



2007 Sesquicentennial Oral Interview

Alvena Tuggle

CH: Today is June 13. This is Cindy Higgins. I am with Alvena Tuggle and we are at PineCrest. At age 88, you are one of the older Eudorans who are native born?

AT: Yes, I think so.

CH: How many people in that category—in their 80s, born in Eudora, and living here?

AT: There are a few. But I don't know how many.

CH: What year were you born and who were your parents?

AT: I was born in 1919, September the fifth. My father was Alvin Bond, and my mother was Lily Smith Bond.

CH: Why did they come to Eudora?

AT: My great-grandfather was sent to Lawrence in 1884 to build the first Friends church in Lawrence. My grandfather went back to Ohio. He carried a note in his pocket that he had permission to marry my grandmother. They came back to Kansas then and settled in Eudora. She brought with her a little box. It was a



round, wooden box with rocks and buckeyes that her brothers had picked up so she could bring some of Ohio back to Kansas with her.

CH: Did they live in the city or did they live outside the city?

AT: They lived outside in the country.

CH: Where did they live in relation to the middle of the town?

AT: They lived just across the Wakarusa. There was a house over there where I don't know who lives there now. John Moody lived there years ago. And, there was no bridge. They either had to walk across on the railroad track bridge to come because they went to church at the Methodist Church or they had to go across in a boat. If the weather wasn't too bad, they went across in the boat. My mother's brothers would carry the little kids up the hill so that they could go to church.

CH: Have you gone to the Methodist Church your whole life?

AT: Yes.

CH: Your other family members?

AT: Yes. Most of them.

CH: What was the Methodist Church like? What are some of your first memories of it?

AT: The first thing I remembered was when my sister and I went by ourselves, my older sister. Somebody was sick at home. I don't remember who was sick. Mama couldn't go. My dad brought us in the horse and buggy. Mama told me to hold Gladys' hand and be a lady. [Laughter] I went to Sunday School. I remember the minister would always stand up in front. We had opening exercises before Sunday School, and he would sing different songs. He led us in our singing.

CH: What are some things that stand out in how the Methodist Church has changed from then? I see your eyebrows lifting.

AT: [Laughter] A lot! Of course, they are building a new church. I haven't been out to see it yet. It's hard to give up the church that we had all my life, you know.

CH: Okay. Where did you go to school when you were in Eudora? What are some memories you have of that?

AT: Where the old grade school was where we went to school [Sixth Street block and Church Street]. One memory I have, it snowed and it was clear up to my dad's knees and he was taking us to school in the horse and buggy. The wheel came off the buggy so we had to walk the rest of the way. By the time we got to the corner where the church is, the bell rang. And my sister had never been tardy or missed school. She was five years older than I was and I was in the first grade. She started crying, because she didn't want to be counted late. So, my dad talked to her teachers so they didn't count us late because the weather was so bad.

CH: How often did you have to walk compared to your grandchildren and great grandchildren?

AT: I walked a mile to school when I was in first grade.

CH: And you were with your sister.

AT: Uh huh. One day my great granddaughter called me and asked me to take them to school it was snowing. I told her about this episode how the wheel came off the buggy and we had to walk the rest of school. But grandmother you didn't have as good as grandmother as we do. [Laughter]. I said, "Tiffany [Musick], we didn't have a car." My grandmother didn't know how drive. She didn't drive the horse and buggy or wagon. Back then, the women didn't do that.

CH: When did your family get their first car? Can you remember that?

AT: Yes. It was about I think I was probably eight or nine. So, it was in the late 20s sometime.

CH: Did they have the bridge then so you could go back and forth to Eudora in the car?

AT: Well, we lived □.

CH: That's right.

AT: We lived south of Eudora. So, we didn't have to □.

CH: To deal with the Wakarusa.

AT: Yeah. There was a bridge then.

CH: Where did you live south of Eudora?

AT: It's where, what's her name lives out there. Where Tom Pyle lives and you go around and that big house?

CH: Where Rose Pyle lives?

AT: Yes.

CH: That was your house?

AT: That's where we lived.

CH: Who built that house?

CH: It was already built when you all went there.

AT: Yes.

CH: What was it like in that part of town, which is around 18th and Oak or Elm Street? There weren't any houses there, right?

AT: No. There was just the one house that is south of Tom Pyle's. That old house. And the house where I lived were the only two houses. The next houses were clear down to the Diedrich house and Snyders that lived on the west side of road.

CH: And were those houses or almost mini farms? Did they keep animals?

AT: Oh, yeah. Almost everybody had.

CH: What animals did you all keep?

AT: Well, we had a cow, and we had horses. That's what I remember most.

CH: How often did you go downtown? And why did you go downtown to Eudora?

AT: We usually went once a week. Folks went in to buy groceries, you know.

CH: Where did you buy groceries at?

AT: Well, there was two stores. A Gerstenbergers' grocery store. And then there was a store across the street, can't remember?

CH: HyKlass?

AT: It wasn't that then. I don't remember the name of it was then.

CH: Just one across the street?

AT: It was in there were the flower store was. And, then there was Trefz Variety store. Well, Humpty's plumbing first, and then Trefz Variety store. We usually bought our shoes in Trefz Variety store. And they were a dollar a pair when I was little [Laughter]. You could buy thread, two spools for a dime.

CH: When, say, you were a child and a teenager, what were some things families might have done for fun or entertainment?

AT: It was mostly family. We'd go to my grandparents.

CH: Visiting family.

AT: Yes. Mostly what we did.

CH: How much family do you have in Eudora?

AT: I have one sister, Edna Holmes, lives in Eudora. I have a son, David Tuggle. And, Sharon lives in Linwood.

CH: You have grandkids, and great-grandkids.

AT: And, great-great.

CH: Why do you think they have stayed around this area?

AT: I don't know. I guess just because we started here and they stayed!

CH: Did you ever have a job after you got out of high school?

AT: Well, I've worked since then. I have worked up at KU. I sold Stanley home products for quite a while. I worked in the kitchen of the high school when it was on Church Street, I mean, on Main Street.

CH: Was there any certain things you all cooked for meals that the kids liked?

AT: That I don't remember.

AT: I remember when I was in school. We had hot lunches every day. Mrs. Moll was the one that cooked hot lunches. And, some of us got to help her, like carry water up for her, because it was up on the second floor. That part is gone now.

CH: You are talking about the school on Church Street.

AT: Yes. If we carried up water or helped her wash dishes, then we got our lunch free because it was only a dime or something. It wasn't expensive then.

CH: When you were working at KU, did many other people in Eudora work at KU?

AT: Well, I suppose. I don't remember who all worked up there. I worked in the bookstore; it's where I worked.

CH: Who were some of the main employers and you had a job, what were some places people went to get jobs at?

AT: Wasn't too much. Grocery stores and filling stations, is about all there was. Generally, whoever owned something had enough family that they did the work.

CH: I know you are involved with the Rebekahs, what are some other organizations you have been involved with since the beginning. Say, the church circles.

AT: Yes, I belong to Debra Circle.

CH: When your children were in school, did you ever get involved with school organizations there?

AT: I probably was room mother more than anyone else [Laughter].

CH: Anything else come to mind for organizations?

AT: Not really.

CH: Card groups?

AT: I do the birthday party and potlucks at Pinecrest.

CH: That's right. How long have you lived at Pinecrest?

AT: '94.

CH: How do you describe Pinecrest to people?

AT: Well, it's a nice place to live when you are no longer able maintain a house, that's the way I feel.

CH: What's the community spirit? In terms of your neighbors: You pretty much know all of your neighbors.

AT: Well, yes.

CH: What are some activities that take place?

AT: They play cards quite a bit. We have birthday parties and potlucks once a month. They have breakfast. Well, since Carol Scott has been manager over there, they are doing a lot more things than they have before

CH: It depends on who is in charge?

AT: Yes.

CH: From when you moved here in '94 and it's 2007, have there been any changes, in terms of the people here, the management, the landscaping?

AT: We lost a lot of the people who were here when I first came.

CH: In a way there has been some loss.

AT: There's been a lot of changes. It's all together almost different people when I first came.

CH: Is Pinecrest community owned?

AT: No.

CH: How's that work?

AT: It's owned by a company that is actually government subsidized. The government somehow loaned the money for it. My son built, too, Richard. He lives in Colorado now.

CH: For example, the nursing home was built in the community, and now it's for sale, but Pinecrest is under a different kind of management.

AT: Yes.

CH: Okay, what are some things the Rebekahs do and how long have you been involved with the Rebekahs.

AT: I've been a Rebekah for 61 years. We give to arthritis, vision committee; we give to the food pantry. We give to the prom party. We always give something, a gift certificate usually for the prom.

CH: What is one of your favorite organizations that the Rebekahs donate to? You do different things, but which one do you get a kick out of?

AT: I guess, probably giving to the food pantry because it stays here in Eudora. I know there's lots of people who need help.

CH: When you were growing up, there was nothing like the food pantry.

AT: Oh, no.

CH: But if somebody was in need, neighbors would help out, family? How'd that work?

AT: Yes. Well, I know when my dad was hurt, he was coming home after taking milk and cream to the creamery here in town and some kids run into the back of his buggy with a car. And, it threw him up on the bank, and we heard our horse

came home and we thought Papa would be coming in pretty soon. He didn't. Pretty soon, the telephone rang and Mrs. Steinway [?] who lived here told Mama that he had been hurt and Doctor Johnson was bringing him home. Doctor Johnson actually went out there and picked him up and put him in his car and brought him home and my brother was just a tiny baby then. He took him and carried him in the house, I remember, because I was between four and five years old. He carried Papa in and examined him and he told Mama that his hip was cracked. That was before [laughter] x-rays and stuff like that. And, then another time, Papa was still sick or still in bed, and the snow was real bad. Doctor Johnson drove his car as far as he could get and then he walked the rest of the way to our house and Mama said, "I didn't call you." He said, "No, the telephone lines were down. I just wanted to know you all were all alright." It was a thing of the past. I don't think any doctor would do that today! He did.

CH: Individuals looking after other people.

AT: Yes.

CH: If this is Eudora's 150th birthday and you could give Eudora a present, something you think Eudora needs, or like, or you would like, does anything come to mind about what would be good for that?

AT: I don't know what to say.

CH: A certain store the town needs to have

AT: You know what I'd like to have, a Kentucky Fried Chicken. That's the main thing I would like to have here in town.

CH: If Eudora's population is around 6,000 people now, and the next 50 years, what is an ideal population for Eudora? Not what you think it is going to be, what's a good population for Eudora so it can retain its best qualities?

AT: Probably not much more than it is now.

CH: Well, that pretty much concludes our interview unless you have something else you would like to say.

AT: There's one thing I wanted to tell you. My grandfather was the justice of the peace here in town. My dad was city marshal. They didn't carry a gun. He just had a billy club. Have you ever seen a billy club?

CH: Kind of. A nightstick.

AT: That's all he ever carried. He would walk up and down the streets of Eudora. Kids did something they shouldn't do, he would talk to them. That's the way it was then.

CH: Did he ever have to use his billy club?

AT: Not that I remember.

CH: So, there weren't any problems. He was just making sure they didn't.

AT: Nothing happened.

CH: There wasn't a jail or anything here.

AT: No.

CH: How long did he do that, do you think?

AT: I don't remember how long he was city marshal.

CH: Did he like his job?

AT: He had another job. He did this in the evening. I think so.

CH: There's good parts and bad parts to jobs.

CH: That's good. Thank you very much. That concludes our interview.

