talk about colors, it's, it's the traditional cooking and all this kind of stuff. But I, I, I see this totally different. That's part of it. But the other part is what I just mentioned, is the values as well.

VF: Do you have any traditional holidays that we celebrate in Stoney? Whether it's Emancipation Day, whether, anything like that?

PD: No. No.

ED: Not in Stoney.

PD: Uh-uh. [negative]

ED: Not in Stoney, no.

VF: No. Okay.

BD: Yeah. My, I've got to.

PD: No, they do it as a community.

VF: You need to go, sir?

BD: Yeah. Yeah. Because I—

VF: Thank you so much.

BD: I've got this guy—now, if you want to continue another time, I'd, you know, it, I mean, you haven't heard half of it yet.

VF: Okay. We're going to keep that in mind. I understand you have to leave.

BD: Yeah. I've got—

ED: [unintelligible 00:35:07].

BD: Huh? Yeah. And, and, and one thing I, you know, I'd like to say before I leave, do you know, when we were small and coming up on Hilton Head, you did not see one single toy nowhere at all until December. Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

ED: And then you made them. We made our toys. A lot of your toys, we made them.

BD: Well, we, we made a few of them. But, but, you, you didn't see a toy in this, in the store until December came. Then, then the guys used to bring toys and put them in the windows. Not, no, you'll never see them.

VF: Okay. I see people putting purses on their arms. Does everybody have to leave?

ED: Yeah. We have to because—

PD: What time is it?

VF: And anything you'd like to say in closing?

ED: It's about 2:30.

VF: Anything that, that has survived? Any particular places that are still special or sacred?

PD: I have a few of them [unintelligible 00:35:55] that.

VF: Okay. If you need to go, thank you so very much.

ED: Thank you for having us.

VF: Thank you.

ED: Sorry, I wasn't too interesting. [laughs]

BD: Well, I, one, one of these times if you, if you, if you want to pay me, I'll come back and see you.

VF: [Laughs]

[Laughter]

BD: But I'm, it's very expensive.

VF: We'll keep that in mind. Thank you.

ED: But nice meeting you all. And thank you—

BD: Thank you very much.

VF: Thank you.

BD: All right [unintelligible 00:36:19].

VF: All right.

BD: Still [unintelligible 00:36:20].

ED: Okay. Okay.

Patrick Sullivan: One more question. Where—

BD: Okay.

PS: Where did you go to—where, where was the school that you all went to?

BD: Ooh, boy. Oh, well, that's another, that's—

PD: Yeah. They, they went to—

BD: When I, when I went to school, they, they used to be a, there used to be a school in, in, in, in different, different community.

PS: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

BD: You, you know, Squire Pope?

PS: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

BD: That's, that, I, I went, I started off in the, a little two-room school. And, and by that, by that two-room school being that I went there, it caused me to graduate a year ahead of time.

VF: What was the name of that school? What did you call it?

BD: Didn't even have a name.

VF: Okay. What was it? Just a Squire Pope school?

BD: You know, if you go down Squire Pope Road from 278 and you pass, you'll see this, this, this place that said, that said Hudson Seafood. Not only now, I'm talking about right, right there what once you pass, once you, once you pass the Shell-, not Sheldon. Yeah. That's Sheldon right at—

PD: I have no idea.

BD: The graveyard. The Stoney graveyard.

PD: Yeah. That's—yeah.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

BD: Once you, once you pass that, you go around about an eighth of a mile. And on the right-hand

side, used to be a little two-room school right there.

VF: No longer there?

BD: Oh, gosh.

VF: No longer there.

BD: We wish.

PD: I guess the things you have to look at pictures from the past and present.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: Just to see—

ED: [unintelligible 00:37:41].

VF: The development.

PD: Most things are not there anymore—

VF: They're not there.

PD: ...because—

ED: ...schools.

PD: Yeah.

BD: Yeah. I got, I got—

PD: You know, because kids development area.

VF: Yeah.

BD: ...the neighbor, the school no longer there.

VF: So, I know we talked about—

BD: [unintelligible 00:37:51], I'll let you see it.

ED: All right. [unintelligible 00:37:58].

BD: Somebody got to leave, but...

Male: Thank you. We'll e-mail, I'm going to e-mail you if you don't mind sharing that.

BD: I don't mind at all.

Male: Okay.

PD: Oh, yeah. There's names of all the schools.

BD: Okay. I'll stop by before I—

PD: Okay.

Male: Thank you very much.

VF: All right.

ED: [unintelligible 00:38:11]—

VF: Oh, okay.

ED: ...[unintelligible 00:38:13] about that. Okay?

VF: Okay.

ED: Okay.

Male: Have a good afternoon.

ED: Thank you.

Male: Bye-bye.

VF: So, we, we look back and we try to, to hold on. I know now, as you said, being Gullah is what everybody wants to be—

PD: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

VF: ...even if you're not. [Laughs]

PD: That's right.

VF: Some people may claim it now—

PD: Exactly. And—

VF: ...when before the wouldn't.

PD: I mean, now it's a brand.

VF: Yes.

Male: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

VF: Hm-hmm, hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: You know, just like Hilton Head is a brand. Everybody knows Hilton Head. And Gullah has become a brand. So, I, I, I don't think... I know you were asking if there—and you, you talk about Stoney specifically, but... And I know that, that older gullers-, older Gullah people, the one that are left, and there are quite a bit left on Hilton Head. But, not—I mean, the elders, a lot of elders have passed on, obviously. And again, I was gone from Hilton Head for quite some time. And I left in '78 and just came back recently. And I've

known for my kids, I did not... It wasn't until maybe 10 years ago they first heard the word Gullah in my house. And from some of the meetings that I've gone to, the only people that are at these meetings, you know, talking about preserving the cultures are people my age. There are no young—young people do not attend these meetings.

Male: Uh-uh. [negative]

PD: So... And that was the first question I asked when I went to these meetings. It's like, where are the young people? Because if we're talking about preserving the culture, the people that the traditions and the, the, the culture itself are going to be passed down to, they're not at these meetings. So, where are they? And from what I've seen, they're, I don't think they're that interested because... And like, me, as a parent, I didn't pass it onto my children. And I think because when they started talking about preserving the culture, kids just weren't that interested anymore because they didn't live it. And they didn't see the struggle. As a parent, you don't want your kids to see the struggle. You keep—you, you, you—your, your role as a parent is to make sure they won't go through the struggle. And so, because of that, we really didn't talk about the struggle we went through. And what are you going to tell them now they're 34 years old? I mean, if they're not interested, they're not interested. And a lot of, like me, because of the lack of opportunities there, I guess, after we graduated high school, we left. There wasn't anything... If you weren't interested in, say, for example, the hospitality services, there wasn't much of anything here. And so, I left. A lot of my classmates left. And people just took a different path in life.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: And so, I mean, I, I, I admire everyone who wants to preserve it. But I think it's lost on the generations.

VF: Are there any landmarks, any, any places, any that you just say, wow, when you think of this, I think of Stoney because such and such is here?

PD: Uh-uh. [negative] Because Stoney was mostly-, I mean, you talk about buildings and, and things like that. But it wasn't like that on Stoney. Stoney was just family residences.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: I mean, the only thing, like I said, it's gone now that would have been something to hold onto was Mr. Charlie's store. But the family, you know, they got rid of it.

VF: Any picnic places? Well, you mentioned the beach.

PD: Uh-uh. [negative]

VF: Nothing like that?

PD: No. The beach, I mean, that was like, our own beach, you know—

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: ...from the, us and the neighborhood kids. We were in that swimming hole.

VF: Churches or schools that still standing, anything?

PD: We didn't have any churches in Stoney. The nearest church was in, on Squire Pope, our pope, as we called it there, was Calvary. And my parents went to First African Baptist Church, and that's on Beach City Road. So, that's another community.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: So, there weren't—no. There were no churches in Stoney. There was just family housing.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: You know, family, where we lived. Because Stoney was small. You're looking at only... Our family, the Stewart's, used to be my grandmother's place. His-, her house is gone. That land was sold to the town. So, there wasn't any—no. I mean, and the school.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: I went to-, my brother went to a, a whole different school. I went to Hilton Head Elementary. That's gone.

VF: Right.

PD: That's been torn down. It, it... They actually... It, it became a county government office, I think, or a town. But that's gone. They tore it down.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: So, you don't have that anymore. You still have two stores in, I guess that's north Stoney. If you go down, before you, if you go down 278, before you make that right onto Spanish Wells Road, there are two stores that are still there. It was there when we grew up, when we were growing up. Because we went to school. The school was actually behind one of the stores on the right side of 278. So, those two stores are still there.

VF: Any old fishing holes still around? Any places where people say, "You drop your line here, you're going to catch something." or...?

PD: Uh-uh. [negative] No. No. Because Stoney... Because, you know, you have two areas that they call Stoney; Big Stoney and Little Stoney. Where I grew up and the only Stoney that I knew was right there on 278. So, you only have a few families that lived there on, in that part of Stoney. You had us, you had the Stewart's, and then you had the Drayton's who are no longer there. The Stewarts were—see, you had us, the Driessen. With my family, my grandmother... My uncle took over my grandmother's house when she passed away. And you had-, so, you-, and you had the Stewart's, the Drayton's, the Green's. Who else was there? The guy who owned the store on the right-hand side with Mr. Frazier [phonetic 00:46:00]. The other one was Mr. Patterson lives-, I mean, they've, they've since gone.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: Then you had... Oh, I'm sorry. You had my-, there was my uncle that lived in Stoney as well. He lived further down. My daddy's brother. And... Jeez.

VF: What, what were the boundaries of Stoney? What street names, or physical boundaries?

PD: Oh, no. There were no street names. It was just—

VF: It was down the road, down the—

PD: Well, it was, yeah. It was down the road.

VF: Down the road.

PD: You want to go to somebody's house, you go down there passed Mrs. So-and-So house or store and you, you know. There was no GPS then. But no, the, the, they didn't give street names until after I left Hilton Head. And now the streets are roads. Not streets, they're roads.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: And because a lot of the families still live in the same areas. That still happen.

Male: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: So, you've got these little pockets of Hilton Head where family members still reside.

VF: Okay.

PD: But even with that said, it's, it has changed because a lot of-, like, from my-, from, like our property for example on 278, where my brother and sister-in-law live. So, you got their house. And then you got my parents' house. That's still there. My two sisters still live there. And then, this is, this-, the way I'm describing our property is a lot of what these properties have to come, and the make-up of it, the way they look.

Male: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: So, you've got my parents' house. You've got my brother's and their-, his sister-in-law-, and his wife house. And then you have mobile homes on them. But the people who live in these mobile homes are not native islanders. They are our Latinos or Hispanics. They are renting. And so, for the most part, that's the way these Gullah communities have become. It, it's not traditional anymore.

VF: All the families were right there.

PD: Right. It's not like that anymore.

Male: Hm.

PD: Uh-uh. [negative] No. So... Again, it's, it's, it's not, it's not the Hilton Head that I grew up on. It's just, it's an entirely different place.

VF: Okay. Well, I know we have a lot we could discuss. But is there anything you want to say in closing for this particular chapter? About the culture? About if, if we lose Stoney, what we, what we would lose?

PD: I, I don't know.

VF: Is a full—

PD: Yeah. I-, no. It's... You just... I don't know. You, you, I think you're—I'm not the person you would ask because my tie, although the fact that my, I got some family members here, I haven't lived on this island since 1978.

VF: So, who, who might you suggest that we talk to? Who, who would be a good—

PD: That's in Stoney?

VF: Yes, ma'am. Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: The Stewart's are coming.

Male: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative] They are. Yes.

PD: They are the people that you need to talk to.

VF: Okay.

PD: Because they're still here.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative] Okay.

PD: Their mom is still here.

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: Isabel Stewart.

VF: Okay.

PD: So, yeah. I, the, I think those are the people that you all need to talk to.

VF: Okay.

PD: That would give you all a different perspective.

VF: Okay.

Male: Okay.

VF: Well, we appreciate you. We really do.

PD: Sure. I want you to be longer.

VF: Yeah. Thank you.

PD: But, sure. And I would suggest, I mean, people have written books on all that. Actually, Tom Barnwell, Emory Campbell and Carolyn Grant just wrote a book.

VF: I love it. I saw it.

PD: Oh, have you?

VF: Hilton-, Before Bridge.

PD: Right. Before Bridge.

VF: Yes.

Male: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

VF: I specifically asked for that one. It's—

PD: Okay.

VF: ...quite informative.

PD: Yeah. I haven't read it yet. But I've read, I don't know how many of those other books. Emory Campbell, actually, I read his book. He, he wrote a book several years back on Hilton Head, end of tradition. He's another person that—he's, I mean, he—

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: ...doesn't have any connection to Stoney because he lives in Spanish Wells. So, that's another—

VF: Oh, okay.

PD: ...community. But he's a wealth of information—

VF: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

PD: ...about that. The only regret I have is that because I left and... It would have been nice had I gotten a history of Hilton Head and Stoney from my father.

VF: Is he buried on the island here?

PD: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

VF: Which cemetery?

PD: He's in Amelia, Amelia White Cemetery.

VF: Okay.

PD: That's our family cemetery. Although it's... That has changed even because the, the county owns

the perimeter of the prop-, of the, the graveyard or the cemetery. And I guess that's when recent, I didn't know anything about it until one Saturday we went to clean it up. And we saw all these flags. And it's... That's changed.

Male: Hm.

PD: So...

VF: It's still an active cemetery though. People—

PD: Hm-hmm. [affirmative]

VF: ...are still being buried there?

PD: Yeah. That's where my brother and-, he went today because they have a meeting or something about it. So... Yeah. Anyway. It's been interesting.

VF: All right. Thank you so much.

PD: You're welcome.

Male: Yeah. Thank you. I was, just out of curiosity, so, this is 278—

PD: This is 278 right here.

Male: Yeah.

PD: Right here.

[End of audio]

Palmer Simmons Interview

This interview was conducted in conjunction with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) regarding the proposed improvements to a 4.1-mile long section of U.S. Highway 278 between Bluffton and Hilton Head Island, from Moss Creek Drive to Squire Pope Road in Beaufort County, South Carolina. The proposed improvements on Hilton Head Island will impact the community of Stoney, where African Americans have owned land since the 1890s. Interviews were conducted with members and descendants of the Stoney community to provide a developmental history of the community, establish its historic geography, and to provide an initial evaluation of the Stoney community's potential as a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) or other potential historical designation for project planning purposes.

Velma Fann, New South Associates, conduced the interview. Patrick Sullivan, New South Associates was also present, adding technical assistance.

Velma Fann: I'm Velma Fann with New South Associates, and today is March 10, 2020. And, I am here with Mr. Palmer Simmons. Is that correct?

PS: Palmer Simmons, yes.

VF: Mr. Simmons, would you spell your name for us, please?

PS: It's Palmer, P-A-L-M-E-R, Simmons, S-I-M-M-O-N-S.

VF: Thank you, and welcome. Mr. Simmons, tell us a little bit about your background. Are you a native of this area, and has your, is your family from here or how many generations back?

PS: I am from Hilton Head. My family has lived here for well over 100-plus years. My grandfather is historically known as Mr. Transportation here on Hilton Head. My family has been a very intricate part of the growth of Hilton Head, and I'm very thankful for the things that my grandfather, my father all did in their early days and lives here on Hilton Head. My grandfather passed away in 2005 at age 99.6.

VF: Wow.

PS: My dad passed away just in 2016 at 80 years of age, and my family has been, been always active, which brings us to the Stoney area, probably one of a few of the grocery stores that they will call. Back in the day, my grandfather operated in the Stoney area for many a years. You know, at one point, it used to on the eastbound side of the highway where the The Crazy Crab restaurant now is, on that side of the highway. He operated a store there for many years, and later, in the early '50s, '60s, the store moved to the east side of, eastbound side of the highway and operated there until probably the very early '80s. My grandfather maintained that as well. So, my ties to the community came out of my grandfather's service to Hilton Head and the entire depth of the Stoney area. My grandfather's little grocery store and gas station and all those, back then, was known as the Big Star.

VF: The Big Star?

PS: So, it was the original Big Star grocery long before it came along another Big Star, but most of the

people knew my grandfather as Mr. Charlie. You know, and so, we've, we've had ties here. That's how I got to know and to have friends and probably family from the Stoney area all of my life. You know, we will do maintain the last piece of property where he operated his grocery, grocery and gas station there. So, we've had ties to the community there for quite some time.

VF: We hear of Big Stoney, Little Stoney, and then Stoney. What's the delineation? When did that come about? Where are the boundaries?

PS: To the best of my knowledge, it says I'm from Spanish Wells. I didn't actually grow up in the Stoney area, but I think Stoney is just the area along 278. And once you turn off of 278 onto Squire Pope Road and go a ways down, I think that's known as Little Stoney. And once you go beyond that into the Squire Pope/ Gum Tree Road area, then you get into the Big Stoney area. And then, it, sort of, loops around and we come to what's known as Big Stoney. Now, it's all probably pretty much labeled historically as Stoney, and I think you get the neighborhood names of the Stoney, Little Stoney and Big Stoney. And, I think that's how the, the native islanders would identify it, you know, at some point, if you're going to Stoney. Little Stoney, where? You know—

VF: Right.

PS: ...you tell your mom you're going to Stoney and you're on 278, you end up down in Gum Tree, you could be in some trouble.

VF: Oh, okay.

PS: So, I think that to be able to identify exactly where you were going through neighborhood communications, you know, is how it probably came about. That's my take on it.

VF: Okay. Now, your grandfather is from Stoney. I'll just say Stoney. Did you grow up around him? Did you visit him a lot? Were you here as a young child in the community?

PS: Yes. My grandfather, we didn't live in the Stoney area, but we mainly occupied the, the business there. We lived in Spanish Wells. That's where my grandfather lived. Even though, you know, my grandfather spent so many hours at his business there, you'd probably think that he lived there, but he spent lots of hours in his business. I mean, he was, I mean, anyone who lived over there, you know, could tell you. Most people could tell you that, you know, the man just didn't stop. I mean, he was a workaholic. He spent many hours at his store there from, from early on. I mean, you would be able to find him there, you know, almost any time. But, my family literally grew up in the Spanish Wells area; however, you know, we spent lots of hours, lots of time—

VF: Right.

PS: ...you know, in the Stoney area.

VF: What did it look like as you were growing up?

PS: Not like this. Definitely a lot more area to roam, a lot more area to just be free. I mean, you know,

we are people that like space. We don't, we don't like close areas, and, you know, development has really put a squeeze on the native communities. We are still fortunate that we can still breathe a little bit still being here, but our breathing room is a lot less these days. And, you know, that brings us to this, this new project, you know. It's, once again, the squeeze is on for the Stoney area and for the people there. You know, it's been from the dirt road to the two-lane and from the two-lane to the four-lane. Now, they're going from the four-lane to the six-lane. So, the people in Stoney, once again, [unintelligible] [00:06:49], and Ms. Isabelle and some of the other recent families, and even myself, you know, we're now faced with the impact, once again. And, this one's probably going to be the most critical because, now, probably, what, 40, maybe 50, however many years ago from the last impact to now, there was probably more places we possibly could move if we had to. And, I do believe that's what's going to be forced for a lot of the, the, the remaining family members there. They'll have to move somewhere. The issue now is where is that going to be and am I going to be compensated fairly or, you know, adequately for the value of what that move is going to be. And, I think that's one of the key elements that now face our community, you know, is the value we're going to receive for having to move. I think that's where we are.

VF: A lot of times, when we think about value, we think about monetary, which is important. But what about that which you can't put a dollar sign on, that is Stoney? Maybe some, some, some of the value of some of the things you've experienced growing up, some of the places that you remember.

PS: Well, I mean, that's, that's, that's, as I say, that's half of the problem, you know, and you can't put a value on the, the, you know, the times you went fishing or crabbing at the store's dock when they did, had their livelihood there. I mean, for years, their family operated shrimping boats from their dock. I mean, that's, that's something that is almost invaluable. You own a shrimping business, and you have your own dock. You do your, you do your thing. That's your business, your land at your backdoor. You know, I mean, those young men and the store family, their dad taught those, those young men how to work. They were working guys, you know. I mean, those guys have been successful in the things they do, and the water still remains to be a part of their livelihood. I know several of the brothers still work, you know, around boat, and it's, it's something that's in their blood. They know how to do it. They're, they're some of the best at it, you know. So, you know, it's, it's, it's, it's going to be difficult to put a value on that. Those kind of things you can't put a value on, but I do believe that the value and monetary values that they receive is going to be important, you know, because I mentioned to the group earlier, if you had to put a monetary, monetary value on those things that you, you know, such as the, the livelihood they have lived, you won't be able to afford the bills.

You know, you can't, you can't, you can't pay enough for that, but you can definitely pay enough for the folks who are going to forced to live a quality of life that they very much so deserve. You know, I mean, Stoney, as we know it now, is about to be gone. It's not happening anymore. Stoney will still be Stoney. The lives are going to be changed forever, you know. I mean, the historic destination of Stoney, Little Stoney, and Big Stoney—

VF: Yeah.

PS: ...they'll still be there.

VF: Right.

PS: But, it's those lives that are going to be impacted as you really need to put the highest value you can on, you know, and how you, and how you do that, that's what needs to happen.

VF: What about—and I know you didn't grow up in the Stoney—but were some of the, the institutions here, the churches maybe or, or the schools, maybe some yearly celebrations when everybody all got together and where they may have met? Are you familiar with anything like that that just says, like a homecoming? If it were to be a homecoming, what would people, where would they come and what would they do?

PS: Well, you know, the Stoney, there were several things in, in my era of knowing of it. I guess I'm, sort of, generational, you know, given my age. You know, the grocery stores and just being able to walk back and forth between. There was my grandfather's store. Then, then, later on, there was a couple of gentlemen, one by the name of John Patterson, another gentleman by the name of Arthur Frazier, who had stores directly across from each other in the Stoney area. And, you know, it was, it was a treat to be able to walk and go to any of those stores for the young people, and then, in the middle of that, there was the Drayton, Mr. McKinley Drayton had a store as well. It became a very intricate part of the Stoney area because then people didn't have to walk as far. So, it gave young people, families, and all, you know, more choices, and, and, of course, there was an elementary school in the Stoney area that most of the young people that, if you didn't go to one of the one-room schools, you went to that elementary school that was in the Stoney area. So, everybody that lived over there eventually came to Stoney for some reason, whether it was school, shopping, or otherwise. You, you, most of Hilton Head came to Stoney.

VF: Okay.

PS: You know, Stoney was that area that people came, you know, for one reason or another. Somehow, somewhere you would be if you lived on Hilton Head. You would have to end up in Stoney somehow. You know, and so, and Stoney had, you know, where you have back in the Little Stoney area, eventually in the early '70s, you had a fishing co-op, which became some industry for the area, and shrimping and fishing has always been a big part of the, the historic neighborhoods and our families. We were just, you know, industrious kind of people. You know, farming was bigger back in the, you know, '40s and '50s.

VF: Right.

PS: There was a lot more farming, but still a lot of fishing as well. So—

VF: Are there still some good fishing spots?

PS: Oh, yeah.

VF: Yeah?

PS: Yeah, yeah. You'd have to pay find where they are.

VF: Oh, my goodness.

PS: Yeah, but it's, you know, I mean, there are a lot of young men who, a lot of guys who still just love it. And, they, they, they'll, you know, fishing is just something they love doing. I mean, I like doing it. I don't get out to do it near as much as I would like to. I've got fishing boat and a crew boat and all, but I just, I don't get out to do it. I mean, it's just, you know—

VF: What were some of the things you may think were handed down? You talked about father to son. What about mother to daughter?

PS: That would be a little difficult for me to say.

VF: Oh, no sisters or nothing like that? Yeah. We did, kind of, keep things to ourselves, us women.

PS: Yeah.

VF: Momma-daughter stuff.

PS: But, I think just the overall, you know, the, the, just the way of life. I mean, how to be independent. You know, a lot of the women over there were very independent women. I mean, they didn't mind working. You know, my grandmother, I can recall probably is one of the hardest working women in the world. As, as industrious and as hard-working as my grandfather was, you know, my grandmother was right there. She could drive a truck. She could lift. She could do it all, you know, and as, no doubt, behind my grandfather, there was a very powerful woman. You know, people, you always hear about Estella Simmons, and I just now had a road to one of our little properties named Estella Lane in her honor. But, people who know my grandfather and know the history know that my grandmother was an intricate part of that, but I think that the, the women really learned how to do lots of things, you know, in the home, out of the home, work ethics. You know, and I think they probably gained it both from the, the, the, women at home because the men were always gone in the, in the, in the rivers or in the fields somewhere. So, mothers and daughters probably were left home most of the time, and most of the men were out working. You know, and I think they taught—You know, most of the, most of the women from this area have careers. I mean, they, they moved onto—And, and, and I, I can't out leave our education—

VF: Right.

PS: ...as uneducated as our grandfathers and grandmothers were. The education that they had you can't buy. You don't buy that education, but you're sending your children off to get an education that they know they didn't have. That was just, wasn't an option. You know, you know, you go somewhere and get an education rather than—However you got to do it or however we have to do it, you going.

VF: Right.

PS: You know?

VF: Do you that still as, as, as part of the community? Are those, is that still a value that's expressed and acted upon?

PS: I would like to think so, but definitely not as prevalent as it, as the push was—

VF: Yes.

PS: ...back 30, 40, 50 years ago. Definitely not as prevalent as just, and it's just so many distractions now. You know, we are faced with those distractions like everybody else, and we do still get our share of people who maintain the, the, the value of an education. I mean, we just can't. There's no way to get around that. Yeah, just no way to get around that.

VF: If you were to get into a truck and take somebody through the community, what would you point to?

PS: Well—

VF: Today.

PS: ...it's, it's really not just a whole lot left that used to be, but there are places you can go and point to, who, who once lived there or what once happened here. There are still a few of those things, and, of course, I have to pitch my family's, the Gullah Heritage tour. I mean, they, they do a very good job because, you know, that family is another very rooted family. We have our cousin, Dr. Emory Campbell, who is one of the premiere historians, period.

VF: Yes, he is.

PS: And thankfully, I can say my cousin is him.

VF: I didn't know that. Yeah.

PS: It's just, you know, he and his family and the Gullah Heritage tours is one of the still things that are very viable for showing those kinds of points that you've made to tell you. I would, I guess I could say proudly take you to my family's property that we now have a restaurant. That's probably there. We've entered into a long-term lease. That's where my grandfather operated his, his ferry boat from.

VF: Okay.

PS: But, we still own that property.

VF: Is that the Stoney or the Spanish Wells?

PS: It's in the Spanish Wells area. It's in the Spanish Wells area. So, and, you know, getting back to the Stoney area, we, you know, for years, another cousin of mine, Mr. Perry, the late Perry White, operated the Gullah, the Gullah Market there for many years. And, it was, you know, one of our premier little thrift shops. It's what you might want to call it, a thrift store.

VF: Right.

PS: You know, people went there for all of their household items. He had, you know, fruits and vegetables. I mean, it thrived for many, many years, and so, it's one of the things in the Stoney area. And, I think he picked that spot, you know, for all the reasons. You know, Stoney was still one of the places that

people came. It was still the spot that you had to come through to come to Hilton Head. So—

VF: It was because it's a strategic location?

PS: Yeah.

VF: Right.

PS: The location, I mean.

VF: Location, location, location.

PS: Yeah, yeah. I mean, you know, if you want people to see what you have, you know, you, here's what you see. You know, so, Stoney has always been an intricate part to the island. It's, it's, you know, for, for the fact that, now, the first thing you see, the first community you come to, that's one, but, you know, once it, the travel came the other way—

VF: Right.

PS: ...you know, for, for many years. You know, so, Stoney is definitely tied to the entire island. You know, I mean, it's just, it's been a, it's been one of those places that people ended up for one reason or another. I mean, like I said that earlier, it's just you couldn't get around it.

VF: Right. Were there any particular holidays that were special in the community that people just said, you know, we're all going to get together on this day, whether it might be the Fourth of July or Emancipation Day or anything?

PS: I, I, I would have to go to Christmas. You know, tradition is used to be, and most, I think most neighborhoods probably, on either Christmas Day or the day after Christmas, would, would, would ban together in groups and would walk to different family members or different houses in the community. And, you didn't always, you know—And, the folks would welcome you in, and you would have a little bite to eat and a cool something to drink. And, you'd go around to, to the various family houses, and people did that as a community. Matter of fact, my community in Spanish Wells maintained that tradition, probably still do to the day, but, but in Stoney and the other communities, I think Christmas was probably still one of the more enjoyable times. We got together with family, and you would go visit. You know, and, and so, I would have to say Christmas was that time when people were most thankful and appreciative of, you know, all of that, you know, that they had down through the years.

VF: Any, any other special areas, any places maybe where baptisms may have taken place or—

PS: Yeah. Most, most churches are all doing baptism. You have one of the spots in the river where you would go. In Stoney, a lot of the members in, in Stoney were—Of course, First African, I've got to get this going here for you. First African, of course, is the, the oldest Baptist church on Hilton Head. So, from all communities, we have members at First African Baptist Church, and First African would hold their baptism in the marshland area.

VF: Marshland?

PS: Marshland Road area, yeah, or the Garden area. Garden was actually the name of the neighborhood.

VF: Okay.

PS: Yeah. And, we would go into the river, the river there. And, as the island grew, of course, we had expanded into other churches, and the baptisms for Mount Calvary, which is the church that's in Big Stoney actually, their baptism is usually held own at the, at the Hudson, directly across from the church. So—

VF: So, there's a, is it a creek across from the church?

PS: It's a river.

VF: River across from the church? Okay.

PS: I think, and don't let me—I think that's Skull Creek—

VF: Okay.

PS: ...across from Mount Calvary, in front of the Mount Calvary Baptist Church. Skull Creed over in that area.

VF: Okay. And they still baptize there you think?

PS: I think they do, yes.

VF: Oh, okay.

PS: Yeah. I think they do. I would venture to think that the last baptism they did was probably in the river there at Skull Creek.

VF: Wow.

PS: Yes. Yes. First African, we've gotten a little fancy. We have a pool.

VF: Yep.

PS: But, you know, and, and, you can—If a family actually wanted to ask to be baptized in the river, I'm sure they, it would be done.

VF: Yeah.

PS: Yeah. But, Calvary, and they have a pool as well, but they still go to the river.

VF: That's great.

PS: Yeah.

VF: Yeah. How about cemeteries? Any traditional cemeteries in Stoney?

PS: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Stoney has two of the very historic cemeteries, one—And then, maybe is it two? Yeah, two that comes to mind immediately. Of course, Amelia Cemetery—

VF: Right.

PS: ...which was founded and named for Amelia White, who was a very industrious lady who lived in the Stoney area, the Squire Pope area. And then, you have the Talbert Cemetery, and I'm not sure where the name Talbert comes from, but a lot of the people who attend Mount Calvary, those two cemeteries. Amelia White, obviously, is more of a family-named cemetery, and a lot of the family members, such as the stores recent, they all go to Amelia White. And, I don't think any of them go to Talbert, but I'm not sure.

VF: Right.

PS: But, cemeteries definitely very, very, very important, very important historically, and there again, Stoney has two.

VF: Yeah.

PS: They're it, you know.

VF: Any traditions with the burial traditions that are still there, still being used? Any of the societies? I know Odd Fellows were here because Odd Fellow live somewhere on Hilton Head back in the day. In fact, the Masons, but—

PS: Oh, yeah.

VF: ...they were Odd Fellows.

PS: Yeah. Masons still participate if the, the deceased is a Mason brother. They'll still participate. You have, not called, but the ladies are the—

VF: Eastern, I think Eastern Stars.

PS: ...Eastern Stars. They still have them. And then, of course, you come to the, to the Greek organizations as well. But traditionally, you know, funerals are pretty much the church services are more traditional these days. Burials are pretty much—I'd rather get into the standards that you have to meet.

VF: Right.

PS: So, yeah.

VF: Is there anything else? Pat, you got any questions?

Patrick Sullivan: No.

VF: Okay. If, in, in closing, if you wanted to say—If we lose "blank", we lose a lot of Stoney. What, what would, what would you put in the blank?

PS: Difficult question. That is difficult.

VF: Yeah.

PS: You know, as the—

VF: Okay. Well, you can say I will always remember blank about Stoney.

PS: It's just the people.

VF: Okay.

PS: It's the people. It's the, it's what Stoney stood for. Stoney stood for community. Stoney was one of the strongpoints. I mean, like I said, come back to it once again. People liked to come to Stoney from all over. Stoney was a mainstay for a lot of people for a long time because, you know, you had to come to Stoney to get goods and services—

VF: Right.

PS: ...you know, from either my grandfather, the, the Drayton, the Drayton store, the Frazier store, and the Patterson store, even the school, and then later on the Richardson store and the Shell station. All those things came later on, but they all were in Stoney. People had to come to Stoney. So, you know, if you—It's just, I guess, the history of Stoney is probably pretty well documented—

VF: Yeah.

PS: ...I guess when you really start to think about it, and, you know, I would, would hope that you never really lose just the, the, how Stoney stood for everybody. Stoney stood for family. Stoney stood for survival. I mean, you know, so, I would think that would be how I would say it.

VF: Great. Thank you. Are there other people you think we might need to speak with?

PS: Well, I think you talked, I think you spoke with the Driessens [phonetic] [00:27:13].

VF: Yes.

PS: The Driessen family. You know, Ben and Edna, Ben is, you know, those are my friends, and I, I think they have a pretty good grasp for the, some of the history. Ben is a couple days older than I am. You know, so, Ben probably knows a little bit more, and, in my family, they were very close, very close. And, Ben, Edna, and I are, are friends, you know, and Ben has a very good perspective on the history stuff. He, he did a lot more of the more historical things than I did, you know, given those few days that he's older than I am. But, the family is definitely steep there, you know, The Driessen family.

VF: Sounds good. Now, were you here when the bridge came, when the built the bridge in the '50s?

PS: Six. The bridge was built—The first bridge was built in 1956.

VF: Okay.

PS: Yeah. That's the year that I came.

VF: Oh, okay.

PS: Yeah. So, the bridge and I came together.

VF: Came, came together. Okay. All right. We thank you so very much.

PS: You're more than welcome.

VF: Thank you. Have a great day.

PS: All right. You do as well.

Pat: I was just curious. One thing. The Driessens were talking about your grandfather and collecting everybody on the bus and going to Savannah. How long, how long did that take? Would that be an all-day thing?

PS: Like I mentioned to you earlier, my grandfather didn't know time. He just, you know, time didn't matter for him. It's whatever he had to do.

Pat: Yeah.

PS: He would get it done if it took sun up to sun down.

Pat: Really? Yeah.

PS: And, you know, that bus was a primary mode of transportation—

Pat: Yeah.

PS: ...for people. People depended.

Pat: That was huge, yeah.

PS: Yeah. They depended on him for many years, and, and he was the old-school kind of guy, not fancy at all. People would say, "Is this thing going to make it to Savannah?" I mean, my grandfather would put you right on there. They would chug right along, and, you know, they would go and come.

Pat: Yeah.

PS: But, you know, definitely Ben remembers growing up right either when the store was across the street or right in front of his current home. I mean, you know, he, he definitely and my grandfather, he probably more stories about my grandmother than I do. You know, so, but yeah. It's one of the things my grandfather did for many years.

Pat: Yeah. That's a fascinating story. We were reading it. I was reading about it too.

PS: Yeah.

Pat: We were in. We got in yesterday and just, kind of, doing research and stuff. So, pretty, pretty fascinating. Yeah. And then, and, they were talking. I was like, "Wow. That sounds like it took a long time." They said he would stop everywhere.

PS: From here, when, when that bus left Hilton Head, ain't no telling how many stops before he got to Savannah. I mean, people knew him from, from Hilton Head to Savannah because everybody along the

way—

Pat: Yeah.

PS: ...you know, needed that bit of that mode. That was the mode of public transportation at the time.

Pat: Yeah.

PS: You know?

Pat: Yeah. Wow.

PS: So, he was well-known.

Pat: Very interesting.

PS: He was well-known.

VF: Thank you.

PS: Yeah.

Stewart Family Interview

This interview was conducted in conjunction with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) regarding the proposed improvements to a 4.1-mile long section of U.S. Highway 278 between Bluffton and Hilton Head Island, from Moss Creek Drive to Squire Pope Road in Beaufort County, South Carolina. The proposed improvements on Hilton Head Island will impact the community of Stoney, where African Americans have owned land since the 1890s. Interviews were conducted with members and descendants of the Stoney community to provide a developmental history of the community, establish its historic geography, and to provide an initial evaluation of the Stoney community's potential as a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP) or other potential historical designation for project planning purposes.

This interview was conducted on March 10, 2020. Velma Fann, New South Associates, conduced the interview. Patrick Sullivan, New South Associates was also present, adding technical assistance.

Velma Fann: I'm Velma Fann, New South Associates, and today is March the 10th, 2020, and I am here with the Stewart family.

Female Voice: Correct.

VF: Correct. Could each of you say your name, please, and spell it for us?

Sarah Stewart: Sarah Stewart. That's—Sarah is S-A-R-A-H, Stewart, S-T-E-W-A-R-T.

VF: Ma'am?

Isabel Stewart: My name is Isabel Stewart, and I-S-A-B-E-L, S-T-E-W-A-R-T.

John Stewart: My name is John Stewart, and J-O-H-N, S-T-E-W-A-R-T.

VF: All right. Thank you all so much for being here. We're here to remember and to look forward in terms of the community of Stoney. I know some people may have to leave, so I'm going to just ask some broad questions, and if we need to kind of come back later on, we can. So when we talk about Stoney, I hear Big Stoney; I hear Little Stoney; I hear Plain Stoney. Which is it and when—where was the divide and when was the divide? Or is there a divide?

JS: Well, I don't know when it was divided, but I growed up in Big Stoney. That's on the main strip as—coming up as a young kid. And I remember Stoney as a place, as—it's a community of family. Everybody was family. Even the few white folks, like the Hodge, the Toomer [phonetic], Billy Toomer, who we growed up as family together, next door. And Mr. Charlie Simmons who had two stores who served the community taking people—take us over to Savannah, you know, on his bus and stuff like that.

And as, as boys, we used to—we had a laundromat, Richardson, used to go down there. We have to walk to, to Richardson. But Mama used to send us there all the time, and God knows if you forgot something, you have to go back in the hot sun. [Unintelligible] [00:02:27]. And as I came up, we never rode the bus to school, in elementary school, because the elementary school is just like about a quarter of a mile down the road.

VF: And what's the—what was the name of your school?

JS: Hilton Head Elementary.

VF: Ahh, okay.

JS: You know.

VF: Yes.

JS: Yes. And we had several businesses like black owned. Well, it probably was—as I can remember as I was coming up one white business was owned. Stoney community on 278 at that Little Stoney community. And that was Jack Richardson, but we had the black owners like Mr. Charlie Simmons. He had two business on both side. We had Frasier, Arthur Frasier, Mr. John Patterson. And there was another guy, older man.

SS: Driessen [phonetic].

JS: Yeah.

SS: Kelly [unintelligible] [00:03:29] Keely.

JS: Well, Kelly Driessen, he was—I was a young youngster but, but his son Earl Driessen, he had a place, a business gas station. And we had a clinic, a little clinic. We had a small little post office at first. Two and then they had to move it, a bigger post office. And as a kid, you know, coming home from school, you know that the community was safe, you know, safe community, house would be open.

House was so free, the chickens used to be in the house when you would come home. You know, I'm serious. And you—we, we, we walked, walked home, come home, the doors were wide open. Nobody'd be home. You know? [Unintelligible] [00:04:21] Mama would be to the oyster factory, you know, she shuck oysters, you know. Well, you know, even when, when I got old enough, older, because me and my brother, William, we used to earn money by going in the, the fields looking for Coke bottles. Used to—used to—a nickel a bottle.

And boy, we used to hustle, me and my brother, we used to go and hustle, man, go in them woods, come back, go to Mr. Charlie Simmons, sell it, get us some honeybun, you know—honeybuns, sodas, and you could—Aww, man, a dollar took you a long way back then.

VF: Yes, it did.

JS: A long way, you know, and Mr. Charlie, we—matter of fact, we, we used to work for Mr. Charlie, too. Mr. Charlie, we used to pump gas for him, his wife, Ms., Ms. Della [phonetic]—

IS: John, Ms. Stella. Ms. Stella was the wife.

JS: Stella?

IS: First wife.

JS: Yes.

IS: Stella.

JS: Stella? I thought you called her Della.

IS: Della was—

JS: After? Oh, okay. Well—

VF: Ms. Stella was first, and then Ms. Della.

[Crosstalk] [00:05:35]

JS: I remember—

IS: It was Della [unintelligible] [00:05:39].

JS: Well, you know—

IS: [Unintelligible] [00:05:40].

JS: Well, I don't know, but when, when I would come home—

IS: The Della used to work—

JS: You straighten me out..

IS: Ms. Della used to work.

JS: Okay.

IS: I can remember.

JS: Yeah. Ms. Della. And we used to go there and, you know, help her out and, you know, at the store.

IS: [Unintelligible] [00:05:56].

[Crosstalk] [00:05:58]

JS: You, you straightened me out after that. But as I said, Ms. Della, you know, and we used to help her out and, you know, as me and my brother was young boys, clean up and stuff like that. And as we got older, getting older, we was shrimpers community, too. Our dad was—that was our main way of life, shrimp—

[Crosstalk] [00:06:27]

JS: ...shrimpers. That's all we used to do as, heck, me and my brother, we hardly ever used to go to school because Daddy used to have us over at the shrimp boat. That's what we used to do to help the family out. And that's just—we had a big family. Seven boys and one daughter. She was the oldest. She used to kick our butt, keep us—keep us in line. Yeah.

But that, that, that Stoney community, down, was all it—all—you, you, you could name the Greens, start—starting with the Driessen [phonetic], the Stewarts, the Greens, the Drayton, the Driessen.

IS: Simmons.

JS: The Simmons. Then you go on down to—

SS: The Ford.

JS: The Ford, the, the Canicks [phonetic] that used to stay on the—on that road.

SS: Brown.

JS: The Brown. So Stoney community was very big homes, you know, homes, people live right on that road. And, here today it's—that—you don't see that. But three—maybe three houses, and that's Stewarts, [unintelligible] [00:07:53] you got the Driessen, they, they live on it. But—and that's about it. Right where you can see on 278.

VF: On 278.

JS: Yes, yes.

VF: When you were growing up, were there particular areas that people kind of gathered or where was the best—

JS: Well—

VF: ...fishing or where—

JS: It, it was the fishing corp. And, and I [unintelligible] [00:08:17] that's, that's—I think that's right on [unintelligible] [00:08:20] right in between. But we used to call that Squire Pope, but the fishing corp, all the guys, ladies if they ain't got income, down there, head shrimp, makes a few dollars, you know, the family. And then—but a lot of hangout spot used to be where the, the blacks used to go, the Singleton Beach.

VF: Singleton?

JS: Singleton Beach.

VF: Okay.

JS: Yes.

SS: That's not at Stoney.

JS: Yeah, that's not—

VF: It's not at Stoney? Okay.

JS: That's not at Stoney. But that used to be the community where the blacks hang out, go to the beach, you know, people come from Savannah, go to the beach, you know. The Bombay Club, that used to be a club way back and down where the, the nightlife—

SS: We're talking about just the Stoney—

VF: We're trying to, yeah—

JS: Oh, oh, oh.

VF: ...hone, hone in on Stoney.

[Crosstalk] [00:09:13]

JS: Oh, okay.

VF: This is very interesting, but—

JS: Well, you know—

VF: Yeah.

JS: Stoney, I'll give you a whole reflection—

VF: Oh, of the island.

[Crosstalk] [00:09:21]

JS: You know, but Stoney, Stoney we had Earl Driessen. We used to go hang out at Earl Driessen's, shoot pool, listen to him pick a little joint, you know, maybe a few ladies be out there. We'd dance. You know, he had a little food that we would buy and you could buy sandwiches and he had little beers. And then we used to go—

SS: Stewart Paradise.

JS: Stewart, Stewart Paradise.

SS: That's our uncle. He used to—

JS: Oh, matter of fact, yeah. Stewart Paradise, now just like I'm telling my side because Mama didn't used to let me. I was too young to go in this—so that's why I probably didn't really thought about it because I couldn't party in there because I was too young. I used to have to, you know, hear the music. You know, I would go by the window or something like that.

SS: He'd go knock on the door for his sister. I used to be in there, and Mama used to send my brothers there. They used to send him when it was time for me to come home. It was—because it was—it's right across from the house, from her house where it's the palm reader's place now. They would always send my brothers there, knock on the door, and once I'd see somebody come for me, I'd know it was time to come home.

VF: So that building is still standing, but—

SS: It's still—it's—yeah, and you have people stay—people still—is still in that building, yeah.

VF: And you said it's the palm reader's—

SS: The palm—it's the palm—

[Crosstalk] [00:10:42]

VF: Okay.

SS: ...it's the palm reader. It used to be Stewart's Paradise.

VF: Okay.

SS: My uncle used to own that building, him and his family. And then, because, you know, you talking about the fact then you had Arthur's Seafood, which our dad, he owned—he owned a seafood place. We used to sell fresh seafood there. Because they owned, [—we owned like several different shrimp boat because behind our house is deep water.

VF: Okay.

SS: That's where all the, the boats used to come and tie up right there. We used to have to go—because just like John say, he didn't—they didn't hardly go to school because they had to go on the boat. Guess what? I went on the boat one day a week, too. I used to have to go on the shrimp boat, too. We all, which my mother, she lived on the boat basically, because, you know, she—her and my dad, they—that's what they did for a living.

And, you know, we used to catch—they used to catch the fresh seafood—shrimp, fish, crab, or whatever—and—Well, the building is still there, was Arthur's Seafood. Because the sign is still near the—near the house. You can see, you know, it's nothing on it, but the sign is still there at the road where, you know—

JS: [Unintelligible] [00:11:49] because we couldn't take it down because if we take it down, we couldn't put it back, so it's grandfathered. It's grandfathered in.

SS: And, and to piggyback on some of the stuff that John was talking about, like the first magistrate office was in Stoney and it was—you know, we had a white judge there.

[Crosstalk] [00:12:10]

JS: It's right off Cora Lee Lane.

SS: Little health department, the part that we used to go over there and get our little shot. And—

JS: That's 107 Cora Lee Lane, right, Mama?

SS: And the Pine Top, there was another restaurant like—

IS: 108.

SS: ...restaurant/nightclub on 278. It's further down where it was the Pine Top where these—it was a hotel and a nightclub and a restaurant. And we also had the Fairfield Mini Mart—

JS: Right.

SS: ...that—where it was like a business on 278 there, too. Well, the—well, the—the—I mean, well, the building is still there.

VF: Okay.

SS: But, you know, nobody is in there. That's gone.

VF: And that's 278 and what intersection? What's it near?

SS: It's right before you get to the traffic—the second traffic Life on the right-hand side. It's across from—well, it's—which now, it's the—What's that building? I'm talking about the building. It's the health—it's—the building where it's—

JS: Fairfield?

SS: Yeah. What is it now? It's the health of—where you can—emergency doctor or—

JS: There's a sign [crosstalk] [00:13:11] change it to a sign—

SS: Okay. Because that used to be the—when he was talking about the Richardson—

JS: The Richardson.

SS: ...the grocery store—

[Crosstalk] [00:13:21]

SS: ...was this white man that used to own this laundromat, it's—that building is still there.

VF: Okay.

SS: And the second post office is still there, which is—

JS: A lawyer's—

SS: ...an attorney's office right now. That's still there. And when he mentioned John Patterson's store and, and Arthur Frasier's store, those buildings are still there. But, you know, we have where—there now is Will Young Upholstery and—I forgot the name. It's a clothing store. It's, it's a young lady. She owns a clothing store. That building is still there.

VF: Okay.

SS: So, you know, and the old—where the first elementary school was at, that turned into the magistrate office where you went there to pay your fines or whatever.

JS: Driver's license.

SS: Driver's license. And that—and they—

JS: And now it's—they just got it there for the people come out there and play picket ball and tennis.

SS: Yeah.

JS: Basketball court and everything's still there. Yeah.

SS: So—and what else? Because that's—And a Shell station, because it was this white guy that owned a Shell station, which is Parker's now because they—You know, the only thing we know it was the Shell station, but they tore that building down, which is Parker's, Parker's gas station now.

And we also had right next to us, when he was saying that the Toomers—they were like, I mean, they were like just family, because where Crazy Crab is now, it was—because our house is right there next to Crazy Crab—that was the oyster factory where they used to pick oyster, and they—And Mama would shuck tons of oyster there, too. And we used to head shrimp there. It was this white family that literally lived in my parents' house, because John and these guys they, they were really, really close.

It's—one of the sisters was two boys and two girls. They were way younger than me. And my first child, Dewan [phonetic], his—the daughter used to come and she used to say she was babysitting my son. He was a little one, so, you know, it, it was a neighborhood we didn't see white and black, we just didn't, but, you know, those were the good old days. But, you know, now it seem like Stoney just dwindled down to just like he say, well, it's four houses.

Two uncles, their house is on the one side of the road, and my dad and my mother's house and my other uncle on this other side. Those are the only one that you actually see coming onto Hilton Head because the Driessen, their—you really can't see them there on the—on the left-hand side. And you just move on down and you get to see, you know, where people, you know, have lost their property. Don't know how/why, but we know the town has brought a lot of property on Stoney. The town have the majority of property on Stoney right now. So that's, that's Stoney.

IS: Are you going to let me tell the history—

[Crosstalk] [00:16:13]

SS: She have a lot to say.

[Crosstalk] [00:16:19]

IS: ...no more to say because they done take it all from me.

JS: [Unintelligible] [00:16:24].

SS: When you first moved—when you first moved—

VF: Well, when you first came—

SS: When you first moved from Hilton Head.

VF: Now, are you born here?

SS: She was born in Hilton Head. She was born on Wild Horse Road middle of the Squire Pope Road [unintelligible] [00:16:34]—

VF: Oh, well, you were just—

SS: ...Stoney

VF: ...right around the corner then, right.

SS: Right in the circle. So she's been—

IS: Yeah.

SS: ...about 70 years, 65 years on Stoney.

IS: [Unintelligible] [00:16:44].

SS: And she's the oldest person—

VF: Okay.

SS: ...right now that's actually on Stoney.

VF: Well, we're going to turn the—we're going to turn this over to you. And tell us about when you were growing up, what, what—

IS: On Stoney?

VF: Yes, ma'am. What was there, what you did...

IS: Okay. I move on Stoney—I moved on Stoney when I was 18 years old, at the time with my husband also. So [unintelligible] [00:17:09] tell all the story for me.

VF: Well, they had to tell all what about—

IS: You know, one thing I know they didn't tell—

VF: Okay.

IS: ...the story when they was coming out right where the Crazy Crab parking lot behind the fence, my children and the Toomer—well, the Toomer children, we—they used to take the can, where you take the pork and beans and stuff out, Billy Toomer, his children, they liked to be up there. The boys, the whole Stoney boys there, they used to play ball there.

VF: Okay.

JS: You're right.

IS: Remember that?

JS: Yes, yes. Yeah, we used to play ball—

[Crosstalk] [00:17:53]

IS: ...playing ball there. And while they playing ball, Billy and them playing ball, I in the house cooking. And the whole of Stoney—I can't name them now, but every house [unintelligible] [00:18:08] was right there playing ball. And when we'd have them playing ball there, sometime Kathy Toomer—she's still living—sometimes you'd go to Kathy house and you be in Kathy house. They come in my house, they be I my house. All black family. No separation or nothing.

And I used to open oyster, go to work in the morning, come back in the afternoon. I would cook enough to take to work, and Sarah would take the children to school. I mean, to next door to the mama house, grandmamma house. And then we'd go on to school, and after coming go fishing and leave our house to go the Crazy Crab. And you'd go fishing around 3:00, 4:00 o'clock with the tide, you know. And Sarah take care of the house while we gone.

And then we'd come back in the evening time sometimes 11:00 o'clock I in the fish house. I be in the house right now. I'm putting the fish and shrimps, separate them, icing them down. Arthur got to go to bed and rest because he got to carry the boat up the river. And as he going up the river [unintelligible] [00:19:40]. Arthur tell me hold the bow straight on out on our way [unintelligible] [00:19:47] a boat. I'm staying the wheel. I got to keep the boat on that white mark right on that [unintelligible] [00:19:56] until he done do what he's got to do [unintelligible] [00:20:01]. And we go on up there. While's he letting the net overboard, I'm the reel holder.

VF: So you're steering the boat. Wow.

IS: She steer boat, too.

VF: Ahh.

IS: And that's when we were making our living, and when we come from fishing, anybody come along to the dock. [Unintelligible] [00:20:28] when they pull the fish out and do the same thing [unintelligible] [00:20:36]. We was a nice island of people on Stoney, very nice to each other. And to see how Stoney going down, how time how Stoney's going down. There's no family to Stoney no more. No family. We got nobody next door to anybody. Chicory house, Ida house, Bertha house, and my house, in the center That's all. That's all that's standing today. And I the only one really, I the oldest one. Chicory [unintelligible] [00:21:17].

SS: But your—Chicory came after you. You were here way before her.

IS: Yeah. Chicory moved from Philly.

SS: Mrs. [unintelligible] [00:21:26].

IS: [Unintelligible] [00:21:29] her load. She was living in Savannah. And so her home was Hilton Head, but she moved to Savannah, moved back from Savannah, then she built across from me. But I was there from 18 years old to now I'm 80 years old.

VF: Oh, wow. Okay.

IS: Some of the members going, and some staying here. So I picked—shuck oyster. I picked crab. I worked on the minnow farm. I leave from there going to Key West Florida, fish on the border for Key West, Florida. Come back to Hilton Head. Fish on the border back to Hilton Head.

VF: Goodness, goodness.

IS: Me and my children.

VF: And your children.

IS: Hm-hmm [affirmative]. And we stay ahead together [unintelligible] [00:22:24].

VF: That's beautiful.

IS: Stay ahead.

VF: Some of the traditions there. I know there's a cemetery, the Amelia—is it White?

IS: That's a cemetery belonged to my great grandmother.

VF: Okay.

IS: I don't know them, but that was my mama's mama probably [unintelligible] [00:22:47] my great, great grandmamma give for the Stoney people to bury on. Now they don't have piece enough for me to bury on.

VF: We got to save a spot for you.

IS: There's so much in-laws come in.

SS: Families, a lot of families and stuff. Yeah. So that's—and that's a little—that's Little Stoney. That's down from where my brother John, he live, that Stoney.

IS: But I on Big Stoney.

VF: Oh, okay.

IS: And when I get home on Stoney there was horse and wagon. Now they take—take, take—still taking... horse and wagon.

VF: What were some of the, the burial traditions, ma'am, when you were growing up? Did they lay things on the grave? Did they leave—

IS: [Inaudible] [00:23:48].

VF: ...gifts? Hm-hmm [affirmative].

IS: Every day. We're not agreeable, no, sir. You know, they tell me I born—you know, sometime they say that children's born with things, you know. And I [unintelligible] [00:24:03] dead people. And I could see, and up until the day, I most know when something going to happen.

VF: Okay.

IS: I don't go to graveyards. I don't visit the dead. Now, I like the way my husband at Beaufort, [unintelligible] [00:24:23], you can't hear nothing [unintelligible] [00:24:25]. They'll tell you, if you hear something, "Oh, that's a bird." Now you know ain't a bird, but what they going to tell you know that you won't get scared. I don't go to no graveyard at all. Now, I go see my husband grave in Beaufort that's nice and clean. You won't see nothing. [Unintelligible] [00:24:48]. I can't.

VF: Okay. What about baptisms? They said a creek or something? There's a river? Anybody baptized in nearby rivers?

SS: I can tell you some on that, okay, because my church still do that. I'm a member of Mt. Calvary Missionary Baptist Church.

VF: Yes.

SS: And we, we don't have a pool in our church, so what we do, they—we go down to the river. And it's right by Hudson, right there in Hudson. We go and we, we baptize people, you know, little one, big one [unintelligible] [00:25:20]. The youngest one that I think that had baptized that—recently, was my nephew. He got—he was six years old. Him and his friend, six years old, they were baptized there. So we still—we still do it at the—at the river. We go to the river.

VF: Yeah.

SS: Yes, hm-hmm [affirmative]. And that's a tradition that our past pastor, Rev. Benjamin William, he, he was the member of—he was the pastor of our church for 42 years. And he died about three years ago. So we loved going to the river, and with our new pastor, we still do it. Yeah.

And, you know, just the same way my mother was saying about—You were asking the question about burial. I know I have attended one funeral—and this was years and years ago—they said when somebody died was older—it was like a older person that died, they had—the grandchild was a baby, and he said they put, you know, put the baby—hand the baby across, you know, across the graves—

VF: Right. Right.

SS: ...to take the spirit, something. You know, I, I never got into that. But that's what our—you know, that's what they said when, when they did that. But normally when we have a funeral, you know, because nowadays you don't even sit until they, you know, actually put the dirt on, you know, because they'll—they take you away. I mean, I guess if you want to stay, because that's the way it used to be where you could stay, stay until everything is done. But, you know, lately, you don't do it.

IS: [Unintelligible] [00:26:56].

SS: Well, she don't—she don't attend funerals.

VF: She doesn't attend?

SS: She, she went to my dad's funeral a couple years ago. Everybody was shocked. She don't do—had three brothers to die, three of them, and she don't attend funerals.

IS: I can see them at night.

VF: You can see them. Sometimes it's like having a [unintelligible] [00:27:16]. You can see it.

SS: I don't—it just like, I mean, after the first brother died, it was just like, you know, it just come naturally. And I just want to say, you know, in our community, the Stoney community, we—I can remember us, before my parents built the house, we stayed with my grandmother. Her name's Cora Lee Stewart. We stayed with her for a while and with—I think Bill, it was—Was it three of us? Arthur Lee, Alvin, and myself, we stayed there. And loved staying with her. She was the sweetest heart. She—I mean, she was just awesome.

We stayed with her for a while until my mother—until they built the house in, I think it was 1963. And then, you know, it was just like—because, you know, back then my mother—I mean my grandmother and her husband—Never met my—never knew who my grandad was because he died before us, Charles Stewart. He died way before I came along, you know, and he bought that property like on 278, you know, where the road came right straight through the property.

So they, you know, I just feel that property is very sacred, because, you know, my grandparents, they worked so hard for this property. Shuck oysters, picked oysters and did, you know, work in the field to buy this. And that's why it's so sacred to us because, think about it, you don't want to just give up property that any—People sell property every day, but that property means something to us. They had—they [unintelligible] [00:28:46]. They had four sons. Four sons, and I think they had—my, my grandma had a miscarriage. She was a—she was a girl.

IS: Three.

SS: Three? Three miscarriage? Okay. Wake me up. But, you know, you had like my—where my aunt lived there, my grandmother used to live there, and my parents lived then across the street. It was the oldest son, Henry Stewart, and Ben—Benjamin Stewart, they were across the street with their family. And with the name Washington, it was Washington Stewart and his family, Cora Lee Stewart and Arthur Stewart and his. But—and it goes across Squire Pope Road. The property actually go across Squire Pope Road where my brothers, they—two of my brothers, they have houses across, across that road.

So, you know, property—if you have property, you're rich, especially on Hilton Head. I mean, especially on Hilton Head. And you just don't want to see that just, just go, because taxes here, extremely high. But, you know, we'll do whatever we can to keep it in the family. Which we don't want the road to come either, but, you know, we know something's going to be—something's going to happen. We don't know what.

And my mother, her house was—being that—you know, I'm the oldest girl. I had seven brothers. So all the boys, they hung out at my mother house. I'm going to tell you, when I would be at work—before I

retired, I would be at work, and, you know, you'd have these young men that came to—came and say, "Don't you remember me? I used to come to your mother house all the time with your brothers?" Don't remember, I'll say, because it used to be—

VF: So many.

SS: ...so many of them. Because I was the person—Mama and Daddy, they were always on the boat or whatever—I'm the person cook, clean. And I had my little—a cousin that lived in the community, they used to come and help me do my work because I couldn't go nowhere, honestly couldn't go no—couldn't go nowhere. They used to come and help me, you know, do my work so well I can go play with them or do whatever.

But, you know, that community, you miss them. You know, some of them still around. And just like, you know, she was saying the neighbor—you know, just like I say, don't know what happened, but you know, people selling property or losing, you don't know. Because, you know, you don't worry about other people, what happened in—went, went wrong with them. But we know that we are still there. We are still there. Crazy Crabs, our neighbor, my aunt, she's there, and another little family stay in a little home. But, you know, it's just—it's not like it's been. Hilton Head have grown a whole lot, which, it's for better because you got jobs.

VF: Yeah.

SS: Because I didn't have to leave Hilton Head. I had a job that I worked for 25 years and now I retired. I don't have to go—get up to go to work. So, you know, it's, it's better. You know, it have it ups and down. It's just that, you know—and it's the people who make the community- —Hilton Head—I'll say Hilton Head because we don't have too many people. You know, we have businesses, some businesses still on the island.

VF: We had talked with another family, and they began to talk about traditional medicine before the doctors came.

SS: That would be her.

VF: Tell us, ma'am.

IS: I remember having medicine [unintelligible] [00:32:00]—

SS: Like Life Everlasting tea? That would be for if you got—that came to my mind because, you know, if I could find some now—No, my brother did give me some. Which I have some Life Everlasting tea. For flu, you would boil that with lemon. And sometime they would put a little liquor/alcohol in there to sweat—to run that sweat out. You remember that, Mama?

IS: When people done stopped so long, you can't even find anything no more till they get away from. Because they used to have all kind of medicine for fever, stomach and all of that, but that Life Everlasting, you better be careful where you say that because you go to jail for that now.

SS: Yeah, because it's illegal.

IS: Yeah. Some go to jail, they don't—you be not have no Life Everlasting.

VF: Oh.

IS: [Unintelligible] [00:32:47].

SS: But I'm just saying that—Okay. That was—Yeah. I did say my brother has it.

IS: Yeah. All them old-time medicine for arthritis [unintelligible] [00:32:58].

SS: And another thing, moss, because I can remember you putting moss in your shoe if you—for high blood pressure.

IS: Yeah. [Crosstalk] [00:33:06].

SS: Okay. What else, Mama? I know you know—

IS: Yeah, I remember the moss [unintelligible] [00:33:12], petrie [phonetic] leaf. Drink that for pain in stomach. And something they used to do with the pine, but I don't remember [inaudible] [00:33:20].

VF: And these things you could find in Stoney just growing wild?

IS: No, you can't.

SS: You can, hm-hmm [affirmative]. Now—

VF: But you used to?

SS: Yeah, but the moss—I mean, the moss still on my tree in my yard. Yeah, I can find that in my yard.

IS: But you got to get it off the tree, not from the ground.

SS: Yeah. And it's still on the tree, yeah.

IS: And you put it in your shoe.

SS: But not on Stoney because Stoney—

IS: Oak tree there in my yard.

SS: So you have moss on your tree?

IS: Yeah, the house [unintelligible] [00:33:48].

SS: Oh, okay. Yeah. Right. Okay.

VF: And the other herbs, did they used to grow in Stoney?

SS: Okay.

VF: The older—the, the herbs from before?

IS: Well, the moss and the pine tree, and I can't remember we used—we used the pine gum off the

tree or what's so ever but those the only two I knows.

SS: But was it—I mean, but Life Everlasting, that used to be in Stoney.

IS: Used to be all over, now people have built up and clean up the woods and stuff and you can't find it now.

SS: Yeah, because Stoney, you really don't find too much. I mean, on the back roads, you probably would be able to find some stuff back on Stoney. You don't—I mean, you just zip through Stoney, now everybody, that's the speedway for people right now. Yeah.

IS: Remember we used to pick moss [unintelligible] [00:34:37].

VF: You used to—

SS: Do what now?

IS: Pick moss. Moss. Used to pick moss. That what we used to make the tobacco.

SS: Oh, in Stoney? We talking about Stoney now.

IS: Oh, no, no, no.

SS: We, we concentrating on Stoney. I mean, because Stoney was basically like seafood—

VF: Okay.

SS: ...going out there to pick oysters, and, you know, because we could do oysters behind our house. We could do—

IS: [Unintelligible] [00:34:57].

SS: ...crab. Used to cast, fish. Which you still—we still have a dock back, back behind the house where people still go back there sometime and they catch fish.

IS: Our water's gotten down [00:35:10] but—

SS: But they still can go back there and fish. Yeah.

IS: Right in the back of Crazy Crab. All our property in the back. Where I live at, I'm sitting right in between the two river. Highway 278 on that side and then the waterfront on that side, and I'm sitting right in the middle of 278 and the two water. Where I live at, theirs is valuable. I can stand at my kitchen sink. It's like I got my view, and there's fish jumping up off the water, and I can see who go down into the dock. When the come out "I ain't catch nothing todays I can stand at my kitchen sink. It's like I got my view, and there's fish jumping up off]. Now when you pick up the bucket with you two hand and put in the back of your truck, you do like this.

SS: Hey, you giving some [inaudible] [00:36:07].

VF: But if you have two hands, you caught something, didn't you?

IS: Don't want to give you none and come walk on your property and catch them off your property.

VF: Goodness.

IS: Right in the back of my house.

SS: That's right.

IS: [Unintelligible] [00:36:29].

VF: Is there anything else you'd like us to, to remember about Stoney? The, the landscape? The traditions? What were some of the big holidays or community celebration days? Were there days that people came together?

SS: Like on the Fourth of July. Well, Stoney was just—because we had—what—it used to be at the school, at the—which was the old school. You know, you would—they would gather there, but it would—basically everybody would have—each family would have their own little celebration. Because I know with us, I mean, any—anybody—everybody was invited to come to our house. We would have like cookouts and stuff like that. Because I think our family could've been the largest—well, probably the youngest, but largest on Stoney.

[Crosstalk] [00:37:18]

SS: But—because of the boys, because, you know, everybody kind of gravitate, because you got boys, you got girls that come, you know. But that—and a big thing was, too, Stewart Paradise back, back in that—back in those days [unintelligible] [00:37:34] having a good time. Because other than Stoney, because everybody used to go to like the beach like my brother was saying, Singleton Beach, because they had a different avenue for everybody, you know, to go. You go Fourth of July, everybody, the bus and every, every—come from Savannah, all over, to the beach. Yeah. But Stoney is just—

VF: Any founders days or anything like even associated with the school or any things like that?

SS: No. No. Because, you know, after they closed—after, you know, they—after the school was, you know—The school went up to seventh grade. Was it seventh grade? And they—I don't know when, when they, you know, when they stopped having the school in—on Hilton Head, and went to Bluffton. Because I know I went a year earlier because I went my seventh grade year in Bluffton because we had to be transported to the Bluffton, Bluffton school. Yeah. But see, John could have been here [unintelligible] [00:38:33].

VF: Yeah. So how—was that—how long of a ride was that from here?

SS: For Bluffton?

VF: Yes.

SS: Probably it—well, it just depend, because of the bridge. So let me bring you back to the bridge, because we had a bridge—because it would be like—probably like I would say, when the bus picked me

up, it would probably be like, say, about 20 minutes or so. It'd just depend on traffic. Because—and the afternoon would be longer because we had one of these bridge that open out. And so when the shrimp boat come—

VF: Okay.

SS: Because I've been on the boat a lot of time when the school buses were there. Yes. So, you know, that—it took time for that, but it probably was like a 20 minutes'—a 20 minutes' ride from Hilton Head. Yeah. And [unintelligible] [00:39:18] everybody in the community, like he was saying, the Driessen, the Stewart, the Toomers, the Green, the Murray, the Perrys, the Blakes, I mean, we all—everybody just—and the Drayton—got along so—I mean, really, really good in this community. And which, you know, the community is just about gone, but I still see, because—see a lot of these people because we go to the same church.

VF: Okay.

SS: Everybody, you know, they have moved and, you know, live in different part of Hilton Head now, but, you know, we, we still—And Big—well, you wouldn't call that—no, it's Squire Pope. Because it's not Big Stoney. Little Stoney would be Squire Pope.

VF: Why was one big and one little?

SS: You know, I never found that out until all this, because I was riding—when the town start putting these signs, okay, Stoney, then I see Little Stoney. Really? Because I thought it was always Squire Pope, but where past my brother, that—I consider that Squire Pope. But that's Little Stoney until you get to the Hilton Head Fishing Corp, a little past that, that's Squire Pope. I don't—you know, I don't know why.

IS: [Unintelligible] [00:40:30] used to live on Little Stoney.

SS: Yeah, that's Little Stoney.

IS: That's [unintelligible] [00:40:32] that the place where everything a shop

SS: Yeah, because Big Stoney was, was the happening—it was the town. Honestly, that's where every—Because I sat down last night. I was just writing the different—You wouldn't believe that all of this was in that area, all these different was in the area. You come on Hilton Head, you'll say, this—I mean, especially if you new to the area you know.

IS: I was showing Jessica on Sunday [unintelligible] [00:41:02] before they come on Stoney and tore the piece of post down [unintelligible] [00:41:13]. Bill had taken a picture of it and take it to Georgia [unintelligible] [00:41:22].

SS: See, I didn't like going down to the river.

VF: Didn't like that?

SS: I never—all my brothers learned to swim. I was the house person.

IS: Yeah.

SS: Yeah, I didn't do the river—I didn't do the river at all.

IS: [Unintelligible] [00:41:31] was good material those days [unintelligible] [00:41:36].

SS: But, you know, just like I say, some of the—some of the businesses is still in that—in, in the Stoney, you know. Like where the palm—not the palm reader now. It's the other business.

IS: [Unintelligible] [00:41:49].

SS: No, no, no, no.

IS: [Unintelligible] [00:41:53].

SS: Memory Matters. You know, there's Memory Matters there. There's a little shopping center that you really can't—you really can't see [unintelligible] [00:42:05]. If you're flying on Hilton Head, you, you won't see, because everybody try to get to their destination—

VF: Yeah.

SS: ...on Hilton Head. And you know, you'll miss—you miss a lot of it.

VF: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

IS: [Unintelligible] [00:42:17] black people [unintelligible] [00:42:19].

SS: No, we have a Stoney.

IS: [Unintelligible] [00:42:24] Stoney.

SS: That's the—that's the [unintelligible] [00:42:25] the little dress store. Oh, the—oh, where they sell seafood. Okay. Yeah. Down there by Spanish Well.

IS: [Crosstalk] [00:42:32].

SS: It is—Okay. Yeah. It's a—it's right across from the [unintelligible] [00:42:37]. This guy, he, he have like fresh seafood and stuff, and he sell fruits and stuff.

IS: Wesley.

SS: And he have a business, yeah, Wesley Campbell. He have a business.

VF: Campbell? Okay.

SS: Yeah.

VF: Okay.

SS: Yes. So [unintelligible] [00:42:52].

VF: Well, I have one other question.

SS: Yes, ma'am.

VF: Sometimes you—the group refers to itself as the native islanders.

SS: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

VF: Why that, and do you consider yourself Gullah?

SS: Okay. Let me tell you now. That could be other people, because I just consider myself—I mean, I guess they, they consider that because—it's because of the inner coastal—probably because we are so close—and we used to talk I guess because you got people that speak Gullah. And you don't find that too often now, and you can—Just like some, you have a family that they have a, a tour bus. They have a tour business. They, they can speak Gullah.

VF: Right.

SS: [Crosstalk] [00:43:33] can speak Gullah. But—and I guess native islander is just because you've been here, you were raised here. That's—but then when you think about native islander, you got white folks that, that, that was born here, too. So where—

Male Voice: Doesn't necessarily mean Gullah.

SS: No, Uh-uh [negative]. So that's—see, I never—I never got into that. I don't know why, but, you know—

VF: Okay. Yeah. Okay. Ma'am, is there anything else you'd like people to remember or to know when you were 18 and on the island and on those shipping—shrimp boats and everything? My goodness.

IS: No. I got to share my story.

VF: Okay.

SS: You shared your story.

VF: Okay. All right. We thank you so much.

SS: She just want to say that, you know, she was married to her husband for—how many years before he passed? My dad was like 10 years older than her, so when they—I think when they had me, I was like six—she was 16. 16 years old.

IS: We been together 60-some year.

VF: Wow.

SS: Yeah. Yeah because he, he passed couple—he, he was just about to turn 90, and that was two years ago.

VF: Okay.

SS: Yeah. Yeah. And she was a little—I'll put it like this. She—he really raised her, raised her well.

IS: Yeah, he raised me.

SS: Yeah. She was a teenager.

VF: Yeah.

SS: Yeah. He raise her good.

VF: Yep.

IS: [Unintelligible] [00:44:59] been some good days. Yeah, good days. [Unintelligible] Children didn't have to do no stealing from nobody [unintelligible] [00:45:07].

SS: That was the good old days. Yes, I wouldn't change it for nothing in the world. Nothing. Nothing. Nothing in the world. Yeah, but, that's, that's—

VF: All right. Thank you so very much.

SS: Yes, ma'am, yes, ma'am. We thank you.

IS: [Unintelligible] [00:45:25] I need more [unintelligible] [00:45:26] for my jaw.

SS: Are you talking—are you asking me that, that question, Isabel?

[Crosstalk] [00:45:34]

APPENDIX B: COORDINATION

Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission Meeting

May 25, 2021

Attendees:

Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission	Dr. Dionne Hoskins-Brown Herb Frazier	**FHWA**	Shane Belcher Sandra Saint-Surin
SCDOT	David Kelly Craig Winn Megan Groves	**SHPO**	Elizabeth Johnson
KCI	Heather Robbins Matt DeWitt Eric Burgess	Phil Leazer Amanda Chandler	

Herb hadn't reviewed the documents sent to the Gullah Geechee Heritage Commission, so Heather provided a brief overview of the coordination that has been completed to date.

- A report was completed in 2019 for the Heritage Commission, as well as the recommendations from the Town of Hilton Head Island were used as a basis to begin discussions with the Stoney Community about potential enhancement opportunities.
- March 2020 was the first meeting with the Stoney Community where they were asked about concerns and to participate in oral history that is included in Traditional Cultural Property report
- Showed renderings to the Stoney community in August 2020
- Met with Stewart family about driveway concerns in October 2020
- Continued discussion of enhancements with the Stoney Community in December 2020
- Additional meetings in February and March 2021 with the Stoney Community
- SCDOT has met with individual property owners to address concerns
- Renderings/Designs are not final, will continue coordination with the Stoney Community

Herb expressed three concerns that he had based on the overview provided.

1. Relocations – where do they go and who helps them?
    - Craig Winn talked with property owners
    - SCDOT has completed a relocation study
    - Potential options to move the upholstery shop back on property, will assist psychic in relocating (provide rental property, no financial hardships)
    - All relocations will comply with federal requirements so that there is no hardship on the property owners.
2. Sidewalks – where will they be?
    - 10-12 foot multi-use path on north side of US 278
    - Sidewalk on south side of US 278
    - Low landscaping in the median
    - Visible Crosswalks and safe crossing locations

3. Oral histories gathered during Traditional Cultural Property report – how will they be stored and accessed?
    - They will be used to develop the Interactive History of Stoney Community and would be stored at SHPO

Dionne expressed the following concerns:

4. Inclusion of individuals
    - Continue cooperation with Stoney Community throughout project implementation
    - Keep families and leadership informed throughout process
5. Acknowledgement of the history of the Stoney Community
6. Speed limit in Stoney Community?
    - Will be 45 mph through entire corridor
7. She believes that there will be a community interruption but will benefit long term

Elizabeth stated that she thought the project coordination with the Stoney Community is a good model for engaging communities

David explained that SCDOT is currently seeking "no adverse effect" determination and de minimis 4(f). SCDOT acknowledges that the project does have an effect, but not such a major effect that it would no longer render it a Traditional Cultural Property.

Discussion of tree canopy nearby on Squire Pope Road and along US 278

- Trees would be preserved as much as possible
- Minimal trees along corridor

Dionne will send David a letter 5/25/2021 that can be shared with the project team and SHPO.

Shane explained that everything will be documented in the EA and Appendices. A public hearing is scheduled for July 22, 2021, where there will be another opportunity for community comments to be heard and incorporated.

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May 25, 2021

David Kelly
SC DOT Environmental Services Office
955 Park Street
P.O. Box 191
Columbia, SC
29201-3959

Mr. Kelly:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the plan to expand a 4.1-mile section of U.S. Highway 278 from Moss Creek Drive to Squire Pope Road in Beaufort County, South Carolina, an area that goes through the Stony community. Conversations with the project team and with the executive committee of the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission have allowed us to give thoughtful consideration to the expansion project and its impacts on the community.

Is important to note that the weaknesses identified the initial approach as summarized in September 2020 by our former executive director, Heather Hodges, maintain their merit. It remains true that the communities in the greater Hilton Head area (and across the Corridor) continue to be disrupted by such development and that even the minimal land loss in this transportation project still represents one of the thousands of cuts that destroy Gullah Geechee communities.

It is laudable that the team took the time and resources to explore the narrow constraints around identifying Stony as a Traditional Cultural Property. We challenge you to continue to consider the previous opinions around community integrity and cultural significance when examining communities that have been dissected by earlier development.

You have made clear in your documentation and communications that you have had regular engagement with the community (beyond the collection of oral histories) and that the plans for the community entrances and the interpretive pavilion reflect the desires of the resident community. It is important to us to express how important it is for community members to have a role in creating interpretive materials and that the content reflect their contributions.

In what has been presented, we see the acknowledgement that the Stony community was not just a commercial center and that cultural retentions within transcend the built environment and demonstrate a continuity of traditional beliefs. We are pleased that the two businesses to be relocated (one of which is a Gullah Geechee business) will receive full funding and support to do so as outlined in the law. Consequently, we register no objection to the current, revised plan and look forward to continued updates on the progress.

Dionne Hoskins-Brown, Ph.D.
Chair

CC. H. Frazier. M. Hardy