

T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

ABSTRACT

INTERVIEWEE NAME: Henry Hollins

COLLECTION: 4700.0647

IDENTIFICATION: McKinley High School graduate

INTERVIEWER: Shawnda Hollins

SERIES: McKinley High School Oral History Project – History of McKinley High School

INTERVIEW DATE: July 11, 1995

FOCUS DATES: 1936-1970

ABSTRACT:

Tape 937, Side A

Hollins was born in Erwinville, Louisiana, April 28, 1921; parents' names; parents only went through sixth grade; mother was a seamstress; Hollins attended McKinley from 1936 through 1940; taught for thirty-seven years; has two master's degrees in science; students cleaned the school since there were no janitors; Hollins later taught physics, chemistry and biology at McKinley; Hollins was one of the first faculty members of the McKinley campus on Buchanan Street; worked at McKinley from 1960-1970; after integration, assigned to Baton Rouge High; annual science fair at McKinley; Louisiana Interscholastic Athletic and Literary Organization; was involved with football and science clubs; was a top student; all his teachers were role models; especially influenced by his math teacher, J.D. Young; nobody scored on the McKinley football team for eleven years straight; lists schools they played; names the many colleges and universities he attended; young blacks came from surrounding areas to stay with Baton Rouge relatives and attend McKinley; wholesome competition between schools; dress codes; corporal punishment; principal and parents beat miscreants; people left their houses unlocked; no drugs; senior prom on Temple Roof with well-known bands; on weekdays, had to be home by sunset; his goal in high school was to become a math teacher; this interview is his first time back to McKinley since 1970; teachers used to get to know parents as well as students, which helped with discipline; alma mater written for his class, the class of 1940; that was the first class to wear a cap and gown for graduation; parents, students and community were 100 percent involved in McKinley; predicts success for the oral history project; so many local professionals and leaders got their start at McKinley; McKinley was committed to Baton Rouge Bus Boycott; competed in International Science Fair; students' work in science prepared them for thesis writing in college; students had to read six books during nine-week grading period; had more language classes available during his time teaching at McKinley; non-blacks write textbooks and eliminate black contributions; penmanship was compulsory; students learned to write; required more units to graduate then; students used to tie for valedictorian; advises aspiring McKinley graduates to

study hard, read and keep a good reputation; recommends more people to interview; industrial arts program.

TAPE: 1 (T937)

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 26 minutes

PAGES TRANSCRIPT: 18 pages

OTHER MATERIALS: Interviewer's Notes and Words List; Correspondence

RESTRICTIONS: None