

MARGARET ABNEY

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200 Carolina Ave., Parkwest Condo
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TAPE ONE (Field Recording #11)

YASECKO: We'll start with the beginning.

ABNEY: All right.

Q: Where were you born, and when?

ABNEY: I was born in Cocoa, January the 11th, 1898.

Q: When did your family first come to Brevard?

ABNEY: Well, my mother was born in Brevard County, on La Grange, my father came in 1884, July the 4th, he landed, back in Rockledge. And, he and his brother both came. And they homesteaded on the island. They came to Florida from Scotland, Glasgow, Scotland, on account of their sister, having been married and lived up in Palatka. Her name was Wallace, Margaret Wallace. And her husband died, she had a little boy, so they came over to the United States, to take her back to Scotland.

And my Uncle Tom wrote to my father (he came first) and my - he wrote back and said, "I think you would like it over here. Come over." And so he landed over here, and came down the St. Johns river and landed back of Rockledge on July the 4th of 1884.

Q: What a trip that must have been.

ABNEY: Yeah, and he was born in Scotland, I think it was 1853. I've got it down somewhere, but, I think that is when he was born.

Q: Where was the homestead in M-?

ABNEY: Over on Merritt Island, up north on Merritt Island, he had a hundred - I think a hundred and twenty-five acres - what they did then. But, his father, they sent him money, to help buy it. And they could get off the land and go find jobs. So, they did that, and my father went up as far as Titusville, and his brother, when he ended up, so he never married (my Uncle Tom), but he worked for the P and O steamship company for a long time, he was a purser. He liked that. But my father, he just worked around, he kept books for people, and then he worked - started working for the fruit company, the Indian River Pineapple and Fruit Growers Association. Was Mr. E.P. Porcher. And he worked for them for nineteen years. Until their son Arthur began to be a man, and could able to take the work. And so, my father quit working for them and he ran for clerk of circuit court. He ran in 1913, I guess he was running in 1912.

Q: What was his name?

ABNEY: James Findlay Mitchell. And he was the second Clerk of Circuit Court in Brevard County. Mr. A. A. Stewart was the one that was first. And, I have a picture, I get, maybe some people have seen it hanging up in the courthouse. I've never seen it hanging there, but I've got a copy of it with all the

clerks of the court, and he's in it. And, but he, he had it for eight years. He didn't run the last because he had the flu. When they had the bad cases of flu. And he never felt too good after that. He died in 1924, I think it was. I'm thinking that, because I've got it written down somewhere. I'm thinking it was 24 when he died.

Q: Your uncle worked on a steamship.

ABNEY: P and O Steamship Company. He was a purser on that, and went from, I think they came from Key West, Florida, and all kind of things like that.

Q: Tell us a little about what the steamships did.

ABNEY: Well now, I don't know so much about what they did, but I know they went up and down the river, and I know that the mail was carried up and down the river in boats. And ah, but I guess they carried passengers back and forth. My father wrote a little piece about going down to Miami on a boat, just a, I guess it was a steamboat. They didn't row it. He taught me how to row a boat, row a canoe, how to work the paddles, and everything. So, every time I see anybody rowing a boat I see if they're doing it correctly. But, we had, we never had a launch, but we had boats with (papa?) My father, when they, working for the fruit company, we had a grove over there, and we bought another house and some more land, grove over next to the place. So, well, I don't know you want to tell me all about that, but, whether you want me to, but they bought a, 1905, they bought a home on Indian River Drive, that used to be Palmetto Avenue, the Indian River Drive used to be. And my mother was one that, she made, there might have been others, but she wrote and asked the people to call it Indian River Drive instead of Palmetto Avenue. And, but he bought this house, it was old, the house, in 1905. And I can remember, I was seven years old then, and I can remember when we lived then, and we, that was on the river. It's still there, and

my nephew has it now.

Q: Which, where is -

ABNEY: It's 307 Indian River Drive. The north part. And then I had some, my Aunt Maggie had a house back of it. And some land, I owned that back there, I sold it to Mitchell. He likes property.

Q: You say your mother was born -

ABNEY: She was born in La Grange in 1871, and her father was, he came down right after the war between the states. Her father came down. And then, after awhile he, ah, that was W. S. Norwood He, some, another man that came with him, Morrow? But I don't know just what he was in this with him, but he had a horse and wagon, and they used to carry the mail, and passengers also over from the river - I don't know what it is -

Q: St. Johns?

ABNEY: There was a St. Johns over there but the lake, ah,

Q: Poinsett?

ABNEY: Poinsett?, but anyway, they had a mail route, and they'd bring passengers over in the wagon and. Then when mama's people came over, my fath - my grandfather was then driving that. And he brought mama's mother, and their family down. And they landed out in La Grange where somebody already bought the land. Some of their cousins in another part of the state, somewhere. But any way, he saw my mother on there - no - my mother's mother. She came, they're the ones that came after the war, between the states. And he said to himself, "I'm going to marry that girl." And within a year he had. And ah, that was my mother's mother. And mama was the oldest child of that family of thirteen chil-

dren.

Q: Did you hear any stories about what life was like in those days?

ABNEY: Oh yes, my mother had diaries. I tried to put my hands on that diary, and then she's got the diaries and I've got the diaries. It was ah, life's simple, but they seemed to enjoy it somehow or other. Mama used to tell about a mule named Dolly. that when she was a child. - . . . Think some of them had walked down from South Carolina. They came from South Carolina. But you were riding in a wagon, and I, she had the correct name on there. But, you remember, seeing a wagon, having hitched it to the thing and then part of the thing go up? Well she's riding, or something, one of them flew back and knocked her off the wagon, 'cause somehow when they unhitched it from the horse, or cow, - mule. But, anyway I've got a lot of stories, my father used to, on the island, there were those Scotsmen that came over that wrote things and sent back to Scotland about Florida. He'd get my father to write the things for him, while he went around having a good time. And papa would write the articles for him to send back to Glasgow, in the paper, or magazine.

Q: What were the stories about?

ABNEY: Well, just about what the island was like and everything, and uh. - When my father was running for the Clerk of the Circuit Court, we rented the house to somebody else in Cocoa, and went over and lived on the property on the grove. And ah, that was when I was in the eighth grade. And we had to ride down to, ah, Courtenay, to go to school. And we had a buggy and a horse, Gallagher, ha, ha, and ah, we'd come to one corner - I don't know whether it was about five miles - I just don't know exactly how far it was from our grove down to where the school-house was. But there was one corner that the mosquitos decided that they were going to eat you up. And we kept coats in the

back of the little, in the back of the boat, oh my land, the buggy. It went up kind of like a car is now. You'd just put it down and shut it up. And we kept coats in there. And we came to this corner, where we knew the mosquitos were going to take over. We'd put on heavy coats to go around that corner. And make the horse fly as fast as he could. We unhitched the horse, tied him to a tree, and went to school. Then we went home from there. But I just did that in the eighth grade. I started school in Cocoa. Do you want me to keep on?

Q: Yes, this all sounds real good, let me -

ABNEY: Better give me something else to talk about.

Q: Yes, well -

ABNEY: My first school teacher was Miss Stella Mims in Cocoa. And, ah, when I was in the primer. And ah, Miss Stella Mims, her folks, well she did too, from when - they lived in Mims, north of Titusville. And -

Q: What was the schoolhouse like?

ABNEY: Well, the one on the island was just a one room schoolhouse. And there wasn't too many pupils in there. I don't remember any of the pupils, but I do remember the teacher's name. Miss Gertrude Stewart. But that was when I was in the eighth grade. The one in Cocoa, with Miss Stella Mims as teacher, was in the Cocoa school. And I went there 'till I was in the well, eighth grade. I just had to go over there because we rented the house, and went over there then. Part of my eighth grade was in Cocoa and part -

Q: What was a school day like, when you went to school in Cocoa? What would it be like?

ABNEY: Well, it was just like any other school, but I can't remember much of it. But the one part that I always laugh about, is Miss Stella Mims. I think she taught all my sisters in the first grade, might have been first, second, third, because I don't remember the second grade teacher. But ah, and that was in the primer. The only thing that I can always remember about that school, was we used to have to march, and we had to exercise. But, ah, I shouldn't maybe tell this, but, it's so funny, I always laugh about it. there was a boy that walked back of me, and we had to lean up and down to exercise, and I would always didn't like to lean down in front of him. His name was Oscar Rouse. And I never, I'd like to know what happened to Oscar. The only thing I've heard about was out, ah, in Oviedo. Oviedo. There was a boy out there named Rouse, and I've always wondered if that was Oscar. But I'm not sure, but (giggle) so I can't remember much, reading and writing and 'rithmetic. I can remember those. But, I better stop on that subject.

Q: OK. We'll stop there, we'll go -

ABNEY: I went back there, I stopped in, anyway in the eighth grade, that was when my father was elected, but then we went to Titusville. I finished the eight grade up in Titusville.

Q: OK, you told me one mosquito story. I'll bet you've got a couple more. You can tell us, how did people deal with all the mosquitos?>

ABNEY: Slept under mosquito netting at night. Everywhere, from Jacksonville to ah Cocoa, Titusville, anywhere, all the bedrooms had a mosquito net over the top. And going out every door, but I guess everybody did, we did, we had a little dish of insect powder. You lit that insect powder, and let it smell. That would kill the mosquitos and pretty near you too. But everywhere the, it, smelled better than have the mosquitos. But, and then they had mosquito brushes, and they had things to switch

them away, you know, the big, some kind of a switch, I just can't remember the made out of, um, a little old, stuff that grows. Palms - not palm trees, but palmetto, little ones when they're small. People used to make palmetto hats out of those. Wide _____ brush the hats.

Q: Did you have smudge pots?

ABNEY: Oh yeah, we had smudge pots inside and outside and up and down. But ah, and you had to have screens on your window so they wouldn't come in if you wanted any air. And ah, mosquitos, they were terrible sometimes they were so big, other times they were little, pretty near always bit you. But everybody had their insect powder. I don't know what they had besides insect powder. I can remember the insect powder. Every now and then I wanted to buy a little, if I could find it, just burn it, just to see what it smells like. See if it smells as bad as I thought it did. (giggle) I can remember some good things, but I can't remember bad things, and I don't remember anything bad. I remember the children, we had a good time.

Q: Tell us a little bit about the early postal history.

ABNEY: Well, now I don't know too much about the early postal history, but my, I don't remember my grandfather was, but my mother's father, was postmaster a little while, up in Titusville, I think it was Titusville, either Mims or Titusville.

Q: What was his name?

ABNEY: W. S. Norwood, he was postmaster up there a while. He was also a legislator awhile. But ah, my second husband was a postmaster, Lawrence Abney, but he - his mother was a postmaster before him. I don't remember that. But she was a postmaster up at City Point. And then when she resigned, or whatever, Lawrence took it over and he was postmaster until they did away with the

postmaster at City Point. A little while before he died, I guess it was. But the, I knew, when I was married to him he was postmaster. Once in awhile I would kind of help with the mail, around. I learned one or two funny little things in the postmaster. If you got a letter addressed to - ought not to tell this - you got a letter addressed to somebody that didn't even live there, you just kept it, 'til they came, and asked for their mail. There were different reasons for doing that, it is mostly a girl and a boy writing a letter, so, I learned that little bit. But I didn't really work in the post, as a worker. I worked a lot of different places, but not -

Q: Tell us again about how they would ship the mail.

ABNEY: Well, the mail - you go out to the train and get it coming off the. Well, now there at City Point was the only one where I really know how they did it. But, they'd hang a bag on a pole out there, and some train that was going by, and that's where, then you'd go out there, you knew when the train was coming, and they went out and took it off the pole and brought it into the post office. That's how they did that. And ah, that's all that I really know, but that's what they did when I. Lawrence and I married in 39. He died in 67. But he, the post office shut several years before he was - and then the post office was closed down, out there. They didn't need it.

Q: And they used to use boats, I guess. In the early -

ABNEY: Oh they used - yeah - they used to deliver the mail, come down the river in a boat, yes, they did that. And people used to come from over on the island, in a boat, to the back of, well, the store at City Point. The back of it was on the river. And they'd come up in a boat. I can remember coming back there with somebody, before I ever had met Lawrence, or anything else, you know, I'd just do ah coming to Abney store, somebody was coming there to buy groceries, or something. Before I even knew

him. But I don't really know too much about - I've worked a lot of places, but never in a post office except when I was married, and just for fun.

Q: Would you talk a little bit about the businesses?

ABNEY: Well, grocery stores were nice and they delivered groceries. And, before the telephone, I guess you went to the store and got your groceries. Vegetables and things used to come down, there used to be a colored man, that had a wagon up and down the island, I remember, they had, sometimes in Cocoa, and he's have vegetables in the wagon, and he'd come up and down the road, calling out what he had. You'd hear him coming, and ah, Dennis Sawyer, I think, was one of the colored men's name. That used to do it. But after awhile, when you got, after you got telephones, I can remember our first telephone. You'd call up and then your groceries were delivered. My mother, I don't think my mother ever, after, went to a grocery store, to get things. Maybe she did when she was a little girl, but not as long as I can remember. And after my first husband died, I came back over from Winter Park to Cocoa, to live with my mother for ten years, before I was married again. But she always called up, I can remember the first telephone that we had there. One that you wound it up on the wall to ring your number. And then you'd call - you didn't ring it up to call your number, except to call, they'd call - a girl at the other end would answer the telephone, "Number please." And you'd give her the number, 29J, or something like that, and she'd ring the number, for you. That's the way you answer the telephone. But that was quite a thing, to get a telephone. And I can remember - you want to ask me a question about lights?

Q: Yes.

ABNEY: Well, for a long time, it was just lanterns, you know. Lanterns for outside and oil lamps for inside. You had to

shine the - oh, what ever you call them - what do you call the - excuse me, Well, shine the glass that was on the. I've got an old lamp back of that thing over there. But then I broke the chimney...chimney, I broke the chimney coming over. I lost it, I haven't seen it since I came over here. That's the way to move. Lose things, when you get moving you clean house. I haven't moved for a good while now so I got rid of all my junk. But anyway, that was kind of interesting. But anyway, the oil. And then I can remember. after awhile we had some kind of a lamp, and I've been trying to think about what that lamp was. It was er, a funny kind of a thing, it wasn't, - I don't remember putting any gas in it, but it was a white thing that, I don't know, I've been trying, look like ice cream cone or something. But anyway, we had one hanging up on the wall. But the oil lamps, I can remember those very well. And ah, I can't exactly remember when the first electricity came in, but I can remember the oil lamps, they always kind of interested me. Had to keep the chimneys shiny, that was a good job. And the lanterns, I had an old lantern, I liked that lantern because you could carry them and swing them around, and ah, but uh, ask me a question.

Q: OK. I'm trying to figure the right question to ask after this. You saw lights and power come in, I guess the ice -

ABNEY: Oh, the icemen, yes, they'd come down the street hollering "ice" icemen come - we knew when they were coming for some reason, we could hear them coming. And then you bought the ice. In Cocoa they had an ice house, out there and you could go out there if you wanted to, if you had a buggy or a wagon or horse, or something, and buy ice by the pound. Then they had refrigerators, and you buy the ice and put, fill it up. It was very nice, you had a chopper and you chopped it off and the chopper. But I can remember that. Before the before the electric iceboxes. I can remember that.

Q: I guess the ice factories came partly for the fish -

ABNEY: The had an ice fac - for the what?

Q: For the fishing -

ABNEY: Yes, I guess they did. but the used to have an ice house down in Cocoa, and I can't remember right now who that was. but you'd go down to the ice house and they's have a walk up on a plank where you walked, and then you'd go in and buy your ice, bring it out. I don't know whether they sold it by the pound, I think that's the way they sold it. But, I kind of like a ice box.

Q: Something cool in the hot weather.

ABNEY: Something cool, yes. I liked it for the cool ice. They'd put fish on it. Anyway ice was good. That's one of my memories of the ice.

Q; OK. let me just check and see how far along we are. We've got a few more minutes on this tape. I'd like to talk to you about the railroad coming through.

ABNEY: Well, now that is what I like is railroads. Because I've got over there where a sheet, somebody brought it to me, cause they were asking me a question about it. It was published in May of 1898. the year I was born. And I was going on a trip to Jacksonville, and it's got on it, first page, it's got more on that first page, which I've got, May of 1898, and my father, and mother, and baby Margaret born, but it didn't say when I was born, but it was May, and I was born in January, so I was just a baby. That was my first ride on a train. So we had passed through _____ and Mr. E.P. Porcher. Well, he was the one my father worked for for nineteen years at the Pineapple and Pineapple, Orange and Pineapple growers Association. My father used to buy pineapples up and down the coast. Then, we'd go to Jacksonville every summer, during the pineapple season, and was always

on a train. And so, from the time I was born every year for, well, for about, 'till papa quit working for the fruit company, just before he ran in 1912. But, before my mother and he were married he worked for the fruit company. But that was my first train ride and I said that proves I was on a train. But, everybody's fussing about the train making so much noise, you know, I could hear them from here. Built the railroad tracks right out there somewhere. The Winter Park railroad. And one day in Cocoa everybody was fussing about them noisy people down in Melbourne, that they didn't like the horns when they blew so much. And so I went down to City Hall, one night, they were having a meeting, and I got up, I was sitting on the back seat. The woman that was the head, the, well, she's one of the leaders of the thing. She could see that I was happy over everytime anybody got up and said, "Let the trains blow their horns." So she beckoned for me to come up. I got up there, in front of everybody, and I said, "Well, if it wasn't for the trains, there wouldn't be any Florida." I says, "The trains brought everybody down to Florida, on the trains." But, I liked to hear them blow. And, I like it here. I learned something on a train not long ago, my children, I said I was going to take one more train ride. So, I went up on the Amtrak to Georgia to visit my younger son. And, ah, every now and then, I heard that horn blow, toot, toot, toot. I said, "What is that thing blowing four times every now and then?" It moans out - and I looked out the window, and every time they do these four, I'd like to imitate it but I'm not now, it was crossing a road. So, I listen here at night, when I hear the trains go over, I hear them say toot, toot, toot, there's where there're coming to a crossing. But the blow it kind of softly. But, anyway, they kept on blowing them I think down in Melbourne, I'm not sure. They do in Cocoa. And they blow them here.

Q: Can you tell me something about the pineapple business?

ABNEY: Well, my father used to go up and down the coast.

and we used to always have it, when we went to Jacksonville, that's when they used to ship the pineapples through Jacksonville there. And a, we always had a crate of pineapples in our house. A long crate, they were little pineapples. And they were so good. I just loved pineapples. And after we'd get through those crates we'd, the four of us, we'd play out in the yard, make us a house, build us a house out in the back yard out of pineapple boxes. But anyway -

Q: I don't think a lot of people know that pineapples ever grew in Florida.

ABNEY: Hoo, well I think most everybody does it, up and down the down to, I think, I don't know how far my father used to go down to buy the things. But, they grew them for awhile, but they grew some on the island, too. But anyway, on this front page, I've got of the paper, nearly every column's got something about pineapples in it. And it was quite a business. And after my father quit, he ran for Clerk of Court, then I think Arthur Porcher managed the office, but my father managed it for nineteen years. And ah, I loved pineapples. I still like them. In fact, I've got caps on two of my front teeth. And the rest of my teeth are mine. But, I think I did it from eating all of those pineapples.

TAPE TWO (Field Recording #12)

Q: OK. If you could tell about your memories of when the stock market crashed, and the depression.

ABNEY: Well, I can remember when it was, soon after my, ah, about the time my husband died, right after. I forgot - he died in 29. And ha, I can remember when the banks closed, remember that ah, somebody from the bank, he did work in the bank. He worked in the bank in Miami and he worked in the bank of Titus-

ville, and worked in the Barnett Bank when we were first married. So, he'd been in the banks business quite awhile. But he wasn't then, because he came down to Titusville and went into the real estate business. And so, one of the bankers, I don't know who it was, he came over to visit, at night, that was up in Titusville. And ah, he says, "The banks aren't going to open in the morning." And I knew that part, that's all I knew. And that's about as much as I knew too much. But, things kept on going, got worse and worse. And, he'd been, he got - was in the real estate business, making a little money. He got out of the banking business because he thought he'd some money down in the _____ . Bought land, went up and down, Miami to Titusville. And then, I can't just remember all about the banks closing, and everything. But, ah, I remember after they's closed, and it kind of confuses me because I know that, he died, I got a little insurance, and ah, some other insurance that he had, a good big thing. He had borrowed money on that insurance, from a bank, I never heard anything about that money, afterwards, I don't know what happened to it. Quite a bit, I didn't. But, he got a little money, and I tried, I had, the little bit that I got, I got in the right place for some accidental reason. But then after while when the depression was on and you couldn't buy sugar without a little piece of paper, couldn't by this, and when I started working over at the base, there was still the depression going on, and you couldn't buy gas unless you carried people with you. Had to have about five people in the car with you to keep it up. And when I worked over at, NASA, I had to pick up people in my car to buy gasoline. I had to have them riding with me. So, I had a couple, and then a girl.

Q: That would have been the Banana River Navel Air Station?

ABNEY: Uh hu, the Banana River Navel Air Station. I worked in the AR Department. And ah, I got up to be a, the manager of that department, before I left. I worked under a whole lot of different commanders. And that's when, World War II came on. I

can remember that part. But, ah, all the little cards you had to have, I've got one, had to have some card to get across the bridge, and I don't know what. It was really kind of confining. I can't say that I knew the best about it. But I didn't suffer too much from it, I don't think. I guess I suffered more, and I didn't know I was suffering. I don't know that I'm very good on the, that, I'll think about a whole lot after awhile, not right now.

Q: Maybe you could tell us a little bit about what it was like in Brevard County during World War II.

ABNEY: Yes, I can do that. Because when my young son was in the army, and, I used to be a spotter, airplane spotter. And ah, get up and go there to City Point and go out on the dock, and sit there. And a plane went over, and we some how or other we knew what kind of a plane it was. But, going over, and how it was going, we'd call up, every time about how a plane came over. And I did that for quite a while. It was fun. But after I went to work, then I went to work over at the base, and, so I didn't do it any more. But they changed the spotting place from on the dock, on the top of the church across up there from the City Point of Sharpes. There's an old church. I think the church is still there, they built a little tower up there. I never got to spot where that was, up there. But I was an airplane spotter. But then I went over to the base, worked in. My youngest son was in the service, then, he was a foot soldier, and ah, he was reported missing while I was working over there. And ah, when I went to one of the mosquito, not the mosquito beaters, but over at the base I go to that reunion they have at the base. One of the men there remembered the day I got this telegram, from Jimmy. But, there's funny, I'm getting that telegram - he was missing in action - it was Thanksgiving. You know they changed the day of Thanksgiving some time about in there. And ah, so I asked to get off. I wanted to celebrate the real Thanksgiving. So I said, "May I get off this day?" so, I was off and I was home and I saw

this telegram boy coming up the road to my house. Driveway. Little ways from the river. I said, "Uh oh". Everything scared you during the war, you know. And he came and the telegram said he was missing in action. And then, the next day I got a letter from, I think it was a letter, might have been a phone call, from a girl down in Rockledge, Mary Lou Shepard, and she said, I don't believe he's missing in action, because I got a letter from him today, it was from a hospital." And he's gone to the hospital, and I don't know to this day if they got him mixed up. But I got a load of clothes, war clothes and everything, that they said was his from the army. I got ah, but then after awhile, a good while, after all that had gone on, I got some kind of a telegram that he wasn't missing in action. He was in the hospital, just had a little wound in his leg. Remember that part about it, and my working over there at the base, in the AR Department. But I think I've messed this up, this question.

Q: No. That's very perfect. It reminds us about what it must have been like.

ABNEY: So, I went back there. One thing about working in the A and R Department, there used to be one of the officer out at the - the part that I worked in, that's where the men did the parachutes and things, out in the back. Used to be one officer that came through there, I guess he was kidding, and everything, but every time he walked through the office - "Heil Hitler" - And I said I don't know to this day why he was "Heil Hitler", all the way through - but that's what we think of through the office. But I think Commander Aiken was the first commander I can remember. But I worked under five or six different commanders, they were always transferred to some other place, you know. A bigger place, or something. But I enjoyed it in our department.

Q: What is A and R?

ABNEY: Assembly and Repair. That's where they repaired the

planes and everyting. My sister worked in there awhile. And I would go in and take dictation. I worked in the secret part of the office. And, I don't know if I knew of any secrets. But anyway, I would go in and take down the dictation and I would come out and my sister would take my dictation and type a letter. She could read my shorthand. And ah, but ah, it's assembly and repair.

Q: It seems as if almost everyone in Brevard was involved in the war, as if the front line was along the coast.

ABNEY: Yeah, seems like it was, uh huh, it was, I think it was. This little thing that I go to over there at the, they have them. Every year they have a meeting. I didn't go last year, at the base. And I've got a booklet, I think it's over there. My name is in there, they've got all the people that worked there, and my name is the first one up there - Abney - because it starts with an A. (giggle)

Q: Ab

ABNEY: Yeah, Ab, yeah.

Q: What about the social life and entertainment. What did you all do for fun?

ABNEY: Danced. Danced, that's what I liked the best was the dances. We danced on Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years, Halloween, anytime there was a holiday or something like that. Both my husbands were good dancers. My first husband went to school up in Winston, ah, Salem - not Winston-Salem - Winston, I'll get everything wrong. But it was in Massachusetts. It wasn't Winston, but anyway. He went to school in Massachusetts, right near Boston. And he'd always learn a new dance up there, then he'd come down and, and one of them was the dip. And every time he came home he'd show me a new dance. But ah, I liked to

dance.

Q: Tell me about the dances. Where were they held?

ABNEY: Well, they were held at different halls. In Cocoa the Elks club used to have dances. Some they'd have down at the Indian River Hotel, and ah, well just different places. But, the ones at the Elks club, they always had a good dance, so I went there with my first - my second husband was an Elk. And between cards, and, he played cards and I danced, when the dances came. But he liked to play cards down there at the Elks club.

Q: And who would provide the music?

ABNEY: Well we had..... once in awhile we had good orchestras would come through there. There's one that I can never remember just who it was. There was a good, one of the famous kind of bands that came through there....and I can never.... I want to meet someone who was at that dance, but I can't remember anybody that was there that was alive. That's ah, in my life I always liked the older people because I belonged to two or three organizations, not political, ah, patriotic. Both start with p's don't they, but anyway, but I said they were all older, a lot of them were older than I, most of them were, but I joined, I've been a DAR for seventy years, and ah, but, I said everybody older than I am are dead now. There's no one left. (giggle) But, anyway, I liked older people.

Q: Tell me about when you got ready for a dance, what kind of dress would you wear?

ABNEY: Oh, I spent more money on dresses than anything else. I'd rather have a good looking dance dress than, ah, so everybody kind of dressed up, put on their best dress and they wear long dresses with other people wearing short, or whatever, but they had long dresses on. I've got one that I wore so long

ago it's terrible. It's a white dress with a shiny top. You know, things on there that make it shine, I've still got that dress. I ought to throw it away, but I can't do it. And ah, but ah, I don't know, over on the island I've got a picture that was in the paper that they publish over there at, um, on the island. But it's got the names of all of us in it, it was the Orlando Social, not the Orlando Social, but the Indianola Social Club, and nearly everybody in the picture, I've got three of my sisters are in it, and ah, the teacher was in it, rem, a teach, I've got her little name, her name, the thing, and ah, but anyway, they got me, my sisters, I am, and then where I'm sitting is next to Charles Reed, he's the one that put it in there, in the paper. You know when you put up - I don't know how the names got drawn, but my sister sat there, and they got my name under it, I'm sitting next to Charlie, but ah, anyway, we learned to dance over there. There was a girl, oh, right this minute, her name, I know it just as well as I know my own, but, she lived over there on, I can't remember, visited someone there on the island.

Q: What other kind of holiday things would you do?

ABNEY: Oh, May, ah, May dances. They had a Maypole dance - everybody around a Maypole, you know. I think they quit having May dances because it was kind of like Russia, or something, I don't know. May Day, cause everybody over there, May Day. And the picnics, you went down there in Cocoa, where there is a hotel now, but we had a clubhouse there, a wooden clubhouse. I've got two or three things my mother wrote up for the paper, and to Jacksonville, that told everybody that was at the dance. And that's when it was her age dancing and I just went to look on, I wasn't much of, wasn't old enough to do that.

Q: Do you remember the Indian River Orange Jubilee?

ABNEY: Yeah, I can remember that. They had different things but - Some of that, was interested in part of it, I just

can't remember a whole lot about the jubilee, but I can remember that.

Q: Were there dramatic productions, and theater groups?

ABNEY: Yeah, when I went to school there in Cocoa, there used to be shows come, they put on a show. They'd come to the opera house, they called it, was over the post office was there then upstairs at the top was what they called the opera house. And good shows would come through there. Plays would come through. And then the school would put on little things sometimes, too. And ah, one of the teachers was a Miss Bingham. I think she used to help in those kind of things wit - we used to call out when we saw Miss Bingham coming. She wasn't one of my teachers, we used to say, "Here comes Bingham in a hobble skirt". It was about the year they were wearing hobble skirts. I think Miss Bingham must have worn one of them. My first, I told you my first school teacher was Miss Stella Mims.

Q: Do you remember the circus and tent shows?

ABNEY: Yes, I can remember them coming, yeah. And then up at Jacksonville they used to have a - I remember them coming through there. I can remember looking through something and seeing the Chinese and the Japanese, I'd never seen them before. They had something in the show, to do in the show. And, they'd come through Cocoa and Titusville, put up their tent, and then we'd go see them in a tent. I can remember that. Yeah, but ah, I try not to say "yeah,". I ought to say "yes". (giggle) I've got two or three things I'm trying to break myself of, but I haven't done it yet. One of the, I look at other people saying "OK," and ever-body says "OK," and "you know," I try to keep from saying that.

Q: You must remember when radio first came in.

ABNEY: Oh boy, do I remember that, yes. Yeah, and I think the first radio that I really had was ah, when we went over to ah, first moved over to Orlando, in 26. I think that was the first radio that we had. That was when I was married, then, I was married, and I used to listen to the things on the radio, talk shows all the time, and - What I can remember listening to the most was Amos and Andy. I loved to hear them. And ah, but I can remember radio. My TV, I never did get TV's 'til later on, I think it was - I think I must have got really have a radio, I mean a TV, in the house, I think was in 39, or something like that. But I might have had one before but I don't remember that. But, ah -

Q: And movies came to town, I guess.

ABNEY: Yep, silent movies, they were silent. And ah, I can remember the one down at Cocoa, and then I, when I was first married, in 1920, in Jacksonville. We used to go to the - before my first child was born, we used to go to the movies to get cool. Because they had ah, didn't have any air conditioning, or we didn't, I don't think anybody did much, had open windows. But we'd go to the movie - I didn't care what the movie was. Because they had all the cool air coming from behind the curtain up in the front. And they'd put the air out back there and they'd pull the curtains out and everything. I spent most of 1921 in a movie show, (giggle), trying to get cool. Oh law. I remember street cars up in Jacksonville, I liked street cars. I can still hear the bells ringing on the street car. You'd not asked me about that though.

Q: Well, not Jacksonville.

ABNEY: Better stop jabbering, yeah, don't want to get up there.

Q: Which of the early businesses do you recall?

ABNEY: Well when my papa was in the fruit organization, thought everybody had an office, I guess. That was that. I grew a little larger I went to Jacksonville, I can remember once or twice, they moved the office from Jacksonville to south Jacksonville, and I'd go across the ferry and maybe sometimes take the mail or get the mail back, as a kid, I just did it for fun. From the office over there, but -

Q: Where did you get most of your staples and perishables when you were in Cocoa?

ABNEY: From the store, down in Cocoa, they'd, 'scuse me, in Cocoa, I think it was Steel's, I think it was Fields, there was a store by the name of Field, I think.

Q: Do you remember the early doctors?

ABNEY: Yeah, the doctor that brought me was Dr. Huelett. And, then there was Dr. Holmes. Those were the ones that were both down in Cocoa, and they both traveled up and down the coast, they's go on a train or the boat because there weren't many doctors. But they both, Dr. Holmes lived up north in Sharpes, and he had a home later on the island. Dr. Huelett had a house there in Cocoa, had a pretty home right down there - it's gone now with the tennis courts, down there. But it was right across from where the Porcher house is now. That was Dr. Huelett. I've got a picture of the house somewhere in my pictures. And ah, fence over there, and Miss Allie Huelett

Q: How about the dentist, was there a dentist?

ABNEY: Yeah, a dentist, Dr. Daniels was my dentist over there in Cocoa. And later on he had a son that turned into a dentist, and he was in Orlando. I went over to Orlando, and lived there. He was Leland Daniels. He had a daughter, Dorothy, that I knew.

Q: Do you remember any of the lawyers?

ABNEY: Well, I didn't have much doings with doctors until later on. One is Shepard, I think was the only - so.....

Q: I see. Were you or any of your family really involved in hunting or fishing?

ABNEY: No, Mr Brady was, that's my father-in-law. He hunted. Every year we had a turkey. Thanksgiving was a wild turkey. He'd go out and get a wild turkey. But I don't know as my father did either one. I can remember the fish I used to eat, mostly mullet, fried mullet. (giggle) I don't think mullet is as good as it used to be. They were good then. Much of mullet and grits. I still like grits. I have my nanny Grier cook some grits every once in awhile, if I want something real good. I just love them. Grits with butter on them.

Q: Where would you get the mullet?

ABNEY: Mullet? We used to get them out of the Indian River. I could buy them at the fish house though. I never fished. I tried to fish once, I had a fishing pole, but I never caught one fish in my life. It took so long to catch him, I didn't care for it - I was not a fisherman. But I, we had a neighbor there in Cocoa when we were just little and, like I said, in 1905, when we bought the house down on the river, and I was seven years old, we had a neighbor came down from New York every year. And they had a boat, right next to us, and a dock. That's Snyder, Mr. B. C. Snyder. And ah, so we enjoyed that.

Q: There were a lot of northerners who would come down for the season. Even a long time ago, I guess.

ABNEY: Yeah. A lot down, came down to Rockledge, there were a lot of little children, there was one - Lears, Lillian

Leahs - was one of the girls. And another girl, I forgot now, which one it was, we used to brag. She came from Michigan, and so I would say, my father came from Scotland, so I would have to say my father came from Scotland. Otherwise we were all crackers, and ah, I was talking about Scotland. Oh, she said, "Well, you pass by Scotland to get to Michigan". (giggle) So she tried to get the best of - I said, well maybe there was a town called Scotland, but I didn't know it. I said you cross the ocean to go to Scotland. My father used to, he spent three years in South America before he came to - . He went back to Scotland from there. He worked for an uncle down there who was in the woolen business. And then he went back home. His mother died young, but ah, he spent three years down there. So he's sit up and tell us stories at night, and we'd all sit around and listen to papa tell wild stories, what ever they were. He was a clerk of circuit court. I've got his picture. Did you ever see the picture of the clerks of courthouse at Titusville? He's the second one over. To me he's the best looking one there, he's got a moustache. (giggle)

Q: Where would the yankees stay when they came down?

ABNEY: Well let me tell you. Did you see that thing in the paper the other day, are you a bubba, a yankee, or a cracker, or are you a southerner or a northerner? I said, well, I'm a cracker but I never cracked a whip, and otherwise I'm a southerner. I'd tell people I'm a cracker but you know where the cracker name came from, you've heard that, it's for the people cracked a whip for the cattle and things. That's where the cracker name came from. But the Bubba - I don't know where that came from. b,u,b,b,a. I'd never heard that. But I like the sound of cracker, but I don't really consider myself a cracker. (giggle)

My mother was born in Titusville. She went to Niagara Falls when she was young. She spent a year up there with a friend and they used to come down to Titusville for their health, she came south. And later on after my husband died, I went up and spent a

few weeks, ah, month or something in the same home with the same family.

Awhile with them, but, uh.

Q: I guess all along, ah, there was a white community and a black community?

ABNEY: AS far as I know. But we always had a colored person that worked for us. I called them Aunt Soren and Aunt Sarah, that what we'd call her. And really, my father, going back and forth to Jacksonville, ought not to tell this - but once, after he'd come home, a colored man from - Steve Smith was his name, he came down and followed my father down here. Trying to get some work, I don't know that he ever got work, but maybe so. But we had a little shanty out in the back and we called it shanty, which was a - had been the kitchen - we moved it off the house and did some rebuilding on the house. And so we let him sleep back there. And we taught him how to read. And I can still hear him saying, "I see a cat." But he, he'd be reading way out loud at night. But we'd always have somebody working for us. They lived out back of Titusville a little, but ah, we never, I never did an I don't think we did, but, ah, ever was so, ah. But I don't know, I guess maybe we just didn't know. Because they were, they helped the people, but I think lots of times that a lot of them have grown up mighty healthy, and everything. When they were slaves they had a place to live, they had food, and ah, they had work to do. And I don't really think it was so bad, the way the start they got. So, I don't go around preaching that, and I guess I shouldn't say it on here.

Q: Do you remember the time of integration? That would have been in the 60's.

ABNEY: Well I remember I had a little colored girl that worked for me. And ah, she used to always, not always, but every now and then, she'd bring a Pittsburgh Courier, or something. It was just when they first started talking about it. And ah, she'd

accidentally leave it behind for me to look at. (giggle) And ah, but that was the first time that I'd really kind of waked up to what they were doing. And then, I had a TV then, too. And they'd be talking on there, sometimes. One of the girls that I had working for me, she said, ah, somebody was talking on there and I don't know who it was, might have been the main one. She says, "What is he talking about?" Now I don't know if she was trying to egg me on or what it was, "What is he talking about?" I didn't know anymore than she did. But ah, we had an Aunt Sarah that worked for us when my mother's last boy, last child was a boy that died. We were staying up at the Packards. All of us kids, three of us (four counting me) the night before. So we knew mama was going to have a baby. So the next morning she came up to get us, and we saw her coming. And we'd been picking flowers in the Packard's yard. Mrs. Packard. And ah, we saw her coming. Well, she said she wanted to go in and tell Mrs. Packard something. So we started running home, about two blocks north of where we lived, and ah, we flew, and she kept calling us to stop us. We wouldn't stop, and we got home and we found out the baby was dead. But we had flowers for mama. But, that was sad to tell. One of my first sorrows - my little brother.

Q: Much, much later in your life, a lot of things changed in our county when the space program started.

ABNEY: Yeah, The only thing I remember is that I worked over there so long, but I can't remember, I know it changed, and everything, but I don't know just what I would say was the biggest change.

Q: A lot of people came to town.

ABNEY: Yeah, strangers. One of the commanders that I had, I been trying to think of his name lately, and I can't think of it, but I found him a renting - a house to rent - up near where I was living in City Point. And ah, his wife and I became real

friendly. And after they went out west, somewhere, after the war, well, after they left, she used to write to me all of the time, and I can't remember that name. Betcha I've got some letters that she used to write to me. But I was a friend of her then.

TAPE THREE (Field Recording #13)

If I look tired, it's because of Andrew, the hurricane that kept me awake all night. I'm still going to look at it tonight, and pray for New Orleans. Kept up to listen to all of it. I like hurricanes, but ah, I'm kind of afraid of them. But that's why I look tired, on account of Andrew.

Q: I guess you've seen a few hurricanes.

ABNEY: Well, since I've lived in Florida all of my life, I've seen quite a few. Watch the trees blow, and the palmettos. They clean house when a hurricane comes. One wild hurricane I heard about through my mother, her father said one of the wildest hurricane's came through here. And that was early because he came right after the war between the states. He said everybody that saw him visit, anybody up and down the coast, that's all they talked about, was that hurricane. So, I wish I knew the name of it. But this is Andrew, going through now. It's a bad one, the worst that Florida has ever seen, some folks say. It's really doing harm in Miami, now going toward New Orleans.

Q: What did you do when the Hurricane came?

ABNEY: Ah. Well, I just sat in the house and listened and looked, and worried, and try to keep everybody excited and not let them go to sleep or do anything. And, I, really, in a way enjoyed hurricanes, I liked to see them blow, and blow all the palmetto fans off the trees. But I don't like to wake up in the morning and find a tree across the driveway and we can't get the

car out of the garage. And ah, water over the road, and - . But I ah, really didn't, can't say I'm really frightened, but I might be if Andrew came around. Don't want to see Andrew. That's a bad one. The worst that ever happened to a house I was in was it tore off a shingle or two and it leaked a little. But I was very glad when it leaked and other people wouldn't get up out of the bed, and then that woke them up and they got out. But that's about the hurricane, But, I've been through quite a few and enjoyed all of them - in a way.

Q: We have some pictures here, I thought you might be able to hold them so that -

BEGIN PICTURES

ABNEY: Well, this is the oldest picture I've got of baseball.

Q: We're going to tilt down on that.

ABNEY: Want it stopped

Q: Alright, tell us about

ABNEY: Now I know, know ah, in fact I've got the names on the back of this. This is champs of Brevard County in 1916. And I have a baseball over there on my I don't know if you can see the faces on that, but I've got some names. Do you want me to read that?

Q: Sure.

ABNEY: Leland T. Daniel, that's the one that turned into a dentist. Theodore Travis, wait a minute, Albert (Chalker?), Lawrence Abney, Rex (Solby?), I don't remember that fellow, Leland Hendel, Harry Forrester, Clarence.....Jones, I knew him, Lefty Forrester, John Patterson, Carl Geiger, Leland Hatch.

that's all of those there. And when this was, nearly all of these when this picture was made, no, after it was made, when I got ahold of it, there was deceased, I've got the year they all died. One died in 63, one in 67. Most of them died in 67 for some reason. But that was the ah, Blair took that picture. the champs of Brevard County.

Q: Were there other baseball teams around?

ABNEY: Well they had them coming up and down, and I used to go to baseball games. I liked them. I still like baseball. I kind of understand it. And they used to - Titusville and Cocoa used to play. And they just - . One fellow that was tongue-tied that was hollering at them, "Do to it, toto, beat dat -" out of Titusville. (giggle) "Do to it toto." (giggle) But that's a , but anyway I liked baseball games. And the man that I married later on in life was Lawrence Abney, here in this picture. My first husband liked baseball too. He was on a team at the Barnett Bank in Jacksonville. I've got a little cut out in the paper where he was playing the ball. And I, but this is just one of my old pictures. (Afterwhile?) I'll have a reprint made of it sometime, and do - but I don't want to part with that one.

Q: OK, let's see what we have here.

ABNEY: I don't know if there's anything here that you would be interested in or not. Well now this is a picture that I don't know the boys in here. I think I know which was one in there, that's ah, ah, two boys, but this is a Titusville school. Long time ago, I don't even know, I'm just guessing, that's in 1904 or 5, and that's in Titusville. All boys. Where are the girls? When I looked through it, it looked like all boys. And I've got on here, "Where are the girls." I think I picked out my first husband, the second row, third from the right. Parkhurst (sp?) Brady. I think that's who, he was in that. He had on shoes,

too.

Q: Most of those boys are barefoot.

ABNEY: Yeah, they're nearly all, but, I said, I wrote, I think my husband had on shoes. And there was ah, Pete Hall, Ryalls Wagum, Richard Robbins, Norris Brosier, those are ones I'm guessing are in there, and that I see.

Q: Did children usually go to school without shoes?

ABNEY: Well now this was taken, I don't know, I think they must have, because when I taught in Mims, one year, in 19 and ah, right after I graduated from high school, and nearly all the children were barefooted there. Shall I take this down? I don't know whether you see it or not but I think some of those, those, got coats on, I think they were the Robbins, he was a lawyer. But ah, they are barefooted. (giggle) But I don't know, but,

Q: Looks like here are some of the girls. But this is a different school.

ABNEY: Oh that is ah, originally in Cocoa this was a bunch of - I've got the names on here. I'm down there, way at the end. I can't read these names I've got it upside down.

Q: That's all right, just hold it

ABNEY: I've got it upside down?

Q: Let's just get a look at the picture first.

ABNEY: The picture you don't have to have the names if you don't want.

Q: You can tell us where this is.

ABNEY: That's in from of the Cocoa school. Cocoa High School building, there.

Q: Where are you, in that picture?

ABNEY: I'm ah, well, I'll point to it. On the - when you're looking at it over there, down at the left, about the second or third over, I think. The third over. I can, you can just see my head. I'm down there. My sister's there. Somewhere. Oh, I wish I had this thing right, I ought to tear this off and get it right. (giggle) Well, anyway,

Q: OK that's good.

ABNEY: That's good enough. Virginia Miles, Dorothy Daniel, Margart Mitchell, Lillian Lears, Bessie Jones, Gladys Johnson, Mary Mitchell, Margie Brian, Katinka Myers, Estelle Canova, Lilly Beal, and Nina Brackhoe. The ones in that picture. Well, these don't have to. Now this is a picture of the boys down at _____ school in Cocoa. But I don't know any of the names on this one, so I don't know if it just a bunch of bad boys, later in time. It's when my children were growing up, I think. But I don't know who, or what, that picture was. So, I guess I'll just put it away. this is those kids. And ah, this is a picture that was in the paper, a clubhouse, this when I was in the wrong place, but I don't think you need to play that. That has already been printed in the paper. What you got over there. I don't know if any of these would be interesting. This is on - do you want me to tell some of these names that's on the beach?

Q: Yeah, tell us who is there at the beach.

ABNEY: Winnie Dixon, Winnie Wells, Carriene Grant, Charles Hill, Charles E. Read, Mary Read, Nora Wells, Margaret Mitchell with the hat. (giggle) Mary Mitchell, Anita Mitchell, now I've

got a little boy with a question mark, and then Catherine Mitchell. That was over on Cocoa Beach.

Q: How would you get to the beach?

ABNEY: Different ways, I'm telling you, the boats, take a boat over. And one of the interesting things I always think about going down to Melbourne, in a boat to the end of the island, going across and then getting on a - I don't know whether they called it a flat bed, or what. But everybody got up on this flat thing. And it was on a little track, and you would take it to the beach, and there you were, at the beach. And I can remember doing that once. And that was really a trip. And I can remember then, in later years when the bridge was going across. When you couldn't get to Orlando from Cocoa without going down to Melbourne, go to Kissimmee.

Q: What year was that?

ABNEY: You got something in your eye?

Q: What year do you think this was?

ABNEY: That one there? Well, I don't know. Must have been a good while. I've got to see if I can. Well, it was all before 19 - I don't know when it was. Tell you the truth. I just haven't figured that one out. I haven't gotten the year written on here. But, I was about in the eighth grade. So, I was in the eighth grade and ah, - well it must have been 1915, 16, like that, 13 - 16.

Q: Let's look at that dancing school picture.

ABNEY: I think that's me there, I think, I think that one right there. That one is me, I think.

Q: Second from the left?

ABNEY: Yeah, I don't know whether you call it the right or the left.

Q: All the way on the end?

ABNEY: No, this one here, with the thing around the head, it looks like, ah, I don't know, a ribbon or rag or something. That's the one I mean, next to Charlie. (giggle)

Q: What is that a picture of?

ABNEY: He was my distant cousin.

Q: What are we looking at there?

ABNEY: That's a dancer that's a picture of him, ah, with some of the people at the dance school that she taught and ah, but we may not have all taken the dancing. Might have been little, but we were there, at the hall. These are toys, down here, dolls, aren't they? I think they're dolls. That was over in Indian, Indianola, about 1912. That's all my - Margaret, Mary, Nita, and Catherine. That's when we rode the scho-, buggy down to school. That's Gallagher, the horse. But that's when we fought the mosquitos when we went to school from our island grove. We lived on the grove while papa was running for Clerk of the Court.

Q: Is that grove on Merritt Island?

ABNEY: That's on Merritt Island, north Merritt Island. My mother called the grove, I better not say what the name is.

Q: What did she call it?

ABNEY: I'm trying to think. Where the land was sold, they've got us into part of building, logging, a road going down to the river. Eagle Grove, she called it Eagle Grove. And the street's called Eagle street there, on north Merritt Island, way up on the island there somewhere.

Q: That buggy? Is that what you went to school in?

ABNEY: That is a buggy, that was when I was in the eighth grade, just for that while, we went to school in that drove, and I drove the horse. (giggle) I did the driving. Yes. And then I'd unhitch the horse at the school and tie it to a tree and ah, and it'd get time to come home and we'd unhitch it.

Q: Tell us about this picture.

ABNEY: This one? This is playing tennis in Titusville. that's when my father was Clerk of the Court. And that 's the Dixie Hotel, on the river. And ah, I think there was more posing than tennis. (giggle)

Q: What year was that?

ABNEY: That was, well it was sometime in the - 13, 14, 15, 16, I just don't know, because my father was Clerk of the Court

Q: Oh, I see, it says 1914.

ABNEY: That it? That's about what it was. Album, Lela Willard, Lela Brown, Willard Morgan, and Mary. One of me later in the album. (giggle) Tennis anyone? This in here.

Q: Tell us again about this picture.

ABNEY: Oh, this is taken, this is tennis. In the front of ah, west of the Dixie Hotel because the Dixie Hotel faced on the

river. It's Mary, Jessie, Willard and Margaret.

Q: Margaret is you, isn't -

ABNEY: Margaret Mitchell down here. Somebody wrote me a letter the other day, they'd made a piece of poem, they said, "Eat your heart out, Atlanta. We've got a Margaret Mitchell, too." (giggle) That was just lately that they did that. Tax Collector. Willard Hall and Margaret Mitchell.

Q: And Mitchell was your maiden name.

ABNEY: Yeah, I was Mitchell before I married. My father was Mitchell. James Finlay Mitchell from Scotland.

Q: You look like you're having a good time -

ABNEY: Had a grandson named Finlay, middle initial, name, Finlay is spelled F-i-n-l-a-y, and he had a big bet with a man in Orlando - Finlay - he told my grandson, "I'll bet your name is not spelled the same." My grandson said, "Yes it is." They both had the l-a-y instead of l-e-y.

Q: Since your name is Margaret Mitchell did you take any teasing about writing "Gone With the Wind"?

ABNEY: Well, I was named Margaret Mitchell because my aunt was named Margaret Mitchell, and she married Wallace. She married a Wallace. And she was one that came over early. And her husband died, and they had a little boy, so that's why my father came over here from Scotland, to help her get her business settled so she could go back to Scotland. And since then my father and Uncle Tom stayed over here, and neither one of them ever went back to Scotland. And I'm not sure if that;s a Haynes or a Ford. Can't tell by looking at it.

Q: Did you like to drive?

ABNEY: Well, I didn't drive much because we didn't have a car. My father, when I was little, but my, ah, my husband to be had a car. And ah, I learned how to do a Ford, you know, and you made the gears with your foot, changed the gear with your foot. And after we got married we went to Jacksonville I learned how to shift the gears on a, the car we had which now escapes my memory. But it's a car, still going along, on the road. But I learned to shift the gears on a one of the busy streets of Jacksonville, which wasn't very busy. That was in 1920. We went up there to live in Jacksonville. See, I graduated in 1916, in Titusville. I've got my graduation thing over there.

Q: We see you in a boat. I guess that's near Titusville, somewhere?

ABNEY: Yes, that's on one of the lakes, back of Titusville. What do you call that thing back there. Mud hills, Lake um, je-, I don't know. Can't say, but it is the nearest lake, when we went back there, back of Titusville, somewhere. Be of interest to anybody.

Q: Just tell us what is happening in these two pictures, here.

ABNEY: Let me see it, turn it around a little so I can see it.

Q: It says "Goodbye Jessie."

ABNEY: Yes, Jessie was taking, going off on the train, somewhere. I don't know where she was going but that's Jessie Morgan. She's one of the ones that graduated with me.

Q: What train was that?

ABNEY: What - what?

Q: What train was that?

ABNEY: Florida East Coast - railroad. That's the one, I have that thing in there. I'd like to find that first thing, I'd like to see that front page of that paper. Man coming down the isle selling bananas and fruit, you know, that come down. I liked the bananas. (giggle) That's when we went to Jacksonville every summer when papa was -

Q: That was just about the only way to travel, at that time.

ABNEY: Yeah, Yeah - and it was kind of fun. Now I'll read you a little news.

Q: What is this?

ABNEY: This is the Indian River Advocate published, the date of this paper is May the 27th, 1898. Price, five cents. And I like this because it shows my first train ride. And all the news of the town, the county, and everywhere else is on here. The democratic convention at Titusville, and all that, its all interesting but I'll read this because it is my first ride on a train. And, where is it, "This is Mrs. E.P. Porcher, and family, and Mrs. James F. Mitchell and baby, of Cocoa, passed through here Monday, on their way to Jacksonville to spend some months. Mr. Porcher is general manager of the Indian River and Lake Worth Pineapple Growers Association, and Mr. Mitchell is his assistant. They will now attend to all shipments of pineapples sent to Jacksonville, by members of the above association." Now then, I would like to read a little article on the other side. My husband, Parkerhurst Brady, was born, this is births. "Born to Mr. and Mrs. L.A. Brady, on Sunday morning, last, a son. May he live long and happily, following in the footsteps of his worthy

father. Who is said to be the happiest man in town." Now that is my first husband. And he died in 1929 in a car wreck, and we were married in 1920. Now then the other little article was interesting too, but I don't think I want to read the whole paper. It's a wedding, "On Wednesday morning at about eleven o'clock, at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. J.D. Hatter of City Point, Mr Adam R. Brady of Titusville, and Miss Susy F. Brown of the former place, were united in the Holy bonds of Matrimony by the Reverend A.D. Penney. The ceremony was a quiet affair, only a few witnessing it, and after receiving the hearty congratulations of their friends, the newly married couple left for Titusville where the wedding dinner was partaken of at the residence of the groom's mother, Mrs. Al Bean Brady. The bride and groom are well and favorably known to this section and have the best wishes of all for a long, happy and prosperous married life, in which the Advocate heartily joins. Mr. and Mrs. Brady are residing in the Scobie cottage on Hopkins Street." And, that's that. But, those were brought to me by some boy, and, right this minute I can't remember his name. But he wanted to find out something about Susy Brown Brady, because in someway, he was kin to her. But he brought me this piece of paper. Which made me very happy to see it.

Q: What's the year on that?

ABNEY: The year, is 1898, and that was the year I was born. I was born in January, my husband was born in May, and I always worried about him being three or four months younger than I was. But he died in 1929, at the age of 31, leaving my two little sons and me alone. And so, after he died I said I'm going to quit worrying, I worried so just that little bit, and now I'm 92 years old, 94 years old. I get mixed up on that birthday because all I have to do is any year and add two to it - 1898 - and that's my age. Add two to the year because two years came in between. You got to be a mathematician. (giggle) It's 92 now, and it was two

years before that to be - add two to 92 and I'm 94.